

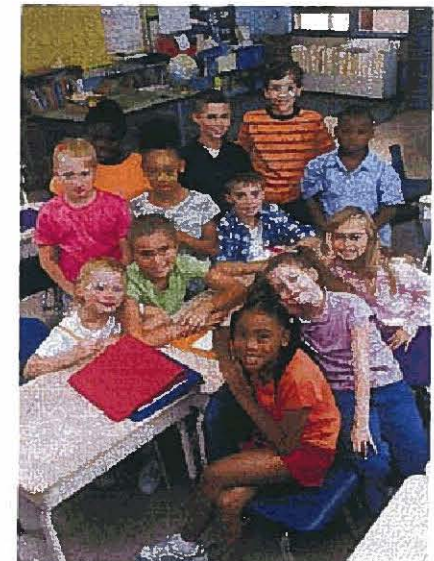
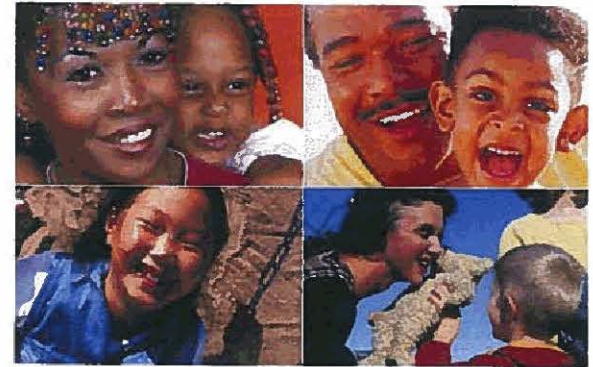


Family Finding Results Phase 1

Pennsylvania Permanency
Practice Initiative
March 2009

Overview

- Finds Families (extended families)
- Combines: common sense, social work, detective work, and technology
- Search for families at intake and throughout the life of the case
- Connects to other family focused practices
- Real work begins once family members are found



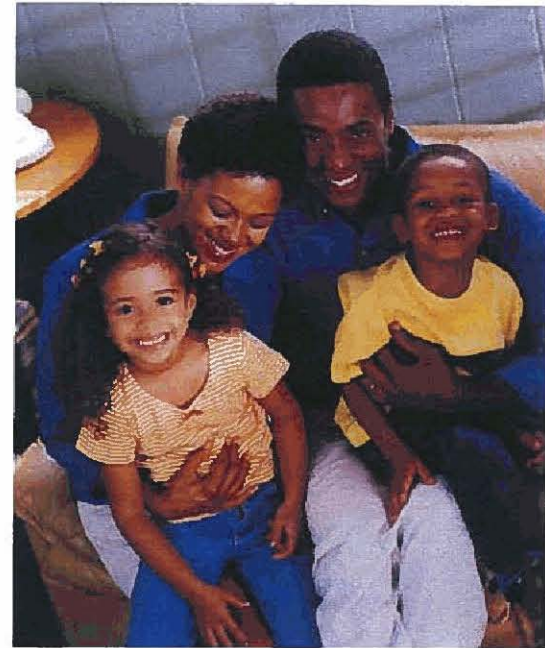
Participating Counties



- Allegheny
- Blair
- Butler
- Carbon
- Chester
- Dauphin
- Jefferson
- Lackawanna
- Lehigh
- Montgomery
- Northampton
- Snyder
- Venango
- Washington
- York

Cases

- 40 cases
- 43 children/youth
- 26 Male
- 17 Female
- Averaged 13.68 years old
- Parental Involvement
 - ❖ Mothers – 31 (out of 40 cases)
 - ❖ Fathers – 27 (out of 40 cases)
 - ❖ Neither Parent – 6 (out of 40 cases)



Identified Resources

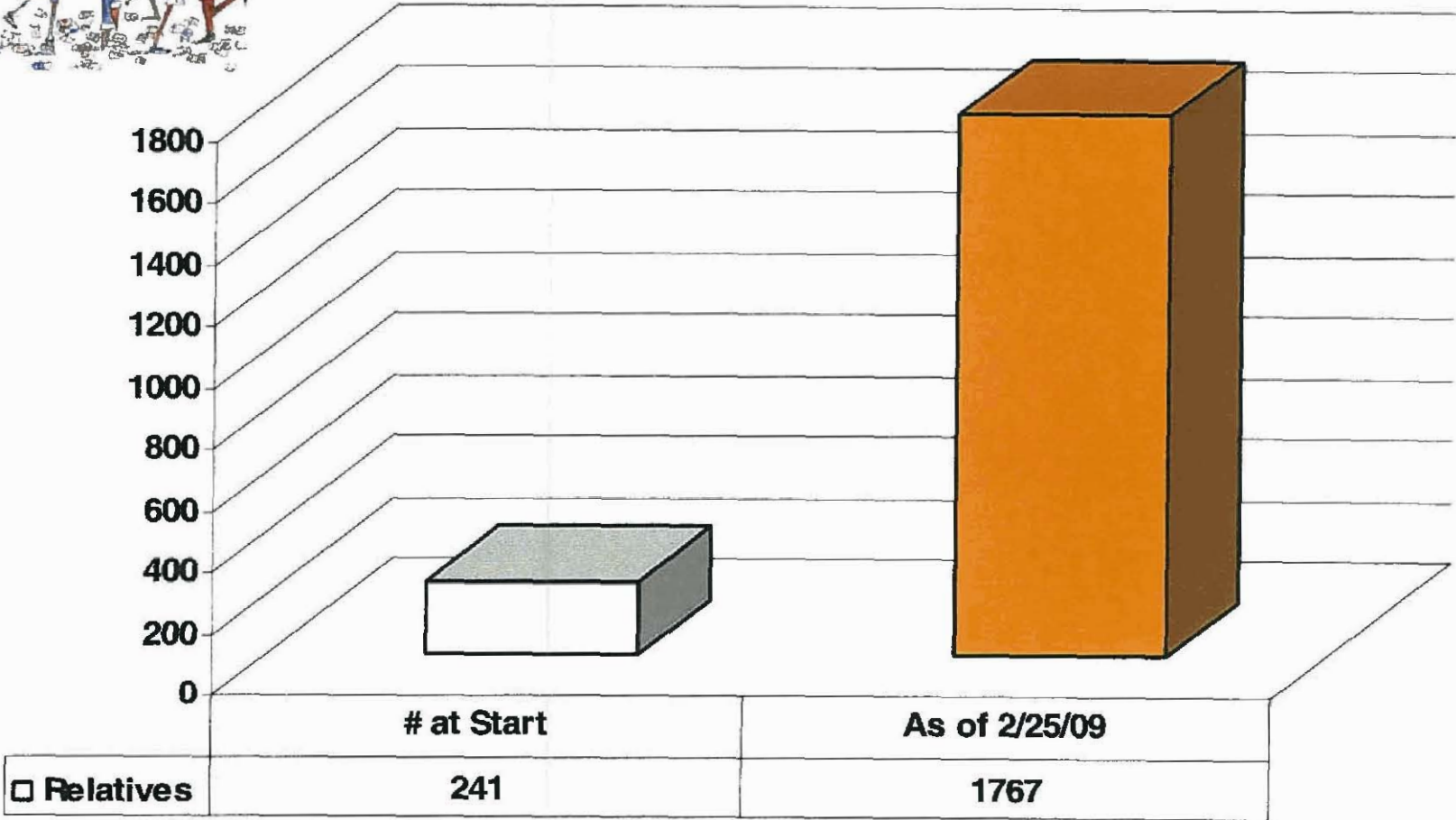
- At start -241
- Resources Found through Family Finding- 1767
- Number of new lasting resources - 250



