

Preventing Placement Disruptions in Foster Care: What does the Research Say?

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Preventing Placement Disruptions in Foster Care
 University of Minnesota/PATH Wisconsin/Bremer Project

Treatment Foster Care Agency Worksheet:
Comparing Key Outcomes from the Literature Review
With Current Outcome Tools and Models of Service Delivery

Desired Outcome	Recommended Service Delivery/ Intervention	Recommended Measurement Tools	Case Example: PATH Wisconsin Current Outcome Tools	Your Agency Comparison
Child Assessment				
Overall Outcome: Child well-being for each youth in placement.				
Emotional and behavioral needs of child are met.	Early and comprehensive assessment of youth when they enter placement (Doran & Berliner, 2001).	Child assessment tools that have been found reliable and valid: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL)</i> • <i>Teacher Report Form (TRF)</i> • <i>Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale (CAFAS)</i> 	<i>Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale (CAFAS)</i> Some <i>CBCL</i> are still being done in situations where counties prefer them over <i>CAFAS</i> and may need the results for internal reasons.	
	Youth receiving services to help meet their needs, particularly services that are evidenced-based, including but not limited to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wraparound services • Attachment-related interventions • Parent-Child Interaction Therapy • Day treatment • Trauma-focused cognitive-behavioral interventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports from service provider about progress of youth. • Caseworker assessment and recommendations. • Foster parent reports: Parent Daily Report (Chamblerlain & Reid, 1987) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PATH Wisconsin Treatment Plan and progress made toward goals. • Treatment Foster Parent Progress Reports – at least twice per month. • Written and verbal report at Treatment Team meetings and in case files. 	

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<p>Foster Parents: Recruitment, Assessment and Retention Overall Outcome: Placing agency has available foster parents to meet the specific needs of youth at the time of placement.</p>				
<p>Recruitment efforts are successful in recruiting foster parents that can meet the needs of youth in care.</p>	<p>Based on knowledge about needs of youth in care, develop foster care recruitment strategies to meet these needs. (Baum et al., 2001; Pasztor & Wynne, 1995) Some recruitment efforts include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilizing current foster parents and staff to speak to prospective foster parents as a team • Target friends and family of current foster parents as potential foster parents • Mass media recruitment campaigns targeted to families of color to diversify base of available foster homes. 	<p>On-going agency process: Ask those who take child referrals if there are available homes when needed. Follow up to find out what kinds of youth are not being placed to determine if agency can meet the needs of those youth through targeted recruitment (Doran & Berliner, 2001).</p>	<p>Standards of Practice: Quarterly measure of on-going social worker recruitment efforts.</p> <p>Open Bed Report: shows available beds.</p> <p>PATH Wisconsin Daily Census</p>	
<p>Foster parents are matched appropriately with youth in need of placement.</p>	<p>Effective assessment tools are implemented and used throughout the agency for new foster parents.</p>	<p>Casey Foster Applicant Inventory (Promising Practice – determined to be reliable and valid)</p> <p>SAFE Assessment (Emerging Practice)</p>	<p>Identify foster parent strengths with following initial assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFAI • PATH Home Study • SAFE (optional) 	
<p>Agency has high foster parent retention rates.</p>	<p>There is a correlation to higher retention rates when agencies and caseworkers do the following (Brown & Calder, 2000; Chamberlain et al., 1992; Christian, 2002; Denby et al., 1999; Gibbs, 2005; Hudson & Levasseur, 2002; Wells & Dangelo, 1994):</p>	<p>Agency records of foster parent licensing, length of time fostering, and data regarding foster parent retention.</p>	<p>Bi- Annual Foster parent retention report data.</p> <p>Board Report: Recruitment and Retention Committee</p>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involve foster parents in decision-making Show respect for their work Exhibit cultural competency Support foster parents in dealing with difficult youth behaviors Competitive stipends 	<p>Assess foster parent feedback on agency and caseworkers meeting this targeted criteria for retention (decision-making, respect, cultural competency, support with youth and stipends.)</p>	<p>Bi- Annual Foster parent satisfaction surveys and exit surveys.</p>	
<p>Foster Parent: Parenting Ability Overall Outcome: Foster parents have the ability to address needs of youth, so that there is greater satisfaction and well-being for both foster parents and youth.</p>				
<p>Foster parents have the ability to meet the emotional and behavioral needs of the child in their home.</p>	<p>Pre-service training and ongoing training to help foster parents address the emotional and behavioral needs of child (Boyd & Remy, 1978; Titterington, 1990).</p> <p>Some emerging or promising training curricula that have been researched:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PRIDE MAPP – only shown effective as a selection and decision-making tool for pre-service training. Project KEEP Web-based training from Foster Parent College Triple P Parenting Incredible Years – co-parenting with biological parents and foster parents 	<p>Evaluation of training, that measures the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in foster parents skills or knowledge Satisfaction of foster parent and increased confidence in their ability to address behavior issues. <p>Foster parent survey tool to assess their view of caseworker’s support.</p> <p>Foster parent survey tool to assess their view of support from others (other professionals or other foster parents) to help them foster parent.</p> <p>Assessment of foster parent ability to parent – CFAI or SAFE</p>	<p>Pre and Post Survey for TCIF initial training and refresher</p> <p>Satisfaction Survey post-training</p> <p>Bi- Annual Foster Parent Satisfaction Survey</p> <p>Foster Parent Self-Evaluation Survey</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial assessment: CFAI and Home Study Foster Home Report Card Social worker observations. 	

