

## **B-01 Major Activities and Accomplishments This Period**

### **1. Project Administration**

#### **Contracts with Consultants**

Cultural Consultants: During this period we have worked very closely with our cultural consultants, Full Circle Cultural Community Institute, Inc., in order to incorporate what we have learned about the cultural aspects of child protection practice into our CFA model. (See Incorporating Culture 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 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 continued 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 Pages 2-3 .

Advisory Group: There were no meetings of the Advisory Group during the period of this review. However, the cultural consultants, who are part of the Advisory Group, met regularly with the Steering Committee.

Service Quality Assurance (SQA): The development of the SQA system is almost completed. It is an agency-wide initiative aimed at improving Targeted Case Management rates and improving performance in audits by developing training and tools 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 and synergy between them insofar as is possible. SQA will be implemented in Traditional Intake on May 8 and in Traditional Program and FA Services during the summer.

The SQA case auditing tool has intentionally been developed to include many CFA practice components. When the SQA system is implemented, staff and supervisors will have software that will enable them to see at a glance if policies and practices are being carried out in a timely way. In addition, each month a sampling of cases for each worker will be reviewed in depth by the supervisor using the SQA tool. This process will be one way of ensuring on-going adherence to the CFA practice model, and hence it will promote on-going fidelity .

## **2. Planning and Development of the CFA Model**

### Incorporating Culture:

Although our core CFA model is fully implemented in Child Protection Intake, Program, and FA Services (Differential Response); the model is still being developed with regard to the

inclusion of cultural content. As has been mentioned previously, 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. Consequently, during the period of this review, our consultants have attended all Steering Committee meetings, in order to determine how to incorporate cultural considerations into CFA practice. Our work has focused on the following:

- The University of Minnesota evaluators conducted a cultural survey of staff and supervisors (see "Worker and Supervisor Cultural Survey", Page 7). The results of this survey informed our decisions about how to incorporate cultural content into the model.
- A review of case files by our consultants to help them understand the CFA model more clearly and see how it is being implemented by our staff.
- A review of CFA manuals and tools by our consultants. The consultants are in the process of adding language and suggestions regarding cultural considerations into these documents.
- We are developing a plan about how to roll out the revised manuals and tools to staff. The consultant met with supervisors to get input for this plan.

### **3. Implementation and Training of the CFA Model**

FA Services (Differential Response) Restructuring: During the period of this review the restructuring of FA services was fully implemented. An assessment of the state of the restructured program will be conducted by our Children's Services planner. This will be discussed in Section B-02, "Problems: Challenges/Barriers" on Pages 10-11 .

Training:

Training for staff

Our trainer, Lorrie Lutz, made two site visits during the period of this review. In December she met with mixed groups of Traditional Intake and Traditional Program staff and supervisors. As was mentioned in the last review there has been a historical gap between those two agency sections that has been partially bridged by the implementation of CFA because CFA requires a face to face hand-off of cases from the Intake worker to the Program worker. During the hand-off the two workers jointly determine what behavioral changes the family members need to make while they are receiving on-going Program services. In order to make the transition of the case from Intake to Program even more seamless, we thought that training sessions for mixed groups on topics of common interest would help each group of staff understand better how the other group makes case decisions. The training was very well received.

Training for Vendors

As was discussed in the previous review, in the summer of Year 4 Ramsey County issued an RFP for all vendored child protection services such as in-home services, mentoring, and visitation monitoring. Early in the period of this report the new vendors were selected. In January, Ms. Lutz held two identical four hour training sessions for the staff of the vendor agencies so that they could better understand Ramsey County's CFA model. This training built on the CFA informational sessions held for vendors in September and the CFA video made for vendors that is posted on the University of Minnesota's CFA website that were mentioned in the previous report. In the training Ms. Lutz gave an overview of the CFA model and stressed the ways in which CFA practice would affect the vendors. Because the referral and reporting forms for vendors have been adapted to include the behavioral focus of the CFA model, the staff were instructed in the use of these forms. A total of 73 staff from vendor agencies attended

these presentations. In addition, seven staff from the Ramsey County Attorney's office attended these sessions. The response to these sessions was extremely positive.

