Report to the Legislature

Community's Commitment to Children

Whatcom County
Family and Community Networks Pilot Project

Chapter 564 Laws of 2009
ESHB 1244 Sec. 202(18)

November 1, 2010

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Executive Summary

Chapter 546, Laws of 2009 Sec. 202(18) requires the Children's Administration to contract for a pilot project with family and community networks in Whatcom County and up to four additional counties to provide services. The pilot project was designed to provide a continuum of services and supports to reduce out-of-home placements and the length of time that a child stays in a placement outside of their home. The focus of the services is re-engaging families with their community and building a network of informal, neighborhood supports. Additional pilot sites have been established in Walla Walla, Island County, and Northshore/Shoreline network areas.

The children and families that are served by these pilots are families that reside in the DSHS Children's Administration's geographic Region 3 and up to four additional regions in Washington State. The families include those families that are currently engaged in Behavioral Rehabilitation Services (BRS), youth that are in out-of-home care, and youth that are at the imminent risk of being removed from their home and placed in out-of-home care.

The Children's Administration and the community-based Whatcom Family and Community Network have worked together over the last several years to create a strong partnership. This partnership has produced exciting and promising community-based strategies to engage the full community with families that have historically remained socially isolated and at risk of re-abusing or neglecting their children.

This strong partnership and its collaborative work have produced many of the concepts used in these pilots as to how a local community and state can effectively partner in providing key community supports to children and families involved with the child welfare dependency system. These new concepts include how the state can contract and work differently with the local community in a way that helps reduce the barriers that these families face when attempting to reunify their family or in preventing the need to remove a child from their home.

The strategies to achieve these results include linking formal and informal support to families that will create a network of social supports that can help move families out of the dependency system and that will support families in sustaining a healthy, supportive home where the child and the entire family can thrive.

As a component of measuring the success of this pilot, parents, relatives, and kin providers will be evaluated by measuring a demonstrated increase to their skills in providing a safe, supportive, and nurturing home for their child.

Community's Commitment to Children

Chapter 546, Laws of 2009 Sec. 202(18):

"Within the amounts appropriated in this section, the department shall contract for a pilot project with family and community networks in Whatcom county and up to four additional counties to provide services. The pilot project shall be designed to provide a continuum of services that reduce out-of-home placements and the lengths of stay for children in out-of-home placement. The department and the community networks shall collaboratively select the additional counties for the pilot project and shall collaboratively design the contract. Within the framework of the pilot project, the contract shall seek to maximize federal funds. The pilot project in each county shall include the creation of advisory and management teams which include members from neighborhood-based family advisory committees, residents, parents, youth, providers, and local and regional department staff. The Whatcom county team shall facilitate the development of outcome-based protocols and policies for the pilot project and develop a structure to oversee, monitor, and evaluate the results of the pilot projects. The department shall report the costs and savings of the pilot project to the appropriate committees of the legislature by November 1 of each year."

This report provides an overview of the work completed over the time-period of July 2009 to June of 2010 and initial activity of both Whatcom and replication sites since July 1, 2010.

Community's Commitment to Children

Community Navigation Pilot
July 2009 – October 2010

Summary of Preliminary Results

Overview of Whatcom families Served

Initial family referrals for navigator support began in September of 2008. Referrals were primarily families involved with Behavioral Rehabilitation Services (BRS). The referrals came from social workers, including Family Team Decision Making (FTDM) Facilitators, and from BRS staff. A few of the first families had initiated their relationship with DCFS through voluntary services. In April 2009, when the first contract was signed, Whatcom Family & Community Network (WFCN) began tracking the hours and type of supports, activities, and engagement with families.

Twenty-four families were served in Whatcom County July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010. Half of the 24 families served during that time were continued from the previous year and had at least one child identified with severe behavioral challenges. Two of the Whatcom families referred after July 1, 2009 were involved with BRS. Children in the families have ranged from infants to adolescents. Seventeen families lived in Bellingham and seven lived in the county, including Deming, Ferndale, Everson, and Maple Falls.

Process and Outcome Results of Navigation Services Contract

The following information includes initial and general results from reports and interviews with Navigators about the twenty-four families that were served from July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010 in Whatcom. Evaluation Protocols (attached) were developed in the winter and spring of 2010 that will allow us in the future to gather baseline information when a Navigator begins working alongside a family. We gathered information for this initial report from ongoing Navigator reports, several family interviews, Navigator discussions, and staff reports that could provide information about the initial outcome areas below. Staff referred to the tools being developed, indicators in each area, the results listed in the contract, and considered if they believed the family had improved in those areas. In the future, we will gather both baseline information when initiating a relationship with a family and also include the social worker and family in the initial and exit assessment to strengthen the validity of the results of this contract. Those protocols and systems will be instituted this contract year.

