

State Court Improvement Program 2023 Annual Self-Assessment Report

This self-assessment is intended as an opportunity for Court Improvement Programs (CIPs) to review progress on CIP projects, joint program planning and improvement efforts with the child welfare agency, and the ability to integrate (Continuous Quality Improvement) CQI successfully into practice. The self-assessment process is designed to help shape and inform ongoing strategic planning and should include meaningful discussion with the multi-disciplinary task force and candid reflection of key CIP staff. The self-assessment primarily focused on assessing efforts undertaken to date while the strategic plan maps out efforts going forward. Questions are designed to solicit candid responses that help CIPs apply CQI and identify support that may be helpful.

I. CQI Analyses of Required Projects *It is ok to cut and paste responses from last year, updating according to where you currently are in the process, and, if you do so, highlight text to show anything that is new. Complete the descriptions for CQI stages you have progressed through or are in. Though some upcoming stages will be inapplicable, consider whether your team may have preliminary thoughts that are relevant to those questions. Please also indicate if you need assistance from your federal or Capacity Building partners in a particular phase.*

Joint Project with the Child Welfare Agency:

Project title:

- State and Regional Outcomes Data.

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

- Texas Department of Family & Protective Services (DFPS) Statewide Leadership and Data Updates and Regional Breakouts; both convened at the annual, statewide Child Welfare Judges Conference hosted by the Texas CIP (Children's Commission) in partnership with the Texas Center for the Judiciary.

Identify the specific safety, permanency, or well-being outcome(s) this project is intended to address. If this effort is linked to any agency measures, e.g. CFSR measures, please note those.

- Permanency.

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)

- In evaluations for the annual judicial conference, judges often express that the state and regional data is one of the most valuable takeaways from the training. Regional agency staff also underscore the importance of reviewing the data with judges on an annual basis.

What is the theory of change for the project? (Phase II)

- By examining statewide trends and region-level data analysis, courts will better understand and be able to address factors contributing to children and youth not achieving positive permanency.

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

- The project consists of a child welfare data plenary presentation by the DFPS leadership and data teams to members of the judiciary at an annual conference designed specifically for judges hearing child welfare cases. The project also includes regional breakout sessions between judges and DFPS regional leadership teams as well as staff contracted by DFPS in privatized regions (see Single Source Continuum Contractors in the description below), to discuss region-specific data elements and permanency outcomes. DFPS also provides court or county-specific information upon request.
- Due to the expansion of Community Based Care (CBC), Single Source Continuum Contractors (SSCCs) responsible for case management and placement are also included in the regional breakout presentations with judges serving CBC catchment areas, beginning in 2020. Additionally, in 2023 the Director of the Office of Community-Based Care Transition will be invited to present on the DFPS Leadership and Statewide Data Update panel, and the regional DFPS Investigations staff will be invited to the Regional Breakouts.

If your solution/intervention includes training, please provide a title and brief description of any training(s).

- At the annual judicial conference, members of the DFPS leadership and data teams will share statewide updates with the judiciary regarding key topics such as the federal lawsuit; removals; capacity; family preservation; investigations; and prevention. The Statewide Leadership and Data Updates will focus on safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes at the statewide level and how these topics intersect and impact each other. Immediately thereafter, judges will meet by region with regional DFPS and SSCC leadership teams to examine and discuss local data with an eye towards improving outcomes for children and families.

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

- DFPS leadership and data team staff continue to participate in the Children's Commission's annual judicial conference and provide data. The data will be reviewed by DFPS Regional Directors for Investigations and Child Protective Services and Regional Systems Improvement leads, which in turn will be discussed with the attending judiciary.
- Permanency was a focus both at the pre-conference and at the annual statewide judicial conference held in October 2021. The pre-conference provided an in-depth analysis of how courts can focus on positive permanency from the outset of the case through extended care. At the

conference, judges and DFPS regional directors discussed each positive permanency outcome, examined the factors that lead to delays, and identified possible solutions. Data, policy, and best practices regarding permanency are woven into the conference curriculum and highlighted in panels with lived experience participants.

How are you 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.) and what results you have, if any. If you have already evaluated your effort, what do the data show, and how did you use these data to modify or expand the project? Please note if you are using any JCAMP measures in this effort.*¹

- All CIP projects and progress are tracked quarterly and reported to the Children’s Commission and Systems Improvement, Legal Practice and Process, Training, and Data Committees in February, May, September, and November.
- Judges are provided with pre-event and post-event surveys following each annual judicial conference. Feedback from the surveys is used to inform the project. For example, when the breakouts were organized by permanency outcome rather than by region, participating judges provided feedback that they preferred time with the Regional Director in their area and that several courts wanted to move beyond regional data to county-specific information.

Have there been notable factors that delayed or accelerated this effort?

- The Supreme Court of Texas final Emergency Order regarding the Covid-19 State of Disaster expired March 1, 2023 and there is now a return to statutory deadlines and procedures. However, there may still be active cases whose statutory deadlines were previously extended under the prior emergency orders. The CIP and DFPS will continue to track the impact of these delays on permanency outcomes in Texas and present related information to the judiciary at the 2023 annual conference.

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

- None identified at this time.

