



University of Pittsburgh, School of Social Work

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**Pennsylvania Child Welfare Resource Center**  
**Annual Report 2017-2018**

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## **Note from the Director**

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With the support of our partners and guidance from our Steering Committee, the Resource Center continued to support Pennsylvania's child welfare workforce through implementation support, training, transfer of learning, technical assistance, evaluation, and project management. Below are a few highlights from the year.

The Resource Center delivered over 1,400 trainings across the Commonwealth to meet the needs of our stakeholders. The certification series for new caseworkers (CTC) represented 40% of this volume. Caseworker Safety, a simulation-based training, continued to be delivered across the Commonwealth, through our partnership with Service Access Management, Inc. Also, many transfer of learning support sessions were delivered to aid in the application of new knowledge and skill. Finally, onsite, often county-specific, technical assistance was provided to many counties with focus areas including but not limited to: organizational effectiveness, older youth related, and Quality Service Reviews.

The Resource Center continued to advance research and evaluation activities to support and inform our work and that of the larger child welfare system. The Title IV-E Demonstration Project concluded the evaluative portion of the project and the final evaluation report will be released in December of 2018. We continue to evaluate training, from measuring participant satisfaction, to assessments that measure knowledge and skill development as well as the extent to which learning transfers to the field. The Resource Center also provided substantial support to the Commonwealth's implementation of the third round of the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR), including the development of the Program Improvement Plan.

Our youth and family engagement efforts continued and highlights include support of the Pennsylvania Youth Advisory Board, with over 300 youth participating in statewide and regional meetings, advocating for improved practices and better informed youth. Efforts included the creation of a welcome booklet for youth entering the system, and resources for LGBTQ youth. In addition, youth provided feedback on newly passed federal legislation (Families First Act), and participated in team building activities at a wilderness camp. We held the Older Youth Retreat at Pitt-Johnstown in August of 2017. It was another successful year with youth making strong connections with their peers and experiencing life on a college campus.

Finally, the Resource Center continued to offer a free online 3 hour course, Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse: Mandated and Permissive Reporting in Pennsylvania. Over 247,000 participants completed the course during this fiscal year. Feedback continues to be overwhelmingly positive with almost 90% reporting they feel more confident in their skills and that they will be able to use what they learned in the course.

On behalf of our team, I thank you for your collaboration, support, and commitment to Pennsylvania's children, youth, and families.

 **Michael Byers**



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## RESOURCE CENTER OVERVIEW

The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Resource Center (Resource Center) is a collaborative effort of the University of Pittsburgh, School of Social Work, the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services, and the Pennsylvania Children and Youth Administrators. The Resource Center is centrally managed and regionally administered by the University of Pittsburgh, School of Social Work.

### VISION

Every child, youth, and family experiences a life rich with positive opportunities, nurturing relationships, and supportive communities.

### MISSION

The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Resource Center is a national leader in advocating for an enhanced quality of life for Pennsylvania's children, youth, and families. In partnership with families, communities, and public and private agencies, we prepare and support exceptional child welfare professionals and systems through education, research, and a commitment to best practice.

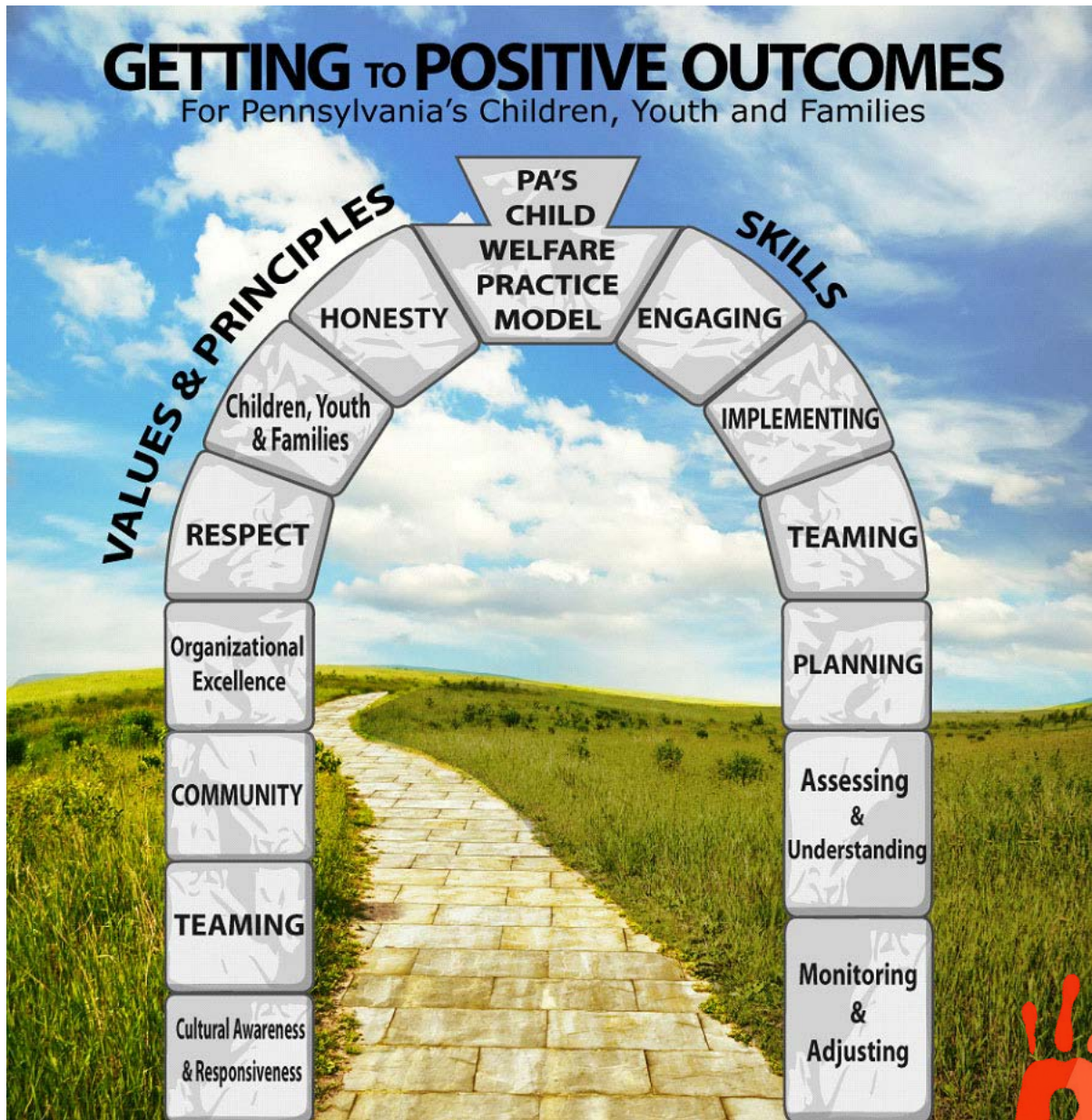
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## Pennsylvania's Practice Model

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This practice model reflects the values, principles, and skills that Pennsylvania's child welfare system holds as critical to achieving positive outcomes for children, youth, and families. The Resource Center works to ensure all products and services are grounded in the practice model. For more information on Pennsylvania's Child Welfare Practice Model, go to the [Resource Center's Practice Model webpage](#).



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## Our Approach and Focus

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The Resource Center provides a continuum of services designed to facilitate and sustain positive change in the child welfare system. Our services include: training, transfer of learning, technical assistance, research and evaluation, project management, and organizational development.

Our primary strategies include:

- **Conducting research and evaluation**
- **Providing consultation and support**
- **Developing and revising tools, materials, and curricula**
- **Training child welfare professionals**
- **Integrating youth and family engagement**
- **Advocating for policy and practice improvements**
- **Developing and implementing a quality improvement process**
- **Organizing and sponsoring events**
- **Providing resource coordination**

The Resource Center is comprised of the following departments:

- **Administrative**
- **Curriculum and Trainer Development**
- **Fiscal and Human Resources**
- **Organizational Effectiveness/Regional Teams**
- **Research and Evaluation**
- **Statewide Quality Improvement**
- **Technology Development**



Following is a summary of work completed within each key strategy.

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## Conduct Research and Evaluation

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The Resource Center has undertaken the strategy of conducting research and evaluation to promote national leadership in child welfare research and implementation to practice. The Resource Center intends that research and evaluation efforts will improve the quality of practice and system functioning in the Commonwealth. During this fiscal year, the Resource Center advanced several major research and evaluation efforts described below.

### Evaluation of Pennsylvania's Child Welfare Demonstration Project

The Resource Center is the independent evaluator for Pennsylvania's Title IV-E Waiver Child Welfare Demonstration Project. The Child Welfare Demonstration Project is testing the flexible use of Title IV-E funds to develop a new case practice model focused on family engagement, assessment, and the expanded use of evidence-based programs/practices (EBP) driven by local needs. It is the intent that these activities will lead to improved placement decisions and child and family functioning, and will ultimately result in improved safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes for children and families involved in the state's child welfare system. Beginning July 2013 through June 2018, the Child Welfare Demonstration Project Evaluation Team implemented an evaluation to investigate the processes, outcomes, and costs associated with the project. The process and outcome evaluations focused on assessment, family engagement and evidence-based practices in addition to collecting and synthesizing fiscal and outcome data. In 2017/2018, the Evaluation Team continued to assess staff knowledge and awareness relative to evidence-based practices as well as readiness to continue efforts toward successful EBP implementation. Additionally, the Evaluation Team collected general referral and dosage information for evidence-based practices and worked directly with service providers in an effort to collect outcome data related to two specific evidence-based programs. As data collection drew to a close in June 2018, the Evaluation Team continued to engage and learn with counties by sharing data about assessments, EBPs, and fiscal data through brief reports and interactive discussions. During this final year of the evaluation, the team also interviewed county leaders about the sustainability of strategies implemented through the Demonstration Project. More information about the Demonstration Project and the evaluation can be found at the [Demonstration Project's webpage](#).

### Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) Evaluation

The Resource Center received surveys from more than 1,200 Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) conferences that were held across the state with nearly 20,000 participating family members and professionals. Some counties and providers do not participate in the Resource Center's evaluation and other counties who had participated in this evaluation in past years are currently participating in the Demonstration Project; therefore, it is likely that the number of conferences held across the state is higher. The FGDM Evaluation measures fidelity to the Family Group Decision Making model by asking each conference participant to complete a survey that contains various questions measuring cultural safety, community partnerships, and family leadership. Consistent with results from previous years, the conference surveys continue to show that families and professionals alike view the conferences positively and find them to be beneficial.



