



QUARTER 2

PIP 3.1.1

PIP 3.1.2 (C)

Nevada's Community Improvement Councils' Action Plans Nevada Court Improvement Program Select Committee

June 6, 2011

Introduction

Because Nevada's district court judges have a unique perspective regarding court operations, the work of system partners, and the overall impact of the system on individuals and the broader community, they have been asked to convene a Community Improvement Council (CIC) in each of their districts. The intent of these CICs is to consider the current functioning and permanency timeframes in dependency cases by identifying the challenges and possible improvements to the child welfare system and dependency court operations.

The initial focus of the CICs has been how to improve timeliness to permanency, adoption, and termination of parental rights. Each of our nine judicial district's CICs has submitted an action plan outlining how they intend to resolve the barriers they have found to be impediments to the smooth and timely functioning of their system. The majority of the strategies outlined in these action plans from across the entire state are within the control of the agencies involved, and for the most part do not require additional resources. Many of the jurisdictions have identified similar barriers, but each has put a creative twist to the solutions.

For example, three courts, an urban, rural and tribal court, all identified the need for peer mentoring to support and guide the family through the process. The 7th Judicial District found that upset parents, themselves, could be barriers to moving through the process in a timely manner. The Duckwater Shoshone Tribal Court suggested that parents who had successfully navigated the system could guide other parents through the process. The 8th Judicial District determined that such mentoring parents may actually be able to shorten the average number of days an assessment takes to complete.

Both an urban (the 8th) and a rural county (the 5th) found that court continuances were overused in their courts and decided to implement a no continuance policy. Several other courts found that an insufficient number of appropriate foster families within the area was a barrier. The 1st Judicial District suggested that the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) increase recruitment efforts. The 6th suggested that DCFS partner with the court to allow the district court to locate, license, and support foster families while DCFS provides support to the court.

Timely identification of relatives was determined in both rural and urban areas to delay permanency planning in some instances. The 2nd Judicial District recommended a system-wide effort and the 7th suggested that the court order the parents to provide all names of relatives both in and out of state to DCFS immediately.

Travel time is a barrier for the rural counties. The 3rd Judicial District's CIC in Yerington suggested that document reader and Polycorn capabilities between DCFS and the district court would allow the caseworkers to appear at district court hearings remotely.

Lack of sufficient resources were identified as obstacles in several jurisdictions. The 3rd Judicial District in Fallon plans to work with county leaders and the legislature to create incentives to encourage psychologists to locate in rural areas. Lack of adequate housing bars reunification efforts in the 7th Judicial District, but may soon be resolved when the DCFS applies for housing assistance via a HUD grant.

Nearly every rural court identified the length of time between the termination of parental rights (TPR) and when the case is processed by the adoption unit as an impediment. The adoption unit supervisor had already begun modifications of the unit's processes. The DCFS is moving forward with the adoption process prior to the determination of SSI subsidy. The contract will simply be modified after the determination is received. Most courts plan to incorporate appropriate language into the court order. The once per month HART meetings were slowing down the process, as well. HART meetings will now be scheduled as needed. Additionally, the adoption unit is identifying TPR cases prior to the actual termination, and scheduling pre-transfer meetings and assigning an adoption worker to expedite the process.

A synopsis of these actions plans follows the background information. Attached are all ten of the action plans submitted. The 3rd Judicial District submitted two, one from the Yerington Court and one from the Fallon Court.

Background

The 2009 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) found that Nevada was not in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 1 (substantially achieved with only 30%). Permanency Outcome 1 measures the following items: efforts to prevent foster care reentry; efforts to ensure placement stability for children in foster care; efforts to establish appropriate permanency goals in a timely manner, including seeking termination of parental rights in accordance with ASFA; efforts to achieve permanency goals in a timely manner; and efforts to ensure children in an APPLA plan are in stable long-term placements and are adequately prepared for eventual independent living. Four data indicators with established national standards were considered: timeliness and permanency of reunification, timeliness of adoptions, permanency for children in foster care for extended time periods, and placement stability.

Nevada met the national standard in areas of timeliness and permanency of reunification. Nevada did not meet the national standard in areas of timeliness of adoptions, permanency for children in foster care for extended periods of time,

and placement stability. Other issues that were noted included permanency goal was not appropriate and/or not established timely; agency had not sought TPR in accordance with ASFA requirements; lack of concerted effort to achieve adoption timely partly through delays in TPR process and lack of effort to finalize adoption when TPR achieved.

The statewide assessment conducted in 2008 identified the following concerns regarding achieving timely permanency: Worker caseloads; lack of services in community to meet identified child and family needs; lack of understanding of concurrent planning; reluctance of some courts to consider TPR unless child is in adoptive placement; and lengthy substance abuse treatment that extends beyond ASFA timelines. The 2008 statewide assessment identified the following barriers to achieving timely adoption: difficulty recruiting families willing and able to commit to adopting children with special needs; insufficient post-adoption services; high caseloads for permanency workers; delays in filing TPR. Furthermore, stakeholder comments further identified the following issues related to timely adoptions: delay in completing adoption paperwork, including criminal histories and home studies; delays caused by TPR appeals to Supreme Court; court continuances and docketing concerns that delay finalizing TPR; and delay in finalizing the adoption caused by case transfer from permanency worker to adoption worker and practice of transfer only after TPR is final. The conclusions of the 2008 CFSR resulted in Nevada developing its Program Improvement Plan which was approved in final form in October 2010. Among the improvement strategies, Nevada identified the need to improve the timeliness and appropriateness of permanency planning across the life of the case. The first goal under this strategy is to reduce the number of children in out-of-home care for 18 months or longer and reduce the barriers to adoption and TPR. This strategy, goal, and benchmarks are set out in detail below:

Primary Strategy: 3 Improve the Timeliness and Appropriateness of Permanency Planning across the Life of the Case		Applicable CFSR Outcomes or Systemic Factors: Permanency Outcome 1 Termination of Parental Rights Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers			
Goal: 1 Reduce the number of children in out of home care for 18 months or longer and reduce barriers to adoption and TPR		Applicable CFSR Items: 7, 8, 9, 10, 28, 29			
Action Steps and Benchmarks	Person Responsible	Evidence of Completion	Quarter Due	Quarter Completed	Quarterly Update
3.1.1 Collaborate to assess major barriers within the courts and the	CIP Coordinator; DCFS, WCDSS,	Report of identified barriers	Q1		

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Action Steps and Benchmarks	Person Responsible	Evidence of Completion	Quarter Due	Quarter Completed	Quarterly Update
agencies to achieve timely adoption	CCDFS Directors/ Designee				
3.1.2 Convene a workgroup by jurisdiction (60-90 days), led by judges (including stakeholders/partners, GAL's, DA's) and includes a cross representative from another jurisdiction to share experiences and understand lessons learned to improve functioning and efficiency of adoption/TPR process	AOC, DCFS, WCDSS, CCDFS Directors/ Designee	List of Members by jurisdiction	Q2		
3.1.2(A) CIP/Courts and jurisdictions will develop baseline data on TPR/Adoption to inform workgroups	DCFS, AOC, WCDSS, CCDFS	Baseline data	Q1		
3.1.2 (B) CIP will develop and disseminate a letter including a checklist, timeframes and expectations of the charge of the workgroup	AOC	Letter	Q2		



Justice Nancy Saitta asked each district court judge involved in child welfare cases in each of Nevada's nine judicial districts to convene a Community Improvement Council (CIC) composed of key local stakeholders and other systems partners such as district attorneys, child welfare agency staff, CASAs, GALs, and other interested parties. Such a team as this can create the opportunity to gain substantial amounts of information from different vantage points, review how the system operates, understand root causes or issues, identify possible areas of change or improvement, and develop and implement solutions that are acceptable to the entire community. Judges are essential to the establishment and operation of these teams or CICs.

The goal of the CICs is to consider the current functioning and efficiency of the permanency timeframes by identifying and assessing the challenges and possible solutions in each jurisdiction. Because such systemic issues often have long and complicated histories, involving the actions and resources of numerous agencies, they are unlikely to lend themselves to easy solutions.

Our judges have a unique perspective regarding court operations, the work of system partners, and the overall impact of the system on individuals and the broader community. By sharing their perspectives and concerns with members of their CICs, the judges are able to create the necessary foundation for the work of the CIC. Participation of our judges in the CICs has the general effect of encouraging critical participation by other stakeholders. The importance of these issues is improved in the eyes of others. The process is imbued with an atmosphere of trust.

To inform the work of the nine CICs, the Court Improvement Program (CIP) staff provided each judicial district with baseline data on the safety, permanency, and well-being of their children. These data illustrated local trends and their relation to state and national standards. A suggested action plan format was provided on which the CIC could report its barriers and solutions. Additionally, each district was asked to share the positive steps being taken in their jurisdiction.

CIP offered to provide a facilitator to guide the CIC discussions. The Eighth and the Fifth Judicial Districts requested and received facilitation help from Judge Stephen Rubin, Pima County, Arizona via technical assistance from the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

Once the right team members were involved and there was sufficient trust to speak openly the true nature of the problems were scrutinized, and the importance of developing a better understanding of these issues emerged and a comprehensive effort was made to arrive at mutually agreeable, long-term solutions. All nine of our judicial districts formed Community Improvement Councils. We have received action plans from all nine of our judicial districts (see attached).



The majority of the strategies outlined in these action plans from across the entire state are within the control of the agencies involved, and for the most part do not require additional resources. Many of the jurisdictions have identified similar barriers and/or solutions. Some, of course, have recognized that timeliness has been negatively impacted by reduced staffing.

