

Pennsylvania Court Improvement Program

2010 Strategic Plan ~Basic, Training and Data Grants

Introduction

In an effort to create more positive outcomes for foster children, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court created the Office of Children and Families in the Courts (OCFC) within the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC). OCFC's principal goal is to minimize the length of time that dependent children spend in foster care or in other temporary living situations when they are removed from their parents under court order as a result of abuse or neglect. OCFC also works with county courts and children and youth agencies to reunite children safely and timely with their families. In the event that family reunification is not a viable option, the OCFC aims to expedite the adoption process for those children with the goal of adoption; increase the incidence of legal guardianship; and to enhance/expand ongoing permanent adult connections for the limited number of children who must remain in the foster care system. The primary responsibility of OCFC is to administer the implementation, oversight and evaluation of all statewide priorities, activities, initiatives, and trainings associated with Pennsylvania's Court Improvement Program (CIP). In addition, OCFC serves as the office responsible for disseminating CIP related information to Pennsylvania's judicial districts.

Background

Pennsylvania uses CIP funds to implement the Permanency Practice Initiative (PPI) through the OCFC. As of September 2009, Twenty-seven (27) of sixty-seven (67) Pennsylvania counties are participating in PPI. The twenty-seven (27) PPI counties are comprised of two Phases, Phase One and Phase Two. Phase One counties that started the PPI in 2008 include: *Allegheny, Blair, Butler, Carbon, Chester, Dauphin, Jefferson, Lackawanna, Lehigh, Northampton, Snyder, Venango, Washington and York*. Phase 2 Counties that started the PPI in 2009 include: *Adams, Armstrong, Bucks, Clinton, Cumberland, Forest, Franklin, Fulton, Montgomery, Indiana, Luzerne, Tioga and Warren (Attachment 1)*. It is projected that in 2010 fifteen (15) additional counties will join the PPI in Phase Three and fifteen more counties will join in 2011 as Phase Four. At the same time the states largest county, Philadelphia, is implementing elements of the PPI with the assistance of OCFC. While not included in either Phase One or Phase Two, Philadelphia's Dependency Court and Child Welfare Agency is making tremendous progress and initiating a slower implementation of practice changes including Family finding, Family Group Decision Making, the Dependency Court Data/Outcome Tracking CPCMS System, a local Children's Roundtable and a three-month judicial review process for targeted children.

The underlining theory on which the PPI was built is that enhanced judicial oversight combined with strength-based, family led practice will ultimately increase the number of children safely maintained in their own homes and support expedited safe returns home. To accomplish this, the PPI seeks to implement or enhance a variety of services prior to the child/youth coming into out-of-home-care or immediately following a need for

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such. The fundamental PPI practice is Family Group Decision Making (FGDM). FGDM is a strength based and family centered practice that allows family members to plan and make decisions for their family. PPI counties recognize the importance of involving family members as part of the process in making important decisions concerning their loved ones in the foster care system. Other PPI practices include Family Finding (FF) and Family Development Credentialing (FDC). Family Finding is a set of methods and strategies using both internet capability and family engagement skills to locate and engage relatives of children living in out of home care. The goal of family finding is to provide each child with the life long connections that only a family can offer. FDC is a professional development course and credentialing program that provides family based support training for frontline workers. Added to these philosophical practice changes is a defined set of court related changes including three-month court reviews, the formation of a local Children's Roundtable (convened by the dependency judge and jointly facilitated with the Child Welfare Administrator) and the CPCMS Dependency Data/Outcome Tracking System. In order to participate in the PPI, judges/hearing masters must conduct court review hearing at least every three months. The intent of these expedited reviews is to ensure timely service delivery and parental/child involvement, identify system barriers preventing such, ensure concurrent plans are being implemented and assure timely permanency for children. The local Children's Roundtable functions as the local oversight body for the PPI and the CPCMS Dependency Module provides needed information to enhance the creation of data informed planning/decision making.

The CIP's overarching structure is the Children's Roundtable Initiative (**Attachment 2**). The roundtable system provides a statewide infrastructure to effectively administer and communicate dependency related information via a three tier structure. Pennsylvania uses a Roundtable model to guide the flow of dependency practice and the collaboration between the Dependency Courts, OCFC, The Department of Public Welfare's Office of Children, Youth and Families (DPW/OCYF) and other relevant stakeholders. At the foundational level (tier 1), each judicial district in Pennsylvania convenes a Local Children's Roundtable (LCR). The LCR is convened by the county dependency judge and is comprised of relevant stakeholders in the dependency system including but not limited to children and youth administrators, county commissioners, hearing masters, guardians *ad litem*, parent attorneys, agency solicitors, Court Appointed Special Advocates, school districts, drug and alcohol and mental health professionals, families, county children and youth staff, juvenile probation staff, police departments, service providers and other relevant stakeholders. The LCRs meet on a regular basis (usually monthly) to share best or promising practices, address areas of concern within the county's dependency system and make plans to overcome barriers to timely permanency for children in their judicial district.

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The second or intermediate level (tier 2) of roundtable infrastructure is known as the Leadership Roundtables (LR). There are eight (8) LRs dividing Pennsylvania's 60 judicial districts into groups based on size (**Attachment 3**). There are a minimum of five (5) judicial districts per LR. The number of judicial districts per LR varies slightly to keep like-size judicial districts together. The dependency judge, children and youth administrator and one additional designated stakeholder from the LCR join one of the eight LRs. At this level, counties are able to raise topical areas of interest or concerns from their own LCR and provide each other with support, problem solving techniques and practice awareness. The expectation is that like-size judicial districts will share similar concerns, solutions and resources. The LRs meet twice a year (spring and fall) and are co-chaired by a dependency court judge from one judicial district and a children and youth administrator from another. In 2008, the concept of co-chairs was developed to establish the LR agenda, facilitate the semi-annual meetings and provide follow-up to meeting discussions. In 2009, the role of the co-chairs was enhanced to include outreach efforts to encourage more participation from dependency judges and children and youth administrators within their LR who have not yet participated or have minimal participation in a LR.

Issues are identified during LR meetings and common themes are brought to the highest roundtable level, the State Roundtable. The State Roundtable (tier 3) is convened by the Honorable Max Baer, Supreme Court Justice, and co-chaired with the Administrator of OCFC and the DPW/OCYF Deputy Secretary. The State Roundtable also consists of other pertinent state and national leaders having specific expertise in dependency matters. During this statewide meeting accomplishments are shared, LR co-chairs report on themes from the eight LRs, updates on initiatives are presented and upcoming events are announced. It is at this annual roundtable where OCFC's priorities for the following year are set and activities are established for the intended use of CIP award dollars. From the State Roundtable membership, workgroups are established to research and address statewide areas of concern. Current workgroups include: Bench Book Development Team, Pennsylvania Children's Roundtable Summit Team and the Pennsylvania Dependency Guiding Principles Team. In addition to facilitating intrastate communication, the State Roundtable is involved in the dependency reform movement at the national level to keep Pennsylvania apprised of the evolving trends and best practices.

Such a structure enables Pennsylvania to be responsive to the common needs of the state while at the same time allowing flexibility for each judicial district to function in a way that best meets their individual needs. The flow of information and communication occurs from both a top-down perspective as well as from a bottom-up approach to ensure a mutual understanding and collaboration of permanency efforts exist for all Pennsylvania agencies and court involved children. Overall, the effect is to move Pennsylvania forward in a consistent, uniform and informed manner as it endeavors to address permanence, safety and well-being for all of our children in the dependency system. This organizational structure contributes to a free flow of ideas, challenges and solutions.

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Activities

• **Roundtables (see information on Roundtables above and matrix p. 13):**

- Fall 2010 (Leadership Roundtables to coincide with Annual Children's Roundtable Summit)
- Spring 2011 (eight Leadership Roundtables)
- Summer 2011 (one Statewide Roundtable)
- FFY 2010-2011 (67 Children's Roundtables)
 - These roundtables occur at the local level and may occur at various times throughout the year as the county deems necessary.
 - The OCFC will be supporting the counties in their efforts with these meetings.

• **Coordination/Collaboration**

The CIP grant application was developed in collaboration with the DPW/OCYF. The letter of support from the Deputy Secretary for DPW/OCYF is attached to this document. Many of the projects and initiatives developed were created in collaboration with the OCFC and DPW/OCYF. Additionally, many are included in Pennsylvania's Performance Improvement Plan.

- **State Agency/State Court Meetings (matrix p. 14)** – The OCFC Director and DPW/OCYF Deputy Secretary. The purpose of these meetings is to ensure that cooperation between the two agencies occurs and services are not duplicated. These happen monthly at a minimum. Additionally, Supreme Court Justice Max Baer joins the meetings on a quarterly basis.
- **Expedited Appeals Subcommittee (matrix p. 14)** - Justice Baer asked the Appellate Rules Committee to develop expedited appeals for Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) hearings. To accomplish this task the Appellate Rules Committee developed a subcommittee which includes members of the Appellate Rules Committee, Juvenile Rules Committee, Domestic Relations Rules Committee and Orphans' Court Rules Committee. The development of these rules has established a statewide expectation of expediting appeals related to dependency, TPR and adoption hearings and will aid in decreasing the time a child spends in care. The rules became effective March 16, 2009.
- **Juvenile Court Rules Committee (matrix p. 14)** - Sandy Moore, OCFC Administrator was appointed by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania as an Ex Officio member of the Juvenile Rules Committee. As an Ex Officio member, Sandy can bring specific Dependency issues before the rules committee for consideration. In February 2007, the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania adopted Rules of Juvenile Court Procedures – Dependency Matters, which

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were developed by the Juvenile Rules Committee. Additionally, the Rules Committee has been integral in reviewing the court orders and forms that are part of the CPCMS Dependency System. Indeed, all requests for changes to CPCMS forms must first be reviewed by the sub-committee and adopted by the Juvenile Rules Committee. Ms. Moore's participation in this committee is ongoing.

- **Coordination of Dependency Court/Orphans Court Practices and Policies (matrix p. 14)** – The coordination of dependency courts and orphans' courts is an essential partnership in Pennsylvania. This coordination is not necessary in every county, as most of Pennsylvania's smaller counties have the same judge hearing both types of cases. In many of Pennsylvania's larger counties, a request for the termination of parental rights is heard in the Orphans Court. This court assumes case responsibility until finalization of adoption and quite often involves a judge other than the dependency judges. The OCFC is dedicated to helping the courts coordinate more closely to expedite a case through the system and provide the child with permanency more quickly. The OCFC will accomplish this through training, site visits and the roundtable structure. The CPCMS dependency data system will also aid us in this task. Timeframes for permanency will be tracked in the system and those counties who have dual courts for these purposes will be required to collaborate to ensure that the necessary data is entered into the system. PPI Phase One and Two counties have this bifurcated system and are required to have this coordination in place. Additionally, the Dependency Court Bench Book (under construction), is incorporating elements related to TPR and finalization into the document.

