



Jefferson County (Louisville), Kentucky

OVERVIEW

Jefferson County's initial involvement with Family to Family is detailed in a report entitled *Keeping Children Safe is Everyone's Business*.¹ It shows how the decision to become involved with Family to Family grew out of earlier involvement with Community Partnerships for Protecting Children (CPPC), an initiative that helped establish Family Team Meetings and partnerships within the Neighborhood Place system. That experience created some challenges for integrating Family Team Meeting practice with Team Decisionmaking and integrating the Neighborhood Places with the Building Community Partners strategy in Family to Family, but the shared values of the two initiatives provided an opportunity to build on the progress made in partnering with families and communities.

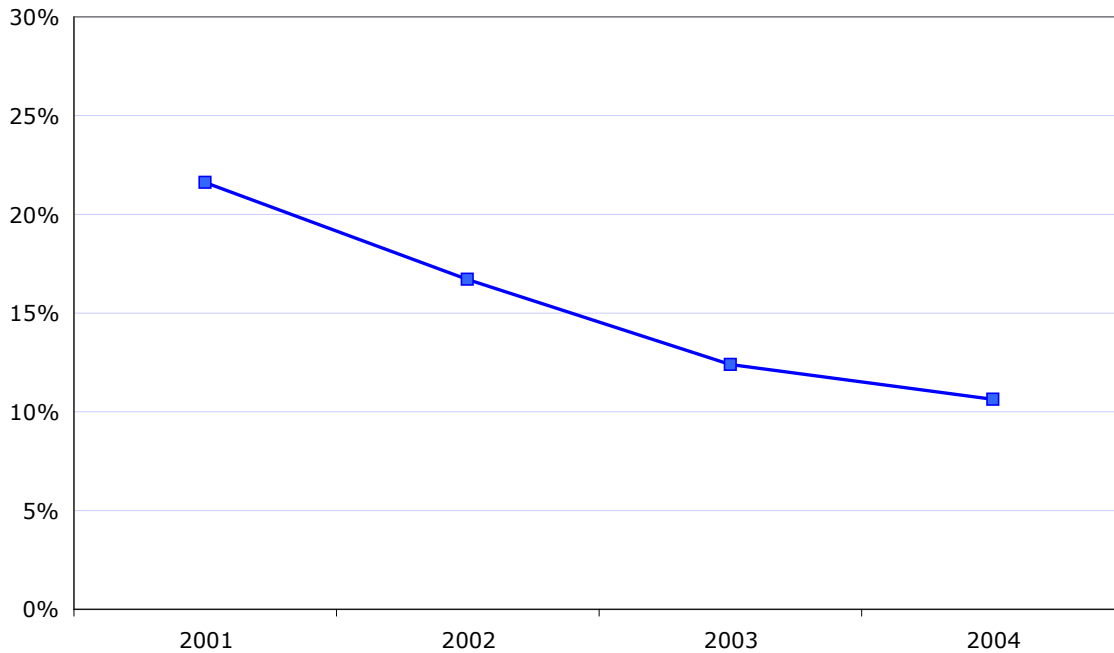
Jefferson County is similar to a number of Family to Family sites in that initial efforts by site participants and the Foundation's technical assistance team focused on the region's reliance on emergency shelter care for initial placements of children and youth entering care. Discussions that began in 2001 culminated in an agreement with the Home of the Innocents child caring facility to transform its role as an emergency shelter to an after-hours assessment center in which children would spend less than one day before moving to family-based care. **Exhibit A.4.1** shows part of the impact of work in the early stages of Family to Family in Jefferson County. The percentage of initial placements in group care for children entering out-of-home care for the first time provides an indicator of a locality's reliance on non-family placement settings, including emergency shelters. This chart shows that Jefferson County DCBS reduced by half the percentage of children initially placed in group care in the years preceding the anchor-site phase.

Jefferson County is the most populous county in Kentucky with an estimated population of approximately 709,264 in 2007, of whom 261,853 reside in Louisville. Just over three-fourths (76.4%) of the county's residents are white, 18.9% are black, and 1.8% are Hispanic.² According to Kentucky Youth Advocates, Inc., in 2005 the child poverty rate was 19 percent and the median household income was \$40,973. Child welfare services in Kentucky are state-administered by the Department of Community Based Services (DCBS). The department is divided into nine service regions that serve 120 counties, but Jefferson County constitutes a single service region.