During 2017/2018, the Resource Center introduced the FGDM Evaluation Portal which allows users to submit information using online forms and access evaluation data via interactive dashboards. Counties participating in the FGDM Evaluation can complete and submit Baseline and Outcome forms online, simplifying the data collection process and improving the quality of data. In 2018/2019, the Resource Center will pilot a process to collect participant surveys online. The FGDM Evaluation Dashboards present data for conferences held after July 1, 2015 in charts, graphs and tables to allow for easier interpretation of evaluation results. Users may also view and filter statewide and county data specific to their interests and needs. In addition to information about participants' conference experiences, the dashboards report data that have not been previously shared, including information about the status of the child/youth at the time of the conference and the plan developed during the conference. In 2018/2019, the Resource Center will continue to add data to the dashboards, including information about the impact that the conference/plan had on the child/youth. Evaluation data and resources, including the Dashboards and online forms, can be found at the [FGDM webpage](#).

## Evaluation of Training

The Resource Center is committed to evaluating the effectiveness of training, using data to improve training program products, and contributing to the field of child welfare. During 2017/2018, the Resource Center developed and redesigned the training for new caseworkers, now referred to as Foundations. Assessments have been incorporated throughout the series and focus on participants' knowledge and skill development as well as their ability to transfer what they have learned to the field. In addition, the Resource Center is exploring multiple methods of electronic data collection to promote efficiency, improve data quality and allow for greater and timelier access to data for evaluation and continuous improvement purposes. Data collected throughout the pilot of Foundations in the coming fiscal year will inform ongoing revisions of Foundations and form the basis for answering more comprehensive research and evaluation questions. The Resource Center will also apply successful evaluation strategies, including electronic data collection processes, to other curriculum in 2018/2019, including the Supervisor Training Series.





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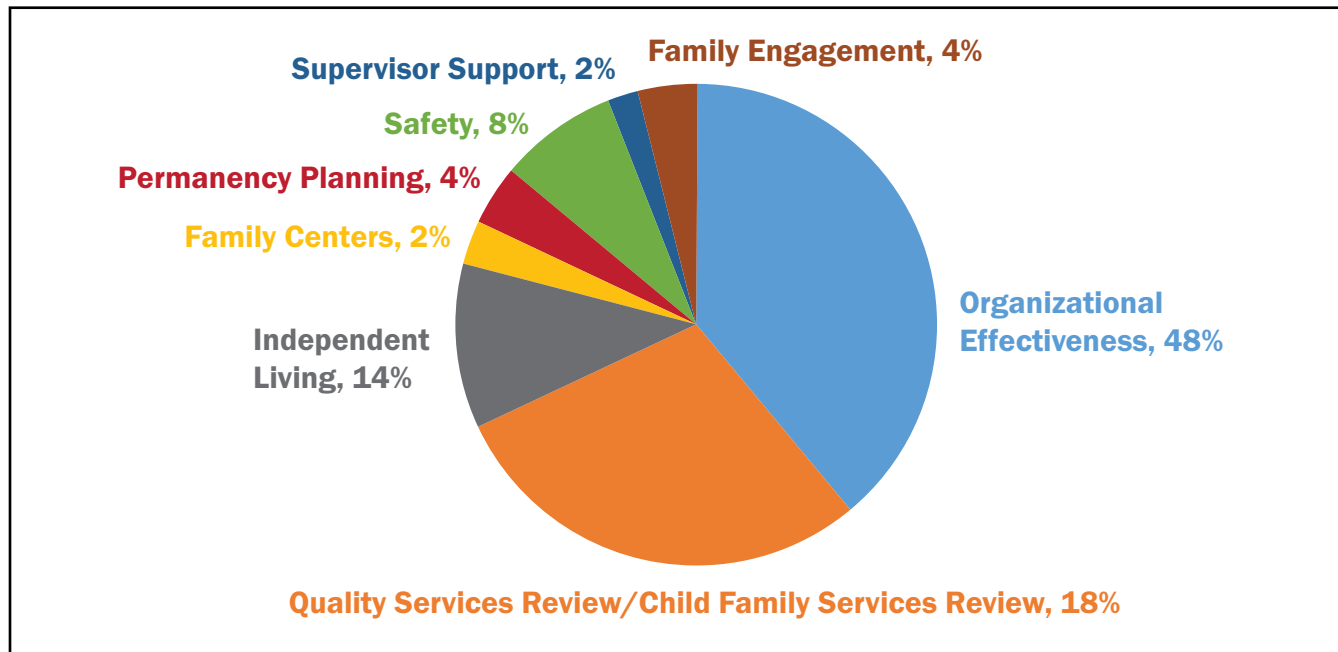
## Provide Consultation and Support

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The Organizational Effectiveness/Regional Team Department at the Child Welfare Resource Center helps to support organizational change and the implementation of best practice across Pennsylvania. In partnership with county children and youth agencies and technical assistance partners, we engage in Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) efforts to make systems change and support agency mission, vision and values. Using an Organizational Effectiveness framework, we facilitate work sessions that allow participants to develop goals, set priorities, and implement work products along with identifying training, transfer of learning and technical assistance supports. But, in all we do, much like children and youth agencies serve families individually, we meet organizations where they are using our models, tools and skills to assist them with moving forward towards positive outcomes.

The chart below shows the percentage of time spent in some of the core practice areas provided by Organizational Effectiveness (OE) staff at the Resource Center.

### Technical Assistance Provided July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018



Organizational Effectiveness services continue to be the main technical assistance provided by OE staff. These services include organizational assessments, formation of sponsor teams and continuous improvement teams, development of processes and procedures, and continuous improvement plan implementation and monitoring. Support is also provided to strengthen leadership teams including meetings with supervisors, managers, and administrators.

Over 75% of PA counties engaged in technical assistance with OE staff during FY 2017/2018. Support was provided for Quality Service Reviews (QSRs). Independent living site visits and technical assistance services were provided to new IL coordinators and programs requesting specific support. Family Center services provided by the Resource Center transition to focusing on Time Limited Family Reunification programs. Safety Assessment and Risk Assessment Support Sessions continue to be offered to support completion of the tools to guide crucial conversations

and decision making. Over 45 safety support sessions were held in 14 different counties. Safety support sessions continue to be co-facilitated with the Office of Children, Youth and Families (OCYF) regional office representatives.

The impact of technical assistance is evaluated in a variety of different methods. There is an increased emphasis on using county data to establish baselines and monitor efforts and results. Sometimes the effort is to develop a continuous improvement process or to refine processes and procedures to ensure the data is accurate and timely. Customer satisfaction, assessment of services, and perceived results is captured in an online survey.

It is anticipated that technical assistance efforts will continue to focus on the same areas in 2019 and that additional efforts will include expanded supervisory support and assistance with the program improvement plan development, implementation, and monitoring. Services will also include support for onsite CFSR efforts. Independent Living services will also be expanded in 2019 to support programs in strengthening services to older youth. For more information about OE services go to: <http://www.pacwrc.pitt.edu/OE-Department.htm>.

## ———— **Develop and Revise Tools, Materials, and Curricula** ————

### **Primary Purpose: Elevate Child Welfare Practice in Pennsylvania**

The University of Pittsburgh, School of Social Work, Pennsylvania Child Welfare Resource Center, in partnership with the Office of Children, Youth, and Families, and the Pennsylvania Children and Youth Administrators provides competency-based training, technical assistance and transfer of learning designed to facilitate and sustain positive change in the child welfare system. To accomplish its purpose to support the elevation of child welfare practice by promoting the long-term career development of public child welfare professionals, the Resource Center continuously examines, develops, and revises its tools, materials, and curricula.

The Resource Center's continuum of products and services are guided by competencies. Competencies are broad statements of knowledge, values, and skills that are essential for effective child welfare practice. The goal of competency-based education and preparation for practice is to build child welfare professionals' competence, confidence, and compassion to support the safety, permanency, and well-being of children involved in Pennsylvania's child welfare system.

This year the Resource Center, through the Competency Rewrite Workgroup and in collaboration with its partners, county staff, private providers, and various committees representing diverse professional groups, completed its update of its child welfare competencies. The workgroup cross-walked the competencies with the new PA Child Welfare Practice Model and components of the NASW Code of Ethics leading to this final version of the PA Child Welfare Competencies. <http://www.pacwrc.pitt.edu/pcwc/Competencies.htm>. These child welfare competencies are designed to enhance the development of curriculum, technical assistance, transfer of learning, and performance-evaluation tools to be delivered to direct service workers, supervisors, and administrators.



In addition to its significant revision of its competencies, the Resource Center dedicated a substantial amount of time and resources in its planned revision and redesign of its curriculum series, Charting the Course, leading to the certification of direct service workers. Although Foundations of Pennsylvania Child Welfare Practice: Building Competence, Confidence, and Compassion, will pilot in July 2018, a vast amount of activities, both in curriculum and trainer development, leading to this revision and redesign has occurred throughout FY 2017/2018.

Curriculum revisions and redesign consist of an increase in content being delivered in an online format to support the learners in gaining factual knowledge at their own pace, at their convenience, and at their home office. As a result of these online required pre-requisites, there will be fewer in-person sessions, which will be dedicated to application and skill practice. This hybrid delivery of curriculum content and practice sessions will promote the adult learner to learn by doing and to practice skills in a real-life situation in a safe setting. In-person sessions will consist of unique and powerful learning experiences that provide the learners opportunities to apply course concepts in a realistic setting. In team-based learning, the learners come prepared, after completing online materials, to apply course concepts to solve real-world problems within a team format. In simulation-based learning, the learners come to the classroom prepared to practice course concepts through interaction with standardized clients who have been trained to provide a realistic portrayal of a client in a scenario and to provide meaningful behaviorally based feedback to the learner. A video depicting the use of team-based learning and simulation sessions can be viewed here: <http://www.pacwrc.pitt.edu/Videos/TBLSimVideo2018.mp4>

In FY 2017/2018, the Resource Center completed the development of 22 new curricula and revisions to 23 existing curricula.

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## **22** new curricula developed **23** curricula revised

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This year, the Resource Center continued its expansion of online training opportunities through its Child Advocacy Studies (CAST) series. Part two of this series, which focuses on risk factors, has added two new online modules on the topic of substance use, 9000 CAST II: Modules 7 and 8: Substance Use: As a Risk Factor for Child Maltreatment: A Macro Perspective and A Micro Perspective. An online course and four in-person sessions on the topic of Child Fatality and Near Fatality was developed and delivered regionally to county review team members. Afterwards, the in-person session was converted into a two-credit online course. Several support sessions to advance learners' knowledge and skills in the topic areas of Safety Assessment, Building and Sustaining Father Engagement, and Out of Home Placement and Permanency Planning have been developed.



