



Nevada

**Court
Improvement
Program**

2019 Annual Report

Supreme Court of Nevada
Administrative Office of the Courts
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Nevada Court Improvement Program 2019 Annual Self-Assessment Report

This self-assessment is intended as an opportunity for Court Improvement Programs (CIPs) to review progress on required CIP projects, joint program planning and improvement efforts with the child welfare agency, and ability to integrate CQI successfully into practice. Questions are designed to solicit candid responses that help CIPs apply CQI and identify support that may be helpful.

- i. **CQI Analyses of Required CIP Projects** (Joint Project with Agency and Hearing Quality Project) *It is ok to cut and paste responses from last year, but please update according to where you currently are in the process.*

Joint Project with the Child Welfare Agency:

STATEWIDE JUVENILE DEPENDENCY MEDIATION PROGRAM

Provide a concise description of the joint project selected in your jurisdiction.

The purpose of the Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program (JDMP) is to improve system processing of dependency cases; to better engage families; thereby decreasing time to permanency and termination of parental rights (TPR). In so doing, it helps stabilize children's lives by getting them into safe, stable, and permanent homes in a timely manner consistent with the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997.

Mediation has been used to enhance the quality of the dependency process by providing the parties an opportunity to enter into a discussion in which the parties voluntarily resolve the issues that brought the family into the dependency system and produce a written agreement in lieu of a contested hearing. Contested hearings tend to be especially painful for children, as they may be required to testify against their parents. Mediations allow children to avoid this trauma, as mediations tend to focus on the family's strengths. Benefits of mediation in child dependency cases include: improved outcomes for children from decreased time to permanency to improved well-being, enhanced parental engagement to safely reunify with the child, time and cost savings, and system efficiency.

Dependency mediation has been identified by child welfare, the judiciary and the Community Improvement Councils (CIC) throughout the State as an intervention to ameliorate timeliness issues. Following extensive research to verify that mediation was an appropriate service, the Division of Child and Family Services and CIP agreed that this was indeed a viable, evidence-based best practice to help the children move into a permanent home situation in a more timely

manner. Former parent's counsel Emilie Meyer, perhaps, said it best when she observed, "*Dependency mediation creates a humane place for these discussions.*" It finds solutions that offer better outcomes for children and a quicker path to permanency for the child outside the litigious and often traumatizing environment of the courtroom.

Identify the specific safety, permanency, or well-being outcome this project is intended to address. The specific outcome expected as a result of implementing a statewide juvenile dependency mediation program is to improve timeliness to permanency and TPR by improving case processing and parental engagement.

Approximate date that the project began:

July 1, 2016

Which stage of the CQI process best describes the current status of project work?

Implemented and being fine-tuned. That value of JDMP to the courts has been demonstrated to such an extent that the Nevada Supreme Court memorialized funding for JDMP in its budget.

How was the need for this project identified?

Dependency Mediation was initially identified in the 2nd Judicial District's (JD) CIC action plan as a means to improve timeliness to permanency and termination of parental rights (TPR) by improving case processing and parental engagement. This area in need of improvement was identified during the Round Two of the Child and Families Services Review (CFSR) and, again, during Round Three of the CFSP (2019) resulting Program Improvement Plans (PIP). The 2nd draft of the most current PIP outlined several Outcomes and Systemic Factors to be addressed during the PIP implementation period. Specifically, Outcome 1, Item 4 "Is the child is a stable placement?", Item 5, "Did the agency establish appropriate permanency goals for the child in a timely manner, and Item 6, "Did the agency make concerted efforts to achieve reunification, guardianship, adoption, or other planned permanency living arrangement for the child". And Systemic Factors under Case Review System, Item 22, to ensure timely filing of TPRs.

CIP first funded dependency mediation as a pilot project in the 2nd JD in 2011. Research indicates that programs implemented in a manner consistent with national and state guidelines and best practices can be expected to offer an improvement over traditional child welfare proceedings. National evaluations of mediation programs find that mediations tend to result in full or partial agreement in at least 70% of cases. Of course, simply producing agreements is not the only goal of mediation. There is substantial support across a variety of studies that mediation provides parents and other participants an opportunity to talk and discuss the issues they believe are necessary for the family's success. The ability to be heard has been a consistent theme in the JDMP's exit surveys which provide quantitative and qualitative data on non-professional (parents, foster parents, etc.) and professional participant's response to mediation.

As a result of the success of the pilot juvenile dependency mediation project in the 2nd JD, using the same refined protocols, four more pilots were launched in Clark, Nye, the northern rural Nevada Counties, and the Washoe Tribe. These four programs met with similar success – 78% to 100% agreement rates, improved parental engagement particularly in hearings, and enhanced communication among case parties.

Research has demonstrated that not only is juvenile dependency mediation successful in producing agreement at every stage of a dependency case, but it also provides an atmosphere in which all parties feel heard. When parties are heard they are likely to become more engaged in the case with an increased likelihood of positive outcomes. Additionally, research has shown that time from petition to permanency is less for mediated cases when compared to a control group of cases not mediated. Prior research has shown that mediation is an empirically supported practice with a demonstrated relationship to engaging parents and improving outcomes in child welfare cases (Gatowski, Dobbin, Litchfield, & Oetjen, 2005; Thoennes, 2008). Nevada’s mediation program has promising findings from two early studies of the Washoe County mediation program: better involvement of fathers following mediation and a higher likelihood the case will achieve reunification (Summers, Wood, Bohannan, Gonzalez, & Sicafuse, 2013). A more recent Nevada mediation study showed mediations have higher rates of adoption than non-mediated cases, and that mediations are more likely to result in reunification with both parents (Siegel, Ganasarajah, Gatowski, Sickmund, & Devault, 2017).

What is the theory of change for the project?

The engagement of all case parties in a non-adversarial dispute resolution process when disagreements occur (e.g., denial of the petition or TPR petition, and disagreements over case plan or placement), is expected to reduce contention among the parties, lead to agreement, and allow both the professionals and the parents to feel fully engaged and vested in the process. This is expected to lead to increased parental engagement in future hearings and increased likelihood that parents will work their case plans. This will, in turn, lead to long term outcomes such as improved time to permanency and reunification rates.

Court hearing quality studies, including those conducted in Nevada, indicate that hearings in which children, parents, and their attorneys are present are more likely to result in reunification. When parents are offered the opportunity to be heard, their children are less likely to age out of the system. When parents engage in discussion of efforts to reunify, the time to permanency for their children is decreased. If one extrapolates, such characteristics of quality hearings and positive outcomes to mediation, it would be expected that mediation would have similar positive impacts.

Some of the lack of timeliness to permanency and TPR may be due to the fact that parents may not be engaged in working their case plans. Research has demonstrated that not only is mediation successful in producing agreement across a wide range of case types, but it also provides an

atmosphere in which all parties feel heard. When parties are heard they are likely to become more engaged in the case with an increased likelihood of positive outcomes. Additionally, research has shown that time from petition to permanency is less for mediated cases when compared to a control group of cases not mediated.

Mediation is used to improve the quality of the dependency process by providing the parties an opportunity to enter into a discussion in which the parties voluntarily resolve the issues that brought the family into the dependency system and produce a written agreement in lieu of a potentially traumatic contested hearing. Mediations tend to focus on the family's strengths. Benefits of mediation in child dependency cases include: time savings, efficiency, parental engagement, and improved outcomes for children.

Have you identified a solution/intervention that you will implement? If yes, what is it?

Yes, Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation (JDMP) implemented in a consistent manner using a facilitative, co-mediation model with continual quality improvement. The JDMP is administered by a highly qualified mediator with a specifically trained mediation panel.

What has been done to implement the project?

As a result of the pilot mediation programs' success, the CICs, Child Welfare and CIP launched the Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program (JDMP) on July 1, 2016, with a full panel of mediators who were specifically trained and certified in dependency mediation. Another 40-hour dependency mediation training was conducted in April 2018 and another in July 2019, enlarging the panel of mediators to accommodate the increased demand and the expansion of JDMP's model to co-mediation. A highly skilled Administrator manages the Program and guides the mediators, ensuring fidelity to program design and process across the state. She conducts monthly mediator trainings, schedules mediations as they are received via court order or direct referral from Child Welfare, co-mediates with mediators on particularly difficult mediations, and assists judicial districts in creating their internal mediation referral processes. All JDMP mediations throughout the state follow the facilitative co-mediation model.

In all districts, the judges and their CICs have been actively involved in determining how mediation will function within their districts. The program design allows referral to mediation at any stage during the legal process. It includes collecting participant and outcome data with standardized data collection tools designed by NCJFCJ.

Protocols, procedures, and forms have been created to ensure consistent implementation (Appendix 1). Brochures were developed (Appendix 2) explaining the mediation process and expected outcomes to the parents. The intent is for the court to note time, date, and location of the mediation on the brochure at the time the judge ordered mediation. However, in some of the smaller jurisdictions child welfare has taken an active role in advocating for mediation when a case

gets “stuck” by contacting the CIP Coordinator directly. The brochure has become an educational tool for other stakeholders, as well.

The JDMP Administrator, as well as the CIP Coordinator, provide trainings to child welfare, attorneys, and judges regarding the use and benefits of JDMP and their unique role both before and during the mediations. The attorney training conducted in the 8th JD was video-taped (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCKAwJrLEcQS_j4eAfcq7zqQ) for future use. The JDMP developed extensive forms and protocols for the program and created an implementation “toolkit” complete with a video on YouTube (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OaD4M-_EaNk) that fully explains dependency mediation.

“Children’s Attorney Program (CAP) attorneys have been very pleased with mediation and would like to see it expanded to the other contested proceedings. The process is a genteel and respectful alternative to the winner-take-all mentality of litigation. We can’t say enough about the caliber and professionalism of our mediators.”

Janice Wolf, Director of CAP at LACSN

Mediation is available at all stages of a dependency or TPR case. Once ordered by the court, participation in mediation by all parties to the case is mandatory with the exception of domestic violence cases and cases in which a parent lacks the capacity to make a decision in mediation. CIP received a VOCA grant to fund the mediation portion of the program, and a grant from the Children’s Justice Act Task Force for the trainings, videos, and protocol and brochure development. CIP funded the administration and evaluation of the Program. During the 2019 session of the Nevada Legislature, the Nevada Supreme Court requested and received a budget enhancement to fully fund and expand JDMP into a co-mediation model.

Mediators participate on monthly mediator trainings via facilitated peer to peer conference calls with the JDMP Administrator and CIP Coordinator to discuss program improvements, new issues, and difficult cases. An additional monthly call is held with the lead judge and other judicial leaders in the 8th JD discussing particular implementation issues that arise in this larger jurisdiction where calendaring, for example, became an issue simply because so many courts were ordering mediations into a limited number of slots each week.

What is being done or how do you intend to monitor the progress of the project?

As part of the CIP continual quality improvement efforts and to ensure fidelity of implementation, CIP has contracted with Drs. Alicia Summers and Sophia Gatowski to conduct an impact assessment on JDMP during the summer of 2019 with results presented during the 2019 CIC Summit.

In 2017, the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) was contracted to design the stakeholder surveys and conduct process and satisfaction assessments for the JDMP.

NCJFCJ also conducted an impact assessment of the 2nd JD's program because it has been in place long enough for cases to have closed.

During the piloting of dependency mediation in Nevada, NCJFCJ was contracted to conduct assessments of the 2nd, 5th, and 8th JD's mediation programs. NCJFCJ also conducted an initial impact assessment of the 2nd JD's program because it had been in place long enough for cases to have closed.

The NCJFCJ's key findings from their process and satisfaction assessment of the mediation program in the 2nd JD indicate that there is a general perception that mediation is successful. Stakeholders agreed that mediation lessened their workload in preparation and hearings, and is a good alternative to court. The majority of the mediations (78%) resulted in agreement, and non-professional participants felt heard, respected, and treated fairly. Mediated cases had fewer default orders in the 2nd JD. Key findings from the 2nd JD's impact assessment indicate that mediated cases are more likely to result in reunification of the children with their families when compared to non-mediated cases. Among mediated cases that had closed, 88% resulted in reunification. Among the non-mediated closed cases, only 50% resulted in reunification. Findings show that fathers who participated in mediation were more engaged and were present at more hearings compared to fathers who did not participate in mediation. Fathers who participated in mediation attended 72% of all hearings, while those who did not participate in mediation only attended 50% of their hearings (Summers, Wood, Bohannon, Gonzalez, & Sicafuse, 2013). A more recent Nevada mediation study showed mediations have higher rates of adoption than non-mediated cases, and that mediations are more likely to result in reunification with both parents (Siegel, Ganasarajah, Gatowski, Sickmund, & Devault, 2017).

As with the 2nd JD process evaluation, the JDMP process evaluation primarily focused on data obtained from exit surveys completed by participants (e.g., mothers, fathers, children, relatives, foster parents, and others) and professional/system stakeholders (e.g., social workers, deputy district attorneys, attorneys for parents, attorneys for children, and others) at the completion of their mediation sessions.¹ The surveys received from each district court were aggregated to present process evaluation findings for the statewide mediation program as a whole. In addition to satisfaction indicators drawn from these surveys, preliminary data were also collected from JDMP case data sheets to provide some initial indicators of statewide program performance and outcomes.

Although mediation is available to be used at any point in a case, the initial analyses conducted for this report showed that most cases used the JDMP at the Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) stage of a case. The predominance of TPR cases in the statewide program is largely a reflection of

¹ In some jurisdictions, assistant attorneys general may represent the state in dependency or TPR matters.

mediation cases in Clark County which has employed all or most of its mediation sessions in TPR matters.

The statewide process evaluation involved analyses of 113 participant surveys and 267 professional stakeholder surveys that were completed during the study period (July 2016 through April 2017) to determine satisfaction levels and to prepare initial suggestions for continued mediation program improvements. These survey figures represent the total numbers of surveys completed by statewide program participants and stakeholders during this 10-month time frame.

Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program Process Evaluation: Key Findings

1. A substantial majority of non-professional program participants (85%) and dependency system stakeholders (98%) expressed overall satisfaction with the statewide mediation program;
2. In this sample, a majority of participants (75%) and stakeholders (72%) indicated that their cases reached full or partial agreements during mediation (the overall agreement rate for the total population July 1, 2016 through June 9, 2017 is **84.4%**). Without mediation, contested issues may have delayed reunification of children with their families and/or delayed other permanency options for children;
3. The results of the surveys administered at the end of the mediations indicate that 95% of the participants felt that they were treated with respect and were able to be part of finding answers to the problems discussed. Additionally, 99% believed that they had an opportunity to voice their opinions. All (100%) of the participants felt that the mediator treated everyone fairly and explained the process clearly. Stakeholders felt that the mediations were conducted fairly (99%), they were treated with respect (99%), they were heard (96%), and had an opportunity to voice their opinions (99%).
4. Participants who expressed satisfaction with mediation (on some questions) reached full or partial agreements more frequently than those who expressed less satisfaction (this finding was shown to be statistically significant for all satisfaction survey questions);
5. No statistically significant differences between the stage in the case when mediation was held and stakeholder satisfaction with mediation were found. This indicates that stakeholders were generally satisfied with mediation regardless of the type of legal action or case stage;
6. Nearly half of the mediations resulted in vacated hearings.

Additionally, the program's praises are being sung by the judiciary as exemplified in the 2nd JD's final mediation program report, reflecting on the Dependency Mediation Program in the 2nd Judicial District, Judge Egan Walker observes:

“In cases where the dependency process results in termination of parental rights, mediation is likely one of the few humane processes which we can offer. In the great majority of cases which remain, mediation is reaping benefits through earlier participation of parents and the tantalizing possibility that mediation will be a significant tool with which to accelerate the safe and effective reunification of families.”

The dependency mediation pilot program in the 8th JD launched in early 2013 and only had completed 13 mediations at the time the assessment began. Consequently, this assessment conducted by the NCJFCJ only included process and satisfaction evaluations as it was too early to be able to assess the program’s impact. As in the 2nd JD, there was a general perception in the 8th JD that mediation is successful and that parties feel heard, respected, and treated fairly during the process. The majority (92%) of the mediations resulted in agreement. Most stakeholders felt that mediation is successful in increasing cooperation among parties and in engaging parents.

The NCJFCJ also completed a process evaluation of dependency mediation in the 5th JD. The results of that process evaluation demonstrate that the dependency mediation program in the 5th JD has had a successful start. Although only 5 mediations have been held, all five have resolved with agreements. There is a general perception from all parties that mediation is a helpful tool in moving their case forward toward permanency for the child.

The data used to assess reduction in time to permanency and TPR are court timeliness and child welfare data from UNITY and Chapin Hall, University of Chicago and AFCARS and NCANDS data compiled by Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina. Last year Nevada added another data resource: the University of North Carolina’s Chapel Hill Fostering Court Improvement Data Project. The most recent data provided by Chapel Hill indicates that Exits to Adoption in less than 24 months are trending positively. The fact that all the statistical measures are trending in the directions of improvement since 2010 or 2011 suggests that a systemic change is taking place in Nevada. Twenty-eight percent (28%) of the exits to adoption are taking place in less than 24 months as compared to only 14.6% in 2010. While overall exits to adoption are taking 29.4 months compared to 36.3 months in 2010. (See chart below in Hearing Quality section).

JDMP is growing and successful:

- During state fiscal year 2018 (the second year of implementation) with all counties in the state participating, 232 dependency mediations were ordered across the state (109 in Clark, 100 in Washoe, 23 in the rural region);
- 76% were mediated, 10% of parents did not appear for the ordered mediation, 11% of the scheduled mediations were cancelled;
- 82% of the mediations came to agreement on how to resolve issues that were preventing child victims from finding a permanent home, compared to a 68% national average;

- 415 children were helped by JDMP during the second year of implementation; and,
- 115 hearings were vacated as a result of those agreements;

In all districts, the judiciary, Child Welfare, and the CICs have been actively involved in determining how mediation will function within their districts. The program design allows referral to mediation at any stage during the legal process. These referrals can be initiated by any of the parties. It also includes collecting participant and outcome data with tools designed by NCJFCJ.

In Nevada, the size and attributes of children in foster care are staggering. According to the Adoption and Foster Care Reporting System (AFCARS) and the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS):

- From October 2017 through September 2018, 30,027 children were the subject of maltreatment reports; and 20,154 children were subjects of a maltreatment investigation
 - Of these children, 4,085 were identified as victims of abuse and neglect
 - **3,166** of these child victims were removed from their homes and placed in foster care;
- An average of **264** children are removed from their homes per month in Nevada;
- 44% of those were removed to relative foster care setting;
- An average of **4,442** children are in care per day;
- Average monthly foster care costs per 10k was \$44,360;
- The median length of stay in foster care was 12.3 months – twelve months to a young child is unfathomable; and,
- 74% of these children are 9 years or younger.

Mediation is used to improve the quality of the dependency process by providing the parties an opportunity to enter into a discussion in which the parties voluntarily resolve the issues that brought the family into the dependency system and produce a written agreement in lieu of a potentially traumatic, contested hearing. Mediations tend to focus on the family's strengths. Benefits of mediation in child dependency cases include: time savings, efficiency, parental engagement, and improved outcomes for children.

The greatest consequence of foster care is on the children themselves. National and international studies have proven the devastating impact varies from depression to behavioral problems such as aggression and delinquency. In adulthood, former foster children have difficulties establishing long lasting relationships, have lower levels of education and employment, and are more often homeless, arrested, and imprisoned.

“The Dependency Mediation Program is a great example of how a modest investment of dollars early can reap untold rewards in positive outcomes for the children later.”

Judge Egan Walker, Second Judicial District Court

What assistance or support would be helpful from the CBCC or Children’s Bureau to help move the project forward?

Nevada would like to collaborate with other CIPs interested in piloting the dependency mediation modeled in Nevada to determine the effectiveness of such a program in other jurisdictions. After several states have piloted JDMP, CBCC assistance in assessing a more global effectiveness would be appreciated.

At the Nevada level, as the program continues to expand CBCC guidance on additional, appropriate data to gather and how to gather beyond exit surveys, and how to best analyze these data would be helpful. It would also be helpful to receive guidance on analyzing administrative data to determine if correlational improvements may be occurring.

It would also be helpful to have regular review of JDMP processes to ensure that fidelity to the model is being adhered to. Guidance on how to conduct informative, multi-disciplinary focus groups would also be useful.

Hearing Quality Project:

COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT COUNCILS

Provide a concise description of the hearing quality project selected in your jurisdiction.

In response to the PIP from the 2nd round CFSR, the courts were asked to develop a workgroup to address the need to reduce barriers to adoption and TPR. Rather than create one large workgroup, CIP asked each judicial district to create a platform/forum for ongoing identification of strengths and opportunities as they pertain to child welfare outcomes. As a result each judicial district created a Community Improvement Council (CIC) of local stakeholders to identify barriers to timely permanency, adoption, and TPR and develop and implement solutions to these barriers in its locale.

The courts and their CICs are regularly informed of their data metrics and how to interpret the data and evidence-based best practices that have demonstrated improvement in specific areas. The members of each CIC agree on the areas in need of improvement and, using expert advice and guidance, select the interventions that best fit their local circumstances and needs.

By providing the courts and their CICs data to help them identify areas needing improvement and information about evidence-based and best practices, with CIP support and guidance, the courts have made systemic changes to improve timeliness and hearing quality. Because each judicial

district is unique, the specific local activities and interventions for that district have been built on a foundation of empirical data and consensus among the key stakeholders and constituency of that district.

Approximate date that the project began:

October 2010

Which stage of the CQI process best describes the current status of project work?

Implemented and continually improving.

How was the need for this project identified?

The Community Improvement Councils (CICs) were created after the Nevada Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) and the resultant Program Improvement Plan (PIP) identified that Nevada needed to improve its time to permanency particularly in the areas of adoption and termination of parental rights (TPR). The PIP outlined several Systemic Factors to be addressed during the PIP implementation period. Specifically, Primary Strategy (3) “Improve the Timeliness and Appropriateness of Permanency Planning across the Life of the Case” and goal #1 under that strategy “Reduce the number of children in out of home care for 18 months or longer and reduce barrier to adoption and TPR.” The creation of CICs helped address this area of needed improvement.

In October 2010, Justice Nancy Saitta, Chair of the CIP Select Committee, requested that each lead district court dependency judge create a workgroup or Community Improvement Council (CIC) of local stakeholders to identify barriers to timely permanency, adoption, and TPR and develop and implement solutions to these barriers (Appendix 3).

The expectation was that time to permanency and TPR would decrease with state-level support of the CICs’ concerted efforts to systemically improve court processing of abuse and neglect cases (Nevada Revised Statutes 432B cases) by implementing evidence-based best practices and continually assessing and improving their execution.

What is the theory of change for the project?

The theory is that by providing the judiciary and their CICs data to help them identify areas needing improvement and information about evidence-based and best practices, the judiciary and stakeholders will have increased knowledge of what constitutes a quality hearing, and judges will have a better understanding of what constitutes reasonable efforts which will lead to an increase in depth of information brought to court by all parties because stakeholders will better understand the information needed by the court. The data and training provided will lead to increased identification of barriers and creation of action steps to improve outcomes. This will, in turn, lead to long term outcomes such as improved time to permanency and overall timeliness of cases.

Because each judicial district is unique, the specific local activities and interventions for that district were built on a foundation of empirical data and consensus among the key stakeholders and constituency of that district. Implementation of the resultant annual action plans will result in the immediate short and long term outcomes as defined by CICs.

Have you identified a solution/intervention that you will implement? Yes. If yes, what is it?

The courts and their CICs were informed of their data metrics and how to interpret these data, and evidence-based best practices that had demonstrated improvement in their specific areas of interest. The CICs agreed on the areas in need of improvement within their own systems and, using expert advice and guidance, selected the interventions that best fit their local circumstances and needs. This now happens annually.

What has been done to implement the project?

Following receipt of Justice Saitta's letter (October 2010) requesting the formation of a CIC in each judicial district, every lead district court judge in the state created a CIC under the guidance and with the support of Nevada CIP. The two new Judicial Districts, 10 and 11, have also formed CICs and have been meeting regularly, created and are implementing annual action plans.

CIP produces quarterly and annual data packets containing court timeliness, child welfare, and trend metrics (Appendix 4). The timeliness data metrics distributed to the CICs quarterly allow for comparison over time as well as comparison among judicial districts. The court performance measures quarterly report (CFS 775 report) generated by the SACWIS (State Automated Child Welfare Information System) was modified to include a comparison of the median days to permanency per year for each judicial district and the proportion of children for whom the first permanency hearing falls within the mandatory requirements. This enables the courts to quickly assess their progress in improving timeliness. It became apparent that some old case data were continuing to skew the impact of recent court case processing improvements. The report now contains columns of information looking back only 2 years, as well. That is what we are calling the "modified" report. A committee is continuing to look at this report to ensure its accuracy. Recently, it became apparent that in some courts' (8th JD) case management systems, permanency hearings were being flagged as timely if they occurred within the month the hearing was due even if the hearing date exceeded 365 days. The formula for the CSF 775 report does not allow for this latitude. This is not an issue, as such reports are used to generally assess overall improvements in each district.

Data are used by the CICs to assess the impact of interventions on areas targeted for improvement in their action plans. The CICs utilize the quarterly and annual data packets, and information on targeted evidence-based and best practices provided at the annual CIC Summit to create annual logic models designed to improve some aspect of court functioning identified at the local level as in need of improvement (Appendix 5).

These data are also used to guide CIP's discussions with the judiciary and their CICs so local stakeholders can work to improve timeliness and resolve systemic problems. For example, many courts were not allowing children to be present in the courtroom. Several CICs included developing protocols to allow input from children at the hearings when appropriate. CIP attends most local CIC meetings (Appendix 6), reaching out to each CIC to help them identify evidence-based and best practices that may be applicable in their jurisdictions, technical assistance to move forward on planning their implementation, and other brainstorming support. The Coordinator is also able to note similar areas of difficulty or success across the State to address. CIP writes and distributes a quarterly newsletter to all CIC members updating on action plan and program implementation and CQI status throughout the state (Appendix 7).

CIP has contracted with the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) to assist the CICs with data interpretation and analysis. As a result, all 11 local CICs are working on improving court hearing processes and quality, and have been doing so since 2011.

Initially each judicial district developed an action plan to identify barriers to permanency, timely adoptions, and termination of parental rights; and solutions to resolve these barriers in their districts. With help from the NCJFCJ, CIP conducts targeted annual convenings of stakeholder teams from each of the judicial districts. During the last four annual Summits, judicial roundtables (Appendix 8) have been facilitated by Nevada Supreme Court Justice Nancy Saitta, Ret. and a judicial facilitator during which the judicial officers share and discuss their issues of concern. This year Nevada Supreme Court Justice Lidia Stiglich, joined Justice Saitta to facilitate a lively discussion around implementation of the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA), warrant processes related to the 9th Circuits warrant decision, rules of evidence, documentation standards/court reports, reasonable efforts findings, and best practices being implemented in Nevada.

During the annual CIC Summits each of the judicial district's CICs are provided with their local timeliness performance measures from UNITY (Unified Nevada Information Technology for Youth, the Nevada SACWIS) and child welfare information from the Chapin Hall web tool and Fostering Court Improvement. Guidance is provided by NCJFCJ and CBCC to help the CICs begin assessing how their systems' timeliness measures compare to federal mandates and to the State as a whole. Training the judges and key stakeholders on performance measurement, helping them to think about their goals, and how and what to measure has been CIP's strategy to advance a CQI mindset throughout the State. NCJFCJ was contracted to develop and present "A Guide to Integrating Continuous Quality Improvement into the Work of the Community Improvement Councils" at the 2015 CIC Summit (Appendix 9). This Guide offers practical suggestions for steps to fully integrate CQI into planning and action within the CIC and is being used by the CICs as they strategize on how to improve hearing quality. During the 2016 CIC Summit, they were provided a primer on how to access the Chapin Hall web-tool and interpret the available data.

During the 2017 CIC Summit, Christopher Church, JD introduced some new data concepts such as survival curves for reunification. As a result several CICs included in their annual action plans the intention to smooth the curves thus indicating that reunification was taking place as was appropriate for the child and family, not whenever the court hearing may have been scheduled.

Using their local data to inform the process, the CICs each created two action plans (around timeliness and child safety decision-making) during the CIC Summits in September 2012 and 2013. The 2014 and 2015 Annual CIC Summits focused on timeliness to permanency and the principles of quality hearings and specific evidence-based strategies to improve hearing quality, and concluded with development of action plans to improve court timeliness and hearing quality. The 2016 CIC Summit focused on producing the best outcomes for children and their families. In 2017, the Summit focused on “Collaboration: The Key to Unlocking a Quality Hearing Door”.

Last year, 2018, Christopher Church, JD guided the CIC teams through navigating the Fostering Court Improvement Data Project, Nevada webpage and how to use the information, therein. He cast a sharper focus on the short-stayers which correlated with annual action plans including a deeper dive into these data to assess if short-stayers were an issue in their district. Alicia Summers, Ph.D. reviewed the results of the Nevada Hearing Quality Study and how to use these data to drive continued improvements in their hearings. Since parental engagement was related to timelier permanency many CICs included improving involvement of parents in the hearing process. FFPSA training was conducted by NCJFCJ, Connie Tanner Hickman, which was so reflected in action planning.

To ensure fidelity of implementation, the CICs are guided by CIP as they develop and grow. The integrated and ongoing collection and provision of information (data that are available and covering an extensive range of measures and potential evidence-based strategies for improvement), combined with efforts to address challenges as they arise has a solid foundation in Nevada’s CICs. As a matter of fact, the CICs have proven to be so effective that CIP used the CIC action plans upon which to build CIP’s Strategic and Funding Plan and updates.

To ensure that all parties’ due process rights are protected, most of the CICs have included access to high quality legal representation for children, parents, and the child welfare agency in their action plans. Nearly all are appointing parents’ counsel and legal representation to children. The recently passed Nevada Senate Bill 305 requires that all children be appointed legal counsel. Child welfare reports that in 15 of the 17 Nevada counties, the District Attorney represents the agency. The CICs have made a concerted effort in this area. In the rural judicial districts, for the most part, the Attorney General’s Office represents the Agency during TPRs because until the recent passage of Nevada Senate Bill 432, TPRs were not part of the dependency process. Courts may now chose to either have a separate petition filed for a new proceeding or a TPR motion filed under the dependency case.

What is being done or how do you intend to monitor the progress of the project?

The CICs are asked to report on implementation status and processing changes annually. Most also review progress during their local CIC meetings. During the year, the CIP Coordinator participates in these CIC meetings to monitor implementation, help interpret quarterly data reports to assess impact, and guide implementation changes that may be necessary. In the past, Nevada CIP has been able to contract with NCJFCJ and other neutral contractors to provide technical assistance related to CQI of current statewide and local court improvement projects. NCJFCJ and other expert contractors also conduct satisfaction, process, and impact evaluations on the best practices implemented by the courts. Recommendations for program improvement are then implemented. The Capacity Building Center for Courts (CBCC) is helping CIP develop an additional means to assess CIC implementation of the action plans to compliment CIP observation and the CICs verbal report out at the CIC Summit.

Drs. Alicia Summers and Sophia Gatowski were contracted to conduct a follow-up quality hearing study to the 2014 study. This was completed on 10 of the 11 judicial districts and results were presented at the 2018 Annual CIC Summit. During the Summit each CIC received its own report of hearing quality data summary to provide the court with information about dependency hearing practice strengths and challenges to inform action planning for ongoing systems change efforts (Appendix 10). Hearings were observed and coded using a hearing quality data collection tool designed to not only describe the hearing process, but also to capture the presence or absence of specific best practices.

The proportion of hearings in which topics advocated in the NCJFCJ's Enhanced Resource Guidelines (ERG) were discussed in both 2014 and 2017 were compared, as was the breadth of discussion by parties present and findings. In the 8th JD, for example, it was noted that during the 72 hour hearings, the court made reasonable efforts findings in 100% of the hearing observed in 2017 as compared to only 10% in 2014.

Parental engagement by the courts increased significantly between 2014 and 2017. Using the 8th JD as an example, in 2014 the hearing purpose and process were only explained to the mother and father, 22% and 38% of the time. In 2017, the purpose of the hearing and the process were explained to the mother 100% of the time and to the father 95% of the time.

A statewide Hearing Quality Study explores changes in practice between 2014 and 2017 court hearings as well as links between hearing quality factors and case outcomes across the judicial districts (Appendix 11). This study used a multi-method approach, including court observation, case file review, and administrative data to explore changes in practice and links to outcomes.

Changes between 2014 and 2017 include:

- The *presence* of fathers, children and attorneys for fathers and children at hearings has increased significantly between 2014 and 2017.
- *Engagement* of fathers and mothers in hearings has increased significantly between 2014

and 2017.

- The breadth of *discussion* in hearings has increased significantly between 2014 and 2017, with hearings averaging discussion of 47% of all applicable topics (topics were pulled from Nevada Revised Statutes and *Enhanced Resource Guidelines* best practices) in 2014 compared to 60% of all applicable topics in 2017.
- There was a statistically significant increase in the percentage of hearings in which judges made reasonable efforts *findings* orally on the record –23% of hearings in 2014 compared to 71% of hearings in 2017.

This study also provides evidence of a linkage between a number of hearing quality factors and specific case outcomes – supporting the premise that a high-quality child abuse and neglect hearing process can have a positive impact on timely permanency and permanency outcomes. Specifically, this study found:

- *Presence* of key parties was related to decreased time to permanency, increased reunification rates, and decreased likelihood of aging out of care.
- *Engagement* of parents was related to timelier permanency, reunification, aging out of care and achieving permanency within 12 months. Higher parent engagement predicted shorter times to permanency, higher rates of reunification and lower rates of aging out.
- *Discussion*, both breadth of discussion across topics and discussion of key issues (e.g., efforts to reunify), was related to timelier permanency, higher rates of reunification, and lower rates of aging out.

The data Nevada CIP used to assess reduction in time to permanency and TPR are court timeliness and child welfare data from UNITY and Chapin Hall, University of Chicago, and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Fostering Court Improvement website. The most recent data profiles indicate that Exits to Adoption in less than 24 months continues to trend positively reflecting that improvement has occurred in timeliness of adoptions. A full 28% of those exiting to adoption are in less than 24 months. The national median is 26.8%, and the 75th percentile is 36.6%. But the trend has been dipping since 2015. The renewed systemic emphasis as a result of the PIP will help refocus efforts. The data also indicate that children are now exiting to adoption in 29.5 months. The national median is 32.4 months and the 25th percentile is 27.3 months (see chart below).

TIMELINESS OF ADOPTIONS DISCHARGED FROM FOSTER CARE	FY 2010	FY 2011	SFY 2012	SFY 2013	SFY 2014	SFY 2015	SFY 2016	SFY 2017	FFY 2018
Exits to Adoption in less than 24 Months (national median 26.8%, 75th percentile = 36.6%)	15%	18%	25%	28%	30%	35%	32%	30%	28%
Exits to Adoption, median length of stay(national median 32.4 months, 25th percentile = 27.3 months)	Median =36.3 months	Median =35.4 months	Median =30.7 months	Median =29.0 months	Median =29.0 months	Median =28.0 months	Median =28.0 months	Median = 27.5 months	Median= 29.4 months

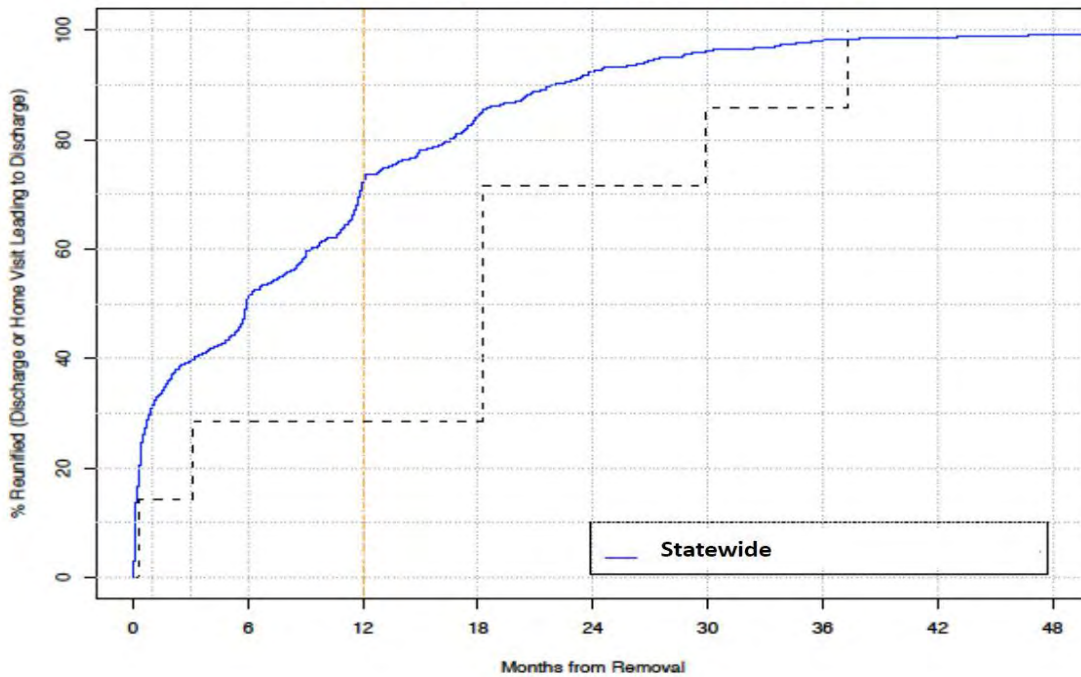
Source: Nevada CFSP-SFY 2015-2019, page 54, 6/23/2015 Data Profile; for SFYs 2015 and 2016 data from Report CFS732, provided by DCFS Data Team on 11/03/2016, Fostering Court Improvement Data Project for 2017.

The fact that all the statistical measures are trending in the directions of improvement since 2010 or 2011 suggests that a systemic change has taken place in Nevada. Twenty-eight percent (28%) of the exits to adoption are taking place in less than 24 months as compared to only 14.6% in 2010. Exits to adoption are taking 29.4 months in FFY 2018 compared to 36.3 months in 2010. The proportion of permanency hearings held within 12 months of removal (NRS 432B.590) has increased from 67% in CY 2012 to 84% in CY 2018. The time to permanent placement has decreased 161 days or 19% between 2011 and 2019 1st quarter (from 848 median days to 687 median days), and the time to TPR has decreased 155 days or 20% between 2011 and 2019 (Appendix 12).

Proportion of Permanency Hearings Meeting Statutory Timeliness Requirements	CY 2012	CY 2013	CY 2014	CY 2015	CY 2016	CY 2017	CY 2018
Percent of Permanency Hearings Held within 365 days	67%	70%	75.4%	77%	80%	82%	84%

As the CICs identify additional areas to improve (e.g., engagement enhanced with trauma focused communication techniques, use of diligent search and inclusion of relatives in family support, the relationship between legal representation and case outcomes) additional and different data will need to be collected and provided.

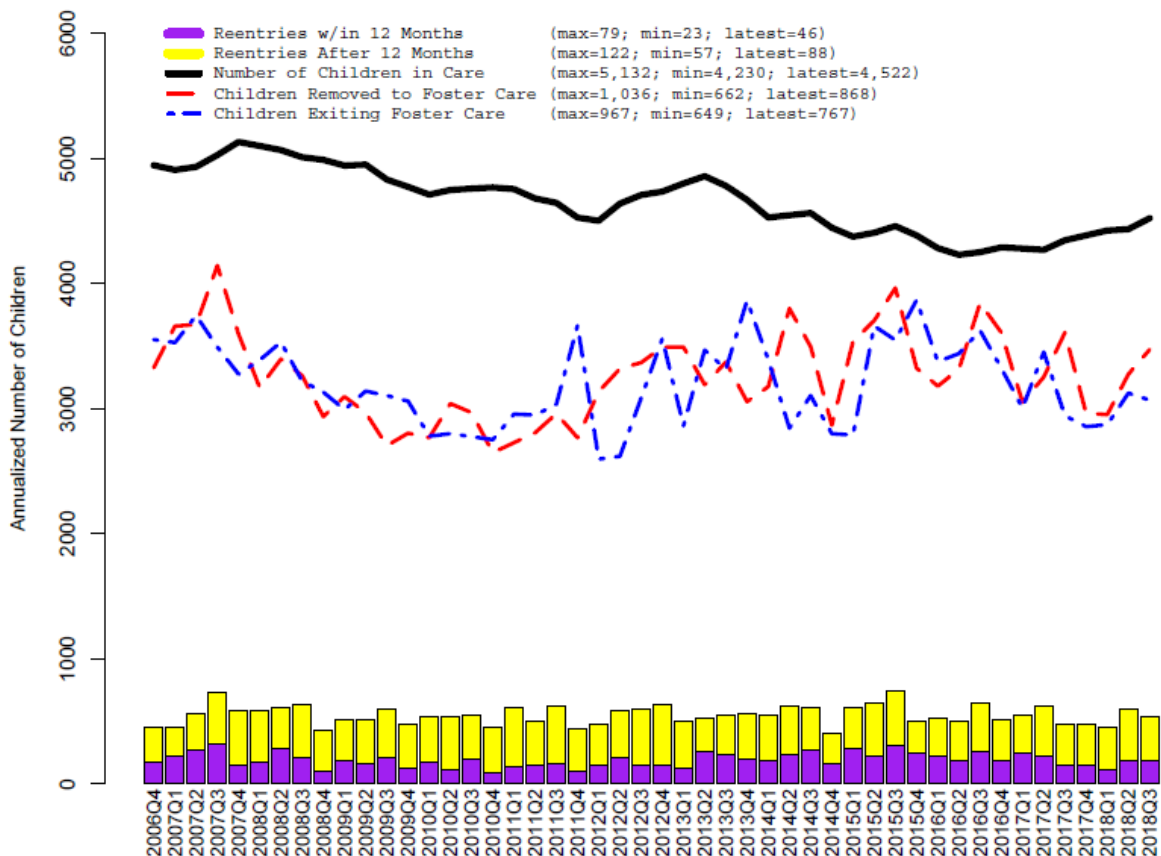
**Statewide: Discharges to Reunification
Length of Stay, October 2006 through March 2018**



Using AFCARS data, the graphs above and below demonstrate Nevada’s commitment to reunification of children with their families during 2006 through March 2018. For example, it appears that around 50% of those children are reunified within 6 months of removal, and 40% are reunified within 3 months. The fact that some children return home so quickly raises the possibility they may be able to remain in their homes with additional support. Further analysis by year may, however, reveal that the new child safety practice model implemented by the child welfare agencies, in recent years, has had an impact on ensuring that only children in immediate danger are removed from their homes; thereby, reducing the large proportion of children being immediately reunified early in the removal year.

The chart below outlines the dynamics of foster care from 2006 through September 2018, showing that that the numbers of children entering foster care are beginning to increase while the numbers of children exiting foster care are starting to decrease. At the same time reentries within 12 months have begun to increase significantly since a downward trend beginning the first quarter of 2017. These trends suggest a system under increasing stress.

Statewide: Foster Care Dynamics October 2006 through September 2018 by Quarter



What assistance or support would be helpful from the CBCC or Children's Bureau to help move the project forward?

Provide assistance analyzing and presenting administrative data to demonstrate trends similar to what Christopher Church does would be helpful.

Continued assistance developing and analyzing CIC annual action plans to help them move forward on identifying how to measure the impact of activities designed to improve hearing quality. The courts consistently struggle with measuring what and the impact of what practice changes they have made.

Guidance on CIC Summit agendas to include most useful and effective data elements regarding hearing quality and legal representation.

II. Trainings, Projects, and Activities For questions 1-9, provide a *concise* description of work completed or underway to date in FY 2019 (October 2018-June 2019) in the below topical subcategories.

For question 1, focus on significant training events or initiatives held or developed in FY 2019 and answer the corresponding questions.

1. Trainings

<i>Topical Area</i>	<i>Did you hold or develop a training on this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, training curriculum/program, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
Data	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Courts/stakeholders/ Community Improvement Councils	85	Conference	Identification of areas in need of improvement and development of action plan to improve timeliness, permanency, and hearing quality for upcoming year.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> L <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Hearing quality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Courts/stakeholders/ Community Improvement Councils	85	Conference	Identification of areas in need of improvement and development of action plan to improve timeliness, permanency, and hearing quality for upcoming year.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

<i>Topical Area</i>	<i>Did you hold or develop a training on this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, training curriculum/program, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
Improving timeliness/permanency	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Courts/stakeholders/ Community Improvement Councils	85	Conference	Development of action plan to improve timeliness, permanency, and hearing quality for upcoming year.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> L <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Quality legal representation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Children's and parents' attorneys and deputy district attorneys in 432B (child abuse and neglect) cases	56	On-line training	Improve attorney understanding of NRS432B and federal acts relating to child abuse and neglect.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Engagement & participation of parties	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Courts/stakeholders/ Community Improvement Councils	85	Conference	Development of action plan to improve timeliness, permanency, and hearing quality for upcoming year.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Well-being	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Courts/stakeholders/ Community Improvement Councils	85	Conference	Identification of specific strategies and best practices to improve court processing and development of action plan to improve hearing quality for upcoming year.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

<i>Topical Area</i>	<i>Did you hold or develop a training on this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, training curriculum/program, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
ICWA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judiciary, children's and parents attorneys, deputy district attorneys in 432B cases, child welfare, CASAs, and other stakeholders	26	On-line training	Update judicial officers and dependency stakeholders on their responsibilities under ICWA and the new ICWA Regulations.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
ICWA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judiciary, children's and parents attorneys, deputy district attorneys in 432B cases, child welfare, CASAs, tribal members, and other stakeholders from the 4 th , 6 th , and 7 th Judicial Districts	45	CIC Training	Update judicial officers and dependency stakeholders on their responsibilities under ICWA and the new ICWA Regulations.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Sex Trafficking	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No					<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

<i>Topical Area</i>	<i>Did you hold or develop a training on this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, training curriculum/program, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
Other: Mediation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judiciary, children's and parents attorneys, deputy district attorneys in 432B cases, child welfare, CASAs, and other stakeholders	38	On-line training	Increase knowledge of all NRS 432B stakeholders on the basics of juvenile dependency mediation.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Other: Mediation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Juvenile Dependency Mediation Panel	17	8-hour training	Improve JDMP mediator's skills in recognizing and managing trauma induced behavior in the mediation setting.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Other: Mediation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	New Juvenile Dependency Mediation Panel Members	12	40-hours training	Expand pool of skilled dependency mediators	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> L <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

On average, with ordinary funding levels, how many training events do you hold per year?

Two or three training events are held each year with additional webinars and on-line trainings recorded and available.

What is your best prediction for the number of attorneys and judges that attend a training annually? 400 attorneys and judges have been trained by our various trainings annually. CIP has trained at least that many CASAs, child welfare workers and administrators, court administrators, and other community stakeholders, as well.

The Family First Prevention Services Act amends the Social Security Act adding an eligibility criterion for the training of judges and attorneys on the congregate care provisions of the Act. See the highlighted portion below.

(1)² IN GENERAL.— In order to be eligible to receive a grant under this section, a highest State court shall have in effect a rule requiring State courts to ensure that foster parents, pre- adoptive parents, and relative caregivers of a child in foster care under the responsibility of the State are notified of any proceeding to be held with respect to the child, *shall provide for the training of judges, attorneys, and other legal personnel in child welfare cases on Federal child welfare policies and payment limitations with respect to children in foster care who are placed in settings that are not a foster family home*, and shall submit to the Secretary an application at such time, in such form, and including such information and assurances as the Secretary may require, including—

States have an option to delay implementation of the congregate care provisions by two years. The decision will have a direct impact on when judicial determinations and CIP training requirements must begin.

Do you know when your state plans to implement Family First? Yes No

If yes, when? Originally Nevada was planning to implement October 1, 2019. The Nevada Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) has now contracted with The Institute for Innovation and Implementation at the University of Maryland, School of Social Work to assist with planning the implementation and expects to implement sometime after spring of 2020.

Have you been involved in planning with the agency on implementing Family First? Yes No

If yes, please describe how the CIP has been involved. DCFS is very inclusive of CIP in planning for FFPSA. Most recently, May 21, 2019, CIP was included in a day-long training/discussion with the three representatives from the Institute for Innovation and Implementation. As part of DCFS's contract with the Institute, they included a presentation at the upcoming CIC Summit, on trauma-focused communication. This will address both key activities in the PIP and FFPSA implementation. FFPSA has been a topic of discussion during the monthly Statewide Quality Improvement Committee meetings, DCFS provides regular updates to the CIP Select Committee, and DCFS developed that Judicial FFPSA Committee.

Have you been developing your Family First judicial training plan? Yes No

If yes, please describe what you have done.

² Sec. 50741(c) of P.L. 115-123 revised sec. 438(b)(1) to add language regarding training. Effective as if enacted on 1/1/18 (sec. 50746(a)(1) of P.L. 115-123).

Because Nevada was originally planning to implement FFPSA in October of 2019, CIP developed and conducted our Family First judicial training September 2019 at the annual Judicial Officers' Round Table and the CIC Summit. NCJFCJ conducted both trainings and helped the CICs develop FFPSA centered action plans and overarching statewide plans such as a public relations campaign to help the public understand the Act, as well. With modifications to FFPSA and the passage of time, follow-up judicial and CIC trainings will be included in the work of the Institute for Innovation and Implementation with the State of Nevada.

2. Data Projects. Data projects include any work with administrative data sets (e.g, AFCARS, SACWIS), data dashboards, data reports, fostering court improvement data, case management systems, and data sharing efforts.

Do you have a data project/activity? Yes No (skip to #3)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
<p>Court Event Notification: The purpose of this project is to ensure that all parties in a case are properly and consistently notified of hearings. In October 2016, the Nevada Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) completed implementation of a NIEM-based web service to consume new, updated and cancelled hearing information directly from the 8th Judicial District Family Court Case Management System. This information automatically updates the “Hearing Screen” of the Nevada SACWIS system, UNITY. Child Welfare Case Workers, supervisors and attorneys assigned to the case are now able to view both historical and upcoming hearing information from within the SACWIS that is updated by the Court Case Management System. The 8th Judicial District Family Court is in the final stages of implementing software to transmit new and updated case hearing information and planning to implement by the end of 2018. A test detected errors in personal identifiers which have yet to be addressed by the 8th JD and DCFS IT teams and Clark County Department of Family Services.</p>	<p>Agency Data Sharing Efforts</p>	<p>Implementation</p>
<p>Centralized Case Index (CCI): The purpose of this project is to provide court performance measure data near real-time to help them manage caseloads and thereby achieve additional key timeliness milestones and improve outcomes for children. To this end, CIP undertook several technical proofs of concept (POC) initiatives. Two POCs were designed to prove that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case and case party information from the child welfare agency (e.g., removal date, permanency goals, placement information) and information provided by the family court (e.g., assigned judicial personnel, hearing dates, petition filing dates, adoption dates) can be combined into a single data store and provide a consolidated view of case information; • Timeliness reports can be generated on-demand through a browser-based system and presented to the user in an easily understandable format. 	<p>Data dashboards</p>	<p>Implementation</p>

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)																		
<p>Fiscal year 2019 has been a successful one for the Nevada AOC Centralized Case Index (CCI). After many years of coordination, planning, designing and developing we have successfully connected and implemented interfaces with the 2nd Judicial District Context Court Case Management System and the state of Nevada DCFS Case Management System known as UNITY.</p> <p>PHASE I: DATA EXCHANGE</p> <p>Phase I of the CCI System went live on March 22, 2019 and has so far processed 60 automated extracts from each source/partner system. These extracts contain 5,220 facts related to case events for 823 individual court cases. A case fact is a piece of information derived from a case management system that is used to infer timeliness information about a case. For example, a fact might contain event data related to a removal, protective custody hearing or even the filing date for a dependency petition. From these case facts, the following key events have been captured:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="219 1123 865 1837"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="219 1123 553 1171">Event</th> <th data-bbox="553 1123 865 1171">Number of Events</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="219 1171 553 1224">Removal</td> <td data-bbox="553 1171 865 1224">853</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="219 1224 553 1329">Protective Custody Hearing</td> <td data-bbox="553 1224 865 1329">734</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="219 1329 553 1434">Petition for Hearing Filed</td> <td data-bbox="553 1329 865 1434">497</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="219 1434 553 1539">Hearing on Petition</td> <td data-bbox="553 1434 865 1539">568 (including continuances)</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="219 1539 553 1644">Dispositional Hearing</td> <td data-bbox="553 1539 865 1644">583 (including continuances)</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="219 1644 553 1696">Semi-Annual Review</td> <td data-bbox="553 1644 865 1696">407</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="219 1696 553 1749">Permanency Review</td> <td data-bbox="553 1696 865 1749">297</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="219 1749 553 1837">Termination of Parental Rights</td> <td data-bbox="553 1749 865 1837">237</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Event	Number of Events	Removal	853	Protective Custody Hearing	734	Petition for Hearing Filed	497	Hearing on Petition	568 (including continuances)	Dispositional Hearing	583 (including continuances)	Semi-Annual Review	407	Permanency Review	297	Termination of Parental Rights	237		
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Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
<p>CIP continues to work with the 2nd Judicial District Court to confirm case facts and ensure data quality. Without a doubt, Phase I has been challenging because of the reliance on partner agencies to commit overloaded IT personnel. With this phase now behind us, we turn our attention to providing access to these case facts to authorized judicial personnel.</p> <p>PHASE II: ON-DEMAND REPORTING</p> <p>The focus in Phase II is on developing timeliness reports that measure the number of days required for completion of key case events. The Nevada CCI has selected Jasper Reports to provide the online reporting capabilities. Jasper Reporting Server has been installed on the CCI Server at Nevada AOC and report development is currently underway. We anticipate preliminary reports to become available by the end of July 2019.</p> <p>Jasper uses SQL to calculate the difference between an event date (i.e., date of the Protective Custody Hearing) and the date of removal. With Jasper will be able to generate reports that provide timeliness measures based on individual case data.</p> <p>Discussions concerning pulling some of their pertinent data into the CCI have been held with such additional agencies as the Nevada Department of Education (NDE), the Washoe County School District, and the Jan Evans Juvenile Justice Center.</p> <p>In the meantime, the UNITY CFS 775 report has been revised to include the proportion of each measure that meets the statutory requirements. The report has also been redesigned to provide the entire history of first permanency hearing timeliness; and calculates recent history (2 years) to allow courts to see progress being made without being encumbered by historical data not impacted by their improvements.</p>		
<p>Because Nevada does not have a unified court system or a statewide case management system, DCFS developed and continues to modify and update the CFS 775 Report from UNITY (Nevada’s SACWIS) to provide CIP and the courts with quarterly timeliness data.</p>	<p>Agency Data Sharing Efforts</p>	<p>Evaluation/Assessment</p>

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
In the last year, DCFS has signed an agreement with Fostering Court Improvement to share Nevada’s encrypted NCANDS and AFCARS files to the GLOBUS site for the Fostering Court Improvement Project. Nevada allows open access to its data, so all stakeholders may enter the site. During the 2017 and 2018 CIC Summits, Christopher Church taught sessions on how to access and interpret the available data.	Agency Data Sharing Efforts	Implementation

(a) *Do you have data reports that you consistently view?* Yes No

(b) *How are these reports used to support your work?*

All decisions, projects, activities and support to courts and CICs undertaken by CIP is data driven. The CICs regularly reference their data during meetings and when assessing impact of their activities. CIP uses all the data sources to determine where CICs may wish to focus their work.

3. Hearing Quality. Hearing quality projects include any efforts you have made to improve the quality of dependency hearings, including court observation/assessment projects, process improvements, specialty/pilot court projects, projects related to court orders or title IV-E determinations, mediation, or appeals.

Do you have a hearing quality project/activity? Yes No (skip to #4)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
<p>Each of the 11 judicial districts has created Community Improvement Councils which meet regularly to implement their annual action plans developed at the annual CIC Summit.</p> <p>These action plans focus on improving the quality of their court hearings. Each judicial district focuses on different aspects of the process for improvement dependent upon where their challenges appear. The courts are in the process of implementing the changes they believe will best improve their hearings.</p> <p>The State CIP is focusing on encouraging judges to: engage parties present by explaining the hearing process and asking if they understand, include children in the hearings, address ICWA, discuss child's safety and why child cannot return home today, and emphasize well-being in all hearings, review permanency and concurrent plans more frequently possibly by utilizing case plan summaries as a tool.</p> <p>With assistance from CBCC. CIP will work with the CICs on assessing the impact of their systems' changes.</p>	<p>Process Improvements</p>	<p>Evaluation/Assessment</p>

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
<p>Through a partnership between the Nevada Division of Child and Family Services and CIP the Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program was launched in August 2016. The overarching goal of the mediation program is to reduce the time to permanency for children. The mediation program also aims to understand and resolve legal and non-legal issues, provide opportunities for parties to speak for themselves and hear others, and build relationships. In mediation, parties are able to meet in a neutral setting to address case issues and identify available options with the help of an impartial third party. Previous research in Nevada and in other jurisdictions throughout the country has shown that mediation can enhance case processing (i.e., improve timeliness of court events), increase key participant (i.e., parents, children, relatives, and foster parents) and system stakeholder (i.e., prosecutors, parents' and children's attorneys and advocates, social workers, and others) engagement in the case process, and improve juvenile dependency case outcomes in a non-adversarial manner (i.e., reunification, timeliness of permanency).</p>	<p>Mediation</p>	<p>Evaluation/Assessment</p>
<p>A court hearing quality study was conducted during FY2018. Timely, thorough dependency court hearings are a CIP priority. 2014 research on hearing quality in Nevada illustrated some positive practice as well as some opportunities for enhancement. CICs have been working toward improving hearing quality for the last three years, but do not have the resources to conduct rigorous monitoring practices. This study will describe the current court practices as compared to the first study, and explore relationships between hearing practice and case outcomes. The results of this study were presented during the 2018 CIC Summit and was the basis for CIC action planning for the upcoming year.</p>	<p>Court Observation/Assessment</p>	<p>Evaluation/Assessment</p>

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
Trauma focused communication , as outlined in the PIP, as a precursor to implementation for a trauma-informed child welfare system, as outlined in the CFSP and the CIP strategic plan update for 2019.	Process Improvements	Selecting Solution
Court order templates are being developed for every dependency court hearing to ensure that all state and federal requirements are included appropriately. The CIP Court Order Template Subcommittee with review and input from all stakeholders statewide are working on these. They will include orders for judges, masters' recommendations including a set of orders for ICWA cases.	Court orders	Implementation

4. Improving Timeliness of Hearings or Permanency Outcomes. Timeliness and permanency projects include any activities or projects meant to improve the timeliness of case processing or achievement of timely permanency. This could include general timeliness, focus on continuances or appeals, working on permanency goals other than APPLA, or focus on APPLA and older youth.

Do you have a Timeliness or permanency project/activity? Yes No (skip to #5)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
Integration of all CIP efforts and programs is designed to improve ASFA timeliness and permanency outcomes. The recent PIP focused on	General/ASFA	Evaluation/Assessment
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

5. Quality of Legal Representation. Quality of legal representation projects may include any activities/efforts related to improvement of representation for parents, youth, or the agency. This might include assessments or analyzing current practice, implementing new practice models, working with law school clinics, or other activities in this area.

Do you have a quality legal representation project/activity? Yes No (skip to #6)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
Implementation of SB 305. This bill allows a county to increase its recording fee from \$3 up to \$6 to assist with funding for attorneys for youth in foster care. In counties where there is legal aid the money will go to legal aid.	New Practice Models	Implementation
On-line training designed to educate parents' and children's attorneys practicing in 432B cases about state and federal law and ethical considerations. Additional trainings on ICWA and mediation are also available. Trainings on domestic violence and trauma have been recorded and are in the process of being edited. These will also be used to inform child welfare workers and GALs/CASAs	Other	Implementation
Multidisciplinary legal and advocacy center to address civil legal and social advocacy of at risk families.	Law School Clinics	Identifying/Assessing Needs

- 6. Engagement & Participation of Parties.** Engagement and participation of parties includes any efforts centered around youth, parent, foster family, or caregiver engagement, as well as projects related to notice to relatives, limited English proficiency, or other efforts to increase presence and engagement at the hearing.

Do you have an engagement or participation of parties project/activity? Yes No

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
The Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program described above has been demonstrated to increase parental participation in their case.	Parent Engagement	Evaluation/Assessment

- 7. Well-Being.** Well-being projects include any efforts related to improving the well-being of youth. Projects could focus on education, early childhood development, psychotropic medication, LGBTQ youth, trauma, racial disproportionality/disparity, immigration, or other well-being related topics.

Do you have any projects/activities focused on well-being? Yes No (skip to #8)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
<p>The Nevada Education, Child Welfare and the Courts Collaborative (Nevada’s Department of Education (NDOE), Clark County Department of Family Services (CCDFS), Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS), Washoe County Department of Social Services (WCDSS)) chaired by CIP has the mission to improve school placement stability and continuity of instruction, specifically reducing the number of school moves and ensuring that if a move is necessary that the transition is eased by making certain that the child’s records are readily available to the new school and that the new school is aware that the child is in foster care.</p> <p>The Educational Collaborative included the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in Nevada Revised Statutes via Assembly Bill 491, thereby ensuring that foster children are identified quickly by the school district and afforded appropriate services. The statewide Educational Collaborative with technical assistance from ABA’s Center on Children and the Law worked collaboratively for over a year on developing the bill draft for this initiative to modify the Nevada Revised Statutes to comply with ESSA and define foster care, school of origin, and immediate enrollment similar to other federal definitions in either Fostering Connections or McKinney-Vento. The resultant bill, AB491, was signed into law. The Collaborative held an educational webinar for school districts and child welfare staff on MOUs between child welfare and school districts concerning best interest decision-making processes and forms, and sample local transportation procedures, and implementing ESSA and AB491. A basic factsheet on ESSA and AB491 was distributed to participants.</p> <p>This Statewide Collaborative is also responsible for a pilot project to ensure that foster children are identified quickly by the school district and afforded appropriate services. The WCHSA and the WCSD initiated a Pilot Electronic Information sharing project in which placement date, location and type into the school district’s case management system, Infinite Campus (IC), populate from UNITY (Nevada’s SACWIS). To date the UNITY tab has been created in IC and the bugs are being worked out. At this time WCHSA counselors can view this tab to identify new foster children within the student population. This information has been electronically pushed from UNITY to IC twice per week. They have</p>	Education	Evaluation/Assessment

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
<p>accomplished a 24-hour automatic update. Updated addresses and custody changes are manually added by school staff and/or the WCHSA Foster Care Liaison. This means, among others things, that schools will have updated information about foster children, including the fact that these students are in foster care, as soon as the information is entered into UNITY and is pushed into Infinite Campus nightly. CIP is exploring pulling Infinite Campus data into its Centralized Case Index, as well.</p> <p>The WCHSA wants to turn these statistics around for children under their care. It received a two year grant and is nearing the end of the fourth year of providing educational case management and mentoring support to transition-age foster youth in the “Achievements Unlocked” (AU) program. The effectiveness and efficacy of this intervention has been assessed by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) and Data Savvy. The program is using experienced high school counselors to provide educational supports for each foster youth to help guide and motivate them. Data is driving advocacy-related decision making for the students, and is being used to measure intervention outcomes.</p> <p>WCHSA and WCSJ have shifted the educational trajectory of students in foster care. Only 50% of foster youth in the U.S. graduate by the age of 18. However, 83% of AU seniors graduated and 70% of all the AU students are on track to graduate from high school. “Achievements Unlocked” provides advocacy, tutoring, mentoring, and case management to high school aged foster youth. The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges completed a two-year process and impact assessment of this project and Data Savvy has completed the 4th year assessment. The results (both 2nd and 4th year) demonstrate that the multi-disciplinary model works. By the end of the 4th year, 83% of the AU seniors were on track to graduate compared to only 65% of the control group. 80% of the AU graduates have been accepted into post-secondary education/vocational training or secured full-time employment. AU students attempted and completed significantly more courses and therefore earned more credits, surpassing students in the control group by 51%.experienced fewer disciplinary actions, and had significantly fewer unexcused absences than the control group. (Appendix 13).</p>		

- 8. ICWA.** ICWA projects could include any efforts to enhance state and tribal collaboration, state and tribal court agreements, data collection and analysis of ICWA compliance, or ICWA notice projects.

Do you have any projects/activities focused on ICWA? Yes No (skip to #9)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
The 4 th JD held an all-day CIC meeting to train its county stakeholders and tribal members on ICWA and the new regulations. The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges conducted the day long training that was deemed highly successful by those who attended. Other CICs and tribal courts were invited to attend.	ICWA Notice	Implementing Changes

- 9. Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (PSTFSA).** PSTFSA projects could include any work around domestic child sex trafficking, the reasonable and prudent parent standard, a focus on runaway youth, focus on normalcy, collaboration with other agencies around this topic, data collection and analysis, data sharing, or other efforts to fully implement the act into practice.

Do you have any projects/activities focused on PSTSFA? Yes No

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
Nevada Strategic Plan to Address the Commercial Sexual Exploration of Children (CSEC)	Sex Trafficking	Implementation
Nevada CSEC Model Coordinated Response Protocol and Toolkit developed	Sex Trafficking	Implementation
Resource guide to prevent CSEC	Sex Trafficking	Implementation

III. CIP Collaboration in Child Welfare Program Planning and Improvement Efforts

1. *Please describe how the CIP was involved with the state’s CFSP due June 30, 2019.*

Because the CFSP is being written at the same time as the PIP and because CIP has always participated in the Statewide Quality Improvement Committee and the APSR, CIP is fully involved in the development of the 2019 CFSP. At the request of Region 9 Children’s Bureau, DCFS decided to include all key activities of the PIP in the CFSP and to move some of these PIP key activities exclusively to the CFSP or extend them into the CFSP. CIP was a key participant in writing and editing the Permanency and Well-being portion of the CFSP.

- a. *Does the CFSP include any of the following:*

- ☒ legal/judicial strategies ☒ the CIP/Agency Joint Project ☒ the CIP Hearing Quality Project

If yes, please describe.

Legal/judicial strategies: court order templates with caregiver notification, diligent search and judicial inquiry regarding relatives, judicial inquiry and explanation about concurrent planning using scripts across the system including the judiciary and attorneys, trauma-focused communication and trauma-informed system, TPR process assessment, develop, implement, and assess legal advocacy project, services resource app for electronic devices.

CIP/Agency Joint Project: Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program to expand to co-mediation model with requisite training for all stakeholders including child welfare staff who regularly participate in mediations.

CIP Hearing Quality Project: The Community Improvement Councils (CIC) are the hearing quality project. Child welfare will continue to participate in both local meetings and the annual CIC Summit.

2. *Please describe how the CIP was or will be involved in the most recent/upcoming title **IV-E Foster** Care Eligibility Review in your state.*

Nevada has been so focused on the CFSP, PIP, APSR, modifying the 3 CIP strategic plans to include PIP key activities and CFSP items, and the CIP annual self-assessment, that a IV-E Review has not been discussed.

3. *Please describe how the CIP is or was involved in preparing and completing round 3 of the CFSR and PIP, if required, in your state. Please check all the ways that the CIP or Court Personnel were involved (or plan to be involved) in the CFSR and PIP Process. Feel free to add additional narrative to explain your involvement in the process.*

Nevada CIP has been deeply entrenched in the CFSR/PIP process from input into the Statewide Assessment. Although the CIP Coordinator was trained and certified to conduct the case file reviews, she was not needed during the recent CFSR file reviews. CIP helped coordinate the CFSR and State Assessment interviews with legal and judicial stakeholders and was interviewed herself. CIP was present for the CFSR exit conference, as well as the CFSR report out. CIP shared the final report and the PowerPoint presentation to all 11 judicial districts.

CIP Coordinator was invited to co-chair one of 4 PIP Teams, Team 3 – Achieving Timely Permanency. At CIP’s request, Alicia Summers from the CBCC was assigned as Team 3’s liaison to assist with data collection, root cause analysis, and interpretation. Team 3 included 21 members, 11 of whom were judicial officers. The Team met weekly for 3 months and developed a comprehensive PIP section and then correlated the Achieving Timely Permanency section with the Engagement section.

CIP became a member of the Permanency/Well-Being CFSP Team and has been actively, collaboratively writing that section and integrating both PIP and CFSP into the 3 CIP Strategic Plans as both include the court/agency joint project and the hearing quality project as well as multiple practice changes to be made by both courts and attorneys in conjunction with agency actions. For example, to better integrate relatives into the case plan including but not limited to as placements, the agency will review the diligent search policy to ensure that these searches are done regularly up to permanency is achieved and will create and utilize a diligent search tracking form which will be attached to each court report. Judges will make inquiries regarding relatives at each hearing. The CIP Court Order Template Subcommittee will include disclosure of relatives and caregiver notification in the court orders. Attorneys will explain to clients the value of having supportive relatives who can not only act as placements, but support the families in fulfilling their case plans. This process in turn is supportive of the concurrent planning and social summary updating included in both the PIP and the CFSP.

Education on these processes are scheduled to take place during the annual CIC Summits as well as by the agency for caseworkers and supervisors.

The Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program is deeply embedded in both the PIP and the CFSP as the joint agency/court CIP project. To ensure that all agency personnel who regularly participate in mediations are well trained on expectations and how to participate successfully in mediations, DCFS Leadership will put forth an Information Memorandum requiring attendance at CIP produced trainings.

The Community Improvement Councils (the hearing quality project) are an integral part of the PIP as they have become integral in the dependency system.

Because CIP is a voting member of the PIP CORE Team, CIP will be intensively involved in the PIP implementation.

were not involved at all

were involved in planning the statewide assessment

were CFSR reviewers **trained, but not needed**

were interviewed for CFSR

were invited to the exit conference at the close of the CFSR review

were invited to the final CFSR results session at the conclusion of the report **as were all 11 judicial districts.**

Final CFSR report was shared with you

Final CFSR report shared with courts broadly across the state **All courts received a copy of the CFSR report and the PowerPoint presentation at the report out meeting.**

were a part of a large group of stakeholders engaged to assist in design of the PIP

high (as in deep) level of inclusion during the entire PIP process **From February 2019 to present, CIP has engaged daily with DCFS in writing either the PIP, the CFSP, or the APSR and correlating them with the CIP strategic plans.**

made suggestions for inclusion in the PIP **CIP co-chaired the Achieving Timely Permanency PIP Team made up of 21 multidisciplinary members including 9 judicial officers.**

suggestions made by CIP for inclusion in the PIP were put forward by the child welfare agency – **CIP wrote an entire section of the PIP on Achieving Timely Permanency PIP Team 3.**

had an opportunity to review and provide feedback on the PIP before it was submitted **and was involved in every weekly meeting with Region 9 and the PIP CORE Team on writing the PIP and revising the 1st draft.**

meet (or plan to meet) ongoing with the child welfare agency to monitor PIP Implementation **CIP is a voting member of the ongoing PIP CORE Team which will continue to meet to facilitate PIP implementation.**

The current version of the PIP includes (check all that apply):

- court strategies court/agency shared strategies
- the court/agency joint project described above the CIP hearing quality project
- specific practice changes that judges will make
- specific practice changes that attorneys will make

4. *What strategies or processes are in place in your state that you feel are particularly effective in supporting joint child welfare program planning and improvement?*

The Community Improvement Councils and annual CIC Summit inclusive of all dependency system stakeholders.

An amazing collaborative and supportive working relationship between DCFS and CIP that engenders an easy flow of information and data back and forth.

A willingness to explore beyond the boundaries of the usual throughout the system.

Trust!

5. *What barriers exist in your state that make effective joint child welfare program planning and improvement challenging?*

None

6. *Does the state child welfare agency currently offer professional partner training to judges, attorneys, and court personnel as part of its Title IV-E Training Plan?*

Not yet. But this has been discussed. It requires an update of the IV-E Plan which leads to other entanglements yet to be resolved

If yes, please provide a brief description of what is provided and how.

If no, have you met with child welfare agency leadership to discuss and explore utilizing professional partner training for judges, attorneys and court personnel?

See above.

7. *Have you talked with your agency about accessing Title IV-E funding for legal representation for parents or for children?*

Yes

Is the agency planning to seek reimbursement?

They were unaware of the possibility when it was brought up by our Children's Attorney Representative at our last CIP quarterly meeting in April. They are looking into it and will report back.

If yes, describe any plans, approaches, or models that are under consideration or underway.

IV. CQI Current Capacity Assessment

1. *Has your ability to integrate CQI into practice changed this year? Yes.*

If yes, what do you attribute the increase in ability to?

CIP has been making increased use of the Fostering Court Improvement website. Some at DCFS question the reliability of the data because they believe there may be data entry errors on the part of the workers. These are the same data sent to the Children's Bureau for AFCARS and NCANDS which are thoroughly scrubbed prior to submission.

2. *Which of the following CBCC Events/Services have you/your staff engaged in in the 2019 Fiscal Year?*

Designing & Evaluating Effective Trainings Workshop

CQI Consult (Topic: _____)

Constituency Group- Hearing Quality

Constituency Group- Safety Decision Making

Constituency Group- CFSR

Constituency Group- Quality Legal Rep

Constituency Group – ICWA

Constituency Group – Anti-Trafficking

Constituency Group – New Directors

Constituency Group – APPLA/Older Youth

CIP All Call — *What % of All Calls does your CIP participate in?* 100%

3. *Do you have any of the following resources to help you integrate CQI into practice?*

CIP staff with CQI (e.g., data, evaluation) expertise Consultants with CQI expertise

a University partnership

A statewide court case management system

Contracts with external individuals or organizations to assist with CQI efforts

Other resources: _____

3a. *Do you record your child welfare court hearings?* Yes No

If yes, are they audio video Most courts in the state have an audio recording system. These are not maintained by the Supreme Court; although CIP has helped some courts purchase these systems.

3b. *Can you remotely access your court case management system? For example, Odyssey systems often allow remote access to case files.* Yes No.

Clark County is the only county that has Odyssey and is able to provide remote access.

4. *Consider the phases of change management and how you integrate these into practice. Are there phases of the process (e.g., Phase I-need assessment, Phase II-theory of change) that you struggle with integrating more than others?*

No.

5. *Is there a topic or practice area that you would find useful from the Capacity Building Center for Courts? Be as specific as possible (e.g., data analysis, how to evaluate trainings, more information on research about quality legal representation, how to facilitate group meetings, etc.)*

We can always use help with data collection, analysis, and interpretation techniques. The continued success of CIP hinges on demonstrated effectiveness and impact.

How to institutionalize court data collection without a statewide court case management system or courts capable of handling this on their own (too busy and no real understanding or knowledge of this area)?

How to develop and implement a quality legal advocacy project pulling together a variety of interests into a cohesive whole?

Best way to educate the entire system – courts, legal, child welfare – on overarching topics such as concurrent planning, engaging relatives, trauma-informed system.

Self-Assessment – Capacity Continued

We would like you to assess your current capacities related to knowledge, skills, resources, and collaboration by responding to the following 2 sets of questions. In questions 6 and 7, we ask about CQI. When we say CQI we mean the entire change management process including root cause analysis, theory of change, strategy selection, implementation and evaluation.

6. Please indicate your level of agreement to the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have a good understanding of CQI.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand how to integrate CQI into all our work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am familiar with the available data relevant to our work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand how to interpret and apply the available data.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The CIP and the state child welfare agency have shared goals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The CIP and the state child welfare agency collaborate around program planning and improvement efforts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
We have the resources we need to fully integrate CQI into practice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have staff, consultants, or partners who can answer my CQI questions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. How frequently do you engage in the following activities?

	<i>Never</i>	<i>Rarely</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>Always</i>
We use data to make decisions about where to focus our efforts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
We meet with representatives of the child welfare agency to engage in collaborative systems change efforts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We create theories of change around systems change projects.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
We use evaluation/assessment findings to make changes to programs/practices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
We evaluate (beyond monitoring outputs) our efforts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

APPENDIX A: DEFINITIONS

Definitions of Evidence

Evidence-based practice – evidence-based practices are practice that have been empirically tested in a rigorous way (involving random assignment to groups), have demonstrated effectiveness related to specific outcomes, have been replicated in practice at least one, and have findings published in peer reviewed journal articles.

Empirically-supported- less rigorous than evidence-based practices are empirically-supported practices. To be empirically supported, a program must have been evaluated in some way and have demonstrated some relationship to a positive outcome. This may not meet the rigor of evidence-base, but still has some support for effectiveness.

Best-practices – best practices are often those widely accepted in the field as good practice. They may or may not have empirical support as to effectiveness, but are often derived from teams of experts in the field.

Definitions for Work Stages

Identifying and Assessing Needs – This phase is the earliest phase in the process, where you are identifying a need to be addressed. The assessing needs phase includes identifying the need, determining if there is available data demonstrating that this a problem, forming teams to address the issue.

Develop theory of change—This phase focuses on the theorizing the causes of a problem. In this phase you would identify what you think might be causing the problem and develop a “theory of change”. The theory of change is essentially how you think your activities (or intervention) will improve outcomes.

Develop/select solution—This phase includes developing or selecting a solution. In this phase, you might be exploring potential best-practices or evidence-based practices that you may want to implement as a solution to the identified need. You might also be developing a specific training, program, or practice that you want to implement.

Implementation – the implementation phase of work is when an intervention is being piloted or tested. This includes adapting programs or practices to meet your needs, and developing implementation supports.

Evaluation/assessment – the evaluation and assessment phase includes any efforts to collect data about the fidelity (process measures: was it implemented as planned?) or effectiveness (outcome measures: is the intervention making a difference?) of the project. The evaluation assessment phase also includes post-evaluation efforts to apply findings, such as making changes to the program/practice and using the data to inform next steps.



Appendix

Appendix 1

Statewide Juvenile Dependency
Mediation Program Protocols,
Forms, and Surveys



STATEWIDE JUVENILE DEPENDENCY MEDIATION PROGRAM PROTOCOL

1. Authority

Nevada Revised Statute Code Section 3.225 states, in pertinent part:
Family court to encourage resolution of certain disputes through nonadversarial methods; cooperation to provide support services.

1. The family court shall, wherever practicable and appropriate, encourage the resolution of disputes before the court through nonadversarial methods or other alternatives to traditional methods of resolution of disputes.

2. Purpose

This document sets forth protocols for the Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program.

3. Definition

"Juvenile Dependency Mediation" is a confidential process conducted by specially trained, neutral third-party mediators who have no decision-making power. Dependency mediation provides a non-adversarial setting in which a mediator assists the parties in reaching a fully informed and universally acceptable resolution that focuses on the child's safety and best interest and the safety of all family members. Dependency mediation is concerned with any and all issues related to child protection.

4. Actions Eligible For Mediation

Active pre and post-adjudication child abuse and neglect cases from all Child Protection calendars are eligible for mediation. Termination of parental rights cases are also eligible for mediation. The mediation program focuses on whether or not Court jurisdiction is appropriate, petition language, services for children and parents, visitation, placement options, educational issues, reunification plans, permanency plans, dismissal orders, termination of parental rights, post-adoption contact, and any issues that are barriers to permanency.

At the discretion of the court mediation sessions for cases may be set: (1) All petition cases in which parents have entered a denial; (2) All contested permanency plan hearings; (3) All contested placement or visitation hearings in underlying dependency cases; and (4) All cases set for a contested Termination of Parental Rights trial.

STATEWIDE JUVENILE DEPENDENCY MEDIATION PROGRAM PROTOCOL

In addition, when the Court determines that an issue is contested, or otherwise appropriate for mediation, the Court may order the case to mediation. Attorneys, social workers, CASA workers, parents and any other individual involved in the case may request that the matter be referred to mediation. The Court, however, retains authority to grant or deny the request.

5. Scheduling Mediation Appointments

If the request for mediation/order to attend mediation takes place at a Court hearing, the mediation appointment will be scheduled at the hearing. The mediation referral order will be completed and provided to the parties and the Statewide Dependency Mediation Program Administrator will receive a copy of the referral order and an email notice of the referral.