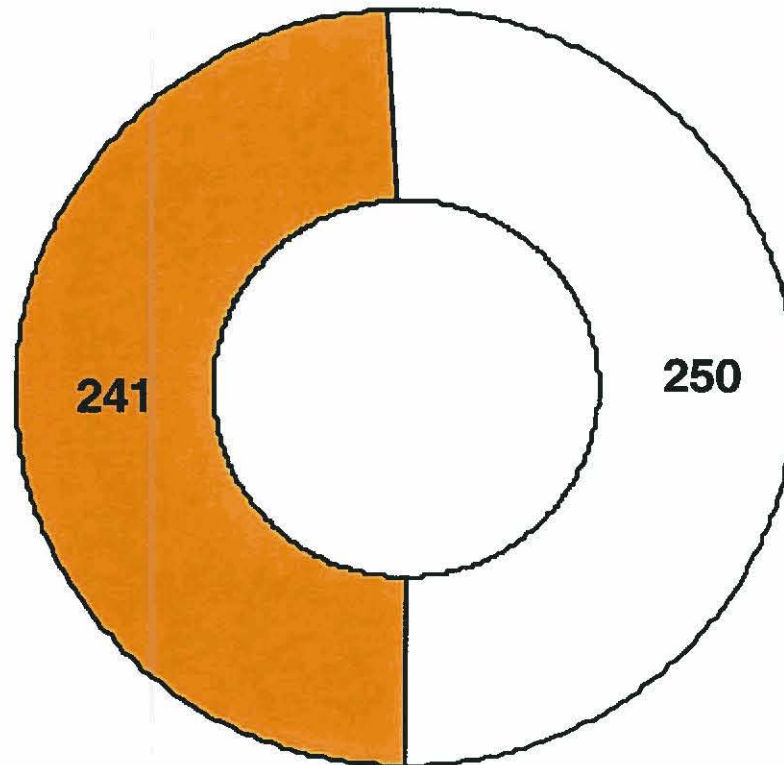
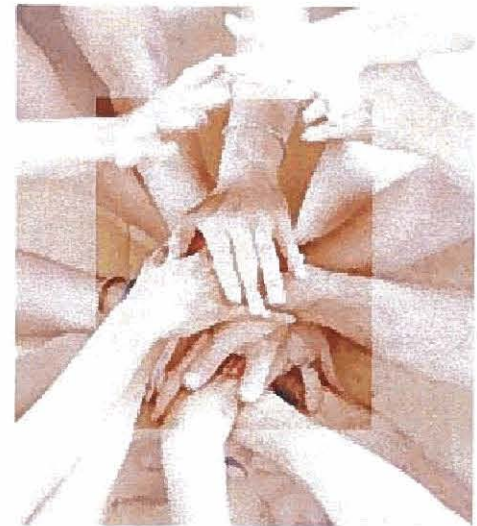
Identified Resources



