

B-01 Major Activities and Accomplishments This Period

1. Project Administration

Contracts with Consultants

Public Relations Contract: During the period of this report four meetings were held jointly with the public relations firm, Padilla Speer Beardsley (PSB) and our cultural consultants to plan a communication campaign to disseminate information about the CFA project to the broader Ramsey County Community. PSB compiled a media list and, after studying our project, created draft materials which can be used as part of a communication campaign. (See B- 04 Dissemination Activities for further information.)

Cultural Consultants: During the period of this report we worked with our cultural consultants, Full Circle Community Institute, Inc., to begin the planning for a communication campaign about the CFA project that will reach Ramsey County's communities of color. In addition, the consultants assisted the African American and American Indian focus groups to create a third "vignette" depicting the parents' ideas about how child protection services could be structured to provide maximum benefit to families.

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. During the period of this report the Steering Committee began the process of incorporating the information we have learned about how culture impacts child protection services into our practice model. This will be discussed below in the section on "Planning and Development" of the model on page 2.

Advisory Group: During the period of this report the full Advisory Group did not meet due to the intense focus on the implementation of the greatly expanded differential response (FA Services) function, described below in the section "Planning and Development of the CFA Model". However, our cultural consultants and some parents from the focus groups are part of the Advisory Group, and we continued to meet with them as described above.

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 University of Minnesota researchers have participated on the relevant CFA working committees in order to coordinate these two projects. The piloting and roll-out of SQA continued during this period.

2. Planning and Development of the CFA Model

Although our core CFA model is fully implemented in Child Protection Intake, Program, and FA Services; the model is still being developed with regard to the inclusion of cultural content. Fidelity testing by the University of Minnesota has indicated that staff would like to have more guidance about how to actively include cultural considerations in their assessments and on-going services to families. Our cultural consultants have been working with parent focus groups since January of 2009 and have been providing us with feedback and consultation. We believe that we are now ready to incorporate the feedback and insights gained from the consultants and parents into the CFA model and to create training in this area for staff and supervisors. Therefore, in August 2011 we held a half day retreat with our consultants and created a plan for Grant Year 5 that will enable us to incorporate cultural specificity into our model.

The plan involves the following components:

- Creation of a third vignette by the consultants and parents to depict child welfare services that would provide maximum benefit to families from their perspective.
- Presentation to supervisors and staff of a combined version of the two earlier vignettes that depicted what parents actual experiences with child protection services had been and the new third vignette that will show services as they should be in the parents' eyes. The presentation of the vignettes will be accompanied by facilitation by the cultural consultants. (See section B-03, "Lessons Learned".)

- Focus groups of staff by Charlesetts Rolack, Child Protection Intake manager, to learn how they work with families from various cultures. She held the first group during the period of this review.
- A review of our CFA manuals by the cultural consultants to provide consultation about how and where to add information about culture.
- A review of our CFA tools to see if and how they should be amended to more deliberately include culture as a factor to be considered with every family.

3. Implementation and Training of the CFA Model

FA Services (Differential Response) Restructuring: As was discussed in the last Semi-Annual Report, Ramsey County has undertaken a very significant restructuring of the manner in which differential response services (in Ramsey County referred to as "Family Assessment" or "FA Services") are provided. The program is being expanded from six to approximately 27 workers. No positions will be lost or gained. There will simply be a change of functions for some workers. The restructured FA program will feature one worker for the life of the case, as opposed to families having separate Intake and Program workers.

During the period of this report there was a phased roll-out of the restructured FA services. It was quickly apparent that maintaining an equitable distribution of cases among the seven service units (two traditional Intake, two traditional Program, and three FA units) was very difficult due to this change in structure. This is particularly true because there has always been a seasonal variation in Intake numbers which tends to skew caseload sizes. In addition, the issue of whether FA workers should handle court cases or transfer them to traditional Program has needed to be resolved. These issues are currently under discussion, and various plans for maintaining equitable caseloads across the seven units are under discussion.

