



Final Report

OHIO STATE COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM REASSESSMENT

Presented by:

**The National Center for State Courts
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OHIO STATE COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM REASSESSMENT

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and
The National Center for State Courts**

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OHIO STATE COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM REASSESSMENT

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FINAL REPORT

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GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

Adoption and Safe Families Act, Public Law 105-89	ASFA
American Bar Association	ABA
Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, Public Law 93-247.....	CAPTA
Children and Family Services Review	CFSR
Conference of Chief Justices.....	CCJ
Conference of State Court Administrators.....	COSCA
Court Appointed Special Advocates	CASA
Court Improvement Program	CIP
Guardian Ad Litem	GAL
Indian Child Welfare Act, Public Law 95-608.....	ICWA
Judicial and Court Services Division	JCS
Memorandum of Understanding.....	MOU
National Center for State Courts	NCSC
National Center for Juvenile Justice	NCJJ
National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.....	NCJFCJ
Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act	OBRA
Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.....	ODJFS
Ohio Revised Code	O.R.C.
Ohio Rules of Juvenile Procedure	O.R.J.P.
Program Improvement Plan	PIP
Public Children Services Agency.....	PCSA
Quality Assurance	QA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The federal Court Improvement Program provides funding from the Children's Bureau to state court systems to assess and improve the pace and success of ensuring safe and permanent homes for children under court supervision for reasons of abuse and neglect.

In 1997, the National Center for Juvenile Justice conducted an initial assessment for the Ohio Court Improvement Program. The assessment was conducted in conjunction with a study of the feasibility of implementing a family court in the Ohio judicial structure.¹ The current assessment was performed by the National Center for State Courts as part of a reassessment of Ohio's efforts in this area. Since the time of the 1997 assessment, significant changes have occurred at the federal, state, and local levels with regard to abused and neglected children.

The Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) imposes new requirements on states regarding how child abuse and neglect cases are handled by courts and social service agencies. State compliance with federal standards regarding the handling of child abuse and neglect cases is monitored through Child and Family Services reviews being conducted by the Children's Bureau of the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Pew Commission on Children in Foster Care² was convened to make recommendations for improving federal funding schemes in order to improve the process for finding safe and stable homes for foster children and recommendations for improving the judicial oversight of child welfare cases. The Commission issued its report in May 2004.³ The Conference of Chief Justices (CCJ) and Conference of State Court Administrators (COSCA) have focused increased attention on child welfare cases. Both Conferences have endorsed the findings of the Pew Commission in policy statements,⁴ and are sponsoring a National Judicial Leadership Summit on Protection of Children in September 2005.

In Ohio, the landscape has changed as well. State and federal standards for processing abuse, neglect, and dependency cases have increased demands on juvenile courts to move cases more quickly, and at the same time improve the quality of outcomes for children and families. The increased demands have come during a period when state and local budget resources have been strained by reduced revenue.

Despite those challenges, the Supreme Court of Ohio has taken significant steps to improve the judiciary's handling of child welfare cases. Most significant is the leadership of the Supreme Court itself. In 2000, new rules for expediting appeals in abuse, neglect, and dependency cases were adopted. Justice Stratton chaired a national committee that issued recommendations for expediting appeals. Chief Justice Moyer created an Advisory

¹National Center for Juvenile Justice, *Ohio Family Court Feasibility Study*, (Pittsburgh, 1997).

²See the Pew Commission website: <http://pewfostercare.org/>

³Pew Commission on Children in Foster Care, *FOSTERING THE FUTURE: Safety, Permanence and Well-Being for Children in Foster Care*, (Washington, DC, 2004). Available on the Pew Commission website at: <http://pewfostercare.org/docs/index.php?DocID=41>

⁴CCJ – COSCA Resolution 15: *In Support of the Recommendations Made by the Pew Commission on Children in Foster Care*. Available on their websites:

CCJ: <http://ccj.nesc.dni.us/ChildWelfareResolutions/PewCommissionChildrenFosterCare.pdf>

COSCA: <http://cosca.nesc.dni.us/Resolutions/ChildWelfare/pewcommission.pdf>

Committee on Children, Families and the Court in 2002. The Supreme Court has initiated an ongoing collaborative relationship with the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services. The Court recently inaugurated a program entitled *Beyond the Numbers - Ohio's Response to the Child and Family Services Review*. The initiative promotes collaboration at the community level between courts; child services agencies, and other stakeholders to improve local practice and compliance with federal requirements relating to child welfare. The Ohio Association of Juvenile Court Judges has endorsed the initiative. Standards for Guardians ad Litem were drafted by a special committee and are being reviewed by the Advisory Committee on Children, Families and the Court. A Family Law Case Manager was hired to focus on child welfare case management. The Family Law Case Manager functions as the liaison to the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services and other state child welfare organizations, provides technical assistance to juvenile courts, and assists in developing training curricula for the Ohio Judicial College. The National Council of Juvenile and Family Courts has established an additional Model Court in Lucas County, in addition to Hamilton County (one of the original Model Courts).

This reassessment addresses the Ohio Court Improvement Program's efforts to improve outcomes for children, increase the efficacy of case processing in child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases, and to comply with the Adoption and Safe Families Act and other national and federal standards and guidelines. The National Center for State Courts identified several research questions to guide the approach to the Court Improvement Program Reassessment. These research questions formed the basis for the development of data collection instruments and protocols, and the analysis of data gathered. Key research questions included:

- What are the rules, standards, and criteria that govern Ohio's judicial decisions in child protection cases? What are the rules and practices governing whether a proceeding is administrative or judicial, legal representation of parties, admissibility of evidence, presentation of witnesses, due process protections, and conducting the various types of child protection proceedings? To what extent do Ohio's court rules and practices governing child protective proceedings conform to national standards and recommendations?
- To what extent do particular practices or procedures facilitate compliance or contribute to non-compliance with the applicable legal requirements?
- Are prescribed time limits being met? What are the frequency and length of delays in child protection proceedings?
- Is the time available for hearings sufficient to permit presentation of evidence and arguments? If not, how much time is needed for each type of hearing and what are the implications for the court?
- To what extent do parties and counsel present witnesses, introduce evidence, and offer arguments in each type of hearing?
- What data is available for case tracking? Is it sufficient? Is it accurate? Do all the people who need it have access?
- To what extent do the number of cases and the limited number of judges and personnel affect the ability of courts to meet safety, timeliness, due process, and permanency standards?

- How often are parents and children represented by counsel? To what extent is representation adequate?
- Are all participants in court proceedings treated with courtesy, respect, and understanding?
- Assess (1) the performance of Ohio's courts and the degree of collaboration with the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services and (2) the sufficiency of judicial determination in court orders (i.e. reasonable efforts, contrary to the welfare, best interest) consistent with the findings, recommendations, and requirements of previous assessments?
- To what extent is the information available to courts sufficient, timely, and accurate?
- To what extent do statutory, regulatory, and procedural requirements facilitate or impede assuring the safety, well being, and permanency of children in foster care and the program goals set forth in titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act?
- To what extent do statutory, regulatory, and procedural requirements impose significant administrative burdens on the courts?
- How effectively do the state and tribal courts coordinate in ICWA cases?

Methodology

NCSC pursued several methods for the collection of data for informing the assessment. This approach allowed a balance between quantitative and qualitative data, and permitted the project team to gather a substantial amount of data in the limited time available for the assessment project. The key tasks included:

- Review of Background Information and Documents
- Review of Ohio Statutes and Rules
- Focus Groups and Interviews
- Review of Information Technology and Case Tracking Systems
- Court Observation
- Closed Case File Review
- Statewide Stakeholder Survey

Findings

The Ohio judiciary has made significant progress in its handling of abuse, neglect, and dependency cases in the past several years.

- Training and the availability of related informational resources for judicial officers and staff have increased. The Supreme Court has made use of the Court Improvement Program funding to provide dedicated staff support for juvenile courts in the administrative office.
- Leadership from the Supreme Court and trial court judiciary has focused on improving outcomes for children coming under the jurisdiction of the court for

abuse, neglect, and dependency cases. Two juvenile courts in the state have been designated by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges as “Model Courts.” Other courts have the opportunity to gain knowledge from the lessons learned in these courts.

- A partnership has been formed with the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services, increasing system collaboration at the state and local level, improving communication between stakeholders, and providing increased training and information resources.

Findings do suggest opportunities for improvement as well.

- Data suggest that overall; there are adequate judicial and court resources and a sufficient number of prosecutors and agency lawyers to address the current child welfare workload. However, court survey and focus group data indicate a shortfall in the number of available qualified defense counsel for parents and children, and that the number of public children service agencies case workers is inadequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency, and permanent custody cases. Focus group participants also commented that the high turnover rate in caseworkers had a negative impact on the ability to manage child welfare cases effectively.
- The available data and feedback from survey respondents and focus groups suggest that some Ohio courts, using strong case management techniques, are able to process their caseload in substantial conformity with Supreme Court guidelines. A significant number of courts, however, appear to have difficulty in meeting timelines.
- Information gathered through focus group interviews indicate that local budget restraints has had a significant impact on the availability of services for children and families and is straining resource availability across the board for courts and all executive agencies. In a few jurisdictions, collaborative enterprises between courts and service agencies have shown promise in improving the delivery of services to children and in making better use of funds for those services.
- Statewide, mediation does not appear to be used in a high percentage of cases. Mediation is available in all but one of the smaller counties visited. The experience with mediation is positive, particularly from the perspective of judges, court staff, court appointed attorneys, guardians ad litem, private attorneys, and court appointed special advocate volunteers. In the two counties visited that had data available regarding mediation results, settlement rates of approximately 70 percent were reported for cases mediated. Other Ohio courts have had positive results from the use of mediation, such as the Lucas County Juvenile Court, which reported a 73 percent settlement rate for child protection cases in 2003.
- Quantitative and qualitative data obtained from surveys and site visits suggest that case tracking information systems were not adequate to provide courts with the ability to actively manage child welfare caseloads. However, one of the sites visited appears to be close to achieving this goal. Most systems appear to be case based systems, rather than individual based systems. Court technology is funded at the local county level, and as a result, there are a number of different systems serving the state’s juvenile courts, limiting the ability to readily collect and share data.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Ohio judiciary has made significant improvements in its handling of abuse, neglect, and dependency matters since the inception of the Court Improvement Program. The leadership of the Supreme Court of Ohio and local juvenile court judges, collaboration with the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services, and the focus brought by the introduction of central administrative staff support (through the Supreme Court's Judicial and Court Services Division) for these cases are important ingredients to the successes of the last several years.

Continued improvements are possible with continued and increased judicial leadership from the Supreme Court and trial court judges; thoughtful, collaborative examination and implementation of improvements in case processing and related procedures; and informed decisions regarding priorities for the use of resources. As a starting point for improvement, the Supreme Court of Ohio may wish to consider the recommendations of the National Center for State Courts.

Synopsis of NCSC Recommendations	
Theme/Report Chapter	Recommendation
Court Resources, Workload, And Training Chapter 4	The Supreme Court of Ohio should continue and strengthen its support of mediation in child protection cases.
	Administrative judges of the juvenile division of Courts of Common Pleas should be encouraged by the Supreme Court of Ohio to provide leadership in their communities in establishing collaborative initiatives that focus on the improvement and integration of services for families and children that come before the court on child abuse, neglect, or dependency petitions or families and children in crisis that are likely to be subject to these proceedings. Support for administrative judges should be provided through training and/or mentoring by administrative judges with demonstrated success in establishing such community collaboration.
Information Technology And Case Tracking Systems Chapter 5	Counties that are currently unable to produce a report of cases that will soon exceed the 90 day rule for dispositions should explore with their software vendor the possibility that they can run their Supreme Court report with future parameter dates to find cases that will soon exceed that limit.
	Counties that are unable to fully track their cases at the child level should explore with their software vendor the possibility of doing so.
	The Supreme Court of Ohio should facilitate a broad users group or develop a newsletter so that all counties may share their child welfare system IT experiences. One model could involve the experiences of individual counties on a rotating basis.
	Quality Assurance Reports should be created to ensure that the data stored in local computer systems is accurate. An example is a report reflecting various date inconsistencies (e.g., filing date prior to child's birth date, disposition prior to adjudication date).
	The courts should create reports that will allow it to assess the court's performance in child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases.
	The Supreme Court of Ohio should monitor the data sharing pilot project in Lucas County and explore funding options for broader implementation of successful components.
	The Supreme Court of Ohio should explore funding options for a statewide juvenile court caseload management that would incorporate the recommendations made in this report.
Timeliness Chapter 6	Model case management reports should be developed for implementation and use in all jurisdictions to assist judges, magistrates, and key court staff in actively managing child welfare cases.
	Juvenile court judges should make a personal, continuing commitment to exercising active court control of the pace of cases.

