

## Updated Strategic Plan

**State Name: Tennessee**

**Date Strategic Plan Submitted: 6-30-2023**

**Timeframe Covered by Strategic Plan: 2022-2026**

**Overall Goal/Mission of CIP:** The CIP aims to equip and empower Tennessee child welfare stakeholders, including families and youth with lived experience, to improve systems and processes that support the safety, well-being and permanency of Tennessee children and families with or at risk for child welfare involvement.

### Priority Area #1: Well-Being

#### Outcome #1:

*Project Wrap Around is a joint project between the Court Improvement Program (CIP) and the Department of Children's Services (DCS), with Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) as collaborative partners. The goal of the project is to improve permanency outcomes for the extension of foster care population by increasing timely high school graduation rates, matriculation, retention rates, and attainment of post-secondary certificates or degrees among the 18- to 21-year-old population. In order to effectuate change for the extension of foster care population, the project's intervention needed to also focus on the foster care population under age 18 and attending high school. In order to increase the number of young adults in EFC who obtain post-secondary degrees or certificates, youth must graduate from high school in a timely manner, which allows for the three years of EFC eligibility to focus on post-secondary success rather than completion of secondary education. As a result, the joint project population also encompasses students under age 18 committed to foster care by Davidson County Juvenile Court who are enrolled in high school in MNPS.*

#### Need Driving Activities & Data Source: *How do you know this is a need in your state?*

*Placement instability is a significant issue facing Tennessee youth. According to the most recent placement stability data gathered by the U.S. Children's Bureau, children and youth in care in Tennessee demonstrate among the highest rates of home placement instability in the country<sup>1</sup>. For Davidson County youth in particular, the situation is even more troubling. According to the Tennessee Child and Family Services Review Program Improvement Plan dated 2019, teens in care from Davidson County experienced home placement instability at rates higher than youth elsewhere in the state.<sup>2</sup> Another issue for teens in care in Tennessee is low on-time graduation rates. While the statewide overall graduation rate is 89.1%, students in foster care graduate at a rate of about 60.6% statewide, lower than any other subgroup of Tennessee students, including homeless students (70.7%). Unfortunately, in Davidson County, where teens' home placement stability is especially fragile, the graduation rate is just 31.7%<sup>3</sup>.*

#### Theory of Change:

*Continued engagement on a multi-disciplinary partner team to address barriers to the secondary education success of high school students in foster care in Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) and under the jurisdiction of the Davidson County Juvenile Court (DCJC) to provide early collaboration and intervention between the Davidson County Juvenile Court, Department of Children's Services and MNPS,*

*So that*

*There is an increase in: Information exchange, school placement stability, coordination of services, and attainment & tracking of credits,*

*So that*

<sup>1</sup> US Children's Bureau, 2020; <https://cwoutcomes.acf.hhs.gov/cwodatasite/sixOneLessThan12/index>

<sup>2</sup> Tennessee Department of Children's Services, 2019; see page 25, [https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/dcs/documents/quality\\_improvement/cfsr/DCS\\_CFSR-PIP\\_Round3.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/dcs/documents/quality_improvement/cfsr/DCS_CFSR-PIP_Round3.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://reportcard.tnedu.gov/districts/190>

There is an increase in: Timely high school graduation rates and Extension of Foster Care retention rates,

So that

Extension of Foster Care is utilized toward matriculation and attainment of post-secondary certificates or degrees,

So that

Young adults in foster care in Davidson County thrive because of improved stability, permanency and well-being outcomes.

<p><b>Activity or Project Description</b> Specific actions or project that will be completed to produce specific outputs and demonstrate progress toward the outcome.</p>	<p><b>Collaborative Partners</b> Responsible parties and partners involved in implementation of the activity.</p>	<p><b>Anticipated Outputs of Activity</b> What the CIP intends to produce, provide or accomplish through the activity.</p>	<p><b>Goals of Activity (short and/or Long-term)</b> Where relevant and practical, provide specific, projected change in data the CIP intends to achieve. Goals should be measurable. <b>Progress toward Outcome</b></p>	<p><b>Timeframe</b> Proposed completion date or, if appropriate, "ongoing".</p>	<p><b>Resources Needed</b> Where relevant identify the resources needed to complete the activity.</p>	<p><b>Plans for Evaluating Activity</b> Where relevant, how will you measure or monitor change?</p>
<p>Briefly describe the overall activity or project that should help lead to the outcome identified above.</p>						
<p><i>Action Step 1</i> - The CIP will work with Metro Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) to develop a contract to provide for data sharing that is compliant with federal education privacy laws in order to support program evaluation.</p>	<p>CIP, MNPS Research Department, MNPS PWA Administration</p>	<p>Clarification on data sharing process to support PWA evaluation.</p>	<p>Information sharing so that CIP can measure student: 1) Credit accrual 2) On time graduation 3) Attendance 4) Disciplinary referrals 5) Extracurricular engagement 6) Student school stability 7) Service supports</p>	<p>In process of securing approval of MOU by all collaborative parties</p>	<p>Collaboration between parties.</p>	<p>Completed MOU in place.</p>
<p><i>Action Step 2</i> - The CIP will host a transcript review on July 19, 2021, prior to the start of the school year. A school counselor from every zoned high school, two alternative schools, and two to three large charter schools will be on hand to learn more about Project Wrap Around, post high school opportunities for young people in care and to review the transcript of Davidson County High School student in care enrolled at their respective schools, to check for errors,</p>	<p>CIP, Metro Nashville Public Schools, Department of Children Services (DCS)</p>	<p>This activity intends to accomplish four things: 1) Students will have correct transcripts prior to beginning the school year, 2) Students will have a planned course to graduation, 3) School counselors will have knowledge of opportunities that they may connect young people in care to on their caseloads, and 4) Students in care in MNPS will be known to a counselor in their school building.</p>	<p>1) Correct transcripts for 100% of MNPS high school and charter school students in care and under the jurisdiction of the DCJC, including backfilled credits not on current transcript. 2) A course to graduation for 100% of these students. 3) MNPS and charter school counselors will be able to identify the resources available specifically to youth in foster care.</p>	<p>1<sup>st</sup> transcript review completed Summer, 2021.</p>	<p>1) Location for training and review. 2) Stipend for counselors. 3) IL and EFC trainer from DCS to conduct training. 4) Pre and post tests on EFC and IL resources.</p>	<p>1) Transcript review forms that record transcripts having errors and error type found. 2) Pre and posttest of counselors during training portion. 3) Exit interviews with counselors. 4) Follow-up data on number of transcripts corrected. 5) Compute number of credits earned.</p>

