



Colorado Court Improvement Program Assessment Report

Federal Fiscal Year 2010

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Colorado Court Improvement Program Assessment Report Federal Fiscal Year 2010

As set forth by Administration of Children and Families Program Instruction ACYF-CB-PI-06-05 and ACYF-CB-PI-07-09 this report must be submitted on December 31, 2010 and should detail the outcomes of the basic grant, data collection and analysis grant, and training grant activities included in each strategic plan and demonstrate that they have measurably and tangibly helped to provide for the safety, permanency and well-being of children in foster care.

I. INTRODUCTION

In October 2006, the Colorado Supreme Court was awarded the Court Improvement Program basic, data collection and analysis (hereinafter “technology grant”), and training grants from the Administration of Children and Families. The funding required Colorado’s Court Improvement Program to develop strategic plans for each grant.¹ Each grant application included an integrated strategic plan and work plan (Appendix A, Combined Strategic Plan).

The 2010 Colorado Court Improvement Program Assessment Report (hereinafter “Assessment”) sets forth the progress and outcomes of the basic, technology, and training grant strategic planning activities during the grant reporting period of October 2009 – September 2010. The primary outcome achieved during this reporting period was the implementation of Colorado’s strategic plans for each of the grants.

The overall goal of the strategic plan is to improve the safety, permanency, and well-being of children in foster care. The strategic plan is designed to create ongoing and sustainable systems change across the child welfare system by developing an infrastructure for the delivery of training and technical assistance to all child welfare stakeholders. The activities included in the strategic plan are designed to institutionalize this infrastructure and delivery system over approximately a five year period of time that began in October 2007.

The integration of the basic, technology and training grants resulted in four main programmatic components:

A) BEST PRACTICE COURTS PROGRAM

The Best Practice Courts Program is designed to develop and foster permanent collaborative court structures at the local level. This program is based on the National Council of Juvenile and Family Courts Judges Model Court Program. Similar to the Model Courts Program, Best Practice Courts are designed to identify key stakeholders; include them in the strategic planning processes; begin assessing systems’ functioning; target specific, attainable goals; provide the information, materials, faculty, and mentors necessary to reach these goals; and support ongoing efforts to effect substantive, sustainable change. The focus of the program activities is two-fold: 1) develop multi-disciplinary teams in each jurisdiction; 2) implement Chief Justice Directives 96-08 and 98-02 and other best practices.

¹ ACYF-CB-PI-06-05 and ACYF-CB-PI-07-09

B) CHILD WELFARE TRAINING PROGRAM (HEREINAFTER “TRAINING PROGRAM”)

The Training Program is designed to deliver multi-disciplinary training curriculum to Best Practice Court teams and other child welfare stakeholders and to provide in depth, in residence dependency and neglect training for judicial officers. The multi-disciplinary trainings consist of a multi-disciplinary training curricula, a statewide multi-disciplinary conference, and CIP sponsored local training initiated by judicial districts. The multi-disciplinary training curricula, the *Training Wheel*, consists of nine individual one day training modules for subject matter categories that address the core knowledge base for those practicing in the child welfare system. The individual training modules are: Roles and Responsibilities; Procedure and Practice; Information; Child Development; Collaborative Process; Community and Culture; Law; Education; and Services (Appendix B, Training Wheel Core Competencies). The judge specific training, the *Colorado Dependency and Neglect Judicial Institute (CoDNJI)*, is a subject matter specific training for judicial officers and a highly interactive in-residence training that follows a dependency case from beginning to end. It affords judicial officers an opportunity to share their bench experiences and practice skills. The focus of the program activities is three-fold: 1) assess training needs; 2) develop training curriculum; 3) deliver or assist delivery of multi-disciplinary and judge specific training at the local, regional or statewide level.

C) FAMILY JUSTICE INFORMATION SYSTEM PROGRAM (HEREINAFTER “FAMJIS PROGRAM”)

The FAMJIS Program is designed to deliver training and technical assistance to Best Practice Court Teams. The FAMJIS Program is an information management system that allows for the real time exchange of child welfare data between the Colorado Judicial Department and Colorado Department of Human Services. The FAMJIS Program allows for the sharing of information related to safety, permanency, well-being and timeliness in child welfare cases. As a result of the FAMJIS Program, outcome based management reports and case management tools have been designed to improve the handling of child welfare cases. The focus of the program activities is two-fold: 1) assess judicial and stakeholder training needs; 2) deliver statewide technical assistance designed to ensure utilization and enhance the capabilities of case management tools and reports related to safety, permanency, timeliness and due process.

D) RESPONDENT PARENTS’ COUNSEL PROGRAM (HEREINAFTER “RPC PROGRAM”)

The Respondent Parents’ Counsel Program is designed to improve the representation of parents by court appointed attorneys and the information provided by court appointed attorneys to the court through the implementation of recommendations made by the RPC Task Force Needs Assessment (finalized in April 2007) and the Recommendations made by the RPC Task Force Final Report to the Chief Justice of the Colorado Supreme Court (finalized in September 2007). The RPC Task Force met from October 2005 through October 2007, and the position of Family Representation Coordinator was established within the Court Programs Unit in January 2007 to staff the Task Force and develop a plan for implementation of the Task Force recommendations. Since the issuance of the RPC Task Force Final Report, a strategic plan has been developed to implement and assess significant structural recommendations made by the

