



SUPREME COURT OF TEXAS PERMANENT JUDICIAL
COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

**Texas Court Improvement Program (CIP)
2019 Annual Self-Assessment Report**

Submitted June 30, 2019

**The Supreme Court of Texas
Permanent Judicial Commission for Children Youth and Families
Court Improvement Program
201 W. 14th Street
Austin, Texas 78701**

State Court Improvement Program 2019 Annual Self-Assessment Report

This self-assessment is intended as an opportunity for Court Improvement Programs (CIPs) to review progress on required CIP projects, joint program planning and improvement efforts with the child welfare agency, and ability to integrate CQI successfully into practice. Questions are designed to solicit candid responses that help CIPs apply CQI and identify support that may be helpful.

- I. **CQI Analyses of Required CIP Projects** (Joint Project with Agency and Hearing Quality Project) *It is ok to cut and paste responses from last year, but please update according to where you currently are in the process.*

Joint Project with the Child Welfare Agency:

Provide a concise description of the joint project selected in your jurisdiction.

- **To increase the percentage of children achieving permanency within 12 months of entering foster care.**

Identify the specific safety, permanency, or well-being outcome this project is intended to address.

- **Permanency.**

Approximate date that the project began:

- **Fall 2016.**

Which stage of the CQI process best describes the current status of project work?

- **Refining solutions; some implementation.**

How was the need for this project identified? (Phase I)

- **It's been an ongoing problem in Texas, highlighted again by CFSR Round 3. Collaborators include judiciary and child welfare agency. The matter was discussed**

at annual judicial conferences in November 2016, November 2017, and again in November 2018. Permanency will be a focus as in years past at the next annual conference being held in October 2019.

What is the theory of change for the project? (Phase II) *If you do not yet have a theory of change and/or would like assistance, please indicate such in the space below.*

- **The original Theory of Change was that by examining various aspects of agency permanency data for a given fiscal year, together, the CIP and child welfare agency would be able to identify certain patterns or practices that encourage or inhibit permanency within 12 months.**

Have you identified a solution/intervention that you will implement? If yes, what is it? (Phase III)

- **In June 2017, it became apparent that data needed to execute this project could not be produced or analyzed with regularity. The SACWIS (known as IMPACT) was undergoing massive updates since FY2016 and the CIP did not possess analytical skills sufficient to make use of the data that was available through the DFPS public data portal. In 2017, the project was modified to consist of a child welfare data presentation by DFPS to members of the judiciary at an annual conference. The event also included breakout sessions between regional personnel and judges to discuss region-specific data elements and permanency outcomes. However, there was little ability to follow up post-event. The general and breakout presentations repeated in November 2018 and will be repeated in October 2019, but the ability to follow up should be more robust going forward with the availability of a data analyst.**
- **Additionally, as part of the PIP, DFPS annually provides aggregate data to the Children's Commission and judiciary with identified trends impacting courts. (PIP Item 5.1.6).**
- **In January 2019, the CIP began funding a specialty court in Dallas County called the Dallas County PMC Court. The court is modeled after the Harris County PMC Court, which has been very successful in moving Harris County youth in long-term conservatorship (also referred to as PMC) to permanency. Both the Harris County and Dallas County PMC Courts use OCA's Child Protection Case Management System to manage cases. CIP funding for the Dallas PMC Court will end on August 31, 2019 and the court will be funded through a General Appropriation from the Texas Legislature. The appropriation will cover the 2020-2021 biennium. (PIP Item 5.6.1)**

- **As part of the PMC Court project, IMPACT and court case management data will be analyzed by a CIP-funded data analyst. Additional details about the project will be provided in FY2020 Self-Assessment. (PIP Item 5.6.2)**
- **In April 2019, the CIP executed an agreement with the Texas Center for Child and Family Services to hire a data analyst to analyze publicly available child welfare data in a manner that facilitates discussions between DFPS and judges about data, judicial processes and practices, and potential systemic improvements. The Center and data analyst also use aggregate court data to identify and analyze barriers within the purview of the legal system including ensuring children and youth in foster care experience safety while in care, achieve permanency as quickly as possible, and maintain personal well-being for the duration of their time in foster care.**

What has been done to implement the project? (Phase IV)