- **National Governor's Association – Policy Academy – PA Permanency Team (matrix p. 15)** - Pennsylvania was one of six states to be selected to participate in the National Governor's Association (NGA) - Policy Academy. The Policy Academy consists of a wide range of child welfare experts from Pennsylvania whose goal is to reduce the number of children in Foster care through a variety of strategies and collaborations. As of 2009, there are sixteen (16) counties participating in the NGA process (**Allegheny, Bucks, Clarion, Clinton, Dauphin, Erie, Lancaster, Lawrence, Lehigh, Luzerne, McKean, Montgomery, Northampton, Philadelphia, Schuylkill, York**). The above listed counties highlighted in bold are participating in both the NGA and PPI projects (**see attachment 1**). Sandy Moore, OCFC Administrator was selected to participate as a member of the NGA Policy Academy Core Team to represent Pennsylvania's Supreme Court and Pennsylvania's Dependency Courts. OCFC Judicial Program Analysts work in collaboration with OCYF staff within these 16 counties and participate in monthly NGA meetings. During these meetings child welfare cases are staffed. The team focuses on strengthening agency social work practice and identifying system barriers to permanency. These system barriers are then presented for discussion and

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resolution at local Children's Roundtable meetings. The NGA project will continue on an ongoing basis.

- **OCYF Children's Cabinet (matrix p.16)** - The Children's Cabinet is the Advisory Counsel for the DPW/OCYF Deputy Secretary. The Cabinet is comprised of the OCFC Director, Children & Youth Administrators, Juvenile Probation Chiefs and other stakeholders. The aim is to provide input and suggestions related to issues impacting abused & neglected children as well as review/comment on proposed regulation & bulletin changes. The OCFC Administrator is a standing member on this Advisory Counsel.
- **International Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) Blueprint Committee (matrix p. 16)** –Sandy Moore, OCFC Administrator, serves as a member of this committee. This international committee develops and issues a blueprint outlining best practice standards for FGDM. Because FGDM is the foundational practice for the Supreme Court's Permanency Practice Initiative, participation on this national group is vital. The OCFC Administrator is a standing member on this ongoing committee.

FGDM Statewide Leadership Team (matrix p. 16) - The FGDM Statewide Leadership Team is an overarching committee that provides guidance to the state in the development and implementation of FGDM. This team also disseminates information on training opportunities for the state related to FGDM. FGDM is the core foundational practice shift of the PPI. This FGDM Statewide Leadership Team also oversees the collection of outcome data related to this practice shift throughout Pennsylvania. Sandy Moore, OCFC Administrator will continue to be an active member of this Team.

- **Child and Family Service Review/Program Improvement Plan (CFSR/PIP) (matrix p. 16)** - The OCFC has been actively involved in all steps of the CFSR/PIP process since 2007. OCFC staff serve as members of the CFSR Steering Committee. In addition, an OCFC staff member participated as a state reviewer in the most recent CFSR process. The OCFC will continue to participate in the development and implementation of Pennsylvania's PIP, particularly as it pertains to dependency courts and collaboration between county dependency courts and children and youth agencies. . At the 2009 Federal Court and Agency meeting in Washington DC, staff from OCFC and OCYF joined a discussion group providing input regarding the State Self-Assessment portion of the CFSR. OCFC staff will continue to participate in the CFSR and PIP processes.

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- **Practice Standards Revision Committee (matrix p. 16)** - Pennsylvania is currently revising the best practice standards. OCFC staff serves as members of this committee. The purpose of this committee is to revise the current Child Welfare Practice Standards for Pennsylvania. This project is ongoing.
- **Pennsylvania Permanency Practice Initiative (PPI) Oversight Team (Matrix p.17)** This Team partners professionals from DPW/OCYF, Phase One and Phase Two Counties, Child Welfare Training Program, Statewide Adoption Network, Pennsylvania Community Action Association and OCFC in an effort to develop and oversee all phases of the PPI implementation. This Team meets regularly throughout the year.
- **Truancy Exploration Committee** – During the 2009 Fall and Spring LRs, counties discussed the subject of truancy and the need for a committee to examine the impact of truancy on the dependency system. Some counties shared best practices surrounding truancy while others had concerns about truancy prevention practices, truancy law interpretation, and truancy proceedings in their counties. At the 2009 State Roundtable meeting, OCFC was charged with developing a Truancy Exploration Committee using CIP dollars to research truancy best practices and concerns and their impact on the dependency system. Since truancy is a basis for dependency in Pennsylvania and many dependent children enter the system through the issue of truancy this is a significant issue. This subgroup consisting of OCFC staff, judges, hearing masters, magisterial district judges, DPW staff, county children and youth staff, county juvenile probation staff and Pennsylvania Department of Education Staff and other interested stakeholders will be established in the fall of 2009. This workgroup will meet regularly throughout the year and present it's findings/recommendations at the 2010 State Roundtable meeting. As a result of that presentation, the State Roundtable will establish additional action steps for OCFC staff.
- **Fatherhood Initiative** – The issue of father engagement within the Child Welfare System has obtained national attention. Locating and engaging fathers in the lives of dependent children requires specialized skills and sensitivity. The OCFC will partner with DPW/OCYF, Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program, Pennsylvania Bar Association, the American Bar Association and the American Humane Association to offer consulting and training services to a a maximum of ten PPI counties in 2010.

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- **Technical Assistance**

- **Direct contact/support of local Children’s Roundtables (matrix p. 18)** – In December 2008, three additional OCFC staff were hired and assigned to geographical regions to provide direct technical assistance to courts at a local level. The staff support all children’s roundtable activities in their assigned region and aid local jurisdictions in developing and implementing programs, practices and initiatives. Staffing information is provided below and **Attachment 1**.
- **Direct contact/support of Leadership Roundtables, including support of Chairpersons (matrix p. 18)** – Regionally assigned staff coordinate LR activities by supporting the leadership roundtable co-chairs and assisting in the actual LR meeting facilitation. Staff also encourage inter jurisdictional communication and provide for planning and development of initiatives.
- **Assist counties in data validation and interpretation (matrix p. 19)** - OCFC Regional staff continue to support Pennsylvania counties through data integrity issues. With the implementation of the statewide CPCMS Data/Outcome/Case Management system and the corresponding implementation of statewide Findings & Orders, it has become increasingly clear that data integrity is an essential component of the CIP. OCFC staff and AOPC Judicial Automation staff are conducting site visits and data review in each assigned county to ensure accuracy as statewide statistical reports are being developed and implemented. Data integrity is critical as we move the dependency system to a “data informed” system rather than an anecdotal response system. This data and its subsequent analysis will inform judicial districts and support strategic planning, development of programs and implementation of practices.
- **Provide expertise regarding practice initiatives for PPI (matrix p. 18)** – The PPI described above (page 1) is the cornerstone of the CIP. It is estimated that fifteen (15) Phase Four Counties, will begin the PPI during funding year 2010. In addition to the fifteen (15) Phase Four counties, it is envisioned that Philadelphia will be entering the second year of it’s PPI implementation. Since Philadelphia County is the largest county in Pennsylvania, it is estimated that it will take two years to fully implement PPI in the county. 2009 CIP funds will be used for Philadelphia first year of implementation and 2010 CIP funds will be allocated for Philadelphia second PPI implementation year.

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- **Conferences/trainings**

- **Third Annual Children’s Roundtable Summit – September 2011 (matrix p. 20)** - The OCFC will host the Third Annual Children’s Roundtable Summit in September 2011. This conference will provide a variety of workshops, keynote speakers and presentations related to Dependency/Permanency issues both in Pennsylvania and nationally. Conference participants will include children’s roundtable members from across the Commonwealth, plus various statewide partners, including DPW/OCYF, Juvenile Court Judges Commission (JCJC), Child Welfare Training Program and other key stakeholder organizations.
- **Graduated Curriculum for Dependency Judges (matrix p. 20)** – The Dependency Bench Book will be completed in January 2010. The document will be unveiled during the Spring 2010 State Trial Court Judges Conference plenary session with a corresponding conference training session to current dependency judges. Spring 2010 will also see the formation of a training curricula committee to develop a graduated curriculum for dependency judges. The bulk of this curricula work will be completed after October 1, 2010.
- **Parent/Child Representation Training** – During the 2009 State Roundtable meeting, roundtable members voted unanimously to allocate a portion of CIP dollars to institute a curriculum that educates Guardians Ad Litem and parent attorneys throughout the Commonwealth. Training areas will include child/family development, basic needs, family systems and service systems that may be part of a dependent child’s life such as education, special education, mental health and substance abuse. Training will be drawn from the fifteen dependency “themes” as identified and articulated within the Pennsylvania Dependency Court Bench Book. Curriculum development will be completed in 2010 and training will be delivered in 2010 and 2011. An evaluation process from all OCFC trainings including those as a result of the curriculum will be implemented. This will be an ongoing process to gauge the effectiveness of the OCFC trainings and curriculum and to identify topics and ideas for future trainings.

- **Educational/Information Initiatives**

- **Winter/Spring, 2011 - State Trial Court Judges Conferences Dependency Workshops (matrix p. 21)** - The AOPC offers the State Trial Court Judges Conference two times per year. The conferences cover a wide variety of judicial topics. The OCFC has a standing workshop time to provide information related to court improvement and dependency court issues. The conference workshops are organized by OCFC Administrator, Sandy Moore and are jointly taught by dependency judges working on special CIP activities.

