Community Based Care Annual Summary
Quality Assurance Review Findings
Report to Headquarters Office of Child Welfare

Agency: Kids First of Florida
Date of Reviews: July 2010 to March 2011
Period under Review: October 1, 2009-March 31, 2011

Summary of Case Management Practice Trends

Figure 1: Practice Trends Comparison Fiscal Year 09-10 and Fiscal Year 10-11

Figure 1 compares the overall percent achieved by area of practice between fiscal years (FY) 2009/2010 and 2010/2011. In FY 2010/2011, there was an increase in performance in three of the five practice areas and an overall increase of 5%. This report mainly focuses on the practice area and questions that received a rating of less than 50% on the FY 2010-2011 Quality Assurance Reviews.

Assessment

A thorough assessment is the foundation of effective practice with children and families. A family centered assessment focuses on the entire family and encourages the family's participation in identifying their strengths and needs.
**Strengths:** FY 2010-2011 Quality Assurance (QA) Reviews documented excellence (100%) in the area of Independent Living cases involving youths who had reached 13 but not yet 15 years of age and were living in a licensed, out-of-home care placement, in which a pre-independent living assessment was completed that identified service needs and services were provided.

**Opportunities:** FY 2010-2011 QA Reviews reflects that attention is needed in the areas of ensuring the initial (22%) and six month (40%) assessments are thorough and completed timely; assessments for residential group care are completed when required (33%); an ongoing assessment of the mother (41%), father (20%) and out-of-home caregiver’s (41%) needs; and ensuring concerted efforts are made to assess children’s dental care needs (23%).

**Strategies Implemented to Improve Results:** During FY 2010-2011, KFF implemented the following strategies to improve performance in the above mentioned areas:

1. KFF had a “mandatory office day” in which case management staff completed all overdue assessments.
2. In February 2011, Mindshare (a web-based computer application), developed a “tickler” that informs case management staff and supervisors 30 days prior to an assessment being due and every day that a review is late, until it is completed and approved by the supervisor. As, of July 19, 2011, there was only one overdue assessment, which was overdue by 2 days.
3. KFF updated the Placement Assessment Forms to capture more information.
4. KFF held staffings for children with more than one placement change.
5. KFF developed a form to capture the ongoing assessment of the mother, father and out-of-home caregiver.
6. KFF reviewed all children in out-of-home care to ensure their medical and dental health needs were met.
7. KFF distributed a medical and dental periodicity schedule to all Family Services Counselors.

**Comparison of Results:** When comparing results between FY 2009-2010 and FY 2010-2011, the results from the 2010-2011 QA reviews show that KFF experienced a 9% decrease in the rating for ensuring the initial assessment is thorough and completed timely; a 31% increase in the rating for ensuring the six month assessment is thorough and completed timely; a 67% decrease in the rating for completing an assessment for residential group care, when required; a 6% decrease in the rating of the mother, 1% decrease for the father, and a 29% decrease in the rating for the out-of-home caregiver’s for ongoing the assessment of their needs; and a 17% increase in the rating for ensuring concerted efforts are made to assess children’s dental care needs.

**Family Engagement**

Family engagement is critical to achieving a successful outcome with the children and families served, and must involve the family’s participation in the assessment, identification of strengths and needs, and input and or decision-making regarding services.
**Strengths:** FY 2010-2011 Quality Assurance (QA) Reviews did not document excellence (100%) in any of the areas related to family engagement.

**Opportunities:** FY 2010-2011 QA Reviews reflects that more focused attention is needed in the area of family engagement, with an overall rating of 45%. More specifically, attention is needed in the areas of notifying parents of the child’s placement changes (43%); encouraging and supporting the mother (18%) and father (5%) to participate in making decisions about their child’s needs and activities; supporting the mother (41%) and father’s (43%) engagement with services; and actively involving all case participants in the case planning process (39%).

**Strategies Implemented to Improve Results:** During, FY 2010-2011, KFF implemented the following strategies to improve performance in the above mentioned areas:

1. KFF completed 2 training sessions addressing the components of quality documentation.
2. DCF Regional Quality Management provided training on the components of quality contact with case participants.