Process Information (July 1, 2009-June 30, 2010)

Number of families served	24
Families with child placed out-of-home	83%
Average length of engagement	3.7 months
Average number of hours per family	41.5 hours
12-Month costs billed for Contract	$41,935
Average cost per family	$1,747

Navigator was helpful in the family's success 83%
Increase in safety indicators 71%
Increased system collaboration/alignment 71%
Increased indicators of family success 83%

Background of Collaboration

The Whatcom Family & Community Network and the Region 3 and Bellingham DCFS offices have been working together on Family to Family, an Annie E. Casey Foundation initiative, since 2007. This strong collaborative partnership has produced many of the concepts that are being used in these pilots as to how a local community and state can effectively partner in providing key informal services to children and families involved with the child welfare dependency system. These new concepts include how the state could contract and work differently with the local community in a way that could help reduce the barriers that these families face when attempting to reunify their family or in preventing the need to remove a child from their home.

The intent of the pilot projects has been to develop and implement new approaches to service delivery in up to four additional counties in Washington State. The overall goal is to have the community and residents step up as the primary sustaining support for these families so that the state can step back and safely return the child to their home. Four Family Policy Council Community Networks were ready to engage residents to achieve this goal, in partnership with the Children's Administration's Family to Family Initiative, and constitute the core for implementing this pilot design. The Whatcom Pilot Advisory Team has provided oversight and coaching to the pilot sites in Island County, King County-North Shore/Shoreline, and Walla Walla County.

The new approaches used in the pilot sites are based on strategies of neighborhood-based community engagement and the expansion of social networks as "core-services." These strategies have been jointly developed by the Whatcom Family & Community Network and the Whatcom County Children's Administration's Family to Family Team. These strategies focus on building a community of natural supports around families where social isolation is a primary cause of abuse/ neglect that requires, or is projected to require, a long-term dependency in the child welfare and foster care system.

The preliminary results of the work in Whatcom County with 31 families from July 1, 2009 to October 31, 2010, gathered from Navigator reports, conversations with families, and conversations with DCFS staff indicate for families:

- There has been increased expansion of social networks and resources for parenting.
- There is an increased sense that parents and children have assets to bring to their families and community.
- Parents and their children are building more collaborative relationships with the Children's Administration in achieving their goals.

Not all of the reunifications have been smooth, but there is an increased understanding of the barriers and challenges in the family's process with Children's Administration that the family can now better address. Reunified families now face more typical challenges due to adolescent development and ongoing family issues, but with an increased support network and an ongoing relationship with the Community Network, these families are linked to other community-building and neighborhood efforts.

Description of Services

Children and families served in the pilots include:
- Youth currently engaged in Behavioral Rehabilitation Services (BRS);
- Youth in other CA out-of-home placements;
- Youth who are at imminent risk of out-of-home placement.

Families referred by the Children's Administration to these pilot projects are identified by local agencies, community members, and social workers when there is a concern that the lack of a healthy social network is or will be a clear barrier to stable and safe reunification of the family. The Whatcom site served 24 families from July 2009 to June 2010. Three other pilot sites were established by June 2010 and have just begun serving families in the last four months. Each pilot site was contracted to serve 20 families during their contract year, as part of a requirement of some additional funding support from the Stuart Foundation for these sites. This seemed a manageable number based on each site's identified population and capacity to test and locally refine this strategy to fit their unique community.

Services/Supports Families Receive

- Link to a "Community Navigator," a community-based support person meets with the family and their DCFS and community team and develop a social support plan that will include links to emergent needs, community support services, and opportunities to build a larger, healthy social network. The Navigator will act as a peer coach and community support person to help the parent with the competencies that need development and safety requirements needed for reunification.
- The Navigator provides coaching, advocacy, and reinforcement on child health, safety, and parenting that the family is receiving from other providers. This coaching is done with the parent and the other individuals and systems the family has for support.
- The Navigator and the Community Network engage the family in neighborhood activities and independently work with local residents to create healthy activities for families to share their skills and interests and participate with other residents.
- Volunteers in the community are recruited and families are linked to these volunteers for specific tasks, such as home repair and household items, and ongoing support with transportation and childcare.
- The Navigators are supervised by Network staff.
- The pilot project uses outcome-focused training and coaching for Navigators in order to build skills, knowledge, and behaviors of navigators that produce desired project results.

- There are ongoing discussions with the Planning Team about evidence-based and community services that might be used to help achieve the outcomes of this project.
- Navigators have regular communication with DCFS social workers to assure communication, alignment of objectives, and a collaborative approach to family support.

