

National Resource Center for Child Protective Services

Technical Assistance Site Report



Prepared for: Louisiana Office of Community Services
By: Anna Stone
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Technical Assistance Request:

Louisiana has requested assistance in three areas:

- 1) Analyzing the reasons for an increase in the number of children entering out-of-home care in 2005. Following analysis plans will be made to assist with identified barriers to children remaining at home safely.
- 2) Exploring models for a centralized intake process, and planning for implementation for such a process in Louisiana. This would include TA with policy, staffing needs, training curriculum and public awareness.
- 3) Devising a plan for statewide implementation of a differential response to abuse and neglect reports. TA would include potential need for legislation, policy and practice, training curriculum, efficient use of staff, development of additional resources and public awareness.

Site Visit:

On March 22, 2006 Theresa Costello and Anna Stone attended a meeting with leaders of the Office of Community Service, staff from central office, regional and parish offices and the training unit. At this time the work group discussed the Department of Social Services' priorities in view of the renegotiated PIP and challenges following the storms of 2005.

Discussion focused on the following priorities and issues regarding those priorities:

Centralized (Regional) Intake

- Specialized additional staff
- Flexibility per regional needs
- Specialized Training for intake
- 24/7 intake response
- ACCESS – computer system
- Resource knowledge for intake staff
- Resource development vs. intake responsibilities
- Rotation of staff field/intake
- Preserve relationship with reporters/partners
- Educate community/staff about changes
- Capacity for 1-800 Central or Regional
- Technology - Toll free by region, caller I.D., on-line reports (TX)

- Rural issues - large geographic areas
- Fewer resources for community referrals and support
- Better utilization of staff
- More specialized assessment skills developed

Differential Response

- Existing pilot in Louisiana – begun 1998
- Positive evaluation of current effort
- Engage families
- Availability of resources
- In-house or contracted staff
- Training needed for all staff
- Staffing in rural areas - current staff are specialized in urban areas
- Work with stakeholders, especially law enforcement, judges and mandated reporters

Increase in children entering care

- Compare 2005 against previous years
- Changes in law and policy may have impact
- Availability of foster homes may be an issue
- Need demographic data
- Identify resources needed to help children remain home safely

Next Steps:

Start with assessment of children entering out of home care. John McInturf and Anna Stone will make a list of the data elements needed to begin assessment. John will work with Quality Assurance staff to collect data. Analysis will follow.

Logic models will be produced to help assist with prioritizing tasks for Centralized Intake and Differential Response. Plans will be made following the legislative session to begin work. The workgroup will be reassembled after May 2006.