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- The completed Pennsylvania Dependency Bench Book will be included as a plenary session and a specific workshop during the 2010 spring conference.
- **Training/Program Guide for Dependency Court Stakeholders (matrix p. 21)** – The OCFC plans to develop specific training sessions and quick reference program guides that will mirror the Dependency Bench book. The trainings will be specific to masters, parent attorneys/advocates and children attorneys/Guardians Ad Litem. The trainings will be offered in a variety of arenas, such as the annual Children’s Roundtable Summit, roundtable meetings and special sessions as requested. Training development and program guides are scheduled after completion of the Pennsylvania Dependency Bench Book.
 - **Website Enhancements (matrix p. 22)** – In July 2009, OCFC selected a vendor to design, develop and host an interactive website for the OCFC. The site will support the OCFC’s vision and provide electronic information to courts, children, families and professionals in Pennsylvania. The website will also maintain a section to inform judges, attorneys and other professionals on upcoming trainings and a section on electronic conference registrations and interactive training opportunities. Initial design steps started in August 2009 and the website is expected to be completed by December 2009. The OCFC will use 2010 CIP funds to continue website enhancements.
 - **Web-based Distance Learning (matrix p. 22)** - A section of the website will be devoted to distance learning, which will allow judges to interactively receive necessary information and training without leaving their judicial districts. The development of the distance learning module began in scheduled for completion in 2011.
 - **Expedited Appeals Training (matrix p.22)** – The Appellate Rules Committee completed the expedited appeals process in March 2009. A training curriculum was developed and delivered to educate judges, attorneys and child welfare agencies to the new processes. The OCFC will track outcomes of this newly developed process and provide support and additional training in 2010 as issues are identified.
- **Data System**
 - **Completion and on going support of Pennsylvania’s Judiciary Dependency Data Module (matrix p. 23)** - In 2008, the AOPC Judicial Automation Department completed the development of the Judiciary Dependency Data module as part of the Common Pleas Case Management System (CPCMS) to track court related dependency activities. Sixty-five (65) of the 67 counties are using the system. The two remaining counties, Philadelphia and Allegheny are in the process of integrating currently used data systems with CPCMS and are scheduled to

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go-live by fall of 2009. OCFC staff will continue to work in coordination with Judicial Automation staff to assist counties in data “clean-up” measures to ensure data integrity. In 2010 OCFC plans to share data from the CPCMS Dependency Module with local judicial officers and provide technical assistance to Children’s Roundtable Team as they move towards data informed rather than anecdotal system change efforts.

- **Development and Initiation of Statistical Reports (matrix p.23)** The AOPC Judicial Automation staff with input from OCFC have developed data reports from the CPCMS system that show aggregate dependency data both county specific and statewide. In addition to the above mentioned reports, Judicial Automation staff is in the process of completing statistical reports. The new statistical reports will provide information about how efficiently courts are processing dependency cases based upon the Juvenile Rules and the Juvenile Act as well as detailed information based on the age and demographic information of children. The statistical reports are scheduled for completion in Spring of 2010.
- **Development and Implementation of PPI Quarterly Reports (matrix p.23)** OCFC staff is in the process of designing a quarterly report for PPI counties that measures PPI activities including: information about PPI target population of children under court supervision, 3 month review hearings, FGDM, FF and FDC and LCR efforts. Judges will be able to submit these reports through the OCFC website and review their county data as well as collective data from their LR for comparison purposes. This web-based report in conjunction with CPCMS statistical reports will allow OCFC to measure the effectiveness of the PPI. It is envisioned that the quarterly reports and CPCMS reports will be a standing agenda item at the LCRs and will be used to assist counties in making data informed decisions.
- **Data Sharing (matrix p.17)-** As part of our collaboration efforts, the OCFC and OCYF routinely share various data reports. The CPCMS Judiciary Dependency Data Module only provides information related to children and families who have entered the court system. Additional data is gathered from OCYF concerning abuse/neglect and services provided which may occur prior to court involvement. The mutual sharing of data continues to provide a broader picture of Pennsylvania’s dependency system.

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Staffing

Judicial Analysts

In 2009 three additional Judicial Analysts were added to the OCFC complement to work in collaboration with judges, DPW, county children and youth staff and other CIP partners towards the overall goal of enhancing court practices to improve the safety, permanency and well-being outcomes of children who are the subject of child dependency proceedings. Four regional Judicial Program Analysts now provide technical assistance to Pennsylvania's sixty seven (67) counties to achieve the above stated goal. Each Judicial Program Analyst is also responsible to coordinate a set number of LR's and provide technical assistance and resources to county roundtables in their regional area. This technical assistance includes PPI implementation practices resources, and CPCMS data integrity assistance. In addition, Analysts are responsible for observing court proceedings and facilitating intra-state communication and quasi-mentoring for judges and administrators. Their responsibilities also include the facilitation of PPI and overall CIP subcommittees.

Judicial Data Analyst Position

With the statewide roll out of the CPCMS Dependency Module, implementation of PPI data reports, gathering of statistical outcomes related to Family Group Decision Making and the need for comprehensive and understandable statistical data, the OCFC plans to hire a Judicial Data Analyst who will oversee the practice implementation of the data/outcomes tracking system. This person will review and analyze system data, compile regular county specific snapshots of data and work with local CRTs to focus reform efforts on areas needing reform attention. The staff will be added for partial year in 2009 and will be compensated for the entire year in 2010.

Administrative Assistance (Half-Time)

With the addition of judicial analyst staff, PPI counties, State Roundtable priorities and the OCFC website, the need for additional support staff has become increasingly evident. The OCFC plans to hire a part time (80 hours per month) Administrative Assistant. This staff will assist in the coordination of meetings, projects, list serves, minute production and other assigned tasks.

Expected Outcomes

It is anticipated that instituting court related enhancements coupled with incorporating strength-based social work practices and improving key stakeholder collaboration efforts will result in 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.)

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- Continued and enhanced collaboration with the courts and agencies at the state and local levels
- Shared analysis of data with courts
- Directed technical assistance to counties at a local level
- Reduced number of children/youth adjudicated dependent and in court-ordered placement
- Reduced number of children/youth who re-enter care
- Reduced dependency court caseload
- Reduced caseworker court caseload
- 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 frequency of court review hearing that will lead to timelier permanence
- Increased Placement Stability (less moves for children)
- Increased number of life long connections with children
- Increased number of FGDM conferences to support dependent children
- Increased number of family service plans developed with family input
- Increased collaboration among stakeholders
- Increased number of fathers actively engaged with their children.
- Increased awareness of truancy issues/best practices
- Increased number of credentialed strength based frontline workers

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Attachments

- Attachment 1:** Pennsylvania PPI and NGA Counties Divided by Judicial Analyst
Attachment 2: Pennsylvania's Children Roundtable Structure
Attachment 3: Leadership Roundtable Structure

Acronyms

CIP	Court Improvement Program
AOPC	Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts
CFSR/PIP	Child and Family Service Review/Program Improvement Plan
DPW/OCYF	Department of Public Welfare, Office of Children, Youth and Families
FDC	Family Development Credentialing
FF	Family Finding
FGDM	Family Group Decision Making
LCR	Local Children's Roundtable
LR	Leadership Roundtable
OCFC	Office of Children Youth and Families
PPI	Permanency Practice Initiative
TPR	Termination of Parental Rights

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Strategic Plan

Focus Area	Activity	Grant	Responsibility	Time frame	Interim Benchmark	Planned Outcome
PA Children's Roundtable Initiative	Local Children's Roundtables (LCR)	Basic Data	OCFC Local Jurisdictions	Ongoing	All counties will have functional LCR	Each judicial jurisdiction will have functional LCR with a cross representation of key stakeholders in the county dependency system. The LCR will provide enhanced judicial oversight of dependency matters at the county level.
	Leadership Roundtables (LR)	Basic	OCFC LR Co-Chairs LR Members	3/11/2010 3/12/2010 3/22/2010 3/29/2010 4/05/2010 4/15/2010 4/16/2010 4/23/2010 09/2010	Leadership Roundtables will meet in the fall and spring of 2011	LRs will be co-chaired by a Judge and C&Y Administrator from different counties. The co-chairs will continue out reach efforts to other county judges and administrators and participate as members of the State Roundtable.
	State Roundtable	Basic	State Supreme Court Justice OCFC DPW/OCYF	05/27/2010 and 05/28/2010	Statewide meeting will occur in May 2011	LR co-chairs will provide information discussed at LRs and CLR's. PPI Sub-committees will report on the status of on-going PPI initiatives. OCFC will present new dependency related topics gathered from Fall and Spring LRs. New OCFC priorities will be established for the following year.

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Coordination & Collaboration	State Agency & State Court Meeting	Basic	Supreme Court Justice OCFC Administrator DPW/OCYF Deputy Secretary JCJC Representative	Ongoing Monthly	Monthly meetings scheduled throughout the year.	These meetings are designed to encourage continued collaboration and provide updates and coordinate efforts on collaborative projects. CFSR and PIP discussions will also occur to ensure jointly established goals are achieved.
	Monitoring of Expedited Appeals Process	Basic	OCFC Administrator Appellate Rules Committee	September 2011	Ongoing report on effectiveness of expedited appeals process. OCFC will coordinate an annual report in conjunction with the Appellate Rules Committee regarding expedited appeals and present at the Annual State Roundtable meeting.	The expedited appeals process related to dependency, TPR and adoption hearings is expected to decrease the wait time for judicial decision making and thereby reduce time a child spends in foster care.
	Juvenile Court Rules Committee	Basic	OCFC Administrator	Ongoing	Meetings occur quarterly.	Dependency court rules can be developed or enhanced to meet OCFC/CIP goals. This will be ongoing work informed by judicial issues that present during regular OCFC work.

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Focus Area	Activity	Grant	Responsibility	Time frame	Interim Benchmark	Planned Outcome
	Coordination of Dependency Court/Orphans Court Practices and Policies	Basic	OCFC Juvenile Rules Committee Orphans Court Rules Committee	Ongoing	Assist courts in coordinating efforts to expedite a case through dependency and orphans court.	The Coordination of efforts between dependency and orphans courts will lead to more timely permanence.
Coordination & Collaboration	National Governor's Association (NGA) Policy Academy – PA Permanency Team	Basic	NGA OCFC Administrator PA Permanency Team	Ongoing Monthly	16 of PA's 67 counties were selected to participate in the NGA. OCFC Director continues as a team member representing the PA Supreme Court and dependency courts. Nine (9) NGA counties are also PPI counties. OCFC Staff participates as court representatives at county NGA meetings.	The NGA aims to reduce the number of children in foster care through a variety of strategies and collaborations. Pennsylvania will continue to work on initiatives developed in the two-year strategic plan to reduce the number of children in foster care, while ensuring safety.