Evaluation Activities Related to Implementation:

The focus of the first half of Year 5 was data collection to support post-test evaluation. During the first half of Year 5 of the CFA Project, the following evaluation activities took place:

- **Management Study:** The management study of RCCHSD management structure, policies, and practice is an on-going study designed to 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. As such, the management study will continue throughout Year 5 of the project to allow for continued data collection throughout the entire implementation process. The findings of the management study will be incorporated into the CFA Implementation Guide that is currently being developed.
- **Post-Test Case Record Review:** The Post-Test Case Record Review Study was a major focus of activity during the current reporting period. The evaluation included the completion of a case record review of 90 cases:
  - 30 Traditional Investigation Intake only cases – cases that were served by Traditional Investigation Intake but did not go on to receive case management services
  - 30 Traditional Case Management (Program) cases – cases that received both Traditional Investigation Intake and Case Management services (inclusive of 13 in-home cases, 14 out-of-home cases, and 3 out-of-home cases in which the subject child was 16 or 17 years of age)

- 30 “One Worker One Family” Family Assessment (Differential Response) cases – cases that were served by One Worker One Family Differential Response (inclusive of 15 cases that were closed following Family Assessment Intake/Assessment and 15 cases that received both Family Assessment Intake/Assessment and Case Management services)

Data to support this study was collected during the entirety of the current reporting period. Data cleaning, analysis, and dissemination will occur in the second half of Year 5.

- **SSIS School Outcomes Study:** 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 (as educational outcomes data were not available until approximately one year after the end of the academic year). Data regarding school/child welfare collaboration to support the post-test school outcomes study was collected during this reporting period in conjunction with the posttest case record review. Data cleaning, analysis and dissemination will occur in the second half of Year 5.
- **Fidelity Study:** An (abbreviated) evaluation of worker fidelity to the CFA practice was added to the evaluation plan as a means of providing additional information about worker practice fidelity to RCCHSD and for dissemination of findings to a larger audience. Data cleaning, analysis and dissemination will occur in the second half of Year 5.
- **Post-Test Focus Groups:** Focus groups will be utilized as part of the process evaluation. The post-test focus group study was designed to gain an understanding of workers’ perceptions of practice change as a result of

implementing CFA at RCCHSD. Instrumentation to be utilized in focus groups was developed during the current reporting period. Focus groups will be held in Spring 2012 with data cleaning, analysis and dissemination occurring thereafter.

- **Worker & Supervisor Cultural Survey:** A large part of the RCCHSD CFA practice model is devoted to focusing on the inclusion of culture during assessment, case planning, and decision-making. Because of this, a survey was added to the evaluation plan to assess worker and supervisor definitions of, comfort with, and use of, culture in their child protection practice. Data was collected and cleaned during the current reporting period. Analysis is currently on-going. A report outlining findings of this study will be developed and disseminated in the second half of Year 5.
- **Intake Baseline Family Interviews:** The report for this study has been written and 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 finalization of this report). The written report for this study will be finalized and submitted to RCCHSD in the second half of Year 5.
- **Cultural Consultant Addendum:** An addendum to the baseline report was developed in a previous reporting period. 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. The written report for this study will be finalized and submitted to RCCHSD in the second half of Year 5.
- **CFA Implementation Guide:** The framework and beginning content for an implementation guide, entitled "*Comprehensive Family Assessment: An Implementation Guide*" was developed in the current reporting period. This

implementation guide was designed to be a comprehensive guide for child welfare administrators to be used in the implementation of Comprehensive Family Assessment (CFA). The guide represents a cooperative effort of the Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare (University of Minnesota) evaluation team and the Ramsey County Community Human Services Department. The organization of the guide is informed by principles of the National Implementation Research Network (NIRN). Core components of implementation efforts are highlighted, with an emphasis on the importance of program evaluation. This guide is intended to be user-friendly (e.g., use of icons noting important information in chapters) and information learned through the implementation and evaluation of CFA practice at RCCHSD is used as case example throughout. Work on this guide will continue throughout the second half of Year 5.

- **Dissemination:** Findings from the CFA project have continued to be disseminated in the first half of Year 5 mainly via the CFA website. The website hosts information and resources about the federal CFA grant, CFA guidelines, RCCHSD CFA practice model (including training materials, forms, and guides), and evaluation (including findings). The website is heavily visited. Since its inception in June 2011, the site itself has had over 9,000 visitors, and more than 26,000 people have looked at the documents that are hosted on the site. About a third of all visitors are utilizing the home page, and about one fifth of all visitors each are utilizing the model overview, training/resources, and evaluation pages. Sixty percent of the visits have occurred in the current reporting period. Visitors are located predominately in Minnesota. However the site has both a national and international audience, with a large number of visitors from California, Washington, Michigan, New York, Florida, Virginia, Texas, North Carolina, and even Beijing, Moscow, and Norway. Findings and information stemming from the CFA project will continue to be disseminated in the second half of Year 5 via conference presentations, additional 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.). (See B-04, Dissemination, Page 13)

#### 4. Sustainability

During this reporting period the Steering Committee continued its planning for sustaining the integrity of the CFA model following the conclusion of the grant. As has been mentioned previously, CFA is now the only child protection practice model used in Ramsey County. It is used by all Child Protection staff for all types of cases (in-home, placement, FA, Intake, and on-going Program.) In order to strengthen and maintain the level of practice following the conclusion of the grant, the following plans have been made:

##### 1) Practice Oversight Committee

We plan to convert an existing working committee for the Service Quality Assurance initiative into an on-going vehicle for overseeing the 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.