In the development and revision of tools, materials, and curricula that will achieve the professional development needs of the child welfare professionals, assigned curriculum and instructional development specialists engage in multiple activities and strategies including but not limited to:

- Partnering with Resource Center’s key stakeholders, the Department of Human Services, and the Pennsylvania Children and Youth Administrators in the identification of tools, materials, and curricula to be developed or revised
- Collaborating with the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania’s Court to support both the improved functioning of the child welfare system and dependency courts
- Convening and conducting curriculum needs assessment meetings and quality assurance committees consisting of subject matter experts and multidisciplinary professionals who have expertise in topics related to the development of the tools, materials, and curricula
- Consulting with subject matter experts and established advisory committees such as the Diversity Task Force
- Incorporating empirically-based literature and best practices
- Incorporating the role and voice of youth and parent consumers
- Analyzing Child and Family Service Review and Quality Service Review data to identify knowledge and skill gaps and strengthening those concepts in the development of tools, materials, and curricula
- Participating in Quality Service Reviews and Child and Family Service Reviews to facilitate understanding of practice improvement initiatives and the front-line experience
- Intentionally incorporating and reinforcing values and themes from the practice model in the curricula
- Developing transfer of learning components and activities to support the curricula.
- Using the Analysis-Design-Development-Implementation-Evaluation (ADDIE) Model to clearly determine the learning objectives, the audience, and the scope of the tools, materials, and curricula to be developed
- Employing decision guides to support the determination of the format of the tools, materials and curricula to be developed, such as in-classroom, online, or blended
- Developing online curriculum directly into an online authoring software tool, Lectora
- Using stories to engage e-Learners by enhancing skills in scenario development

With a few exceptions, due to copyright restrictions, all Resource Center curricula are located at the [Resource Center’s Curriculum Page](#).





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## Train Child Welfare Professionals

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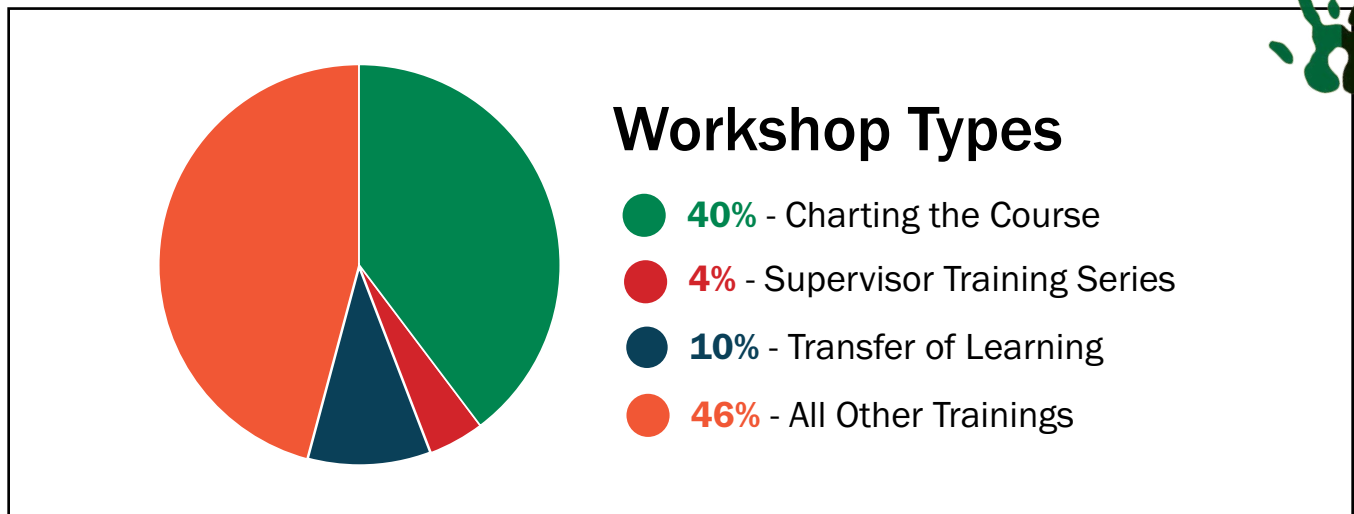
Child welfare professionals from 391 agencies across Pennsylvania attended over 1,400 workshops delivered by the Resource Center in FY 2017/2018.

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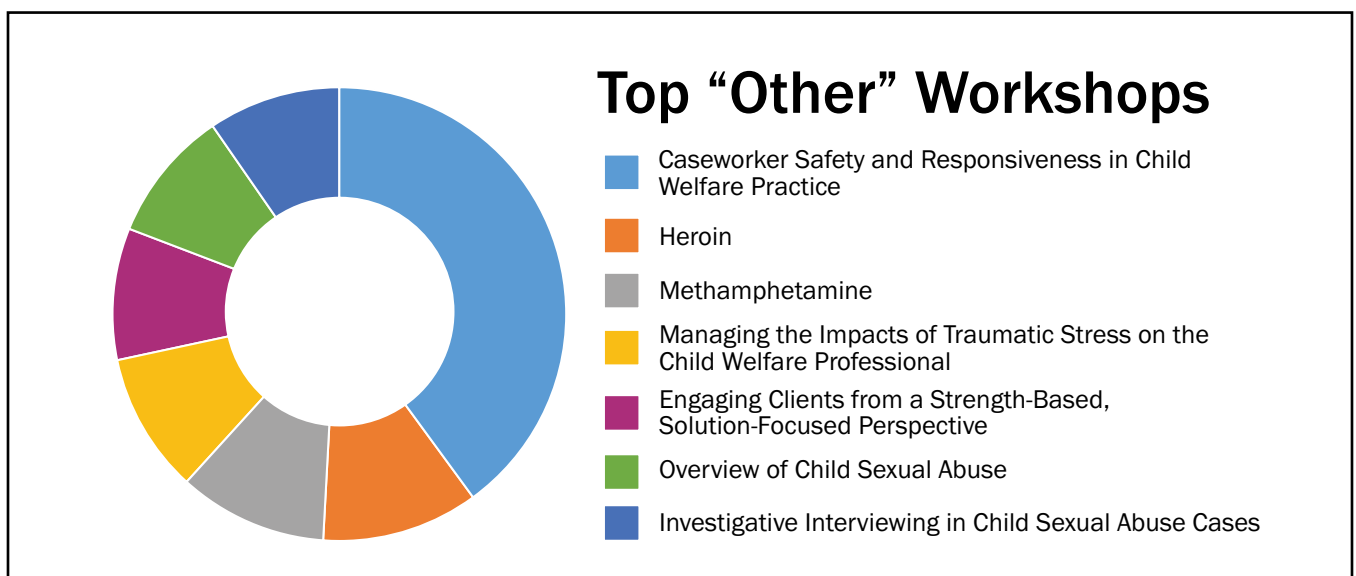
**1416** workshops delivered

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The following chart identifies the percentage of training sessions by workshop type. Fifty one percent of all offerings represent one of the certification series for caseworkers and supervisors. Seven hundred and twenty six (726) child welfare caseworkers and 100 supervisors completed their respective certification series. The chart below depicts the breakdown of workshop types delivered in FY 2017/2018.



To breakdown the “other” category in more detail, the following chart identifies the top training sessions delivered outside of the certification areas.



During FY 2017/2018, the Resource Center, in partnership with SAM, Inc. provided twenty-six counties 72 simulation training sessions. Over 800 participants, both caseworkers and supervisors, participated in these sessions.

In addition, the Resource Center has continued to expand the number of online training options available to Pennsylvania's child welfare professionals. There are now 60 online courses available.

## — **60** online course options **4,737** participants completed one or more online course —

Finally, the Resource Center continued to offer a free online 3-hour course: Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse: Mandated and Permissive Reporting in Pennsylvania. Over 247,000 participants completed the course during this fiscal year. Of that number, over 116,000 trainee records were processed and sent to the Department of State for licensure renewal. Additionally, 11% (or 26,144) of trainees who completed the course indicated they had previously made a report of child abuse. Feedback continues to be overwhelmingly positive with over 89% reporting they feel more confident in their skills and that they will be able to use what they learned in the course.

To support the unique and powerful curriculum revisions and redesign discussed above and continuous quality improvement of training delivery, the Resource Center has undertaken extensive efforts to retrain its contracted instructors and in its recruitment and management of standardized clients (SC) and attorneys (SA). New instructor competencies and a new Instructor Competency Training (ICT) have been developed and piloted this fiscal year. The ICT offers both online and in-person sessions, where the contracted instructors learn and practice team-based learning techniques within a team-based format. To promote the contracted instructors' professional development, new tools, such as observation forms, and additional training opportunities are in development.

Standardized clients (SC) are part-time employees who have been recruited and retained to support the delivery of simulation-based training sessions. They have been trained to provide a realistic portrayal of a client in a variety of scenarios such as interviewing, conducting safety assessments, and full disclosure interviews. They also provided meaningful behaviorally based feedback to the learner at the conclusion of the simulation. Standardized attorneys (SA), attorneys who have practiced in dependency court, conduct direct and cross examinations of the learners during a dependency court mock hearing. At the conclusion of the learners' practice testimony, these attorneys also provide behaviorally based feedback.





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## Youth and Family Engagement and Integration

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The Resource Center has undertaken the key strategy of Youth and Family Engagement and Integration to support the increased engagement of consumers at the individual, community, and systems level toward improved service and outcomes. There are a variety of means by which the Resource Center supports youth and family engagement, including training and technical assistance. The following sections will highlight significant youth and family engagement work by the Resource Center.

### Family Engagement

The Resource Center remains committed to leading efforts across the Commonwealth to help counties engage family members in their planning and service delivery. Supported family engagement practices include:

- **Family Group Decision Meeting (FGDM)**
- **Family Finding**
- **Father Engagement**
- **Engagement of Incarcerated Parents**



The Resource Center employs a Family Engagement Project Manager who supports family engagement practice at the county, regional and statewide levels. Ongoing support is provided to Regional Family Engagement Network Meetings and FGDM Leadership Team and Statewide Meetings.

