

B-01 Major Activities and Accomplishments This Period

1. Project Administration

Contracts with Consultants

Public Relations Contract: During the period of this report we completed a contract with Padilla Speer Beardsley, a public relations firm, that will assist us in dissemination activities. (See Section B-06)

Cultural Consultants: During the period of this report we have continued to work with our cultural consultant vendor, Full Circle Community Institute, primarily on planning activities that will occur during the next six month period. We have asked Full Circle to facilitate the creation of another vignette by the parents in the African American and American Indian focus groups. In addition, we have asked Full Circle to partner with us and with the public relations firm to help produce an event in September for the dissemination of information about our CFA model to the community. (See Sections B-04 and B-06 for a description of these planned activities.)

Training Contract: We are continuing our contract with Lorrie Lutz from L3P Associates. (See Training Section below.)

On-Going Project Administration

CFA Steering Committee: This group, which meets twice a month, continues to be a very effective vehicle for overseeing the development and implementation of our CFA model; coordinating Ramsey County activities with the University of Minnesota evaluation activities; coordinating the Service Quality Assurance (SQA) and Concurrent Permanency Planning Initiatives described below; and problem solving in a number of areas.

Advisory Group: During the period of this report the Advisory Group did not meet due to scheduling conflicts and the transition of the two Child Protection managers which will be described below (See Section B-02, Contextual Events or Community Changes.)

Service Quality Assurance (SQA): The development of the SQA system has continued during the period of this report. It is an agency-wide initiative aimed at improving Targeted Case Management rates and improving performance in audits by developing tools and training to promote standardized clinical practice in each program area. Because the goals of SQA and CFA are somewhat similar and because they are being rolled out during the same period of time, a concerted effort has been made to prevent confusion in the implementation of the two initiatives and to create overlap between them insofar as is possible. CFA management staff and the CFA University of Minnesota researchers have participated on the relevant CFA working committees in order to coordinate these two projects. During the period of this report piloting of the SQA has continued to occur. A web-based version of an auditing tool for SQA is currently being finalized.

2. Planning and Development of the CFA Model

FA Program (Differential Response) Restructuring: During the period of the last Semi-Annual Report both Child Protection Intake and Child Protection Program components of the CFA model had been developed and fully implemented.

Toward the end of the last reporting period the agency made a decision to significantly restructure the manner in which differential response services (in Ramsey County referred to as Family Assessment, “FA Services”) are provided. A program that had previously had only six workers and which had relied heavily on linking families to time-limited vendored services will now have 27 workers. [There will be no positions lost or gained. There will simply be a change of functions for some workers.] Following the restructuring there will be two traditional Intake units, two traditional Program units, and three FA units.

The restructured FA program will feature one worker for the life of the case, as opposed to families having separate Intake and Program workers. A one worker model has not been used before in Ramsey County. Because one worker will follow throughout the life of a case, it was necessary to adapt our CFA model to that requirement. A great deal of planning was done during the period of this report with our trainer, Ms. Lutz, our managers, and our supervisors to determine the best way to adapt the CFA model to the new FA structure. Also, because of the one worker feature, it was necessary to provide training to all the workers for the part of Child Protection services they had never provided. Consequently, Ms. Lutz geared all her staff training sessions during this period to address training in the adapted form of the CFA model. In addition, the three supervisors who will supervise the new FA units created and conducted a training curriculum involving four training sessions for the 27 workers to teach

them the organizational and Department of Human Services requirements for the part of the Child Protection service delivery they had not done previously.

Training and Implementation

During this reporting period Ms. Lutz conducted training during site visits in November, December, and February. In addition, several conference calls were held with her for the purposes of discussing the adaptation of the CFA model for the restructured FA units.

Ms. Lutz spent a half day during the December visit with the combined Children's Justice Initiative and Children's Safety Advisory Team (CJI/CSAT). These groups are composed of professionals such as representatives of the school system and court system who work closely with our child protection system. During that session she presented the Child Protection Program component of the model to complement the presentation she made to that group in September on the Child Protection Intake component.