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Focus Area	Activity	Grant	Responsibility	Time frame	Interim Benchmark	Planned Outcome
Coordination & Collaboration	OCYF Children's Cabinet	Basic	OCFC Administrator	Ongoing	OCFC Administrator serves as an active member of this cabinet representing the views and needs of dependency court.	The purpose of this cabinet is to provide input and suggestions related to issues impacting abused and neglected children as well as review/comment on proposed regulation and bulletin changes.
	FGDM International Blueprint Committee	Basic	OCFC Administrator	Ongoing		The FGDM International committee develops and issues guidance regarding best practice standards.
	FGDM Statewide Leadership Team	Basic	OCFC Administrator OCFC Judicial Analyst	Ongoing	Bi-monthly meetings	Statewide Leadership Team provides guidance to the state for development, implementation and outcomes monitoring of FGDM.
	CFSR/PIP	Basic	OCFC	Ongoing	OCFC Staff sits on the CFSR Steering committee and is a state reviewer for the onsite CFSR review.	OCFC staff will participate on this committee through the PIP development and implementation. The needs identified in the PIP related to the court will continue to be priorities in upcoming years.
	Practice Standards Revision Committee	Basic	OCFC	Ongoing	OCFC represents the courts on this committee.	OCFC will continue to represent the court needs as they relate to best practices in dependency matters.

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Focus Area	Activity	Grant	Responsibility	Time frame	Interim Benchmark	Planned Outcome
Coordination & Collaboration	Data Sharing	Data	OCFC DPW/OCYF	Ongoing	Continue to share court related and non-court related data between AOPC and DPW.	Sharing of data provides a broader picture of PA's Dependency System.
	PPI Oversight Team	Basic	OCFC DPW/OCYF Phase 1 Counties Phase 2 Counties Child Welfare Training Program Statewide Adoption Network Community Action Association	Ongoing	In the summer of 2009 PPI Phase 2 Counties were selected. In the summer of 2009, Philadelphia began implementation of PPI components. In the summer of 2010 PPI Phase 3 Counties will be selected. In the summer of 2011 PPI Phase 4 Counties will be selected.	The primary responsibility of this team is to provide guidance on the implementation and expansion of the PPI across PA. This team is also responsible for reviewing PPI county letters of interest and providing recommendations to the State Supreme Court

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Focus Area	Activity	Grant	Responsibility	Time frame	Interim Benchmark	Planned Outcome
	Truancy Exploration Committee	Basic	AOPC OCFC DPW/OCYF Department of Education. Dependency Judges Magisterial District Judges County Juvenile Probation Other Stakeholders	Beginning fall 2009 Ongoing	The Committee will be established, Fall 2009. Stakeholders will identify the mission of the Committee.	The primary function of this group will be to explore a myriad of truancy related topics including: PA truancy law interpretation, truancy prevention practices, truancy proceedings, best practices and the impact of truancy on dependent children. The group will present a report and recommendations at the 2010 Summer State Roundtable meeting.
Coordination & Collaboration	Fatherhood Initiative	Basic	OCFC DPW/OCYF American Humane American Bar Association Phase 1 and Phase 2 Counties	December 2010 and ongoing in 2011	Practice Counties will be identified.	The overall outcome expected is an assessment of father friendliness/support in selected counties and an implementation of gender specific promising practices as needed which will increase meaningful father and paternal family involvement.

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Focus Area	Activity	Grant	Responsibility	Time frame	Interim Benchmark	Planned Outcome
Technical Assistance	Direct support of LCRs, LRs and Statewide Roundtable	Basic Training Data	OCFC	Ongoing Monthly in 2010 and 2011	<p>OCFC regional Judicial Analyst staff was hired in 2008.</p> <p>Staff will continue to assist counties in the establishment, strengthening and providing technical support to roundtables including support of PPI elements.</p> <p>Staff will continue court observation, providing feedback to LCR.</p> <p>Staff will continue to provide more frequent technical assistance to those counties beginning the PPI.</p>	OCFC regional Judicial Analyst staff will continue to work in collaboration with judges, DPW/OCYF, county court administrators and other CIP partners towards the overall goal of enhancing court/agency practices to improve the safety, permanency and well-being outcomes for dependent children.

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Focus Area	Activity	Grant	Responsibility	Time frame	Interim Benchmark	Planned Outcome
Technical Assistance	Assist counties with providing valid data and interpreting data to make better informed decisions.	Data	OCFC	Ongoing Monthly in 2010 and 2011. First Annual Report to be completed in December 2010	OCFC regional Judicial Analyst staff will support county staff on the clean-up and accurate input of court related data. OCFC will hire a Judicial Data Analyst to assess, coordinate, evaluate and synthesize court data. Meeting and prepare an annual statistical report. OCFC will develop a PPI web based quarterly report. This report, coupled with statistical analysis of CPCMS reports will measure the impact of PPI.	The overall planned outcome is that counties accurately capture court related dependency and PPI data. Data results will be shared with LCRs and LRs so that counties may use this information to make data informed decisions that will change/enhance procedures that may lead children to more timely permanence.

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Focus Area	Activity	Grant	Responsibility	Time frame	Interim Benchmark	Planned Outcome
Conferences/ Trainings	Third Annual Children's Roundtable Summit	Training	AOPC, OCFC, DPW/OCYF, Summit Planning Committee, LCRs, LRs, Statewide Roundtable and other key stakeholders	September 2011	A Summit Planning Committee will be organized in 2010 for this conference.	This annual statewide summit will provide a forum for all Pennsylvania counties to be educated on national/state best and promising practices in the dependency system. County teams will also work in groups to enhance their county work plan.
	Graduated Curriculum for Dependency Judges	Training	AOPC OCFC	Ongoing through December 2010	The completion of the Dependency Bench Book is scheduled for January 2010. In the Spring of 2010 a training curricula committee will be established to develop a graduated curriculum for dependency judges. Dependency judge training will occur begin in October 2010.	The bench book will be used as both a reference guide and a textbook for a graduated curriculum for judges. The intended outcome for the development and training of the bench book to twofold. First, it will be developed to ensure both new judges and veteran judges are aware of the federal and state statutory requirements and DPW regulations. Second, this book will include current best practice information related to child emotional & physical development at various ages, family development, attachment/bonding, grief/loss, trauma impacts/recovery and other critical research/science as determined by the OCFC, and Bench Book Committee. It is expected that this material, will assist judges in making the most appropriate decisions related to a child's case.

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Conferences/ Trainings	Training/Program Guide for Dependency Court Stakeholders	Training	AOPC OCFC ABA PBA	September 2010	Develop specific training sessions and quick reference program guides from the Bench Book.	Program guides will be distributed to the public and training sessions will be developed for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearing Masters • Parent Advocates • Guardians Ad Litem
	Parent/Child Representation Training	Training	OCFC PBA Other key stakeholders to be determined	Beginning March 2010	In 2009 OCFC will convene a workgroup to develop training. Initial training will occur in early 2010 with more extensive sessions being ongoing.	Parent / Child Representation Training will increase the quality of practice for parties' legal representation which will ultimately impact more timely permanence for dependent children.
Educational/ Informational Initiatives	State Trial Court Judges Conference	Training	OCFC AOPC Judicial Education Department Dependency Judges	Winter 2011 Spring 2011	These workshops will continue to provide PPI and other court related information. During the 2011 Winter and Spring sessions specific themes will be highlighted and training provided.	The OCFC will use standing workshops to update, train and provide information on PA and national issues in dependency.

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Focus Area	Activity	Grant	Responsibility	Time frame	Interim Benchmark	Planned Outcome
Educational/ Informational Initiatives	Expedited Appeals Support	Basic Training Data	OCFC	Ongoing as needed	Continue to train on the process Begin tracking outcomes as a result of the process.	The expedited appeals rule is designed to strengthen the Family Fast Track Program to accelerate the internal appellate process in court cases involving adoption, custody, dependency, paternity and involuntary termination of parental rights. A report will be generated assessing movement in timeliness and permanency resulting from these appellate rules changes.
	Website Enhancements	Data	OCFC	Ongoing	The OCFC is scheduled for completion in November 2010. Website enhancements will be continued on an ongoing basis.	The OCFC website will provide judges, county agencies, DPW/OCYF, parents, guardians, kin, children and other stakeholders with various information, resources and data surrounding the PA dependency system and CIP project.

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Focus Area	Activity	Grant	Responsibility	Time frame	Interim Benchmark	Planned Outcome
	Web-based Distance Learning	Data	OCFC Judicial Education Judicial Automation	September 2010 ICPC web-based training will occur in September 2011.	The OCFC is scheduled for completion in November 2010. OCFC will continue to work with Judicial Automation and Judicial Education to develop distance learning modules. Distance Learning Module on ICPC will occur in September 2011	The OCFC website will have the capability to provide distance learning. Web-based training sessions will be available to judges and other stakeholders so that they may learn about specific topics while remaining in their jurisdiction.

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Focus Area	Activity	Grant	Responsibility	Time frame	Interim Benchmark	Planned Outcome
Dependency Data System	Completion and ongoing support of PA Dependency Data System (CPCMS)	Data	AOPC/Judicial Automation OCFC	Ongoing	Judicial Automation will continue to work with Allegheny and Philadelphia counties to fully execute CPCMS. Judicial Automation and OCFC will continue to provide county support on system training and data integrity issues.	OCFC Staff and Judicial Automation Staff will continue to work collaborate on system reporting, enhancements and support to counties.
	Development of Statistical Data Reports	Data	AOPC Judicial Automation OCFC	December 2009	Statistical reports are scheduled to be completed by December 2009.	Statistical reports will be used to gather statewide data on court related dependency cases.

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Focus Area	Activity	Grant	Responsibility	Time frame	Interim Benchmark	Planned Outcome
	Development and Implementation of PPI Quarterly Reports	Data	AOPC	November 2009	OCFC will work with website vendor to develop PPI quarterly reports.	Data results will be shared with LCRs and LRs so that counties may use this information to make data informed decisions that will change/enhance procedures that may lead children to more timely permanence.
Interstate Placement of Foster Children	Inclusion of ICPC in the Dependency Bench Book	Training	OCFC	January 2010	The Dependency Bench Book will have a chapter dedicated to ICPC	The ICPC Chapter of the Dependency Bench Book will Provide Dependency Judges with pertinent information on ICPC
	Web-Based ICPC Training for Judges	Training Data	AOPC OCFC	September 2011	Included with other web-based training for judges offered through the OCFC will be a module on ICPC	This training will facilitate uniformity in the application and understanding of ICPC laws across jurisdictions.
	Enhance CPCMS Dependency Reporting System to include the ability to capture ICPC Data	Data	AOPC Judicial Automation and OCFC	December 2010	Development of CPCMS ICPC data module	Capturing specific ICPC information will allow OCFC to gather data on the number of ICPC cases and the states where placement occurs.