Hearing Quality Project:

Project title:

- Reasonable Efforts Hearing Quality Project.

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

- CIP staff will design and implement a hearing quality project where gains in knowledge and application of Reasonable Efforts will be identified and measured. This project will be linked with CIP trainings on Reasonable Efforts for the judicial and legal communities. The CIP will continue to increase awareness about the law the importance of making reasonable efforts and reasonable efforts findings and encourage judges and

¹ <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/courts/reform/jcamp/>

attorneys in child welfare cases to adopt and implement appropriate policy and practice changes that ensure reasonable efforts are understood and applied.

Approximate date that the project began:

- Fall 2021.

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)

- Federal law as well as the Texas Family Code require that reasonable efforts are applied throughout a child welfare case. Despite having statutes in place, the practice of applying a reasonable efforts analysis by judges and attorneys continues to be a challenge, and meaningful examination of whether reasonable efforts have been made and related judicial decision-making remains the exception and not the norm.
- Reasonable efforts findings are a powerful tool for courts to improve outcomes for children and families by ensuring that the child welfare agency is fulfilling its obligation to keep families together and ensure timely permanency. Training child welfare judges and attorneys on federal and state law regarding reasonable efforts and comparing data from pre-and post-training hearing observation can result in better quality hearings.

What is the theory of change for the project? (Phase II)

- By training judges and attorneys on reasonable efforts law and its application, the quality of child welfare hearings, judicial practices, 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)

- The CIP provides training and judicial tools such as bench cards and communiques regarding the law, policy, practice, training opportunities, and changes to statutory and practice to support high-quality hearings and court proceedings. The training on Reasonable Efforts in FY 2024 will be accompanied by court observations to track changes in behavior and practice.
- The CIP plans to create a reasonable efforts bench card in the 2023 Bench Book updates. Additionally, legislative updates regarding Reasonable Efforts will be included throughout the Bench Book. The Commission's Tool Kit for Attorneys Representing the Texas Department of Family & Protective Services in Child Welfare Cases and Tool Kit for Attorneys Representing Parents and Children in Child Welfare Cases will include legislative updates regarding Reasonable Efforts throughout.

If your solution/intervention includes training, please provide a title and brief description of any training(s).

- In FY 2024, the CIP plans to host in-person Reasonable Efforts trainings for judges and attorneys. Additionally, the biennial Legislative Update webcast and written report produced by Commission staff will include recent legislation on reasonable efforts and its anticipated effect on child welfare cases. A Legislative Update will also be offered at the biennial Child Protection Court training as well as at the annual judicial conference.

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

- In January 2022, the CIP hosted a virtual Reasonable Efforts Judicial Academy in partnership with CBCC. Twenty-two judges participated and of those, 16 hear child welfare cases exclusively. Following that training, the CIP adapted the national curriculum to conform to the statutorily required hearings in Texas child welfare cases. Additionally, Texas CIP participated in a virtual Colorado CIP attorney training on Reasonable Efforts in early Spring 2023, and Texas CIP also participated in an in-person Minnesota CIP judicial training on Reasonable Efforts in late Spring 2023. These experiences of observing and serving as faculty in the trainings prepared the CIP to train Texas judges and attorneys on Reasonable Efforts.
- Commission staff analyzed legislation on new, statutorily-required reasonable efforts findings passed in the 88th Texas Regular Legislative Session, concluded in May 2023, and will provide related training to judges, attorneys, and stakeholders.

How are you 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.) and what results you have, if any. If you have already evaluated your effort, what do the data show, and how did you use these data to modify or expand the project? Please note if you are using any JCAMP measures in this effort.*

- CIP will partner with OCA and the CBCC to conduct hearing observations before and after training to identify gains in knowledge and practice changes.
- CIP will collect information by monitoring the number of judges and attorneys viewing related CLE offerings, attending in-person trainings, and by monitoring how frequently the related pages and sections of the Bench Book are being accessed, and by which stakeholders.
- CIP will continue training on reasonable efforts through activities of the Children’s Commission, Training Committee, and other workgroups and ongoing projects.

Have there been notable factors that delayed or accelerated this effort?

- Participation in the Colorado and Minnesota CIP trainings provided invaluable experience for Commission staff. Also, the need for training on very recent legislation has accelerated this effort.

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

- None identified at this time.

Quality Legal Representation Project:

Project title:

- Standards of Representation, Tool Kits, and Attorney-Client Relationship Materials

Provide a concise description of the quality legal representation project selected in your jurisdiction.

- The CIP currently has several projects related to quality legal representation, including the following areas of focus:
 - The formation and adoption of Texas specific standards of representation;
 - Tool kits for attorneys representing parents and children and attorneys representing DFPS; and
 - Creation of materials for parents, children, and caregivers explaining the attorney-client relationship.

Approximate date that the project began:

- The tool kits and the materials explaining the attorney-client relationship began in Fall 2018 in response to the Children’s Commission 2018 Study on Legal Representation. The creation and adoption of standards of representation was a recommendation of the Task Force on Court-Appointed Legal Representation Final Report released in May 2021.