Other than the CJI/CSAT presentation, Ms. Lutz directed all her training activities during the period of this report to training staff and supervisors on the CFA adapted model for the restructured FA units. In all, she provided 762.50 hours of training for 27 staff, 7 supervisors, two managers, and one project staff. The training included how to conduct a safety assessment for those staff who had not previously had experience in Intake and how to conduct a full functional assessment and develop case plans for those who have not previously worked in Program. In addition, Ms. Lutz revised the manual for supervisors. At present the supervisors and managers are reviewing the manual revisions.

It should be noted that the supervisors were very active in structuring the training sessions during the period of this report. In addition, as was mentioned above, the supervisors created and conducted a separate training curriculum for the 27 FA staff on agency and Department of Human Services requirements for Child Protection Practice.

Evaluation Activities Related to Implementation

During the first half of Year 4 of the CFA Project, the following evaluation activities took place:

- Fidelity Study: An evaluation of worker fidelity to the adapted CFA practice began in the second half of Year 3. Data collection (via interviews with workers about their use of CFA components in practice and corresponding case record reviews) began in Fall 2010 and continued throughout January 2011. Data was analyzed January through March 2011 and a report is currently being written (expected report completion date April 2011). Preliminary results show much improved fidelity, although improvement is still needed with regard to the inclusion of fathers and culture in CFA practice.
- Management Study: The management study of RCCHSD management structure, policies, and practice is currently in progress. The management study will allow evaluators to identify the change process that is occurring during the development and implementation of CFA in RCCHSD; specifically, the management study will provide a better understanding of agency changes that took place prior to and during the implementation of CFA.

- SSIS School Outcomes Study: The school outcomes study is also currently in progress. The goal of the school study is to better understand the processes by which child protection workers interact with school systems, as this may affect educational outcomes of children involved in child protection. Case record reviews of worker/school collaboration in all cases included in the Intake and Program (Case Management) Baseline Studies have been completed. Additionally, all subject children from the baseline studies have been matched to educational records using the Minn-LInK administrative database. Data analysis is on-going.

1. Contextual Events or Community Changes

There have been developments in two agency initiatives that impact the CFA model.

- Family Group Decision- Making grant: The Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) Grant received by Ramsey County last year has resulted in a recent beneficial policy change. Social workers will now be required to offer FGDM consent forms to families in Intake if the child is being placed and in Program before a permanency review team meeting is held. This will help to normalize the use of FGDM and will expand the number of families who have the benefit of this service.
- Concurrent Permanency Planning: The Permanent Families Recruitment Project grant has been developing guidelines for implementing concurrent permanency planning. Project staff for the two grants have met to plan how to coordinate the two initiatives; and the permanency staff and their consultant, Janyce Fenton, have reviewed the CFA model. It is clear that the permanency planning concept and activities are very compatible with the CFA model as it is written. (See Section B-06)

B-03 Lessons Learned

During this review period we experienced the benefits of the lessons we have learned previously about the crucial role of the supervisors in supporting the roll-out of the CFA model and facilitating buy-in of staff to the practice changes brought about by the model. Because we have been much more intentional in including supervisors in our planning processes and have focused more thought and training on meeting their needs, they have responded by being much more engaged in the very difficult planning and training processes for the FA restructuring as was mentioned in Sections B-01 and B-02.

B-04 Dissemination

a. Current

Project Presentations

- In October the CFA project cultural consultants presented the American Indian vignette (See B-01 above)
 - Audience: approximately 40 students and 10 faculty from the University of Minnesota School of Social Work.
 - Goal: the goal was to sensitize the students to the experience of American Indian parents who are being served in the Child Protection system and to show the ways in which bias and lack of knowledge

about a family's culture presents barriers to providing effective service to the family.