Synopsis of NCSC Recommendations	
Theme/Report Chapter	Recommendation
Timeliness Chapter 6	The Supreme Court of Ohio should regularly reinforce the importance of judicial oversight of caseflow management in child welfare cases.
	The administrative judge of each juvenile court should develop, in collaboration with the bench and local bar, a written continuance policy designed to minimize unneeded continuances.
	In larger jurisdictions, juvenile courts should work with attorney agencies and the local private bar to explore the feasibility of developing case processing teams consisting of one or two judicial officers and an appropriate number of specifically assigned attorneys in order to minimize schedule conflicts and expedite caseflow.
	At the state and local levels, steps should be taken to accord greater calendar priority to child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases.
	The Supreme Court of Ohio should take steps to emphasize the importance and priority of child abuse, neglect, and dependency court proceedings.
	Administrative juvenile court judges should collaborate with administrative judges of other trial courts, the presiding judge of the county's court of common pleas, and key stakeholders within the county to establish policies for managing calendar priority. Child welfare cases should be given the highest priority.
	The Supreme Court of Ohio should establish a committee of judges and magistrates, the bar, and ODJFS staff to develop model procedures for managing discovery in child welfare cases.
	Juvenile courts in border counties should consider establishing memorandums of understanding with courts in neighboring counties in border states to assist one another in facilitating the process of interstate placement pursuant to the Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children.
Representation and Due Process Chapter 7	Courts should review local rules governing the appointment of counsel to ensure that they are clear and definitive in regard to the requirements and process by which attorneys are added to appointment lists and the procedure for appointment.
	Attorneys involved in child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases need training on the law, the goals of practice, and related areas such as substance abuse, domestic violence, mental health issues, and the availability and delivery of services. Some minimum training requirements should be established.
	Policies that require attorneys to withdraw from cases following disposition should be reviewed to determine if they serve the interests of the clients and result in unnecessary re-appointments.

Synopsis of NCSC Recommendations	
Theme/Report Chapter	Recommendation
Representation and Due Process Chapter 7	Juvenile courts should be encouraged or required to develop means to appoint legal counsel and guardians for children and for indigent parents as soon after the filing of a petition as possible.
Quality of Hearings Chapter 8	Judicial officers should routinely explain the purpose of proceedings to parties at the start of the hearing and review the outcome and next step/hearing at the conclusion.
Contrary to the Welfare, Reasonable Efforts, ICWA, and ASFA Findings Chapter 9	At each stage of the proceeding, judges should make an active inquiry about the applicability of ICWA. The Supreme Court of Ohio should adopt the standards and practices set out by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.
Stakeholder Collaboration and Judicial Leadership Chapter 10	The administrative judge of each juvenile court should be required or strongly encouraged to establish formal collaboration programs with stakeholders to review performance of the juvenile court and stakeholders in processing child welfare cases and to develop and implement initiatives to improve the performance of the court and stakeholder agencies.
	The Supreme Court of Ohio should continue its strong support of the “Beyond the Numbers” initiative. The continued, active support of the Supreme Court and its Chief Justice will provide critical support for local administrative judges in bringing stakeholders into the collaborative process.
	The Supreme Court of Ohio, in collaboration with the Beyond the Numbers judicial planning committee, should consider developing a collection of “leadership best practices.”

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

In 1993, Congress created the Court Improvement Program through the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA).⁵ OBRA allotted federal funds to state court systems (1) to conduct assessments of the state's child welfare laws and child welfare case processing and (2) to improve the quality and timeliness of these processes in order to ensure that children are safe from harm and achieve permanent homes.

The first assessment of Ohio's child welfare case processing was completed in 1997 by the National Center for Juvenile Justice (NCJJ).⁶ The assessment was conducted in conjunction with a study of the feasibility of implementing a family court in the Ohio judicial structure. Since that time, significant changes have occurred at the federal, state, and local levels with regard to abused and neglected children.

The Adoption and Safe Families Act, Public Law 105-89, (ASFA) imposes new requirements on states regarding how child abuse and neglect cases are handled by courts and social service agencies. State compliance with federal standards regarding the handling of child abuse and neglect cases is monitored through Child and Family Services reviews being conducted by the Children's Bureau of the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Pew Commission on Children in Foster Care was convened to make recommendations for improving federal funding schemes in order to improve the process for finding safe and stable homes for foster children, and recommendations for improving the judicial oversight of child welfare cases.⁷ The Commission issued its report in May 2004.⁸ The Conference of Chief Justices (CCJ) and Conference of State Court Administrators (COSCA) have focused increased attention on child welfare cases. CCJ and COSCA have endorsed the findings of the Pew Commission in policy statements,⁹ and are sponsoring a National Judicial Leadership Summit on Protection of Children in September 2005.¹⁰

In Ohio, the landscape has changed as well. State and federal standards for processing abuse, neglect, and dependency cases have increased demands on juvenile courts to move cases more quickly, and at the same time improve the quality of outcomes for children and families. The increased demands have come during a period when state and local budget resources have been strained by reduced revenue.

⁵Omnibus Budget and Reconciliation Act of 1993, Public Law 103-66.

⁶See National Center for Juvenile Justice, *Ohio Family Court Feasibility Study*, (Pittsburgh, 1997).

⁷See the Pew Commission website: <http://pewfostercare.org/>

⁸Pew Commission on Children in Foster Care, *Fostering the Future: Safety, Permanence and Well-Being for Children in Foster Care*, (Washington, DC, 2004). Available on the Pew Commission website at: <http://pewfostercare.org/docs/index.php?DocID=41>

⁹CCJ – COSCA Resolution 15: *In Support of the Recommendations Made by the Pew Commission on Children in Foster Care*. Available on their websites:

CCJ: <http://ccj.ncsc.dni.us/ChildWelfareResolutions/PewCommissionChildrenFosterCare.pdf>

COSCA: <http://cosca.ncsc.dni.us/Resolutions/ChildWelfare/pewcommission.pdf>

¹⁰Funding is being made available through grants to the National Center for State Courts from the Pew Commission, and Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, Fostering Results, and the State Justice Institute.

Despite those challenges, the Supreme Court of Ohio has taken significant steps to improve the judiciary's handling of child welfare cases. Most significant is the leadership of the Supreme Court itself. In 2000, new rules for expediting appeals in child welfare cases were adopted. Justice Stratton chaired a national committee that issued recommendations for expediting appeals. Chief Justice Moyer created an Advisory Committee on Children, Families and the Court in 2002. The Court has initiated an ongoing collaborative relationship with the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services (ODJFS). The Court recently inaugurated a program entitled *Beyond the Numbers - Ohio's Response to the Child and Family Services Review*. The initiative promotes collaboration at the community level between courts; child services agencies, and other stakeholders to improve local practice and compliance with federal requirements relating to child welfare. The Ohio Association of Juvenile Court Judges has endorsed the initiative. Standards for guardians ad litem (GALs) were drafted by a special committee and are being reviewed by the Advisory Committee on Children, Families and the Court. A Family Law Case Manager was hired to focus on child welfare case management. The Family Law Case Manager functions as the liaison to ODJFS and other state child welfare organizations, provides technical assistance to juvenile courts, and assists in developing training curricula for the Ohio Judicial College. The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) has established an additional Model Court in Lucas County, in addition to Hamilton County (one of the original Model Courts).

As a condition of continuing federal dollars, state courts are required to periodically re-examine their Court Improvement Programs. Through a competitive bid and proposal process, the Supreme Court of Ohio selected the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) to perform the Reassessment of Ohio's Court Improvement Program (CIP) and its child abuse, neglect, and dependency case processing.

To set the project in motion, members of the NCSC project team met with representatives of the Judicial and Court Services Division (JCS) of the Supreme Court of Ohio and other interested parties in March 2005. The purpose of the meeting was threefold (1) to refine the objectives of the reassessment; (2) to review the proposed methodology and schedule; and to identify the five counties for in-depth, on-site study. Based upon these discussions, JCS personnel and NCSC team members selected the counties of Athens, Franklin, Hamilton, Lorain, and Washington.

For the Ohio CIP Reassessment, NCSC finalized a series of Research Questions listed in Table 1. As a result of the investigation of these research questions, several themes emerged regarding Ohio's processing of child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases: (1) Legal Framework; (2) Court Resources, Workload, and Training; (3) Timeliness; (4) Information Technology and Case Tracking Systems; (5) Representation and Due Process; (6) Quality of Hearings; (7) Reasonable Efforts, Contrary to the Welfare, ICWA, and ASFA Findings; (8) Stakeholder Collaboration; and (9) Leadership. While this *Reassessment Report* is constructed around these emerging themes, data and results responding to the Research Questions correlate to specific chapters within the text and are also noted in Table 1.

Based on the analyses of information from focus groups, file review, surveys, and court observation, the NCSC project team has prepared this *Reassessment Report* presenting its

findings and recommendations. The *Reassessment Report* also includes a statement of the objectives of the project, a brief description of the methodology, the Ohio legal framework, a summary of the results of the statewide survey, focus groups/interviews information, court observation and examination of case records, a discussion of the findings, and a series of recommendations. The Appendix contains the NCSC's review of prior reports and evaluations, the NCSC data collection instruments, and the full results of the statewide survey.

Table 1: Ohio CIP Reassessment Research Questions	
Research Question	Report Chapter(s)
What are the rules, standards, and criteria that govern Ohio's judicial decisions in child protection cases?	3,6,7
What are the rules and practices governing whether a proceeding is administrative or judicial, legal representation of parties, admissibility of evidence, presentation of witnesses, due process protections, and conducting the various types of child protection proceedings?	3,6,7,8
To what extent do Ohio's court rules and practices governing child protective proceedings conform to national standards and recommendations?	3,6,7,8
To what extent do particular practices or procedures facilitate compliance or contribute to non-compliance with the applicable legal requirements?	4,5,6,7,8
Are prescribed time limits being met? What are the frequency and length of delays in child protection proceedings?	6
Is the time available for hearings sufficient to permit presentation of evidence and arguments? If not, how much time is needed for each type of hearing and what are the implications for the court?	8
To what extent do parties and counsel present witnesses, introduce evidence, and offer arguments in each type of hearing?	8
What data is available for case tracking? Is it sufficient? Is it accurate? Do all the people who need it have access?	5
To what extent do the number of cases and the limited number of judges and personnel affect the ability of courts to meet safety, timeliness, due process, and permanency standards?	4
How often are parents and children represented by counsel? To what extent is representation adequate?	7
Are all participants in court proceedings treated with courtesy, respect, and understanding.	8
Assess (1) the performance of Ohio's courts and the degree of collaboration with the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services and (2) the sufficiency of judicial determination in court orders (i.e. reasonable efforts, contrary to the welfare, best interest) consistent with the findings, recommendations, and requirements of previous assessments?	5,9,10
To what extent is the information available to courts sufficient, timely, and accurate?	5
To what extent do statutory, regulatory, and procedural requirements facilitate or impede assuring the safety, well-being, and permanency of children in foster care and the program goals set forth in titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act?	6,7,8,9
To what extent do statutory, regulatory, and procedural requirements impose significant administrative burdens on the courts?	6
How effectively do the state and tribal courts coordinate in ICWA cases?	9

CHAPTER 2 METHODOLOGY

The NCSC project team developed an interactive, multi-phase, and multi-method approach to gather the quantitative and qualitative information necessary to complete the Reassessment of Ohio's CIP. The specific phases and tasks by which NCSC completed the CIP Reassessment are discussed in the following paragraphs. The tasks fell into seven major categories:

- Review of Background Information and Documents
- Review of Ohio Statutes and Rules
- Focus Groups and Interviews
- Review of Information Technology and Case Tracking Systems
- Court Observation
- Closed Case File Review
- Statewide Stakeholder Survey

Review of Background Information and Documents

To become familiar with the past and current culture of child abuse, neglect, and dependency case processing in Ohio, the NCSC thoroughly reviewed the methodology, findings, and recommendations of prior assessments and evaluations including: (1) The American Bar Association's (ABA) *Court Improvement Progress Reports 1998-2003*; (2) The 1997 initial assessment of Ohio's Court Improvement Program conducted by the National Center for Juvenile Justice (NCJJ) ; (3) The 2003 Child and Family Services Review (CFSR); and (4) Program Improvement Plans (PIP). The table in Appendix A identifies the key findings of these prior reports and evaluations in the following areas: (1) Court Structure, Organization, Management; (2) Rules, Statutes, Legal Process; (3) Case Processing Timelines; (4) Representation, Due Process; (5) Quality Proceedings; (6) Reasonable Efforts, Services; and (7) Collaboration and Leadership. The reader may wish to familiarize herself with the prior reports prior to reviewing the contents contained within this *Reassessment Report*.