Task Force regarding the oversight and compensation of parents' counsel. Steps have already been taken in the following areas: provision of accessible and relevant training to RPC; exploration of models of compensation alternative to the widely-used flat fee payment model; provision of technical support and assistance through the creation of a quarterly newsletter, outreach and communication to attorneys serving as RPC and maintenance of the RPC listserv; and, improvements in oversight through communication with districts, revision to contracts and efforts to identify and contract with all attorneys providing state-paid RPC services. The Needs Assessment has provided some baseline data for the measurement of these program improvement efforts. Surveys of RPC and other stakeholders, as well as existing Judicial Department data tracking systems, will be used to provide ongoing assessment of the performance and needs of RPC.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE UTILIZATION OF COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM FUNDS

The Colorado Court Improvement Program identified a need to develop an integrated strategic plan that blended the funding of the basic, training and technology grants into one Court Improvement Program as set forth in Administration of Families Program Instruction.² The funding in each of the three grants has and will be utilized to fund the activities of the each of the four programmatic components listed in Section I. The Colorado Court Improvement Program continues to work towards achieving the goals set forth in the strategic plan and implementing each of its four programmatic components. Progress is steady and many of the preliminary steps have been set into place. Primarily during the next twelve months, Colorado hopes to further develop the infrastructure for the delivery of training and technical assistance across the state.

A) NEEDS ADDRESSED WITH COURT IMPROVEMENT FUNDS

i) BASIC GRANT FUNDS

Court Improvement Program funds were utilized to support training, memberships with the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges for judicial officers and other court staff, mini-grants to local courts, and a .55 day contract for the Colorado CIP Judge in Residence.

ii) TRAINING GRANT FUNDS

Court Improvement Program funds were utilized to staff a full time training coordinator to provide training and technical assistance, develop the training strategic plan and staff the training subcommittee established in December 2006. The Court Improvement Program Training Coordinator is an employee of the Colorado Judicial Department and works very closely with stakeholder agencies. Funds were also utilized to staff a part time Family Programs Analyst to perform technical editing on training curricula and to provide technical assistance to the Best Practice Court Teams. The Colorado Department of Human Services CIP Program funds were also used to contract with subject matter experts to write curriculum modules for the CIP Training Wheel curricula.

² ACYF-CB-PI-07-09 and ACYF-CB-PI-06-05

iii) TECHNOLOGY GRANT FUNDS

Court Improvement Program funds were utilized to hire FAMJIS Analysts to provide training and technical assistance to local courts and departments of human services, implement the strategic plan, and staff the technology subcommittee. Funding was also used to pay for programming and updates to the FAMJIS system. All positions are employees of the Colorado Judicial Department. Success in training is achieved by the FAMJIS analyst recruiting local Department of Human Services' experts to assist with the case management system training. A third FAMJIS Analyst was hired as of September 1, 2010 to assist with distance learning development and training and conversion issues with the new case management system.

B) PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES DEVELOPED AND IMPLEMENTED TO ADDRESS NEEDS

i) BASIC GRANT PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

(1) Leadership Symposium on Colorado's Children: Following the success of the 2008 and 2009 Summits on Children, Youth, and Families cross-systems training, the Training Coordinator and other CIP judicial personnel were anxious to continue collaboration with the Colorado Division of Child Welfare to host a 2010 Summit, but were prevented from doing so because of budget restrictions in the Department of Human Services. However, a smaller statewide conference, the *Leadership Symposium on Colorado's Children*, was held on September 12-15, 2010. The Colorado Department of Education joined the planning committee to both plan education sessions and to improve attendance of education representatives at the *Symposium*. The collaborative goal was to bring together leaders from all child welfare, stakeholder groups in order to maximize systems change efforts at the local level in order to achieve permanency, safety, and well-being for those Colorado families who find themselves involved with the child welfare system.

(2) Provided statewide Best Practice Court Team Technical Support: Best Practice Court Teams are standing teams led by dependency and neglect judges who are designated by the Chief Judge in each judicial district. Membership includes local child welfare representatives, Court Appointed Special Advocates, Guardian ad Litem, respondent parents' counsel, county attorneys, family court facilitators, education representatives, service providers, foster parents, faith based organizations, and other stakeholders who are involved in the child welfare system or the dependency and neglect court. The Court Improvement Program supports these local teams by providing mini-grants, doing site visits, and supporting the Best Practice Court Teams Website.

(3) Funded Membership to the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges: The Colorado CIP was unable to renew the 2008 Contract with the NCJFCJ because of statewide fiscal emergency measures. The relationship with the NCJFCJ was continued through:

- National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges Memberships to State of Colorado Judicial Officers.

(4) Staffed the Colorado CIP with part time Judge in Residence who delivered CIP Regional Training, Conducted Site Visits, and acted as a liaison between the CIP State Office and Lead Dependency judges in local jurisdictions.

(5) Performed CIP Site visits in local courts.

(6) Contributed to the funding and planning for the *Best Practices Meet the Community* drug court conference held on April 27-29, 2010.

(7) Entered into an interagency agreement with the Department of Human Services to collaborate on the delivery of regional training and maintenance of Best Practice Court Team Website (BPC Website at www.cobpcteams.com).

- The Colorado Best Practice Court Teams Website is a virtual meeting place for all of Colorado's dependency court BPC Teams to communicate directly with one another and to share best practices information by viewing and posting meetings; holding forum discussions; and, posting documents and links in the virtual library. Members can also view all team goals and profiles.

ii) TRAINING GRANT PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

(1) CIP Training Coordinator: A full time Court Improvement Program Training Coordinator staffed and chaired the Training Subcommittee and coordinated training.

(2) Family Program Analyst: A .5 FTE Family Program Analyst acted as technical editor for CIP *Training Wheel* curricula and provided technical assistance to Best Practice Court Teams.