Outcome Measures

- Client Outcome measure instruments have been developed and will be used this year by the Department and the local Advisory Team to measure:
  - Increased child safety
  - Increased parent competencies, based on MEEERS caregiver competencies (Motivation to keep child safe, demonstrated Efficacy in changing their environment, Experience in caring for and keeping child safe, Enjoyable parent/child interaction, Resources to support and nurture child, and Skills to care for child)
  - Increased family success and healthy social network
  - Increased collaboration and community engagement with families and DCFS
- These instruments include survey tools for clients (children and caretakers), social workers, and the Navigator. There are additional exit meetings with families and project staff to assess and evaluate the impact of the pilot on their reunification or maintenance of placement.
- MEEERS measurements instruments are being developed by the Pathways to Reunification project led by Brigid Collins. An adaptation of this instrument will be co-used by this pilot project. Both projects will also continue to explore the use of the newly developed WISH Family Journal (from Gates and Allen Foundation grants) as a tracking and communication tool for the family, the navigator, social workers, and other members of the family's "team."

Outcomes are also measured by:
- Stability of placements for referrals of clients whose families are together at the time of the referral, with measurements as developed by the Network and the Department
- Successful family reunification – unification for the clients with the child in an out-of-home placement at the time of the referral. This will include measures for the length of time in care and time taken to achieve family reunification and placement stability thereafter, with measurements as developed by the Network and the Department
- Reduced time to achieve permanency

Parents, relatives, or kinship caregivers will also be assessed on their demonstrated skill enhancement in several areas including:

- Knowledge and understanding of the mood, behavior, emotional, and educational disorders relevant to the children in their care
- Skill in supporting their children and their biological families in coping with the moods, behavior, emotional and educational disorders
- Knowledge and skill in navigating multiple systems involved with the care of their children, including government programs, schools, social service agencies, and other community programs
- The ability to connect with and use community supports such as neighborhood groups, other parents/families, support groups, community gatherings and recreational activities, and appropriate faith-based activities
- The ability to access and use appropriate professional services
- To ability to access and use respite care services
- The ability to follow through on treatment plans for children in their care
- The ability to improve communications and quality of family interactions and relationships
- To display a sense of confidence and hopefulness regarding the care of their children along with a decreased sense of isolation, hopelessness, blame, and failure

The Whatcom Team developed evaluation indicators and protocols which will be implemented with new families entering the project this year. All pilot sites will use the core of these measures to assure fidelity of the core strategies and a multi-site evaluation. The evaluation protocols are being implemented at the local sites. Oversight and review will be done by the Department, the Whatcom Network Director, and the Family Policy Council's research and evaluation staff.

Whatcom Planning Team – Overview of Replication & Sites

In July 2009, the Network and DCFS first convened the Whatcom County Planning Team to further refine the model and the contracting provisions needed to begin implementation. This team has met monthly to further refine the project, provide oversight, and evaluate the results. The team includes four DCFS Whatcom and Region 3 staff, two parent participants, a local service provider, and two Network staff. The Family Policy Council staff worked with the Whatcom Team to develop the replication of site criteria for new Networks. In those sites, DCFS staff were recruited to partner with the project. Even though there is no additional funding for this proviso in the state budget, DCFS linked funding for Family to Family from the Stuart Foundation to support the start up of replication sites.

Replication Integrity

The Family Policy Council, Children's Administration, and the Whatcom Team have provided coaching and orientation for representatives from the three additional pilot sites on model design and implementation requirements and expectations. This has assured replication integrity and consistency.

Additional Sites

North Shore/Shoreline – King County
The North Shore/Shoreline Network coordinated planning with DCFS, the Center for Human Services (CHS), and Parkwood School to focus Family to Family at this school and neighborhood. CHS contracted with Children's Administration and has hired a part-time staff. The team met and came up with specific work plans for things people can do even now to improve connection to resources in the community and make different and more effective efforts to keep children in or at least very close to Shoreline. The whole team is very excited and the meetings developed plans for linking to families once the school year began in September. There have been five families served to date.

Island County/Stanwood
The Island County Network developed a plan with the local DCFS staff and an Island County Navigator Contract was signed in July/August 2010. The local group tailored the advisory and referral processes. The Island County Reasonable Efforts Team had opportunity to review descriptions/objectives and gave full support. There have been three families served to date.

Walla Walla
The Walla Walla Network and DCFS staff began meeting in the fall of 2009 to discuss this project and signed a contract with the Network to provide navigator services in July 2010. Their focus is to begin working with local neighborhood organizing staff in Commitment to Community to engage families in neighborhoods where they currently work. There have been four families served to date.

Contract

The Whatcom team established a job description and key responsibilities for the peer navigator position, developed service-reporting forms with "core service" objectives, and drafted evaluation protocols. The Whatcom Team and Region 3 DCFS staff developed a model contract for peer "community navigators" and this was the foundation of the new pilot projects' contract.