Review of Ohio Statutes and Rules

The NCSC project team reviewed the statutes and rules associated with child abuse, neglect, and dependency case processing in Ohio. Additionally the NCSC prepared a legal process flowchart, which is a step-by-step illustration of the court process from removal through permanent custody of the child. The flowchart includes the mandatory timelines, burdens of proof, the court review process, and the administrative review process. Ohio state statute and federal legislation provisions are included as references and to identify key court milestones. Finally, the NCSC project team reviewed these statutes and rules in comparison to national standards such as the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges' (NCJFCJ) *Resource Guidelines*¹¹ and applicable federal legislation. This information is discussed further in Chapter 3 and threaded throughout this *Reassessment Report*.

¹¹ See National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, *Resource Guidelines: Improving Court Practice in Child Abuse & Neglect Cases* (Reno, Nev.: National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, 1995.)

Focus Groups and Interviews

The NCSC project team engaged in considerable on-site activity to obtain a representative and robust picture of child abuse, neglect, and dependency case processing in Ohio. Qualitative information was generated through a series of comprehensive focus groups and interviews with child welfare professionals in each of the five selected counties. Child welfare professionals included judges and magistrates, public children services agency (PCSA)¹² social workers and supervisors, county prosecutors and PCSA attorneys, children and parent attorneys, court staff, court-appointed special advocates (CASA) staff and volunteers, and GALs. In total, the NCSC project team facilitated 29 focus groups with child welfare professionals as indicated in Table 2.

Table 2. Number of Focus Groups/Participants by County

County	# Groups	Judges & Magistrates	PCSA Social Workers & Supervisors	County Prosecutors & PCSA Attorneys	Children and Parent Attorneys	Court Staff	CASA Staff & Volunteers	GALs
Athens	6	1	10	2	7	2	7	--
Franklin	6	11	5 ¹³	5	16	8	10	--
Hamilton	7	6	22	6	6	10	5	6
Lorain	5	7 ¹⁴	7	4	4	5	--	--
Washington	5	1	8	4	4	3	--	--

Each focus group session was scheduled for one and one-half to two hours and was led by a team of two NCSC facilitators. Focus group participants were advised in advance that their individual statements would be kept confidential and anonymous and no names would be attributed. However, it was stated that this information would be reported to the Supreme Court of Ohio by theme and by professional category as part of the *Reassessment Report*. Each session opened with an explanation of the background and purpose of Reassessment followed by a set of “ice breaker” questions. The discussion then moved into three key areas including (1) Case Processing Practices, (2) Court Resources, and (3) Stakeholder Relationships and Communication. Appendix B contains the Focus Group Protocol used by the NCSC project team during the series of on-site focus groups in each of the five counties.

Review of Information Technology and Case Tracking Systems

The information technology and case tracking system specialist on the NCSC project team visited each of the five counties to assess the functioning and quality of case tracking

¹²Because Ohio has multiple configurations of child protection agencies (i.e. county based, state based, etc), the generic term “public children services agency” is utilized throughout this *Reassessment Report* unless there is a need to reference the specific agency.

¹³Just prior to NCSC’s scheduled meeting with PCSA case workers, a notice was issued that the department union members were intending to strike. Case workers were required to bring case notes up to date on a priority basis. As a result, only one worker was able to attend the scheduled session during our initial on-site visit. In a specially arranged follow-up visit, we were able to interview three additional PCSA staff.

¹⁴All of the judges in the Lorain County Juvenile Court attended.

systems to support effective and timely child abuse, neglect, and dependency case processing for the courts. The NCSC project team also created a review of the case tracking systems in order to assess the availability and accuracy of data and its overall functionality and ease of use.

Typically, the NCSC project team member spent the morning with the data entry personnel at the court and the afternoon with the court administration. Additionally, the NCSC also spoke by phone with representatives from the Supreme Court of Ohio and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.

Court Observation

The NCSC project team developed a protocol for the observation of child abuse, neglect, and dependency hearings to capture information for the following dimensions: (1) Type of Hearing; (2) Persons Present; (3) Delay and Continuance; (4) Service and Notice to Parties; (5) Engagement of Parties and Conduct of Hearing; and (6) Hearing Outcome. A copy of the Court Observation Protocol is located in Appendix B. A total of 48 court observation forms were completed by NCSC project staff and analyzed. Table 3 lists the number and types of hearings observed in each county.

Type of Hearing Observed	County ¹⁵¹⁶				Total
	Athens	Franklin	Hamilton	Lorain	
Shelter Hearing		3	2		5
Pre-Trial		15	1		16
Adjudicatory Hearing		3	1		4
Dispositional Hearing		1	1		2
6 Month Case Review	4				4
Interim Review	1		2		3
Annual Review	3	4	4		11
Motion For Permanent Custody (TPR)		1		1	2
Other			1		1
Total	8	27	12	1	48

Closed Case File Review

Court files were reviewed by NCSC project staff, JCS personnel, and CASA staff and volunteers under the direction of the NCSC project team using the Ohio CIP Reassessment File Review Instrument located in Appendix B. The Reassessment File Review Instrument was created to track specific data elements relating to the Research Questions identified in Table 1.

¹⁵There were no scheduled hearings during the NCSC on-site activity in Washington County.

¹⁶The visit to Lorain County occurred during the shortened work week following Memorial Day 2005. Most of the hearings scheduled during NCSC on site activity were delinquency hearings. Participants in two of the child abuse, neglect, dependency hearings scheduled for observation objected to the presence of the NCSC observers.

Sample Selection: The NCSC project team requested a list of cases “closed” during 2004 from each of the five counties.¹⁷ Cases were randomly selected from the lists provided by each county. An overview of the number of 2004 closed cases and number of cases actually reviewed is shown in Table 4.

County	Total cases closed/ disposed in 2004	Sample for 10% Confidence Interval	Sample for 15% Confidence Interval	Review goal	Number of cases Actually reviewed
Athens	65	39	26	33	36
Franklin	5,283	94	42	68	119
Hamilton	357	76	38	57	85
Lorain	244	69	36	53	68
Washington	16	14	12	13	16

Statewide Stakeholder Survey

The NCSC project team conducted a statewide survey of child welfare professionals involved in child abuse, neglect, and dependency case processing. These professionals included: judges, court staff, county prosecutors, PCSA attorneys, PCSA caseworkers and supervisors, CASA staff and volunteers, court appointed attorneys for parents and children, private attorneys, and foster care providers. NCSC utilized a statewide survey to increase the likelihood that all child welfare professionals would have an opportunity to participate in the data collection process in the event they were unable to participate during on-site activity or the location was not selected for on-site focus groups.

To facilitate responses, the NCSC project team employed an electronic, web-based survey process.¹⁸ Statewide survey participants were encouraged to participate in the statewide survey via a targeted invitation process facilitated by the Supreme Court of Ohio. Each survey participant was provided with information regarding the CIP Reassessment process, NCSC information, and the URL link to the statewide survey. Survey participants were also advised that individual survey responses and comments would be kept confidential. Reminder messages were sent to all survey stakeholders approximately one week before the response deadline.

Respondents were first asked to identify their professional role, years working in this role, and the primary county in which they work. The statewide survey presented a series of statements under the following categories: (1) Training and Standards; (2) Caseload and

¹⁷In some instances, the cases provided on the lists were not “closed” cases, meaning there was no additional and/or potential court activity and the child had achieved a permanency outcome. Because these files were often incomplete, care should be taken when interpreting the results. Moreover, assertions regarding ASFA compliance, permanency, and time to permanency are limited to court observation and survey results.

¹⁸The NCSC project team also developed a paper-based survey for those respondents who did not have access to the Internet.

Court Resources; (3) Hearings and Case Processing; (4) Continuance and Delay; (5) Statutory and Legal Requirements; (6) Agency Relationships and Communication; and (7) Use of Mediation. Respondents were asked to react to the series of statements based on a four point Likert scale between “strongly agree,” “agree,” “disagree,” and “strongly disagree.” Respondents also had the option of selecting “not applicable” and “don’t know.” Comments regarding each rating were also solicited. A copy of the Statewide Stakeholder Survey is found in Appendix B.

Tables 5 and 6 identify the number of survey respondents by child welfare professional category and by county. Appendix D contains the complete results of the Statewide Stakeholder Survey.

Primary Role	Frequency	Percent
CASA staff	24	8.66%
CASA volunteer	62	22.38%
Court Appointed Attorney for parent	9	3.25%
Court staff	16	5.78%
Foster Care Provider	20	7.22%
Guardian Ad Litem	25	9.03%
Judge/Judicial Officer	27	9.75%
Other	4	1.44%
Private Attorney	10	3.61%
Prosecutor/Agency attorney	15	5.42%
Public Children Service Agency case worker	32	11.55%
Public Children Service Agency supervisor	33	11.91%
Total	277	

County	Frequency	County	Frequency
Allen	1	Lorain	4
Ashtabula	2	Lucas	10
Athens	9	Madison	1
Brown	1	Mahoning	2
Butler	9	Marion	12
Clark	5	Medina	1
Clermont	3	Miami	10
Clinton	1	Montgomery	38
Columbiana	1	Morgan	1
Coshocton	2	Morrow	2
Cuyahoga	15	Muskingum	4
Darke	3	Noble	1
Delaware	1	Pickaway	5
Erie	1	Portage	1
Fairfield	1	Preble	2

Table 6. Number of Statewide Stakeholder Survey Responses From Each County			
County	Frequency	County	Frequency
Franklin	45	Sandusky	1
Gallia	1	Scioto	3
Geauga	6	Seneca	1
Greene	2	Shelby	1
Guernsey	1	Stark	10
Hamilton	16	Summit	4
Hancock	6	Trumbull	1
Hardin	2	Van Wert	1
Henry	1	Warren	2
Huron	1	Washington	2
Lake	2	Wayne	4
Lawrence	2	Wood	8
Licking	2	Wyandot	1
Logan	1	Missing	1
		Total	277

CHAPTER 3 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The statutes controlling child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases in Ohio are located in Chapter 2151 of the Ohio Revised Code. Figure 1. (*Filing through Disposition Activity*) and Figure 2. (*Post Disposition Activity*) are comprehensive flowcharts of abuse, neglect, and dependency case processing in Ohio. Ohio statute, ASFA, and Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, Public Law 93-247 (CAPTA) provisions are included as references and to identify where court milestones are consistent with federal legislation.

The passage of ASFA at the federal level is the most significant legislation to affect child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases nationwide. ASFA requires that, as a condition of federal funding, courts must process these cases in accordance with specific minimum criteria.¹⁹ Each state, however, can promulgate laws that are more demanding than ASFA so long as the restrictions do not violate the constitutional rights of the parties. CAPTA requires the appointment of a competent, trained guardian ad litem to any child subject to an abuse or neglect proceeding.²⁰ The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges *Resource Guidelines* represent optimal case processing, court activity and oversight in child welfare cases.²¹ The review and comparison of Ohio statutes and court process, by hearing type, to ASFA, CAPTA, and the *Resource Guidelines* is helpful to determine how Ohio compares to the processes envisioned in the *Resource Guidelines* and the mandatory provisions of federal legislation.

Removal and Shelter Care Hearing

Ohio law permits the removal of a child from his/her home upon (1) a report of abuse, neglect, or dependency; (2) a complaint filed in juvenile court alleging abuse, neglect, or dependency; or (3) an ex-parte emergency order issued by the juvenile court. If the removal was not pursuant to a complaint, a complaint must be filed before the end of the next day after the day on which the child was taken into custody.²² To obtain an ex-parte emergency removal order, there must be probable cause of abuse, neglect, or dependency; and reasonable efforts to notify the parents or guardians of the removal and the reasons for the removal.²³ When a child is removed from the home pursuant to an ex-parte emergency order, probable cause must be proven at a hearing convened before the end of the next business day after the day on which the emergency order is issued, or no later than 72 hours after the emergency order is issued. In addition to determining probable cause, the court

¹⁹The Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997, Public Law 105-89. ASFA necessitates more timely, decisive, and substantive hearings, and more frequent court and administrative case reviews including: (1) review hearings every six months; (2) 12-month time limit for permanency hearings; and (3) 22-month time limit for termination hearings.

²⁰The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, Public Law 93-247, 42 U.S.C. 5104(b)(2)(A)(xiii).