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

- The formation and adoption of Texas-specific standards of representation is in the development stage.
- Tool kits for attorneys representing parents and children and attorneys representing DFPS are in the implementation stage. Workgroups established a regular schedule to review and update each tool kit.
- Materials for parents, children, and caregivers explaining the attorney-client relationship were developed and implementation is ongoing. This includes materials specific to fathers, incarcerated parents, videos for youth, and a coloring book for younger children. Pamphlets entitled “What Does a Parent’s Attorney Do?” and “What Does an Attorney for a Child in a CPS Case Do?” were also created to provide clarity for parents and caregivers. A video for parents on the attorney-client relationship is in the development stage.

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

- The Children’s Commission 2018 Study on Legal Representation identified several deficiencies in representation including inconsistencies in accountability and compensation for attorneys, inconsistencies in compliance and performance by attorneys, and a lack of understanding by parents and children on the role of their attorney.

What is the theory of change for the project? (Phase II)

- Creation of standards of representation - standards will establish a consistent, objective, and measurable definition of quality representation in Texas that will provide guidance to attorneys, judges, and stakeholders for implementing quality representation.

- Tool kits - providing essential information necessary for delivering quality representation in an easy to access and peer reviewed format will increase the consistency of representation across the state.
- Materials regarding the attorney-client relationship - increasing the understanding of the attorney's role for parents, children, and caregivers will result in improved attorney-client relationships.

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

- The Standards of Representation Committee will continue developing standards of representation in FY 2024.
- For tool kits, standing tool kit workgroups developed a regular schedule for updating the respective publication after each legislative biennium.
- For attorney materials, CIP will work with judicial and other stakeholders to promote awareness and access to the materials.

If your solution/intervention includes training, please provide a title and brief description of any training(s).

- None.

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

- The Child Welfare Law Standards of Representation Committee is charged with drafting proposed standards to submit to the State Bar of Texas. Committee members were selected for their expertise in child welfare law and represent the diversity of jurisdictions across Texas. The committee has conducted a detailed review of the American Bar Association Standards, the National Association of Council for Children Standards, as well as state standards for the twenty states which have adopted child welfare standards of representation. The Committee has settled on a framework by dividing representation into six phases and the committee members began the process of drafting language for each of the six phases.
- The Tool Kit Workgroup and the DFPS Representation Subgroup provide integral input to review and update each tool kit with changes in policy and law.
- Pamphlets for parents and caregivers, a father's rights pamphlet, an incarcerated parents poster, and a coloring book for children are complete and are available on the Children's Commission webpage, and the two-part video "Your Lawyer Works for You" is available on the Texas Network of Youth Services YouTube channel.

How are you 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.) and what results you have, if any. If you have already evaluated your effort, what do the data show, and how did you use these data to modify or expand the project? Please note if you are using any JCAMP measures in this effort.*

- The Children's Commission will support the work of the Standards of Representation Committee by providing research, drafting, and logistical support. Monitoring the implementation of the standards once adopted will be done in collaboration with the Office of Court Administration and the Texas Indigent Defense Commission.

- The CIP will monitor the review, update, and publication of the tool kits by facilitating workgroup meetings, consolidating workgroup drafts, and finalizing the tool kits for publication. The Commission will distribute physical copies of the tool kits at statewide child welfare legal education courses and will promote online access to the tool kits via the Law Box app.
- The CIP will monitor attorney-client materials by seeking feedback from attorneys, judges, and parents and children with lived experience.

Have there been notable factors that delayed or accelerated this effort?

- Commission Chair Justice Debra Lehrmann’s support for standards of representation accelerated the creation of the Standards of Representation Committee.
- Both tool kits were timely published and are available online; the tool kit for attorneys representing parents and children was updated and released in print in March 2022. The tool kit for attorneys representing DFPS originally did not have standing workgroup responsible for review and updates, but the DFPS Representation Subcommittee now has that responsibility and the tool kit for attorneys representing DFPS was updated in October of 2022. Both tool kits will be updated simultaneously in FY 2024.

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

- None identified at this time.

II. Projects, Activities, and Training. For questions 1-13, provide a *concise* description of work completed or underway to date in FY 2023 (October 2022-June 2023) in the topical subcategories below where applicable.

1. Training Overall

Did you have any significant training efforts not related to a particular project (those are now integrated under 2 to 14 below)? If yes, please describe.

- The CIP regularly produces online training internally and in partnership with external stakeholders based on emerging issues and urgent needs. For example, in Spring 2023 the CIP publicized, produced, and archived a live webcast presented by DFPS staff on Treatment Foster Family Care as requested by the Department. However, given the scope of the Commission’s strategies, nearly all of the CIP training efforts are tied to a particular project.

On average, how many training events do you hold per year?

- On average every year, the CIP produces two to three judicial trainings; one or two hands-on, attorney Trial Skills Trainings; CIP-produced webinars for attorneys and judges as needed; and subject matter trainings as needed (e.g., an October 22, 2022 webcast entitled “Enhancing the Experience of Children & Youth in Court: How Judges and Attorneys Can Prepare and Support Youth Attending Court”). The CIP also supports the annual legal training produced by DFPS and supports other state and national judicial and attorney conferences throughout the year by providing registration scholarships and occasionally providing reimbursement for approved travel-related expenses to those events.