(3) Training Subcommittee: The training subcommittee was established in December 2006 and met monthly through September 2008. The subcommittee is a standing committee staffed by the Training Coordinator and is charged with developing the goals set forth in the strategic plan for the training grant. The subcommittee has completed development of core competencies, goals, and objectives for the curricula outlined in the strategic plan. The Training Coordinator developed curriculum writing protocol and contracted with independent curriculum writers to develop curricula for eight of the subject matter areas of *The Training Wheel* and the CIP Training Subcommittee continued to function as a review committee as each curriculum module was completed.

(4) Regional Level Cross-System Training: *Roles and Responsibilities in the Child Welfare System* training was provided regionally in seven locations across Colorado. The focus of this training is to assure that stakeholders in the child welfare system have an understanding of the perspectives, motivations, culture and ethical considerations, and the roles and responsibilities of other stakeholders within the child

welfare system in order to gain an appreciation of the roles of others so that they can create respect for individuals, promote productive relationships, and maximize system capacity to assure safety, permanency and well being for children, youth and families.

(4) The Colorado Dependency and Neglect Judicial Institute (CoDNJI): The CoDNJI is a residential training for dependency and neglect judicial officers. The training is interactive, organized from a common case scenario, and follows the progression of a dependency case that begins with the first contact a judge would have with a case and ends with a termination hearing.

iii) TECHNOLOGY GRANT PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

(1) Coordinated Training with Colorado Department of Human Services: The Colorado Judicial Branch continues to work very closely on the FAMJIS Program with the Colorado Department of Human Services. This partnership originated in 2004 when the Judicial Branch received the Strengthening Abuse and Neglect Courts of America (SANCA) Grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. The agencies worked together to develop a joint agency training curriculum, completed the training statewide, and are working together to continue to provide this training on an ongoing basis. The FAMJIS analyst continues to work closely with the state training manager for Colorado Department of Human Services coordinating quarterly joint regional trainings in 2011 to demonstrate the data exchange between the two agencies. Quarterly trainings will be offered throughout 2011.

(2) FAMJIS Program Staff: FAMJIS program staff includes a .60 Project Coordinator, a .60 FAMJIS Analyst, and a .75 FAMJIS Analyst. CIP technology funds were used to pay programming staff for the development and implementation of four case management reports in a new IBM software reporting tool, Cognos. Cognos allows for more visually aesthetic reports viewed by Judicial Officers along with the ability to “slice and dice” data for comparative analysis.

(3) Established Dependency and Neglect Case Management Team: CIP technology funds were used to send an Analyst from Colorado to the case management seminar in Virginia in December 2009 hosted by the National Center for State Courts. The Dependency and Neglect Case Management Team, which was formed in January 2009, continue to meet on a monthly basis. The accomplishments of this team to date are:

- Continue to meet on a monthly basis.
- Developed training curriculum for statewide coding and management report training.
- Developed a specific dependency and neglect change of venue form.
- Continue to revisit the current coding practices.
- Developed a protocol for utilization of dependency and neglect case management reports.
- Continue to focus efforts on providing training and technical assistance.

- Develop curriculum for Colorado Caseflow Management Workshops to be held in May and September 2011.
- Assisted in the development of a new statewide dependency and neglect advisement video.
- Assisted in the development of dependency and neglect caseflow charts.

(4) Conduct Coding and Case Management Report Training: The FAMJIS Analysts continue to conduct quarterly trainings for coding, management reports, and joint agency training with Colorado Department of Human Services. The following sessions are offered (Appendix C, Save the Date 2011 FAMJIS Training Schedule):

1. Cure for the Common Code:

What should staff who process Dependency and Neglect cases know about D&N coding practices and the effects that coding has on D&N case management reports? The training goal and core competencies for *Cure for the Common Code* offer the answers to that question. They set out the basic requirements of knowledge and understanding necessary both to process Dependency and Neglect cases and to understand the larger effects of coding on case management. The objectives provide a step by step interactive learning experience that guides users through the necessary professional knowledge and skill base necessary to reach the goal by mastering the competencies.

This course is recommended for all court Participants new to D&N case processing.

Training Goal for *Cure for the Common Code*

Interaction with online Dependency and Neglect case management tools will empower staff to become more efficient in case processing both by providing the practical skills necessary to ensure data integrity and by creating a more comprehensive understanding of the sensitive nature of Dependency and Neglect cases.

Core Competencies for *Cure for the Common Code*

Those involved with processing D&N cases should have an understanding of the following:

- The codes specific to D&N case processing;
- When and how to enter the codes into the case management system;
- The statutory timeframes in D&N cases;
- The progression of a typical D&N case ;
- Case management tools available in the case management system;
- The importance of proper data entry and the impact they have on case management reports Best practices for case closing procedures; and
- The data exchange process between Judicial and the Colorado Department of Human Services;

Training Objectives for Cure for the Common Code

- Participants will demonstrate a working knowledge of coding for events and scheduled events specific to D&N case processing.
- Participants will demonstrate a working knowledge proper utilization of events and scheduled events in D&N cases.
- Participants will acquire an awareness of the impact that coding has on case management reports.
- Participants will demonstrate a working knowledge of the statutory time frames for adjudication, disposition, permanency planning hearings, and termination hearings.
- Participants will acquire an awareness of typical D&N case progression.
- Participants will demonstrate a working knowledge of the available case management tools.
- Participants will demonstrate a working knowledge of the case closure practices.
- Participants will acquire an awareness of the data exchange process between Judicial and the Colorado Department of Human Services

2. Unraveling the Coding Mystery

Why is it important for staff that process Dependency and Neglect cases to understand the typical case flow, hearings and how they progress through the case, case closing practices, and when and how to use the codes critical to D&N case management and their impact on management reports? The training goal and core competencies for *Unraveling the Coding Mystery* offer the answers to that question. They expand on the basic requirements of knowledge and understanding set forth in the *Cure for the Common Code* training to heighten the awareness of caseflow progression and caseflow management. The objectives provide a highly interactive learning experience that guides users through the professional knowledge and skill base necessary to reach the goal by mastering the competencies.