concerns, and chart a path to high school graduation.						
<i>Action Step 3</i> - The CIP will host transcript reviews after every semester ongoing.	CIP, Metro Nashville Public Schools, Department of Children Services (DCS)	This activity intends to accomplish four things: 1) Students will have correct transcripts prior to beginning the school year, 2) Students will have a planned course to graduation, 3) School counselors will have knowledge of opportunities that they may connect young people in care to on their caseloads, and 4) Students in care in MNPS will be known to a counselor in their school building.	1) Correct transcripts for 100% of MNPS high school and charter school students in care and under the jurisdiction of the DCJC. 2) A course to graduation for 100% of these students. 3) MNPS and charter school counselors will be able to identify the resources available specifically to youth in foster care.	Ongoing	Location for transcript review	1) Transcript review forms that record transcripts having errors and error type found. 2) Follow-up data on number of transcripts corrected.
<i>Action Step 4</i> - The CIP will observe and coach recently trained foster care review boards on education reviews related to high school students in care.	CIP, Davidson County Juvenile Court, DCS	This activity will accomplish two things: 1) FCRB will become accustomed to reviewing educational stability in their routine reviews of children before them. 2) FCRB will make recommendations to ensure school stability is considered for students who require this.	1) FCRB will review placement stability and educational stability where relevant in 100% of their reviews. 2) FCRB Summary Forms will show increase in BIDs, when applicable.	Ongoing	Davidson County FCRB Summary Form update with checkboxes for placement and school stability and next steps, where appropriate.	FCRB teen board observations one time per month and FCRB summary forms.
<i>Action Step 5</i> - CIP will plan and deliver collaborative training regarding the root causes for academic risk among youth in foster care and Project Wrap Around. Project Wrap Around training will include information related to project mechanisms, entry points for students in care and strategies to connect students to the project. Audience includes: DCS	CIP, MNPS, DCS, MNPS	This activity will accomplish two things: 1) Training will help stakeholders understand the reasons the project exists and increase buy in for community members 2) Stakeholders will know how to connect young people to their Project Wrap Around team to increase student support.	Increase in knowledge related to educational stability requirements, youth stability benefits, and knowledge of PWA mechanisms for every group will be demonstrated.	Ongoing	Technology for virtual trainings and locations for in person training.	Pre- and post-test show increase in knowledge related to educational stability requirements, youth stability benefits, and knowledge of PWA mechanisms.

front line staff, DCS management staff, GALs, CASA, Foster Parents, school based mental health providers, and court staff.						
<p><i>Action Step 6 - Project Wrap</i>          Around notifications sent from DCS to MNPS to notify MNPS within 48 hours of a student experiencing the following transitions:          (1) Enter/exit foster care          (2) Intra-county foster home placement changes that may result in an educational placement change          (3) Move in- or out-of-county          (4) Step up or down (residential treatment or detention)          (5) Run away or return from runaway          (6) Accepted Ext. Foster Care Services          Also, MNPS sends notification to high schools within 48 hours.</p>	CIP, DCS, MNPS	Notifications improve information exchange, which allows stakeholders to know which students are experiencing transitions so that they can target support.	80% of notifications sent within 48 hours, to ensure timely attention to critical student needs. 95% of notifications sent in four business days, less than 5% missing notifications.	Ongoing	DCS, MNPS, CIP staffing support	Evaluations of project notifications for timeliness.
<p><i>Action Step 7 - Project Wrap</i>          Around notifications sent from MNPS to DCS to notify DCS if:          1) A student enrolled in PWA has 3 or more consecutive unexcused absences. Notice will be sent within 48 hours of 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive unexcused absence.          2) A student experiences a disciplinary referral resulting in out of school suspension or expulsion. Notice from MNPS to DCS within 24 hours of referral,</p>	DCS, MNPS, CIP for evaluation	Notifications improve information exchange, which allows stakeholders to know which students are experiencing transitions so that they can target support.	80% of notifications sent within designated time.	Ongoing	DCS, MNPS, CIP staffing support	Data evaluation of data sent to CIP on notification and timeliness of notification.

(Note: per TCA 46-6-3401, notice must be sent to “parent” within 24 hours, here providing notice sent to DCS and foster parent).						
<i>Action Step 8 - Project Wrap Around</i> referral form completed by DCS and sent from DCS to MNPS for every student subject to transition notification. Referral form supplies MNPS contact information; high school placement history; and support information about academic progress, safety, permanency, and well-being.	CIP, DCS	Referral forms streamline information exchange and connect stakeholders on the front end.	90% of notifications accompanied by a student referral. 75% of student referrals contain required information.	Ongoing	DCS, MNPS, CIP staffing support	Evaluation of PWA referrals sent to CIP.
<i>Action Step 9 - Project Wrap Around</i> meetings held for students in the transitions identified in Action Step 6. In Wrap Around Meetings, relevant stakeholders determine educational placement, assess needs, and coordinate services.	CIP, DCS, MNPS	Multidisciplinary team that includes student experiencing transition or disruption discuss and plan for educational stability, academic progress and track to high school graduation, social-emotional, well-being status, mental health and connectedness at school (extracurriculars, mentoring).	95% of Wrap Around Meetings result in meeting form that includes notes for each of the following items: 1) graduation progress 2) social-emotional, well-being status, and mental health 3) connection to school (extracurriculars, mentoring) 4) educational stability where a placement disruption has occurred. 75% of meetings include an Action Plan detailing next steps and responsible parties.	Ongoing	DCS, MNPS, CIP staffing support.	1) Evaluation of Wrap Around Forms for evidence that support areas were discussed. 2) Focus group data with youth to capture qualitative, depth and breadth of PWA meeting discussions.
<i>Action Step 10 - Follow through</i> on Action Steps from Wrap Around Meeting.	CIP, DCS, MNPS	Student connection and stability.	75% of Action Plans are completed/checked off.	Ongoing	DCS, MNPS, CIP staffing support.	1) Completed Action Plans 2) Focus group data with youth to capture qualitative, depth and breadth of PWA meeting discussions.