If there is not an upcoming hearing scheduled, the parties will contact the court clerk to request that a mediation appointment be scheduled. Once the mediation appointment has been scheduled, the referral order form will be completed by the clerk, submitted to the Court for judicial signature, and filed with copies distributed to the parties. The Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program Administrator will receive a copy of the referral order as well as an email notice of the referral.

In addition to the referral order, the court clerk will also transmit to the mediator: (1) a list of expected participants and their contact information (from the court clerk); (2) the petition or TPR petition/motion; (3) the last case report filed; (4) the last court order; and (5) any other reports the Program Administrator requests as well as any issues related to domestic violence.

If a party requests mediation and another party objects to the mediation referral, a motion must be filed in the case and an order sought for the mediation. After the appropriate motion practice and if an order referring the matter for mediation is issued, setting of the session will proceed as outlined in this protocol.

To ensure compliance with ASFA and Nevada law, termination of parental rights cases that cannot be scheduled for mediation prior to the termination of parental rights trial will not be referred for mediation. The judge presiding over the termination of parental rights matter has the discretion to order the case to mediation at any time.

Once a mediation is scheduled, the Program Administrator will contact the parties to obtain all the documents described in Section 9(a)(i) of this protocol.

6. Who May Participate in Mediation

Participants in Mediation:

The Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program shall utilize a model of mediation that includes, at the mediator's discretion, the active participation of parents, guardians, social workers, foster parents, prospective adoptive parents and CASA

STATEWIDE JUVENILE DEPENDENCY MEDIATION PROGRAM PROTOCOL

workers. Also actively involved are parents' attorneys, agency attorneys, and children's attorneys. Additional participants may be included (e.g., counselor, psychiatrist) or support persons (e.g., in domestic violence cases, a domestic violence support person) at the mediator's discretion.

Once the matter is ordered to mediation by the Court, attendance at mediation is mandatory. Failure to attend mediation by the mandated participants will be reported to the Court and may result in Court-ordered sanctions.

Child Participation in Mediation:

Children may be included in some or all of the mediation process on a case-by case basis. Among the factors considered are the child's age, developmental level, maturity, emotional well-being, desire to participate, as well as the nature of the abuse/neglect, and the nature of the disputed issue, in other words, whether the disputed issue has direct relevance to the child (e.g., removal or return, placement, visitation). The mediator will make a determination about the child's participation in mediation in consultation with the child's attorney, CASA, social worker and other relevant parties. The child's safety and well-being are always at the forefront of the decision about whether, and how, to include the child in the mediation process.

When children do participate in mediation, they will receive an age appropriate orientation to the mediation process. Among the issues discussed will be any options available to the child for his/her participation in the mediation; what is going to happen in the mediation process; the role of the mediator; what realistic goals the child may expect from the mediation and the limits on his/her ability to control the outcome; any limitations to the confidentiality of the process; the child's right to be accompanied throughout the mediation process by his/her attorney and/or other support persons; and, the ability to take a break and/or discontinue participating in the mediation process.

7. Domestic Violence Protocol

Research indicates that domestic violence in the form of adult-to-adult violence is frequently present in child abuse cases. The Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program will operate in a manner consistent with the recommendations of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges Family Violence Department as included in *Effective Intervention In Domestic Violence & Child Maltreatment Cases: Guidelines For Policy and Practice; Recommendation 48*.¹

¹ Mediators are trained thoroughly in the dynamics of domestic and family violence, including child maltreatment, as well as trained in the dynamics of substance abuse, basic psychology and family systems theory, the developmental needs of children, the workings of the local child protection and juvenile court systems, local domestic violence services, and other local community resources,

The mediation program provides specialized procedures designed to protect survivors of domestic violence from intimidation alleged perpetrators and to correct power imbalances created by the violence. With interventions, including the performance of a domestic violence screening, the offering of individual- as opposed to joint-sessions

STATEWIDE JUVENILE DEPENDENCY MEDIATION PROGRAM PROTOCOL

It is the responsibility of all regular participants in mediation to inform the mediator whether adult-to-adult violence is an issue in any dependency/termination of parental rights case and to inform the Court if this issue is present in any case referred for mediation. It is then the responsibility of the Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program, in particular, its mediators, once notified of the existence of allegations of domestic violence in a given case, to ensure that mediation is conducted in an appropriate manner as described below.

This protocol holds that the issue of the violence itself will never be mediated (i.e., domestic violence including child and/or partner abuse is never justified), though conditions designed to preclude violence may be appropriate for discussion. Additionally, the cessation of violence shall not be predicated on the behavior of the survivor.

Additionally, it is recognized that psychological and/or physical intimidation may affect the balance of power between the parties. It may also affect the ability of a party to participate in her/his own best interest or the best interest of the children in the Court process. Measures included herein are designed to help rectify that imbalance of power during the course of mediation. Domestic violence is understood to be a behavior, or set of primarily learned behaviors, arising from multiple sources, which may follow different patterns in different families, rather than a disease process or syndrome with a single underlying cause. Domestic violence occurs where one partner in an intimate relationship controls or attempts to control the other through force, intimidation, subjugation and/or the threat of violence.

The procedures for cases involving domestic violence referred to the Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation shall be as follows:

The Court, at the time of the scheduling of the Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation session, shall inform the program coordinator that the case includes elements of domestic violence, in addition to child abuse; The Court shall also note this information on the referral order.

for the survivor and alleged perpetrator so that they never have direct contact with each other, and permitting the survivor to have an advocate in attendance throughout the process;

The mediation process also provides for the participation of survivor and child advocates, the child protection agency, other interested family members and individuals, as well as involved attorneys and GALs or CASAs, to reinforce further the balance of power and ensure that the rights of the participants are protected in the search for a resolution that focuses upon the safety and best interest of the child and the safety of all family members;

Mediators are vigilant when involved in discussions concerning the factual basis of the abuse of the child or survivor-parent in order to prevent victim blaming and/or collusion with the abuser's minimizing or discounting the significance of the violence or abuse (p.101)

STATEWIDE JUVENILE DEPENDENCY MEDIATION PROGRAM PROTOCOL

Prior to commencing the mediation, the mediator will review the court file and, when available, any pertinent reports describing the domestic violence, and/or any existing domestic violence protective orders. This document review will be the first step in a domestic violence screening further discussed below. Even if domestic violence is not directly mentioned in the file, the mediator will be screening for incidents/behaviors that may indicate domestic violence is present and also communicating with stakeholders about any possible domestic violence. The mediator will continue to assess for domestic violence until the mediation has concluded.

If domestic violence has been identified and both parties will be present, prior to actually involving the family members in the mediation process, the mediator(s), shall perform a domestic violence screening using the protocol attached as Attachment A. The screening will be for the purpose of:

- a. Assessing the ability of the survivor parent to fully and safely participate and reach a non-coerced settlement in that particular case;
- b. Clarifying the history and dynamics of the domestic violence issue in order to determine the most appropriate manner in which mediation should proceed consistent with the other provisions of this protocol;
- c. Assisting the parties, family members and attorneys, in formulating an agreement that provides appropriate safeguards for the safety of children and family members.

The mediator(s) will inform identified survivors of domestic violence that it is the policy of the Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program that they have the following options available to them:

- a. The parent who has been the survivor of domestic violence has the option of having separate sessions with the mediators, that is, she/he does not have to be in the mediation room at the same time as the perpetrator of the violence.
- b. In the alternative, she/he may elect to be seen jointly in mediation with the family member who perpetrated the violence but only after having been individually interviewed by the mediator, and only if the mediator concurs that a conjoint interview is safe and appropriate.
- c. In cases involving domestic violence, a support person will be permitted to accompany a party during mediation, whether or not she/he elects to be seen separately or together with the perpetrator. The protected party may also choose to have her/his attorney function as a support person. In the event the survivor of the violence selects any other adult to be her/his support person, the function of the support person and causes for exclusion will be as follows:
 - i. It is the function of the support person to provide moral and emotional support for a person alleging she/he is a survivor of domestic violence.
 - ii. The person who alleges that she/he is a survivor of domestic violence may select any individual to act as a support person. No certification, training, or other special qualification is required for an individual to act as a support person.

STATEWIDE JUVENILE DEPENDENCY MEDIATION PROGRAM PROTOCOL

- iii. The support person's role is to assist the person in feeling more confident that she/he will not be injured or threatened during a proceeding when the survivor of domestic violence and the other party must be present in close proximity. The degree of participation by the support person will be determined by the mediator.
- iv. Except when the support person is the individual's attorney, the support person shall not be present as a legal adviser and shall not give legal advice.
- v. The presence of the support person does not waive the confidentiality of the mediation.
- vi. The mediator has the authority to exclude any support person, other than the individual's attorney, from a mediation proceeding if the presence of a particular support person is disruptive or disrupts the process of the session.

Dependency mediators will be sensitive when involved in discussions concerning the factual basis of child abuse or neglect, or domestic violence, in order to avoid collusion with victim blaming, denial, minimization or discounting of alleged child abuse or violence against any family member.

It is appropriate for dependency mediators to facilitate the process in a manner which encourages the incorporation of appropriate safety and treatment interventions in any settlement.

The mediation location provided by the court should be a safe and secure place for members of the community to discuss the most important issues related to their families, if possible. Persons present in and about the mediation location are expected to conduct themselves in a civil and businesslike manner at all times. With this in mind, the Program has a zero tolerance policy with regard to any expression or threat of violence, disorderly conduct, verbal abuse, or observable intimidation in the mediation. Such behavior may be considered detrimental to the safety and best interest of children and families, will be dealt with accordingly, and will be reported to security personnel and/or the Court, as appropriate.

When during the course of mediation, it appears that there is a clear and immediate danger to an individual or to society; the mediator shall take appropriate action aimed at protecting those in jeopardy.

8. Orientation

There shall be an oral orientation to mediation designed to inform dependency mediation participants about the mediation process in order to facilitate their safe, productive, and informed participation and decision-making by educating them about:

- a. How the mediation process is conducted, who generally participates in the session(s), the range of issues which may be discussed, and what to expect at the conclusion of the mediation;
- b. The mediator's role;

STATEWIDE JUVENILE DEPENDENCY MEDIATION PROGRAM PROTOCOL

- c. Confidentiality and any limitations on the confidentiality of the process;
- d. If appropriate, the right of a participant who has been a survivor of violence perpetrated by another mediation participant, to be accompanied by domestic violence support person and to have sessions with the mediator separate from the perpetrator. Unless otherwise authorized to participate, this support person may not actively participate in the mediation, except to act as emotional support for the survivor.

9. The Mediation Process

The Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation process typically involves the following stages:

- a. Pre-Mediation:
 - i. A review of the case related information forwarded to the Program Administrator by the Court, including at a minimum, a list of expected participants and their contact information (from the court clerk), the petition or TPR petition/motion, the last case report filed, the last court order, and any other reports the Program Administrator requests as well as any issues related to domestic violence.
 - ii. Program Administrator selects mediator and forwards case file and a list of participants and contact information.
 - iii. Discussion between the mediator and participants and/or others with knowledge relevant to the mediation.
- b. During the Mediation
 - i. A brief orientation of the parents and other interested participants to the dependency mediation process.
 - ii. A meeting with the attorneys, social worker, and assigned CASA worker/GAL for exchange of the most current case related information, including that related to domestic violence, identification of issues, and problem solving.
 - iii. Meetings and/or caucuses with the family members in various combinations, including for the purpose of differentially assessing the issue of domestic violence as it applies to the mediation process, for an identification and exchange of the most current case related information, identification of issues, and problem solving.
 - iv. Discussion among the parties, social worker, and their attorneys.
 - v. Final group or subgroup meeting(s) for: remaining problem solving; to identify areas of agreement/disagreement; clarification of expectations; answering remaining questions; and if applicable, drafting and reviewing the mediation agreement.
 - vi. The mediator will make concerted reasonable efforts to ensure that any agreement reached in mediation is clearly understood by each

STATEWIDE JUVENILE DEPENDENCY MEDIATION PROGRAM PROTOCOL

participant. Mediation agreements shall be reviewed and approved by all parties and the attorneys participating in said agreement, prior to its submission to the Court. When possible, parties and attorneys will proceed directly to Court to present the mediation agreement on the record (signed by all of the parties) to the judicial officer. Otherwise, the mediation outcome form, and, if applicable, the mediation agreement (signed by all of the parties) is lodged in the court file for review and approval.

c. Post-Mediation

- i. Participants will be asked to complete a voluntary survey geared to their role in the mediation. The surveys are intended to be confidential. The surveys will not be reviewed by the mediators and will be placed directly in an envelope addressed to the Program Administrator.
- ii. Mediators must complete Mediation Report, Case Data Sheet, and In-Kind Form and return to Program Administrator with a copy of the invoice within two weeks of mediation. Invoices will not be approved for payment unless all of these documents have been submitted.
- iii. Once all forms are submitted, the mediator(s) shall destroy any notes made during the mediation process.

10. Use of Interpreters

Whenever possible, dependency mediation will be conducted in the shared language of the participants. When the participants speak different languages, court-certified interpreters will be assigned to translate the mediation session.

11. In Custody Mediation Participants

If possible, the mediation appointment shall be conducted in an appropriate location to accommodate the in-custody mediation participant. Any incarcerated parent shall be telephonically available to attend mediation and the court shall issue any requisite orders.

12. Failure to Appear for Mediation Appointment

Participation in the mediation session is mandatory once a case has been ordered to mediation. The parties and their attorneys are expected to participate in the mediation process.

13. Termination of Mediation Appointment

Each session will end with the consensus of the parties, unless the mediator determines that the session should be terminated prior to such consensus. The mediator shall have the power to suspend or terminate the mediation process if it is determined that the mediation cannot be conducted in a safe or appropriately balanced manner. The mediator shall also suspend or terminate the mediation process if it is determined that any party is unable to participate in an informed

STATEWIDE JUVENILE DEPENDENCY MEDIATION PROGRAM PROTOCOL

manner for any reason, including fear or intimidation.

14. Mediation Outcome Report and Mediation Agreement

If the agreement cannot be presented in court, a Mediation Court Memo shall be completed by the mediator at the end of each mediation session and submitted to or filed with the Court. If the mediation session was not held, the Memo shall inform the Court why it did not occur whether the appointment was rescheduled, or that the case is inappropriate for mediation. If the mediation session was held, the Mediation Memo shall inform the Court of the parties present at the mediation; whether the parties reached a written or verbal agreement and if it represents a full agreement, a partial agreement, or if there is no agreement; and if an additional mediation appointment has been scheduled.

While parties may have been ordered to participate in mediation and make an effort to resolve certain issues, entering into any agreement is strictly voluntary. The attorneys for the parties have an opportunity to review any written agreement that is reached before it is presented to the Court. When a written agreement is reached and signed by all of the parties, the parties may either present the agreement in court or the mediator shall attach the agreement to the Mediation Memo and both shall become part of the court file. The Court shall ultimately determine the acceptability or unacceptability of all mediation agreements.

15. Confidentiality

Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation is a confidential process consistent with Nevada Revised Statute Code Section 48.109.

NRS 48.109 Closure of meeting held to further resolution of dispute;
Exclusion of admission, representation or statement made during mediation proceedings; confidentiality of matter discussed during mediation proceeding.

1. A meeting held to further the resolution of a dispute may be closed at the discretion of the mediator.
2. The proceedings of the mediation session must be regarded as settlement negotiations, and no admission, representation or statement made during the session, not otherwise discoverable or obtainable, is admissible as evidence or subject to discovery.
3. A mediator is not subject to civil process requiring the disclosure of any matter discussed during the mediation proceedings.

Exceptions to Confidentiality:

In the Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation program, there are certain circumstances where these protections do not apply and mediation communications may or must be disclosed. Some of the circumstances where mediation communications are **not confidential** are listed below.

STATEWIDE JUVENILE DEPENDENCY MEDIATION PROGRAM PROTOCOL

- a. Some professionals participating in the mediation may be permitted or required by law to report specific information to certain authorities, such as:
 - i. Information that would **support new allegations of child abuse or neglect**
 - ii. Information about elder abuse and/or dependent adult abuse
 - iii. A mediation participant's **threat to harm him/herself or someone else**
- b. Any written settlement agreement
- c. An attorney and client may discuss the details of a mediation with each other in the event that one of them is not present at the mediation.
- d. There may also be other circumstances where information from the mediation may not be confidential (including but not limited to, if a **criminal case is pending or filed at a later date**)
- e. Non-identifying information about this mediation may be made available for Program evaluation

If parties have any questions about confidentiality and the limits of confidentiality, they are advised to consult with their attorney privately before discussing any topic at the mediation.

Discovery:

All statements, whether oral or in a record or verbal or nonverbal, made during a mediation session conducted pursuant to this protocol, including those made in any individual meeting with the mediator, and all such statements made for the purposes of considering, conducting, participating in, initiating, continuing or reconvening a mediation, shall be exempt from discovery and inadmissible as evidence in the child protection case. Evidence or information that is otherwise admissible or subject to discovery does not become inadmissible or protected from discovery solely by reason of its disclosure or use in mediation. Disclosure of mediation communications shall not be compelled in any arbitration, administrative hearing, adjudication, civil action, or non-criminal proceeding in which, pursuant to law, testimony is compelled to be given. The mediators are exempted from participating in discovery proceedings

16. Mediation Records

Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program files are kept separate from the court file and no papers generated by the dependency mediation process will be included in the court file, nor shall the judicial officer assigned to the case have access to them, except as follows:

- a. Mediation settlement agreement/stipulation (signed by all of the parties)
- b. Mediation Memo as described in Section 14
- c. Mediation confidentiality and agreement to mediate form

Confidentiality will be protected in the appropriate storage and disposal of records.

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17. Accountability and Complaint Process

The Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program is accountable to the Court Improvement Program

The Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program Administrator will submit a report to the Court Improvement Program no less than four times a year. Included in the report will be a summary of the number and types of cases mediated, the agreement rate, and cumulative information collected from mediation participant surveys.

Informal concerns or complaints regarding the Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program may be made at any time by contacting the Court Improvement Program Coordinator at 775-687-9809. Formal complaints about a mediator's performance must be addressed in writing to:

The Court Improvement Program Coordinator
Administrative Office of the Courts
Supreme Court Building
201 S. Carson Street, Suite 250
Carson City, Nevada 89701-4702

The Court Improvement Program Coordinator will respond to the complaint in writing within thirty days of receipt of the complaint.

06/24/19

STATEWIDE JUVENILE DEPENDENCY MEDIATION PROGRAM PROTOCOL

Attachment A

Domestic Violence Screening Protocol

1. What are we trying to find out by screening? We are trying to determine whether a survivor is safe or feels safe participating in mediation with the abuser present. We are also trying to determine whether the parties will be able to voluntarily and meaningfully participate in mediation, free from coercion and control by the abuser, whether the mediation is conducted in joint session or through shuttle mediation.

2. How should screening be done? Screening must be initiated by discussion between the mediator, district attorney, child welfare and attorneys of parties in the action. Screening should be done separately with each party (ideally with the survivor first) so the abuser does not directly influence the answers given by the survivor. If screening is done in person, appointments should be on different days to prevent stalking of the survivor by the abuser. If screening is done telephonically, the parties should be asked if they are alone prior to questioning.

3. If screening reveals that a survivor is in immediate or present danger. A person in danger of battering should be put in touch with the police or a domestic violence shelter. It is helpful to follow up and see if they are safe. A mediator should not be neutral about safety.

4. Where there is a history of domestic violence the process may be modified to provide a safe environment for the survivor. Consider the following strategies.

1. The survivor should arrive 10 minutes after the abuser and leave 10 minutes earlier than the abuser.
2. Seat the survivor closer to the door.
3. Set additional ground rules for the mediation and conversation between the couple to reduce fear and intimidation. Discuss concerns of parties prior to mediation in development of ground rules (e.g. “what ground rules will make you feel safe?”)
4. Allow for an advocate to come to the mediation with the survivor or to wait in the waiting room for the survivor.
5. Require a court bailiff to be present, if possible.
6. Utilize caucus as a safety valve.

STATEWIDE JUVENILE DEPENDENCY MEDIATION PROGRAM PROTOCOL

7. Talk to the survivor during breaks or between sessions to assess the level of fear.

STRUCTURE FOR SCREENING INTERVIEW OF PARTIES IF NEEDED

- The person conducting the screening must be trained in domestic violence.
- Screening must be undertaken before joint sessions are held.
- Screening of each party must be conducted separately, preferably in person, during the orientation portion of the mediation. When scheduling a screening in person, inquire whether a party has any safety concerns about coming to the screening location. Arrangements should be made to respond to the safety concerns of the parties.

GUIDELINES FOR THE ORIENTATION INTERVIEW

- Observe each party's behavior during the interview.
- Preface screening with reassurance to reduce awkwardness.
- Explain the program's policy of confidentiality consistent with applicable statutes and court rules to the parties, as well as the goals and process of mediation.
- Identify each party's ability to negotiate, patterns of abuse, and any acts of coercion or threats by a party that may influence the mediation process. Ask the survivor whether she or he has concerns about participating in the mediation jointly and whether shuttle mediation is more appropriate. Consider the batterer's ability to negotiate in a meaningful way if it appears that a pattern of coercion and control is present and that the batterer may not be able to separate from this pattern to openly negotiate.
- Assure all participants that participation in the orientation screening process fulfills the requirement for court ordered mediation and that any additional participation is entirely voluntary.
- Do not make judgments about allegations of abuse. The mediator's role is to determine whether the case is appropriate for mediation with both parties present or at different times, or if the case is appropriate for mediation.
- Seat the survivor in a position of power (e.g., next to mediator), by an exit, away from the batterer and out of the batterer's line of vision, and next to a support person such as an attorney or domestic violence advocate.

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- Use caucus regularly to check in with the victim and ensure that participation continues to be voluntary and appropriate throughout the mediation.
- Never share confidential information learned in preliminary interviews or caucus with the batterer (note: this is particularly important if the mediator learns the location of a survivor's safe house).
- Never have parties waiting in the same room before mediation begins or during breaks.
- Create a safety plan with the victim before the mediation begins. This may include pre-identified signals that enable the victim to safely communicate fear or discomfort during the mediation or to request a caucus.
- Set forth ground rules before the mediation begins and ensure strict adherence
- Have a telephone close at hand to call for assistance if needed
- Mediators should familiarize themselves with the following domestic violence screening tools:
 - Michigan's Domestic Violence Screening Protocol for Mediators of Domestic Relations Conflicts, <http://courts.mi.gov/Administration/SCAO/Resources/Documents/standards/odr/Domestic%20Violence%20Screening%20Protocol%20for%20Mediators.pdf>
 - The Battered Women's Justice Project (BWJP) [Practice Guides for Family Court Decision-Making in Domestic Abuse Related Child Custody Matters](http://www.bwjp.org/assets/documents/pdfs/practice-guides-for-family-court-decision-making-ind.pdf), <http://www.bwjp.org/assets/documents/pdfs/practice-guides-for-family-court-decision-making-ind.pdf>
- Become familiar with the dynamics of domestic violence in order to recognize signs that domestic violence may be present. Because domestic violence is a pattern of coercion and control, and is not limited to physical and sexual violence, mediators should screen for a full range of batterer behaviors, such as those identified in the following power and control wheels designed to address the unique experiences of different survivor populations:
 - Duluth Power and Control Wheel: <https://www.theduluthmodel.org/wheels/>

STATEWIDE JUVENILE DEPENDENCY MEDIATION PROGRAM PROTOCOL

- Power and Control Wheel for Immigrant Women,
<https://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/power-and-control-tactics-used-against-immigrant-women/>
- Power and Control Wheel for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans Relationships, <http://www.loveisrespect.org/lir-files/LGBT-Power-and-Control-Wheel.pdf>
- Abuse in Later Life Power and Control Wheel,
<http://www.ncall.us/FileStream.aspx?FileID=27>
- Other adaptations of the power and control wheel available at
http://www.ncdsv.org/publications_wheel.html.

08/24/16

**THE * JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT OF THE STATE OF NEVADA
IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF ***

JUVENILE DEPENDENCY MEDIATION REFERRAL ORDER

IN THE MATTER OF: CHILD'S NAME _____, Minor Child DOB: _____

CASE NUMBER: _____ DEPARTMENT NUMBER: _____ COURTROOM: _____

THIS MATTER, having come before the Court on ____ day of _____, 20__, and it appearing to the Court that this matter is appropriate for mediation, the Court hereby refers the dispute indicated below to Juvenile Dependency Mediation. The Parties to the dispute shall appear at the time and place set and make every effort to resolve the issues related to this case. The Court expects legal counsel for the parties to be present at the Court ordered mediation.

Disputed issue: _____

Participants and Counsel:

Mother: _____ **Counsel:** _____

Father: _____ **Counsel:** _____

Child Welfare: _____ **Counsel:** _____

Minor: _____ **Counsel:** _____

Other: _____ **Counsel:** _____

Other: _____ **Counsel:** _____

Mediation Date: _____ **Mediation Time:** _____ **Courtroom:** _____

The parties shall report for Juvenile Dependency Mediation at: _____

Mediations may not be rescheduled or cancelled without issuance of a court order.

Interpreter Needed? Yes/No If so, language _____ For Whom? _____

The Interpreter's Office must be notified in advance of any services needed. Due to time considerations, failure to notify the Interpreter's Office in advance of mediation may result in cancellation or delay of mediation.

Incarcerated parent? Yes/No

If an incarcerated parent will be participating in mediation, it is the responsibility of the parent's attorney to arrange for the parent's telephonic participation.

Domestic Violence Issues? Yes/No

Adoptive Resource Identified (if appropriate)? Yes/No If no, please specify why mediation is appropriate at this time. _____

Any other special considerations: _____

Dependency Mediation (J-case) –

Pre-Adjudication: A copy of this Referral, along with a copy of the Petition and Protective Custody Report will be forwarded to the Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program Administrator.

Post-Adjudication: A copy of this Referral, along with a copy of the last-filed Petition, along with a copy of the Disposition Report or Permanency Report (whichever was filed last) will be forwarded to the Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program Administrator.

Termination of Parental Rights/Post-Adoptive Contact Mediation (D-case): A copy of this Referral, along with a copy of the Termination Petition and the last filed Permanency Report will be forwarded to the Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program Administrator.

Dated this ____ day of _____, 20 __.

IT IS SO ORDERED:

DISTRICT JUDGE/COURT MASTER

Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program

List of Parties

(To Be Sent to Program Administrator)

Margaret M. Crowley
Program Administrator
Crowley Mediation, L.L.C.
www.CrowleyMediation.com
775-233-6711

Mother: Email: Phone:	Mother's Attorney: Email: Phone:
Father: Email: Phone:	Father's Attorney: Email: Phone:
Child(if applicable): Email: Phone:	Child's Attorney Email: Phone:
Foster Parent: Email: Phone:	District Attorney: Email: Phone:
CASA: Email: Phone:	Attorney General: Email: Phone:
Other: Email: Phone:	Social Worker: Email: Phone:
Other: Email: Phone:	Social Worker(Supervisor): Email: Phone:



Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program Confidentiality Statement and Agreement to Mediate

Mediation is a process where parties come together in an attempt to settle a dispute. A trained mediator assists the parties during the mediation. Free and open communication is necessary for a mediation to cover all of the concerns of the participants. Because this is of such great importance, the law considers mediation communications confidential and prohibits their disclosure (NRS 48.109). The mediator and all of the participants are not allowed to disclose to anyone else a communication made in a mediation session. Also, information from a mediation session cannot be used in the court case related to the mediation.

HOWEVER, there are certain circumstances where these protections do not apply and mediation communications may or must be disclosed. Some of the circumstances where mediation communications are not confidential are listed below.

- A. Some professionals participating in the mediation may be permitted or required by law to report specific information to certain authorities, such as:
 1. Information that would support **new allegations of child abuse or neglect**
 2. Information about **elder abuse and/or dependent adult abuse**
 3. A mediation participant's **threat to harm him/herself or someone else**
- B. An attorney and client may discuss the details of a mediation with each other in the event that one of them is not present at the mediation
- C. Any written settlement agreement
- D. There may also be other circumstances where information from the mediation may not be confidential (including but not limited to, if a **criminal case is pending or filed at a later date**)

If you have any questions about confidentiality and the limits of confidentiality, please consult with your attorney privately before discussing any topic at the mediation.

- While parties may have been ordered to participate in mediation and make an effort to resolve certain issues, entering into any agreement is strictly voluntary.
- The only report the mediator will make to the court is one that states who attended the scheduled mediation appointment, whether an agreement was reached, and if so, the terms of the agreement, and whether an additional mediation appointment has been scheduled. The mediator will not make any recommendations to the court as to how the case should be decided.
- The mediator cannot be used as a witness in civil court or other non-criminal legal proceedings (NRS 48.109). Written documents prepared for mediation, during mediation, or as a direct result of mediation, cannot be used as evidence in civil court or other non-criminal legal proceedings.
- The attorneys for the parties have an opportunity to review any written agreement that is reached before it is presented to the court. Once signed by all parties, written settlement agreements will be tendered to the court for review/approval and become part of the court file.

- Non-identifying information about this mediation may be made available for program evaluation.

This agreement binds all mediation participants, including but not limited to, social workers, district attorneys, parents' attorneys, minor's counsel, CASA, therapists, parents and any other persons present at the mediation.

By signing below, I agree that I have read and understand the above and that the mediator has verbally explained this document to me. I further agree to participate in the mediation and keep confidential all communications from the mediation unless I am permitted or required by law to disclose specific information.

Case Number

Child(ren)'s Name(s) & Date(s) of Birth

Date: _____

Print Name:
Relationship to case:

Print Name:
Relationship to case:

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Relationship to case:

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Relationship to case:

05/16/17



Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program

TO: The Honorable

FROM: Dependency Mediator

DATE:

SUBJECT:

The parties participated in mediation on ----- to attempt to resolve issues related to this case.
The parties
successfully reached agreement
successfully reached a partial agreement
were unable to reach an agreement

cc:
, Esq.
, Esq.
, DCFS

This memo is lodged in Case No. _____ to apprise the Court of the status of the mediation referral.

08/15/16

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**IN THE * JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT OF THE STATE OF NEVADA
IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF ***

In Re: the Matter as to

***,**

CASE NO. *

minor child.

DEPT. NO. *

_____ /

JUVENILE DEPENDENCY MEDIATION AGREEMENT

OUTCOME: Full Agreement OR Partial Agreement

MEDIATION DATE:

MEDIATOR: *, Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediator

PARTIES PRESENT:

***, Mother**

***, Attorney for Mother**

***, Father**

***, Attorney for Father**

***, Social Worker**

***, Social Work Supervisor**

***, Deputy District Attorney, Attorney for Agency**

***, Attorney for Name(s) of Child(ren)**

***, CASA**

Pursuant to the mediation held , the parties agree as follows:

Read and Accepted by:

*, Mother

*, Mother's Attorney

*, Father

*, Father's Attorney

*, Social Worker

*, Social Work Supervisor

*, Deputy District Attorney

*, Attorney for Child(ren)

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*, CASA

IT IS ORDERED.

This ____ day of _____, 2016.

MASTER

IT IS ORDERED.

This ____ day of _____, 2016.

DISTRICT JUDGE

Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program
Mediation Report

A mediation for the ___ Judicial District was conducted on ___ with ___ acting as the mediator. The child has been in care since birth, for over 13 months, and the DCFS has referred the case to the Attorney General's Office for termination of parental rights. The child has been placed with prospective adoptive parents who are not related to the birth parents. Present at the mediation were: parents and their attorneys, prospective adoptive parents, DCFS, District Attorney's Office and CASA.

The parents came to the mediation ready to consent to the adoption of their child by the prospective adoptive parents. Prospective adoptive parents were willing to offer very generous terms to biological parents so that they can be a part of their child's life. In addition, biological parents have another child and wanted the siblings to have the opportunity to know each other. There were several challenges in the mediation, including trying to craft a plan that would endure for the next 17 years as well as negotiating a name change for the child. The parties were able to come to agreement and the parents signed a consent to adopt.

Submitted by: ___

08/15/16



Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program PARTICIPANT SURVEY

You recently participated in juvenile dependency mediation. We are interested in your experience of the juvenile dependency mediation service and any suggestions you may have. Your comments are important to us and will help improve our services.

Was this co-mediated? Yes No

1.) Today's Date: _____ / _____ / _____

2.) What is your relationship to the child?

- Mother
- Father
- Child (Age: _____)
- Other Family Member _____
- Foster Parent _____
- Other _____

3.) The mediator explained the mediation process clearly so I knew what to expect.

- Yes, Strongly Agree
- Yes, Agree
- No, Disagree
- No, Strongly Disagree

4.) Did you have a chance to voice your opinions?

- Yes, Strongly Agree
- Yes, Agree
- No, Disagree
- No, Strongly Disagree

5.) Was an agreement reached?

- Yes, on all issues
- Yes, on some issues
- No

If no, why do you think an agreement could not be reached?

If yes, do you think that the mediation agreement will work?

6.) Do you think the other people in mediation really listened to what you had to say?

- Yes, Strongly Agree
- Yes, Agree
- No, Disagree
- No, Strongly Disagree

7.) Did you feel ignored or unimportant during the mediation?

- Yes, Strongly Agree
- Yes, Agree
- No, Disagree
- No, Strongly Disagree

8.) Were you treated with respect?

- Yes, Strongly Agree
- Yes, Agree
- No, Disagree
- No, Strongly Disagree

9.) Were you able to be a part of finding answers to the problems discussed?

- Yes, Strongly Agree
- Yes, Agree
- No, Disagree
- No, Strongly Disagree

10.) Did the mediator treat everyone fairly?

- Yes, Strongly Agree
- Yes, Agree
- No, Disagree
- No, Strongly Disagree

11.) What did you find most helpful?

12.) What did you find least helpful?

13.) Other comments or suggestions:



Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program STAKEHOLDER SURVEY

You recently participated in juvenile dependency mediation on behalf of your client or agency. We are interested in your experience of the juvenile dependency mediation service and any suggestions you may have. Your comments are important to us and will help improve our services.

Was this co-mediated? Yes No

1.) Today's Date: ____ / ____ / ____

2.) What is your role in this case?

- Mother's Attorney
- Father's Attorney
- Child's Attorney
- District Attorney/Attorney General
- Social Worker
- CASA
- Other _____

3.) What legal action is pending in this case?

- Adjudicatory/Evidentiary Hearing
- Disposition Hearing
- 6 Month Review Hearing
- 12 Month Review Hearing
- Permanency Planning Hearing
- Termination of Parental Rights
- Other _____

4.) Did your session result in an agreement?

- Yes, All Issues
- Yes, Some Issues
- No

If no, why do you think an agreement could not be reached?

If yes, how does the mediated agreement compare w/ court orders?

5.) Did you (or your client) have a chance to voice your opinions?

- Yes, Strongly Agree
- Yes, Agree
- No, Disagree
- No, Strongly Disagree

6.) Do you think the other people in mediation really listened to what you (or your client) had to say?

- Yes, Strongly Agree
- Yes, Agree
- No, Disagree
- No, Strongly Disagree

7.) Were you treated with respect?

- Yes, Strongly Agree
- Yes, Agree
- No, Disagree
- No, Strongly Disagree

8.) Was your mediation session conducted fairly?

- Yes, Strongly Agree
- Yes, Agree
- No, Disagree
- No, Strongly Disagree

9.) What did you find most helpful about the mediation session?

10.) What did you find least helpful?

11.) Other comments or suggestions:

09/13/16

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts

Mediator's Name: _____ APPOINTMENT DATE: _____

Case Preparation Time: _____ APPOINTMENT TIME: _____



**Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program
Case Data**

Unity Number _____ Judicial District _____ Case Number _____ Dept. # _____

Previous Mediation? ___ Yes ___ No

Children's Name(s) & Date(s) of Birth _____

Race/Ethnicity: _____ Gender Identity: _____

Children's Name(s) & Date(s) of Birth _____

Race/Ethnicity: _____ Gender Identity: _____

Please list additional children on page 2

Number of children who are the subject of this mediation? _____

Number of subject children siblings (adult/minor) who are not the subject of this mediation? _____

Mediation: ___ Ordered by Court ___ Requested by party _____ Other _____

FOCUS OF MEDIATION:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ___ Jurisdiction | ___ petition language | ___ services for children & parents |
| ___ visitation | ___ placement | ___ education issues |
| ___ reunification plans | ___ permanency plans | ___ dismissal orders |
| ___ TPR | ___ post-adoption contact | ___ post-guardianship contact |
| ___ other _____ | | |

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS: _____

Next Court Date: _____

Mediator's Use Only **START TIME:** _____ **END TIME:** _____

Did the mediation eliminate the need for the court to hold any type of hearing? ___ Yes ___ No

If yes, what type of hearing? _____

Settlement Conference _____ Trial/Evidentiary Hearing # of days _____

OUTCOME: _____ AGREEMENT
 _____ PARTIAL AGREEMENT
 _____ NO AGREEMENT REACHED
 _____ PARTIES FAILED TO SHOW
 _____ OTHER

Written / Verbal (circle)
Written / Verbal (circle)

Type of Victimization:

_____ Child Physical Abuse or Neglect
 _____ Child Sexual Abuse/Assault
 _____ Human Trafficking: Sex

Special Classifications of Individuals:

	<u>Child</u>	<u>Parent</u>
_____ Deaf/Hard of Hearing	_____	_____
_____ Homeless	_____	_____
_____ Immigrants/Refugees/Asylum Seekers	_____	_____
_____ LGBTQ	_____	_____
_____ Victims with Disabilities: Cognitive/ Physical /Mental	_____	_____
_____ Victims with Limited English Proficiency	_____	_____
_____ Victims of Domestic Violence	_____	_____
_____ Other	_____	_____

Number of surveys distributed _____

Number of surveys completed _____

FOLLOW-UP

2ND MEDIATION SCHEDULED:

_____ YES _____ NO DATE: _____ TIME: _____

POST-MEDIATION INFORMATION:

Additional Children

Children's Name(s) & Date(s) of Birth _____

Race/Ethnicity: _____ Gender Identity: _____

Children's Name(s) & Date(s) of Birth _____

Race/Ethnicity: _____ Gender Identity: _____

JDMP CHECKLIST

Documents to complete for Program ASAP:

- In-Kind Match Information Sheet
- Register as vendor

Before Mediation

- Prepare Confidentiality Statement and Agreement to Mediate
- Prepare draft agreement if applicable
- Obtain UNITY # for social worker to put on Case Data sheet
- Envelope for surveys and Confidentiality Statement addressed to:

Margaret Crowley
Crowley Mediation, LLC
121 Washington Street
Reno, NV 89503

During Mediation

- Have parties sign Confidentiality Statement
- Participant Survey
- Stakeholder Survey

After Mediation

- Memo/Agreement to Court if applicable
- Case Data sheet
- Mediator's Report
- In-Kind Reporting Form

Documents that go to Margaret

- Confidentiality Agreement, original
- Surveys, originals
- Case Data Sheet
- Mediator's Report
- In-Kind Reporting Form (I will forward to Robbie Taft)

Billing

- Prepare Invoice
- Email invoice to JudicialBranchAcct@nvcourts.nv.gov; copy rtaft@nvcourts.nv.gov
- Make sure your email includes "The invoice attached is the only invoice provided and a hard copy will not be mailed."

Appendix 2

Statewide Juvenile Dependency
Mediation Program Brochure
and Road Map to Success



What is Juvenile Dependency Mediation?

Dependency Mediation Program is an informal and confidential process in which the parents, social workers, attorneys, and other people in a case meet with an impartial person (the mediator).

The mediator helps the parties explore ways to resolve differences and make a plan that everybody agrees is safe and best for the child, as well as safe for all of the involved adults.

Mediation is an opportunity for you to help decide what is best for your family. The mediator does not make decisions for the people in mediation and will not make any recommendations to the court.

You can consult with your attorney at any time.

Be sure to ask as many questions as necessary so that you understand what is expected of you and what you can expect from your social worker and the Court.

Your Mediation Appointment
has been scheduled for:

Date: _____

Time: _____

Place: _____

Please plan on arriving 10 minutes
before the appointment time.

What You Should Know About: Juvenile Dependency Mediation



Who Participates in Mediation?

Mediation usually includes the parents, social workers, attorneys, CASA, as well as other people involved in the case.

Children may also participate in one form or another if they are of an appropriate age, if it is likely to be helpful, and if the child's attorney agrees.

Mediation Procedure

At the beginning of the appointment, the mediator will meet with you to answer questions and explain the mediation process. The mediator will then speak with the attorneys, social workers, and others present to discuss the case and identify legal issues.

At some point during the process, it is likely that all of the participants will meet together in the same room. Throughout the process, the mediator will meet with various groups of people to help them share their ideas and problem solve. The goal is for everybody to come up with a plan that is safe and best for the child, as well as safe for the family members.

If the parties come to some agreement, the mediator will write this down and have everyone sign it. Agreements become court orders when signed by the Judicial Officer. In the alternative, the agreement may be placed on the court record by the Judicial Officer. Even if you have reached a mediated agreement, you will still attend your next court hearing. If there is no agreement, the case moves on to the previously scheduled court date for the Judicial Officer's decision.

Confidentiality & Exceptions

Confidentiality in Dependency Mediation means that no one can tell the Juvenile Dependency Court Judge or Master what was said in mediation, except to report who attended and the areas of agreement. It also means that people in the mediation should not talk to anyone outside of the mediation about what was said, unless everyone agrees that this should happen. Notes taken in the mediation session will be collected by the mediator.

The following things are NOT confidential, and require that the proper authorities be informed:

- The agreement reached in mediation that goes to the Judicial Officer for signature;
- If the mediator reasonably suspects a new act of abuse or neglect (child or elder) has happened;
- If anyone threatens to harm self or others.

There may be other circumstances where information may not be confidential (including if a criminal case is pending, or filed at a later date.) Consult with your attorney prior to participating in mediation if there is a related criminal matter or investigation in process.

Who are the Mediators?

All of the JDMP mediators are formally trained in dependency mediation. They come from different professions and have an understanding of the Nevada child welfare system, the dynamics of conflict, and cultural considerations. Their job is to facilitate conversation in a safe, informal environment, empowering participants to find satisfactory solutions.

Issues Discussed in Mediation

Some of the issues talked about in mediation are:

- Wording of Allegations (petition language)
- Reunification Plans
- Placement Options
- Custody and Visitation Plans
- Expectations
- Services for children and parents, such as:
 - » individual and/or family counseling
 - » drug testing
 - » substance abuse treatment
 - » parenting and/or domestic violence classes

Throughout the mediation session, the focus will be on what the child's needs are, what parents will do, and what social services can do.

Preparing for the Appointment

To prepare for the mediation appointment you can talk with your attorney about the issues you would like to bring up, think about what is best for your child, and be open to considering different ideas.



JDMP ROAD MAP TO SUCCESS IN NEVADA

Successful Implementation of a Statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program (JDMP)

JDMP assists those involved in child abuse and neglect cases to collaboratively consider a wider range of creative options and formulate the best decisions about appropriate intervention and care of children.

CQI



Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)



Outcome Evaluation Conducted By Neutral 3rd Party

- Consider enhancement and expansion based on findings

CQI



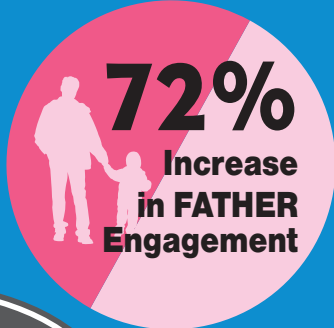
Statutory Support – Stable, Permanent Funding

- **CQI** – Implement recommendations



Process Evaluation Conducted By Neutral 3rd Party

- Annual advanced mediation panel training
- Monthly meetings for mediators and administrators to provide support, answer questions
- Stakeholder buy-in / stakeholder training
 - Identify funding sources



CQI

Process & Outcome Evaluations Conducted By Neutral 3rd Party

- Stakeholder interventions
- **CQI** – implement eval recommendations



CQI



Process Evaluation Conducted By Neutral 3rd Party

- Stakeholder education/buy-in



Implement Several Pilot Projects

- Implement one at a time followed by process and outcome evaluations



Design Pilot Project with Protocols & Evaluation Components to Address Need

- Develop theory of change with logic model
- Identify possible Solution & Funding Sources

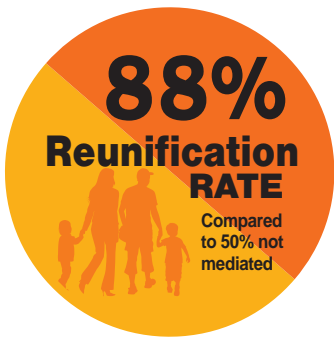


ID Possible Causes of Issue

- Root cause analysis with judges, child welfare, stakeholders



Identify the Issue



Go Statewide After Several Years of Implementing Pilots

- Develop Toolkit: Protocol, forms, brochures, videos
- Recruit & Train Mediators: 40hr Dependency Mediation Training
- Ensure program is adequately supported administratively
- **CQI**

“Mediation mirrors the very essence of the dependency process - all parties working for the best interests of the child”

- DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL



DEPENDENCY MEDIATION OBJECTIVES

- Expedite permanency for children
- Improve permanency outcomes for children
- Reduce need for further litigation
- Increase engagement and communication among parties
- Allow and promote meaningful input from children and youth
- Enhance mediation participants' satisfaction
- Reduce costs



WHAT PARENTS ARE SAYING

"The chance to be heard was very helpful."

"Walking out with more hope now than the whole 2 years for this case. This is a great way for parents to feel safe and able to let everyone know how they feel and where they stand."

"Keep doing this, we are not criminals!"

"A place of peace and hope for discussion without yelling." - FOSTER PARENT

THE SURVEY SAYS ...



Children, Parents
Foster/Adopted Parents



Attorneys, Social Workers,
CASA/GAL, etc.



NUMBER OF CHILDREN HELPED

"A genteel & respectful alternative to the litigious courtroom setting"

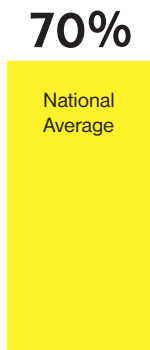
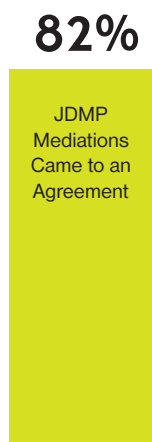
CHILD'S ATTORNEY

"Everyone came together to calmly discuss the child.."

- PARENT'S ATTORNEY



IN AGREEMENT



"The Dependency Mediation Program has been a successful tool in resolving highly emotional and difficult cases. By mediation agreements prior to the settlement conference, the program has greatly assisted in reducing congested court dockets."

- HONORABLE CYNTHIA LU
2ND JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT

SAVINGS*

\$420,451



*Reduced court and staff time

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Katherine R. Malzahn-Bass
Administrative Office of the Courts, Supreme Court of NV
(775) 687-9809
kmalzahn-bass@nvcourts.nv.gov

Margaret M. Crowley
JDMP Administrator
(775) 233-6711
Margaret@CrowleyMediation.com

Appendix 3

Justice Saitta's Letter Requiring
Formation of Community
Improvement Councils

SUPREME COURT OF NEVADA
NANCY M. SAITTA, JUSTICE
201 SOUTH CARSON STREET
CARSON CITY, NEVADA 89701-4702
(775) 684-1530



October 27, 2010

The Honorable T. Arthur Ritchie, Jr.
Judge, Eighth Judicial District Family Court
200 Lewis Avenue
Las Vegas NV 89155

Dear Chief Judge Ritchie, Jr.:

cut

In response to a federal review of Nevada's child welfare system, the courts have been asked to identify barriers to permanency, timely adoption, and termination of parental rights. Work groups or "community improvement councils" (CIC) have proven to be very effective in other states. Because you are directly involved in the system, know what your local issues are and how best to resolve them, I would like you to convene and have one of the family court judges chair a CIC in your judicial district. These Councils should be composed of key local stakeholders and other system partners such as district attorneys, private attorneys, child welfare agency staff, CASAs, GALs, and other interested parties.

The goal of these CICs is to consider the current functioning and efficiency of the permanency timeframes by identifying and assessing the challenges and possible solutions specific to your jurisdiction. To accomplish this goal your CIC will meet two or three times over the next four months. Ideally, all the CICs should share their experiences and lessons learned.

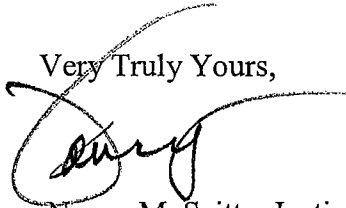
You will not be alone in this endeavor. The Court Improvement Program will provide you with information and staff support. CIP has some limited resources available to assist you with such things as facilitation of your Council, invitations to community members, or research data.

In the next day or two, you will receive a letter from Kathie Malzahn-Bass, CIP Coordinator, with more specific information on the Community Improvement Council process. Kathie plans to attend as many initial CIC meetings as possible. Please consider this letter as my "introduction" of Kathie. As the CIP coordinator, Kathie can assist you and identify opportunities during your council meetings where CIP might offer assistance.

I am counting on you to make your CIC a success. I know how busy you are, and I sincerely appreciate the time and effort you will give to this project. I believe that the court plays an important part in ensuring the system works for everyone.

Should you have any questions, please contact me directly at nsaitta@nvcourts.nv.gov or 775.684.1530.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nancy', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Nancy M. Saitta, Justice

rt

cc: Chief Justice Parraguirre
Judge Togliatti
Judge Sanchez
Judge Steel
K. Malzahn-Bass

Appendix 4

Court Performance Measures and Statewide Data Summary

Court Performance Timeliness Measures
 Statewide

From: 01-01-2018 To: 12-31-2018

Last update: 01-31-2019

This is the ad hoc modified CFS775 report (new court names, no future hearings, youth age 18 and under, etc) prepared by the Office of Analytics - DCFS Branch.

Court	Nbr of Children with Protective Custody Hearing*	Nbr of Children with at least 1 Permanency Hearing**	Median Days to 1st Permanency Hearing	Percent 1 st Hearing within 365 days from Removal Date	Nbr of Children with at least 1 Permanency Hearing - 2-year look back from end of PUR	Median Days to 1 st Permanency Hearing - 2-year look back from end of PUR	Percent 1 st Hearing within 365 days from Removal Date - 2 year look back from end of PUR	Nbr of Parents with Termination	Median Days to Terminate Parental Rights	Nbr of Parents with Relinquishment	Median Days to Relinquishment of Parental Rights
TOTAL	4110	2376	352	84%	1868	350	85%	2371	673	1027	576
1 ST /CARSON	89	69	286	100%	65	286	100%	25	607	43	503
1ST/STOREY	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2ND/WASHOE	739	495	331	97%	365	295	97%	540	678	330	644
3RD/LYON	63	44	326.5	84%	37	305	89%	9	655	16	431
4TH/ELKO	38	27	360	85%	20	360	85%	10	668	10	443
5TH/ESMERALDA	1	1	356	100%	1	356	100%	3	1091	3	1021
5TH/NYE	64	40	363	58%	30	358	73%	13	735	13	741
6TH/HUMBOLDT	14	16	364	94%	16	364	94%	16	891	3	899
7TH/EUREKA	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7TH/LINCOLN	1	1	343	100%	1	343	100%	0	0	0	0
7TH/WHITE PINE	9	10	360.5	50%	10	360.5	50%	0	0	0	0
8TH/CLARK	3033	1625	354	80%	1281	353	81%	1744	572	581	669
9TH/DOUGLAS	10	8	354	88%	7	354	100%	5	587	3	576
10TH/CHURCHILL	27	24	322	96%	21	322	100%	3	637	12	426
11TH/LANDER	3	4	357	100%	4	357	100%	1	855	3	709
11TH/MINERAL	3	4	366.5	50%	2	312.5	100%	2	895	4	575
11TH/PERSHING	8	8	325	100%	8	325	100%	0	0	6	323

*This column shows the count of youth in agency custody with a removal record and a protective custody hearing entered in UNITY for the current foster care episode.

**This column shows the count of youth in agency custody with a removal record and at least one permanency hearing entered in UNITY for the current foster care episode.

NEVADA/STATEWIDE (Jurisdiction weighted averages)

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	779	3.66	794,304	925
AGED OUT	21	10.09	36,943	821
CUSTODIANSHIP	1	6	819	819
DEATH OF CHILD	1	5	2,409	2,409
EMANCIPATION	0	N/A	N/A	N/A
GRDNSHPNONREL	11	2.91	7,361	621
GRDNSHPRELATIVE	110	2.68	72,339	615.5
RTNTOCARETAKER	310	2.93	169,038	500
RTNTOOTHRPRNT	296	3.03	179,491	541
RTNTOOTHRRELT	10	3.30	7,170	742
RUNAWAY	0	N/A	N/A	N/A
TRANSFROTHAGNCY	0	N/A	N/A	N/A
TRANSFRTOTRIBE	1	3	687	687

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for STATEWIDE – CY 2018		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2018	697
Median Days to Permanency	Through 2 nd Quarter 2018	687
Median Days to Permanency	Through 3 rd Quarter 2018	721
Median Days to Permanency	Through 4 th Quarter 2018	726
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	824
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	848
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	729
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	675
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	688
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	644
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	714
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2017	688
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2018	726

1ST/CARSON

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	14	4.43	13648	954
GRDNSHPRELATIVE	3	2.00	2005	695
RTINTOCARETAKER	2	2.00	789	394
RTINTOOTHPRNT	7	1.14	4031	606

1ST/STOREY

N/A

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for the 1st JD – CY 2018		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2018	567
Median Days to Permanency	Through 2 nd Quarter 2018	760
Median Days to Permanency	Through 3 rd Quarter 2018	760
Median Days to Permanency	Through 4 th Quarter 2018	727.5
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	1,190
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	790
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	730
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	557
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	715
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	578
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	871
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2017	671
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2018	727.5

2ND/WASHOE

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	213	3.32	224130	979
AGED OUT	6	5.33	6800	815
GRDNSHPRELATIVE	6	3.50	5045	748
RTINTOCARETAKER	79	2.39	45658	532
RTINTOOTHPRNT	22	3.18	13484	522
RTINTOOTHRELT	1	2.00	829	829

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for the 2 nd JD – CY 2018		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2018	717.5
Median Days to Permanency	Through 2 nd Quarter 2018	848
Median Days to Permanency	Through 3 rd Quarter 2018	848
Median Days to Permanency	Through 4 th Quarter 2018	823
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	849
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	818
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	712
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	659
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	658
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	681
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	713
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2017	718
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2018	823

3RD/LYON

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	6	1.67	3838	622
RTNTOCARETAKER	1	1.00	334	334
RTNTOOTHRPRNT	6	1.67	2597	420
TRANSFRTOTRIBE	1	3.00	687	687

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for the 3 rd JD – CY 2018		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2018	612
Median Days to Permanency	Through 2 nd Quarter 2018	612
Median Days to Permanency	Through 3 rd Quarter 2018	612
Median Days to Permanency	Through 4 th Quarter 2018	612
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	603
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	1,128
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	1,029
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	761
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	719
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	503
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	920
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2017	697
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2018	612

4TH/ELKO

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	6	3.00	4985	795
GRDNSHPNONREL	1	6.00	1294	1294
RTNTOCARETAKER	1	1.00	283	283
RTNTOOTHRPRNT	10	1.70	6985	557

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for the 4th JD – CY 2018		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2018	1,048.5
Median Days to Permanency	Through 2 nd Quarter 2018	690.5
Median Days to Permanency	Through 3 rd Quarter 2018	795
Median Days to Permanency	Through 4 th Quarter 2018	795
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	1,270
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	685
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	522
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	618
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	753
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	448
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	620
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2017	691
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2018	795

5TH/ESMERALDA

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	3	4.00	3462	1154

5TH/NYE

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	5	12.00	7703	1077
AGED OUT	1	10.00	1763	1763
RTINTOCARETAKER	7	4.00	1883	235
RTINTOOTHPRNT	4	2.75	1534	386

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for the 5 th JD – CY 2018		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2018	342
Median Days to Permanency	Through 2 nd Quarter 2018	1,055
Median Days to Permanency	Through 3 rd Quarter 2018	1,086
Median Days to Permanency	Through 4 th Quarter 2018	446.5
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	1,573
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	562
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	732
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	557
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	674
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	916
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	1,018
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2017	646
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2018	446.5

6TH/HUMBOLDT

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
RTINTOCARETAKER	2	3.00	1372	686
RTINTOOTHERPRNT	3	4.00	2566	686

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for the 6th JD – CY 2018		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2018	1,290
Median Days to Permanency	Through 2 nd Quarter 2018	1,290
Median Days to Permanency	Through 3 rd Quarter 2018	1,290
Median Days to Permanency	Through 4 th Quarter 2018	686
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	1,068
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	1,564
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	581
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	966
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	810
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	929
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	704
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2017	688
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2018	686

7TH/EUREKA

N/A

7TH/LINCOLN

N/A

7TH/WHITE PINE

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
RTNTOCARETAKER	2	2.50	1038	519

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for the 7th JD – CY 2018		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2018	639
Median Days to Permanency	Through 2 nd Quarter 2018	519
Median Days to Permanency	Through 3 rd Quarter 2018	519
Median Days to Permanency	Through 4 th Quarter 2018	519
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	995
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	540
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	356
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	1,206
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	948
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	417
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	660
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2017	645
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2018	519

8TH/CLARK

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	529	3.74	534206	900
AGED OUT	11	12.09	18896	816
CUSTODIANSHIP	1	6.00	819	819
DEATH OF CHILD	1	5.00	2409	2409
GRDNSHPNONREL	9	2.78	5738	621
GRDNSHPRELATIVE	100	2.66	64856	600
RTNTOCARETAKER	208	3.16	115257	515
RTNTOOTHRPRNT	224	3.21	137086	541
RTNTOOTHRRELT	9	3.44	6341	655

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for the 8 th JD – CY 2018		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2018	701.5
Median Days to Permanency	Through 2 nd Quarter 2018	673
Median Days to Permanency	Through 3 rd Quarter 2018	698.5
Median Days to Permanency	Through 4 th Quarter 2018	714
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	793
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	869
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	735
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	679
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	691
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	641
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	663
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2017	686
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2018	714

9TH/DOUGLAS

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
RTINTOCARETAKER	2	5.00	700	350
RTINTOOTHPRNT	8	3.50	6911	802

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for the 9th JD – CY 2018		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2018	350
Median Days to Permanency	Through 2 nd Quarter 2018	350
Median Days to Permanency	Through 3 rd Quarter 2018	545.5
Median Days to Permanency	Through 4 th Quarter 2018	725.5
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	241
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	478
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	418
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	399
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	537
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	482
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	916
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2017	560
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2018	725.5

10TH/CHURCHILL

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	3	2.00	2332	742
AGED OUT	1	7.00	625	625
GRDNSHPNONREL	1	1.00	329	329
GRDNSHPRELATIVE	1	2.00	433	433
RTINTOCARETAKER	1	1.00	61	61
RTINTOOTHERPRNT	9	1.67	2209	227

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for the 10 th JD – CY 2018		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2018	N/A
Median Days to Permanency	Through 2 nd Quarter 2018	331
Median Days to Permanency	Through 3 rd Quarter 2018	433
Median Days to Permanency	Through 4 th Quarter 2018	506.5
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	726
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	699
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	601
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	650
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	831
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	504
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	533
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2017	769
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2018	506.5

11TH/LANDER

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
AGED OUT	1	7.00	4420	4420
RTNTOOHRPRNT	3	2.33	2088	753

11TH/MINERAL

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
AGED OUT	1	23.00	4439	4439
RTNTOCARETAKER	2	1.00	682	341

11TH/PERSHING

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
RTNTOCARETAKER	3	1.00	981	327

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for the 11th JD – CY 2018

Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2018	N/A
Median Days to Permanency	Through 2 nd Quarter 2018	341
Median Days to Permanency	Through 3 rd Quarter 2018	475
Median Days to Permanency	Through 4 th Quarter 2018	408
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	1,225
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	1,589
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	1,382
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	577
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	1,252
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	931
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	484
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2017	675
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2018	408

Court Performance Timeliness Measures
 Statewide

From: 01-01-2019 To: 03-31-2019

Last updated: 04-19-2019

This is the ad hoc modified CFS775 report (new court names, no future hearings, youth age 18 and under, etc) prepared by the Office of Analytics - DCFS Branch.

Court	Nbr of Children with Protective Custody Hearing*	Nbr of Children with at least 1 Permanency Hearing**	Median Days to 1st Permanency Hearing	Percent 1 st Hearing within 365 days from Removal Date	Nbr of Children with at least 1 Permanency Hearing - 2-year look back from end of PUR	Median Days to 1 st Permanency Hearing - 2-year look back from end PUR	Percent 1 st Hearing within 365 days from Removal Date - 2 year look back from end of PUR	Nbr of Parents with Termination	Median Days to Terminate Parental Rights	Nbr of Parents with Relinquishment	Median Days to Relinquishment of Parental Rights
TOTAL	4087	2355	352	84%	1872	350	87%	1517	673.5	698	565
1ST/CARSON	77	63	267	100%	58	276.5	100%	17	607	34	481
1ST/STOREY	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2ND/WASHOE	727	507	346	97%	393	346	97%	278	670	207	622
3RD/LYON	60	35	335	86%	29	335	93%	7	661	8	367
4TH/ELKO	40	19	363	100%	13	364	100%	0	0	16	565
5TH/ESMERALDA	1	1	356	100%	1	356	100%	0	0	0	0
5TH/MINERAL	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	831
5TH/NYE	68	44	362.5	55%	32	358	66%	8	677	9	516
6TH/HUMBOLDT	13	15	364	100%	7	342	100%	16	891	3	899
7TH/LINCOLN	1	1	343	100%	1	343	100%	0	0	0	0
7TH/WHITE PINE	13	13	357	62%	13	357	62%	0	0	0	0
8TH/CLARK	3033	1616	353	80%	1290	351	83%	1178	572	391	650
9TH/DOUGLAS	8	7	354	86%	4	359	100%	4	587	2	576
10TH/CHURCHILL	27	20	304	95%	18	304	100%	6	727	14	475
11TH/LANDER	3	4	357	100%	4	357	100%	1	855	4	709
11TH/MINERAL	2	2	366.5	50%	1	353	100%	2	895	2	356
11TH/PERSHING	8	8	325	100%	8	325	100%	0	0	6	323

*This column shows the count of youth in agency custody with a removal record and a protective custody hearing entered in UNITY for the current foster care episode.

**This column shows the count of youth in agency custody with a removal record and at least one permanency hearing entered in UNITY for the current foster care episode.

NEVADA/STATEWIDE (Jurisdiction weighted averages)

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	168	3.62	176,315	995
AGED OUT	10	5.10	11,465	927.5
CUSTODIANSHIP	0	N/A	N/A	N/A
DEATH OF CHILD	0	N/A	N/A	N/A
EMANCIPATION	0	N/A	N/A	N/A
GRDNSHPNONREL	3	3.00	1,935	823
GRDNSHPRELATIVE	28	3.07	17,459	580
RTNTOCARETAKER	74	2.23	47,935	609
RTNTOOTHRPRNT	102	3.14	62,307	523
RTNTOOTHRRELT	0	N/A	N/A	N/A
RUNAWAY	0	N/A	N/A	N/A
TRANSFROTHAGNCY	1	21.00	2,373	2,373
TRANSFRTOTRIBE	0	N/A	N/A	N/A

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for STATEWIDE – CY 2019		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2019	687
Median Days to Permanency	Through 2 nd Quarter 2019	
Median Days to Permanency	Through 3 rd Quarter 2019	
Median Days to Permanency	Through 4 th Quarter 2019	
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	824
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	848
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	729
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	675
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	688
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	644
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	714
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2017	688
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2018	726
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2019	

1ST/CARSON

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	4	1.75	2826	712
GRDNSHPNONREL	1	3.00	289	289
RTNTOCARETAKER	1	8.00	1353	1353
RTNTOOTHRPRNT	12	2.08	7537	568

1ST/STOREY

N/A

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for the 1 st JD – CY 2019		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2019	642
Median Days to Permanency	Through 2 nd Quarter 2019	
Median Days to Permanency	Through 3 rd Quarter 2019	
Median Days to Permanency	Through 4 th Quarter 2019	
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	1,190
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	790
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	730
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	557
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	715
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	578
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	871
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2017	671
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2018	727.5
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2019	

2ND/WASHOE

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	37	2.57	37872	992
AGED OUT	3	2.33	5423	1099
RTNTOCARETAKER	10	2.10	5179	491
RTNTOOTHRPRNT	9	3.11	5084	546

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for the 2nd JD – CY 2019		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2019	775
Median Days to Permanency	Through 2 nd Quarter 2019	
Median Days to Permanency	Through 3 rd Quarter 2019	
Median Days to Permanency	Through 4 th Quarter 2019	
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	849
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	818
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	712
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	659
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	658
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	681
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	713
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2017	718
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2018	823
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2019	

3RD/LYON

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	2	1.00	1294	647
AGED OUT	1	2.00	257	257
RTINTOCARETAKER	7	2.57	6557	917
RTINTOOTHPRNT	1	1.00	357	357

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for the 3 rd JD – CY 2019		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2019	917
Median Days to Permanency	Through 2 nd Quarter 2019	
Median Days to Permanency	Through 3 rd Quarter 2019	
Median Days to Permanency	Through 4 th Quarter 2019	
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	603
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	1,128
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	1,029
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	761
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	719
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	503
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	920
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2017	697
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2018	612
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2019	

4TH/ELKO

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	3	1.00	2222	672
GRDNSHPRELATIVE	3	2.00	2130	710
RTNTOOTHRPRNT	6	3.00	2838	473

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for the 4 th JD – CY 2019		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2019	517
Median Days to Permanency	Through 2 nd Quarter 2019	
Median Days to Permanency	Through 3 rd Quarter 2019	
Median Days to Permanency	Through 4 th Quarter 2019	
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	1,270
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	685
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	522
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	618
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	753
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	448
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	620
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2017	691
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2018	795
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2019	

5TH/ESMERALDA

N/A

5TH/NYE

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	1	3.00	883	883
GRDNSHPRELATIVE	1	1.00	513	513

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for the 5 th JD – CY 2019		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2019	698
Median Days to Permanency	Through 2 nd Quarter 2019	
Median Days to Permanency	Through 3 rd Quarter 2019	
Median Days to Permanency	Through 4 th Quarter 2019	
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	1,573
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	562
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	732
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	557
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	674
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	916
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	1,018
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2017	646
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2018	446.5
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2019	

6TH/HUMBOLDT

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	1	1.00	937	937

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for the 6 th JD – CY 2019		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2019	937
Median Days to Permanency	Through 2 nd Quarter 2019	
Median Days to Permanency	Through 3 rd Quarter 2019	
Median Days to Permanency	Through 4 th Quarter 2019	
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	1,068
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	1,564
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	581
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	966
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	810
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	929
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	704
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2017	688
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2018	686
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2019	

7TH/EUREKA

N/A

7TH/LINCOLN

N/A

7TH/WHITE PINE

N/A

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for the 7th JD – CY 2019		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2019	N/A
Median Days to Permanency	Through 2 nd Quarter 2019	
Median Days to Permanency	Through 3 rd Quarter 2019	
Median Days to Permanency	Through 4 th Quarter 2019	
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	995
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	540
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	356
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	1,206
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	948
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	417
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	660
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2017	645
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2018	519
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2019	

8TH/CLARK

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	116	4.16	126760	1038
AGED OUT	5	5.60	4911	981
GRDNSHPNONREL	2	3.00	1646	823
GRDNSHPRELATIVE	24	3.29	14816	579
RTINTOCARETAKER	54	2.15	34062	603
RTINTOOTHPRNT	72	3.36	45893	536
TRANSFROTHAGNCY	1	21.00	2373	2373

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for the 8 th JD – CY 2019		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2019	680.5
Median Days to Permanency	Through 2 nd Quarter 2019	
Median Days to Permanency	Through 3 rd Quarter 2019	
Median Days to Permanency	Through 4 th Quarter 2019	
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	793
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	869
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	735
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	679
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	691
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	641
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	663
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2017	686
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2018	714
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2019	

9TH/DOUGLAS

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
AGED OUT	1	14.00	874	874

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for the 9 th JD – CY 2019		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2019	874
Median Days to Permanency	Through 2 nd Quarter 2019	
Median Days to Permanency	Through 3 rd Quarter 2019	
Median Days to Permanency	Through 4 th Quarter 2019	
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	241
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	478
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	418
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	399
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	537
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	482
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	916
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2017	560
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2018	725.5
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2019	

10TH/CHURCHILL

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	3	3.67	2879	943
RTNTOCARETAKER	2	1.00	784	392
RTNTOOTHRPRNT	2	3.00	598	299

3RD/CHURCHILL

N/A

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for the 10 th JD – CY 2019		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2019	515
Median Days to Permanency	Through 2 nd Quarter 2019	
Median Days to Permanency	Through 3 rd Quarter 2019	
Median Days to Permanency	Through 4 th Quarter 2019	
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	726
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	699
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	601
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	650
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	831
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	504
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	533
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2017	769
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2018	506.5
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2019	

11TH/LANDER

N/A

6TH/LANDER

N/A

11TH/MINERAL

End Reason	Nbr of Children	Average Nbr of Placements	Total Days in Custody	Median Days till closure
ADOPTIONLEGAL	1	3.00	642	642

5TH/MINERAL

N/A

11TH/PERSHING

N/A

Quarterly Median Days to Permanency for the 11th JD – CY 2019		
Median Days to Permanency	1 st Quarter 2019	642
Median Days to Permanency	Through 2 nd Quarter 2019	
Median Days to Permanency	Through 3 rd Quarter 2019	
Median Days to Permanency	Through 4 th Quarter 2019	
Annual Median Days to Permanency		
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2010	1,225
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2011	1,589
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2012	1,382
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2013	577
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2014	1,252
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2015	931
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2016	484
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2017	675
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2018	408
Median Days to Permanency per Year	CY 2019	

Appendix 5

Community Improvement Councils' 2018 Action Plans

Action Plan
for **Change**

September 28, 2018

**FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT
COUNCIL**



Nevada Community Improvement Councils 2018 Summit

Topic: Change and Knowledge: The Foundation of Progress

PLANNING FOR CHANGE				
PRIORITIES TO DELIVER QUALITY HEARINGS	CONCRETE STEPS TO IMPLEMENT (i.e., DRAFT PROTOCOL, BUY A PRINTER)	PRACTICE CHANGE EXPECTED (WHAT WILL BE DONE DIFFERENTLY i.e. JUDGE ASKS W.A.T.C.H.)	EXPECTED RESULTS OF THE CHANGE (i.e., TIMELINESS, PARENTS ENGAGED, PERMANENCY)	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce re-entry rates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify re-entry cases from the last 2 years. Analyze reasons for case closure and cause of re-entry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize conditions for return and assessments provided. CFT meeting before case closure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lower re-entry rates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owner: Court Stakeholders Status: Next Steps: Identify cases Estimated Completion Date: 1 year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow Children to stay in foster care as long as they need to and not one day more. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify if there is a correlation between court hearings and children's return home. Kelly will call Mr. Church Explore scheduling change of CFT meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on conditions of return. Reunify as soon as requirements are satisfied to DCFS standards, or If court order required for return, then file a stipulation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> if necessary a status hearing will be scheduled. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leveling of curve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owner: Court Stakeholders Status: Next Steps: Talk with Mr. Church Estimated Completion Date: 1 year

Which priority will be monitored and how?

Action Plan
for **Change**

September 28, 2018

**SECOND JUDICIAL DISTRICT
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT
COUNCIL**



Nevada Community Improvement Councils 2018 Summit

Topic: Change and Knowledge: The Foundation of Progress

PLANNING FOR CHANGE				
PRIORITIES TO DELIVER QUALITY HEARINGS	CONCRETE STEPS TO IMPLEMENT (i.e., DRAFT PROTOCOL, BUY A PRINTER)	PRACTICE CHANGE EXPECTED (WHAT WILL BE DONE DIFFERENTLY i.e. JUDGE ASKS W.A.T.C.H.)	EXPECTED RESULTS OF THE CHANGE (i.e., TIMELINESS, PARENTS ENGAGED, PERMANENCY)	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mediation to address at risk reunification, contested permanency, and no-shows. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set mediation for risk of reunification contested permanency. • Avoid wasted mediation slots 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement new referral order –Mary Herzik • Stip/order to vacate • Not set mediation if parents are inconsistent. • Engagement/ Use brochures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better utilization and cost savings to medication program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Judge Lu • Status: • Next Steps: • Estimated Completion Date: 90 days
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data analysis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ 22% short stayers ➢ 56% removal rate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact Mr. Church to understand data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Ask re-time in care ➢ Use same data language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify removal reasons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower short stayers and removal rates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Judge Lu, HAS • Status: • Next Steps: • Estimated Completion Date: 6 months

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Flattening reunification “Survival Curve” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 8.5 months to reunify vs. 9 months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reboot for PCs /FST ● When to close is given, a meeting in court order to push closing decision ● 3 months and 9 months meeting or monthly review meetings in house? ● Training 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Owner: HSA ● Status: ● Next Steps: ● Estimated Completion Date: 90 days
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Which priority will be monitored and how?

Action Plan
for **Change**

September 28, 2018

**THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT
COUNCIL**



Nevada Community Improvement Councils 2018 Summit

Topic: Change and Knowledge: The Foundation of Progress

PLANNING FOR CHANGE				
PRIORITIES TO DELIVER QUALITY HEARINGS	CONCRETE STEPS TO IMPLEMENT (i.e., DRAFT PROTOCOL, BUY A PRINTER)	PRACTICE CHANGE EXPECTED (WHAT WILL BE DONE DIFFERENTLY i.e. JUDGE ASKS W.A.T.C.H.)	EXPECTED RESULTS OF THE CHANGE (i.e., TIMELINESS, PARENTS ENGAGED, PERMANENCY)	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decreasing time permanency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold interim hearings at 9 months Coordinate with County Social Services to address transportation issues Research additional clinicians for domestic violence counseling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional hearings & oversight Additional resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faster delivery of services Faster permanency Quicker & more likely reunification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owner: Status: Next Steps: Estimated Completion Date:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address changes brought by Family First and ensure compliance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders familiarize selves with law's provision Setup 3 meetings before 10/1/2019 implementation to decide how to ensure compliance Use template orders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Come into compliance with Family First law 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure compliance with Family First opens its implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owner: Status: Next Steps: Estimated Completion Date:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly CIC meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify issues for improvement 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase Collaboration among stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: • Status: • Next Steps: • Estimated Completion Date:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents, pleadings etc. sewed and filed in a timely manner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All documents filed 7 days before hearing • Orders appointing counsel sent to DA to ensure proper service of petition • PLR & placement petitions to be done timely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents completed sooner & shared 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure service to all stakeholders • Ensure timely delivery of reports and pleadings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: • Status: • Next Steps: • Estimated Completion Date:

Which priority will be monitored and how?

Action Plan
for **Change**

September 28, 2018

**FOURTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT
COUNCIL**



Nevada Community Improvement Councils 2018 Summit

Topic: Change and Knowledge: The Foundation of Progress

PLANNING FOR CHANGE				
PRIORITIES TO DELIVER QUALITY HEARINGS	CONCRETE STEPS TO IMPLEMENT (i.e., DRAFT PROTOCOL, BUY A PRINTER)	PRACTICE CHANGE EXPECTED (WHAT WILL BE DONE DIFFERENTLY i.e. JUDGE ASKS W.A.T.C.H.)	EXPECTED RESULTS OF THE CHANGE (i.e., TIMELINESS, PARENTS ENGAGED, PERMANENCY)	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customized Hearing schedule for each case 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At Disposition Hearing , set semi and perm hearings as well as 30 day hearing if warranted for that case 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More parent and stakeholder engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents engaged and more reunification in a timely manner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Judge • Status: • Next Steps: Start at next Disposition Hearing • Estimated Completion Date: Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Court utilizing bench cards for each hearing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading and understanding of the bench cards so DCFS, attorneys, CASA & parents understand the process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More understand by the parties and increased engagement by parents and parties. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve hearing quality to enhance permanency for the children in a timely manner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Judge • Status: • Next Steps: Start at next hearing • Estimated Completion Date: Ongoing

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improve foster care recruitment and retention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue to meet with community organizations ● Continue to organize stakeholders to speak at recruitment events ● Host social events for existing foster parents to promote positive relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase number of foster homes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Decrease in traumatic impact through sibling separation and Uprooting from support systems ● Follow law to keep siblings together as much as possible ● Increase in local foster care recruitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Owner: ● Status: ● Next Steps: ● Estimated Completion Date:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Address and implement Family First Act as required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Learn the provisions and implementation of the requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Judge will ensure compliance ● Trainings for the stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Compliance with requirements ● Better outcomes for families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Owner: ● Status: ● Next Steps: ● Estimated Completion Date:

Which priority will be monitored and how?

Action Plan
for **Change**

September 28, 2018

**FIFTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT
COUNCIL**



Nevada Community Improvement Councils 2018 Summit

Topic: Change and Knowledge: The Foundation of Progress

PLANNING FOR CHANGE				
PRIORITIES TO DELIVER QUALITY HEARINGS	CONCRETE STEPS TO IMPLEMENT (i.e., DRAFT PROTOCOL, BUY A PRINTER)	PRACTICE CHANGE EXPECTED (WHAT WILL BE DONE DIFFERENTLY i.e. JUDGE ASKS W.A.T.C.H.)	EXPECTED RESULTS OF THE CHANGE (i.e., TIMELINESS, PARENTS ENGAGED, PERMANENCY)	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conditions for return. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written in court report, in court order, and attached together. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better Communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents, attorney, and judge will have a better understanding when children will return. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Michael Cason • Status: Pending • Next Steps: Continue • Estimated Completion Date: 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Filing Motions for TPR hearings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AGs office filing motion for TPR after notice from DCFS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All filings and hearings will be done with the same 432B judge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved timeliness, and stakeholder performance. • Familiarity with the same court and knowledge of the judge, expedited hearings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Michael Cason and Izaac Rowe • Status: Implemented • Next Steps: Continue • Estimated Completion Date: 2019

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All children will be appointed counsel. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Order by Judge per statute. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All children will be legally represented. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's legal rights will be supported and heard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Michael Cason and Judge • Status: Implemented • Next Steps: Continue • Estimated Completion Date: 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warrants for all removals (if applicable). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warrant template confirming access to DAG and Judge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of warrants and court approval for DCFS actions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents' rights are protected, DCFS actions supported, legal process followed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Michael Cason, Judge, AG's Office • Status: Implemented • Next Steps: Continue • Estimated Completion Date: 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribution of court bench cards for a check list of court protocol. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a standardized checklist per district hearing quality standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All district court judges will be in unison regarding communicating with clients. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better communication, increased engagement and understanding among parents, DCFS, and the courts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Michael Cason, Court • Status: Pending • Next Steps: Continue • Estimated Completion Date: 2019

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mediation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a timeline of when mediation will be utilized. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More scheduled and frequent mediations and better communication and engagement with parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More expeditious hearings to improve understanding of legal process and give parents a voice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Michael Cason, mediator, Court • Status: Pending • Next Steps: Continue • Estimated Completion Date: 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of Family First Prevention Services Act. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pending. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pending. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pending. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Michael Cason • Status: Pending • Next Steps: Pending • Estimated Completion Date: 2019

Which priority will be monitored and how?