- In FY 2023 to date, the CIP produced, sponsored, or partnered with another entity to develop these major, statewide training events: (1) on October 20, 2022, the CIP highlighted the importance of youth voice by partnering with young adults to develop and create a webinar entitled “Enhancing the Experience of Children & Youth in Court: How Judges and Attorneys Can Prepare and Support Youth Attending Court;” (2) October 24-26, 2022 Annual Child Welfare Conference; (3) December 1, 2022 Reasonable Efforts Judicial Academy faculty training; (3) January 2022 creation of “Fundamentals of Child Welfare Law” online course for prosecutors and agency attorneys in partnership with the Texas District and County Attorney Association; (4) April 12-13, 2023 12-hour child welfare track at the Texas District and County Attorney Association Crimes Against Children Conference; (5) April 28, 2023 Trauma-Informed Court Project Cohort Convening; (6) May 17, 2023 webcast entitled “Overview of Treatment Foster Family Care.” Also, the CIP provides funding to DFPS for its annual legal training. The 2022 DFPS Attorney Training took place on October 25-26, 2022. This was the first opportunity since 2019 for the Department’s regional attorneys to gather in person for training, to work on team building, and to share ideas.

What is your best prediction for the number of attorneys, judges, or other legal system stakeholders that will participate in training annually?

- Between 100 – 200 judges
- Between 100 – 600 attorneys
- 300+ judges and 3000+ attorneys receive regular educational communiques from the Commission, and access free CIP 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 may include: (1) State Bar of Texas Family Law Section’s Advanced Family Law One-Day Child Abuse and Neglect Workshop; (2) DFPS Regional Attorney Training Conference; (3) State Bar of Texas Child Protection Law Section’s Advanced Child Protection Law CLE; (4) National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges Juvenile Justice and Annual Conferences; (5) National Association of Counsel for Children Annual Conference; (6) Biennial ABA Parent and Child Legal Representation Conferences; and (7) Biennial Texas District and County Attorney Association Crimes Against Children Conference as well as the “Fundamentals of Child Welfare Law” online course hosted by Texas District and County Attorney Association.

The Family First Prevention Services Act amended 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)² IN GENERAL. — In order to be eligible to receive a grant under this section, a highest State court ... *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...*—

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

² 42 U.S.C § 629h(b); Social Security Act §438(b)

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

- The CIP Director meets with DFPS Investigations, Family-Based Safety Services, Child Protective Services, and Prevention and Early Intervention division leadership on a regular basis.
- The CIP Director also participates on the Prevention and Early Intervention Prevention Framework Workgroup and the Thriving Families, Safer Children Learning Collaborative.
- CIP, OCA, and DFPS are currently implementing an Early Intervention Court Liaison pilot to enhance capacity to provide support prevention efforts and utilize opportunities under FFPSA. CIP staff meet on a monthly basis with DFPS staff from Investigations, Family-Based Safety Services, Prevention and Early Intervention, Data and Evaluation, Legal, and Finance departments on the Texas Family First Pilot Implementation Steering Committee. During meetings, DFPS provides updates on steps taken to identify the target population served and implement the pilot. CIP has convened judges in both regional and statewide meetings to discuss legal issues in pilot implementation.
- The pending biennial Child Protection Court Convening will feature a panel entitled “Moving Upstream: Early Intervention Court Liaisons and Texas Family First Pilots.” Speakers include a judge and her Early Intervention Court Liaison, as well as a judge who participates in the Texas Family First pilot; the panel will be moderated by the Chief Prevention and Community Well-Being Officer at DFPS.
- For the Early Intervention Court Liaison Pilot, the Commission contracted with Texas A&M University to conduct a formal evaluation of the pilot program. As of April 2023, Texas A&M had completed the first round of stakeholder interviews and plans to start a secondary set of interviews in May 2023. The Commission is working closely with the OCA and PEI to renew the Early Intervention Pilot funding for 2024-2026.
- Texas CIP convened a workgroup and subgroups to develop QRTP and Residential Treatment Center court processes from September 2021 to July 2022. A report was submitted to the Texas Legislature with recommendations in October 2022. Several recommendations were adopted in the 88th Regular Legislative Session and CIP will update existing materials to highlight these changes.

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

If yes, please describe what you have done.

- In partnership with DFPS, the CIP hosted an “Overview of Qualified Residential Treatment Program Legal Requirements” webcast on Tuesday, May 17, 2022. The purpose of the webcast was to explain the court requirements for QRTP placements and to provide an opportunity for judges, attorneys, and guardians ad litem to explore the legal process prior to implementation of QRTP placements in Texas. Approximately 200 judges, attorneys, and advocates from areas throughout Texas participated. The video is archived on the Children’s Commission website.
- At the annual judicial conference, DFPS provides updates in Family First through dedicated presentations and/or the DFSP leadership panel. Since the Chief Prevention and Community Well-Being Officer at Prevention and Early Intervention is a member of the Children’s Commission, information is also shared at quarterly multidisciplinary meetings.

2. Data Projects. Data projects include any work with JCAMP,³ administrative data sets (e.g., AFCARS, CCWIS), data dashboards, data reports, fostering court improvement data, case management systems, and data sharing efforts.