Action Step 11 - Interagency communication between DCS and CIP so that the CIP can track EFC enrollment.	CIP, DCS	Students that are eligible enroll in EFC when they turn 18 so that they will have support after 18 and access to educational and independent living benefits until age 21.	70% of PWA-enrolled Youth eligible for EFC enroll when they turn 18 years old.	Ongoing	DCS, CIP staffing support.  Data sharing agreement between DCS and CIP	EFC Report for PWA-enrolled youth.
Action Step 12 - Interagency communication between MNPS and CIP so that the CIP can track graduations.	CIP, MNPS	Students graduate from high school.	In 2022, the graduation rate for MNPS students in care increased from 39% to 40.3% which is still below the state average of 42.7%.	Ongoing	MNPS, CIP staffing support.  Data sharing agreement between DCS and CIP	Graduation notice, transcript to determine whether graduation was on time or delayed.

**Reevaluation of Project:** After several years of project implementation, the systematic project issues with PWA continue from year to year necessitating a reexamination of this joint project. Therefore, over the next year, the CIP will complete an in-depth evaluation of this joint collaborative project to determine the effectiveness of the project and to determine if changes to this project are needed. The CIP will continue working with DCS and MNPS on the PWA project in its current form for the 2023-2024 school year as we reevaluate the project. The following is the Evaluation Plan for 2023-2024:

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Action Step 1 – CIP will complete Ecocycle process.	CIP, Regional Liaison	Evaluation of sustainability of the current PWA project.	Determine: 1) What role/involvement does Davidson County Court have in PWA? 2) Can Court have accountability or enforcement over PWA in current structure? 3) Is Court driving the project or is CIP serving in a supportive, administrative, conflict-resolution role between MNPS and DCS?	By the end of 2023	Open and honest discussion and reflection among CIP.	Completion of evaluation of PWA

<p><i>Action Step 2 – If determination is made to continue with the PWA project, then begin process of restructuring project and continue with Action Step 6.</i></p>	<p>CIP, Regional Liaison, Project Partners at DCS and MNPS, Davidson County Juvenile Court, DCS Leadership, TDOE Leadership</p>	<p>Restructuring of PWA processes and procedures to include active participation and accountability of the Court in collaboration with DCS CFSR team.</p>	<p>A collaborative joint project between the Court, DCS and TN DOE (MNPS) which includes active participation from the Court that will expand beyond Davidson County and effectuate change on a statewide level.</p>	<p>Ongoing in 2024 in preparation for 2024-2025 school year</p>	<p>Collaboration between project partners including State decision-makers</p>	<p>A completed MOU in place between the Court, DCS, and TNDOE that sets out the project goals and Project Partners' roles, responsibilities and expectations.</p>
<p><i>Action Step 3 - If the determination is made to sunset PWA, then CIP will begin to transition out of PWA as our joint project and continue with Action Steps 3 – 6.</i></p>	<p>CIP, Regional Liaison, MNPS, DCS</p>	<p>CIP will present project data and annual report to current PWA partners and discuss CIP's transition from the joint project while maintaining the PWA project fundamentals for the 2023-2024 school year.</p>	<p>Ensure a smooth transition of CIP's role within PWA while maintaining PWA project fundamentals and continuing CIP's relationship with project partners.</p>	<p>Ongoing in 2024 in preparation for 2024-2025 school year</p>	<p>Assistance from CBCC in preparation for meeting.</p>	<p>Continued relationship with Project Partners allowing for CIP's new role in PWA.</p>
<p><i>Action Step 5 – CIP will begin the CQI process to select a new joint project with DCS.</i></p>	<p>CIP, Regional Liaison, CBCC, DCS, Multidisciplinary Task Force</p>	<p>Collaborate with DCS to discuss program requirements, goals, and objectives of the collaborative joint project.</p> <p>Utilize the expertise and knowledge of the Multidisciplinary Task Force to inform decisions concerning the direction of the new joint project as it pertains to state child welfare and juvenile court system needs.</p> <p>Utilize the JCAMP instruments and performance measures to collect necessary data to inform the project.</p>	<p>Identify a collaborative joint project with a focus on CFSR/PIP needs and how the joint project can support those needs.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>CQI assistance Collaboration with DCS</p>	<p>A completed MOU in place between the Court and DCS, that sets out the project goals and Project Partners' roles, responsibilities and expectations.</p>
<p><i>Action Step 6 – Update Strategic Plan to reflect progress on joint project.</i></p>	<p>CIP</p>	<p>Maintain clear, concise goals and objectives for the joint project.</p> <p>Update the Strategic Plan in accordance with</p>	<p>Collaborate with DCS to develop a joint project that will benefit children and families in Tennessee.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Davidson County FCRB Summary Form update with checkboxes for placement and school stability and</p>	<p>A clear, concise project plan for the Joint Project FY 2024 Updated Strategic Plan.</p>

		findings and determinations.			next steps, where appropriate.	
		Share updates with CBCC Regional Specialist and Regional Liaison.				