Action Plan
for **Change**

September 28, 2018

**SIXTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT
COUNCIL**



Nevada Community Improvement Councils 2018 Summit

Topic: Change and Knowledge: The Foundation of Progress

PLANNING FOR CHANGE				
PRIORITIES TO DELIVER QUALITY HEARINGS	CONCRETE STEPS TO IMPLEMENT (i.e., DRAFT PROTOCOL, BUY A PRINTER)	PRACTICE CHANGE EXPECTED (WHAT WILL BE DONE DIFFERENTLY i.e. JUDGE ASKS W.A.T.C.H.)	EXPECTED RESULTS OF THE CHANGE (i.e., TIMELINESS, PARENTS ENGAGED, PERMANENCY)	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and implement a Guardian Ad Litem program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate with adjoining jurisdiction (7th) Create committee from CIC resources Identify volunteers and training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Court will appoint GAL in compliance with the law 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better informed court More paternal engagement More Support for children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owner: Team Status: New Next Steps: Get Committee Estimated Completion Date: 1 year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on implementing & compliance with Family First Prevention Services Act 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educate the stakeholders Utilize CIC resources to create checklist Collaborate with Family Services regarding prevention program & services Explore more court oversight While kids are kept at home (Admin Docket /Petition –Legal Only) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compliance with the law Kids remain in home with families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quicker reunification and discharge Fewer kids removed More families served 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owner: Team Status: New Next Steps: Begin education process Estimated Completion Date: 1 year

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore & Identify a few questions about our data, to dig deeper to assess what is going on • Reunification rate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USE CIC team to come up with the questions • Email Chris <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ (i.e.) Include Brandy Holbrook on unity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity on gaps in our local system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quicker reunification • More Parental engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Team • Status: New • Next Steps: CIC meeting focused on data • Estimated Completion Date: 6 months
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving timeliness for reunification and prevent removals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIC Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Explore and assess how, and if increased collaboration will result in ramification • FTC families moving towards milestones and benchmarks in the program • Consideration by stakeholders for monthly reviews • Training on in-home safety planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased court oversight • Stakeholder engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease time for ramification and discharge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Team • Status: New • Next Steps: CIC meeting with specific topic • Estimated Completion Date: 6-12 months
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping children in our community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorming new, creative ways to assist DCFS in keeping kids in relative placements • Identify barriers • Community outreach • Training on in-home safety planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better educated stakeholders • Targeted use of resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More children remaining home safely • Fewer resources expended by DCFS • Less trauma for children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Team • Status: New • Next Steps: Training from DCFS roundtable • Estimated Completion Date: 6-12 months

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same day orders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify who will prepare the order • Finalize a template for the 6th JD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same day order • Efficiency and faster services • More family treatment court 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental engagement • More collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Court • Status: Quasi-new • Next Steps: Identify the best person • Estimated Completion Date: 3-6 months
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Which priority will be monitored and how?

Training on in home safety planning.

Action Plan
for **Change**

September 28, 2018

**SEVENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT
COUNCIL**



Nevada Community Improvement Councils 2018 Summit

Topic: Change and Knowledge: The Foundation of Progress

PLANNING FOR CHANGE				
PRIORITIES TO DELIVER QUALITY HEARINGS	CONCRETE STEPS TO IMPLEMENT (i.e., DRAFT PROTOCOL, BUY A PRINTER)	PRACTICE CHANGE EXPECTED (WHAT WILL BE DONE DIFFERENTLY i.e. JUDGE ASKS W.A.T.C.H.)	EXPECTED RESULTS OF THE CHANGE (i.e., TIMELINESS, PARENTS ENGAGED, PERMANENCY)	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase number of foster homes in Judicial District 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community events speaking engagements • Open house: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ White Pine County ➢ Eureka County ➢ Lincoln County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More foster homes would be available to allow children to stay in their home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children will be able to have more visits with their parents & maintain their supports in their home community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: CIC Team • Status: Ongoing • Next Steps: Community Events • Estimated Completion Date: Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance with state law Re: GAL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit for GALS within safety providers community • Finalize Training & Safety procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children to be represent by necessary counsel & GAL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's best interest to be met & 7th JD in compliance with state law 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: CIC Team • Status: New • Next Steps: Training/ Recruitment • Estimated Completion Date: 9/2019

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implement PCFA/PCPA model into court process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Possible more training ● Require status updates during CIC meetings to discuss forms and implementation on status 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Working with parents to have active role in establishing their own case plan ● Case plan more in parents own words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● More behavior change rather than compliance based & less recidivism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Owner: CIC Team ● Status: Ongoing ● Next Steps: Continue training & Meeting ● Estimated Completion Date: Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue to improve parents understanding of court process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work with court staff to develop process to use court order templates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be ready to hand court orders to parents as they leave to ensure they understand what occurred at the hearing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parents understand the court process and their case 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Owner: CIC Team ● Status: New ● Next Steps: Working Staff ● Estimated Completion Date: 9/2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Compliance with Family First 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Monitoring short stays: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Spreadsheet ● Recruit safety providers ● Identify services that are needed ● Continue roundtable discussion/bringing into CIC teams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tapping into more services to prevent removals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fewer removals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Owner: CIC Team ● Status: New ● Next Steps: Training ● Estimated Completion Date:

Which priority will be monitored and how?

Action Plan
for **Change**

September 28, 2018

**EIGHTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT
COUNCIL**



Nevada Community Improvement Councils 2018 Summit

Topic: Change and Knowledge: The Foundation of Progress

PLANNING FOR CHANGE				
PRIORITIES TO DELIVER QUALITY HEARINGS	CONCRETE STEPS TO IMPLEMENT (i.e., DRAFT PROTOCOL, BUY A PRINTER)	PRACTICE CHANGE EXPECTED (WHAT WILL BE DONE DIFFERENTLY i.e. JUDGE ASKS W.A.T.C.H.)	EXPECTED RESULTS OF THE CHANGE (i.e., TIMELINESS, PARENTS ENGAGED, PERMANENCY)	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIC to have a good working knowledge of FFPSA to help in educating other stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training our Bench Bar • Training for Judges • DFS agency training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revamp the bench cards • Develop/implement court order template • Re-evaluate court calendars to ensure assessments are occurring in timely manner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potentially fewer removals • Timely permanency • Better awareness • 7 buy-in from child-welfare stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: CIC committee • Status: Ongoing • Next Steps: organize material, review & train • Estimated Completion Date: organize material & review–Nov 1st Train by Dec 31st
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the Fostering Court Improvement Data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule CIC meeting • Request Chris Church to review 8th Judicial data (72 hour, 30 day) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent canvassing of reasonable efforts • Utilize data review to inform further practice change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in congregate care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Judge Sullivan to request assistance by Nov. 1st • Status: Ongoing • Next Steps: Judge Sullivan to contact Kathie to schedule time with Chris Church • Estimated Completion Date: Call by Oct 15th & Schedule by Nov 15th

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review current service providers provides available in the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify well-supported, supported & promising practices identified by California clearing house ● Review Oct 1st memo ACF (Admin for Child and Families) ● Review local providers that meet FFPSA requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Quality & effective services provided to children & families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Families remaining intact ● Reduction in recidivism ● Timely reunification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Owner: CIC committee ● Status: Ongoing ● Next Steps: Review Information Memo & Clearing house info ● Estimated Completion Date: Jan 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recruitment of quality foster placement ● Continue quality improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review current agency recruitment efforts ● CIC stakeholders to hold foster recruitment sessions ● Ongoing recruitment of CASA's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Less reliance on congregate care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase in the number of quality dedicated foster homes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Owner: CIC Committee ● Status: Ongoing ● Next Steps: ● Estimated Completion Date:

Which priority will be monitored and how?

Each action step will be reviewed at each CIC meeting. Course corrections will be made if warranted and successes celebrated, while continuing to identify areas of improvement.

Action Plan
for **Change**

September 28, 2018

**NINTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT
COUNCIL**



Nevada Community Improvement Councils 2018 Summit

Topic: Change and Knowledge: The Foundation of Progress

PLANNING FOR CHANGE

PRIORITIES TO DELIVER QUALITY HEARINGS	CONCRETE STEPS TO IMPLEMENT (i.e., DRAFT PROTOCOL, BUY A PRINTER)	PRACTICE CHANGE EXPECTED (WHAT WILL BE DONE DIFFERENTLY i.e. JUDGE ASKS W.A.T.C.H.)	EXPECTED RESULTS OF THE CHANGE (i.e., TIMELINESS, PARENTS ENGAGED, PERMANENCY)	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mediation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Order mediation in accordance with JDMP rules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When a case is “stuck” (ex: evidentiary hearing set at petition or TPR) court will order mediation • Date will be set during court • JEA will complete forms and forward to Margaret Crowley 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce drain on court resources • Win-win for the parties • Move the case along toward permanency • Parents will get brochure before leaving with date of mediation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Judges & JEAS along with team • Status: • Next Steps: • Estimated Completion Date:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialized child attorney 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate contract possibilities • Evaluate expected workload/ cost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One attorney assigned to all kids • Specialized attorney will have opportunity to gain expertise in child matters (ex: Families First Prevention Services Act’s requirement concerning residential treatment) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased expertise & collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Judges discuss P.D.S? • Status: • Next Steps: • Estimated Completion Date:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearing Process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss goals of each hearing • Create 1-page bench card for hearings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow same steps in every hearings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Judge explain ➤ DCFS update ➤ DA & Attorney give response ➤ Discuss conditions for return & steps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased collaborative discussions at hearings • More effective arguments • Increased parental engagement • Decreased time to permanency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Judges/Carey draft, bench card & send to law clerks • Status: • Next Steps: • Estimated Completion Date: Whole team
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Which priority will be monitored and how?

Action Plan
for **Change**

September 28, 2018

**TENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT
COUNCIL**



Nevada Community Improvement Councils 2018 Summit

Topic: Change and Knowledge: The Foundation of Progress

PLANNING FOR CHANGE

PRIORITIES TO DELIVER QUALITY HEARINGS	CONCRETE STEPS TO IMPLEMENT (i.e., DRAFT PROTOCOL, BUY A PRINTER)	PRACTICE CHANGE EXPECTED (WHAT WILL BE DONE DIFFERENTLY i.e. JUDGE ASKS W.A.T.C.H.)	EXPECTED RESULTS OF THE CHANGE (i.e., TIMELINESS, PARENTS ENGAGED, PERMANENCY)	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform parties to case re: trauma and the possible effects on child & service needs 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get T/S completed as soon as possible • Upon recommendation of T/S, DCFS will provide to DA who will submit for disposition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaged parties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: DCFS/ DA • Status: • Next Steps: • Estimated Completion Date: Start immediately
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify relatives at early stage of cases to facilitate engagement & potential relative placement. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judge will canvas parents at 72 hr., petition, & dispositional hearings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved timeliness to permanency • Earlier concurrent planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: Judge • Status: • Next Steps: • Estimated Completion Date: Start immediately

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reunify with parents as soon as reasonably possible 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Social worker will articulate CFR & reasons for stability and safety service providers & articulate levels of supervision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increased likelihood of reunification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Owner: DCFS ● Status: ● Next Steps: ● Estimated Completion Date:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make efforts to increase participation with family drug court. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Counsel for parents will have meaningful conversation with parents before hearing ● DA will recommend family drug court when applicable 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Owner: ● Status: ● Next Steps: ● Estimated Completion Date:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Familiarize & prepare for FFPSA by reviewing brief ● Our team will participate with statewide or rural population for FFPSA 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Judge will canvas parents to determine their understanding of case needs & what it will take to reunify 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Owner: ● Status: ● Next Steps: ● Estimated Completion Date:

Which priority will be monitored and how?

Action Plan
for **Change**

September 28, 2018

**ELEVENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT
COUNCIL**



Nevada Community Improvement Councils 2018 Summit

Topic: Change and Knowledge: The Foundation of Progress

PLANNING FOR CHANGE				
PRIORITIES TO DELIVER QUALITY HEARINGS	CONCRETE STEPS TO IMPLEMENT (i.e., DRAFT PROTOCOL, BUY A PRINTER)	PRACTICE CHANGE EXPECTED (WHAT WILL BE DONE DIFFERENTLY i.e. JUDGE ASKS W.A.T.C.H.)	EXPECTED RESULTS OF THE CHANGE (i.e., TIMELINESS, PARENTS ENGAGED, PERMANENCY)	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a system for issuing warrants for removal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Script for judge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compliance regarding removal of children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistency across district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owner: CIC Committee Status: In progress Next Steps: Discuss at CIC on 10/9 Estimated Completion Date: CIC 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same day court orders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating Software 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orders will be given after hearing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents are more informed after hearing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owner: Court Status: In progress Next Steps: Incorporate template orders Estimated Completion Date: Before CIC 2019

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop process and utilize mediation more often 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss at CIC what we need to do and who will do it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve permanency at an earlier stage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner: CIC • Status: In progress • Next Steps: • Estimated Completion Date: Before CIC 2019
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Which priority will be monitored and how?

Appendix 6

Examples of Judicial District's
Community Improvement
Councils' Agendas

AGENDA
CIC MEETING
SECOND JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT, FAMILY DIVISION
DEPARTMENT 5
MONDAY, JUNE 3, 2019, at noon

1. Review of short stayers data (Shannon McCoy)
2. Flattening the reunification curve (Judge Lu)
3. Mediation for at risk reunification (Judge Lu)
4. Update regarding Family First Act (Judge Lu)

Next Meeting – September 9, 2019, at noon

**Second Judicial District Court
Community Improvement Council Meeting
MINUTES
3rd Floor, Department 5
Second Judicial District Court, 1 South Sierra Street
Monday, March 11, 2019**

In attendance: Honorable Cynthia Lu, District Court Judge, Karen Sabo, Esq., Court Master, Cindi Smith, Esq., Chief Deputy Alternate Public Defender, Mary Fiala, Court Clerk, Katie Chadliev, Esq., Washoe Legal Services, Stephanie Cook, Esq., Washoe Legal Services, Aaron Baumann, Esq., Washoe Legal Services, Stephanie Larkin, Legal Secretary Supervisor, Amy Crowe, Esq., Deputy Alternate Public Defender, Myra Sheehan, Esq., CASA attorney, Jeff Martin, Esq., Chief Deputy District Attorney, Dianne Talley, Judicial Assistant, Matt Barringer, Court Clerk, Heather Bernhard, Court Clerk.

I. Data Presentation by Christopher Church

Christopher Church presented data via a recorded PowerPoint presentation. The data can be found at www.fosteringcourtimprovement.org/nv/County/Washoe.

Washoe County has an average of 4.2 removals for every 10,000 children. The State average is 3.8 removals.

Approximately 23 percent of children in Washoe County are removed and reunified within the first 30 days of their removal. Higher than Clark County at 19 percent. Of the 23 percent, 31 percent reunify in less than three days; 63 percent less than a week; and 83 percent less than two weeks. Would a goal be to locate other parent quicker?

Mr. Church stated the data shows substance abuse and incarceration is only a small part. The question then becomes what is the larger part.

Between months one and five, there is almost no reunification. Approximately 8 percent are reunified at six months and another 8 percent around 12 months, but again, almost no reunification in between 6 and 12 months. Why are so many children reunified in the first 30 days and at six month intervals? Reunification needs to be based on when the child and family are ready to be reunified not at the time of court hearings.

WCHSA will provide data relating to short stayers, i.e., reasons for removal, and after hour warrants.

Next Meeting: June 3, 2019, at noon

4th Judicial District Court CIC

June 28, 2019 agenda

8:30 a.m.- Juvenile & Family Court

1. Action Plan for Quality Hearings – Review and assignments.
 - a. Prepare for next CLE – Topic for next training –“Trauma Training”
 - i. Michelle to contact trainers regarding dates – 9/13, 10/4 or 10/11
 - b. Utilize Supreme Court on-line training and NCJFCJ Bench Cards.
 - c. Instruments to use to assess how we are doing
 - i. Court Performance Measures – Review 1/1/19-3/31/19
 1. Order Attorneys to get file from Clerk’s Office within 10 days.
 2. Use of Mediation – bring up in hearings and parties request
 3. Procedure for Children in Hearings – Alana & Michelle to work of procedure for presence of kids in hearings. (start with kids then have family come in)
 - d. CLE Requirement for Attorneys- Court Master to provide follow up.
 1. AMM to follow up with Attorney Compliance.
2. Center for Healthy Families Update. –
3. Foster Care Crisis for Elko County. – Update from DCFS on how outreach is going.
 - a. Licensing training in Winnemucca
4. Overall Standards for Practice/Best Practice:
 - a. Each team member should be familiar with those standards/Best Practices particular to your agency.
 - b. Elko County adopting the ABA Standards for Practice for Lawyers Who Represent Children in Abuse and Neglect Cases. (discuss any changes to ABA Standards-Court Master to draft Standing Order adopting)
https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/child_law/repstandwhole.authcheckdam.pdf
5. Consider adopting Rules of Procedure/Court Rules in 432B cases. Has everyone reviewed the links?
 - a. Rand to look at when available.
6. Filing TPR & Guardianship by Motion in 432B cases
7. National Adoption Day – November 15, 2019
8. CIC Summit – September 26 & 27, 2019
9. Next Meeting – July 26, 2019

**FIFTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL**

**JANUARY 31, 2019
11:00AM TO 12:00PM
DCFS CONFERENCE ROOM
1780 E. BASIN AVE, STE. #2
PAHRUMP, NV 89060**

THE FIFTH Judicial District's Community improvement council emphasizes children's right to Protection. Together in partnership with families, community providers, the court, and other governmental agencies, we can support and assist Nevada's children and families in reaching their full potential. 5th JD CIC recognizes that Nevada's families are our future and children, and families can thrive. Children and families are best served when they are actively listened to and are invited to participate in the decision-making process. We support full implementation of the family centered approach, by engaging families, offering individualized services, and building upon each family's strengths. We are committed to develop and implement data-driven, evidence-based, based, and an outcome-focused model that advances meaningful and ongoing collaboration, to achieve safety, permanency, and the well-being.

- AOC ANNOUNCEMENTS: KATHIE MALZAHN-BASS.
 - FROM THE BENCH: DISTRICT AND JUSTICE COURT JUDGES, RONNI PLEASE ASK JUSDGES IF ANY ISSUES WITH DCFS?
 - DCFS: MICHAEL CASON: COURT REPORTS AND COURT ORDERS CLOSE CASES WHEN A CHILD/REN ARE SAFE TO GO HOME WITH PARENT OR PARENTS.
 - CASA: BARBARA JORDENSEN & JOHN ELKINS: TONOPAH, BEATTY AND GOLDFIELD COURTS.
 - COURT: NANCY MCCRATTY: JUDGE LANE SPECIAL REQUEST (more in depth of information).
 - DEFENSE: NATHAN GENT
 - DAG: IZAAC ROWE: TPR MOTION (to ensure Judge Lane hears these cases).
-
- A. MEDIATION PROTOCOLS AND MEDIATION DOCUMENTS. (SEE ATTCHMENT).
 - 1. TPR, EDVIDENTIARY HEARINGS GOING TO MEDIATION.
 - B. INFORMATION ON 72 HOURS HEARINGS: MICHAEL AND KRISTI WILL CONTACT RONI AT THE DA'S OFFICE AND GIVE INFORMATION ABOUT THE CASE. THE WHO, WHEN, AND WHY.
 - C. REVIEW HEARING BENCHCARDS: OPEN DICUSSION TO IDENTIFY RELEVANT ITMES.
 - D. CIC ATION PLAN.
 - E. NEXT CIC MEETING WILL BE HELD ON FEBRUARY 28, 2019 @ 11:00AM.

Sixth Judicial District
Community Improvement Council (CIC) Agenda

March 14, 2019

Courtroom 12:30 p.m.

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Minutes from February 21, 2019 Meetings
3. Discussion about CASA, update/appointment of GAL's in 432B cases – Gabrielle Carr/Jane Saint/Brandy Holbrook - Next steps to implementing a GAL program in Humboldt County
4. Update and discussion re: uniform dependency orders – Gabrielle Carr
5. Update from Family Treatment Court Program re: Milestones – Betsy Guerrero
6. Action Steps: Same Day Orders
7. Action Steps: Improving Timelines for Reunification and Preventing Removals

What are our next steps to the following actions:

- a. Filing of Motion for Order to Show Cause immediately if person does not do mental/substance use evaluations within time required by court
 - b. Trainings available to engage parents sooner (evidence based)
 - c. Increasing resources for mental/substance/child evaluations
 - d. Warm Hand off to schedule evaluations right after court
 - e. Informal Settlement Conference before petition filed
 - f. Increasing services in Home before removal of children
8. Presentation: Families First Prevention Services Act (Presentation)(Mayo)
 9. Dates, times and topics for upcoming Meetings:

April 18	Explore Data to Address Reunification Rates/Digging Deeper
May 16	Keeping Children in Our Community When Placing
June 20	Review of CIC Summit Action Items and Next Steps to Implement Change

10. New Business/Old Business
11. Next Meeting Date – **April 18, 2019 (12:30pm)** (Lunch – Gabrielle/Betsy)
12. Adjournment

**Sixth Judicial District
Community Improvement Council**

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 21, 2019
Sixth Judicial District Court - 25 W. 5th Street
Winnemucca, Nevada
12:30 p.m.

Members Present:

Michael R. Montero, District Judge
Gabrielle Carr, Court Master
Maureen McQuillan, Alternate Public Defender
Kimberly Schmeling, DCFS
Valerie Teichert, Substance Abuse Counselor
Jennifer Spencer, Deputy Attorney General
Betsy Guerrero, Family Treatment Court Coordinator
Kathie Malzahn-Bass, CIP
Jane Saint, CASA State Director

Staff Present:

Ellie Sandoval, Juvenile Court Coordinator
Alicia DeYoung

Ms. Carr called the meeting of Sixth Judicial District Community Improvement Council to order at 12:43 p.m.

Ms. McQuillan moved to approve the amended November 2018 minutes and Ms. Malzahn Bass seconded the motion.

Ms. Malzahn-Bass moved to approve the minutes from January 2019. Ms. Sandoval seconded the motion.

3. Discussion about CASA, update/appointment of GAL's

Ms. Saint requested help in obtaining information about our jurisdiction so she can complete the gap analysis and complete her annual report. The information she needs specifically is regarding the number of children who are involved in a child dependency case; in foster care; and if the child(ren) have a guardian ad litem. Ms. Carr offered to provide Ms. Saint with any information we have that may be of benefit to her.

Ms. Carr and Judge Montero are meeting with the Family Support Center on March 5th in hopes that they would be interested in implementing a GAL program. If a volunteer GAL program is developed the idea is that the GALs be an independent voice in child dependency cases. Also if a volunteer GAL program is started then that would be an ideal opportunity for the GALs to transfer into the CASA program once it is implemented, however they would need to undergo the CASA training.

#4 Update and Discussion Re: Uniform Dependency Orders

Ms. Carr did not have new updates for the team.

Ms. Malzahn-Bass mentioned that orders are still being reviewed and will need to be finalized first before they begin working on the ICWA orders.

#5 Update from Family Treatment Court

Ms. Guerrero mentioned that they have not implemented the milestones. Ms. Guerrero provided a draft of the milestones and requested feedback from the team. She would like to receive all feedback by February 28th. Ms. Guerrero believes they will implement in March.

Judge Montero commented that they are building the number of participants and are in search of eligible participants that can benefit from Family Treatment Court.

#6 Action Steps to Achieve Same Day Orders and Placing Children in our Community

There was no additional feedback given about same day orders but will stay on agenda for next meeting to allow absent team members an opportunity to give their feedback.

Ms. Schmeling shared that they have done recruiting for foster care and families have signed up for training. There will be a booth at the St. Patrick's Fair to do more recruiting.

Ms. Carr inquired if anyone had any ideas of how to keep kids in the community. Ms. DeYoung suggested hosting a viewing of the movie "Instant Family". The movie is centered on foster care and was hopeful that it would inspire people to consider becoming foster parents.

#7 Action Steps: Improving Timeliness for Reunification and Preventing Removals

Ms. Carr mentioned that she has never done or seen a study to show that timeliness makes a difference. There is no data available to review at the moment the correlation between timeliness and reunification.

Ms. Teichert suggested for reunification to happen sooner than when possible resources/referrals be made as soon as possible to avoid prolonging the reunification process.

Ms. Schmeling mentioned that volunteer safety plans is the biggest aid in preventing removals. The Safety model has also been an important factor in ensuring that safety plans are implemented effectively. They use best practices such as deescalating conversations and being respectful.

Ms. Carr is aware that pre-settlement conferences have also been implemented more often and supports the practices however it is her preference that they occur before the adjudicatory hearing. She also inquired if there was anything that can be done to engage the parents sooner. Ms. Teichert commented that she feels that our community needs more resources for families, because reunifications are delayed due to the limited resources in our community.

Ms. Carr also made a suggestion if there was a way that a Family Support worker could assist in coordinating evaluations or treatment recommendations to expedite any requirements. Right now a DCFS worker is in charge of making referrals for clients when any evaluation is needed.

Alicia DeYoung offered to assist in making any referrals happen to prevent any time gaps from occurring.

Ms. Carr wants the team to create specific actions steps at the next meeting to prevent removals and timeliness for reunification.

#8 Dates and Times and Topics for upcoming meetings.

March 14	Families First Prevention Services Act (Presentation)(Mayo)
April 18	Explore Data to Address Reunification Rates/Digging Deeper
May 16	Placing Children in Our Community
June 20	TBD

#8 New/Old Business

Team members shared upcoming training opportunities and important dates.

Ms. Spencer shared that there will be an ICWA training occurring in Elko on March 22, 2019. She will follow up with more info via email.

Ms. Carr also shared that there will be a training available High in Plain Sight the presentation will be on informing professionals about the current drug trends and popular culture that promotes alcohol and drug use. She will share more info via email.

She also shared that she was recently nominated to be the chair person for the CJA Task Force and will be attending a conference in April and will also assist the National Abuse Conference in DC.

#9 Comments

Ms. Saint invited all team members if they had some time to attend children's week at the legislature on March 11th -14th.

Ms. Sandoval will bring lunch for the next meeting.

Next Meeting Date

March 14, 2019 at 12:30 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:49 p.m.

Minutes approved on the ____ day of _____, 2019.

9th Judicial District
Community Improvement Council Meeting
Thursday, May 23, 2019, 12:00pm
District Court – Dept. I

MEETING AGENDA

A. INTRODUCTIONS:

B. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Child assignment and information for appointed counsel (add to existing)
2. Hearings and Mediation Usage (CIC Goals)
 - A. Timing, length of hearing, cases on calendar
 - B. Bench Card for Hearings – Being used (successful?)
 - C. Mediation Usage – Being used (successful?)
3. Innovative ideas in other jurisdictions
 - A. Therapy Dog (6th JD)
 - B. Reading Room for Kids (Washoe)

C. OTHER NON-AGENDA ITEMS

D. NEXT MEETING –August 29, 2019 – 12:00 – 1:00pm

E. ADJOURN

CIC MEETING
May 21, 2019
11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Courtroom 2
(Lunch Included)

AGENDA

1. 72 Hour Protective Custody Hearings Days and Times – Judge Stockard
2. CASA Update – Shana Clark, Project Manager
3. Family Law Resolution Program – Judge Stockard
4. Statewide 432B Mediation Updates – Kathie Malzahn-Bass
5. AOC – CIP Updates – Kathie Malzahn-Bass
6. Permanency Cases – Judge Stockard
7. Foster Care/Adoption Update – Kelli Weishaupt
8. Future Agenda Items?
9. Upcoming Meeting Dates:
 CIC Summit – Tentative Time (9/25/19 to 9/27/19 in Reno) – Save the Dates?
 January 21, 2020 (11:30 a.m to 1:00 p.m.)

Appendix 7

Examples of Community
Improvement Councils Quarterly
Newsletters



Court Improvement Program

Community Improvement Councils News

July-September 2018

Issue 18

October 2018

November is National Adoption Month

Inside this issue:

Hard Work Pays Off	2
Domestic Violence	3
JD's Data	3
Judicial District's CIC Contact Information	4

National Adoption Month is an initiative of the Children's Bureau with a goal to increase national awareness and bring attention to the need for permanent families for children and youth in the U.S. foster care system. This year's National Adoption Month theme is "In Their Own Words: Lifting Up Youth Voices." The National Adoption Month microsite includes resources and tips to help the child welfare system develop and support opportunities for young people to effectively share their voices and perspectives. Their stories can inform recruitment practices, training resources for families, and other permanency support services. This year's website also contains resources designed specifically for youth, including how to get involved and ways to share their story effectively. Visit the 2018 National Adoption Month website for more information.

[2018 National Adoption Month website](https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/nam/)
<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/nam/>

85 Join Together In Reno To Build A Foundation For Progress

Facilitated by Justice Nancy Saitta, Ret. and Justice Lidia Stiglich, District Court Judges from across the state gathered at the Judge's Round Table for the CIC Summit to discuss issues arising in their districts and how to comply with the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA). During the next two days, 85 participants representing CIC teams from all 11 judicial districts came together to learn about and discuss changes to be made to lay a foundation for progress. Christopher Church, JD., Law and Policy Director of the Children's Law Center at the University of South Carolina, demonstrated how to navigate the Fostering Court Improvement web tool at University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. He explained how these data can be used by the CICs to inform and foster progress in their districts. The FFPSA was re-

viewed and stakeholder groups discussed how they could best help comply with the new law. Each CIC received its own 2017 hearing quality study and statewide results were presented by Dr. Alicia Summers, Research Director of the federal Capacity Building Center for the Courts. The draft court order templates were shared by CIP Select Committee members Special Juvenile Master Kimberly Okezie and Carson City Deputy District Attorney Buffy Okuma. Margaret Crowley, Esq., administrator of the statewide Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program, discussed the next steps to improve the Program. All this information and these data were, then, melded by each CIC into an action plan for the upcoming year to help them continue progressing into the future.

Hard Work Pays Off: Nevada Courts Significantly Improve Handling of Dependency Cases

Since 2014, the dependency hearing quality in Nevada courts has dramatically improved explains the latest quality hearing study conducted by Alicia Summers, Ph.D. and Sophia Gatowski, Ph.D. The original 2014 study laid the baseline from which courts and their Community Improvement Councils (CICs) gauged progress.

Factors found to impact hearing quality included parties present, parties engaged by the judge, the discussion of relevant topics during hearings, findings on the report, the number of judges per case, and the number of continuances.

Significant increases between 2014 and 2017 were found in the presence of the father, child, and child's attorney at dependency hearings. The presence of other parties increased, but not as dramatically as those three. The judiciary stepped up its engagement with mothers, fathers, and children. For example, in 2014 judges explained the purpose of the hearing to only 38% of the fathers present, whereas, in 2017 judges explained the purpose to 70% of the fathers. Judges addressed the mother by name 90% of the time in 2017 compared to 75% in 2014. Thirty-one percent (31%) of the parents were asked if they had any questions in 2014. In 2017 63% of them were asked.

Of the topics that the Enhanced Resource Guidelines suggests be discussed in each hearing, discussion for the vast majority increased. Discussion of applicable topics increased from 47% in 2014 to 60% in 2017. Among those that most significantly increased were the child's placement, Native American heritage, diligent search, progress or compliance with case plans, adequacy or modifications of case plans, and 15 of 22 months/compelling reasons.

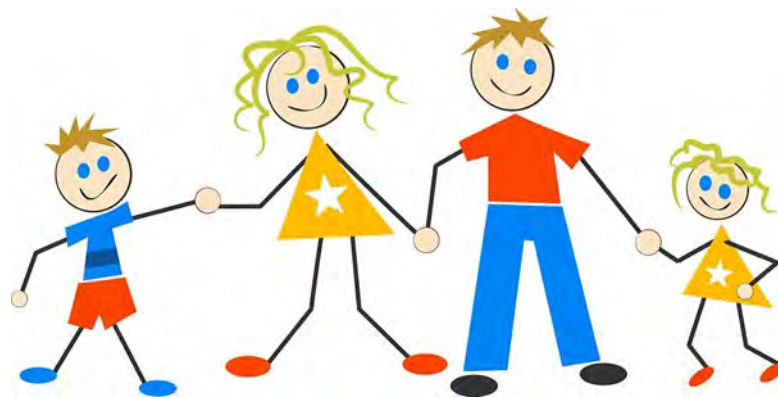
Not only are the courts doing a better job engaging parents and discussing relevant topics during the hearings, but they are putting findings on the record more frequently as well. Reasonable efforts findings were observed 71% of the time in 2017, but only 23% of the time in 2014. Two courts did so 100% of the time in 2017 and two more put reasonable efforts findings on the record 90% of the time.

Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) findings were observed 35% of the time in 2017 and only 6% of the time in 2014 statewide. One court put ICWA findings on the record 100% of the time in 2017. Another did so in 80% of the hearings.

What difference does all this make? These hearing quality factors are directly linked to outcomes for children. Time to permanency, for example, is reduced when the mother is engaged by the judge and in depth discussion takes place during the hearings around child safety and efforts to reunify. On the other hand, time to permanency increases when more judges hear the case and there are continuances.

The likelihood of reunification increases when the mother is present for the hearings across the life of the case, the judge addresses her by name, and there are sufficient discussions regarding child safety and efforts to reunify. Parents having the opportunity to be heard directly impacts children achieving permanency within 12 months.

The single factor linked to all outcomes – time to permanency, reunification, and permanency in less than 12 months – is the engagement of parties by the judge.



The Co-Occurrence of Child Maltreatment and Domestic Violence

A few months ago the Nevada Juvenile Dependency Mediation Program mediators were trained on how to handle domestic violence in the mediation setting. But how frequently does child abuse and neglect intersect with domestic violence? More often than we may think. Research suggests that nearly 30 million children in the United States will be exposed to some type of family violence before the age of 17, and there is a 30 to 60 percent overlap of child mal-

treatment and domestic violence.

Children may be harmed (either accidentally or intentionally when witnessing violence), or traumatized from experiencing domestic violence. These children are more likely than their peers to experience a wide range of difficulties, which can vary by age and developmental stage. These fall into three categories: behavioral, social, and emotional problems; cognitive and attitudinal problems;

and long-term problems like delinquency and substance use.

Learn more in the newly revised Children’s Bureau field manual, **Child Protection in Families Experiencing Domestic Violence**, which reflects recent practice innovations, the latest research and data, and greater emphasis on family preservation and in-home services complementing the Family First Prevention Services Act.

<https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/usermanuals/domesticviolence2018/>

COMPARISON OF RELEVANT DEPENDENCY DATA ACROSS JUDICIAL DISTRICTS

Judicial District	Permanency Hearing within 1 year	Congregate Care Was 1 st Placement	Short Stayers/Home In	
			72 hours	30 Days
	Percentage	Percentage	Percentage	
1 st JD	100	17	3.5	10
2 nd JD	97	26	8	20
3 rd JD	76	17	17	17
4 th JD	79	10	14	33
5 th JD	43	2	4	16
6 th JD	100	0	0	12
7 th JD	71	9	0	38
8 th JD	81	41	8	24
9 th JD	93	0	0	0
10 th JD	95	4	15	15
11 th JD	67	0	0	7
Statewide	85	36	11	23

Source: 2018 Data Summaries presented during 2018 CIC Summit

Nevada Supreme Court
 Administrative Office of the Courts
 Court Improvement Program
 201 S. Carson street, Suite 250

Katherine Malzahn-Bass
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Court Improvement Program

Community Improvement Councils News

October-December 2018

Issue 19

January 2019

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Happy 2019
The Year of Endless Change

The Courts' Contributions to Child Welfare System Reform

Nevada is on the threshold of stepping through the door to dramatic child welfare transformation. Unlike the majority of states, Nevada is poised to both develop and implement a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) following the federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR), and implement the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA).

The Courts and CIP are actively involved in the CFSR. Seven judicial districts will attend the federal report meeting on Nevada's CFSR results and begin developing portions of the PIP on February 5 and 6, 2019. Eight judicial districts will join the *Achieving Timely Permanency for Children in Foster Care* Break-out Group in February to begin brainstorming the root causes for Nevada's lag in timeliness to permanency. Dr. Alicia Summers will guide the *Permanency* Group to identify and assess requisite data to determine why timeliness to permanency remains an issue. Using these data and judicial experience, the Group will create a plan to improve performance in this area and to eventually evaluate the impacts of

changes recommended by the Group.

CIP is a member of the PIP CORE Team which has begun work on developing a CFSR-PIP Charter with mission, goals, and objectives. As such, Kathie Malzahn-Bass will co-chair the *Permanency* Group.

The complete PIP, with input from all four Break-out Groups, will be due to the Children's Bureau within 90 days of the CFSR report out.

At the same time another group, involving many of the same people, is working on implementing the FFPSA due by October 1, 2019. CIP is also involved in this effort and is a member of the Judicial Subcommittee. This Subcommittee met for the first time January 4, 2019, to begin to draft an action plan on how to implement FFPSA from the courts' perspective. This draft will be presented to the CIP Select Committee and the judiciary for input and editing before finalizing.

Judicial Districts Seek Expert Input to Help Implement CIC Action Plans

Both the 2nd and 8th Judicial Districts reached out to Christopher Church, JD for help reviewing their Fostering Court Improvement Data, particularly concerning those children remaining in the child welfare system for fewer than 30 days or the “short stayers”.

The statistics regarding length of stay for the “short stayers” are quite similar in both districts. In both the 2nd and the 8th JDs, 31% and 35% of “short stayers”, respectively, spend only 3 days in care. In both Washoe and Clark Counties, 63% and 52%, respectively, of “short stayers” spend a week or less in care, and 83% and 81%, respectively, of “short stayers” spend two weeks or less in care.

This similarity diverges when placement type is considered. In Washoe County, 92% of the “short stayers” are placed in an unfamiliar environment with unfamiliar people (either in institutions (37%) or in non-relative foster care (55%)). In Clark County, 58% are placed in unfamiliar places with unfamiliar people (either in institutions (37%) or in non-relative foster care (21%)). How-

ever, in both counties 37% of the “short stayers” are placed in institutions.

In both districts, most of the “short stayers” returned to the home from which they were removed (79% in Washoe and 78% in Clark). In Washoe another 17% of the “short stayers” were discharged to a family member. Only 3% went to a relative in Clark.

Another difference between the two districts rests with the ages of the “short stayers”. Over one-third (38%) of the “short stayers” in Washoe were under the age of three compared to only 26% in Clark.

According to Mr. Church, the data show that the Washoe County Human Services Agency is doing a great job of entering all reasons for removal which allows in-depth analysis of what could be done to prevent removal. The data reflect a strong system in Clark. Few children are aging out, and the re-entry rate is unusually low which shows the impact of front-loading services.

Father Engagement – Critical Factor in Strengthening Families

Research demonstrates the importance of fathers in children’s lives. Positive and frequent early interactions with infants helps improve a child’s social skills and stimulate cognitive competence. Stronger emotional ties between father and child lead to an increased sense of emotional security and lower levels of depression and anxiety in children. Children and adolescents who have close and positive relationships with their fathers are less likely to engage in risky behaviors or substance and alcohol use. Not only do involved fathers contribute to the financial support of the family, but also to general family stability and well-being.

How does the child welfare system create a father-friendly family service approach? The Children’s Bureau (CB) offers a number of ideas and resources in their Information Memorandum-18-01 issued on October 17, 2018 . (https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/acffatherhoodim_final.pdf)

Father support or mentor programs help fathers navigate the child welfare system successfully. When fathers are separated from their child whether geographically or due to incarceration, the CB suggests actively nurturing father and paternal family connections even if it is only through letters and phone calls.

Engaging fathers in Head Start and Early Head start programs have a deep impact on their children’s development and well-being. The Office of Head Start has a long history of engaging male family members and father figures to support school readiness.

The Office of Family Assistance (OFA) funds *The National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse* (www.Fatherhood.gov) which serves as a resource for responsible fatherhood information, designed to promote and encourage appropriate involvement of fathers in their children’s lives.

It's Time to Follow the Law and Take Reasonable Efforts Seriously

An Article by **David Kelly**

Special Assistant to the Associate Commissioner of the Children's Bureau

A caseworker driving a child four hours--one way--to visit his mother on a weekly basis. The child welfare agency putting a family up in a hotel for two days and hiring a professional cleaning service to return a home to a habitable condition. A children's attorney refusing to give up on finding a family connection for a severely disabled young man, even though he requires a residential treatment setting. A judge understanding the treatment and recovery process and insisting a parent receive the support they need. These are all solid examples of reasonable efforts to prevent removal or finalize a permanency plan recently provided by an audience of child welfare legal professionals. In total, a dozen or so strong responses to the straightforward question, what are the best examples of reasonable efforts that you have seen made? The question was posed to an audience of approximately 700. There were twelve examples of reasonable efforts in a room of 700 participants from around the country.

Sure, this scarcity could be partially attributable to a reluctance of folks to speak up publicly-- asking for audience participation during a conference plenary is an unusual request. But it could also be something more serious. It could be that reasonable efforts have become a hollow finding, one made to comply with federal requirements and maintain funding as opposed to a legal finding to protect the integrity of the parent child relationship, advance the best interest and well-being of children, and prevent the trauma of unnecessary family separation.

I allege no malicious intent by any of the dedicated professionals in our field, but do submit that when we fail to take reasonable efforts seriously, we do real harm to children and families. Maybe we've become too comfortable with the way the system typically operates, or perhaps accepted that nothing more or better can be done. I suspect for some it reflects a reticence to rock the boat by making a no reasonable efforts argument or finding, perhaps even a general trust that the child welfare system will keep the child safe for now and it's best to avoid risk. But that overlooks the fact that foster care has always been intended as a placement of absolute last resort and that family separation inflicts psychological and emotional harm to children and parents.

The problem is exacerbated by our infatuation with the latest and greatest thing - we have issues de jour, a growing number of specialty courts, and checklists and bench cards abound. To be fair, many of these efforts have brought value and helped infuse more knowledge into the courtroom and field. But collectively we take our eye off the ball, over and over again. The conversation never lingers on reasonable efforts in a substantive way, and our attention shifts.

In nearly two decades of work with courts and attorneys around the country, including direct practice, court observation, case file reviews, focus groups, and stakeholder interviews, I have yet to see compelling evidence that the statutory tools of reasonable efforts are being used as the law intended. Growing numbers of children entering care, continued challenges around parent engagement, and a national struggle to improve permanency outcomes for children in care all offer evidence of complacent legal practice and compliance-oriented findings.

The irony is that, if used meaningfully, the law provides an incredibly powerful tool for keeping families together and preventing trauma to children-- a judicial determination that reasonable efforts were made to prevent removals. Where out-of-home placement is necessary, reasonable efforts determinations to finalize the permanency plan are the second critical tool for expediting reunification or other safe permanency options and minimizing trauma to parents and children.

Making sure a child sees his or her parents regularly, refusing to separate a family over a "dirty house" case, and ensuring that case plans are designed to support parents struggling with substance misuse should represent the floor of reasonable efforts, not the ceiling. If we are serious about strengthening families, preventing unnecessary trauma to children and parents, taking on implicit bias, reducing disproportionate placement of children from highly vulnerable families and communities into foster care, and no longer mistaking poverty for maltreatment, we must take reasonable efforts to prevent removal and reasonable efforts to finalize the permanency seriously and treat each with the urgency and substance that the law requires.

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Court Improvement Program

Community Improvement Councils News January— March 2019

Issue 20

April 2019

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April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month

All dependency and child welfare system professionals are essential to preventing child maltreatment in Nevada. To help with this critical work the Child Welfare Information Gateway has released the *2019 Prevention Resource Guide: Strong and Thriving Families*.

The *Prevention Resource Guide* is designed to help individuals and organizations in every community strengthen families and prevent child abuse and neglect. It focuses on protective factors that build on family strengths to foster healthy child and youth development. The *Guide* is broken into six chapters including:

- Strengthening individuals, families, and communities
- Working with families using the protective factors
- Using protective factors as a framework for your community partnership
- Protecting children
- Tip sheets for parents and caregivers
- Resources

The Tip Sheets are specifically designed for dissemination to caregivers, parents, and community partners.

Copy link below to download or order your free copy:

https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/preventing/preventionmonth/resources/resource-guide/?utm_source=03.19.2019&utm_medium=eblast&utm_content=guide&utm_campaign=NCAPM19

♪♪♪ How Much is that Doggie in the Courtroom? The One with the Waggy Tail! ♪♪♪

The 6th Judicial District knows. Walking into a courtroom is an intimidating experience for most of us. Imagine how terrifying it is for a child. Especially when entering a room filled with strangers and even people who may have hurt you. And, then, there is that stranger in a black robe sitting high up and towering over everyone. The 6th JD now has a Support Dog in the court room during dependency cases.

In January, 2019, the Sixth Judicial District Court, Humboldt County Nevada, implemented a pilot program allowing “Gracie”, the golden retriever therapy/facility dog to be present during dependency court hearings. The dog’s calm, loving demeanor was expected to decrease the stress and anxiety that may affect children and parents while in the court setting.

“Gracie” also provides added support to families, if a parent is testifying about some very difficult and serious childhood trauma or other issues that are upsetting. In comes “Gracie”, to sit near the witness on the stand to provide needed comfort.

The American Humane Society’s Manual on Therapy Animals Supporting Kids (TASK) Program* explains how therapy animals can calm a child; thereby resulting in more efficient and accurate testimony and less trauma to the child. The 6th JD has, indeed, witnessed this first

hand. Additionally, the court has noticed that “Gracie” helps the parents bond with their children while in court; an unintended, but very much appreciated, side-effect.

Master Gabrielle Carr reports that, in addition to support for families in dependency cases, Gracie also regularly offers comfort in the local school system. Gracie even “writes” a *Dear Gracie* (just like *Dear Abby*) column once a month in the local newspaper.

* Copy and paste the link below.

[Therapy Animals Supporting Kids \(TASK\) Program](#)



Implementation of The Family First Prevention Services ACT Has Been Delayed in Nevada

The Division of Child and Family Services has elected to delay the implementation of the Family First Prevention Services Act, as allowable by the federal government. The delay was requested to allow additional time to accomplish several goals that are critical for effective implementation including:

- Revisions to Nevada regulations to include standards identified within the National Family Foster Model Licensing Standards
- Changes in statute to ensure alignment with the requirements of qualified residential treatment program (QRTP) placements
- Ensuring that Nevada is prepared with an adequate service array to place a more significant emphasis on prevention services
- The possibility of needing to revise NRS to accommodate the federal requirements

The Division of Child and Family Services is in the process of initiating a contract with a national technical assistance provider from the University of Maryland that has supported other states in their planning and implementation of FFPSA. Our state team is working on an implementation timeline, and will share the timeline with the CIP at the next meeting on April 19.

The Child and Family Services Review's Program Improvement Plan in Nevada

The genesis of the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) and the Program Improvement Plan (PIP) goes back to the 1994 Amendments to the Social Security Act which authorized the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to review state child and family service programs to ensure conformity with the requirements in titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act. The Children's Bureau (CB), part of the Department of Health and Human Services, administers the review system, known as the Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSR), and assesses states for substantial conformity with federal requirements for child welfare services.

The goal of the reviews is to help states improve child welfare services and achieve the following seven outcomes for families and children who receive services:

Safety

- Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.
- Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate

Permanency

- Children have permanency and stability in their living situations
- The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for families

Family and child Well-Being

- Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.
- Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.
- Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.
- The reviews also measure state performance on seven system factors, including the effectiveness of (1) the statewide child welfare information system; (2) the case review system; (3) the quality assurance system; (4) staff and provider training; (5) the service array and resource development; (6) the agency's responsiveness to the community; and (7) foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention.

The 2018 CFSR found Nevada to be out of substantial conformity with all seven outcomes and six of the seven systemic factors. Nevada is charged with developing a Program Improvement Plan (PIP) that addresses all areas rated as not in substantial conformity or suffer a \$ 1,068,285.00 penalty.

CIP was asked to co-chair and the courts were asked to work on the PIP Team designing improvements to achieve timely permanency. A team of multidisciplinary stakeholders including 9 judicial officers from 8 judicial districts (1st, 2nd, 4th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, and 11th JDs), attorneys, child welfare agencies' staff and supervisors, CQI staff, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), and the Capacity Building Center for the Courts met for 2 months to develop goals, strategies and activities designed to improve Nevada's timeliness to permanency.

The Achieving Timely Permanency (ATP) Team's goal for its portion of the PIP is: *Nevada children have legal permanency and stability in their home lives and their continuity of family relationships and connections are preserved.*

ATP compiled the following strategies to accomplish this goal:

Strategy 1: Implement practice initiatives that improve families' involvement in the court hearing process to achieve desired permanency outcomes;

Strategy 2: Improve consistent practices and/or policies for concurrent planning, KinGAP, and hearing notification for foster caregivers;

Strategy 3: Improve earlier and ongoing relative identification and involvement by increasing dependency stakeholder interaction with families, parents, and fictive kin to enhance placement stability and permanency;

Strategy Four: Modify the termination of parental rights (TPR) process to reduce the time to permanency in adoption cases.

The ATP portion of the PIP is being combined with the other 3 Teams' portions to be sent to the Children's Bureau for review and questions.

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Appendix 8

Community Improvement Councils Summit Agendas



NATIONAL COUNCIL OF
JUVENILE AND FAMILY COURT JUDGES
WWW.NCJFCJ.ORG



**Nevada Community Improvement Council
2018 Judicial Officer Roundtable**

Change and Knowledge: The Foundation of Progress

**ATLANTIS CASINO RESORT SPA
RENO, NV
SEPTEMBER 26, 2018**

Wednesday: September 26, 2018

Treasure AB Room

12:00 – 12:15 p.m.

Registration

12:15 – 2:00 p.m.

Working Lunch, Welcome and Opening Remarks

*The Honorable Nancy M. Saitta, Ret.
Senior Justice, Supreme Court of Nevada*

*The Honorable Lidia Stiglich
Associate Justice, Supreme Court of Nevada*

Round Table Discussion

This session will cover rules of evidence, quality of testimony, differences and similarities in documentation standards/court reports, reasonable efforts findings, and ethical considerations related to dependency cases among the Judicial Districts throughout the State.

The Honorable Nancy M. Saitta, Ret.

The Honorable Lidia Stiglich

** This conference has been funded by the State Court Improvement Program grant (CFDA 93.586) through the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families. Sec. 438, [42 U.S.C. 629th].*

- 2:00 – 2:15 p.m.** **Break**
- 2:15 – 3:00 p.m.** **Families First Prevention Services Act**
This session will provide an overview of the new provisions under Title IV-E to provide prevention services to children and youth who are at risk of entering foster care and outline the oversight role judges must adopt to approve and review congregate care placements in child abuse and neglect cases.
- Connie Hickman Tanner, JD*
Chief Program Officer, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges
- 3:00 – 4:15 p.m.** **Round Table Discussion (continued)**
- 4:15 – 4:30 p.m.** **Evaluations, Next Steps, and Closing Remarks**
The Honorable Nancy M. Saitta, Ret.
- The Honorable Lidia Stiglich*

** This conference has been funded by the State Court Improvement Program grant (CFDA 93.586) through the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families. Sec. 438, [42 U.S.C. 629th].*



Nevada Community Improvement Council 2018 Summit

Change and Knowledge: The Foundation of Progress

**ATLANTIS CASINO RESORT SPA
RENO, NV
SEPTEMBER 27-28, 2018**

Thursday: September 27, 2018

Paradise AB Room

8:00 – 8:30 a.m. Registration & Breakfast

8:30 – 8:45 a.m. Welcome & Opening Remarks
Joey Orduna Hastings, JD
Chief Executive Officer, National Council of Juvenile and
Family Court Judges

8:45 – 9:30 a.m. Year in Review
Each CIC will designate a spokesperson to share strategies, practices, activities and/or accomplishments that have furthered the implementation of their 2017 Action Plan and best practices in their judicial district since the last Summit.

The Honorable Nancy M. Saitta, Ret.
Senior Justice, Supreme Court of Nevada

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- 9:30 – 11:00 a.m.** **Using Data to Foster Progress**
Participants will be provided with a demonstration of how to access and navigate a web-based tool in order to interpret and a web-based tool in order to interpret and use data to create meaningful action plans.
- Christopher Church, JD*
Staff Attorney, CHAMPS Clinic, University of South Carolina School of Law
- 11:00 – 11:15 a.m.** **Break**
- 11:15 – 12:00 p.m.** **Family First Prevention Services Act: *What is It?***
Participants will be provided with an overview of the key provisions of the 2018 Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA). The presentation will include an overview of reform efforts related to Title IV-E Funding, congregate care and new provisions related to prevention services.
- Connie Hickman Tanner, JD*
Chief Program Officer, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges
- 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.** **Lunch**
- 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.** **Hearing Quality Study to Inform Change**
Participants will receive an update on the hearing quality study and will develop an understanding of the initial findings from the study.
- Alicia Summers, PhD*
Director, Data Savvy Consulting, LLC
- 2:30 – 2:45 p.m.** **Break**

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2:45 – 3:40p.m.

Templates for Dependency Court Orders

Participants will be provided with an overview and update of the development of the court order templates and the timeline for implementation.

*The Honorable Kimberly Okezie
Special Master, First Judicial District*

*Buffy Jo Okuma, Esq.
Deputy District Attorney, Carson City District Attorney's Office*

3:40 – 4:30

**Statewide Juvenile Dependency Program Mediation Update:
*Making Mediation Successful***

Participants will be provided with an update on the dependency mediation program and will acquire knowledge on how they can utilize mediation to assist families in exploring solutions.

*Margaret M. Crowley, Esq.
Crowley Mediation*

8:00 – 8:30 a.m. **Breakfast**

8:30 – 8:45 a.m. **What’s On Your Mind?**

Participants will have an opportunity to ask questions about the previous day and share experiences regarding court practices and identified challenges.

8:45 – 9:45 a.m. **Advancing Stakeholder Compliance with FFPSA**

Participants will break out by discipline to discuss how they can work toward statewide compliance with the Family First Prevention Services Act.

Connie Hickman Tanner, JD

9:45 – 10:00 a.m. **Break**

10:00 – 11:30 p.m. **Action Planning**

Each CIC will finalize its goals and next steps based on information gathered throughout the Summit. NCJFCJ and CIP staff will be available to assist all of the JDs in understanding how measurable outcomes can be an integral part of the action planning process.

11:30 – 12:30 p.m. **Report Out**

12:30 p.m. **Closing Remarks**

The Honorable Nancy M. Saitta, Ret.

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Appendix 9

“A Guide to Integrating Continuous Quality Improvement into the Work of the Community Improvement Councils”



A Guide to
**Integrating
Continuous Quality
Improvements**
into the Work of the
**Community
Improvement
Councils**



NATIONAL COUNCIL OF
JUVENILE AND FAMILY COURT JUDGES

WWW.NCJFCJ.ORG



The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges® (NCJFCJ) headquartered on the University of Nevada campus in Reno since 1969, provides cutting-edge training, wide-ranging technical assistance, and research to help the nation's courts, judges, and staff in their important work. Since its founding in 1937 by a group of judges dedicated to improving the effectiveness of the nation's juvenile courts, the NCJFCJ has pursued a mission to improve courts and systems practice and raise awareness of the core issues that touch the lives of many of our nation's children and families.

For more information about the NCJFCJ or this guide, please contact:

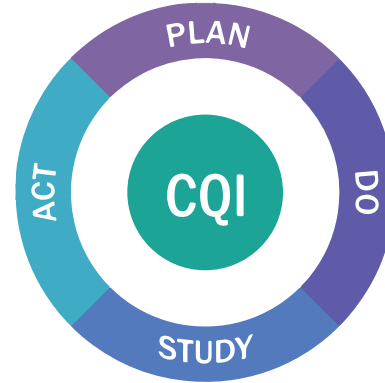
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This guide was made possible with funding from the Nevada Administrative Office of the Courts Court Improvement Program.

INTRODUCTION

Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI), is an important part of systems change efforts. CQI has been defined as “the complete process of identifying, describing, and analyzing strengths and problems and then testing, implementing, learning from and revising solutions.” Simplified, the model identifies the cyclical steps in a process of systems change—the plan, do, study, act model (illustrated below). It is important to **plan** for systems change, using the most current or most available data that you have. From this, you plan to make a change. Then you **do**, or implement a change. Then, you must assess what you have done (**study**). Assessment does not have to be a complex process, it often requires a simple monitoring of whether the change was implemented as expected and what occurred after that. Following the study phase, you use the information/data that you gathered to set a course of action (**act**). You take an action to either change the program/practice that you implemented to make it better, or you



implement it full scale. Then the process begins anew. It is important as stakeholders who work with some of the nation’s most vulnerable youth to examine practices and programs and make sure that what we are doing has its desired effect and is not harming kids. By integrating CQI into current discussions and planning, it allows for an opportunity to assess any changes in practice and determine if you are moving in the right direction, or if you need to course correct and make adjustments to what you are doing to better serve the needs of the families you serve.

USING *this* GUIDE

This *Guide* offers practical suggestions for steps to fully integrate CQI into planning and action within your Community Improvement Council (CIC). Steps are identified along the way with helpful questions for you to ask yourself about current practice. The *Guide* also offers some concrete suggestions for tools to gather data, and examples of process and outcome measures that may be helpful in studying whether the changes

you have made have had an impact. Included in each step of the process is a CQI Self-Assessment. Self-assessment asks questions to help you think about where you are in the process. If the answer to any of the questions is NO, the next question is *why not?* If you are stuck at a step in the process, technical assistance is available to you to help move you forward toward successful integration of CQI into your systems change efforts.

> STEP 1:

ESTABLISH *a* DEDICATED COLLABORATIVE TEAM

Continuous Quality Improvement is not a one-time activity. It is an ongoing process and often requires stakeholders

to adopt a new way of thinking about achieving systems change, which ideally permeates into organizational cultures. Each judicial district in Nevada has established a Community Improvement Council (CIC), a collaborative team comprised of diverse stakeholders who are dedicated to improving system processes and outcomes. This is a critical first step in any CQI endeavor. These teams work to identify system needs and areas for improvement; to coordinate and implement improvement efforts; to assess the effectiveness of improvement efforts; and to determine what changes need to be made to promote continued improvement and success.

Collaborative teams dedicated to improving court practices and outcomes for children and families involved in child abuse and neglect cases tend to be most successful when they:

- Are comprised of a diverse group of stakeholders and agency leaders. Team members could include one or more judicial officers, attorneys (agency attorneys, parents' attorneys, children's attorneys or child advocates such as

CQI SELF-ASSESSMENT (STEP 1)

- Does your judicial district have an established CIC?
- Does the team include all the persons that should be involved?
 - If not, who is missing?
How can they be engaged?
- Does your CIC meet regularly?
- Are meetings productive uses of time?
 - If not, what can be done to improve them? (See suggested agenda on next page)
- Could you use some Technical Assistance on this issue?

Guardians Ad Litem (GALs) and/or Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs), social service professionals, and other influential community members. Collaborative teams also may include court staff and administrative personnel, educators or school representatives, treatment providers, data and IT system professionals, members of law enforcement, domestic violence advocates, and juvenile justice professionals. The makeup of your team should reflect the visions and objectives for systems change in your jurisdiction. For example, if you would like to improve outcomes for children and families concurrently involved in both juvenile dependency and delinquency systems, then the collaborative team should include juvenile justice professionals.

- Are motivated by a shared vision for systems

change. Each collaborative team should develop and agree upon an overarching vision and mission statement to guide their improvement efforts. The vision and mission for every team will differ, but should ultimately reflect shared organizational values.

- Communicate and convene on a regular basis. The most successful court improvement teams tend to hold in-person meetings on at least a bi-monthly basis so that they can discuss progress towards current goals and objectives, identify and develop solutions to any problems or obstacles, and share perspectives and new ideas. A basic sample agenda for a Community Improvement Council (CIC) Meeting is provided below.
- Utilize interdisciplinary expertise and connections. It is important to develop a team of diverse stakeholders so that team members can 1) Offer a variety of different

CIC MEETING AGENDA – JULY 8, 2015

3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

- **Welcome and Announcements**
- **Child Safety Guide Trainings**
 - Participant and presenter feedback
 - Volunteers to coordinate fall trainings
- **Presentation of results from Court User Surveys**
 - Discuss areas for improvement
- **Subcommittee updates**
 - Data subcommittee
 - Policy subcommittee
 - Leadership team
- **Plans for the next month and next steps**
- **Schedule next meeting**
- **Adjourn**

perspectives, experiences, and resources to help guide court improvement efforts; 2) Represent their organization or agency by sharing similar stakeholders' perspectives to help inform CQI processes; and 3) Discuss and coordinate court improvement team efforts with agency stakeholders.

- Clearly communicate and establish roles, responsibilities, and next steps for implementing and analyzing court improvement efforts. Court improvement teams operate most efficiently and effectively when necessary roles are established (e.g., team leaders, organizers, note takers/recorders, etc. and when specific individuals are identified as responsible for any given task related to planning or implementing a court improvement effort.

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL MEETING

- Schedule meetings at least one month in advance
- Draft and distribute agenda 1-2 weeks before each meeting – ask CIC members what needs to be included
- Identify a recorder to take minutes at each meeting and distribute to all CIC members within one week after the meeting
- Identify a facilitator for each meeting who will ensure the CIC stays on topic and that all members have a chance to speak

>> STEP 2:

CREATE, REVIEW, *and* REFINE a STRATEGIC PLAN *through a CQI LENS*

CQI involves analyzing the processes and outcomes of efforts made to achieve identified goals. Therefore, to fully integrate CQI principles into practice, Community Improvement Councils (CICs) must clearly articulate measurable goals and the plans for achieving these goals. This is commonly accomplished by developing a strategic plan or action plan for implementing and tracking change efforts. Although it would be optimal to begin CQI'ing a new program or practice, the reality is that integrating CQI often requires retrofitting this process to something that already exists. For instance, many CICs may have already identified system needs or areas for improvement and are working to address them, and CICs may already have created strategic plans. Whether your CIC is already executing a strategic plan or is beginning to develop one, it is important to view the strategic plan through a CQI lens. Strategic plans guiding the CQI process must, at minimum, include the following components:

- A clearly articulated, measurable goal linked to an identified need or improvement area
- Key steps or actions that must be taken to achieve the goal

CQI SELF-ASSESSMENT (STEP 2)

- Does your action plan have clearly articulated and measurable goals?
- Does your action plan include concrete steps with timelines and persons responsible?
- Do you have a plan to track progress?
- How will you know if your change effects the outcome you want?
- Could you use some technical assistance on this?

- How you will know if the key steps or actions needed to achieve the goal were implemented as planned
- How you will track progress towards the goal and determine whether the goal was achieved

It is also recommended that strategic plans identify 1) a timeline for program implementation and assessment of processes and outcomes; 2) specific persons or entities responsible for implementing key steps and/or actions; and 3) desired longer-term outcomes linked to achievement of the specified goal. For example, a CIC may set a goal of improving the quality of permanency hearings, and measure progress toward that goal by systematically assessing the breadth and depth of discussion surrounding key topics at permanency hearings. However, although improving the quality of permanency hearings is a measurable goal, it is still unclear *why* improving the quality of permanency hearings is important. Is improved hearing quality expected to increase

parties' satisfaction and acceptance of the case decisions, foster child well-being, or expedite permanency?

A sample strategic plan summarizing CIC activities and expected outcomes of increasing

focus on youth well-being at all juvenile dependency hearings is included in Appendix A. This sample plan will be used as an example throughout the remainder of this guide to help illustrate the CQI process.

>>> STEP 3: IDENTIFY PROCESS *and* OUTCOME MEASURES

Two main types of measures are used to help inform the CQI process.

Process measures document program activities and outputs, such as the number of participants reached by a training or the number of collaborative meetings held and the minutes of those meetings. Documenting and analyzing the processes of change initiatives will help CICs determine the extent to which programming was implemented as intended. In the sample strategic plan (see Appendix A), process measures would be developed from **Column D** (Evidence to be collected to indicate that the action has been implemented as planned). Process measures are important for several reasons. If the programming results in positive outcomes, process measures can help illustrate *how* the programming led to change and which elements of the program were successful. This information can then be used to develop a “road map for success” that can be disseminated and adopted by other CICs to promote broader change. If the

CQI SELF-ASSESSMENT (STEP 3)

- Do you understand how process outcome measures can be used to help guide CIC efforts?
- Do you have a plan to track process measures (e.g., if your change has been implemented as it was supposed to be)?
- Do you have a plan to track outcome measures (e.g., if your change has the desired effect)?
- Could you use some technical assistance on this?

programming did not lead to the desired change, process measures can be examined to determine if any discrepancies between what was planned and what was actually implemented may have impeded change. CICs refine their strategic plans to address any barriers to program implementation and/or to incorporate alternative actions that may be better suited to achieving their goals.

Outcome measures assess the extent to which programming led to desired changes are needed to answer the question, “Did our efforts make a difference?” The content of **Column E** (Evidence to be collected to indicate that the action has led to change) in the sample strategic plan can


be translated into outcome measures. Outcome measures are essential in tracking progress towards goals and in demonstrating how more immediate impacts of programming are linked to broader impacts in the following months or years. CICs should articulate and measure both short- and long-term outcomes of their change efforts. In the sample strategic plan, *Increased presence of youth at all hearings* represents an anticipated short-term outcome of change efforts, whereas *Increase in positive well-being outcomes for youth involved in dependency cases* represents a long-term outcome.

Measuring processes is sometimes more straightforward and less time-intensive than measuring outcomes, although this still requires time and dedication from CICs. For instance, the CIC working on the sample action plan will need

to collect data on the number and disciplines of participants attending trainings and conduct evaluations of the trainings (i.e. to assess the impacts of the training on participants' knowledge and intentions to apply this knowledge in their work). The CIC team also will need to collect data to determine if there has been an increase in positive well-being outcomes for youth involved in dependency cases. In doing so, the team will first need to identify measures of youth well-being they wish to use. Educational success, increased community involvement, developing positive peer relationships, and abstinence from drugs and alcohol are just some indicators of youth well-being. Next, the CIC team will determine how to collect the data needed for those measures.

>>>> STEP 4:

IDENTIFY WAYS *to* COLLECT (OR FIND EXISTING) DATA



In the next step in the CQI process, the CIC team will identify ways to collect the data needed for the processes and outcomes they wish to track. This should include conversations with all system stakeholders to assess the availability of data elements through various IT systems. The agency and the court will likely have data systems in place and collect some data that would be useful in tracking progress towards CIC goals and

CQI SELF-ASSESSMENT (STEP 4)

- Do you know what data are available to you?
- Do you know what data you need to collect?
- Do you have internal capacity to collect additional data?
- Could you use some technical assistance on this?

objectives. Further, the agency reports their data to the Adoption and Foster Care Reporting System (AFCARS), which will provide state level data (and sometimes jurisdiction specific data). Local school districts and juvenile justice agencies may also have data systems that include data elements that will help inform CIC efforts.

In Nevada, CICs have access to court timeliness data collected from the child welfare data in the SACWIS, UNITY, and in the SACWIS and UNITY systems, which are distributed to the courts quarterly. These data include the median days to permanency hearings, to termination of parental rights, and to permanency.

CICs also have access to agency data collected by Chapin Hall¹, including data on placement stability, case closure/exit type (i.e., whether a case ended in reunification, TPR/adoption, guardianship, etc.), and case timeliness (i.e., number of days from petition filing to permanency and case closure). This data is provided annually at the CIC annual meeting. Other data can be requested from NCJFCJ, who has access to the Chapin Hall data system. Also, it may be possible for the CICs to designate a person to gain access to Chapin Hall for additional information.

If data are not already available, it will be important to design a plan to collect data. This may include the collection of quantitative or

qualitative data. Quantitative data involves collecting numeric information from various primary sources (e.g., court records or stakeholder surveys) or secondary sources (e.g., school data or agency data). Qualitative data focus on descriptive information rather than numbers and provide a richer, more detailed description. Such data can be collected through parent or stakeholder interviews or focus groups, as well as through open-ended survey questions. The information collected can be used to better understand stakeholders' and users' perceptions about how well the program is working and how to improve programs.

CICs may discover that there are several different sources of data and data collection methods they can use to track processes and outcomes, and choose the source and method that is most efficient and relevant to their goals. If a CIC determines that data required to measure specific processes or outcomes are truly unavailable, the CIC should consider revising the desired process or outcome so that it is measurable.

¹ For more information about Chapin Hall, see:
<http://www.chapinhall.org/partners/CSCWD>

>>>>> STEP 5:

DETERMINE HOW *to* COLLECT OTHER NECESSARY DATA (COLLECTING YOUR OWN DATA)

After CICs determine what data they will need to collect in order to measure processes and outcomes, they should then articulate *how* these data will be collected. For primary data collection (that is, quantitative or qualitative data that CIC members will be requesting or collecting themselves), this should include details about what method should be used (e.g., online surveys, paper surveys, case file review, court observation), who will be responsible for collecting the data, and how data will be combined, stored, and analyzed. CICs, or the CIC data/performance measurement subcommittee groups also will need to determine who is responsible for entering, analyzing, and reporting data; how data will be reported; and if any data sharing agreements or Memorandums of Understanding need to be in place to obtain the data needed to measure performance.

It is recommended that all CICs create a performance measurement plan identifying process and outcome measures to track progress towards their overarching goal(s) and how these data will be collected and analyzed. A comprehensive sample performance measurement plan based on the sample strategic plan (Appendix A) is included in Appendix B. This example measurement plan includes

CQI SELF-ASSESSMENT (STEP 5)

- Are you familiar with different methods to collect your own data (e.g., surveys, case file review, court observation)?
- Do you know which methods would be best-suited to measuring your processes and outcomes?
- Do you have a clear plan for collecting, analyzing, and reporting your data?
- Could you use some technical assistance on this?

measures and procedures to track all processes and outcomes identified in the sample strategic plan for demonstration purposes (i.e., to provide CIC members with several different examples).

It is important to note that many CIC strategic plans and performance measurement plans may be briefer than the examples provided. Given limitations on time and resources, a CIC may decide to implement two activities aimed at promoting systems change and identify 2-4 process measures and 2-3 outcome measures. The process and outcome measures selected should be directly linked to the programming and/or activities. For example, a CIC may direct their efforts towards implementation of the following **practices** (adapted from Appendix A):

All judicial officers will inquire about youth availability to attend hearings and the judicial officers and clerks will make every effort to schedule hearings so that youth can attend.

The CIC will organize multi-disciplinary trainings on best practices for engaging youth during juvenile dependency hearings and the key topics related to youth permanency and well-being that should be discussed at hearings.

The CIC team then identifies the following **process measures** they will use to determine whether these activities were implemented as planned:

- Frequency with which judicial officers inquire about youth schedules when scheduling the next hearing.
- Frequency with which hearings are scheduled that accommodate youth.
- Number of staff trained and disciplines of staff trained.
- Participants' satisfaction with training and knowledge gained

Next, the CIC team identifies the following two measures to determine if the activities are leading to the anticipated **outcomes**:

Frequency with which youth attend their court hearings.

Breadth and depth of discussion focused on child well-being during hearings.

After the programming has been implemented for some time and data have been collected for the identified process and outcome measures, the CIC may consider exploring more long-term outcomes expected to result from their efforts. For instance, increased attendance of youth at hearings and increased quality of discussion focused on child well-being at these hearings may be in turn expected to improve readiness for living independently among youth who are aging out of care. This outcome can be measured by completing an Independent Living Readiness Checklist for each youth as applicable. Appendix B includes examples of potential data collection sources and methods and measurement plans for each of the measures identified above.


Some CICs may want to begin by implementing a simplified data collection and performance measurement plan. Such a plan should include 1) CIC activities that are being implemented; 2) One or more measures for each activity; and 3) The method that will be used to collect data for the measure. The table on the following pages provides examples of simplified data collection and performance measurement plans using many of the activities that CICs identified in their Action Plans for 2014-2015 (completed at the 2014 Nevada CIC Summit).

PROPOSED CIC ACTIVITIES AND EXAMPLE DATA COLLECTION METHODS		
ACTION	MEASURE(S)	DATA COLLECTION METHOD
Monthly case review meetings with DCFS, PD, DA, and CASA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequency of meetings (date and time) Frequency with which all specified professionals attend 	Identify a recorder and keep minutes for each meeting. Record the date of each meeting and persons present. Save meeting minutes as word or other electronic document.
Improve engagement of parents and during hearings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses to Parent Engagement Survey <p>NOTE: Please see Appendix C for a sample Parent Engagement Survey.</p>	At the end of each hearing, the Bailiff will ask the parent(s) if they would be willing to take the survey and provide instructions. All completed surveys will be dropped in a locked box in the back of the courtroom
Increase the number of case plans that are filed in a timely manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of case plans that are filed within the specified timeframe 	All social services staff responsible for filing case plans will record the date each case plan is <i>supposed</i> to be filed by and the date each case is actually filed in a simple Excel template. They will send completed templates for each month to administrators.
Increase focus on child well-being at all hearings as appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of well-being topics discussed at each hearing; extent to which each topic is discussed (e.g., brief mention or thorough discussion) 	Designated CIC members or other trained volunteers will randomly observe hearings and collect data using a Court Observation Tool that includes child well-being discussion topics. NOTE: Please see Appendix D for a sample Court Observation Tool.
Expanding and improving petitions and case plans to be rationally related	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree of correspondence between allegations and presenting problems noted in the petition and case plans 	Examine petitions and case plans side-by-side. For each petition/case plan pair selected, use a table to record the number of instances in which case plan services were <i>not</i> related to petition allegations or presenting problems.
Confirm ICWA status at each hearing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of hearings during which the judicial officer inquires about ICWA (asks if child has Native American heritage and if ICWA applies) 	CIC members, trained volunteers, or ICWA compliance officers will randomly attend hearings and record whether ICWA status was confirmed using a court observation instrument. NOTE: Please see Appendix E for a sample ICWA Compliance – Court Observation Tool

PROPOSED CIC ACTIVITIES AND EXAMPLE DATA COLLECTION METHODS		
ACTION	MEASURE(S)	DATA COLLECTION METHOD
Invite children to attend court (with prior notification of team members)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of hearings that youth attend 	Pull random samples of electronic case files and record whether the child was present for each hearing in the case in an Excel spreadsheet (e.g., Adjudication present? Y/N).
Promote attendance of foster parents at hearings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of hearings for which foster parents are present 	Judicial officers and/or court staff will ensure that foster parents are identified and entered into the court case management system as present. Random samples of hearings can then be selected within the system to determine the extent to which foster parents appear.
Recruitment and retention of quality foster parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of licensed foster care providers in the jurisdiction. 	Social Services will send the CIC quarterly reports (pulled from their case management system) with the present numbers of licensed foster care providers
Recruitment and retention of quality foster parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of licensed foster care providers in the jurisdiction. 	Social Services will send the CIC quarterly reports (pulled from their case management system) with the present numbers of licensed foster care providers
Increase focus on child safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of safety issues addressed during the initial hearing and extent to which these issues were addressed (Per the Child Safety Guide) 	<p>CIC members or trained volunteers will randomly observe initial hearings (i.e., Shelter Care, Preliminary Protective Hearings) and complete a checklist of child safety topics that should be discussed as recommended per the Child Safety Guide.</p> <p>NOTE: Please see Appendix F for a sample Initial Hearing Observation – Child Safety Checklist</p>

>>>>>> STEP 6:

ANALYZE YOUR DATA *and* REACT to YOUR FINDINGS



In developing a performance measurement plan, CICs should specify how the data collected or obtained will be analyzed, the timeframe and/or frequency with which the data will be analyzed (e.g., six months after program implementation and every six months following) and who will be responsible for analyzing the data and reporting the findings to the CIC and other stakeholders. After the findings are shared, the CIC enters in perhaps the most important phase of CQI: reacting to the findings. This is what distinguishes CQI from other methods of tracking processes, progress, and impacts. Rather than simply reporting their findings and moving on, CICs engaged in the CQI process carefully consider the results obtained, identify successes and areas for improvement, and begin

CQI SELF-ASSESSMENT (STEP 6)

- What did the data tell you about your change?
- Was the change implemented like it was supposed to?
- Were there barriers to implementation?
- Can something be done differently to improve implementation?
- Should you continue with the change or stop?
- Were you able to illustrate a positive outcome following the change?
- Could you use some technical assistance on this?

to develop plans for further improvement. These plans may include maintaining and expanding programs that have led to successes, modifying programming that has fallen short of expectations, and/or implementing new programs and activities that may be more conducive to achieving the desired outcomes.



SEEK TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE *as* NEEDED

The Nevada Court Improvement Program contracts with the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) to provide technical assistance related to CQI of current statewide and local projects. The research team at the NCJFCJ is available to assist the CICs in thinking about how to integrate CQI more fully into current practice. Technical assistance can take many forms, depending on the needs of the court. These may include:

- **Identification of performance measures.** In developing an action plan, the CICs often identify practice or program changes they would like to make. The NCJFCJ can help identify performance measures to correspond to those suggested changes. For example, if you want to increase involvement of children, families, and other necessary parties, the NCJFCJ can help you identify multiple ways you might want to measure this to determine if your change is occurring as planned.
- **Assistance with tool development.** Often it might be necessary to develop an instrument to collect all the necessary components you would like to see. For example, an action plan might be to better engage parents in the process. The CIC may want to survey parents about current engagement and barriers to coming to court.

The NCJFCJ can help the CIC develop a user-friendly tool to use in data collection.

- **Answering data questions.** Data can be tricky and always has some limitations. The NCJFCJ can help answer any questions you have about the currently available data, its limitations, and how it can best be used.
- **Analysis of currently available data.** The NCJFCJ could also serve as a data analysis partner. In addition to having access to AFCARS and Chapin Hall data, the NCJFCJ could potentially help with analysis of data the CIC has collected (e.g., analyzing survey responses, doing analysis of data collected in excel, etc.)
- **Brainstorming ideas for data collection.** The NCJFCJ can serve as a thought partner, working with the CIC to consider all potential data sources and ways to efficiently and effectively collect data needed to monitor change and assess outcomes.
- **Assistance with action planning.** The NCJFCJ can also assist in the action planning process, helping to identify process measures, as well as short term and long-term outcomes measures of interest.

Appendix A – Sample Strategic Plan

Goal: Increase focus on child well-being at all hearings in juvenile dependency cases.

A. Description of action to bring about change or improvement	B. Specific entities or persons responsible for the action and timeframe	C. Materials and resources needed for action	D. Evidence to be collected to indicate that the action has been implemented as planned	E. Evidence to be collected to indicate that the action has led to change
Inform all relevant parties (e.g., parents, foster parents, child advocates, youth) that the court encourages youth attendance at hearings and provide one-page information sheets about youth attendance along with the next hearing date to parties	CIT representatives from each agency (Lead Judge, social worker, attorneys) will train other staff on protocol. Youth in Court subcommittee will draft and supply information sheets. Completion date: Oct. 2015	Youth in Court (YIC) protocol and guidelines, information sheets	Parties' awareness of expectations that youth are present in court; number of staff trained; extent of YIC information sharing and distribution.	Increased youth presence at all hearings Increased engagement of youth who are present at hearings
Inquire about youth availability to attend hearings and schedule hearings accordingly	Lead Judge will train judicial officers and court clerks to accommodate youth schedules. Completion date: Sept. 2015	Reminder notices, youth schedules.	Extent of inquiries and hearings scheduled that accommodate youth	Increased depth and breadth of discussion focused on child well-being at all hearings
Multi-disciplinary trainings on best practices for engaging youth and key hearing discussion topics	Representatives from the DA, Public Defender, and GAL office will coordinate trainings, to be held in Aug. and Sept. 2015	Training curriculum, presenters, and educational materials	Number and discipline of participants attending training, training evaluations	Increased understanding and perceptions of procedural fairness among youth regarding their case
Monthly multi-disciplinary case reviews, with a focus on promoting child well-being	Social service agency representatives will coordinate meetings, beginning Sept. 2015	Case and child information from each agency; staff participation	Number and frequency of meetings; topics discussed	Increase in positive well-being outcomes for youth involved in dependency cases

Appendix B – Sample Data Collection and Performance Measurement Plan

Process Measures		
Measure	Data collection sources and methods	Measurement plan
Parties' awareness of expectations that youth are present in court	Prior to each hearing, court staff will ask all relevant parties (e.g., child advocates, parents/guardians/foster parents, attorneys, social workers) if they have received verbal and written information encouraging youth presence at hearings.	Designated staff will pose this question to all relevant parties prior to each court hearing and record their responses on a standardized form. Forms will be collected each week by designated court staff and results analyzed on a monthly basis.
Number of staff trained and disciplines of staff trained	All participants who attend trainings will be asked to provide their name and discipline on a sign-in sheet	CIT representatives will collect sign-in sheets and enter participants' names and disciplines into an Excel file.
Participants' satisfaction with training and knowledge gained	Data will be collected using a post-reflective evaluation survey distributed to participants at the end of each training. The survey will ask participants to indicate their satisfaction with the training and to rate their knowledge in the topics covered before and after the training.	CIT representatives will collect evaluation surveys at the end of each training and enter data into an Excel file. CIT representatives can calculate response frequencies and averages using Excel to assess overall satisfaction with the training and to determine the extent of knowledge increase from pre to post training.
Frequency with which YIC information sheets are distributed to all relevant parties	A CIT member will observe of 2-3 hearings per week (including different judicial officers) for the first two months of program implementation to determine whether information sheets are distributed as planned.	The CIT member will record whether the information sheet was distributed to all, some, or none of the relevant parties for each hearing observed and enter this information into an Excel file. These data will be analyzed after three months into the implementation phase to assess fidelity to distribution of the information sheets.
Frequency with which judicial officers inquire about youth schedules when scheduling the next hearing and the frequency with which hearings are scheduled that accommodate youth.	A CIT member will observe of 2-3 hearings per week (including different judicial officers) for the first two months of program implementation to determine whether judicial officers are inquiring about youth schedules and, if so, whether hearings are scheduled to accommodate youth.	The CIT member will record whether the judicial officer did or did not inquire about youth schedules when scheduling the next hearing and whether the hearing was in fact scheduled to accommodate youth. This information will be entered into an Excel file. These data will be analyzed after three months into the implementation phase to determine the extent to which judicial officers are making efforts to accommodate youth schedules.
Frequency of multi-disciplinary case review meetings and discussion of topics focused on child well-being	Social services representative will document meetings and complete a "checklist" of discussion topics, marking all topics discussed related to child well-being (e.g., placement, mental and physical health, visitation, education)	The social services representative will enter data collected at meetings into a shared Excel file. Data will be analyzed on a bi-monthly basis to assess the extent to which meetings are held and child well-being topics are discussed.

