

THE ADOPTION AND SAFE FAMILIES ACT (ASFA) TRAINING SERIES

ACTION PLANNING: A PROBLEM SOLVING TOOL

TRAINER'S GUIDE

January 2003

**Developed by
The Institute for Child and Family Policy
Edmund S. Muskie School of Public Service
University of Southern Maine
Portland, Maine**

**Funded by
The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Children's Bureau
Washington, D.C.**

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Introduction

The national vision for child welfare is that children will grow up in safe, nurturing and stable environments. To help achieve that vision, state and county child welfare agencies are striving to assure that their practice, systems and management approach ensure that clients needs are assessed quickly, that individualized services for children and families are available and delivered promptly, that the impact of the services is monitored and, if need be, that services are modified.

The emphasis on results and the use of data to measure progress toward the achievement of outcomes carry clear expectations for child welfare administrators, supervisors and managers. While agencies are making progress implementing Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA), more work needs to be done to assure that the managerial and supervisory day to day decisions are informed by data and reports, that agencies refine internal administrative systems to support practice and that training continues to enhance the skills needed to successfully implement the practice, managerial and legal implications of ASFA.

The document you are reading is one in a set of trainer's guides designed to communicate information on the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) that goes beyond introductory, compliance based topics. While this material is designed primarily for training purposes, it certainly is adaptable to other forums, such as internal or external workshops, presentations, newsletters or briefings on ASFA and could be successfully presented to child welfare administrators, supervisors, managers, foster parents, caseworkers, providers, teachers and other community stakeholders.

The Training Series

The trainer's guides in this series are:

The Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) and the Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSR): Using Outcomes to Achieve Results

This trainer's guide highlights the major requirements of ASFA, presents federal outcomes and measures and systemic factors and provides an opportunity to discuss the philosophy, practice implications and results of the CFSR.

Action Planning: A Problem Solving Tool

This trainer's guide introduces and demonstrates how the use of Action Planning can assist child welfare managers and supervisors in planning, managing and evaluating practice, systems and programs toward the achievement of desired outcomes.

Collaboration with Native American Tribes: ICWA and ASFA

In the child welfare system Native American children have different service delivery systems as well as laws that apply to them. Therefore, individuals must ask different questions and make different assumptions in their efforts to identify and work with Native American children and families. Because of the importance of the interaction between the agency and tribes, this trainer's guide focuses on successful approaches to collaboration, the requirements of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and ASFA and the practice considerations when working with Native American children and families.

Using Data to Measure Success

Child welfare managers and supervisors are increasingly expected to be able to use data, information and reports to guide decision making and to determine what is working and what isn't working in the organization, with practice and in the service delivery system. This trainer's guide gives participants practice in analyzing reports and in using basic data tools for reading and interpreting data.

Change is all Around Us: Tools to Build Commitment to Change

In most organizations change occurs constantly. In order to be effective in leading and modeling change management skills, supervisors and managers must understand the dynamics of avoiding resistance to change and how to build commitment to it. This trainer's guide includes a model for building commitment to change, provides an opportunity to build on these skills and includes use of a case study, *Family Net: An Automated Child Welfare Information System* which explores organizational and managerial issues when a major change in the workplace takes place.

Collaboration with the Courts (under development)

ASFA promotes the concept that the child protective system involves a network of interrelated agencies and services. The courts, of course, are an essential piece of this network. This trainer's guide explores what the courts and child protective agencies identify as their main opportunities, challenges and needs as they work together and independently to carry out their required activities in child welfare cases.

Notes on Using These Trainer's Guides

The Muskie project team expects that each agency will use the *Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) Training Series* in a variety of ways, thus we designed the training guides to be easily modified to accommodate the differing needs of child welfare agencies. This approach enables each public child welfare agency to customize these training guides to meet its unique needs -- in effect to use the materials contained in this series to guide its own workshops, briefings and presentations. For example, some agencies will select and use material from all of the trainer's guides, others will use only

1 or 2 of the guides, while others will use these guides as a springboard to create their own materials to better suit their needs. The material in these guides is proven to accommodate and support this type of adaptation by child welfare personnel. At minimum, an agency will need to adapt the material by adding their own agency's outcome measures, results of the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR), policies, regulations, data, reports and other state or county specific materials.