Relatives Identified

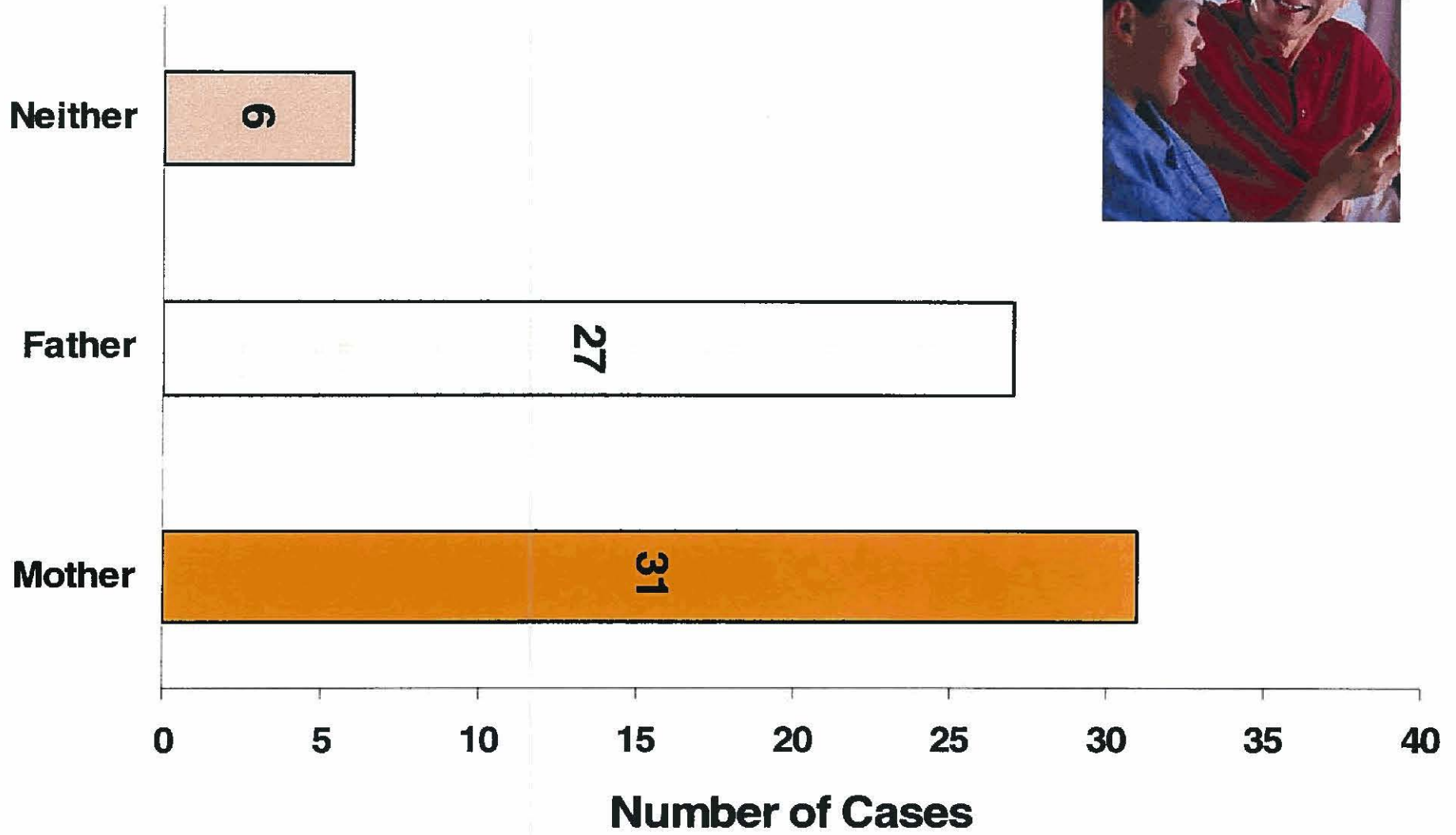


Identified Resources



■ Resources Identified at Start □ Number of new lasting resources

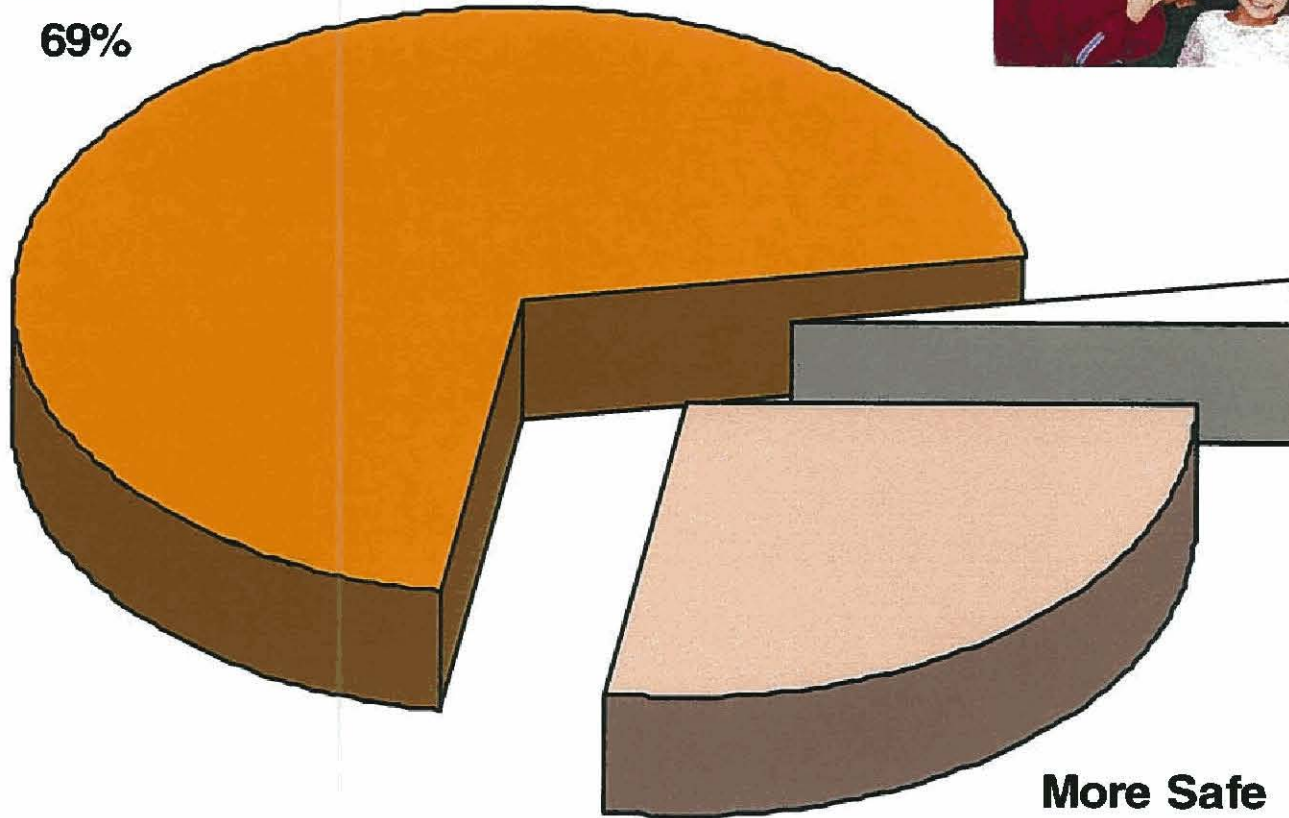
Parents Involvement



Safety



Same
69%



Less Safe
3%

More Safe
28%

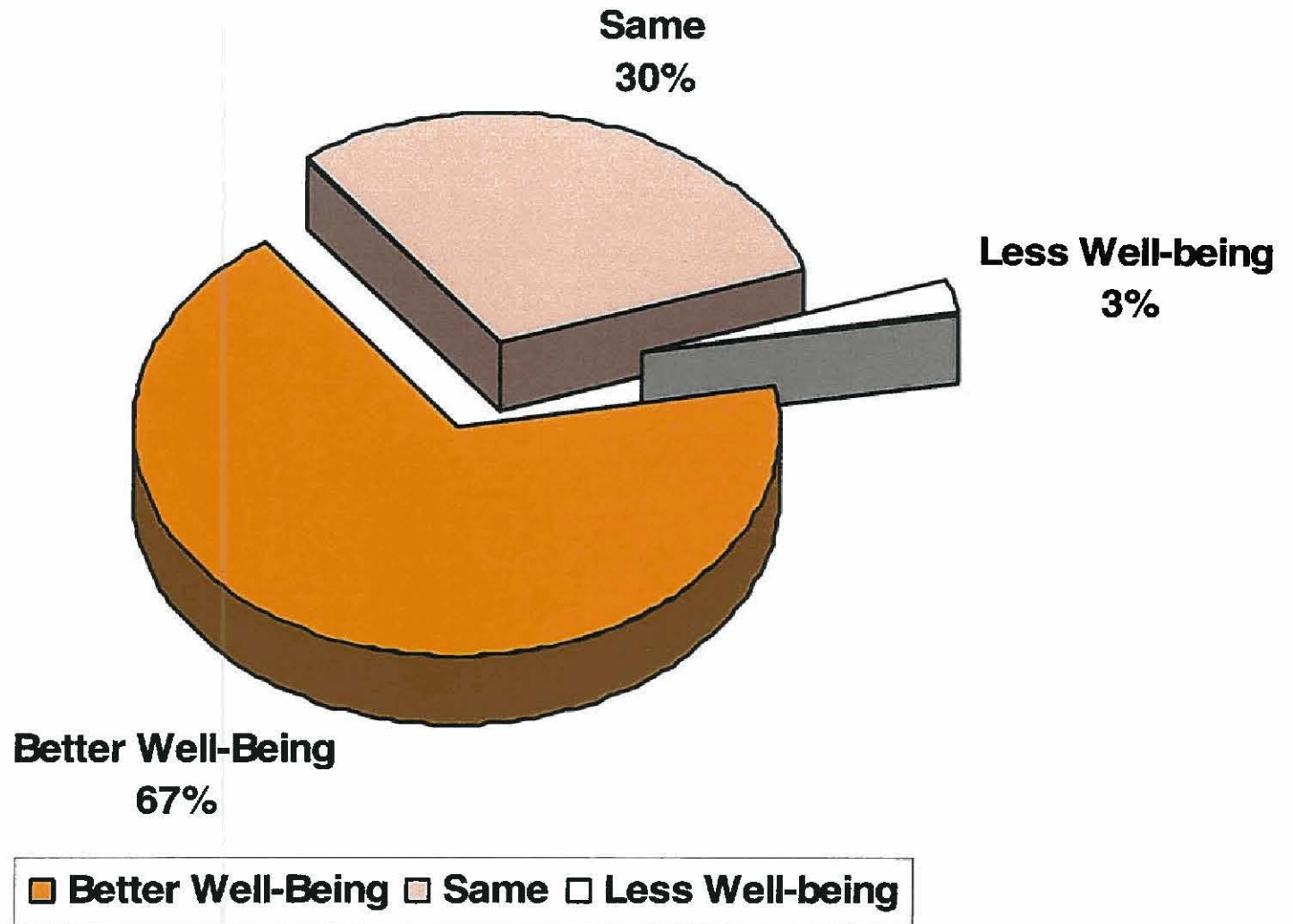
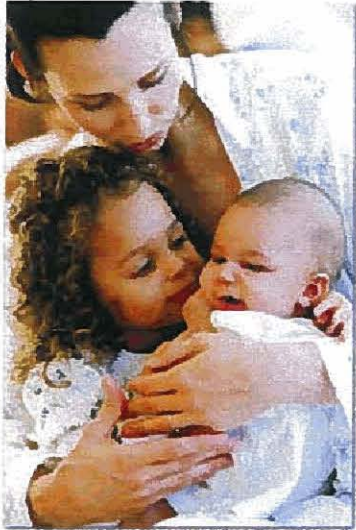
More Safe

Same

Less Safe



Well-Being



Pennsylvania Court Improvement Project

Office of Children & Families in the Courts Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts Supreme Court of Pennsylvania

Introduction

In an effort to create positive outcomes for abused and neglected children, the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania created the Office of Children and Families in the Courts (OCFC) within the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC). The OCFC's principal goal is to safely minimize the length of time that children must spend in foster care or in other temporary living situations when they have been removed from their parents under court order as a result of abuse or neglect. The OCFC also aims to reunite children safely and timely with their families, expedite the adoption process for those children with the goal of adoption; and enhance/expand ongoing permanent adult connections for those children who remain in the foster care system.