Appendix B – Sample Data Collection and Performance Measurement Plan

Outcome Measures		
Measure	Data collection sources and methods	Measurement plan
Youth presence at hearings	Presence of parties at each hearing is already documented in the court case management system.	Court IT staff will randomly select 30 cases closed prior to program implementation and calculate the percentage of hearings for which youth were present for each case. A year after program implementation, IT staff will randomly select 30 cases that opened after program implementation and calculate the percentage of hearings for which youth were present for each case. These pre and post percentages can be compared to assess the extent to which youth presence at hearings have increased as a result of CIT efforts.
Judicial engagement of youth during hearings	Designated CIT members will observe at least 5 juvenile dependency hearings per month for which youth are present beginning now (to establish a baseline) and continuing throughout the following months during and after program implementation. CIT observers will use a standardized court observation instrument to assess the extent and quality of judicial engagement.	Each CIT observer or support staff (e.g., interns, student volunteers) will enter the data collected via the observation instruments into an Excel file. Means (averages) will be calculated for each engagement variable as well as total engagement scores. These will be compared across months to assess improvements in judicial engagement of youth.
Breadth and depth of discussion focused on child well-being during hearings.	Designated CIT members will observe at least 5 juvenile dependency hearings per month for which youth are present beginning now (to establish a baseline) and continuing throughout the following months during and after program implementation. CIT observers will use a standardized court observation instrument to assess the breadth and depth of key discussion topics as set forth in the <i>Resource Guidelines</i> (e.g., placement, education, health, permanent connections, etc.)	Each CIT observer or support staff (e.g., interns, student volunteers) will enter the data collected via the observation instruments into an Excel file. Means will be calculated for each discussion topic variable as well as total "hearing quality" pertaining to child well-being scores. These will be compared across months to assess improvements in the breadth and depth of discussion focused on child well-being.
Youths' perceptions of procedural fairness regarding their court hearings and case.	At the end of hearings, Bailiffs will administer a survey to youth who attended assessing their perceptions related to procedural fairness- e.g., whether they felt the way their case was handled was fair and if the hearing outcome was fair, whether they had the opportunity to be heard, whether the judge listened to their side of the story. This will occur at each hearing beginning immediately and throughout the months during and following program implementation.	CIT volunteers or support staff will enter survey results into an Excel database. Response frequencies and means will be examined and compared over time to determine if there are increases in youth's perceptions of procedural fairness.

Appendix B – Sample Data Collection and Performance Measurement Plan

Outcome Measures		
Measure	Data collection sources and methods	Measurement plan
Educational Benchmarks: Percentage of youth performing at or above grade level at case closure. (well-being measure)	Upon case closure, the Educational Liaison will submit updated academic records to social services and indicate if the student is performing at or above grade level.	An additional field for “academic performance at case closure” will be added to the Agency database with codes to indicate whether youth are performing below, at, or above grade level. These data will be analyzed every six months to determine if youth academic performance has improved.
Dual Involvement: Percentage of children under court jurisdiction who are also involved in the juvenile delinquency system. (well-being measure)	Juvenile Services already tracks dual involvement-youth who have open dependency and delinquency cases. Youth who are dually involved are flagged in their data system. The court case management system tracks the total number of youth under court jurisdiction (in child welfare cases).	Juvenile Services staff will run quarterly reports indicating the number of youth who are dually involved-the percentage of youth with open dependency cases who are dually involved can then be calculated by court IT staff. These data will be analyzed quarterly to assess changes in the extent of dual involvement.
Independent Living Readiness (well-being measure)	Social workers will complete the independent living readiness checklist for all APPLA youth 2-3 months prior to their eighteenth birthday or discharge from care. The checklist includes variables related to education, employment, housing, and independent living skills.	Data from the independent living readiness checklist will be entered into the Agency database. Every six months, the CIT social services representative will request a report on the checklists completed during the six month time period. Checklist scores will be compared over time to detect changes in Independent Living Readiness among APPLA youth.

Appendix C - Parent Engagement Survey

We are interested in your opinion of how you were treated in court today. Your answers to these questions can be used to help improve the court system. Your answers will only be used to measure the court's strengths and weaknesses and will not affect your case in any way. We appreciate you taking the time to complete this survey.

When did your case open? _____ month _____ year

Please indicate your agreement with each statement, using the following scale.

1=Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly Agree

The judge treated me with respect	1	2	3	4	5	
The judge listened to me	1	2	3	4	5	
I had a chance to speak	1	2	3	4	5	
The judge spoke directly to me	1	2	3	4	5	
I helped make the decisions for my case.....	1	2	3	4	5	
I agreed with the case plan ordered for me	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
I understood what happened in court today.....	1	2	3	4	5	
I understand what I am supposed to do next.....	1	2	3	4	5	
All of my questions were answered	1	2	3	4	5	
The judge was fair.....	1	2	3	4	5	
I agree with the decisions made in court today	1	2	3	4	5	

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your experience in court today? _____

Please check your role in the case: Mother Father

Please check your race/ethnicity (mark all that apply):

- White/Caucasian Black/African American Hispanic/Latino
 Asian/Pacific Islander Native American Other: _____

Appendix D – Example Court Observation Tool²

The following is an excerpt from a court observation tool used to assess hearing practice in review hearings. The top portion gathers descriptive data regarding when the hearing was held, who was present, the scheduled start and end time, as well as the child’s current placement. The bottom portion focuses just on what was discussed at the hearing.

Date			Inquiry about parties not present? Who? _____ (N Y NA)		Site
MONTH	DAY	YEAR	Explanation from agency to locate missing parties? (N Y NA)		Scheduled Time: <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/>
(J) J					Start Time: <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/>
(F) F					End Time: <input style="width: 100px;" type="text"/>
(M) M	(0) (0)	(0) (0)	Parties Present/ Spoke at Hearing		Current Placement (1) Home (2) Relative/Kin (3) Pre-Adoptive Home (4) Foster Care (5) Group Home (6) Treatment Facility (7) UD
(A) A	(1) (1)	(1) (1)	(Y) (S) Judge	(Y) (S) Treatment Provider	
(A) A	(1) (1)	(1) (1)	(Y) (S) Child(ren)	(Y) (S) State's Atty	
(M) M	(2) (2)	(2) (2)	(Y) (S) Caseworker	(Y) (S) Agency Atty	
(J) J	(3) (3)	(3) (3)	(Y) (S) Attorney <i>ad litem</i>	(Y) (S) Mother	
(J) J	(4) (4)	(4) (4)	(Y) (S) GAL	(Y) (S) Father	
(A) A	(5) (5)	(5) (5)	(Y) (S) CASA	(Y) (S) Mother Atty	
(S) S	(6) (6)	(6) (6)	(Y) (S) Foster Parent	(Y) (S) Father Atty	
(O) O	(7) (7)	(7) (7)	(Y) (S) Relative Caretaker	(Y) (S) Other: _____	
(N) N	(8) (8)	(8) (8)	(Y) (S) Extended Family	(Y) (S) Other: _____	
(D) D	(9) (9)	(9) (9)			

For each of the discussion items below, use the 0 to 2 scale to identify how much discussion occurred in the hearing. 0 = No discussion, 1=statement only/little discussion, 2=more than a statement/substantive discussion.

Well-Being	
Educational needs being met	(0) (1) (2) (NA)
Educational placement appropriate	(0) (1) (2) (NA)
Physical well-being	(0) (1) (2) (NA)
Mental health needs	(0) (1) (2) (NA)
Special needs	(0) (1) (2) (NA)
Independent Living Plan	(0) (1) (2) (NA)

² More information about this tool and measuring ICWA compliance generally can be found in the Measuring Compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act: An Assessment Toolkit, Available online at: <http://www.ncjfcj.org/resource-library/publications/measuring-compliance-indi-an-child-welfare-act-assessment-toolkit>

Appendix E – ICWA Compliance Tool²

NCJFCJ ICWA Performance Measurement Court Observation Tool						
Court Case File Number	Type of Hearing	Coder	Tribe(s) of Child		Date	
Judicial Officer	County/Jurisdiction	State	Num of children	# child selected:	M	Y
Parties Present at Hearing		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Relatives	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interpreter	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Foster Parent		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mother	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mother's Atty	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Child	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Child's Atty	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tribal Representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CASA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Treatment Prov
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Father	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Father's Atty	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social worker	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State's Atty	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Atty for Tribe	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other:
Was an attorney appointed at this hearing for: the mother? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> the father? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> the child? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>						
ICWA Applicability						
1. Application of ICWA						Yes No
1a. Did the judge inquire about the applicability of ICWA?						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Who was asked? _____						
1b. Has the child's tribe(s) been identified?						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
1c. Is the child a member, or eligible for membership of a federally recognized tribe?						<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
1d. Did the judge make a finding orally on the record that ICWA does/does not apply?						<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
1e. Does ICWA apply in this case? (even if no finding)						<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
2. Jurisdiction						Yes No
2a. Did the judge make a finding <i>on the record</i> that the tribe(s) received formal notice of petition filing?						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
2b. Is the child a ward of a tribal court?						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
2c. Is the child domiciled or living on the reservation?						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
2d. Does the state court have jurisdiction?						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
***If this is not the initial hearing, is there indication that this is an ICWA case?						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
ICWA Compliance						Yes No
3. Findings on the Record & Placement					Finding Made	Notice Given
3a. Did the judge make a finding that the tribe(s) received notice of this hearing?					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3b. Did the judge make a finding that the mother received notice of this hearing?					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3c. Did the judge make a finding that the father received notice of this hearing?					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3d. Did the judge make a finding that the Indian custodian received notice of this hearing?					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3e. Did the judge order the child in to (or to remain in) out of home placement?					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3f. Did the judge make a finding that emergency removal was necessary to prevent imminent physical damage or harm to the child?					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3g. Was there qualified expert witness testimony presented at this hearing?					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3h. Did the judge make a finding that there was clear and convincing evidence that the child was likely to suffer serious emotional or physical damage if continued in the custody of the parent?					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3i. Did the judge make a finding of active efforts <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> to prevent removal? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> to return the child home?					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3j. Was there discussion of why child was not placed with relatives?					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3k. Did the judge make a finding of good cause not to follow the placement preferences? If yes, why? _____					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
4. Tribal Intervention						Yes No
4a. Did the tribe petition or move to intervene in the case?						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
4b. Did the judge grant the tribe's petition or motion to intervene in the case?						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
4c. Did the tribe have a recommendation to present to the court?						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
4d. Did the judge allow the tribe to present its recommendation to the court?						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
4e. Did the judge adopt all <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> adopt some <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> or not adopt <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> the tribe's recommendation?						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
5. Transfer to Tribal Court						Yes No
5a. Did a party request a transfer of the case to tribal court at this hearing?						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
5b. Did the judge make a decision about the transfer to tribal court? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Grant <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Deny						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
5c. Did the judge make a finding of good cause to deny the request to transfer the case? If yes, why? _____						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
6. Engagement of Tribe						Yes No
6a. Was there discussion of how the tribe has been involved in case planning?						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
6b. Was there discussion of culturally appropriate services for the family?						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
6c. Was there discussion of how the tribe has been involved in locating relatives?						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Child Placement Order: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New order <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continuation Is this an adoptive home? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>						
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Home/Parent		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Indian Home		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Treatment Facility		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Relative		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-Indian Home		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unable to Determine		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tribal Home		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Group Home				

² More information about this tool and measuring ICWA compliance generally can be found in the *Measuring Compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act: An Assessment Toolkit*, Available online at: <http://www.ncjfcj.org/resource-library/publications/measuring-compliance-indian-child-welfare-act-assessment-toolkit>

Appendix F --Sample Child Safety Initial Hearing Checklist

Date: _____ Coder: R L Sched. Start Time: _____ Start Time: _____ End Time: _____

PARTIES PRESENT:

- Mother
- Father
- Child(ren)
- Child Advocate A G C
- Foster Parent
- Relative: _____
- Tribal Rep
- Other: _____

ICWA Finding? Yes No

CHILD DISCUSSION TOPICS:

- Child Placement H R FC (0 1 2)
- Child education- general N/A (0 1 2)
- Child educational placement N/A (0 1 2)
- Child physical health (0 1 2)
- Child mental health (0 1 2)
- Child other well-being (0 1 2)
- Child safety** (0 1 2)
- Visitation P S (0 1 2)
- Efforts to reunify/prevent removal (0 1 2)

INITIAL HEARING DISCUSSION TOPICS:

- Parents' rights (0 1 2)
- Permanency timeframes (0 1 2)
- Review of the petition (0 1 2)
- Paternity (0 1 2)
- Diligent search (0 1 2)
- Relative resource (0 1 2)
- Safety planning** (0 1 2)
- Prevent child from returning home today? (0 1 2)
- Judge ask about Native American heritage? (0 1 2)

ENGAGEMENT:

- Overall Mother engagement N/A (0 1 2)
- Overall Father engagement N/A (0 1 2)
- Overall Child engagement N/A (0 1 2)

SERVICES:

- Mother N/A (0 1 2)
- Father N/A (0 1 2)

SAFETY TOPICS:

- Threats of Danger** (0 1 2)
- Present threats identified? Y N
- Impeding threats identified? Y N
- If identified, were threats considered in:**
- Placement? Y N Safety plan? Y N
- Visitation plan? Y N Service plan? Y N

Threats of Danger:

- Vulnerability** (0 1 2)
- Vulnerabilities identified? Y N
- If identified, were threats considered in:**
- Placement? Y N Safety plan? Y N
- Visitation plan? Y N Service plan? Y N

Vulnerabilities:

- Protective Capacities** (0 1 2)
- Cognitive capacities identified? Y N
- Behavioral capacities identified? Y N
- Emotional capacities identified? Y N

- If identified, were protective capacities considered in:**
- Placement? Y N Safety plan? Y N
- Visitation plan? Y N Service plan? Y N

Protective Capacities:

Note

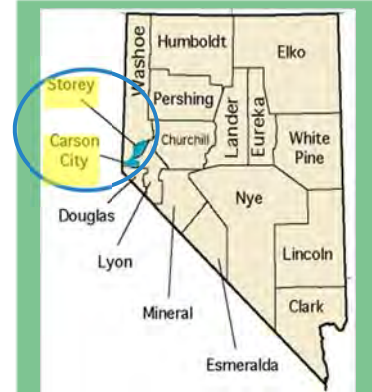
Appendix 10

Judicial Districts Hearing Quality Data Summaries

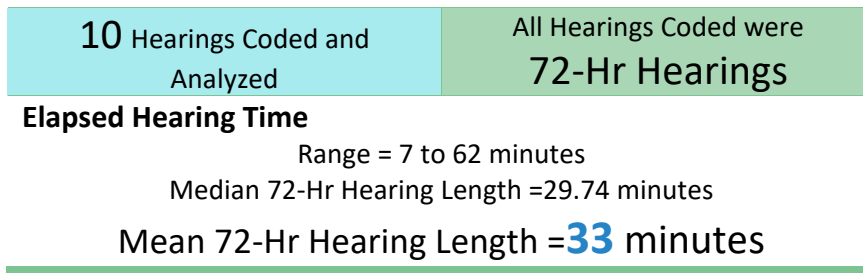
1st Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Introduction

To provide the court with information about dependency hearing practice strengths and challenges, and to inform action planning for ongoing systems change efforts, a random sample of recorded hearings from February 2017 to January 2018 from the 1st Judicial District were obtained. Hearings were observed and coded using a hearing quality data collection tool designed to not only describe the hearing process, but also to capture the presence or absence of specific best practicesⁱ in dependency court hearings. Where data were available, the findings from the current study were compared to hearing quality findings from a study conducted for the 1st Judicial District in 2014.



FINDINGS

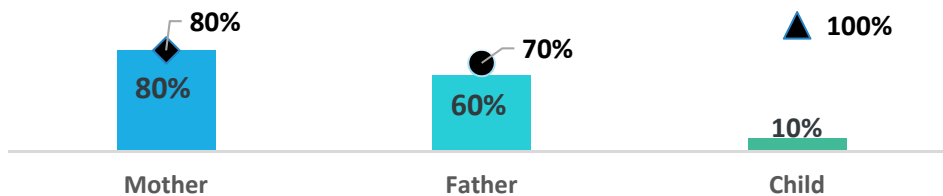


In 2014, 72-hr hearings (N=11) averaged **32 minutes**

Parties Present

Mothers were present in 80% of the hearings observed, fathers were present in 60% of the hearings and a child was present in only one of the hearings observed (10%; n=1 of 10). Parties present and their counsel are shown in the chart below. Parties presence are depicted by bars and the symbols represent the percentage of hearings their attorneys were present. **Case workers and district attorneys were present at all of the hearings.**

Percentage of 72-Hr Hearings with Party and Attorneys Present (1st Judicial District; N=10; Hearings conducted Feb 2017-Jan 2018)



Relatives were present **60%** of the hearings

Foster parents were present **10%** of the hearings (n=1)

2014 Parties Present

Mother	90%
Father	50%
Child	0
Mother's Atty	52%
Father's Atty	52%
Child Rep	100%

In 2014, relatives were present for **24%** of hearings

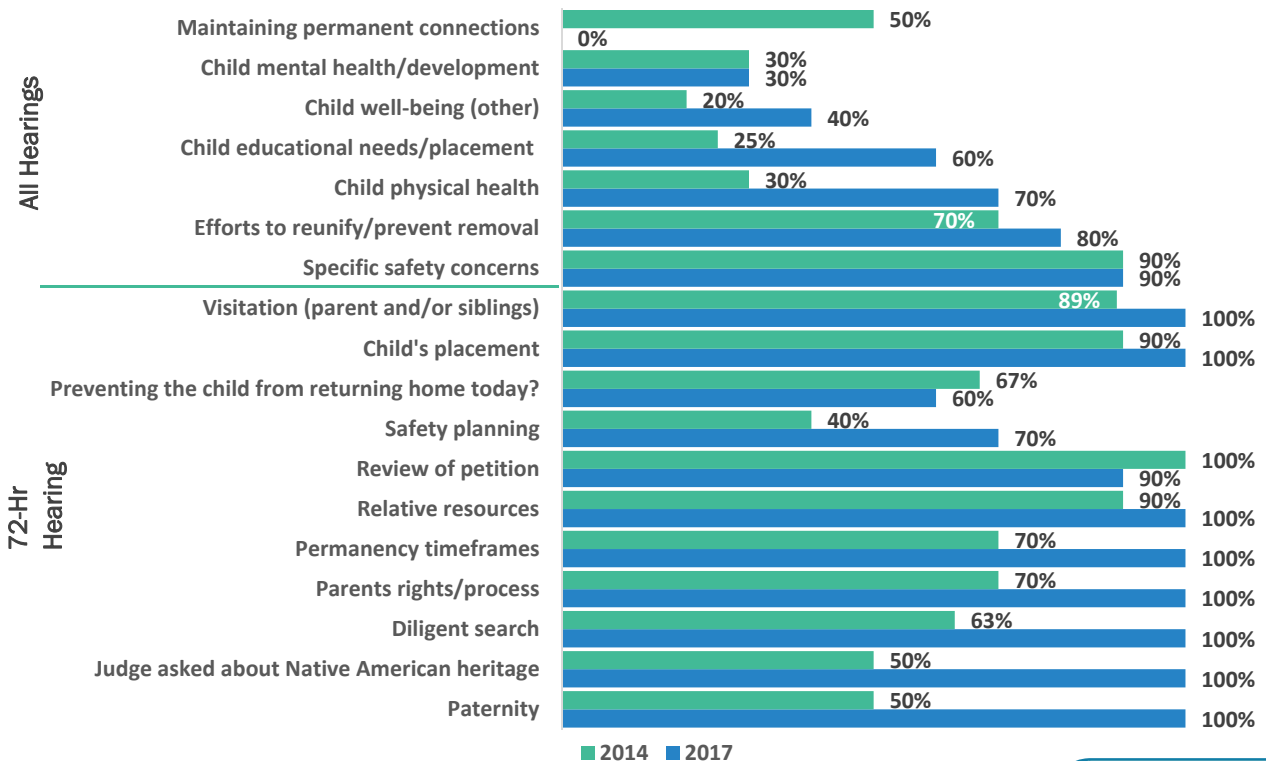
1st Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Discussion During 72-Hr Hearings

Discussion was measured with a list of topics that could be relevant to discuss at the hearing. As noted in the figure below, 72-hour hearing topics listed are those most relevant to that hearing whereas “all hearings” lists topics that could be relevant to all hearings. Topics were derived from Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) and from best practice guidelines from the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.ⁱⁱ The figure compares the percentage of time (when applicable) that a topic was discussed in the 2014 and 2017 sample of 72-hour hearings. **In 2017, 100% of the 72-hour hearings observed discussed the child’s placement, visitation, parents’ rights, the abuse/neglect case process and timeframes, paternity, diligent search, and relative resources.** The only topics discussed in more 72-hour hearings in 2014 than in 2017 were maintaining permanent connections, what is preventing the child from returning home today, and the petition.

Percentage of 72-Hr Hearings in Which Topic Was Discussed

1st Judicial District; 2014 N=11; 2017 N=10



1st Judicial District: 2017 72-Hr Hearings (N=10)

Hearing Topics with Less Discussion (Only a brief statement made; mere mention)	Topics Discussed in Depth (Substantive)
Child physical health	Parents rights & permanency timeframes
Efforts to reunify/ prevent removal	Child placement
Review of petition	Child safety
Relative resources	Visitation
Safety planning	Diligent search

In 2017, **100%** of the 72-Hr Hearings inquired about Indian Heritage;
In 2014, **50%** of 72-Hr Hearings made the same inquiry

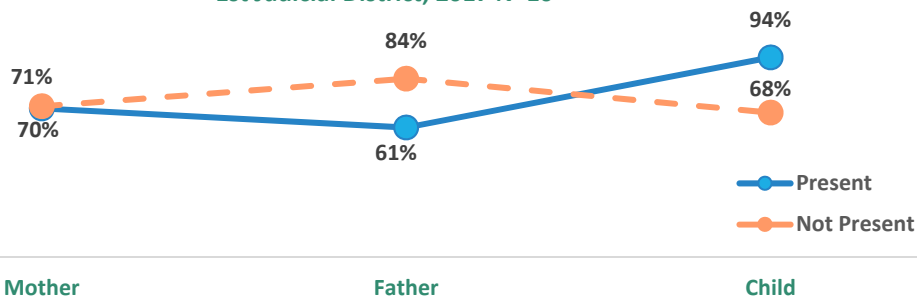
1st Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Breadth of Discussion by Parties Present

The figure below shows the breadth of discussion at the 2017 hearings by the presence of parties. Breadth of discussion is the percentage of items discussed out of all the potential topics (derived from NRS and best practice guidelines)ⁱⁱⁱ that were applicable to be discussed at the hearing. **On average, 72-Hr hearings included discussion of 70% of all applicable topics**, with the percentage of items discussed in each hearing ranging from 24% to 94% of all applicable topics. As shown in the figure below, breadth of discussion was similar whether the mother was present or not (70% of all topics were discussed when the mother was present and 71% of topics were discussed when the mother was absent). More topics, however, were discussed when fathers were not present (84%) at the hearing. While only one child was present in the sample of hearings observed, in that hearing 94% of all topics were discussed, compared to 68% of applicable topics discussed in hearings without the child being present.

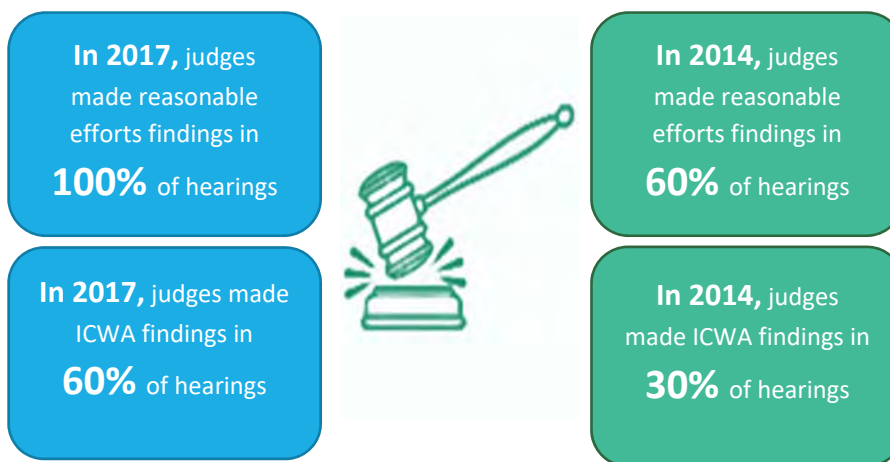
Breadth of Discussion at 72-Hr Hearings by Parties Present

1st Judicial District; 2017 N=10



Findings/Orders

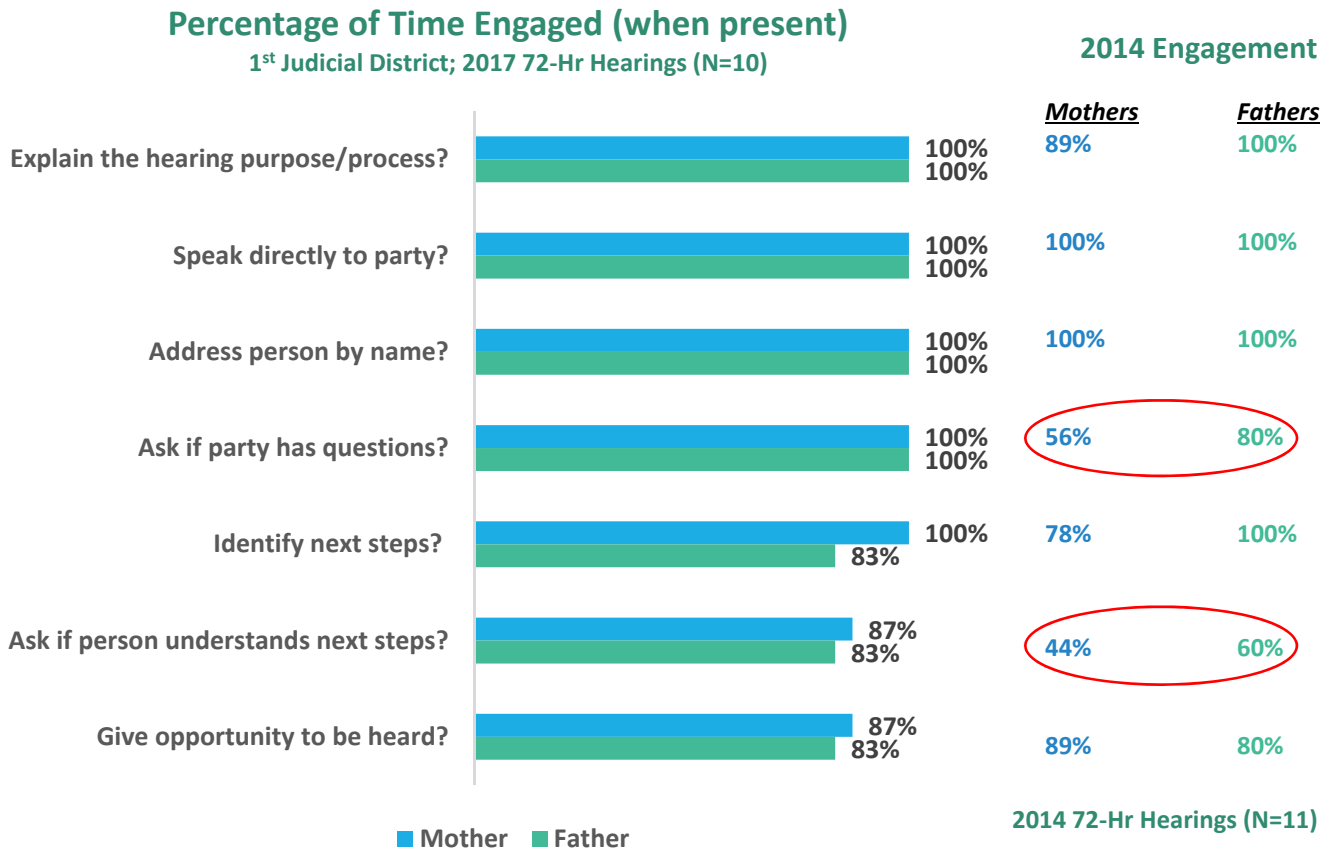
The court observation tool captured whether the judge made findings orally on the record in the 72-Hr hearings. This was calculated as a percentage of time the judge made specific findings. In 2017, the judge made a reasonable efforts finding in **100%** of hearings observed. The judge made an oral finding on the record that the *Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)* did or not apply in **60%** of hearings observed.



1st Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Engagement

Engagement of parties was measured by a series of yes/no questions regarding how the judge engaged the parent and child, including spoke directly to them, addressed them by name, gave them an opportunity to be heard, asked if they had any questions, explained the hearing process, and explained legal timelines. In the one instance where a child was present, the judge engaged the child by explaining the hearing purpose, speaking directly to the child, addressing the child by name and asking if they had questions. The child was given an opportunity to be heard, but only through their attorney.



In **100%** of the 72-Hr hearings in 2017 the judge explained the hearing purpose/process to both mothers and fathers who were present, spoke directly to mothers and fathers, addressed them both by name, and asked if they had any questions. In **100%** of the hearings, judges also identified the next steps for mothers who were present. The least frequent method of engagement of parties was giving fathers an opportunity to be heard (83%) when present, identifying next steps for fathers (83%) and asking if fathers understood the next steps (83%). Compared to 2014, the **2017 72-Hr hearings saw the greatest increases in engaging parties by asking if they had any questions and asking if the next steps in the case process were understood by the mothers and fathers who were present** (See circled items in the figure above).

1st Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Key Findings



Parties Present:

- Attorney representation and the presence of relatives at the 72-Hr hearing both increased in 2017.



Discussion:

- While the average length of the 72-Hr hearings observed was virtually unchanged from 2014 (32 minutes) to 2017 (33 minutes), the 2017 72-Hr hearings were more substantive in terms of discussion. There was an increase, for example, in the applicable topics discussed in the 2017 hearings and 70% of the hearings included a discussion of all applicable topics. Critical issues, such as parents' rights and permanency timeframes, child placement, child safety, visitation and diligent search were discussed in-depth in 2017. And, 100% of the hearings in 2017 made an ICWA inquiry – compared to only 50% of hearings in 2014.
- While the hearings discussed a wide range of applicable topics, there was less discussion of child well-being. While safety and removal are the primary focus of the 72-Hr hearing, the initial hearing in the child abuse and neglect case process also represents an opportunity to establish a tone that prioritizes child well-being and sets the stage for subsequent hearings with respect to the information the court deems important. As such, judges should consider including more attention to child well-being issues even at the 72-Hr hearing. While much of the information about child well-being may not be available, the judge can set the expectation early on that child well-being will be focused on with the same urgency as the court focuses on safety and permanency.^{iv} This will ensure that all parties and advocates understand the court's expectations regarding information to be provided to the court at each subsequent hearing.



Engagement:

- Engagement of parents and youth in the dependency court process is considered essential in holding a high-quality hearing.^v In 100% of the 2017 hearings the judge explained the hearing purpose and process to mothers and fathers present, addressed them both by name, and asked if they had any questions. Engagement included an extensive explanation of parents' rights, what the 72-Hr letter and petition means, the role of parties in the process, (such as CASA), and the meaning of the different hearings in the abuse/neglect process. There was an overall emphasis on the time sensitive nature of cases and the importance of parental participation and involvement in the case process moving forward (e.g., motivating parents to become engaged in case planning and visitation if applicable and stressing the importance of staying in touch with the Division). Judges were encouraging and respectful of all parties present, while still admonishing parents appropriately if relevant.

1st Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

- While findings indicate that engagement of parents is strong, judges are still missing key opportunities to identify next steps for fathers when present and to ensure both parents fully understand the next steps in the process by asking about their understanding. Judges can also provide parties more of a direct opportunity to be heard and not solely through their attorneys.



Judicial Findings/Orders

- Detailed judicial findings were made orally and clearly in the 72-Hr hearings. A reasonable efforts finding, for example, was made orally in 100% of the cases, with 70% of the hearings also including a “contrary to welfare” and “best interests” finding. Sixty percent (60%) of the hearings also made an oral finding about the applicability of ICWA.

ⁱ “Best practices” for dependency court hearings include those practices outlined in the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges’ *ENHANCED RESOURCE GUIDELINES: Improving Court Practice in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases*, which provides recommendations for conducting a high- quality child abuse and neglect hearing process.

ⁱⁱ Ibid.

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid.

^{iv} Ibid.

^v Ibid.

1st Judicial District (JD) Timeliness Measures 2016, 2017 & 2018 (1st Half)

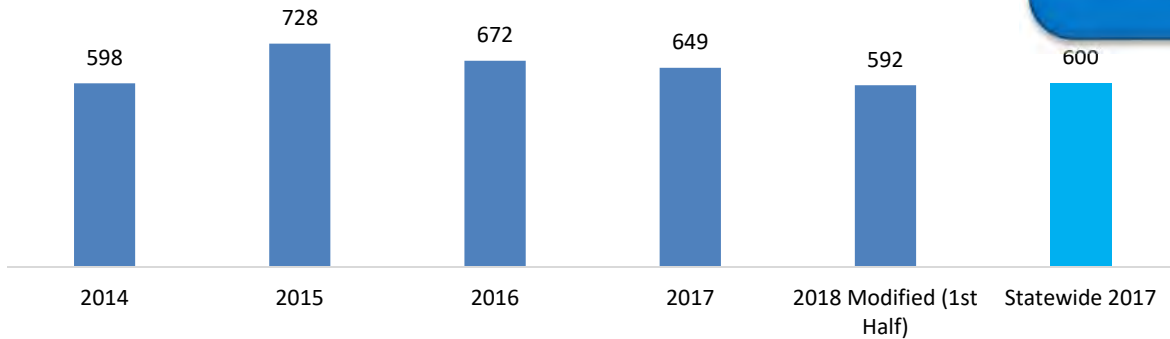
1st JD Median Days to 1st Permanency Hearing



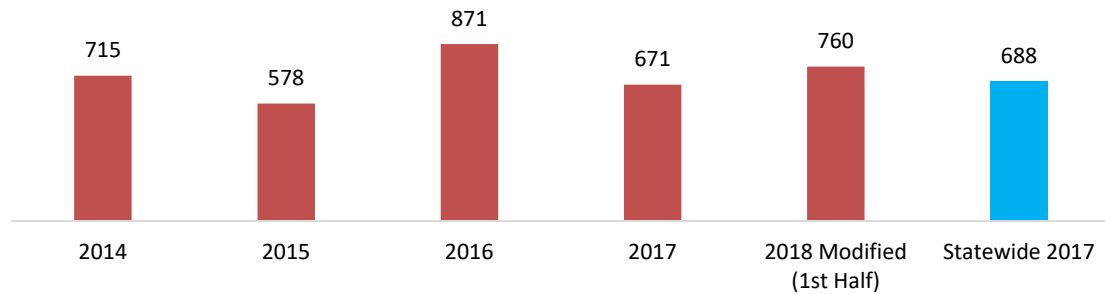
100% of 1st permanency hearings took place within 365 days of removal in the 1st half of 2018

97.3% of 1st permanency hearings took place within 365 days of removal in 2017

1st JD Time to Termination of Parental Rights 2014 - 2018 (1st Half)



1st JD Time to Permanency 2014 - 2018 (1st Half)

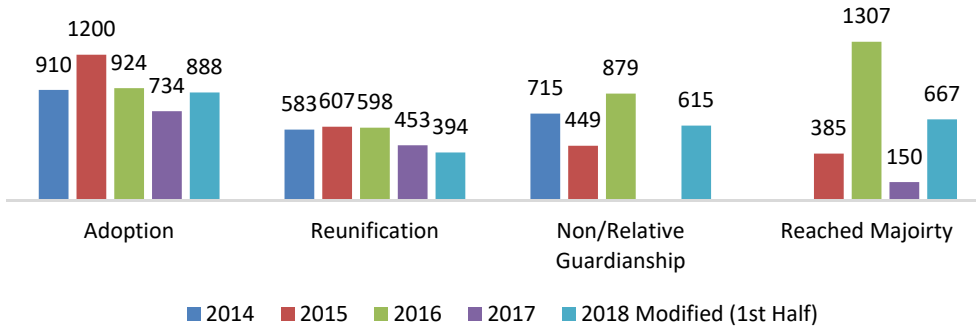


First Placement of Child Entering Foster Care Between 2014 - 2017

	Relative/Kin	Foster Care	Congregate Care
2014	28%	28%	33%
2015	26%	25%	36%
2016	28%	49%	23%
2017	35%	44%	17%

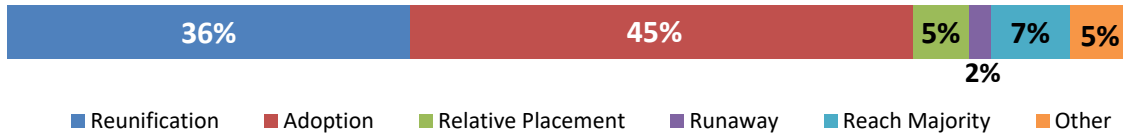
1st Judicial District Data Summary | 2018

1st JD Median Days to Case Closure 2014-2018 (1st Half)

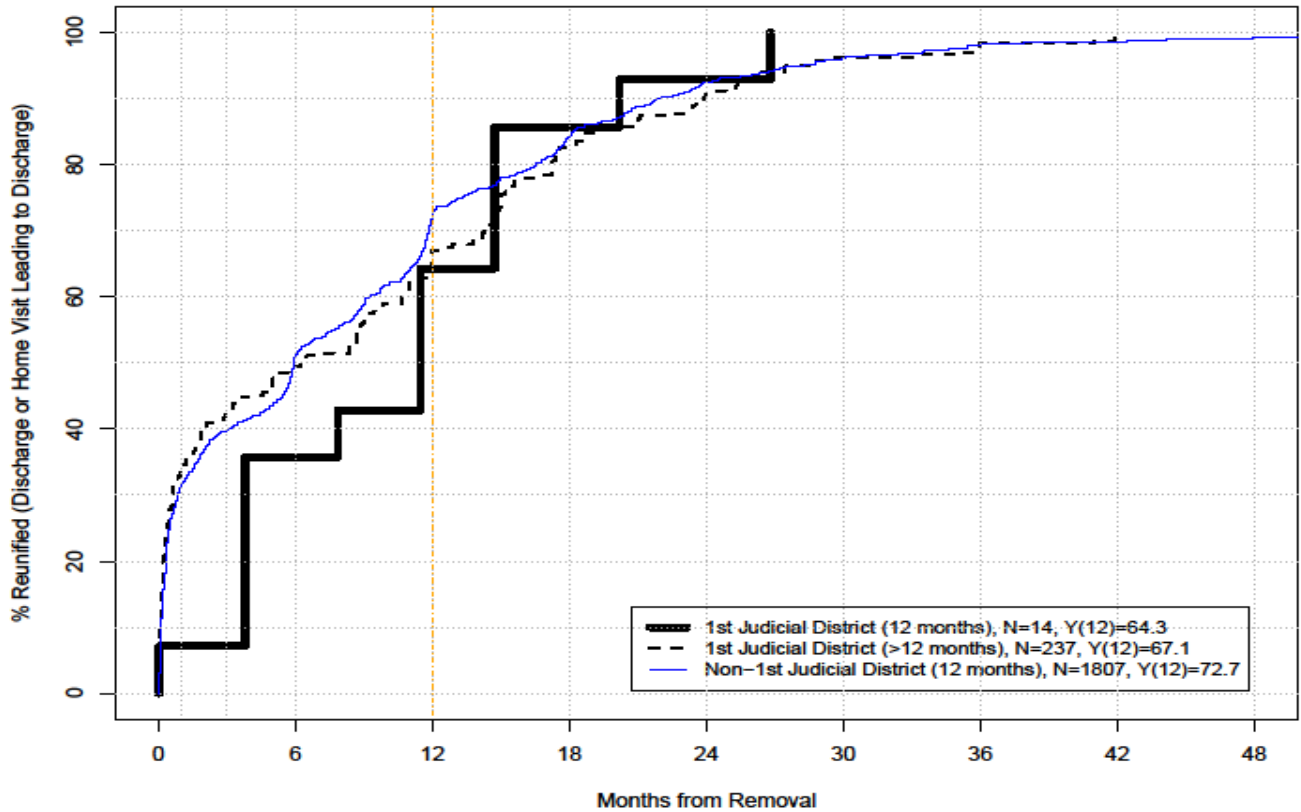


1st JD
 63% of youth who entered care in 2016 were still in care at the end of 2017
Statewide
 47% of youth who entered care in 2016 were still in care at the end of 2017.

1st JD Outcomes for Children Who Exited Care in 2017 (n=42)



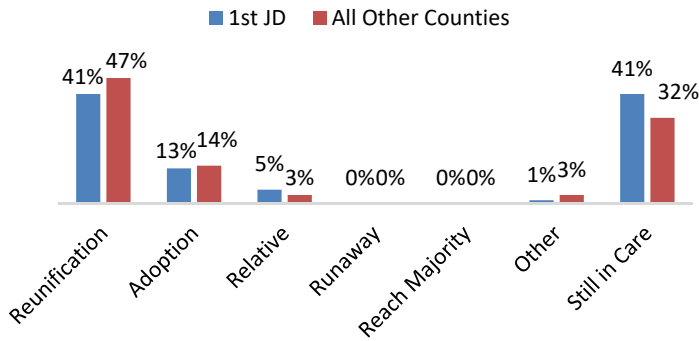
1st Judicial District: Discharges for Reunification Length of Stay, October 2006 through March 2018



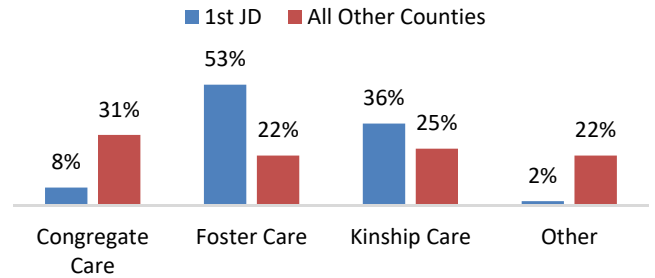
Digging Deeper

Children 0 – 3 Years Old who Entered Care 2014-2017 (n=86)

1st JD Outcomes for Children Who Entered Foster Care 2014-2017



1st JD First Placement Type for Children Who Entered Foster Care (2014-2017)



Short Stayers

1st JD Number of Children Discharged in 72 Hours and 30 Days in 2017

	72 Hours	30 Days
Guardianship	1	3
Relative	0	1
Reunification	1	1
Unknown	0	1
Overall	2 (3.5%)	6 (10%)

40% of cases achieved permanency within 12 months (for kids in care on March 2017)

Reentry

1st JD

***10.7%** of children reentered foster care within 12 months of previous discharge*

Statewide

***4.9%** of children reentered foster care within 12 months of previous discharge*

2nd Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Introduction

To provide the court with information about dependency hearing practice strengths and challenges, and to inform action planning for ongoing systems change efforts, a random sample of recorded hearings from January 2017 to April 2018 from the 2nd Judicial District were obtained. Hearings were observed and coded using a hearing quality data collection tool designed to not only describe the hearing process, but also to capture the presence or absence of specific best practicesⁱ in dependency court hearings. Where data were available, the findings from the current study were compared to hearing quality findings from a study conducted for the 2nd Judicial District in 2014.



FINDINGS

21 Hearings Coded and Analyzed	All Hearings Coded were Permanency Hearings
Elapsed Hearing Time	
Range = 4 to 50 minutes	
Median Permanency Hearing Length =9.17 minutes	
Mean Permanency Hearing Length =13 minutes	

In 2014, permanency hearings (N=15) averaged **12 minutes**

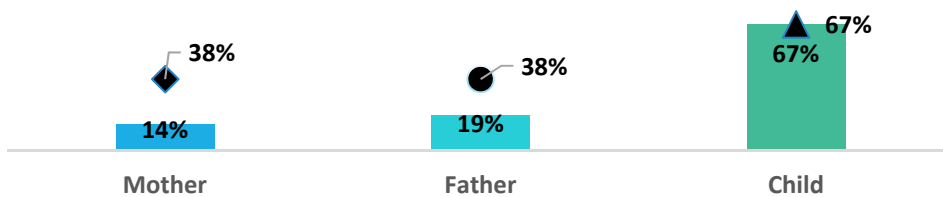
Parties Present

Mothers were present in 14% of the permanency hearings observed, fathers were present in 19% of the hearings and a child was present in 67% of the hearings observed. Parties present and their counsel are shown in the chart below. Parties presence are depicted by bars and the symbols represent the percentage of hearings their attorneys were present. **Case workers and district attorneys were present at all of the hearings.**

2014 Parties Present

Mother	27%
Father	13%
Child	33%
Mother's Atty	33%
Father's Atty	20%
Child Rep	53%

Percentage of Permanency Hearings with Party and Attorneys Present (2nd Judicial District; N=21; Hearings conducted Jan 2017-Apr 2018)



Relatives were present in 19% of hearings	Foster parents were present in 43% of hearings	Tribal representatives were present in all hearings involving ICWA (n=3)
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In 2014, relatives were present **13%** of hearings and foster parents were present **47%** of hearings

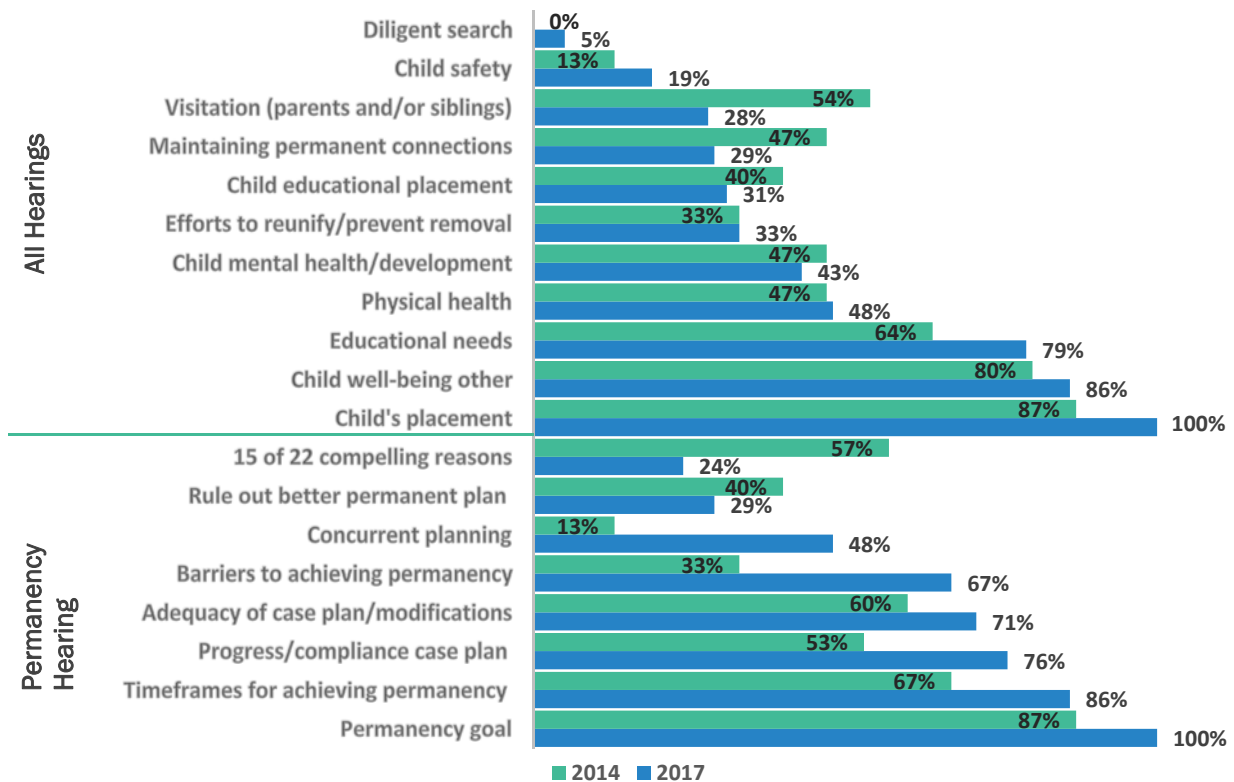
2nd Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Discussion During Permanency Hearings

Discussion was measured with a list of topics that could be relevant to discuss at the hearing. As noted in the figure below, permanency hearing (PH) topics listed are those most relevant to that hearing whereas “all hearings” lists topics that could be relevant to all hearings. Topics were derived from Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) and from best practice guidelines from the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.ⁱⁱ The figure compares the percentage of time (when applicable) that a topic was discussed in the 2014 and 2017 sample of PHs. **In 2017, 100% of the PHs observed discussed the child’s placement and the permanency goal** and involved more discussion in a number of areas (e.g., timeframes to achieve permanency, barriers to permanency, child well-being generally) when compared to 2014 PHs. Some of the topics discussed in more PHs in 2014 than in 2017, however, were the 15 of 22 months/compelling reasons, visitation, maintaining permanent connections, and ruling out better permanent plans.

Percentage of Permanency Hearings in Which Topic Was Discussed

2nd Judicial District; 2014 N=15; 2017 N=21



2nd Judicial District: 2017 Permanency Hearings (N=21)

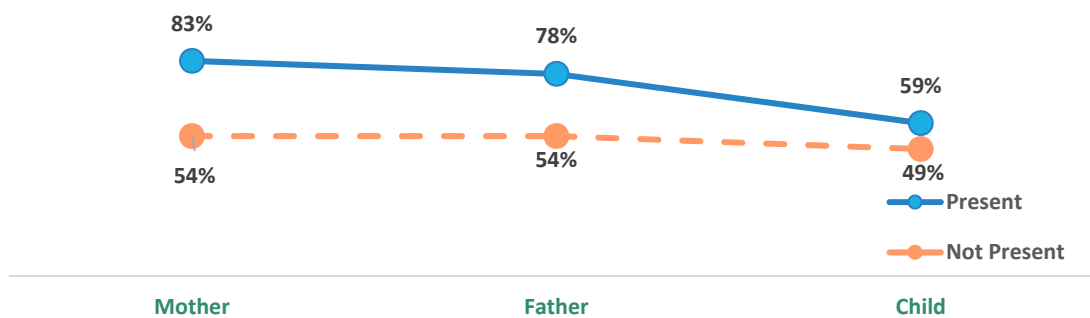
Hearing Topics with Less Discussion (Only a brief statement made; mere mention)	Topics Discussed in Depth (Substantive)
Child physical health	Permanency goal
Child’s educational placement	Child placement
Child’s mental health	Progress/compliance case Plan
Child’s safety	Adequacy of case plan/modifications
	Barriers to achieving permanency

2nd Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Breadth of Discussion by Parties Present

The figure below shows the breadth of discussion at the 2017 permanency hearings by the presence of parties. Breadth of discussion is the percentage of items discussed out of all the potential topics (derived from NRS and best practice guidelines)ⁱⁱⁱ that were applicable to be discussed at the hearing. **On average, PHs included discussion of 63% of all applicable topics**, with the percentage of items discussed in each hearing ranging from 33% to 100% of all applicable topics. As shown in the figure below, breadth of discussion was greater when mothers, fathers and children were present at the hearing.

Breadth of Discussion at Permanency Hearings by Parties Present
2nd Judicial District; 2017 N=21



Findings/Orders

The court observation tool captured whether the judge made findings orally on the record in the permanency hearings. This was calculated as a percentage of time the judge made specific findings. In 2017, the judge made a reasonable efforts’ finding orally in **76%** of hearings observed. The judge made active efforts findings in all of the hearings in which the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) applied (n=3).

In 2017, judges made reasonable efforts findings in **76%** of hearings

In 2014, judges made reasonable efforts findings in **43%** of hearings

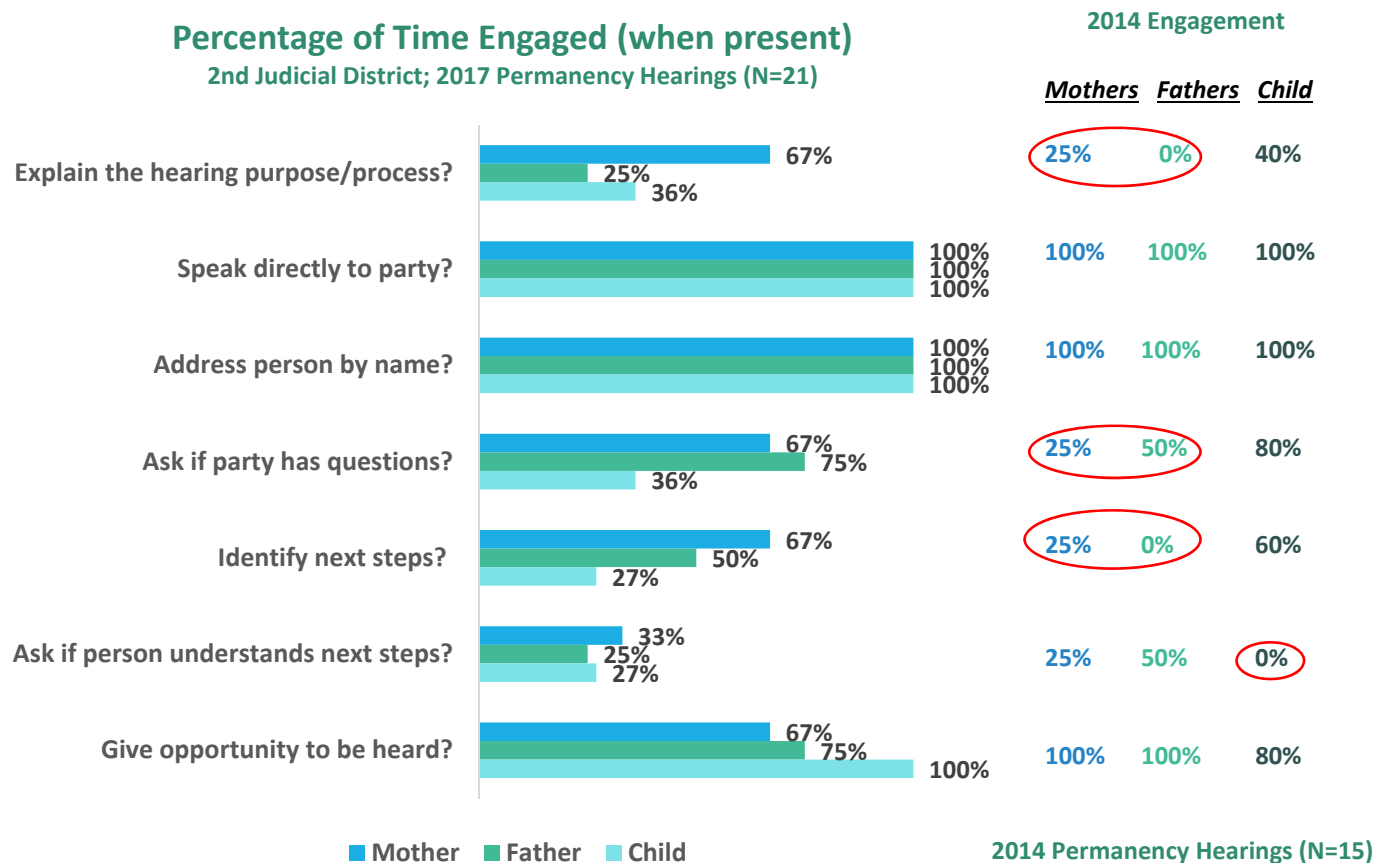
In 2017, judges made active efforts findings in **100%** of hearings involving ICWA (n=3 of 3)

In 2014, no ICWA findings were made orally on the record; researchers could not determine if ICWA applied from court observations

2nd Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Engagement

Engagement of parties was measured by a series of yes/no questions regarding how the judge engaged the parent and child, including spoke directly to them, addressed them by name, gave them an opportunity to be heard, asked if they had any questions, explained the hearing process, and explained legal timelines.



In **100%** of the permanency hearings in 2017 the judge spoke directly to mothers, fathers and children who were present, and addressed them by name. In **100%** of the hearings, judges also gave the children who were present an opportunity to be heard (rather than be heard only through their attorney). The least frequent method of engagement of parties was explaining the hearing process to fathers who were present (25%) and asking fathers if they understood the next steps in the process (25%). Compared to 2014, the **2017 permanency hearings saw the greatest increases in engaging mothers and fathers who were present by explaining the hearing process, asking if mothers and fathers had questions, identifying the next steps for mothers, fathers, and children, and asking children who were present if they understood the next steps** (See circled items in the figure above).

2nd Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Key Findings



Parties Present:

- The presence of attorney representatives for mothers, fathers and children in permanency hearings increased in 2017, with the biggest increase in the presence of the father's attorney at the hearings (from 20% of permanency hearings in 2014 to 38% of permanency hearings in 2017). The presence of mothers and fathers at the permanency hearings, however, decreased in 2017, with only the presence of children at the hearings increasing -the presence of children increased from 33% of hearings in 2014 to 67% of hearings in 2017. There was an increase in the number of relatives present in 2017 (19%) compared to 2014 (13%) and a decrease in the number of foster parents present in 2017 (43% of hearings compared to 47% of hearings in 2014).



Discussion:

- While the average length of the permanency hearings observed was virtually unchanged from 2014 (12 minutes) to 2017 (13 minutes), the 2017 permanency hearings were more substantive in terms of discussion. Compared to the percentage of time topics were discussed in the 2014 permanency hearings, the 2017 hearings had more discussion of permanency goals, timeframes for achieving permanency, progress/compliance on the case plan, adequacy of the case plan/modifications, barriers to achieving permanency, concurrent planning, the child's placement, general well-being (including discussion of involving children in activities that promote normalcy) and the child's educational needs. A number of these issues were discussed in-depth, with the judge, attorneys and parties engaging in a substantive and detailed examination of the topic. Breadth of discussion (the percentage of items discussed out of all the potential topics applicable to be discussed at the hearing) was influenced, however, by the presence of parties at the hearing. When mothers, fathers and children were present, hearings involved discussion of a greater percentage of applicable topics.



Engagement:

- Engagement of parents and youth in the dependency court process is considered essential in holding a high-quality hearing.^{iv} In 100% of the 2017 hearings the judge spoke directly to mothers, fathers and children who were present, addressing them by name. In 100% of the hearings the judge also gave the child/youth an opportunity to be heard and not just through his/her attorney. Compared to 2014, judges explained the hearing purpose and case process (using non-technical language), identified the next steps more frequently for mothers and fathers who were present, and asked if children understood the next steps in more of the 2017 hearings. The judges also engaged all of the foster parents and relatives who were present in the permanency hearings by speaking directly to them, addressing them by name and giving them an opportunity to be heard.
- With a few exceptions, the judges verbally identified each hearing as "the 36-month permanency hearing" or the "12-month permanency hearing" etc.), helping to orient everyone present to the hearing purpose and reminding all parties of the timeline of the case. Judges were encouraging, motivational and supportive of parents and were focused on family strengths. Judges also appeared to understand the issues before them (e.g., substance abuse, domestic violence, having a child with special needs, etc.). In some of the hearings, the judges directly praised caseworkers for good

2nd Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

casework practice, “out of the box thinking,” and “excellent teamwork.” When required, the judges were good at holding the agency accountable (e.g., for service plan delivery and addressing barriers to permanency). Overall, the judges observed did an excellent job of engaging children and youth who were present – clearly explaining the hearing purpose, expressing interest in their schooling and activities, and being motivational and supportive.

- While findings indicate that engagement of parents and children is strong, judges can continue to enhance engagement of fathers when present by explaining the hearing purpose and process to them. In addition, judges can ensure that parents and children fully understand the next steps in the case process by asking them directly about their understanding.



Judicial Findings/Orders

- While an improvement over 2014 permanency hearings, in 24% of the 2017 hearings (n=5 of 21) judges did not make detailed oral findings. Instead, judges “adopted the findings and recommendations contained in the report” or “continued previous findings and orders” as written. However, detailed judicial findings were made orally and clearly in the majority of the 2017 permanency hearings observed (76%; n=16 of 21). Detailed oral findings, for example, included reasonable efforts to finalize the permanency plan, specifying anticipated permanency plan completion dates, finding compelling reasons not to file a termination of parental rights, making best interests’ findings, and making appropriate findings in ICWA cases (i.e., active efforts and clear and convincing findings).

ⁱ “Best practices” for dependency court hearings include those practices outlined in the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges’ *ENHANCED RESOURCE GUIDELINES: Improving Court Practice in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases*, which provides recommendations for conducting a high- quality child abuse and neglect hearing process.

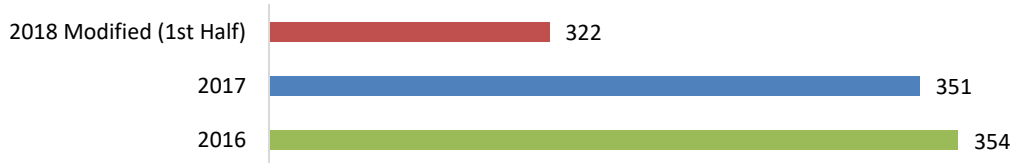
ⁱⁱ Ibid.

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid.

^{iv} Ibid.

2nd Judicial District (JD) Timeliness Measures 2016, 2017 & 2018 (1st Half)

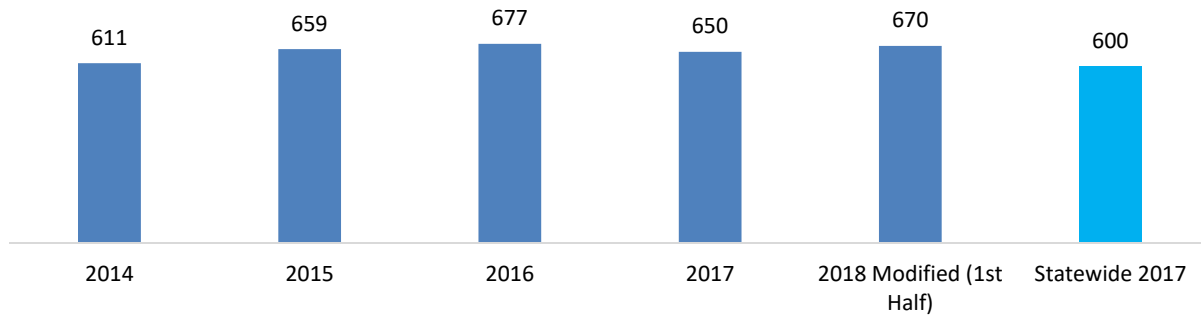
2nd JD Median Days to 1st Permanency Hearing



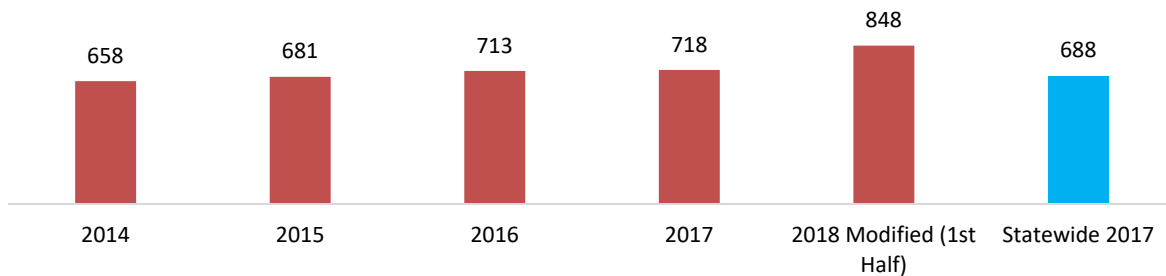
97% of 1st permanency hearings took place within 365 days of removal in the 1st half of 2018

95% of 1st permanency hearings took place within 365 days of removal in 2017

2nd JD Time to Termination of Parental Rights 2014-2018 (1st Half)

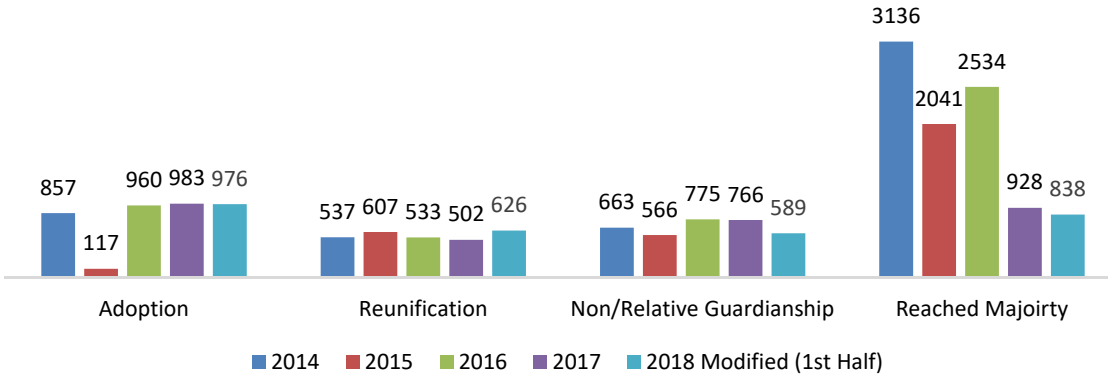


2nd JD Time to Permanency 2014 - 2018 (1st Half)



First Placement of Child Entering Foster Care Between 2014 - 2017			
	Relative/Kin	Foster Care	Congregate Care
2014	13%	22%	60%
2015	15%	19%	58%
2016	19%	19%	54%
2017	24%	42%	26%

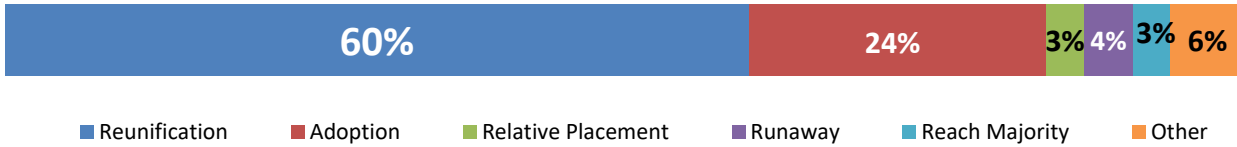
2nd JD Median Days to Case Closure 2014-2018 (1st Half)



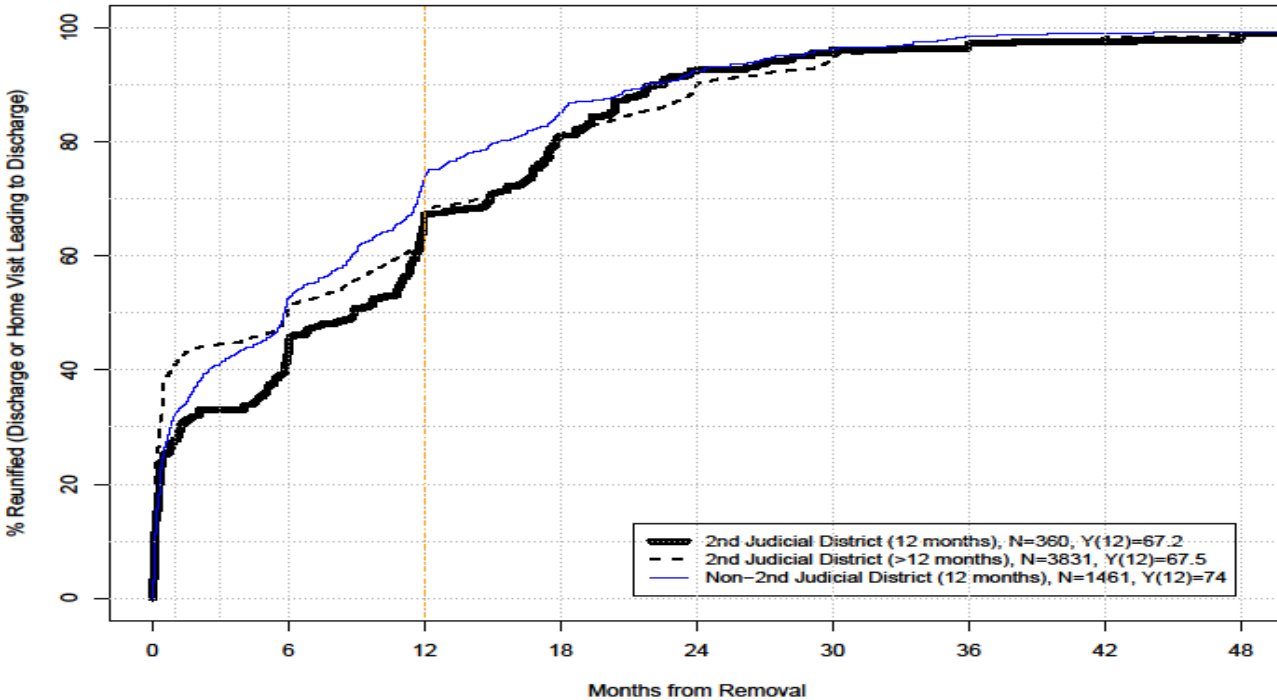
2nd JD
45% of youth who entered care in 2016 were still in care at the end of 2017.

Statewide
47% of youth who entered care in 2016 were still in care at the end of 2017.

2nd JD Outcomes for Children Who Exited Care in 2017 (n=539)



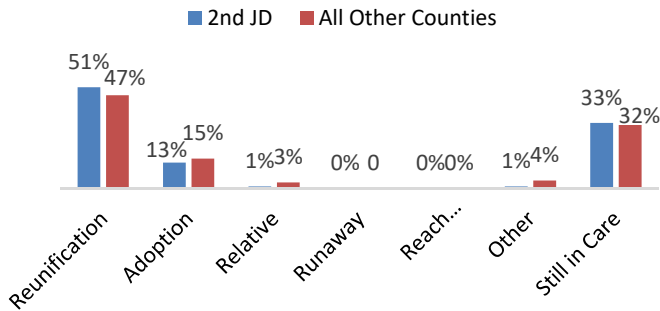
2nd Judicial District: Discharges for Reunification Length of Stay, October 2006 through March 2018



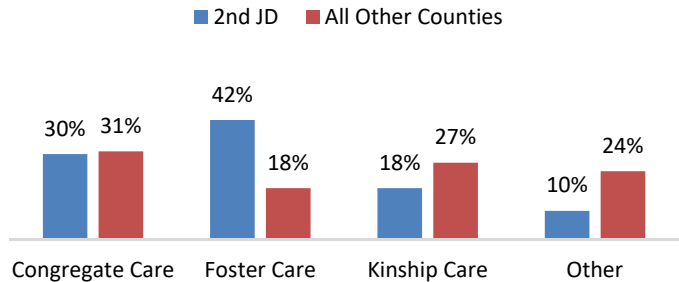
Digging Deeper

Children 0 – 3 Years Old who Entered Care Between 2014 – 2017 (n=1068)

2nd JD Outcomes for Children Who Entered Foster Care 2014-2017



2nd JD First Placement Type for Children Who Entered Foster Care (2014-2017)



Short Stayers

2nd JD Number of Children Discharged in 72 Hours and 30 Days in 2017

	72 Hours	30 Days
Guardianship	0	0
Runaway	0	1
Relative	7	11
Reunification	41	100
Emancipation	0	1
Transfer	0	2
Overall	48 (8%)	115 (20%)

40% of cases achieved permanency within 12 months (for kids in care on March 2017)

Reentry

2nd JD

5.4% of children reentered foster care within 12 months of previous discharge

Statewide

4.9% of children reentered foster care within 12 months of previous discharge

3rd Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Introduction

To provide the court with information about dependency hearing practice strengths and challenges, and to inform action planning for ongoing systems change efforts, a random sample of recorded hearings from April 2017 to February 2018 from the 3rd Judicial District were obtained. Hearings were observed and coded using a hearing quality data collection tool designed to not only describe the hearing process, but also to capture the presence or absence of specific best practicesⁱ in dependency court hearings. Where data were available, the findings from the current study of permanency hearings were compared to findings from a study conducted for the 3rd Judicial District in 2014 involving review hearings. While the specific hearing types studied in 2017 and 2014 differ, because both data collection years assessed a type of review hearing many of the same elements of hearing quality are applicable.



FINDINGS

10 Hearings Coded and Analyzed	All Hearings Coded were Permanency Hearings
Elapsed Hearing Time	
Range = 6 to 38 minutes	
Median Permanency Hearing Length =11.51 minutes	
Mean Permanency Hearing Length =18 minutes	

In 2014, review hearings (N=9) averaged **7 minutes**

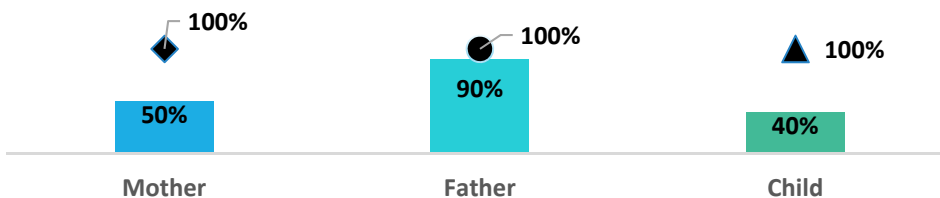
Parties Present

Mothers were present in 50% of the permanency hearings observed, fathers were present in 90% of the hearings and a child was present in 40% of the hearings observed. Parties present and their counsel are shown in the chart below. Parties presence are depicted by bars and the symbols represent the percentage of hearings their attorneys were present. **Case workers and district attorneys were present in all but one of the permanency hearings.**

2014 Parties Present

Mother	22%
Father	44%
Child	0
Mother's Atty	89%
Father's Atty	56%
Child Rep	56%

Percentage of Permanency Hearings with Party and Attorneys Present
(3rd Judicial District; N=10; Hearings conducted Apr 2017-Feb 2018)



Relatives were present **40%** of the hearings

Foster parents were present **10%** of the hearings (n=1)

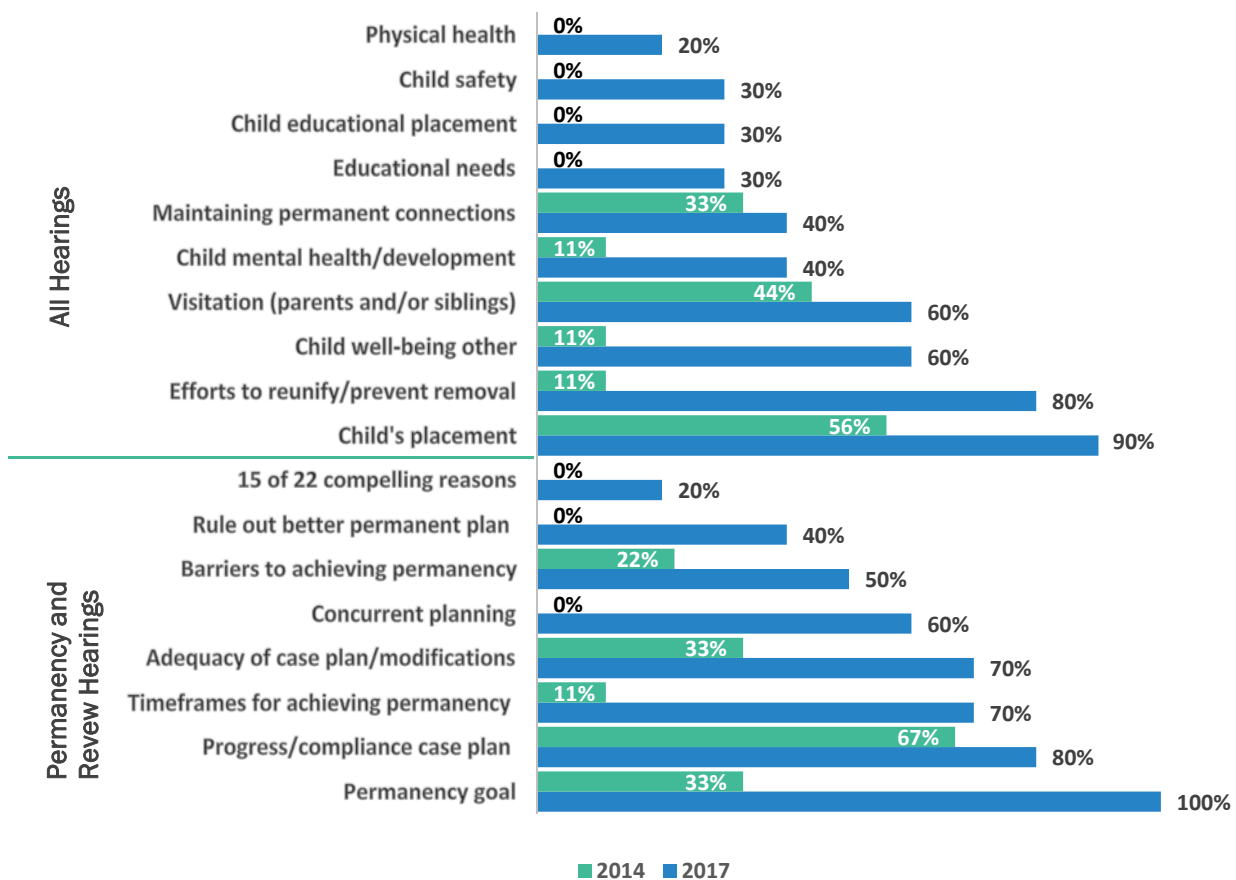
In 2014, relatives were present **11%** of hearings and foster parents were present none (**0%**) of hearings

3rd Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Discussion During Permanency and Review Hearings

Discussion was measured with a list of topics that could be relevant to discuss at the hearing. As noted in the figure below, permanency hearing (PH) topics and review hearing (RH) topics listed are those most relevant to those hearings whereas “all hearings” lists topics that could be relevant to all hearings. Topics were derived from Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) and from best practice guidelines from the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.ⁱⁱ The figure compares the percentage of time (when applicable) that a topic was discussed in the 2014 and 2017 sample of hearings. **In 2017, 100% of the PHs observed discussed the child’s permanency goal, 90% discussed the child’s placement and 80% discussed progress/compliance on the case plan and efforts to reunify.**

Percentage of Hearings in Which Topic Was Discussed
3rd Judicial District; 2014 Review Hearings N=9; 2017 Permanency Hearings N=10



3rd Judicial District: 2017 Permanency Hearings (N=10)

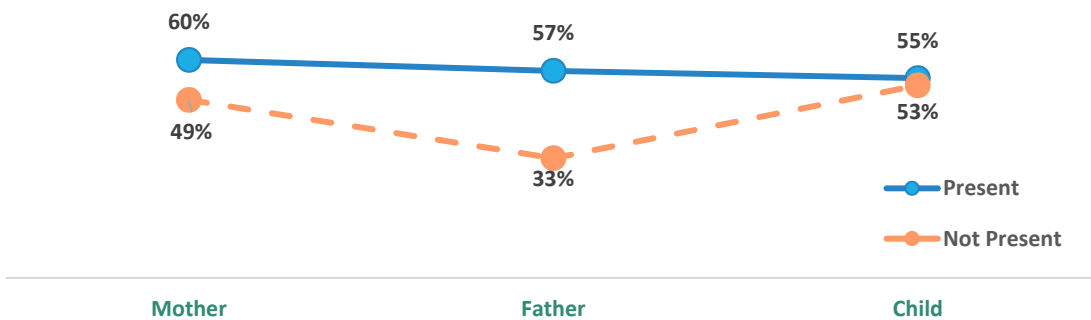
Hearing Topics with Less Discussion (Only a brief statement made; mere mention)	Topics Discussed in Depth (Substantive)
Rule out better permanent plan	Progress/compliance with case plan
Barriers to achieving permanency	Adequacy of case plan/plan modification
Timeframes for achieving permanency	Visitation (parent and/or sibling)
Concurrent planning	Child’s placement

3rd Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Breadth of Discussion by Parties Present

The figure below shows the breadth of discussion at the 2017 permanency hearings by the presence of parties. Breadth of discussion is the percentage of items discussed out of all the potential topics (derived from NRS and best practice guidelines)ⁱⁱⁱ that were applicable to be discussed at the hearing. **On average, PHs included discussion of 54% of all applicable topics**, with the percentage of items discussed in each hearing ranging from 33% to 89% of all applicable topics. As shown in the figure below, breadth of discussion was greater when mothers and fathers were present, and very similar whether the child was present at the hearing or not.

