The Summer/Fall 2013 CJA newsletter includes information about the CJA Grantees quarterly conference calls, theologians participation in MDTs and our Quarterly Featured Topic - Differential Response.

Theologians Participation in Multi-Disciplinary Teams

A recent article published in CenterPiece, a peer reviewed newsletter of the National Child Protection Training Center, discusses twelve potential roles that theologians can have as part of a multi-disciplinary team (MDT).

According to the article, there are typically two functions of multi-disciplinary teams: to provide core investigative team activities and the broader function of service planning to meet the ongoing needs of the child and family. Since many states allow case review teams to include members of the community on their teams, the article discussed the value in including a member of the faith community in the work of the MDT.

According to the article, some of the potential roles for a theologian/clergy member of an MDT include:

- consultant to professionals working with victims;
- providing child protection professionals with additional resources;
- spokesperson in explaining MDT processes to the faith communities and establishing community credibility;
- consulting on culturally sensitive child placements; and
- addressing vicarious trauma of MDT members.

The article covers all twelve potential roles for theologians in detail and provides information about encouraging stronger connections to the faith community.

To view the article go to: http://www.ncptc.org/vertical/Sites/%7B8634A6E1-FAD2-4381-9C0D-5DC7E93C9410%7D/uploads/CenterPiece.NL.Vol3.Iss6.pdf
CJA Grantees Quarterly Conference Calls

As a reminder, quarterly informal voluntary CJA grantee conference calls have been scheduled to allow peer to peer sharing. We welcome grantees who would like to share information about their funded projects during the calls.

The next calls are scheduled for **December 12, 2013 and March 20, 2014**. All of the calls will be held from will be held 1:00-2:00 PM Eastern. The December call will focus on the Three Year Assessment process and reporting.

**Quarterly Featured Topic: Differential Response**

Each quarter the newsletter highlights a topic of interest to CJA programs. This quarter the focus is on differential response. The following provides information on the variety of resources available concerning differential response and features information from CJA grantees, Kristin Gilbert of Ohio and Jasmine Hayes of the District of Columbia providing information about the work being done in each of their jurisdictions concerning differential response.

**Differential Response Can Improve Traditional Investigations**

A research paper, based upon data collected as part of the evaluation of the Missouri Family Assessment and Response Demonstration, conducted by the Institute of Applied Research (IAR), found that Missouri’s alternative response Family Assessment approach actually increased legal pursuit of perpetrators of the most serious types of child abuse and neglect.

According to the research article, entitled *Differential Response Improves Traditional Investigations: Criminal Arrests for Severe Physical and Sexual Abuse*, since a family assessment approach is intended to enhance initial family visits by making them non-adversarial, more traditional investigations can focus on a smaller set of families where it is highly likely that criminal and highly dangerous activities are occurring. The research looked at criminal records on three types of initiating incidents, sexual abuse, severe physical abuse and less severe sexual abuse.

The conclusions indicated that:

- significantly more arrests occurred in the demonstration areas using the family assessment process;
- the large differences in arrests tended to occur during a 10 day period following the initiating incident which suggests that the differences were related to the investigative activities; and
- the differences were found across a number of demonstration sites so were not likely to be attributable to differences in typical arrest rates in a particular site.

To view the research article and the specific findings go to: [http://www.iarstl.org/papers/DiffRespAndInvestigations.pdf](http://www.iarstl.org/papers/DiffRespAndInvestigations.pdf)
Protecting Children- Differential Response in Child Protective Services: Research and Practice Advancements

The 2012 edition of Protecting Children, a publication of the American Humane Association, focused exclusively on differential response research and practice advancements. A wide variety of practitioners, researchers and administrators who participated through the three Quality Improvement Center on Differential Response in Child Protective Services (QIC-DR) research and demonstration sites contributed articles. The article subjects include:

- Lessons Learned from the Planning and Development Phases of Implementing Differential Response in Illinois
- Lessons Learned by the SOAR Consortium on the Journey to Differential Response
- Decision Point: Screening Practice as the Foundation for Differential Response
- Building a Multi-Site Evaluation of Differential Response
- Evaluation of Differential Response in Ohio
- Making the Case for Chronicling System Change
- Analysis of Costs in a Differential Response Program

While in 2012, the American Humane Association relinquished the QIC-DR to the Kempe Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Child Abuse and Neglect at the University of Colorado the work on the research and demonstration sites, which the Protecting Children publication chronicles continues, and final evaluations are expected to be released sometime this fall.