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## Priority Area #2: Quality Court Hearings

### Outcome #1:

*CIP has completed the Engagement in FCRBs through Motivational Interviewing Quality Court Hearing project. Therefore, it is anticipated that a CQI root cause analysis to identify a new Quality Court Hearing project centered around best practices of Foster Care Review Boards will begin. CIP will utilize the data gathered from our JCAMP project and Round 4 assessments, case reviews and focus groups to inform this new FCRB hearing quality project. CIP recognizes the importance of FCRBs as a mechanism to complete timely permanency reviews. However, there is not consistency in the manner of reviews among FCRBs throughout the state. CIP will continue to collaborate with DCS on improving practice and resolving any barriers within the FCRBs to increase permanency for child and families in Tennessee.*

### Need Driving Activities & Data Source: *How do you know this is a need in your state?*

*The CIP has completed Phase V of our Quality Hearing Project seeking to improve hearing quality by increasing engagement of parties before foster care review boards by establishing Motivational Interviewing as the common language used by all non-parties engaged with boards. Through this project and additional engagement with legal stakeholders throughout the State, we have begun to identify some possible additional areas of need with the permanency hearing/FCRB structure.*

*In Tennessee, juvenile court judges may conduct judicial reviews or appoint FCRB to conduct permanency reviews for children in foster care. All FCRB's roles and responsibilities are mandated by statute and rule in Tennessee. There are Model FCRBs that voluntarily agree to work with the CIP at the authority of the Juvenile Court Judge and agree to 1) participate in CIP training programs; 2) engage with CIP on problem solving issues; 3) use model FCRB forms; and 4) allow for coaching, observation and evaluation by the CIP. All FCRBs should be operating in accordance with the best practices as set out by the Model Board program; however, the reality is the FCRB practices vary across the State, and there is a fundamental misunderstanding by judges of their responsibility when they delegate the responsibility of conducting periodic reviews to FCRBs leading to inconsistent reviews for children in foster care. CIP believes that implementing the best practices and standards of model FCRBs to all FCRBs will allow for more efficient Boards who make thorough findings and lead to improved permanency outcomes.*

### CQI Process for New Quality Hearing Project:

*CIP will begin by gathering FCRB data including the number of judicial reviews vs FCRBs vs Model FCRBs, time to permanency differences in types of reviews, how often FCRBs meet, statutory requirements, make up of board members, etc. This data will be shared with the CIP multidisciplinary task force as we begin to conduct a root cause analysis. CIP will work with DCS to assure the project aligns with the needs of the CFSR/PIP. CIP will be able to use the JCAMP instruments and performance measures to inform the development of this project. As the data is analyzed, a theory of change and an action plan will be developed. The initial goal may be to have all FCRBs operating as Model FCRBs and supporting one another. As part of the solution, an examination of additional needs to help support non-model FCRBs must be identified.*



Throughout the CQI process, updates will be made to the Strategic Plan and shared with the CBCC.

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Briefly describe the overall activity or project that should help lead to the outcome identified above.						
<b>Action Step 1 – Gather data FCRB data</b>	CIP, JCAMP team, CBCC, DCS	Relevant data including: the number of judicial reviews vs FCRBs vs Model FCRBs, time to permanency differences in types of reviews, how often FCRBs meet, statutory requirements, make up of board members, etc.	Gather relevant data to enable CIP to make informed decisions concerning QCH project.	October 2023	CFSR Round 4 data, JCAMP survey and focus group results, Administrative data.	Will review all data with team to determine relevancy
<b>Action Step 2 – Begin root cause analysis for CQI</b>	CIP, DCS, Multidisciplinary Task Force, CBCC	Theory of Change and Action Plan leading to identification of anew Quality Court Hearing Project	Identify and begin implementation of solutions that will improve outcome.	Ongoing throughout 2023-2024 as necessary to complete CQI process.	CQI assistance	

**Priority Area #3: Quality Legal Representation**

**Outcome #1:**

The Tennessee CIP seeks to improve the quality of legal representation in child welfare proceedings by providing parent attorneys and guardians ad litem (GALs) with the skills necessary to adequately represent parents and children in child dependency proceedings through the development of a comprehensive, connected training experience. This year long training program will be offered to a cohort of GALs, parent attorneys and DCS attorneys who will complete five components focused on increasing their skills and best practice in the representation of parents and children in child welfare proceedings. Through training and ongoing mentoring, participants will have an increased knowledge and understanding of the child welfare system and juvenile law, will be equipped with the skills necessary to advocate for reasonable efforts and will be empowered to challenge the agency on the provision of services when necessary to support the needs of the party and the goals of representation. This comprehensive training supports the participants' leadership in the child welfare system and improves outcomes for Tennessee children and families. Further, in cases staffed by these trained and mentored attorneys, we expect to see a reduced time to permanency.

**Need Driving Activities & Data Source: How do you know this is a need in your state?**

Research demonstrates that a child's time to permanency is impacted by: (1) An increase in services to families interacting with child welfare, and (2) Increased interaction between the court and the child welfare agency (Courtney and Hooks, 2012). According to Tennessee's CFSR Round 4 Data Profile, Tennessee tracks closely to national averages on time to permanency in twelve months but falls below the national average as time to permanency increases. A lower average time to permanency is desirable. In Tennessee, attorneys have not had a basic attorney legal representation training focused on advocacy skills in juvenile court including reasonable efforts requirements under the law. Anecdotal information from judges, seasoned attorneys, and child welfare stakeholders over the past few years reported a decrease in the lack of quality representation in dependency and neglect proceedings.

**Theory of Change:**

Develop a comprehensive, connected training program that will provide training and mentoring for parent attorneys, child attorneys and DCS attorneys,

So that

There is an increase in attorney's knowledge and skills of best practices, advocacy and reasonable efforts in dependency and neglect cases,

So that

Parent attorneys and GALs have a comprehensive understanding of critical advocacy skills in dependency and neglect proceedings,

So that

Attorneys have increased capacity to effectively advocate for clients, in and out of the courtroom,

So that

There is an increase in attorneys challenging agency's reasonable efforts at various points in the case (to prevent removal, reunify, or achieve another permanent goal),

So that

Judges make more detailed child and parent-specific reasonable efforts findings that are documented in orders,

So that

Services are more tailored to the needs of children and parents and tied to the reason for removal,

So that

Families are preserved or reunified when it is safe and possible, or permanency through guardianship or adoption is established for children that cannot return to their families of origin in a timely manner.