Under the strong leadership of our judiciary, the Community Improvement Councils statewide have diligently and comprehensively reviewed the child welfare and dependency court processes, and built bridges among the system partners to achieve change. Each CIC recognized that in order to move forward they had to stop doing what was not working. Each worked to determine what was not working, why it was not working and what to do about it. This investment of time and energy by our community leaders throughout the state was essential to achieving the results outlined below.

Summary of Findings

Synopsis of Barriers to and Solutions to Improve Timeliness to Permanency and Termination of Parental Rights		
Compiled from Judicial Districts' Community Improvement Council Action Plans		
Barriers to Permanency	Solutions/Strategies/Recommendations	Judicial Districts
Public Defender is not assigned to handle TPR cases.	Court will assign more children attorneys.	1 st
Insufficient families willing to adopt special needs and older children.	DCFS will increase recruitment efforts. Additional mental and behavioral health resources are needed from the State.	1 st
More foster families within the area are needed. Lack of sufficient and appropriate foster homes for which there is a disconnect between the DCFS licensing unit and the caseworkers.	Increase recruitment by DCFS. DCFS allow District Court Judges and Juvenile Department to locate, license, and support foster families. Local person employed by the court will recruit, train, support and continue to educate local foster parents. Additionally, foster parent respite would be provided.	1 st 6 th
ICPC Failure to adhere to timeliness. Receiving state	DCFS/State will training and provide consistent procedures In its initial report, DCFS will request a court order for an expedited ICPC which will be written by Judge at the Disposition Hearing.	1 st 7 th



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Barriers to Permanency	Solutions/Strategies/Recommendations	Judicial Districts
does not respond.	Regulation 7 may be implemented in appropriate situations in which child is less than 5 years. In other cases DCFS local manager will intervene.	
Strident petition language cites parental hostility.	Soften petition language similar to that of the 2 nd JD with sufficient information for DA.	7 th
Parents must accept or deny accusations.	Court will implement accepting "no contest pleas". Court will substantiate allegations with such a plea.	7 th
All parties' attorneys do not communicate early in the process.	Court will appoint attorneys at 72-hour hearing and order exchange of discovery meeting of all counsel.	7 th
Protective custody hearings often are not thorough and meaningful. They may not always establish consistent expectations between the Court and its partners.	Implement a second protective custody hearing: Revising the dependency court calendars; distributing the cases among 5 judicial officers – 4 assigned to the front end (pc hearings, pleas, reviews, permanency hearings) and 1 assigned to the back end (trials, TPRs) of the cases; Implementing pre-hearing conferences scheduled at the 1 st pc hearing and held immediately preceding the 2 nd . Implementing 2 nd pc hearing focusing on family preservation and identifying safety issues to be addressed in order to return children home; Training on the purpose of pc hearings and how to make these hearings thorough and meaningful.	8 th
Waiting for permanency plan finalization until 12-month permanency hearing.	Where parents are absent, WCDSS will seek earlier permanency hearings to establish permanency plan and initiate TPR.	2 nd
Inadequate collaboration with parents in development of case plans resulting in excessive exceptions and delays in making child's placements.	Parent should write the case plan with DCFS providing guidance and input. Hold parents accountable without exception	9 th
Delayed identification of relatives delays permanency	Initiate a system-wide effort to gather relative information to include them in process earlier. Court will order parents to provide all names of relatives both in and out of state to DCFS immediately.	2 nd 7 th

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Compiled from Judicial Districts' Community Improvement Council Action Plans

Barriers to Permanency	Solutions/Strategies/Recommendations	Judicial Districts
planning, and relatives late challenge of placement decisions.		
Waiting until permanency plan is adopted by Court to process the petition to terminate parental rights.	DA will be provided information to draft petition to terminate parental rights by the date of the permanency hearing.	2 nd
Difficulty locating parents after permanency hearing.	Expedite filing of TPR, so service of parents occurs closer to permanency hearing before they disengage from WCDSS.	2 nd
Time/Resources for rural DCFS caseworkers to appear in Court hearings.	Provide document reader/Polycom capabilities between DCFS and District Court room.	3 rd - Yarrington
Lack of awareness of federal/state mandates for timeliness and procedures.	Training presented by AG's office for Judges, Attorneys, DAs and Child Advocates.	3 rd - Yarrington
ASFA and DCFS guidelines difficult to attain given lack of rural resources.	Court and caseworkers fully disclose ASFA and Permanency to parents. Make full use of Benchbook.	3 rd - Fallon
Lack of resources in rural areas makes timelines and goals unrealistic. No one in community to do counseling or assessments.	DCFS with court will make case plan pertinent and realistic to the reason children were removed from home. County leaders with Legislature create incentives to encourage psychologists to locate in rural areas.	3 rd - Fallon 3 rd - Fallon
Lack of housing or funding for housing bars reunification efforts.	DCFS will apply July 2011 for housing assistance via HUD Grant. DCFS will keep Courts informed. DCFS will provide \$7 drug tests which they will administer before petition is filed if parent consents.	4 th 7 th

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Compiled from Judicial Districts' Community Improvement Council Action Plans

Barriers to Permanency	Solutions/Strategies/Recommendations	Judicial Districts
Inability to determine parental drug use up-front.		
WIN program is cumbersome and duplicative causing delays.	WIN worker and DCFS caseworker will staff case's monthly meeting. DCFS caseworker will be apprised of status of all providers at CFT.	4 th
Teenagers aging out of system are unprepared for adulthood.	Children's attorney, CASA and DCFS will identify community resources, increase collaboration among stakeholders re: Independent Living programs develop partnership with Family Resource Center, Great Basin College, community colleges, and University of Nevada (vocational education opportunities).	4 th
Average wait for assessments is 45 days, and to begin treatment is 60 days after completion of the assessment.	Front-load services to parents and children by: Creating a Resource Guideline listing all available service providers with contact information; Streamlining service referral process including purpose/nature of assessment and service needs of family; Developing peer mentoring to support family throughout process (DCFS will develop training with the 7 th JD Bar Association to include review of CPS manual with parents, but not offer legal advice – 7 th); Developing 1-page case plan summary for substance abuse and non-substance abuse cases identifying services required and timeframes by which Court expects family to be engaged in service. These will be provided to and discussed with parents and CPS at the 2 nd PC hearing.	8 th Duckwater Shoshone Tribal Court 7 th
Current contracted court appointed attorneys and their availability.	Review court appointed attorney contracts. Provide attorney training on federal child welfare mandates and NRS 432B.	5 th
Over-use of court continuances.	Court develops a no-continuance policy. Institute a no-continuance policy in TPR proceedings and reduce the backlog of adoption cases by: Developing and training (by Judge Sullivan) a core group of Family Court Judges who are willing and able to conduct TPR proceedings; Identifying (CCDFS) all cases in which parental rights have been terminated and adoption is the permanency plan; Implementing quarterly adoption assessment court calendar reviewing the status of 40 of the longest pending adoption	5 th 8 th

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Barriers to Permanency	Solutions/Strategies/Recommendations	Judicial Districts
	cases and identifying barriers to achieving adoption timely.	
Lack of solution-focused dialogue across disciplines and stakeholders. All stakeholders are not always working collaboratively to ensure efficient movement toward timely permanency and safety.	Develop a mediation/facilitation program. Strengthen Child and Family Team's interface with the court process. Court will order a pre-admit/deny hearing meeting of all parties similar to Early Resolution Program in the 8 th or Juvenile Dependency Mediation in the 2 nd .	5 th 7 th
Availability and resources of DA's office to work with DCFS and DAG.	DA commits to work cooperatively with DCFS and to dedicate an attorney for 432B cases.	5 th
Lack of data upon which to base decision making	Develop pilot project to test and evaluate changes.	5 th
Size of DCFS caseworkers' caseloads and number and range of responsibilities.	Hire two more competent and committed staff.	7 th
Inadequate work on concurrent guardianship or adoption planning during reunification efforts.	Court will order that DCFS' concurrent efforts will be presented during review hearings to assess progress.	9 th
Length of time after TPR and case is sent to the adoption unit.	DCFS moving forward w/adoption process prior to determination of SSI subsidy. Court will incorporate appropriate language into court order. Court will order that subsidy negotiations by completed by a "date-certain" HART meetings will be scheduled as needed. Adoption unit will identify TPR cases and schedule pre-transfer meetings and assign an adoption worker.	3 rd - Yarrington, 4th, 6 th , 7 th , 9th, 9 th

Ten Community Improvement Council Action Plans
from Each of the Judicial Districts

**FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL**

FINAL ACTION PLAN

First Judicial District Community Improvement Council Meeting:

Date and Time: January 4, 2011

Location: Carson City Juvenile Court Facility

Work Group Topic: Decrease the time to permanency; reduce barriers to adoption and TPR to achieve timely adoptions

Needs Statement: The Division of Child and Family Services needs to incorporate all relevant parties in the case plan meetings with the goal of achieving an appropriate task oriented case plan for reunification. In addition, a reasonable concurrent case plan should be established. The Court and DCFS need to be clear in setting appropriate timelines for case plan tasks to be completed by the parents, and at the same time, set time frames for concurrent planning. In this manner, all parties are clear about the objectives and the consequences should the case plan not be met, thereby avoiding unnecessary delay.

Outcome: The case plan moves forward in a timely manner.