- **For the past three years, DFPS has and will continue to participate in the Children’s Commission’s annual judicial conference and provide data which will be reviewed by regional directors. (PIP Items 5.5.1 and 5.5.2).**
- **The PMC court is just starting to hear cases. The CIP data analyst will serve on the PMC Court Advisory Committee and a data project will be designed within the next 3 to 6 months. (PIP Item 5.6.2)**
- **The goals of CIP data analysis project beyond the Dallas PMC Court include the Center consulting with judges on methods for capturing and utilizing court specific data, staying current on emerging child welfare and legal trends and best practices, and communicating information that empowers judges to improve their court operations and practices. It is also anticipated that the Center will develop original content (presentations, white papers, analyses, trainings, etc.) on topics relevant to the larger child welfare community. Through this partnership and collaboration, three major components of the child welfare system: the state agency, the foster care provider network, and the courts, will apply their experience with internal CQI processes in a collective manner that will help Texas further improve outcomes for children, youth, and families involved in the child welfare system.**

What is being done or how do you intend to monitor the progress of the project? (Phase V). *Be specific in terms of what type of evaluation (e.g., fidelity or outcome, comparison group, etc) or data efforts you have in place or plan to have in place to assess your efforts. If you have already evaluated your effort, how did you use this data to modify or expand the project?*

- **All CIP projects and progress are tracked quarterly and reported to the Children's Commission in February, May, and September. However, these projects are fairly new and there are no evaluation efforts to report yet.**

What assistance or support would be helpful from the CBCC or Children's Bureau to help move the project forward?

- **None identified at this time.**

Hearing Quality Project:

Provide a concise description of the joint project selected in your jurisdiction.

- **The Texas Family Code requires that youth attend permanency review hearings, and places additional duties on attorneys ad litem, judges, and the child welfare agency to meet with children in advance of court hearings. Despite having statutes in place, the practice of involving youth in the court process continues to be a challenge, and meaningful participation by youth remains the exception and not the norm. This lack of involvement results in youth feeling disconnected from the process and judges not reaping the benefit of the input from youth. Although Texas has not yet studied whether the lack of youth participation in the court process directly correlates with delays in permanency, our hypothesis is that it does.**

Approximate date that the project began:

- **Fall 2016.**

Which stage of the CQI process best describes the current status of project work?

- **Implementation.**

How was the need for this project identified? (Phase I)

- **There have been many studies on the issue of youth voice and youth involvement. There is consensus that youth in foster care repeatedly express the desire to be involved in decisions about their lives because it gives youth a sense of control, helps them understand the process, and promotes healing. Direct contact between the court and the youth also benefits judges. Simply put, youth involvement in court proceedings results in better quality hearings. In FY 2014, the CIP undertook a hearing**

observation project. As indicated on p. 26 of the Hearing Quality Observation Project Report dated March 2014, the presence of the child in court aligned with a significant increase in the number of quality indicators addressed in the hearings.

- In 2017, the Texas Legislature enacted a requirement that the CIP conduct a statewide study and produce a report on legal representation in Child Protective Services (CPS) cases across Texas. The Children’s Commission, working in concert with its standing Legal Representation Committee, the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), and the University of Texas at Austin’s Texas Institute of Child & Family Wellbeing, designed, vetted, and distributed survey questions regarding the state of legal representation in Texas CPS cases.
- In 2018, perspectives from parents, youth currently in care, relatives, foster parents, attorneys, mediators, judges, and other professionals involved in the child-welfare system were solicited through these survey questions regarding the strengths, barriers, and efficacy of the current court-appointment system. Representatives from the same organizations that developed the surveys reviewed the results which included various participants’ answers to various questions, open-ended responses, and feedback gathered through a focus group of parents currently involved in CPS cases. CPS caseworkers offered youth on their caseloads the opportunity to complete the survey. Youth age 12 and older completed an online survey, either alone or with the assistance of the caseworker. The CPS caseworker determined whether the survey was appropriate for each specific youth. The survey did not distinguish between youth who are in Temporary Managing Conservatorship (TMC) of DFPS and are statutorily required to have a court-appointed attorney, and youth in Permanent Managing Conservatorship (PMC) of DFPS, who are not required to have a court appointed attorney. However, to be eligible to participate, youth had to confirm that they currently had an attorney and that they knew the identity of their attorney. Youth who did not currently have an attorney but confirmed that they previously had an attorney were also allowed to participate; only 4% of youth participants fell into this category. Of the 50,293 children in DFPS conservatorship at any time in Fiscal Year (FY) 2017, 11,740 (or 23% of the total) were 12 years old or older. A total of 737 youth in care completed surveys.