<b>Activity or Project Description</b> <i>Specific actions or project that will be completed to produce specific outputs and demonstrate progress toward the outcome.</i>	<b>Collaborative Partners</b> <i>Responsible parties and partners involved in implementation of the activity.</i>	<b>Anticipated Outputs of Activity</b> <i>What the CIP intends to produce, provide or accomplish through the activity.</i>	<b>Goals of Activity (short and/or Long-term)</b> <i>Where relevant and practical, provide specific, projected change in data the CIP intends to achieve. Goals should be measurable.</i> <b>Progress toward Outcome</b>	<b>Timeframe</b> <i>Proposed completion date or, if appropriate, "ongoing".</i>	<b>Resources Needed</b> <i>Where relevant identify the resources needed to complete the activity.</i>	<b>Plans for Evaluating Activity</b> <i>Where relevant, how will you measure or monitor change?</i>
Briefly describe the overall activity or project that should help lead to the outcome identified above.						

<i>Action Step 1</i> - CIP will identify components of RIPPLE program including GAL and parent representation training, Red Book Training, mentoring and reasonable efforts training.	CIP	Develop a Program Curriculum for the year.	To provide training to increase basic knowledge and skills for attorneys while providing mentoring and support to the Cohort.	Summer 2022		Program components and training curriculum resources identified
<i>Action Step 2</i> - Set out potential participant criteria for RIPPLE Cohort.	CIP	Include in possible participant pool attorneys practicing in juvenile court with less than 10 years of experience, from a variety of geographic area and diversity in gender and race/ethnicity.	Complete list of criteria to share with POC to solicit referrals.	July 2022		Completed criteria list in place
<i>Action Step 3</i> - Recruit participants for the RIPPLE Cohort. Develop participant list.	CIP	CIP will create marketing material for RBT to engage attorneys.  CIPs will contact Judges, Juvenile Court Clerks, TBA, DCS, CASA, etc. to set out criteria and solicit referrals.	Creation of participant data spreadsheet.	July 2022	Financial resources for promotion and marketing of training to attorneys	Evaluation of participant referrals sent to CIP. Contact of potential participants. Compile potential participant list.
<i>Action Step 4</i> – Contact possible RIPPLE participants to discuss program.	CIP	CIP will develop an invitation to RIPPLE Cohort to be sent to attorneys meeting criteria. CIP will follow-up with recipients to assure accurate exchange of information.	Creation of RIPPLE invitation.  Documentation of communication.	August 2022		Confirmation of interest in participation from RIPPLE Cohort.
<i>Action Step 5</i> - CIP will implement a pre- and post-training survey to all RIPPLE Cohort for RBT training.	CIP, NACC, RIPPLE Cohort	Establish a pre-training baseline of knowledge of the participants.  Establish a post-training level of knowledge of the participants and determine the efficacy of the training.	Obtain survey responses from each participant at the beginning and end of the fall sessions and compile the results	Summer 2022 and October 2022	Resources for the preparation and implementation of survey.	Data evaluation of completed surveys.
<i>Action Step 6</i> - CIP will monitor RIPPLE Cohort's progress during Red Book training for the fall session.	CIP, NACC, RIPPLE Cohort	CIP to facilitate discussions on specific topics.	Increase knowledge of attorneys practicing in child welfare law of the core dependency practice areas.	September 8 – October 27, 2022	Technology to access virtual training.  CLE credit available.	Data evaluation of completed session surveys; Compilation of FAQs

					Zoom platform for training and discussion groups.	
<i>Action Step 7 – Assist RIPPLE Cohort in the completion of CWLS as requested</i>	CIP, NACC, RIPPLE Cohort	Work with certain participants on their completion of the Child Welfare Specialization.	Goal for all qualified RIPPLE attorneys to obtain CWLS	Ongoing	Financial resources to complete specialization	Evaluate rate of certification
<i>Action Step 8 – Register RIPPLE Cohort for CCJ Conference including welcome gathering for Cohort</i>	CIP, CCJ Committee, RIPPLE Cohort	Gather RIPPLE Cohort, including DCS Attorneys, at CCJ with system partners.	Opportunity for mentoring and increase in knowledge in expansive child welfare areas.	November 2022	Financial resources for conference fees and CLE credit	Data evaluation of completed session surveys and focus group discussions.
<i>Action Step 9 - CIP will develop the GAL and parent representation training curriculum based on the identified curriculum resources, knowledge and experience.</i>	CIP	Quality legal representation training curriculum developed	Training curriculum completed for GALs and parent attorneys.	Fall 2022	CIP	Completion of curriculum for representation training
<i>Action Step 10 – Schedule representation training venue and confirm attendance with RIPPLE Cohort.</i>	CIP, RIPPLE Cohort	Training sessions scheduled and completed.  Travel arrangements confirmed for Cohort.	Training session completed for review, feedback from live participants regarding quality is received.	Fall 2022	Financial resources for training sessions including venue, food, materials, travel.  CLE credit	Training scheduled and facility secured.
<i>Action Step 11 - Review surveys from training and focus group discussion notes to inform program.</i>	CIP	Completion of post-session survey.  Active engagement in discussion groups.	Increase knowledge and basic representation skills.	December 2022 and January 2023	CIP	Post- training surveys for attorneys attending training to assess competency level and satisfaction
<i>Action Step 12 - CIP will work with the Capacity Building Center for Courts (CBCC) and ABA to plan, organize and prepare training curriculum for a Reasonable Efforts Academy training.</i>	CIP, CBCC, ABA	Reasonable Efforts Academy training curriculum designed specifically for Tennessee	A highly interactive reasonable efforts training that can be presented in order to increase reasonable efforts training to parent attorneys and GALs.  Increased knowledge and skills on reasonable efforts.	Planning to begin Fall 2022	Assistance from CBCC in the preparation and planning for RE Attorney Academy.	Academy completed.  Knowledge and skills evaluated at training.

