

B-01 Major Activities and Accomplishments in This Period

1. Project Administration

Contracts with Consultants

Cultural Consultants: During the period of this report our cultural consultant, Full Circle Institute, has continued to work with the African American and Native American parent response focus groups. As was reported previously there has not been any progress made in working with Latino parents. As was also reported previously initial feedback was obtained from Hmong parents on a one-to-one basis, but the parents have not been comfortable forming an on-going group as have the American Indian and African American parents.

The cultural consultants met with our training consultant, Lorrie Lutz, on two occasions during the period of this report to work on incorporating responsiveness to culture into the practice model. They also met with the project research staff from the University of Minnesota School of Social Work to present their feedback from the parent focus groups. The primary activities of the consultants during this period are included in the Advisory Group section below.

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 each 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) initiative described below; and problem solving in a number of areas.

Advisory Group: The Advisory Group met every two months during the period of this report. Members include representatives from the Minnesota Department of Human Services, the University of Minnesota, the County Attorney's Office, community agencies, Human Services staff, cultural consultants, and parents. This group provides an excellent setting for the sharing and discussion of feedback from our cultural consultants and parents.

As was reported in the previous report period, the American Indian parent focus group created and presented a very powerful vignette at the March Advisory Group meeting. The vignette depicted a composite of the child protection experiences of several parents. In the weeks following that vignette, feedback was obtained from the Advisory group members about their responses to the vignette as well as suggestions about how what was learned from the vignette could be used to inform the implementation of the CFA model. At the July Advisory Group meeting the African American parents presented another compelling vignette based on their experiences with the Ramsey County Child Protection system. A similar process of obtaining feedback was used after the July meeting. At the September meeting the feedback and recommendations were discussed with particular reference to how to operationalize them in the implementation of CFA. This will be an on-going topic for the group.

Service Quality Assurance (SQA): The SQA initiative 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 and documentation in each program area. SQA features an auditing tool for supervisors so that they can track workers' performance. Because the goals of SQA and CFA are somewhat similar and because they are being rolled out during the same period of time, care has been taken to prevent confusion in the implementation of the two initiatives. CFA management staff and the CFA University researchers have participated on the relevant CFA working committees in order to coordinate the two projects.

During the period of this report all staff were trained on the basic concepts of SQA. One Intake unit and one Program unit piloted an early version of the SQA supervisors tool. There is currently a hiatus in implementation of the SQA tool while a web-based version of the tool is being finalized. It is expected that it will be available early in the winter.

2. Planning and Development of the CFA Model

Child Protection Intake

Planning and Development of the Intake Component of the CFA Model:

As was reported during the period of the previous report, the planning process for the Intake component of the CFA model was conducted by a planning group of six Intake staff, three supervisors, and the Intake manager, Tina Curry. This group met weekly to prepare for the training of all Intake staff by Ms. Lutz in June and the full implementation of the Intake portion of the model on July 1. A total of 235.5 staff hours were devoted to the planning and development of the Intake model during the period of this report. In April the group had a day-long training and consultation

session with Ms. Lutz to assist them in structuring the Intake model including the steps, stages, and procedures for the Intake portion of the CFA assessment. In addition she held a training session for supervisors. The group planned internal training sessions for Intake staff which were held prior to the formal training by Ms. Lutz.

During the period of this report Ms. Lutz created two draft practice guides: one for Intake staff and one for Intake supervisors. The planning group created an Intake Narrative format for staff to document the results of their assessments as well as other forms to aid staff in implementing the model.

Five of the six planning group members piloted the new model during the first three months of this reporting period.

3. Implementation of the CFA Model

At the start of this reporting period only half of the Child Protection Program staff and five staff in Inake were using the new model. Following training of all Intake and Program staff, full implementation of the model began on July 1, 2010. The roll out process is described below.