**Comparison of Results:** When comparing results between FY 2009-2010 and FY 2010-2011, the results from the 2010-2011 QA reviews show that KFF experienced a 40% decrease in the rating for notifying parents of the child’s placement changes; a 15% decrease in encouraging and supporting the mother to participate in making decisions about her child’s needs and activities; a 10% decrease in encouraging and supporting the father to participate in making decisions about his child’s needs and activities; a 7% decrease in the rating for supporting the mother’s engagement in services; a 20% increase in the rating for supporting the father’s engagement with services; and a 9% increase in the rating for actively involving all case participants in the case planning process.

**Service Planning and Provision**

Service planning and provision must involve the family’s participation and include frequent updates based on the case manager’s and family’s assessment of the progress made. Case plans should be thoughtful and focused on outcomes, and practical in assisting the families with meeting the practical needs of family members.

**Strengths:** FY 2010-2011 Quality Assurance (QA) Reviews documented excellence (100%) in the area of placement and the court being informed of a child’s placements and reasons for changes in placement. Excellence (100%) was also achieved in the area of Independent Living where, in cases involving a youth 15 years of age but not yet 18, KFF appropriately monitored his/her progress towards successfully transitioning from foster care to independence through regular informative staffings.

**Opportunities:** FY 2010-2011 QA Reviews reflects that attention is needed in the areas of identifying, locating and evaluating other potential relative and other permanents placements for children (31%); affording teenagers the opportunity to participate in normal life skills activities (19%); ensuring the frequency (17%) and quality (45%) of FSC visits with all case participants are sufficient to address issues
pertaining to the safety, permanency and well-being of the child; and making concerting efforts to provide appropriate services to address the child’s identified physical health needs (38%).

**Strategies Implemented to Improve Results:** During FY 2010-2011, KFF implemented the following strategies to improve performance in the above mentioned areas:

1. When a case is staffed over to for protective services, KFF is requesting DCF provide Accurint data for missing parents and possible relatives. The Accurint system integrates key law enforcement data such as Drivers Licenses, Motor Vehicle Records, Sex Offender Registries, Criminal Histories, Department of Corrections Records and other agency-specific data with LexisNexis® public records.

2. KFF has devoted 3 Family Service Counselor’s (FSC’s) to working with teens that are participating in the Independent Living Program. The FSC’s have a reduced case load and act as the primary caseworker for the Independent Living teens.

3. KFF has developed a system for tracking face-to-face contacts with all case participants including the parents and caregivers. The case management staff was trained on how to use the new form. The form is submitted to the case management supervisor each month and FSFN is reviewed to ensure there is note documenting the contact in FSFN.

4. KFF reviewed all children in out-of-home care to ensure their medical and dental health needs were met.

5. KFF enters medical information in the FSFN medical screen, when the case is transferred from DCF to KFF for protective services.

**Comparison of Results:** When comparing results between FY 2009-2010 and FY 2010-2011, the results from the 2010-2011 QA reviews show that KFF experienced a 23% decrease in the rating for identifying, locating and evaluating other potential relative and other permanents placements for children; a 6% increase for affording teenagers the opportunity to participate in normal life skills activities; a 1% decrease for ensuring the frequency of FSC visits with all case participants are sufficient to address issues pertaining to the safety, permanency and well-being of the child, and a 3% increase in the rating for ensuring the quality of FSC visits with all case participants are sufficient to address issues pertaining to the safety, permanency and well-being of the child; and a 24% decrease in the rating for making concerting efforts to provide appropriate services to address the child’s identified physical health needs.

**Promoting Case Progress**

Promoting case progress is achieved through a number of avenues. Case plans must be current, appropriately focused on the presenting concerns, and identify appropriate tasks and accessible services. The case record must document ongoing two-way communication between the case manager and the service providers to ensure all involved understand the progress made, and any concerns or barriers to the family’s success. When removal is necessary, it is critical for the child to be in a stable and appropriate placement located in close proximity to the parents. When termination of parental rights is necessary, the case record must document appropriate steps were taken to timely achieve permanency for the child.
**Strengths:** FY 2010-2011 Quality Assurance (QA) Reviews documented excellence (100%) in the area of placements in that the location of the child’s current placement was based on the child’s needs and achieving the case plan goal, if the child’s current placement was not in close proximity to the parents to facilitate face-to-face contact between the child and parents.