Training

During the period of this report Ms. Lutz conducted four site visits to provide training and consultation. In all, she provided 880 hours of training to 78 workers and case aides, seven supervisors, two managers, and one project staff. In order to accommodate the needs of staff who have been reassigned to the new FA Services units, 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. She also conducted specialized case consultation sessions for units in traditional Intake and traditional Program in keeping with our objective of moving

away from large group training sessions as much as possible. The response to the unit-based sessions was very positive.

Ms. Lutz also created a training power-point and script tailored for prospective vendors. This will be discussed more fully in B-02,3. "Contextual Events".

The issues involved in the roll-out of restructured FA Services required a great deal of supervisory time and attention during this period. And, as was the case during the period of the last report, it was imperative that Ms. Lutz provide fundamental training to the new FA workers. Because of these factors, it was once again necessary to defer the planned training for supervisors focusing on coaching, mentoring, and group supervision skills.

Evaluation Activities Related to Implementation: During the second half of Year 4 of the CFA Project, the following evaluation activities took place:

- 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. All subject children's data from the baseline studies have been matched to educational records using the Minn-LInK administrative database. Baseline data analysis is on-going. Preparation for posttest case record reviews of worker/school collaboration is underway.
- Fidelity Study: An evaluation of worker fidelity to the adapted CFA practice was completed in Spring 2011 (see attached). The fidelity report was written and presented to RCCHSD in April 2011. Preparation for an additional (abbreviated) fidelity study to accompany the posttest case record review began in Summer 2011.
- Intake Baseline Family Interviews: The report for this study has been written and is in its final editing phase. 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 (thus delaying the writing of this report).

- Cultural Consultant Addendum: An addendum to the baseline report was written Spring 2011. The addendum 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. Findings of the report have been shared with RCCHSD in previous reporting periods; upon editing, this report will be submitted to RCCHSD.
- Post-Test Study: University of Minnesota researchers have begun preparing for the posttest case record review and focus groups during summer, 2011 through development of instrumentation development and refinement of methodology.

4. Sustainability

During this reporting period the Steering Committee began planning for ways in which to sustain the integrity of the CFA model following the conclusion of the grant. The current plan is to convert an existing working committee for the Service Quality Assurance initiative into an on-going vehicle for overseeing the overall integrity of practice in the agency. Since SQA will be fully implemented this year, the committee, which will meet regularly, will broaden its scope to provide oversight not only for SQA but for the integrity of the CFA model and other agency initiatives such as concurrent permanency planning.

A further consideration that will promote sustainability is that CFA is now the only child protection practice model in Ramsey County, and it is used by all Child Protection staff. Although our trainer will no longer be available at the conclusion of the grant, all staff have been trained in the model and, at the conclusion of the grant, they will have been using the model exclusively for either two or three years depending on where they were in the CFA roll-out schedule.

2. Changes

During the previous reporting period we indicated our plan to hold a large educational event about CFA for the broader Ramsey County community in September, 2011. As was mentioned above, planning was begun for the event with Padilla Speers Beardsley and our cultural consultants. During the summer of 2011 we decided that it was premature to provide information to the community at that point in our project. Although all staff were using CFA at that point, there was considerable flux in job functions for 30 staff and supervisors. Also, we felt that the model had not been used for a long enough time to provide really rich data in such a session.

In addition, one of our objectives doing this presentation is to indicate the ways we have incorporated into our child protection practice what we have learned about culture from working with our cultural consultants and focus groups. As was mentioned above, grant Year 5 will include an extensive effort to incorporate our cultural learning into the model and to provide staff training in this area. Because of all these things, we decided to hold the event at the end of the grant project in August or September of 2012. The media list and publicity materials prepared by Padilla Speer Beardsley will be used at that time.

3. Contextual Events or Community Changes

Rebidding for Child Protection Vendors: Ramsey County has issued an RFP for all vendored child protection services. These services include in-home services, mentoring, visitation monitoring, and other services used by child protection families. In a very deliberate way, the RFP framed the desired services in terms of CFA concepts. For example, the RFP indicated that specific behavioral objectives should be worked on by the vendors and that referrals to the vendors would specify the behavioral objectives the parents were working on. Also, intentional visitation requirements were explained to the vendors. To provide background to the prospective vendors, there was a section in the RFP explaining CFA. In addition, two informational sessions were held in September in which a presentation was made by the CFA project manager. Finally, an informational video about CFA was created and posted on the University of Minnesota's CFA website so that prospective vendors could refer to it. The presentations and videos will be discussed in section B-04 on dissemination activities. Ms. Lutz is creating a vendors's CFA manual and will provide training in January, 2012 after the new vendors are selected. The thorough incorporation of CFA components into our expectations for vendors will also contribute to the sustainability of the integrity of the model after the grant is concluded.