##### 2) Tracking of Data to Monitor Fidelity to the Model

Following the conclusion of the grant our internal Ramsey County evaluator, Allan Malkis, will continue to track data that will provide a picture of the state of CFA practice, with particular reference to indicators of fidelity. Among the items tracked will be the monthly case reviews performed by supervisors using the SQA format mentioned on Page 2.

3) Training of Trainers

In order to train new staff entering Child Protection in the CFA model, we will begin a train the trainer project during the period of the next review. This will be discussed in Section B-06, "Activities Planned for Next Reporting Period", on Pages 16-17. We believe that the combination of the Practice Committee, on-going data gathering and analysis, and the training of trainers will be very instrumental in sustaining the integrity of the CFA model.

**B-02 Problems**

1. Challenges/Barriers

FA Services Restructuring: As we mentioned in the previous review a number of factors caused the major restructuring of FA services to be complex. First, the seasonal variation in cases screened by Intake has caused overload for Intake, Program or FA services depending on the time of the year. Various ideas have been put forth to try to remedy this problem.

Second, the FA model is based on one worker/one family, a model not previously used in Ramsey County. This has caused staff to need to learn the part of the case process (either Intake or on-going Program) that they had not done previously. We have provided specialized training for the FA staff to help them learn the parts of the process they have not used previously. Another issue arising from the one worker/one family model, is that guidelines needed to be established for when it is determined that FA is not an effective model for a particular family and the case needs to be transferred to on-going Program. In general, the decision has been that cases should be transferred if

court activity has been initiated. There has been some confusion surrounding making these case decisions.

Because of the issues mentioned above, an evaluation of the current status of the one worker/one family model will be conducted by Becky Montgomery, Children's Services Planner. Ms. Montgomery is a member of the CFA Steering Committee and has attended much of the training provided by Ms. Lutz. In preparation for her evaluation, which will be based on meetings with the FA work groups, Ms. Montgomery met with Ms. Lutz, a University of Minnesota evaluator, Ms. Rolack and the project manager. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the convergence of fidelity issues for CFA and the one worker/one family model.

### 3. Contextual Events of Community Changes

(See Page 12)

### B-03 Lessons Learned

Culture: The preliminary findings of the University of Minnesota's cultural survey (see Page 7) indicate that staff and supervisors have widely different levels of comfort in discussing issues of culture. We have been mindful of this as we have planned how to incorporate information about culture into the CFA manuals and tools and how to roll them out to staff.

Contextual Events as Opportunities: There have been two contextual events or processes during the course of our CFA project work that have initially appeared to be complicating factors to the roll-out of CFA: the SQA initiative and the rebidding of all Ramsey County child protection contracts. Both have been described previously. Both SQA and the rebidding process have required us to invest considerable project time in trying to bring them into alignment with CFA. Somewhat to our surprise, both SQA and the rebidding process have brought value to CFA. The ability to audit cases using the SQA tool (see Page 2) which has many CFA components embedded in it will provide a very useful means of tracking fidelity after the formal CFA project ends. In regard to the rebidding of contracts, we used this as an opportunity to frame the RFP, the informational sessions, the vendor practice manual, and the tools and forms used by vendors in the language and practice concepts of CFA. Then, during the period of this review, we provided training for vendor staff in the CFA model.

## B-04 Dissemination

### a. Current

#### Project Presentations

- 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 for the Minnesota Department of Human Services Department.
  - 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 Department 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](mailto: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 Overbakh, and the project manager; and an informational narrated power point for prospective vendors.
  - Results of Strategy: To date the site has had more than 9,000 visitors, and more than 26,000 people have looked at the documents that are hosted on the site. Visitors are predominately located in Minnesota, but there are also visitors from eight other states and three countries. (See “Dissemination”, pp. 8-9).
  - Contact Person: Dr. Traci LaLiberte- 612-624-2279.

### **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](mailto:jenny.gordon@co.ramsey.mn.us). (See “CFA Implementation Guide”, Pages 7-8)

Project Presentations:

- Presentation for April 16-20 18<sup>th</sup> 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 for the Ramsey County CFA project.
  - Contact: Dr. Traci LaLiberte at 612-624-2279
  
- Presentation for April 16-20 18<sup>th</sup> 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 will make a joint presentation, “Implementing Comprehensive Family Assessment: Lessons Learned in Changing Professional Behavior, Adapting Organizational Structures, and Redefining Relationships with Stakeholders”. This presentation will focus on an overview of the CFA grant, changes in practice, results of interventions, implementation drivers, and will identify challenges in implementation.
  - Contact: Dr. Kantahyanee Murray at [kmurray@ssw.umaryland.edu](mailto:kmurray@ssw.umaryland.edu).