This interactive course is recommended for all court staff needing a refresher course in D&N case coding, case progression, and the fundamentals of case management.

Training Goal for *Unraveling the Coding Mystery*

Interactive participation with peers will allow staff to strengthen their current knowledge of coding and caseflow progression which will empower staff to become more efficient in case processing by increasing their knowledge base of fundamentals for caseflow management.

Core Competencies for *Unraveling the Coding Mystery*

Those involved with processing D&N cases should have an understanding of the following:

- The codes specific to D&N case processing and when to enter them into the case management system;
- The statutory timeframes in D&N cases;
- The progression of a typical D&N case;
- Case management tools available in the case management system;
- The importance of proper data entry and the impact they have on case management reports Best practices for case closing procedures

Training Objectives for Cure for the Common Code

- Participants will demonstrate a working knowledge of coding for events and scheduled events specific to D&N case processing.
- Participants will demonstrate a working knowledge proper utilization of events and scheduled events in D&N cases.
- Participants will heighten their awareness of the impact that coding has on case management reports.
- Participants will demonstrate a working knowledge of the statutory time frames for adjudication, disposition, permanency planning hearings, and termination hearings.
- Participants will acquire an awareness of typical D&N case progression.
- Participants will demonstrate a working knowledge of the available case management tools.
- Participants will demonstrate a working knowledge of the case closure practices.
- Participants will demonstrate a working knowledge of the data exchange process between Judicial and the Colorado Department of Human Services.

3. Management Report Training

What should staff who manage Dependency and Neglect cases know about how data can be used to assist in case management? The training goal and core competencies for *Putting the Pieces Together: Using Data to Manage Dependency and Neglect cases* offer the answers to that question. They set out the basic requirements of knowledge and understanding necessary both to interpret the data on the reports and to recommend best practices for utilization. The objectives provide a step by step interactive learning experience that will guide staff through the necessary professional knowledge and skill base necessary to reach the goal by mastering the competencies. This course is recommended both for all court staff who manage D&N cases and for those who are responsible for running and distributing the reports.

Training Goal for *Putting the Pieces Together: Using Data to Manage Dependency and Neglect Cases*

Provide court staff with sufficient understanding of D&N Case Management reports to enable them to better manage these sensitive cases.

Core Competencies for Putting the Pieces Together

Those involved with managing D&N cases should have an understanding of the following:

- The reports available to assist in D&N case management in areas of safety, timeliness, due process, and permanency;
- When and how to run the reports;
- Which codes affect specific management reports;
- How to interpret the data posted on the reports; and
- Best business practices for report utilization

Training Objectives for Putting the Pieces Together

- Participants will receive copies of management reports run for their respective court location.
- Participants will demonstrate an awareness of the available case management reports.
- Participants will recognize and understand how to utilize the proper tools for running the management reports.
- Participants will demonstrate a working knowledge of how coding affects the management reports and of the data posted on the reports.
- Participants will respond to recommendations based on a developed best business practice protocol for management report utilization.
- Participants will develop an action plan for utilizing the reports in their respective court location.

4. Joint Agency Training

During this course, a live demonstration of the Interface between ICON/Eclipse and Trails will be provided. The demonstration will serve as training to both Department of Human Services and Judicial staff on the case connection process and show where the shared data resides in both systems. Participants will be made aware of how data entry and the case connection process affect each other's business.

This is also an opportunity for each agency to talk about any issues they are currently facing with the interface.

(5) Conducted FAMJIS Site Visit: In October 2009, the FAMJIS project coordinator and the FAMJIS analyst conducted a site visit in the 10th Judicial District. FAMJIS staff worked closely with the Lead Dependency Judge of the 10th Judicial District in preparing the agenda. Prior to the site visit, FAMJIS staff performed a data entry audit on a random sample of dependency and neglect cases and ran the district's dependency and neglect case management reports. The site visit consisted of dependency and neglect docket observations for two hours in the morning and participating in a management report meeting with the judicial officer and various court staff in the district over the lunch hour. The afternoon was spent addressing data entry practices with court staff. Feedback from the site visit was provided to the court within three weeks of the visit. The report included strengths, areas of focus, and recommendations pertaining to

the court observation, dependency and neglect coding practices, and dependency and neglect case management reports.

(6) Delivered local Coding and Management Report Training: These trainings are designed to assist judicial districts outside of the Denver Metro area that were unable to attend quarterly trainings held due to staffing constraints and travel restrictions. Local training was conducted in the following judicial districts:

- 9th Judicial District (includes Garfield, Rio Blanco and Pitkin Counties) in March 2010.
- 21st Judicial District (Mesa County) in March 2010.
- 15th Judicial District (includes Cheyenne, Kiowa, Prowers and Baca counties) in April 2010.
- 16th Judicial District (includes Crowley, LaJunta, LasAnimas) in April 2010.
- Joint agency training conducted in the 15th Judicial District in September 2010.