B-03 Lessons Learned

Incorporating Cultural Material into CFA Model: As was mentioned in section B-01 we have begun the process of incorporating the cultural feedback and information we have gathered into our CFA practice manuals. Staff training will be provided in this area also. The training will include a presentation of the parent vignettes to staff and supervisors. The vignettes are very powerful and show the pain faced by the parents who created them. We have observed that sometimes the presentation of painful material on cultural issues to staff, or in one instance to a group of social work students, has evoked a defensive response in the audience. This defensiveness

could impair the ability of the audience to absorb useful lessons from the cultural consultants and parents. Therefore, when the vignettes are presented to staff and supervisors, the cultural consultants will facilitate discussions following the presentations to help the audience debrief and process the experience. This was recommended by the consultants based on their previous training experiences.

B-04 Dissemination

a. Current

Project Presentations

- **April, 2011 Presentation of Fidelity Study Findings**
 - **Audience:** the CFA Steering Committee, including the Child Protection managers.
 - **Goal:** Dr. Kristine Piescher presented the findings of the April 15 fidelity study report (see attached) so as to inform our decisions and the direction of future CFA activities.
 - **Results:** the presentation was very helpful. Of particular value was a chart of the findings of the study which summarized areas of strength and areas with challenges.
 - **Contact:** Dr. Kristine Piescher at kpiesche@umn.edu.

- **September 8 and 9, 2011: Informational CFA Presentations to Prospective Child Protection Vendors**
 - **Audience:** Each presentation had an audience of approximately 25 representatives from agencies who were responding to an RFP for new vendors to provide in-home, visitation monitoring, and mentoring services for Ramsey County child protection families.
 - The goal was to familiarize the audience with the CFA model because we are requiring that vendors provide services within the framework of CFA model. Examples are working and tracking progress on clear behavioral goals with parents and conducting supervised visits in accordance with the protocols for intentional visitation.
 - **Results:** the presentations were well received and the audience asked many questions.
 - **Contact:** Jenny Gordon at jenny.gordon@co.ramsey.mn.us.

Orientation Materials

- Informational CFA Power Point Video to augment the September 8 and 9 sessions (above):
 - Audience: Prospective vendors for in home support, intentional visitation, and mentoring services for child protection in Ramsey County.
 - Goal: Prior to the September informational sessions for vendors, we asked our training consultant, Lorrie Lutz, to create a power point and script to explain the CFA model for prospective vendor agencies. The power point was narrated and placed on the University of Minnesota CFA website (see below) so that prospective vendors could learn more about CFA. The narrated power point is about 35 minutes in length and provides an overview of CFA as well as a summary of the implications of the CFA model for vendors.
 - Results of the Strategy: The power point video has received extremely positive feedback.
 - Contact: the video can be seen in the "Training and Resources" section of the University of Minnesota CFA website. The URL is <http://www.cejd.umn.edu/ssw/cascw/research/RamseyCFAProject/>
For further information contact Jenny Gordon at jenny.gordon@co.ramsey.mn.us.

Project Updates

- University of Minnesota Evaluation Website: "Comprehensive Family Assessment Model in Child Welfare". URL: <http://www.cehd.umn.edu/ssw/cascw/research/RamseyCFAProject/>
 - 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 staff and management with on-going information regarding the status of evaluation activities and findings. The website is divided into three content sections: Model Overview, Training and Resources, and Evaluation. It contains the Semi-Annual Progress Reports, evaluation reports, training materials, and resources relating to comprehensive family assessment. In addition, the website contains explanatory videos by the Federal Project Officer, Cathy Overbagh, and the project manager; and an informational narrated power point for prospective vendors.
 - Results of Strategy: To date the site has been visited 1101 times during the current reporting period.
 - Contact Person: Dr. Traci LaLiberte- 612-2279.

b. Planned

Publications

- Work will be done on an Implementation Manual to be completed in September 2012
 - Audience: any jurisdiction interested in replication of the Ramsey County CFA model.
 - Goal: to develop a replication manual based on the NIRN framework.
 - Contact: Jenny Gordon at jenny.gordon@co.ramsey.mn.us.