To increase usability, this trainer's guide and the others in the series have the same format. The pages are divided into two columns. One contains the text of the guide and the other sometimes contains notes on the text and also provides space for users to write their own notes.

Each guide begins with information on the length of time the session will take to complete, the rationale, the learning objectives, activities, sample materials, advance preparation, glossary of terms and an annotated bibliography. The Trainer's Instructions are guidelines for the way a presenter may want to organize the material and thus are an attempt to standardize content, not delivery style. The text (appearing in regular type) provides information on moving through the material, while the text in italic type is a suggestion for what the presenter might actually say as he/she presents the material. Of course, the material in the text can be modified or changed to suit the needs of the presenter and the group. Following the text of the guides are the handouts/overheads that accompany the text. These appear in the order that they are referenced in the text.

Additional Resources

The *Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) Training Series* builds on training material previously produced by the Institute for Child and Family Policy, Edmund S. Muskie School of Public Service at the University of Southern Maine:

- **Using Information Management to Support the Goals of Safety, Permanency and Well Being**, developed as part of a project funded by the Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under Section 426 of the Social Security Act, published September 27, 2000 (<http://www.muskie.usm.maine.edu/sacwis>) and
- **Bringing Together the Child Welfare Team**, developed as part of a project funded by the Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under Section 426 of the Social Security Act, published September 27, 2002 (<http://www.muskie.usm.maine.edu/asfa>).

Several talented experts in child welfare, curriculum design and the adult education field tested and provided feedback on these documents, including the trainer's notes, exercises and handouts, and helped polish the material to better convey the complex concept of outcomes based management.

The training guide(s) can be viewed/downloaded on the internet at <http://www.muskie.maine.edu/asfa>. Or, they can be ordered from Clearinghouse, National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement, University of Southern Maine, One Post Office Square, 400 Congress Street, P.O. Box 15010, Portland, ME 04112. Phone: (207) 780-5813; Fax: (207) 780-5817; e-mail: clearing@usm.maine.edu.

Action Planning: A Problem Solving Tool

Time: Approximately 2 hours

Rationale: The implementation of the federal, state/county child welfare outcomes and measures has changed the way supervisors and managers guide practice, lead staff, and implement organizational improvements and system reforms. This module introduces and demonstrates how the use of Action Planning can assist managers and supervisors in planning, managing and evaluating practice, systems and programs toward the achievement of desired outcomes.

Learning Objectives

When this module is complete, the participant should be able to:

- Understand the workshop agenda and materials
- Define an action plan
- Explain the purposes and components of action planning
- Identify potential uses for and users of action planning
- Implement an action planning approach to problem solving

Activities

Introduce the Case and Action Planning Steps (10 minutes)

Discuss the performance glossary, what action planning is and how action plans can be used, including a walkthrough of sample action plans (20 minutes)

Exercise: Create a supervisory/managerial action plan to address a locally defined issue (90 minutes)

Sample Materials

- Case and Action Planning Steps (Overhead #1)
- Performance Measurement Glossary (Overhead #2)
- York Unit Action Plan (Overhead #3)
- Jones Family Action Plan (Overhead #4)
- County Social Service Agency Adoption Initiative Action Plan (Overhead #5)
- Nana's House Action Plan (Overhead #6)

Glossary of Terms

Action plan: a tool (sometimes called a logic model) that can be used to describe, manage and evaluate a unit/team, case, program or system by defining goals, outcomes, indicators and approaches to achieving those goals.

Activities: the work to be done.

Assumptions: what you know or think you know about the case, program, system or practice.

Child and family outcomes: the results effecting the child or family.

Goal: expression of direction or priority.

Indicator: evidence of achievement or non-achievement of any outcome.

Overheads/handouts are designated as "overheads", but they can be used as both overheads and/or handouts.

Outcome: consequence or result of actions or a set of actions.

System outcomes: what results will the activities produce in the administrative systems or infrastructure.

Strategic planning: a continual process for improving organizational performance. It includes preparation, planning, implementing the plan and reviewing and revising the plan.

Advance Preparation

Determine, in conjunction with senior administrators, an appropriate managerial/supervisory topic for the group to use to develop an action plan. (Topics may include issues such as: what the unit/region needs to do to prepare for/follow-up on the child and family services reviews, address poor morale, review the case assignment process or deal with a staff issue such as a worker who is so enmeshed with a family, that he/she has lost objectivity and doesn't want to make permanency decisions.)