To view Protecting Children go to:

Differential Response Implementation Map

The University of Colorado Kempe Center as the QIC-DR has developed an updated map detailing the progress of differential response in all states. As of May, 2013, the map shows those states that have statewide implementation, those with regional/county implementation, those planning or considering implementation, those that have discontinued differential response and those with a screen-out response. The map also identifies those states with tribal implementation of differential response. Currently the map indicates that there are seventeen states including the District of Columbia with full implementation of differential response. To view and download the map, go to:
http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/medicalschool/departments/pediatrics/subs/can/QIC-DR/Documents/DR%20Map%20as%20of%20May%202013.pdf
Lessons from the Beginning of Differential Response: Why it Works and When it Doesn’t

The Institute on Applied Research (IAR) is an independent research and consulting organization based in Missouri. The organization provides technical assistance services to state governments concerning a variety of programming including child welfare and child protection. IAR has done a number of evaluations related to differential response and published papers and reports related to the evaluations.

In 2012, IAR published a monograph authored by Dr Gary Siegel entitled Lessons from the Beginning of Differential Response: Why it Works and When it Doesn’t examining the evaluation conducted by IAR related to differential response. The monograph includes information about what has been learned so far and how differential response can be implemented in large child welfare systems, not just small project sites. Featured in the monograph is information related to the early development of differential or alternative response in Missouri and the early efforts in Minnesota. The monograph details the challenges as well as the successes of the efforts in these states as well as program development in Mississippi, Nevada, and Ohio.

According to the monograph:

The dilemmas faced in the implementation of differential response include:
- Differential response assumes that the safety of children often requires more attention than investigating specific allegations that do not address underlying conditions;
- New investments in child protection are needed particularly when implementing differential response;
- Policy may not support the provision of differential response; and
- Worker attitudes and buy-in impact implementation of differential response.

Reasons differential response can work include:
- Differential response can be a way of institutionalizing family-centered practice;
- A broader assessment of family issues and needs is more likely to uncover and guide helping families;
- More services that families need are provided and more families receive services;
- While the majority of children who come to the attention of CPS do not face imminent safety threats, many face chronic unsafe conditions that can be impacted; and
- CPS caseloads contain an overrepresentation of very poor families and these families are more likely to need and accept services.

To review the entire monograph go to: http://www.iarstl.org/papers/DRLessons.pdf
Differential Response: Lessons from CJA Grantees

Ohio: Kristin Gilbert

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS), the state’s child welfare agency, is counting down to June 30, 2014, when Ohio has an operational Differential Response system in each of its 88 counties. This completes a process that began in 2004, when Ohio’s Children’s Justice Act (CJA) Task Force asked the question, “Do Ohio’s laws best serve its children and families?”

The Road to Implementation

The CJA Task Force, a subcommittee of the Supreme Court of Ohio, conducted an 18-month study of statute, practice, and administrative rule and policy across the state’s county-administered child welfare programs, directly involving almost 1,200 stakeholders.

The resultant report made numerous suggestions, including that Ohio consider exploring an alternative option for how some reports of child abuse and neglect are handled after they are accepted for investigation. The report recommended that this option allow caseworkers to shift their focus from the reported incident to the family’s overall need. The possibility of transforming the system’s basic orientation struck a chord with the task force’s multidisciplinary membership.

Using a combination of Casey Family Programs and CJA funding, the task force developed a competitive selection process and established a workgroup of 10 diverse county agencies to design and field-test a state model. The task force also selected a team of consultants to support and evaluate this pilot.

The final report recommending statewide adoption of a two-option system – traditional and alternative – can be found at http://ohiochildlaw.org/. As ODJFS sought permanent statutory authorization for this, the agency increased the number of pilot sites, as permitted in temporary statute. In June 2011, Ohio enacted legislation to establish a statewide Differential Response system.