Excellence (100%) was also documented in that the information provided in the ICPC packet regarding the focus child was sufficient to enable the receiving state to make an appropriate decision concerning approval of the proposed placement for the focus child.

In the area of adoption, excellence (100%) was achieved in that appropriate steps were taken to identify and recruit an adoptive family that matched the child’s needs and appropriate steps were taken to process and approve an adoptive family that matched the child’s needs.

In the area of Independent Living, excellence (100%) was achieved in that if the child was 13 years of age or older and in licensed foster care, KFF provided guidance and assistance in developing an educational and career path that is based on the child’s individual abilities and interests.

**Opportunities:** The only area to receive a 0% rating (applicable to 13 cases) during the FY 2010-2011 Quality Assurance Reviews was that there was no documented compelling reasons and an exception for not filing a petition, if a Termination of Parental Rights petition was not filed when a child was in out-of-home care for at least 12 of the most recent 22 months or met other ASFA criteria for TPR (applicable to out-of-home cases).

FY 2010-2011 QA Reviews reflects that attention is needed in the areas of the service worker communicating with service providers about the effectiveness of services (24%); Judicial Reviews being held timely (31%); and ensuring concerted efforts were made to ensure children with the goal of APPLA are adequately prepared to transition into independent living in a permanent arrangement until the age of majority (33%).

**Strategies Implemented to Improve Results:** During FY 2010-2011, KFF implemented the following strategies to improve performance in the above mentioned areas:

1. KFF has met with Children’s Legal Services to discuss the issue of filing TPR petitions, when needed.
2. During staffing, the KFF manager responsible for completing case staffings has begun documenting compelling reasons and an exception for not filing a petition, when a TPR petition was not filed but should have been.
3. At the end of FY 2019-2011, KFF only had one youth with the goal of APPLA.

**Comparison of Results:** When comparing results between FY 2009-2010 and FY 2010-2011, the results from the 2010-2011 QA reviews show that KFF experienced a 50% decrease in the rating in regards to there not being a documented compelling reasons and an exception for not filing a petition, if a Termination of Parental Rights petition was not filed, when a child was in out-of-home care for at least 12 of the most recent 22 months or met other ASFA criteria for TPR.
KFF experienced a 18% decrease in the rating of the service worker communicating with service providers about the effectiveness of services; a 50% decrease in the rating of Judicial Reviews being held timely (it should be noted however that the Judicial Reviews were held timely, but not all paperwork was attached to the Judicial Review Report, resulting a “no” answer for this question); and a 67% decrease in the rating for ensuring concerted efforts were made for children with the goal of APPLA are adequately prepared to transition into independent living in a permanent arrangement until he or she reaches the age of majority (it should be noted that the APPLA was added in the 4th Quarter of FY 2009-2010).

Quality of Supervisory Reviews, Direction and Follow-up

Supervision is critical to ensuring timely and appropriate assessments, engaging families, ensuring effective and appropriate service planning and service provision, and monitoring case plan progress.

**Strengths:** No areas of excellence (100%) were identified in the areas of supervisory reviews, direction and follow-up.

**Opportunities:** FY 2010-2011 QA Reviews reflects that attention is needed in the areas of reviews being completed quarterly (39%).

**Strategies Implemented to Improve Results:** During FY 2010-2011, KFF implemented the following strategies to improve performance in the above mentioned areas:

1. Utilizing Mindshare, daily notifications are provider to case management staff when a supervisory review is due within two weeks or is overdue.
2. Every two weeks, the percentage of supervisory reviews completed, is provided to case management staff and managers. Since at least March of 2010, 97% of supervisory reviews have been completed timely.

**Comparison of Results:** When comparing results between FY 2009-2010 and FY 2010-2011, the results from the 2010-2011 QA reviews show that KFF experienced a 28% increase in the rating for supervisory reviews being completed quarterly.

Addressing Findings

For FY 2011-2012, KFF has developed goal of achieving at least a 50% rating on Family Engagement and on each question that received a rating below 50% on the FY 2010-2011 Quality Assurance Reviews. A root cause analysis will be completed on areas that continue to rate poorly, despite strategies being implemented to improve performance. Further Quality Improvement activities will be described in the FY 2011-2012 update of the Quality Management Plan.