Make sure that a flip chart, markers, newsprint pad, overheads and an overhead projector are in the room.

Bibliography and Suggested Reading

- **Publications**

Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997. (1997) Public Law 105-89.

Alter, Catherine and Egan, Marcia (1997), *Logic Modeling: A Tool for Teaching Critical Thinking in Social Work Practice.* Journal of Social Work Education, Vol. 33, No 1, Council of Social Work Education.

The article describes how logic models can be used as a tool to aid critical thinking and to link knowledge acquired in the classroom with social work practice. The article presents a description of logic models and a case example for illustrating useage.

Bryson, John M. (1995) *Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations: A Guide to Strengthening and Sustaining Organizational Achievement*. Revised Edition. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

This book is written for elected and appointed policy makers, managers and planners in governments, public agencies and nonprofit organizations and students of strategic planning. It reviews the reasons for using strategic planning and presents one strategic planning process called the Strategy Change Cycle and how this process can be used and the major roles that must be played by various individuals and groups.

Bryson, John M. and Alston, Farnum K. (1996) *Creating and Implementing Your Strategic Plan: A Workbook for Public and Nonprofit Organizations*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

This workbook provides information and worksheets that guide an organization step-by-step through the process of developing a strategic plan. It is specifically targeted at public and nonprofit organizations and can be used in conjunction with Bryson's 1995 edition of *Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations: A Guide to Strengthening and Sustaining Organizational Achievement*. There are ten key steps in the process and explanations and worksheets are given for each one.

Federal Register/Vol.65, No. 16, Tuesday, January 25, 2000, *Rules and Regulations*, Washington, D.C.

This issue contains the "Final Rule" which establishes new approaches to monitoring of state child welfare programs under the Adoption and Safe Families Act. It addresses the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) and the Title IV-E eligibility review.

Mercer, James L. (1991) *Strategic Planning for Public Managers*. New York: Quorum Books.

This book is designed to help public officials develop their own strategic planning process. It contains a description of

strategic planning as a tool to deal with change and as a technique of organizational development.

National Association of Public Child Welfare Administrators. (1999) *Guidelines for a Model System of Protective Services for Abused and Neglected Children and Their Families*. National Association of Public Child Welfare Administrators, Washington, D.C.

This work covers the historical and current influences on CPS, as well as a description of the child protective services. It also covers the role of the CPS Agency within the community as well as sections devoted to outcomes, evaluation, information systems and community partners - topics of interest because of the emphasis on outcomes and reporting in child welfare practice. It includes material on the use of logic models in strategic planning.

Strategic Planning for Child Welfare Agencies. (Spring 2002) , Managing Care for Children and Families Newsletter, Volume IV, Number 1, National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement, Portland, ME.

Many state child welfare agencies are discovering that they must develop Program Improvement Plans (PIPs) as part of the child and family services review process. The elements of these PIPs are goals, action steps, dates to accomplish the steps and benchmarks to measure progress. All of these are among the basic components of strategic planning. This edition of the newsletters describes a framework for strategic planning, the basic steps in the process, a state example, the relationship between the PIPs and the Title IV-B Child and Family Services Planning Process, and a checklist for strategic planning for child welfare agencies, and an article on strategic planning for the courts.

- **On-Line**

<http://www.muskie.usm.maine.edu/asfa>

This website was developed by the Institute for Child and Family Policy, Edmund S. Muskie School of Public Service at the University of Southern Maine. It contains a curriculum titled 'Bringing Together the Child Welfare Team' that is designed to help child welfare supervisors, managers and senior administrators implement the requirements of the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA). The site also contains final reports and related state by

state data from two phone polls, conducted in 2001 and 2002, that asked child welfare and court improvement project representatives to discuss how meeting ASFA requirements has changed the way that child welfare agencies do business and to identify what skills child welfare managers and supervisors need to implement the requirements of ASFA.

Trainer's Instructions

1. Begin the session by welcoming the group and introducing yourself and other presenters and presenting the agenda and materials. Then introduce the module by presenting the rationale and objectives.
2. Introduce the action planning concept using the following as a guide:

In child welfare, beyond the requirements of the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA), the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and the Final Rule (published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on January 25, 2000 which establishes new approaches to monitoring state child welfare programs under ASFA), one of the primary reasons that we measure performance is to collect information that lets us know how we are progressing toward achieving agreed upon goals and outcomes, to make corrections or alter practice if needed and thus improve services to children and families. Whether we are talking about a case, a program, the unit or a county or the state as a whole, to effectively measure performance, we need to know what is the ultimate aim, what the expected results will be and how we'll know when we get there.