Project Presentations:

- (Event has Already Occurred) Presentation to Administrators at the Minnesota Department of Human Services on October 26.
 - Audience: Assistant Commissioner for Children and Families and the Director of the Child Safety and Permanency Division.
 - Goal: since the beginning of our CFA project we have involved supervisory level staff at DHS on our Advisory Committee and other working groups and we have kept them informed about our project. However, at this point in our project we felt that it was appropriate to present an overview of our project to the higher level administrators.
 - Result: the administrators were extremely interested and stated that they would like us to disseminate information about our project to the other 86 counties in Minnesota and that they will begin to consider ways to accomplish that.
 - Contact: Jenny Gordon at jenny.gordon@co.ramsey.mn.us.

- (Proposal Accepted) April 16-20 18th National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect, *Celebrating the Past- Imagining the Future* to be held in Washington D.C.
 - Audience: attendees will be a wide array of child welfare professionals.
 - Goal: four presenters from the University of Minnesota and Ramsey County will present "High-Fidelity; It's not just for the music world" which will describe fidelity testing of the Ramsey County CFA project.
 - Contact: Dr. Traci LaLiberte at 612-624-2279.

- (No Notification to Date about Proposal) April 16-20 18th National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect, *Celebrating the Past- Imagining the Future* to be held in Washington D.C.

- Audience: attendees will be a wide array of child welfare professionals.
- Goal: three CFA teams, Alabama, Alamance County, and Ramsey County propose to make a presentation, "Implementing Comprehensive Family Assessment: Lessons Learned in Changing Professional Behavior, Adapting Organizational Structures, and Redefining Relationships with Stakeholders". This presentation would focus on an overview of the CFA grant, changes in practice, results of interventions, implementation drivers, and would identify challenges in implementation.
- Contact: Dr. Kantahyanee Murray at kmurray@ssw.umaryland.edu.

B-05 Other Activities

A) Other Activities Not Previously Reported

N/A

- B) I. Process Evaluation (See Attached)
- II. Practice Evaluation (See Attached)
- III. Outcome Evaluation (See Attached)

C) Information and Knowledge Obtained from Grantees Meeting

The 2011 experiences and learning at the 2011 Grantees Meeting led culminated in :

- The decision to meet with the administrators from the Minnesota Department of Human Services as described above. In the discussions at the Grantees Meeting about dissemination we realized that this was an appropriate time in the life of our project to meet with the administrators to explore their interest in further dissemination .
- The decision to submit the two proposals for the OGAN conference described above grew out of discussions about dissemination and in our networking with the other teams.
- The decision to create a joint program and evaluation manual that can be used for replication grew out of discussions at the meeting, as did the decision to use the NIRM guidelines as a framework for the manual.

B-06 Activities Planned for Next Reporting Period

1. Project Administration

Contracts with Consultants: During grant year 5 we will continue contracts with Full Circle Community Institute, Inc. for cultural consultation and with L3P Associates (Lorrie Lutz) for training. The cultural consultation and training activities are described below.

Advisory Group: The full Advisory Group will meet on an as-needed basis. The parents and cultural consultants who are part of the group will continue to meet with us on activities related to the incorporation of cultural considerations into our model.

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: It is anticipated that the SQA case auditing procedure will be fully implemented in Child Protection Intake and Program by the end of the next reporting period.

