Quality Assurance Plan
Fiscal Year 08/09
Introduction

Big Bend Community Based Care’s core value is the belief that all children have the right to grow up safe, healthy and fulfilled in families that love and nurture them. One of the commitments that we make to demonstrate this core value is that we employ an analytic and systemic approach to planning and performance management.

Big Bend Community Based Care’s (BBCBC) system of performance/QA is designed to assure quality and promote the continuous improvement of services for children and families. To achieve this objective, our service provision must be consistent with our contract with the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) and our service delivery model. It must also be in compliance with state and federal law; administrative rule; and DCF operating procedures. This plan is designed to address these matters in a format consistent with Florida’s newly published QA Model for Fiscal Year 2008/2009 and its CBC Lead Agency Quality Assurance Plans – Statewide QA Planning Criteria, approved on 5/1/08.

Groups referenced in this plan:

BBCBC Management Team – Lead agency Executives and Directors, including the:

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)  Court Facilitation Director
Chief of Operations (COO)    Intake Director
Chief Financial Officer (CFO)  Placement Director
Client Services Directors  Quality Management Director
Communications Director  Utilization Management Director

Network Management Team – BBCBC Management Team and Case Management Sub-Contract Provider representatives, including:

Sub-Contract Provider Program Managers
Sub-Contract Provider Chief Executive Officers
Sub-Contract Provider Quality Assurance Directors
Sub-Contract Providers – BBCBC Sub-Contracted Providers include:

**Case Management**
- Anchorage Children’s Home
- Children’s Home Society
- Camelot Community Care
- DISC Village, Inc.

**Adoptions**
- Life Management Center
- Children’s Home Society

**Independent Living**
- DISC Village, Inc.

**Foster Home Management**
- Life Management Center
- Boys Town
- Camelot Community Care

**Family Preservation**
- Life Management Center
- Habilitative Services
- Children’s Home Society
- DISC Village, Inc.

**In-Home Substance Abuse Prevention**
- Children’s Home Society
- DISC Village, Inc.

**Visitation**
- DISC Village, Inc.
- Life Management Center

**Group Homes**
- Boys Town
- Children’s Home Society
- Florida Baptist Children’s Home
- Vision Quest

**Emergency Shelters**
- Anchorage Children’s Home
- Habilitative Services
- Capital City Youth Services
- Children’s Home Society
Statewide QA Planning Criteria

1. **Focus on Coordination**

The 2008 Quality Assurance Statewide Model calls for regions and lead agencies to develop local processes to meet the statewide minimum requirements. The information provided in this section outlines how BBCBC will coordinate with the Northwest Region to accomplish the quarterly activities and requirements of the model.

1.1. Unit Supervisory Discussions

1.1.1. Unit Supervisory Reviews – quarterly unit supervisor reviews will continue to occur as described in BBCBC operating procedure. The Supervisor Review guidance document developed by DCF will be incorporated into the existing process to promote detailed, quality-focused discussion on each case.

1.1.2. BBCBC will collaborate with the Department to assure that case management supervisors are adequately trained/prepared to implement the supervisor review process that forms the base level of the State’s quality assurance model. Training for supervisors will be scheduled after the Department schedules and implements its *Training for Trainers* for this activity.

1.1.3. BBCBC QA staff will periodically check small samples of active case files to ensure that the elements included in the guidance document/tool are included in supervisor reviews of cases.

1.2. CBC QA Reviews – Base, Side-by-Side, In-Depth

CBCs are required by the new QA model to complete a total of 25 case file reviews per quarter. Each quarter’s sample will target a specific population of children defined by DCF. Seventeen (17) Base Reviews will be completed by the Lead Agency’s Sub-Contracted Case Management Providers. The eight (8) remaining reviews will be completed by BBCBC QA Staff ‘Side-by-Side’ with Region QA staff. Two (2) of these eight ‘Side-by-Side’ reviews will also include an ‘In-Depth’ component to be completed by Region QA. Details for each of these review types are included here:

1.2.1. Base Reviews – A total of 17 Base Reviews will be completed quarterly through the combined efforts of BBCBC’s Sub-Contract Providers. The number of reviews to be completed each quarter by each Sub-Contract Provider will be determined by the
quarter’s random sample. Providers’ internal QA Staff and/or their peer review systems will be used to complete the file reviews. All Reviewers will use the DCF-developed review tool for these case file reviews. Specific responsibilities include:

1.2.1.1. Sub-Contract Provider Reviewers will be required to have participated in the State-funded training for reviewers to assure a common understanding of the process and to promote inter-rater reliability.

1.2.1.2. The BBCBC’s QA Staff will be responsible for providing the list of children to be reviewed to the Sub-Contract Provider. This list will include the sampled children who will not be part of the Side-by-Side or In-Depth reviews.

1.2.1.3. Sub-Contract Provider Reviewers will be required to enter the review’s data into the State’s web-based data system by the end of each quarter.

1.2.1.4. BBCBC QA Staff will be responsible for monthly checks of the State’s web-based data system to assure that Sub-Contract Provider reviews are being completed, and will follow-up with any concerns.

1.2.1.5. BBCBC QA Staff will collaborate with the Region to create a quarterly report for the 17 cases reviewed by its Sub-Contracted Providers (possibly in conjunction with the Region’s quarterly report of the entire sample). BBCBC QA Staff will disseminate this report to the agency Management Team and appropriate Sub-Contract Providers.

1.2.2. CBC and Region QA Side-by-Side Reviews – BBCBC Quality Assurance Staff will:

1.2.2.1. Complete the State-funded training for reviewers to assure a common understanding of the process and to promote inter-rater reliability.

1.2.2.2. Pull the quarterly sample as directed by the State guidance/criteria prior to or during the first month of each quarter.

1.2.2.3. Set the review dates with the Sub-Contract Providers and arrange for suitable meeting space for the review.

1.2.2.4. Notify the Sub-Contract Provider of the files needed for the review and assure their availability on the scheduled day(s).
1.2.2.5. Serve as case file reviewers in collaboration with Northwest Region Quality Assurance staff to complete eight (8) Side-by-Side Reviews.

1.2.2.6. Assist with arrangements for case participant interviews, as needed.

1.2.2.7. Assist as needed in entering the resulting data into the State’s web-based data system by the end of the quarter.

1.2.3. CBC and Region QA Side-by-Side Reviews – NW Region QA Staff will:

1.2.3.1. Complete the State-funded training for reviewers to assure a common understanding of the process and to promote inter-rater reliability.

1.2.3.2. Provide assistance (as needed) to BBCBC QA Staff in pulling the sample for the case file reviews.

1.2.3.3. Provide review materials for each review.

1.2.3.4. Serve as a case file reviewers and review leaders to complete the Side-by-Side and In-Depth reviews.

1.2.3.5. Complete the ‘In-Depth’ review requirements for two of the eight Side-by-Side Reviews.

1.2.3.6. Arrange for any interviews with case participants and lead the interviews.

1.2.3.7. Enter all resulting data into the State’s web-based data system by the end of each quarter.

1.2.3.8. Complete the summary report of case file review results for the Side-by-Side and In-Depth reviews at the end of each quarter as directed by the Office of Family Safety.

1.2.3.9. Provide the summary report to BBCBC and all offices required by DCF within two weeks of the end of each quarter.

1.3. Executive Management and Region Discretionary Reviews

1.3.1. BBCBC will work with Region/Circuit staff to complete Executive Management and Region Discretionary Reviews as requested.
1.3.2. BBCBC’s QA Director will serve as the point of contact for Region/Circuit staff for planning for discretionary reviews.