Project Updates

- University of Minnesota Evaluation Website: “Comprehensive Assessment Model in Child Welfare”. URL: <http://www.cehd.umn.edu/ssw/cascw/research/RamseyCFAProject/>  
(See description on Page 13.)

## 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 experiences and learning at the 2012 Grantees Meeting culminated in the decision that the three top priorities for the period of the next review will be:

- Strengthening the level of practice in the FA section. Due to the factors listed above in B-02, Problems: Challenges/Barriers ( Pages 10-11), there is still some lack of clarity on the part of some workers about how to use the CFA model in the context of one worker/one family. It is hoped that the assessment by Ms. Montgomery will shed light on areas requiring more training for these workers.
- Completing the incorporation of cultural considerations into our practice manuals and tools and then rolling them out to staff.
- Creating and implementing a training of trainers program.

## B-06 Activities Planned for Next Reporting Period

### 1. Project Administration

Contracts with Consultants: During the period of the next review 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. A gathering will be planned for the group and other community partners in September in order to disseminate information about the activities and accomplishments of the project.

Steering Committee: Team meetings of the project management staff, University of Minnesota evaluators, and cultural consultants will be held regularly twice each month.

Service Quality Assurance: The SQA case auditing procedure will be fully implemented in Child Protection intake, Program and FA Services by the end of the next reporting period.

## **2. Planning and Development of the CFA Model**

Incorporation of culture in the CFA Model: During the period of the next review, our consultants will complete their review and recommendations for cultural content to be included in our practice manuals and tools. The manuals will be rolled out to supervisors and staff.

## **3. Implementation of the CFA Model**

Training: During the period of this review we will begin to train internal trainers who will be able to assume responsibility for training at the conclusion of the project when Ms. Lutz will no longer be the trainer. The plan is for a group of ten staff to be selected as internal trainers. There are seven units of workers, and each unit will have at least one trainer. In addition, the supervisors will participate in the training of the trainers. Because of the on-going issues we have had in providing adequate training for supervisors, particularly in mentoring and coaching staff, we feel the training for internal trainers will focus on similar skill development and will be equally useful to supervisors and to the internal trainers.

Ms. Lutz will make two site visits during the period of this review in order to train the internal trainers and supervisors. During a site visit in June, the first day will be devoted to a meeting of the project manager, Ms. Rolack, the University of Minnesota evaluators and Ms. Lutz in order to discuss the preliminary findings on the fidelity testing currently being conducted by the University. This information will show areas of relative strength and weakness in adherence to the practice model, and will help to inform Ms. Lutz's training.



During July and August the trainers will begin doing training with new staff. In addition, conference calls will be held with the trainers, supervisors, and Ms. Lutz. In September, a training session will be held with Ms. Lutz for the trainers and supervisors.

Motivational Interviewing Training: During the period of the next review we will follow up on the plan mentioned in the previous review to provide training in motivational interviewing for staff and supervisors. At this time, it appears that agency training funds may be available for this training.

Manuals: The practice manuals, practice guides, and tools for staff in Intake, Program, and FA Services will be completed. The supervisory manuals will also be completed. In addition, the manual for vendors and the manual for internal trainers will be completed. These manuals will be distributed to staff, supervisors, and vendors.

Implementation of the CFA Model in FA Units: Following the review mentioned in section B-02 by our planner, Ms. Montgomery, the status of practice in the FA Services units will be monitored, and administrative assistance and/or training will be provided for staff and supervisors as needed.

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

Evaluation Activities:

The focus of the second half of Year 5 will be on data analysis and continued dissemination. During the second half of Year 5 of the CFA Project, the following evaluation activities will take place:

- **Data collection** to support the following studies (see Pages 5-6):
  - Management Study
  - Post-Test Focus Groups

- **Data cleaning, analysis, and dissemination** to support (see Pages 5-9):
  - Post-Test Case Record Review
  - SSIS School Outcomes Study
  - Fidelity Study
  - Post-Test Focus Groups
  - Worker and Supervisor Cultural Survey
- **Additional dissemination** of the following (see Pages 7-9):
  - Intake Baseline Family Interview Addendum
  - Cultural Consultant Addendum
  - CFA Implementation Guide
  - Additional CFA findings and information as opportunities arise

#### 4. **Sustainability**

During the period of the next review, the final planning for the sustainability of our model will occur. Logistical arrangements for the Practice Committee mentioned above will be made. In addition, decisions will be made about the details of the data tracking process that will be put into place. Finally, the internal trainers will begin training new staff in the CFA model as they are hired.