Child Welfare Program Evaluations

Update on Progress and Planning for CW Monitoring
Nine staff Team created by the General Assembly in 2014 to monitor county child welfare agencies

To fulfill the purpose, the mission is to put in place a process to review county CW programs for adherence to law, rule, policy, and best practice to develop county baselines in order to measure improvement.

All 100 counties will have a program development plan to address findings in the program evaluations

In developing the process, lessons from past efforts were evaluated and applied
Mechanics of the process

• The process depends heavily on county staff collaboration in reviewing records and data to identify areas needing to be addressed

• Record review and data organizing tools have been developed based upon policy and best practice

• It is not about:
  • scores, but baselines to measure improvement
  • what has not been done, but about creating agency cultures that value accountability in providing the best services to achieve child safety, permanence and well being in NC
Progress to Date

• The Monitoring Team has been to 77 counties to date
  • 47 counties with record reviews
  • 30 counties completing data reviews of programs

• There have been 13 counties with whom the Monitoring Team has completed progress reviews on Program Development Plans

• All 100 counties will have a data or record review by June 30, 2016
Where the Team Has Been
What Effective County Programs Have

• A clear understanding through the staff that cases are agency cases requiring agency decisions

• Have a clear supervisory model and expectations

• Staff who have completed job specific training

• Use of data to track caseloads and work

• Clear expectations on documentation and record management, including use of state forms without modification
What Struggling County Programs Have

• Inconsistent supervision

• Lack of a clear means of staffing cases

• Supervisors who carry cases

• A lack of attention to data

• Nebulous or non-existent practice protocols and processes

• An absence of a means to hold staff accountable for performance
Specific Problematic Practice Areas

• Contacts to assure safety
• Use of safety resources
• Initiation or documentation of diligent efforts
• Checking with collaterals
• Assessments not completed timely
• Length of time In Home cases are open without clear plans
• Keeping care providers informed in foster care cases
Future Planning

• Beginning July 1, 2016, program evaluations including a case review will be conducted annually.

• Program Development Plans will be formally reviewed by the Monitoring Team 6 months after the evaluation.

• Links between the OSRI (the CFSR tool) and the monitoring will be outlined.

• Aggregate outcomes from the program evaluations will be posted for review.
Feedback

• To support and model a continuous quality improvement system (CQI), there is a mechanism for county staff to provide comments and feedback.

• From feedback we have learned the evaluation process:
  • has been identified as a good learning experience for county staffs,
  • has reinforced county management guidance and direction, and,
  • has given county leadership feedback on how programs are actually functioning.
Thank You!

• We appreciate the spirit of collaboration with county staffs in completing the reviews and processing the data to produce the best results for children and their families

• Also a special thank you to all those county staff who have given feedback on the process and critique of the evaluation tools
Questions?