1.3.3. BBCBC staff or sub-contractors will be selected to participate in these activities based upon:
   - the specific expertise and/or knowledge needed to complete the task
   - the current workload and duties of staff/sub-contractors

1.4. Local Review Schedule

1.4.1. Base Reviews – base reviews will be completed by BBCBC’s Sub-Contract Providers, preferably during the first two months of each quarter. At least two professionals will be identified by each network case management agency to be trained as certified reviewers at the State training sessions. These reviewers will be either quality assurance staff or supervisory staff (i.e. peer reviewers, etc.). These reviewers will enter case file review results into the State developed web-based system for case file review data.

1.4.2. Side-by-Side Reviews – side-by-side reviews will be completed during the second month of each quarter by BBCBC QA Staff in cooperation with the Northwest Region QA staff. The data will be entered into the State developed web-based system for case file review data.

1.4.3. In-Depth Reviews – the in-depth review components are the responsibility of the Region QA staff. BBCBC QA Staff will assist with arrangements for case participant interviews, as needed.

1.4.4. Additional Quality Assurance Activities –

   1.4.4.1. BBCBC QA staff will develop a formal system of tracking performance measures for each of its sub-contractors types (case management, prevention, intervention, visitation, group homes, emergency shelters, adoptions, training, licensing, substance abuse, independent living). Please see number 2.3 below for details.

   1.4.4.2. BBCBC QA staff will join agency Contract Administration staff to monitor quality service provision based on service-specific criteria such as; adherence to DCF policy, administrative code, BBCBC procedures, best practices etc.
1.4.4.3. Management Team Quarterly Performance Review. See number 2.1.2 below for details.

1.4.4.4. Quarterly Performance Review with the Northwest Region Office. See number 2.1.3 below for details.

1.4.4.5. Board of Director’s Meeting. See number 2.1.4 below for details.

1.4.4.6. Community Alliance Meetings. See number 2.1.5 below for details.

2. **Focus on Results - Quality Improvement Standards and Process**

Quality improvement standards and processes include:

2.1. Tracking, Reporting and Communicating Performance on Contract Measures – BBCBC monitors performance on all contract performance measures on a monthly and/or quarterly basis, as appropriate. Performance outcomes are determined using the Florida Safe Families Network (FSFN) data reports. The data is analyzed at the Circuit, sub-contract and unit level (as available) in chart, table, list and line graph formats as appropriate. Trend lines are maintained to determine progress over time resulting from quality improvement initiatives instituted to address unmet goals. BBCBC disseminates performance data electronically, via the agency website and at quarterly gatherings of key stakeholders. These dissemination methods include:

2.1.1. **Big Bend Community Based Care’s Community Report Card & Performance Measure Report** – Big Bend has developed a Community Report Card and Performance Measure Report that is posted on the agency website each month. It is available for review at: [http://bigbendcbc.org/documents.php](http://bigbendcbc.org/documents.php).

2.1.2. **Network Management Team Quarterly Performance Review** – Data reflecting Network performance (agency and sub-contract performance measures) are disseminated to Sub-Contract Providers in electronic format prior to the formal Network Management Team Quarterly Performance Review. Disseminating electronically and in advance allow Sub-Contract Providers to review the data and develop quality improvement activities, if necessary in preparation for the formal performance review. Sub-Contract Provider Program Managers and CEOs then join with BBCBC Management Team Members for a quarterly review of performance outcome/contract measures. Sub-
Contract Provider Program Managers are requested to present their own data and to share the quality improvement plans they will be implementing to address deficiencies.

2.1.3. Quarterly Performance Review with the Northwest Region Office – Big Bend’s Management Team joins with the Northwest Region Office to review performance outcomes on contracted measures. Big Bend presents its data and quality improvement initiatives to address deficiencies.

2.1.4. Board of Director’s Meeting – Big Bend’s Board of Directors meets bi-monthly with the Chief Executive Officer and other executive level staff. The Chief Executive Officer reviews the latest monthly/quarterly performance measure data with the Board and outlines quality improvement activities being undertaken to address any concerns. The Board of Directors also has immediate access to the latest monthly/quarterly performance data via the Community Report Card and Performance Measure Report on Big Bend’s website (referenced in 2.1.1, above).