Background

The overarching structure for Pennsylvania's Court Improvement effort is seen in Pennsylvania's Roundtables for Children Initiative. These roundtables have created a statewide infrastructure that allows for effective administration and communication via a three tier system including local Children's Roundtables, eight Leadership Roundtables (based on county size) and a Statewide Roundtable comprised of representatives from each Leadership Roundtable and other child advocate/experts (which meets annually and provides statewide leadership).

In June 2007, the Statewide Roundtable identified social work and court practice priorities for the Pennsylvania dependency reform. They included the implementation of Family Group Decision Making, Family Finding, Family Development Credentialing, and 3 - month court reviews (collectively referred to as the Permanency Practice Initiative). Currently being implemented in twenty-seven counties (Allegheny, Bedford, Blair, Butler, Carbon, Chester, Dauphin, Jefferson, Lackawanna, Lehigh, Snyder, Venango, Washington, York, Montgomery, Warren, Forest, Armstrong, Indiana, Clinton, Tioga, Luzerne, Fulton, Franklin, Cumberland, Adams, Bucks) the Permanency Practice Initiative combines strength-based collaborative social work practice with enhanced judicial oversight. Expected outcomes include expedited, safe permanency for children, reduction in "stranger care," and an increase in placement stability.

In addition, a comprehensive dependency court data system is being implemented in all 60 judicial districts (67 counties). Sixty-five (65) counties will be utilizing the system by November 2008, with implementation in Allegheny and Philadelphia counties scheduled for mid-2009. This system will provide uniformity to the dependency court process across jurisdictions and data to assist local jurisdictions improve outcomes for children & families.

Other activities include the creations of a Pennsylvania Dependency Bench Book, a Pennsylvania Dependency Guiding Principles document, an annual Children's Roundtable summit focusing specifically on dependency issues, and a Pennsylvania Dependency Best Practices Website.

Outcomes

By incorporating strength-based social work practices with specific court related changes and enhanced communication between judicial districts, the OCFC is anticipating the following outcomes over the next two years:

- Enhanced Judicial Oversight of Dependency Matters.
- Increased education of dependency court participants (judges, attorneys, advocates, child welfare staff, etc.)
- Continued and enhanced collaboration with the courts and agencies at the state and local levels
- Shared analysis of data with courts
- Reduced number of children/youth adjudicated dependent and in court-ordered placement
- Reduced time children/youth spend in the foster care system.
- Reduced number of children/youth who re-enter care
- Reduced costs of children in care (Reduction of placement costs means that funds could be redirected to other services (such as prevention, aftercare, adoption, pilot services, etc.)
- Reduced level of care (i.e. – reduced number/percent of restrictive placements and increase in kinship care, when placement is needed)
- Increased Placement Stability (less moves for children).

Pennsylvania Permanency Practice Initiative

Phase 2

Spring 2009

Background

The Permanency Practice Initiative assumes close, constructive relationships between the executive and judicial branches of government are critical to child safety, permanence and well-being. As such, the pilot is a joint venture with the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare - Office of Children, Youth & Families (OCYF) and the Pennsylvania Supreme Court - Office of Children & Families in the Courts (OCFC).

On any given day in Pennsylvania approximately 20,000 children are in the foster care system as a result of abuse and neglect. Too often these children spend several years in the foster care system without returning home to their families or being adopted. Additionally these children, upon "aging out" of the foster care system are disproportionately represented in the adult mental health, homeless and prison populations.

While two primary partner entities for the Initiative are discussed in this concept paper, clearly the Initiative requires involvement from a multitude of individuals and groups including County Commissioners, Private Providers, Families, Youth, Community members and others. However, lead on the Initiative comes from the Office of Children and Families in the Courts (OCFC) within the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC) and the Office of Children, Youth & Families (OCYF) within the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare. Both entities are concerned with the safety, well-being and permanence of Pennsylvania's children.

The OCFC was created by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania to provide oversight of Pennsylvania's Dependency Court Improvement. To this end, the Statewide Roundtable identifies the elements of this Initiative as the key components for Pennsylvania's Court Improvement partnership. The OCYF has for many years led the efforts to provide comprehensive, supportive services aimed at protecting children who have been abuse/neglected and preventing others at risk of such. Together the two offices hope to increase positive outcomes for the children & families of our great commonwealth.

Additional support and guidance for the Initiative come from the Pennsylvania Family Group Decision Making Leadership Team, the Statewide Adoption Permanency Network, the Community Action Association of Pennsylvania, the Child Welfare Training Program and the University of Pittsburgh School of Social Work.

Permanency Practice Initiative

The underlying hypothesis of this Permanency Practice Initiative is that **enhanced oversight of the judiciary combined with strength-based, family led practice will ultimately increase the number of children safely maintained in their own homes and expedite safe return home.** As such, focus will be on a saturation of front end services that will empower families to safely and effectively maintain the child or youth in the home; identify kin or other permanent resources prior to or as an appropriate placement, when such is needed; while at the same time providing the family with the necessary services to alleviate the circumstances which caused the referral for services.

To accomplish this, the Permanency Practice Initiative seeks to implement or enhance a variety of services prior to the child/youth coming into out-of-home care or immediately following the need for such. These services will be supported through initiative funding with oversight and technical assistance from a team of resources, as needed. The initiative will not supplant services already in place; but can be used to enhance or create new ones.

Pennsylvania Permanency Practice Initiative

Phase Two counties are required to have the following services, practices and/or initiatives in place or the capacity to immediately (within 6 months of selection) meet these requirements:

1. Three (3) Month Court Review Hearings (minimum)
2. Family Search Capacity (as a front-end service)
3. Active Local Children's Roundtable (local initiative oversight team)

4. Family Group Decision Making
5. Family Finding/3-5-7 Model
6. Family Development Credentialing

The following are additional expectations for selected Phase Two counties:

1. Actively entering all dependency cases into CPCMS Dependency Module
2. Comprehensive, well-trained legal representation for all parties (children, parents and agency)
3. Commitment to use Incentive Fund to support Initiative services and additional child serving services
4. Training for all involved staff (administration to line staff) on core elements of initiative.
5. A plan for coordination between Dependency Court and Orphans Court
 - i. Coordination between judges, if not the same judge
 - ii. Consistency in representation of children and families
 - iii. Plan for inputting permanency data into CPCMS module
6. A Current Organizational Readiness Assessment (within past 2 years)

Expected Outcomes

The goal of this Initiative is to incorporate strength-based social work practices with specific court related changes that will safely accomplish the following:

- Reduce number of children/youth adjudicated dependent and in court-ordered placement
- Reduce time children/youth spend in the foster care system.
- Reduce number of children/youth who re-enter care
- Reduce the Dependency Court Caseload
- Reduce the cost of children in care (Reduction of placement costs means that funds could be redirected to other services including Phase One supports, prevention, aftercare, adoption, services, etc.)
- Reduce the level of care (i.e. – reduced number/percent of restrictive placements and increase in kinship care, when placement is needed)
- Increased Placement Stability (less moves for children).

