

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS/FOCUS GROUPS AND INTERVIEWS (July 2006)
BUTLER INSTITUTE FOR FAMILIES, UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

Three Focus Groups: 1 for Partners (6), 1 for CYF Supervisors (5), 1 for Caseworkers (8), 2 for family members (total of 7)

Three interviews with Court Personnel: 1 with a magistrate, 1 with a county attorney, and 1 with the Court Facilitator

Focus was on the 5 SOC goals and how they are impacting CYF:

- Inter-agency collaboration and communication
- Cultural competence
- Family involvement
- Individualized, strength based services and community-based delivery
- Accountability

Inter-agency Collaboration and Communication Strengths:

- Grant activities have built an awareness and knowledge about the functions of each division as well as resources in the community.
- Spring Resource Fair
- Scavenger Hunt
- Partner Informational Trainings (PITs) and other trainings
- SOC Open House explained what SOC is all about
- Actual level of collaboration at the case level was about the same, the understanding and potential for collaboration was different.....hopefully a beginning????
- Greater collaboration between TANF and Child Welfare
- Info sharing policy
- Court is seeing more collaboration between various agencies than in the past
- HB 1451 and the MOU
- Court pleased with the collaboration that has been fostered by the SOC grant and staff

Inter-agency Collaboration and Communication Concerns and Challenges:

- Not clear if the info sharing policy was in effect or not. Collaboration could not increase until the info sharing policy was finalized. (Finalized in May 2006)
- Caseworkers reluctant to collaborate because it meant giving up some control
- There are "walls" up between divisions and folks are not willing to share information
- CYF staff not attending PITs as much as people from other divisions/agencies so less informed
- A desire to have caseworkers housed in the community
- Court expressed frustrations with JCMH

Cultural Competence Strengths:

- Cultural Competence Trainings

Cultural Competence Concerns and Challenges:

- County had a great deal of room for improvement in "providing" culturally competent services; culturally competent services are lacking in the county.
- Family members did not view that their culture and beliefs were explored or considered in their treatment plans.
- Family members felt that differences in cultural traditions and beliefs between them and their caseworker resulted in challenges in working together.
- Family members felt people with addictions or who are low-income are viewed negatively
- Hiring processes and procedures posed organizational barriers to diversity
- Cultural Competence is the "buzz of the moment"

Family Involvement Strengths:

- TDMs

Family Involvement Concerns and Challenges:

- Family members commented on the "long time" it takes between a referral and the first appointment with a provider.
- Families perceived that newer caseworkers were more responsive to families than more tenured ones
- Efficacy of the Parent Partner Program: how PPs are screened, prepared, selected
- Family members did not feel they were included in developing Tx Plans and that they were not listened to
- Inflexibility of visitation schedules esp. for working parents (parents and the court commented on this)
- No child care on site and no healthy snacks for families to access

Individualized, Strength Based Services and Community-Based Delivery Strengths:

- The development of the Early Intervention Services
- Court pleased with expedited substance abuse assessments
- Court pleased about TDMs, involving parents on committees and the non-adversarial nature of EIS

Individualized, Strength Based Services and Community-Based Delivery
Concerns and Challenges:

- Having treatment plans developed as soon as possible
- Services are inaccessible especially transportation to the HS building

Accountability Strengths:

Accountability Concerns and Challenges:

Other Concerns and Challenges:

- CYF staff not fully committed to the grant's intended goals. Lack of trickle down acceptance from management to line staff.
- Management does not hold caseworkers accountable to ensure change
- Confusion regarding SOC and F2F goals and activities
- Court frustrated with lack of "no faults"