- Results: the presentation was very well received.
 - Contact: Dr. Kristine Piescher at kpiesche@umn.edu.
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- In December Ms. Lutz provided a three hour information and training session to a combined meeting of the Children's Justice Initiative (CJI) and the Child Safety Advisory Team (CSAT) on the CFA Program Model.
 - Audience: This group of 50 people is composed of child welfare professionals who work closely with our Child Protection system. The group includes representatives from the County Attorney's office, the
 - Court, Child Abuse medical center, Guardian Ad Litem program, community agencies, the public schools, and other organizations.
 - Goal: The purpose of this meeting was to provide updated information on the changes in our Child Protection practice so that the professionals could work more effectively with our staff on cases. This session was a follow-up to a session in September where Ms. Lutz presented on the Intake portion of the CFA model.
 - The session was received very enthusiastically as was the one in September.
 - Contact: jenny.gordon@co.ramsey.mn.us.
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- In February Richard Coleman, Child Protection Program Manager, made an informational presentation about CFA to the Ramsey County Guardian Ad Litem program.
 - Audience: The Guardian Ad Litem staff and supervisors of Ramsey County.
 - Goal: The purpose of the presentation was to expand the knowledge of participants about CFA so that they better understand the new

model that agency workers are using. This will enable our staff and the guardians to work more effectively together on behalf of families.

- Contact: jenny.gordon@co.ramsey.mn.us.

Project Updates

- University of Minnesota Evaluation Website: “Evaluation of the Comprehensive Family Assessment Model in Child Welfare”. URL: <http://www.cehd.umn.edu/SSW/cascw/researchCFA%20Evaluation/default.asp>
 - Audience and Goal: This website is designed to share information regarding the CFA project with the Children’s Bureau, other grantees, and the broader audience of those interested in comprehensive family assessment. In addition. In order to be transparent it will provide a feedback loop to Ramsey County staff and management with on-going information regarding the status of evaluation activities and findings.
 - Contact person: Traci LaLiberte- 612-624-2279

b. Planned

Project Presentations

- In September a large community event is planned to present information to all interested community members about Ramsey County’s CFA model.

This event is currently being planned by members of the CFA Steering Committee, Full Circle Cultural Institute, and our public relations firm, Padilla, Speer, Beardsley.

- Audience: all interested community members. Particular attention will be paid to inviting members of the cultural communities we have worked with on this project and to publicizing the event in communities of color.

- Goal: To provide information to the community about the ways in which Ramsey County has changed its child protection practice through the CFA model.
- Contact: jenny.gordon@co.ramsey.mn.us.

Meetings and Information Sessions

- Advisory Group: Sessions will be held quarterly to update the Advisory Board on the activities of the project and to engage them in helping to plan the September event.

Project Updates

- Articles and interviews with a variety of media: these will be arranged and facilitated by the public relations firm in order to help us disseminate information about the CFA model to as broad an audience as possible.

B-05 Other Activities

- I. Process Evaluation (See Attached)
- II. Practice Evaluation (See Attached)

III. Outcome Evaluation (See Attached)

B-06 Activities Planned for Next Reporting Period

1. Project Administration

Cultural Consultants and Parent Response Focus Groups: During the next review period the cultural consultants will work with the parent focus groups to create a third vignette to complement the first two they produced. The first vignette depicted a composite of the American Indian parents' experiences with our Child Protection services, and the second one depicted the experiences of African American parents. The third and final vignette will portray child protection services as the parents believe they should be structured and delivered in order to provide the maximum benefits to families.

In addition, during the next six months the consultants will work with CFA project staff and staff from the public relations firm to help plan a large community informational event. The consultants will help facilitate the event and will provide assistance to the public relations staff in how to do outreach about the event. The purpose of the event will be to demonstrate to the community the ways in which child protection practice has changed through the CFA grant, and to explain the objectives of the changes.

Advisory Group: During the next review period the Advisory Group will meet quarterly for project updates and to help plan the September community event.