²¹See National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, *Resource Guidelines: Improving Court Practice in Child Abuse & Neglect Cases* (Reno, Nev.: National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, 1995.). The *Resource Guidelines* articulate “best practices” for the court’s processing of child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases. The *Resource Guidelines* specify (1) the purpose and intent of key court hearings, (2) the timing of key court hearings, (3) the minimum duration of key court events, and (4) the key decisions court should make during each court hearing.

²²O.R.C. 2151.27.

²³O.R.C. 2151.31(D).

should also (1) ensure that a complaint is filed; (2) that the agency removing the child from the home made reasonable efforts to prevent the removal of the child from his/her home; and (3) hold a hearing to determine if the child should remain in shelter care. If probable cause is not proven, the child is returned home.²⁴

Regardless of how a child is removed from the home, an informal shelter care hearing should be held promptly but no later than 72 hours after placement in shelter care to determine whether continued shelter care is warranted.²⁵ ASFA does not reference a specific time for a preliminary or shelter care hearing but stresses that the child's welfare is of paramount concern and reasonable efforts must be made to eliminate the need for the child's removal.²⁶ The purpose of the shelter care hearing is to determine whether physical custody of the child should remain with the parents or PCSA. At the shelter care hearing parents are notified: (1) that a case plan may be prepared for the family; (2) of the consequences to the family of not following the case plan; (3) whether they will have physical custody of the child; and (4) their right to counsel.²⁷ If physical custody remains with the parents, PCSA should make immediate reasonable efforts for the next 30 days to ensure that the family unit is maintained.²⁸

A *guardian ad litem* for the child should be appointed as soon after the complaint is filed as possible.²⁹ The usual practice in Ohio is to appoint counsel for parents from the Public Defender's Office (or a contract attorney depending upon the jurisdiction) between the filing of the complaint and the scheduled shelter care hearing; therefore, counsel is available for the parents throughout the course of the proceedings. This is in keeping with the requirements of CAPTA which requires that a *guardian ad litem* be appointed to obtain first-hand, a clear understanding of the situation and needs of the child and to make recommendations to the court concerning the best interests of the child.³⁰

Adjudicatory Hearing

Pursuant to Ohio statute, an adjudicatory hearing should be held within 30 days of the shelter care hearing to determine whether the child is in fact abused, neglected, or dependent.³¹ The hearing may be continued for ten days to allow parties to obtain counsel or for a reasonable time beyond the 30 day period to obtain service on all parties, but not more than 60 days of the complaint.³² This requirement is within the *Resource Guidelines*, which recommend an adjudicatory hearing within 60 days of removal of the child from the home.³³ ASFA does not set a specific time reference for the hearing but is implicitly premised on prompt adjudication of the child's status as abused, neglected, or dependent.

²⁴ O.R.C. 2151.31(E).

²⁵ O.R.C. 2151.314 and NCJFCJ, *Resource Guidelines*, pg. 30

²⁶ 42 U.S.C. 671(a)(15)

²⁷ O.R.C. 2151.314

²⁸ 42 U.S.C. 671(a)(15)(B)

²⁹ O.R.C. 2151.281(G)

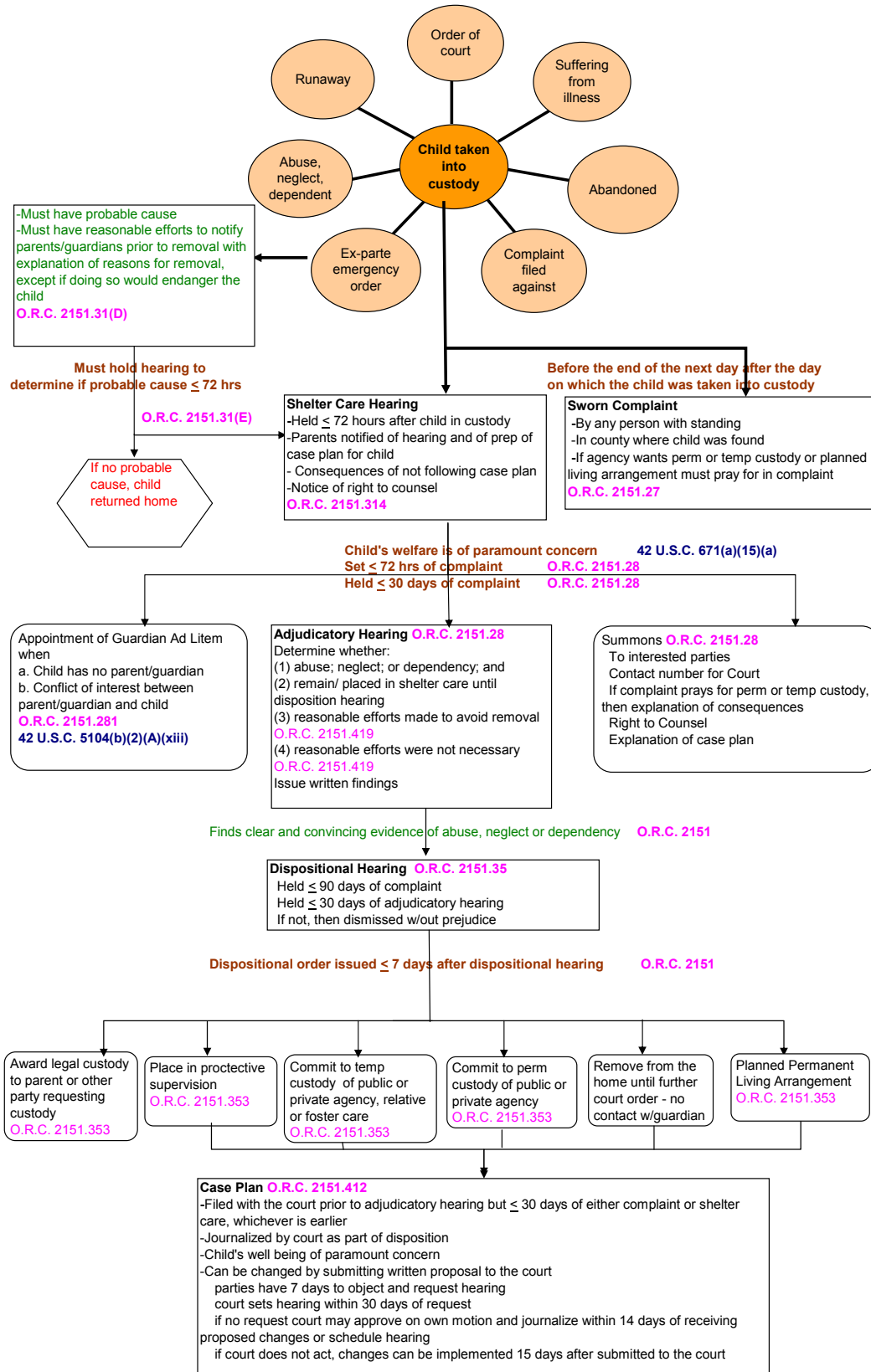
³⁰ 42 U.S.C. 5104(b)(2)(A)(xiii)

³¹ O.R.C. 2151.28

³² O.R.C. 2151.28

³³ NCJFCJ, *Resource Guidelines*, pg. 47

Figure 1. Filing through Disposition Activity



The court is required to determine whether the agency responsible for the child's removal from the home made reasonable efforts to: (1) prevent removal, (2) eliminate the continued removal of the child, or (3) make it possible for the child to return safely home.³⁴ ASFA permits the waiver of reasonable efforts under specific circumstances, which must be found by the court before waiver is allowed.³⁵ In determining whether reasonable efforts were made, the child's health and safety shall be paramount.³⁶

If the complainant wants temporary or permanent custody of the child or wants the child placed in a planned permanent living arrangement, such must be specifically prayed for in the complaint.³⁷ A summons issued with the complaint must explain that the parents may be divested of their parental rights if permanent custody is granted to the agency and that the adjudication of the child as abused, neglected, or dependent will result in the removal of the child from the home until a final disposition is entered. The summons must also provide an explanation of the consequences of the child being placed in planned permanent living arrangement.³⁸

The court may issue a summons to the child, parents, or any other person who appears to be a party to the proceedings; subpoena witnesses; hear sworn testimony; and accept sworn affidavits in gathering evidence to determine whether the child is in fact abused, neglected, or dependent and whether reasonable efforts were made to prevent removal from the home.³⁹ The complainant has the burden of proving by clear and convincing evidence that the child is abused, neglected, or dependent.

Disposition Hearing

Upon a finding of abuse, neglect, or dependency by clear and convincing evidence at the adjudicatory hearing, a dispositional hearing should convene to hear evidence on the proper disposition of the proceeding.⁴⁰ By state statute the dispositional hearing must be held within 30 days of the adjudicatory hearing, which is in accordance with the *Resource Guidelines*.⁴¹ Ohio statute allows the 30 day deadline to be extended for a reasonable time to allow parties to obtain legal counsel, but may not be held more than 90 days after the adjudicatory hearing.⁴² If a dispositional hearing is not convened within 90 days of the adjudicatory hearing, the court, on its own motion or on the motion of a party, may dismiss the action without prejudice.⁴³ This "90 day rule" results in many cases being dismissed prior to disposition and then re-filed. Re-filing resets the clock causing delays which are generally not in the best interest of the child. Frequent use of the "90 day rule" violates the

³⁴O.R.C. 2151.419

³⁵42 U.S.C.671(a)(15)(D)

³⁶O.R.C. 2151.419

³⁷O.R.C. 2151.27

³⁸O.R.C. 2151.28(D)

³⁹O.R.C. 2151.28

⁴⁰O.R.C. 2151.35

⁴¹O.R.C. 2151.35 and NCJFCJ, *Resource Guidelines*, pg. 55; ASFA refers to a disposition hearing as a "permanency hearing" and requires that it be held within 12 months of the date the child entered foster care. U.S.C. 675(5)(C)

⁴²O.R.C. 2151.35

⁴³O.R.C. 2151.35

spirit of the state statute, the *Resource Guidelines* and ASFA. Neither the state statute nor ASFA prevent the dispositional hearing from commencing on the same day as the adjudicatory hearing, in fact the state statute specifically permits the dispositional hearing to be heard immediately following the adjudicatory hearing.⁴⁴ Holding the adjudicatory and dispositional hearings on the same day is most appropriate when the complaint alleging abuse, neglect, or dependency is uncontested, which is true in most instances.⁴⁵ Given the frequency of the invocation of the “90 day rule” some jurisdictions may consider holding both hearings on the same day to allow dispositions to be entered in a timely manner. It should also be noted that the most common reason for invoking the “90 day rule” is the inability to perfect service on the parties. The statute does not specifically allow for a continuance for this reason; it permits an extension of time to allow the parties to obtain counsel.⁴⁶ This is in contrast to the statutorily permitted extensions for an adjudicatory hearing that allow for extensions “for a reasonable period of time beyond the thirty-day deadline to obtain service on all parties...”⁴⁷

The same judge or referee who presided over the adjudicatory hearing should preside over the dispositional hearing and permit the admission of all relative evidence including hearsay, opinion, and documentary evidence.⁴⁸ The court should also accept any evidence that contradicts, supplements, or explains the social history provided by a medical examiner or other investigator but should not permit cross examination of such individuals, except for good cause.⁴⁹

Within seven days of the disposition hearing the court orders one or more of the following dispositions:⁵⁰

- Place the child in protective custody
- Commit the child to the temporary custody of an agency
- Award legal custody to parent or other guardian
- Place the child in a planned permanent living arrangement
- Remove the child from the home until further order

If a case plan has not been agreed upon by all parties, the court should determine the contents of the case plan based on the evidence presented at the hearing and the best interest of the child.⁵¹ Dispositions and case plans are journalized by the court and the court retains jurisdiction over the child until the child reaches the age of majority, is adopted, or returned home.

