Florida’s IV-E Waiver

EVALUATION FINDINGS:
FIVE YEARS POST-IMPLEMENTATION

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TITLE IV-E WAIVER - OVERVIEW

- Authorized by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) and implemented statewide in October, 2006

- Allowed the use of federal foster care funds for a wide variety of child welfare purposes rather than being restricted to out-of-home care, as is normally the case under Title IV-E of the Social Security Act

- Permitted funds to be used for a broader array of child welfare services and supports to improve permanency and safety outcomes for all children who enter the child welfare system with an allegation of maltreatment
Hypothesis 1: Over the life of the demonstration project, fewer children will need to enter out-of-home care.

Hypothesis 2: Over the life of the demonstration project, there will be improvements in child outcomes, including child permanency, safety, and well-being.

Hypothesis 3: Waiver implementation will lead to changes in or expansion of the existing child welfare service array for many, if not all, of the lead agencies. Consistent with the Community-Based Care (CBC) model, the new flexibility of funds will be used differently by each lead agency, based on the unique needs of the communities they serve.

Hypothesis 4: Expenditures associated with out-of-home care will decrease following Waiver implementation, while expenditures associated with prevention and in-home services will increase, although no new dollars will be spent as a result of Waiver implementation.
**EVALUATION DESIGN**

Analysis Components

- **Programmatic Outcomes Analysis:** Examined the effect of IV-E Waiver implementation on lead agency performance and outcomes for children, based on administrative data analysis. Florida Safe Families Network (FSFN) was used as the primary source of data, in addition to data reports produced by DCF.

- **Family Assessment and Services Analysis:** Examined the process used by CBC organizations to assess family needs in order to plan for/provide appropriate services and understand the extent to which families are involved and satisfied with the services received. Data were collected via focus groups, interviews, DCF Regional Quality Assurance reviews, and the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect.
Analysis Components

- **Child Welfare Practice Analysis:** Assessed changes in CBC lead agency practices since Waiver implementation. Specifically, strategies were identified that were intended to: prevent child abuse, neglect, and out-of-home placement, engage families in service planning/provision, increase permanency, and reduce lengths of stay in out-of-home care. Primary data sources included a lead agency survey, interviews, focus groups, and supplementary materials.

- **Cost Analysis:** Examined the relationship between Waiver implementation and changes in the use of child welfare funding sources. Expenditure data were provided by the DCF Office of Revenue Management and lead agencies, and qualitative data regarding changes in the use of child welfare funding sources were collected via interviews with relevant stakeholders.
Analysis Components

- **Implementation Analysis**: Examined and tracked the implementation process and assessed the system-level impact of the Waiver on the state’s child welfare system, including CBC lead agencies, provider networks, child protection units, local communities, judges, and DCF. Data were collected via interviews, document reviews, and focus groups.
FINDINGS

Contextual and Organizational Factors Affecting Waiver Implementation

Facilitators

- Philosophy of Care
- Organizational Efficiencies
- Communication and Collaboration
- Community Perception and Involvement
Contextual and Organizational Factors Affecting Waiver Implementation

Challenges

- Pace of Implementation
- Education Needs
- Recruitment and Retention of Case Managers
- Fiscal Challenges
- Contextual Challenges
Hypothesis 1

Number of Children Living in and Entering Out-of-Home Care Nationally by Federal Fiscal Year

Hypothesis 1

Number of Children Living in and Entering Out-of-Home Care in Florida by Federal Fiscal Year


Hypothesis 2: Child and Family Outcomes

Permanency Indicators

- Proportion of children who achieved permanency within 12 months of removal
- Proportion of children who were either reunified or placed with relatives within 12 months of removal
- Proportion of children who were adopted within 24 months of removal
- Median length of stay in out-of-home care
- Proportion of children experiencing two or fewer placements within 12 months of removal
**Hypothesis 2**

Proportion of children exiting OOH care who achieved permanency within 12 months of removal
Hypothesis 2

Proportion of children reunified or placed with relatives within 12 months of removal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Proportion of children reunified/placed with relatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FFY 04-05</td>
<td>49.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FFY 05-06</td>
<td>50.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>FFY 06-07</td>
<td>52.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FFY 07-08</td>
<td>52.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FFY 08-09</td>
<td>52.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FFY 09-10</td>
<td>49.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Waiver Implementation
Hypothesis 2