In 2017/2018, the Resource Center filled the previously vacant Parent Ambassador position with a parent who was a former constituent of the system. The Parent Ambassador is working with the Curriculum and Organizational Effectiveness Departments to make family engagement connections in curriculum development and technical assistance provided to counties. The Parent Ambassador is also involved in both internal and stakeholder workgroups to represent the parent perspective. As she becomes acclimated to the Resource Center and the PA child welfare system, her role in technical assistance to counties and other providers will continue to expand.

### Youth Engagement

In 2017/2018, the Resource Center continued to employ Youth Quality Improvement Specialists to assist in the delivery of trainings and technical assistance, as well as to provide oversight to the Older Youth Retreat and PA Youth Advisory Board (YAB) regional and statewide efforts. These positions are filled by former constituents of the child welfare system. The role these former youth consumers play represents the highest level of youth engagement in our continuum of employment opportunities at the Resource Center.

The Resource Center's second level of opportunity for engagement of youth is the Youth Ambassador positions. We recently changed the position to a part-time status with a maximum two-year commitment. While eligible candidates will no longer need to be registered in post-secondary education, they must still have out-of-home placement experience in the child welfare system. Youth Ambassadors help lead youth engagement training and technical assistance efforts across Pennsylvania, often in collaboration

with our Youth Quality Improvement Specialists and our Practice Improvement Specialists working in the counties. Youth Ambassadors continue to support the Youth Advisory Board, Older Youth Retreat, and Know Your Rights trainings. Additionally, Youth Ambassadors and the Youth Quality Improvement Specialists continue to support internal Resource Center operations, including reviewing curriculum, and participating on workgroups. The Youth Quality Improvement Specialists co-trained 20 trainings of Module 9 of Charting the Course throughout the year.

In 2017/2018, the Statewide Youth Advisory Board (YAB) focused on completing the LGBTQ project developed at the Youth Leadership Summit in 2017. At the statewide meeting in September, youth participants discussed ideas for their 2017/2018 Statewide Project, which resulted in an LGBTQ-SOGIE toolkit for professionals. The goal of the LGBTQ-SOGIE Toolkit was to gather resources and recommendations that professionals and agencies can use to develop safe practices for youth in their care. Throughout the year, youth continued to gather resources, worked in individual groups in their regions and communities, as well as workgroups at the statewide level.

In September 2017, a new group of youth leaders were elected by their peers to form the YAB Core. YAB Core members are representatives of local and regional boards across the state and are responsible for planning and facilitating the YAB Statewide meetings. They participate in conference calls prior to each event and provide insight into the agenda, handouts, activities, and priorities. They then facilitate each discussion, training or activity at the event. This role within the Statewide YAB helps them develop leadership and facilitation skills and provides them with opportunities for professional development.

During the November 2017 Statewide meeting, youth developed sections within the toolkit including the introduction, learning objectives, scope, components, and action plans. Each region brought ideas, resources, and created items to be added to the toolkit based on the needs of their specific region. After reviewing the materials collected, youth and staff felt there was a wealth of national/statewide resources and decided to focus their attention on regional/local resources. However, YAB still chose to move forward with a GoAnimate project highlighting ways allies can support LGBTQ youth in foster care. This project continues to be a work in progress, primarily utilizing youth from the Southwest region to lead the project.

In July 2017, the YAB held their second annual Statewide Open House where youth interested in YAB were invited to spend the day at a YAB Statewide meeting. A resource fair was held in the morning and a community service project was completed in the afternoon. Youth created welcome cards for older youth entering the system. Youth and staff also had an opportunity to write cards to veterans thanking them for their service. After the welcome cards were completed, they were collected and comprised into the Foster Care Welcome Booklet for youth entering care. The booklet includes messages of hope and inspiration, quotes, pictures and drawings utilized to support and acknowledge that there are other youth that may have been in a similar situation. The Welcome Booklet is distributed to counties upon request and can be found on the YAB website along with a video explaining its purpose.

In April 2018, YAB members from across the state met at the Diakon Wilderness Center in Boiling Springs, PA for the first annual Statewide Community Service Project. The group worked in the program's greenhouse in the morning hours removing overgrown grass and weeds along the border and replaced it with mulch. Flowers will ultimately be planted in the redesigned area to restrict the grass from growing in the future. Post lunch, the group transitioned into climbing on the program's

High Challenge Course where they were able to challenge themselves 45 feet off the ground doing a variety of different elements. Participants also got to do the zip line as they exited the course.

In June of 2018, the annual YAB Leadership Summit was held at the Resource Center. There were 28 youth in attendance representing each of the six regions throughout the state. This professional development opportunity consisted of three workshops, co-facilitated by youth and staff, including:

- **Child Welfare 101 - an Introduction to Child Welfare for Youth**
- **Time Management - a workshop designed to support youth in prioritizing tasks as well as managing time and schedules**
- **Conducting Yourself in Court - a workshop intended to support youth in how to prepare, dress, and handle the many aspects of the court process and other similar situations**

During the Summit, youth were also asked by OCYF for feedback regarding the extension of IL services to age 23 (as a result of the passage of the Families First Act) and what they felt would be the benefits. Their feedback is as follows:

- **Many youth are still in college (don't graduate until after age 21, may have graduated high school late)**
- **Youth are just getting on their feet at age 21**
- **Youth are still developing at age 21 (lack maturity)**
- **More time for youth who entered care at an older age to access resources – more time to learn**
- **Allow for additional support (begin stepping down services at age 21)**
- **Youth are not making necessary progress between 18-21**
- **Youth may not have established a network of permanent connections (outside of paid staff)**
- **Youth require additional time to plan and make crucial decisions**
- **Allows youth with disabilities to get additional support**

The training material from the Leadership Summit has been added to the YAB website to ensure easy access by youth, county workers, coordinators and others looking for useful resources to support older youth.

The PA Youth Advisory Board (YAB) website, [www.payab.pitt.edu](http://www.payab.pitt.edu), was also revamped to make the website more user friendly, visually appealing and full of relevant resources based on feedback from older youth and staff. The information that was previously located on the Independent Living Project page, <http://www.ilp.pitt.edu/>, has been moved to the YAB website under the staff tab. Our goal is to keep youth and staff up-to-date about events across the state, resources and opportunities for collaboration and engagement.

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**Over 300 youth actively  
participate on the YABs**

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The Resource Center continues to provide fee waivers for both the SAT Reasoning Test and the SAT Subject Test. These waivers are available for current high school students who cannot afford to pay the test fees. The Resource Center also continues to share financial aid information to assist older youth in care in finding ways to finance post-secondary education.

In addition to supporting the Pennsylvania Youth Advisory Board, the Resource Center continues its partnership with current and former foster care youth and independent living professionals in planning and facilitating the annual Older Youth Retreat. The retreat is co-sponsored by the Office of Children, Youth and Families at the Department of Human Services and the University of Pittsburgh's School of Social Work, Pennsylvania Child Welfare Resource Center. A committee comprised of youth, county and provider staff, Resource Center staff and other statewide partners plan and implement the week's activities, which include youth-led peer group sessions, activity sessions, youth versus staff activities and other special events. Youth retreat participants from across the state also participated in focus groups related to PA's Five- Year Plan. Youth identified goals they would like to achieve over the next year as well as the supports and barriers that impact their progress.

The purpose of the retreat is to afford current and former foster care youth educational, practical and social experiences for a week while living on a college campus. This year, the retreat was held the week of August 6-10, 2018, on the University of Pittsburgh's Johnstown campus. Participants included 91 youth, ranging in age from 16-20 years and 48 staff representing 30 counties across the state. For more detailed information regarding the 2018 Older Youth Retreat, please visit the Youth Advisory Board website <http://www.payab.pitt.edu/ILRetreat.htm>.

The Resource Center remains committed to leading efforts across the Commonwealth to help counties engage youth and family members in their planning, service delivery, management, and evaluation processes. Success will be achieved when youth, alumni, and family voices are not only heard, but when their voices are the ones leading the process.



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# Advocate for Policy and Practice Improvements

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## Child and Family Services Review

The Child and Family Services Reviews are a federal-state collaborative effort designed to help ensure that quality services are provided to children and families through state child welfare systems. The Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, has administered the reviews since 2000. These reviews examine state child welfare programs and practice to identify strengths and challenges in state programs and systems, focusing on outcomes for children and families in the areas of safety, permanency and well-being. The reviews work in tandem with other state and federal frameworks for system planning, reform and effective implementation, such as the Child and Family Services Plan and a well-functioning continuous quality improvement system.

The review of 65 cases (40 foster care cases and 25 in home cases) occurred during the months of April–July 2017.

The Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) process was initiated with an analysis of child welfare data and the submission of a statewide assessment to ACF of areas seen as critical to the effective functioning of the child welfare system. During the period of April – July 2017, Pennsylvania staff and trained volunteers completed a state-conducted review of 65 cases with secondary oversight conducted by federal staff. In addition, ACF conducted interviews with the state's stakeholders and partners.

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## Resource Center Staff who were CFSR Reviewers and Quality Assurance Staff

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**24** of the **120 (20%)** CFSR reviewers were Resource Center staff