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Focus Area	Activity	Grant	Responsibility	Time frame	Interim Benchmark	Planned Outcome
	Collaborate with identified ICPC states	Basic	OCFC DPW States involved in ICPC with PA Children	Begin Meetings in July 2011	Meet regularly with ICPC states.	

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Introduction

In an effort to create more positive outcomes for foster children, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court created the Office of Children and Families in the Courts (OCFC) within the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC). OCFC's principal goal is to minimize the length of time that dependent children spend in foster care or in other temporary living situations when they are removed from their parents under court order as a result of abuse or neglect. OCFC also works with county courts and children and youth agencies to reunite children safely and timely with their families. In the event that family reunification is not a viable option, the OCFC aims to expedite the adoption process for those children with the goal of adoption; increase the incidence of legal guardianship; and to enhance/expand ongoing permanent adult connections for the limited number of children who must remain in the foster care system. The primary responsibility of OCFC is to administer the implementation, oversight and evaluation of all statewide priorities, activities, initiatives, and trainings associated with Pennsylvania's Court Improvement Program (CIP). In addition, OCFC serves as the office responsible for disseminating CIP related information to Pennsylvania's judicial districts.

Background

Pennsylvania uses CIP funds to implement the Permanency Practice Initiative (PPI) through the OCFC. As of September 2009, Twenty-seven (27) of sixty-seven (67) Pennsylvania counties are participating in PPI. The twenty-seven (27) PPI counties are comprised of two Phases, Phase One and Phase Two. Phase One counties that started the PPI in 2008 include: *Allegheny, Blair, Butler, Carbon, Chester, Dauphin, Jefferson, Lackawanna, Lehigh, Northampton, Snyder, Venango, Washington and York*. Phase 2 Counties that started the PPI in 2009 include: *Adams, Armstrong, Bucks, Clinton, Cumberland, Forest, Franklin, Fulton, Montgomery, Indiana, Luzerne, Tioga and Warren (Attachment 1)*. It is projected that in 2010 fifteen (15) additional counties will join the PPI in Phase Three and fifteen more counties will join in 2011 as Phase Four. At the same time the states largest county, Philadelphia, is implementing elements of the PPI with the assistance of OCFC. While not included in either Phase One or Phase Two, Philadelphia's Dependency Court and Child Welfare Agency is making tremendous progress and initiating a slower implementation of practice changes including Family finding, Family Group Decision Making, the Dependency Court Data/Outcome Tracking CPCMS System, a local Children's Roundtable and a three-month judicial review process for targeted children.

The underlining theory on which the PPI was built is that enhanced judicial oversight combined with strength-based, family led practice will ultimately increase the number of children safely maintained in their own homes and support expedited safe returns home. To accomplish this, the PPI seeks to implement or enhance a variety of services prior to the child/youth coming into out-of-home-care or immediately following a need for

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such. The fundamental PPI practice is Family Group Decision Making (FGDM). FGDM is a strength based and family centered practice that allows family members to plan and make decisions for their family. PPI counties recognize the importance of involving family members as part of the process in making important decisions concerning their loved ones in the foster care system. Other PPI practices include Family Finding (FF) and Family Development Credentialing (FDC). Family Finding is a set of methods and strategies using both internet capability and family engagement skills to locate and engage relatives of children living in out of home care. The goal of family finding is to provide each child with the life long connections that only a family can offer. FDC is a professional development course and credentialing program that provides family based support training for frontline workers. Added to these philosophical practice changes is a defined set of court related changes including three-month court reviews, the formation of a local Children's Roundtable (convened by the dependency judge and jointly facilitated with the Child Welfare Administrator) and the CPCMS Dependency Data/Outcome Tracking System. In order to participate in the PPI, judges/hearing masters must conduct court review hearing at least every three months. The intent of these expedited reviews is to ensure timely service delivery and parental/child involvement, identify system barriers preventing such, ensure concurrent plans are being implemented and assure timely permanency for children. The local Children's Roundtable functions as the local oversight body for the PPI and the CPCMS Dependency Module provides needed information to enhance the creation of data informed planning/decision making.

The CIP's overarching structure is the Children's Roundtable Initiative (**Attachment 2**). The roundtable system provides a statewide infrastructure to effectively administer and communicate dependency related information via a three tier structure. Pennsylvania uses a Roundtable model to guide the flow of dependency practice and the collaboration between the Dependency Courts, OCFC, The Department of Public Welfare's Office of Children, Youth and Families (DPW/OCYF) and other relevant stakeholders. At the foundational level (tier 1), each judicial district in Pennsylvania convenes a Local Children's Roundtable (LCR). The LCR is convened by the county dependency judge and is comprised of relevant stakeholders in the dependency system including but not limited to children and youth administrators, county commissioners, hearing masters, guardians *ad litem*, parent attorneys, agency solicitors, Court Appointed Special Advocates, school districts, drug and alcohol and mental health professionals, families, county children and youth staff, juvenile probation staff, police departments, service providers and other relevant stakeholders. The LCRs meet on a regular basis (usually monthly) to share best or promising practices, address areas of concern within the county's dependency system and make plans to overcome barriers to timely permanency for children in their judicial district.

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The second or intermediate level (tier 2) of roundtable infrastructure is known as the Leadership Roundtables (LR). There are eight (8) LRs dividing Pennsylvania's 60 judicial districts into groups based on size (**Attachment 3**). There are a minimum of five (5) judicial districts per LR. The number of judicial districts per LR varies slightly to keep like-size judicial districts together. The dependency judge, children and youth administrator and one additional designated stakeholder from the LCR join one of the eight LRs. At this level, counties are able to raise topical areas of interest or concerns from their own LCR and provide each other with support, problem solving techniques and practice awareness. The expectation is that like-size judicial districts will share similar concerns, solutions and resources. The LRs meet twice a year (spring and fall) and are co-chaired by a dependency court judge from one judicial district and a children and youth administrator from another. In 2008, the concept of co-chairs was developed to establish the LR agenda, facilitate the semi-annual meetings and provide follow-up to meeting discussions. In 2009, the role of the co-chairs was enhanced to include outreach efforts to encourage more participation from dependency judges and children and youth administrators within their LR who have not yet participated or have minimal participation in a LR.

Issues are identified during LR meetings and common themes are brought to the highest roundtable level, the State Roundtable. The State Roundtable (tier 3) is convened by the Honorable Max Baer, Supreme Court Justice, and co-chaired with the Administrator of OCFC and the DPW/OCYF Deputy Secretary. The State Roundtable also consists of other pertinent state and national leaders having specific expertise in dependency matters. During this statewide meeting accomplishments are shared, LR co-chairs report on themes from the eight LRs, updates on initiatives are presented and upcoming events are announced. It is at this annual roundtable where OCFC's priorities for the following year are set and activities are established for the intended use of CIP award dollars. From the State Roundtable membership, workgroups are established to research and address statewide areas of concern. Current workgroups include: Bench Book Development Team, Pennsylvania Children's Roundtable Summit Team and the Pennsylvania Dependency Guiding Principles Team. In addition to facilitating intrastate communication, the State Roundtable is involved in the dependency reform movement at the national level to keep Pennsylvania apprised of the evolving trends and best practices.

Such a structure enables Pennsylvania to be responsive to the common needs of the state while at the same time allowing flexibility for each judicial district to function in a way that best meets their individual needs. The flow of information and communication occurs from both a top-down perspective as well as from a bottom-up approach to ensure a mutual understanding and collaboration of permanency efforts exist for all Pennsylvania agencies and court involved children. Overall, the effect is to move Pennsylvania forward in a consistent, uniform and informed manner as it endeavors to address permanence, safety and well-being for all of our children in the dependency system. This organizational structure contributes to a free flow of ideas, challenges and solutions.

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Activities

• **Roundtables (see information on Roundtables above and matrix p. 13):**

- Fall 2010 (Leadership Roundtables to coincide with Annual Children's Roundtable Summit)
- Spring 2011 (eight Leadership Roundtables)
- Summer 2011 (one Statewide Roundtable)
- FFY 2010-2011 (67 Children's Roundtables)
 - These roundtables occur at the local level and may occur at various times throughout the year as the county deems necessary.
 - The OCFC will be supporting the counties in their efforts with these meetings.

• **Coordination/Collaboration**

The CIP grant application was developed in collaboration with the DPW/OCYF. The letter of support from the Deputy Secretary for DPW/OCYF is attached to this document. Many of the projects and initiatives developed were created in collaboration with the OCFC and DPW/OCYF. Additionally, many are included in Pennsylvania's Performance Improvement Plan.

- **State Agency/State Court Meetings (matrix p. 14)** – The OCFC Director and DPW/OCYF Deputy Secretary. The purpose of these meetings is to ensure that cooperation between the two agencies occurs and services are not duplicated. These happen monthly at a minimum. Additionally, Supreme Court Justice Max Baer joins the meetings on a quarterly basis.
- **Expedited Appeals Subcommittee (matrix p. 14)** - Justice Baer asked the Appellate Rules Committee to develop expedited appeals for Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) hearings. To accomplish this task the Appellate Rules Committee developed a subcommittee which includes members of the Appellate Rules Committee, Juvenile Rules Committee, Domestic Relations Rules Committee and Orphans' Court Rules Committee. The development of these rules has established a statewide expectation of expediting appeals related to dependency, TPR and adoption hearings and will aid in decreasing the time a child spends in care. The rules became effective March 16, 2009.
- **Juvenile Court Rules Committee (matrix p. 14)** - Sandy Moore, OCFC Administrator was appointed by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania as an Ex Officio member of the Juvenile Rules Committee. As an Ex Officio member, Sandy can bring specific Dependency issues before the rules committee for consideration. In February 2007, the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania adopted Rules of Juvenile Court Procedures – Dependency Matters, which

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were developed by the Juvenile Rules Committee. Additionally, the Rules Committee has been integral in reviewing the court orders and forms that are part of the CPCMS Dependency System. Indeed, all requests for changes to CPCMS forms must first be reviewed by the sub-committee and adopted by the Juvenile Rules Committee. Ms. Moore's participation in this committee is ongoing.