Proportion of children with adoption finalized within 24 months of removal

Proportion of children adopted

0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14

FFY 04-05 FFY 05-06 FFY 06-07 FFY 07-08 FFY 08-09

5.1 6.7 8.3 10.2 11.7

Waiver Implementation
Hypothesis 2

Median length of stay for children who entered OOH care and exited for any reason

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Median Length of Stay (in months)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FFY 04-05</td>
<td>11.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>FFY 05-06</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FFY 06-07</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FFY 07-08</td>
<td>10.9</td>
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<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FFY 09-10</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Waiver Implementation
Hypothesis 2

Proportion of children experiencing two or fewer placements within 12 months of removal
Hypothesis 2

Strategies used to promote permanency

- Supports for relative caregivers
- Efforts to increase timely adoptions
- Changes in practice when children are placed in shelter
- Concurrent changes in the judicial system
Hypothesis 2

Stakeholder perspectives on strategies for placement stability

- Timely and appropriate assessment of children and matching to services
- Foster home recruitment
- Retention and capacity
- Identifying and supporting relative placements
- Providing behavioral support training to all placement types
- Targeted review committees
Hypothesis 2

Safety Indicators

- Proportion of children who exited out-of-home care and re-entered within 12 months
- Proportion of children with recurrence of maltreatment within six months of service termination
**Hypothesis 2**

Proportion of children re-entering OOH care within 12 months after exiting for reasons of reunification

![Graph showing the proportion of children re-entering OOH care from FFY 04-05 to FFY 09-10. The graph includes data points for each fiscal year, with a notable increase in the proportion from FFY 05-06 to FFY 06-07 following the implementation of the waiver. The data points are as follows:
- FFY 04-05: 10.7
- FFY 05-06: 12
- FFY 06-07: 10.8
- FFY 07-08: 10.9
- FFY 08-09: 11.3
- FFY 09-10: 9.9

Waiver Implementation marks the point where the proportion started to increase significantly.]
Hypothesis 2

Proportion of children who were maltreated with six months after service termination

Average proportion of children maltreated

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Proportion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FFY 04-05</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FFY 05-06</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FFY 06-07</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FFY 07-08</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FFY 08-09</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FFY 09-10</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hypothesis 2

Stakeholder perspectives on re-entry into OOH care

- Lack of agreement about reunification decisions between legal services, the judiciary, Guardians ad Litem, parents, and the lead agency
- Need for supportive services for guardians – continuum of care
- Need plan for alternative placements at time of reunification
- Treatment services and community supports need to be in place before and after reunification
Hypothesis 2

Family Assessment and Services Analysis
Data Source

- Florida DCF case management quality of practice reviews (QP)
## Hypothesis 2

**Family Assessment and Services Analysis**

*Florida Quality of Practice Data Related to Assessing Child and Family Needs by State Fiscal Year*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality of Practice Standard</th>
<th>SFY 08-09</th>
<th>SFY 09-10</th>
<th>SFY 10-11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing Assessment of Child’s Needs</td>
<td>85.7</td>
<td>88.0</td>
<td>89.9*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing Assessment of Mother’s Needs</td>
<td>74.6</td>
<td>77.9</td>
<td>77.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing Assessment of Father’s Needs</td>
<td>55.8</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>55.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing Assessment of Out-of-Home Care Provider’s Needs</td>
<td>85.9</td>
<td>88.4</td>
<td>90.1*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Needs Assessment</td>
<td>85.9</td>
<td>84.4</td>
<td>83.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Health Needs Assessment</td>
<td>80.9</td>
<td>71.9</td>
<td>70.9*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental Health Needs Assessment</td>
<td>50.2</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>45.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental and Behavioral Health Needs Assessment</td>
<td>87.2</td>
<td>89.2</td>
<td>91.3*</td>
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</table>

