

Child and Family Services Reviews Update

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State Funding of Program Improvement Plans

A new report produced for the Children's Bureau provides an overview of States' allocations of resources in order to design and implement Federal child and family services reviews (CFSRs) Program Improvement Plans (PIPs). The report includes information about specific States' funding activities in relation to the PIPs, and is divided into three main categories: new resources allocated for PIPs, reallocation of existing resources for PIPs, and new resources allocated for child welfare-related services not tied to PIPs.

The report found that several States allocated new resources for PIP implementation and PIP-related improvements, including child welfare workforce improvements, comprehensive system reform, and State support of county PIP-related efforts. Reallocation of existing resources provided funds for technical assistance for local offices, quality assurance enhancements, and other PIP-related efforts, such as training for foster and adoptive parents.

The report was prepared by the Technical Assistance to State Legislators on the CFSRs Project, which is managed by Johnson, Bassin and Shaw (JBS), Inc., and its subcontractor, the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL). The report is available at:

<http://www.ncsl.org/print/cyf/fundingcfsr.pdf>. 

Formalizing Court and Agency Collaboration in the Reviews

The National Child Welfare Resource Center on Legal and Judicial Issues (NCWRCLI) has developed a sample Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to assist States in improving collaboration between the child welfare agency and the courts during the Federal child and family services reviews (CFSRs). The sample MOU, entitled Court-Agency Cooperation on Child and Family Services Reviews, enables States to formally specify how the child welfare agency and courts will work together during the next round of reviews.

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) recently issued an Information Memorandum strongly encouraging State child welfare agencies to collaborate with the State courts in the CFSRs and, in some cases, requiring court participation in the Program Improvement Plan process. (See [Child and Family Services Reviews Update, Issue 6, July 2005](#).) The sample MOU is intended to be consistent with the ACF requirements, and was designed by the NCWRCLI as a technical assistance tool for States and courts to consider. Although the

Information Memorandum encourages increased court and agency collaboration in the CFSRs, formal agreements such as an MOU are not required.

The sample MOU is available at: <http://www.abanet.org/child/rcjji/cfsrmemorandum.pdf>. 

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