(7) Develop Dependency and Neglect Advisement DVD: One of the FAMJIS analysts discovered a need for an advisement video after attending caseload management training and after participating in several site visits. It became apparent that there are a few districts that have developed their own advisement video and found great benefit from using it. The Analyst felt strongly that using this format statewide, would improve the consistency among the districts resulting in better frontloading of services. In March 2010, a team was assembled to look at current videos/DVD's being used. The D&N case management team and a local parent partner group met to provide input on the videos/DVD's currently being used. A statewide needs and assessment survey was sent to all districts for their input regarding the use of this tool (see Appendix D, D&N Advisement Survey). A Magistrate from the Fourth Judicial District agreed to deliver the advisement in Spanish and English. The DVD is being developed in house with the assistance of the Judicial Branch's Information Technology Services staff. Taping began in August 2010 and it is currently being edited for finalization and distribution within the next few months. Upon completion of the DVD, every district will receive a Spanish and English version with best practice recommendations.

(8) Continue to monitor additional juvenile case data transfers: A user group was convened in October 2008, to discuss the possibilities of enhancing our current data exchange with CDHS. Although the programming specifications have been completed, both agencies continue to lack resources to complete this project. This project is on hold until programming resources become available.

(9) Continue the development and enhancement of management reports. The Subsequent Petition, Permanency, and Placement Reports have been completed in COGNOS. The Timeliness Report is approximately ninety percent complete. Four judicial districts will be piloting the new reports upon completion of the Timeliness Report.

(10) Continue to monitor the development of Electronic Exchange for Caseworker Reports: The Colorado Department of Human Services is going to implement changes in TRAILS to prevent caseworkers from modifying the actual TRAILS report. Once this process is in place, Judicial will be able to rely on consistent data on these reports, which will allow for the data exchange to begin. Judicial will need to convene a work group to identify what data Judicial will receive and how to format the data.

C) **OUTCOMES**

i) **BASIC GRANT OUTCOMES**

(1) Awarded Basic Grant: FFY 2010 Basic Grant application and strategic plan was submitted on June 30, 2009 and funding awarded on October 1, 2009.

(2) Development of RPC Strategic Plan: The Colorado State Court Administrator's Office has begun developing a three year strategic plan in response to the recommendations of the RPC Task Force. The following action steps are being pursued:

- Hiring an additional management analyst at the State Court Administrator's Office to address RPC issues e.g. access to resources such expert witnesses, motions, and pleadings.
- Including RPC Practice Guidelines in a Chief Justice Directive.
- Developing and delivering training curriculum.
- Changing RPC pay structure from contract to hourly in a pilot jurisdiction.

(3) Training Delivery and Evaluations: The Court Improvement Program Basic Grant provided funding for the *Leadership Symposium on Colorado's Children*, a training delivered to over 350 child welfare stakeholders statewide in the past twelve months. Through the delivery of this training in combination with evaluations, the Court Improvement Program plans to enhance and improve all future training efforts (Appendix E, Evaluation Results from the Regional Team Track Sessions of the *2010 Leadership Symposium for Colorado's Children*).

(4) Best Practices Meet the Community Drug Court Conference: The Court Improvement Basic Grant provided funding for the Best Practices Meet the Community Drug Court Conference on April 27-29, 2010. The Colorado CIP collaborated with the Colorado Interagency Task force on Treatment, the Problem Solving Court Advisory Committee, and the Colorado DEC to sponsor regional problem solving drug court related activities to approximately 450 participants.

(5) National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges Membership: The Court Improvement Basic Grant provided memberships to the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges to judicial officers upon request. Currently, approximately twenty judicial officers maintain a membership.

ii) TRAINING GRANT OUTCOMES

(1) Awarded Training Grant: FFY 2010 Training Grant application and strategic plan was submitted on June 30, 2009 and funding awarded on October 1, 2009.

(2) Continued to Develop Curriculum Development: In 2008, the Training Subcommittee agreed that a curriculum development requirements template must be created to give consistency to the design of the *Training Wheel* curricula, but also take into consideration the differences in core competencies, goals, and objectives contained within each of the subject matter areas of the curricula. The Training Coordinator developed the Training Wheel Curriculum Development Requirements template which was approved by the Training Subcommittee (Appendix F, Training Wheel Curriculum Development Requirements document for the Roles and Responsibilities). Training Wheel individual curriculum development requirements differ one from the other in terms of core competencies, goals, and objectives. In 2009, vendors and subject matter experts were identified and selected by the Training Subcommittee to write the individual subject matter areas of the curricula in eight of the subject matter areas. Curriculum writing was completed for Roles and Responsibilities. In 2010, curriculum for Community and Culture was completed by American Humane and is scheduled for pilot delivery on November 19, 2010. Curriculum for Education was completed by the Rocky Mountain Children's Law Center in 2010 with a pilot training to be delivered in Spring of 2011. Curriculum for Child Development was completed by the Kempe Center with pilot delivery scheduled in Spring of 2011. Curriculum for Procedures and Practice was completed in September 2010 by CIP Judge in Residence, J. Robert Lowenbach, and the pilot delivery is scheduled for December 17, 2010. Collaborative Process is being written by CIP Judge in Residence, Robert Lowenbach, and is scheduled to be completed by November 30, 2010. A curriculum for Law and for Information was completed by the National Association of Counsel for Children and pilot delivery is scheduled for Spring of 2011. A curriculum writer for Services is being sought.