Breadth of Discussion at Permanency Hearings by Parties Present
3rd Judicial District; 2017 N=10



Findings/Orders

The court observation tool captured whether the judge made findings orally on the record in the permanency hearings. This was calculated as a percentage of time the judge made specific findings. In 2017, the judge made a reasonable efforts' finding orally in **90%** of hearings observed. No oral *Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)* findings were made.

In 2017, judges made reasonable efforts findings in **90%** of permanency hearings

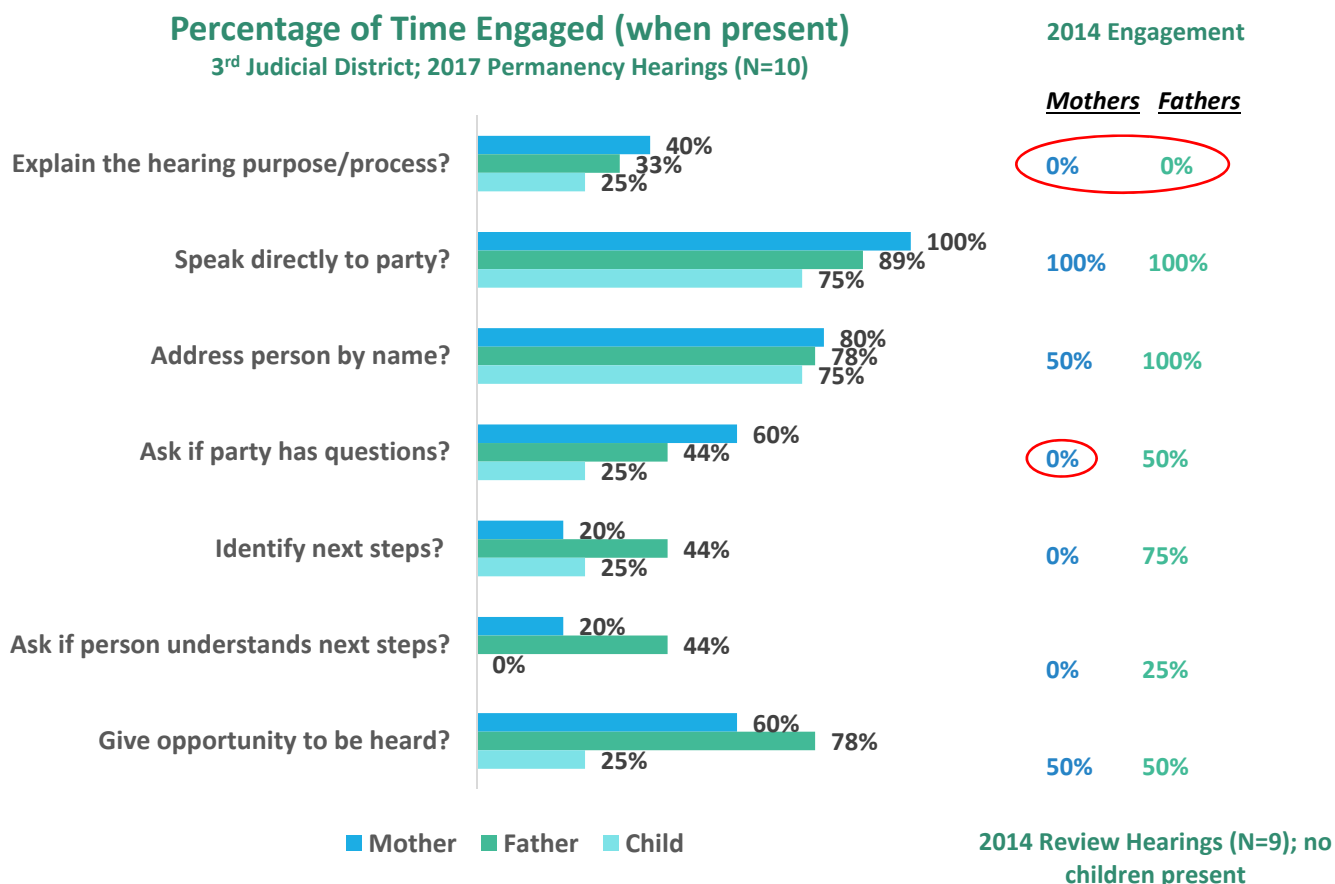


In 2014, judges made reasonable efforts findings in **11%** of review hearings

3rd Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Engagement

Engagement of parties was measured by a series of yes/no questions regarding how the judge engaged the parent and child, including spoke directly to them, addressed them by name, gave them an opportunity to be heard, asked if they had any questions, explained the hearing process, and explained legal timelines.



In **100%** of the permanency hearings in 2017 the judge spoke directly to mothers who were present, addressing them by name in 80% of the hearings. Judges spoke directly to fathers who were present in 89% of hearings, addressing them by name in 78% of hearings. When children were present, the judge spoke directly to them and addressed them by name in 75% of hearings. The least frequent method of engagement of parties was asking children who were present if they understood the next steps (0% of the hearings). Compared to 2014 review hearings, the **2017 permanency hearings saw the greatest increases in engaging mothers, fathers and children who were present by explaining the hearing process and asking mothers who were present if they had any questions.** (See circled items in the figure above).

3rd Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Key Findings



Parties Present:

- While not directly comparable (i.e., the 2014 hearings analyzed were review hearings and the 2017 hearings analyzed were permanency hearings), the appearance of all parties at the hearings increased from 2014 to 2017. Mothers were present in 50% of permanency hearings (compared to 22% of the 2014 review hearings), fathers were present in 90% of permanency hearings (compared to 44% of the 2014 review hearings) and children were present in 40% of the permanency hearings (compared to none of the review hearings in 2014). In addition, more relatives (40% of hearings) were present in the 2017 permanency hearings compared to only 11% of the 2014 review hearings.
- The presence of representatives for parties increased in the 2017 permanency hearings when compared to the 2014 review hearings. The greatest increases were in the appearance of father's attorneys (100% of permanency hearings compared to 56% of the 2014 review hearings) and in the appearance of the child's representative (100% of permanency hearings compared to 56% of the 2014 review hearings).



Discussion:

- The average length of the permanency hearings (18 minutes) was more than double the average length of the review hearings (7 minutes). As a result, there was more hearing time, on average, to engage in a comprehensive and detailed discussion of issues in the permanency hearings. When compared to the 2014 review hearings, the 2017 permanency hearings saw increased discussion of almost all of the items deemed to be important to permanency and review hearing practice by NRS and accepted national best practice standards. In the 2017 permanency hearings observed, for example, more hearings included a discussion of the permanency goal, child's placement, progress and compliance on the case plan, efforts to reunify and prevent removal, timeframes for achieving permanency, and the adequacy of the case plan and any modifications. A number of these topics were also discussed in-depth and with detail (e.g., case plan progress, case plan adequacy and modification, visitation and child placement). The 2017 permanency hearings also saw increases in discussion of areas not addressed at all in the 2014 review hearings such as child safety, education, and physical health.
- The permanency hearings included some focus on child well-being issues (e.g., 60% addressed child well-being generally, 40% addressed the child's mental health/development, and 30% addressed the child's educational needs and educational placement). Compared to the 2014 review hearings observed, this also represents an increase in the percentage of hearings addressing child well-being issues (e.g., none of the 2014 hearings addressed the child's educational needs or placement and only 11% of those hearings discussed child well-being generally). While an increase over the 2014 hearings, none of the child well-being topics were discussed in a substantive way in the 2017 permanency hearings. This suggests that a focus at the permanency stage on child well-being may be an area in need of improvement.
- The presence of mothers and fathers at the permanency hearings appears to make a difference to the breadth of discussion (the percentage of items discussed out of all the potential topics derived from NRS and best practices) at the hearings. The percentage of items discussed was greater when

3rd Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

mothers and fathers were present compared to when they were absent. The breadth of discussion, however, was virtually the same whether the child was present at the hearing or not.



Engagement:

- Engagement of parents and youth in the dependency court process is considered essential in holding a high-quality hearing.^{iv} Some engagement strategies were used in the 2017 permanency hearings that were not previously seen in the sample of 2014 review hearings. The judge in the 2017 permanency hearings, for example, explained the hearing purpose and process to mothers and fathers who were present (including the goal of mediation, the importance of finalizing permanency and case timelines, and what concurrent planning entails). None of the 2014 review hearings engaged mothers and fathers who were present in this way. There was also good engagement of youth who were present at the permanency hearings, with the judge asking about school, activities, and appearing genuinely interested in how children and youth were doing.
- While findings indicate that judges are engaging parties who are present, and the permanency hearings observed demonstrated increased levels of engagement compared to the 2014 review hearings in a number of areas, the court can still enhance its engagement practice. For example, the court can engage parties more fully in hearings by asking if they have questions, identifying the next steps in the case process, and confirming parties' understanding of those next steps by directly asking them.



Judicial Findings/Orders

- In all but one hearing the judge made an oral reasonable efforts finding. These findings were detailed, including, when appropriate, reasonable efforts to finalize the permanent plan and reasonable efforts to reunify no longer required findings. While the hearing types are not directly comparable, only 11% of the 2014 review hearings included an oral reasonable efforts finding. No oral findings related to ICWA were made in either of the 2014 and 2017 sample of hearings observed.

ⁱ "Best practices" for dependency court hearings include those practices outlined in the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges' *ENHANCED RESOURCE GUIDELINES: Improving Court Practice in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases*, which provides recommendations for conducting a high- quality child abuse and neglect hearing process.

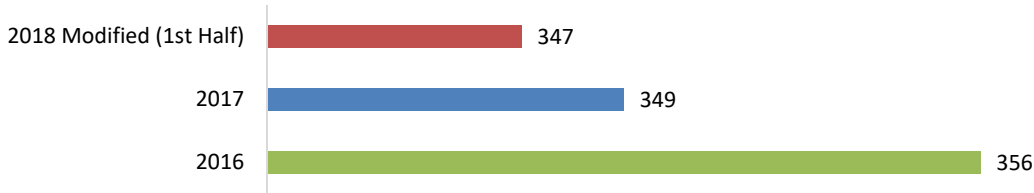
ⁱⁱ Ibid.

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid.

^{iv} Ibid.

3rd Judicial District (JD) Timeliness Measures 2016, 2017 & 2018 (1st Half)

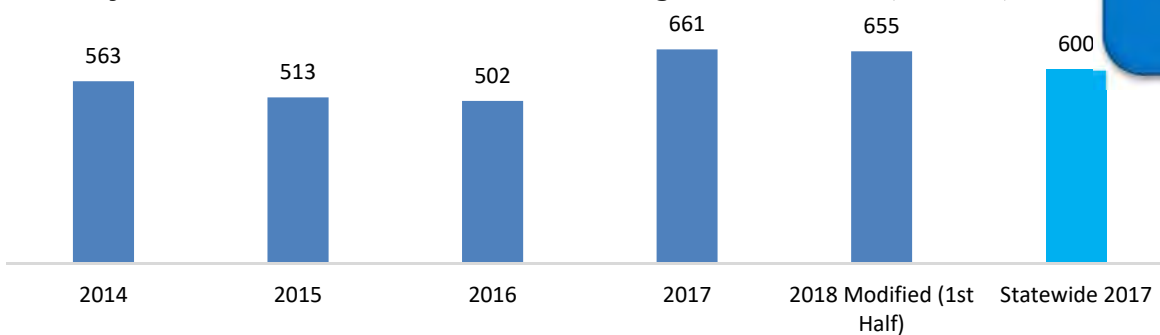
3rd JD Median Days to 1st Permanency Hearing



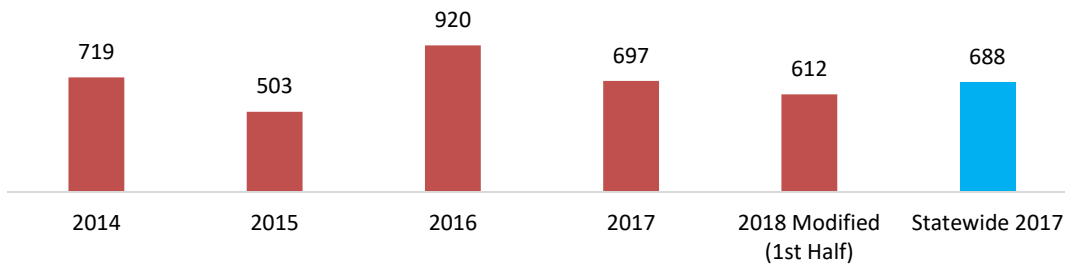
76% of 1st permanency hearings took place within 365 days of removal in the 1st half of 2018

76% of 1st permanency hearings took place within 365 days of removal in 2017

3rd JD Time to Termination of Parental Rights 2014 - 2018 (1st Half)



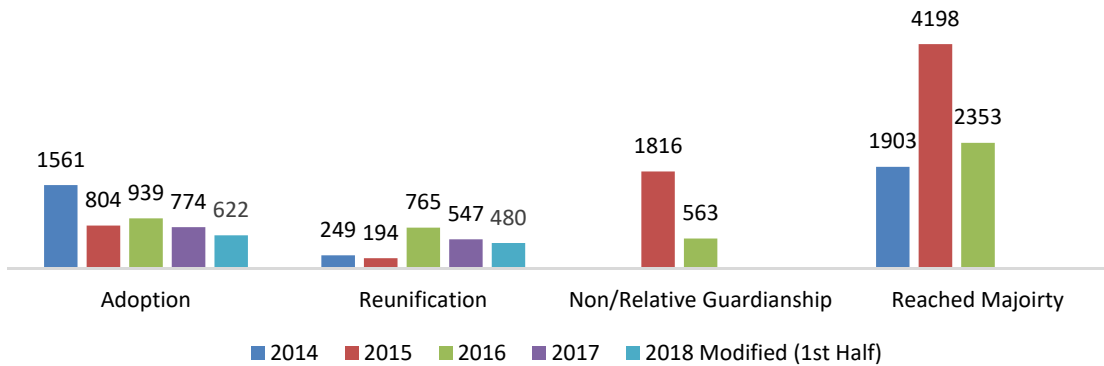
3rd JD Time to Permanency 2014-2018 (1st Half)



First Placement of Child Entering Foster Care Between 2014 - 2017

	Relative/Kin	Foster Care	Congregate Care
2014	32%	36%	27%
2015	28%	45%	20%
2016	21%	54%	23%
2017	17%	55%	17%

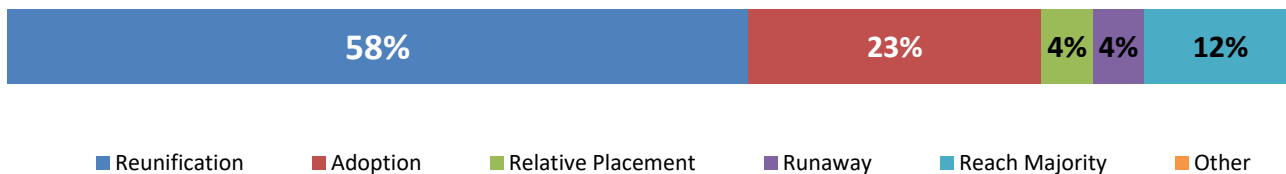
3rd JD Median Days to Case Closure 2014-2018 (1st Half)



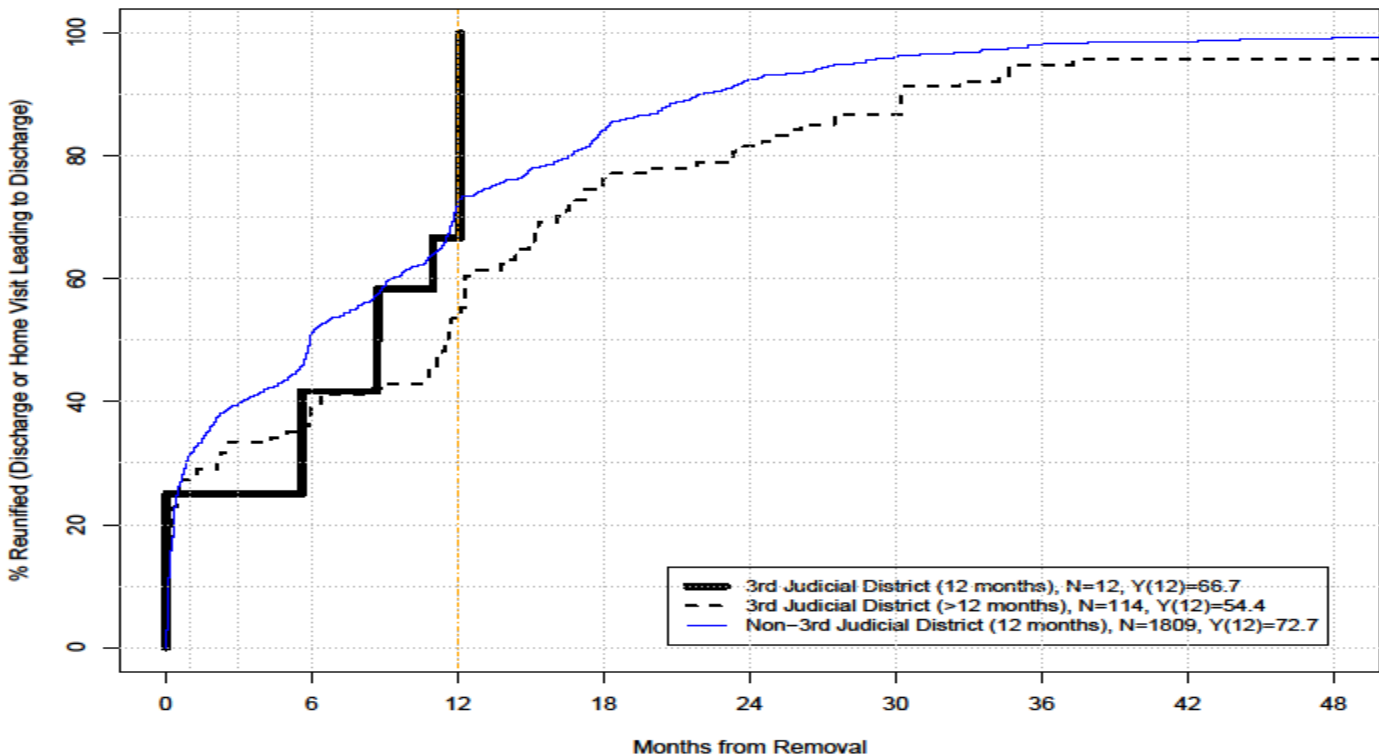
3rd JD
47% of youth who entered care in 2016 were still in care at the end of 2017.

Statewide
47% of youth who entered care in 2015 were still in care at the end of 2016.

3rd JD Outcomes for Children Who Exited Care in 2017 (n=26)



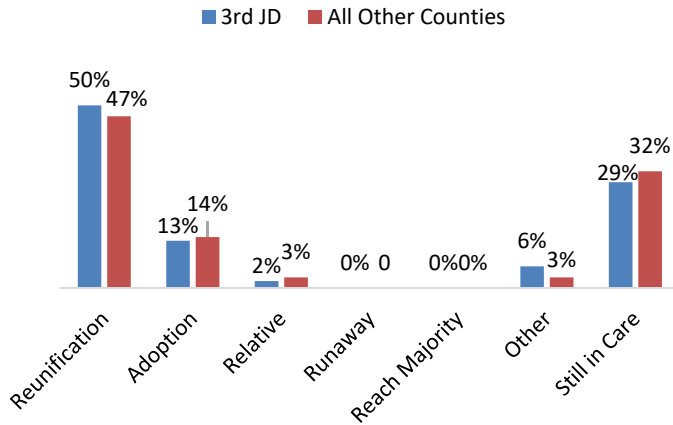
3rd Judicial District: Discharges for Reunification Length of Stay, October 2006 through March 2018



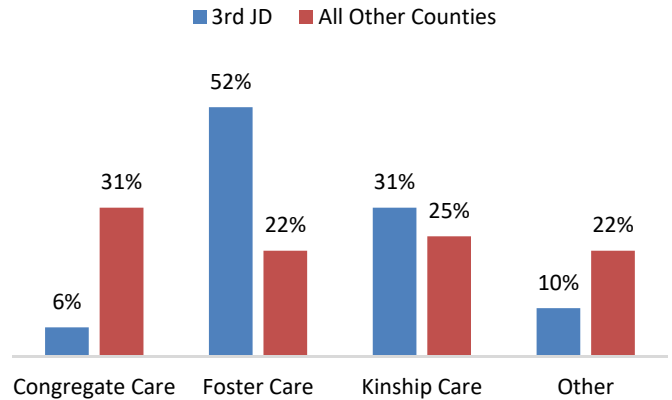
Digging Deeper

Children 0 – 3 Years Old who Entered Care Between 2014 – 2017 (n=48)

3rd JD Outcomes for Children Who Entered Foster Care 2014-2017



3rd JD First Placement Type for Children Who Entered Foster Care (2014-2016)



Short Stayers

3rd JD Number of Children Discharged in 72 Hours and 30 Days in 2017

	72 Hours	30 Days
Guardianship	0	0
Runaway	0	0
Relative	0	0
Reunification	3	3
Overall	3 (17%)	3 (17%)

24% of cases achieved permanency within 12 months (for kids in care on March 2017)

Reentry

3rd JD

4.8% of children reentered foster care within 12 months of previous discharge

Statewide

4.9% of children reentered foster care within 12 months of previous discharge

4th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Introduction

To provide the court with information about dependency hearing practice strengths and challenges, and to inform action planning for ongoing systems change efforts, a random sample of recorded hearings from January 2017 to November 2017 from the 4th Judicial District were obtained. Hearings were observed and coded using a hearing quality data collection tool designed to not only describe the hearing process, but also to capture the presence or absence of specific best practicesⁱ in dependency court hearings. Where data were available, the findings from the current study were compared to hearing quality findings from a study conducted for the 4th Judicial District in 2014.



FINDINGS

10 Hearings Coded and Analyzed	72-hr (n=3); Adjudication (n=2); Disposition (n=2); Review (n=1); Permanency (n=2)
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Elapsed Hearing Time

Range = 5 to 141 minutes
 Median Hearing Length = 16.74 minutes
Mean Hearing Length = 30 minutes

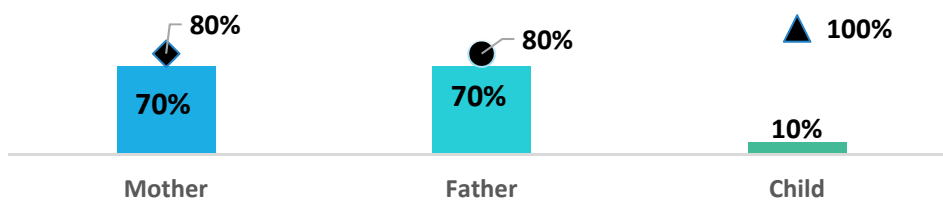
In 2014, a mix of hearings (72-hr, adjudication, disposition, review and permanency) were analyzed (N=10). The hearings averaged **54 minutes**

Parties Present

Mothers were present in 70% of the hearings observed, fathers were present in 70% of the hearings and a child was present in only one of the hearings observed (10%; n=1 of 10). Parties present and their counsel are shown in the chart below. Parties presence are depicted by bars and the symbols represent the percentage of hearings their attorneys were present. **Case workers and district attorneys were present at all of the hearings.**

2014 Parties Present	
Mother	70%
Father	60%
Child	10%
Mother's Atty	80%
Father's Atty	50%
Child Rep	90%

Percentage of Hearings with Party and Attorneys Present
 (4th Judicial District; N=10; Hearings conducted Jan 2017-Nov 2017)



Relatives were present **10%** of the hearings (n=1)

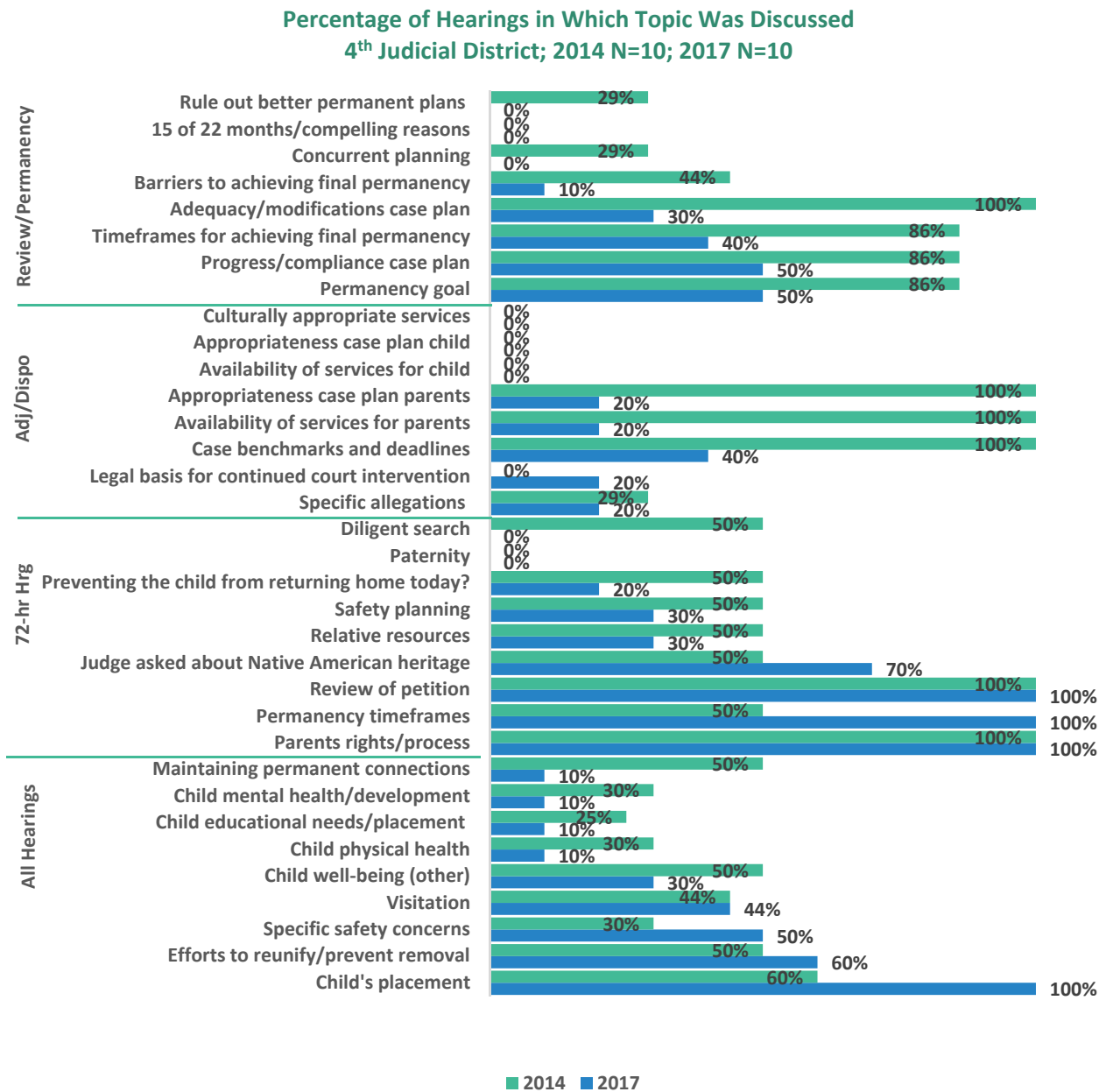
Foster parents were present **10%** of the hearings (n=1)

In 2014, relatives were present for **20%** of hearings and foster parents were present for **30%** of hearings

4th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Discussion During Hearings

Discussion was measured with a list of topics that could be relevant to discuss at the hearing. The topics listed next to specific hearings in the figure below are those that are most relevant for discussion in those hearings, while topics listed under “all hearings” are those that could be relevant for any hearing. Topics were derived from Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) and from best practice guidelines from the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.ⁱⁱ The figure compares the percentage of time (when applicable) that a topic was discussed in the 2014 and 2017 sample of hearings. **In 2017, 100% of the hearings observed discussed the child’s placement, parents’ rights/process, permanency timeframes, and the petition.**



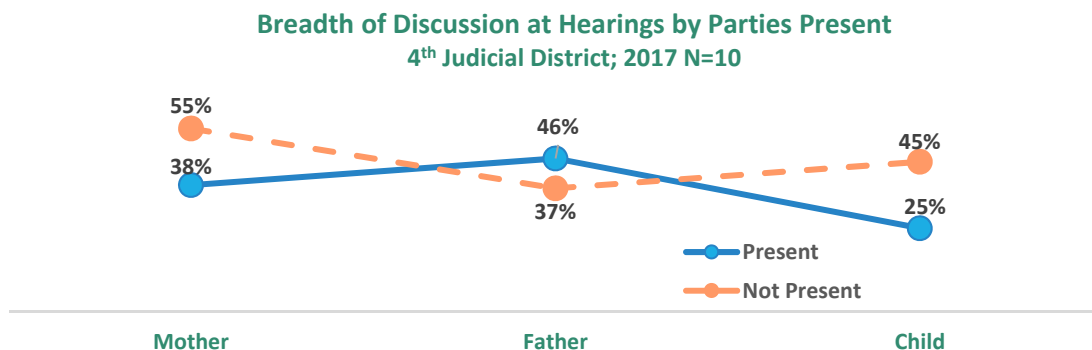
4th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

4th Judicial District: 2017 Hearings (N=10)

Hearing Topics with Less Discussion (Only a brief statement made; mere mention)	Topics Discussed in Depth (Substantive)
Adequacy of case plan parents	Parents rights/process
Barriers to achieving permanency	Permanency timeframes
Child well-being (other)	Case benchmarks and deadlines
Child physical health	Specific allegations
Child mental health or development	Petition review

Breadth of Discussion by Parties Present

The figure below shows the breadth of discussion at the 2017 hearings by the presence of parties. Breadth of discussion is the percentage of items discussed out of all the potential topics (derived from NRS and best practice guidelines)ⁱⁱⁱ that were applicable to be discussed at the hearing. **On average, 2017 hearings included discussion of 42% of all applicable topics**, with the percentage of items discussed in each hearing ranging from 10% to 74% of all applicable topics. As shown in the figure below, breadth of discussion was greater when the mother was not present (38% of all applicable topics were discussed when the mother was present and 55% of topics were discussed when the mother was absent). More topics, however, were discussed when fathers were present at the hearings (46%) compared to when they were absent (37%). Only one child was present in the sample of hearings observed. In that hearing, 25% of all applicable topics were discussed, compared to 45% of applicable topics discussed in hearings without the child being present.



Findings/Orders

The court observation tool captured whether the judge made findings orally on the record in the hearings. This was calculated as a percentage of time the judge made specific findings. In 2017, the judge made a reasonable efforts finding orally in **50%** of hearings observed. The judge made an *Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)* finding orally on the record in **80%** of 2017 hearings observed (compared to none of the hearings in 2014).

In 2017, judges made reasonable efforts findings in **50%** of hearings

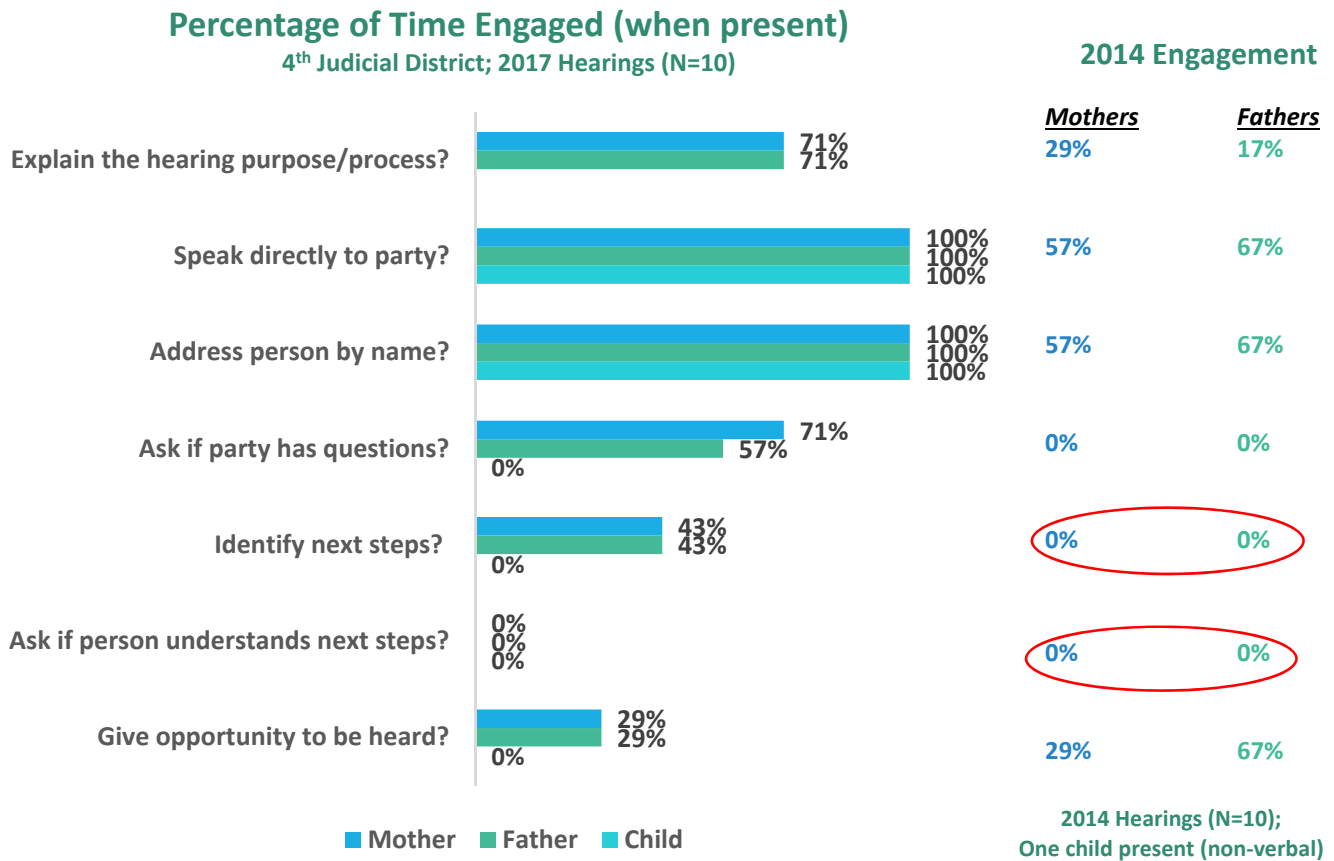


In 2014, judges made reasonable efforts findings in **20%** of hearings

4th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Engagement

Engagement of parties was measured by a series of yes/no questions regarding how the judge engaged the parent and child, including spoke directly to them, addressed them by name, gave them an opportunity to be heard, asked if they had any questions, explained the hearing process, and explained legal timelines.



Compared to 2014, the 2017 hearings demonstrated increased engagement of parents who were present in almost all of the possible engagement strategies coded. In **100%** of the 2017 hearings the judge spoke directly to mothers and fathers who were present, addressing them both by name. In **71%** of the 2017 hearings, judges explained the hearing purpose and process to the mothers and fathers. The 2017 hearings also used engagement techniques that weren't used in 2014, such as asking if parents had any questions and identifying the next steps for parents (see circled items in the figure above). While 29% of the 2017 hearings gave mothers and fathers an opportunity to be heard, the remainder of the hearings with mothers and fathers present gave parties an opportunity to be heard through their attorney only. In the one instance where a child was present, the judge engaged the child by speaking directly to the child and addressing the child by name. The child was given an opportunity to be heard, but only through their attorney.

4th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Key Findings



Parties Present:

- Fewer children were present in the sample of hearings observed in 2017, with only one hearing having a child present (10%; n=1) compared to 90% (n=9 of 10) of hearings in 2014 having a child present. The presence of mothers and fathers however, was more similar to the 2014 hearing sample. Seventy percent of both the 2014 and 2017 hearings had a mother present while fathers were present in 60% of the 2014 hearings and 70% of the 2017 hearings. Relatives and foster parents were present in slightly more of the 2014 hearings.



Discussion:

- The average length of time for hearings in the 2014 sample was considerable at 54 minutes while the average length of time for hearings in the 2017 sample was 35 minutes. Despite the shortened amount of time for discussion in the hearings, there was an increase in the percentage of hearings discussing a number of topics in 2017. Discussion topics that were addressed in more hearings in 2017, for example, included the child's placement, efforts to reunify or prevent removal, specific safety concerns, permanency timeframes, and the applicability of ICWA. However, when comparing specific hearing types, more hearings in the 2014 sample addressed a number of key issues such as a discussion of case benchmarks and deadlines, availability of services for parents, and the appropriateness of the parents' case plan in adjudication/disposition hearings. A greater percentage of review and permanency hearings in 2014 included a discussion of the permanency goal, progress/compliance on the case plan, timeframes for achieving final permanency, adequacy of the case plan and any modifications, among other items. And, more of the 72-hr hearings in 2014 discussed relative resources, safety planning, what is preventing the child from returning home today, and diligent search efforts when applicable.
- Half of all the hearings observed in 2017 were disposition (n=2) and review/permanency hearings (n=3). Considering one of the key areas of focus for these hearings is the child's well-being, only brief statements (or mere mentions) were made about the child's physical health, mental health and development. While this may be a function of the specific child's characteristics and situation (e.g., there may be no need to address the child's physical health if it is known at this stage not to be an issue), and the fact that only one child was present in the sample of hearings observed, there was very little discussion of child well-being issues generally as well as little discussion of the child's education in any of the hearings.



Engagement:

- Engagement of parents and youth in the dependency court process is considered essential in holding a high-quality hearing.^{iv} The 2017 sample of hearings saw increased engagement of parents who were present. In addition to speaking directly to parents who were present and addressing them by name, the judge explained the hearing purpose and process in the majority of hearings observed. The judge was particularly strong, for example, at explaining parents' due process rights

4th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

and the role of the professional stakeholders in the court. The judge used engagement strategies that weren't previously seen in the 2014 hearings as well, such as identifying next steps for parents who were present. The judge was strength-based and supportive of parents, praising parents when they had done a good job and congratulating them on their progress.

- While considerable improvement has been made in the level of judicial engagement of parties compared to the 2014 hearings, key opportunities are being missed to fully engage parties in the process by asking them about their understanding of the next steps and providing them with more of a direct opportunity to be heard (rather than be heard solely through their attorneys).



Judicial Findings/Orders

- An oral reasonable efforts finding was made in 50% of the hearings observed, including detailed contrary to the welfare and best interests' findings when applicable. In the other 50% of hearings the judge did not make specific reasonable efforts findings orally but instead either "adopted the findings and recommendations in the report" or "continued previous findings and orders." In 80% of the hearings the judge made an ICWA finding orally on the record (e.g., about the applicability of ICWA or made active efforts in an ICWA case). None of the hearings observed in 2014 made oral ICWA findings.

ⁱ "Best practices" for dependency court hearings include those practices outlined in the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges' *ENHANCED RESOURCE GUIDELINES: Improving Court Practice in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases*, which provides recommendations for conducting a high- quality child abuse and neglect hearing process.

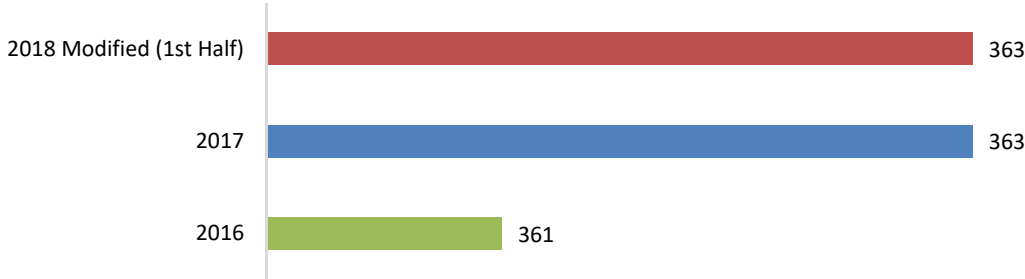
ⁱⁱ Ibid.

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid.

^{iv} Ibid.

4th Judicial District (JD) Timeliness Measures 2016, 2017 & 2018 (1st Half)

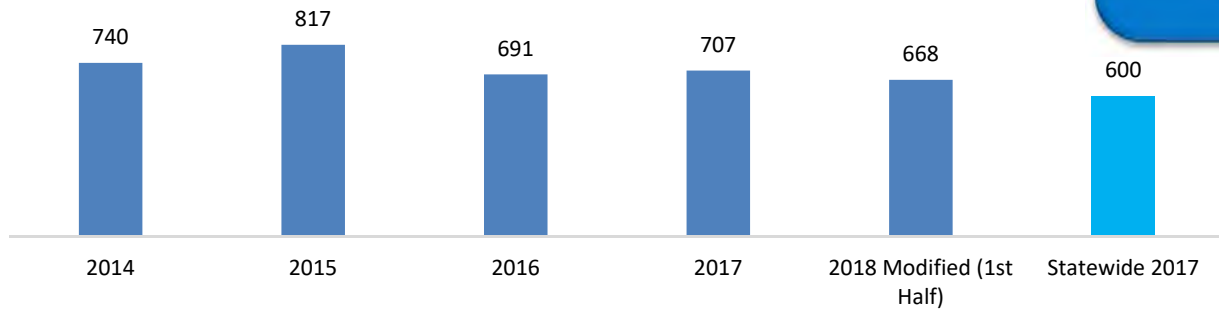
4th JD Median Days to 1st Permanency Hearing



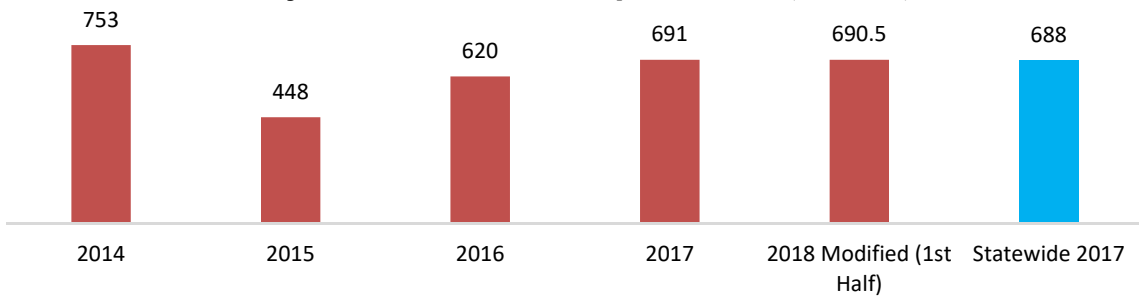
79% of 1st permanency hearings took place within 365 days of removal in the 1st half of 2018

71% of 1st permanency hearings took place within 365 days of removal in 2017

4th JD Time to Termination of Parental Rights 2014-2018 (1st Half)

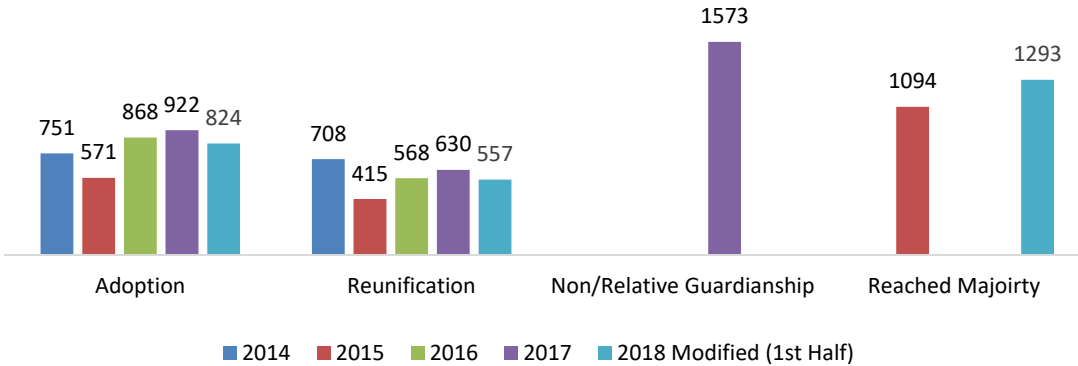


4th JD Time to Permanency 2014-2018 (1st Half)



First Placement of Child Entering Foster Care Between 2014 - 2017			
	Relative/Kin	Foster Care	Congregate Care
2014	33%	54%	4%
2015	40%	52%	7%
2016	70%	20%	0%
2017	65%	25%	10%

4th JD Median Days to Case Closure 2014-2018 (1st Half)



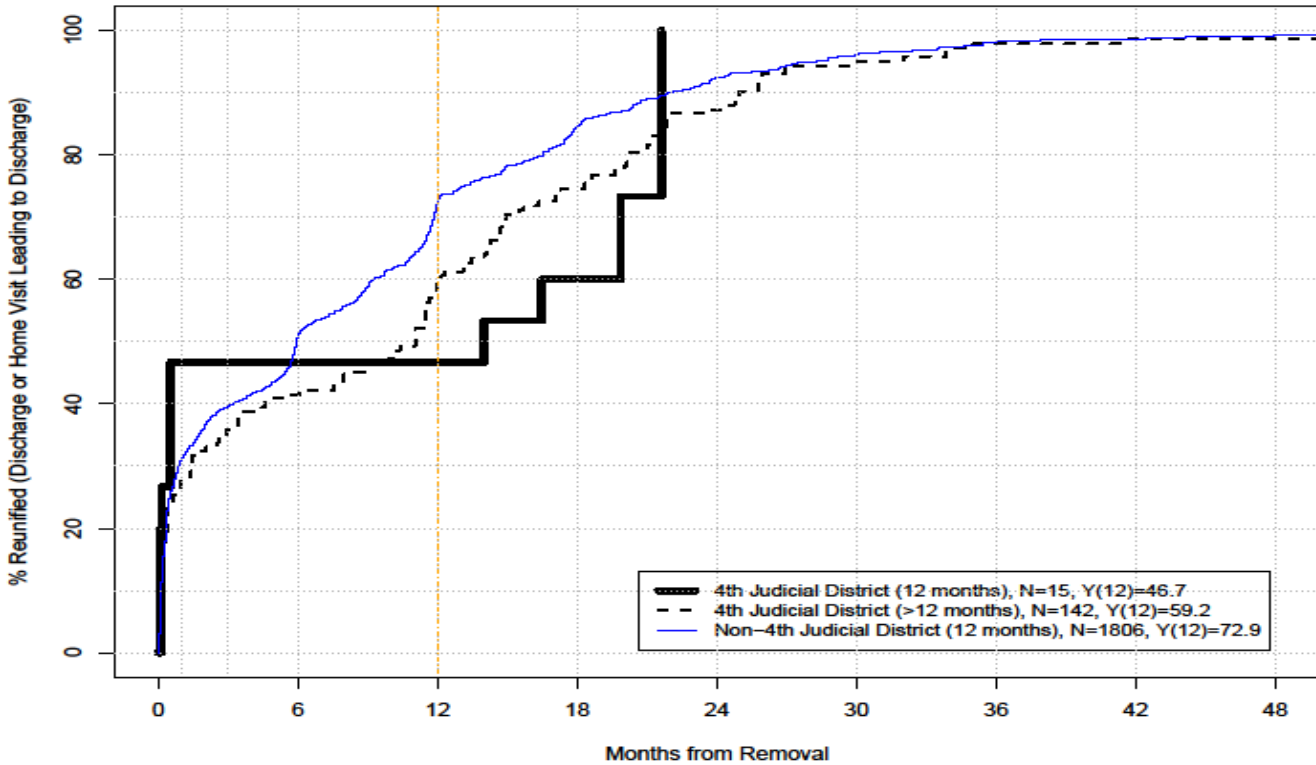
4th JD
 65% of youth who entered care in 2016 were still in care at the end of 2017.

Statewide
 47% of youth who entered care in 2016 were still in care at the end of 2017.

4th JD Outcomes for Children Who Exited Care in 2017 (n=20)



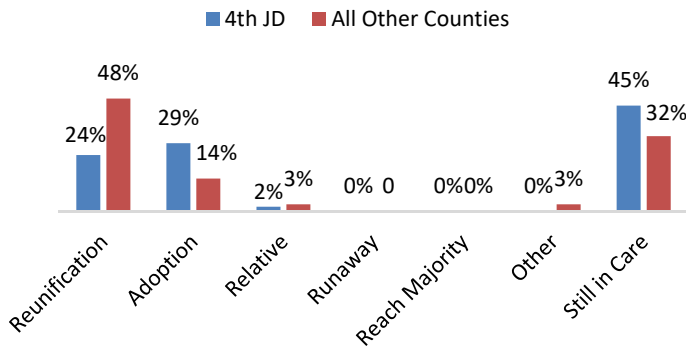
4th Judicial District: Discharges for Reunification Length of Stay, October 2006 through March 2018



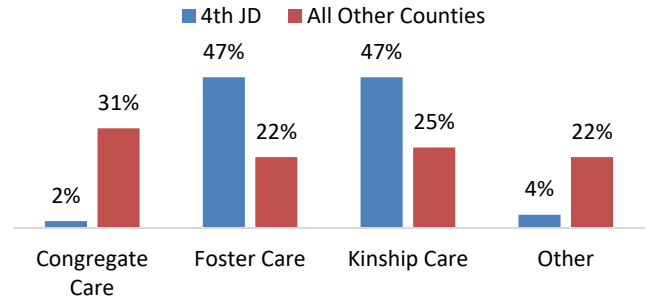
Digging Deeper

Children 0 – 3 Years Old who Entered Care Between 2014 – 2017 (n=49)

4th JD Outcomes for Children Who Entered Foster Care 2014-2017



4th JD First Placement Type for Children Who Entered Foster Care (2014-2017)



Short Stayers

4th JD Number of Children Discharged in 72 Hours and 30 Days in 2017

	72 Hours	30 Days
Guardianship	0	0
Runaway	0	0
Relative	0	0
Reunification	3	7
Overall	3 (14%)	7 (33%)

27% of cases achieved permanency within 12 months (for kids in care on March 2017)

Reentry

4th JD

0% of children reentered foster care within 12 months of previous discharge

Statewide

4.9% of children reentered foster care within 12 months of previous discharge

5th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Introduction

To provide the court with information about dependency hearing practice strengths and challenges, and to inform action planning for ongoing systems change efforts, a random sample of recorded hearings from October 2017 from the 5th Judicial District were obtained. Hearings were observed and coded using a hearing quality data collection tool designed to not only describe the hearing process, but also to capture the presence or absence of specific best practicesⁱ in dependency court hearings. Where data were available, the findings from the current study were compared to hearing quality findings from a study conducted for the 5th Judicial District in 2014.



FINDINGS

10 Hearings Coded and Analyzed	72-hr (n=3); Disposition (n=1); Review (n=3); Permanency (n=3)
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Elapsed Hearing Time
 Range = 3 to 10 minutes
 Median Hearing Length = 4.43 minutes
 Mean Hearing Length = **5** minutes

In 2014, a mix of hearings (72-hr, adjudication, disposition, review and permanency) were analyzed (N=18). The hearings averaged **18** minutes

2014 Parties Present

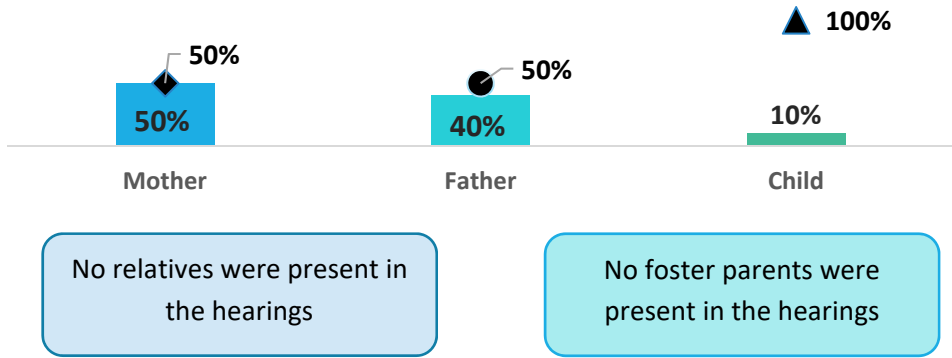
Mother	39%
Father	33%
Child	11%
Mother's Atty	33%
Father's Atty	28%
Child Rep	100%

In 2014, relatives were present for **17%** of hearings and foster parents were present for **11%** of hearings

Parties Present

Mothers were present in 50% of the hearings observed, fathers were present in 40% of the hearings and a child was present in only one of the hearings observed (10%; n=1 of 10). Parties present and their counsel are shown in the chart below. Parties presence are depicted by bars and the symbols represent the percentage of hearings their attorneys were present. **Case workers and district attorneys were present at all of the hearings.**

Percentage of Hearings with Party and Attorneys Present
 (5th Judicial District; N=10; Hearings conducted Oct 2017)

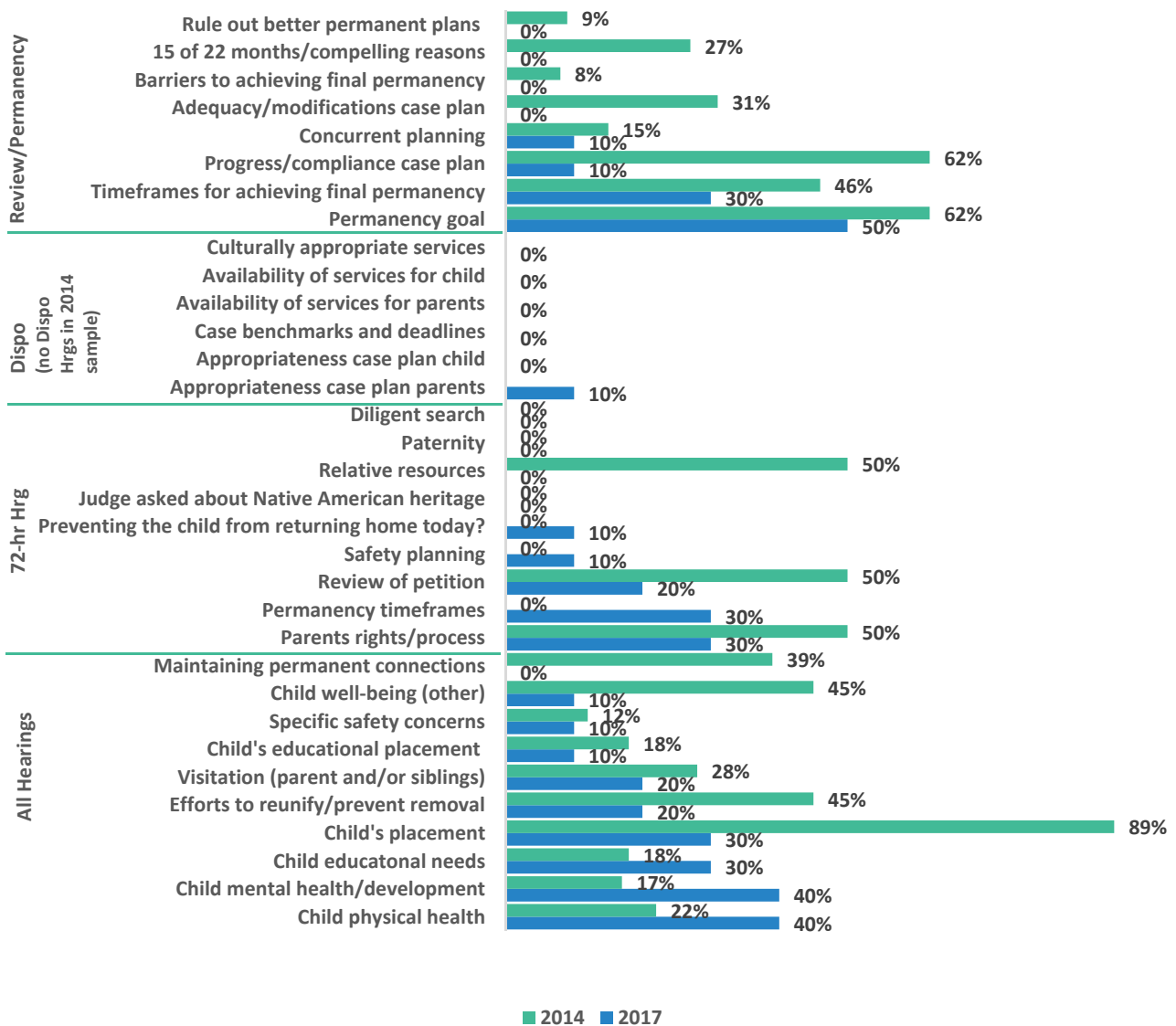


5th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Discussion During Hearings

Discussion was measured with a list of topics that could be relevant to discuss at the hearing. The topics listed next to specific hearings in the figure below are those that are most relevant for discussion in those hearings, while topics listed under “all hearings” are those that could be relevant for any hearing. Topics were derived from Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) and from best practice guidelines from the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.ⁱⁱ The figure compares the percentage of time (when applicable) that a topic was discussed in the 2014 and 2017 sample of hearings. Compared to 2014, there was **more discussion in 2017 hearings of specific child well-being issues such as the child’s physical health, mental health/development, and the child’s educational needs.** However, the 2014 hearings included more discussion of most of the other topics coded in the hearing observations.

Percentage of Hearings in Which Topic Was Discussed
5th Judicial District; 2014 N=18; 2017 N=10



5th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

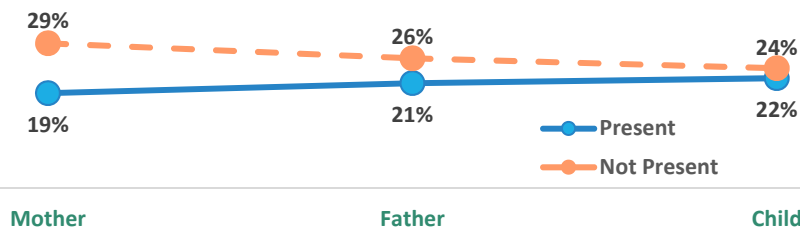
5th Judicial District: 2017 Hearings (N=10)

Hearing Topics with Less Discussion (Only a brief statement made; mere mention)	Topics Discussed in Depth (Substantive)
Child safety	Parents rights/process
Visitation	Permanency timeframes
Progress/compliance case plan	Child physical health
Concurrent planning	Child mental health/development
Efforts to reunify/prevent removal	Permanency goal

Breadth of Discussion by Parties Present

The figure below shows the breadth of discussion at the 2017 hearings by the presence of parties. Breadth of discussion is the percentage of items discussed out of all the potential topics (derived from NRS and best practice guidelines)ⁱⁱⁱ that were applicable to be discussed at the hearing. **On average, 2017 hearings included discussion of 23% of all applicable topics**, with the percentage of items discussed in each hearing ranging from 6% to 50% of all applicable topics. As shown in the figure below, breadth of discussion was greater when the mother was not present (19% of all applicable topics were discussed when the mother was present and 29% of applicable topics were discussed when the mother was absent). A similar pattern was found for fathers, with more topics discussed when fathers were absent (26%) than when they were present (21%). Only one child was present in the sample of hearings observed. In that hearing, 22% of all applicable topics were discussed, compared to slightly more (24%) applicable topics when the child was absent.

Breadth of Discussion at Hearings by Parties Present
5th Judicial District; 2017 N=10



Findings/Orders

The court observation tool captured whether the judge made findings orally on the record in the hearings. This was calculated as a percentage of time the judge made specific findings. In 2017, the judge did not make oral reasonable efforts findings in any of the hearings observed. There were also no ICWA findings made orally on the record in the hearings observed.

In 2017, judges made reasonable efforts findings orally in none (0) of the hearings observed

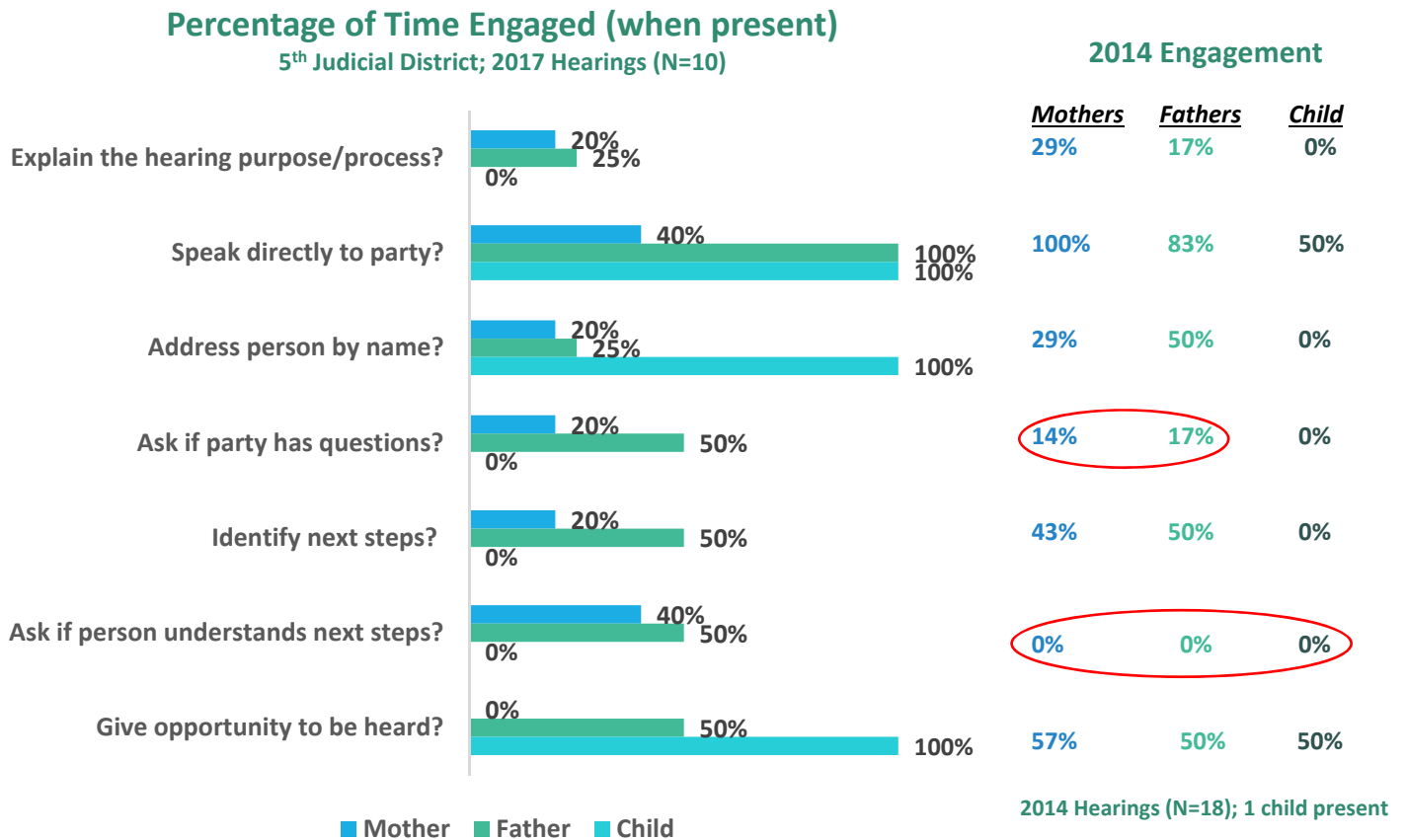


In 2014, judges made reasonable efforts findings orally in none (0) of the hearings observed

5th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Engagement

Engagement of parties was measured by a series of yes/no questions regarding how the judge engaged the parent and child, including spoke directly to them, addressed them by name, gave them an opportunity to be heard, asked if they had any questions, explained the hearing process, and explained legal timelines.



Although judges spoke directly to fathers who were present in **100%** of the 2017 hearings and mothers in 40% of the hearings, the judge only addressed fathers by name 25% of the time and mothers 20% of the time. Compared to 2014, the judge more frequently engaged mothers and fathers who were present in 2017 hearings by asking if they had any questions. In addition, the 2017 hearings used engagement techniques that weren't used in 2014, such as asking if parents understood the next steps. (See circled items in the figure above). In the one instance where a child was present, the judge engaged the child by speaking directly to him/her and addressing the child by name. The child was also given an opportunity to be heard (and not just through his/her attorney only).

5th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Key Findings



Parties Present:

- Attorney presence at hearings for mothers and fathers both increased in 2017 (from 33% to 50% for attorneys for mothers and from 28% to 50% for attorneys for fathers). Appearances for the child's representative remained the same from 2014 to 2017 at 100% of all hearings having a child representative present. More mothers and fathers were also present in the 2017 hearings, with 50% of hearings having a mother present (compared to 39% of hearings in 2014) and 40% of hearings having a father present (compared to 33% of hearings in 2014).
- No relatives or foster parents were present in any of the 2017 hearings observed.



Discussion:

- The average length of the 2017 hearings observed was shorter at 5 minutes on average when compared to the 2014 hearings which had an average length of 18 minutes. As a result, the 2017 hearings had less time to engage in a comprehensive and robust discussion of issues.
- On average, the 2017 hearings included a discussion of 23% of all applicable topics (applicable topics for a hearing were derived from NRS and best practice guideline).
- When comparing the percentage of time (when applicable) that a topic was discussed in the 2014 and 2017 hearings, the 2014 hearings included more discussion of most of the applicable topics. Some of the biggest differences were in the percentage of hearings discussing the child's placement, efforts to reunify or prevent removal, child well-being generally, parent's rights and the abuse/neglect process, timeframes for achieving permanency, and a number of items related to the case plan -with a greater percentage of the 2014 hearings addressing these issues. While fewer 2017 hearings may have discussed parent's rights and permanency timeframes, however, when these topics were discussed they were addressed in-depth (i.e., a substantive, detailed discussion was held). The child's permanency goal was also discussed in-depth in the 2017 hearings.
- Although many discussion topics were covered by a greater percentage of the 2014 hearings, elements of child well-being such as the child's physical health, mental health and development, and educational needs and educational placement were covered in more of the 2017 hearings. When these items were discussed they were also discussed in-depth.
- Breadth of discussion (the percentage of items discussed out of all of the potential topics derived from NRS and best practice guidelines) was greater in the 2017 hearings when parties were present than when they were absent.



Engagement:

- Engagement of parents and youth in the dependency court process is considered essential in holding a high-quality hearing.^{iv} Emerging research has also demonstrated that positive interactions with parents in the dependency process can improve permanency outcomes for children and families. While there has been some improvement in engagement of parties in 2017 compared to 2014 (e.g., the judge asked if parties had questions and if they understood the next steps in more

5th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

hearings in 2017), this is an area that could be further enhanced. For example, the judge spoke directly to fathers who were present in 100% of the 2017 hearings but only addressed them by name 25% of the time. The judge spoke directly to mothers who were present in just 40% of hearings and addressed them by name only 20% of the time. Engagement could also be enhanced by explaining the hearing purpose and process to parents who are present, using non-technical language, and by providing parties with a direct opportunity to be heard (and not solely through their attorney).



Judicial Findings/Orders

- None of the 2017 hearings observed included oral reasonable efforts findings. Instead, judges either adopted “findings and recommendations in the report,” or “continued previous findings and orders.” No ICWA findings were made orally on the record in the hearings observed. In 2014, the judge also did not make oral reasonable efforts or ICWA findings in any of the hearings observed.

ⁱ “Best practices” for dependency court hearings include those practices outlined in the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges’ *ENHANCED RESOURCE GUIDELINES: Improving Court Practice in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases*, which provides recommendations for conducting a high- quality child abuse and neglect hearing process.

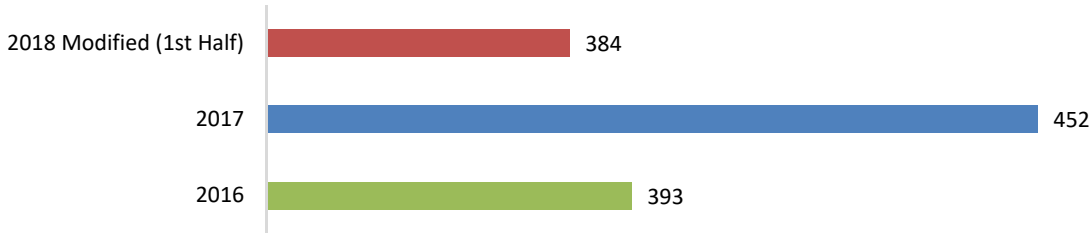
ⁱⁱ Ibid.

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid.

^{iv} Ibid.

5th Judicial District (JD) Timeliness Measures 2016, 2017 & 2018 (1st Half)

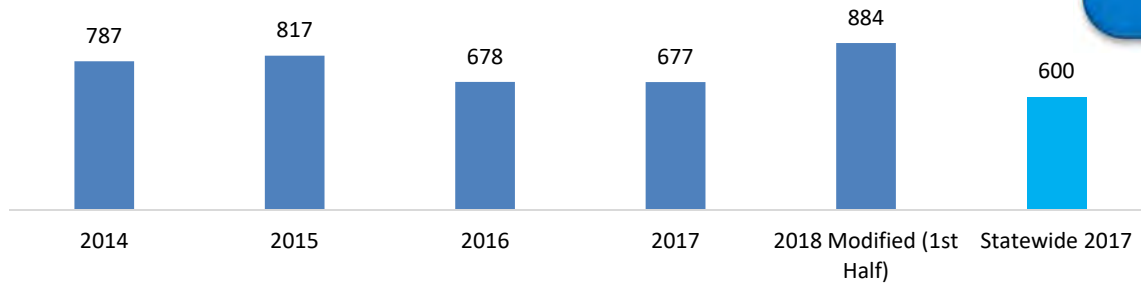
5th JD Median Days to 1st Permanency Hearing



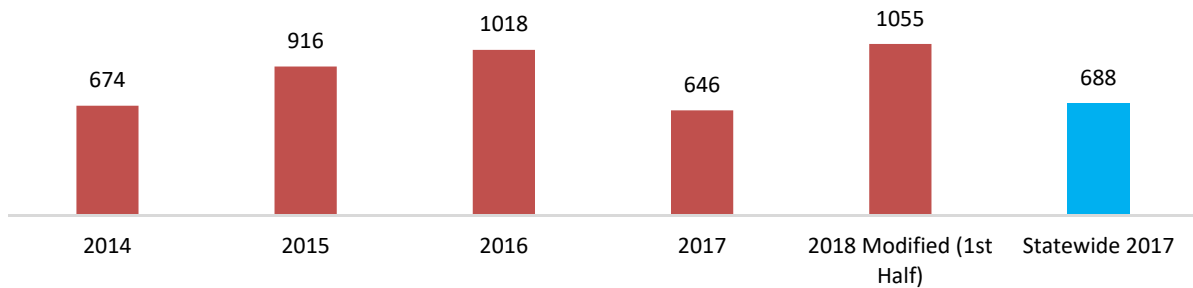
43% of 1st permanency hearings took place within 365 days of removal in the 1st half of 2018

24% of 1st permanency hearings took place within 365 days of removal in 2017

5th JD Time to Termination of Parental Rights 2014-2018 (1st Half)



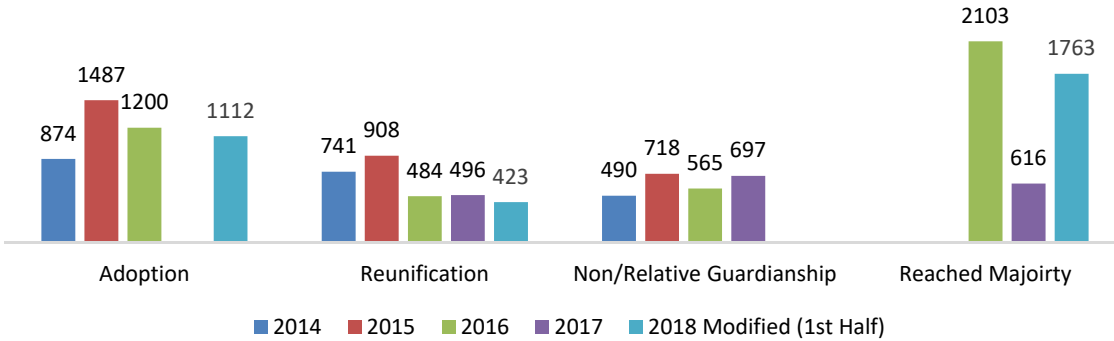
5th JD Time to Permanency 2014-2018 (1st Half)



First Placement of Child Entering Foster Care Between 2014 - 2017

	Relative/Kin	Foster Care	Congregate Care
2014	47%	35%	12%
2015	31%	49%	11%
2016	17%	60%	7%
2017	23%	65%	2%

5th JD Median Days to Case Closure 2014-2018 (1st Half)



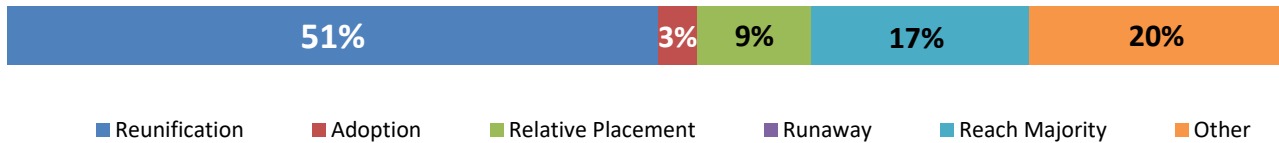
5th JD

54% of youth who entered care in 2016 were still in care at the end of 2017.

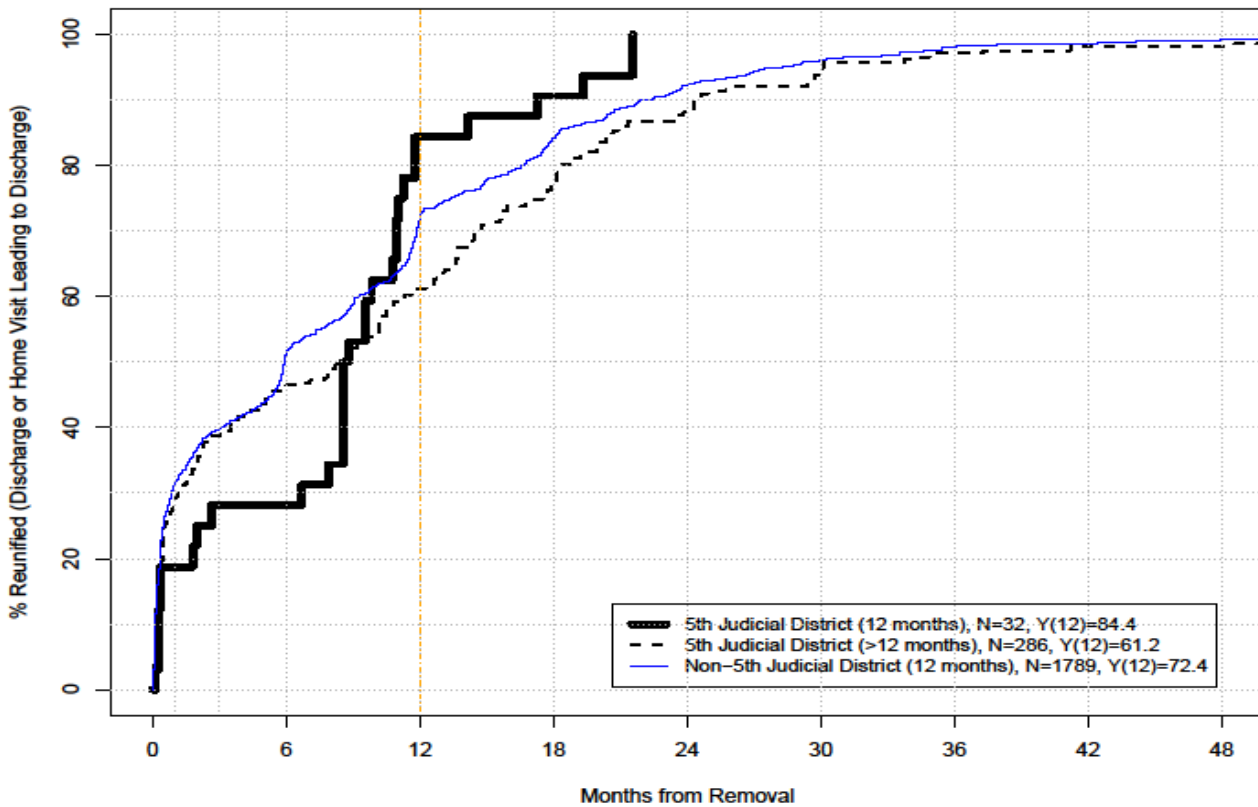
Statewide

47% of youth who entered care in 2016 were still in care at the end of 2017.