¹ The report is available online at: <http://www.cssp.org/uploadFiles/Celebrating%20cppc%2010.pdf>

² Population estimates for 2007 obtained from *City-data.com*, Retrieved June 23, 2009, from: <http://www.city-data.com/>.

Exhibit A.4.1: Percentage of Children Initially Placed in Group Care



SITE-LEVEL PLACEMENT EXPERIENCE INDICATORS

Following changes in policy and practice during the period leading up to the anchor-site phase, the number of children entering out-of-home care in DCBS custody for the first time began to decline; however, it is important to understand the circumstances associated with this trend. First, the commitment to reduce reliance on shelter care in Jefferson County resulted in a decline in the number of children entering out-of-home care for the first time in 2000 and 2001; however, admissions began to rise again in 2002. Based on data available at that time, this was largely attributable to increased use of relatives to care for children that had come to the attention of child protective services (CPS). During this period, however, changes emerged in federal requirements related to the application of equivalent standards for licensing or approving foster parents who were related to the children for whom they provided out-of-home care. One response in Kentucky was a change in policy and practice that resulted in substantial numbers of children being placed in the temporary custody of a relative following a CPS investigation. Given that these children were not entering DCBS custody, they were appropriately not recorded as being in “foster care” in TWIST, Kentucky’s State Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS). As a result, these children are not reflected in the exhibits presented in this profile.³

Continued placements of children in the temporary custody of relatives resulted in further declines in the number of children entering DCBS custody during the baseline year of 2005 and the ensuing anchor-site period, 2006-2008. As **Exhibit A.4.2** shows, 697 initially entered care in 2005, but the number declined steadily in the ensuing years. By 2008, only 503 children and youth entered custody for the first time. The characteristics of children entering custody during this period did not change in any substantial way.

³ Data extracts DCBS provided for the evaluation in 2007 and earlier indicated that the agency helped make such arrangements for approximately 300 children in 2005 and more than 250 in 2006; however, more recent data extracts have omitted such children because they did not enter DCBS custody. To ensure comparability across years, this table does not include children in this kinship care arrangement.

**Exhibit A.4.2: Demographic Characteristics of Children Initially Entering Out-of-Home Care
—Jefferson County, KY**

Characteristic	2005 (N=697)	2006 (N=650)	2007 (N=563)	2008 (N=503)
Gender				
Male	332 (48.9%)	309 (49.5%)	267 (49.6%)	234 (49.2%)
Female	347 (51.1%)	315 (50.5%)	271 (50.4%)	242 (50.8%)
Race				
White Non-Hispanic	299 (45%)	256 (42.7%)	260 (50.3%)	217 (47.5%)
Black Non-Hispanic	323 (48.6%)	309 (51.5%)	231 (44.7%)	215 (47%)
Hispanic	0 (0%)	3 (0.5%)	6 (1.2%)	5 (1.1%)
Native American/ Alaska Native	0 (0%)	3 (0.5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Asian American/ Pacific Islanders	1 (0.2%)	1 (0.2%)	3 (0.6%)	0 (0%)
Other	42 (6.3%)	28 (4.7%)	17 (3.3%)	20 (4.4%)
Age				
Birth - 1 year	158 (23.3%)	149 (23.9%)	141 (26.2%)	136 (28.6%)
2-5 years	125 (18.4%)	101 (16.2%)	75 (13.9%)	89 (18.7%)
6-11 years	154 (22.7%)	130 (20.8%)	103 (19.1%)	79 (16.6%)
12-14 years	112 (16.5%)	113 (18.1%)	97 (18%)	67 (14.1%)
15-17 years	130 (19.1%)	131 (21%)	122 (22.7%)	105 (22.1%)
18-21 years	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Siblings entering care at the same time				
Single child	433 (62.1%)	455 (70%)	348 (61.8%)	289 (57.5%)
2	135 (19.4%)	110 (16.9%)	93 (16.5%)	96 (19.1%)
3	69 (9.9%)	60 (9.2%)	86 (15.3%)	80 (15.9%)
4	29 (4.2%)	20 (3.1%)	26 (4.6%)	28 (5.6%)
5	15 (2.2%)	5 (0.8%)	3 (0.5%)	10 (2%)
6 or more	16 (2.3%)	0 (0%)	7 (1.2%)	0 (0%)