CHILD PROTECTION INTAKE

Training and Implementation:

Prior to the formal training in June for all Intake staff with Ms. Lutz, two internal training sessions were held. Each session was 3-4 hours in duration. The training was done by Tina Curry, Richard Coleman, and Jenny Gordon. There was a power point presentation about the model, a discussion of key terms and concepts, and an overview of the Intake and Program components of the model.

Following the two preparatory sessions, Ms. Lutz provided training for all Intake workers and supervisors. In addition, she conducted a separate session for Intake supervisors. On June 30, the day before full implementation began, there was a three hour session for all Intake staff to review the CFA model once more and to receive materials to assist them in using the model. Each staff person received a draft practice guide as well as a notebook in which there were an outline of the model, descriptions of important steps in the model, and other forms and materials to aid them in using the model.

In September, two months after full implementation, Ms. Lutz did further training for Intake and for the Intake supervisors. In addition, there were joint sessions for Intake and Program where two workers conducted a “transfer meeting” of a case from Intake to Program with all of the staff observing.

CHILD PROTECTION PROGRAM

Training and Implementation:

At the beginning of this reporting period the two Child Protection Program units that had piloted the CFA model were continuing to use it. The first three months of this reporting period were devoted to preparing for full implementation on July 1. The steps to accomplishing this were as follows:

- Pilot Intervention Units: The Child Protection manager, Richard Coleman, had been directly supervising one of the units for several months and had been able to assure a level of fidelity to the model and consistency of practice for that unit. Before rolling out the model to the two control units that had had no exposure to the model, Mr. Coleman wanted to determine the level of consistency of the application of the model of the other pilot unit. To do so he reviewed a case from each worker in the unit and met with each worker and their supervisor.

Through this process Mr. Coleman discovered some variations between the two units and provided training and instruction in order to correct this problem. In addition, the staff of the two intervention units received follow-up training by Ms. Lutz in April, and the Child Protection Program supervisors had an additional separate training session.

- Roll-out for the two control units: In April the two control units were trained by Ms. Lutz. In May Mr. Coleman developed a training presentation and conducted special trainings for the two units in the key elements and processes of the model. Finally, in June the units received further training from Ms. Lutz, and full implementation began on July 1.

In addition to the training described above, the case plan format and other forms were modified to reflect the requirements of the new model.

In September, two months after full implementation began, Ms. Lutz provided training for all Program staff and Program supervisors, as well as the transfer meeting training described above.

- Family Assessment Case Management Training: in September a training session was held for the six workers who were at that time doing Family Assessment (alternative response) case management. There will be a very significant restructuring of this program in January (See Contextual Events B-02 below).

- Stakeholder training: During the period of this report various trainings were held for stakeholder groups:
 - Ms. Lutz met twice with our cultural consultants, and twice with the University of Minnesota research staff.
 - A training session for vendor agency staff who work with our Child Protection families was held by Richard Coleman and one of the Program supervisors in August.
 - In September a session was conducted by Ms. Lutz for Ramsey County case aides and the vendor agency staff to familiarize them with the ways in which Ramsey County will be working differently with families and the new expectations we will have of the agencies.
 - Also, in September Ms. Lutz conducted a three hour training session for a mixed group of professionals that interact with our Child Protection families. The group included representatives of the Court, County Attorney's office, the schools, guardian ad litem program, the child abuse resource center, and other agencies.

- Consultation phone calls with Ms. Lutz: During the months of July and August seven consultation telephone calls were held with Ms. Lutz: one with managers, two with supervisors, one with Intake, and one with Program. One involved a transfer meeting for both Intake and Program, and one involved a discussion of fidelity instrumentation with the University of Minnesota.

We found that the conference call modality was very effective for smaller groups, such as the supervisors and managers, but we received feedback from staff that having very large groups of staff on a call was not an effective way for them to learn. Future conference calls will take this into account, and the calls will be held with smaller groups, probably individual units.