⁴⁴ O.R.C. 2151.35(A)(2)(B)(1)

⁴⁵ NCJFCJ, *Resource Guidelines* pg 48

⁴⁶ O.R.C. 2151.35(A)(2)(B)(1)

⁴⁷ O.R.C. 2151.28(A)(2)(b)

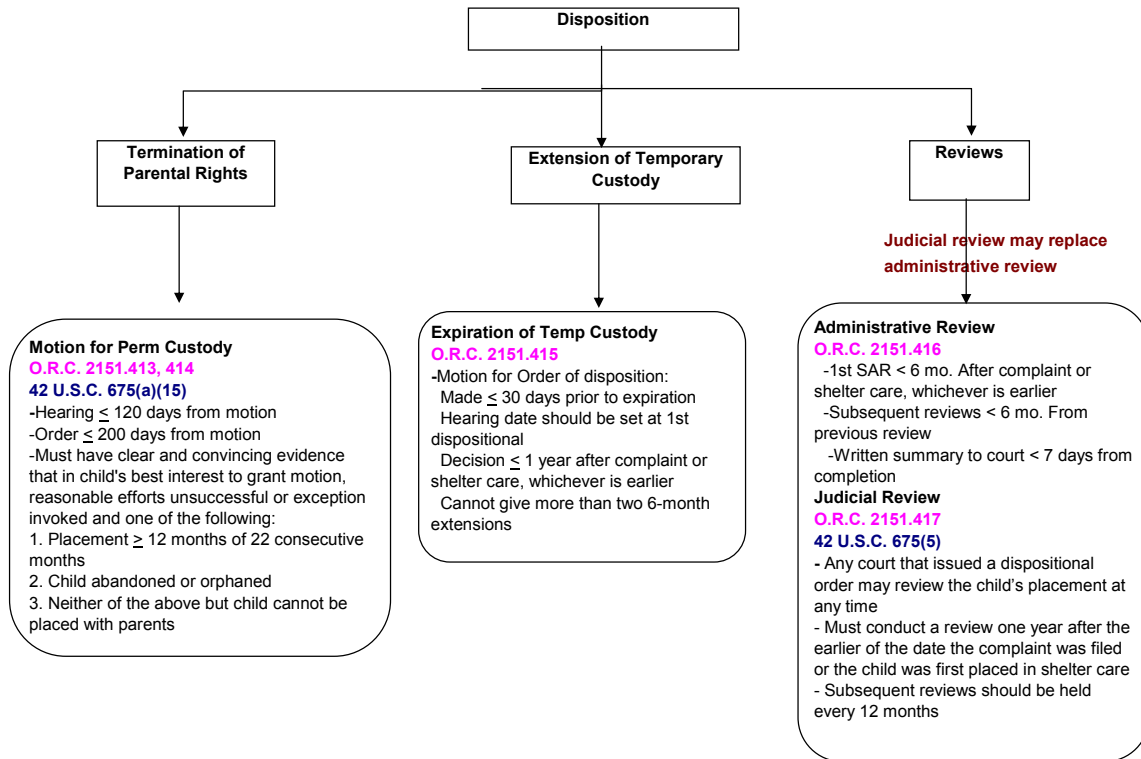
⁴⁸ O.R.C. 2151.35

⁴⁹ O.R.C. 2151.35

⁵⁰ O.R.C. 2151.353

⁵¹ O.R.C. 2151.412

Figure 2. Post-Disposition Activity



Case Plans

Any agency, whether public or private, providing services to a child must prepare and maintain a case plan for that child if: (1) the agency filed a complaint alleging abuse, neglect, or dependency; (2) the agency has temporary or permanent custody of the child; (3) the child is living at home subject to an order for protective supervision; or (4) the child is in a planned permanent living arrangement. The case plan should be prepared and filed with the court prior to the adjudicatory hearing but no later than 30 days after the earlier of the date the complaint was filed or the date the child was first placed into shelter care. If the agency does not have adequate information to complete the case plan prior to the adjudicatory hearing, it should specify what additional information is needed and how it intends to obtain that information to complete the case plan, which should be completed by the earlier of 30 days after the adjudicatory hearing or the date of the dispositional hearing.

In considering the goals of the case plan the health and safety of the child should be of paramount concern.⁵² The agency should also strive to construct a plan to which all interested parties consent; however, if the parties cannot come to a consensus the court will determine the contents of the case plan based on evidence presented at the disposition hearing and on the best interests of the child. All parties to the case plan are bound by its terms and cannot deviate from the plan without proposing a change through the court. Any party may request a change to the case plan by giving notice of the proposed change in writing to the court. A party objecting to the proposed change has seven days to respond to

⁵² O.R.C. 2151.412(G)

the proposal after it is filed with the court and request a hearing. If a request for a hearing is made, the court will hear the matter within 30 days of the date the proposal was submitted to the court.⁵³

Requests for Permanent Custody (Termination of Parental Rights)

An agency that has temporary custody of a child or has placed the child in a planned permanent arrangement pursuant to an order of disposition from the court may move for permanent custody of the child. The motion must be accompanied by the child's case plan and the agency's plan to seek an adoptive family for the child. The court should conduct a hearing on the motion within 120 days of the filing of the motion, which may be extended for good cause; however, it must be completed and the order journalized within 200 days of the filing of the motion.⁵⁴

Pursuant to state statute a motion for permanent custody must be filed not later than when a child has been in placement for 12 of the last 22 consecutive months (ASFA allows for the child to be in placement for 15 or the last 22 consecutive months).⁵⁵ A child is considered to have entered the temporary custody of an agency on the earlier of the date the child is adjudicated abused, neglected, or dependent or 60 days from the removal of the home.⁵⁶ Ohio statute also permits motions for permanent custody be filed if the child is abandoned or the child is orphaned and no relatives will take permanent custody of the child.⁵⁷ State statute expands the number of reasonable effort exceptions provided in ASFA that can be invoked so the court can find by clear and convincing evidence that the child cannot be placed with either parent within a reasonable period of time or should not be placed with the parents.⁵⁸ In making this determination the court must consider all relevant evidence including the factors listed in the Ohio Revised Statutes relating to parental status and actions.⁵⁹

Reviews

Administrative Reviews

ASFA requires that the status of each child be reviewed periodically but no less frequently than once every six months by either a court or by administrative review to determine the safety of the child, the continuing necessity for and appropriateness of the placement, the extent of compliance with the case plan, and the extent of progress which has been made toward alleviating or mitigating the causes necessitating placement in foster care, and to project a likely date by which the child may be returned to and safely maintained in the home or placed for adoption or legal guardianship.⁶⁰

⁵³O.R.C. 2151.412(E)

⁵⁴ O.R.C. 2151.414

⁵⁵ O.R.C. 2151.414 and 42 U.S.C. 675(E)

⁵⁶ O.R.C. 2151.414

⁵⁷ O.R.C. 2151.414

⁵⁸ O.R.C. 2151.415(E) and 42 U.S.C. 671(a)(15)(D)

⁵⁹ O.R.C. 2151.414

⁶⁰42 U.S.C. 675(5)(C)

If an agency implemented a case plan for a child, then the agency is required by Ohio statute to complete a semiannual administrative review within six months of the earlier of the date of the complaint or the child was placed in shelter care.⁶¹ Subsequent semiannual reviews are to be conducted every six months with the child's health and safety of paramount concern.⁶² The review panel should be composed of at least three individuals, one of which should be a caseworker with day to day responsibility or familiarity with the child's case plan; and one of which should not have any responsibility for the child's case plan. The review should be a joint meeting of the panel members, the parents/guardians, the GAL and the foster care provider to consider and evaluate: (1) the safety and appropriateness of the child's foster care placement; (2) the extent of compliance with the case plan of all the parties; (3) the extent of progress made toward alleviating the circumstances that required the agency to assume temporary custody of the child; and (4) the date by which the child may be returned to and safely maintained in the child's home or placed for adoption or legal custody.⁶³

Within seven days of completing the review, the panel must submit a summary of the review, including any proposed changes to the case plan to the court and all parties. The parties then have seven days to object to the proposed changes and request a hearing. If the court receives a request for a hearing, a hearing should be conducted within 30 days of the request; if no request is made the court may approve the proposed changes without a hearing and journalize the changes within 14 days of receiving the proposed changes.⁶⁴ If the court does not approve the proposed changes, the court should conduct a hearing within 30 days of the 14 day deadline for approving the changes. If the court does not act and neither approves the changes or schedules a hearing, the agency may implement the changes 15 days after the summary and proposed changes were submitted to the court.⁶⁵

Judicial Reviews

Any court that issued a dispositional order may review the child's placement; the child's case plan; the agency's actions; or the child's permanency plan at any time, but must conduct a review one year after the earlier of the date the complaint was filed or the child was first placed in shelter care to assess whether the case plan and placement are serving the child's best interests.⁶⁶ Subsequent reviews should be held every 12 months until the child is adopted, returned to the parents, or the court terminates the child's placement. Evidence from interested parties to the case should be accepted to assist the court in determining the appropriateness of the case plan; the permanency plan; the actions of the child's custodian; the actions of the caseworker; or any action that should be taken on the child's behalf.⁶⁷

⁶¹ O.R.C. 2151.416

⁶² O.R.C. 2151.416

⁶³ O.R.C. 2151.416

⁶⁴ O.R.C. 2151.416

⁶⁵ O.R.C. 2151.416

⁶⁶ O.R.C. 2151.417

⁶⁷ O.R.C. 2151.417

A judicial review may take the place of a regularly scheduled administrative review and address the same issues that would have been addressed by the administrative review panel. Judicial reviews may be conducted by a citizens review board, subject to review by the court. A citizen review board must be composed of one member representing the general public, four members trained or experienced in the care or placement of children and with experience in related fields, such as medicine, psychology, social work, or education.⁶⁸ Although, the statute permits the formation of citizen review boards, few jurisdictions have formed such boards and reviews are generally handled by the court.

⁶⁸O.R.C. 2151.417

CHAPTER 4 COURT RESOURCES, WORKLOAD, AND TRAINING

Data and information addressing these themes comes from the Statewide Stakeholder Survey and Focus Groups to respond to this theme. Areas of inquiry included: (1) the caseload and workloads of child welfare professionals; (2) judicial and court staff resources; (3) judicial and court staff training; and (4) court resources such as mediation services.

Statewide Stakeholder Survey

The majority of survey participants reported that 75 percent or more of their caseload involved child welfare cases (e.g., child abuse, neglect, dependency, and permanent custody cases). The amount of time per week spent working on child welfare cases varied with approximately one-half of the participants reporting 0 to 20 hours (55.74 percent) and the other half reporting 20 hours or more (44.26 percent). Results to these two survey questions are found in Tables 7 and 8.

Percent of cases	Frequency	Percent of Total
0-10%	20	8.13%
11-25%	19	7.72%
26-50%	26	10.57%
51-75%	12	4.88%
76-100%	169	68.70%
	246	

Hours per week	Frequency	Percent of total
0-5 hrs	74	30.33%
6-10 hrs	32	13.11%
11-15 hrs	10	4.10%
16-20 hrs	20	8.20%
21-25 hrs	8	3.28%
26-30 hrs	12	4.92%
31-35 hrs	10	4.10%
36-40 hrs	63	25.82%
40 + hrs	15	6.15%
	244	

Participants' responses to the caseload and court resource questions varied by job category. Overall, CASA volunteers, court staff, court appointed attorneys, GALs, judges, and private attorneys felt that their child welfare caseload was manageable and the procedures for assigning cases was fair and reasonable. CASA staff, PCSA case supervisors PCSA case workers, foster care providers, and prosecutors/agency attorneys were less likely to agree with those statements.

Overall, only GALs and private attorneys agreed that the number of judicial officers, court personnel, and prosecutors was adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency, and permanent custody cases. Court appointed attorneys, GALs and private attorneys agreed that the number of GALs available was adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency, and permanent custody cases. Similarly, court-appointed attorneys and private attorneys had the opinion that the number of CASA volunteers was adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency, and permanent custody cases. Only GALs as a group felt that the number of public defenders/court appointed attorneys was adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency, and permanent custody cases. No group felt that the number of PCSA case workers was adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency, and permanent custody cases. The results to these survey questions are found in Table 9.