Timeline

May 25, 2009	Letter of interest is due to the Office of Children & Families in the Courts
June 2009	Site Visits
July 13, 2009	Selections made
August 2009	Phase Two Roll Out
February 1, 2010	Practices in place

The FDC Course

- Interactive instruction and portfolio advisement, based on the text, *Empowerment Skills for Family Workers*, a strengths-based family support curriculum developed by Cornell University.
- Classes offered by community-based instructors trained and supported by the PA FDC system.
- An experiential and supportive adult learning environment that promotes discussion and reflection.
- Development of a Skills Portfolio documenting knowledge and skills with guidance of a trained portfolio advisor.

With successful completion of the FDC Course, an approved portfolio, and passing a standardized exam, workers earn the nationally recognized and respected FDC Credential.

Core Competencies (Chapters) of the FDC Course

1. *Family Development: A Sustainable Route to Healthy Self-Reliance*
2. *Communicating with Skill and Heart*
3. *Taking Good Care of Yourself*
4. *Diversity*
5. *Strengths-based Assessment*
6. *Helping Families Set and Reach Goals*
7. *Helping Families Access Specialized Services*
8. *Home Visiting*
9. *Facilitation Skills: Family Conferences, Support Groups and Community Meetings*
10. *Collaboration*

What happens when agencies use Family Development principles?

1. Families develop *a partnership* with a family development worker.
2. A family development worker *helps each family assess* its needs and strengths-an ongoing process.
3. Each *family sets its own major goal* and smaller goals working toward the major goal and identifies ideas for reaching them.
4. The family development *worker helps the family make a written plan* for pursuing goals with some tasks being the responsibility of the family member and some of the worker's.
5. The family *learns and practices skills* needed to become self-reliant.
6. *The family uses services as stepping stones* to reach their goals.
7. The family's sense of responsibility is restored. *The family (and each individual within the family) is strengthened by the family development process* so they are better able to handle future challenges.

For more information about enrolling in the next FDC Course in your area, please contact:

The Family Development Training and Credentialing (FDC) Program

FDC: Transforming the Way



*Agencies Work with
Families*

**Strengths-based
family support training for
frontline family workers**

What is the Family Development Training and Credentialing Program?

The FDC Program is a professional development course and credentialing program for frontline family workers to learn and practice skills of strength-based family support with families.

FDC courses are offered to frontline family workers from a wide range of government, private, and not-for-profit agencies as well as businesses and large corporations.

Family development trainees work with families across the life span including families with young children, teen parents, retired people, people with disabilities, and many other groups.

To earn the FDC, a worker:

- completes **90 hours** of interactive classroom instruction and portfolio advisement based on the *Empowerment Skills for Family Workers* curriculum;
- prepares a **Skills Portfolio** with support of a portfolio advisor; and,
- passes a state **credentialing exam**.

FDC courses are offered through interagency partnerships by community-based instructors and portfolio advisors who are trained by the Cornell affiliate in PA: the Community Action Association of Pennsylvania. Information on costs for the training and the credential is available through your local contact or the CAAP.

In Pennsylvania, the credential is issued by Indiana University of Pennsylvania.



FDC Outcomes – The Research Shows:

Research conducted on the outcomes of FDC training revealed that workers:

- used family development skills in their professional and personal lives;
- enhanced skills in helping families develop their own goals of self-reliance;
- increased the ability of families to meet their goals.

Agency supervisors reported FDC training:

- increased effectiveness in helping workers relate to families; and,
- improved communication among workers and families.

Praise for the Empowerment Skills for Family Workers curriculum from frontline family worker:

"It helped me remember why I went into this work in the first place!"

I have a renewed attitude toward the families I work with. This course showed me what it's like to be on the other side of the desk."

"Now, I'm looking for strengths. Last year I never thought about how important that step is when working with families."

"I'm more patient and communicate better with families. I look at situations differently now."

"This class should be a prerequisite for every family worker!"

Join the Nationwide Family Development Movement

- The FDC was established in 1996 at Cornell University through an interagency collaboration, and funded by the NY Department of State's Community Services Block Grant Program.
- In Pennsylvania, the Community Action Association of Pennsylvania administers the program, partnering with other state programs including Indiana University of PA, University of Pittsburgh Office of Child Development, Penn State Cooperative Extension and Center for Schools and Communities.
- Currently, FDC training and credentialing is available in Alaska, Alabama, Arizona, California, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Maine, Missouri, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Washington, and the District of Columbia.

For more information about the FDC program in Pennsylvania, contact

Dr. Barbara Mooney
Director of Training
Community Action Association
of Pennsylvania
243 E. High Street
Waynesburg, PA 15370
Phone: 724-852-2272
Cell: 717-756-3109
E-mail: Barbara@thecaap.org

CAAP
Community Action
Association
of Pennsylvania

3-5-7 MODEL

The 3-5-7 Model provides a framework to engage children and youth in the process of permanency, safety and well-being. It helps them deal with identity confusions, grieve the lost opportunities for normal childhood development and for families, friends, and communities they became detached from in placement activities. This model assists in the attachment process to build relationships where they find a sense of belonging in permanent familial relationships.

It is an approach to working with children and youth at the point they enter child welfare services and for those who live in the child care system waiting permanency options.

The Model is a practice approach to work with those who have experienced profound losses in their lives. It assists those individuals in the building of relationships through the attachment process. For those children and youth receiving services through children and youth agencies, this practice work may be provided at any point in the provision of services. Training will provide an in-depth opportunity to increase understanding of the grief and attachment processes and the doing of feelings work with children, youth and families.

3-5-7 Model **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

1. Participants will learn the concepts of the 3-5-7 Model and its use in preparing children, youth and families for all forms of permanency.
2. Participants will increase their knowledge of the core issues of loss (primary trauma of abuse and neglect; secondary trauma of placements away from family), identity formation through developmental cycles, the building and rebuilding of relationships through the attachment process as it relates to permanency work.
3. Participants will practice skill development of these concepts through the use of interactive exercises.
4. Participants will understand the application of the 3-5-7 Model in using the practice models of Family Group Decision Making, Family Development Credentialing and Family Finding.



MISSION *and* GUIDING PRINCIPLES

For

PENNSYLVANIA'S
CHILD DEPENDENCY SYSTEM

Prepared By:

CHILDREN'S ROUNDTABLE INITIATIVE
OFFICE OF CHILDREN & FAMILIES IN THE COURTS
SUPREME COURT OF PENNSYLVANIA

Spring 2009

Introduction

With approximately 20,000 children in Pennsylvania's foster care system, the need to examine and enhance our child dependency system is paramount. To do so, collaboration between the courts and the child welfare agencies is essential. This point was highlighted in the 2004 Pew Commission on Children in Foster Care Report to Congress stating,

"Although child welfare agencies and the courts share responsibility for improving outcomes for children in foster care, institutional barriers and long-established practices often discourage them from collaborating. Effective collaboration requires that both entities change the way they think about their respective roles, responsibilities, and priorities and engage in a new way of doing business together. Jurisdictions in which courts and agencies have been able make this shift have yielded better results for children." (Pew, 2004)

The initiative set forth herein combines the efforts of professionals from both the child welfare service and legal system in attaining the overarching goals of **child safety, well-being and permanency**. All involved in this work, from child welfare professionals to attorneys to commissioners and judges, are united in this common goal of helping children and families. To support and guide these efforts, this document was created by the Pennsylvania Children's Roundtable Initiative.