BARRIERS TO PERMANENCY (ADOPTION AND TPR)	SOLUTIONS RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
<p>Significant lapse of time from when court decides TPR is appropriate case plan and when AG's Office can prepare and file TPR documents.</p> <p>The Public Defender is not assigned to handle TPR cases, so often a new attorney must be appointed to learn and handle case.</p>	<p>Need more than one or two attorneys designated to handle these matters for the rural counties.</p> <p>Court will take steps toward concurrent plan of TPR earlier if little or no progress being made on reunification case plan.</p> <p>May also be beneficial to assign an attorney for the child in more cases.</p>	<p>AG</p> <p>Court</p> <p>Court</p>
<p>Preference for reunification case plan, especially when children are bonded with parents and/or siblings and parents make "some" progress toward case plan.</p>	<p>Create set timelines for certain case plan steps to be completed and take steps toward a concurrent case plan earlier if progress is not where it should be.</p>	<p>DCFS/Court</p>
<p>Insufficient and inadequate number of families willing to adopt children with special needs and/or older children</p>	<p>More recruitment efforts are needed.</p> <p>More available mental health and behavioral resources are needed.</p>	<p>DCFS</p> <p>State</p>

Incentives to promote guardianship of child by family member(s), especially where needs of child are significant.	Provide assistance and/or stipends to family willing to be guardians, similar to adoption.	State
More foster families are needed in the area so that children can be placed in close proximity to parents to allow for frequent visitation and encourage case plan efforts	More recruitment efforts are needed.	DCFS
Overworked and underfunded/under-trained social workers who are more crisis driven than focused on appropriate case plan tasks and deadlines.	Increase budget and/or seek grant funding to assist with more training.	DCFS/State
Poor communication and oversight between state agencies regarding ICPC placements and case plan services and monitoring	More training and consistent procedures to facilitate process.	DCFS/States

Discussion Points

Generally: Parents need to have a clear understandable case plan which sets forth tasks that must be met within a set time frame. Parents must also have a clear understanding of the concurrent case plan, and that the court and DCFS will take steps toward that case plan in order to avoid delays in permanency.

CIC:

Positive Steps Being Taken in Judicial District: Currently, the First Judicial District has a grant-funded Dependency Court which meets every other week and is available to parents with substance abuse issues in order to provide regular monitoring of their case and progress in treatment. Through regular court appearances and case monitoring, parents have the opportunity to meet their case plan tasks in a more timely fashion and achieve reunification goals sooner. Also, this regular monitoring assists the court to identify those cases where reunification is unlikely to be achieved so that we can move to a case plan of guardianship or TPR and adoption.

DCFS is also meeting with the district attorney, defense attorneys and CASAs in cases where permanency has not been achieved in a timely fashion. The goal of these meetings is to communicate about the problems in particular cases in order to streamline progress toward permanency.

Second Judicial District Court
Family Division
Court Improvement Project Report

Barriers to Permanency in Dependency Proceedings

The 2009 CFSR found that Nevada was not in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 1 (substantially achieved with only 30%; Washoe County was 40%). Permanency Outcome 1 measured the following items: efforts to prevent foster care reentry; efforts to ensure placement stability for children in foster care; efforts to establish appropriate permanency goals in a timely manner, including seeking termination of parental rights in accordance with ASFA; efforts to achieve permanency goals in a timely manner; and efforts to ensure children in an APPLA plan are in stable long-term placements and are adequately prepared for eventual independent living. There were four data indicators for which there are established national standards that were considered: timeliness and permanency of reunification, timeliness of adoptions, permanency for children in foster care for extended time periods, and placement stability.

Nevada met the national standard in areas of timeliness and permanency of reunification. Nevada did not meet the national standard in areas of timeliness of adoptions, permanency for children in foster care for extended periods of time, and placement stability. Other issues that were noted included: permanency goal was not appropriate and/or not established timely; agency had not sought TPR in accordance with ASFA requirements; lack of concerted effort to achieve adoption timely partly through delays in TPR process and lack of effort to finalize adoption when TPR achieved.

The statewide assessment conducted in 2008 identified the following concerns regarding achieving timely permanency: High worker caseloads; Lack of services in community to meet identified child and family needs; Lack of understanding of concurrent planning; Reluctance of some courts to consider TPR unless child is in adoptive placement; and Lengthy substance abuse treatment that extends beyond ASFA timelines. The 2008 statewide assessment identified the following barriers to achieving timely adoption: difficulty recruiting families willing and able to commit to adopting children with special needs; insufficient post-adoption services; high caseloads for permanency workers; delays in filing TPR. Furthermore, stakeholder comments further identified the following issues related to timely adoptions: delay in completing adoption paperwork, including criminal histories and home studies; delays caused by TPR appeals to Supreme Court; court continuances and docketing concerns that delay finalizing TPR; and delay in finalizing the adoption caused by case transfer from permanency worker to adoption worker (and practice of transfer only after TPR is final).

The conclusions of the CFSR resulted in Nevada developing its Program Improvement Plan which was approved in final form in October 2010. Among the improvement strategies, Nevada identified the need to improve the timeliness and appropriateness of permanency planning across the life of the case. The first goal under this strategy is to reduce the number of children in out of home care for 18 months or longer and reduce the barriers to adoption and TPR. This strategy and goal is set out in detail below:

Primary Strategy: 3 Improve the Timeliness and Appropriateness of Permanency Planning across the Life of the Case			Applicable CFSR Outcomes or Systemic Factors: Permanency Outcome 1 Termination of Parental Rights Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers		
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Action Steps and Benchmarks	Person Responsible	Evidence of Completion	Quarter Due	Quarter Completed	Quarterly Update
3.1.1 Collaborate to assess major barriers within the courts and the agencies to achieve timely adoption	CIP Coordinator; DCFS, WCDSS, CCDFS Directors/ Designee	Report of identified barriers	Q1		
3.1.2 Convene a workgroup by jurisdiction (60-90 days), led by judges (including stakeholders/partners, GAL's, DA's) and includes a cross representative from another jurisdiction to share experiences and understand lessons learned to improve functioning and efficiency of adoption/TPR process	AOC, DCFS, WCDSS, CCDFS Directors/ Designee	List of Members by jurisdiction	Q2		

Action Steps and Benchmarks	Person Responsible	Evidence of Completion	Quarter Due	Quarter Completed	Quarterly Update
3.1.2(A) CIP/Courts and jurisdictions will develop baseline data on TPR/Adoption to inform workgroups	DCFS, AOC, WCDSS, CCDFS	Baseline data	Q1		
3.1.2 (B) CIP will develop and disseminate a letter including a checklist, timeframes and expectations of the charge of the workgroup	AOC	Letter	Q2		
3.1.2 (C) Identify barriers and develop a plan to address barriers within 120 days	DCFS, AOC, WCDSS, CCDFS	Plan	Q4		

Action Steps and Benchmarks	Person Responsible	Evidence of Completion	Quarter Due	Quarter Completed	Quarterly Update
3.1.3 Each jurisdiction will convene a team to review a sample of cases that have been in out of home for more than 18 months and have a low prognosis of achieving permanency within the next 12 months	Clark, Washoe & Rural Directors/ designee	Reports of reviews	Q 4		
3.1.3. (A) Based upon the review of cases, agencies will develop a plan to expedite permanency plans and institute process changes to reduce future and ongoing barriers to permanency	Clark, Washoe & Rural Directors/ designee	Copy of plans for expedited permanency	Q 5		

In response to the direction from the Nevada Supreme Court, the Second Judicial District Court convened its Council consisting of several key stakeholders, including: Juvenile Master Buffy Dreiling; Jeanne Marsh, Children's Services Director, Washoe County Department of Social Services; Shannon McCoy, Coordinator, Washoe County Department of Social Services; Jeffrey Martin, Chief Deputy District Attorney; Kathleen Baker, Deputy District Attorney; Myra Sheehan, Deputy District Attorney; Kathy O'Leary, Chief Deputy Public Defender; Lance White, Deputy Alternate Public Defender; Karen Sabo, Directing Attorney, Washoe Legal Services; and Franz Braun, Model Court Liaison, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

This group met over the course of several weeks and first identified barriers to timely TPR and developed several strategies to improve the efficiency of the TPR process, once termination was identified as the appropriate permanency plan. The group does emphasize that care must be taken to ensure that none of the strategies results in "a rush to TPR" when termination is not in the child's best interest. The most common theme identified throughout the discussions and collaboration was the need to identify and involve family members at the earliest possible time in a dependency case. The barriers and strategies identified are set forth below.

Establish Permanency Earlier in Appropriate Cases

Barrier: Delayed permanency plan of termination in cases where parents have been absent from the case or substantially disengaged. Previously, permanency plan finalization would wait for the 12-month permanency hearing, although some informal concurrent planning primarily around placement identification was occurring.

Strategy: In cases with absent parents, WCDSS is seeking earlier permanency hearings to establish permanency plan and initiate termination actions. WCDSS is no longer waiting for regularly scheduled permanency hearings and is seeking such hearings at the time when it reasonably appears that the parent will not engage and the best interest of the child will be served by moving forward with permanency. The result is earlier permanency planning and initiation of termination proceedings.

Relatives

Barrier: Delayed identification of relatives delays permanency planning. Delays come from several sources including: parents refusing to identify relatives believing it will prevent reunification; resource issues in WCDSS limiting staff available to perform relative searches; lack of clarity in policy regarding required follow-up throughout the case with relatives who do not respond to initial contact, sometimes delaying movement toward permanency.

Strategy: All participants in dependency system will work to gather relative information from beginning of case and explain to parents the need for early identification.

Strategy: Clarify policy for workers regarding responsibility to follow-up with relatives throughout the case so permanency decisions can be made timely.

Barrier: Relatives challenging placement determinations late in the case, delaying identification of permanent placement.

Strategy: Develop process for relatives to bring placement issues before the court earlier in the process.

Barrier: Delay in determining permanent placement with relatives delays permanency when a parent is willing to relinquish if placement is with relative.

Strategy: Strategies for timely identification of relatives and assessment of placement with relatives identified above will address this barrier.