Do you have a data project/activity? Yes No

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	CQI Stage (if applicable)
Data and Trends Analysis	Agency Data Sharing Efforts	Identifying/Assessing Needs
Support for CPCMS	Case management systems	Implementation
Data Integration between CPCMS + SACWIS	Agency Data Sharing Efforts	Selecting Solution
Virtual Hearings Study	Fostering Court Improvement data projects	Evaluation/Assessment

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

(b) How are these reports used to support your work? Identifying trends and priority areas of focus.

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to 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, 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>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judges (Oct 2022 Annual Judicial Conference)	92	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

3. Legal Representation. Legal representation projects include any efforts you have made to improve the quality of legal representation for parents, children and youth, the agency, or others. List projects here if you have any in addition to the required project.

Do you have (an additional) legal representation project/activity? Yes No

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	CQI Stage (if applicable)
Standards of Representation	Parent/Child Representation	Selecting Solution
Representation Tool Kits	Parent/Child/State Representation	Implementation

³ <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/courts/reform/jcamp/>

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	CQI Stage (if applicable)
Attorney Client Materials	Parent/Child Representation	Implementation

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to 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, 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>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Attorneys (Apr 2023 Child Welfare Track at biennial Crimes Against Children Conference)	75	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
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Attorneys (Archived Oct 2021 Texas District and County Attorney “Fundamentals of Child Welfare Law” Online MCLE series)	27 attorneys requested reimbursement for online training series	On demand training	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
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Attorneys (Trial Skills Training)	21	Virtual 1-day pretrial training followed by 2-day in person, hands-on training	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

4. 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

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	CQI Stage (if applicable)
Dual Status Child Protection Court Evaluation	Specialty/Pilot Courts	Evaluation/Assessment
Mediation Workgroup	Mediation	Implementation
Reasonable Efforts	Process Improvements	Implementation

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to 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, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do?</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judges (Oct 2022 Annual Judicial Conference)	92	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

5. 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 improvement in specific outcomes such as around reunification, guardianship, adoption or a focus on APPLA and older youth.

Do you have a timeliness or permanency project/activity? Yes No

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	CQI Stage (if applicable)
Joint Agency Project - see above	Continuances/Delays	Implementation
Child Protection Law Bench Book	General/ASFA	Evaluation/Assessment

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to 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, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do?</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judges (Oct 2022 Annual Judicial Conference)	92	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

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?	CQI Stage (if applicable)
Notice & Engagement	Notice to Relatives	Evaluation/Assessment
Family Helpline	Caregiver Engagement	Implementation
Incarcerated Parents Poster	Parent Engagement	Implementation
Father's Rights Pamphlet	Parent Engagement	Implementation

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to 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, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do?</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judges (Oct 2022 Annual Judicial Conference)	92	Conferences	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

7. **Well-Being.** Well-being projects include any efforts related to improving the well-being of children and youth. Projects could focus on education, early childhood development, psychotropic medication, trauma, social network support, cultural connections, or other well-being related topics.

Do you have any projects/activities focused on well-being? Yes No

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	CQI Stage (if applicable)
Trauma Informed Courts Project	Trauma	Selecting Solution
Foster Care & Education Committee	Education	Implementation

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to 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, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do?</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judges (Oct 2022 Annual Judicial Conference)	92	Conferences	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

- 8. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA).** These projects include any efforts related to improving equity in child welfare systems around race, sexual orientation or gender identity, national origin or immigration status, religion, persons with disabilities, geographic or otherwise.

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

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	CQI Stage (if applicable)
Equity Workgroup	Race	Selecting Solution

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to 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, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do?</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judges (Oct 2021 Annual Judicial Conference)	132	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

- 9. ICWA/Tribal collaboration.** These projects could include any efforts to enhance state and tribal collaboration, state and tribal court agreements, data collection and analysis including of ICWA practice.

Do you have any projects/activities focused on ICWA or tribal collaboration? Yes No

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	CQI Stage (if applicable)
Participation in DFPS Tribal/State Collaborative	Tribal Collaboration	Implementation

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to 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, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do?</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judges & Attorneys; Child Welfare Stakeholders (Jan 2021 ICWA Summit)	1000+	Online 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

10. Preventing Sex Trafficking. These projects could include work around domestic child sex trafficking, a focus on runaway youth, collaboration with other agencies around this topic, data collection and analysis, data sharing, or other efforts to fully implement these sections of the Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act into practice.

Do you have any projects/activities focused on preventing sex trafficking/runaways? Yes No

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	CQI Stage (if applicable)
Human Trafficking Judicial Workgroup	Sex Trafficking	Selecting Solution
Participation on Attorney General Statewide Task Force	Collaboration with other agencies	Implementation
Partnership with Office of Governor Child Sex Trafficking Team	Collaboration with other agencies	Implementation

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to 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, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do?</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judges (Oct 2022 Annual Judicial Conference)	92	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

11. Normalcy/Reasonable and Prudent Parent. These projects could include any work around normalcy or the reasonable and prudent parent standard or practices, collaboration with other agencies around this topic, data collection and analysis, data sharing, or other efforts to fully implement these sections of the Preventing Sex and Strengthening Families Act into practice.