The document identifies a new mission for Pennsylvania's child dependency system and sets forth guiding principles that will lead to accomplishing that mission under the name:

FAMILIES 4 CHILDREN

"Families 4 Children" stands for the collection of Pennsylvania individuals and organizations who have agreed to communicate and cooperate in pursuing the common purpose of finding or creating safe, permanent homes for every dependent child in Pennsylvania as quickly and practically as possible. This common purpose should be achieved through application of the Mission Statement and Guiding Principles set forth below, which are symbolized in its logo and summarized in its name.

Children's Roundtable Initiative

The Children's Roundtable, supported by the Office of Children and Families in the Courts (OCFC) within the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC) and established by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania in 2006, formally adopted the Mission Statement & Guiding Principles on May 29, 2009. The Children's Roundtable embodies a collaborative, cross-system statewide infrastructure that allows for effective administration and communication via a three-tiered system.

The first tier of the infrastructure is comprised of the local **Children's Roundtables**. These exist in each judicial district and are convened by a judge. Members include supervisory and dependency judges, children and youth professionals, county solicitors, child and parent advocates, academic experts, and anyone interested in making a positive contribution to the functioning of the dependency system within counties.

The intermediate tier of the infrastructure is comprised of the **Leadership Roundtables**. Pennsylvania's sixty judicial districts are divided into eight Leadership Roundtables. The number of judicial districts per Leadership Roundtable varies slightly to keep like-size judicial districts together, with a minimum of five (5) judicial districts per roundtable. These Leadership Roundtables are comprised of three members from each local Children's Roundtable including a dependency judge, the Children & Youth Administrator, and one additional Children's Roundtable member. Members of Leadership Roundtables provide a forum for members to identify, discuss, and share problems and solutions.

The third and highest level of the infrastructure is the **State Roundtable**. The State Roundtable is comprised of at least two members from each Leadership Roundtable and others with specific expertise in child dependency matters. In addition to facilitating intrastate communication, the State Roundtable sets priorities related to child dependency court improvement efforts and is involved in the national dependency reform movement to keep Pennsylvania apprised of evolving trends and best practices.

As recommended in the 2004 Pew Commission on Children in Foster Care Report, the Children's Roundtable Initiative encourages strong communication and collaboration on behalf of children. The State Roundtable first met in June of 2007. Through a collaborative discussion process at that meeting, a consensus was reached that a paradigm shift must occur regarding the way we presently work with children and families in Pennsylvania. The State Roundtable adopted a philosophical framework of respect by empowering families to identify their strengths and make their own decisions regarding the future of their children. It was further agreed that practice supported by the initiative henceforth would be strength-based and family-centered, engaging families in a manner that would guide them in developing their own collaborative solutions. That paradigm shift is described in this document.

Logo & Name



Description of Logo

This logo depicts the picture and words that we believe a child would create from blocks and crayons if that child were asked to show what he or she really wanted from the Pennsylvania child dependency system:

To grow up in a safe, nurturing, and permanent family.

This logo is child and family-friendly, representing a new philosophy and approach to child dependency in Pennsylvania which builds on the strengths of the family as a foundation for protecting children.

The adult figures represent all families and the child figure represents all children.

The blue circle contains the Mission Statement set forth below.

Description of Name

The name “Families 4 Children” summarizes the ultimate goal of this initiative and the Pennsylvania child dependency system:

To ensure that every child grows up in a safe, nurturing, and permanent family.

The name also stands for the “family” of Pennsylvanians who are “for” children and are communicating and cooperating with each other to achieve that goal.

Mission Statement & Guiding Principles

The ultimate goal of “Families 4 Children” is to ensure that every child grows up in a safe, nurturing, and permanent family. This goal will be accomplished through the following four mission priorities: protecting children; promoting strong families; promoting child well-being, and providing timely permanency. Embedding these mission priorities into all aspects of the child dependency system will lead to better outcomes for our children and a brighter future for our communities.

These principles represent the fundamental beliefs that should guide the overall operation of the child dependency system in Pennsylvania and be reflected in the delivery of all services to children and families within that system. These beliefs should also guide court and policy decisions at all levels within the system and the relationships among all participants in the system. Doing so should increase child safety and well-being while reducing the number of dependent children in Pennsylvania and/or the length of time that any particular child remains dependent.

To accomplish this mission and redefine, refocus, and redirect the goals, actions, and operation of the child dependency system in Pennsylvania, the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, through its Office of Children & Families in the Courts and the Children's Roundtable Initiative, presents the following Guiding Principles.

Mission Statement

***“Protect Children;
Promote Strong Families;
Promote Child Well-Being;
Provide Timely Permanency”***

Protect Children

All children have the right to be protected from physical neglect and abuse, including sexual victimization, and from emotional neglect and abuse.

Promote Strong Families

All children have the right to live in a strong family that provides a safe, nurturing, and healthy environment in which to be reared, as families are the primary source of the protection and nurturing of children.

Promote Child Well-Being

All children have the right: to be happy, thriving, self-actualized, educated, healthy, and content; to have the opportunity to reach their full potential as individuals capable of healthy relationships and productive lives; and to have a fair chance in life with opportunities for healthy, balanced, and well-rounded development.

Provide Timely Permanency

All children have the right to live in a permanent family and to timely permanency decisions, as these are critical to the health and welfare of dependent children.

Mission Statement #1: Protect Children

OUR BELIEF:

All children have the right to be protected from physical neglect and abuse, including sexual victimization, and from emotional neglect and abuse.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

Pennsylvania's child dependency system shall:

- Protect children who:
 - are without proper parental care or control, subsistence, without education as required by law, or other control necessary for that child's physical health, mental health, emotional health, or moral development;
 - have been placed for adoption in violation of law;
 - have been abandoned by their parents, guardian or other custodian;
 - are without a parent, guardian, or legal custodian;
 - are habitually and without justification truant from school;
 - have committed an act of habitual disobedience of the reasonable and lawful commands of their parent, guardian, or other custodian and are ungovernable and found to be in need of care, treatment, or supervision;
 - are both under the age of ten years and have committed a delinquent act;
 - formerly under the jurisdiction of the court or on informal adjustment who commit an ungovernable act;
 - are born to a parent whose parental rights regarding another child have been involuntary terminated within three years immediately preceding their date of birth and the conduct of the parent poses a risk to their health, safety, or welfare.

- Recognize and address the trauma a child experiences as a result of abuse and neglect.
 - Recognize and address the trauma a child experiences as a result of placement.
 - Ensure that “reasonable services” are provided to parents or other caregivers prior to removal, if possible.
 - When placement is required to ensure child safety, first and foremost, make all reasonable steps to immediately locate a safe, kinship care option, preferably within the child’s community.
 - Utilize shelter and congregate care facilities only when the child’s immediate physical and emotional needs require such care.
 - Ensure that the voice of the child is heard at each stage of the process.
 - Regard child safety, well-being and timely permanency as the shared responsibility of those within the system and the community.
-

Mission Statement #2: Promote Strong Families

OUR BELIEF:

All children have the right to live in a strong family that provides a safe, nurturing, and healthy environment in which to be reared, as families are the primary source of the protection and nurturing of children.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

Pennsylvania’s child dependency system shall:

- Recognize that a family is the primary source for the nurturing and protection of a child and has the primary responsibility to meet a child’s needs for permanency, safety, and well-being.