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Youth of all racial and cultural backgrounds experience placement stability and have their emotional, behavioral and cultural needs met.	<p>A priority for culturally competent agencies should be the recruitment of more resource families of color.</p> <p>A parallel strategy is working towards the cultural competence of all foster parents.</p>	<p>Assess the cultural competence of new foster parents.</p> <p>Assess changes in cultural competence and cultural receptivity before and after training in this required area of competency.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for youth to give feedback on cultural competence of foster parents.</p>	<p>PATH Wisconsin Home Study process through initial licensing.</p> <p>PATH Wisconsin Youth Report Card</p>	
<p>Foster Parent: On-going Support Overall Outcome: Increased foster parent satisfaction and retention.</p>				
Foster parents feel supported by caseworker and the agency in fulfilling their responsibilities as a foster parent to meet the needs of youth in care.	<p>Caseworkers build strong working relationships with foster parents through consistent contact and rapport-building (Brown & Calder, 2000; Christian, 2002; Hudson & Levasseur, 2002; Wells & Dangelo, 1994).</p> <p>Provide foster parents with 24-hour, on-call support (Redding et al., 2000).</p>	<p>Assess how well the caseworker provides support, perhaps through foster parent on-going feedback.</p> <p>Assess how much on-call services are used and how effective this service is in meeting the needs of the foster parents and youth in placement.</p>	<p>Bi- Annual Foster Parent Satisfaction Surveys</p> <p>On-call Tracking Log / CQI Review</p> <p><i>Brief, time limited survey of on call users (June-August 2008)</i></p>	
Foster parents have adequate social support.	<p>Peer support groups with other foster parents (Denby et al., 1999; Titterington, 1990).</p> <p>Mentoring by experienced foster parent of new foster parents.</p> <p>Encourage foster parents to develop their own support networks through friends and family (Walsh & Walsh, 1990).</p>	<p>Assessment of existing social support for new foster parents (i.e., eco-map or other assessment).</p> <p>Evaluate peer support meetings of foster parents by assessing the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do foster parents feel more connected to other foster parents after meetings? 	<p>Initial assessment (PATH Home Study; SAFE).</p> <p>Bi- Annual Foster Parent Satisfaction Survey</p> <p><i>As a result of this project, a question was added to this survey to further assess peer support.</i></p>	