In the broad context of declining numbers of initial admissions to DCBS custody, **Exhibit A.4.3** shows that placements into residential treatment rose to 15.6% of initial entries in 2007, but declined to 12.9% of 2008 entries. During the same period, placements in emergency shelters declined to less than five percent of initial entries while placements with foster homes or approved relatives rose to 72.1% of entries in 2007 and 78.2% of entrants in 2008. In conjunction with a rise in initial placements with a family connection (41.9% of entrants in 2008), the overall pattern suggests an increased reliance on family-based care when children and youth enter out-of-home care. In fact, among anchor sites outside California, Jefferson County achieved the highest rates of placements in family settings (kinship care or foster homes) for youth 12-14 years of age (79.1%) and 15-17 years of age (81.9%). Rates in other sites ranged from 34.5% to 71.4% for those aged 12-14 and 17.2% to 71.4% for those aged 15-17.

Jefferson County DCBS also showed strong performance in making placements for sibling groups. During the anchor-site phase, 80% or more of children were placed with all other siblings who were entering care. In 2007 and 2008, only four percent of children were not placed with at least one other sibling. Among all children entering care (i.e., those with siblings and those entering care without a sibling), the percentage entering care with a relative and/or placed with a sibling rose from 28% in 2006 to 41.9% in 2008.

Exhibit A.4.3: Characteristics of Placement: Jefferson County, KY				
Characteristic of Initial Placement	2005	2006	2007	2008
Initial Placement				
Foster Home	510 (73.2%)	436 (67.1%)	384 (68.2%)	360 (71.6%)
Relative Home—Licensed	26 (3.7%)	28 (4.3%)	22 (3.9%)	33 (6.6%)
Relative Home—Unlicensed	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Group Home	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Residential Treatment	48 (6.9%)	57 (8.8%)	88 (15.6%)	65 (12.9%)
Emergency Shelter*	45 (6.5%)	46 (7.1%)	26 (4.6%)	5 (1%)
Other Institutional	68 (9.8%)	78 (12%)	43 (7.6%)	35 (7%)
Own Home	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Adoptive Home	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.2%)
Other	0 (0%)	5 (0.8%)	0 (0%)	4 (0.8%)
Sibling Placement Status for Children Initially Placed in Foster Home				
No Siblings Entered Placement	281	280	210	194
Placed with All Siblings	131 (61.2%)	111 (80.4%)	143 (90.5%)	119 (82.1%)
Placed with Some Siblings	50 (23.4%)	12 (8.7%)	8 (5.1%)	20 (13.8%)
Placed with no Siblings	33 (15.4%)	15 (10.9%)	7 (4.4%)	6 (4.1%)
Family Connection at Initial Placement**				
No	468 (67.1%)	468 (72%)	352 (62.5%)	292 (58.1%)
Yes	229 (32.9%)	182 (28%)	211 (37.5%)	211 (41.9%)

*Includes some children and youth placed in foster homes at emergency shelter rates.

**Family connection components include: placed with relative and placed with sibling

Consistent with the measure of placement stability used in the federal Child and Family Service Review (CFSR) process, the indicator in **Exhibit A.4.4** measures the percentage of children with three or more placements. To facilitate comparisons across cohorts, the table provides a separate analysis of placement moves for two groups—children and youth whose length of stay was more than one week, but less than one year and those who remained in care for more than one year, but less than two years. The data indicate that children with shorter lengths of stay who entered care in 2007 were less likely to experience a higher number of placements. In contrast, children and youth with longer lengths of stay who entered care in 2006 were more likely to have three or more placements than those who entered in 2005.

Exhibit A.4.4: Placement Stability by Year of Initial Entry—Jefferson County, KY

	2005	2006	2007
All Ages			
No. of Placements in 1st Spell for Children Remaining in Care 8 - 365 days			
1 or 2 placements	226 (85.6%)	195 (86.7%)	172 (91.0%)
3 or more placements	38 (14.3%)	30 (13.3%)	17 (9.0%)
No. of Placements in 1st Spell for Children Remaining in Care 1 - 2 years			
1 or 2 placements	79 (64.2%)	87 (53.7%)	na
3 or more placements	44 (35.8%)	75 (46.3%)	na
12 - 17 years			
No. of Placements in 1st Spell for Teens Remaining in Care 8 - 365 days			
1 or 2 placements	70 (73.7%)	75 (83.3%)	64 (86.5%)
3 or more placements	25 (26.3%)	15 (16.7%)	10 (13.5%)
No. of Placements in 1st Spell for Teens Remaining in Care 1 - 2 years			
1 or 2 placements	26 (49.1%)	26 (40.6%)	na
3 or more placements	27 (50.9%)	27 (50.9%)	na