- Define “family” broadly to include parents, relatives, those not related by blood but who have a close and meaningful relationship with the child, and those who provide a permanent home for a child.
- Recognize that a child should be maintained with his or her parents whenever possible and, if not, then with other family members.
- Encourage families to utilize all available resources to meet that responsibility.
- Recognize that the family is significant to all aspects of the child’s development.
- Recognize that families are capable of change and, with support, most can safely care for their children.
- Engage families respectfully.
- Recognize that each family is both unique and diverse and provide services tailored to its unique and diverse strengths and needs by respecting its economic, ethnic, class, cultural and religious beliefs, values, practices, and traditions.
- Inspire hope, growth, and change in each family by identifying its strengths.
- Engage custodial and non-custodial parents as well as kin in the care of their children.
- Engage non-participating parents effectively.
- Include family members in the ongoing care of their children, even when those children are temporarily placed outside of the family home.
- Support families by stressing the importance of formal education for the child.
- Educate families in parenting and life skills.
- Ensure that a child in placement maintains safe family connections.
- Find and engage absent parents, siblings, and other relatives to keep children connected to their birth families.
- Value extended family members as permanent resources for children.

Mission Statement #3: Promote Child Well-being

OUR BELIEF:

All children have the right: to be happy, thriving, self-actualized, educated, healthy and content; to have the opportunity to reach their full potential as individuals capable of healthy relationships and productive lives; and to have a fair chance in life with opportunities for healthy, balanced, and well-rounded development.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

Pennsylvania's child dependency system shall:

- Recognize and promote the physical, emotional, social, and educational well-being of each child.
- Inspire hope, growth, and change in each child by identifying his or her strengths.
- Recognize that each child is unique and provide services tailored to his or her unique strengths and needs.
- Provide opportunities for each child to develop individual talents and skills.
- Provide opportunities for each child to build self-confidence and self-esteem.
- Empower every child to develop a sense of individual responsibility and accountability for their actions.
- Identify and engage an adult with whom a child can develop a reliable, sustaining and meaningful life-connection.
- Ensure that siblings are placed together unless there is a compelling reason not to provide such placement.
- Implement a visitation schedule including siblings, parents, and kin that meets the developmental needs of each child, understanding frequent, quality visitation as being key to successful family reunification.
- Seek and strengthen informal and formal community resources for children and families.
- Ensure that early assessment is made of each child's cognitive development and, where possible, include family members in any recommended treatment.

- Encourage a child's interaction with peers in order to foster healthy social development.
 - Strengthen an older child's ability to live independently as he or she transitions into adulthood by providing supportive services such as education, life skills training, prevention services, and employment and housing education.
-

Mission Statement #4: Provide Timely Permanency

OUR BELIEF:

All children have the right to live in a permanent family and to timely permanency decisions, as these are critical to the health and welfare of dependent children.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

Pennsylvania's child dependency system shall:

- Identify all possible practices and strategies that address the needs of a child and family and encourage solutions which do not require court intervention.
- Recognize that a child should be reunified with his or her parents whenever possible and, if not, then with other family members.
- Understand the need for urgency in service delivery and decision-making for those children who do require court intervention.
- Whenever possible, employ non-adversarial court processes including facilitation and mediation strategies as a means for resolving concerns.
- Employ family finding strategies in recognition of the potential trauma caused by family separation.
- Employ decision-making and planning strategies that are family driven.
- Employ family engagement strategies as a means of insuring strength-based family centered skills for professionals serving children and families.

- Employ non-adversarial, family-driven planning strategies at the initial stages of the dependency process and at any other stage at which a plan is being developed or updated.
 - Assure timely and thorough court hearings and expeditious decisions for each child.
 - Assure competent legal representation for children and parents before a shelter care hearing and throughout the legal process.
 - Ensure that the voices of parents or other caregivers are heard at each stage of the process.
 - Employ concurrent planning for permanency as each case commences and at every stage of the proceedings.
 - Minimize the length of time children must spend in foster care and other temporary living situations.
 - Timely accomplish permanency for every dependent child according to the law.
 - Terminate court intervention in the life of a child when that child is no longer dependent.
 - Identify, create, and implement additional systemic improvement practices.
 - Ensure that recruitment activities are fully pursued to identify the best adoptive family for those children who cannot return to their families.
 - Ensure close coordination with Orphans' Courts aimed at finalizing adoptions in a timely manner.
 - Recognize that permanent legal custodianship is a viable option when reunification or adoption is not possible.
-

Child Dependency System Operations

OUR BELIEF:

To accomplish the Mission Statement and implement the Guiding Principles above, the Pennsylvania child dependency system must improve in every facet and at every level, increase the resources dedicated to that system, and measure its progress toward these new goals.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

Pennsylvania's child dependency system shall:

- Communicate and cooperate with others within the child dependency system working toward the common goal of providing each child with a safe, nurturing, and permanent family.
- Provide appropriate and effective prevention, intervention, and treatment programs and ensure that all decisions made and all services offered are designed to meet the unique needs of each child and family.
- Ensure strong and responsible leadership from all facets of the dependency system, beginning with our courts.
- Ensure competent, trained legal counsel for children and parents who qualify for court-appointed legal counsel.
- Ensure that children and parents are fully informed about their rights, the court process, and the function and duties of legal counsel who represent them.
- Utilize the Children's Roundtable Initiative as a mechanism for local and statewide communication, decision-making, and leadership.
- Create unified methods to measure practices and outcomes.
- Collect and manage data, then evaluate and plan for future needs.
- Establish and monitor accountability for all system participants.
- Employ highly trained, competent, and caring staff who are prepared to serve children and families in accordance with the Mission Statement and Guiding Principles set forth herein.

- Treat all child dependency professionals with respect and dignity, establish clear expectations and standards for their performance, evaluate them regularly, and compensate them appropriately.
- Assure that families receive priority in the delivery of human services including mental health treatment, drug and alcohol treatment, training and employment connections, housing services and child care services, and other needed services.
- Educate community members and organizations to the within Mission Statement and Guiding Principles and the functioning of the child dependency system.
- Encourage community members and organizations to participate in all aspects of the child dependency system, because local communities are our greatest resource in meeting the needs of families and children.
- Develop and work within a strong and integrated network of service systems, since neither the child dependency system, nor any other system can alone address all the needs of children and families.
- Support the educational needs of all dependent children and advocate on their behalf.
- Continually increase the effectiveness of all services, programs, and processes.
- Advocate for stable and sufficient funding is provided to support all aspects of service delivery and account for the expenditure of all such funds.
- Ensure that courts, child welfare agencies, permanent families, and all other participants in the child dependency system are provided with the necessary resources and capacity to implement these Guiding Principles and accomplish the mission to “protect children, promote strong families, promote child well-being, and provide timely permanency” in Pennsylvania.