*p < .05*
Hypothesis 2

Family Assessment and Services Analysis

*Florida Quality of Practice Data Related to Family Engagement by State Fiscal Year*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality of Practice Standard Number</th>
<th>SFY 08-09</th>
<th>SFY 09-10</th>
<th>SFY 10-11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percent of Cases Achieving the Standard</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Manager Visits – Frequency – Child</td>
<td>49.7</td>
<td>70.2</td>
<td>66.9*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Case Manager Visits – Quality – Child</td>
<td>59.7</td>
<td>70.4</td>
<td>73.5*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Manager Visits – Frequency – Mother</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>44.8*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Manager Visits – Frequency – Father</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>32.6</td>
<td>31.0*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Manager Visits – Quality – Mother</td>
<td>56.6</td>
<td>72.3</td>
<td>73.2*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Manager Visits – Quality – Father</td>
<td>44.6</td>
<td>58.6</td>
<td>62.7*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother’s Participation in Decision Making</td>
<td>49.3</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>58.9*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Father’s Participation in Decision Making</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>40.0</td>
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<td>Family Involvement in Case Planning Process</td>
<td>63.4</td>
<td>69.1</td>
<td>74.9*</td>
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<td>Engaging Child’s Mother in Services</td>
<td>68.2</td>
<td>72.7</td>
<td>76.6*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engaging Child’s Father in Services</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>58.2</td>
<td>59.8*</td>
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* p < .05
### Family Assessment and Services Analysis

*Florida Quality of Practice Data Related to Service Provision by State Fiscal Year*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality of Practice Standard</th>
<th>SFY 08-09</th>
<th>SFY 09-10</th>
<th>SFY 10-11</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Services to Protect the Child at Home</td>
<td>86.6</td>
<td>93.7</td>
<td>92.8*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Appropriate Service Referrals</td>
<td>83.2</td>
<td>88.1</td>
<td>91.0*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of Risks</td>
<td>69.2</td>
<td>75.4</td>
<td>75.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Services</td>
<td>81.3</td>
<td>82.6</td>
<td>80.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Service Outcomes</td>
<td>83.1</td>
<td>78.3</td>
<td>79.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Health Services</td>
<td>81.7</td>
<td>68.8</td>
<td>64.4*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental Health Services</td>
<td>67.4</td>
<td>48.8</td>
<td>54.7*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mental and Behavioral Health Services</td>
<td>81.9</td>
<td>81.7</td>
<td>80.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05
Hypothesis 3: Child Welfare Practice

Strategies to Prevent Child Abuse, Neglect, and the Need for Out-of-Home Placement

Primary and Secondary Prevention Initiatives

- Enhanced community information and referral services
- Collaborative community campaigns and partnerships between CBC lead agencies, faith-based organizations, DCF, schools, and other provider organizations
- Neighborhood service centers (e.g., Cassat House and the Library Partnership)
- Expansion of domestic violence prevention services
Hypothesis 3

Strategies to Prevent Child Abuse, Neglect, and the Need for Out-of-Home Placement

Tertiary Prevention Strategies

- Increased use of strategies to connect families with resources and supports at the initial stage of contact with the child protection/welfare system
- Intensive in-home family preservation services
- Increased capacity of in-home parent education and intervention programs (e.g., Nurturing Parent Program, Parenting with Love and Limits)
- Increased use of flex funds to purchase items or services such as beds, utility payments or rent assistance
Hypothesis 3

Strategies to Engage Families in Service Planning

- Increased availability of family team conferencing or family group decision making
- Increased availability of services and practices to engage and support relative and non-relative caregivers
- Implementation of family-centered practice model
- Reduction in caseload size
Hypothesis 3

Strategies to Increase Permanency and Reduce Lengths of Stay in OOH Care

- Addition of permanency specialists
- Use of Family Finding to locate supportive connections and potential permanent families
- Implementing evidence-based child welfare practice models (e.g., solution-based casework, Structured Decision Making)
- Supportive services for foster parents such as foster parent liaisons, foster parent mentoring programs, Quality Parenting Initiative
- Enhanced visitation and reunification support and adoption support services
Hypothesis 3

Strategies to Improve Child and Family Well-Being

- Educational liaisons/specialists
- Nurse liaisons/specialists
- Increased capacity of medical foster care
- Increased availability of behavior analysts and behavior management services
Hypothesis 4: Cost Analysis