Steering Committee: Team meetings of the project management staff from Ramsey County and the University of Minnesota will be held regularly twice each month.

Service Quality Assurance: the SQA case auditing procedure will begin to be used in the two traditional Intake units during the period of the next review.

Public Relations Firm: In addition to helping plan the September community event referenced above, Padilla Speer Beardsley will assist us in publicizing the CFA model through outreach to a variety of media outlets. They will help us generate public awareness of the practice change and the new approach to assessing and providing services to families in Ramsey County.

2. Planning and Development of the CFA Model

N/A

3. Implementation of the CFA Model

Training: Training site visits with Ms. Lutz are planned for April and May. Pending the approval of carry-over funds, site visits are also planned in June and September. There are three areas of focus for these site visits:

- The continuing training of the twenty-seven staff and 3 supervisors who will be in the newly structured FA units.
- The continuing training of the traditional Intake and Program staff to enable them to apply the CFA practice model more thoroughly and effectively.
- The continuing work with supervisors in the areas of need referenced in Section B-02: 1) deepening the supervisors' knowledge of and ability to supervise within the CFA model, 2) improving the supervisors' skill in doing

group supervision, and 3) improving their skills in coaching and mentoring staff.

Based on our earlier learning about the most effective modality for structuring training in the model, insofar as is possible, Ms. Lutz will provide training unit by

unit. This will provide the benefits of a small group learning environment and the familiarity of participants with their unit colleagues.

Manuals: Ms. Lutz will continue final revisions for the traditional Intake and Program manuals and for the supervisory manual. An adapted version of the practice manual will be created for the new FA units.

Implementation the CFA model in the FA units: There will be a phased roll-out of implementation in the three newly restructured FA units during the next review period. The first unit will begin accepting cases using the new FA approach (one worker for the life of the case and the use of a slightly adapted form of the CFA model) in April, the second in May, and the third unit by September.

Coordinating with Concurrent Permanency Planning: During the next review period, in May, a conference call will be arranged between project staff members of the CFA and the Permanent Families Recruitment grant project with the CFA trainer, Lorrie Lutz, and the Permanent Families consultant, Janyce Fenton to discuss the coordination of concurrent planning guidelines with the CFA model. Training and implementation for the Permanent Families project will occur in July, and CFA project staff will participate as needed.

Evaluation Activities

During the remainder of Year 4 of the CFA Project, the following evaluation activities will take place:

- Intake Baseline Family Interviews: The written report for this study will be finalized and submitted to RCCHSD. Findings of this report have been shared

with RCCHSD in previous reporting periods; challenges in analysis and interpretation resulted due to perceived response bias of families who agreed to participate versus those families who did not participate.

- Cultural Consultant Addendum: An addendum to the baseline report will be written that summarizes information shared by the cultural consultants as it relates to families' experiences with RCCHSD Child Protection and their recommendations for future Child Protection work.
- Post-Test Study: U of MN evaluators will begin preparing for the post-test case record review and focus groups in the remainder of Year 4. The post-test study will occur in Year 5 of the project.
- Fidelity Study: Instrumentation will be developed in the remainder of Year 4 for the final evaluation of fidelity. This final evaluation will occur in Year 5 in conjunction with the post-test case record review (above).
- SSIS School Outcomes Study: Analysis of baseline findings will continue over the remainder of Year 4, with a written report to follow shortly thereafter. Additionally, instrumentation will be developed in the remainder of Year 4 for the post-test school outcomes study. This post-test study will occur in Year 5 in conjunction with the post-test case record review (above).

- **Management Study:** The aforementioned management study will continue throughout Years 4 and 5 of the project to allow for continued data collection throughout the entire implementation process.

- **Dissemination:** Findings from the CFA project will be disseminated in Year 4 via conference presentations, journal articles, web publications, sharing with federal cluster partners, research reports and presentations to RCCHSD and federal funders, and other outlets that may arise (e.g., presentation invitations, articles directed towards county workers, etc.).