One tool that can help ensure that you and those you supervise are working toward the same goals is an action plan. What is

an action plan? An action plan defines goals, lays out approaches to achieving those goals and describes measures of progress. It's a management tool -- a visual way to look at the relationship between 'what is', an intervening set of activities and a result. When you are here and want to get there, action planning provides a structured way to think about priorities, activities, resources, assumptions and results.

Using a tool like this is not a new concept. Sometimes people use a tool like this and call it a logic model, or use some other name. Sometimes planning in this way is called strategic planning. Although the names of the tools and the process can vary, the methods used employ similar steps. These procedures have been used in the military, business, government and more recently in non-profit organizations.

The term action plan indicates a series of defined steps aimed at providing maximum support to the adopted policies and priorities of the unit, team, county, region or agency.

As child welfare supervisors and managers, you are constantly going through a series of decision making and planning activities with others -- families, workers, managers, community partners, and courts. Ultimately you reach agreement, stop planning and begin a course of action. The process used to create the action plan can support that planning/implementation/monitoring cycle by helping establish common direction, setting priorities and devising indicators to measure progress at the unit, region, county, program, or

Notes in *italics* in the Trainer's Instructions section are talking points, comments that the trainer may make directly to the participants or use to form the basis of his/her presentation.

system level. In fact, the process used for action planning is quite similar to the process you and the workers use to put together a case plan.

3. Put up the Comparison of Case and Action Planning Steps, (Overhead #1) highlight the four major steps and note:

Like the case planning process, the action planning process:

- *is circular and ongoing not linear*
- *should be strengths based*
- *involves key participants in all steps of the process*
- *aims for results*
- *ensures monitoring and revisions*

4. Put up the Performance Measurement Glossary (Overhead #2) overhead and continue the discussion:

So let's now look at some basic action planning terms. Not surprisingly, you'll see that like the process, some of the terms used in action planning are similar to the terms used in case planning.

- **Goals:** *goals are an expression of direction or priority. Your goal establishes what you want to achieve for the client or from the program, for example, keep children safe.*
- **Outcomes:** *outcomes are the consequence or result of actions or a set of actions. Outcomes can be measurable. They may be system outcomes, defining the results the work will produce in the administrative*

systems, or child and family outcomes, defining the results the activities will produce for the children and families, or both.

- **Indicators:** *help you measure the progress being made (or not made).*

5. Put up overhead York Unit Action Plan (Overhead #3) and continue:

Building on those terms, what are the components of an action plan? The components can vary from situation to situation depending on the need of the agency and the complexity of the issues being addressed. In general, action plans have five components and are supported by a detailed work plan. The five components are:

- **Goals, outcomes and indicators,** *which we've already discussed, and*
- **Underlying assumptions:** *what you know or think you know about the program that has meaning for the design of the program or service plan. Often, the assumptions include statements of what needs to be changed.*
- **Activities:** *what work will be done.*

The assumptions should lead to the activities, which support the outcomes, which ultimately should promote the goal although it is often not quite that straight forward or simple. You can see how there could be layers of needs and loops in the activities or interventions.

Some action plans also have slots for who the responsible person or unit is for each activity and associated time lines. The who and the when can be part of the action plan or a related work plan but they must be considered in the planning process.

Ok, we've covered a lot here...does anyone have any questions on the purposes of action plans and their several potential uses?

Let's look at a few examples of action plans.

6. Quickly walk through some of the sample action plans; use as many as you think are needed to reinforce the key concepts.

The York Unit Action Plan

This action plan presents an example of how this tool can be used at the unit or team level. The background here is that a supervisor has heard from her manager that her unit is 'way behind' in its visits to children in foster care. So the supervisor sets out to uncover what is happening in terms of the visits that are being made and those that aren't. A major assumption (and key fact) in this example is that caseworkers are not visiting children in foster homes as frequently as is needed or required. In other words, some foster home visits are not being conducted. In this action plan, the unit supervisor has defined certain activities---

such as reviewing data that show worker by worker the frequency and timing of foster home visits--- that should accomplish the outcome of increasing the number and frequency of caseworker visits to children in foster homes.