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do they feel more supported? • Do they make contact with other foster parents to seek support? <p>Evaluate foster parent mentoring component.</p>		
<p>Caseworker/Social Worker Overall Outcome: Caseworkers have the necessary skills to help meet the needs of the youth in placement, and caseworker retention is high.</p>				
<p>Caseworkers have the ability to support foster parents and foster youth to ensure needs of the youth are met and to ensure the stability of the foster care placement.</p>	<p>Use caseworker skills to meet needs of foster family.</p>	<p>Evaluation of performance by supervisor.</p> <p>Feedback on performance from foster parents, youth, and other service providers on team.</p>	<p>Supervision – 2x per month</p> <p>PATH Annual Employee Appraisal</p> <p>Standards of Practice in Supervision: include feedback from satisfaction surveys of foster parents, youth, and county referral source.</p>	
	<p>Training to improve skills (Hunter College School of Social Work & National Resource Center for Family-Centered Practice and Permanency Planning, 2004; Kessler & Greene, 1999).</p> <p>Cross-training, so that foster parents and caseworkers are getting the same basic training foundation (Christian, 2002).</p>	<p>Assess caseworker training to determine if there is an increase in skills or knowledge in helping meet the needs of youth and foster parents.</p> <p>Use staff development plans to identify strengths and opportunities for growth.</p>	<p>Annual appraisal.</p> <p>Supervision – 2x per month</p> <p>Bi- Annual Foster Parent Satisfaction Surveys</p>	

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Youth and their birth families experience successful visits, and have good relationships with their caseworker.	<p>Help youth and birth family prepare for visits and provide support after visits.</p> <p>Caseworkers build rapport with birth families (Butler & Charles, 1999; Harden, 2004).</p>	<p>Evaluation of visits by parent and youth.</p> <p>Treatment foster parent and caseworker assessment of visitation and its impact.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for youth and birth families to give feedback on role of social workers.</p>	<p>Foster Parent Progress notes</p> <p>Notes in Treatment Plan.</p> <p>Home Visit Summary: <i>As a result of this project, this earlier tool developed by PATH Wisconsin will be implemented throughout the agency again.</i></p> <p>Biological family surveys.</p>	
Caseworkers are supported, have high job satisfaction and job retention.	Agency supports caseworker to increase retention through the following: ongoing, effective supervision; supportive colleagues; flexible agency policies and adequate salaries (B. D. Smith, 2005; Westbrook et al., 2006).	Assess caseworkers' perception of support and satisfaction through caseworker feedback surveys and on-going feedback in supervision.	<p>Annual Employee Survey.</p> <p>Annual Appraisal.</p>	
Agency retains caseworkers in their positions.	Caseworkers are hired who have degrees in social work, particularly with child welfare specialization (Bernotavicz, n.d.; Child Welfare League of America, 2002).	<p>Agency records of caseworker retention.</p> <p>Agency supports caseworker's ability to do the work.</p>	<p>Employee retention records.</p> <p>Staff Development Records.</p>	
<p>Assessment of overall needs and demographics of youth served by agency</p> <p>Overall Outcome: Needs of youth in out-of-home care are met.</p>				
Agency has an understanding of the overall needs of the youth served in their communities.	Agency collects and reports information on specific needs of youth in care.	Data-gathering processes at agency that captures needed information in a timely manner.	<p>PATH CQI data</p> <p>PATH SOP data</p> <p>Benchmark data.</p>	

Additional Info

Links to the Full Report:

Preventing Placement Disruptions in Foster Care, Final Report for PATH Wisconsin-Bremer Project.

http://cehd.umn.edu/SSW/cascw/attributes/PDF/publications/Path_BremerReport.pdf

Websites:

Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare, University of Minnesota:

<http://cehd.umn.edu/ssw/cascw/>

Gamble-Skogmo Child Welfare & Youth Policy, University of Minnesota:

<http://cehd.umn.edu/ssw/G-S/>

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