**35** of **130 (27%)** CFSR reviewer positions were Resource Center staff

**16** of the **21 (76%)** of the Quality Assurance CFSR positions were Resource Center staff

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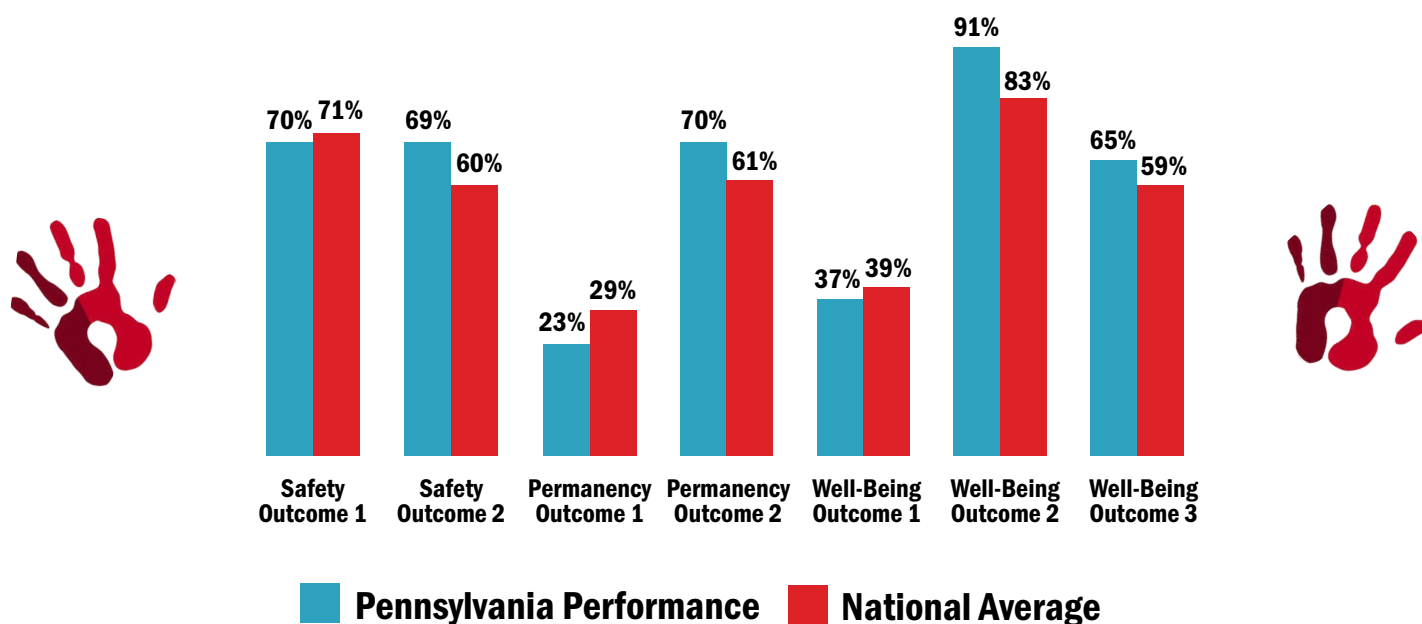
[Pennsylvania's CFSR Final Report](#) was issued in November 2017. Pennsylvania was found to meet the federal performance standards for five of the seven systemic factors assessed, including: Case Review System; Quality Assurance System; Staff and Provider Training; Agency Responsiveness to the Community; and Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment and Retention. Pennsylvania did not meet the performance threshold set by ACF for the seven outcomes outlined below:

- Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.
- Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.
- Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.
- The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.
- Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.
- Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.
- Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.

Pennsylvania did not meet the federal performance standard for the systemic factors of: Statewide Information System and Service Array and Resource Development. The following provides a visual comparison of Pennsylvania's performance on the seven outcomes vs. the national average, based on the findings of 24 states that conducted CFSR case reviews during 2015 and 2016.

### Pennsylvania Outcomes vs. National Average\*

\*National average reflects findings from 24 states who conducted the CFSR in 2015 and 2016



A Program Improvement Plan (PIP) was required to address each outcome and systemic factor for which the state did not meet federal standards. The PA Child Welfare Council and Subcommittees (Safety, Permanency, Well-Being and Resources/Cross-Categorical), to include leadership, membership and support from the Resource Center, has served as the stakeholder group who supports PIP development and statewide strategic planning. Pennsylvania submitted a PIP in February 2018 and Pennsylvania continues to work with ACF to finalize the PIP. The PA Child Welfare Council continues their review of the findings and analysis of data to support the identification of key strategies/interventions that will focus on practice-level and sustainable improvements to ensure positive outcomes are achieved for children and families across the Commonwealth as part of the PIP implementation.

### PCYA Leadership Academy

The Leadership Academy provides PA Child Welfare leaders with the practical knowledge and skills needed to build the competence, confidence, and commitment required of high-quality leaders within their agency, community, and the child welfare field. Efforts to achieve these goals include training, transfer of learning and technical assistance designed to support leaders to enhance their personal and professional skills to achieve agency goals of safety, permanency and well-being for children and families. Resource Center staff facilitate the Leadership Academy Workgroup which develops and delivers training sessions (for PCYA quarterly meetings and regionally), reviews and provides certification for new administrators, maintains leadership resources, and conducts program and practice sessions to support best practice. More information is available on the Resource Center website at: <http://www.pacwrc.pitt.edu/LeadershipAcademy.htm>



## Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA)

CAPTA provides federal funding to states in support of prevention, assessment, investigation, prosecution, and treatment activities, and also provides grants to public agencies and non-profits, for demonstration programs and projects. The Resource Center provides support to the Department of Human Services (DHS) for two specific activities related to CAPTA. The first activity is to support CAPTA compliance by fulfilling the requirements related to Citizen Review Panels and the second area is providing project management support as it relates to the application and administration of the Children's Justice Act Grant activities.

### Citizen Review Panels (CRP)

Pennsylvania is mandated to maintain three CRPs consisting of volunteer citizens that examine the policies, procedures, and practices of state and local agencies. Members serving on the panels are charged with developing an annual report, which is then sent to and reviewed by the Department of Human Services. Contained in the report are recommendations aimed at improving Pennsylvania's child protective services. These reports cover the calendar year but are published, along with the state's responses, in April or May of each year, and can be viewed online by clicking the following link: [Pennsylvania Citizen Review Panel Annual Reports](#)



While these panels are independent entities, a project manager for CAPTA within the Resource Center provides support for their work in a variety of ways, including supporting their bi-monthly regional and bi-annual state meetings, data collection, and communication to key stakeholders. Each year the CRPs, along with the project manager and staff from the Department of Human Services, attend a National Citizen Review Panel Conference. Following the conference, lessons learned and best practices are discussed and incorporated into Pennsylvania's CRP process.

In 2017/2018, the Resource Center worked collaboratively with the Department of Human Services to recruit a third panel representing the Southwest area of the state; as well as adding additional members to the existing Northeast and South Central panels. In all, 17 new volunteers were added. Orientation of those new panel members occurred in August 2018.

### Children's Justice Act (CJA)

The Resource Center's project manager for CAPTA also provides support to the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Pennsylvania CJA Task Force in the compliant and effective use of Pennsylvania's CJA grant funds. The Resource Center project manager engages in activities designed to promote collaboration and communication in the use of CJA funds, increase knowledge and resources gained through the Annual CJA Grantee Meeting and supports DHS and the task force in identifying opportunities regarding the use of CJA funds to address goal areas in the Annual Progress and Service Report.

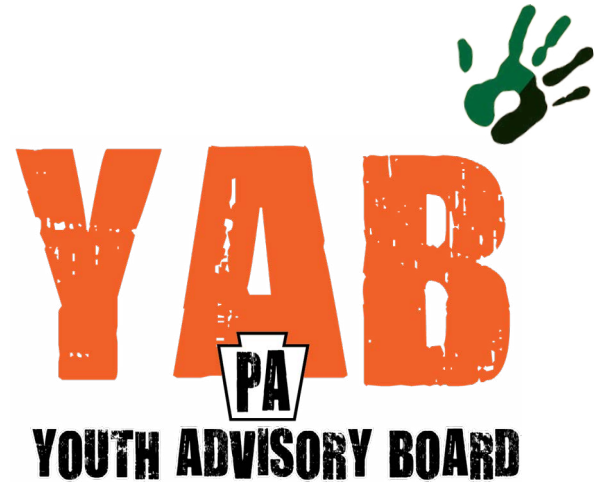
The task force has met seven times since its convening in June of 2017. As a result of their work, they met all of their goals set for FY 2017/2018. These goals included increasing membership to

include all federally required disciplines by early Fall 2017, revising Pennsylvania's Model Standards for Multidisciplinary Investigative Teams (MDIT) and supporting the development of MDIT online trainings to further strengthen these teams across Pennsylvania.

In recent years, CJA funds have been used to support the strengthening of multi-disciplinary teams across the state, as well as supporting an online mandated reporter training following the changes in the Child Protective Services Law and the creation of an online Spanish version of this training.

## **Pennsylvania Youth Advisory Board**

The Resource Center continues to provide support to the PA Youth Advisory Board. One of the Pennsylvania Youth Advisory Board's main objectives is developing youth leaders so that they can effectively use their personal experiences to advocate for changes in the child welfare system. Youth are given resources and trainings on how to strategically and safely share their stories in an effort to impact system change and practice. The topics they address range from education to normalcy to permanency. Know Your Rights trainings are available to youth in Pennsylvania so that they can learn how to advocate for themselves.



The Resource Center's Older Youth Project partners with the Pennsylvania Statewide Adoption and Permanency Network (SWAN) to bridge and connect SWAN permanency services with older youth's transition to adulthood. Over the past year, the Statewide YAB delivered a train-the-trainer on the Strategic Sharing Curriculum. This is to ensure that youth are prepared to co-facilitate regional Strategic Sharing trainings. The training was also used as a recruitment opportunity to reach current YAB members, as well as youth who were not currently involved with YAB. This training ensures that youth across Pennsylvania have opportunities to use their stories to advocate for themselves and share their story in a safe way. As a result, YAB members were able to carry out several trainings in their respective regions throughout the year.

The Child Welfare Resource Center has been utilizing the Pennsylvania Youth Advisory Board Facebook page and "The BLAST" as an outlet for sending timely information and resources to older youth and professionals, and highlighting youth accomplishments.

## **Diversity Task Force**



The Diversity Task Force (DTF) is comprised of child welfare professionals and community members who are committed to issues of human diversity in child welfare.

The 2017 Diversity Task Force fall event addressed the needs of kinship care families. The training focused on identifying how personal values impact decision-making and recognizing the core elements of implementing a value-based kinship care program within casework. The training also addressed how kinship care myths can undermine effective practice, and the impact personal frame-

of-reference has on practice. The training was offered via WebEx and two Resource Center training locations to accommodate participants.

The Diversity Task Force continues its collaboration with the PA Youth Advisory Board with their LGBTQ project, identifying information that would be helpful to child welfare professionals and resource parents mentoring and supporting LGBTQ youths successful transition to adulthood.

The Diversity Task Force is planning a 2018 fall event addressing the needs of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning (LGBTQ) Youth in the Child Welfare System. This training is designed to assist child welfare professionals in being aware of the needs of youth who identify as LGBTQ in their programs, and how to address those needs. The focus of the day will be creating awareness and discussion of professionals' existing attitudes and beliefs about LGBTQ youth, support participants in exploring what it means to serve as a safe(r) space for LGBTQ youth, identify areas for personal growth, and how to turn that awareness into accurate information and then into action to help these youth cope with challenges that they face. In order to accommodate participants, this training will be offered at the Resource Center training sites located across the state.

The Diversity Task Force continued to collaborate with the Pennsylvania Youth Advisory Board on work related to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity and Expression (SOGIE) and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning (LGTBQ) youth. The work this year focused on expanding statewide efforts to enhance practice with young people who identify as LGBTQ and to provide recommendations and resources to professionals working with these youth.