(3). Developed and delivered the first *Leadership Symposium on Colorado's Children* from September 12-15, 2010. The *Symposium* was collaboratively sponsored by the Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Child Welfare; the National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement; and the Court Improvement Program of the Colorado Judicial Branch. Approximately 350 child welfare stakeholders attended the 2010 Symposium. The theme and focus of the 2010 Symposium was leadership, collaboration, and teamwork at the judicial district/county level – finding new ways to combine local collaboratives for the good of Colorado's at-risk children, youth and families.

(4) Delivered the first annual Colorado Dependency and Neglect Judicial Institute (CoDNJI): The CoDNJI took place on August 1-4, 2010, at the Sturm College of Law at the University of Denver. The CoDNJI is a residential training for dependency and neglect judicial officers. The training is interactive, organized from a common dependency and neglect case scenario, and follows the progression of a dependency case that begins with the first contact a judge would have with a case and

ends with a termination hearing. Twenty-two judicial officers from small, medium, and large judicial districts in Colorado attended the CoDNJI.

iii) TECHNOLOGY GRANT OUTCOMES

(1) Awarded Technology Grant: FFY 2010 Technology Grant application and strategic plan was submitted on June 30, 2009 and funding awarded on October 1, 2009.

(2) Pre-Training Survey: Information is gathered prior to each FAMJIS training through an on-line survey that is distributed to court clerks, judicial officers, case managers, and facilitators. The FAMJIS analysts review the survey results prior to each of the trainings so that specific needs can be addressed during the training. It also helps the analysts determine which areas need more or less attention during their presentations (Appendix G, Dependency and Neglect Case Management Curriculum and Surveys).

The analysis of the surveys has indicated the following themes:

- Users believe that they receive better case information as a result of the data transfers.
- Users believe that they have easier access to information as a result of the data transfers.
- Broad understanding of the SANCA and FAMJIS projects has improved.
- Judicial users are utilizing the case connection and case history building processes.
- There is a continued need for regularly scheduled coding training for judicial staff.
- Users need a better understanding of available case management tools.

(3) Post Training Evaluation: At the conclusion of FAMJIS trainings there are two evaluation components: 1) Open Lab: Participants are provided with a case scenario in which they read and apply coding practices learned in the morning session. Once the participants complete the exercise, the FAMJIS analysts review the scenario with the participants and walk through the correct coding procedures. This allows participants to perform a self-evaluation on what they actually entered during the open lab and 2) Evaluation Forms (Appendix G, Dependency and Neglect Case Management Curriculum and Surveys): Participants are asked to complete evaluation forms at the end of each day. The majority of participants responded as follows:

- “What was the strength of the training program?” Responses indicate the “Wheel of FAMJIS” format, materials (specifically the USB’s) and handouts, trainer knowledge, organization, and open lab were the greatest strengths.
- “What is the weakness of the program?” Responses indicate that there was too much information provided in one day. Participants requested separate sessions for coding and management reports.
- “Did your understanding of the topic improve as a result of the training? If so, how?” Responses indicate participants have a greater understanding of dependency and neglect cases progress, the coding definitions, the impact of coding on management reports, and the importance of common language used by all stakeholders during proceedings.

- “What will you do differently when you return to work?” Responses indicate that attendees will pay more attention to: 1) data entry and code utilization as it impacts management reports; 2) work with stakeholders to improve language spoken during proceedings; and 3) develop local practice for utilizing FAMJIS “Super User”.

III. OVERALL PROGRESS TOWARDS THE GOALS DELINEATED IN THE STRATEGIC PLAN.

The goals and activities delineated in the strategic plan are primarily based on two key assumptions: 1) Implementing the Court Improvement Program court reform efforts will improve the safety, permanency, well-being, and due process for children and families involved in the child protection court system; 2) All training activities will provide safety, permanency, and well-being for children in foster care. These assumptions and their correlating activities, intermediate outcomes, and impact are integrated in the Combined Basic, Training, and Technology Strategic Plan attached in Appendix A. At this stage it is difficult to illustrate the overall progress of strategic plan implementation without describing the progress towards implementing the activities delineated in the Combined Strategic Plan. This description of activities will first be organized by the assumptions listed above in relation to the action strategies for the basic, training and technology grant. However, it must be noted that the action strategies are not mutually exclusive and must occur simultaneously in order to achieve the goals delineated in the strategic plan.

A) IMPLEMENTING THE COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM COURT REFORM EFFORTS

i) PROGRESS TOWARDS BASIC GRANT ACTION STRATEGIES

(1) Establish a CIP Collaborative Court Program in each jurisdiction charged with implementing Colorado Chief Justice Directives 96-08 and 98-02, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) Resource Guidelines, NCJFCJ Adoption and Permanency Guidelines, and NCJFCJ Building a Better Collaborative: Progress towards this goal continues through the development of training activities that will address the Chief Justice Directives and NCJFCJ best practice materials. The team training at both the 2008 and 2009 Summits and the 2010 Leadership Symposium for Colorado’s Children functioned as a mechanism for each jurisdiction to establish multi-disciplinary Best Practice Court Teams, refine team goals, and benchmark best practices of other court teams. At the 2008 Summit, twenty-one of Colorado’s twenty-two judicial districts were represented on Team Day. At the second annual summit, the 2009 Summit on Children, Youth and Families, all of Colorado’s twenty-two judicial districts brought Best Practice Court teams. During the full day of multi-disciplinary team training at this conference, Best Practice Court teams reported progress on team goals since 2008, set new goals, shared best practices, and received training on leadership and collaboration and on the of the Best Practice Court Team Website. At the 2010 Leadership Symposium, leaders in education and juvenile courts joined dependency court and child

welfare leaders to work on combining efforts on behalf of at-risk families at the judicial district and county levels.