5th JD Outcomes for Children Who Exited Care in 2017 (n=35)



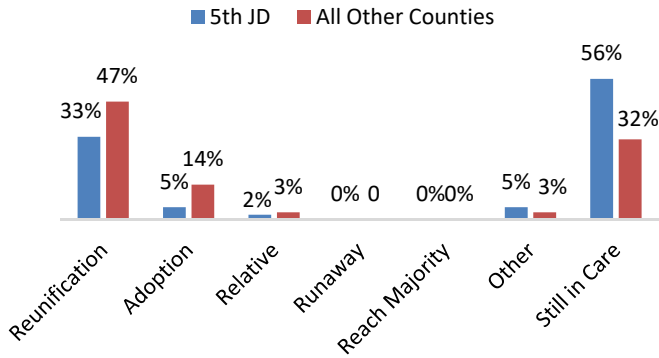
5th Judicial District: Discharges for Reunification Length of Stay, October 2006 through March 2018



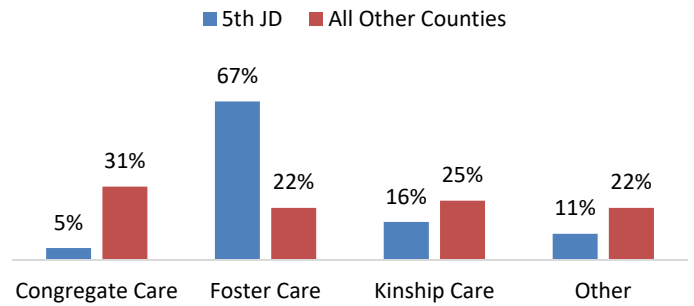
Digging Deeper

Children 0 – 3 Years Old who Entered Care Between 2014 – 2017 (n=61)

5th JD Outcomes for Children Who Entered Foster Care 2014-2017



5th JD First Placement Type for Children Who Entered Foster Care (2014-2017)



Short Stayers

5th JD Number of Children Discharged in 72 Hours and 30 Days in 2017

	72 Hours	30 Days
Guardianship	0	0
Runaway	0	0
Relative	2	2
Reunification	0	6
Overall	2 (4%)	8 (16%)

33% of cases achieved permanency within 12 months (for kids in care on March 2017)

Reentry

5th JD
3.6% of children reentered foster care within 12 months of previous discharge

Statewide
4.9% of children reentered foster care within 12 months of previous discharge

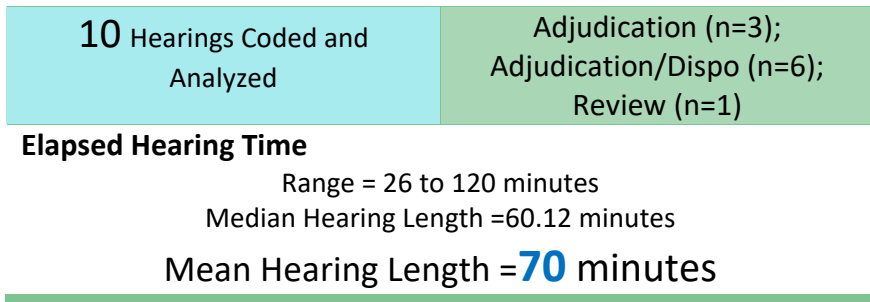
6th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Introduction

To provide the court with information about dependency hearing practice strengths and challenges, and to inform action planning for ongoing systems change efforts, a random sample of recorded hearings from July 2016 to January 2018 from the 6th Judicial District were obtained. Hearings were observed and coded using a hearing quality data collection tool designed to not only describe the hearing process, but also to capture the presence or absence of specific best practicesⁱ in dependency court hearings. Where data were available, the findings from the current study were compared to findings from a study conducted for the 6th Judicial District in 2014.



FINDINGS



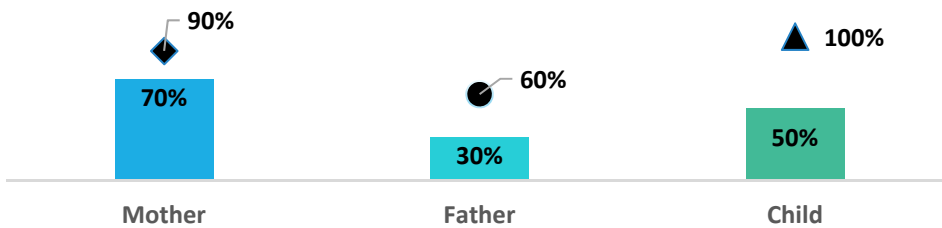
In 2014, a mix of hearings (adjudication, disposition and review) were analyzed (N=7). The hearings averaged **27 minutes**

Parties Present

Mothers were present in 70% of the hearings observed, fathers were present in 30% of the hearings and a child was present in 50% of the hearings observed. Parties present and their counsel are shown in the chart below. Parties presence are depicted by bars and the symbols represent the percentage of hearings their attorneys were present.

Case workers and district attorneys were present in all of the hearings.

Percentage of Permanency Hearings with Party and Attorneys Present (6th Judicial District; N=10; Hearings conducted July 2016-Jan 2018)



2014 Parties Present

Mother	100%
Father	43%
Child	0
Mother's Atty	71%
Father's Atty	14%
Child Rep	100%

Relatives were present **70%** of the hearings

Foster parents were present **40%** of the hearings

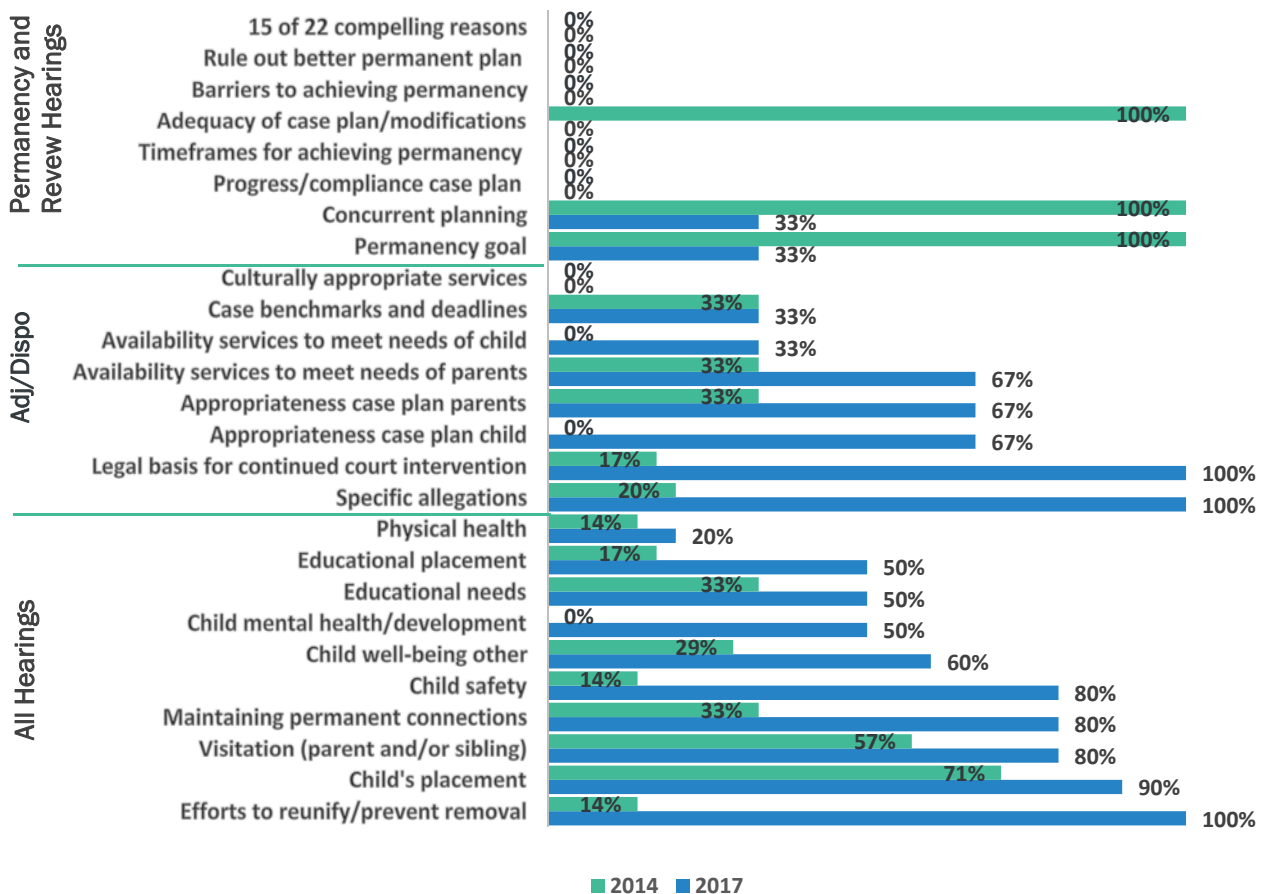
In 2014, relatives were present **43%** of hearings and foster parents were present **43%** of hearings

6th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Discussion During Hearings

Discussion was measured with a list of topics that could be relevant to discuss at the hearing. The topics listed next to specific hearings in the figure below are those that are most relevant for discussion in those hearings, while topics listed under “all hearings” are those that could be relevant for any hearing. Topics were derived from Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) and from best practice guidelines from the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.ⁱⁱ The figure compares the percentage of time (when applicable) that a topic was discussed in the 2014 and 2017 sample of hearings. **In 2017, 100% of the hearings discussed efforts to reunify or prevent removal, the specific allegations, and the legal basis for continued court intervention.**

Percentage of Hearings in Which Topic Was Discussed
6th Judicial District; 2014 Hearings N=7; 2017 Hearings N=10



6th Judicial District: 2017 Adjudication, Disposition and Review Hearings (N=10)

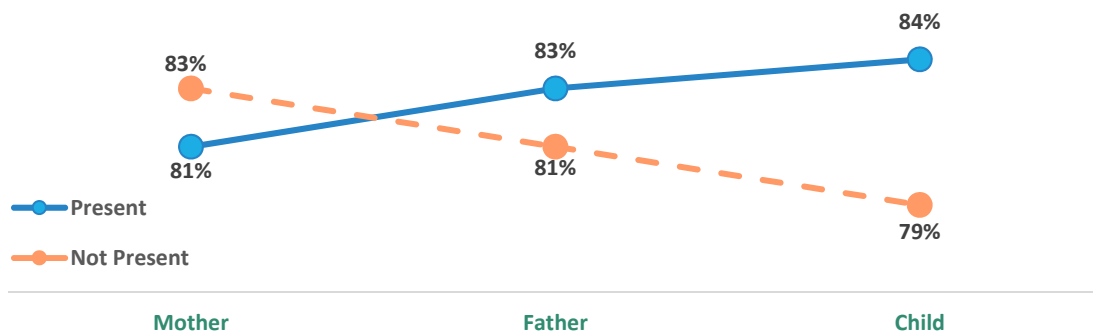
Hearing Topics with Less Discussion (Only a brief statement made; mere mention)	Topics Discussed in Depth (Substantive)
Child physical health	Specific allegations
Child mental health/development	Legal basis for continued court intervention
Availability of services to meet child's needs	Timeframe for achieving permanency
Availability of services to meet parent needs	Visitation parent and/or sibling
Educational placement	Efforts to reunify/prevent removal

6th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Breadth of Discussion by Parties Present

The figure below shows the breadth of discussion at the 2017 hearings by the presence of parties. Breadth of discussion is the percentage of items discussed out of all the potential topics (derived from NRS and best practice guidelines)ⁱⁱⁱ that were applicable to be discussed at the hearing. **On average, the hearings included discussion of 82% of all applicable topics**, with the percentage of items discussed in each hearing ranging from 53% to 100% of all applicable topics. As shown in the figure below, while breadth of discussion was greater when mothers were absent, breadth of discussion was greater when fathers and children were present.

Breadth of Discussion at Permanency Hearings by Parties Present
6th Judicial District; 2017 N=10



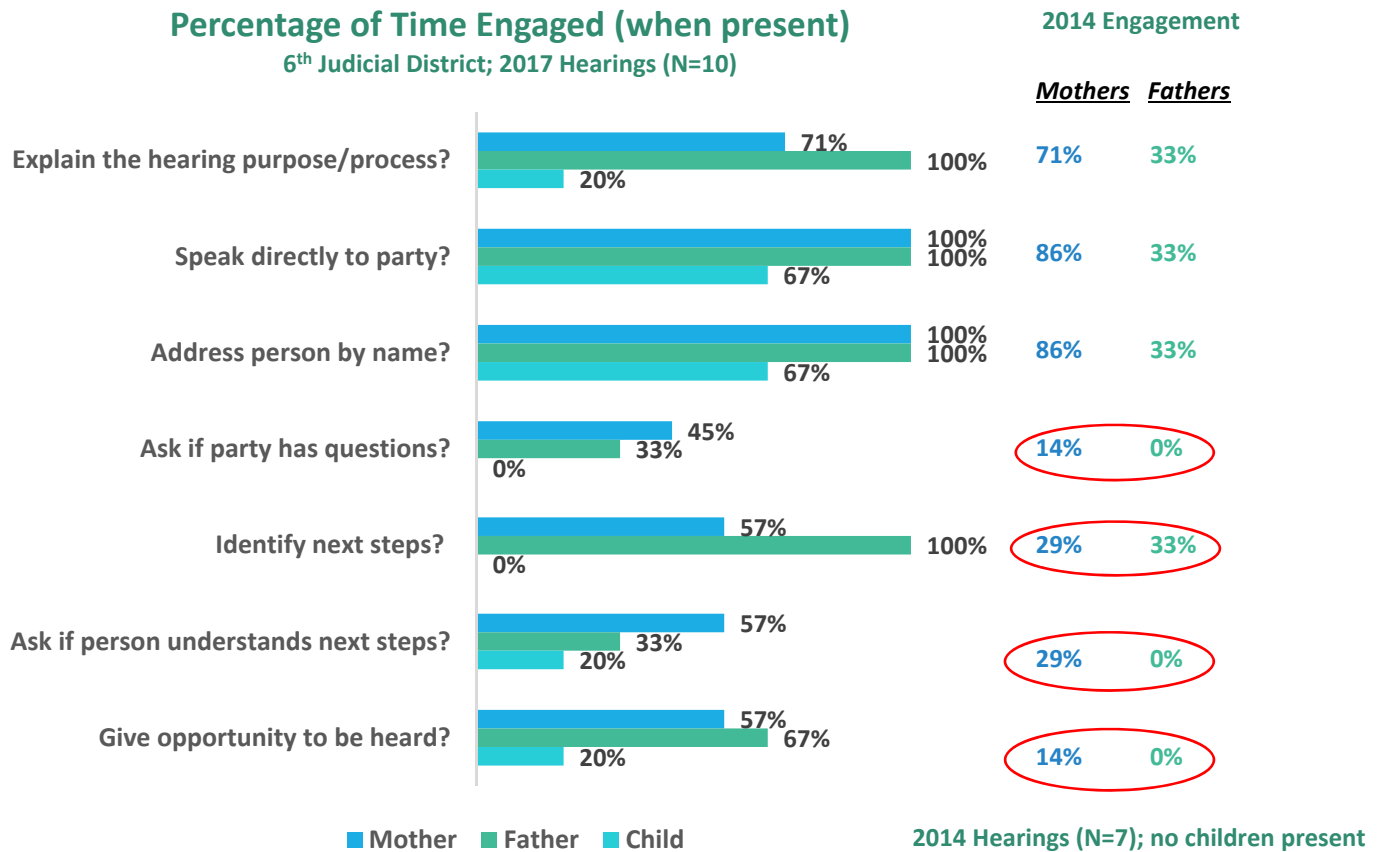
Findings/Orders

The court observation tool captured whether the judge made findings orally on the record in the permanency hearings. This was calculated as a percentage of time the judge made specific findings. In 2017, the judge made a reasonable efforts’ finding orally in **90%** of hearings observed. The judge made an *Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)* finding orally on the record in **60%** of the hearings observed.

6th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Engagement

Engagement of parties was measured by a series of yes/no questions regarding how the judge engaged the parent and child, including spoke directly to them, addressed them by name, gave them an opportunity to be heard, asked if they had any questions, explained the hearing process, and explained legal timelines.



Compared to 2014, the 2017 hearings saw more overall engagement of parties who were present, with increases observed in almost all of the engagement strategies coded (see circled items in the figure above for some notable increases from 2014 to 2017). In **100%** of the hearings in 2017 the judge spoke directly to mothers and fathers who were present, addressing them by name. The judge also explained the hearing purpose/process and identified to all of the fathers who were present. In 2017, the least frequent method of engagement was asking children who were present (n=5) if they had any questions and identifying the next steps (0% of hearings). In two of the hearings, the children who were present were given an opportunity to be heard but through their attorney only.

6th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Key Findings



Parties Present:

- Attorney representation for mothers and fathers, as well as the presence of relatives at the hearings increased in 2017. Representation for the child at the hearings remained the same with a child's representative present in 100% of the hearings. While more children were present in the 2017 hearings observed (5 compared to none in 2014), fewer mothers, fathers, and foster parents were present compared to the hearings studied in 2014.



Discussion:

- While the types of hearings studied in 2014 and 2017 were the same (a mix of adjudication, disposition and review hearings), the average length of time differed considerably. The average hearing length in the 2017 sample of hearings was 70 minutes compared to 27 minutes in the 2014 hearings.
- The majority of the 2017 hearings involved a comprehensive discussion of applicable or relevant topics for that hearing. On average, the hearings included discussion of 82% of all applicable topics (applicable topics were derived from NRS and best practice guidelines). When comparing the percentage of time (when applicable) that a topic was discussed in the 2014 and 2017 hearings, more of the 2017 hearings discussed efforts to reunify or prevent removal, child placement, visitation of parents and/or siblings, maintaining permanent connections, and child safety. With respect to adjudication/disposition hearings, there was a greater percentage of 2017 hearings addressing the specific allegations, the legal basis for continued court intervention, and a number of case plan issues (e.g., appropriateness and availability of services) among other items. The only areas of discussion with more discussion in 2014 were related to the review hearing (e.g., permanency goal, concurrent planning and the adequacy of the case plan and any modifications). There was only one review hearing in the sample of 2017 cases however.
- A number of areas of discussion in the 2017 hearings were substantive (discussed in detail and in-depth). These included visitation of the parents and/or siblings, the timeframe for achieving permanency, and efforts to reunify or prevent removal. Although 60% of hearings discussed child well-being generally, some specific issues related to child well-being were only briefly mentioned (e.g. a brief statement was made). These included the child's physical and mental health or development, and educational placement, as well as the availability of services to meet the child's needs. Of course, this may be a function of the specific circumstances of the child or his/her situation (e.g., it may not be relevant to discuss a child's physical health at any level of substance if it is known not to be an issue at this stage of the case). Nevertheless, the court should consider whether it may be appropriate to expand discussion of child well-being – especially at the disposition and review stages of the dependency case process. This will ensure that all parties and advocates understand the court's expectations regarding information to be provided to the court about child well-being at each subsequent hearing.

6th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017



Engagement:

- Engagement of parents and youth in the dependency court process is considered essential in holding a high-quality hearing.^{iv} Compared to 2014, the 2017 hearings saw more overall engagement of parties who were present, with increases in almost all of the engagement strategies coded for this study. In 100% of the 2017 hearings the judge spoke directly to mothers and fathers who were present, addressing them by name. In the majority of hearings, the judge also explained the hearing purpose and process, including identifying the next steps for fathers 100% of the time that fathers were present. Engagement areas to consider for further enhancement, however, are asking if the party has questions and ensuring parties' understanding of the process and next steps by asking them directly if they understand.
- In all of the hearings observed the judge had an excellent demeanor with the parents and children who were present, speaking to them respectfully and with non-technical language. With parents, the judge was encouraging, supportive, and caring but was also able to admonish parents and hold them accountable as needed in a clear and respectful manner. In a number of hearings, for instance, the judge was able to provide clarity to parents on conditions for return. The judge also held the agency accountable for their practice in a number of hearings (e.g., lack of diligent search and no progress on addressing barriers to visitation and case plan delivery) while still conveying respect for their expertise and professional roles. The judge was strength-based when engaging both parents and children who were present and was clearly knowledgeable about issues such as substance abuse, domestic violence and trauma. The judge appeared genuinely interested in the children who were present, asking about their school progress and activities.
- In every case with a foster parent or relative present the judge spoke directly to them, addressed them by name and gave them an opportunity to be heard (e.g., the judge asked foster parents and relatives present how the child was doing).



Judicial Findings/Orders

- Reasonable efforts findings were made orally and clearly in the 90% of the hearings compared to only 29% of the hearings in 2014. Findings were detailed, including contrary to welfare and best interests' findings when appropriate. The judge made oral ICWA findings in 60% of the hearings, including active efforts findings when applicable. In 2014, none of the hearings observed made ICWA findings orally on the record.

ⁱ "Best practices" for dependency court hearings include those practices outlined in the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges' *ENHANCED RESOURCE GUIDELINES: Improving Court Practice in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases*, which provides recommendations for conducting a high- quality child abuse and neglect hearing process.

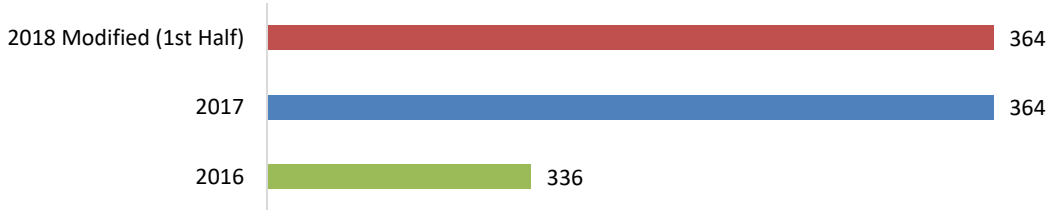
ⁱⁱ Ibid.

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid.

^{iv} Ibid.

6th Judicial District (JD) Timeliness Measures 2016, 2017 & 2018 (1st Half)

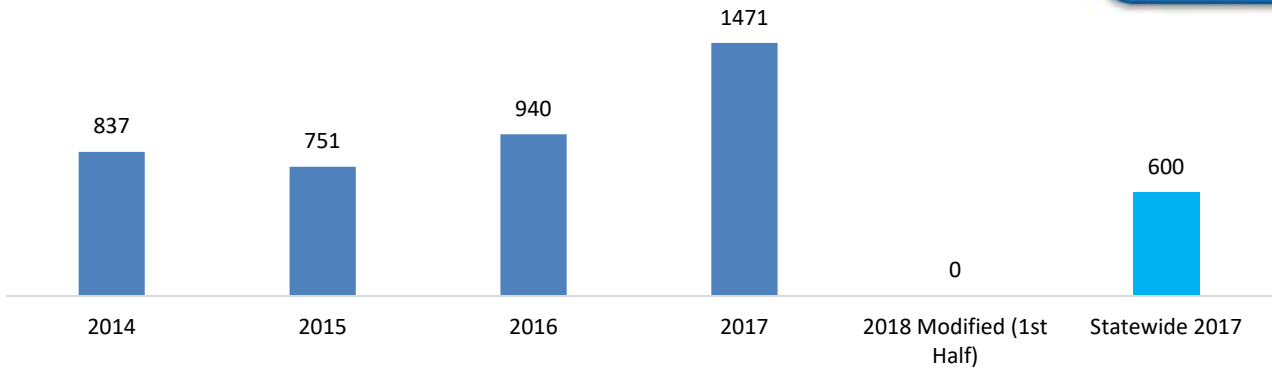
6th JD Median Days to 1st Permanency Hearing



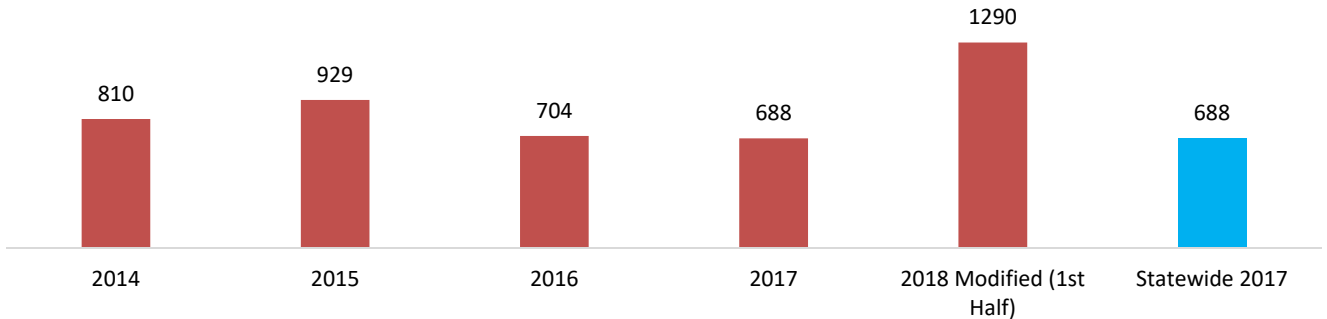
100% of 1st permanency hearings took place within 365 days of removal in the 1st half of 2018

100% of 1st permanency hearings took place within 365 days of removal in 2017

6th JD Time to Termination of Parental Rights 2014-2018 (1st Half)

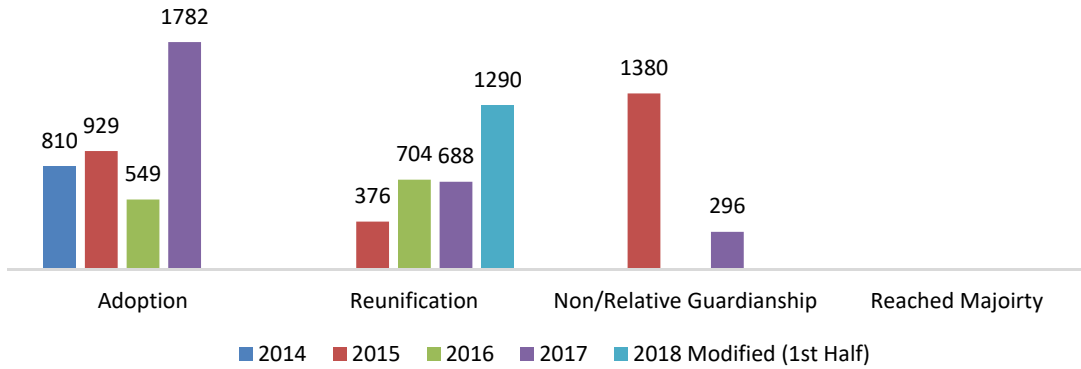


6th JD Time to Permanency 2014-2018 (1st Half)



First Placement of Child Entering Foster Care Between 2014 - 2017			
	Relative/Kin	Foster Care	Congregate Care
2014	0%	56%	0%
2015	36%	64%	0%
2016	16%	79%	0%
2017	85%	15%	0%

6th JD Median Days to Case Closure 2014-2018 (1st Half)



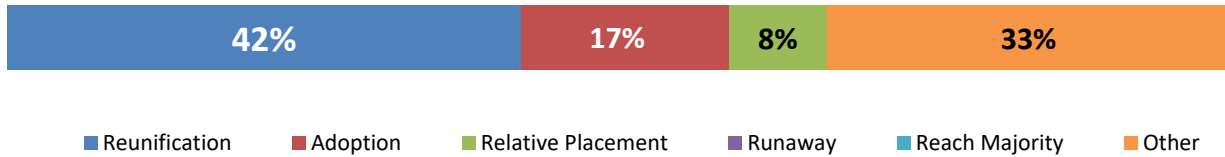
6th JD

75% of youth who entered care in 2016 were still in care at the end of 2017.

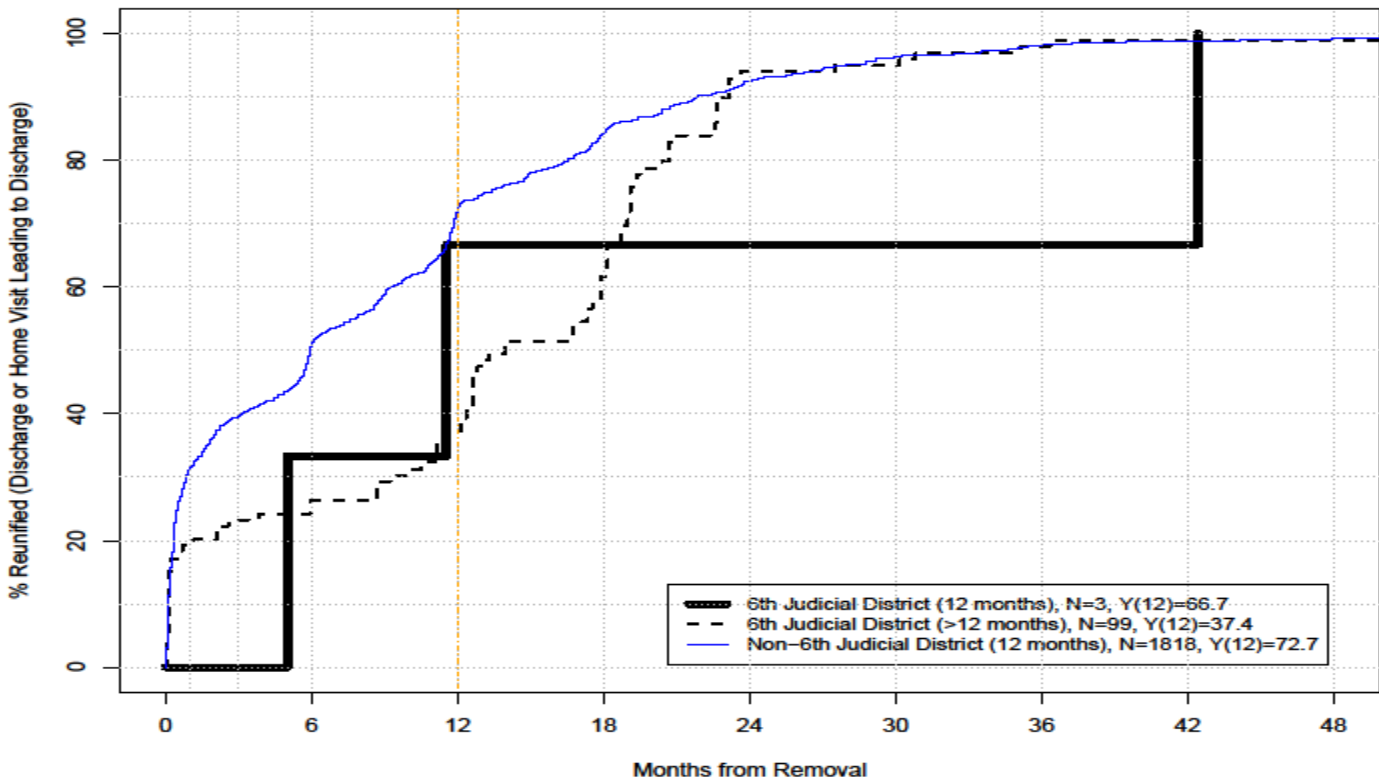
Statewide

47% of youth who entered care in 2016 were still in care at the end of 2017.

6th JD Outcomes for Children Who Exited Care in 2017 (n=12)



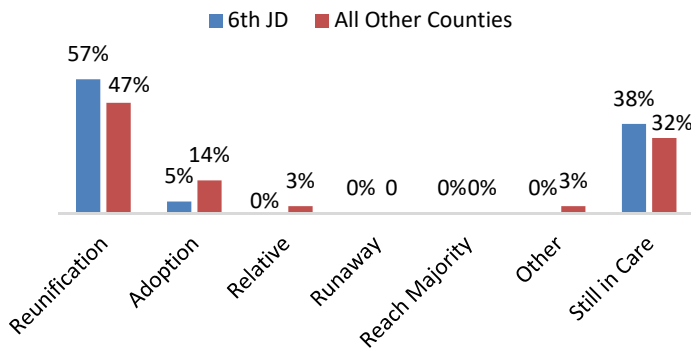
6th Judicial District: Discharges for Reunification Length of Stay, October 2006 through March 2018



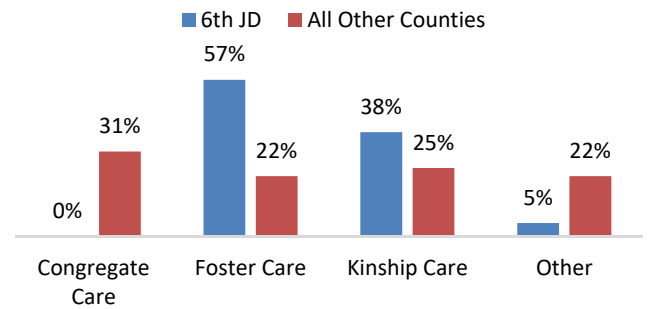
Digging Deeper

Children 0-3 Years Old Who Entered Care Between 2014 – 2017 (n=21)

6th JD Outcomes for Children Who Entered Foster Care 2014-2017



6th JD First Placement Type for Children Who Entered Foster Care (2014-2017)



Short Stayers

6th JD Number of Children Discharged in 72 Hours and 30 Days in 2017

	72 Hours	30 Days
Guardianship	0	0
Runaway	0	0
Relative	0	0
Reunification	0	0
Transfer	0	1
Overall	0	1 (12%)

25% of cases achieved permanency within 12 months (for kids in care on March 2017)

Reentry

6th JD

0% of children reentered foster care within 12 months of previous discharge

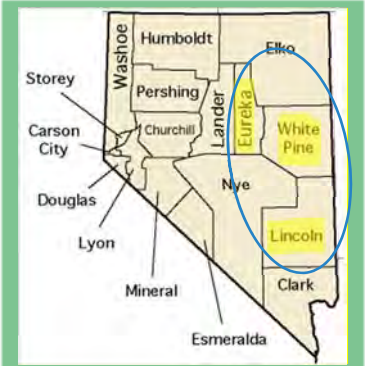
Statewide

4.9% of children reentered foster care within 12 months of previous discharge

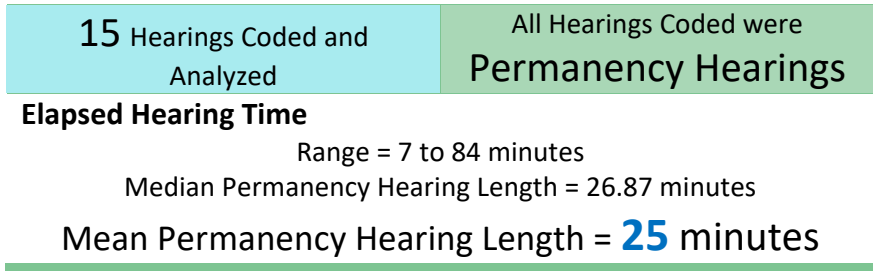
7th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Introduction

To provide the court with information about dependency hearing practice strengths and challenges, and to inform action planning for ongoing systems change efforts, a random sample of recorded hearings from January 2017 to December 2017 from the 7th Judicial District were obtained. Hearings were observed and coded using a hearing quality data collection tool designed to not only describe the hearing process, but also to capture the presence or absence of specific best practicesⁱ in dependency court hearings. Where data were available, the findings from the current study of permanency hearings were compared to findings from a study conducted for the 7th Judicial District in 2014 involving 72-hr hearings.ⁱⁱ



FINDINGS



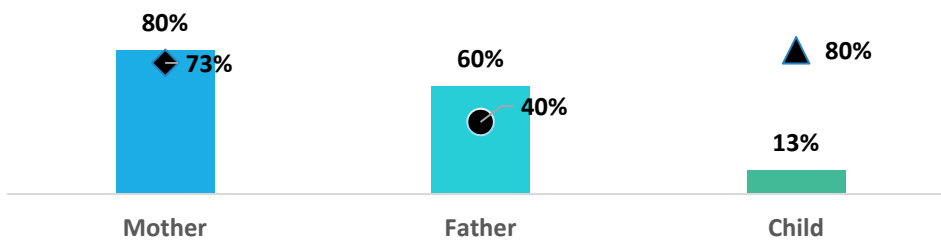
The 2014 hearing observation study involved 72-hr hearings (N=6)

The 2014 72-hr hearings averaged 42 minutes

Parties Present

Mothers were present in 80% of the permanency hearings observed, fathers were present in 60% of the hearings and a child was present in 13% of the hearings observed. Parties present and their counsel are shown in the chart below. Parties presence are depicted by bars and the symbols represent the percentage of hearings their attorneys were present. **Case workers and district attorneys were present all of the permanency hearings.** A tribal representative was present in 20% of hearings.

Percentage of Permanency Hearings with Party and Attorneys Present (7th Judicial District; N=15; Hearings conducted Jan-Dec 2017)



2014 Parties Present	
Mother	90%
Father	50%
Child	0
Mother's Atty	52%
Father's Atty	52%
Child Rep	43%

In 2014, relatives were present 24% of hearings and foster parents were present in none (0%) of hearings

Relatives were present **27%** of the hearings

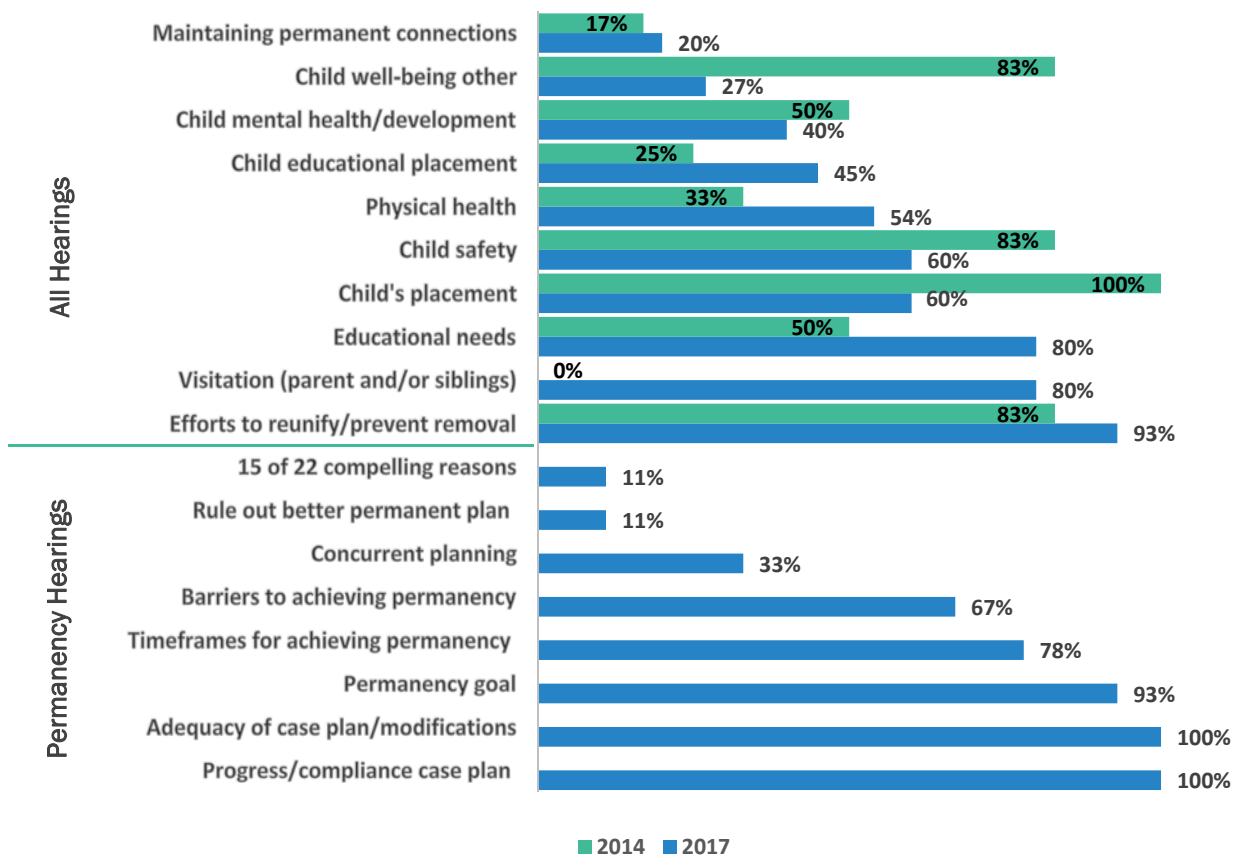
Foster parents were present **27%** of the hearings

7th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Discussion During Hearings

Discussion was measured with a list of topics that could be relevant to discuss at the hearing. As noted in the figure below, permanency hearing (PH) topics listed are those most relevant to those hearings whereas “all hearings” lists topics that could be relevant to all hearings. Topics were derived from Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) and from best practice guidelines from the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.ⁱⁱⁱ The figure compares the percentage of time (when applicable) that a topic was discussed in the 2014 and 2017 sample of hearings. **In 2017, 100% of the PHs observed discussed progress or compliance with the case plan and the adequacy of the case plan and any modifications.**

Percentage of Hearings in Which Topic Was Discussed
7th Judicial District; 2014 72-Hr Hearings N=6; 2017 Permanency Hearings N=15



7th Judicial District: 2017 Permanency Hearings (N=15)

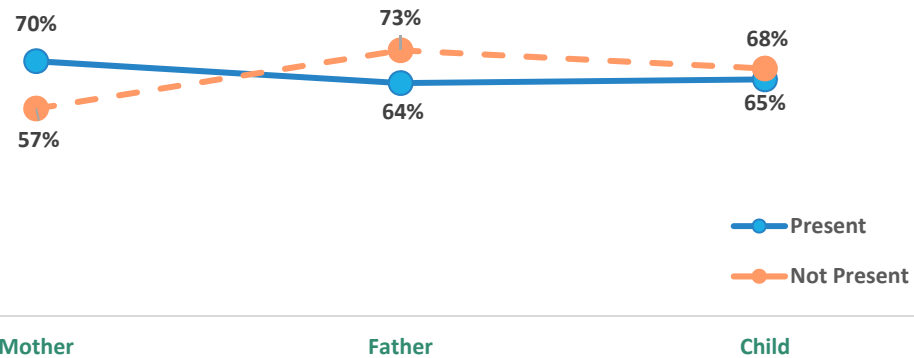
Hearing Topics with Less Discussion (Only a brief statement made; mere mention)	Topics Discussed in Depth (Substantive)
Child physical health	Progress/compliance case plan
Child educational needs	Adequacy of case plan/modifications
Child educational placement	15 of 22 compelling reasons
Child mental health	Rule out better permanent plan
Child well-being (other)	Permanency goal

7th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Breadth of Discussion by Parties Present


The figure below shows the breadth of discussion at the 2017 permanency hearings by the presence of parties. Breadth of discussion is the percentage of items discussed out of all the potential topics (derived from NRS and best practice guidelines)^{iv} that were applicable to be discussed at the hearing. **On average, PHs included discussion of 68% of all applicable topics**, with the percentage of items discussed in each hearing ranging from 29% to 100% of all applicable topics. As shown in the figure below, breadth of discussion of all applicable topics was greater when mothers were present but greater when fathers were absent. Breadth of discussion was slightly greater when the child was absent.

Breadth of Discussion at Permanency Hearings by Parties Present
7th Judicial District; 2017 N=15



Findings/Orders

The court observation tool captured whether the judge made findings orally on the record in the permanency hearings. This was calculated as a percentage of time the judge made specific findings. In 2017, the judge made a reasonable efforts’ finding orally in **73%** of hearings observed. The judge also made an *Indian Child Welfare Act* (ICWA) finding orally in **47%** of the hearings.



In 2017, judges made oral reasonable efforts findings in **73%** of permanency hearings

In 2014, judges made oral reasonable efforts findings in **83%** of 72-hr hearings

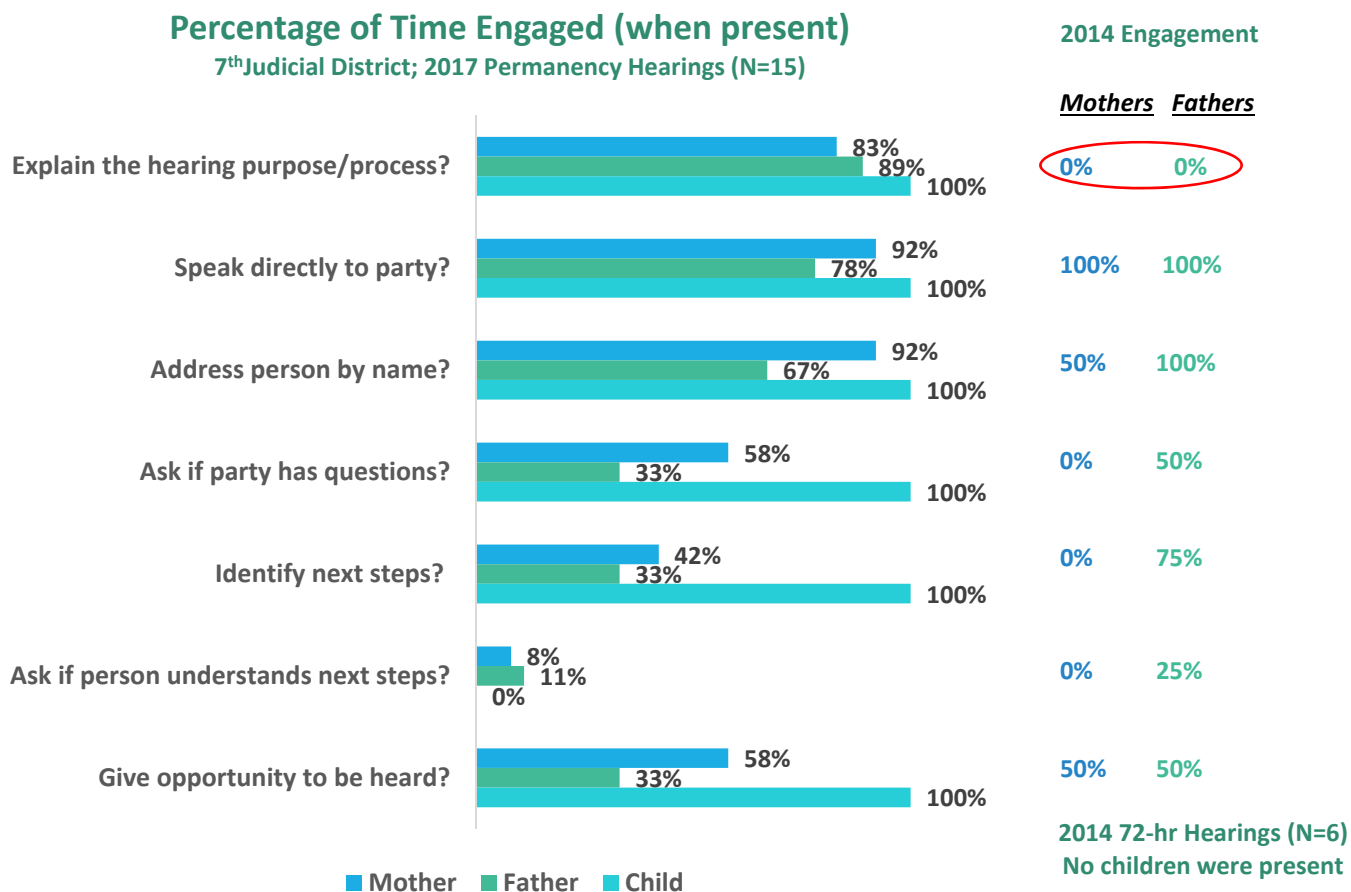
In 2017, judges made oral ICWA findings in **47%** of permanency hearings

In 2014, judges made oral ICWA findings in **33%** of 72-hr hearings

7th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Engagement

Engagement of parties was measured by a series of yes/no questions regarding how the judge engaged the parent and child, including spoke directly to them, addressed them by name, gave them an opportunity to be heard, asked if they had any questions, explained the hearing process, and explained legal timelines.



In **100%** of the permanency hearings in which children were present (n=2) the judges explained the hearing purpose and process to the child, spoke directly to them and addressed them by name, asked if they had questions, identified the next steps and gave the child an opportunity to be heard. In the majority of hearings, judges also explained the hearing purpose and process to mothers (83%) and fathers (89%) who were present, spoke directly to mothers (92%) and fathers (78%), and addressed mothers (92%) and fathers (67%) by name. The least frequent method of engagement of parties was asking if they understood the next steps in the case. Compared to the 2014 72-hr hearings, the 2017 permanency hearings saw the greatest increase in engaging parties who are present by explaining the hearing purpose and case process. (See circled item in the figure above).

7th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Key Findings



Parties Present:

- The majority of permanency hearings studied in 2017 had a mother present (80%) as well as a mother's attorney (73%). Over half of the hearings had a father present (60%), with an attorney for the father appearing in 40% of the hearings. Only two of the permanency hearings observed had a child present (13%; n=2 of 15), although a representative for the child appeared in the majority of the hearings (80%). In many of the hearings observed the judge waived the child's right to appear (putting the waiver on the record) or excused the children due to their young age.



Discussion:

- While the 72-hr hearings observed in 2014 are not directly comparable to the permanency hearings observed in 2017 with respect to hearing goals and purpose, they can be compared on a number of best practice elements that should be addressed at all hearings.^v Compared to the hearings studied in 2014, a greater percentage of the 2017 hearings included a discussion of efforts to reunify or prevent removal, visitation with parents and/or siblings, the child's educational needs and educational placement, physical health, and maintaining permanency connections. A greater percentage of the 2014 hearings, on the other hand, discussed child well-being generally, the child's mental health or development, child safety and the child's placement.
- All of the 2017 permanency hearings discussed progress and compliance with the case plan as well as case plan adequacy and any needed modifications. The majority of the 2017 hearings also included a discussion of the child's permanency goal and the timeframes for achieving permanency. These topics were addressed in-depth, involving a detailed and substantive discussion. In addition, the court had substantive discussion about ruling out better permanent plans when applicable.
- Child well-being was addressed in a less substantive way in the 2017 permanency hearings. The areas of child well-being generally, the child's physical and mental health or development, and the child's educational needs and placement were only discussed with a brief statement or mere mention.



Engagement:

- Engagement of parents and youth in the dependency court process is considered essential in holding a high-quality hearing.^{vi} When children were present (n=2) in the permanency hearings observed, the judge fully engaged them and did so in a way that conveyed caring and support. The judges spoke to children directly and by name, explaining the purpose of the hearing and the case process, asking if they had any questions, identifying the next steps, and giving them an opportunity to be heard. In the majority of hearings, the judge also explained the hearing's purpose and case process to mothers and fathers who were present, speaking directly to them, and addressing them by name (although fewer fathers who were present were addressed by name compared to mothers). The least frequent method of engagement of parents (and children) who were present was asking if they understood the next steps in their case process.

7th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

- Judges were encouraging of parents who were present and did a very good job explaining their rights and the dependency case process (e.g., in one hearing the judge was particularly good at explaining the concept of open adoption, the process involved and risks of relinquishment, and did so in a very thorough, supportive and respectful manner). Overall, judges were affirming to parents (praising them when they had done well) and were strength-based in their discussion while still being up-front and holding parents accountable.
- When relatives and foster parents were present judges engaged them by asking if they had anything they wanted to add or specifically asking how the children were doing in their placement.
- When tribal representatives were present at hearings involving ICWA they were not always invited to speak or offer input. There was also no discussion of culturally appropriate services in those instances.



Judicial Findings/Orders

- The judge made reasonable efforts findings orally on the record in 73% of the permanency hearings observed (compared to 83% of the 2014 72-hr hearings). When reasonable efforts were made orally on the record they were detailed (e.g., making contrary to welfare findings when applicable; when finding compelling reasons those reasons were thoroughly spelled out). When ICWA findings were made those were also detailed with the court making oral findings about notice, articulating why placement at home is contrary to the welfare of the child (if applicable) and putting all of the active efforts made on the record verbally.
- In the remainder of hearings without a reasonable efforts finding made orally on the record (27%), the judge adopted the “findings and recommendations in the report” or “continued the court’s previous findings and orders.”

ⁱ “Best practices” for dependency court hearings include those practices outlined in the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges’ *ENHANCED RESOURCE GUIDELINES: Improving Court Practice in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases*, which provides recommendations for conducting a high- quality child abuse and neglect hearing process.

ⁱⁱ While the specific hearing types that were studied in 2014 and 2017 differ, and some practice elements that would be relevant at a permanency hearing would not be relevant at the initial hearing (e.g., progress and compliance related to the case plan, barriers to achieving final permanency, etc.), many “best practices” in child abuse and neglect hearings apply to all hearings (e.g., engagement of parties who are present at hearings, making oral findings on the record, etc.).

ⁱⁱⁱ Supra note i.

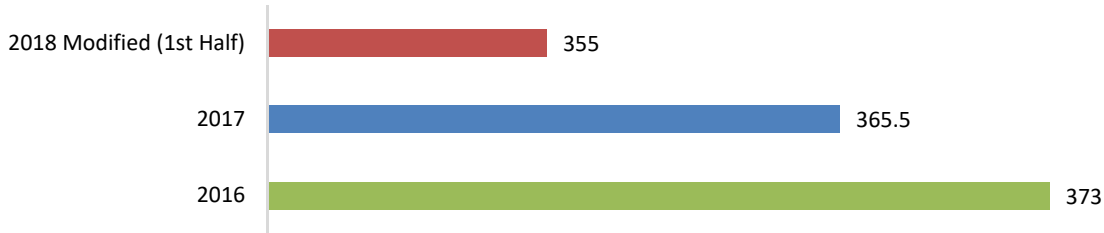
^{iv} Ibid.

^v Ibid.

^{vi} Ibid.

7th Judicial District (JD) Timeliness Measures 2016, 2017 & 2018 (1st Half)

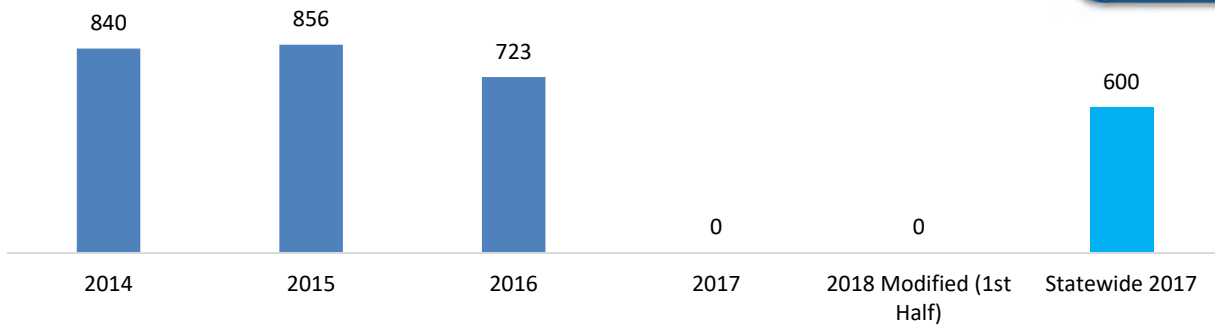
7th JD Median Days to 1st Permanency Hearing



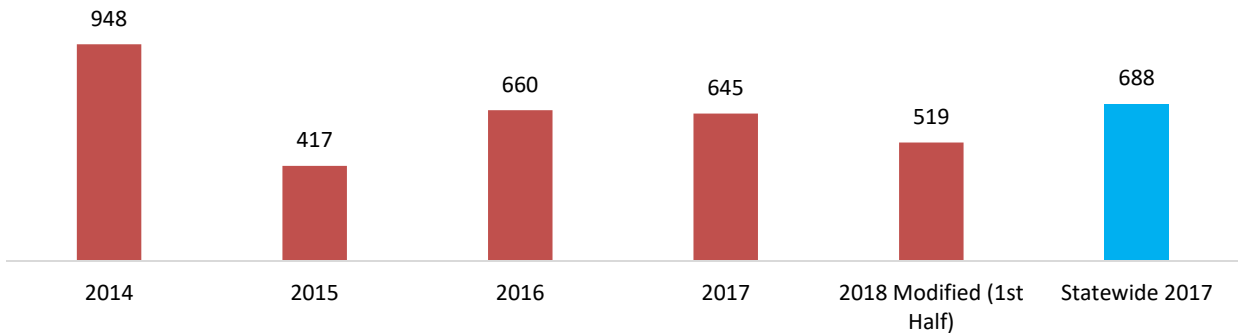
71% of 1st permanency hearings took place within 365 days of removal in the 1st half of 2018

67% of 1st permanency hearings took place within 365 days of removal in 2017

7th JD Time to Termination of Parental Rights 2014-2018 (1st Half)



7th JD Time to Permanency 2014-2018 (1st Half)

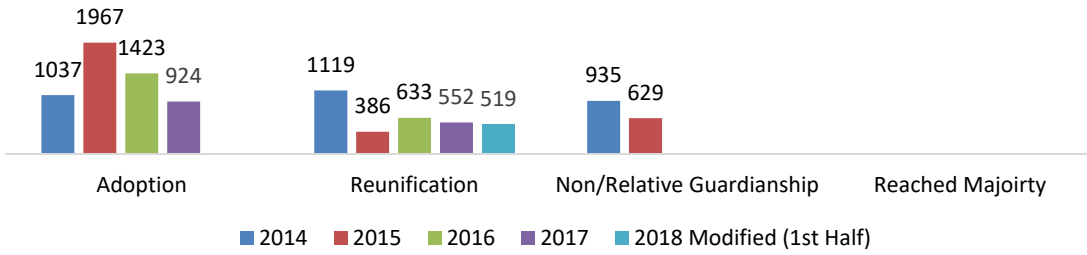


First Placement of Child Entering Foster Care Between 2014 - 2017

	Relative/Kin	Foster Care	Congregate Care
2014	11%	75%	4%
2015	0%	50%	25%
2016	40%	60%	0%
2017	45%	45%	9%

7th Judicial District Data Summary | 2018

7th JD Median Days to Case Closure 2014-2018 (1st Half)



7th JD

56% of youth who entered care in 2016 were still in care at the end of 2017.

Statewide

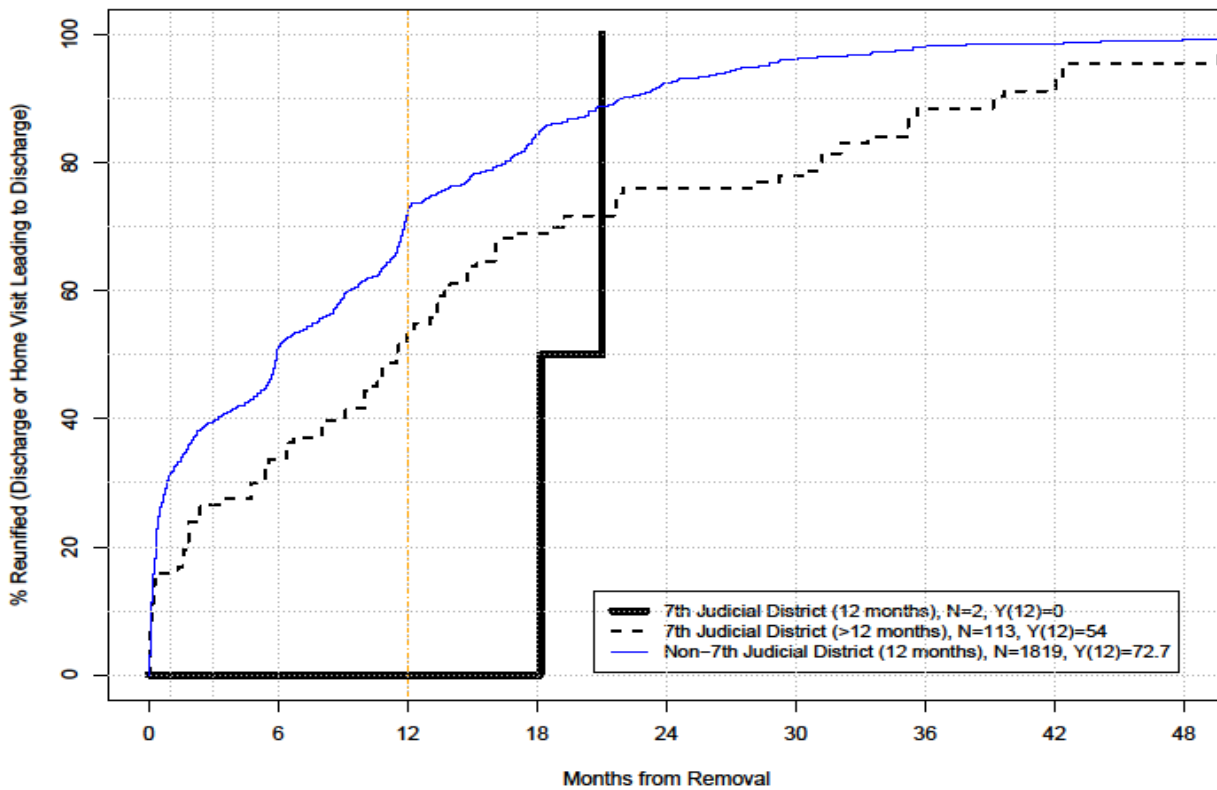
47% of youth who entered care in 2016 were still in care at the end of 2017.

7th JD Outcomes for Children Who Exited Care in 2017 (n=8)



■ Reunification ■ Adoption ■ Relative Placement ■ Runaway ■ Reach Majority ■ Other

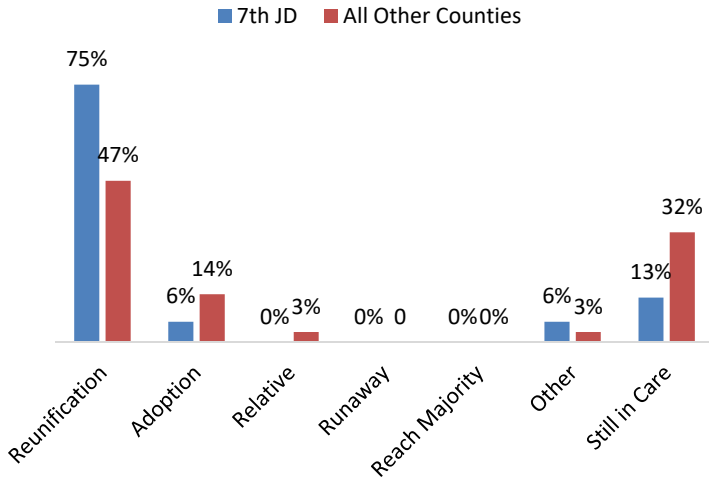
7th Judicial District: Discharges for Reunification Length of Stay, October 2006 through March 2018



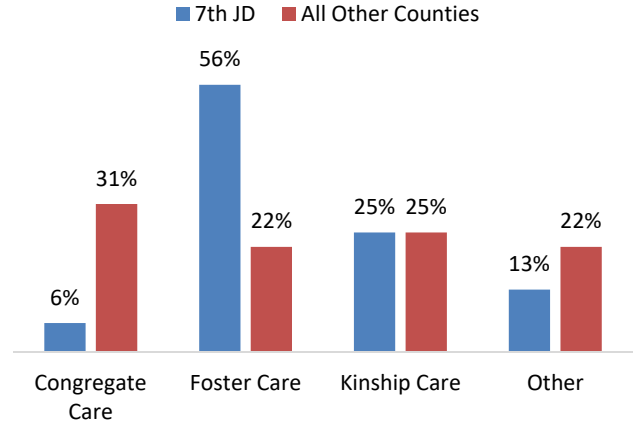
Digging Deeper

Children 0-3 Years Old Who Entered Care Between 2014 – 2017 (n=16)

7th JD Outcomes for Children Who Entered Foster Care 2014-2017



7th JD First Placement Type for Children Who Entered Foster Care (2014-2017)



Short Stayers

7th JD Number of Children Discharged in 72 Hours and 30 Days in 2017

	72 Hours	30 Days
Guardianship	0	0
Runaway	0	0
Relative	0	0
Reunification	0	0
Transfer	0	3
Overall	0	3 (38%)

38% of cases achieved permanency within 12 months (for kids in care on March 2017)

Reentry

7th JD

17.6% of children reentered foster care within 12 months of previous discharge

Statewide

4.9% of children reentered foster care within 12 months of previous discharge

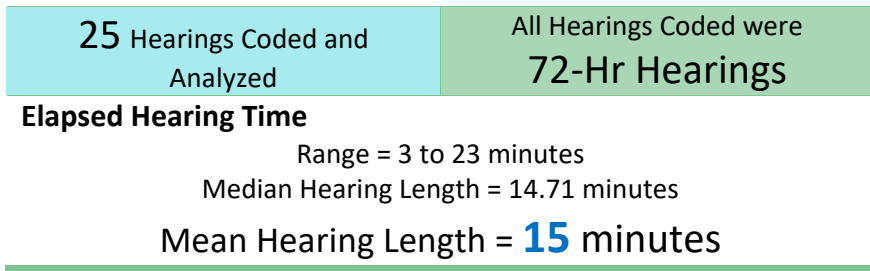
8th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Introduction

To provide the court with information about dependency hearing practice strengths and challenges, and to inform action planning for ongoing systems change efforts, a random sample of recorded hearings from January 2017 to January 2018 from the 8th Judicial District were obtained. Hearings were observed and coded using a hearing quality data collection tool designed to not only describe the hearing process, but also to capture the presence or absence of specific best practicesⁱ in dependency court hearings. Where data were available, the findings from the current study were compared to findings from a study of dispositional hearing practice conducted for the 8th Judicial District in 2014.ⁱⁱ



FINDINGS



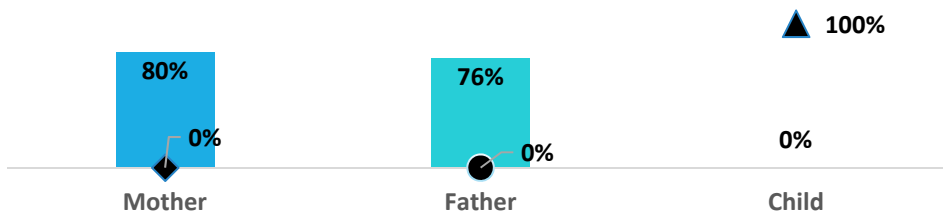
The 2014 hearing observation study involved dispositional hearings (N=21)

The 2014 dispositional hearings averaged **7 minutes**

Parties Present

Mothers were present in 80% of the 72-hr hearings observed and fathers were present in 76% of the 72-hr hearings observed. No children were present in any of the 72-hr hearings. Parties presence are depicted by bars and the symbols represent the percentage of hearings their attorneys were present. **Case workers, district attorneys and children’s attorneys were present in all of the hearings.**

Percentage of 72-hr Hearings with Party and Attorneys Present (8th Judicial District; N=25; Hearings conducted Jan 2017-Jan 2018)



2014 Parties Present

Mother	43%
Father	38%
Child	5%
Mother’s Atty	52%
Father’s Atty	52%
Child Rep	43%

Relatives were present **16%** of the hearings

No foster parents were present in the hearings

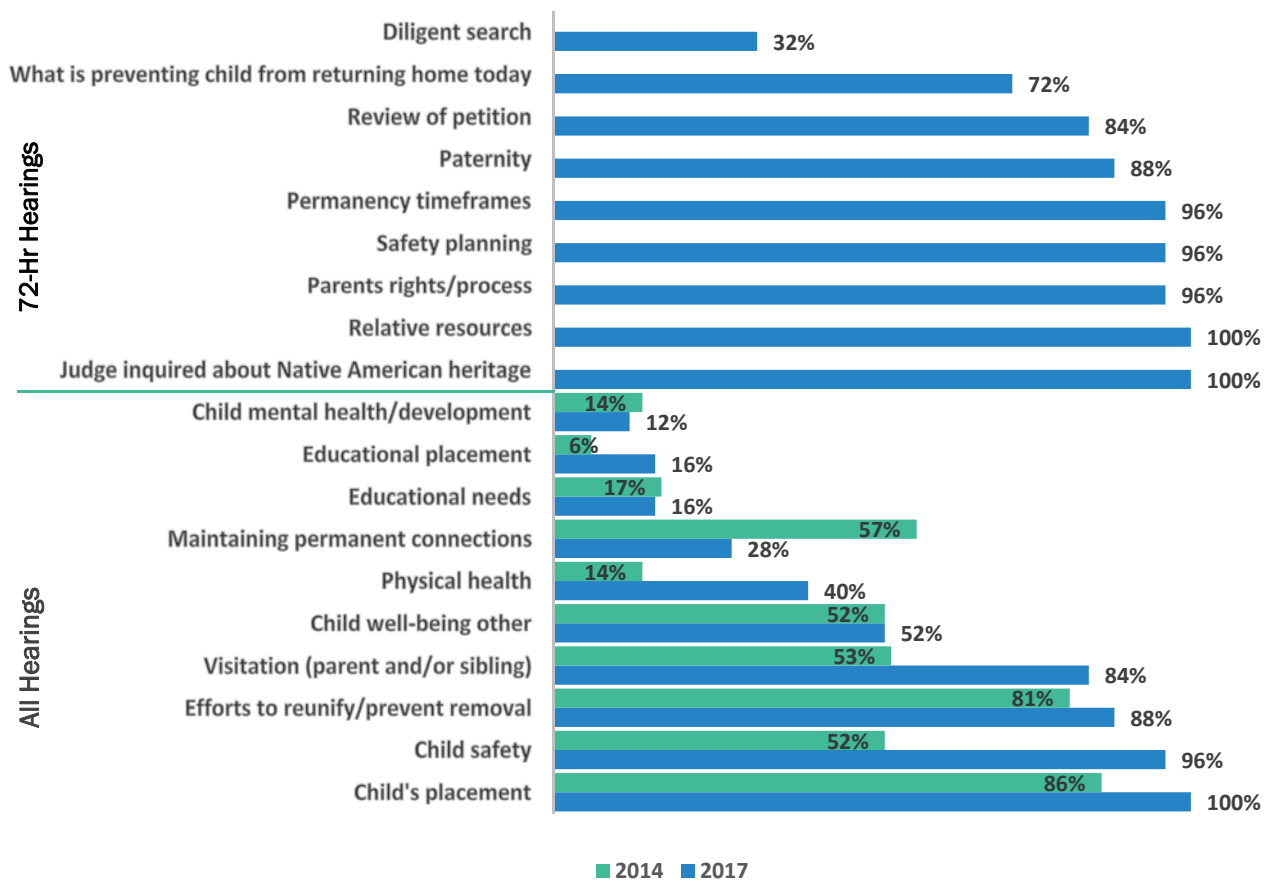
In 2014, relatives were present **24%** of hearings

8th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Discussion During Hearings

Discussion was measured with a list of topics that could be relevant to discuss at the hearing. The topics listed next to the 72-hr hearing in the figure below are those that are most relevant for discussion in those hearings, while topics listed under “all hearings” are those that could be relevant for any hearing. Topics were derived from Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) and from best practice guidelines from the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.ⁱⁱⁱ The figure compares the percentage of time (when applicable) that a topic was discussed in the 2014 and 2017 sample of hearings. **In 2017, 100% of the 72-hr hearings discussed the child’s placement and relative resources, and 100% inquired about the applicability of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA).**

Percentage of Hearings in Which Topic Was Discussed
8th Judicial District; 2014 Hearings N=21; 2017 Hearings N=25



8th Judicial District: 2017 72-Hr Hearings (N=25)

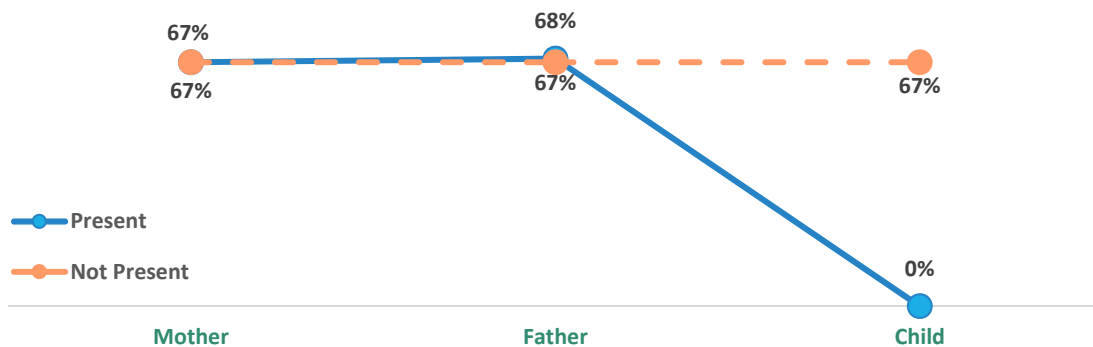
Hearing Topics with Less Discussion (Only a brief statement made; mere mention)	Topics Discussed in Depth (Substantive)
Child mental health/development	Child safety
Child educational needs	Child placement
Child educational placement	Relative resources
Diligent search	Safety planning
Maintaining permanent connections	Visitation (parent and/or sibling)

8th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Breadth of Discussion by Parties Present

The figure below shows the breadth of discussion at the 2017 hearings by the presence of parties. Breadth of discussion is the percentage of items discussed out of all the potential topics (derived from NRS and best practice guidelines)^{iv} that were applicable to be discussed at the hearing. **On average, the hearings included discussion of 67% of all applicable topics**, with the percentage of items discussed in each hearing ranging from 47% to 88% of all applicable topics. As shown in the figure below, breadth of discussion was the same regardless of whether the mother was present or not and was virtually the same if the father was present or absent. No children were present for the 72-hr hearings.

Breadth of Discussion at 72-Hr Hearings by Parties Present
8th Judicial District; 2017 N=25



Findings/Orders

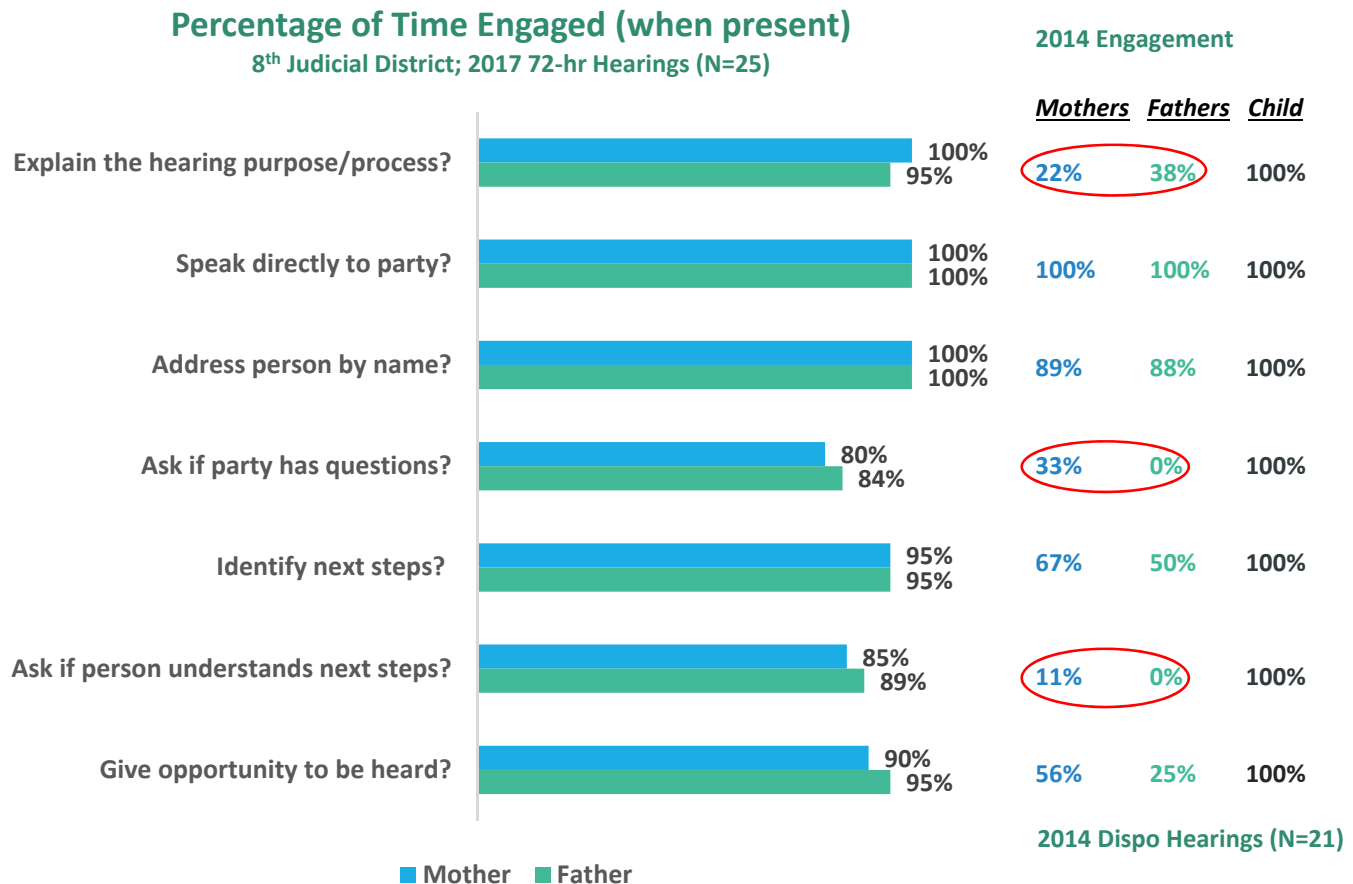
The court observation tool captured whether the judge made findings orally on the record in the 72-hr hearings. This was calculated as a percentage of time the judge made specific findings. In 2017, the judge made a reasonable efforts’ finding orally in **100%** of hearings observed. The judge made a finding about the applicability of the *Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)* orally on the record in **46%** of the hearings observed.

Year	Reasonable Efforts Findings (%)	ICWA Findings (%)
2017	100%	46%
2014	10%	0%

8th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Engagement

Engagement of parties was measured by a series of yes/no questions regarding how the judge engaged the parent and child, including spoke directly to them, addressed them by name, gave them an opportunity to be heard, asked if they had any questions, explained the hearing process, and explained legal timelines. No children were present in the 2017 sample of 72-hr hearings.



Compared to 2014, the use of a number of engagement strategies with parties who were present increased in 2017 (see circled items in the figure above for some notable increases). In **100%** of the hearings in 2017 the judge spoke directly to mothers and fathers who were present, addressing them both by name. The judge also explained the hearing purpose/process to the mother in **100%** of the hearings and to fathers who were present in 95% of the hearings. In 2017, the least frequent method of engagement was asking parties if they had any questions, although this engagement strategy was used in the majority of hearings where mothers (80%) and fathers (84%) were present.

8th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Key Findings



Parties Present:

- Children’s attorneys were present at 100% of the 72-hr hearings. While mothers and fathers were present for the majority of these initial hearings in the case process, they were appearing without representation. As a result, appointment of counsel for mothers and fathers was addressed at the hearing. An important task of the 72-hr hearing, when applicable, is to consider relatives as placement resources. This discussion was facilitated by the presence of relatives who appeared in four of the hearings (16%).



Discussion:

- In the majority of 72-hr hearings observed there was a discussion of critical topics (as indicated by NRS and best practice guidelines). For example, in 100% of hearings the judge discussed the child’s placement, relative resources and made an inquiry about the applicability of ICWA. And, in all but one hearing (96%), there was a discussion of child safety, parents’ rights and the abuse/neglect process, safety planning and permanency timeframes. Many issues were also discussed at some length and in-depth (e.g., child safety, placement, relative resources, safety planning and visitation of parents and/or siblings).
- While the 72-hr hearings discussed a wide range of applicable topics, there was less discussion of child well-being. While safety and removal are the primary focus of the 72-hr hearing, the initial hearing in the child abuse and neglect case process also represents an opportunity to establish a tone that prioritizes child well-being and sets the stage for subsequent hearings with respect to the information the court deems important. Although there was some discussion of child well-being in the 72-hr hearings observed (e.g. 52% of hearings discussed child well-being generally and 40% discussed the child’s physical health), judges should consider including more attention to child well-being issues even as early as the 72-hr hearing. While much of the information about child well-being may not be available, the judge can set the expectation early on that child well-being will be focused on with the same urgency as the court focuses on safety and permanency.^v This will ensure that all parties and advocates understand the court’s expectations regarding information to be provided to the court at each subsequent hearing.
- Presence or absence of parties did not appear to influence the breadth of discussion at the 72-hr hearings. Breadth of discussion (the percentage of items discussed out of all of the potential topics that were applicable to be discussed at the hearing), was the same regardless of whether the mother was present or not and was virtually the same if the father was present or absent.



Engagement:

- Engagement of parents and youth in the dependency court process is considered essential in holding a high-quality hearing.^{vi} While the purpose of a 72-hr hearing and disposition hearing differs, both hearings represent an opportunity to engage with those who are present. The 72-hr hearing, as the initial hearing in a case, and potentially parties’ first experience with the court, represents an important early engagement opportunity. In the sample of hearings observed, judges did an excellent job of informing those present about the goals and purpose of the

8th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

hearing and the roles of each of the professional stakeholders in the process. Judges reinforced that the court proceedings will be fair (emphasizing parents' rights in the process) and that parties' voices will be heard. In 100% of the 72-hr hearings the judge spoke directly to mothers and fathers, addressing them both by name, asked if they had questions and identified the next steps in the case process. Judges were also good about checking to ensure parties understood those next steps. Compared to the 2014 dispositional hearings studied, engagement of parties in the 2017 72-hr hearings was more robust, involving more engagement strategies with more parties and in more hearings.