2.1.5. Community Alliance Meetings – Members of Big Bend’s Management Team attend, participate in and present to their Child Welfare Community Alliances and share quarterly data. On some instances, Alliance Members participate in regular Quarterly Performance Review meetings with the NW Region.

2.2. Tracking, Reporting and Communicating Performance on Agency Strategic Objectives – Big Bend’s Strategic Objectives are broad five-year objectives aligned with the state contract cycle. As a number of the agency’s performance measures represent critical indicators of achievement of the strategic objectives, they will be measured using FSFN data, as in section 2.1 above. Others will be measured by such things as actual increases in the number of available service providers, monitoring results on QA reviews, financial summaries, etc. BBCBC will communicate its progress in meeting these objectives via its Annual Report in these forums:

2.2.1. BBCBC’s Annual Report is presented formally to the Board of Directors upon completion.

2.2.2. The Annual Report is disseminated to the agency’s Management Team and Sub-Contract Providers in printed and electronic format and is available on the agency’s website.

2.2.3. The Annual Report is also made available to all stakeholders and interested parties via the agency website. It is available here: http://bigbendcbc.org/documents.php.
2.3. Tracking, Reporting and Communicating Performance of its Sub-Contracted Sub-Contract Providers – Sub-Contractor Providers will be monitored for contract compliance and performance by the agency’s Contracts Administration Unit in conjunction with the QA Staff. The sub-contracts will be monitored as specified in the agency’s approved ‘Sub-Contract Monitoring Plan.’ Administrative compliance will be determined by the Contracts Administration Staff using standard contract monitoring activities such as personnel file reviews, budgetary practice reviews, review of compliance with administrative codes, etc. Programmatic aspects will be assessed by QA staff reviewing a sample of client files for proper implementation administrative code standards, compliance with agency policy and procedure and/or best practices as appropriate to the sub-contract type.

2.3.1. Monthly/quarterly performance data that is required of all sub-contracts will be directed to QA staff for tracking and analysis.

2.3.2. QA staff will develop compliance tracking systems to assess trends in performance over time.

2.3.3. QA staff will develop an ongoing reporting system for Sub-Contract performance to share data with the Management Team and others as appropriate.

2.3.4. Sub-contract performance and contract compliance will be provided to the sub-contractor in a formal Monitoring Report prepared by the Contracts Administration Unit as specified in BBCBC’s approved ‘Sub-Contract Monitoring Plan.’ The report will include a summary of the Provider’s areas of contractual and programmatic compliance and non-compliance, as well as a summary of its performance contract measure data. The report will also be provided to the Chief Executive Officer and Chief of Operations, the QA Director, and DCF contract offices, as required.

2.3.5. BBCBC QA staff will work with appropriate internal Management Team members and other staff (Operations staff, Contract Administration staff, etc.) and sub-contracted providers to determine the root cause for identified poor performance and to devise improvement plans.

2.3.6. BBCBC QA staff will work with appropriate internal Management Team members and other staff (Operations staff, Contract Administration staff, etc.) and the sub-contracted providers to assure follow-through on improvement plans and assess success.

2.4. Tracking and Reporting on Ongoing Quality Improvement Initiatives – BBCBC’s recent quality and performance improvement activities address DCF’s Key Initiative on permanency identified
in the agency’s Strategic Intent 2008-2010. BBCBC is working to decrease the time for children in foster care to achieve permanency by:

2.4.1. Reducing Out-of-Home Care – For FY 07/08, BBCBC proposed the inclusion of several contract performance measures in addition to those required of all CBCs. One of these performance goals was to obtain or maintain a rate of children in out-of-home care less than the national average of 7 children per 1,000.

Circuit 2 has met this goal each month of FY 07/08. Circuit 14 has shown improvement each month of FY 07/08 and is expected to meet this goal in the coming months.