What is the theory of change for the project? (Phase II) *If you do not yet have a theory of change and/or would like assistance, please indicate such in the space below.*

- **By increasing youth participation in court proceedings and service planning, youth will feel more engaged, and the quality of review hearings and legal representation in general will be enhanced.**

Have you identified a solution/intervention that you will implement? If yes, what is it? (Phase III)

- To realize the theory of change over multiple years, the CIP collaborates with child welfare partners to facilitate and elevate youth input into policy, legislation, and practice.
- The CIP provides training and judicial tools such as bench cards and communiques regarding statutory and practice changes so that youth will experience high-quality hearings and court proceedings, and hopefully improved permanency outcomes, including exiting foster care sooner.
- Continue to increase awareness about the law, the importance of youth voice, reducing barriers to participation, and putting pressure on child welfare stakeholders to adopt and implement appropriate policy, legislative, and practice changes that ensure youth voice is included and considered.

What has been done to implement the project? (Phase IV)

- The Children's Commission's CPS Bench Book (Bench Book) includes ABA Bench Cards on interviewing children.
- The Bench Book includes a topical chapter on the importance of youth voice and youth appearance and participation in court proceedings.
- The Bench Book includes bench cards with specific inquiries about the child's attendance and the attorney ad litem and other parties' obligations to communicate with the child and help ensure the child's voice is heard.
- The CPS Judges Bench Book includes a chapter on Normalcy.
- The CIP supports a Statewide Young Adult Leadership Council designed to engage young adults in statewide policy and administrative procedure discussions, particularly in the area of improving the foster care system. The statewide council provides long-term opportunity for those youth to actively use their voices to change policy and influence the development and provision of services.
- The CIP supports a video conferencing project, which enables children involved in child abuse and neglect cases to participate in permanency review hearings without being physically present in the courtroom. The Office of Court Administration (OCA) hosts and supports the hardware and software required to facilitate video conferencing between courts and residential placements. OCA maintains a list of courts, Residential Treatment Centers, and local CASA offices with video conferencing capability. OCA maintains a log of all hearings conducted, including the

date, time, participating court, type of hearing, participating placement, length of hearing, any problems with the transmission quality, or technical difficulties. This service is also available to CASA volunteers, Attorneys ad Litem, and youth in foster care.

- In February 2019, the CIP hosted a Roundtable on Normalcy and the importance of youth voice in creating and ensuring normalcy activities for youth in foster care.
- In May 2019, the Children’s Commission was presented with the results and recommendations from the Normalcy Roundtable and a Commission workgroup will be formed for FY2020 to determine how best to develop strategies and execute those strategies.
- In May 2019, the Children’s Commission added a Youth Representative as a Commissioner. Young adults formerly in foster care are included in many of the Children’s Commission committees, workgroups, and training events including education and trauma initiatives.

What is being done or how do you intend to monitor the progress of the project? (Phase V) *Be specific in terms of what type of evaluation (e.g., fidelity or outcome, comparison group, etc) or data efforts you have in place or plan to have in place to assess your efforts. If you have already evaluated your effort, how did you use this data to modify or expand the project?*

- CIP will collect information through reports from partners, by monitoring the number of attorneys viewing CLE offerings, how much and who is accessing the related pages and sections of the Bench Book.
- CIP may use individual interview tools or surveys as well as agency and stakeholder interviews, focus groups, or surveys.
- CIP will continue to monitor use of video conference hearings as one measure of youth involvement in court proceedings.
- CIP will continue monitoring youth involvement through activities of the Children’s Commission’s Legal Representation Committee, Foster Care & Education Committee, and other workgroups and projects that are ongoing through the CIP.
- CIP will monitor participation and activities of the Normalcy Workgroup.
- The new Youth representative on the Children’s Commission will participate on the implementation of the CC’s Statewide Collaborative on Trauma Informed Care Blueprint.