The Whatcom contract for the navigator and community-building portion of the contract was originally budgeted for up to approximately $80,000 each year, depending upon state funding, to serve 24 families. The budget amounts for other pilot sites was set at $25,000 by the Children's Administration based on availability of Stuart Foundation funding and local DCFS service funding. Additional Stuart funding was used for planning and travel in the pilot site development.

Casey and Stuart Foundations

The Annie E. Casey Foundation has been working for the past four years on replicating their successful community-based Family to Family model within the Washington State Children's Administration system. The Stuart Foundation often partners with the Casey Foundation and has provided funding to support the development of the community and Children's Administration collaborations needed for Family to Family in local areas.

Conclusion

With the primary goal of child safety and reunification, this project is using the flexibility offered by the Legislature's budget proviso to test new ways of building community partnerships that are showing an increase in neighborhood and natural supports for families engaged with the Children's Administration. The more people in the community engaged with and supporting socially isolated families, the safer our children are. This proviso continues to offer the opportunity of engaging communities as full partners with the state, both jointly taking responsibility to assure the safety and well-being of our children and their families.

COMMUNITY'S COMMITMENT TO CHILDREN

EVALUATION PROTOCOLS DRAFT

FOR

**CHILDREN'S ADMINISTRATION/COMMUNITY NETWORK
BUDGET PROVISO 2009-2011**

Developed by the

Whatcom County Planning Team

January 2010

Revised October 30, 2010

Layout of the Evaluation Protocols Manual

The information in this manual is designed to serve as background to the development of the protocols and also a suggested operating manual for the evaluation. Some project background is provided in the introduction. The sections following include the outcome areas and corresponding indicators. Additional sections detail the protocols process, the evaluation implementation and reporting timeline, the different partner responsibilities for collection and analysis, and the data sources and measurement instruments that will be used. Data collection software, the WISH Family Journal, is also described in the data collection section.

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INTRODUCTION

The Whatcom Planning Team worked to develop these evaluation protocols in order to measure the impact of the pilot project developed under the Children's Administration Budget Proviso below, passed in the April 2009 Legislative Session. Chapter 546, Laws of 2009 Sec. 202(18):

> *"Within the amounts appropriated in this section, the department shall contract for a pilot project with family and community networks in Whatcom county and up to four additional counties to provide services. The pilot project shall be designed to provide a continuum of services that reduce out-of-home placements and the lengths of stay for children in out-of-home placement. The department and the community networks shall collaboratively select the additional counties for the pilot project and shall collaboratively design the contract. Within the framework of the pilot project, the contract shall seek to maximize federal funds. The pilot project in each county shall include the creation of advisory and management teams which include members from neighborhood-based family advisory committees, residents, parents, youth, providers, and local and regional department staff. <u>The Whatcom county team shall facilitate the development of outcome-based protocols and policies for the pilot project and develop a structure to oversee, monitor, and evaluate the results of the pilot projects.</u> The department shall report the costs and savings of the pilot project to the appropriate committees of the legislature by November 1 of each year."*

Project Background

The Whatcom Family & Community Network and the Region 3 and Bellingham DCFS offices have been working together on Family to Family, an Annie E. Casey Foundation initiative since 2007. This strong collaborative partnership has produced many of the concepts that led to the budget proviso as to how a local community and state can effectively partner in providing key services to children and families involved with the child welfare dependency system. These new concepts include how the state could contract and work differently with the local community in a way that could help reduce the barriers that these families face when attempting to reunify their family or in preventing the need to remove a child from their home.

The intent of the pilot projects are to develop and implement new approaches to service delivery in Whatcom and up to four additional counties in Washington State. The overall goal is to have the community and residents step up as the primary sustaining support for these families so that the State can step back and safely return the child to their home. Family Policy Council Community Networks that are prepared to engage residents to achieve this goal, in partnership with the Children's Administration's Family to Family Initiative, will constitute the core team for pilot design and oversight.

The new approaches used in the pilot sites are based on strategies of neighborhood-based community engagement and the expansion of social networks as "core-services." These strategies have been jointly developed by the Whatcom Family & Community Network

and the Whatcom County Children's Administration's Family to Family Team. These strategies focus on building a community of natural supports around families where social isolation is a primary cause of chronic neglect that requires, or is projected to require, a long-term dependency in the child welfare and foster care system.

This model of community building was tested January-June 2009 with seven families in Whatcom County. The families were all involved with Behavioral Rehabilitation Services through the Children's Administration. Children were returned home in three of the seven families and plans have been developed for the return home in two other families.

How Protocols Were Developed & Their Purpose

The heart of these evaluation protocols came from multiple discussions with local partners, families, and state agency representatives, each sharing their hopes and expectations for how this project could positively impact child safety using new and focused strategies that engaged families and the community. These discussions included Family to Family and funder expectations as well as regular meetings with families involved with DCFS in Whatcom County. The project partners considered data collection systems already in place and others being developed.