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## **Develop and Implement a Quality Improvement Process**

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Implementing change at the local level is critical to the achievement of positive child, youth and family outcomes, particularly in a state-supervised and county-administered state. Pennsylvania's Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) approach continues to be an effort focused on reshaping the system at the local and state level to support the achievement of positive outcomes for our children, youth, and families. The Resource Center has remained a key stakeholder and partner in the strategies of implementing and monitoring Pennsylvania's Continuous Quality Improvement effort.

### **Time Limited Family Reunification**

The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Resource Center was asked to support the thirteen programs which offer services through the Time Limited Family Reunification (TLFR) grants in FY 2017/2018. Each of the TLFR programs works with families to address and correct issues and reunite children and youth safely with their birth families when possible. An Executive Summary of each program's grant application was developed to assist OCYF and OE staff in gaining a high-level overview of the TLFR programs, including scope of services, populations served and partnerships within the community and county.

Through the Organizational Effectiveness (OE) Department, each program was sent and asked to complete a pre-site visit questionnaire which was developed jointly by OCYF and OE. These questionnaires provided key updates regarding the families being served; program achievements; barriers that the programs faced in achieving goals and changes to programs or services implemented after the grant application was approved. Practice Improvement Specialists then conducted site visits with each of the programs to further discuss program strengths, areas for improvement and needs for training and technical assistance. After each site visit, a report was prepared that combined information from the pre-visit questionnaire and the on-site review. Questions raised by the programs, requests for technical assistance and training needs were also shared with OCYF.

### **Older Youth**

The Resource Center continues to provide project management for work with counties around Independent Living and older and transitioning youth. The Resource Center works closely with older youth, county and provider staff, and stakeholders through a variety of venues. Over the past year, the Resource Center developed an IL Welcome Guide for new staff working with older youth. This document contains a broad overview of IL services, important documents and resources, words of wisdom from veteran staff and information related to the PA Youth Advisory Board.

The Resource Center continues to facilitate the county Independent Living site visits. The Resource Center's Independent Living Project Manager reviews all site visit reports and gathers statewide themes in areas of strengths and challenges from the data collected and provides that information to the Department of Human Services. The site visit process was assessed at the conclusion of the 2017/2018 cycle and changes were implemented to increase collaboration with OCYF Regional Offices and technical assistance providers, as well as with counties and their private providers. Most notably, Program Improvement Specialists will be conducting a visits with counties 90 days after the onsite visit to provide the opportunity to review the report as well as develop a plan to address any existing challenges.

Over the past year, the Resource Center has been working with stakeholders and county and provider staff to identify gaps in services for older youth transitioning to adulthood. The collaboration has been an asset to the Independent Living Project and has allowed the Resource Center to better identify how to serve the needs of older youth across the state. The next step in this process will be to review data collected through networking sessions, site visits and focus groups. The Older Youth Continuous Improvement Team will then develop recommendations to enhance services and supports to older youth and counties, which will be shared with OCYF in late 2018.

The Resource Center continues working collaboratively with counties and other agencies to produce the Older Youth Collaborative Webinar Series. These sessions offer counties and practitioners a forum to share their work and promising practices happening across the state. Over the past year we have collaborated with Youth Thrive, OCYF, University of Pennsylvania Foster Care to College Program, the Older Child Matching Initiative and the Juvenile Law Center Youth Fostering Change Project. All webinars can be viewed at <http://www.pacwrc.pitt.edu/Webinars.htm>.

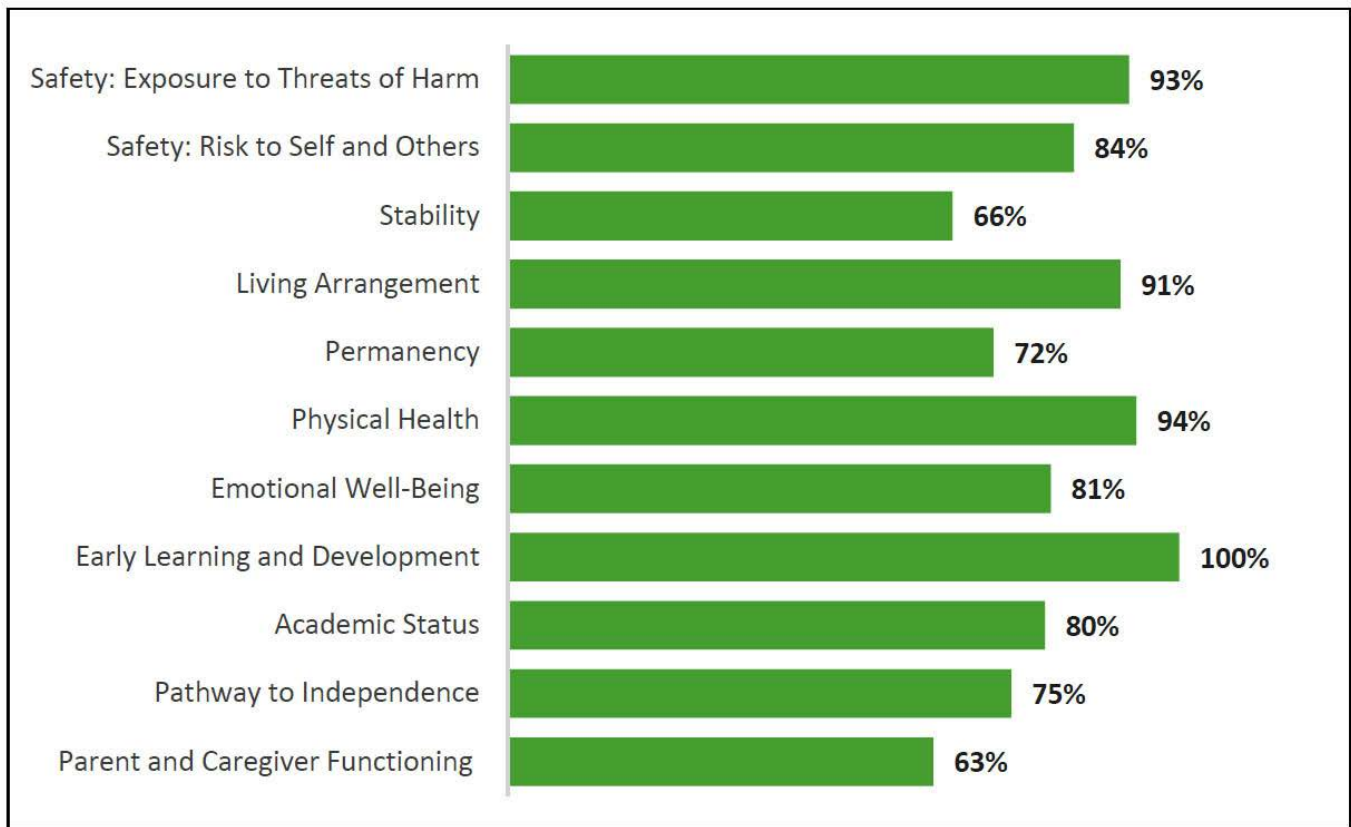
## Continuous Quality Improvement

The Quality Services Review (QSR) process continues to be one critical component of the CQI effort, which is used to evaluate safety, permanency and well-being outcomes as well as practice performance. The QSR uses a combination of record reviews, interviews, observations, and deductions made from fact patterns gathered and interpreted by trained cross-systems reviewers regarding children, youth and families receiving services. Pennsylvania's QSR Protocol, developed in collaboration with Human Systems and Outcomes (HSO), outlines a specific set of 23 indicators that are then used to examine the status of the child/youth and parent/caregiver and analyzing the responsiveness and effectiveness of core practice functions. Indicators are divided into two distinct domains: Child, Youth and Family Status and Practice Performance.

The following information includes the summary findings based on the seventh round of state-supported Quality Service Reviews (QSR) which were conducted between January 2017 and December 2017. During the seventh round, QSRs were held in four counties and 47 cases were in the sample with 19 out-of-home cases and 28 in-home cases.

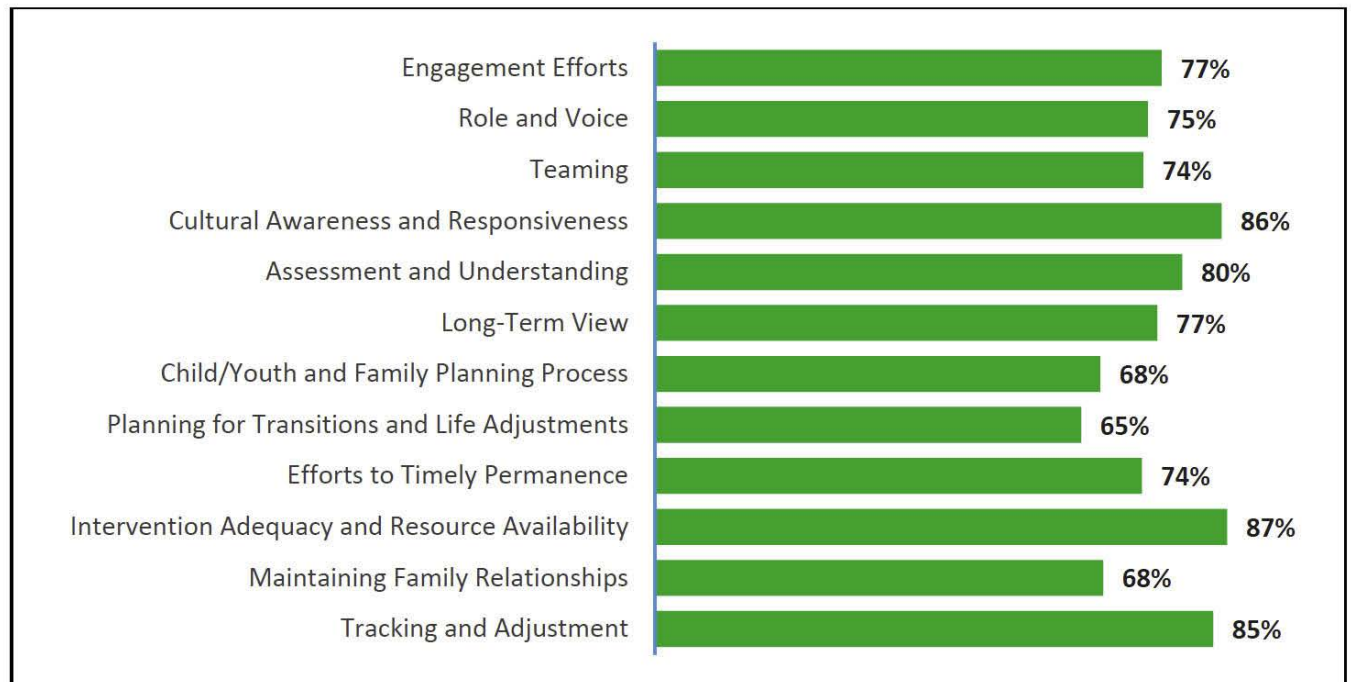
The Child/Youth and Family Status Indicators examine the safety, permanence, and well-being of the child/youth, as well as the capacity of the child/youth's caregivers (both familial and substitute) to provide support to that child/youth. Eleven indicators are utilized with the indicators generally focusing on the 30 days immediately prior to the onsite review.