What assistance or support would be helpful from the CBCC or Children’s Bureau to help move the project forward?

- None identified at this time.

II. Trainings, Projects, and Activities For questions 1-9, provide a *concise* description of work completed or underway to date in FY 2019 (October 2018-June 2019) in the below topical subcategories.

For question 1, focus on significant training events or initiatives held or developed in FY 2019 and answer the corresponding questions.

1. Trainings

<i>Topical Area</i>	<i>Did you hold or develop a training on this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>How many persons attended?</i>	<i>What type of training is it? (e.g., conference, training curriculum/program, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do? S=Satisfaction, L=Learning, B=Behavior, O=Outcomes</i>
Data	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judges	83	Conference	Increase knowledge, change practice	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Hearing quality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judges	83	Conference	Increase knowledge, change practice	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Improving timeliness/permanency	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No					<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Quality legal representation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judges	83	Conference	Increase knowledge, change practice	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Engagement & participation of parties	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judges	83	Conference	Increase knowledge, change practice	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Well-being	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judges	83	Conference	Increase knowledge, change practice	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> L <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
ICWA	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No					<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Sex Trafficking	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judges	83	Conference	Increase knowledge, change practice	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> S <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> L <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No					<input type="checkbox"/> S <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> O <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

On average, with ordinary funding levels, how many training events do you hold per year?

- In FY2019, we sponsored 6 major training events: (1) Annual Child Welfare Judges Conference (83 judicial attendees, plus other stakeholders); (2) Annual Family Justice Conference (70+ attendees); (3) Trial Skills Live (21 attendees); and (4) State Bar of Texas One-Day webcast of 6 total hours of CLE (614 viewers); (5) Legislative Update via Webcast scheduled for July 23, 2019. (FY2017 Legislative Update had 395 viewers); and (6) Department of Family and Protective Services Regional Attorney Training (100+ attendees). CIP also regularly publishes communiques, education materials, resource guides, and bench books to large distribution lists of judges and attorneys throughout the year.

What is your best prediction for the number of attorneys and judges that attend a training annually?

- **Between 100 – 200 judges**
- **Between 100 – 600 attorneys**
- **400+ judges and 3000+ attorneys receive regular educational communiques from the Commission, and access online training materials each fiscal year.**
- **In addition to the development and hosting of the above events, the CIP provides scholarships to state and national conferences and sponsors child welfare department training events as well. Events include: (1) Advanced Family Law One-Day Child Abuse and Neglect Track; (2) DFPS Regional Attorney Training Conference; (3) Child Protection Law Section CLE; (4) National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges; (5) National Association of Counsel for Children Annual Conference and Red Book Online Training; and (6) ABA Parent and Child Legal Representation Conferences.**

The Family First Prevention Services Act amends the Social Security Act adding an eligibility criterion for the training of judges and attorneys on the congregate care provisions of the Act. See the highlighted portion below.

(1)¹ IN GENERAL.— In order to be eligible to receive a grant under this section, a highest State court shall have in effect a rule requiring State courts to ensure that foster parents, pre- adoptive parents, and relative caregivers of a child in foster care under the responsibility of the State are notified of any proceeding to be held with respect to the child, *shall provide for the training of judges, attorneys, and other legal personnel in child welfare cases on Federal child welfare policies and payment limitations with respect to children in foster care who are placed in settings that are not a foster family home, and*

¹ Sec. 50741(c) of P.L. 115-123 revised sec. 438(b)(1) to add language regarding training. Effective as if enacted on 1/1/18 (sec. 50746(a)(1) of P.L. 115-123).

shall submit to the Secretary an application at such time, in such form, and including such information and assurances as the Secretary may require, including—

States have an option to delay implementation of the congregate care provisions by two years. The decision will have a direct impact on when judicial determinations and CIP training requirements must begin.

Do you know when your state plans to implement Family First? Yes No

If yes, when?

- **Texas has deferred implementation to October 2021.**

Have you been involved in planning with the agency on implementing Family First? Yes No

If yes, please describe how the CIP has been involved.

- **CIP Director has met with Child Welfare Director periodically. Texas is just now starting to evaluate FFPSA and will spend FY2020 preparing for October 2021 implementation.**

Have you been developing your Family First judicial training plan? Yes No

If yes, please describe what you have done.