One evaluation goal is to use measurement tools that can be easily implemented and analyzed so current information was regularly available for the project oversight teams. The protocols need to provide a process that is simple and useable by local teams for quickly assessing the short-term results of increased social networks and family/community capacity so that they can implement needed quality improvements to increase short-term results. The protocols also need to measure longer-term results related child safety, time in out-of-home care, and cost savings that can be reported annually to funders and the Legislature.

Participatory Action Research – A Reflective Process

The shared responsibility of the evaluation process is based on the project's values that include 1) planning, oversight, and evaluation be shared among DCFS, the Network, the community, and families themselves and 2) the evaluation and quality improvement of the project will be an actively reflective process benefitting all partners. The protocols for the project require the integration of some current evaluation protocols used by the individual partners and the creation of some new collaborative protocols involving all of the partners. Taken from the methods of participatory action research, the project evaluation will directly involve families, the community, the Network, and Children's Administration in the majority of the core assessment and data collection processes as well as the reflection on the impact of the project.

SECTION ONE: OUTCOMES AND INDICATORS

HOW THE OUTCOMES WERE SELECTED
The outcomes to be measured for this project were developed by the Whatcom Planning Team from:

- The Nine Family to Family Goals.
- Whatcom County's Family To Family Advisory Team selected goals.
- Measures from the Whatcom County Navigator contracts with DCFS.

Evaluation planning sessions with the Whatcom Planning Team that combined goals critical to local and state DCFS partners, the Whatcom Family & Community Network, the State Legislature, and the families represented on the team.

CORE PROJECT GOALS
The Team developed the outcomes and indicators for this proviso based on four key partner and legislative goals the project was designed to impact:

1) Increased safety and reduced time to reunification,
2) Increased natural and neighborhood supports to families,
3) Increased collaboration between community partners, families, and the Children's Administration, and
4) Cost savings to the system.

SELECTED OUTCOMES
The Whatcom Planning Team identified the following outcomes in measure in order to determine if the project was achieving the intended goals.

- Increased Child Safety
- Reduced Time to Reunification
- Reduced Out-of-Home Placements
- Reduced Time to Achieve Permanency
- Change in Collaboration/System Barriers
- Increased Family Success/Reduced Social Isolation
- Cost Savings to the System/Families

INDICATORS

INCREASED CHILD SAFETY

QUANTITATIVE DATA

Evaluation of increased child safety will include the following "quantitative" or primarily numeric data:

Re-referrals to CPS – this measure is a standard measure used by DCFS to assess child safety over time. This information will be collected and reported for each project family and tracked from the time of initial engagement for two years following termination of DCFS involvement. The information will be compared to data that DCFS regularly collects and compiles on re-referrals of the families it serves over the same time period.

Data Collection: (Network for project families/DCFS for overall comparative data)
Timeframe: Quarterly/End of Year

Number and skills of caregivers in child's life – it is generally accepted that children are safer (and provided more nurturing) when there are a number of healthy, caring adults in their lives who spend time with them. When families engage with the project, the initial assessment will identify the quality of caregiver engagement with the child and family, including the number of caring adults in the child's life that provide support and a brief description of their individual strengths and capacities. This information will be reassessed quarterly and upon exit of the program.

Data Collection: (Network for project families)
Timeframe: At entry and exit for family/Quarterly & Annual report

Re-entry into Foster or Group Care – re-entry into care can often be an indicator that a family remained unsafe for a child. In some circumstances, such as when the parent acknowledges they need a break to learn new skills, enter treatment, or improve the safety of the home, it could also be positive indicator of child safety. We will collect this information on children in the project and also clarify whether this indicator reflected an increase or decrease in child safety. We will compare the project family data to re-entry data collected by DCFS on families they serve over the same time period.

Data Collection: (Network for project families/DCFS for overall comparative data)
Timeframe: Quarter & Annual

Other system/agency contacts – it was determined that more services and systems working with families when they are in crisis can intensify their development and bring more resources to bear for families in multiple areas of stress they face, such as financial, housing, education, medical care, transportation, and other basic needs. This increase in service supports will reduce family stress and increase child safety. Families' initial assessment upon engagement will note the number and type of services they are connected to and create a plan for increased contact with other systems that might benefit

child safety and reunification. This information will be updated regularly and the number of agency/service connections since engagement will be reported at the end of a family's involvement with the project.

Data Collection: (Network for project families)
Timeframe: Quarter & Annual

Positive changes in physical environment that was unsafe – Families' initial assessment upon engagement will note any physical environment factors that are unsafe and create a plan with the family to remedy them. Positive changes will be noted and counted regularly in the family's information.