Increasing in-home intervention and support is key to achieving this goal, thus Big Bend has executed contracts for in-home substance abuse intervention in both Circuits 2 and 14 in an effort to increase the number of children who can remain safely at home. These contracts were developed in response to data indications that substance misuse was a key factor in the high numbers of removals that occurred in 2006.

Removals are tracked monthly based on allegation types and what, if any, services could have been provided to prevent removal. Out-of-home care exits are also tracked as part of this effort. The data is shared with Sub-Contract Providers to maintain attention and focus on providing in-home services to keep children safely in their homes. This initiative will continue in FY 08/09.

2.4.2. Timely permanency – BBCBC has recently designated a Permanency Specialist and two Client Services Directors to work directly with sub-contractors to increase the percentage of children who are reunified within 12 months or are adopted within 24 months. These staff members participate in permanency staffings for children at 1, 4, 7, and 10 months and assist the involved parties in moving children toward permanency quickly and safely. As these are standard contract performance measures, the data has historically been widely disseminated each quarter.

2.4.3. Green Belt Data Analysis Training for Staff - BBCBC and Circuits 2 and 14 Protective Investigations staff began Green Belt Data Analysis Training in March 2008. Upon completion of the training program in the summer of 2008, Big Bend and the Circuits will have approximately 20 additional ‘Green Belt Certified’ staff that have been trained to collect, analyze and develop responses to data indicating or reflecting concerns about performance. It is anticipated that this investment in staff training will improve the quality of services provided by the agency, its partners and sub-contractors.
2.5. Description of New Performance Improvement Initiatives for FY 08/09

BBCBC and Circuits 2 and 14 Protective Investigations staff are currently participating in Green Belt Data Analysis Training and have three identified QIC stories in progress. These improvement activities identified in this process will become the agency's new quality improvement initiatives for FY 08/09. A presentation on the data analysis and recommended actions/activities to address the root causes is scheduled to occur on 7/2/08 with leadership approval and implementation to follow accordingly. The QIC stories included are:

2.5.1. Decreasing Removals

2.5.2. Strengthening Foster Home Recruitment and Retention

2.5.3. Decreasing the Number of Placements for Children in Out-of-Home Care

2.6. Plan for Analysis and Response to New Information

Analyzing and responding to new information are critical aspects of any Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) plan. BBCBC recognizes two goals as key to its CQI process. They are:

- to institutionalize an agency philosophy of shared responsibility for the ongoing improvement of services for children and their families
- to provide a system of ongoing assessment, problem solving, and implementation of solutions.

In using this model, crises and reactive thinking are replaced by ongoing, data-driven evaluation and planning at the case and system levels. As such, new information is expected and is critical to the model. This continuous improvement effort uses Dr. W. Edwards Deming’s PDCA (Plan, Do, Check, Act) Model, which is reflected here:

As the CQI model is implemented and new information/data is discovered, BBCBC will use the PDCA model to address needed changes quickly and efficiently.

2.7 Approach to Critical Life, Health or Safety Threats Identified During Quality Assurance Practices

BBCBC Operating Procedure QA-102 makes QA staff responsible for addressing any child safety concerns with the Dependency Case Manager (DCM) and the Dependency Case Manager Supervisor (DCMS) immediately. All appropriate action and follow-up to assure child safety should be completed on site, including the DCM or DCMS contacting the Abuse Hotline...
(if necessary) and documenting in the child’s case file and in the QI Specialist’s notes. Reviewers will use technical assistance forms similar to DCF’s forms of the same name to document safety concerns and all resulting action and resolution. Sub-contractor Program Managers, the BBCBC QA Director and the Region QA Manager will be notified of any safety concern, as well.

2.8 Description of BBCBC’s Accreditation Efforts

BBCBC is investigating accreditation through the nationally recognized Council on Accreditation (COA) and its child welfare Network accreditation component. A consultant is presently working with members of the Management Team to implement a gap analysis to determine the agency’s current status on accreditation standards. Based upon the results of this analysis, the next steps and timeline for actions will be developed. BBCBC anticipates initiating the formal accreditation process during FY 08/09 contingent upon available resources.