- **Coordination of Dependency Court/Orphans Court Practices and Policies (matrix p. 14)** – The coordination of dependency courts and orphans' courts is an essential partnership in Pennsylvania. This coordination is not necessary in every county, as most of Pennsylvania's smaller counties have the same judge hearing both types of cases. In many of Pennsylvania's larger counties, a request for the termination of parental rights is heard in the Orphans Court. This court assumes case responsibility until finalization of adoption and quite often involves a judge other than the dependency judges. The OCFC is dedicated to helping the courts coordinate more closely to expedite a case through the system and provide the child with permanency more quickly. The OCFC will accomplish this through training, site visits and the roundtable structure. The CPCMS dependency data system will also aid us in this task. Timeframes for permanency will be tracked in the system and those counties who have dual courts for these purposes will be required to collaborate to ensure that the necessary data is entered into the system. PPI Phase One and Two counties have this bifurcated system and are required to have this coordination in place. Additionally, the Dependency Court Bench Book (under construction), is incorporating elements related to TPR and finalization into the document.

- **National Governor's Association – Policy Academy – PA Permanency Team (matrix p. 15)** - Pennsylvania was one of six states to be selected to participate in the National Governor's Association (NGA) - Policy Academy. The Policy Academy consists of a wide range of child welfare experts from Pennsylvania whose goal is to reduce the number of children in Foster care through a variety of strategies and collaborations. As of 2009, there are sixteen (16) counties participating in the NGA process (**Allegheny, Bucks, Clarion, Clinton, Dauphin, Erie, Lancaster, Lawrence, Lehigh, Luzerne, McKean, Montgomery, Northampton, Philadelphia, Schuylkill, York**). The above listed counties highlighted in bold are participating in both the NGA and PPI projects (**see attachment 1**). Sandy Moore, OCFC Administrator was selected to participate as a member of the NGA Policy Academy Core Team to represent Pennsylvania's Supreme Court and Pennsylvania's Dependency Courts. OCFC Judicial Program Analysts work in collaboration with OCYF staff within these 16 counties and participate in monthly NGA meetings. During these meetings child welfare cases are staffed. The team focuses on strengthening agency social work practice and identifying system barriers to permanency. These system barriers are then presented for discussion and

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resolution at local Children's Roundtable meetings. The NGA project will continue on an ongoing basis.

- **OCYF Children's Cabinet (matrix p.16)** - The Children's Cabinet is the Advisory Counsel for the DPW/OCYF Deputy Secretary. The Cabinet is comprised of the OCFC Director, Children & Youth Administrators, Juvenile Probation Chiefs and other stakeholders. The aim is to provide input and suggestions related to issues impacting abused & neglected children as well as review/comment on proposed regulation & bulletin changes. The OCFC Administrator is a standing member on this Advisory Counsel.
- **International Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) Blueprint Committee (matrix p. 16)** –Sandy Moore, OCFC Administrator, serves as a member of this committee. This international committee develops and issues a blueprint outlining best practice standards for FGDM. Because FGDM is the foundational practice for the Supreme Court's Permanency Practice Initiative, participation on this national group is vital. The OCFC Administrator is a standing member on this ongoing committee.

FGDM Statewide Leadership Team (matrix p. 16) - The FGDM Statewide Leadership Team is an overarching committee that provides guidance to the state in the development and implementation of FGDM. This team also disseminates information on training opportunities for the state related to FGDM. FGDM is the core foundational practice shift of the PPI. This FGDM Statewide Leadership Team also oversees the collection of outcome data related to this practice shift throughout Pennsylvania. Sandy Moore, OCFC Administrator will continue to be an active member of this Team.

- **Child and Family Service Review/Program Improvement Plan (CFSR/PIP) (matrix p. 16)** - The OCFC has been actively involved in all steps of the CFSR/PIP process since 2007. OCFC staff serve as members of the CFSR Steering Committee. In addition, an OCFC staff member participated as a state reviewer in the most recent CFSR process. The OCFC will continue to participate in the development and implementation of Pennsylvania's PIP, particularly as it pertains to dependency courts and collaboration between county dependency courts and children and youth agencies. . At the 2009 Federal Court and Agency meeting in Washington DC, staff from OCFC and OCYF joined a discussion group providing input regarding the State Self-Assessment portion of the CFSR. OCFC staff will continue to participate in the CFSR and PIP processes.

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- **Practice Standards Revision Committee (matrix p. 16)** - Pennsylvania is currently revising the best practice standards. OCFC staff serves as members of this committee. The purpose of this committee is to revise the current Child Welfare Practice Standards for Pennsylvania. This project is ongoing.
- **Pennsylvania Permanency Practice Initiative (PPI) Oversight Team (Matrix p.17)** This Team partners professionals from DPW/OCYF, Phase One and Phase Two Counties, Child Welfare Training Program, Statewide Adoption Network, Pennsylvania Community Action Association and OCFC in an effort to develop and oversee all phases of the PPI implementation. This Team meets regularly throughout the year.
- **Truancy Exploration Committee** – During the 2009 Fall and Spring LRs, counties discussed the subject of truancy and the need for a committee to examine the impact of truancy on the dependency system. Some counties shared best practices surrounding truancy while others had concerns about truancy prevention practices, truancy law interpretation, and truancy proceedings in their counties. At the 2009 State Roundtable meeting, OCFC was charged with developing a Truancy Exploration Committee using CIP dollars to research truancy best practices and concerns and their impact on the dependency system. Since truancy is a basis for dependency in Pennsylvania and many dependent children enter the system through the issue of truancy this is a significant issue. This subgroup consisting of OCFC staff, judges, hearing masters, magisterial district judges, DPW staff, county children and youth staff, county juvenile probation staff and Pennsylvania Department of Education Staff and other interested stakeholders will be established in the fall of 2009. This workgroup will meet regularly throughout the year and present it's findings/recommendations at the 2010 State Roundtable meeting. As a result of that presentation, the State Roundtable will establish additional action steps for OCFC staff.
- **Fatherhood Initiative** – The issue of father engagement within the Child Welfare System has obtained national attention. Locating and engaging fathers in the lives of dependent children requires specialized skills and sensitivity. The OCFC will partner with DPW/OCYF, Pennsylvania Child Welfare Training Program, Pennsylvania Bar Association, the American Bar Association and the American Humane Association to offer consulting and training services to a a maximum of ten PPI counties in 2010.

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- **Technical Assistance**

- **Direct contact/support of local Children’s Roundtables (matrix p. 18)** – In December 2008, three additional OCFC staff were hired and assigned to geographical regions to provide direct technical assistance to courts at a local level. The staff support all children’s roundtable activities in their assigned region and aid local jurisdictions in developing and implementing programs, practices and initiatives. Staffing information is provided below and **Attachment 1**.
- **Direct contact/support of Leadership Roundtables, including support of Chairpersons (matrix p. 18)** – Regionally assigned staff coordinate LR activities by supporting the leadership roundtable co-chairs and assisting in the actual LR meeting facilitation. Staff also encourage inter jurisdictional communication and provide for planning and development of initiatives.
- **Assist counties in data validation and interpretation (matrix p. 19)** - OCFC Regional staff continue to support Pennsylvania counties through data integrity issues. With the implementation of the statewide CPCMS Data/Outcome/Case Management system and the corresponding implementation of statewide Findings & Orders, it has become increasingly clear that data integrity is an essential component of the CIP. OCFC staff and AOPC Judicial Automation staff are conducting site visits and data review in each assigned county to ensure accuracy as statewide statistical reports are being developed and implemented. Data integrity is critical as we move the dependency system to a “data informed” system rather than an anecdotal response system. This data and its subsequent analysis will inform judicial districts and support strategic planning, development of programs and implementation of practices.
- **Provide expertise regarding practice initiatives for PPI (matrix p. 18)** – The PPI described above (page 1) is the cornerstone of the CIP. It is estimated that fifteen (15) Phase Four Counties, will begin the PPI during funding year 2010. In addition to the fifteen (15) Phase Four counties, it is envisioned that Philadelphia will be entering the second year of it’s PPI implementation. Since Philadelphia County is the largest county in Pennsylvania, it is estimated that it will take two years to fully implement PPI in the county. 2009 CIP funds will be used for Philadelphia first year of implementation and 2010 CIP funds will be allocated for Philadelphia second PPI implementation year.

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- **Conferences/trainings**

- **Third Annual Children’s Roundtable Summit – September 2011 (matrix p. 20)** - The OCFC will host the Third Annual Children’s Roundtable Summit in September 2011. This conference will provide a variety of workshops, keynote speakers and presentations related to Dependency/Permanency issues both in Pennsylvania and nationally. Conference participants will include children’s roundtable members from across the Commonwealth, plus various statewide partners, including DPW/OCYF, Juvenile Court Judges Commission (JCJC), Child Welfare Training Program and other key stakeholder organizations.
- **Graduated Curriculum for Dependency Judges (matrix p. 20)** – The Dependency Bench Book will be completed in January 2010. The document will be unveiled during the Spring 2010 State Trial Court Judges Conference plenary session with a corresponding conference training session to current dependency judges. Spring 2010 will also see the formation of a training curricula committee to develop a graduated curriculum for dependency judges. The bulk of this curricula work will be completed after October 1, 2010.
- **Parent/Child Representation Training** – During the 2009 State Roundtable meeting, roundtable members voted unanimously to allocate a portion of CIP dollars to institute a curriculum that educates Guardians Ad Litem and parent attorneys throughout the Commonwealth. Training areas will include child/family development, basic needs, family systems and service systems that may be part of a dependent child’s life such as education, special education, mental health and substance abuse. Training will be drawn from the fifteen dependency “themes” as identified and articulated within the Pennsylvania Dependency Court Bench Book. Curriculum development will be completed in 2010 and training will be delivered in 2010 and 2011. An evaluation process from all OCFC trainings including those as a result of the curriculum will be implemented. This will be an ongoing process to gauge the effectiveness of the OCFC trainings and curriculum and to identify topics and ideas for future trainings.

- **Educational/Information Initiatives**

- **Winter/Spring, 2011 - State Trial Court Judges Conferences Dependency Workshops (matrix p. 21)** - The AOPC offers the State Trial Court Judges Conference two times per year. The conferences cover a wide variety of judicial topics. The OCFC has a standing workshop time to provide information related to court improvement and dependency court issues. The conference workshops are organized by OCFC Administrator, Sandy Moore and are jointly taught by dependency judges working on special CIP activities.