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Termination Process

Barrier: WCDSS does not begin the process of gathering the information for the petition to terminate for the District Attorney until after a permanency plan of termination has been adopted by the Court. Much of this information is the same information WCDSS uses to justify a request to the Court of termination. By waiting until after the permanency plan is adopted by the Court, the process to draft the petition to terminate parental rights is delayed by several weeks to a month.

Strategy: WCDSS will gather the information necessary for the District Attorney's office to draft the petition to terminate parental rights (this process of gathering the information is known as the TPR worksheet) and submit the information to the DA by the date of the permanency hearing.

Barrier: District Attorney's Office has experienced backlog of getting petitions to terminate parental rights drafted and filed.

Strategy: District Attorney's Office will have more active management of case distribution with its deputies to reduce or eliminate any backlog and increase timely filing of petitions.

Strategy: District Attorney's Office will revise their petition format to streamline the information contained in the petitions to make the drafting process less time consuming.

Barrier: Following permanency hearing, many parents disengage with WCDSS and become difficult to locate for service of the TPR petition.

Strategy: By expediting the filing of the TPR petition, service of the parents can occur more closely to the permanency hearing before their whereabouts become unknown.

Barrier: Limited resources exist to complete diligent efforts to locate parents for service of TPR petition to either achieve service or justify publication of summons.

Strategy: Coordinate the timing of the filing of the TPR petition with the diligent search efforts to reduce the need to conduct searches multiple times.

Barrier: Delays in appointment of counsel for parents in TPR cases causes delays in setting trials or negotiating settlement.

Strategy: specific strategies were not identified to expedite appointment of counsel, however, the team agreed to work with the Public Defenders offices and conflict counsel to identify specific strategies.

Barrier: Delays in negotiating open adoption agreements between adoptive parents and natural parents cause delay in settling termination case. Delay can be caused by reluctance or uncertainty of the adoptive parents because they are often unrepresented whereas the natural parent is usually represented by Public Defender's office.

Strategy: Establish pro bono program for attorneys to represent adoptive parents in negotiating open adoption agreements.

The majority of the strategies listed above are all within the control the agencies involved in the daily work of permanency planning and implementation for the children in the dependency system. Additionally, these strategies in large part do not require additional resources which we all realize are not likely to be available. It is anticipated that the combined implementation of these strategies would reduce unnecessary delays in the termination process and expedite permanency for those children whose best interests have been determined to be adoption.

	<p>reviewing the membership.</p> <p>Identify potential TPR cases (0-5 years who are 50% free, 14 consecutive months out of home or in a pre-adoptive home), and cases where the TPR paperwork is at the AG's office in UNITY and schedule pre-transfer meetings and assign an adoption worker to the case. That worker attends IEP's, CFT, court (via phone if not in person), reviews cases notes and orders.</p>	Michael Cason
<p>DCFS lowered the number of months to permanency from 18 to 12 months which does not take into consideration the challenges in a rural court.</p> <p>ASFA guidelines are too short to recognize some of the problems in the system.</p>	Provide full disclosure to the parents regarding ASFA and Permanency for children.	Caseworkers & Judge Huff
Unrealistic goals may deny the possibility of reunification due to parents' lack of family support and resources.	Case plan must be pertinent and realistic to the reason why children were removed and taken into custody.	Caseworkers with court oversight.
DCFS reports are too overwhelming for the parents. Judge Huff may not approve all the recommendations.	Reports must be pertinent and up to date.	Caseworkers with court oversight.
There is no one in the community to do the counseling or assessments	Need incentives for psychologists. Perhaps could help mental health counselors obtain credentials	County leaders working with the Legislature.

Discussion Points:

Generally:

CIC: Positive Steps Being Taken in Judicial District: An attorney is appointed for every child in 432B cases. The County funds the public defender. Sharon Benson, the Deputy Attorney General, does a good job. Great working relationship between the court and the local DCFS.

**THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT
COUNCIL**



FINAL ACTION PLAN

Third Judicial District Community Improvement Council Meeting:

Date and Time: March 21, 2011

Location: Third Judicial District Court
31 South Main Street
Yerington, Nevada 89447

Work Group Topic: Decrease the time to permanency; reduce barriers to adoption and TPR to achieve timely adoptions

Needs Statement:

Outcome:

BARRIERS TO ADOPTION AND TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS	SOLUTIONS RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
Time/Resources for Rural DCFS Caseworkers to appear at District Court Hearings	Document Reader/Polycom capabilities between DCFS & District Court	Judge William G. Rogers
Reluctance by Judges to Terminate Parental Rights	Citizen Review Panel Per 432B.396	Kandee Mortenson, DCFS
Not everyone is aware of timelines, procedures, etc. regarding terminations and adoptions	Meeting/conference presented by AG's office to include Judges, Attorneys, Das, Child Advocates	Debbie Gilmore

Discussion Points:

Generally:

CIC: Positive Steps Being Taken in Judicial District: The committee has met twice to this point and plan on future meetings. The committee members are working well together and are optimistic of accomplishing the goal of reducing the barriers to adoption and TPRs.

**FOURTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL
FINAL ACTION PLAN**

Date and Time: December 3, 2010. 11:30 a.m.

Location: Jury Room of the 4th Judicial District Court. Department 2 and by video Conference

Attendance: Betsey Crumrine, (DCFS Rural Region Manager); District Judge Andrew J. Puccinelli, Family Court Master Mason Simons; Larry Robb (Local DCFS District Manager); Alana McKinney (Northeastern Nevada CASA Director); Michelle Rodriguez, Esq., (Contracted Children's Attorney); Michael Cason, (Adoption Unit Manager DCFS Carson City); Karen Dickerson, Esq. (Senior Deputy Attorney General); and Kathie Malzahn-Bass, (CIP Coordinator, Administrative Office of the Courts).

Work Group Topic: Decrease the time to permanency; reduce barriers to adoption and termination of parental rights to achieve timely adoptions.

Needs Statement: The Parties and the Courts need to be informed and clear about expectations and deadlines to create accountability, avoid delay and expedite permanency.

Outcome: All parties are present for each hearing, the parties and the court are prepared for each hearing, and the case moves forward in a timely manner.

BARRIERS TO ADOPTION AND TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS	SOLUTIONS RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
Social Security Determination – Historically, cases have been left in transition because SSI has not made a determination as to whether the child qualifies for services. We were not able to transfer cases to the adoption unit for finalization and subsidy negotiation until such determination was made.	Now moving forward with subsidy negotiations prior to determination and once get SSI determination is made, DCFS will adjust the subsidy contract. District Court shall incorporate the appropriate language into Court Orders.	Michael Cason Judge Puccinelli, Court Master Simons

**FOURTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL
FINAL ACTION PLAN**

<p>WIN Program: The program is cumbersome, delays the process and is duplicative of the DCFS Caseplans. It is also a strain on the Court's limited resources. There is a question as to whether there have been any positive productive results from the usage of said program in the Elko County area.</p>	<p>WIN worker and DCFS worker should staff case monthly rather than with parties in a WIN monthly meeting. DCFS worker to be apprised of the status of all providers at the CFT and report accordingly.</p>	<p>Joe Prichard, WIN Rural Region/North Region Manager and Larry Robb</p>
<p>Reunification Barrier: Housing not available and funding for housing not available.</p>	<p>In July DCFS will apply for the grant through HUD for housing assistance. DCFS shall keep the Courts involved in the process.</p>	<p>Division of Child and Family Services</p>
<p>Aging out of teenagers: They are not prepared for adulthood. They do not have a grasp on what is necessary to succeed on their own.</p>	<p>Research ILP and identify available community resources, youth serving organizations to promote independent or transitional living arrangements. Coordinate with existing DCFS staff members regarding ILP issues and programs. Increase collaboration between all stake holders regarding Independent Living programs. Develop partnership with local Family Resource Center to establish Independent Living Resources. Possibly partner with Great Basin College, other community colleges and University of Nevada to establish and enhance vocational/educational opportunities.</p>	<p>Michelle Rodriguez and Alana McKinney and appropriate DCFS personnel. FRC personnel and various college personnel.</p>

**FOURTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL
FINAL ACTION PLAN**

Positive Steps Being Taken by District:

The 4th Judicial District Court does not have the same time frames as the rest of the State of Nevada establishing permanency, filing and finalizing the Termination of Parental Rights cases and the eventual permanency through adoption or full legal guardianships.

Court Master Simons is very aggressive with providing a ruling of "no more reasonable efforts" when there has not been any positive movement in the caseplan for a period of four months or greater. In addition, Court Master Simons will order DCFS to begin recruitment efforts when appropriate family placements are not available.

Ms. Rodriguez, the children's attorney regularly prepares and files any needed pleadings to assist in the 432B process. Ms. Rodriguez, the children's attorney regularly files and pursues, on behalf of the minor child, NRS 126 Petitions for establishment of legal rights for putative fathers. The District Court routinely waives filing fees for said actions. Ms. Rodriguez, the children's court appointed attorney, files for termination of parental rights if there is not positive movement in the case after 9 months. Ms. Rodriguez also represents adoptive parents at a reduced rate to assist with the adoption finalization process. The CASA volunteers and Directors actively participate in and advocate for the minor children throughout the entire process. In addition, the CASA Director acts as the Petitioner when necessary in filings done by Ms. Rodriguez. See Page 4 for Northeastern Nevada CASA caseload information and Pages 5-9 for Attorney Rodriguez's caseload information.

Additional CIC program meeting will be scheduled to occur in the spring of 2011 to assure the identified barriers are being addressed and to determine if there are any unidentified barriers that need to be addressed.

**FOURTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL
FINAL ACTION PLAN**

Report Northeastern Nevada CASA Program

Number of children served by CASA in 2010:	79
Females	42
Males	37

Total number of cases served in 2010: 44

Total number of new children in 2010: 36

Total number of children whose cases closed:	31
Adopted:	13
Reunified:	11
Transferred to other jurisdiction	5
Aged out	2

Time spent in foster care for the kids whose cases closed in 2010

less than 1 mo:	2	1-5 mos:	4
6-11 mos:	8	12-17 mos:	2
18-23 mos:	5	24-29 mos:	3
30-35 mos:	3	3-4 years:	4
over 4 years:	0		

Provided by Alana McKinney
Northeastern Nevada CASA

**FOURTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL
FINAL ACTION PLAN**

Caseload Statistics for
Attorney Michelle Rodriguez
As of January 5, 2011

No.	Case No.	Custody Date	DOB	Termination Filed	Termination Filed By:	Termination Completed	Adoption Filed	Adoption Completed	Final Order in 432B Case
1	JV-SW-08-7524	5/12/2008	5/10/2004	12/16/09	Michelle Rodriguez	4/12/10	Nov. 2010	-	-
2	JV-SW-08-7524	5/12/2008	2/12/2006	12/16/09	Michelle Rodriguez	4/12/10	Nov. 2010	-	-
3	JV-SW-08-7524	5/12/2008	3/11/2007	12/16/09	Michelle Rodriguez	4/12/10	Nov. 2010	-	-
5	JV-SW-08-7658	8/3/2007	9/23/1995	4/9/09	Michelle Rodriguez	7/13/09	10/7/09	2/8/10	4/14/10
6	JV-SW-08-7658	8/3/2007	7/16/2000	4/9/09	Michelle Rodriguez	7/13/09	10/7/09	2/8/10	4/14/10
7	JV-SW-08-7658	8/3/2007	9/10/2002	4/9/09	Michelle Rodriguez	7/13/09	10/7/09	2/8/10	4/14/10
8	JV-SW-08-7658	8/3/2007	10/9/2004	4/9/09	Michelle Rodriguez	7/13/09	10/7/09	2/8/10	4/14/10
9	JV-SW-10-8193	6/22/2010	4/8/1993	-	-	-	-	-	-
10	JV-SW-10-8114	12/9/2010	7/29/1998	-	-	-	-	-	-
11	JV-SW-08-7619	9/8/2008	4/2/2008	9/18/09	Michelle Rodriguez	12/7/09	1/29/10	3/22/10	3/30/10
12	JV-SW-09-7840	04/16/09	8/2/1994	-	-	-	-	-	-
13	JV-SW-09-7840	04/16/09	11/28/1995	-	-	-	-	-	-
14	JV-SW-09-7840	04/16/09	5/17/2001	-	-	-	-	-	-
15	JV-SW-09-7840	04/16/09	11/19/2003	-	-	-	-	-	-
16	JV-SW-10-8323	12/15/2010	7/12/2010	-	-	-	-	-	-
17	JV-SW-10-8108	4/2/2010	1/27/2001	-	-	-	-	-	-
18	JV-SW-10-8117	04/15/10	8/20/2004	-	-	-	-	-	5/26/10 Returned to Mother
19	JV-SW-10-8117	04/15/10	7/26/2008	-	-	-	-	-	5/26/10 Returned to Mother
20	JV-SW-10-8324			-	-	-	-	-	-
21	JV-SW-08-7562	6/27/2008	4/23/2008	-	-	-	-	-	Deceased Case closed 10/10/08
22	JV-SW-08-7640	9/19/2008	5/9/1996	-	-	-	-	-	-
23	JV-SW-08-7443	1/29/2008 1/4/2010	9/25/2007	5/7/2010	Michelle Rodriguez	8/16/2010	-	-	-
24	JV-SW-05-8763	12/22/2005	9/4/1997	6/20/08	Michelle Rodriguez	Mother 9/15/08 Father 12/1/2008	4/14/10	7/12/10	8/19/10

**FOURTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL
FINAL ACTION PLAN**

No.	Case No.	Custody Date	DOB	Termination Filed	Termination Filed By:	Termination Completed	Adoption Filed	Adoption Completed	Final Order in 432B Case
25	JV-SW-05-6763	12/22/2005	11/1/1995	6/20/08	Michelle Rodriguez	Mother 9/15/08 Father Relinquished 8/18/08	4/14/10	7/12/10	8/19/10
26	JV-SW-05-6763	12/22/2005	11/21/2000	6/20/08	Michelle Rodriguez	Mother 9/15/08 Father Relinquished 8/18/08	4/14/10	7/12/10	8/19/10
27	JV-SW-06-7086	12/6/2006	12/4/2006	8/5/08	Michelle Rodriguez		9/9/10	10/11/10	12/1/10
28	JV-SW-05-6710	10/31/2005	7/1/2005	Mother 11/30/07 Father 1/18/08	Michelle Rodriguez	Mother Relinquished 3/21/08 Father 3/13/08	Filed in Douglas County Date Unknown	6/14/10	8/19/10
29	JV-SW-10-8086	2/18/2010	2/17/2010	-	-	-	-	-	-
30	JV-SW-07-7394	11/19/2007	10/10/1992	-	-	-	-	-	-
31	JV-SW-07-7394	11/19/2007	5/7/1993	-	-	-	-	-	-
32	JV-SW-06-7115	12/19/2006	8/7/1999	2/25/09	Michelle Rodriguez	6/9/09	-	-	2/12/10
33	JV-SW-06-7115	12/19/2006	6/19/2002	2/25/09	Michelle Rodriguez	6/9/09	-	-	2/12/10
34	JV-SW-08-7633	9/11/2008	3/10/1993	-	-	-	-	-	10/13/08
35	JV-SW-08-7633	9/11/2008	8/5/1997	-	-	-	-	-	10/13/08
36	JV-SW-08-7633	9/11/2008	3/3/2000	-	-	-	-	-	10/13/08
37	JV-SW-08-7633	9/11/2008	3/29/2004	-	-	-	-	-	10/13/08
38	JV-SW-07-7334		9/19/1993	-	-	-	-	-	Returned to Mother 9/3/08
39	JV-SW-05-6728	11/15/2005	10/7/1997	-	-	-	-	Guardianship Finalized 12/22/08	1/14/09
40	JV-SW-05-6728	11/15/2005	1/25/1999	-	-	-	-	Guardianship Finalized 12/22/08	1/14/09
41	JV-SW-10-8237	9/8/2010	3/19/2008	-	-	-	-	-	-
42	JV-SW-10-8237	9/8/2010	9/10/2009	-	-	-	-	-	-
43	JV-SW-10-8237	9/8/2010	9/10/2009	-	-	-	-	-	-
44	JV-SW-07-7315	11/27/2007	10/7/2005	-	-	-	-	-	Returned to Mother 12/16/08
45	JV-SW-07-7315	11/27/2007	9/24/2007	-	-	-	-	-	Returned to Mother 12/16/08
46	JV-SW-10-8166	8/11/2010	8/20/1995	-	-	-	-	-	-
47	JV-SW-10-8166	8/11/2010	7/5/1998	-	-	-	-	-	-
48	JV-SW-10-8166	8/11/2010	8/30/1999	-	-	-	-	-	-
49	JV-SW-10-8166	8/11/2010	7/29/2000	-	-	-	-	-	-

**FOURTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL
FINAL ACTION PLAN**

No.	Case No.	Custody Date	DOB	Termination Filed	Termination Filed By:	Termination Completed	Adoption Filed	Adoption Completed	Final Order in 432B Case
50	JV-SW-10-8166	8/11/2010	4/7/2009	-	-	-	-	-	-
51	JV-SW-06-6818	4/10/2008	1/8/1993	-	-	-	-	-	-
52	JV-SW-07-7146	2/12/2007	3/12/1992	-	-	-	-	-	Aged out of Care
53	JV-SW-07-7146	2/12/2007	7/20/1997	-	-	-	-	-	-
54	JV-SW-07-7146	2/12/2007	12/2/1998	-	-	-	-	-	-
55	JV-SW-10-8086	3/11/2010	1/19/2010	-	-	-	-	-	-
56	JV-SW-09-3674	04/18/09	6/6/1994	-	-	-	-	-	9/16/2009 Custody given to Father
57	JV-SW-07-7314	8/28/2007	7/13/2007	5/21/08	Michelle Rodriguez	8/25/08	12/4/09	3/22/10	4/14/10
58	JV-SW-09-8020	12/4/2009	4/18/2001	-	-	-	-	-	10/25/10 Returned to Parents
59	JV-SW-09-8020	12/4/2009	1/1/2003	-	-	-	-	-	10/25/10 Returned to Parents
60	JV-SW-09-8020	12/4/2009	6/15/2005	-	-	-	-	-	10/25/10 Returned to Parents
61	JV-SW-07-7247	5/25/2007	3/22/2007	11/30/07	Michelle Rodriguez	3/13/08	5/1/08	9/15/08	12/9/08
62	JV-SW-06-7021	9/1/2006	1/27/2005	11/30/07	Michelle Rodriguez	Mother Relinquished 3/21/2008 Father 3/13/2008	10/3/08	4/27/09	8/4/09
63	JV-SW-06-7021	9/1/2006	2/12/2006	11/30/07	Michelle Rodriguez	Mother Relinquished 3/21/2008 Father 3/13/2008	10/3/08	4/27/09	8/4/09
64	JV-SW-06-7021	9/1/2006	1/31/2003	11/30/07	Michelle Rodriguez	Mother Relinquished 3/21/2008 Father 3/13/2008	10/3/08	4/27/09	8/4/09
65	JV-SW-10-8165	5/30/2010	12/3/2004	-	-	-	-	-	-
66	JV-SW-10-8165	5/30/2010	12/4/2008	-	-	-	-	-	-
67	JV-SW-10-8165	5/30/2010	2/2/2010	-	-	-	-	-	-
68	JV-SW-07-7188	3/21/2007	7/20/2003	11/30/07	Michelle Rodriguez	3/13/08	5/1/08	4/27/09	6/9/09
69	JV-SW-07-7188	3/21/2007	1/24/2007	Mother 11/30/2007 Father 3/4/2008	Michelle Rodriguez	Mother 3/13/2008 Father Relinquished 5/15/08	3/13/08 By Robert Salyer	December, 2010	-
70	JV-SW-10-8275	10/14/2010	7/14/2000	-	-	-	-	-	-
71	JV-SW-10-8275	10/14/2010	4/9/2005	-	-	-	-	-	-
72	JV-SW-10-8275	10/14/2010	3/24/2006	-	-	-	-	-	-
73	JV-SW-10-8275	10/14/2010	11/13/2007	-	-	-	-	-	-

**FOURTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL
FINAL ACTION PLAN**

No.	Case No.	Custody Date	DOB	Termination Filed	Termination Filed By:	Termination Completed	Adoption Filed	Adoption Completed	Final Order in 432B Case
74	JV-SW-10-8275	11/9/2010	7/17/2006	-	-	-	-	-	-
75	JV-SW-10-8275	11/10/2010	2/22/2008	-	-	-	-	-	-
76	JV-SW-10-8275	11/10/2010	3/19/2006	-	-	-	-	-	-
77	JV-SW-09-7988	11/6/2009	6/23/2008	-	-	-	-	-	-
78	JV-SW-09-7988	11/6/2009	8/2/2009	-	-	-	-	-	-
79	JV-SW-08-7001	3/4/2008	5/16/1991	-	-	-	-	-	Aged out of Care 8/29/2009
80	JV-SW-09-7963	10/5/2009	2/19/1993	-	-	-	-	-	8/17/2010 Navajo Nation Took Custody
81	JV-SW-09-7963	10/5/2009	2/7/1994	-	-	-	-	-	8/17/2010 Navajo Nation Took Custody
82	JV-SW-09-7963	10/5/2009	12/25/1997	-	-	-	-	-	8/17/2010 Navajo Nation Took Custody
83	JV-SW-09-7963	10/5/2009	2/2/1999	-	-	-	-	-	8/17/2010 Navajo Nation Took Custody
84	JV-SW-09-7963	10/5/2009	1/20/2003	-	-	-	-	-	8/17/2010 Navajo Nation Took Custody
85	JV-SW-06-6908	7/8/2006	8/6/2005	4/29/08	Michelle Rodriguez	7/21/08	9/29/08	1/12/09	2/17/09
86	JV-SW-10-8311	11/23/2010	1/27/2010	-	-	-	-	-	-
87	JV-SW-06-6903	6/7/2006	5/25/1994	-	-	-	-	-	Returned to Mother 4/2/2009
88	JV-SW-06-6903	6/7/2006	9/8/1992	-	-	-	-	-	Returned to Mother 4/2/2009
89	JV-SW-08-7444	01/30/08	6/12/2007	2/25/09	Michelle Rodriguez	7/6/09	12/1/10	12/22/10	-
90	JV-SW-08-7664	10/23/2008	4/6/2006	-	-	-	-	-	Returned to Parents 3/26/2009
91	JV-SW-08-7636	9/16/2008	2/28/1992	-	-	-	-	-	Returned to Mother 10/13/2009
92	JV-SW-05-6626	8/29/2004	9/10/1990	-	-	-	-	-	Aged out of Care 9/18/08
93	JV-SW-07-7378	11/5/2007	3/20/1993	11/12/09	Michelle Rodriguez	3/1/10	-	-	-
94	JV-SW-07-7378	11/5/2007	10/11/1990	-	-	-	-	-	Aged out of Care 4/27/2009
95	JV-SW-09-7941	9/15/2009	2/1/1993	-	-	-	-	-	Returned to Parents 10/5/10
96	JV-SW-09-7941	9/15/2009	12/15/1994	-	-	-	-	-	Returned to Parents 10/5/10

**FOURTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL
FINAL ACTION PLAN**

No.	Case No.	Custody Date	DOB	Termination Filed	Termination Filed By:	Termination Completed	Adoption Filed	Adoption Completed	Final Order in 432B Case
97	JV-SW-09-7941	9/15/2009	9/15/2003	-	-	-	-	-	Returned to Parents 10/5/10
98	JV-SW-09-7941	9/15/2009	12/21/2005	-	-	-	-	-	Returned to Parents 10/5/10
99	JV-SW-93-3243	12/31/2006	5/23/1991	2/6/08	Michelle Rodriguez	5/19/08	-	-	Aged out of Care 6/29/2009
100	JV-SW-93-3243	12/31/2006	10/1/1992	2/6/08	Michelle Rodriguez	5/19/08	-	-	Aged out of Care 11/16/10
101	JV-SW-93-3243	12/31/2006	5/14/1990	2/6/08	Michelle Rodriguez	5/19/08	-	-	Aged out of Care 7/10/2008
102	JV-SW-07-7248	6/1/2007	1/26/2000	-	-	-	Guardianship finalized 03/19/2009	-	8/5/09
103	JV-SW-10-8202	7/12/2010	3/3/2004	-	-	-	-	-	-
104	JV-SW-07-7259	8/18/2007	12/19/2006	-	-	-	-	-	Returned to Mother 10/17/07
105	JV-SW-07-7781	3/1/2007	3/29/1990	-	-	-	-	-	Aged out of Care 8/11/08
106	JV-SW-07-7194	4/27/2007	5/13/2004	6/6/08	Michelle Rodriguez	11/10/08	1/13/09	2/23/09	8/4/09
107	JV-SW-08-7657	05/04/07	4/13/2007	-	-	-	-	-	12/2/2010 Custody returned to Natural Father
108	JV-SW-08-7476	3/3/2008	12/6/2007	11/7/08	Michelle Rodriguez	1/16/09	4/30/09	5/29/09	10/13/09
109	JV-SW-10-8183	6/19/2010	5/7/1998	-	-	-	-	-	-
110	JV-SW-06-7030	9/29/2008	7/5/2006	5/12/08	Michelle Rodriguez	Mother 7/21/2008 Father Relinquished 7/23/08	11/8/08	4/27/09	8/4/09
111	JV-SW-10-8082	2/17/2010	1/31/1999	-	-	-	-	-	-
112	JV-SW-07-7159	3/1/2007	8/28/1990	-	-	-	-	-	Aged out of Care 9/8/08
113	JV-SW-10-8245	9/22/2010	6/14/2010	-	-	-	-	-	-
114	JV-SW-09-7991	11/12/2009	2/10/2009	-	-	-	-	-	-
115	JV-SW-07-7347	10/5/2007	6/3/2001	7/22/08	Michelle Rodriguez	10/6/08	Filed by Barbara Torvinen	12/21/09	
116	JV-SW-07-7300	8/15/2007	12/22/2006	3/13/08	Attorney General's Office	10/30/08	Filed in Douglas County Date Unknown	6/14/10	8/19/10

***Fifth Judicial District
Community Improvement Council***

January 11, 2011

Action Planning Summary from Pahrump Workgroup

Needs Statement:

The Stakeholders commit to developing increased compliance with federal child welfare guidelines and the NRS to better serve children and families within the rural Nevada child welfare system.

Outcomes:

The Stakeholders commit to having regular scheduled meetings with the next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, February 22 at 1:30pm at the District Court Hearing Room in Pahrump, Nevada.

Summary of the Barriers to Adoption and Termination of Parental Rights:

1. Identification of stakeholders. Do we have everyone at the table?
2. Commitment of partners to effect change.
3. Availability and resources of DA's office to work with DCFS and DAG.
4. Availability of court appointed attorneys.
5. Current contractual agreements with attorneys.
6. Training and engagement of attorneys.
7. Impact of the federal Child and Family Services Review of Nevada and the subsequent federally mandated Program Improvement Plan.
8. Availability of data to drive decision making.
9. Need for solution-focused dialogue across disciplines and stakeholders.
10. Improved and coordinated scheduling of court cases.
11. Over-use of court continuances.
12. Effectiveness of Child and Family Teams.
13. Socio-economics of community.
14. Under-resourced community.

Summary of some of the proposed solutions:

1. Court develops a no-continuance policy.
2. Development of a mediation/facilitation program.
3. Pilot project to test and evaluate changes.
4. Strengthen Child and Family Teams interface with the court process.
5. DA's commitment to work cooperatively with DCFS, and to dedicate attorney for DCFS cases.
6. Review existing court appointed attorney contracts.
7. Training for attorneys in federal child welfare mandates and NRS 432B.

**SIXTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT
COUNCIL**



FINAL ACTION PLAN

Sixth Judicial District Community Improvement Council Meeting:

Date and Time: on-going meetings within the District

Location: Leighton Hall in Winnemucca

Attendance: Juvenile probation personnel, DCFS workers, 3 counties Das, County Public Defenders, others

Work Group Topic: Decrease the time to permanency; reduce barriers to adoption and TPR to achieve timely adoptions

Needs Statement: When we remove children whose ultimate focus is adoption there are numerous barriers to having children finally adopted

Outcome: Focus on the needs of the children to provide stability as quickly as possible.