The Jones Family Action Plan

This action plan represents an example of how this tool can be used at the case level. The goal here is permanency for the Jones children, the desired outcomes are that:

- *The Jones children will be placed together in a permanent home.*
- *The Jones children will be adopted and live with relatives.*
- *The Jones children's relatives will support the parents in relinquishment and have open adoption.*
- *The Adoption Unit will support the relatives in caring for the children.*

So...how do we get to those Child and Family Outcomes? We start with some assumptions, in this case that it will be difficult to place four children together, the biological parents will be uncooperative and adoption resources are limited. From there, we see a set of activities and indicators to help us measure our progress toward the desired outcomes.

County Social Service Agency Adoption Initiative

Action Plan

This action plan is based on a real life situation. In response to some extremely negative publicity regarding kids languishing

in care for excessively long periods of time, the Governor mandated the outcomes of reducing the length of stay in foster care by an established percent and placing a certain number of children in adoptive homes. Failure to meet these targets would result in sanctions. This was pretty cold stuff. Clearly the name of the game here, the goal, was permanency, adoption.

The first step was to set out the assumptions, which in this case is really a barrier analysis of internal organizational issues that were retarding effectiveness. '...children in long term care are not consistently reviewed for adoption potential, the level of collaboration between adoption and other child welfare staff is poor, kinship placements are not targeted for special focus...'

Once the main barriers were specified, the activities to address these assumptions were developed; they actually flowed from the assumptions. You can see how an activity like 're-assessing status of all children with a permanent plan of long term care' flows from the first assumption of sporadic adoption reviews. The activities of having adoption workers participate in pre-placement process and provide secondary support clearly addresses the perceived poor collaboration between adoption and other workers.

You can see that the outcomes are mostly systemic outcomes, the agency felt that it had a lot of internal work to do to get the desired benefits of the children...things like increasing the

percent of new kinship homes willing to consider adoption, and the child and family outcomes and indicators...the 12-month targets...are the ones mandated by the Governor.

This action plan presents assumptions as a barrier/needs analysis and strong links between the assumptions and the concrete, solid activities.

Nana's House Action Plan

This action plan, again developed to address a real life situation, represents a Family Preservation, Family Support Program where, following a report, the child is not removed from the home however the family then is referred to Nana's House to receive a variety of services. This is sort of the settlement house model.

Looking at this action plan, you can see that the assumptions are truly that...assumptions, with only a hint of the needs assessment element. 'Most parents of children known to the child protective system want to be effective parents' and 'Basic services are often unavailable'.

The activities flow from the assumptions...offering drop in, emergency food and shelter services is responsive to the assumption that basic services are unavailable.

What's neat about this model is that the measures are linked to a data source.

7. Ask for and address questions.

8. Introduce the next activity in this module, developing a supervisory/managerial action plan. Use the issue(s) defined by the agency administrators while planning for this training. If participants work in a public child welfare agency, they might be able to use a topic generated by the review of the CFSR or storyboarding activities or a combination. Once you have agreed on the topics, ask each participant to join a group that is focusing on a topic of interest to him/her and create an action plan using the material provided combined with their experience/expertise. Ask each group to appoint a recorder/reporter. Provide flip charts, markers and tape to each group for them to use to display their model. Give the groups 30 minutes to create their models. At the end of that time, have each group present their model and ask the other groups to comment on the clarity of the model (it should be clear to anyone who reads it), the connections between the assumptions, the activities and the outcomes (they should easily be linkable) and the indicators (they should be measurable). Probe for **who** needs to do **what** by **when** and in **what sequence**. Spend time on each model. Record the work plans on a flip chart.

9. Wrap the activity up by noting that:

Planning at the case, agency and community level provides a framework for the complex decisions that child welfare supervisors and managers make every day. Understanding and using a structured tool for planning such as the action plan will help you think through the connections between selecting,

then implementing, monitoring and, if needed, adjusting a set of activities and the anticipated results of those activities for a client, service, practice or system.