Do you have any projects/activities focused on normalcy/reasonable prudent parenting? Yes No

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	CQI Stage (if applicable)
Normalcy Guide and video (in partnership with Texas CASA)	Reasonable & Prudent Parent	Evaluation/Assessment

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to 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, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do?</i>
<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

12. Prevention. Prevention projects include work around preventing child maltreatment including primary prevention (preventing maltreatment from occurring in the first place), secondary, and tertiary prevention.

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

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	CQI Stage (if applicable)
Participation in Prevention and Early Intervention Prevention Framework Workgroup	Collaboration with other agencies	Identifying/Assessing Needs
Judicial Early Intervention Court Liaison Project	Secondary or tertiary prevention	Selecting Solution
Support for Texas Family First Pilot	Secondary or tertiary prevention	Implementation
Pre-petition Legal Representation pilot (in partnership with Casey Family Programs)	Parent Representation	Evaluation/Assessment

<i>Did you hold or develop a training related to 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, webinar)</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>What type of training evaluation did you do?</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Judges (Oct 2022 Annual Judicial Conference)	92	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

13. Safety. Safety projects are those that focus on decision-making around safety including decision-making practices in substantiation, removal, family time/visitation, and decisions about safety in out of home placements.

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

14. Other. Please list any projects you have that do not fit in any of the categories above.

Do you have any other projects/activities? Yes No

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	CQI Stage (if applicable)
Forensic Assessment Center Network Report and related information for parents	Cross-System Collaboration	Selecting Solution

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	CQI Stage (if applicable)
Identifying Roles in Court Videos and Handout (in partnership with Texas CASA)	Parent & Caregiver Engagement	Implementation

Did you hold or develop a training related to this topic? Yes No

15. Other Notable Activities. Are there any other activities the CIP has been engaged in not included above that you believe would be important to share with partners including those in the state, partner tribes, the Children’s Bureau, or the Capacity Building Center for Courts?

- Communiques to judges and attorneys.
- Reimbursement of exam fees for attorneys who become certified as Texas Child Welfare Law Specialists.

16. Materials. From any of the work described above, do you have any documents or other materials that feel would be helpful to share with the national CIP community? For example, rigorous research, innovative approaches, compelling outcome data, etc. Please link here or note and include in your submission.

- [Normalcy Matters: A Guide to Supporting Children & Youth in Texas Foster Care](#)
- [Coloring Book: Sam and the Search for Spots - How Your Lawyer Can Help You](#)
- [Fathers' Rights in CPS Cases: Important Information For Fathers Involved in CPS Cases](#)
- [Rights of Incarcerated Parents in CPS Cases](#)
- [“Your Lawyer Works for You” Video Series](#)
- [School of Origin Determinations for Students in Foster Care](#)
- Top 10 “Things to Know” about Education for Children in Foster Care in Residential Treatment Centers: [providers](#), [educators](#), [legal professionals](#)

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

A) Overall Legal System Structures. This section collects overall information about how legal systems are structured in your state. This information is designed to help partners understand the overall landscape of legal services. This will also be shared with the national CIP community to allow more targeted peer connections and technical assistance. We recognize that some responses may vary across your state, so we have set up items so that you can estimate percentages that would apply to the question at hand. If you completed the survey that was sent out January 10th, 2023, and there have been no changes regarding questions 1 to 16 in this section, there is no need to answer these again at this time.

1. What kinds of judicial officers preside over your child welfare cases? (check all that apply)

- Judges
- Magistrates
- Referees
- Commissioners
- Other:

2. Approximately how many judicial officers oversee child welfare cases in your state? 200

3. What percentage of your courts have a dedicated child welfare docket?

- 0%
- 1-25%
- 26-50%
- 51-75%
- 75-99%
- 100%

Regarding child representation and advocacy in your state:

4. Thinking about the practice in all courts in your state, please estimate what percentage do the following:

What percentage of the courts in your state....	0%	1-25%	26-50%	51-75%	76-99%	100%
Appoint an attorney for children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Appoint an attorney guardian ad litem for children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appoint an attorney and a lay advocate for children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do not appoint legal representation/advocates for children	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use in-house staffing (e.g., Children’s Law Center, Office of Child’s Representative, etc.) for child representation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use contract attorneys for child representation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have multi-disciplinary child representation offices or “specialty” offices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Do you have standards of practice for children’s attorneys/attorney GALs? Yes No

If yes, can you provide a link?

6. Where does the funding for child legal representation primarily come from in your state? The counties.

7. Regarding how children's attorneys are compensated in your state jurisdiction: (It’s okay to estimate your answer.)

What percentage of children’s attorneys in your state are compensated...	0%	1-25%	26-50%	51-75%	76-99%	100%
at an hourly rate, with no cap per case.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
at an hourly rate, with a per case cap.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
as a salary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
at a flat rate per case	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
at a per hearing rate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I don’t know	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Regarding any lay advocacy your jurisdiction provides to children or youth: (It’s okay to estimate your answer.):

What percentage of courts in your state have...	0%	1-25%	26-50%	51-75%	76-99%	100%
peer advocates for children or youth	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Court Appointed Special Advocates	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
non-attorney guardians ad litem	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Regarding child welfare agency representation in your state:

9. How is your agency's legal representation organized in your jurisdiction?

- state department of human services (i.e., “agency”) staff
- county department of human services (i.e., “agency”) staff
- non-department of human services (i.e., “agency”) state or county office (e.g. prosecutor’s/district attorney’s office)
- Other:

10. How are agency attorneys compensated in your jurisdiction?

- salary
- hourly rate
- other:

11. Do you have standards of practice (e.g., attorney competencies, workload standards, policy of practice, etc.) for agency attorneys? Yes

No

a. If yes, can you provide a link?