The table also provides a more focused analysis of youth who were 12 years of age or older when they entered out-of-home care. This age group is of concern because they are vulnerable to placement moves; however, Jefferson County adolescents who had shorter lengths of stay tended to experience fewer placements in later cohorts. The percentage with three or more placements declined from 26.3% of those who entered care in 2005 to 13.5% of those who entered in 2007. Among those with longer lengths of stay, the rate at which youth experienced higher numbers of placements was unchanged from 2005 to 2006 (50.9%). While encouraging, these results are based on relatively small numbers of youth in each cohort, and therefore, should be interpreted cautiously.

According to the estimates shown in **Exhibit A.4.5**, predicted rates of exit from care within six months, one year, and two years appear not to have changed across cohorts. In fact, the probability of exiting to reunification within one year decline from 0.30 in 2004 and 2005 to 0.26 in 2006, and the preliminary estimate for 2007 was 0.20. Rates of reentry to care following the end of a child's first spell did not change in any appreciable way across cohorts.

Exhibit A.4.5: Time in Care and Reentry—Jefferson County, KY				
	2004	2005	2006	2007
Probability of Exit by:				
Exit to Reunification				
6 months	0.16	0.13	0.14	0.10
1 year	0.30	0.30	0.26	0.20
2 years	0.42	0.40	0.39	--
Exit to Adoption				
6 months	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
1 year	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.03
2 years	0.20	0.14	0.19	--
Exit to Relative				
6 months	0.14	0.09	0.11	0.13
1 year	0.19	0.14	0.15	0.19
2 years	0.24	0.19	0.20	--
Probability of Reentering Care After 1st Spell				
0-7 days	.10 (30)	.15 (41)	.12 (32)	0.0 (29)
>7 days	.07 (57)	.06 (56)	.08 (46)	.06 (34)

The longer that children remain in custody, the more challenging it becomes to help them achieve a permanent placement. As **Exhibit A.4.6** shows, this is evident in the fact that no more than one in six of the children and youth who had been in care for two years or more on December 31 in any of the years from 2004 through 2007 achieved a permanent placement in the subsequent year. Further, the rates for children in care at the end of 2006 and 2007 suggest that permanency rates may have declined for children in care for such long periods. In addition, it is important to note that the number of children and youth remaining in care for two years has increased from 387 at the end of 2004 to 596 at the end of 2007. This occurred in spite of an overall decline in the case-load in recent years, but indicates that more children and youth are reaching a stage in the placement process at which permanency becomes a very elusive goal. In light of this situation, the focus of work under Family to Family in the past year or so has been on ways to address the permanency needs of this group, especially adolescents.

Exhibit A.4.6: Achieving Permanency for Children and Youth in Care for Two Years or More—Jefferson				
	2004	2005	2006	2007
Number in care for two years or more	387	420	455	596
Number who exited to reunification, adoption, relative in the subsequent year	57	74	51	71
Percent achieving permanency	14.7%	17.6%	11.2%	11.9%

PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING CORE STRATEGIES

Jefferson County is one of the Family to Family sites that had several years' experience with practice approaches that were similar to Family to Family core strategies, but also different in some significant ways. Also, in addition to the four core strategies, this anchor site has supported work in a strategy called Strategic Communications. The Communications team conducts focus groups with community partners, DCBS staff, and other key stakeholders to assess their progress toward reform and to evaluate training sessions and other reform activities. They use free media and community events to communicate reform messages (e.g. Keeping Children Safe is Everyone's Business). Their communication efforts are dedicated to educating both their staff and the wider community about their vision for reform.

Jefferson County's experience with the CPPC initiative influenced its progress in adopting and implementing Family to Family core strategies. Also, as a regional office in a state-administered system, the efforts of Jefferson County DCBS to pursue Family to Family practices sometimes were not entirely in line with approaches being emphasized at the Cabinet level for other regions.