Action Step 13 - The CIP will participate in the RE Academy by scheduling faculty members and recruiting participants.	CIP, CBCC, RIPPLE Cohort	Reasonable Efforts Attorney Academy Training for Tennessee.	Attorneys are trained on reasonable efforts so that they have the knowledge to conduct reasonable efforts investigations and engage in reasonable efforts advocacy when necessary.	September 2022 to February 2023	1) Attorneys and Judges with knowledge and experience in juvenile law to serve as faculty members for the academy. 2) Technical support for virtual training	Pre- and post-training evaluation with participating cohort attorneys.
Action Step 14 - The CIP will organize and facilitate a RIPPLE Retreat.	CIP, RIPPLE Cohort	Gather to evaluate the RIPPLE Program.  Share implementation plans for skills gained.  Develop plans for future RIPPLE cohorts.	Learn, engage and connect with the RIPPLE Cohort.  Discuss implementation of knowledge and skills learned to develop a plan for action beyond RIPPLE.	April 2023	CIP funds for Retreat.	Focus groups on specific topics.  Action plan for implementation of skills.
Action Step 15 - CIP support and mentor RIPPLE Cohort throughout Program and implement tools for exchange of information and resources among Cohort.	CIP	RIPPLE Cohort is supported through mentoring component	Cohort is implementing training knowledge and skills in practice.	Ongoing	CIP and attorney mentors; Technology	Cohort will implement knowledge gained in home counties.

**Outcome #2: Quality Legal Representation (Red Book Training):**

Tennessee will utilize a portion of the remainder of its **COVID-19** funds to provide NACC Red Book virtual training to parents’ attorneys, children’s attorneys and attorneys from the Department of Children’s Services (DCS) who have not been able to participate in traditional trainings and continual learning opportunities as a result of the **COVID-19** pandemic and provide them the opportunity to sit for the Child Welfare Specialization certification as an extra incentive for participation. Participation in this Red Book training will increase the number and diversity of attorneys with extensive knowledge of the child welfare system available to participate in the juvenile justice system, ultimately having more positive child welfare outcomes for children and youth, including but not limited to an increase in permanency and decrease in maltreatment.

**Need Driving Activities & Data Source: How do you know this is a need in your state?**

During the course of the **COVID-19** pandemic, custody numbers in Tennessee are on an upward trend resulting in an increase in the number of cases in front of the Courts requiring legal representation. However, there has not been a corresponding increase in the number of knowledgeable attorneys available to assure these cases are effectively heard in a timely manner. The pandemic exacerbated the already disproportionate burdens women and other minority lawyers experience resulting in these particular attorneys to consider whether to step back from or leave the profession of law even more than usual.<sup>4</sup> The availability of attorneys with knowledge in the major dependency practice competency areas has been significantly impacted by the **COVID-19** pandemic. DCS reports they are dealing with unprecedented staff turnover as a direct result of the **COVID-19**

<sup>4</sup> Scharf, S. & Liebenberg, R. (2021). American Bar Association’s Results and Best Practices from a Nationwide Survey of the Legal Profession – Practicing Law in the Pandemic and Moving Forward; see pages 12, 14 & 18, <https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/digital-engagement/practice-forward/practice-forward-survey.pdf>

pandemic”.<sup>5</sup> These shortages of qualified attorneys involved in the child welfare system are having a detrimental effect on child welfare outcomes including permanency and maltreatment.

As the Department has established that it is struggling to meet the needs of Tennessee’s children in their care and traced the issue to its root cause, we must recognize that it is not the sole burden of the Department to support child welfare outcomes. Tennessee children and families must be afforded competent legal representation. Research demonstrates that attorney behaviors significantly contribute to efficient family reunification<sup>6</sup>, and attorney training is a key feature in providing high quality legal representation.<sup>7</sup> Evaluation of the Quality Improvement Center’s Child Representation curriculum completed by Chapin Hall indicated that ongoing training was critical to improving permanency rates among older youth: “[R]esearch . . . suggests that better-trained attorneys will be more able to address inefficiencies in the decision-making process in the placement experiences of older children.” Interestingly, having access to a community of learners within the legal practice also served as a beneficial support for attorneys, and may be associated with improved child welfare outcomes.<sup>8</sup>

In Tennessee, the legal community is not organized under a single state office of parent or child representation. Rather, individual practitioners and small independent groups provide the bulk of parent and child representation. This system has its drawbacks, as there is not a centralized source for training, support and evaluation. Many attorneys across Tennessee enter the practice with little formal training in the child welfare practice area and learn as they provide critical representation. This lack of centralized training support is especially concerning at a time as this, when DCS is struggling to meet the needs of children and youth within the child welfare system. As a result of **COVID-19**, “too many attorneys are working in settings that are not laser focused on the necessary strategies to develop a truly diverse group of talented lawyers, who reflect the breadth of backgrounds, training, and experiences that lead to successful teams of lawyers”.<sup>9</sup> Survey results show that during these burdened times, attorneys value incentives such as additional trainings which foster engagement through personal connections by leaders with their teams creating an individual’s sense of inclusiveness and value.<sup>10</sup>

**Theory of Change:**

Provide a comprehensive training of the child welfare system through the use of the proven, evidence-based NACC Red Book Training Program to a diverse group of attorneys who have an interest in specializing in the practice of juvenile and family law,

So that,

Participating attorneys will increase their knowledge of the major child dependency competency areas including child welfare law, the child welfare legal process, the role and duties of legal counsel and courtroom advocacy and learn tips to enhance their representation of children, parents or the child welfare agency and preparing participating attorneys for a Child Welfare Specialization,

So that,

There will be more positive child welfare outcomes, including increase in permanency for and decrease in maltreatment of children and youth in foster care.

Activity or Project Description	Collaborative Partners	Anticipated Outputs of Activity	Goals of Activity (short and/or Long-term)	Timeframe	Resources Needed	Plans for Evaluating Activity
Specific actions or project that will be completed to produce specific outputs	Responsible parties and partners involved in	What the CIP intends to produce, provide or	Where relevant and practical, provide specific, projected change in data	Proposed completion date or, if	Where relevant identify the resources needed	Where relevant, how will you

<sup>5</sup> The Tennessee Department of Children’s Services (Submitted June 30, 2021). Annual Progress and Services Report – FY-2022 from TN Dept. of Children’s Services; see page 18, [https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/dcs/documents/quality\\_improvement/cfsr/aspr\\_fy2022.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/dcs/documents/quality_improvement/cfsr/aspr_fy2022.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Wood, J. & Russel, J. (2011). Effects of parental and attorney involvement on reunification in Juvenile dependency cases Children and Youth Services Review 33 (2011) 1730–1741.