12. Who does the agency attorney represent; that is, who is the client?

- the child welfare agency
- the “people” of the state
- the state itself
- Other, please specify:

Regarding parent representation and advocacy in your state:

13. Do you have standards of practice for parents’ attorneys? Yes No

a. If yes, can you provide a link?

14. What percentage of your courts have the following parent representation structure?

What percentage of the courts in your state....	0%	1-25%	26-50%	51-75%	76-99%	100%
Use in-house staffing (e.g., Family Defense Center, Office of Respondent Parent’s Counsel, etc.) for parent representation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use contract attorneys for parent representation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have multi-disciplinary parent representation offices or “specialty” offices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

15. How are parents’ attorneys compensated in your jurisdiction? (It’s okay to estimate your answer.)

What percentage of parents’ attorneys in your state are compensated...	0%	1-25%	26-50%	51-75%	76-99%	100%
at an hourly rate, with no cap per case.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
at an hourly rate, with a per case cap.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
as a salary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
at a flat rate per case	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
at a per hearing rate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I don’t know	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

16. Does your state utilize Title IV-E funding to help pay for representation?

Representation type	Yes, in a single jurisdiction	Yes, in multiple jurisdictions	Yes, statewide	No
Agency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Child	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

a. If yes, what are the administrative structures for accessing these IV-E funds? Counties enter individual contracts with DFPS.

17. Please describe how the CIP was involved with the state’s CFSP due June 30, 2023.

- Reviewed and provided input.

Does the CFSP include any of the following:

- the CIP/Agency Joint Project
- the Hearing Quality Project
- the Legal Representation Project
- other judicial strategies
- other attorney strategies

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, which may be included in the State Plan.

18. 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. However, CIP is willing to participate in any way that would be beneficial to the review process in Texas.

19. Please describe how the CIP was or will be involved in preparing and completing round 4 of the CFSR and PIP.

- CIP Director participates in two monthly meetings; one with the Children’s Bureau and DFPS and one with DFPS. CIP is actively engaged in planning for CFSR Round 4. The Children’s Commission will include presentations on the CFSR Data and Process during the September 15, 2023 multidisciplinary task force meeting and the annual judicial conference in October 2023. The Children’s Commission will also partner with DFPS to host any stakeholder engagement meetings as well as development and implementation of the Program Improvement Plan.

B) Only states that will be participating in round 4 of the CFSR and PIP in your state this reporting year need to complete these questions. However, working to organize meaningful engagement of a broad array of legal and judicial stakeholders and to support collaboration with other system partners is useful for other major CIP projects as well, so others may wish to consider these with your teams. See the PI at page 9 for further explanation.

1. Regarding engaging the legal and judicial stakeholders with a broad representation of perspectives in CFSR/PIP processes:

- i) What barriers do you foresee in engaging stakeholders at an appropriate breadth and depth?

- The biggest barrier in Texas is likely to be the size of the state. With 254 counties and an independent judiciary, it will be a challenge to identify representative jurisdictions. Additionally, Community Based Care is not fully implemented across the state, so some areas operate under the legacy system whereas others are privatized. Legal representation is also variable across the state with many children and parents represented by solo practitioners and prosecution mixed between county or district attorneys and regional DFPS attorneys.
- ii) What do you believe will facilitate engaging stakeholders at an appropriate breadth and depth?
- Leveraging key partnerships, offering an inclusive process, and activating judicial leadership will be invaluable to meaningful stakeholder engagement.
2. Are there other leadership structures for legal and judicial stakeholders and how can those facilitate the processes around the CFSR/PIP?
 - For judges and attorneys, the Children’s Commission offers many leadership opportunities including serving on the Commission, committees or workgroups, leading initiatives statewide, speaking engagements, and having regular opportunities to provide input on how to improve the child welfare system writ large. For attorneys, the Child Protection Law Section of the State Bar of Texas and Texas Board of Legal Specialization Child Welfare Law Specialty Area are existing structures to support high-quality legal representation. These relationships will be integral to the legal and judicial engagement in the CFSR process.
 3. How will legal stakeholder involvement in the CFSR/PIP be managed? e.g. CIP is the lead, via the Multi-Disciplinary Task force, a sub-committee established by the child welfare agency, etc.
 - CIP Director and Legal Representation Director will serve as leads for legal stakeholder engagement in the CFSR/PIP processes. Additionally, there will be opportunities for legal stakeholder involvement at the task force meeting, annual judicial conference, and likely dedicated committee meetings established for this purpose.
 4. What court, judicial, or attorney data could be integrated into the CFSR/PIP process?
 - The court system is independently managed in Texas but there are 30 Child Protection Courts with a centralized case management system. The Child Protection Case Management System is maintained by the Texas Office of Court Administration with CIP funding.
 5. How might participation vary in stages of the process?
 - To the extent possible, there will be multiple opportunities for engagement in various locations and mediums. For example, participation via Zoom or another online meeting platform could assist with engaging stakeholders in remote locations. In-person meetings might be more accessible for other stakeholders. Providing more than one date and time could also assist with accessing a broader stakeholder group.