10. Ask for and respond to questions

Case and Action Planning Steps

Case Planning	Action Planning
<p>PREPARE Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family • Needs and Strengths <p>Vision – Goals for Child and Family</p> <p>Family and community involvement in the case planning process</p>	<p>PREPARE Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal and external • Needs and Strengths <p>Vision – Outcomes for Agency and Families</p> <p>Stakeholder/staff involvement in the action planning process</p>
<p>CREATE Draft the plan</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">What interventions and services will be used to achieve the goals?</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">How will the case plan be evaluated to determine goals accomplishment?</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">What are the timeframes for goal achievement?</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Who is responsible for the steps?</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">What are priorities among the goals?</p> <p>Engage family, providers etc. in case plan</p>	<p>CREATE Draft the plan</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Action steps</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Indicators of achievement</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Benchmarks</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Timeframes</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Responsible Parties</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Prioritize</p> <p>Build consensus for the plan with stakeholders and staff, finalize and distribute plan</p>
<p>IMPLEMENT Case manager coordinates delivery of treatment services; monitors progress</p> <p>Supervisors monitor progress (case reviews, utilization management)</p>	<p>IMPLEMENT Management assigns responsibilities; plan manager coordinates those responsible for action steps</p> <p>Supervisors and managers monitor implementation of plan (develop reporting systems)</p>
<p>REVIEW AND REVISE Evaluate family progress</p> <p>Revise plan</p>	<p>REVIEW AND REVISE Evaluate progress towards outcomes</p> <p>Revise plan</p>

Source: *Strategic Planning for Child Welfare Agencies*. (Spring 2002), Managing Care for Children and Families Newsletter, Volume IV, Number 1, National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement, Portland, ME. Modified for training purposes.

Performance Measurement Glossary

	Goal	Outcome	Indicator
Definition	Expression of direction or priority	Consequence or result of actions or set of actions	Evidence of achievement or non-achievement of any outcome
Characteristics	Indicates a direction and/or vision Broad statements Abstract	Can be measurable Tends to be more concrete and tangible than goals	Extent Degree Quality Quantity
Examples	Keep children safe Adolescents will avoid further delinquent behavior	Reduced abuse/neglect of children known to the child welfare system Adolescents will have an understanding of the laws that affect them and their responsibilities under the laws.	5% decrease in abuse/neglect during a specified period when compared to a previous period 75% of the program participants will demonstrate an increased knowledge of the laws that affect them and their responsibilities under the laws.

York Unit Action Plan

Goal: Ensure that children in foster care are protected from abuse and neglect.

Assumptions	Activities	System Outcomes	Child and Family Outcomes	Indicators
<p>Home visits are not occurring as frequently as required by policy or the needs of the child(ren).</p> <p>Face to face visits with the child(ren) in the foster home, both with the foster parents present and with the child(ren) alone are important to assure the safety of the child(ren).</p> <p>Data and reports exist that document the number and frequency of foster home visits by case, worker and team.</p> <p>Children are being abused/neglected in Foster Care at an unacceptable rate.</p>	<p>By 12/02, each worker on the team will do a peer review for a co-worker to review the foster home visit history of children assigned to this unit by looking at the number and frequency of visits by individual worker and for the team.</p> <p>The supervisor will discuss with the unit and individual caseworkers the status of the foster home visits for their assigned cases and find out why the home visits are or aren't occurring as needed.</p> <p>Develop a plan to assure the visits are conducted as needed or required and recorded promptly.</p> <p>Establish a system of ongoing supervisory monitoring and feed back to assure that visits occur as needed or required.</p> <p>Revise training to emphasize the importance of foster home visits.</p>	<p>Case records contain easily accessible documentation of when foster home visits occurred and a description of the visit, including who participated.</p> <p>Workers understand the need for and prioritize foster home visits.</p>	<p>Children have increased interaction with their caseworkers in the foster home setting.</p> <p>Foster parents have increased interaction with, support from and teamwork with caseworkers to assist them in preventing high stress or problematic issues/situation.</p> <p>Decreased reports of substantiated neglect and abuse of children in foster care.</p>	<p>At least every 60 days, York unit workers visit (in the child's foster home) all children assigned to them.</p> <p>Care records are updated within 2 days of each visit.</p> <p>There is a 10% reduction in the number of substantiated or indicated maltreatment by a foster parent during this fiscal year as compared to last fiscal year.</p>

Jones Family Action Plan

Goal: Establish stable permanent home setting for the Jones children who can not be reunited with their biological parents