Table 9. Statewide Survey Results: Caseload and Court Resources											
Average Response (4=strongly agree, 3=agree, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree)											
	CASA Staff	CASA Volunteers	Case Supervisor	Case Workers	Court Staff	Ct. Appt. Atty	Foster Care	GAL	Judges	Private Atty	Prosecutor/Agency attorney
Generally speaking, my child welfare caseload is manageable.	2.74	3.72	2.55	2.54	3.18	3.63	2.86	3.39	3.23	3.44	2.36
The procedure for assigning cases in my office is fair and reasonable.	3.30	3.79	3.15	2.64	3.33	3.33	3.00	3.32	3.27	3.83	3.18
The number of available judicial officers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency, and permanent custody cases.	2.61	2.93	2.61	2.29	2.88	2.63	1.70	3.10	2.92	3.00	2.40
The number of available court personnel in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency, and permanent custody cases.	2.95	2.79	2.59	2.28	2.94	2.38	1.90	3.10	2.77	3.11	2.43

Table 9. Statewide Survey Results: Caseload and Court Resources Average Response (4=strongly agree, 3=agree, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree)											
	CASA Staff	CASA Volunteers	Case Supervisor	Case Workers	Court Staff	Ct. Appt. Atty	Foster Care	GAL	Judges	Private Atty	Prosecutor/Agency attorney
The number of available prosecutors in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency, and permanent custody cases.	2.50	2.86	2.81	2.50	2.75	2.67	1.89	3.00	2.80	3.30	2.43
The number of available public defenders and/or court appointed attorneys in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency, and permanent custody cases.	2.18	2.84	2.61	2.52	2.25	2.78	2.00	3.00	2.12	2.75	2.40
The number of available guardians ad litem in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency, and permanent custody cases.	2.39	2.51	2.57	2.34	2.50	3.13	1.50	3.10	2.60	3.13	2.60
The number of available CASA volunteers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	2.36	2.50	2.83	2.50	2.80	3.50	1.50	2.69	2.76	3.38	2.85
The number of available Public Children Service Agency case workers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency, and permanent custody cases.	2.04	1.98	2.52	1.96	2.75	2.50	1.92	2.95	2.68	2.86	1.87

In regard to written job guidelines, only the CASA volunteers, PCSA case supervisors and GALs reported receiving job-related guidelines and finding the guidelines helpful. As a group, CASA volunteers, PCSA case workers, foster care providers, and GALs reported receiving initial training concerning their role with child abuse, neglect, dependency, and permanent custody cases and found the training to be very helpful. All groups reported attending subsequent training and finding them beneficial. The results to these survey questions are found in Table 10.

Table 10. Statewide Survey Results: Training and Standards
Average Response (4=strongly agree, 3=agree, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree)

	CASA Staff	CASA Volunteers	Case Supervisor	Case Workers	Court Staff	Ct. Appt. Arty	Foster Care	GAL	Judges	Private Atty	Prosecutor/Agency attorney
Prior to starting my job, I was provided written guidelines concerning my role with child abuse, neglect, dependency, and permanent custody cases	3.09	3.82	3.07	2.68	2.36	2.20	3.06	3.25	2.13	2.29	2.20
The written guidelines/manuals I received were helpful	2.95	3.69	3.15	2.64	2.57	3.00	2.75	3.52	3.36	3.00	2.22
Prior to starting my job, I received training concerning my role with child abuse, neglect, dependency, and permanent custody cases.	2.86	3.81	3.13	2.63	2.27	2.43	3.11	3.29	2.28	2.29	2.27
The training I received prior to assuming my role was very helpful.	2.71	3.74	3.10	2.70	2.75	3.25	3.05	3.50	3.21	2.75	2.73
I have attended additional trainings since assuming my role?	3.61	3.83	3.70	3.69	3.06	3.50	3.75	3.63	3.62	3.00	3.73
Additional training I have received has been very helpful.	3.50	3.67	3.58	3.35	3.21	3.57	3.35	3.42	3.68	3.50	3.40

Use of Mediation

According to the statewide survey, mediation is not used very often for child abuse, neglect, dependency, and permanent custody cases. For the cases that are sent to mediation, the results were mixed with 16 percent of the respondents reporting that 76-100 percent of the cases were successfully resolved through mediation. Survey results are located in Tables 11 and 12.

Table 11. Statewide Survey Results: Use of Mediation in Child Abuse, Neglect, Dependency and Permanent Custody Cases		
Percent of cases	Frequency	Percent of Total
0-10%	41	59.42%
11-25%	12	17.39%
26-50%	8	11.59%
51-75%	4	5.80%
76-100%	4	5.80%
	69	

Table 12. Statewide Survey Results: Percentage of Cases Successfully Resolved through Mediation		
Percent of cases successfully resolved through mediation	Frequency	Percent of Total
0-10%	15	30.61%
11-25%	4	8.16%
26-50%	11	22.45%
51-75%	11	22.45%
76-100%	8	16.33%
	49	

Overall, CASA volunteers, court staff, court appointed attorneys, GALs, judges, and private attorneys had the most positive outlook concerning the use of mediation for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases. Results to individual survey questions are found in Table 13.

Table 13. Statewide Survey Results: Mediation
Average Response (4=strongly agree, 3=agree, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree)

	CASA Staff	CASA Volunteers	Case Supervisor	Case Workers	Court Staff	Ct. Appt. Atty	Foster Care	GAL	Judges	Private Atty	Prosecutor/Agency attorney
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases are resolved more quickly than non-mediated cases.	2.67	3.30	2.25	2.50	3.25	2.75	2.00	3.13	3.00	3.50	3.00
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases move to permanent living situations for children more quickly than non-mediated cases.	2.67	3.29	2.25	2.20	3.00	3.50	2.00	3.00	3.00		2.50
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases are less costly to the court than non-mediated cases	2.83	3.40	2.67	2.25	3.50	3.00	1.00	3.13	3.40	3.50	2.50

Focus Groups and Interviews

Resources and Workload

Judicial Resources and Workload:

Participants in focus groups in most of the jurisdictions generally believed that the judicial resources available were adequate to address the caseload in their jurisdiction. In one jurisdiction, however, some of the participants believed that an additional judge was needed in order to expedite the handling of permanent custody matters. In another small jurisdiction, court staff expressed concern that there was not enough calendar time available to schedule needed hearings in a timely fashion. Magistrates, who handle a substantial portion of the caseload in larger jurisdictions, generally agreed that they had sufficient time to handle their caseloads. Some commented, however, that they could use more time to devote individualized, “quality” time to review cases. Others indicated a need for additional, consistently available writing time to ensure complete and timely findings and orders. Notably, in one court the magistrates commented that they believed that their jurisdiction had more judicial resources comparatively than many other jurisdictions, but that their challenge in terms of resources was in the coordination of those judicial resources with the resources of other child welfare system participants.⁶⁹

The allocation of workload between judges and magistrates varies between counties. In general, magistrates handle the bulk of hearings and workload in larger jurisdictions, while

⁶⁹ The issue of coordination of resources was reported in many of the counties we visited, but in a different context.

judges appear to shoulder most of the workload in smaller jurisdictions. In one larger jurisdiction, for example, judges handled only the most serious cases, objections to magistrate's decisions, and permanent custody matters. The majority of the judges' time in larger jurisdictions was devoted to delinquency and domestic relations matters.

In the two smaller jurisdictions visited, the judges shouldered the lion's share of the work on child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases. The judge in one jurisdiction indicated that he spent most of his bench time on these case types. He indicated that participants in child abuse, neglect, and dependency case processing, including the prosecuting attorneys, defense counsel, guardians, and the Department of Jobs and Family Services, were thorough. However, he also indicated a concern that the time demands of the cases were increasing and that those demands may require prioritization of more serious cases in the future.⁷⁰

In the other small court, the judge believed that he spent the majority of his time on custody⁷¹ and delinquency cases, but that on average he spent substantially more time on individual child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases than on custody and delinquency cases.

The allocation of workload between judges did not appear to make an impact on whether the court was successful in the timely processing of cases. The courts that appeared to be most successful in case processing, for example, had different allocations of workload between judges and magistrates.

Likewise, allocation of workload did not appear to significantly affect the perceived quality of the outcome relating to safety and permanency for children. Participants in focus groups reported a high degree of satisfaction with the quality and thoroughness of proceedings and the opportunity for participants to be heard in courts with a high degree of judicial involvement and in courts where magistrates handled the majority of the workload. In fact, defense counsel and guardians in one jurisdiction, when asked whether there was a need for more judge time devoted to these cases, responded that in their view it would be more helpful to expand available magistrate time. They explained that magistrates were able to devote their attention exclusively to child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases. The magistrates, therefore, were able to become experts on child welfare issues and did not have conflicting demands on their time from other cases.

Court Staff Resources and Workload:

With a few exceptions, the majority of focus group participants believe that court staff resources are adequate. In a few courts, recent budget cutbacks have resulted in staff shortages. It is not clear, however, whether these will be short-term cutbacks or become permanent reductions in force.

⁷⁰ Other focus groups participants in this county were very positive in their comments on the management of cases by the court, the thorough treatment of cases, of the opportunity of all parties to be heard.

⁷¹ The judge in this court and defense counsel reported that there has been an increase in custody petitions. This is apparently due in part to the fact that a local legal services agency, which handles divorce matters for indigent persons, has encouraged indigent persons to file independent custody petitions. Apparently, due to limited resources, there is a delay in their ability to take on divorce matters. If an independent custody action is filed, indigent persons are entitled to counsel supplied at government expense. Indigent persons in divorce proceedings are not entitled to counsel.

In one of courts visited by the NCSC project team, a substantial share of the juvenile court's record keeping is performed in an independent clerk's office. All focus group participants in that jurisdiction reported that the clerk's office is substantially delayed in records processing and reported that delays ranged from six weeks to two months. This means that it is difficult if not impossible to obtain current information on service of process and that the entries of the courts' orders are substantially delayed. These delays obviously have an impact on efficient management of cases and cause additional work for other court staff, judges, magistrates, and other system participants. The delays in processing also have an impact on the initiation of service of process as well.⁷²

Overall, the NCSC project team did not detect that court staff levels significantly affected child abuse, neglect, and dependency caseload or outcomes. However, it was clear that all counties are suffering budget restrictions similar to those being experienced across the nation by courts and other governmental agencies across the nation. Some are facing potential severe budget cuts.⁷³ The increased focus on the needs of abused and neglected children and children in foster care has resulted in an increase in the requirements that have been placed on courts in handling these cases, and in the need for accountability in judicial processing of cases. State court leaders have embraced the need for improved management of court cases and of greater accountability for all system participants, including courts. The improvements in case processing and increased accountability cannot be realized without adequate resources for the judicial support and information management functions supplied by court staff.

At both local and state levels, the priority of court staffing requirements should continue to be closely monitored. In the current budgetary environment, there is a tendency to "spread the pain" of budget revenue shortfalls by requiring that all agencies and branches make across the board reductions in equal amounts. The judiciary should resist this approach. The approach, while expedient in some respects, assumes that current or past base levels of funding are adequate. During the appropriation process, court leaders should make available assessments of current needs for processing its caseload and advocate for the appropriate priority of those needs and the impact of budget reductions on the welfare of children and families and on the operations of stakeholder agencies.⁷⁴ In allocating resources within the court's appropriated budget, court leaders should critically review priorities based on need and current resource allocations, rather than implementing equal across the board reductions.

⁷²The precise nature of this problem was not clear from our focus group interviews. There appeared to be a lack of coordination between the prosecutor's office and the clerk's office in the initiation of service on parties. The precise manner in which record-processing delays in the clerk's offices affected this process, however, was unclear.

⁷³One court reported a current hiring freeze and the potential for a budget cut of up to 11 percent for the coming fiscal year.

⁷⁴For example, delays in processing of cases may increase the costs of care and services to the PCSA. Similarly, delays may increase the cost of providing guardian services and legal representation.

Other Resources:

Mediation is available in all but one of the smaller counties visited. One of the counties, however, is using mediation only for visitation and custody matters, and not for child abuse, neglect, and dependency case mediation. Mediation has been shown to be an effective tool for some dependency cases. The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) include alternative dispute resolution in its “Key Principles for Permanency Planning for Children.”⁷⁵ NCJFCJ indicates, “All juvenile and family court systems should have alternative dispute resolution processes available to the parties.” Mediation and family group conferencing are included in its definition of alternative dispute resolution. A recent study of mediation in the Washington D. C. Family Court concluded that:

*Full settlement (agreement on both the case plan and a stipulation) was achieved in just over half of these cases (54%; n=108 of 200). A partial settlement (agreement on either a case plan or a stipulation but not both) was achieved in 39% of mediated cases (n=78 of 200). The majority of mediation sessions, therefore, resulted in a settlement of some form (i.e., 93% of mediation cases reached either a full or partial settlement on the issues). Only 7% of mediated cases (n=14 of 200) resulted in no settlement at all.*⁷⁶

In Lucas County, Ohio, the Juvenile Court (A Model Court site) reports a 73 percent settlement rate for child protection cases.⁷⁷

In the two jurisdictions with data available regarding mediation results, settlement rates of approximately 70 percent were reported for cases mediated. In many cases, however, mediation programs have been funded through grant resources, which now have become unavailable, or through local general fund resources that have been reduced.

The majority of resource shortage issues identified in focus groups related to assessment, treatment, and family services. Although these resources are almost exclusively outside of the direct control of the court, all can have a significant impact on the ability of courts to manage child abuse, neglect, and dependency caseload, assure the safety of children under court jurisdiction, and achieve positive and timely permanency outcomes for children.