Assessment of Fiscal Effectiveness

- Extent to which CBC lead agencies invested a larger proportion of child welfare services funds on front-end services
- How key funding sources were used
- Reduction in IV-E administrative costs
Hypothesis 4

Ratio of OOH care expenditures to prevention/diversion/family preservation/in-home expenditures by federal fiscal year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FFY 04-05</td>
<td>10.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FFY 05-06</td>
<td>11.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FFY 06-07</td>
<td>6.25</td>
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<td>FFY 07-08</td>
<td>6.08</td>
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<tr>
<td>FFY 08-09</td>
<td>4.69</td>
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<td>FFY 09-10</td>
<td>3.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FFY 10-11</td>
<td>2.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Waiver Implementation
### Hypothesis 4

Child welfare expenditures by federal fiscal year by type of service (in million $)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Service</th>
<th>FFY 04-05</th>
<th>FFY 05-06</th>
<th>FFY 06-07</th>
<th>FFY 07-08</th>
<th>FFY 08-09</th>
<th>FFY 09-10</th>
<th>FFY 10-11</th>
<th>FFY 10-11 minus FFY 04-05</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Licensed out-of-home care</td>
<td>163.4</td>
<td>194.4</td>
<td>184.0</td>
<td>167.5</td>
<td>144.9</td>
<td>134.1</td>
<td>133.7</td>
<td>-29.7</td>
<td>-18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependency case management</td>
<td>312.4</td>
<td>384.7</td>
<td>315.1</td>
<td>325.6</td>
<td>311.5</td>
<td>310.8</td>
<td>310.5</td>
<td>-1.9</td>
<td>-0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front-end services</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>45.7</td>
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<td>205.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>124.7</td>
<td>122.5</td>
<td>78.8</td>
<td>88.5</td>
<td>102.0</td>
<td>121.1</td>
<td>121.0</td>
<td>-3.7</td>
<td>-3.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>615.5</td>
<td>717.8</td>
<td>607.3</td>
<td>609.1</td>
<td>589.4</td>
<td>604.7</td>
<td>610.9</td>
<td>-4.6</td>
<td>-0.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: Some totals and differences may be off by one decimal place due to rounding.
Hypothesis 4

Changes in Spending by Fund Source

- Allowed Florida’s child welfare system to access 100% of the federally-appropriated IV-E funds each year since Waiver implementation.

- The more flexible use of IV-E funds enabled a much greater use of State funds for front-end services.

- The largest increase in categorical spending of State funds during the Waiver period occurred with non-Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) funds for prevention, intervention, and in-home supports.
  - Spending increased from $27.6 million in FFY 04-05 to $68.9 million in SFY 11-12.
Hypothesis 4

Fiscal Issues Pertinent to Waiver Implementation

- Funding flexibility
- Funding challenges
- Shifting resources from OOH care
- Directing resources toward creative prevention strategies
Recommendations

- Pursue renewal of the IV-E Waiver. The financial flexibility afforded by the Waiver has enabled CBC lead agencies to increase spending for prevention, diversion, family preservation, and other in-home services that are viable substitutes for out-of-home care for many children and families.

- With renewal of the IV-E Waiver, flexible funds should be used to improve permanency and safety outcomes for children with physical and emotional problems.

- CBC lead agencies should continue their efforts to address safety issues and to prevent re-entry into out-of-home care.
Recommendations

- Improvement is needed in the areas of the ongoing assessment of fathers’ needs, the frequency of case manager visits, assessing children’s dental health needs, supporting parents’ participation in case planning, and providing physical and dental health services to children.

- Provide guidance to CBC lead agencies to ensure administrative costs are reported in a consistent manner.

- The legislature, DCF, CBC lead agencies, and community providers should devise a strategy to facilitate more even distribution of services and supports available to children and families involved in the child welfare system to ensure adequate access across all individuals, especially in rural areas.
Contact Information

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Evaluation reports, briefs, and topical papers:
Florida's Center for Child Welfare

http://centerforchildwelfare.fmhi.usf.edu/DataReports/IVEReport.shtml