- **Nothing extensive yet. We will have a one-hour discussion about FFPSA at our annual judicial training in October 2019. The training will most likely focus on the state's implementation status and the duties and responsibilities, strategic planning being undertaken by the child welfare agency, and a preview of the effect on judges and lawyers as it relates to congregate care placements and options for prevention services.**

2. Data Projects. Data projects include any work with administrative data sets (e.g, AFCARS, SACWIS), data dashboards, data reports, fostering court improvement data, case management systems, and data sharing efforts.

Do you have a data project/activity? Yes No (skip to #3)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
See above	Agency Data Sharing Efforts	Identifying/Assessing Needs
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

(a) Do you have data reports that you consistently view? Yes No

(b) How are these reports used to support your work?

3. Hearing Quality. Hearing quality projects include any efforts you have made to improve the quality of dependency hearings, including court observation/assessment projects, process improvements, specialty/pilot court projects, projects related to court orders or title IV-E determinations, mediation, or appeals.

Do you have a hearing quality project/activity? Yes No (skip to #4)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
See above	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

4. Improving Timeliness of Hearings or Permanency Outcomes. Timeliness and permanency projects include any activities or projects meant to improve the timeliness of case processing or achievement of timely permanency. This could include general timeliness, focus on continuances or appeals, working on permanency goals other than APPLA, or focus on APPLA and older youth.

Do you have a Timeliness or permanency project/activity? Yes No (skip to #5)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
See above	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

5. Quality of Legal Representation. Quality of legal representation projects may include any activities/efforts related to improvement of representation for parents, youth, or the agency. This might include assessments or analyzing current practice, implementing new practice models, working with law school clinics, or other activities in this area.

Do you have a quality legal representation project/activity? Yes No (skip to #6)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
Legal Representation Committee	Other	Implementation
Texas Board of Legal Specialization	Other	Implementation
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

6. Engagement & Participation of Parties. Engagement and participation of parties includes any efforts centered around youth, parent, foster family, or caregiver engagement, as well as projects related to notice to relatives, limited English proficiency, or other efforts to increase presence and engagement at the hearing.

Do you have an engagement or participation of parties project/activity? Yes No

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
Notice & Engagement	Notice to Relatives	Implementation
Video Conferencing for Permanency Reviews	Youth Engagement	Implementation
Family Helpline	Caregiver Engagement	Implementation

7. Well-Being. Well-being projects include any efforts related to improving the well-being of youth. Projects could focus on education, early childhood development, psychotropic medication, LGBTQ youth, trauma, racial disproportionality/disparity, immigration, or other well-being related topics.

Do you have any projects/activities focused on well-being? Yes No (skip to #8)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
Statewide Collaborative on Trauma Informed Care	Trauma	Selecting Solution
Education Outcomes	Education	Implementation
Normalcy	Trauma	Selecting Solution
Wellbeing focused pre-conference session at annual child welfare judges conferences	Trauma	Implementation

8. ICWA. ICWA projects could include any efforts to enhance state and tribal collaboration, state and tribal court agreements, data collection and analysis of ICWA compliance, or ICWA notice projects.

Do you have any projects/activities focused on ICWA? Yes No (skip to #9)

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

9. Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (PSTFSA). PSTFSA projects could include any work around domestic child sex trafficking, the reasonable and prudent parent standard, a focus on runaway youth, focus on normalcy, collaboration with other agencies around this topic, data collection and analysis, data sharing, or other efforts to fully implement the act into practice.

Do you have any projects/activities focused on PSTSFA? Yes No

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
Participation on Statewide Task Force of State Attorney General	Collaboration with other agencies	Implementation
Participation of Office of Governor Sex Trafficking Unit	Collaboration with other agencies	Implementation

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
Providing scholarships to NCJFCJ Domestic Child Sex Trafficking Institute	Collaboration with other agencies	Implementation

III. CIP Collaboration in Child Welfare Program Planning and Improvement Efforts

1. Please describe how the CIP was involved with the state’s CFSP due June 30, 2019.

- Reviewed
- Provided input

a. Does the CFSP include any of the following:

- legal/judicial strategies the CIP/Agency Joint Project the CIP Hearing Quality Project

If yes, please describe.