Expansion and Support

Since then, the 10-agency workgroup has been renamed the Ohio Differential Response Leadership Council, and it has been reconfigured to focus on issues of model fidelity, continued skill development and sustainability. In addition, the task force continues to be actively involved in the statewide rollout, providing oversight and offering guidance.

Core recommendations were made in the Task Force final report and on the following page are details about the recommendations and how Ohio has approached them.
Core Recommendations for Ohio:

1. **Implement Differential Response statewide through a developmental and incremental process.**
   - **Approach: Expand Gradually to New Counties.** Ohio has scheduled an incremental expansion of Differential Response to ensure sufficient support and preparation for each new county. Every county coming on board receives a one-day orientation training, a Differential Response Readiness Self-Assessment Tool and Planning Guide, onsite technical assistance, a two-day Differential Response Primer training for staff, and an introductory presentation for community partners. This has allowed experienced counties to provide significant peer support to new counties.

2. **Focus on change management in expansion efforts and use the framework of implementation science.**
   - **Approach: Create a Statewide Implementation Team.** The Differential Response Leadership Council created a task team comprised of state and county representatives and facilitated by experts from the National Implementation Research Network to ensure a strong foundation for quality practice and long-term success.
   - **Approach: Use Implementation Science and Model Fidelity.** The Differential Response Leadership Council, Statewide Implementation Team and experts from the National Implementation Research Network created “Practice Profiles” to promote consistent implementation of Differential Response statewide. The profiles are available online, as an interactive PDF, to give county users more guidance on what is meant by the following 10 essential skill areas: engaging, assessing, partnering, planning, implementing, evaluating, communicating, advocating, demonstrating cultural and diversity competence, and collaborating with the community. In addition, a one-day workshop titled “Coaching in Child Welfare Supervision” was developed to show supervisors how to use the profiles to better educate county staff. The Practice Profiles can be found at [http://jfs.ohio.gov/PFOF/PDF/Differential-Response-Practice-Profiles.stm](http://jfs.ohio.gov/PFOF/PDF/Differential-Response-Practice-Profiles.stm).

   - **Approach: Support Sustainability.** For experienced Differential Response counties, Ohio offers a self-assessment tool and continued consultation support. This allows them to evaluate their programs and develop written plans to address ongoing challenges. Through these plans, counties can more easily identify benchmarks to measure their progress, consider their short- and long-term needs, and develop strategies to improve their practices over time. Feedback from counties on this process has been very positive.
Lessons from CJA Grantees - Ohio

Core Recommendations for Ohio (Cont’d):

3. **Create methods to monitor and improve the quality of practice and operations.**

   - **Approach: Participate in Federal Evaluation.** Ohio has invested significant resources to study the impact of Differential Response, monitor its outcomes and continuously improve its system. A consortium of six Ohio counties has participated in the federal cross-site evaluation conducted by the National Quality Improvement Center on Differential Response (QIC-DR), which also involved the state of Illinois and several Colorado counties. The QIC-DR researchers completed a multi-year random-control trial study of Differential Response’s impact on child safety, family outcomes, worker response and fiscal consequences. They are completing their data analysis and developing their final report now. This report is due soon.

   - **Approach: Expand Ohio’s Evaluation.** Ohio has continued to follow the families involved in its initial pilot. A recently concluded five-year study will help the state better understand Differential Response’s long-term impact and family outcomes. The final report will include an updated analysis of workers’ responses and a more comprehensive cost analysis.

   - **Approach: Track Model Fidelity.** The Statewide Implementation Team’s Data and Outcomes Task Group is creating performance measures so counties can assess how well they master the 10 essential skill areas explained in the Practice Profiles. The measures will allow counties’ performance to be compared and tracked over time, and will provide a better understanding of how differences in implementation can influence outcomes for children and families.

**Next Steps:**

Because Ohio’s child welfare system is state-supervised and county-administered, county leadership has been critical to the success of the state’s Differential Response design and rollout. The system will be an option in all 88 Ohio counties by July 2014, but the work of implementation won’t be over. In fact, the hard work of ongoing quality assurance and sustainability will only just have begun.