- Judges were respectful and empathic when engaging parents, with some of the judges' observed doing an excellent job of being clear and firm but still conveying support and caring. Judges appeared knowledgeable of issues such as substance abuse, domestic violence and trauma and were able to convey that knowledge in a strength-based way with parents present. Overall, the judges were encouraging and motivational while still admonishing parents respectfully and appropriately if warranted by the circumstances.



Judicial Findings/Orders:

- Detailed reasonable efforts findings were made orally and clearly in the 72-hr hearings. A reasonable efforts finding, for example, was made orally in 100% of the cases, with 84% of the hearings also including a “contrary to welfare” and “best interests” finding. The judge made a clear oral finding about the applicability of ICWA in 46% of the 72-hr hearings -indicating some room for improvement in making oral ICWA findings on the record in these initial hearings.

ⁱ “Best practices” for dependency court hearings include those practices outlined in the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges’ *ENHANCED RESOURCE GUIDELINES: Improving Court Practice in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases*, which provides recommendations for conducting a high- quality child abuse and neglect hearing process.

ⁱⁱⁱ While the specific hearing types that were studied in 2014 and 2017 differ, and some practice elements that would be relevant at a dispositional hearing would not be relevant at the initial hearing (e.g., case plan review), many “best practices” in child abuse and neglect hearings apply to all hearings (e.g., engagement of parties who are present, making oral findings on the record, etc.).

ⁱⁱⁱ Supra note i.

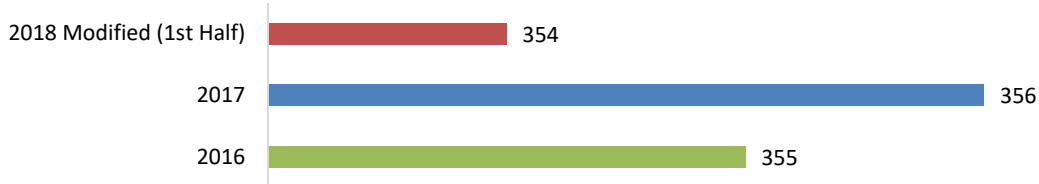
^{iv} Ibid.

^v Ibid.

^{vi} Ibid.

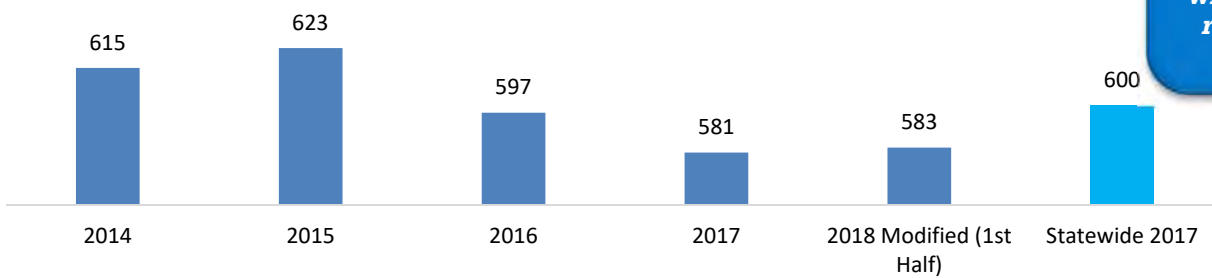
8th Judicial District (JD) Timeliness Measures 2016, 2017 & 2018 (1st Half)

8th JD Median Days to 1st Permanency Hearing



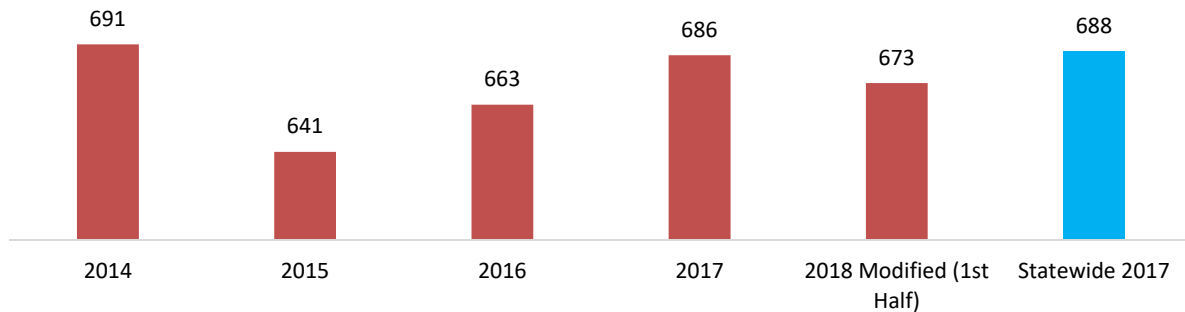
81% of 1st permanency hearings took place within 365 days of removal in the 1st half of 2018

8th JD Time to Termination of Parental Rights 2014-2018 (1st Half)



78% of 1st permanency hearings took place within 365 days of removal in 2017

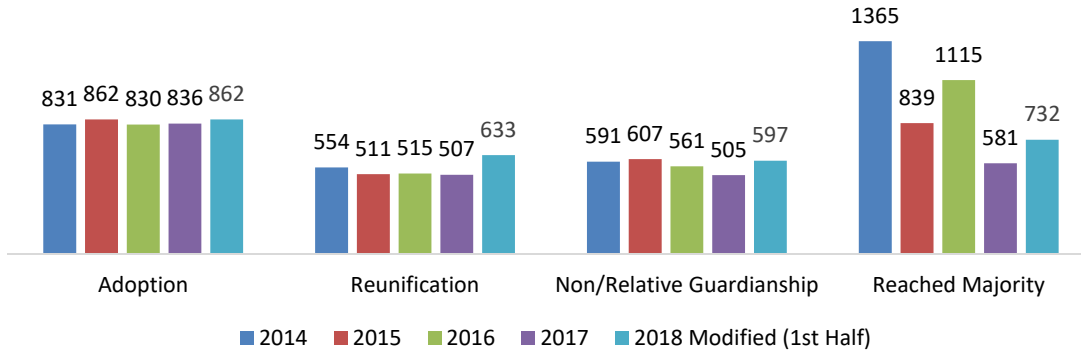
8th JD Time to Permanency 2014-2018 (1st Half)



First Placement of Child Entering Foster Care Between 2014 - 2017

	Relative/Kin	Foster Care	Congregate Care
2014	32%	23%	33%
2015	28%	15%	43%
2016	29%	10%	47%
2017	34%	11%	41%

8th JD Median Days to Case Closure 2014-2018 (1st Half)



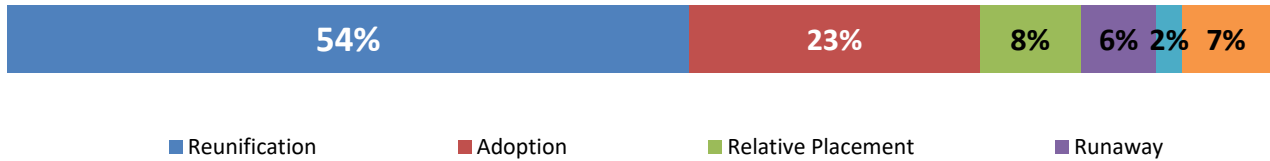
8th JD

47% of youth who entered care in 2016 were still in care at the end of 2017.

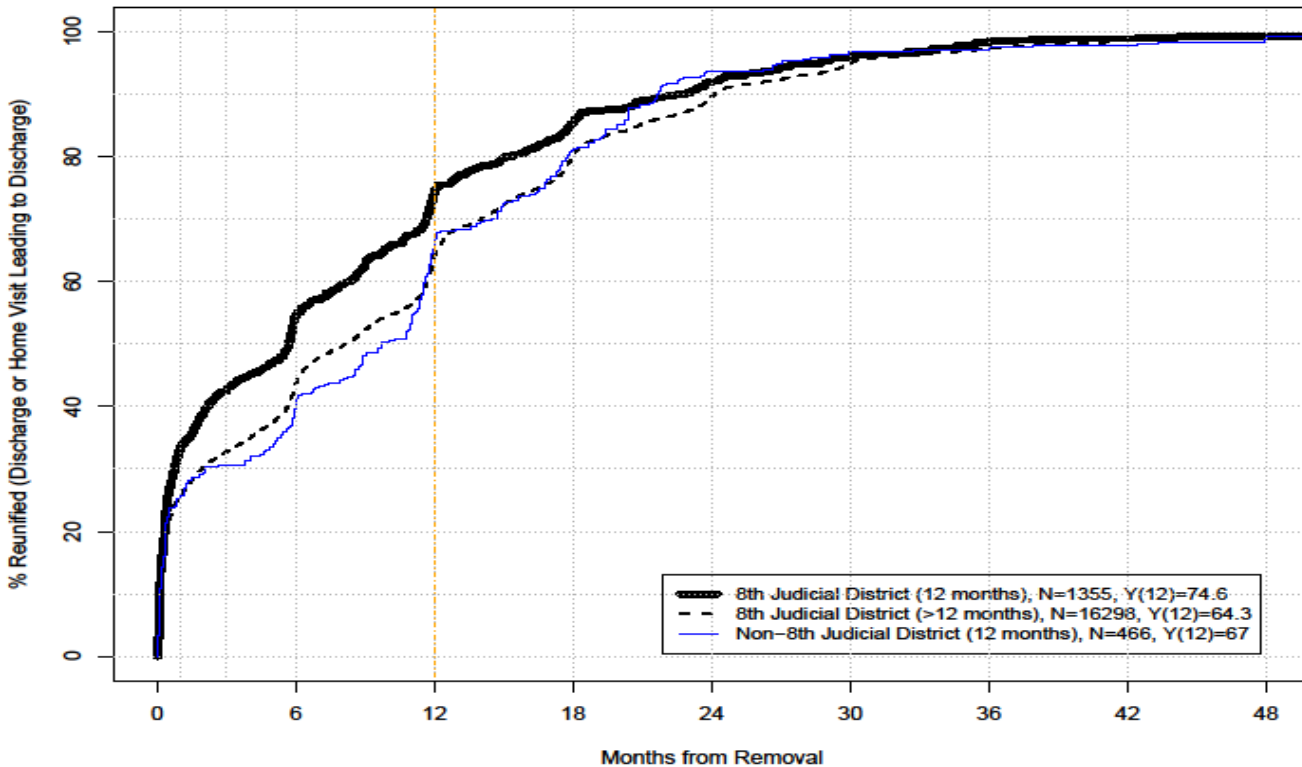
Statewide

47% of youth who entered care in 2016 were still in care at the end of 2017.

8th JD Outcomes for Children Who Exited Care in 2017 (n=2132)



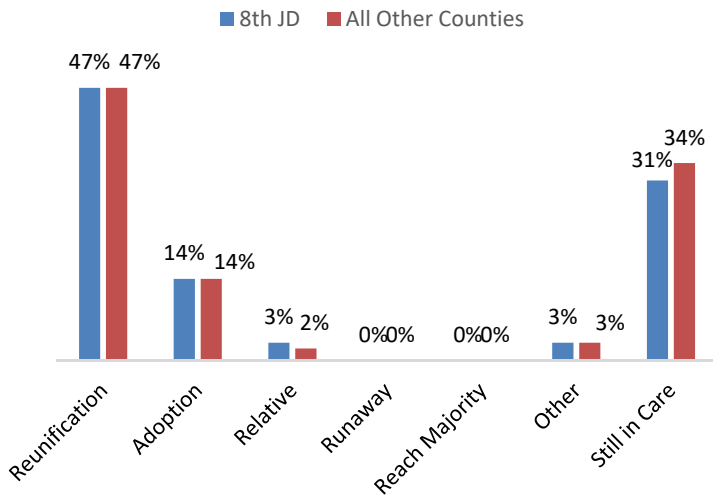
8th Judicial District: Discharges for Reunification Length of Stay, October 2006 through March 2018



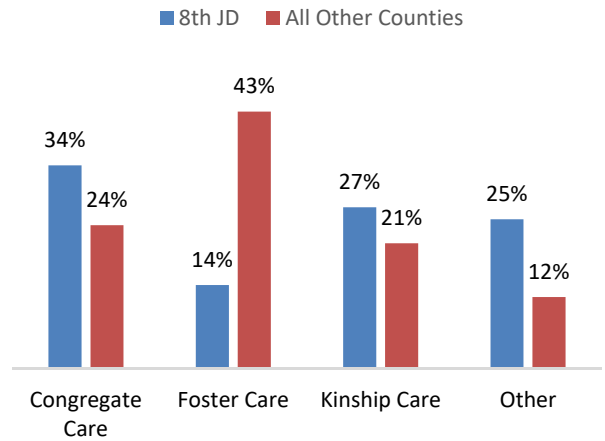
Digging Deeper

Children 0 – 3 Years Old who Entered Care Between 2014 – 2017 (n=4,076)

8th JD Outcomes for Children Who Entered Foster Care 2014-2017



8th JD First Placement Type for Children Who Entered Foster Care (2014-2017)



Short Stayers

8th JD Number of Children Discharged in 72 Hours and 30 Days in 2017

	72 Hours	30 Days
Guardianship	8	34
Runaway	2	5
Relative	10	21
Reunification	157	455
Transfer	10	36
Death	0	1
Overall	187 (8%)	552 (24%)

43% of cases achieved permanency within 12 months (for kids in care on March 2017)

Reentry

8th JD

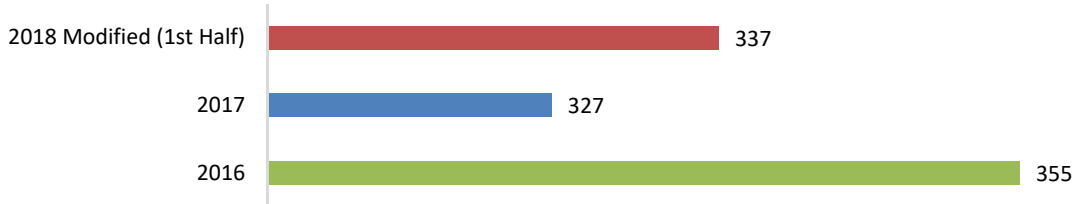
4.8% of children reentered foster care within 12 months of previous discharge

Statewide

4.9% of children reentered foster care within 12 months of previous discharge

9th Judicial District (JD) Timeliness Measures 2016, 2017 & 2018 (1st Half)

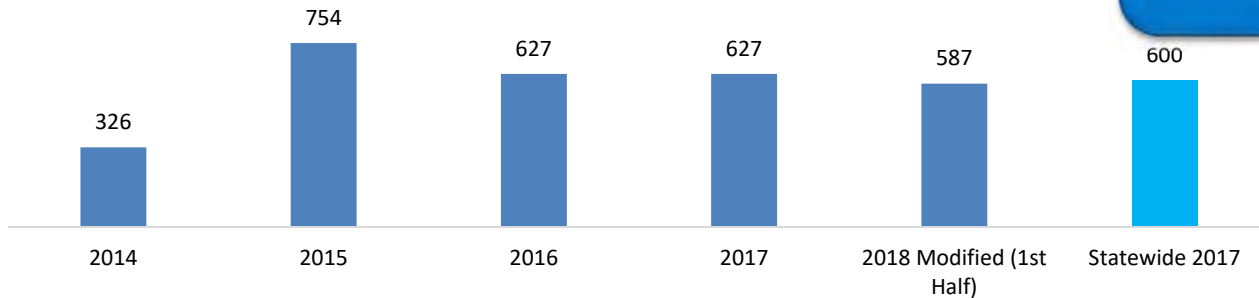
9th JD Median Days to 1st Permanency Hearing



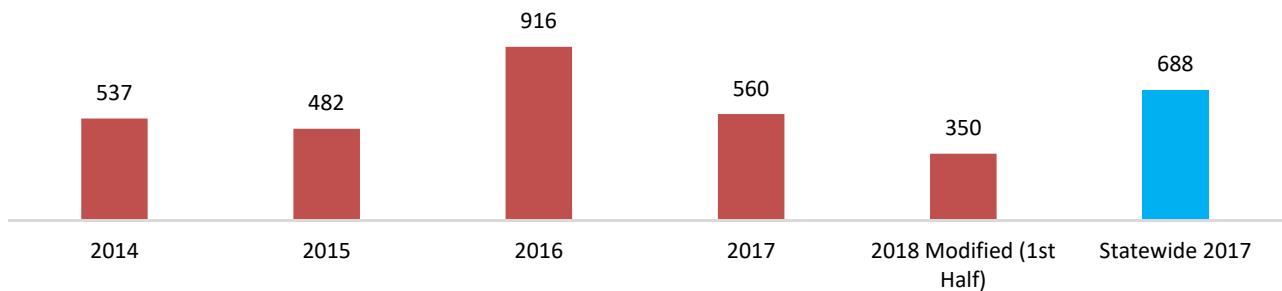
93% of 1st permanency hearings took place within 365 days of removal in the 1st half of 2018

87% of 1st permanency hearings took place within 365 days of removal in 2017

9th JD Time to Termination of Parental Rights 2014-2018 (1st Half)



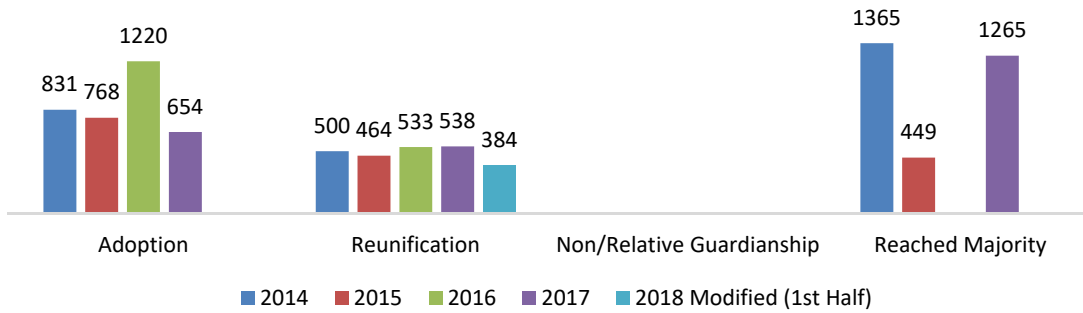
9th JD Time to Permanency 2014-2018 (1st Half)



First Placement of Child Entering Foster Care Between 2014 - 2017

	Relative/Kin	Foster Care	Congregate Care
2014	18%	18%	64%
2015	40%	20%	40%
2016	9%	18%	64%
2017	73%	9%	0%

9th JD Median Days Case Closure 2014-2018 (1st Half)



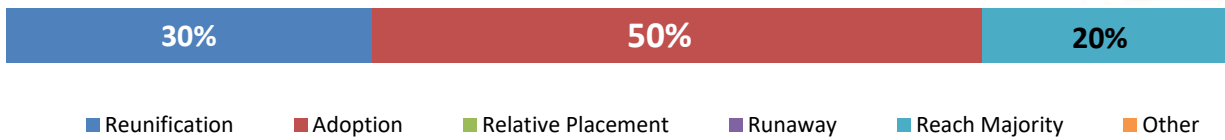
9th JD

64% of youth who entered care in 2016 were still in care at the end of 2017.

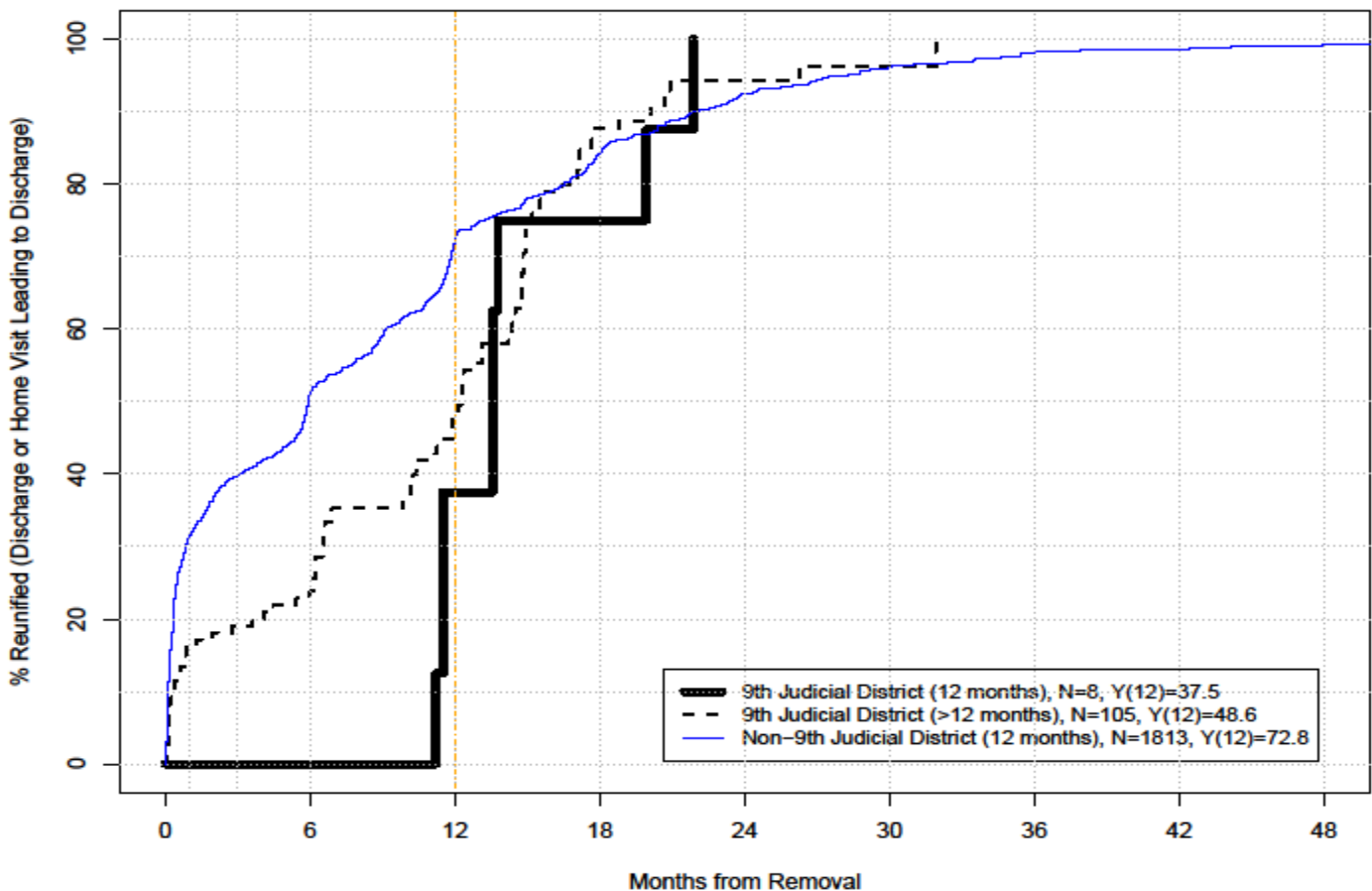
Statewide

47% of youth who entered care in 2016 were still in care at the end of 2017.

9th JD Outcomes for Children Who Exited Care in 2016 (n=20)



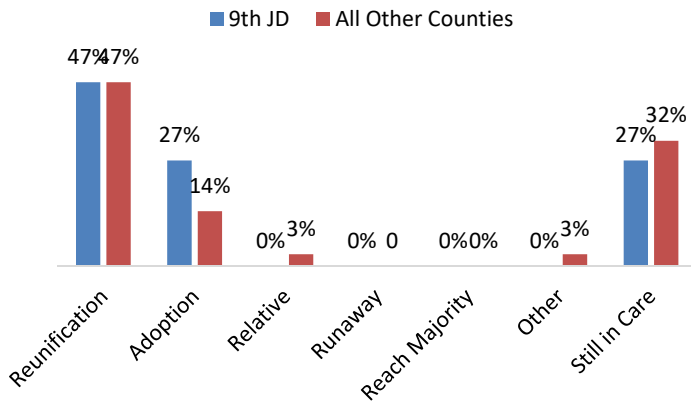
9th Judicial District: Discharges for Reunification Length of Stay, October 2006 through March 2018



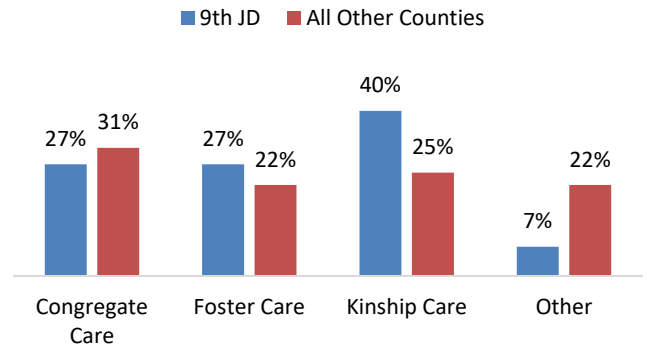
Digging Deeper

Children 0 – 3 Years Old who Entered Care Between 2014 – 2017 (n=15)

9th JD Outcomes for Children Who Entered Foster Care 2014-2017



9th JD First Placement Type for Children Who Entered Foster Care (2014-2017)



Short Stayers

9th JD Number of Children Discharged in 72 Hours and 30 Days in 2017

	72 Hours	30 Days
Guardianship	0	0
Runaway	0	0
Relative	0	0
Reunification	0	0
Overall	0	0

35% of cases achieved permanency within 12 months (for kids in care on March 2017)

Reentry

9th JD

0% of children reentered foster care within 12 months of previous discharge

Statewide

4.9% of children reentered foster care within 12 months of previous discharge

10th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Introduction

To provide the court with information about dependency hearing practice strengths and challenges, and to inform action planning for ongoing systems change efforts, a random sample of recorded hearings from April 2017 to February 2018 from the 10th Judicial District were obtained. Hearings were observed and coded using a hearing quality data collection tool designed to not only describe the hearing process, but also to capture the presence or absence of specific best practicesⁱ in dependency court hearings. Where data were available, the findings from the current study of permanency hearings were compared to findings from a study conducted for the 10th Judicial District in 2014.



FINDINGS

9 Hearings Coded and Analyzed

All Hearings Coded were
Permanency Hearings

Elapsed Hearing Time

Range = 2 to 30 minutes

Median Permanency Hearing Length = 10.48 minutes

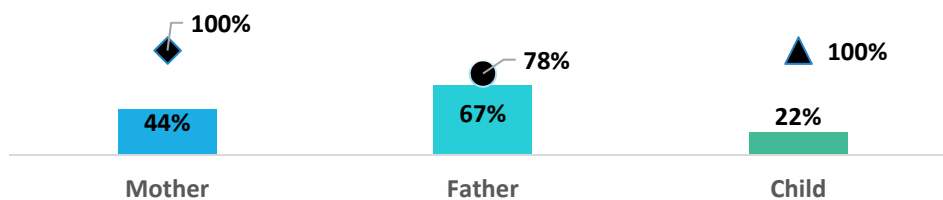
Mean Permanency Hearing Length = **12** minutes

In 2014, permanency hearings (N=9) averaged **12 minutes**

Parties Present

Mothers were present in 44% of the permanency hearings observed, fathers were present in 67% of the hearings and a child was present in 22% of the hearings observed. Parties present and their counsel are shown in the chart below. Parties presence are depicted by bars and the symbols represent the percentage of hearings their attorneys were present. **Case workers were present in all hearings and the district attorney was present in all but one of the permanency hearings.**

Percentage of Permanency Hearings with Party and Attorneys Present
(10th Judicial District; N=9; Hearings conducted Apr 2017-Feb 2018)



2014 Parties Present

Mother	44%
Father	33%
Child	11%
Mother's Atty	78%
Father's Atty	78%
Child Rep	78%

Relatives were present
33% of the hearings

Foster parents were present
in none (0%) of the hearings

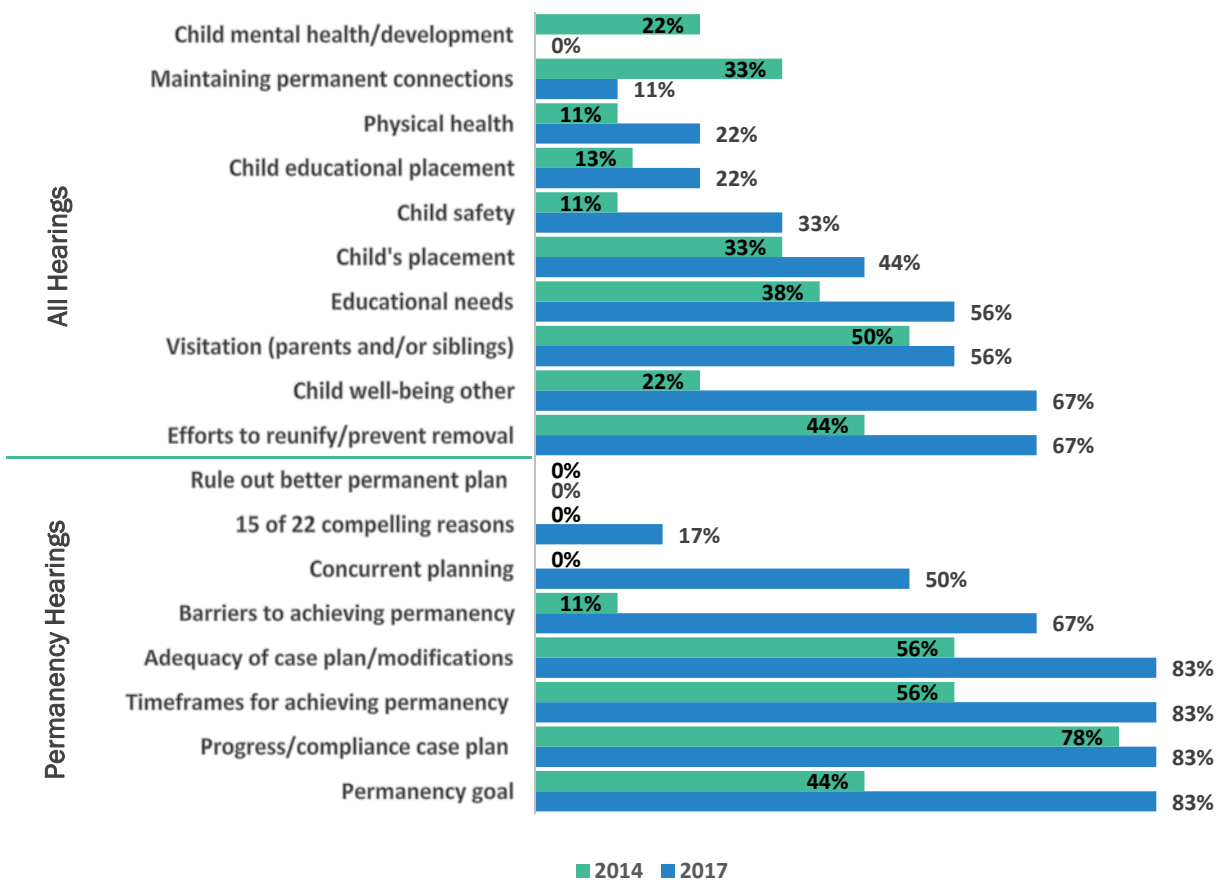
In 2014, relatives were present **11%** of hearings and foster parents were present **11%** of hearings

10th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Discussion During Permanency Hearings

Discussion was measured with a list of topics that could be relevant to discuss at the hearing. As noted in the figure below, permanency hearing (PH) topics listed are those most relevant to those hearings whereas “all hearings” lists topics that could be relevant to all hearings. Topics were derived from Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) and from best practice guidelines from the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.ⁱⁱ The figure compares the percentage of time (when applicable) that a topic was discussed in the 2014 and 2017 sample of hearings. **In 2017, the majority of the PHs observed (83%) discussed the permanency goal, progress/compliance on the case plan, timeframes for achieving permanency, and the adequacy of the case plan and any modifications.**

Percentage of Hearings in Which Topic Was Discussed
10th Judicial District; 2014 PHs N=9; 2017 PHs N=9



10th Judicial District: 2017 Permanency Hearings (N=9)

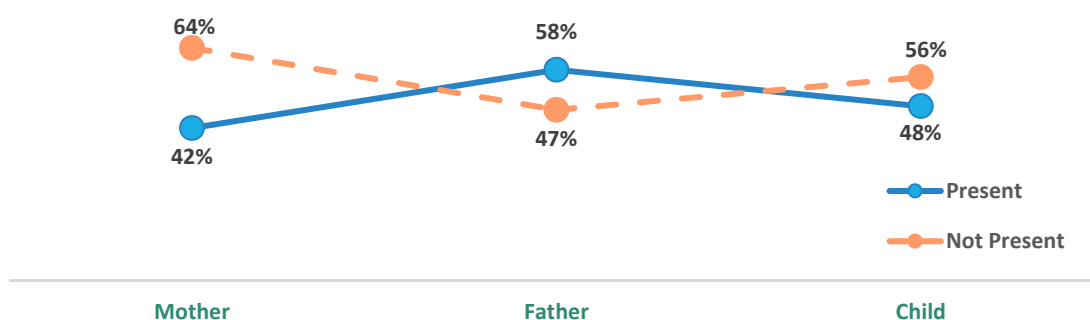
Hearing Topics with Less Discussion (Only a brief statement made; mere mention)	Topics Discussed in Depth (Substantive)
Child physical health	Permanency goal
Maintaining permanent connections	Progress/compliance on case plan
Child safety	Adequacy of case plan/modifications
Child well-being (other)	Timeframes for achieving permanency

10th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Breadth of Discussion by Parties Present

The figure below shows the breadth of discussion at the 2017 permanency hearings by the presence of parties. Breadth of discussion is the percentage of items discussed out of all the potential topics (derived from NRS and best practice guidelines)ⁱⁱⁱ that were applicable to be discussed at the hearing. **On average, PHs included discussion of 54% of all applicable topics**, with the percentage of items discussed in each hearing ranging from 8% to 89% of all applicable topics. As shown in the figure below, breadth of discussion was greater when mothers were absent and when children were absent from the hearings. However, breadth of discussion was greater when fathers were present.

Breadth of Discussion at Permanency Hearings by Parties Present
10th Judicial District; 2017 N=9



Findings/Orders

The court observation tool captured whether the judge made findings orally on the record in the permanency hearings. This was calculated as a percentage of time the judge made specific findings. In 2017, the judge made a reasonable efforts' finding orally in **11%** of hearings observed. An *Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)* finding was made orally on the record in **22%** of the hearings (compared to no oral ICWA findings in the 2014 hearings).

In 2017, judges made oral reasonable efforts findings in **11%** of the permanency hearings

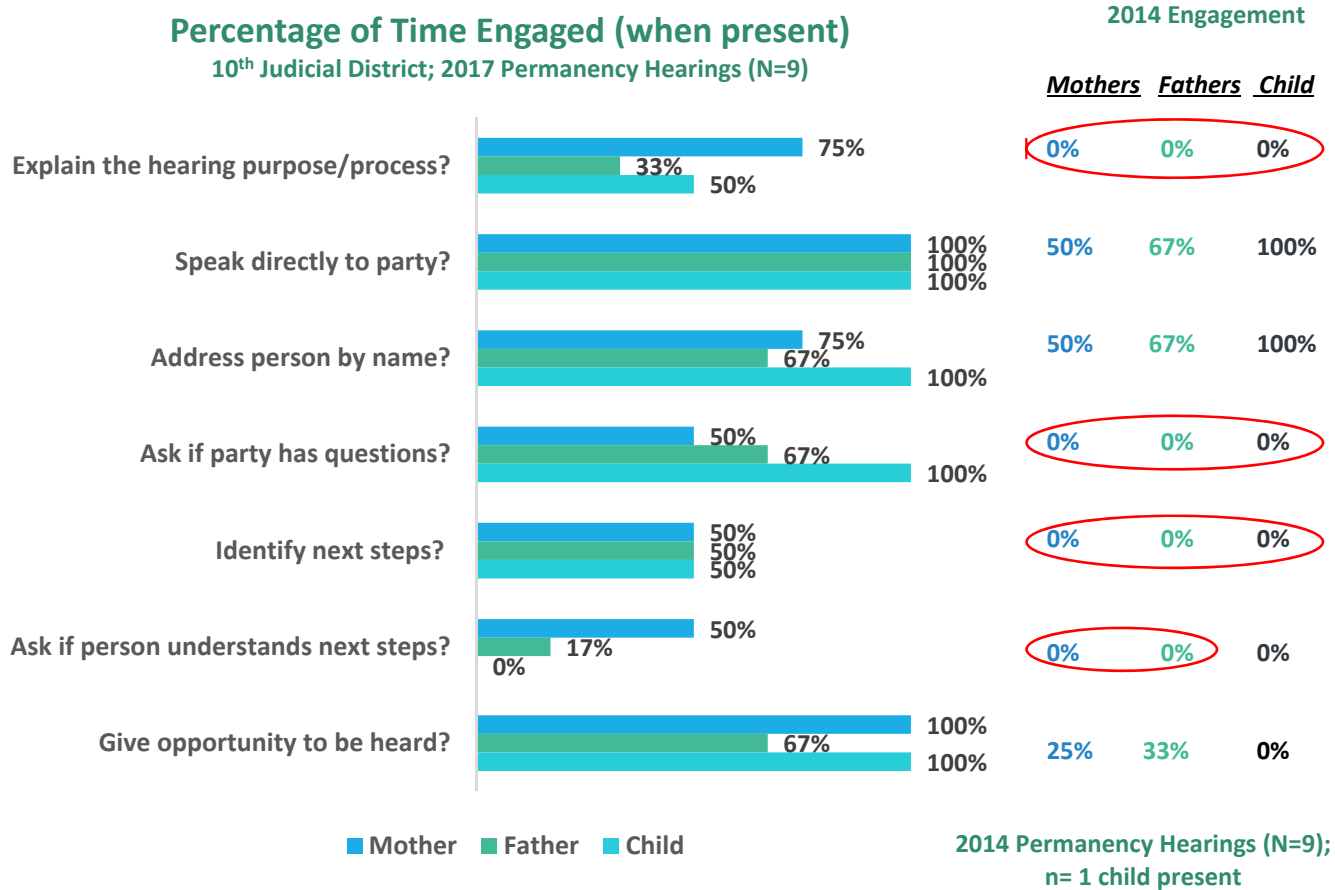


In 2014, judges made oral reasonable efforts findings in none (**0%**) of the permanency hearings

10th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Engagement

Engagement of parties was measured by a series of yes/no questions regarding how the judge engaged the parent and child, including spoke directly to them, addressed them by name, gave them an opportunity to be heard, asked if they had any questions, explained the hearing process, and explained legal timelines.



In **100%** of the permanency hearings in 2017 the judge spoke directly to mothers, fathers and children who were present. The judge also addressed all of the children who were present by name and asked if they had any questions. Mothers and children who were present were given an opportunity to be heard in **100%** of the hearings and not just through their attorney. The least frequent method of engagement of parties was asking mothers (50%), fathers (17%) and children (0%) who were present if they understood the next steps. Compared to 2014 PHs, the **2017 PHs saw the greatest increases in engaging mothers, fathers and children who were present by explaining the hearing purpose and process, asking if there were any questions, and identifying the next steps.** (See circled items in the figure above).

10th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Key Findings



Parties Present:

- Presence of fathers at the permanency hearings increased in 2017 to 67% (up from 33% in the 2014 sample of permanency hearings). The presence of children also increased with two children present at the 2017 permanency hearings (22% n= 2 of 9) compared to one child present in the 2014 hearings (11%; n=1 of 9). The presence of mothers in permanency hearings remained the same (at 44% of hearings in both 2014 and 2017). Attorney representation at the permanency hearings increased for mothers (from 78% in 2014 to 100% of hearings in 2017) but stayed the same for fathers' attorneys (78% of hearings in both 2014 and 2017). Children's representation increased in 2017 to 100% of the permanency hearings (up from 78% of hearings in 2014). While fewer foster parents were present in the 2017 hearings, more relatives were present in the 2017 hearings (33% of the permanency hearings had a relative present compared to 11% of permanency hearings in 2014).



Discussion:

- While the average length of the permanency hearings was unchanged from 2014 (12 minutes) to 2017 (12 minutes), the 2017 permanency hearings were more substantive in terms of discussion. There was an increase, for example, in almost all of the applicable topics (derived from NRS and best practices guidelines) discussed in the 2017 hearings. Compared to 2014, important permanency hearing issues such as the permanency goal, progress and compliance on the case plan, timeframes for achieving permanency, barriers to achieving permanency, concurrent planning and a discussion of 15 of 22 months compelling reasons, when applicable, were discussed in a greater percentage of the 2017 hearings. Moreover, these topics that were discussed at length and in-depth in the 2017 hearings.
- Topics with just a brief statement, mere mention or not discussed at all in the permanency hearings observed were issues related to child well-being. These included the child's physical health, maintaining permanent connections, and the child's mental health or development – all of which may reflect the specific child's circumstances and situation (e.g., it may not be relevant to discuss the child's physical or mental health at the permanency hearing in detail if it is already known not to be an issue in that case). However, the child's general well-being was also a topic that was addressed by only a brief statement or mere mention in the permanency hearings observed. Given that a goal of the permanency hearing is to address the child's well-being, including the adequacy of the case plan with respect to well-being issues, this indicates an area in which the court can enhance the substance of permanency hearing practice moving forward.



Engagement:

- Engagement of parents and youth in the dependency court process is considered essential in holding a high-quality hearing.^{iv} Compared to 2014, the 2017 permanency hearing saw enhanced engagement of parties who were present using several different engagement strategies. The 2017 permanency hearings, for example, saw an increase in engaging mothers, fathers and children present by explaining the hearing purpose and process, asking if there were any questions, and for

10th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

the mothers and fathers who were present, identifying the next steps in the case. These engagement strategies were not used in any of the 2014 permanency hearings. Most of the hearings in 2017 gave parties a direct opportunity to be heard, and not solely through their attorneys. Mothers, for example, were given the opportunity to be heard in 100% of the hearings in which they were present.

- When children were present (n=2), the judge actively and supportively engaged the youth in discussion, including fully explaining orders to them and why they were made. The judge respectfully engaged parents who were present at the permanency hearings, praising parents for progress made while clearly and respectfully admonishing them if circumstances warranted. However, some of the discussion had at hearings used technical language and may have appeared to parents to be a hearing conducted somewhat “in code.” The use of non-technical language, when appropriate, can facilitate parties’ understanding not only of the case process but also of the court’s expectations of them.
- When relatives were present (n=3 hearings), the judge spoke directly to them, addressed them by name, asked if they had questions and gave them an opportunity to be heard (e.g., the judge asked about how the child was doing in their placement and whether the relatives had anything they wanted to add).



Judicial Findings/Orders

- Reasonable efforts findings were made orally in just one of the 2017 permanency hearings (11%; n=1 of 9), with the judge adopting the findings and recommendations in the report in the rest of the permanency hearings observed. The one hearing with an oral finding of reasonable efforts was an ICWA hearing that also included contrary to the welfare and detailed active efforts findings. In this hearing the judge engaged in a full explanation for the active efforts finding, including ensuring the youth who was present understood why findings were made.

ⁱ “Best practices” for dependency court hearings include those practices outlined in the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges’ *ENHANCED RESOURCE GUIDELINES: Improving Court Practice in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases*, which provides recommendations for conducting a high- quality child abuse and neglect hearing process.

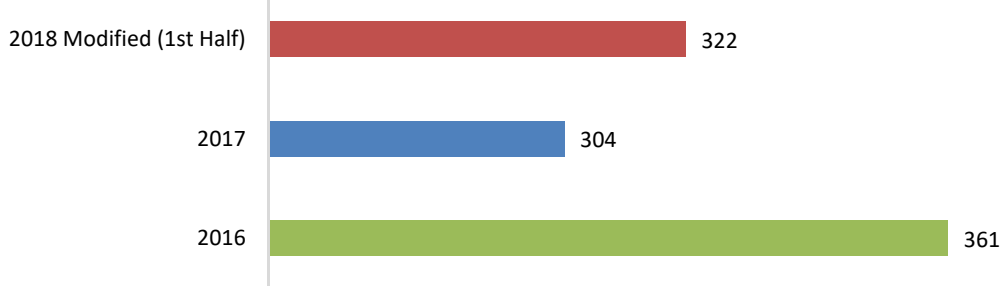
ⁱⁱ Ibid.

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid.

^{iv} Ibid.

10th Judicial District (JD) Timeliness Measures 2016, 2017 & 2018 (1st Half)

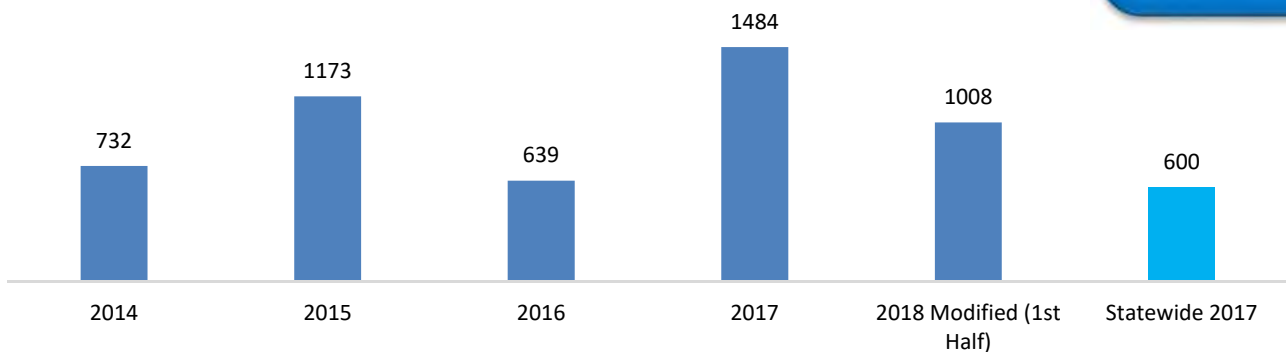
10th JD Median Days to 1st Permanency Hearing



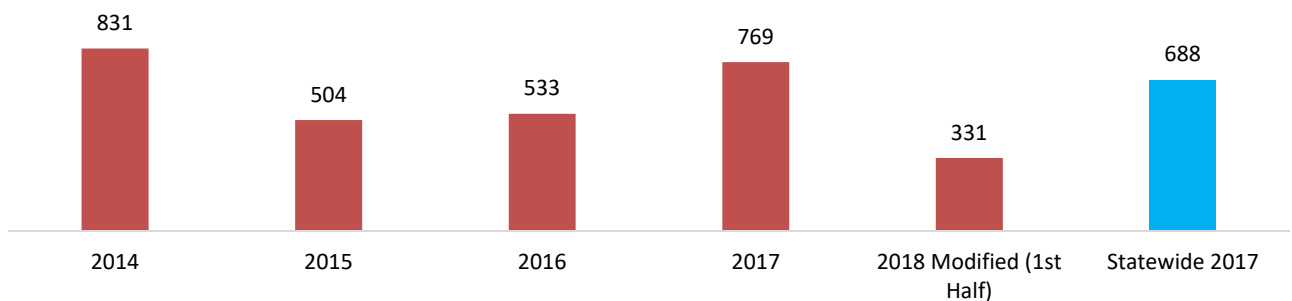
95% of 1st permanency hearings took place within 365 days of removal in the 1st half of 2018

81% of 1st permanency hearings took place within 365 days of removal in 2017

10th JD Time to Termination of Parental Rights 2014-2018 (1st Half)



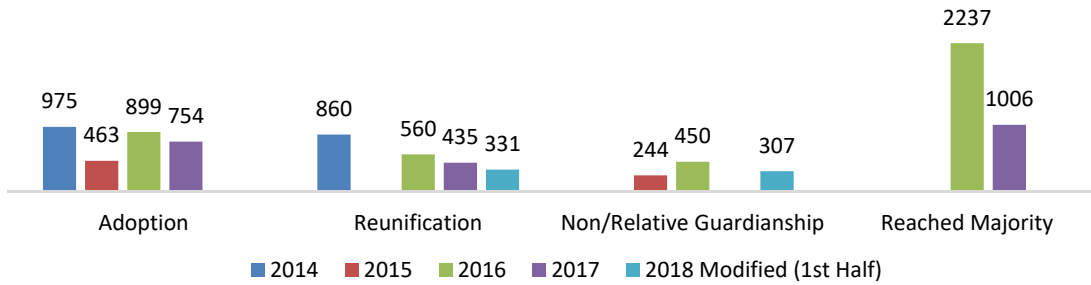
10th JD Time to Permanency 2014-2018 (1st Half)



First Placement of Child Entering Foster Care Between 2014 - 2017

	Relative/Kin	Foster Care	Congregate Care
2014	26%	62%	7%
2015	12%	50%	9%
2016	29%	63%	9%
2017	33%	52%	4%

10th JD Median Days to Case Closure 2014-2018 (1st Half)



10th JD

55% of youth who entered care in 2016 were still in care at the end of 2017.

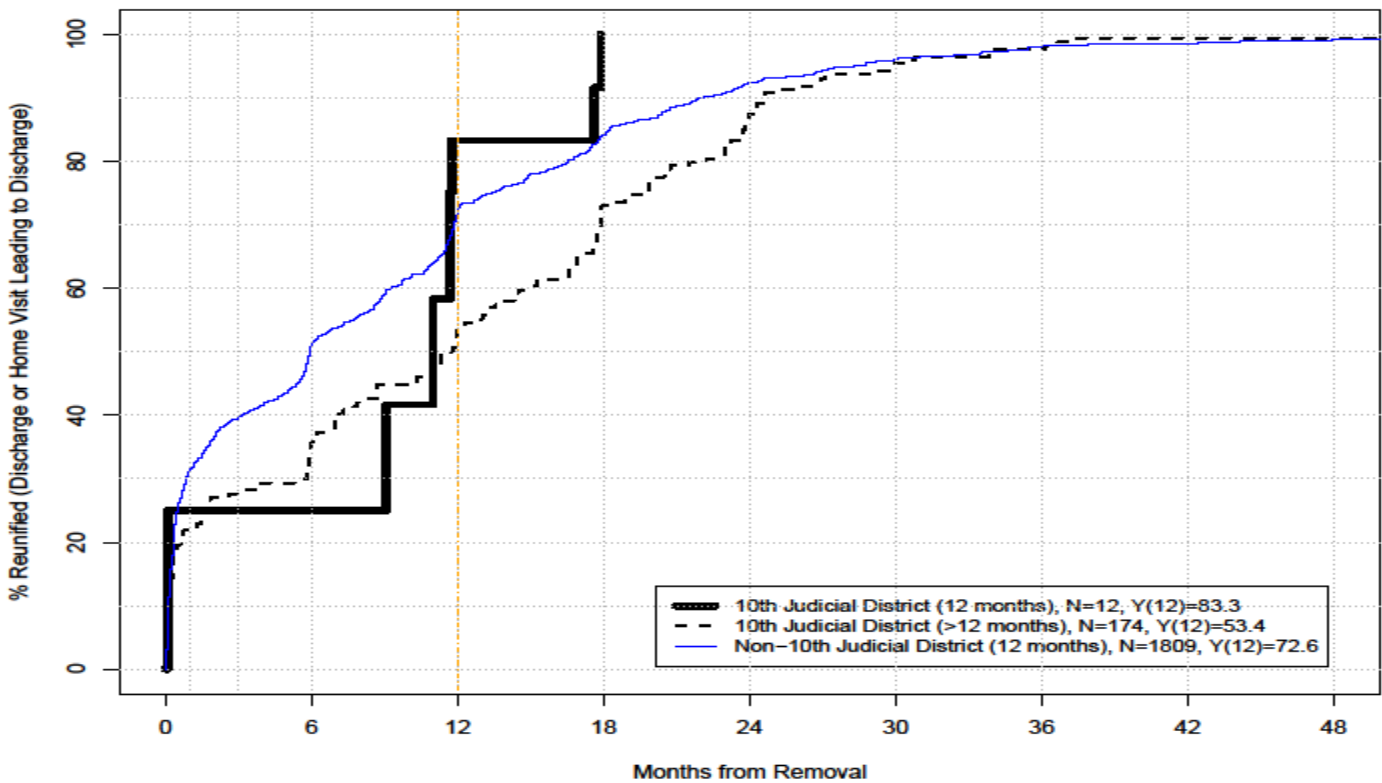
Statewide

47% of youth who entered care in 2016 were still in care at the end of 2017.

10th JD Outcomes for Children Who Exited Care in 2017 (n=30)



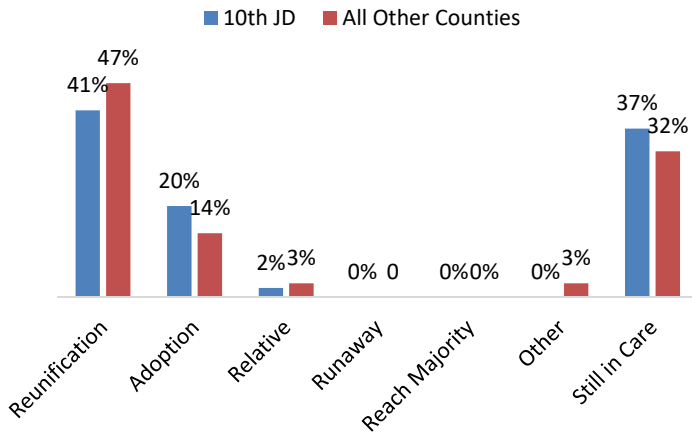
10th Judicial District: Discharges for Reunification Length of Stay, October 2006 through March 2018



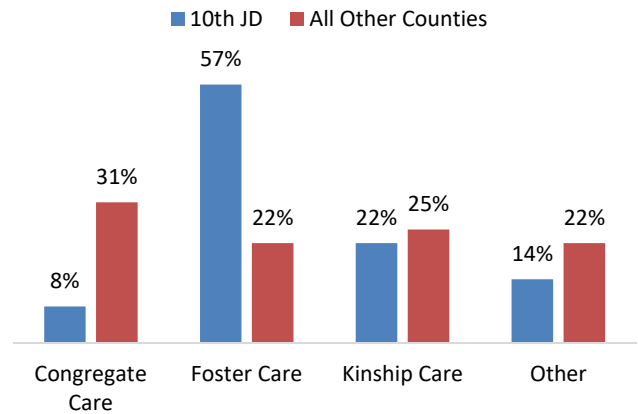
Digging Deeper

Children 0 – 3 Years Old who Entered Care Between 2014 – 2017 (n=51)

10th JD Outcomes for Children Who Entered Foster Care 2014-2017



10th JD First Placement Type for Children Who Entered Foster Care (2014-2017)



Short Stayers

10th JD Number of Children Discharged in 72 Hours and 30 Days in 2017

	72 Hours	30 Days
Guardianship	1	1
Runaway	0	0
Relative	0	0
Reunification	3	3
Overall	4 (15%)	4 (15%)

49% of cases achieved permanency within 12 months (for kids in care on March 2017)

Reentry

10th JD
0% of children reentered foster care within 12 months of previous discharge

Statewide
4.9% of children reentered foster care within 12 months of previous discharge

11th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Introduction

To provide the court with information about dependency hearing practice strengths and challenges, and to inform action planning for ongoing systems change efforts, a random sample of recorded hearings from April 2016 to December 2017 from the 11th Judicial District were obtained. Hearings were observed and coded using a hearing quality data collection tool designed to not only describe the hearing process, but also to capture the presence or absence of specific best practicesⁱ in dependency court hearings.

FINDINGS

8 Hearings Coded and Analyzedⁱⁱ

72-hr (n=3); Adjudication (n=2);
Disposition (n=3)

Elapsed Hearing Time

Range = 11 to 60 minutes

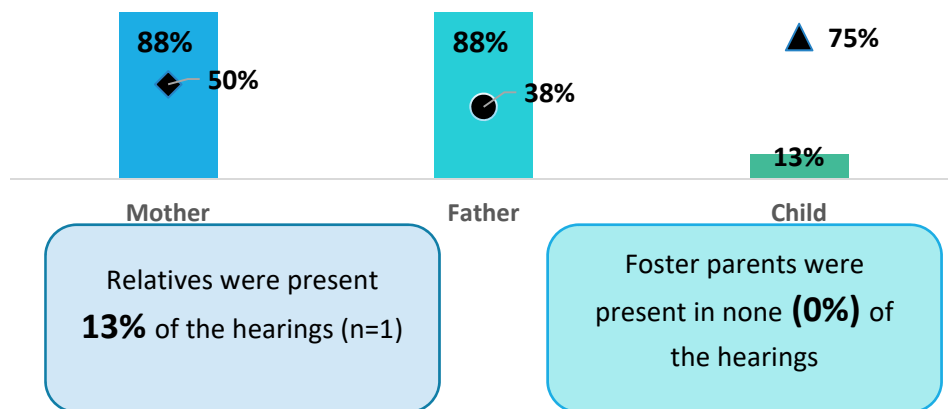
Median Hearing Length = 60.04 minutes

Mean Hearing Length = **47** minutes

Parties Present

Mothers were present in 88% of the hearings observed, fathers were present in 88% of the hearings and a child was present in only one of the hearings observed (13%; n=1). Parties present and their counsel are shown in the chart below. Parties presence are depicted by bars and the symbols represent the percentage of hearings their attorneys were present. **Case workers and district attorneys were present at all of the hearings.**

Percentage of Hearings with Party and Attorneys Present
(11th Judicial District; N=8; Hearings conducted Apr 2016-Dec 2017)



Range of hearing times by hearing type

72-hr: 35 to 60 mins

Adjudication: 25 to 26 mins

Disposition: 60 to 60 mins

Other parties present in the 2017 hearings

Juvenile probation: 25%

Sheriff: 13%

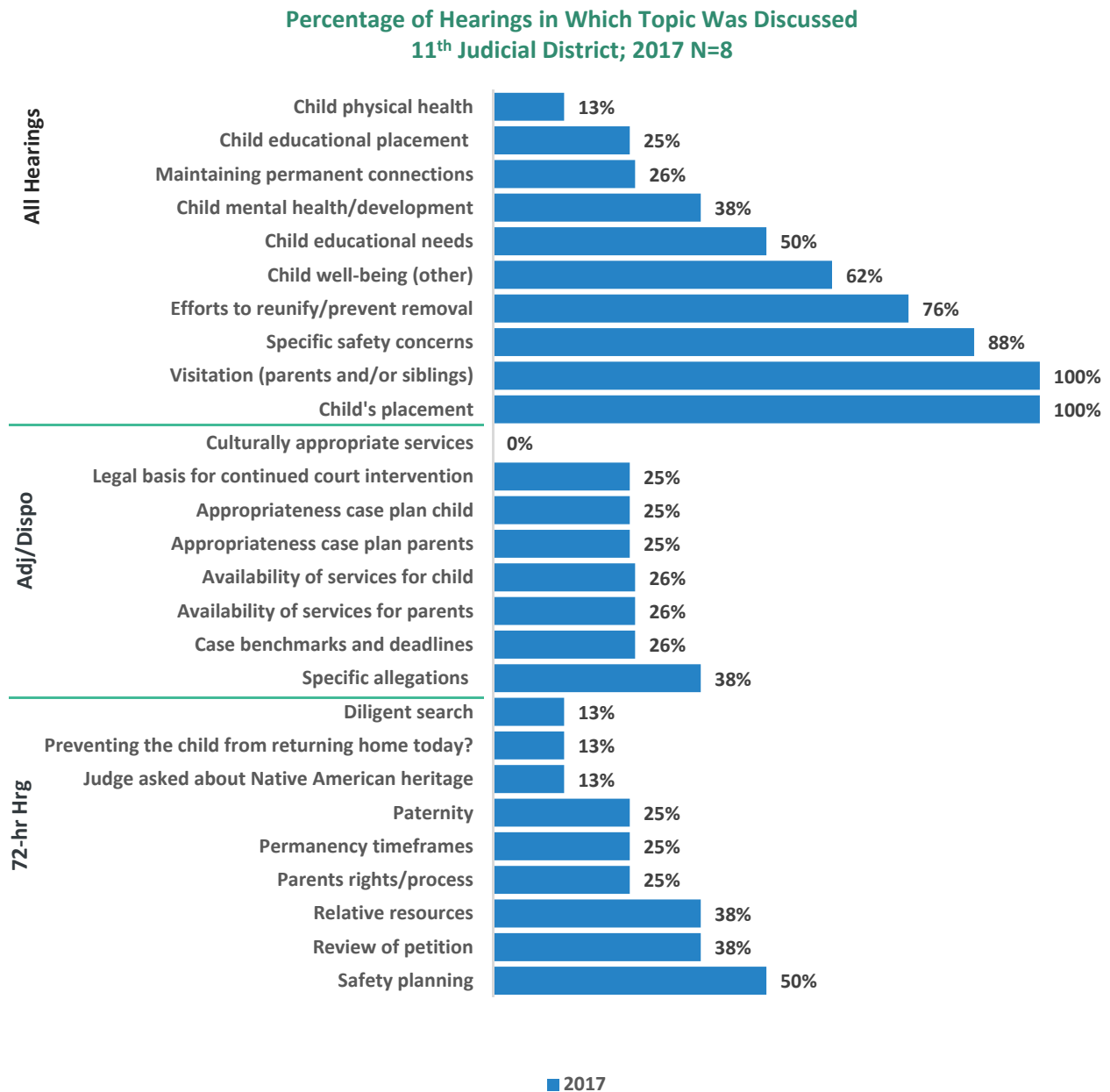
Tribal representative: 0%

Treatment provider: 0%

11th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Discussion During Hearings

Discussion was measured with a list of topics that could be relevant to discuss at the hearing. The topics listed next to specific hearings in the figure below are those that are most relevant for discussion in those hearings, while topics listed under “all hearings” are those that could be relevant for any hearing. Topics were derived from Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) and from best practice guidelines from the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.ⁱⁱⁱ **In 2017, 100% of the hearings observed discussed the child’s placement and visitation of the parents and/or siblings. The majority of hearings also discussed specific safety concerns (88%) and efforts to reunify or prevent removal (76%).**



11th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

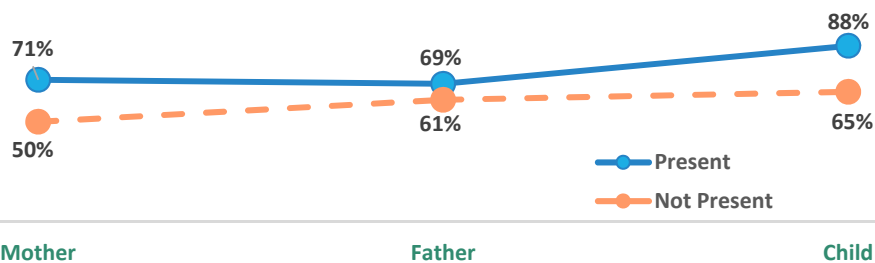
11th Judicial District: 2017 Hearings (N=8)

Hearing Topics with Less Discussion (Only a brief statement made; mere mention)	Topics Discussed in Depth (Substantive)
Maintaining permanent connections	Petition review
Child physical health	Diligent search
Child educational placement	Availability of services to meet parent needs
What is preventing child from return home today	Case benchmarks and deadlines

Breadth of Discussion by Parties Present

The figure below shows the breadth of discussion at the 2017 hearings by the presence of parties. Breadth of discussion is the percentage of items discussed out of all the potential topics (derived from NRS and best practice guidelines)^{iv} that were applicable to be discussed at the hearing. **On average, 2017 hearings included discussion of 68% of all applicable topics**, with the percentage of items discussed in each hearing ranging from 38% to 88% of all applicable topics. As shown in the figure below, breadth of discussion was greater when mothers, fathers and children (n=1) were present. For mothers, for example, 71% of all applicable topics were discussed when they were present at the hearing and 50% when they were absent. For fathers, 69% of all applicable topics were discussed when they were present and 61% when they were absent. And 88% of all applicable topics were discussed in the one case with a child present, compared to 65% of applicable topics when children were not present.

Breadth of Discussion at Hearings by Parties Present
11th Judicial District; 2017 N=8



Findings/Orders

The court observation tool captured whether the judge made findings orally on the record in the hearings. This was calculated as a percentage of time the judge made specific findings. In 2017, the judge made a reasonable efforts finding orally in **75%** of hearings observed. The judge made an *Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)* finding orally on the record in **25%** of hearings observed.

In 2017, judges made reasonable efforts findings in **75%** of hearings



In 2017, judges made an ICWA finding in **25%** of hearings

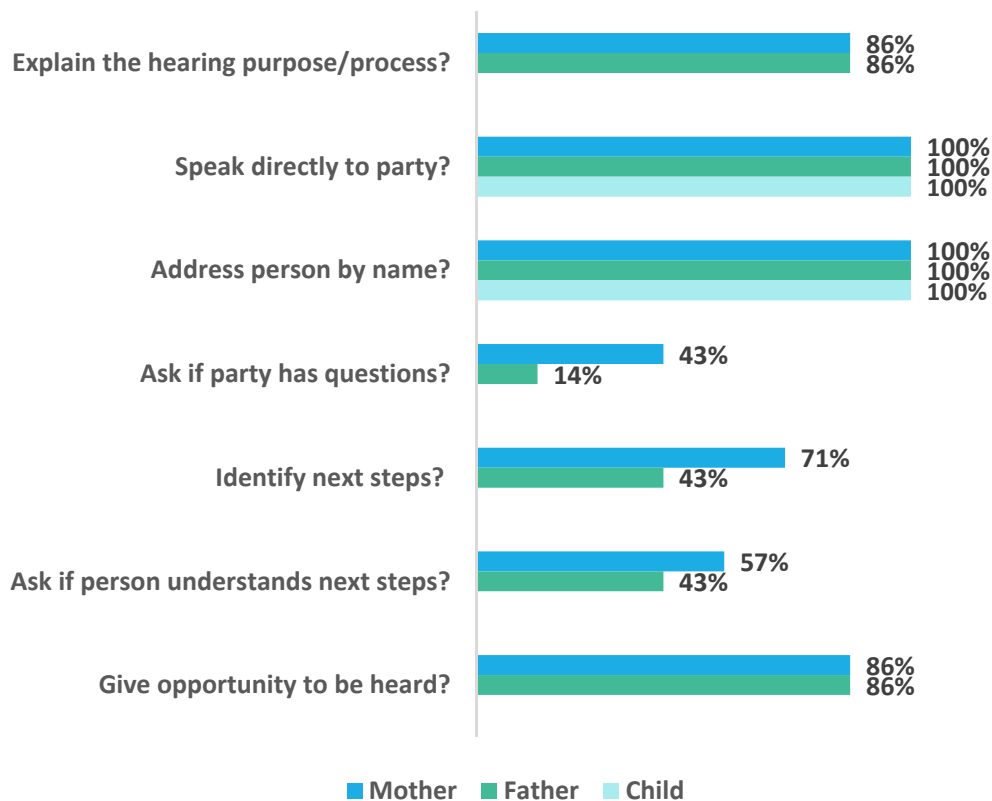
11th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Engagement

Engagement of parties was measured by a series of yes/no questions regarding how the judge engaged the parent and child, including spoke directly to them, addressed them by name, gave them an opportunity to be heard, asked if they had any questions, explained the hearing process, and explained legal timelines.

Percentage of Time Engaged (when present)

11th Judicial District; 2017 Hearings (N=8)



In **100%** of the 2017 hearings the judge spoke directly to mothers and fathers who were present, addressing them both by name. In the majority of the hearings (86%), the judge also explained the hearing purpose and case process to mothers and fathers who were present and gave them an opportunity to be heard. The least commonly used engagement strategy in the 2017 hearings observed was asking if mothers (43%) and fathers (14%) who were present had any questions. In the one hearing with a child present, the child was very young. In this hearing the judge spoke directly to the child, addressing her by name but did not engage with her in other ways.

11th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

Key Findings



Parties Present:

- Mothers and fathers were present in the majority of hearings observed (88%) while a child was present in only one of the hearings (13%; n=1 of 8). Attorneys for mothers were present in half of the hearings (50%) and attorneys for fathers were present in 38% of the hearings. Children's representatives, on the other hand, were present in the majority of hearings observed (75%). One hearing had a relative present (13%; n=1 of 8) and no foster parents were present at any of the hearings observed.



Discussion:

- One way in which discussion was examined was the percentage of hearings in which specific topics were addressed. Hearing topics were derived from NRS and best practice guidelines for what would be most relevant to discuss at specific hearings as well as those items that would be relevant for discussion at any hearing. In the sample of hearings studied (which included 72-hr hearings, adjudication and disposition hearings), 100% of the hearings addressed the child's placement and visitation with the parents and/or siblings. The majority of hearings also included a discussion of specific safety concerns and efforts to reunify or prevent removal. Topics that were discussed at fewer hearings included diligent search efforts, what is preventing the child from returning home today, the child's physical health and whether ICWA applies in the case.
- With respect to the breadth of discussion (the percentage of items discussed out of all potential topics derived from NRS and best practice guidelines), the 2017 hearings included discussion of 68% of all applicable topics – ranging from a low of 38% to 88% of all applicable topics. The breadth of discussion appeared to be influenced by the presence of parties, with greater breadth of discussion occurring when mothers, fathers and children were present at the hearings.
- In addition to the range or percentage of topics discussed at hearings, the level of discussion was also measured (i.e., no discussion; a statement or mere mention only; a few sentences or paragraphs; or a substantive and detailed discussion of the topic). Topics that involved a substantive, in-depth discussion in the hearings observed were petition review, diligent search, availability of services to meet the needs of parents, and case benchmarks and deadlines. On the other end of the spectrum, topics with only a brief statement or mere mention were what is preventing the child from returning home today, and items related to child well-being such as maintaining permanent connections, the child's physical health and the child's educational placement.



Engagement:

- Engagement of parents and youth in the dependency court process is considered essential in holding a high-quality hearing.^v In 100% of the 2017 hearings the judge spoke directly to parties, addressing them by name. In the majority of hearings, the judge also explained the hearing purpose and process to mothers and fathers present, gave them both an opportunity to be heard and

11th Judicial District Hearing Quality Data Summary 2017

identified the next steps for the mothers who were present. The least frequent engagement strategies used were asking if a party had questions and asking if parties understood the next steps in the case process. This indicates that the judge is missing key opportunities to enhance engagement of parties in hearings including asking about their understanding.

- Overall, the judge’s demeanor with parents was caring and empathetic with the judge doing a good job of praising parents for their progress. While supportive of parents, the judge also clearly admonished parents in a respectful manner if warranted by the situation. The judge did a good job of explaining the case process (especially when attorneys for the parents were not present). There was an emphasis on the time sensitive nature of cases and the importance of parental participation and involvement in the case process moving forward.



Judicial Findings/Orders

- Most of the hearings (75%) made oral reasonable efforts findings on the record. This included detailed judicial findings of “contrary to welfare” and “best interests” when applicable. In 25% of the hearings the judge also made an oral finding about the applicability of ICWA in the case. When reasonable efforts findings were not made orally on the record in the hearing the judge “continued previous findings and orders” or “adopted the findings and recommendations contained in the report.”

ⁱ “Best practices” for dependency court hearings include those practices outlined in the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges’ *ENHANCED RESOURCE GUIDELINES: Improving Court Practice in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases*, which provides recommendations for conducting a high- quality child abuse and neglect hearing process.

ⁱⁱ While 10 randomly selected hearings were submitted for coding, two of the hearings were not coded – in one hearing no sound was recorded and the other hearing was a criminal arraignment.

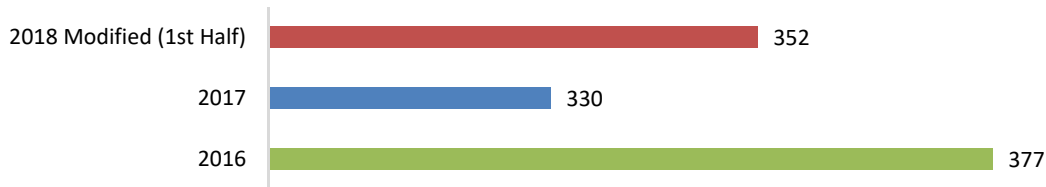
ⁱⁱⁱ Supra note i.

^{iv} Ibid.

^v Ibid.

11th Judicial District (JD) Timeliness Measures 2016, 2017 & 2018 (1st Half)

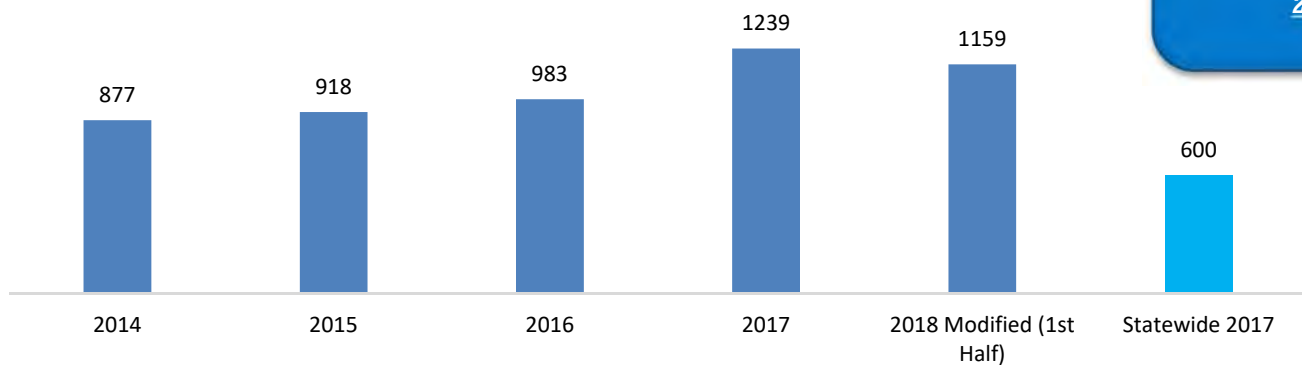
11th JD Median Days to 1st Permanency Hearing



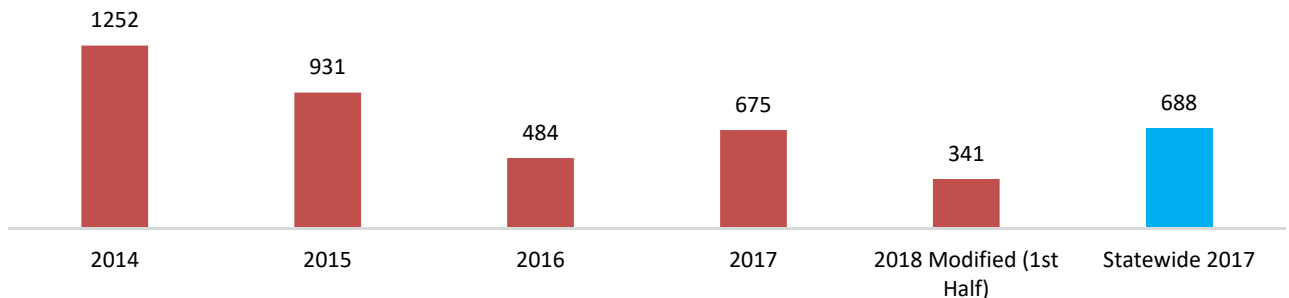
67% of 1st permanency hearings took place within 365 days of removal in the 1st half of 2018

72% of 1st permanency hearings took place within 365 days of removal in 2017

11th JD Time to Termination of Parental Rights 2014-2018 (1st Half)

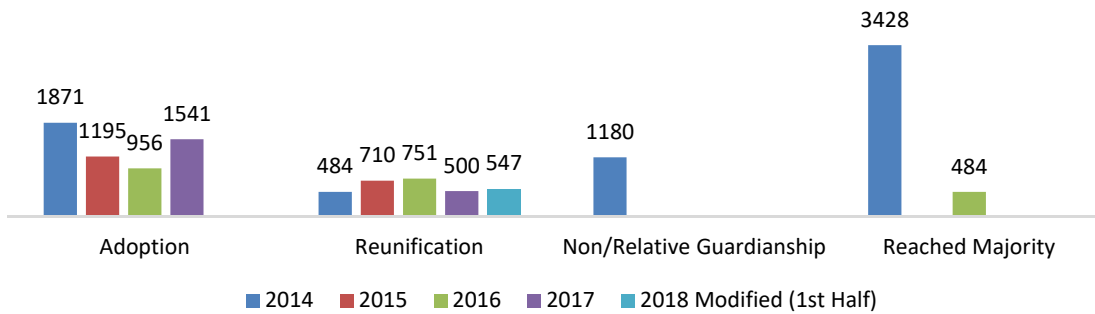


11th JD Time to Permanency 2014-2018 (1st Half)



First Placement of Child Entering Foster Care Between 2014 - 2017			
	Relative/Kin	Foster Care	Congregate Care
2014	50%	33%	4%
2015	67%	29%	0%
2016	12%	88%	0%
2017	53%	47%	0%

11th JD Median Days to Case Closure 2014-2018 (1st Half)



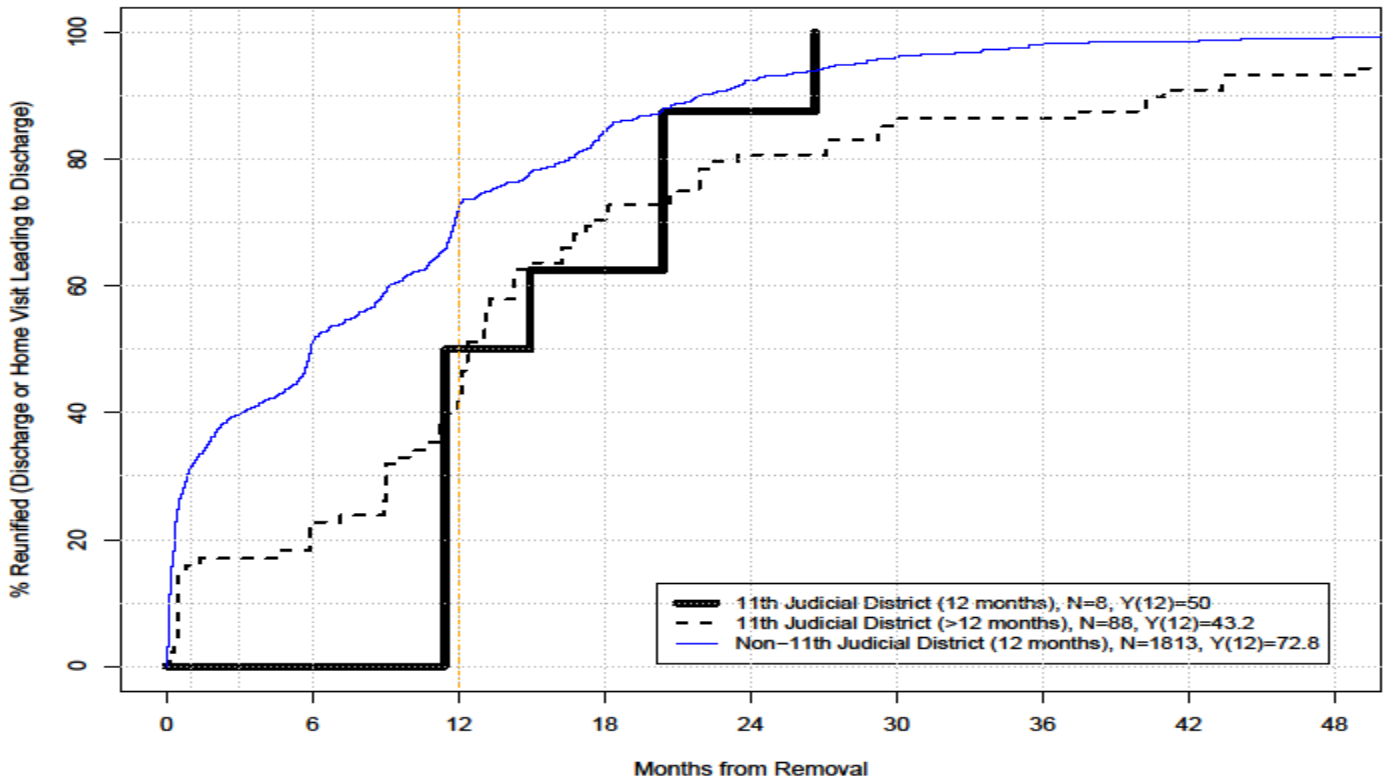
11th JD
 53% of youth who entered care in 2016 were still in care at the end of 2017.
Statewide
 47% of youth who entered care in 2016 were still in care at the end of 2017.