**Round 7 “Child/Youth & Family Domain” Overall Percentage of Acceptable Ratings**

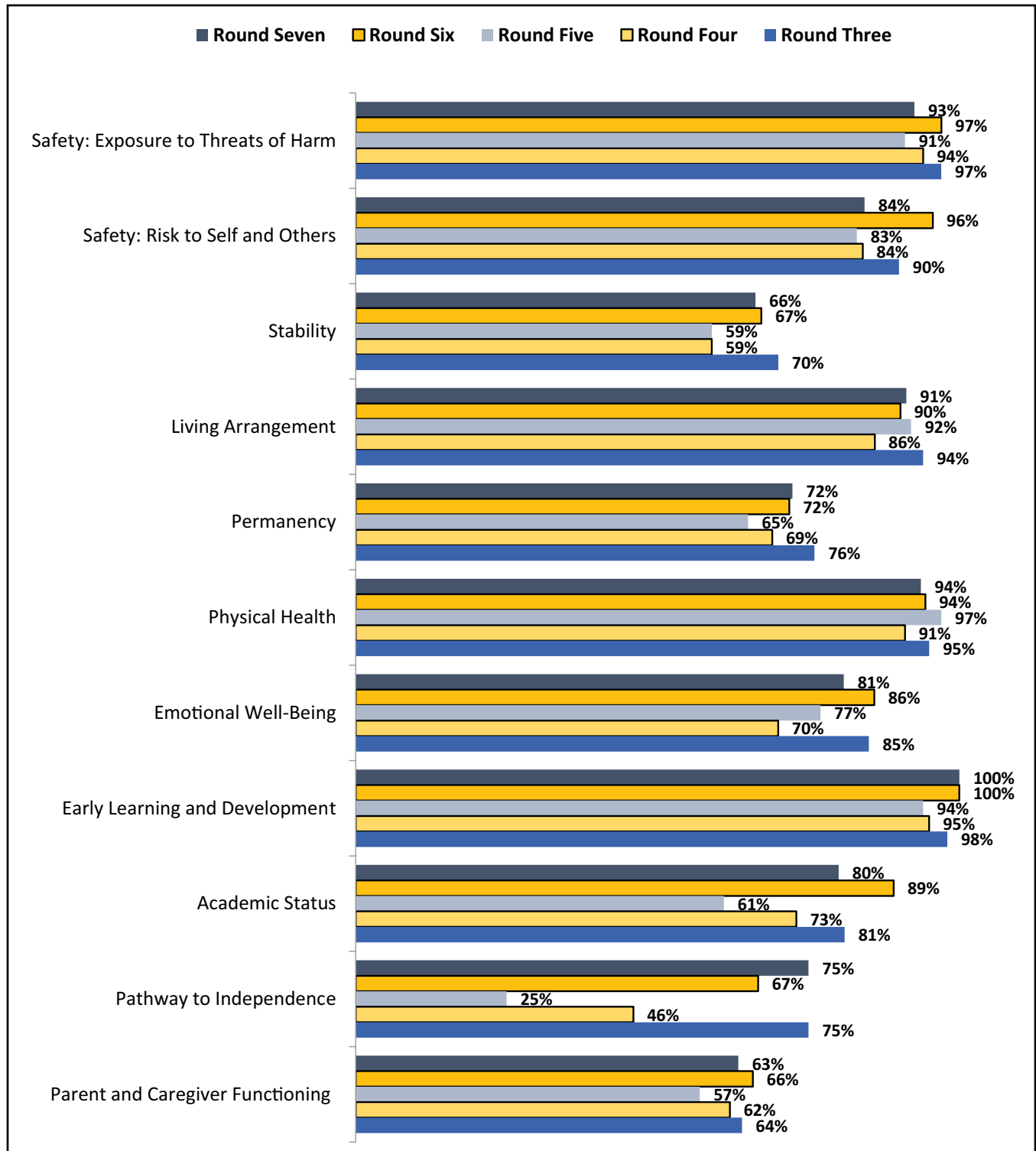
The Practice Performance Indicators examine the twelve indicators used to assess the status of core practice functions. These indicators generally focus on the past 90 days from the date of the onsite review, unless otherwise indicated.



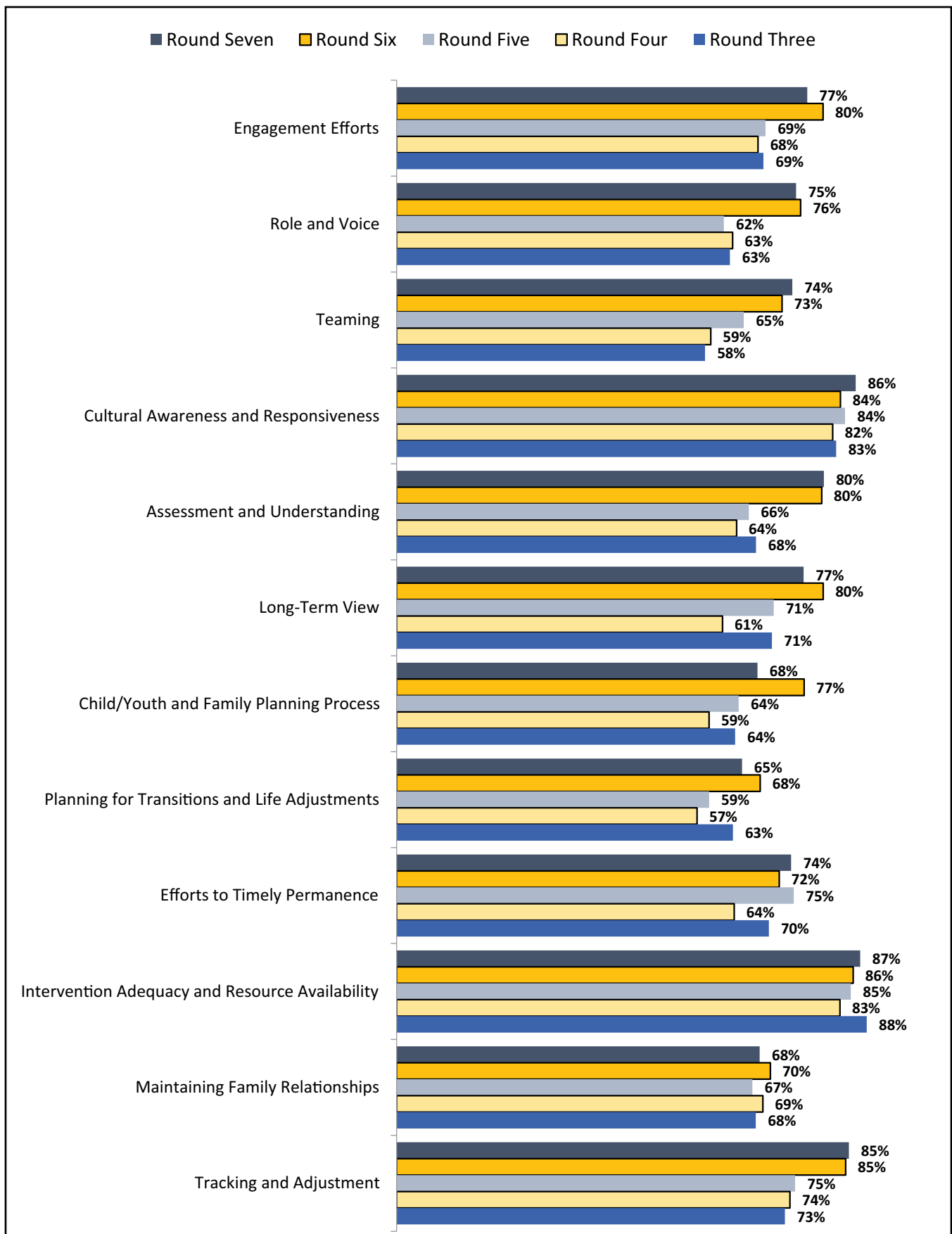
**Round 7 “Practice Performance Domain” Overall Percentage of Acceptable Ratings**



Over the course of the seven rounds of Quality Service Reviews, that Pennsylvania has been conducting we have gathered information regarding the overall child/youth/family status domain indicators as well as the overall practice performance domain indicators to address case and county-specific findings, as well as to determine the trends over the course of time that the reviews have been conducted. The following two charts show the percentage of acceptable ratings for each indicator during each round of Quality Service Reviews from Round III in 2013 to Round VII in 2017.



**“Child/Youth & Family Domain” Overall Percentage of Acceptable Ratings Round III – VII**



**“Practice Performance Domain” Overall Percentage of Acceptable Ratings Rounds III - VII**

Gathering data is only one step in the CQI process. In addition to supporting the Quality Service Reviews conducted in the counties, Resource Center staff and other technical assistance providers also work diligently to support the individualized county specific improvement efforts, as well as statewide assessment of performance across all counties involved in the statewide CQI effort. Much of the focus of the county-specific improvement efforts have centered around enhancements to practice efforts focused on:

- engagement (particularly with fathers),
- maintaining family relationships,
- teaming within the public child welfare organization and with community partners,
- quality assessment of child/youth and family service needs (particularly for older youth) and the link to planning for service provision, and
- planning for transitions and adjustments

County specific improvement efforts also focused on internal functioning such as a greater understanding of overarching child welfare laws and regulations, internal communication amongst staff and targeted efforts to improve stability in living situations and efforts to achieve timely permanence.

Resource Center staff members and key stakeholders will continue to support the improvement efforts by facilitating local and statewide analysis of the data collected from QSRs and other data sources to inform strategic decision making, promote Pennsylvania's Child Welfare Practice Model, and support continuous improvement planning, implementation, and monitoring.