- Evaluation Activities Related to Implementation
 - **Formative Evaluation of Trial in Child Protection Program:** A formative evaluation of the implementation of CFA in Child Protection Program was completed in the reporting period prior to this one. The report on the study, *Comprehensive Family Assessment Formative Evaluation*, was finalized during this reporting period. (See Attached)

- **Management Study:** The management study of RCCHSD management structure, policies, and practice continued during the period of this review. 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 may impact both the implementation of CFA as well as outcomes. The management study design was developed from the federal CFA Guidelines, the Request for Proposal, and a review of the literature, as well as from discussions with managers and staff at RCCHSD. Data collection and analysis are on-going .

- **SSIS School Outcomes Study:** The school outcomes study continued during the period of this review. 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.

- **Cost Study:** The cost study – a study designed to determine whether pre-CFA or post-CFA practice is more cost-effective in regard to foster care re-entry and other associated outcomes continued during the period of this review.

- Instrumentation for data collection is in the development phase, and U of MN evaluators are working with RCCHSD staff to locate reliable and valid sources of data using SSIS and other RCCSHD databases.
- **Fidelity Study:** An evaluation of worker fidelity to the adapted CFA practice began Summer 2010 (Year 3). Instrumentation was developed Summer 2010 and training of evaluation staff took place in September 2010. Approximately half of all workers from Intake (Traditional Investigation and Family Assessment units) and Case Management will be interviewed about their use of CFA components in practice for this study in Fall 2010; workers will be randomly selected and units will be equally represented in the sample. Case record reviews of randomly selected cases will complement the interview process and enhance the understanding of fidelity to CFA practice in RCCHSD Child Protection.

B-02 Problems

1. N/A
2. Contextual Events or Community Changes

There are three initiatives that will be impacting the CFA model in the period of the next review.

- Family Group Decision-Making grant: In January the County received a grant from DHS to expand our use of group decision making. Because of the grant, it is anticipated that during the period of the next review we may have more ability to do family group meetings, particularly for cases with court involvement. This should enhance workers' ability to engage and problem solve with families.
- Concurrent Planning: The Fostering Permanent Connections grant project currently being conducted in Human Services will be impacting the work of Child Protection Program. Currently, some training and planning sessions are

being held, and soon the practice steps for implementing concurrent permanency planning will be incorporated into the CFA practice model.

- Restructuring the Family Assessment (Alternative Response) Program: Beginning January 1, 2011 there will be a major restructuring of this program. Because of clarifications with Minnesota Department of Human Services, we will be greatly expanding the number of staff who work with Family Assessment. A program that until now has had only six staff will expand to 24 staff divided into three units. [There will be no positions lost or gained. There will simply be a change of functions for some workers.] The program will feature one worker for the life of the case, as opposed to families having separate Intake and Program workers.

Currently, there are 3 Intake units and 4 Program units. After January 1 there will be 2 traditional Intake units, 2 traditional Program units, and 3 Family Assessment units. All of the units will use the CFA model. An implication for our work during the next reporting period is that all of the 24 Family

Assessment staff will need to use both the Intake and the Program components of the model. Since staff until now have only been using only one or the other component, that will mean that the 24 staff in Family Assessment will require training in either the Intake or the Program segment of the model.

B-03 Significant Findings and Events

Lessons Learned

During the period of this review we were able to make excellent use of the lessons we have learned previously. These lessons include that training should occur in smaller, interactive sessions and that a great deal of training should be invested in our supervisors. During the period of this review we provided 1543.5 total hours of formal training. In so far as was feasible, we structured training sessions to be smaller and more interactive than our earlier training sessions had been. This model for training was very well received. Of the total training hours, 239.75 hours were for training specifically for our supervisors. The supervisors felt that the emphasis on providing more training for them was very valuable. As was mentioned above, the next step in applying the lessons we have learned will be to enhance the supervisors' capacities by providing specialized training in coaching, mentoring, and working effectively in a group supervision setting.