BARRIERS TO ADOPTION AND TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS	SOLUTIONS RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
Lack of sufficient and appropriate foster homes for which there is a disconnect between the DCFS licensing unit and the caseworkers.	Allow the District Court Judges and the Juvenile Department to be authorized to locate, license, and provide support to foster families. A local person employed the District Court will be charged with recruitment, training, support, and continuing education of local foster parents. Additionally, foster parent respite would be provided by licensing respite families for brief and temporary care to provide short-term relief to the foster families.	DCFS to agree Judge together with Juvenile Department
Time lag between the final order of the 432B case for termination of parental	Change the practice from having AG's office file all TPR proceedings,	District Attorney

<p>rights and the filing of a termination of parental rights proceeding by the AG's office.</p>	<p>to having the local District Attorney file the petition to terminate parental rights. This would eliminate DCFS having to transfer the file to the AG's office where the Deputy Attorney General reviews huge files to determine the appropriateness of the termination. The local DA is already fully aware of the case and would file for termination immediately. This would eliminate the potential for emotionally damaging the children because of ongoing visits with their natural parents while waiting for the actual termination.</p>	
<p>Length of time after TPR and case is sent to the adoption unit.</p>	<p>Now moving forward with adoption process prior to determination of SSI subsidy. DCFS will adjust the subsidy contract upon receipt of determination.</p> <p>District Court shall incorporate the appropriate language into the court order.</p> <p>Scheduling the HART DCFS meetings when they are required, not just once a month. Michael Cason will be chairing these meetings and reviewing the membership.</p> <p>Identify potential TPR cases (0-5 years who are 50% free, 14 consecutive months out of home or in a pre-adoptive home), and cases where the TPR paperwork is at the AG's office in UNITY and schedule pre-transfer meetings and assign an adoption worker to the case. That worker attends IEP's, CFT, court (via phone if not in person), reviews cases notes and orders.</p>	<p>Michael Cason</p> <p>Judge Wagner</p> <p>Michael Cason</p> <p>Michael Cason</p>

Discussion Points:

Generally: CIC will reconvene periodically to ensure and guide proper implementation of solutions and to evaluate other possible barriers or solutions needed.

CIC: Positive Steps Being Taken in Judicial District: The 6th Judicial District has built a strong partnership with the Commissioners in each of the three counties, Humboldt, Lander, and Pershing. The 6th Judicial District prioritizes children by expending 80% of its budgets on children, either juvenile justice or child dependency. The judicial philosophy is to emphasize prevention. By prioritizing children crime can be prevented.

Every child in a 432B case is appointed a guardian ad litem. Because mental health services are scarce, the 6th has employed a part-time psychologist and pays for counseling, domestic violence counselors, and assessments and evaluations to ensure the timeliness of services provided.

Recognizing that children are lost if they drop out of school, education is emphasized by the court. At the court's suggestion the three County Commissions each provide an alternative education building. Teachers are assigned from the school districts.

**SEVENTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT
COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT
COUNCIL**



ACTION PLAN

7th Judicial District Community Improvement Council Meeting:

Date and Time: March 4, 2011 at 9:00 AM

Location: Ely, Nevada

Attendance: District Judge Dan Papez, District Judge Steve Dobrescu, Michael Cason (Adoption Unit Manager DCFS), Gary Fairman, Esq., Jerolyn Tennyson (DCFS Ely Supervisor), Larry Robb (Local DCFS District Manager), Kelly Brown (White Pine County District Attorney), Steven Bishop (Deputy White Pine County District Attorney), Bill Murphy (State Public Defender), Faye Cavender (DCFS Social Worker II), Shannon Cessford, Director (Great Basin CASA), Shannon Rebiejo (DCFS Social Worker II), Shannon Richards (Deputy Attorney General), Justice Nancy Saitta (Nevada Supreme Court), Kathie Malzahn-Bass (CIP Coordinator, Administrative Office of the Courts).

Work Group Topic: Decrease the time to permanency; reduce barriers to adoption and TPR to achieve timely adoptions

Needs Statement: The Parties and the Courts need to be informed and clear about expectations and deadlines to create accountability, avoid delay and expedite permanency

Outcome: All parties are present for each hearing, the parties and the court are prepared for each hearing, and the case moves forward in a timely manner

BARRIERS TO ADOPTION AND TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS	SOLUTIONS RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
Inability to immediately involve counsel for the parents upon removal of the children often results in negative parental attitudes and resistance to the process thereby causing delays in reunification plan and efforts.	Provide family mentors who have successfully gone through the system similar to CASA and the 2 nd Judicial District's Mentor Moms. These mentors will guide the family through the	Kathie Malzahn-Bass

	<p>system.</p> <p>Investigate resolving cases upfront using a Juvenile Dependency Mediation-type model.</p> <p>Ethical mentors who have been trained to guide, but not offer legal advice.</p> <p>Create Mentor Program to include review of CPS manual with parents.</p> <p>Identify potential mentors.</p>	<p>provide information</p> <p>Kathie Malzahn-Bass provide information</p> <p>Shannon Richards will provide Maricopa County information</p> <p>Faye Cavender and Shannon Rebiejo (DCFS) develop training with members from new 7th Judicial District Bar Association identified by Kelly Brown.</p> <p>Larry Robb investigate including mentors in "MDT" training funded by DCFS grant</p> <p>Faye Cavender and Shannon Rebiejo (DCFS) with Judges Papaz and Dobrescu</p> <p>Faye Cavender and Shannon Rebiejo (DCFS)</p>
Inability to determine parental drug involvement up-front.	DCFS will be provide \$7 drug tests which they may administer before the petition is filed if the parent consents.	Larry Robb Faye Cavender and Shannon Rebiejo (DCFS)
Strident petition language that further incites parental hostility.	Soften petition language similar to that of the 2 nd Judicial District. Ensure that it contains sufficient information for the DA.	DCFS and DA Kelly Brown

Parents must accept or deny accusations.	Implement accepting "no contest pleas." Court substantiates the allegations even though the parents plead "not contest."	DA and Judges
Insufficient information about possible relative placements initially	DCFS outline actions taken to locate relatives. Court orders the parents to provide all names of relatives both in and out of state to DCFS immediately	Faye Cavender and Shannon Rebiejo (DCFS) Judge Papez Judge Dobrescu
Attorneys for all parties do not communicate early in the process	Court appoint attorneys at 72 hour hearing and order exchange of discovery meeting of all council.	Judge Papez Judge Dobrescu
All stakeholders are not always working collaboratively to ensure efficient movement toward timely permanency and safety.	Court order a pre-admit and deny hearing meeting of all parties similar to Early Resolution Program in the 8th or Juvenile Dependency Mediation in the 2nd.	Judge Papez Judge Dobrescu
Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC). Failure to adhere to timeliness. Receiving state does not respond.	In initial DCFS report, request an order from the court for an expedited ICPC that is written by the Judge at the Disposition Hearing. Regulation 7 may be implemented in appropriate situations in which the child is under 5 years. In others the DCFS local manager will intervene.	DCFS Judge Papez Judge Dobrescu Larry Robb
Size of workers' caseloads and number and range of responsibilities. The 7 th is down two caseworkers	Hire two more competent and committed staff.	Larry Robb
TPR information readily and easily available to the Deputy AG.	Transcripts available helps expedite process for Deputy	Judges will have transcripts prepared and available to

	AG.	the Deputy AG more often.
Length of time after TPR and case is sent to the adoption unit.	<p>Now moving forward with adoption process prior to determination of SSI subsidy. DCFS will adjust the subsidy contract upon receipt of determination.</p> <p>District Court shall incorporate the appropriate language into the court order.</p> <p>Scheduling the HART DCFS meetings when they are required, not just once a month. Michael Cason will be chairing these meetings and reviewing the membership.</p> <p>Identify potential TPR cases (0-5 years who are 50% free, 14 consecutive months out of home or in a pre-adoptive home), and cases where the TPR paperwork is at the AG's office in UNITY and schedule pre-transfer meetings and assign an adoption worker to the case. That worker attends IEP's, CFT, court (via phone if not in person), reviews cases notes and orders.</p>	<p>Michael Cason</p> <p>Judge Papez</p> <p>Judge Dobrescu</p> <p>Michael Cason</p> <p>Michael Cason</p>
Adoptive family may require assistance to ensure timeliness of responses.	Subsidy worker will call on adoptive family one week after the Subsidy Packet is sent by the adoptive worker to assist with timely completion and return.	Michael Cason

Discussion Points:

Generally: CIC will reconvene periodically to ensure and guide proper implementation of solutions and to evaluate other possible barriers or solutions needed.

CIC: Positive Steps Being Taken in Judicial District: The 7th Judicial District assigns counsel to all children involved in 432B cases. Hearings are regularly held within 72 hours after removal. At this hearing the facts of the removal are reviewed and the parents' are advised of their rights including right to counsel. Usually Gary Fairman is appointed as council for the children and the State Public Defender is appointed to represent the parents. The Great Basin CASA is also appointed to the case during the 72 hours hearing.

Both Judges have had discussions with the system participants about best practices and moving the family into appropriate services as quickly as possible.

The 7th has been ordering drug addicted 432B case parents to participate in drug court. It takes approximately 18-24 months to heal the drug addicted brain which makes it nearly impossible to get the parents back on track and the children back in their home within 14 months.

**Community Improvement Council / Model Court Team Discussion
Beginning Your Action Planning: CIC/ Model Court Goal Implementation (One Objective per Form)**

MODEL COURT TEAM: 8th Judicial District Clark County (Las Vegas)

CIC/ MODEL COURT GOAL : Achieve timely permanency for children by actively engaging the family in services by providing timely assessments, timely access to treatment services and case plan summary identifying the services and time frames within which to engage in services.

