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PLAN

Identify an opportunity and plan for improvement.

Area for Improvement (Why focus on this area?)

Frequency and quality of Social Worker face-to-face visits with children/youth in DCF custody is frequently cited as one of the highest predictors of successful outcomes.

Target Goal

For the October 1, 2011 to September 30, 2012, time period DCF will meet or exceed the federal standard of 90%.

Baseline Data

Prior to October 1, 2011 DCF was around 65% based on documentation.

What change ideas (theories) did you have before you started testing changes?

Social Worker caseloads were too high to have at least one face-to-face visit with each child/youth on his/her caseload. Social Workers were not documenting all face-to-face visits in the computer system. District Directors and Supervisors did not know how to identify which children/youth were not seen.

DO

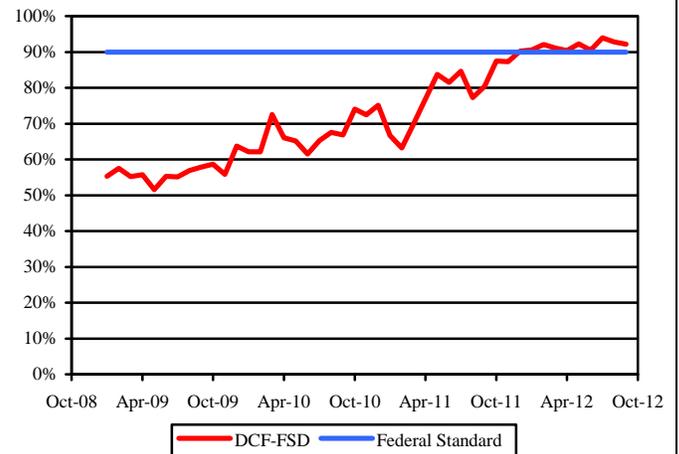
What ideas for improvement did you test?

We tested two variables:

- 1) Adding new Social Worker positions (6 in January 2011 and 5 in April 2012) to reduce caseload;
- 2) Informing District Directors and Supervisors of those undocumented children/youth;
- 3) Following-up with District Directors and Supervisors to confirm whether or not individual children/youth were visited and documented.

STUDY

What were the results of your test(s)? What is your final post-change data compared to the baseline data?



Face-to-face visitation and documentation for the October 1, 2011 to September 30, 2012 time period averaged 90.94%, thus surpassing the national standard and avoiding a monetary penalty.

ACT

What lessons did you learn from the process? How will this change be sustained?

We learned that while providing the data to district staff is useful it is not enough to only provide information, clear expectations and guidance are equally important.

To sustain these efforts we will need to transfer the ownership of producing and monitoring the data to the districts. It is expected this culture shift will take a minimum of 6 months.