As is the case with resources directly under the court’s control, the availability of assessment, treatment, and family services have been affected recently by the severe economic conditions being faced by state and local governments. During our discussions with focus group participants, the NCSC project team was informed that a variety of those services had been cut in recent years, and that there is a substantial likelihood of service reductions in upcoming budget years. These cuts currently have an impact on the court’s

⁷⁵National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, *Key Principles for Permanency Planning for Children, Technical Assistance Brief* (1999)

⁷⁶National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, *Mediation in Child Protection Cases: An Evaluation of the Washington, D.C. Family Court Child Protection Mediation Program*, 2005, Reno NV. Pg 15.

⁷⁷Juvenile Division of the Lucas County Court of Common Pleas, 2003 Annual Report, 2003, Toledo, OH: Pg 6. Also available on the Lucas County website: www.co.lucas.oh.us/Juvenile/AnnualReport03.pdf

ability to process cases now, and the impact will obviously be magnified if future cuts affect those services.

The fiscal crises being faced by local government can also have a less direct impact, by reducing the availability of prevention resources. CASA workers in one of the smaller jurisdictions visited identified recent cuts in programs established to provide services to families undergoing crisis as a looming problem. They are concerned that the inability of local service agencies to provide preventative services is increasing the number of child abuse, neglect, and dependency petitions being filed.

Focus group attendees identified a number of examples of shortfalls in assessment, treatment, and family services:

- Lack of transportation assistance for families and children to attend court sessions, to attend assessment programs, or to receive treatment and other services
- Inadequate subsidies for kinship care
- Insufficient number of foster care homes, particularly therapeutic foster care homes,⁷⁸ and limited funds for other placement options
- Inadequate foster care subsidies⁷⁹
- Insufficient mental health assessment and treatment
- Lack of specialized educational services, such as tutoring
- Limited drug treatment resources for parents and children
- Limited availability or access to specialized treatment services such as sexual abuse counseling⁸⁰

Focus group participants in several jurisdictions commented on the high turnover rate of PCSA caseworkers. CASA workers and volunteers in one larger jurisdiction indicated that in their county the average turnover rate for caseworkers is seven months.

In at least two of the counties visited, collaborative enterprises between courts and community social services organization have been formed to explore means to pool some portion of resources available to the constituent organizations in order to provide integrated services for families and children with multiple service needs. Collaborative integration initiatives such as these are very helpful in eliminating duplication of services and reducing costs. For the individual families and children served, it frequently can result in more efficient and relevant service. Children and parents are frequently faced with less “bureaucracy” in order to receive services (since they may be dealing with fewer agency contacts), and are more likely to have a better-integrated “package” of services. The collaboratives usually have beneficial indirect effects. Participating organizations develop better understanding of the needs and resources available to other participating

⁷⁸Therapeutic foster homes are a critical resource for children with significant behavioral deficits or treatment needs.

⁷⁹According to focus group attendees in one jurisdiction, foster care subsidies have recently been cut.

⁸⁰Specialized services frequently do not exist in every community, particularly more rural communities. This means that the services cannot be made available without placement (at much higher cost). Placement in some situations can be counterproductive. There are some services, such as sexual abuse counseling, that are so scarce that there are not enough slots available.

organizations, a better understanding of overall community resources (and limitations), and often build a well informed and powerful source of advocacy for the needs of children and families in the community.

Recommendation 1: The Supreme Court of Ohio should continue and strengthen its support of mediation in child protection cases. That support should include assisting courts in assessing and reporting on the positive qualitative and quantitative outcomes for mediation of child abuse, neglect, and dependency matters, and assisting courts in identifying funding sources for program implementation and maintenance.

Recommendation 2: Administrative judges of the juvenile division of Courts of Common Pleas should be encouraged by the Supreme Court of Ohio to provide leadership in their communities in establishing collaborative initiatives that focus on the improvement and integration of services for families and children that come before the court on child abuse, neglect, or dependency petitions or families and children in crisis that are likely to be subject to these proceedings. Support for administrative judges should be provided through training and/or mentoring by administrative judges with demonstrated success in establishing such community collaboration.

Training

Judges and Magistrates:

The judges and magistrates in the sample sites expressed general satisfaction with the nature and amount of training and education available for judicial officers, although many noted that additional training is always needed and welcome. Among the resources cited were the Ohio Judicial College, Ohio Judicial Conference, and the Ohio Bar Association. Magistrates noted that they are required to have 14 hours of training per year, 10 of which must be from the Judicial College. Judicial officers also have a bench book, the *Ohio Deskbook of Juvenile Court Procedures on Child Abuse, Neglect and Dependency*, which was prepared for the Ohio Association of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

In the jurisdiction which is a model court, magistrates have also attended the specialized training available from the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) as well as internal specialized trainings and hold a quarterly magistrate retreat. Several judicial officers across sites noted the recent training conducted by the Supreme Court of Ohio on the results of the Child and Family Services Review, which included a series of regional meetings to familiarize judicial officers with the CFSR process and outcome measures and how judicial actions may impact these measures. This effort is notable for its inclusion of PCSA directors in the process, since opportunities for and participation in educational sessions that involve cross training appear to limited.

In addition to specific training and educational opportunities, magistrates and judges in some jurisdictions act as faculty for the training sessions held for PCSA workers and/or CASAs. They also may participate in Supreme Court and inter-agency state and local initiatives and efforts designed to improve procedures and outcomes in the courts for abuse and neglect and other cases. Among the examples cited included Supreme Court of Ohio's "Advisory Committee on Children, Families and the Court" and its subcommittee on "Child Abuse and Neglect, and Dependency" as well as, in at least one jurisdiction, the local Fatality Review Board, CASA Board of Directors, Domestic Violence Coordinating Council, and various ODJFS committees and working groups.

Court Personnel:

According to some court personnel, training opportunities have increased and improved over the last several years. Focus group participants cited trainings that were available locally, in one instance through the County Commissioners Office and in another the internal training department of the court, but noted that they were seldom focused exclusively on abuse and neglect cases or court staff's role in the court. After a lapse in training for juvenile court clerks in the last several years, the Ohio Judicial College is sponsoring a two day session in July 2005, billed as the *First Annual Clerk Event*. Although not mentioned during the site visits, the Supreme Court of Ohio published *Ohio Juvenile Court Clerks Best Practices* in 2004. This manual covers the functions and duties of the clerk's office and includes sections on service of process, time guidelines, court appointments, scheduling, appellate procedures, and a range of other topics.

CHAPTER 5 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND CASE TRACKING SYSTEMS

Data and information addressing this theme comes from the Statewide Stakeholder Survey and a review of county-based information technology and case tracking systems. Areas of inquiry included: (1) the availability and sufficiency of case tracking information; (2) the accuracy and timeliness of information; (3) report generation and management information; and (4) imaging and storage.

Statewide Stakeholder Survey

Generally speaking, the statewide survey respondents found the case tracking information insufficient except for court staff, GALs, and private attorneys. Survey responses to the case tracking system questions are found in Table 14.

Table 14. Statewide Survey Results: Case Tracking Systems											
Average Response (4=strongly agree, 3=agree, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree)											
	CASA Staff	CASA Volunteers	Case Supervisor	Case Workers	Court Staff	Ct. Appt. Atty	Foster Care	GAL	Judges	Private Atty	Prosecutor/Agency attorney
Case tracking information is available and sufficient to meet your needs.	2.64	2.97	2.70	2.86	3.17	2.17	2.63	3.00	2.93	3.00	2.54
Case tracking information is available concerning the number or proportion of children who are subject to additional allegations of abuse or neglect while under court jurisdiction.	2.42	2.88	2.94	2.72	2.90	2.25	2.50	2.80	2.71		2.78
Case tracking information is available concerning reunification rates of children before the court.	2.42	2.96	2.95	3.13	2.56	2.00	2.00	2.88	2.55		2.55
Case tracking information is available concerning adoption disruption rates.	2.13	2.93	2.81	2.93	2.33	2.00	1.60	2.86	2.19		2.44
Case tracking information is available concerning the permanency strategy of awarding legal custody to relatives.	2.22	2.90	2.79	2.73	2.63	2.25	1.60	2.88	2.39		2.50
Case tracking information is available to identify positive or problematic trends regarding the use of Ohio's new Grandparent Power of Attorney or Caregiver Authorization Affidavit forms created under HB 130.	1.78	3.00	2.25	2.36	2.11	2.00	2.17	2.86	2.11		2.78

Review of County-Based Information Technology and Case Tracking Systems

Although the five counties seem generally satisfied with their current systems' ability to track information about a single case, the systems, by and large, lack the ability to assist the courts in monitoring cases and ensuring that cases are processed timely and effectively.

Of the five sites visited, Hamilton County had the computer system that was clearly closer to achieving this goal than any of the other sites. The administration at Hamilton County also seemed to have a good vision as to where they needed to go with the system in order to be able to better process their cases. That said, all five sites certainly had room for improvement.

One action that the counties other than Lorain County might want to consider is to see whether they are able to run their current Supreme Court Report with future dates in the date parameters. If they can, they could use the report like Lorain County to find cases that are going to not hit the 90 day time limit for the disposition hearing. This would provide them with a proactive measure of compliance with the 90 day rule for dispositions. If the report is run far enough into the future, they might still have enough time to get the parties in for the adjudication.

Recommendation 3: Counties that are currently unable to produce a report of cases that will soon exceed the 90 day rule for dispositions should explore with their software vendor the possibility that they can run their Supreme Court report with future parameter dates to find cases that will soon exceed that limit.

Most of the systems could improve processing of cases by tracking case processing information at the child level rather than at the case level. Naturally, the court's interests are with the children before it, yet most of the systems are built around tracking what happened to the case. The ideal system should be able to track time between case events and legal time processing requirements by child. A more accurate picture of the court's actions can be obtained by tracking court events at the child level. Data that could be collected at the child level include: the date the child was added to the case, the allegations that relate to that particular child, the parent(s) that was involved with each allegation, the findings as to the child's allegations, the case plan for that child, the hearings where that child's issues were addressed, the child's concerns/problems, closure reason, date, etc. The data model found to be most useful for these types of cases is where the children are attached to a case entity and then entities such as allegations, hearings, problems, and such, are attached to the child on that case rather than the case directly. Using this method, both child level and case level reporting can be done based on the particular issue being addressed in the report.

Recommendation 4: Counties that are unable to fully track their cases at the child level should explore with their software vendor the possibility of doing so.

Even in times of budget problems there are things that could be done at relatively low costs. A common request heard from different counties was to somehow facilitate the sharing of experience from each of the counties in Ohio in terms of what the courts are doing for these cases. This can be accomplished in several ways. Certainly, counties that have bought their systems from the same software vendor could benefit from some sort of "Users Group." For example, Lorain County could share how they run their Supreme Court Report with future date parameters to get a listing of cases that will be non-compliant in the

future. Counties might be able to use their strength in numbers with their vendor to pressure the vendor to make changes to their systems either for free or for a reduced rate.

A broader users group, or even a newsletter, could be helpful for all counties to share their experiences. For example, one county might contribute an article about an inventive way of how they handled a recent change in statute without having to modify their computer system.

Recommendations 5: The Supreme Court of Ohio should facilitate a broad users group or develop a newsletter so that all counties may share their child welfare system IT experiences. One model could involve the experiences of individual counties on a rotating basis.

One of the first steps should be the development of quality assurance (QA) reports for systems that do not currently have QA reports, and the improvement of QA reports for the other systems. Examples of this type of report include listings of cases pending a certain number of days; cases pending without a future hearing set; cases where the filing date is prior to the child's birth date; and cases where the case disposition date is prior to the adjudication date. Although three counties reported that they have not had problems with the accuracy of their data, NCSC believes that once the data is used more by those counties additional data issues will arise. Without QA report examining the data, it is difficult to be able to assess the quality of the data. Hamilton County seemed to be the furthest along in this area. Their experiences in writing the reports and then working with the reports to get the system changed where needed and the data corrected could be valuable if shared with other courts.

Recommendation 6: "Quality Assurance Reports" should be created to ensure that the data stored in the computer is accurate. These reports will be different for each system since they need to be based on the data collected by that individual system, but examples of possible reports include: cases pending a certain number of days; pending cases without a future hearing set; various date inconsistencies (e.g., filing date prior to child's birth date, disposition prior to adjudication date); and hearing results not entered for hearings held in past.

Once the QA reports have been improved, new detail and summary reports need to be created that are geared towards the management of cases, not just counting cases. Reports should help management analyze what is happening in the courts. For example, a common problem in courts is the continuation of hearings. This is certainly something that happens in every court, but through reports you might find that it happens more often in cases before one hearing officer than another, or when one prosecutor is involved than another. Armed with this information the problem can be more rationally addressed.