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- The completed Pennsylvania Dependency Bench Book will be included as a plenary session and a specific workshop during the 2010 spring conference.
- **Training/Program Guide for Dependency Court Stakeholders (matrix p. 21)** – The OCFC plans to develop specific training sessions and quick reference program guides that will mirror the Dependency Bench book. The trainings will be specific to masters, parent attorneys/advocates and children attorneys/Guardians Ad Litem. The trainings will be offered in a variety of arenas, such as the annual Children’s Roundtable Summit, roundtable meetings and special sessions as requested. Training development and program guides are scheduled after completion of the Pennsylvania Dependency Bench Book.
 - **Website Enhancements (matrix p. 22)** – In July 2009, OCFC selected a vendor to design, develop and host an interactive website for the OCFC. The site will support the OCFC’s vision and provide electronic information to courts, children, families and professionals in Pennsylvania. The website will also maintain a section to inform judges, attorneys and other professionals on upcoming trainings and a section on electronic conference registrations and interactive training opportunities. Initial design steps started in August 2009 and the website is expected to be completed by December 2009. The OCFC will use 2010 CIP funds to continue website enhancements.
 - **Web-based Distance Learning (matrix p. 22)** - A section of the website will be devoted to distance learning, which will allow judges to interactively receive necessary information and training without leaving their judicial districts. The development of the distance learning module began in scheduled for completion in 2011.
 - **Expedited Appeals Training (matrix p.22)** – The Appellate Rules Committee completed the expedited appeals process in March 2009. A training curriculum was developed and delivered to educate judges, attorneys and child welfare agencies to the new processes. The OCFC will track outcomes of this newly developed process and provide support and additional training in 2010 as issues are identified.
- **Data System**
 - **Completion and on going support of Pennsylvania’s Judiciary Dependency Data Module (matrix p. 23)** - In 2008, the AOPC Judicial Automation Department completed the development of the Judiciary Dependency Data module as part of the Common Pleas Case Management System (CPCMS) to track court related dependency activities. Sixty-five (65) of the 67 counties are using the system. The two remaining counties, Philadelphia and Allegheny are in the process of integrating currently used data systems with CPCMS and are scheduled to

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go-live by fall of 2009. OCFC staff will continue to work in coordination with Judicial Automation staff to assist counties in data “clean-up” measures to ensure data integrity. In 2010 OCFC plans to share data from the CPCMS Dependency Module with local judicial officers and provide technical assistance to Children’s Roundtable Team as they move towards data informed rather than anecdotal system change efforts.

- **Development and Initiation of Statistical Reports (matrix p.23)** The AOPC Judicial Automation staff with input from OCFC have developed data reports from the CPCMS system that show aggregate dependency data both county specific and statewide. In addition to the above mentioned reports, Judicial Automation staff is in the process of completing statistical reports. The new statistical reports will provide information about how efficiently courts are processing dependency cases based upon the Juvenile Rules and the Juvenile Act as well as detailed information based on the age and demographic information of children. The statistical reports are scheduled for completion in Spring of 2010.
- **Development and Implementation of PPI Quarterly Reports (matrix p.23)** OCFC staff is in the process of designing a quarterly report for PPI counties that measures PPI activities including: information about PPI target population of children under court supervision, 3 month review hearings, FGDM, FF and FDC and LCR efforts. Judges will be able to submit these reports through the OCFC website and review their county data as well as collective data from their LR for comparison purposes. This web-based report in conjunction with CPCMS statistical reports will allow OCFC to measure the effectiveness of the PPI. It is envisioned that the quarterly reports and CPCMS reports will be a standing agenda item at the LCRs and will be used to assist counties in making data informed decisions.
- **Data Sharing (matrix p.17)-** As part of our collaboration efforts, the OCFC and OCYF routinely share various data reports. The CPCMS Judiciary Dependency Data Module only provides information related to children and families who have entered the court system. Additional data is gathered from OCYF concerning abuse/neglect and services provided which may occur prior to court involvement. The mutual sharing of data continues to provide a broader picture of Pennsylvania’s dependency system.

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Staffing

Judicial Analysts

In 2009 three additional Judicial Analysts were added to the OCFC complement to work in collaboration with judges, DPW, county children and youth staff and other CIP partners towards the overall goal of enhancing court practices to improve the safety, permanency and well-being outcomes of children who are the subject of child dependency proceedings. Four regional Judicial Program Analysts now provide technical assistance to Pennsylvania's sixty seven (67) counties to achieve the above stated goal. Each Judicial Program Analyst is also responsible to coordinate a set number of LR's and provide technical assistance and resources to county roundtables in their regional area. This technical assistance includes PPI implementation practices resources, and CPCMS data integrity assistance. In addition, Analysts are responsible for observing court proceedings and facilitating intra-state communication and quasi-mentoring for judges and administrators. Their responsibilities also include the facilitation of PPI and overall CIP subcommittees.

Judicial Data Analyst Position

With the statewide roll out of the CPCMS Dependency Module, implementation of PPI data reports, gathering of statistical outcomes related to Family Group Decision Making and the need for comprehensive and understandable statistical data, the OCFC plans to hire a Judicial Data Analyst who will oversee the practice implementation of the data/outcomes tracking system. This person will review and analyze system data, compile regular county specific snapshots of data and work with local CRTs to focus reform efforts on areas needing reform attention. The staff will be added for partial year in 2009 and will be compensated for the entire year in 2010.

Administrative Assistance (Half-Time)

With the addition of judicial analyst staff, PPI counties, State Roundtable priorities and the OCFC website, the need for additional support staff has become increasingly evident. The OCFC plans to hire a part time (80 hours per month) Administrative Assistant. This staff will assist in the coordination of meetings, projects, list serves, minute production and other assigned tasks.

Expected Outcomes

It is anticipated that instituting court related enhancements coupled with incorporating strength-based social work practices and improving key stakeholder collaboration efforts will result in 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.)

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- Continued and enhanced collaboration with the courts and agencies at the state and local levels
- Shared analysis of data with courts
- Directed technical assistance to counties at a local level
- Reduced number of children/youth adjudicated dependent and in court-ordered placement
- Reduced number of children/youth who re-enter care
- Reduced dependency court caseload
- Reduced caseworker court caseload
- 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 frequency of court review hearing that will lead to timelier permanence
- Increased Placement Stability (less moves for children)
- Increased number of life long connections with children
- Increased number of FGDM conferences to support dependent children
- Increased number of family service plans developed with family input
- Increased collaboration among stakeholders
- Increased number of fathers actively engaged with their children.
- Increased awareness of truancy issues/best practices
- Increased number of credentialed strength based frontline workers

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Attachments

- Attachment 1:** Pennsylvania PPI and NGA Counties Divided by Judicial Analyst
Attachment 2: Pennsylvania's Children Roundtable Structure
Attachment 3: Leadership Roundtable Structure

Acronyms

CIP	Court Improvement Program
AOPC	Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts
CFSR/PIP	Child and Family Service Review/Program Improvement Plan
DPW/OCYF	Department of Public Welfare, Office of Children, Youth and Families
FDC	Family Development Credentialing
FF	Family Finding
FGDM	Family Group Decision Making
LCR	Local Children's Roundtable
LR	Leadership Roundtable
OCFC	Office of Children Youth and Families
PPI	Permanency Practice Initiative
TPR	Termination of Parental Rights

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Strategic Plan

Focus Area	Activity	Grant	Responsibility	Time frame	Interim Benchmark	Planned Outcome
PA Children's Roundtable Initiative	Local Children's Roundtables (LCR)	Basic Data	OCFC Local Jurisdictions	Ongoing	All counties will have functional LCR	Each judicial jurisdiction will have functional LCR with a cross representation of key stakeholders in the county dependency system. The LCR will provide enhanced judicial oversight of dependency matters at the county level.
	Leadership Roundtables (LR)	Basic	OCFC LR Co-Chairs LR Members	3/11/2010 3/12/2010 3/22/2010 3/29/2010 4/05/2010 4/15/2010 4/16/2010 4/23/2010 09/2010	Leadership Roundtables will meet in the fall and spring of 2011	LRs will be co-chaired by a Judge and C&Y Administrator from different counties. The co-chairs will continue out reach efforts to other county judges and administrators and participate as members of the State Roundtable.
	State Roundtable	Basic	State Supreme Court Justice OCFC DPW/OCYF	05/27/2010 and 05/28/2010	Statewide meeting will occur in May 2011	LR co-chairs will provide information discussed at LRs and CLR's. PPI Sub-committees will report on the status of on-going PPI initiatives. OCFC will present new dependency related topics gathered from Fall and Spring LRs. New OCFC priorities will be established for the following year.

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Focus Area	Activity	Grant	Responsibility	Time frame	Interim Benchmark	Planned Outcome
Coordination & Collaboration	State Agency & State Court Meeting	Basic	Supreme Court Justice OCFC Administrator DPW/OCYF Deputy Secretary JCJC Representative	Ongoing Monthly	Monthly meetings scheduled throughout the year.	These meetings are designed to encourage continued collaboration and provide updates and coordinate efforts on collaborative projects. CFSR and PIP discussions will also occur to ensure jointly established goals are achieved.
	Monitoring of Expedited Appeals Process	Basic	OCFC Administrator Appellate Rules Committee	September 2011	Ongoing report on effectiveness of expedited appeals process. OCFC will coordinate an annual report in conjunction with the Appellate Rules Committee regarding expedited appeals and present at the Annual State Roundtable meeting.	The expedited appeals process related to dependency, TPR and adoption hearings is expected to decrease the wait time for judicial decision making and thereby reduce time a child spends in foster care.
	Juvenile Court Rules Committee	Basic	OCFC Administrator	Ongoing	Meetings occur quarterly.	Dependency court rules can be developed or enhanced to meet OCFC/CIP goals. This will be ongoing work informed by judicial issues that present during regular OCFC work.

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	Coordination of Dependency Court/Orphans Court Practices and Policies	Basic	OCFC Juvenile Rules Committee Orphans Court Rules Committee	Ongoing	Assist courts in coordinating efforts to expedite a case through dependency and orphans court.	The Coordination of efforts between dependency and orphans courts will lead to more timely permanence.
Coordination & Collaboration	National Governor's Association (NGA) Policy Academy – PA Permanency Team	Basic	NGA OCFC Administrator PA Permanency Team	Ongoing Monthly	16 of PA's 67 counties were selected to participate in the NGA. OCFC Director continues as a team member representing the PA Supreme Court and dependency courts. Nine (9) NGA counties are also PPI counties. OCFC Staff participates as court representatives at county NGA meetings.	The NGA aims to reduce the number of children in foster care through a variety of strategies and collaborations. Pennsylvania will continue to work on initiatives developed in the two-year strategic plan to reduce the number of children in foster care, while ensuring safety.