Another unique aspect of the context within which DCBS implemented the core strategies in Jefferson County is that it was one of 13 jurisdiction selected to participate in the Casey Family Program Breakthrough Series Collaborative (BSC) addressing disproportionality and disparate outcomes for children and families of color involved with child welfare and they were also selected for post-BSC work. In addition to this national support, the Region has benefited from significant local support. Their judges and county attorneys voluntarily attended Undoing Racism workshops and selected disproportionality as one of their "Model Court" goals. Private child care agencies and community organizations have hosted workshops and local police and health departments have made large financial contributions to support the workshops.

Building Community Partnerships

In the early 1990s, Louisville implemented a strategy called Neighborhood Places, a county-wide system of family service centers operated from eight community sites. The Neighborhood Place system acts as a central hub of services for families and offers access to needed resources, including financial services and a variety of educational opportunities for families. It also attempts to link residents and community partners with the Jefferson County DCBS. In 1996, Jefferson County moved forward with CPPC in an effort to strengthen the community mobilization approach initiated by the Neighborhood Place system.

The Neighborhood Place approach differed from other Family to Family sites in that it was rooted in organizations established by the government rather than grassroots community-based organizations. Nonetheless, when Jefferson County began implementing Family to Family in 2000, some of the community connections needed for the Building Community Partnerships (BCP) core strategy were already in place. Therefore, Family to Family BCP technical assistants worked with local community organizers and DCBS staff to build upon work that was already underway as a result of previous efforts.

Site Infrastructure. Louisville's community effort includes residents, birth parents, consumers, and grassroots community partners who act as "community connectors" and decision-makers on the Neighborhood Place community council, the Neighborhood Place managing board, and the

county-wide child welfare steering committee. The steering committee is chaired by a community resident and a community partner instead of a CPS staff member. The remainder of the committee is made up by two community council members from each Neighborhood Place, two community members-at-large, and 17 CPS-related community agencies. Although they were recently eliminated, two full-time community liaisons formerly support BCP-specific work, specifically, youth engagement, community partner presence at Team Decision Meetings (TDMs), and father engagement. For a year-long period in 2007, an overlap in initial goals in their youth engagement work resulted in BCP and RDS teams conducting meetings together. However, in 2008, BCP began to meet on its own in order to focus its own separate piece of the youth engagement work.

BCP Activities. Louisville has enhanced its practice with a variety of activities that reflect the adoption of the BCP core strategy values and principles. Many child welfare activities are now conducted within the communities they serve. For example, resource family training and support meetings, child welfare staff meetings, and supervised visitations are often held in community locations. Community partners participate and facilitate family team meetings in addition to offering resources to families. Community residents act as parent advocates, linking with families to offer mentorship around issues of safety and to connect them with resources. Parent education and support groups called Talkshops are provided at each Neighborhood Place. The site has also mobilized churches and other faith-based organizations to enhance their efforts in service provision, foster family recruitment, fundraisers, and various publicity strategies. Louisville's BCP work on youth engagement has been highly integrated with their RDS work and until 2009, was coordinated under the community partnership strategy rather than Family to Family. Their current youth engagement group called Teens of Now Initiating Change (TONIC) coordinates their efforts into three sub-groups, Youth Program Opportunities, Youth Mentoring, and Youth Employment Partnership. The groups are made up of community partners, cabinet staff, and youth.

Funding. Recent budgetary problems threatened the continuation of the Neighborhood Place structure in Louisville, but in response to strong expressions of support by community representatives, at least some leadership positions were retained. Also, BCP currently has a subcontract to conduct truancy/status offense work for YMCA-Safeplace. Community mini-grants are being offered to community partners to support BCP efforts. As noted above, however, the two full-time community liaisons had to be eliminated in earlier budget reductions.

Impact on Facilitated Staffings. Exhibit A.4.7 shows how community partnerships were reflected in facilitated staffings in Jefferson County. More than one-third of removal staffings and approximately two-thirds of change of placement staffings included a service provider other than DCBS. Although most staffings of both types did not include a community representative invited by DCBS, the percentages in 2008 showed increases from staffings held in previous years. Similar increases occurred in 2007 and 2008 in terms of family members or friends invited by the birth family to attend change of placement staffings. Although family and friends were present more often at removal staffings, a decline occurred between 2007 and 2008. Relatively recent local efforts to support families with parent advocates are apparent in 2008. Finally, Jefferson County has not started to hold staffings in community locations.