<sup>7</sup> Orlebeke, B., Zhou, X., Skyles, A., & Zinn, A. (2016). Evaluation of the QIC-Child Rep Best Practices Model, training for attorneys representing children in the child welfare system. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.

<sup>8</sup> Orlebeke, B., Zhou, X., Skyles, A., & Zinn, A. (2016). Evaluation of the QIC-Child Rep Best Practices Model, training for attorneys representing children in the child welfare system. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.

<sup>9</sup> Scharf, S. & Liebenberg, R. (2021). American Bar Association’s Results and Best Practices from a Nationwide Survey of the Legal Profession – Practicing Law in the Pandemic and Moving Forward; see page 34, <https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/digital-engagement/practice-forward/practice-forward-survey.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> Scharf, S. & Liebenberg, R. (2021). American Bar Association’s Results and Best Practices from a Nationwide Survey of the Legal Profession – Practicing Law in the Pandemic and Moving Forward; see page 44, <https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/digital-engagement/practice-forward/practice-forward-survey.pdf>

<i>and demonstrate progress toward the outcome.</i>	<i>implementation of the activity.</i>	<i>accomplish through the activity.</i>	<i>the CIP intends to achieve. Goals should be measurable.</i> <b>Progress toward Outcome</b>	<i>appropriate, "ongoing".</i>	<i>to complete the activity.</i>	<i>measure or monitor change?</i>
Briefly describe the overall activity or project that should help lead to the outcome identified above.						
<i>Action Step 1 - CIP will collaborate on a contract for Red Book Training with NACC.</i>	CIP, NACC	Contract for Red Book training will establish the virtual 7 session attorneys' training for the fall session.	Completed contract	Contract by Summer 2022	Financial resources to support contract with NACC.	Completed contract in place.
<i>Action Step 2 - Set out potential participant criteria.</i>	CIP	Include in possible participant pool attorneys practicing in juvenile court with less than 3 years experience, from a variety of geographic area and diversity in gender and race/ethnicity.	Complete list of criteria to share with POC to solicit referrals.	End of June 2022.	<u>Short-term outcomes</u> Increase the knowledge of the participant attorneys Prepare participant attorneys for the Child Welfare Specialization Encourage continued sharing of ideas and mentoring  <u>Long-term outcomes</u> Increase permanency and decrease maltreatment of children and youth in the child welfare system.	Completed criteria list in place
<i>Action Step 3 - Recruit participants for the Training class. Develop ideal participant list.</i>	CIP, NACC	CIPs will contact POCs including Judges, Juvenile Court Clerks, TBA, DCS, CASA, etc. to set out criteria and solicit referrals.	CIP will compile a list of attorneys to register for Trainings.	July 2022	Financial resources for promotion and marketing on training to attorneys	Evaluation of participant referrals sent to CIP. Contact of potential participants. Compile potential participant list.
<i>Action Step 4 - Assure complete registration of participants</i>	CIP, NACC	Work with NACC to develop specialized registration for TN CIP Red	Creation of registration procedures.	September 2022	Financial and Technical support for on-line registration	Verification of registered participants.

		Book Training. Assure all Participants are registered.	Complete 500 registrations for Fall Session.			
<i>Action Step 5</i> - CIP will implement a pre-training survey to all registered participants.	CIP, NACC, Participant Attorneys	Establish a pre-training baseline of knowledge of the participants	Obtain survey responses from each participant prior to the beginning of the fall sessions and compile the results	Summer 2022	Resources for the preparation and implementation of survey.	Data evaluation of completed surveys.
<i>Action Step 6</i> - CIP will work with NACC to facilitate the Red Book training for the fall session to the participating attorneys.	CIP, NACC, Participant Attorneys	A goal of 500 attorneys to participate in the virtual training over the 7 sessions.  CIP to facilitate monthly discussion sessions on specific topics.	Increase knowledge of attorneys practicing in child welfare law of the core dependency practice areas.	September 8 – October 27	Technology to access virtual training.  CLE credit available.  Zoom platform for training and discussion groups.	Data evaluation of completed session surveys; Compilation of FAQs
<i>Action Step 7</i> - CIP will implement a post-training survey to all participants.	CIP, NACC, Participant Attorneys	Establish a post-training level of knowledge of the participants and determine the efficacy of the training.	Obtain surveys from each participant upon completion of the fall sessions and compile the results	October 2022	Resources for the preparation and implementation of survey.	Data evaluation of completed surveys.
<i>Action Step 8</i> - Assist in the completion of Child Welfare Specialization as requested	CIP, NACC	Work with certain participants on their completion of the Child Welfare Specialization.	Goal of 40 participant attorneys obtain Child Welfare Specialization	Ongoing	Financial resources to complete specialization	Evaluate rate of certification
<i>Action Step 9</i> – Analyze survey responses and attendance reports to determine efficacy.	CIP	Creation of data dashboard to summarize survey data and summarize participants' attendance, perceptions and feedback.	Data to support efficacy of RBT divided into professional roles and subgroups	September 2023	Assistance with data analysis  Continued funding for subsequent RBT.	Data dashboard to be used to inform the offering of future RBT.