- **Although the relationship between DFPS and the CIP is mentioned several times in the CFSP, it is not apparent that the CFSP includes anything directly responsive to the above categories. However, this Self-Assessment discusses in detail the CIP/Agency Joint Project and the CIP Hearing Quality Project, which may be included in the State Plan, which is over 700 pages. The DFPS PIP has several legal/judicial strategies as well; some are mentioned in this Self-Assessment.**

2. Please describe how the CIP was or will be involved in the most recent/upcoming title IV-E Foster Care Eligibility Review in your state.

- **CIP usually attends the kick-off and exit conferences but is not otherwise involved.**

3. Please describe how the CIP is or was involved in preparing and completing round 3 of the CFSR and PIP, if required, in your state. *Please check all the ways that the CIP or Court Personnel were involved (or plan to be involved) in the CFSR and PIP Process. Feel free to add additional narrative to explain your involvement in the process.*

- were not involved at all
- were involved in planning the statewide assessment
- were CFSR reviewers
- were interviewed for CFSR

- were invited to the exit conference at the close of the CFSR review
- were invited to the final CFSR results session at the conclusion of the report
- Final CFSR report was shared with you
- Final CFSR report shared with courts broadly across the state
- were a part of a large group of stakeholders engaged to assist in design of the PIP
- high level of inclusion during the entire PIP process
- made suggestions for inclusion in the PIP
- suggestions made by CIP for inclusion in the PIP were put forward by the child welfare agency
- had an opportunity to review and provide feedback on the PIP before it was submitted
- meet (or plan to meet) ongoing with the child welfare agency to monitor PIP Implementation

The current version of the PIP includes (check all that apply):

- court strategies court/agency shared strategies
- the court/agency joint project described above the CIP hearing quality project
- specific practice changes that judges will make
- specific practice changes that attorneys will make

4. What strategies or processes are in place in your state that you feel are particularly effective in supporting joint child welfare program planning and improvement?

➤ **Regular and ongoing communication and collaboration with the child welfare agency as well as participation on most major child welfare system reform projects.**

5. What barriers exist in your state that make effective joint child welfare program planning and improvement challenging?

➤ **There are no significant barriers to joint planning with DFPS.**

6. Does the state child welfare agency currently offer professional partner training to judges, attorneys, and court personnel as part of its Title IV-E Training Plan?

If yes, please provide a brief description of what is provided and how.

➤ **No. Texas uses CIP funds to pay for judge, attorney, and court personnel training.**

If no, have you met with child welfare agency leadership to discuss and explore utilizing professional partner training for judges, attorneys and court personnel?

➤ **No.**

7. Have you talked with your agency about accessing Title IV-E funding for legal representation for parents or for children? Is the agency planning to seek reimbursement?

If yes, describe any plans, approaches, or models that are under consideration or underway.

- **Yes, but it is too early to articulate exactly how the reimbursement process will work. Generally, the agency will modify existing MOUs with counties to accommodate reimbursement requests, but there are questions about whether the agency can impose quality representation measures on counties in return for the reimbursement assistance.**

IV. CQI Current Capacity Assessment

1. Has your ability to integrate CQI into practice changed this year? If yes, what do you attribute the increase in ability to?

- **Yes, and it is probably attributed to simply knowing more and a better understanding of how to apply CQI to our projects. Some of the changes we made in FY2019: the CC implemented several changes from its 2018 Trial Skills Training to its 2019 version based on surveys and feedback from faculty and attendees. Also, we are hosting a pre-conference on well-being at our annual judicial conference in October 2019 based on feedback from judges at our 2018 conference that they wanted more information and training about trauma, plus we are designing a judicial Trauma Institute for March 2020. We are also launching a trauma blueprint implementation project in October 2019. We have also changed the project management structure of our education committee's work based on CQI of the structure that has been in place since 2015.**

2. Which of the following CBCC Events/Services have you/your staff engaged in in the 2019 Fiscal Year?

- Designing & Evaluating Effective Trainings Workshop
- CQI Consult (*Topic: _____*)
- Constituency Group- Hearing Quality Constituency Group- Safety Decision Making
- Constituency Group- CFSR Constituency Group- Quality Legal Rep
- Constituency Group – ICWA Constituency Group – Anti-Trafficking
- Constituency Group – New Directors Constituency Group – APPLA/Older Youth
- CIP All Call — *What % of All Calls does your CIP participate in? 80%*