6. What feedback loops will be needed to keep stakeholders informed?
 - CIP staff will report on the CFSR process at quarterly multidisciplinary task force meetings and the annual judicial conferences. Written correspondence throughout the process will be shared via regular communication channels, in partnership with DFPS and other legal and judicial stakeholder networks.
7. What supports do you need from the Children’s Bureau or Capacity Building Centers for participating in the CFSR/PIP?
 - Texas will receive technical assistance from the Capacity Building Center for States and CIP participates in related meetings. The Children’s Bureau contracted Legal/Judicial Child Welfare Specialist and the Capacity Building Center for Courts Liaison are significant supports to Texas CIP.

C) Collaboration with the Child Welfare Agency in General

1. 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. Additionally, DFPS leadership has standing positions on the Children’s Commission and at least one state-level DFPS staff serves as a member in each of the Systems Improvement, Legal Practice & Process, Training, and Data Committees. Many state and regional DFPS staff also participate on the Collaborative Council and other committees, workgroups, and projects organized by the Children’s Commission.
2. 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.
3. Regarding collaboration on training with the child welfare agency...
 - a. Regarding training needs across the child welfare system, what is your process to work with the agency to consider how to maximize the impact of complementary resources and ensure there is no undue duplication of efforts?
 - CIP and DFPS are in regular communication about ongoing initiatives in both organizations.
 - b. 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?

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

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

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

- Yes. This has been discussed in the past and CIP will continue to inquire about whether the circumstances have changed to make this a viable option.

IV. CQI Current Capacity Assessment

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

- Yes. There are quarterly meetings with the Children’s Commission where the slate of projects and activities are presented to the multidisciplinary task force. Committees and workgroups also regularly assess, modify, and review CIP projects. Annually, CIP staff review every project and deliverable to identify status in the change management process and ensure that the program is responsive to the identified priority areas.
- Every training-related project, including scholarships, involves a pre-event and post-event survey, which are used to modify the curriculum and format for future events. In addition to receiving valuable CQI-related information from trainees, CIP staff also conduct extensive internal CQI on each training project to review our internal planning process and our training outcomes.

2. Which of the following CBCC Events/Services have you/your staff engaged in this past year?

- Attorney Academy
- Judicial Academy
- CIPShare 2.0
- CQI Consult (Topic: _____)
- CQI Workshop
- Constituency Group - JCAMP
- Constituency Group - Data/Evaluation
- Constituency Group - Family First Prevention Services Act
- Constituency Group - Hearing Quality
- Constituency Group - ICWA
- Constituency Group - Legal Representation

- Constituency Group - New Directors
- Constituency Group - Race Equity
- Constituency Group – Regional CIP Calls
- Constituency Group - Other _____
- CIP All Call -- What % of All Calls does your CIP participate in? 95%

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

- CIP staff with data expertise
- CIP staff with 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: _____

a. Do you record your child welfare court hearings? Yes No

If yes, are they audio video

- In general, some courts utilize audio recordings for hearings. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many courts transitioned to recording hearings on Zoom. Some courts have returned to in person proceedings whereas others have a hybrid approach or continue with virtual proceedings using a Livestream to comply with the Open Courts Doctrine required by the Texas constitution.

b. 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. The Office of Court Administration is working toward a unified case management system in the future.

c. What court case management software does your state use? If multiple, please indicate the most common:

- Although there is great variance throughout the state, the Child Protection Courts utilize CPCMS. The CIP funds CPCMS and OCA operates and maintains the software.

- d. Have you employed any new technology or applications to strengthen your work?
- CIP is partnering with OCA to pilot equipment that enables continued participation in hybrid court proceedings. The OWL camera has been beneficial to allow for virtual participation at the case level and will likely be utilized in CIP-related meetings as well as committee meetings in the future to allow for increased engagement among participating stakeholders, many of whom live in various parts of the state.
- e. Do any of these systems include an electronic filing system?
- e-Filing is now mandatory for all attorneys filing civil, family, probate, or criminal cases in the Supreme Court, Court of Criminal Appeals, Courts of Appeals, and all district and county courts.
4. Please describe any continuity planning the CIP has led or has been involved in if not noted above. Continuity planning includes prevention and recovery planning for threats such as public health crises, natural disasters, or cyber-attacks. This may include, for example, technology support for remote hearings or legal representation, developing guidance, coordinating with other agencies, or otherwise ensuring back-up approaches are in place to ensure needed services are able to continue.
- Texas CIP participated in the federal Disaster Planning and Response Workgroup organized by the Child Welfare Capacity Building Center for States.
5. Considering 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?
- No.
6. 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.)
- Not at this time. The CBCC liaison is very responsive to the needs of the entire Texas CIP team.

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 CQI Phases

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.

Paperwork Reduction Act

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (P.L. 104-13), an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Control Number. The OMB control number for this collection is 0970-0307 and it expires 11/30/2022. The estimated time to complete the CIP Complete Application is 92 hours