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Coordination & Collaboration	OCYF Children's Cabinet	Basic	OCFC Administrator	Ongoing	OCFC Administrator serves as an active member of this cabinet representing the views and needs of dependency court.	The purpose of this cabinet is to provide input and suggestions related to issues impacting abused and neglected children as well as review/comment on proposed regulation and bulletin changes.
	FGDM International Blueprint Committee	Basic	OCFC Administrator	Ongoing		The FGDM International committee develops and issues guidance regarding best practice standards.
	FGDM Statewide Leadership Team	Basic	OCFC Administrator OCFC Judicial Analyst	Ongoing	Bi-monthly meetings	Statewide Leadership Team provides guidance to the state for development, implementation and outcomes monitoring of FGDM.
	CFSR/PIP	Basic	OCFC	Ongoing	OCFC Staff sits on the CFSR Steering committee and is a state reviewer for the onsite CFSR review.	OCFC staff will participate on this committee through the PIP development and implementation. The needs identified in the PIP related to the court will continue to be priorities in upcoming years.
	Practice Standards Revision Committee	Basic	OCFC	Ongoing	OCFC represents the courts on this committee.	OCFC will continue to represent the court needs as they relate to best practices in dependency matters.

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Coordination & Collaboration	Data Sharing	Data	OCFC DPW/OCYF	Ongoing	Continue to share court related and non-court related data between AOPC and DPW.	Sharing of data provides a broader picture of PA's Dependency System.
	PPI Oversight Team	Basic	OCFC DPW/OCYF Phase 1 Counties Phase 2 Counties Child Welfare Training Program Statewide Adoption Network Community Action Association	Ongoing	In the summer of 2009 PPI Phase 2 Counties were selected. In the summer of 2009, Philadelphia began implementation of PPI components. In the summer of 2010 PPI Phase 3 Counties will be selected. In the summer of 2011 PPI Phase 4 Counties will be selected.	The primary responsibility of this team is to provide guidance on the implementation and expansion of the PPI across PA. This team is also responsible for reviewing PPI county letters of interest and providing recommendations to the State Supreme Court

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Focus Area	Activity	Grant	Responsibility	Time frame	Interim Benchmark	Planned Outcome
	Truancy Exploration Committee	Basic	AOPC OCFC DPW/OCYF Department of Education. Dependency Judges Magisterial District Judges County Juvenile Probation Other Stakeholders	Beginning fall 2009 Ongoing	The Committee will be established, Fall 2009. Stakeholders will identify the mission of the Committee.	The primary function of this group will be to explore a myriad of truancy related topics including: PA truancy law interpretation, truancy prevention practices, truancy proceedings, best practices and the impact of truancy on dependent children. The group will present a report and recommendations at the 2010 Summer State Roundtable meeting.
Coordination & Collaboration	Fatherhood Initiative	Basic	OCFC DPW/OCYF American Humane American Bar Association Phase 1 and Phase 2 Counties	December 2010 and ongoing in 2011	Practice Counties will be identified.	The overall outcome expected is an assessment of father friendliness/support in selected counties and an implementation of gender specific promising practices as needed which will increase meaningful father and paternal family involvement.

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Technical Assistance	Direct support of LCRs, LRs and Statewide Roundtable	Basic Training Data	OCFC	Ongoing Monthly in 2010 and 2011	<p>OCFC regional Judicial Analyst staff was hired in 2008.</p> <p>Staff will continue to assist counties in the establishment, strengthening and providing technical support to roundtables including support of PPI elements.</p> <p>Staff will continue court observation, providing feedback to LCR.</p> <p>Staff will continue to provide more frequent technical assistance to those counties beginning the PPI.</p>	OCFC regional Judicial Analyst staff will continue to work in collaboration with judges, DPW/OCYF, county court administrators and other CIP partners towards the overall goal of enhancing court/agency practices to improve the safety, permanency and well-being outcomes for dependent children.

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Focus Area	Activity	Grant	Responsibility	Time frame	Interim Benchmark	Planned Outcome
Technical Assistance	Assist counties with providing valid data and interpreting data to make better informed decisions.	Data	OCFC	Ongoing Monthly in 2010 and 2011. First Annual Report to be completed in December 2010	OCFC regional Judicial Analyst staff will support county staff on the clean-up and accurate input of court related data. OCFC will hire a Judicial Data Analyst to assess, coordinate, evaluate and synthesize court data. Meeting and prepare an annual statistical report. OCFC will develop a PPI web based quarterly report. This report, coupled with statistical analysis of CPCMS reports will measure the impact of PPI.	The overall planned outcome is that counties accurately capture court related dependency and PPI data. Data results will be shared with LCRs and LRs so that counties may use this information to make data informed decisions that will change/enhance procedures that may lead children to more timely permanence.

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Focus Area	Activity	Grant	Responsibility	Time frame	Interim Benchmark	Planned Outcome
Conferences/ Trainings	Third Annual Children's Roundtable Summit	Training	AOPC, OCFC, DPW/OCYF, Summit Planning Committee, LCRs, LRs, Statewide Roundtable and other key stakeholders	September 2011	A Summit Planning Committee will be organized in 2010 for this conference.	This annual statewide summit will provide a forum for all Pennsylvania counties to be educated on national/state best and promising practices in the dependency system. County teams will also work in groups to enhance their county work plan.
	Graduated Curriculum for Dependency Judges	Training	AOPC OCFC	Ongoing through December 2010	The completion of the Dependency Bench Book is scheduled for January 2010. In the Spring of 2010 a training curricula committee will be established to develop a graduated curriculum for dependency judges. Dependency judge training will occur begin in October 2010.	The bench book will be used as both a reference guide and a textbook for a graduated curriculum for judges. The intended outcome for the development and training of the bench book to twofold. First, it will be developed to ensure both new judges and veteran judges are aware of the federal and state statutory requirements and DPW regulations. Second, this book will include current best practice information related to child emotional & physical development at various ages, family development, attachment/bonding, grief/loss, trauma impacts/recovery and other critical research/science as determined by the OCFC, and Bench Book Committee. It is expected that this material, will assist judges in making the most appropriate decisions related to a child's case.

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Focus Area	Activity	Grant	Responsibility	Time frame	Interim Benchmark	Planned Outcome
Conferences/ Trainings	Training/Program Guide for Dependency Court Stakeholders	Training	AOPC OCFC ABA PBA	September 2010	Develop specific training sessions and quick reference program guides from the Bench Book.	Program guides will be distributed to the public and training sessions will be developed for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearing Masters • Parent Advocates • Guardians Ad Litem
	Parent/Child Representation Training	Training	OCFC PBA Other key stakeholders to be determined	Beginning March 2010	In 2009 OCFC will convene a workgroup to develop training. Initial training will occur in early 2010 with more extensive sessions being ongoing.	Parent / Child Representation Training will increase the quality of practice for parties' legal representation which will ultimately impact more timely permanence for dependent children.
Educational/ Informational Initiatives	State Trial Court Judges Conference	Training	OCFC AOPC Judicial Education Department Dependency Judges	Winter 2011 Spring 2011	These workshops will continue to provide PPI and other court related information. During the 2011 Winter and Spring sessions specific themes will be highlighted and training provided.	The OCFC will use standing workshops to update, train and provide information on PA and national issues in dependency.

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Focus Area	Activity	Grant	Responsibility	Time frame	Interim Benchmark	Planned Outcome
Educational/ Informational Initiatives	Expedited Appeals Support	Basic Training Data	OCFC	Ongoing as needed	Continue to train on the process Begin tracking outcomes as a result of the process.	The expedited appeals rule is designed to strengthen the Family Fast Track Program to accelerate the internal appellate process in court cases involving adoption, custody, dependency, paternity and involuntary termination of parental rights. A report will be generated assessing movement in timeliness and permanency resulting from these appellate rules changes.
	Website Enhancements	Data	OCFC	Ongoing	The OCFC is scheduled for completion in November 2010. Website enhancements will be continued on an ongoing basis.	The OCFC website will provide judges, county agencies, DPW/OCYF, parents, guardians, kin, children and other stakeholders with various information, resources and data surrounding the PA dependency system and CIP project.

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	Web-based Distance Learning	Data	OCFC Judicial Education Judicial Automation	September 2010 ICPC web-based training will occur in September 2011.	The OCFC is scheduled for completion in November 2010. OCFC will continue to work with Judicial Automation and Judicial Education to develop distance learning modules. Distance Learning Module on ICPC will occur in September 2011	The OCFC website will have the capability to provide distance learning. Web-based training sessions will be available to judges and other stakeholders so that they may learn about specific topics while remaining in their jurisdiction.

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Dependency Data System	Completion and ongoing support of PA Dependency Data System (CPCMS)	Data	AOPC/Judicial Automation OCFC	Ongoing	Judicial Automation will continue to work with Allegheny and Philadelphia counties to fully execute CPCMS. Judicial Automation and OCFC will continue to provide county support on system training and data integrity issues.	OCFC Staff and Judicial Automation Staff will continue to work collaborate on system reporting, enhancements and support to counties.
	Development of Statistical Data Reports	Data	AOPC Judicial Automation OCFC	December 2009	Statistical reports are scheduled to be completed by December 2009.	Statistical reports will be used to gather statewide data on court related dependency cases.

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Focus Area	Activity	Grant	Responsibility	Time frame	Interim Benchmark	Planned Outcome
	Development and Implementation of PPI Quarterly Reports	Data	AOPC	November 2009	OCFC will work with website vendor to develop PPI quarterly reports.	Data results will be shared with LCRs and LRs so that counties may use this information to make data informed decisions that will change/enhance procedures that may lead children to more timely permanence.
Interstate Placement of Foster Children	Inclusion of ICPC in the Dependency Bench Book	Training	OCFC	January 2010	The Dependency Bench Book will have a chapter dedicated to ICPC	The ICPC Chapter of the Dependency Bench Book will Provide Dependency Judges with pertinent information on ICPC
	Web-Based ICPC Training for Judges	Training Data	AOPC OCFC	September 2011	Included with other web-based training for judges offered through the OCFC will be a module on ICPC	This training will facilitate uniformity in the application and understanding of ICPC laws across jurisdictions.
	Enhance CPCMS Dependency Reporting System to include the ability to capture ICPC Data	Data	AOPC Judicial Automation and OCFC	December 2010	Development of CPCMS ICPC data module	Capturing specific ICPC information will allow OCFC to gather data on the number of ICPC cases and the states where placement occurs.

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	Collaborate with identified ICPC states	Basic	OCFC DPW States involved in ICPC with PA Children	Begin Meetings in July 2011	Meet regularly with ICPC states.	