- END -

STATE ROUNDTABLE - MEMBER LIST

Pennsylvania CIP Task Force

Roundtable 1

Montgomery County

Laurie O'Connor, Department Director
Office of Children and Youth
Human Services Center
1430 De Kalb Street
P.O. Box 311
Norristown, PA 19404-0311
Member: Guiding Principles Committee

Allegheny County

Cynthia K. Stoltz, Esq. (LRT Co-Chair)
Administrator, Court Services for Children
Family Division - Adult & Juvenile Sections
440 Ross Street, Suite 5080
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
Member: Guiding Principles Committee
Children's Roundtable Summit Planning Committee

Roundtable 2

Lancaster County

Honorable Leslie Gorbey (LRT Co-Chair)
Court of Common Pleas of Lancaster County
Lancaster County Courthouse
50 North Duke Street
P.O. Box 83480
Lancaster, PA 17608
Member: Children's Roundtable Summit Planning Committee

Chester County

Keith. A. Hayes, Administrator
Children & Youth Services

Roundtable 3

Lehigh County

Honorable Brian Johnson (LRT Co-Chair)
Court of Common Pleas of Lehigh County
455 West Hamilton Street
Allentown, PA 18101
Member: Bench Book Committee
Guiding Principles Committee (chair)

Dauphin County

Honorable Todd A. Hoover
Court of Common Pleas of Dauphin County
Front & Market Streets
Harrisburg, PA 17101
Member: Bench Book Committee
FGDM Statewide Leadership Team (chair)
Permanency Practice Initiative Oversight Team

Dauphin County

Peter Vriens (LRT Co-Chair)
Dauphin County Human Services
2 South Second Street, 5th floor
Harrisburg, PA 17101
Member: FGDM Leadership Team (chair)
Permanency Practice Initiative Oversight Team

Roundtable 4

Washington County

Honorable Mark Mascara (LRT Co-Chair)
Court of Common Pleas of Washington County
Courthouse
One South Main Street
Washington, PA 15301

Butler County

Honorable Kelley Streib
Court of Common Pleas of Butler County
Butler County Government Center
P.O. Box 1208
Butler, PA 16003
Member: Bench Book Committee
Children's Roundtable Summit Planning Committee

Lackawanna County

Honorable Chester T. Harhut
President Judge
Court of Common Pleas of Lackawanna County
200 North Washington Avenue
Scranton, PA 18503
Member: Bench Book Committee (chair)

William Browning, Executive Director (LRT C-Chair)
Children and Youth Services of Lackawanna County
280 Adams Avenue
Scranton, PA 18503

Roundtable 5

Franklin/Fulton Counties

Honorable Carol Van Horn (LRT Co-Chair)
Court of Common Pleas of Franklin County
Franklin County Courthouse
157 Lincoln Way East
Chambersburg, PA 17201
Member: Bench Book Committee

Blair County

Mary Ann Burger, Director (LRT Co-Chair)
Children and Youth Services
423 Allegheny Street
Hollidaysburg, PA 16648

Roundtable 6

Northumberland County

Honorable Charles H. Saylor (LRT Co-Chair)
Court of Common Pleas of Northumberland County
Courthouse
201 Market Street
Sunbury, PA 17801
Member: Bench Book Committee

Lycoming County

Richard Saylor, Director (LRT Co-Chair)
Children and Youth Services of Lycoming County
Sharwell Building
200 East Street
Williamsport, PA 17701

Roundtable 7

Indiana County

Honorable Carol Hanna (LRT Co-Chair)
Court of Common Pleas of Indiana County
Courthouse
825 Philadelphia Street
Indiana, PA 15701
Member: Bench Book Committee
Children's Roundtable Summit Planning Committee (chair)
Family Developing Credentialing
Permanency Practice Initiative Oversight Team

Venango County

Honorable Oliver Lobaugh
Court of Common Pleas of Venango County
1168 Liberty Street
Franklin, PA 16323

Venango County

David Schwille, Director of Human Services
1283 Liberty Street
Franklin, PA 16323

Jefferson County

Brian Mowrey, Administrator (Co-Chair)
Jefferson County C&Y Services
Jefferson Place
155 Main Street
Brookville, Pa. 15825

Roundtable 8

Columbia/Montour

Honorable Scott W. Naus (LRT Co-Chair)
Court of Common Pleas of Columbia County
P.O. Box 380
Bloomsburg, PA 17815-0380

Tioga County

Diana Robinson, Court Coordinator
Department of Family Services
1873 Shumway Hill Road
Wellsboro, PA 16901

Sullivan County

Lisa Wilcox, Director (LRT Co-Chair)
Children & Youth Services
Sullivan County Courthouse
PO BOX 157
Main and Muncy Streets
Laporte, PA 18626
Member: Children's Roundtable Summit Planning Committee

PERMANENT SEATS ON STATE ROUNDTABLE

Honorable Max Baer, Supreme Court Justice
Pittsburg, PA 15219

Honorable Kim Berkeley Clark
Dependency Judge - Family Division
Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County
Family Division - Juvenile Section
440 Ross Street, Suite 5065
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
Member: Bench Book Committee
Children's Roundtable Summit Planning Committee (chair)

Honorable Kevin M. Dougherty (LRT Co-Chair)
Administrative Judge - Family Division
Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia County
1801 Vine Street, Room 314
Philadelphia, PA 19103
Member: Bench Book Committee
Children's Roundtable Summit Planning Committee

Marc Cherna, Executive Director
Department of Human Services
United Way Building, Fourth Floor
One Smithfield Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Honorable David Wecht
Administrative Judge - Family Division
Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County
Family Division - Juvenile Section
440 Ross Street, Suite 5065
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Anne Marie Ambrose, Commissioner
Department of Human Services
1515 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19102
Member: Children's Roundtable Summit Planning Committee

INVITED GUESTS

Mr. Alan Ademski
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administrator for Children and Families
Suite 864 Public Ledger Building
150 Independence Mall West
Philadelphia, PA 19106

Jess Wolovoy
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Suite 864 Public Ledger Building
150 Independence Mall West
Philadelphia, PA 19106

Fayette County
John Perrott, Esq.
Parent Attorney
48 E. Main Street
Uniontown, PA 15401

Jefferson County
Kerith Strano Taylor, Esquire
Child Advocate/Guardian ad Litem
173 Main Street, Suite 700
Brookville, PA 15825

Calvin B. Johnson, M.D., M.Ph.
Secretary of Health of Pennsylvania
802 Health and Welfare Building
Commonwealth and Forster Streets
Harrisburg, PA 17108

Honorable Estelle B. Richman
Secretary of Welfare
Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare
333 Health and Welfare Building
Commonwealth and Forster Streets
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Frank P. Cervone, Executive Director
Support Center for Child Advocates
1900 Cherry Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103
Member: Children's Roundtable Summit Planning Committee

James Anderson, Executive Director
Juvenile Court Judges Commission
Room 401
Finance Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120
Member: Guiding Principles Committee
Children's Roundtable Summit Planning Committee

Dale McClain, President
Pennsylvania Bar Association
100 South Street
Harrisburg, PA 17101

Mimi Laver, J.D.
American Bar Association
ADA Permanency Barriers Project
740 15th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005

Richard Gold, Deputy Secretary
Office of Children, Youth and Families
Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare
131 Health and Welfare Building

Commonwealth and Forster Streets
Harrisburg, PA 17105-2675
Member: Guiding Principles Committee
Children's Roundtable Summit Planning Committee (chair)

Honorable Dennis M. O'Brien
House of Pennsylvania
139 Main Capitol Building
P.O. Box 202169
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2169

Honorable Stewart J. Greenleaf
Senate of Pennsylvania
Senate Box 203012
19 East Wing
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3012

Zygmunt A. Pines, Esquire
Court Administrator of Pennsylvania
Administrative Office of PA Courts
1515 Market Street, Suite 1414
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Joe Mittleman
Judicial Programs
Administrative Office of PA Courts
1515 Market Street, Suite 1414
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Honorable Jay Costa
Senate of Pennsylvania
1501 Ardmore Boulevard
Suite 403
Pittsburgh, PA 15221

Commissioner George P. Hartwick, III
Commissioner's Office of Dauphin County
P.O. Box 1295
Harrisburg, PA 17108

Commissioner Pamela Tokar-Ickes
Commissioner of Somerset County
300 North Center Avenue
Suite 500
Somerset, PA 15501

Karen Jenkins, Director Public Child Welfare Initiatives
American Humane
63 Inverness Drive East
Englewood, CO. 80112

Revised: August 15, 2009