Exhibit A.4.7: Community Partnerships Reflected in Facilitated Staffings

	2005	2006	2007	2008
Removal Staffings:				
Community representative present	3%	4%	2%	11%
Service provider present	36%	35%	36%	36%
Family member or friend present	2%	23%	32%	20%
Held in a community location	0%	1%	0%	0%
Parent Advocate	0%	0%	0%	5%
Change of Placement Staffings:				
Community representative present	3%	2%	2%	5%
Service provider present	65%	56%	64%	68%
Family member or friend present	0%	5%	15%	16%
Held in a community location	0%	0%	0%	0%
Parent Advocate	0%	0%	0%	1%

Based on meetings held in 2008, the participation rates of community representatives are slightly lower than the median rates for all anchor sites—11% vs. 15% for removal staffings and 5% vs. 7% for change of placement (COP) staffings. The differences are greater for participation by family or friends—20% vs. 48% for removal staffings and 16% vs. 33% for COP staffings. The rates of participation by service providers are similar (36% vs. 42% for removal staffings) or equivalent to the median rate (68%) for COP staffings in all anchor sites.

Resource Family Development and Support

Approximately two-thirds (65.6%) of foster families approved in Jefferson County from 2006 to 2008 were recruited and trained and are being supervised by DCBS. The remaining foster parents serving children in this region are supervised by private child caring agencies. The data in Exhibit A.4.8 show the rates at which prospective foster families have moved from the stage of making an inquiry about becoming a foster parent to becoming approved. The information shows the continuing challenge DCBS faces at each stage of the process in terms of moving from inquiries to attended an informational session, to starting and completing training, and finally, to being approved as a resource family. The net proportion of families achieving approval each year has fluctuated, but generally has not exceeded ten percent.

Exhibit A.4.8: Inquiries From Prospective Foster Families and Progress Toward Approval—Jefferson County, KY

Cohort	Initial Inquiries	Attended Information Meeting	Started Training	Completed Training	Families Approved
2003	690	25.4%	19.0%	11.2%	9.4%
2004	725	38.5%	25.1%	16.1%	13.5%
2005	785	34.5%	21.1%	12.6%	10.3%
2006	912	32.6%	19.6%	11.0%	8.7%
2007	737	32.8%	20.5%	9.9%	7.2%

One of the factors related to this pattern is whether the prospective foster family was seeking to adopt a child, and therefore, followed a concurrent-planning track. More than 80% of the families following a concurrent-planning track were approved within six months. In contrast, other families were much less likely to be approved within that timeframe—approximately one-third of white families and only one in six African-American families who did not pursue the concurrent-planning track. The difference in approval rates was much smaller among families pursuing the concurrent-planning track.

As in other sites that rely to any significant extent on foster homes that are recruited and supervised by private agencies, it is impossible to know how the overall availability of foster families has changed in Jefferson County during the anchor-site phase. Placements of children with foster families and approved relatives continue to account for nearly three-fourths of initial placements for children entering in DCBS custody for the first time. Given the decline in the number of children entering care for the first time and the continuing low rate of reentry to care, the demand for resource families has not been exacerbated by an influx of children and youth. Perhaps the most significant challenge now facing Jefferson County is finding family-based placements for youth 15 to 17 years of age whose numbers have not declined as much as other age groups. Similarly, the number of infants less than one year of age continues at previous levels and this group presents a different set of special needs. Therefore, targeted recruitment of resource families with particular skills and experience represents an ongoing challenge in this anchor site.

One of the key elements of Family to Family RDS practice is active participation of caregivers in decisionmaking about appropriateness of placement settings for children in their care. As a result, they are encouraged to participate in COP staffings when the child welfare agency is deciding whether a change in placement is necessary and appropriate for a child or youth. The rate of caregiver participation in such meetings increased from 19% of those held in 2005 to 34% of those held in 2008. This compares to a median participation rate of 55% across all anchor sites for the more recent year.

It is important to note the extent to which Jefferson County relies on relatives in caring for children at risk of abuse and neglect. The dimensions of this contribution are not apparent in the placement data DCBS provided for the evaluation; however, according to the DCBS report *Kinship Care FACTS* for December 1, 2008, 2,331 children from Jefferson County were in kinship care. In contrast, data provided by the Jefferson County self-evaluation team indicate that 1,152 children were in DCBS custody on that date. Therefore, at this recent point in time, the number of children from Jefferson County in kinship care arrangements was roughly double the number in DCBS custody.