(2) Contract with National Council of Juvenile Family Court Judges Permanency Planning for Children Department Model Courts Program: Due to state financial restrictions, a contract with the NCJFCJ was not executed in 2010. However, the Colorado Court Improvement Program funded memberships for judicial officers to the NCJFCJ.

(3) Establish technical assistance teams within Family Issues Unit (SCAO) and in conjunction with local multi-disciplinary teams: Progress toward this goal is continuously accomplished by the establishment of a support team, Team 23, which is comprised of Colorado State Court Administrator's Office Family Unit and CIP staff members. Team 23 maintains a presence on the Best Practice Court Teams Website and allows Best Practice Court Team members statewide to ask questions and request resources that help individual teams to achieve their goals. In addition, retired Judge J. Robert Lowenbach served as "Judge in Residence" as part of the Colorado Judicial Department Senior Judge Program. Judge Lowenbach provided ongoing technical assistance and support to Best Practice Court Teams. Judge Lowenbach and Team 23 also conducted a three day site visit to Colorado's 18th Judicial District. Additionally, the Department of Human Services Division of Child Welfare and Court Improvement Program continue to support a Best Practice Court social networking website, the BPC Team Website, to aid communication and the delivery of training and technical assistance to Best Practice Court Teams.

(4) Establish and implement best practices: The progress towards this goal was accomplished through the delivery of training described in Number 1, 2, and 3 of this section.

ii) PROGRESS TOWARDS TRAINING GRANT ACTION STRATEGIES

(1) Develop judicial training program and curriculum: Progress towards this goal has been established through the development of the Training Wheel curricula by the CIP Training Subcommittee. The purpose of the Training Wheel Curricula is the development of core competencies, goals, and objectives for curriculum in nine specific subject-matter areas; Law; Services; Roles and Responsibilities; Procedure & Practice; Information, Child Development; Education; Collaborative Process; Community and Culture. Each curriculum area is a separate spoke in multi-disciplinary curricula called The Training Wheel. The curricula is designed as a method of providing sustainable training that will present basic knowledge in each area to multi-disciplinary audiences of judges, magistrates, court staff, county attorneys, guardians *ad litem*, respondent parents counsel, county departments of human services staff, CASA, service providers, foster parents, educators, law enforcement, children and families, and legislators. The Training Subcommittee held in-person meetings to write competencies for curriculum and, in 2008-2009, the Training Coordinator began hiring subject matter experts to write specific curriculum areas on the CIP Training Wheel. In 2010, the curricula for five training

modules were completed and one module, Roles and Responsibilities, was delivered seven times regionally to a total 350 regional child welfare stakeholders. Three curricula are scheduled for completion by November 30, 2010, and will be scheduled for delivery in the Spring and Summer of 2011, The CIP Training Subcommittee stays actively involved in curriculum development by reviewing and commenting on all curriculum proposals and completed curriculum modules. The CIP and the Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Child Welfare is collaborating to deliver completed training modules regionally in 2010 and 2011. The CIP Training Wheel curricula has also been included in the Colorado Child Welfare's IV-B Five Year Training Plan as multi-disciplinary training created through the collaborative efforts of the Colorado CIP and Colorado Division of Child Welfare.

(2) Develop Cross-Systems Training Program and Curriculum: *The Leadership Symposium on Colorado's Children* was held in September 2010. The *Symposium* was sponsored by the Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Child Welfare; the National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement; and the Court Improvement Program of the Colorado Judicial Branch. Approximately 450 child welfare stakeholder leaders attended the Symposium. The theme and focus of the Symposium was leadership, collaboration, and teamwork– finding new ways to work together at the county and judicial district level for the good of Colorado's children, youth and families. All concurrent workshops were multi-disciplinary and a regional team track concluded each day of training.

(3) Develop training curriculum for court appointed attorneys: Role specific attorney training has historically been conducted in conjunction with the *2008 and 2009 Summits on Children, Youth, and Families*. However, because of budget restrictions for the Colorado Division of Child Welfare, a *Summit* was not delivered in 2010. Instead, the Colorado Court Improvement Program collaborated with the Colorado Division of Child Welfare to plan and deliver a *Leadership Symposium on Colorado's Children*. Child Welfare attorneys were invited to attend the *Leadership Symposium* in their role as leaders in the child welfare community, but the *Leadership Symposium* did not offer a role specific court appointed attorney track. In 2010, the Colorado CIP refocused training efforts for court appointed attorneys by developing a scope of training for Respondent Parent Counsel (Please see Appendix H). Then, in March 2010, the Colorado CIP contracted with an independent contractor to write two-day curricula for Respondent Parent Counsel. At this date, the curricula are nearing completion and multiple regional deliveries are projected for the Spring of 2011.

iii) PROGRESS TOWARDS TECHNOLOGY GRANT ACTION STRATEGIES

(1) Provide ongoing site visits in combination with annual regional and statewide training focused on utilization of outcome based management reports and case management tools designed to improve information related to safety, permanency, timeliness and due process: Progress towards achieving this goal has been established through the regularly scheduled FAMJIS site visits and quarterly trainings.

(2) Implement statewide technical assistance plan: Progress towards achieving this goal has been established through the delivery of the FAMJIS training curriculum and technical assistance as outlined previously.

(3) Develop statewide technical assistance plan: The FAMJIS Analysts continue to provide FAMJIS training for data entry, case management tools, and case matching on an as-needed basis and at regional and statewide conferences.