Assumptions	Activities	System Outcomes	Child and Family Outcomes	Indicators
<p>The sibling group of 4 children will be difficult to place together.</p> <p>Biological parents are uncooperative with helping to identify relatives to provide permanent care for the children.</p> <p>The current adoption resources are limited. No homes are available for sibling groups in Denver area.</p>	<p>Acquire a court order for the biological parents to disclose names, addresses and phone numbers of relatives for a Family Group conference.</p> <p>Conduct a Family Group conference, ASAP.</p> <p>Adoption recruiter conducts a national search for possible adoptive homes for sibling groups.</p>	<p>Every newly referred case where out of home placement is possible or has occurred; a Family Group conference is conducted.</p> <p>Every child has adoptive home options.</p> <p>The Adoption Unit has support groups for adoptive family.</p>	<p>The Jones children will be placed together in a permanent home.</p> <p>The Jones children will be adopted and live with relatives.</p> <p>The Jones children's relatives will support the parents in relinquishment and have open adoption.</p> <p>The Adoption Unit will support the relatives in caring for the children.</p>	<p>The Jones children will remain living with a relative at least until the age of emancipation (18 years old).</p> <p>Adoptive family attends 90% of all adoptive family support groups.</p> <p>Adoptive family completes all required training.</p>

Prepared by Sheila Alimonos, Training Coordinator, Denver Department of Human Services

County Social Services Agency Adoption Initiative Action Plan

Goal: Establish stable permanent home settings for all children who cannot be reunited with their families of origin

Assumptions	Activities	System Outcomes	Child and Family Outcomes	Indicators
<p>Children in long term care are not consistently reviewed for adoption potential.</p> <p>Support services for fost-adopt families during reunification effort not provided by adoption staff.</p> <p>Level of collaboration between adoption and other child welfare staff is poor.</p> <p>Kinship placements not targeted for special focus in Adoptions Program.</p>	<p>Re-assess status of all children w/permanent plan of long term care.</p> <p>Allocate additional staff resources for joint adoptability assessments.</p> <p>Conduct key staff adoptions finalization workshops.</p> <p>Adoption workers participate in pre-placement process and provide secondary support to placement of children needing concurrent plans.</p> <p>Revise training to emphasize kinship adoption, streamlined home studies.</p>	<p>Expanded adoptions staff for assignment to pre-placement review and joint case planning.</p> <p>All child and family histories include family information called for on adoption forms AD512, AD67, AD67A.</p> <p>Medical and social histories for all children coming into care completed within 90 days.</p> <p>Increased percentage of new kinship homes willing to consider adoption.</p>	<p>Decreased time in foster care.</p> <p>Increased placement of children in safe adoptive homes.</p>	<p>Average length of stay for children in foster care reduced by 15%.</p> <p>Average placement planning and evaluation procedure time spans reduced by 30 days.</p> <p>182 children placed in adoptive homes by end of FY 98.</p> <p>209 children placed in adoptive homes by end of FY 99.</p>

Nana's House Action Plan

Goal: Increase Child Safety

Assumptions	Activities	System Outcomes	Child and Family Outcomes	Measures
<p>Most parents of children known to the child protective system want to be effective parents.</p> <p>Families at risk are reluctant to make use of supportive services.</p> <p>Basic services for high risk families are often inaccessible.</p> <p>Many families at risk need periodic access to emergency services.</p>	<p>Negotiate memoranda of agreement with DHS regarding referral protocols and confidentiality policies and procedures.</p> <p>Establish on-site intra-program referral and case coordination protocols.</p> <p>Offer drop-in, emergency food and shelter services to target populations.</p>	<p>Referral process for response between DHS and Nana's House implemented.</p> <p>Increased number of appropriate referrals from DHS.</p> <p>Expanded participation in drop in programs and parenting classes.</p> <p>Expanded family utilization of on-site programs and services.</p>	<p>Increased parental knowledge and skills regarding child development, discipline and family communication.</p> <p>Families achieve identified treatment goals.</p> <p>Reduced subsequent reports.</p>	<p>80 percent of parents participating increase knowledge and skills regarding child development, discipline, family communication (Source: Pre and Post Tests, client self-reports).</p> <p>65 percent of families achieve treatment goals identified in the case plan (Source: DHS worker reports, client self reports).</p> <p>80 percent of participants have no subsequent report within 12 months of initial enrollment (Source: DHS abuse/neglect reports).</p>