11th JD Outcomes for Children Who Exited Care in 2017 (n=15)



■ Reunification ■ Adoption ■ Relative Placement ■ Runaway ■ Reach Majority ■ Other

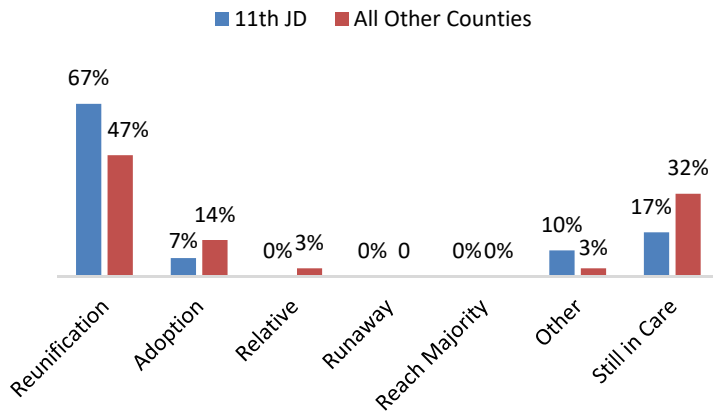
11th Judicial District: Discharges for Reunification Length of Stay, October 2006 through March 2018



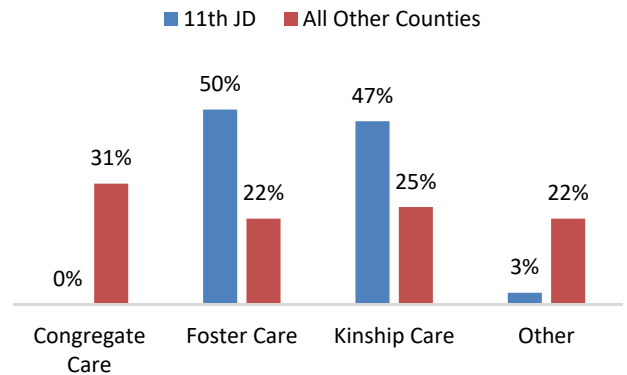
Digging Deeper

Children 0 – 3 Years Old who Entered Care Between 2014 – 2017 (n=30)

11th JD Outcomes for Children Who Entered Foster Care 2014-2017



11th JD First Placement Type for Children Who Entered Foster Care 2014-2017



Short Stayers

11th JD Number of Children Discharged in 72 Hours and 30 Days in 2017

	72 Hours	30 Days
Guardianship	0	0
Runaway	0	0
Relative	0	0
Reunification	0	0
Transfer	0	1
Overall	0	1 (7%)

41% of cases achieved permanency within 12 months (for kids in care on March 2017)

Reentry

11th JD

0% of children reentered foster care within 12 months of previous discharge

Statewide

4.9% of children reentered foster care within 12 months of previous discharge

Appendix 11

Nevada Hearing Quality Study

2018 | September



Nevada Hearing Quality Study

Examining the Quality of Child Welfare
Court Hearing Practice in Nevada

Report Authored by:
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Director, Data Savvy Consulting, LLC

Sophia Gatowski, PhD
Systems Change Solutions, Inc.



Nevada Hearing Quality Study

Executive Summary

The Nevada Court Improvement Program (CIP) began working on improving timeliness to permanency in 2009. They discovered that they needed to better understand how the courts were doing. In 2014, Nevada CIP conducted a hearing quality assessment to provide baseline data to counties on court practice. Nine of 10 judicial districts participated. In 2018, the CIP contracted with researchers to expand on the findings from the 2014 study. This study explores changes in practice between 2014 and 2017 court hearings as well as links between hearing quality factors and case outcomes in the state of Nevada. The study used a multi-method approach, including court observation, case file review, and administrative data to explore changes in practice and links to outcomes.

Changes between 2014 & 2017. Findings from this study of hearing quality indicate a number of areas in which Nevada child abuse and neglect hearing practice has improved between 2014 and 2017. These changes suggest significant improvement over time.

- The **presence** of fathers, children and attorneys for fathers and children at hearings has increased significantly between 2014 and 2017.
- **Engagement** of fathers and mothers in hearings has increased significantly between 2014 and 2017.
- The breadth of **discussion** in hearings has increased significantly between 2014 and 2017, with hearings averaging discussion of 47% of all applicable topics (topics were pulled from Nevada Revised Statutes and *Enhanced Resource Guidelines* best practices) in 2014 compared to 60% of all applicable topics in 2017.
- There was a statistically significant increase in the percentage of hearings in which judges made reasonable efforts **findings** orally on the record –23% of hearings in 2014 compared to 71% of hearings in 2017.

Linking Hearing Quality to Outcomes. This study also provides evidence of a linkage between a number of hearing quality factors and specific case outcomes – supporting the premise that a high-quality child abuse and neglect hearing process can have a positive impact on timely permanency and permanency outcomes. Specifically, this study found:

- **Presence** of key parties was related to decreased time to permanency, increased reunification rates, and decreased likelihood of aging out of care.
- **Engagement** of parents was related to timelier permanency, reunification, aging out of care and achieving permanency within 12 months. Higher parent engagement predicted shorter times to permanency, higher rates of reunification and lower rates of aging out.
- **Discussion**, both breadth of discussion across topics and discussion of key issues (e.g., efforts to reunify), was related to timelier permanency, higher rates of reunification, and lower rates of aging out.

Overall, the study shows statistically significant change in practice between 2014 and 2017 and significant links between hearing quality factors and case outcomes.

Nevada Hearing Quality Study

Statewide Trends, Improvements, and Links to Outcomes

Introduction

The Nevada Court Improvement Program (CIP) has been working to improve the quality of child welfare court process and practice for several years. In 2010, the Nevada CIP asked each judicial district to create a platform/forum for ongoing identification of strengths and improvement opportunities as they pertain to child welfare outcomes. As a result, each judicial district created a Community Improvement Council (CIC) of local stakeholders to identify barriers to timely permanency, adoption, and termination of parental rights (TPR) and to develop and implement solutions to these barriers in its locale. In 2014, the CICs began to focus on the quality of child welfare court practices and processes. As part of this process, the National Resource Center on Legal and Judicial Issues worked with the CIP (in 2014) to observe a random sample of court hearings for 9 of the 10 judicial districts. A summary of findings (site specific) was presented to each judicial district that participated in the study at the 2014 CIC Summit. Each CIC began action planning for change to improve both the quality of child welfare hearing practice and processes, as well as outcomes for children and families.

For 2018, the Nevada CIP decided to expand upon its hearing quality work within the state by conducting a follow-up study. The follow-up hearing quality study had three goals:

1. Explore statewide trends in practice to identify areas of strengths and opportunities for improvement across the state;
2. Observe how hearing practice has changed in each judicial district between 2014 and 2017; and
3. Examine how hearing quality is related to case outcomes.

Hearing quality, for the purpose of this study, was defined based on what should occur in a hearing, prescribed by Nevada Revised Statute and taken from the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judge's *Enhanced Resource Guidelines: Improving Court Practice in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases*. The case files included active presence and participation of key parties, engagement of parents and youth, in-depth discussion of key topics, and oral findings on the record. These hearing quality factors are discussed in more depth later in the report.

Method

The hearing quality study used a mixed method approach to examine hearing quality in the state. All judicial districts were invited to participate in the study. In 2014, Nevada had

10 judicial districts and 9 participated. In 2018, Nevada has 11 judicial districts and 10 chose to participate in the study. The methods include: court observation, case file review, review of administrative data, and secondary analysis of 2014 hearing quality data. Each method is described below.

Court Observation. The primary method for obtaining data to examine hearing quality is court observation. For the current study, the researchers asked all judicial districts to provide a sample of recorded hearings. The random sample of recent hearings was provided electronically to the researchers via USB, CD, or secure file transfer site (e.g., Dropbox). The court observation tool provided data on parties present, engagement of parties, length of hearing, key areas of discussion, and findings on the record.

Case File Review. Case file review was used to supplement court observation data. Researchers examined the case files of the 2014 cases that had been observed for the hearing quality study so that case outcomes could be individually linked to hearing quality. Researchers traveled to each site to conduct case file reviews. These reviews collected data on case allegations, dates of key events (e.g., petition filing, 72-hour hearings, adjudication, etc.), parties present at key hearings, placement of the child, and outcomes of the case (e.g., reunification, adoption). These data were used to link 2014 hearing quality data to outcomes.

Administrative Data. In addition to data collected from the cases on site, the researchers gathered aggregate jurisdiction level data on key outcomes of interest. These data represent averages of outcomes, instead of case level outcomes. These data were gathered for both 2014 and 2017 and included: median time to permanency, percentage of cases resulting in reunification, percentage of cases resulting in youth emancipating/aging out of care, percentage of cases that achieve permanency within 12 months, and percentage of cases still in care after 24 months. These data were used to explore aggregate level relationships between typical hearing practice and outcomes by judicial district.

2014 Data. Researchers also used 2014 data for further analysis so that comparisons could be made between cases. These data also included the court observation data for 2014.

Overview of Report

This report presents findings from the study first by the portraying the statewide trends in hearing quality variables of interest. The statewide trends illustrate the variation in practice across the 10 jurisdictions and illustrates the statewide numbers for comparison. Following the statewide trends for each variable, is an overview of the 2014 and 2017 numbers for

comparison, including whether the differences are statistically significant. Finally, the report presents information on hearing quality factors that are related to case outcomes.

Statewide Trends

The 2018 study included 128 hearings that were observed across the 10 judicial districts that participated in the study. Efforts were made to include at least 10 hearings from each site, with larger judicial districts submitting additional hearings. These included 45 72-Hour (35%), 12 Adjudication (9%), 5 Disposition (4%), 5 Adjudication/Disposition combined (4%), 9 Review hearings (7%) and 52 Permanency hearings (41%). Data below are reported across hearing types and judicial districts.

Using these graphs: “The Hearing Length (in minutes) Across the State” graph and many of the subsequent graphs are created to illustrate data points in the 10 judicial districts reviewed. Graphs have 10 columns of data as well as a statewide column (when applicable). The columns are not labeled so as to maintain anonymity of site-specific information. For example, in the Figure 2, the first site had an average hearing time of 33 minutes in 2017 and 32 minutes in 2014. The second column (13 minutes in 2017 and 12 minutes in 2014) represents another judicial district. Graphs are intentionally setup this way so that trends and variations across sites can be seen without identifying site specific information.

Length

Figure 1 illustrates the diversity of average hearing times across the state. Statewide numbers are depicted at the end of graphs in a red rectangle. Each data point represents the average for a specific judicial district. While hearings averaged almost 20 minutes, there was a lot of diversity across the state. Some sites averaged much shorter hearings (closer to 10 minutes), while others averaged closer to 30. Of course, part of the difference may be due to the type of hearing that was observed.

Figure 1: Hearing Length (in Minutes) Across the State (2017)

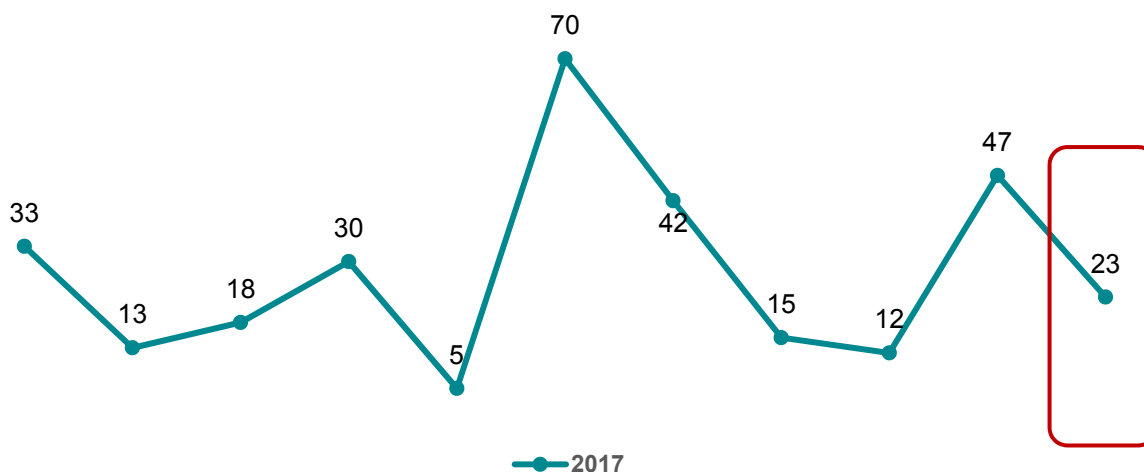
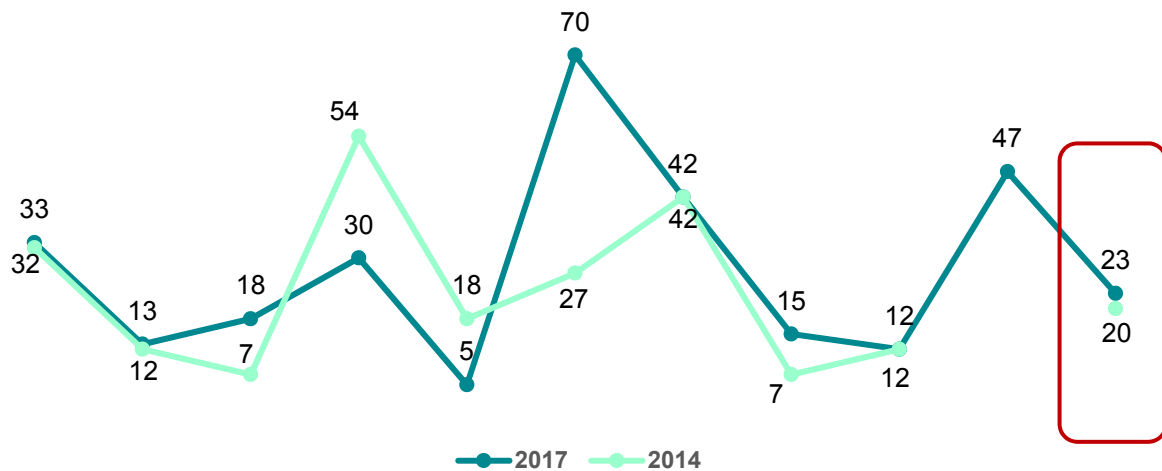


Table 1 below indicates the average time by hearing type. As noted below, combined adjudication/disposition hearings averaged the longest (92 minutes) and review hearings were the shortest (8 minutes),

Table 1: Average Length of Hearing Time in Minutes by Type of Hearing		
Hearing Type	2017	2014
72 Hour Hearing	22 (n=45)	31 (n=21)
Adjudication	43 (n=12)	37 (n=7)
Adj/Disposition	92 (n=5)	34 (n=3)
Disposition	20 (n=5)	7 (n=21)
Review	8 (n=9)	17 (n=22)
Permanency	16 (n=52)	19 (n=31)

There were few significant differences in hearing length over time. Hearing length (in minutes) ranged from 5 minutes to 70 minutes in 2017 and from 7 to 54 minutes in 2014, with an average of 23 minutes for hearings statewide in 2017 and 20 minutes for hearings statewide in 2014.

Figure 2: Hearing Length (in Minutes) Across the State Over Time



Statistically significant differences between 2014 and 2017:
 There is no difference between hearing length in 2014 and 2017

Parties Present

Parties present varied by site and hearing type. For example, mothers were more likely to be present at 72-Hour hearings than any other hearing type. Table 2 illustrates the percentage of parties present across hearing types.

Party	72 Hour	Adj/Disp	Review/Perm
Mother	84%	68%	41%
Father	73%	45%	51%
Child	6%	27%	39%
Mother's Attorney	33%	82%	64%
Father's Attorney	27%	64%	56%
Child's Attorney	89%	100%	85%

Presence of mothers was somewhat diverse across the state in 2017, ranging from an average of 42% (low) to a high of 86% in one site. Most sites hovered around mother present 50% of the time. Percentage of time mother's attorneys were present also varied by site but appeared to be related to mother's presence at the hearings. Figures 3-5 illustrate variations in mother's, father's, and youth's presence as well as their respective attorney over time. As previously noted, statewide data are presented in the red rectangles.

Figure 3: Presence of Mother and Mother's Attorney by Judicial District and Statewide (2017)

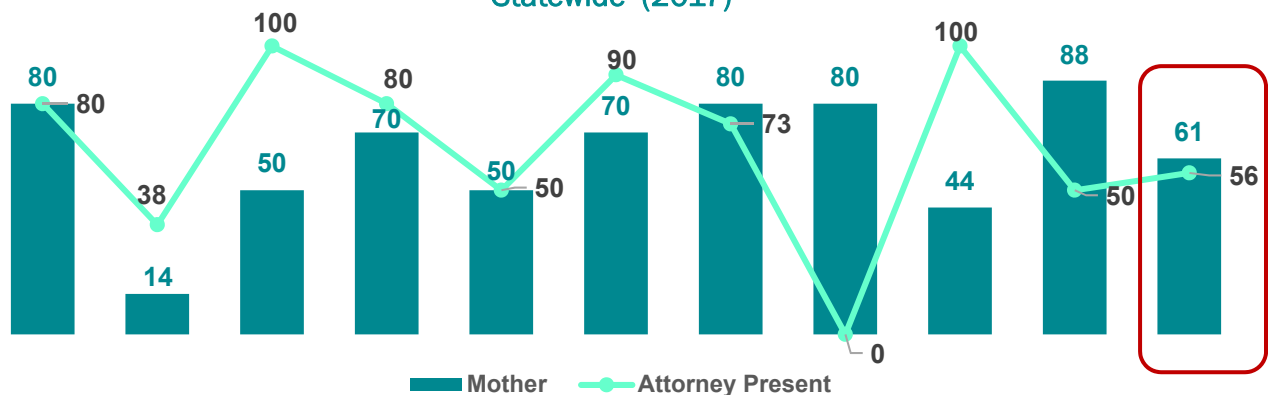


Figure 4: Presence of Father and Father's Attorney by Judicial District and Statewide (2017)

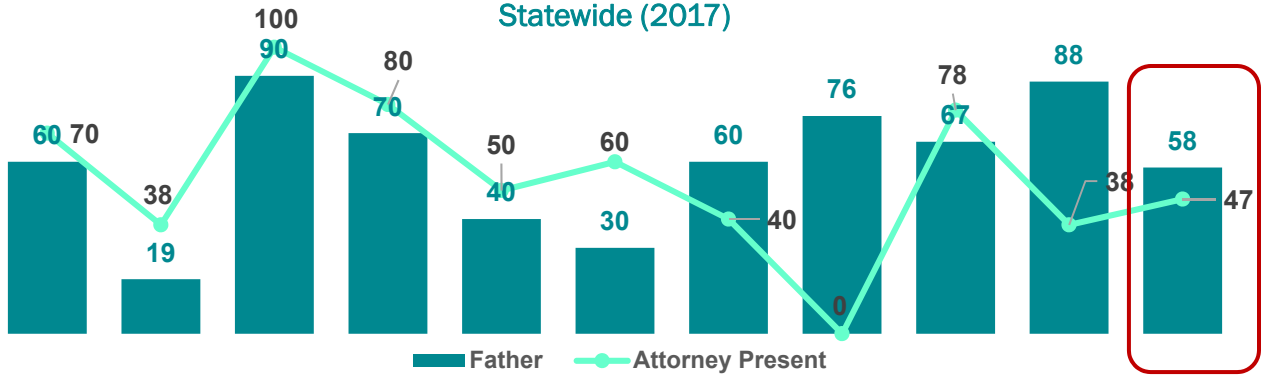
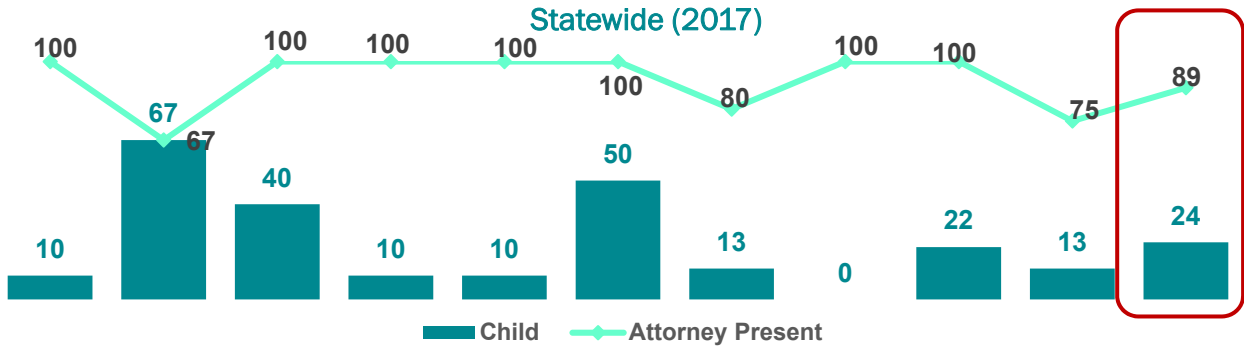


Figure 5: Presence of Child and Child Attorney by Judicial District and Statewide (2017)



Presence Changes Over Time. Overall, the presence of parties changed very little over time. However, presence of the father, child, father’s attorney and child’s attorneys have increased significantly between 2014 and 2017.

Table 3: Percentage of Hearings with Party Present

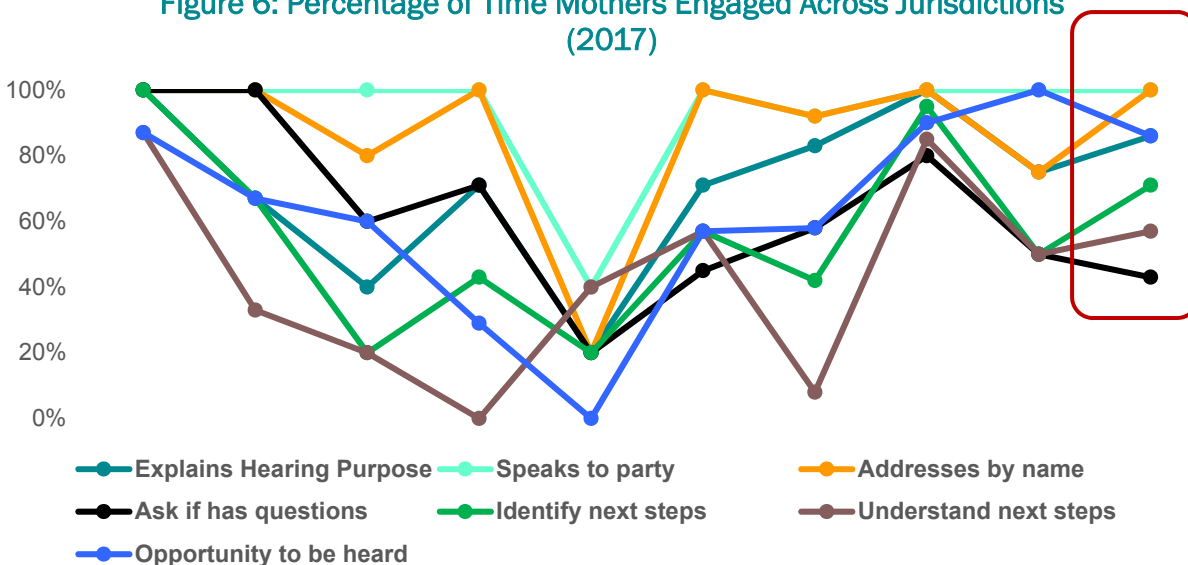
Party	Presence in 2017	Presence in 2014
Mother	61%	52%
Father	58%	40%*
Child	24%	9%*
Mother’s Attorney	56%	57%
Father’s Attorney	47%	42%*
Child’s Attorney	89%	57%*
Agency worker	98%	100%
Attorney General/District Attorney	98%	100%
Relative	27%	23%
Foster Parent	16%	15%

Statistically significant differences for each present person are denoted with a star in Table 3 above. In addition, researchers explored whether parent and child attorneys were more likely to be present at the 72 Hour hearing in 2017 than in 2014. There was no difference in appearance of mother’s or father’s attorneys at the 72 Hour hearing between 2014 and 2017. However, children’s attorneys were more likely to be present at the 72-Hour hearing (89%) than at the 72 Hour hearings in 2014 (62%).

Parental Engagement

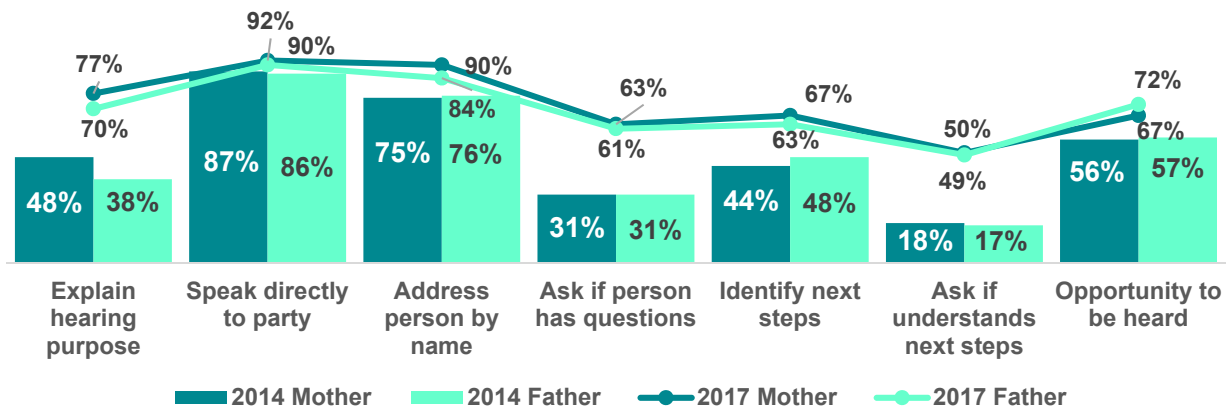
Engagement of parents in the hearing process is considered essential to holding a high-quality hearing. Researchers examined judicial behaviors, interactions, and engagement with parents and children. When parents were present in court, judges mostly spoke to them directly and addressed them by their names. The *Engagement of Mothers Across Jurisdictions* figure (6) below portrays the percentage of time (when the mother was present) that the judicial officers engaged the party in a specific way. These numbers reflect differences in practice across multiple sites. Engagement strategies varied widely by site, but the most common was speaking directly to the mother and addressing her by name. Engagement strategies were similar for fathers.

Figure 6: Percentage of Time Mothers Engaged Across Jurisdictions (2017)



Engagement can be conceptualized as a percentage of strategies that judges used to engage parents and youth in the process. Consider the seven engagement strategies identified in Figure 6. Each hearing was coded with a yes or no as to whether the judge engaged in this behavior. These were averaged to calculate a percentage of yeses. In 2017, judges engaged mothers with 72% of these strategies and fathers with 70% of these strategies. In 2014, these percentages were 51% and 50%. Individual responses are reported in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Percentage of Time Parents Were Engaged in Specific Ways (2014 & 2017)



Statistically Significant Changes Over Time: Both engagement of the father and engagement of the mother increased significantly over time from 2014 to 2017.

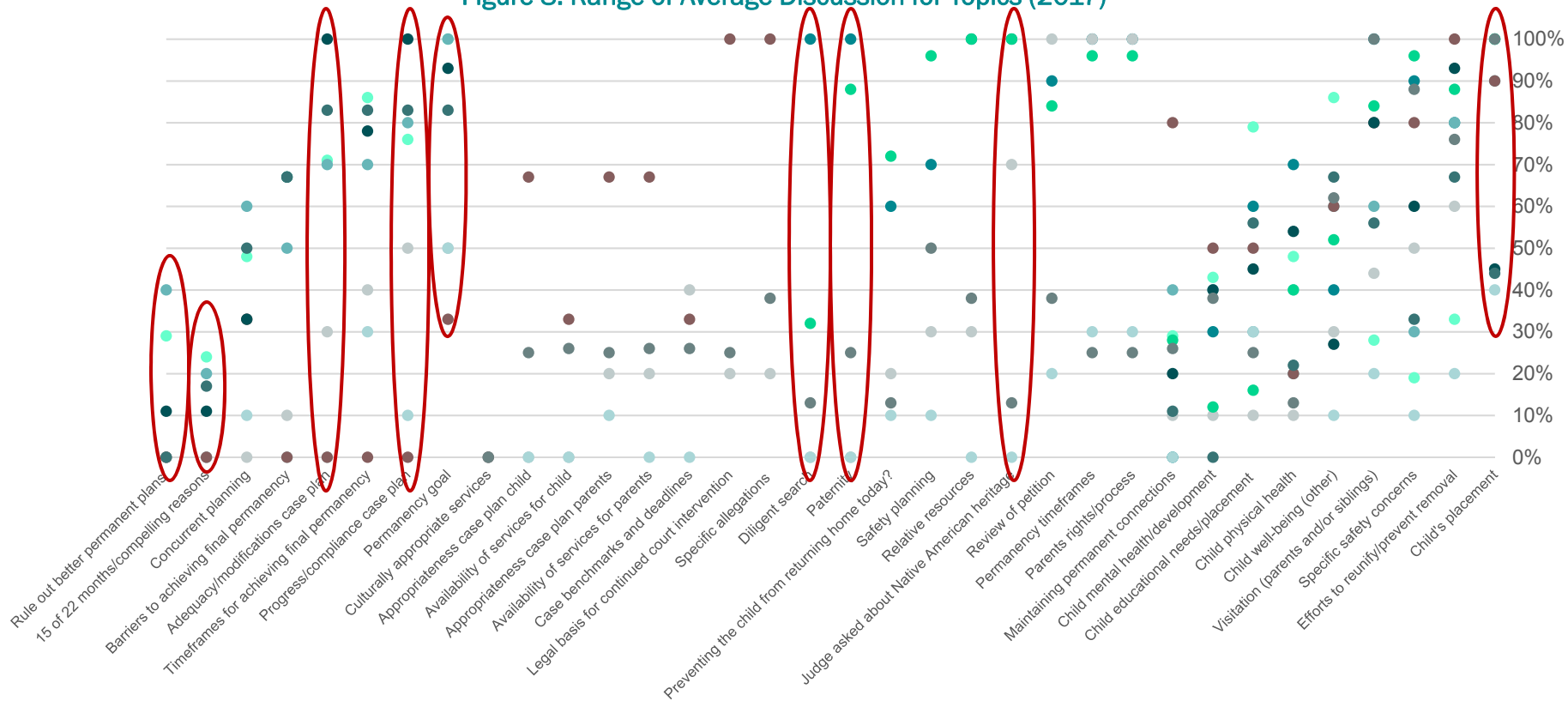
Hearing Discussion

Discussion was measured using a list of topics that could be relevant to discuss at the hearing. When presenting the findings, topics listed next to specific hearings are those that are considered most relevant for discussion in those specific hearings, while topics listed under “all hearings” are those that could be relevant for any hearing. Topics were derived from Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) and from best practice guidelines from the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.¹

Breadth of Discussion. Breadth of discussion is the percentage of items discussed out of all the potential topics (derived from NRS and best practice guidelines) that were applicable to be discussed at the hearing. On average, hearings across the state included discussion of 60% of all applicable topics, with the percentage of items discussed in each hearing ranging from 7% to 100% of all applicable topics. The *Range of Average Discussion for all Topics* in Figure 8 below illustrates the range of discussion across judicial districts. Each dot represents the average discussion of a topic in a judicial district. For example, child’s placement was discussed at a low 40% in one jurisdiction, and a high of 100% in another. The purpose of this graph is to illustrate diversity of practice across sites. The red ovals identify the least and most diverse topics. The most diverse topics are those that some sites discuss 100% of the time and others never discussed in their hearings. The shorter ovals illustrate the topics that are consistently discussed (or not discussed) by all jurisdictions.

¹ “Best practices” for dependency court hearings include those practices outlined in the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges’ *ENHANCED RESOURCE GUIDELINES: Improving Court Practice in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases*, which provides recommendations for conducting a high- quality child abuse and neglect hearing process.

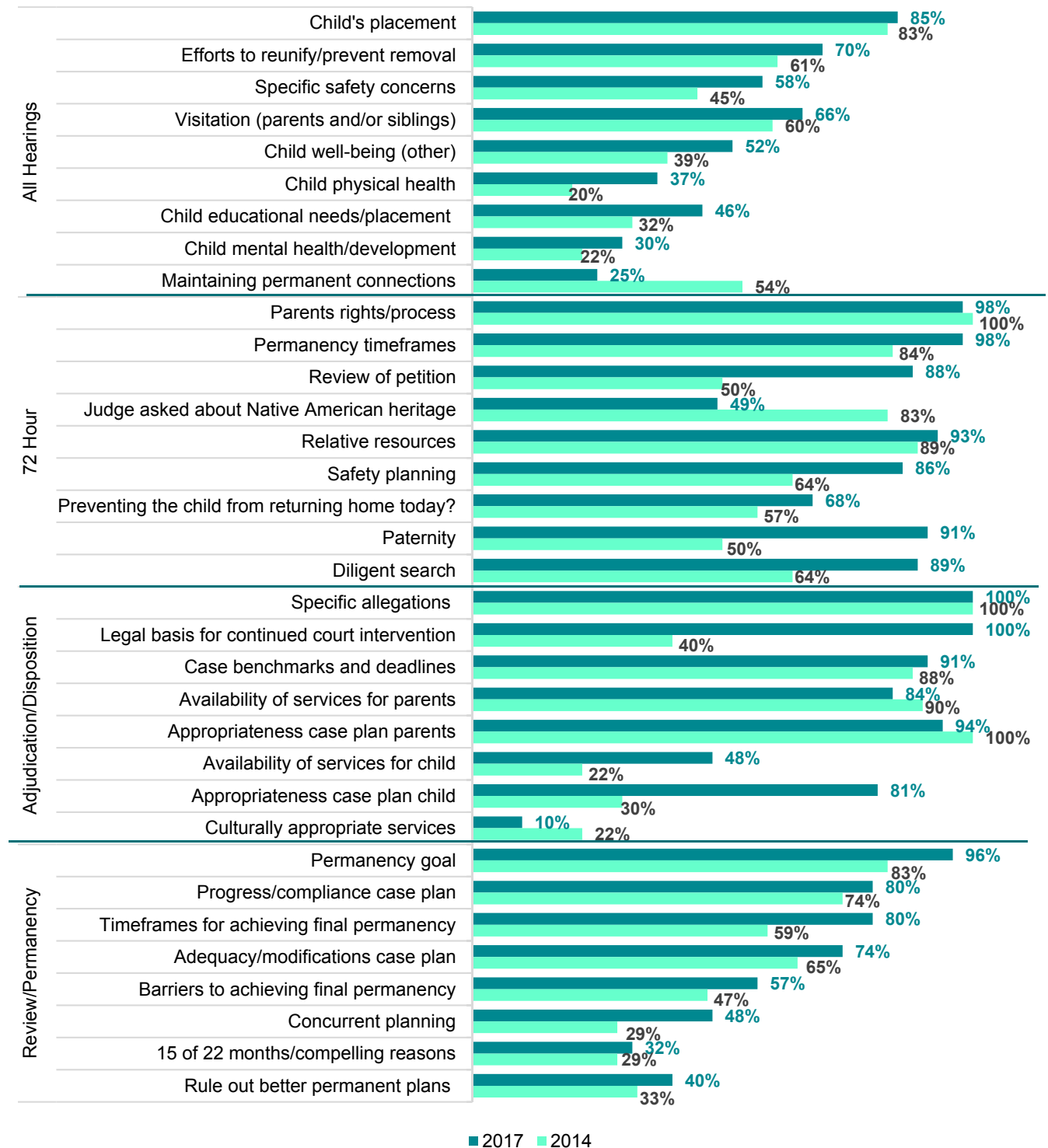
Figure 8: Range of Average Discussion for Topics (2017)



***The ovals represent the variation in the discussion practice. The ovals that stretch from top to bottom illustrate topics that some sites never discussed but others discussed 100% of the time, indicating great variation in the state. The smaller ovals represent topics that are more consistently discussed or not discussed. For example, rule out better permanent plans (discussion when the permanency plan is not the preferred plan about how the court ruled out more preferred plans) and 15 of 22 months/compelling reasons were rarely discussed, even when applicable. On the other hand, permanency goals and child’s placement were often discussed in all jurisdictions.*

Discussion is also explored across time. The chart below (Figure 9) illustrates the percentage of time that topics were discussed across all sites. The sample size varied for items as sites primarily focused on one hearing type.

Figure 9: Discussion of Key Court Topics Between 2014 & 2017

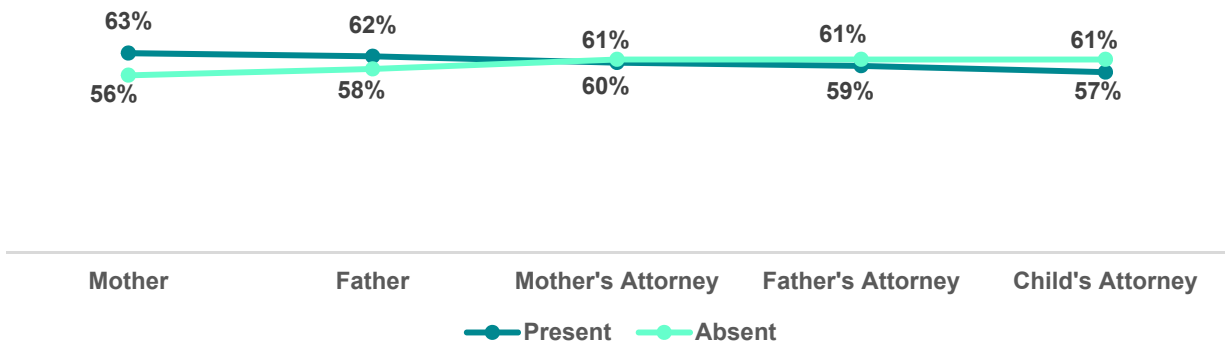


Statistically significant differences over time: There was a statistically significant increase in breadth of discussion over time. Hearings averaged discussion of 47% of applicable topics in 2014 compared to 60% of applicable topics in 2017 ($p < .001$).

Digging Deeper Into Discussion

As additional analyses, researchers explored length of hearings by parties present. As noted in Figure 10 below, there were very little difference in how much discussion was held when parents were present versus when they were absent.

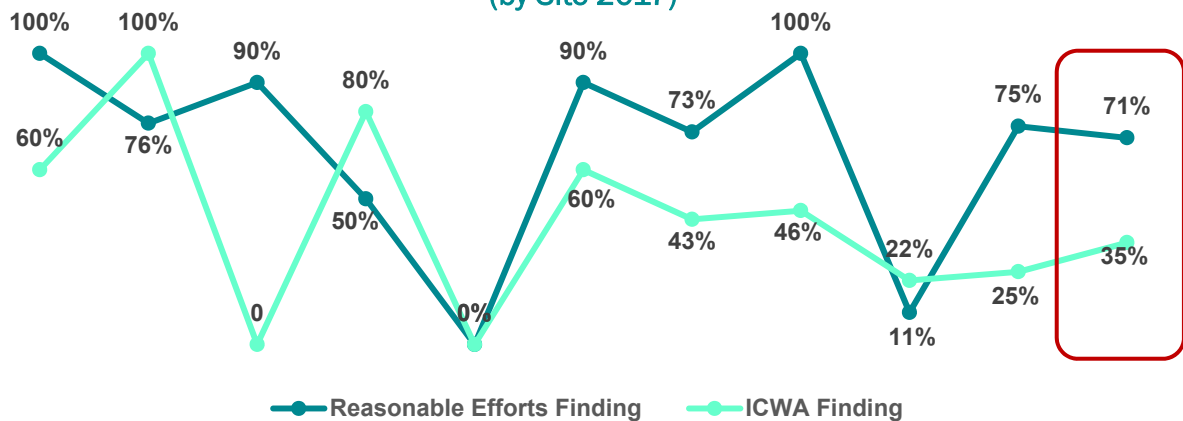
Figure 10: Breadth of Discussion by Presence of Parties (2017)



Findings and Orders

Two types of oral findings on the record were examined, the finding of Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) applicability and the finding that Reasonable Efforts were made. These were calculated as percentage of time that findings were made. The Statewide data are presented in the red rectangle.

Figure 11: Oral Reasonable Efforts and ICWA Findings on the Record (by Site 2017)



Statistically significant differences over time: There was a statistically significant increase in oral findings on the record over time. Judges made oral reasonable efforts findings in 71% of cases in 2017 compared to 23% in 2014. ICWA findings

Summary of Significant Differences Over Time

Practice changes improved significantly between 2014 and 2017 in all key areas. Court practice demonstrated improved engagement of parties, enhanced discussion, and an increase in findings on the record, overall.

Hearing Practice	Significant Change Over Time
Length of Hearings	NO
Parties Presence (Child Atty, Father Atty, Child, Father)	YES
Engagement of Parties	YES
Discussion	YES
Findings on the Record	YES

Relationships Between Hearing Quality and Case Outcomes

Multiple hearing quality variables were examined to determine their impact on case outcomes. Two types of methods were used to examine outcomes. These methods are described in detail later in this section. The following variables explored were related to hearing quality:

- **Breadth of discussion:** the percentage of time key topics (identified from the *Enhanced Resource Guidelines* and NRS) were discussed in hearings, when applicable.
- **Key discussion topics:** discussion topics were coded at each hearing on a scale of 0 to 3, with 0 indicating no discussion and 3 indicating substantive discussion.² Across multiple hearings, these variables were calculated as a percentage of time specific discussion topics were discussed at hearings. Key discussion topics used in analysis were topics that should be discussed at all hearings, including:
 - Child safety
 - Efforts to reunify
 - Child well-being
- **Presence of parties:** Presence of parties was coded as a yes/no variable at each hearing. This was further calculated across hearings to include percentage of time key parties were present at hearings. Parties included mothers, fathers, and youth.
- **Presence of attorneys:** Presence of attorneys was coded as a yes/no variable at each hearing. This was further calculated across hearings to include percentage of time attorneys were present at various hearings. This was calculated for mother's, father's and child attorneys.

² Substantive discussion was defined as an in-depth discussion of a topic.

- *Findings on the record*: At each hearing, the coders determined whether reasonable efforts and ICWA findings were made on the record (yes/no variable).

The child welfare outcomes identified for study were based on nationally accepted performance measures for dependency courts. These outcomes were identified from case outcomes in the case file review (see methods discussion later) as well as from aggregate level Fostering Court Improvement website performance measurement data for the most currently available child welfare data. These include:

Time to Permanency: Time to permanency was calculated as an average (and median) time from entry into care to case closure. Time to permanency was also calculated as percentage of cases that achieve permanency within 12 months.

Reunification: Reunification was examined in terms of what percentage of cases result in a child reunifying with family.

Aging Out: The percentage of youth aging out of child welfare system without achieving permanent legal connection was examined through Fostering Court Improvement data, as a percentage of youth that had this outcome in the most recent Nevada data.

Permanency within 12 Months: The percentage of cases for each judicial district that achieve permanency within 12 months of the child entering care.

Percentage of Legal Orphans: The percentage of legal orphans is the percentage of cases that have a TPR but have not yet achieved permanency in the judicial district.

Methods

Two methods were used to examine the relationship between hearing quality and case outcomes. The first method included predictive analysis of 2014 court observation data that was linked to case file review data. Specifically, researchers used 2014 court observation data and the case file review data collected (in 2018) for those same cases to match the hearing quality data in the case to case outcomes. Descriptions of the methods are presented below. The second method included correlations of aggregate level judicial district hearing quality and performance measurement data.

Predictive Analysis. Predictive analyses use data and statistical algorithm to identify the likelihood of future outcomes based on historical data. Linear regression analysis was used to examine what hearing quality factors predicted time to permanency for the 2014 hearing quality cases. This analysis shows when there is a relationship between the variables and the outcomes of interest. Because this analysis explores outcomes directly related to the hearings observed, it is more robust than comparing aggregate level “typical” practice as in the correlational method.

Table 5: Factors in Predictive Analysis

Hearing Quality Indicators	Performance Measures
Number of judges per case	Time to permanency
Number of continuances per case	Reunification
Breadth of discussion	Age Out
Presence of Mother	
Presence of Father	
Presence of youth	

Statistical Significance. Predictive analysis and correlations (discussed below) rely on tests of statistical significance; essentially, this is testing whether the researcher believes that the relationship is more than can be explained by chance alone. Statistical significance can be explained as evidence on a scale of 0 to 1, with smaller values indicating more evidence that the values derived were not chance, and that there is actually something there. Traditionally, researchers use a value of .05 as a cutoff (also called p value). In applied research with smaller sample sizes, researchers chose to use a value of .1, indicating 90% certainty that our results are not just chance.

Correlations. To examine relationships between hearing quality and case outcomes, researchers explored correlations, a common statistic that provides a single number that describes the degree of relationship between two variables. For this method, researchers took the averages from the 10 sites on a series of hearing quality measures (identified above) and compared this to average jurisdiction level data from the Fostering Court Improvement or Chapin Hall websites for that specific site. For example, for the 10 hearings observed in site A, researchers calculated the percentage of time the mother was present. This variable was entered into a database as a number (e.g., 67% = .67). Researchers also took outcome data from the Fostering Court Improvement website, such as percentage of cases reaching reunification within 12 months and added that number to the dataset. This resulted in 10 cases (each jurisdiction is 1 case) and 30 variables to correlate. The hearing quality variables and case outcome variables were all added into a correlation matrix and examined for statistically significant relationships.

Correlation Values. Correlation values range from 0 to +/-1, with those closer to 1 being stronger relationships. A value of .2 to .39 is considered weak, .4 to .59 is considered moderate, .6 to .79 is considered strong and .8 to 1.0 is considered a very strong association between two variables.

Correlation Direction. Correlations also include a direction. A positive correlation means that variables both increase or decrease in the same direction. That is, as one increases so does the other. For example, a positive correlation (.80) between height and shoe size indicates that as people get taller their shoe size increases. A negative

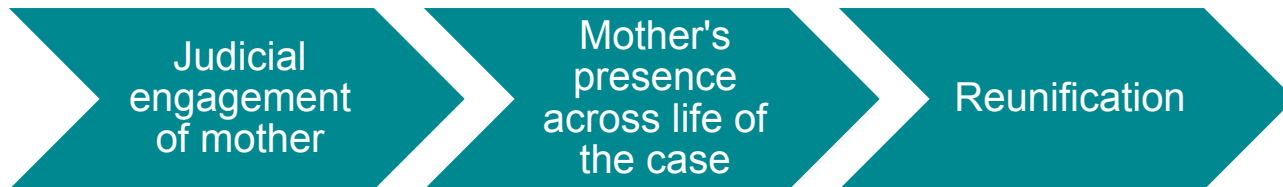
correlation (any value -.1 to -1.0) indicates that the variables are related in opposite directions. For example, smoking and life expectancy are negatively correlated, as the amount of smoking you do per day increases, your life expectancy decreases. The direction is not related to the strength. A -.8 correlation shows a stronger relationship than a +.5).

Findings (Predictive Analysis)

A series of linear and logistic regression analyses were conducted to determine which factors predicted the outcomes of Time to Permanency, Reunification, and the youth Aging Out. Several analyses were conducted because the sample size is too small to include all variables in one analysis. Table 6 below presents the findings. The yes in the table indicates that this item is a statistically significant predictor of the outcome of interest. The – or + indicates the direction. For time to permanency, the – means that as the hearing quality indicator goes up, time to permanency goes down. The + means that as the hearing quality indicator goes up, so does time to permanency. As an example, as percentage of time the mother is present increases, the time to permanency decreases in cases. On the other hand, as the number of judicial officers increases the time to permanency also increases. For reunification and age out outcomes, positive means this outcome is more likely as the variable increases.

Table 6: Hearing Quality Factors that Predict Specific Case Outcomes			
	Time to Permanency	Reunification	Age Out
PARTIES PRESENT			
Percent Mother Present	Yes (-)	Yes (+)	
Percent Child Present			Yes (-)
Percent Mother Attorney Present			Yes (-)
Father Attorney Present	Yes (-)		
Child Attorney Present	Yes (-)		
DISCUSSION			
Breadth of Discussion	Yes (-)		
Disc: Child Safety		Yes (-)	
Disc Efforts to Reunify	Yes (-)	Yes (+)	Yes (-)
ENGAGEMENT			
Average Engagement			
Addresses Mom by Name	Yes (-)		
Opportunity to be heard			
ORDERS			
Reasonable efforts finding on record			
Number of Judicial Officers	Yes (+)		
Number of Continuances	Yes (+)		

Moderating variable. Not all relationships are direct. Researchers predicted that judicial engagement of parents might lead to increased parent’s presence across the life of the case. The data support this. There was a *statistically significant* relationship between judicial engagement of both mother and father and their presence across the life of the case. When the judge had higher engagement in the hearing, parents were more likely to be present at multiple hearings across the life of the case. For mothers only, engagement has an indirect effect on reunification. As higher levels of parent engagement significantly predicted mom’s presence throughout the case and mom’s presence was related to increased likelihood of reunification. The relationship between these variables is indicated in the diagram below.



Findings (Correlations)

In addition to the findings from the matched case file review and court observation data, a series of correlational analyses explored relationships between aggregate level hearing quality factors and case outcomes. This allowed for additional analysis of the data. No additional significant findings were found related to reunification, time to permanency, or aging out. However, two new outcomes were identified with correlations to hearing quality – percentage of cases achieving permanency within 12 months and percentage of legal orphans.

Percentage of Cases Achieving Permanency within 12 Months. Giving parents an opportunity to be heard in hearings was significantly related to achieving permanency within 12 months. The correlation was .61 indicating a positive relationship. Jurisdictions that are more likely to give parents an opportunity to be heard also had a higher rate of cases achieving permanency within 12 months.

Percentage of Legal Orphans. Researchers explored the percentage of cases within a jurisdiction that are legal orphans (e.g., termination of parental rights but not achieved permanency). Two factors were related to this: mother’s attorney’s presence (-.61); and child’s attorney present (-.69). Increased presence of mother’s attorneys and increased child’s attorney presence were both related to a decreased number of legal orphans for that jurisdiction.

Summary of Linking Hearing Quality Factors to Outcomes

Table 7, below, illustrates the relationship between hearing quality and case outcomes. As noted in the table below, engagement of parties was related to almost every outcome of interest. Discussion, both generally as well as discussion of specific topics were also commonly related to outcomes. The table identifies which factors are related to outcomes and

indicates how an increase in the hearing quality factor is related to the case outcome factor. For example, as breadth of discussion increases (hearing quality factor), time to permanency decreases, so the (-) show that increases in the factor result in lowering this. For number of judges, the relationship is reversed, as the number of judges increases, the time to permanency also increases.

Table 7: Summary of Findings Linking Hearing Quality to Outcomes					
	Time to Permanency	Reunification	Permanency <12 Months	Age Out	Legal Orphans
Breadth of Discussion	Yes (-)			Yes (-)	
Discussion (Specific Topic)	Yes (-)	Yes (+)		Yes (-)	
Parties Present		Yes (+)		Yes (-)	Yes (-)
Engagement of Parties	Yes (-)	Yes (+)	Yes (+)	Yes (-)	
Findings on the Record					
Number of Judges	Yes (+)				
Number of Continuances	Yes (+)				

Recommendations

The Nevada Court Improvement Program (CIP) has been working to improve the quality of child welfare court process and practice for nearly a decade, including supporting judicial district Community Improvement Councils (CICs) in their efforts to identify local barriers to timely permanency, adoption, and termination of parental rights (TPR) and to develop and implement solutions to these barriers. The CIP has also supported training throughout the state on the elements of an effective and high-quality hearing process in child abuse and neglect cases. This study revealed significant improvements in hearing quality in Nevada in the last three years. Some recommendations are suggested to continue hearing quality efforts in Nevada and to suggest ideas for potential future research.

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that Nevada CIP

- *Continue discussion/training with the CICs on engagement strategies with parties who are present.* While engagement of mothers and fathers has improved since 2014, the hearing observations conducted in 2017 indicated that judges could further enhance their engagement of parties by directly asking questions, inquiring about their understanding of what happened in the hearing/hearing process, and giving parties an opportunity to be heard (and not only through their attorneys). As engagement is related to nearly all outcomes of interest, it is key that judges understand and implement strategies to engage both mothers and fathers in the process.

- *Continue discussion/training with the CICs on the importance of providing clear oral findings on the record in hearings.* When judges give clear oral findings on the record in hearings, they are providing added assurance that parties leave the hearing knowing what just happened (i.e., parties do not just have to rely on their attorneys to summarize the findings and orders of the judge). This could be used as an engagement strategy so that parents understand what happened today. As engagement is significantly related to outcomes, oral findings on the record may help contribute to parent's participation and perception of engagement in the case.
- *Increase training and efforts with CICs to integrate more robust discussion of key topical areas into court practice.* Discussion was a significant predictor of positive case outcomes. Discussion varies significantly across the state. For example, discussion of efforts to reunify, which is linked to multiple case outcomes, varied from occurring in 20% of hearings to 100% of hearings depending on the judicial district. Efforts to identify the critical topical areas and increase discussion of these may result in improved outcomes.
- *Continued discussion and efforts around ensuring parent and child attorneys are appointed early and present throughout the case.* Presence of parent and youth attorneys were linked to some positive outcomes. A better understanding of how attorneys impact hearing quality would be beneficial to Nevada.

In addition to recommendations, for improved trainings and discussions around hearing quality, some suggestions for future research and evaluation efforts are put forth. These include:

- *Continue efforts to examine relationship between findings on the record /next steps on the record and case outcomes.* The current study did not find a relationship between making a finding on the record and outcomes. However, further exploration could determine what information is provided, how detailed findings are, and whether they are explained to parents in a lay friendly way. Findings may serve as an engagement strategy and further ensure parents fully understand what occurred in the hearing.
- *Explore more closely the relationship between legal representation and case outcomes.* At present, the data could only examine the presence of the attorneys and the presence across the life of the case. A more robust study could examine time to appointment of counsel, continuity of counsel, and specific attorney trainings and behaviors that may be related to both improved hearing quality and outcomes on the case.
- *Continue to explore more fully the 72-hour hearing.* Prior research has demonstrated that the first hearing on the case can set the tone for all future hearings and parent's engagement in the process. Research has linked this hearing to multiple positive outcomes. A few judicial districts chose to explore this hearing, but the majority did not. Focusing specifically on one hearing type could further allow for cross site comparisons of practice and focus efforts on a critical stage in the process.

Appendix 12

Statewide Timeliness Data and Performance Measurements

Median Days	CY 2011 Baseline Measure Year	CY 2012	CY 2013	CY 2014	CY 2015	CY 2016	CY 2017	CY 2018	CY 2019 1 st Qtr	CIP Projects Targeting Measures (if applicable) <i>[If this measure was targeted by an intervention (e.g., efforts made to improve timeliness), please list the project or activity here]</i>
										Required Timeliness Measures – median days
4G. Time to First Permanency Hearing	359	366	359	357	352	353	355	352	352	CICs, Dependency mediation, CASA, attorney training, pro bono programs, and CQI efforts
4H. Time to Termination of Parental Rights Petition	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	CICs, Dependency mediation, CASA, attorney training, pro bono programs, and CQI efforts
4I. Time to Termination of Parental Rights	764	699	599	608	676	610	600 (-21%)	673 (-12%)	609 (-20%)	CICs' focus on eliminating barriers to timely placement in their judicial districts and CQI efforts
4A. Time to Permanent Placement	848	729	675	688	644	714	709 (-16%)	726 (-14%)	687 (-19%)	CICs' focus on eliminating barriers to timely placement in their judicial districts and CQI efforts
										Optional Measures – median days
<i>Time to Reunification *Fostering Court Improvement 204 (9/17 to 9/18)</i>						555	529	500	609	CICs, Dependency mediation, CASA, attorney training, pro bono programs, and CQI efforts
<i>Time to Adoption *Fostering Court Improvement 882 (9/17 to 9/18)</i>						939	852	925	995	CICs' focus on eliminating barriers to timely placement in their judicial districts and CQI efforts, Dependency Mediation
<i>Time to Rel Guardianship</i>						563	638	616	702	
<i>Time to Emancipation</i>						816	788	820	928	
<i>Time to Subsequent Permanency Hearings</i>	367	199	348	182	182	182	182	182	182	
<i>1B. Percentage of Cases that Re-enter within 1 year</i>	5.1%	5.6%	5.8%	6.4%	5.6%	6.5%	6.5%	Not Avail	Not Avail	

*Note: An agreement between Fostering court improvement at University of N. Carolina (Chapel Hill) and DCFS allows aggregate data from Nevada's AFCARS and NCANDS data to be available on the fosteringcourtimprovement.org website. These data indicate shorter times to reunification and adoption as compared to the CFS775 reports pulled out of UNITY for CIP by the DCFS Data Team.

Appendix 13

Achievements Unlocked Interim Report

2019 | June



Achievements Unlocked Interim Report (2018-2019)

Report Authored by:
Alicia Summers, PhD
Director, Data Savvy Consulting, LLC

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Program Coordinator, Educational Liaison
Washoe County Human Services Agency



Achievements Unlocked Interim Report (2018-2019 School Year)

Project goals, objectives, activities, and outcomes

It is with pleasure to report the progress of the Walter S. Johnson Achievements Unlocked grant project for year four.

The following section identifies each objective as stated in the grant proposal narrative and corresponding progress toward achieving that goal, where data are available to demonstrate progress toward attaining the objective. Data are reported both in narrative and (when applicable) in graphic format to illustrate progress. The majority of the data for this project compares the foster youth in the Achievements Unlocked program to all other foster youth in high school in Washoe County concerning progress toward their academic achievement. These data are derived from Washoe Education Systems' Infinite Campus database. In addition, some surveys were conducted only for youth in the program (no comparison group) and preliminary findings are shared where they may provide additional context to the objectives identified.

Students Served

Thirty-four (34) students were served for the 2018-2019 school year by the Achievements Unlocked program, including 22 students who were new to the program and 12 returning students from prior semesters. Nine students exited the program this school year. Of these, three exited because their foster care case closed (33%), 3 exited due to non-compliance (33%), and three exited to graduation (33%).

Objective 1: Improved education outcomes.

The primary goal of the project is to improve educational outcomes for the youth served. Educational outcomes can be defined in many ways. The program articulated four discrete outcomes under this objective

- **Increase aggregate GPAs by 5%**

The first measure under the improved education outcomes is increasing aggregate GPAs by 5% for the students participating in the program. **GPAs in the AU group were significantly higher than those in the control group, even though grades decreased slightly (-1.2%), thereby not successfully achieving the 5% goal.**

Progress in year 4. Students who were part of the Achievements Unlocked project began the year showing mixed results on improving GPA over time. When comparing students with how they ended the 2017-2018 school year, there was a small increase in GPA at the end of term 1. However, GPAs

in the program group were lower in term 2 than in term 1. The following Table illustrates the unweighted GPAs of students in each group. Although the difference between groups was not significant, the AU cohort's GPAs were higher than the control group in every time period.

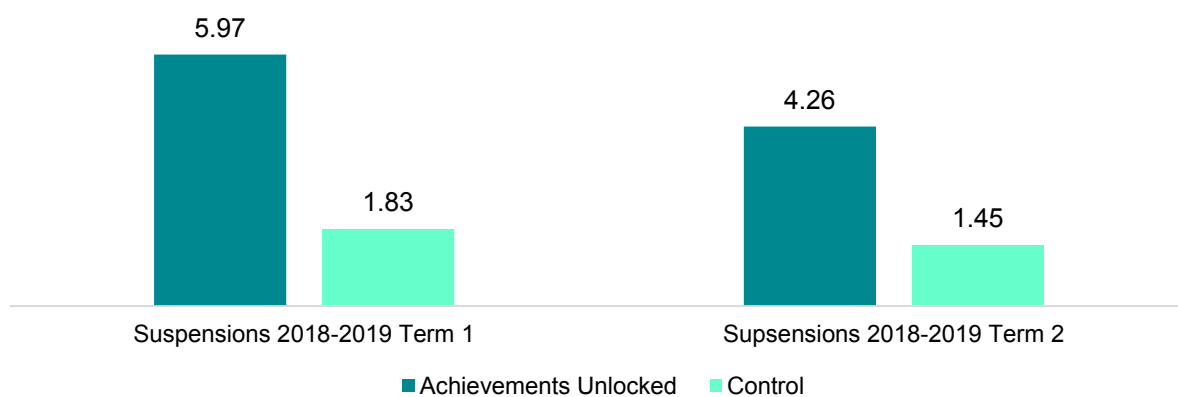
Group	2017-2018 T2 GPA	2018-2019 T1 GPA	2018-2019 T2 GPA
Achievements Unlocked	1.66	1.72	1.51
Control	.85	1.13	.90

- **Decrease the number of school-related disciplinary actions by .5 incidents.**

Progress on the number of school related disciplinary action was tracked in two ways. First students were compared between the first term and second term of the 2018-2019 school year. In addition students in the program were compared to other foster youth in high school to determine if they are similar or different.

Progress in Year 4. Youth in the Achievements Unlocked program had significantly more suspensions than youth in the control condition. However, the number of suspensions did decrease between semesters. AU youth averaged nearly 6 suspensions in term 1 and only 4.3 in term 2. **This demonstrates a decrease of 1.7 incidences of suspensions thereby successfully meeting and surpassing the goal of .5 incidents by 204%!**

Figure 1: Average Number of Suspensions

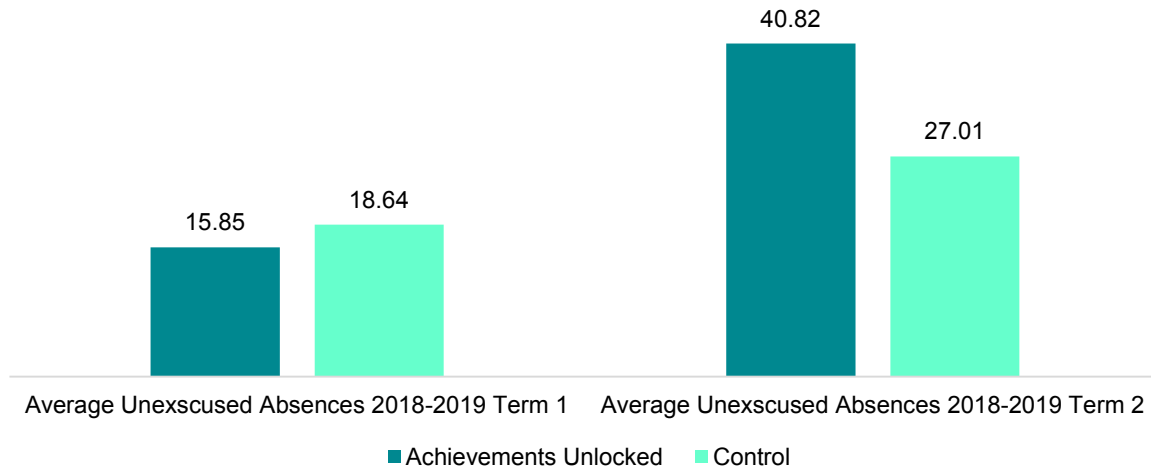


- **Decrease the number of times each participant student is reported late**

The data on tardiness are inconsistent as the school district policies regarding missed seat time have slightly changed over the past academic year and are currently being modified again. Therefore a decision was made to focus on the number of unexcused absences as this is tracked consistently in Infinite Campus. This ensures better quality of the data.

Progress in Year 4. Figure 2 illustrates that students in the AU project had more unexcused absences in term 2 when compared to term 1. This was also true for the control group. The control group had more unexcused absences than AU students in term 1 but significantly fewer in term 2.

Figure 2: Average Number of Unexcused Absences for 2018-2019 School Year



- Increase number of credits taken and taken successfully completed**

Data were explored for both the AU group and the other foster youth in high school in terms of the average number of credits attempted each semester and the average number of credits earned for each semester.

Progress Year 4. **Achievements Unlocked students attempted and earned significantly more credits in both term 1 and term 2, surpassing students in the control group by 51%.** The table below illustrates the average number of credits attempted and earned. For term 1, AU students earned 68% of the credits they attempted compared to 74% of credited earned for control students. For term 2, AU students earned 81% of the credits they attempted compared to 69% for the control students.

	Credits Attempted 2018-2019 T1	Credits Earned 2018-2019 T1	Credits Attempted 2018-2019 T2	Credits Earned 2018-2019 T2
Achievements Unlocked	3.4	2.3	2.7	2.2
Control	1.9	1.4	1.6	1.1

Objective 2: Youth will experience improved college and career readiness.

A second goal of the AU program is that youth will experience improved college and career readiness. There are several ways to assess this as part of the project. Two discrete outcomes are explored, including whether students are on track to graduate and whether students who graduate are accepted into post-secondary education or vocational training or have secured full time employment by the end of the project. In addition, the project included a youth survey that students can complete to identify their own perceptions of their readiness for their college and career goals.

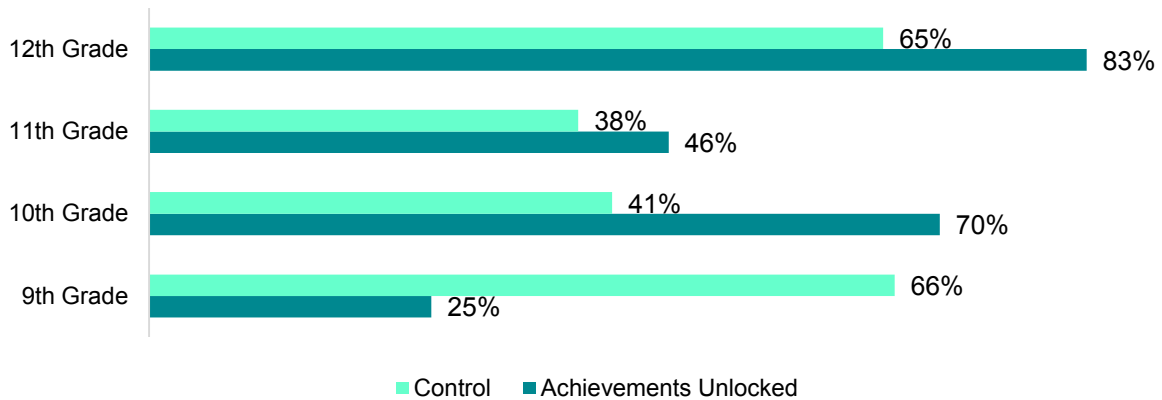
- **Seventy percent (70%) of the students are on track for graduation by the end of project.**

A part of youth improved college and career readiness is that youth are on track to graduate. The data for on track to graduate from the Infinite Campus dataset is not always consistent. However, with an understanding that students need 22.5 credits to graduate, and an understanding of how many credits students have, it is possible to determine the percentage that is on track. For this analysis, 9th grade students should have approximately 6 credits to be on track, 10th should have 12, 11th graders should have 18, and 12th should have 23. For these analyses, we would consider +/- 3 credits “on track” to graduate.

Progress Year 4. Of the students in the program, 59% were on track to graduate, compared to 55% of students in the control condition. The percentage of students on track to graduate is statistically similar overall to the control group. This percentage varied by grade. In 12th grade, 83% of the students in the AU program were on track to graduate compared to 65% of students in the control condition. Figure 3 illustrates that percentage of students on track to graduate (calculated by the credits they need +/- 3 credits). **Although the aggregate success of this goal was 59%, the most significant indicator of graduation readiness is captured in the year that is most important – the senior year – in which the program achieved 83% success!** This is a strong indication of the incredible increase in resilience and confidence gained by students by their senior year of high school. Additional successes are worth celebrating. There were 4 graduates during the year and one on track to graduate by the end of this month (June, 2019); 3 were seniors, 1 was a junior and graduated a year early, and the determined senior who should be graduating within a few weeks, actually completed 13 on-line courses in less than 3 months!! **This means that of the 6 who were on track to graduate this year, 5 were successful which equates to an 83% graduation rate for students participating in the Achievements Unlocked Program!**

Student testimonial in this group: “My educational advocate opened the door for me. All I had to do is choose to walk through it.”

Figure 3: Percentage of Students on Track to Graduate by Grade



Data were also explored based on the number of years the student has been in the program. Of the 34 students in the program, the majority had only been in the program one year (65%). Only two students had been in the program for 4 years. There was no statistical correlation between years in the program and being on track to graduate, but there did appear to be a **trend for 2-3 years in the program being more likely to be on track.**

Years in Program	1 Year (n=22)	2 Years (n=6)	3 Years (n=4)	4 Years (n=2)
Percent on Track to Graduate	46%	100%	75%	50%

- **Eighty percent (80%) of the students who graduate are accepted into post-secondary education/vocational training or secured full-time employment by end of project.**

A second way to assess the objective that youth are college and career ready to identify how many youth who exit the program are enrolled or accepted into post-secondary education or vocational training or who have full employment.

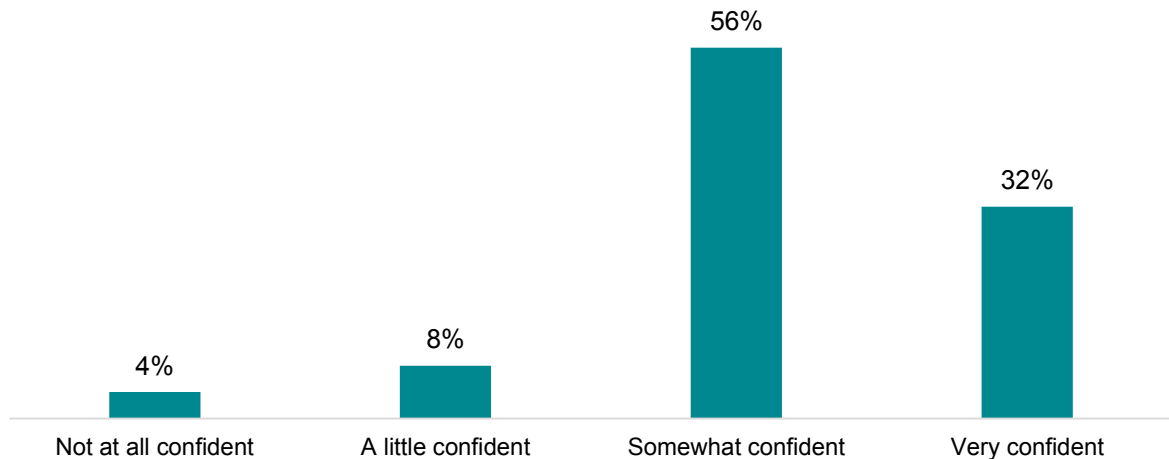
Progress Year 4. Of the 9 youth who exited the program this year, 3 exited due to graduation from high school. Of these, one was accepted to a four-year University, and two were accepted into a community college. That is 100% who exited the program who had been accepted into a two or four year post-secondary school. Of the others that exited, 3 exited because their foster care cases closed and 3 exited due to non-compliance.

- **Additional college and career readiness measures.**

In addition to reviewing Infinite Campus for quantitative measures of the college and career readiness, a survey was developed and sent to youth at the end of tutoring sessions to allow them to answer some questions about their perceived readiness and ability to achieve their goals. Youth were

asked how confident they are in their ability to achieve educational goals. The vast majority of students are somewhat confident or very confident in their ability to achieve educational goals (see Figure 4). Thirteen students completed the study. Eight of these students completed the survey on multiple occasions. Of these 8 students, 50% noted an increase in their confidence to achieve educational goals over time. The other 50% indicated no change in their confidence over time.

Figure 4: Confidence in Ability to Achieve Educational Goals



Objective 3: Youth will experience improved case outcomes.

A final youth measure includes improving child welfare case outcomes for youth involved in foster care. One educational outcome for youth in foster care is the number of educational placements that the youth has as an indication of the level of educational stability. There are significant data supporting the correlation between school transitions and poor outcomes for children and youth. For each school change, students lose an average of one semester of coursework. As such, reducing educational placement changes strongly benefits the youth in excelling at school.

- **Decrease the number of education placements by .5 placements for participant students by end of project.**

The measure of improved outcomes for this study was defined as decreasing the number of educational placements by .5 placements for students in the project. This can be explored by examining the average number of placements for AU youth compared to the control youth and by examining how the number of placements changes between term 1 and term 2. These data are pulled from the Infinite Campus Primary Enrollment data element. These data build over time, so term 2 data would include any placement changes that occurred in term 1 and those that occurred in term 2.

Progress Year 4. As noted in the table below, there were no differences in the educational placements for youth in AU program across semesters, whereas youth in the control group increased

their placements by .15. When exploring the educational placements of foster youth prior to entering the program, students coming into the AU program experienced an average of 1.5 placements the year prior to the term they entered the program. However, it is interesting to note that although there was no significant decrease in placements over the year among the AU students, the number of placements did decrease from the prior year to the current year and these students remained stable throughout the current school year. This is a reflection on educational stability which significantly contributes to improved outcomes.

Additional factors contribute to the dynamics of educational placements that the AU Program is unable to control. One significant challenge is that limited placement options for high school students continues, as they are less likely to be adopted and mainly reside in group homes. The lack of available of placement options, coupled with the declining transportation resources in the school district, sometimes leads to a school change if the distance is so great that it is not possible to maintain students in their school of origin. There is a call to action in the community to explore additional transportation options to mitigate this barrier, optimism continues for better outcomes as a reflection of increased resources.

	Educational Placement Prior to Entering Program (for 1st Year AU Students)	Educational Placement 2018-2019 T1	Educational Placements 2018-2019 T2
Achievements Unlocked	1.50	1.35	1.35
Control		.85	1.0

Objective 4: Youth will be supported to secure full-time long-term employment through partnership with the iFoster Jobs Program.

Year 1:

Initiate planning strategies with iFoster to engage local employers and community partners to raise awareness of the dynamics and benefits of the iFoster Program.

Initial planning strategies are underway as collaboration with the iFoster Jobs Program has taken place at multiple levels. Meetings and site visits took place to discuss implementation of the iFoster Jobs Program within Washoe County Human Services Agency/Adult Services Division. Further discussions are on hold with this prospect pending grant funding outcomes across similar job training programs that support the adult population. Additionally, a coordinated site visit took place between iFoster and Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC) to explore the potential for dual programming that would provide each iFoster cohort an opportunity to earn a TMCC Skills Certificate

and iFoster job training concurrently. The advantage of this combination of programming is that in a short period of time, the students would become employable at thriving local organizations such as Tesla and Panasonic. Since the coursework is stackable, students then have the opportunity to progress forward to earn a Certificate of Achievement and on to an Associate's degree in the same field; thereby improving their odds to successfully promote and build a future in local cutting edge industries.

Identify local organizations to outsource the tutoring component of the project in an effort to leverage resources required to support the training component of the iFoster Jobs Program.

The program successfully identified and contracted with Boosted Learning, a local organization that has operated within a similar model by providing tutoring services in the home for 3 years prior to the current school year. The first year of partnership demonstrated the potential and capacity for Boosted Learning to acquire and administer the entire Achievements Unlocked program within the next grant year cycle.

Additionally, through the generous \$20,000 donation from the Monroe Schuler Foundation, the program can expand services to serve more high school students and extend college and career support to youth aging out through the age of 21. This expansion will provide momentum to strengthen the segue to an increased focus on improving outcomes for youth transitioning out of foster care.

Year 2: *To be reported on in final report year 2*

- **Initial stages of implementation**
- **Pilot an initial cohort of youth through the training component of the iFoster Jobs Program.**

Summary

The above analyses provide insight into the overall positive impact of the interventions provided through the Achievements Unlocked program. The program successfully achieved improved grades, improved attendance, decreased disciplinary issues, improved college and career readiness as demonstrated by tackling and completing more credits, significantly gaining momentum in their senior year to become markedly more on track to graduate, including accomplishing their goal to graduate. Although a couple goals were not fully realized, the overall success across all objectives demonstrates the continued strength of the program; further substantiating that a combination of personalized educational advocacy and tutoring clearly results in improved educational outcomes and increased stability in the lives of our foster youth that are embarking on a new journey into adulthood.

Lessons Learned

Data

There have been several lessons learned during this project year. One lesson included the importance of identifying appropriate data measures to track progress on the program. The objectives include quantifiable data, primarily derived from Infinite Campus (Washoe County School District database). However, discussions with the educational advocates and tutors suggested that some outcomes might be more qualitative in nature. As such, efforts have been made to introduce forms and surveys that can capture more qualitative information from and about the youth. These include forms completed at referral, intake, and exit by the educational advocate that explores the youth's participation, current activities, and educational goals and how they may change over time. These qualitative and quantitative data elements and how they change over time will be included in the future evaluation report for all the students in the program for years 4-5.

In addition, with the available data, it was decided that more robust analyses can be conducted in two ways. First, dosage data that tracks the amount of time educational advocates and tutors spend with each youth can be included in the study to better explore if there is a minimum threshold of time needed to improve outcomes for youth or if length of time in the program is related to improved outcomes. Second, the data are similar enough on the majority of measures that analyses can be done to explore all cases that have entered into the program since its inception. This will increase the overall sample size of the project and all for greater power in detecting differences that may have occurred. These lessons learned will be addressed in a Year 5 summative evaluation report.

Process

New partnerships - This year has been exciting as a new partnership was formed with Boosted Learning, a subcontractor organization and Data Savvy, our program evaluator. Boosted is very technologically advanced in its processes from scheduling to time keeping and reporting, resulting in a great improvement to the program as far as accurate record keeping, data collection and documenting clear outcomes. In addition, the program brought on a new evaluator, Data Savvy which is exponentially improving process and evaluation consistency and quality. However, the challenge with new advanced systems affects implementation time and accuracy. The transition of new processes for the educational advocates including new forms added to capture data from referral to exit, all time keeping automation created a slight lag while the educational advocates learned the system and gained proficiency. Also, the process of on-boarding new clients included new processes with the Boosted Learning dedicated scheduler and resulted in some delays in initial setup of tutoring sessions.

Staff changes - One educational advocate is retiring at the end of the semester so recruitment for a qualified replacement was quite a challenge and the transition to the new EA is not ideal. The good news is that not one but three qualified EAs surfaced in the final hour, while searching for a replacement for our retiree. Since the grant was underspent due to a delay in the change of vendors, and new funds were secured through the Monroe Schuler Foundation, the program is able to expand the team of educational

advocates to three and possibly bring on a fourth by the end of the summer. These positions are all part-time and each has a unique personality and perspective to contribute to the program.

Training – With the change in tutoring vendor also came a new tutoring staff and the consequent learning curve for working with foster students on a larger scale. Although this organization has served foster students, the level of understanding the population was not as strong as it could be. Due to the unique challenges that foster youth present, some tutors were affected by difficulties encountered. While we know that sometimes personalities can clash and a better match can be identified between student and tutor, we know that increased training for tutors in Trauma Informed Care, etc. will help better prepare them for this specialized line of work. Implementation of additional training for all staff will take place over the summer in preparation for the new school year. In the Nevada Performance Improvement Plan, trauma-focused communication for all dependency stakeholders will take place in the next two years. In the five year Child and Family Services Plan, Nevada included development of a trauma informed system, which will support the trauma informed care mentioned above.

Communication across agencies and staff at multiple levels – The program continues to seek ways to increase communication among child welfare workers, schools, educational advocates and tutors. While we are making strides with process improvement we know that opening and improving communication channels will ensure that the students receive consistent messaging and better follow-through as they step forward into adulthood.