B) ALL TRAINING ACTIVITIES WILL PROVIDE SAFETY, PERMANENCE, AND WELL-BEING FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

i) PROGRESS TOWARDS BASIC GRANT ACTION STRATEGIES

(1) Provide ongoing local multi-disciplinary training programs: Progress towards this goal began in 2008 when *Resource Guidelines* trainings were held in three local jurisdictions. As local Best Practice Court Teams were established in 2008 and 2009, training programs in local jurisdictions began. In 2009, the CIP provided flexible funding assistance to Colorado's 18th Judicial District Best Practice Court Team to put on a one-day symposium dependency and neglect symposium. Seven local trainings of *Roles and Responsibilities in the Child Welfare System* were held in 2010.

(2) Provide ongoing local technical assistance and assessment (qualitative and quantitative): In 2008, the Court Improvement Program worked collaboratively with the Colorado Department of Human Services Division of Child Welfare to facilitate design of an electronic *Judges Sign-Up Website* so that Lead dependency and neglect judges in individual Colorado judicial districts could designate teams for the *2008 Summit*. In 2009 the website was upgraded to make it more interactive and to expand functionality: the editing function was enhanced to make it easier for Best Practice Court Teams to update goals; functionality was created to add additional teams both within judicial districts and to add support teams that are not judicial district teams; the ability to notify website members of forum postings and library additions was added. In 2010, the Colorado Court Improvement Program conducted a Site Visit to the 18th Judicial District which is a four county district comprised of both small and large counties. The Site Visit was led by the CIP Judge in Residence, J. Robert Lowenbach, assisted by Court Improvement Program Staff. The Site Visit was modeled on site visits as conducted by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges model court site visits.

ii) PROGRESS TOWARDS TRAINING GRANT ACTION STRATEGIES

(1) Provide annual regional cross-systems training: Progress towards this goal began with the local 2008 *Resource Guidelines* training that was delivered in three regional locations. Nine regional trainings are scheduled for delivery between February 2010 and May 2010 in the subject matter areas of *Roles and Responsibilities, Community and Culture, Child Development, and Education*.

(2) Provide annual statewide judicial training: Progress towards this goal was accomplished when a full day of judicial training was conducted at the May 2008 Summit on Children, Youth and Families and a half-day of judge specific training was conducted at the 2009 Summit on Children, Youth and Families. In September 2009, the CIP began collaboration with the University of Denver and the Rocky Mountain Children's Law Center to construct a judicial institute for dependency judges in order to provide sustainable yearly training for the full spectrum of dependency court. The first institute, the *Colorado Dependency and Neglect Judicial Institute (CoDNJI)* was held August 1-4, 2010.

(3) Provide annual statewide cross-systems training: Progress towards this goal was accomplished when a half day of Best Practice Court Team cross-systems team training was conducted at the May 2008 Summit on Children, Youth and Families. Additionally, the 2009 Summit on Children, Youth and Families featured a full day of Best Practice Court Team Training. For both the *2008 and 2009 Summits on Children, Youth and Families*, the last two and one-half days of the Summit were reserved for cross system sessions open to all child welfare stakeholders. In 2010, the *Leadership Symposium on Colorado's Children*, was held September 12-15. All concurrent sessions were multi-disciplinary and each day of concurrent sessions was concluded with a regional team meeting.

(4) Provide ongoing local multi-disciplinary trainings: The first local multi-disciplinary training was delivered in 2009 and consisted of a one day Child Welfare Symposium planned and delivered by Colorado's Best Practice Court Team from the 18th Judicial District. The event was funded by the CIP and technical assistance was provided by the CIP for the event.

(5) Provide training to court appointed attorneys: Progress towards this goal began at the May 2008 Summit on Children, Youth and Families and continued during the 2009 *Summit on Children, Youth and Families*. A full day of role specific training was conducted at the *2008 Summit*. Guardians ad litem, respondent parents' counsel and city/county attorneys attended these sessions. At the *2009 Summit on Children, Youth and Families*, a half day of attorney specific training was offered. Due to budget restrictions in effect for the Division of Child Welfare in 2010, the Colorado CIP was not able to collaborate on a *2010 Summit*, and so the CIP focused efforts on designing and writing two-day curricula, *Building a Defense and Helping Families in the Child Welfare System*, for respondent parent attorneys.

iii) PROGRESS TOWARDS TECHNOLOGY GRANT ACTION STRATEGIES

(1) Provide ongoing local training in combination with annual regional and statewide training focused on utilization of outcome based management reports and case management tools designed to improve information related to safety, permanency, timeliness and due process: Local training continues to be offered upon request, on a quarterly basis, and when other conference opportunities arise. FAMJIS Analysts

continue to focus on utilization of case management reports and data analysis to ensure the FAMJIS system is working as intended.

(2) Implement statewide technical assistance plan: This goal has been achieved through the delivery of the FAMJIS training curriculum and technical assistance outlined in Appendix G.

IV. FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS, OR REPORTS OF THE STATEWIDE TASK FORCE.

No findings, recommendations or reports generated by the statewide task force during the time period of October 2009 – September 2010.

V. RESULTS OF ANY ASSESSMENT OF ACTIVITIES FUNDED UNDER GRANT.

A) Evaluation Results from the Regional Team Sessions of the 2010 Leadership Symposium on Colorado's Children

(See Appendix E)

VI. CONCLUSION

The Colorado Court Improvement Program continues to work toward implementation of the strategic plan. The Colorado Judicial Department, Court Improvement Program and Colorado Department of Human Services continue to work closely in preparation for the upcoming program improvement plan. Issues and needs identified in the 2009 Child and Family Services Review will be incorporated into the CIP strategic plan. All activities are designed to provide for the safety, permanency, and well-being of children in foster care.