We have further learned that formal training is best approached through a graduated exposure to the terms and concepts prior to formal training. We were very careful as we rolled out the CFA model to Child Protection Intake and the two control units in

Child Protection Program to provide preliminary, step-wise exposure to the CFA model prior to doing formal training with Ms. Lutz. Thus, we held preliminary sessions with these groups where we explained the core terms and concepts in the model and provided a high level overview of the model. Then, when Ms. Lutz came to do formal training, the groups had some familiarity with the model and were able to absorb and benefit more from the training.

B-04 Dissemination

a. Current

Project Presentations

- Dr. Traci Laliberte, Executive Director at the Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare and Principal Investigator in the external evaluation of Ramsey County's implementation, presented at a conference in Denver, CO on Sept. 24, 2010.
 - Audience: an international audience of 20 researchers, practitioners and academics.
 - Goal: she presented on the CFA demonstration grant activities in Ramsey County specifically detailing the 10 steps of the CFA model and discussing its application with a wide range of families such as those headed by a parent with an intellectual disability (the topic of the conference). Dr. LaLiberte discussed with attendees the particular aspects of CFA which lend themselves favorably to engaging parents with disabilities in this model and working with families toward successful and safe outcomes.
 - Results: The content was well received by audience members who actively engaged with the content and processed with her and among each other additional benefits and applications.
 - Contact e-mail: lali0017@umn.edu.
- College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) University of Minnesota. The presentation was a poster presentation on the CFA fidelity study.

- Audience: There were approximately 100 faculty and alumni in the audience.
 - Goal: The objective of the presentation was to highlight student involvement in research projects within the College of Human Development.
 - Results: The results of the presentation were that the faculty and alumni were able to see the variety of research projects that the University is involved in.
 - Contact: jaeran@gmail.com.
- Presentation at the University of Minnesota Family Social Service program in collaboration with three students on the CFA fidelity study.
 - Audience: There were 10 faculty and 20 students;
 - Goal: The goal was for the students to learn how to present their research project findings in a professional setting.
 - Result: The result was a shared understanding of the collaboration between institutions and departments at the University in participating in research projects. The presentation was written up in the FSOS newsletter.
 - Contact: jaeran@gmail.com

Meetings and Information Sessions

- Advisory Group Updates: every other month we present updated project information to our Advisory Group.
 - Audience: a group of 25, composed of Department of Human Services staff, County Attorney representative, community agency staff, cultural consultants, parents, and Human Services and University of Minnesota staff.
 - Goal: The goal is to provide the group with the most current information on the project and to receive feedback and suggestions from them.
 - Three meetings were held in the period of this review.
 - Results: This group has been able to use the information presented to them to inform their individual organizations about our new practice model and to provide helpful feedback and suggestions to us.
 - Contact: jenny.gordon@co.ramsey.mn.us
- In June the University of Minnesota researchers presented an informational session on the results of the formative evaluation (see *Comprehensive Family Assessment Formative Evaluation* attached).
 - Audience: The session was held for the two intervention units in the pilot in Child Protection Program, an audience of about 25 people.
 - Goal: The goal of the training was to transparently provide for the staff and supervisors the results of the evaluation in which they participated and to help them understand the level of practice fidelity found in the evaluation.
 - Results: The session was well received.
 - Contact: jenny.gordon@co.ramsey.mn.us.

- In September Ms. Lutz provided a three hour information and training session to a combined meeting of the Childrens' Justice Initiative (CJI) and the Child Safety Advisory Team (CSAT) on the CFA Intake model.
 - 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.
 - 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.
 - The session was received very enthusiastically and many people commented on how valuable it was for them to understand the changes in our system. A comparable session will be held in December outlining the Program model.
 - 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/research/CFA%20Evaluation/default.asp>
Contact person: Traci LaLiberte- 612-624-2279
 - 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.

b. Planned

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 presents barriers to providing effective service to the families.
- Results: The presentation was very well received.
- Contact: Dr. Kristine Piescher at kpiesche@umn.edu.

Meetings and Information Sessions

- Advisory Group: Sessions will be held every two months during the period of this report. (See **a. Current** above).
- In December Ms. Lutz will hold a follow-up session for the combined CJI/CSAT group (see **a. Current** above).