Data Collection: (Network and DCFS for project families)
Timeframe: Quarter & Annual

QUALITATIVE DATA

Evaluation of increased child safety will include the following "qualitative" or perception/observation, or anecdotal data:

Social Worker, Parent, & Child's feelings of safety – social workers, parents, and children will be interviewed upon engagement about their perception or observation of the child's safety. Upon completion with the project, they will be interviewed again using the same questions. Changes will be noted by question area and by stakeholder for individual families and for the project group.

Data Collection: (Network responsible to include DCFS and project families)
Timeframe: At entry and exit for family/Quarterly & Annual report

DCFS/WFCN/Family reflection on impact of project engagement with child safety – At the exit of the program, the family team with DCFS and the Network will meet to discuss the overall perception or observation of the role this particular intervention in child safety. This will be used to assess its impact overall and which of its components were most effective.

Data Collection: (Network responsible to include DCFS and project families)
Timeframe: Annual report

Increase in parent competencies related to child safety – The MEEERS tool will be used at the entry of work with WFCN. DCFS and parent will agree on key areas to work on and will each fill out an assessment survey at entry, at exit, and at other times that may be appropriate for the team to discuss progress in this area. There will seem to be "quantitative" data here, but it will be based on perception and observations of change and discussions about that change.

Data Collection: (Network responsible for tool implementation and recording of discussion related to what partners feel about changes in their assessment)
Timeframe: Entry, exit, and as appropriate for progress assessment.

REDUCED TIME TO REUNIFICATION

QUANTITATIVE DATA

Evaluation of reduced time to reunification will include the following "quantitative" or primarily numeric data:

Track time out of home since WFCN engagement: the days that a child is in out-of-home placement during involvement with WFCN will be tracked by the Navigator and Network staff for each family in the project. It is expected that families' involvement with this project should have a shorter time out-of-home placement until reunified. We will compare this information with families involved with DCFS not involved with WFCN.

Data Collection: (Network responsible in collaboration with DCFS)
Timeframe: Monthly, quarterly, & annual

Amount (numbers) of peer support/informal supports on steps to reunify safely – this will be the number of people and "things" that the family has received from community & family members, volunteers, and others to accomplish the steps established in the family's plan to address barriers to reunification.

Data Collection: (Network responsible)
Timeframe: Monthly, quarterly, & annually

QUALITATIVE DATA

Quality of peer support/informal supports on steps to reunify safely – this is intended to assess any change in the level of quality of the personal supports or depth of engagement of the family with others during their work to reunify.

Data Collection: (Network)
Timeframe: Monthly, quarterly, & annually

Parent/Team's understanding of steps to reunify – this will be the Network, Navigator, and DCFS's sense of whether the parents and team members understand (not necessarily agree on) the barriers to reunification and what it will take for the family to be ready to safely reunify.

Data Collection: (Network)
Timeframe: Monthly, quarterly, & annually

DCFS/WFCN/Family reflection on impact of engagement on reunification – this will be a gauge of whether the core partners in the project feel their change in informal supports had an impact on reunification.

Data Collection: (Network responsible to include DCFS and project families)
Timeframe: Gathered at exit/reunification for family/Quarterly & Annual reports

REDUCED OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT

QUANTITATIVE DATA

1. Non-placement and placement days out-of-home during WFCN engagement – (see reduced time to reunification above)

2. County average of out-of-home placement days for all families during proviso time frame – this is overall for the county as determined by DCFS data sources. This will be compared to average out-of-home placement days for families served by this project

Data Collection: (DCFS/UW)
Timeframe: Annual

QUALITATIVE DATA

1. DCFS/WFCN/Family reflection on impact of WFCN engagement in the prevention of out-of-home placement - this will be a gauge of whether the core partners in the project feel their change in informal supports had an impact on the prevention of out-of-home placement.

Data Collection: (Network responsible to include DCFS and project families)
Timeframe: Gathered at exit/reunification for family/Quarterly & Annual reports

REDUCED TIME TO ACHIEVE PERMANENCY

QUANTITATIVE DATA

1. Number of permanency plans achieved per quarter/overall for county & by project families

Data Collection: (Network for project families/DCFS for county data)
Timeframe: Quarterly & Annually

<u>QUALITATIVE DATA</u>

2. <u>Reflections on project impact on time-to-permanency</u> – the core project partners will discuss the impact of the project on permanency

Data Collection: (Network responsible to include DCFS and project families, may be done at Advisory Committee meetings)
Timeframe: At least every six months

INCREASED COLLABORATION & REDUCED SYSTEM BARRIERS

<u>QUANTITATIVE DATA</u>

1. <u>Number of referrals, type (FVS, CPS, DFWS), and presenting issue</u> – referral forms to the project will be reviewed to assess any noticeable changes or trends in collaboration and understanding of the project's goals.