Team Decisionmaking

Jefferson County DCBS uses the rubric of “facilitated staffings” to refer to the mixture of family team meetings begun under the CPPC initiative and meetings pursued under the Team Decisionmaking (TDM) strategy of Family to Family. Considerable time and effort has been devoted to resolving differences in the purposes and approaches of each type of meeting. In addition, the TDM database was ultimately adopted by the Cabinet to record information about meetings in Jefferson County and the Northern Bluegrass Region.

Exhibit A.4.9 provides indicators that estimate the extent to which removal staffings and change of placement (COP) staffings were held in Jefferson County from 2005 through 2008. The estimated rate of removal staffings rose to 65% for the 2008 cohort while the estimate for COP staffings for the same cohort was 45%, a decline from a consistent rate of at least 55% for previous cohorts (the estimate for 2008 may underestimate the percentage of children and youth who will ultimately experience a COP staffing due to abbreviated follow-up). The estimated rate of removal staffings for other anchor sites ranged from 51% to 90%, with a median rate of 67%. Similarly, the estimated rate of COP staffings for three other anchor sites outside California range from 9% to 66%, with a median rate of 38%. It appears, therefore, that “penetration” rates for removal and COP TDM meetings in Jefferson County are consistent with or slightly higher than other anchor sites.

Jefferson County’s experience with removal staffings is similar to other anchor sites in some important ways, such as being held prior to removal (90% in 2008) and having an experienced facilitator (100% in 2008).

Exhibit A.4.9: Facilitated Staffing Implementation in Jefferson County				
	2005	2006	2007	2008
Removal Staffings:				
Percentage of children entering care for 1st time relative to number of children who had a removal staffing this time period	22%	43%	60%	65%
No. of removal staffings	143	614	980	1,046
No. of removal recommendations made	259	1,008	1,793	1,833
Staffing held prior to placement	93%	87%	86%	90%
Parents present	61%	69%	75%	80%
More than one DCBS staff person present	33%	41%	49%	18%
Experienced Facilitator	69%	80%	87%	100%
Change of Placement Staffings:				
Percentage of children entering care for 1st time during these years and experiencing more than 1 placement who had a change of placement staffing during these years	55%	55%	56%	45%
No. of change of placement staffings held	711	626	823	738
No. of change of placement recommendations	1015	793	1,032	911
Parents present	38%	30%	35%	40%
More than one DCBS staff person present	35%	37%	36%	24%
Experienced Facilitator	42%	85%	90%	100%

Exhibit A.4.10 shows that the pattern of recommendations emerging from removal staffings in Jefferson County changed in some significant ways from 2005 through 2008. Whereas 37% of meetings in 2005 produced recommendations to remove children, only 17% of staffings in 2008 produced such a recommendation. This occurred as the number of staffings grew from 256 in 2005 to more than 1,800 in 2008. While participants in the remainder of meetings identified alternatives other than out-of-home care that led them to recommend leaving children in their own homes or immediately returning them if they had been removed on an emergency basis.

Exhibit A.4.10: Recommendations of Removal Staffings by Cohort—Jefferson County

Recommendation	2005	2006	2007	2008
Remove	37%	34%	24%	17%
Maintain in own home or return immediately	31%	36%	38%	48%
Custody to relative or non-custodial parent	33%	30%	38%	35%
Total	101%	100%	100%	100%
N	256	1,007	1,794	1,825

Some columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

While TWIST placement data did not reveal the extent to which DCBS was assisting in arranging custody of children with relatives, it is more apparent in the staffings data. In more recent years, more than one-third of removal staffings led to recommendations that a child be placed in the custody of a relative. Based on these rates and the number of removals addressed by staffings, it is not surprising that the number of children following this permanency pathway far exceeds the number entering DCBS custody. Officials in Jefferson County report that protective services cases are opened for children in these arrangements. Unlike children in DCBS custody, however, the rates at which these children are subjects of future reports of maltreatment, achieve reunification, or move into the permanent custody of their related caregiver are not easily determined.

Exhibit A.4.11 shows that the pattern of recommendations from change of placement (COP) staffings has shifted away from maintaining current placements to recommending lateral moves, that is, recommendations for a move from a current placement to one of a similar level of restrictiveness. This suggests difficulty in bringing resources to bear to help current foster parents in meeting the challenges posed by children in their care. In addition, approximately one-fourth of COP staffings in the past three years produced recommendations for a move to a more restrictive setting. This occurred in conjunction with an increase in the number of COP meetings from 2005 to 2008. As a result of these changes, only one-fourth of COP staffings in 2008 led to a recommendation to maintain children in their current placements.