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: Our cultural consultants and parents will continue to work with and be part of our Advisory Group. In addition, during the period of the next report they will assist us with dissemination. Building on the vignettes already created and by recording parents' stories as digital stories, they will help us craft messages to show cultural communities that Ramsey County is conducting Child Protection services in a new way.

Advisory Group: The Advisory Group will continue to meet every two months and will serve as a vehicle for sharing project information and for receiving input from our parent members and other stakeholders.

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: By the end of the next reporting period, it is anticipated that there will be full implementation of the SQA initiative in Child Protection Intake and Program. The supervisory case auditing process and the feedback provided to staff from the supervisory audits should assist supervisors in tracking the fidelity of the application of the CFA model by their staff.

Public Relations Contract: During the next reporting period we will complete a contract with a public relations firm to assist us with the dissemination activities listed below.

2. Planning and Development of the CFA Model N/A as the model development has been completed.
3. Implementation of the CFA Model

Training

During the period of the next report there will be three site visits by Ms. Lutz. Training will be provided as follows:

- Child Protection Intake and Child Protection Program (Traditional): These units have all received formal training in the CFA model. During the period of the next report, they will have periodic consultations with Ms. Lutz in order to deepen their knowledge of the practice model and ability to apply it accurately to cases.
- Family Assessment (Alternative Response) Case Management: This newly restructured program (See B-03 above) to be rolled out in January, 2011 will require that the 24 staff to be reassigned to the program receive the basic training in the part of the model that they have not been previously trained in. This was an unanticipated training need, and we will need to incorporate it into our 2011 training plans.
- Supervisory Training: Supervisory training will be the primary training focus for the next reporting period. The training will focus on 1) developing skill in supervising staff on difficult cases, 2) training in coaching and mentoring skills, and 3) training in supervising effectively in a group supervision context. Because working through actual cases will be a prominent part of this

training, the supervisors will also continue to deepen their knowledge of the practice model as they engage in the training.

- Training for Stakeholders:
 - Ms. Lutz will provide a follow-up training to the September training for the combined CSAT/CJI group (See B-01). The September training provided a three hour overview of the Intake portion of the model, and the training planned for December will provide an overview of the Program portion of the model. This group is composed of child welfare professionals who have a close connection to Child Protection, and it is very important that they understand the new practice model.
 - Additional training will also be provided for vendor agency staff that provide services to Child Protection families so that they understand the new expectations we will have of them.

Manuals: During the period of the next report our practice manuals will be finalized, and all staff and supervisors will receive a manual. Vendor agency staff who provide services to Child Protection families and other community stakeholders will also receive manuals.

Dissemination: We will provide information about the model and the practice changes implemented in Ramsey County to as wide an audience as possible. In particular we will reach out to the four cultural communities that we have worked with: American Indian, African American, Hmong and Latino. We will work with a public relations firm to plan large community-wide events in each of the cultural communities to publicize and explain that Ramsey County is using a new practice model for Child Protection. In addition, we will use the services of the firm to help us provide information about the CFA model and practice changes implemented in Ramsey County to as wide an audience as possible.

Evaluation Activities

- **Fidelity Study:** The aforementioned fidelity study will continue throughout the next reporting period to allow for continued data collection throughout the entire implementation process. In early 2011, U of MN evaluators will conduct a series of interviews/focus groups to allow for feedback between Intake and Program about the use of CFA components in practice. The final CFA practice model is anticipated to be in place in the early months of 2011.

- **Management Study:** The aforementioned management study will continue during the next reporting period allow for continued data collection throughout the entire implementation process.
- **Cost Study:** The aforementioned cost study will continue during the next reporting period to allow for data collection and analysis of pre- vs. post-test differences in cost in relation to foster care re-entry and associated outcomes.
- **Dissemination:** Findings from the CFA project will be disseminated as opportunities occur during the next reporting period 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.).