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## Organize and Sponsor Events

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The Resource Center organizes and sponsors many events each year with the intention of enhancing child welfare practice and integrating our key stakeholders, consumers, families and youth into our work. The events help to enhance collaboration and increase engagement with the hopes that strengthening these areas will lead to an improved quality of practice.

### Continuing Education Credits

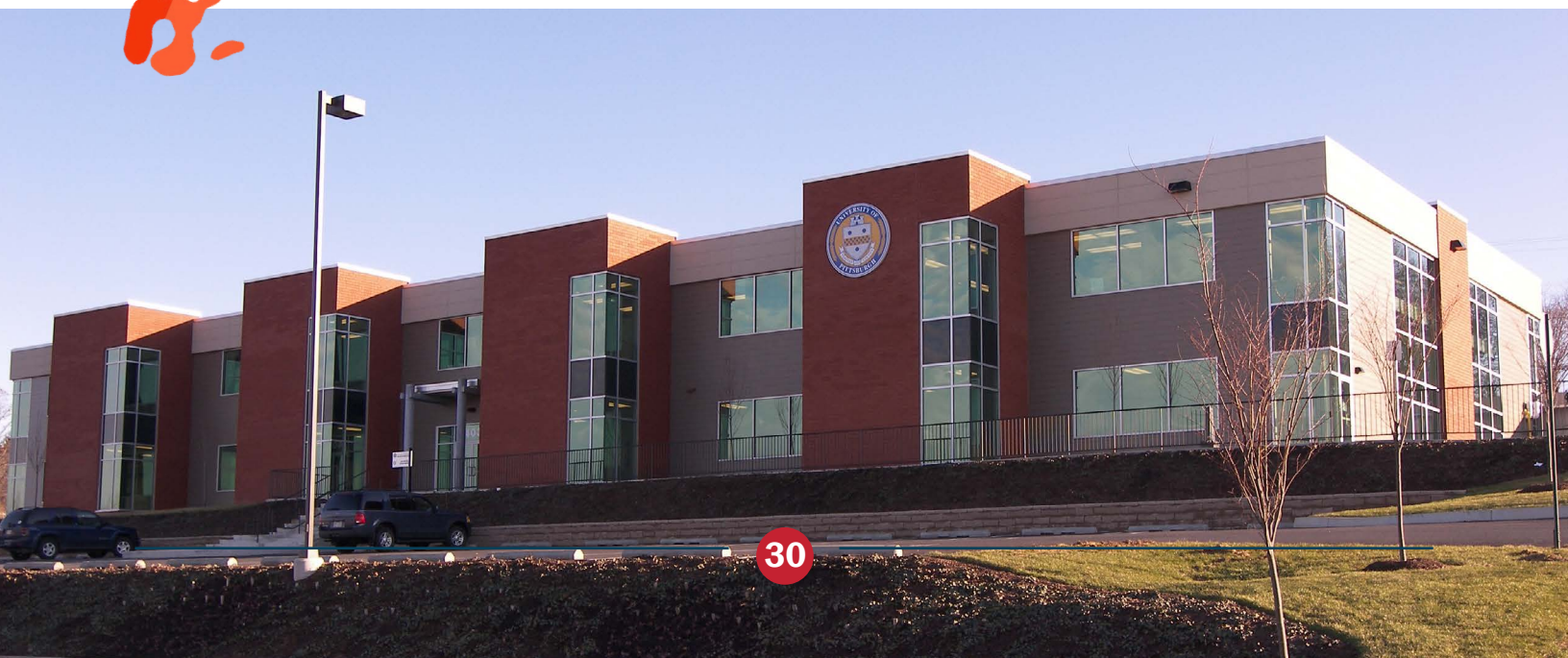
The Resource Center continued to offer continuing education credit hours in partnership with the University of Pittsburgh, School of Social Work Continuing Education Department.

### Training Partnerships

The Resource Center provided leadership within identified task areas for partner committees and provided support with identifying training and curriculum needs. The Resource Center also collaborated with the following partners to support events and meetings:

- **Pennsylvania Children and Youth Administrators and the Leadership Academy Workgroup**
- **Office of Children, Youth and Families (OCYF)**
- **Pennsylvania State Resource Family Association (PSRFA)**
- **Family Group Decision Making Statewide and Leadership Teams**
- **Statewide Adoption and Permanency Network (SWAN)**
- **Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts (AOPC)**
- **American Bar Association (ABA)**
- **National Staff Development and Training Association (NSDTA)**

The Resource Center utilizes leased training rooms both in our home office building in Mechanicsburg, as well as in locations across the state for trainings, meetings and various events.



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## Resource Coordination

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The Resource Center continued to expand and refine efforts in the delivery of products and services using a variety of methods to meet the needs of our consumers and stakeholders. During FY 2017/2018, the Resource Center undertook several resource coordination efforts, including those listed below.

### Identify County Specific and Statewide Consultation and Training Needs

One of the ways the Resource Center coordinates and prioritizes work is through the assessment of training needs. In FY 2017/2018, the Individual Training Needs Assessment (ITNA) tool was converted from paper to an online format. Twenty-two (22) counties were scheduled to complete the ITNA during the fiscal year, and from those counties, close to 1,000 participants completed the tool prior to August 1st. The following is a list of the five content areas most frequently identified as a high need:

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#### High Need Area

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Sexual Abuse

Hostile Clients

Work Related Stress

Alcohol Abuse

Drug Abuse

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### Child Welfare Education for Baccalaureates (CWEB)

Designed to recruit and prepare students for a career in the public child welfare field, the Child Welfare Education for Baccalaureates (CWEB) Program is offered at 15 schools of social work throughout Pennsylvania. Undergraduate students who are official social work majors in any of the 15 approved, participating undergraduate schools are eligible to apply for the CWEB program. Qualified students receive substantial financial support during their senior year in return for a legal commitment to work in one of Pennsylvania's county public child welfare agencies following graduation. Students must satisfactorily complete child welfare course work and an internship at a public child welfare agency. During the course of the internship, most students are able to complete some or the entire competency-based training required for public child welfare caseworkers. Upon graduation, students also receive assistance with their employment search.

Requirements as a student:

- Complete child welfare course work;
- Enroll in Charting the Course; and
- Complete an internship at a public child welfare agency.

Requirements as a graduate:

- Gain and maintain, for one year, employment at a public child welfare agency.



## Child Welfare Education for Leadership Program (CWEL)

The Child Welfare Education for Leadership (CWEL) Program provides substantial financial support for graduate-level social work education for current employees of public child welfare agencies. Caseworkers, supervisors, managers, and administrators of any Pennsylvania county children and youth agency are eligible to apply to participate in the CWEL program. All persons enrolled meet participation criteria as determined by their CWEL applications, résumés, personal statements, agency approvals, notifications of admission from one of the approved schools, and signed agreements. The CWEL program has funded students from 66 counties. DHS Office of Children, Youth, and Families, and 12 Pennsylvania Schools of Social Work on both a full and part-time basis. The CWEL program reimburses salary and benefits for full-time CWEL students and covers tuition, fees, and other expenses for both full- and part-time students in return for a legal work commitment to the employing county child welfare agency upon graduation.

### Requirements:

- Complete child welfare course work.
- Complete an internship at a public or private child and family agency serving IV-E eligible clientele.
- Maintain, for two years, employment at a Pennsylvania public child welfare agency.

For more information concerning the CWEL/CWEB programs ([Click Here](#)).

## Develop, Support and Maintain Websites and Databases

The Resource Center hosts a variety of websites and software applications designed to provide the most up-to-date information and resources on all Resource Center activities, as well as, resources for Independent Living youth and all child welfare professionals and their affiliates. In collaboration with our internal and external systems, comprehensive evaluation strategies are developed and supported to increase accountability and provide evidence of the effectiveness of specific approaches. The design and content for each website and application is informed by the respective advisory boards and committees assigned to the sites, as well as by input from other avenues. During FY 2017/2018, the Resource Center either deployed, maintained or made major enhancements to the following websites and applications.

- **Websites**
  - PACWRC
  - Being Well
  - Citizen Review Panel
  - Youth Advisory Board
  - Independent Living PA
- **Databases and Software Applications**
  - Encompass
  - Screening (Developmental Screening Database)
  - E-Learn (online course site)
  - Meeting Planner (PACWRC's room reservation software)
  - FGDM Statewide Evaluation Databases and Dashboards



- Evaluation Databases for the Demonstration Project (CANS, FAST, and Developmental Screening Database)
- TA Tracker (a web application designed to track technical assistance provided to counties and OCYF by the Resource Centers OE staff)
- Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse: Mandated and Permissive Reporting in Pennsylvania Online Training
- Online Forms:
  - Participant Feedback Form
  - Reflection Next Steps Form
  - Simulation Form



## Information Technology Support

During FY 2017/2018, the Technology Development Department continued its efforts to offer technology support to Resource Center staff, University of Pittsburgh, School of Social Work staff/faculty as well as external state and county stakeholders by:

- Developing and maintaining of computer applications and software used to support the initiatives of the Resource Center and its affiliate
- Developing and maintaining reports, dashboards, and other data driven visuals from multiple applications and databases for the Resource Center, county children and youth agencies, DHS-OCYF, and private providers
- Migrating file storage to the cloud utilizing Microsoft Office 365 and SharePoint taking advantage of enhanced collaboration and content management tools allowing for anytime, anywhere, any-device access
- Providing technical assistance and support through the provision of a helpdesk to over 247,000 trainees who completed the Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse: Mandated and Permissive Reporting in Pennsylvania Online Training
- Providing daily data uploads to the PA Department of State for Act 31 licensure and license renewal processing for over 116,000 licensed (and applying for license) trainees who completed the Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse: Mandated and Permissive Reporting in Pennsylvania Online Training
- Developing, maintaining, and supporting web-based collaboration and communication tools
- Developing and maintaining technology training resources, media development and duplication
- Providing technology related equipment, setup and support for over 1,500 function arrangements
- Resolving 658 formal internal helpdesk tickets
- Developing and maintaining multiple websites, updated regularly to ensure accuracy
- Developing and maintaining online courses, videos and technology-based tools used to enhance the delivery of curriculum, transfer of learning, and other initiatives
- Working with the University of Pittsburgh Computing Services and Systems Development staff to ensure staff and faculty connectivity to network resources whether onsite or offsite
- Developing brochures and media for publications and events
- Deploying new hardware and software for staff
- Maintaining inventory and tracking of all computer related equipment





*“There can be no keener  
revelation of a society’s  
soul than the way in which  
it treats its children.”*

**– Nelson Mandela**



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