Exhibit A.4.11: Recommendations of Change of Placement TDM Meetings by Cohort—Jefferson County

Recommendation	2005	2006	2007	2008
Maintain placement	39%	26%	23%	25%
Move less restrictive	18%	19%	16%	16%
Move more restrictive	20%	25%	24%	26%
Move same level	23%	30%	36%	33%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%
N	756	729	928	907

Self-Evaluation

As a regional office within a state-administered child welfare system, Jefferson County DCBS has faced several challenges in creating a locally based self-evaluation capacity. Although self-evaluation technical assistants ultimately received data from which to construct the longitudinal database used in their TA efforts, some delays occurred initially. More important was the continuing difficulty of identifying staff at the regional level who could commit the time to developing new skills and applying them to the analysis of the database. This eventually led DCBS to contract with the University of Louisville to obtain analytic support for periodic updates of performance on Family to Family outcomes using the longitudinal database provided by the technical assistance team. Unfortunately, this arrangement did not endure beyond 2004, corresponding roughly to the Cabinet's effort to establish statewide a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) program.

The approach to self-evaluation promoted during the anchor-site phase of Family to Family created some important differences in approach for Jefferson County DCBS. First, the CQI staff positions allocated to regional offices represented a potential source of support for this work; however, the statewide focus of CQI activity was on efforts to plan and implement aspects of the Program Improvement Plan (PIP) growing out of the federal Child and Family Service Review (CFSR) process. This, in turn, created a difference in perspective given the emphasis in Family to Family on longitudinal performance measures in addition to the CFSR measures based on cross-sectional data and exit cohorts. As a result, the Cabinet drew a sharp distinction between CFSR and Family to Family indicators, and made it clear to regional staff and the technical assistance team that Family to Family measures would not be used elsewhere in Kentucky nor would they continue to be disseminated after the conclusion of the anchor-site phase.

Given this position of the Cabinet, the Family to Family technical assistance team and Jefferson County DCBS targeted self-evaluation technical assistance on (1) developing new data resources related to the tracking of prospective resource families in their efforts to become approved; and (2) the development of information that would inform planning related areas of concern such as adolescents experiencing higher rates of admission to care and longer lengths of stay in non-family settings. Cabinet-level staff supported the regional office by developing the semi-annual outcomes reports the Foundation expected of anchor sites, thus permitting regional staff to focus on these targeted priorities.

The Evaluation of the Anchor-Site Phase of Family to Family

In 1992, the Annie E. Casey Foundation embarked on an initiative entitled *Family to Family: Reconstructing Family Foster Care*. By the time it concluded in 2009, dozens of large urban areas in more than 20 states had participated in Family to Family. The final phase from 2006 through 2009 focused on a smaller set of “anchor sites” in nine states. Drawing on earlier experience with the initiative, each anchor site developed a workplan to integrate efforts across four core strategies designed to achieve the transformation of policy and practice envisioned for Family to Family. To assess the impact of resulting changes in policy and practice on outcomes for children and their families, the Foundation sponsored an evaluation by a team of researchers from the University of North Carolina, Wildfire Associates, the University of California at Berkeley, and Case Western Reserve University. The evaluation team included: Judith Wildfire of Wildfire Associates, Inc., Co-Principal Investigator; Daniel Webster of the Center for Social Services Research (CSSR) at the University of California at Berkeley, Co-Investigator; David Crampton of Case Western Reserve University, Co-Investigator; and Lynn Usher of the School of Social Work at the University of North Carolina, Principal Investigator.

Reports from the evaluation include an executive summary, a comprehensive report with technical appendices, and profiles of each anchor site. Each report is available online at:

<http://www.unc.edu/~lynnu/f2feval.htm>

The evaluation team appreciates the cooperation it received from Family to Family participants in each site and from state child welfare officials who provided the data on which this evaluation is based. We also appreciate the efforts of Regional Operations Managers and Site Team Leaders in coordinating the review of draft site profiles, including: Suzanne Barnard; Bill Bettencourt; Fred Harris; Lisa Paine-Wells; Jana Rickerson; Sheila Spydell; and Kate Welty.

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