3. Do you have any of the following resources to help you integrate CQI into practice?

- CIP staff with CQI (e.g., data, evaluation) expertise Consultants with CQI expertise
- a University partnership A statewide court case management system
- Contracts with external individuals or organizations to assist with CQI efforts
- Other resources: _____

3a. Do you record you child welfare court hearings? Yes No
If yes, are they audio video

➤ **Some are recorded, but not all.**

3b. Can you remotely access your court case management system? *For example, Odyssey systems often allow remote access to case files.* Yes No

➤ **Texas does not have a uniform or statewide case management system.**

4. Consider the phases of change management and how you integrate these into practice. Are there phases of the process (e.g., Phase I-need assessment, Phase II-theory of change) that you struggle with integrating more than others?

➤ **I do not believe so.**

5. Is there a topic or practice area that you would find useful from the Capacity Building Center for Courts? Be as specific as possible (e.g., data analysis, how to evaluate trainings, more information on research about quality legal representation, how to facilitate group meetings, etc.)

➤ **We recently joined the FFPSA Constituency Group.**

Self-Assessment – Capacity Continued

We would like you to assess your current capacities related to knowledge, skills, resources, and collaboration by responding to the following 2 sets of questions. In questions 6 and 7, we ask about CQI. When we say CQI we mean the entire change management process including root cause analysis, theory of change, strategy selection, implementation and evaluation.

6. Please indicate your level of agreement to the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have a good understanding of CQI.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand how to integrate CQI into all our work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am familiar with the available data relevant to our work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand how to interpret and apply the available data.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The CIP and the state child welfare agency have shared goals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The CIP and the state child welfare agency collaborate around program planning and improvement efforts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We have the resources we need to fully integrate CQI into practice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have staff, consultants, or partners who can answer my CQI questions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. How frequently do you engage in the following activities?

	<i>Never</i>	<i>Rarely</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>Always</i>
We use data to make decisions about where to focus our efforts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We meet with representatives of the child welfare agency to engage in collaborative systems change efforts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We create theories of change around systems change projects.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We use evaluation/assessment findings to make changes to programs/practices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We evaluate (beyond monitoring outputs) our efforts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

APPENDIX A: DEFINITIONS

Definitions of Evidence

Evidence-based practice – evidence-based practices are practice that have been empirically tested in a rigorous way (involving random assignment to groups), have demonstrated effectiveness related to specific outcomes, have been replicated in practice at least one, and have findings published in peer reviewed journal articles.

Empirically-supported- less rigorous than evidence-based practices are empirically-supported practices. To be empirically supported, a program must have been evaluated in some way and have demonstrated some relationship to a positive outcome. This may not meet the rigor of evidence-base, but still has some support for effectiveness.

Best-practices – best practices are often those widely accepted in the field as good practice. They may or may not have empirical support as to effectiveness, but are often derived from teams of experts in the field.

Definitions for Work Stages

Identifying and Assessing Needs – This phase is the earliest phase in the process, where you are identifying a need to be addressed. The assessing needs phase includes identifying the need, determining if there is available data demonstrating that this a problem, forming teams to address the issue.

Develop theory of change—This phase focuses on the theorizing the causes of a problem. In this phase you would identify what you think might be causing the problem and develop a “theory of change”. The theory of change is essentially how you think your activities (or intervention) will improve outcomes.

Develop/select solution—This phase includes developing or selecting a solution. In this phase, you might be exploring potential best-practices or evidence-based practices that you may want to implement as a solution to the identified need. You might also be developing a specific training, program, or practice that you want to implement.

Implementation – the implementation phase of work is when an intervention is being piloted or tested. This includes adapting programs or practices to meet your needs, and developing implementation supports.

Evaluation/assessment – the evaluation and assessment phase includes any efforts to collect data about the fidelity (process measures: was it implemented as planned?) or effectiveness (outcome measures: is the intervention making a difference?) of the project. The evaluation assessment phase also includes post-evaluation efforts to apply findings, such as making changes to the program/practice and using the data to inform next steps.