2. Planning and Development of the CFA Model

Inclusion of Culture in the CFA Model: During the period of the next review the cultural consultants will work with the African American and American Indian parent focus groups to create the third vignette described in section B-01 above. As was also mentioned, Ms. Rolack will continue to conduct focus groups with staff to obtain their input on working with families from various cultures. Ramsey County is fortunate to have many social workers in culturally specific positions (African American, ICWA, Hmong, and Spanish speaking), and they as well as other staff have experience that can be brought to bear on this topic. Finally, the cultural consultants will review our practice guides to provide suggestions about how they can be modified to reflect a greater focus on culture.

3. Implementation of the CFA Model

Supervision: As part of our on-going attempt to enhance the quality of supervision of the CFA model, the Child Protection Program manager, Cheryl Barnes, is

implementing a shift from crisis-oriented questions to supervision that is planned and scheduled. The supervisor observation study conducted in December, 2009 clearly showed that workers are accustomed to frequently "dropping into the office" or stopping the supervisor in the hallway to ask concrete questions about cases. Often these questions involve seeking permission or approval of a particular course of action. The workers were much less likely to hold reflective, clinically oriented consultations with supervisors. As has been mentioned in other reports, the CFA model requires more clinically oriented supervision.

Because the supervisors are constantly being asked questions, they have less time to consult in-depth with workers. This becomes a vicious circle. In order to break this chain of events, Ms. Barnes has implemented a phased-in schedule for increasing the frequency of supervision with each worker. Required supervision sessions increased from one to two a month in September, and the plan is to move to three sessions a month in March and to weekly supervision in September, 2012. It is hoped that as the frequency of supervision increases, staff will learn to defer their questions until the next supervisory session. This may be a partial solution to the lack of supervisory time.

Training: Ms. Lutz will make two site visits during the period of the next report. In December she will work with mixed groups of Traditional Intake and Traditional program staff to work on issues of common interest. It is important that each group of staff understand better how the other group makes decisions so that the process of serving families is as seamless as possible. In addition, Ms. Lutz will continue her case consultations with individual units as this model of training has been very successful. In January, Ms. Lutz will provide training for the newly chosen vendors for in-home support, mentoring, and visitation monitoring services.

In addition, Ms. Lutz will continue the important work with supervisors helping them increase their skills in coaching, mentoring, and group supervision. As was mentioned above, the roll-out of the restructured FA services continues to absorb a great deal of supervisory time. It is hoped that during this period the roll-out issues will have abated and that more intensive time can be spent with the supervisors.

Manuals: Ms. Lutz will complete a CFA model guide for vendors to be used by the newly selected vendors in January. In addition, the process of adding cultural content to the worker and supervisor manuals will begin.

Implementation of the CFA Model in FA Units: The problem of periodic overload of Intake, Program, or FA Services will continue to be worked on.

Coordinating with Concurrent Permanency Planning During the next review period we will continue to work on coordinating the CFA grant activities with those of the Permanent Families project.

Evaluation Activities

During the beginning of Year 5 of the CFA Project, the following evaluation activities will take place:

- **Management Study:** The management study mentioned in Section B-01 will continue throughout Year 5 of the project to allow for continued data collection throughout the entire implementation process.
- **SSIS School Outcomes Study:** Data regarding school/child welfare collaboration to support the school outcomes study will be collected Fall 2011 in conjunction with the posttest case record review.
- **Fidelity Study:** Data to support an additional abbreviated fidelity study will be collected in Fall, 2011. Data will be collected via interviews with workers and in conjunction with the posttest case record review.
- **Intake Baseline Family Interviews:** The written report for this study will be finalized and submitted to RCCHSD.
- **Cultural Consultant Addendum:** The written report for this study will be finalized and submitted to RCCHSD.
- **Post-Test Study:** University of Minnesota evaluators will continue preparation for post-test evaluation activities in Fall, 2011, including development of instrumentation for focus groups, interviews with workers, supervisors, and managers, and supervisor observations. The post-test study data collection will begin in Fall 2011, with analysis and writing to occur in the remainder of Year 5 of the project. The Post-Test Study will include week-long observations of supervisors such as occurred in December, 2009.

4. Sustainability

The issue of sustainability will be a regular agenda item for the bi-monthly Steering Committee meetings. The function, membership, and activities of the on-going "Practice" committee which will replace the Steering Committee at the conclusion of the grant will be discussed and determined.