Data Collection: (Network/DCFS and Advisory Committee)
Timeframe: Every six months

<u>BOTH QUANTITATIVE & QUALITATIVE DATA</u>

2. <u>Changes in informal neighborhood and community supports</u>

Data Collection: (Network will collect information on number of linkages made, both informal and formal, to other services and supports. Goal will be to link a <u>minimum</u> of five (5) linkages per family.

3. <u>Changes in norms for supporting families/residents/# of volunteers, meetings, events in community related to goals of project & Family to Family</u>

Data Collection: (Network will collect neighborhood, community, Navigator, and volunteer data, and have regular discussions with the Family to Family Advisory Team about perceptions/observations)
Timeframe: Numbers reported quarterly, perception/observations reported annually

4. <u>Identification of what does and does not work, any changes made in process, and recommendations made for change in WFCN/DCFS/F2F processes</u>

Data Collection: Information compiled by Network staff and reviewed in collaboration with Proviso and F2F Advisory Teams
Timeframe: actions ongoing, annually reported

INCREASED FAMILY SUCCESS AND REDUCED SOCIAL ISOLATION

BOTH QUANTITATIVE & QUALITATIVE DATA

1. <u>Increase in parent competencies</u> – The MEEERS tool will be used at the entry of work with WFCN. DCFS and parent will agree on key areas to work on and will each fill out an assessment survey at entry, at exit, and at other times that may be appropriate for the team to discuss progress in this area. There will seem to be "quantitative" data here, but it will be based on perception/observation of change and discussions about that perception.

Data Collection: (Network responsible for tool implementation and recording of discussion related to what partners feel about changes in their assessment)
Timeframe: Entry, exit, and as appropriate for progress assessment.

2. <u>Increase in family feeling respected, supported, and that the family's goals were met</u> –assessment of changes in attitudes

Data Collection: (Network responsible for "family success" tool implementation and recording of discussion related to what partners feel about changes in their assessment)
Timeframe: Entry and exit.

3. <u>Increase in hope/belief in themselves and that the community can support their child</u> –assessment of changes in attitudes

Data Collection: (Network responsible for "family success" tool implementation and recording of discussion related to what partners feel about changes in their assessment)
Timeframe: Entry and exit.

4. <u>Increase in family's ability to identify, build, and use informal resources to support their family</u>–assessment of changes in attitudes

Data Collection: (Network responsible for "family success" tool implementation and recording of discussion related to what partners feel about changes in their assessment)
Timeframe: Entry and exit.

5. <u>Increase in time and assets of family given/exchanged with other families and the community</u> –assessment of family changes both in perception/observation and actually time spent.

Data Collection: (Network responsible for "family success" tool implementation, monthly reports, and recording of discussion related to what partners feel about changes in their assessment)
Timeframe: Entry and exit.

6. Increase in number of informal/social supports family interact with regularly – counting number and assessing changes over the time of WFCN involvement – (see Reunification #2)

Data Collection: (Network responsible)
Timeframe: Monthly, quarterly, & annually – by family and aggregated

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COST SAVINGS TO THE SYSTEM/FAMILIES

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1. Reduced costs to DCFS due to reduced time out-of-home and provider involvement

2. Reduced costs to DCFS/system due to increased natural vs. professional supports

3. Reduced costs to family due to reduced time out-of-home

Data Collection: Network/DCFS will review families and estimate potential cost savings per family in case worker time, foster care costs, service costs, child support, and other system costs in each of these areas due to engagement with project
Timeframe: at exit of each family, annual report of compiled estimated cost-savings

4. Reduced emotional "cost" to families/neighborhood due to engagement

Data Collection: Navigator/Network will compile family data and will assess this impact on "family and neighborhood stress" with Advisory Team annually, report annually for legislature
Timeframe: at exit of each family, annual report of compiled estimated cost-savings

5. Benefits of assets of family engaged in the community and with other families

Data Collection: Navigator/Network will compile family data, then assess benefits to community with Advisory Team annually, report annually for legislature
Timeframe: at exit of each family, annual report of compiled estimated cost-savings

REFERRALS & RECORDKEEPING

Each site will establish its own referral process to Navigator supports to best fit their systems of recordkeeping and communication. Navigator support is voluntary for families and upon referral, the Navigator and family will assess whether this relationship will help them achieve their goals. It is important to have data maintenance processes in place to assure the evaluation data is easily gathered and can be compiled for reflection by all the partners.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Navigators and families will be oriented in the values and practices of confidentiality. All partners working with the evaluation process will sign confidentiality agreements and will follow strict confidentiality standards. All written evaluation reports will include

aggregate information about families and will not include family names or identifying information. Data on each family will be stored in secure files and destroyed upon completion of all evaluation processes for this project. Family involvement in all follow-up evaluation processes will be voluntary and will in no way effect engagement with the proviso project.