OBJECTIVE 1: Front-loading of services

What activities need to take place to accomplish this CIC/ Model Court objective?	Who is the lead for each activity? Each activity may have a different lead person.	Who else needs to be part of this activity? Do other partner organizations need to be included in this specific activity?	Due Dates	How will you know if your activities have been successful and your CIC /Model Court objective has been reached? What will be your measurement or evaluation strategy?
Community mapping of available service resources from government and non-government service providers, including, but not limited to, non-profit organizations, university entities, faith-based organizations and other community service providers.	Janice Wolf, CAP	DFS, service providers, university representatives, neighborhood resource centers, Courts Catalyzing Change subcommittee, CASA, Community We Will, HACCA/Hope Link.	October 1, 2011	Preparation of a Resource Guideline listing available service resources, service providers contact information which will be distributed to family members and other stakeholders.
Review, modify and streamline service referral process to include detailed information, purpose and nature of the assessment, and other information necessary to assist the provider in identifying the service needs of the family.	Mary Brown, Chief D.D.A.	DFS, service providers, neighborhood resource centers.	October 1, 2011	Preparation of a revised version of the existing Community Referral Form.
Development of a parental support and mentoring cadre of parents and other individuals to mentor and support the family in timely engagement in services and to support the family throughout the process.	Shella Parks, CASA	DFS, neighborhood resource centers, faith-based organizations, Director of UNLV's outreach program.	January 1, 2012.	Development of a cadre of parents and individuals who have been trained and approved through background checks who are ready, willing and able

<p>Development and implementation of a CPS/Juvenile Court Case Plan Summary for Substance Abuse and one for Non-Substance Abuse cases identifying services required of the family and time frames by which the Court expects the family to be engaged in such services with the assistance of CPS.</p>	<p>Judge Frank P. Sullivan</p>	<p>DFS, CASA, neighborhood resource centers, deputy district attorneys, special public defenders, and CAP attorneys.</p>	<p>October 1, 2011.</p>	<p>to mentor and support the parents throughout the process.</p> <p>Development of one-page Case Plan Summaries for Substance Abuse and Non-Substance Abuse cases which will be provided to and discussed with the parents and CPS at the second protective custody hearing.</p> <p>*** The overall success of the front-loading of services will be measured by reducing the current waiting list for assessments, which averages approximately 45 days, to 30 days or less following the second protective custody hearing.</p> <p>***The overall success of the front-loading of services will be furthered measured by reducing the current waiting list for treatment services, which averages about 60 days, to 30 days or less after the completion of the assessment.</p>
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**Community Improvement Council / Model Court Team Discussion
Beginning Your Action Planning: CIC/ Model Court Goal Implementation (One Objective per Form)**

CIC/ MODEL COURT GOAL (Be as specific as possible): Achieve timely permanency for children by making the protective custody hearing as thorough and meaningful as possible.

OBJECTIVE 2: Implement a second protective custody hearing.

What activities need to take place to accomplish this Model Court objective?	Who is the lead for each activity? Each activity may have a different lead person.	Who else needs to be part of this activity? Do other partner organizations need to be included in this specific activity?	Due Dates	How will you know if your activities have been successful and your CIC/Model Court objective has been reached? What will be your measurement or evaluation strategy?
Revision of dependency court calendars distributing the cases among five (5) judicial officers with four (4) judicial officers assigned to the front end (p.c. hearings, pleas, reviews, permanency hearings, etc.) of cases and one (1) judicial officer assigned to the back end (trials, TPRs, etc.) of cases.	Ron Cordes, D.D.A.	Judges, Hearing Masters, deputy district attorneys, CAP attorneys, special public defenders, and conflict attorneys.	June 15, 2011	Revised court calendars will be implemented.
Implementation of pre-hearing conferences to be scheduled at the initial protective custody hearing and held immediately preceding the second protective custody hearing.	Frank P. Sullivan, District Court Judge	Hearing Masters, parents, deputy district attorneys, special public defenders, CAP attorneys, conflict attorneys, DFS, neighborhood resource centers, HACAH/Hope Link.	July 1, 2011	Surveys will be conducted of all participating parties to determine if the pre-hearing conference resulted in an environment that was more family driven and family supportive and focused on problem solving instead of litigation.

<p>Implementation of second protective custody hearings focused on family preservation and identifying safety issues which need to be addressed in order for the children to return home.</p>	<p>Frank P. Sullivan, District Court Judge.</p>	<p>Hearing Masters, deputy district attorneys, special public defenders, CAP attorneys, conflict attorneys and DFS.</p>	<p>July 1, 2011</p>	<p>Cases will be monitored and compared with existing data to determine if the second protective custody hearing resulted in a reduction of time between removal and adjudicatory hearing, removal and dispositional hearing, and removal and permanency.</p>
<p>Training on the purpose of protective custody hearings and making such hearings as thorough and meaningful as possible.</p>	<p>Franz J. Braun, Model Court Liaison.</p>	<p>Judges, Hearing Masters, deputy district attorneys, special public defenders, CAP attorneys, conflict attorneys and DFS.</p>	<p>Training completed on April 8, 2011.</p>	<p>Training session was attended by approximately 100 individuals from DFS, judiciary, deputy district attorneys, special public defenders, CAP attorneys, university representatives, and CASA.</p>

**Community Improvement Council / Model Court Team Discussion
Beginning Your Action Planning: CIC/ Model Court Goal Implementation (One Objective per Form)**

CIC/ MODEL COURT GOAL (Be as specific as possible): Achieve timely permanency for children by instituting a firm and effective no continuance policy in TPR proceedings while continuing to reduce the backlog of cases pending adoption as the permanency plan.

OBJECTIVE 3: No continuance policy in TPR proceedings and reduction of backlog of adoption cases.

<p>What activities need to take place to accomplish this CIC/ Model Court objective?</p>	<p>Who is the lead for each activity? Each activity may have a different lead person.</p>	<p>Who else needs to be part of this activity? Do other partner organizations need to be included in this specific activity?</p>	<p>Due Dates</p>	<p>How will you know if your activities have been successful and your CIC/Model Court objective has been reached? What will be your measurement or evaluation strategy?</p>
<p>Development of a core group of Family Court Judges who are ready, willing and</p>	<p>Frank P. Sullivan, District Court Judge.</p>	<p>Family Court Judges, deputy district attorneys.</p>	<p>October 1, 2011</p>	<p>Development of a core group of Family Court</p>

<p>able to conduct TPR proceedings.</p>		<p>special public defenders, CAP attorneys, conflict attorneys and DFS.</p>		<p>Judges to hear TPR cases and assignment of TPR cases among the core group of judges.</p>
<p>Training to the core group of judges and attorneys as to the importance of having a firm policy on continuances and the need to achieve permanency in a timely manner by completing TPR proceedings in an expeditious manner.</p>	<p>Frank P. Sullivan, District Court Judge.</p>	<p>Family Court Judges, deputy district attorneys, special public defenders, CAP attorneys, conflict attorneys and DFS.</p>	<p>September 1, 2011</p>	<p>Monitoring of TPR proceedings conducted by the core group of judges and comparing such data with existing data as to time period form filing of the TPR Petition to completion of the TPR proceedings.</p>
<p>Identification of all cases in which the parental rights have been terminated and adoption is the permanency plan for the children.</p>	<p>Paula Hammock, DFS.</p>	<p>DFS information technician personnel.</p>	<p>June 1, 2011</p>	<p>Preparation of a list of all children whose parents have had their rights terminated and who are still pending adoption.</p>
<p>Implementation of a quarterly adoption assessment court calendar reviewing the status of forty (40) of the longest pending adoption cases and identifying the barriers to achieving the adoption in a timely manner.</p>	<p>Steven Jones, District Court Judge.</p>	<p>Ron Kirschenheiter/CAP and DFS adoption unit.</p>	<p>July 1, 2011</p>	<p>Establishment of a quarterly adoption assessment court calendar.</p>
<p>Implementation of an adoption status check court calendar to be held 60 days following the quarterly adoption assessment calendar to review the forty (40) longest pending adoption cases and determine if reasonable efforts have been made to achieve the permanency goal of adoption.</p>	<p>Steven Jones, District Court Judge.</p>	<p>CAP attorneys and DFS adoption unit.</p>	<p>September 1, 2011</p>	<p>Increase in the amount of adoptions completed over the 2010 calendar year with a targeted goal of 600 adoptions for the year 2011, which would be a 35% increase over calendar year 2010.</p>

FINAL ACTION PLAN

Ninth Judicial District Community Improvement Council Meeting:

Date: May 31, 2011

Location: Judicial and Law Enforcement Building, Minden, NV

Work Group Topic: Decrease the time to permanency; reduce barriers to adoption and TPR to achieve timely adoptions

Needs Statement: The Court needs more accountability from parties as to the status of progress towards permanency, requiring specific dates from DCFS and parties for completion of tasks leading to permanency.

BARRIERS TO ADOPTION AND TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS	SOLUTIONS RECOMMENDATIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
Inadequate collaboration in development of case plan. Parent(s) claims he/she had little/no input to case plan. This leads to excessive exceptions and delays in decision making about child's placement.	Parent should write case plan. DCFS give guidance and provide final input/adjustments. Hold parent(s) to his/her actions without exception.	Parent and DCFS
During reunification efforts little/no work is done on concurrent plan of guardianship or adoption. This leads to delays if/once TPR is ordered.	Court should order that DCFS' efforts/work will presented during review hearings in order to assess that progress.	Court and DCFS
Too much time elapses when TPR is ordered to the actual date TPR Petition is filed.	Set definite date for TPR Petition filing.	DCFS and Attorney General
HART does not meet frequently enough.	Increase meetings from once monthly to twice monthly.	HART
Adoptive families requesting (and eligible for) subsidies for ongoing medical or mental health conditions. DCFS is responsible for these negotiations.	Court should order that DCFS' negotiations should be completed by a 'date-certain'.	DCFS

Discussion Points: Barriers are often rooted in tactical mishandling which results in strategic failure. Recommended solutions should be simple and measureable.