**Contact for Questions:**

For questions contact Kristin Gilbert through email at: Kristin.Gilbert@jfs.ohio.gov or Sonia Tillman, the DR Coordinator at Sonia.Tillman@jfs.ohio.gov.
Differential Response: Lessons from CJA Grantees

District of Columbia: Jasmine Hayes

In September 2011, the District of Columbia Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) implemented the practice approach known as Alternative or Differential Response. It allows for alternatives to the traditional child protective services (CPS) investigation for certain allegations of child abuse and neglect referred to CFSA’s 24-Hour Hotline.

Implementation

In the District of Columbia, CFSA implemented the Family Assessment pathway to address the needs of families when child safety is not compromised. Family Assessment (FA) social workers use a more tailored, appropriate, and non-adversarial initial response to accepted reports of neglect that pose a low to moderate risk to the child. Families may qualify for the FA pathway if they are subject to one or more of the following allegations: (1) Caretaker is unwilling or unable to care for a youth age 13 or older and the parent has not been arrested, (2) Inadequate food, (3) Inadequate physical care, (4) Inadequate or Dangerous shelter, (5) Inadequate clothing, (6) Educational neglect, or (7) Newborn with positive toxicology.

The FA social worker and the family work in partnership to identify family strengths and needs, as well as appropriate services to address the family’s individual needs. Family participation is voluntary and unlike an investigation, FA social workers do not seek to identify a maltreater or to enter names into the District’s Child Protection Register.

Engagement

One of the predominant strengths of the District’s approach is CFSA’s engagement of other public and private entities to strengthen and tighten the city-wide safety net. The District’s vision incorporates family-involved meetings that include the CFSA-contracted Healthy Families/Thriving Communities Collaboratives along with other government agencies, such as the Department of Human Services, depending on the family’s needs.

Expansion

In 2013, CFSA has focused on expanding the capacity of the Family Assessment model. The Agency established a new administration specifically for Family Assessment that will include 10 units. At full capacity, each unit is composed of five social workers, a family support worker, and a supervisor.
Lessons from CJA Grantees - District of Columbia

Evaluation
Evaluation of the District’s Differential Response model is ongoing. As the Agency expands its capacity for Family Assessments under Differential Response, the Mayor’s Advisory Council on Child Abuse and Neglect (MACCAN) will continue to examine the impact of the legislation as well as identify important ways that the Task Force can support continued implementation and progress.

Contact for Questions:
For more information contact: Marcy Chell, Planning Specialist, Child and Family Services Agency, Office of Planning, Policy & Program Support. Email: marcy.chell@dc.gov and phone: 202-727-6322

Eighth Annual Conference on Differential Response in Child Welfare
The University of Colorado Department of Pediatrics Kempe Center will be hosting the 8th Annual Conference on Differential Response in Child Welfare in Vail, Colorado on October 22-25, 2013. This year’s theme, Differential Response: A Catalyst for Change, is focused on all of the innovations that fit naturally with the implementation of a differential response CPS system. There will also be pre-conference skills institutes offered. To learn more about the conference and to register go to: http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/medicalschool/department/s/pediatrics/subs/can/DR/Pages/DiffResp.aspx

Save the Date: CJA/SLO Annual Meeting and 19th National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect:
Remember to mark your calendars for the week of April 28-May 2, 2014 in New Orleans, Louisiana. The CJA/SLO Annual Meeting will be held on April 28th and 29th followed by the national conference. More information will be provided as it becomes available.

Have a Question or Comment?
Let us know if you have questions or a comment. Do you have ideas for the upcoming CJA annual meeting or a topic for the next CJA webinar? Please contact Kathy Simms at kathy.simms@action4cp.org. Look for the next CJA e-newsletter in Winter, 2014. To view archived issues of the CJA newsletter, go to: http://nrccps.org/peer-networks/cja-support/ Also available at the same link on the NRCCPS website are archived webinars including many topics of interest for CJA grantees.