WISH Family Journal protocols for confidentiality follow all federal guidelines and will be monitored by the Whatcom Family & Community Network and Brigid Collins Family Support Center.

OUTCOMES AND INDICATORS CHART

INCREASED CHILD SAFETY   **Information Source**
Re-referrals to CPS   DCFS
Number and quality/skills of caregivers in child's life   WFCN/DCFS/FAMILY
Re-entry into care (foster/group)   DCFS
Other system/agency contacts   WFCN/DCFS/FAMILY
Social Worker, Parent, & Child's feelings of safety   WFCN/DCFS/FAMILY
Positive changes in physical environment that was unsafe   WFCN/DCFS/FAMILY
Increase in Parent Competencies related to safety – MEEERS assessment   WFCN/DCFS/FAMILY

REDUCED TIME TO REUNIFY
Amount of peer support/informal support on steps to reunify safely   WFCN/FAMILY
Parent/Team's understanding of steps to reunify   WFCN/DCFS/FAMILY
Track time out of home since WFCN engagement   WFCN/DCFS
DCFS/WFCN/Family reflection on impact of engagement on reunification   WFCN/DCFS/FAMILY

REDUCED OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT
Placement out-of-home during WFCN engagement   DCFS/WFCN
DCFS/WFCN/Family reflection on impact of WFCN engagement in   WFCN/DCFS/FAMILY
    prevention of out-of-home placement

REDUCED TIME TO ACHIEVE PERMANCY
Number of permanency plans achieved per quarter/overall & by project   DCFS
Reflections on project impact on time-to-permanency   WFCN/DCFS/FAMILY

CHANGE IN COLLABORATION/SYSTEM BARRIERS
Number of referrals, type (FVS, CPS, DFWS), and presenting issue   DCFS/WFCN
Identification of what does and does not work and any changes made in   WFCN/DCFS/FAMILY
    process (WFCN/DCFS/F2F)
Changes in neighborhood support and norms for supporting families/residents/# of   WFCN/F2F/FAMILY
    volunteers, meetings, events in community related to goals of project and
    Family to Family

INCREASED FAMILY SUCCESS AND REDUCED SOCIAL ISOLATION
Increase in Parent Competencies with MEEERS assessment   WFCN/DCFS/FAMILY
Increase in family feeling respected, supported, and that their goals were met   WFCN/DCFS/FAMILY
Increase in hope/belief in themselves and that the community can support their child WFCN/DCFS/FAMILY
Increase in family's ability to identify, build, and use informal resources to support their
    family   WFCN/DCFS/FAMILY
Increase in time and assets of family given/exchanged with other families and the
    community   WFCN/DCFS/FAMILY
Increase in number of informal/social supports family interacts with regularly   WFCN/DCFS/FAMILY

COST SAVINGS FAMILY, COMMUNITY, AND SYSTEM
Reduced costs to DCFS due to reduced time out-of-home and provider involvement   WFCN/DCFS
Reduced costs to DCFS/system due to increased natural vs. professional supports   WFCN/DCFS
Reduced costs to family due to reduced time out-of-home   FAMILY/WFCN/DCFS
Reduced emotional "cost" to families/neighborhood due to engagement   FAMILY/WFCN/DCFS
Benefits of assets of family engaged in the community and with other families   FAMILY/WFCN/DCFS

SECTION TWO: THE W.I.S.H FAMILY JOURNAL

Whatcom's Integrated Services Host*: An interactive family and provider communication tool*

<u>This project will continue to pursue the potential use of this communication tool for the Proviso, but it is not a requirement.</u>

Overview

Nothing can or should replace the human side of relationships. However, a family-controlled and staff-supported communication system can greatly enhance the quality of help and healthy family outcomes. The WISH Family Journal is a web-based, family/partner communication tool developed in Whatcom County to support families in their move toward self-sufficiency.

Participation in use of the tool is at the sole discretion of the family and other participants.

The interactive WISH Family Journal has the capacity to:

- Put families in charge of what is in their community family information.
- Put families more directly in charge of who has access to this information and its use.
- Reduce the number of times a family fills out service application forms.
- Increase family skills in managing their own service plan.
- Track contacts across community and service systems.
- Facilitate more efficient multi-system communication.

This communication tool tested with a few families in this project to see its potential to enhance communication and focus on the families' goals. The Navigator and WFCN will administer the WISH Family Journal for project families in collaboration with the technology staff at Brigid Collins Family Support Center.

Some of the family information and indicator data will potentially be available through its reporting in the WISH Family Journal. This tool could potentially be used to compile some of the information related to achievement of family goals, numbers of family supports, and other outcomes.