#### Priority Area #4: Data

##### Outcome #1:

*Improvement in data entry in juvenile court case management systems, thereby enhancing the quality of juvenile case data entered, will result in improved accuracy of outcome measure data pulled from case management systems, increasing the juvenile courts' capacity for monitoring and utilizing their own data. These outcomes will ensure that juvenile courts and CIP can make better data-driven decisions based on quality data to support juvenile court and CIP interventions.*

##### Need Driving Activities & Data Source: *How do you know this is a need in your state?*

*First hand observations of poor data quality in juvenile court case management systems.*



**Theory of Change:**

*Collaborate with juvenile courts to assess data quality and provide targeted training*

*So that*

*D&N foster care cases are entered and updated accurately*

*So that*

*The juvenile court has tools for utilizing their own data*

*So that*

*Juvenile court outcome measures from the juvenile court case management systems will be accurate and the courts will have increased capacity for monitoring and utilizing their data*

*So that*

*Juvenile courts and CIP can make data-driven decisions based on quality data to support court and CIP interventions.*

<p><b>Activity or Project Description</b> <i>Specific actions or project that will be completed to produce specific outputs and demonstrate progress toward the outcome.</i></p>	<p><b>Collaborative Partners</b> <i>Responsible parties and partners involved in implementation of the activity.</i></p>	<p><b>Anticipated Outputs of Activity</b> <i>What the CIP intends to produce, provide or accomplish through the activity.</i></p>	<p><b>Goals of Activity (short and/or Long-term)</b> <i>Where relevant and practical, provide specific, projected change in data the CIP intends to achieve. Goals should be measurable.</i> <b>Progress toward Outcome</b></p>	<p><b>Timeframe</b> <i>Proposed completion date or, if appropriate, "ongoing".</i></p>	<p><b>Resources Needed</b> <i>Where relevant identify the resources needed to complete the activity.</i></p>	<p><b>Plans for Evaluating Activity</b> <i>Where relevant, how will you measure or monitor change?</i></p>
<p>Briefly describe the overall activity or project that should help lead to the outcome identified above.</p>						
<p><i>Action Step 1 - CIP will create a data quality assessment tool to measure quality of D&amp;N case data entered into juvenile court case management systems. CIP will conduct a data quality assessment on a random sample of D&amp;N foster care cases to obtain baseline measurement of D&amp;N case data quality.</i></p>	<p><i>CIP, CIP case management system contractor, and the juvenile court teams.</i></p>	<p><i>Juvenile case data quality assessment tool, random sample of D&amp;N commitment cases assessed for baseline data quality.</i></p>	<p><i>Short-term:</i> Improvement in data quality assessment scores</p> <p><i>Long-term:</i> Increase in similarity between AFCARS time to perm in 12 months and Quest Juvenile Court Case Management System time to perm in 12 months in county (children in foster care 0-12 mos., 12-24 mos., 24+ mos.)</p>	<p><i>Initial quality reviews completed for Montgomery, Sumner and Marshall pilot counties</i></p>	<p><i>CIP funding for case management system contractor, CIP Staff</i></p>	<p><i>Short-term:</i> Measure % of cases scoring 100%/90%/80% on the data quality assessment</p> <p><i>Long-term:</i> Measure difference in average and variance between measures from AFCARS and from Quest Juvenile Court Case Management System</p>
<p><i>Action Step 2 - CIP will provide recommendations how to correct poor data quality errors and conduct</i></p>	<p><i>CIP, CIP case management system contractor,</i></p>	<p><i>Juvenile court staff responsible for data entry trained on how to enter and update D&amp;N</i></p>	<p><i>Same as Action Step 1</i></p>	<p><i>Initial reviews and recommendations completed</i></p>	<p><i>CIP funding for case management system contractor, CIP staff</i></p>	<p><i>Same as Action Step 1</i></p>

targeted training to juvenile court staff responsible for entering these data.	and the juvenile court team.	commitment cases correctly.		for Montgomery, Sumner and Marshall pilot counties		
<i>Action Step 3</i> - In three to six months, CIP will conduct a post-training data quality assessment on D&N foster care cases, assess data quality improvement, and provide further recommendations to the juvenile court team.	CIP, CIP case management system contractor, and the juvenile court team.	Random sample of D&N commitment cases assessed for post-training data quality.	<i>Same as Action Step 1</i>	Completed in Montgomery and Sumner Counties. Marshall County to be completed by Fall 2022.	CIP funding for case management system contractor. CIP staff	<i>Same as Action Step 1</i>
<i>Action Step 4</i> - CIP will create a survey tool to assess a baseline measurement of how the juvenile court is monitoring and utilizing its case management system data. CIP will obtain a baseline measurement with the survey.	CIP, CIP case management system contractor, and the juvenile court team.	Survey tool to assess the juvenile court's capacity for data quality monitoring and data utilization. Baseline measurement of data monitoring and utilization.	<i>Short-term:</i> Increase in frequency of data quality monitoring, data utilization, and ways of utilizing data.  <i>Long-term:</i> Increase in juvenile capacity to monitor data quality and utilize own data.	Completed	CIP staff	<i>Short-term:</i> Measure outcomes with survey tool.  <i>Long-term:</i> Measure outcomes with survey tool
<i>Action Step 5</i> - CIP will provide a targeted training on monitoring and utilizing their case management system data based off results from data utilization survey tool. In six months, CIP will conduct a post-training assessment on monitoring and utilizing their data, then assess further intervention needs.	CIP, CIP case management system contractor, and the juvenile court team.	Juvenile court staff with decision-making responsibilities trained on data monitoring and utilization. Post-training measurement of data monitoring and utilization.	<i>Same as Action Step 4</i>	Spring 2022	CIP case management system contractor, CIP staff and juvenile court staff	<i>Same as Action Step 4</i>
<i>Action Step 6</i> - CIP will provide monthly user community support sessions to provide ongoing training, peer sharing, support for users with data entry responsibilities and users who utilize the data for decision-making.	CIP, CIP contractor, and the juvenile court team.	Supported users with data entry and decision-making responsibilities.	Increase in self-reported level of support, consistently high reported usefulness of training.	Ongoing	CIP contractor/CIP staff	Periodic survey to assess how well-supported, monthly Zoom poll on training usefulness.

<i>Action Step 7</i> – Identify next round of Juvenile Courts and Replicate Action Steps 1 - 6 based on funding available with CIP.	Replicate Action Steps 1 - 6 based on funding available.	Replicate Action Steps 1 - 6 based on funding available.	Replicate Action Steps 1 - 6 based on funding available.	Ongoing	Replicate Action Steps 1 - 6 based on funding available.	Replicate Action Steps 1 - 6 based on funding available.
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