Performance measures are critical if the court is going to be able to determine where they are now and how they can improve. As a starting point, we recommend that the "Performance Measures" that were developed by a project funded by the Packard

Foundation be examined. These are measurements for child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases that were developed by ABA, NCSC, and NCJFCJ to help courts track these cases and to assist the court in meeting timelines and ensuring the best possible outcomes.⁸¹

Recommendation 7: The courts should create reports that will allow it to assess the court's performance in child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases. Reviewing the "Performance Measures" developed by the ABA, NCSC, and NCJFCJ and funded by the Packard Foundation is a good place for the courts to start.

The NCSC project team is very encouraged by the work that the Supreme Court of Ohio and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services are doing to create data exchanges between the two entities. The report entitled *Automated Case Tracking of Dependency Matters*,⁸² addressed many of the shortcomings in the systems that we observed during our visit. The cost to the system to upgrade all the current software used for child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases in Ohio would be staggering.

The Supreme Court of Ohio and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services' pilot project that is just getting off the ground has great potential for addressing many of these issues in a cost effective manner. The data sharing project will not fix all problems, but it is a step in the right direction and should provide both the court and the Agency valuable data on the cases they are responsible for. By coupling the data sharing with new reports to monitor the system's performance the stakeholders will gain information that will allow them to address various problems and to provide better solutions for the families being severed.

Recommendation 8: The Supreme Court of Ohio should monitor the data sharing pilot project in Lucas County and explore funding options to expand the project should the results of that project suggest that other counties could benefit.

One last issue to be considered follows a model that the state of Georgia uses to provide the same software package to all juvenile courts. In Georgia, the Council of Juvenile Court Judges contracts with a software vendor to provide all 158 counties in Georgia with a juvenile court case management system. The courts are free to use the software the Council makes available or to find another product or to use no software at all. Currently about 60-70 counties are using the software provided by the Council. This is a cost effective way of providing software to the courts since the vendor makes a single version of the software and as new requirements come in (either from the Council, the Legislature, or the Users Group),

⁸¹The American Bar Association-Center on Children and the Law, National Center for State Courts, and National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges Permanency Planning Department (Spring 2004) Building a Better Court: Measuring and Improving Court Performance and Judicial Workload in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases. http://www.ncsconline.org/WC/Publications/Res_CtPerS_TCPS_PackGde4-04Pub.pdf.

⁸²See *Automated Case Tracking of Dependency Matters*, Children Families and the Courts: Ohio Bulletin, Vol. 2, No. 1, 2004. http://www.sconet.state.oh.us/Judicial_and_Court_Services/family_court/summer2004.pdf.

only one application needs to be changed rather than scores of different applications. Several of the larger counties (e.g., Fulton, Clayton, and Gwinnett) have contracted with the same vendor the Council uses to provide systems that meet their court's specific needs. Other counties use software from different vendors.

The NCSC project team is aware that some of the recommendations made above may prove costly because several vendors would have to make major changes to their systems. The sharing of data that the Supreme Court of Ohio and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services are currently piloting will also require additional funds for modification of the various systems to be able to share their data. The NCSC worries that with multiple systems in Ohio the costs to bring all the systems in line with best practices might be too expensive and might prevent changes that would truly help the courts in Ohio. A system that was funded by some outside source might entice courts to adopt the recommendations offered above because the new system would have most of those recommendations already built into it.

Recommendation 9: The Supreme Court of Ohio should explore funding options to provide a caseload management system to all juvenile courts in the state that would incorporate the recommendations made in this report. The new system might be from one of the current vendors or might be from a new vendor.

Table 15. Summary of Highlights from the Case Tracking Systems

	Lorain County – Elyria	Washington County – Marietta	Athens County – Athens	Franklin County – Columbus	Hamilton County -- Cincinnati
<i>Name of system</i>	Court View 2000	CourtView 2000	CMS	FCJS	JCMS
<i>Vendor</i>	Maximus	Maximus	Henschen	County's IT shop	Proware
<i>People who need access to system have it</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<i>Accuracy of data</i>	Has not been a problem.	Has not been a problem.	Has not been a problem.	There have been issues with data accuracy that the court is trying to address.	There have been issues with data accuracy and they are being addressed with various QA reports.
<i>System warns of upcoming case processing time limits</i>	Limited, only for the 90 days to disposition (done via Supreme Court Report).	No (only report that deals with time limits is the Supreme Court Report and this is used in this county only to see cases that have already missed the time limit).	No (the system has an item on one of the screens that shows when the 90 days to disposition is up, but the user would have to go to that screen for every case to find the ones that are coming up).	No (only report that deals with time limits is the Supreme Court Report and this is used in this county only to see cases that have already missed the time limit).	No.
<i>System includes Quality Assurance reports</i>	No	No	No	Yes (e.g., judge assigned by case not initiated, more than one termination on a case, case terminated with an active schedule, etc.)	Yes, currently there are 18 QA reports (they are called Control Reports in this system) with more being planned.

Table 15. Summary of Highlights from the Case Tracking Systems

	Lorain County – Elyria	Washington County – Marietta	Athens County – Athens	Franklin County – Columbus	Hamilton County -- Cincinnati
<i>System produces reports of cases received, cases completed, cases pending</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No (these reports are in the system but they are not currently in production – they are still being tested).
<i>The court's administration uses the reports created by the system</i>	No	No	No	Yes	Not yet.
<i>System is able to track court processing for each child</i>	No, findings are at the case level, not the child level (though text is entered in the journal and can be viewed there). Cannot tell when the matter is completed for a particular child on the case.	No, findings are at the case level, not the child level (though you could see this information in the docket). Cannot tell when the matter is completed for a particular child on the case.	Yes, a case is created for each child on the petition, so the information is tracked at the child level.	Mostly, prior cases are not linked automatically – the user has to manually do it, so the history on a child is not always available. Allegations stored at child level since all allegations on a case are for each child on the case. Findings are stored at the child level. Hearings are set on the case, not the child, so you cannot tell which child's issues were dealt with at any particular hearing.	Mostly, allegations are at the case level, not the child level. Results are at the child level. Hearings are set on at the child level, not the case level, so you can tell which child's issues were dealt with at any particular hearing. Termination codes are tracked at the child level, so this is a very good way of telling when the matter is completed for a particular child on a case.

Table 15. Summary of Highlights from the Case Tracking Systems

	Lorain County – Elyria	Washington County – Marietta	Athens County – Athens	Franklin County – Columbus	Hamilton County -- Cincinnati
<i>System provides tools to management to monitor court's case processing activities</i>	No, the system collects much of the needed data, but the reports have not yet been written that the administration wants to allow it to monitor the court activity and to perform the type of analysis it needs.	No, the system collects much of the needed data but the administration is not getting the reports it wants out of the system.	No, the administration is receiving only an annual report and that report is created by manually pulling files.	Close. There are some reports, but improvements are needed in terms of monitoring cases as they approach various time limits. Judges and magistrates review reports on their docket.	Close. The system is close. Reports are still being reviewed and tweaked. The foundation is there, they just need to complete their work on the reports.
<i>System includes method for creation of ad-hoc reports to assist management</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes, though you need to know how to write the query in SQL to query the FilePro database. The staff does not know how to do this, so ad-hoc reports are not generated.	No	No
<i>Who does most of the data entry</i>	Clerks	Clerks	Clerks	Clerks	Magistrates
<i>Case plans stored on line?</i>	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
<i>Does the system have imaging?</i>	Yes	No	Limited – just for service of notice.	No	Yes

CHAPTER 6 TIMELINESS

This theme emerged through data and information obtained from the case file review, court observation, the Statewide Stakeholder Survey, and Focus Groups. Areas of inquiry included: (1) timelines between court events and milestones; (2) court delay and continuance; (3) the practice of setting next hearing dates; (4) the burden of statutory and legal requirements; (5) compliance with state and federal case processing timelines; (6) case management; and (7) scheduling of hearings.

Case File Review

For the cases reviewed, almost half of the cases (45.76 percent) had a shelter hearing before or on the day of the removal from the home. The majority of cases reviewed (68.91 percent) held a court review within six months of the filing of the complaint. Time breakdowns are located in Tables 16 and 17.

Number of Days	Frequency	Percent of Total
Shelter hearing before removal	35	19.77%
0 days	46	25.99%
1-5 days	41	23.16%
6-15 days	7	3.95%
16-25 days	19	10.73%
26-30 days	20	11.30%
More than 30 days	9	5.08%
	177	

Number of Days	Frequency	Percent of Total
0 days	1	0.52%
1-30 days	7	3.63%
31-60 days	9	4.66%
61-90 days	20	10.36%
91-120 days	12	6.22%
121-150 days	32	16.58%
151-180 days	52	26.94%
181-210 days	15	7.77%
More than 210 days	45	23.32%
	193	

For the cases reviewed, the time between Complaint/Shelter Hearing and Adjudicatory Hearing was 31 to 90 days for the majority of cases (61.13 percent). While the time between Complaint/Shelter Hearing and Dispositional Hearing for the majority of cases (61.46 percent) was 1-90 days. The vast majority of cases reviewed (71.73 percent) recorded the adjudicatory and dispositional hearing occurring on the same day. The full time results are found in Tables 18, 19, and 20

Table 18. Case File Review: Time between Complaint/Shelter Hearing and Adjudicatory Hearing

Number of Days	Frequency	Percent of Total
0 days	1	0.40%
1-30days	31	12.55%
31-60 days	83	33.60%
61-90 days	68	27.53%
91-120 days	23	9.31%
121-150 days	10	4.05%
151-180 days	11	4.45%
181-210 days	4	1.62%
More than 210 days	16	6.48%
	247	

Table 19. Case File Review: Time between Complaint/Shelter Hearing and Dispositional Hearing

Number of Days	Frequency	Percent of Total
1-30days	22	11.28%
31-60 days	53	27.18%
61-90 days	45	23.08%
91-120 days	16	8.21%
121-150 days	10	5.13%
151-180 days	17	8.72%
181-210 days	4	2.05%
More than 210 days	28	14.36%
	195	

Table 20. Case File Review: Time between Adjudicatory Hearing and Dispositional Hearing		
Number of Days	Frequency	Percent of Total
0 days	137	71.73%
1-30days	13	6.81%
31-60 days	10	5.24%
61-90 days	12	6.28%
91-120 days	7	3.66%
121-150 days	3	1.57%
151-180 days	0	0.00%
181-210 days	3	1.57%
More than 210 days	6	3.14%
	191	

Court Observation:

Of the 48 cases observed during the evaluation data collection timeframe, the majority (56.25 percent) were delayed in some manner. A good portion of the delays were 20 minutes or less (39.59 percent) while 31 percent of the proceedings were delayed by 1 hour or more. The time delay results from the court observations are found in Tables 21 and 22.

Table 21. Court Observation: Delay and Continuance		
	Frequency	Percent of Total
yes, delayed more than 15 minutes	27	56.25%
yes, delayed and continued	6	12.5%
no delay or less than 15 minutes	15	31.25%
	48	

Table 22. Court Observation: Time between Scheduled and Actual Start Time (Minutes)		
Length of Delay	Frequency	Percent of Total
0 minutes - on time	5	10.42%
5-10 minutes	8	16.67%
11-20 minutes	6	12.50%
21-30 minutes	4	8.33%
31-40 minutes	4	8.33%
41-50 minutes	3	6.25%
51-60 minutes	2	4.17%
Over 60 minutes	15	31.25%
Missing	1	2.08%
	48	

The court observation found that at the majority of proceedings observed, the data and time for the next hearing was discussed. Table 23 lists the results.

Table 23. Court Observation: Next Hearing Dates				
Did the court discuss the following:	yes	No	unclear	Not applicable
Date and time for next hearing	80.43%	8.70%	0.00%	10.87%

Statewide Stakeholder Survey

Survey respondents were asked their opinions on the various potential sources of delay for court proceedings. Only the PCSA case workers as a group identified parties being absent and court scheduling problems as being major sources of delay in their jurisdiction. Overall, survey participants responded that parties being tardy, parties being unprepared, inability to identify absent parent(s), inability to locate absent parent(s), and problems with service were not a major source of court proceeding delay and/or continuance in their jurisdiction. The survey results are located in Table 24.

Table 24. Statewide Survey Results: Continuance and Delay Average Response (4=strongly agree, 3=agree, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree)											
	CASA Staff	CASA Volunteers	Case Supervisor	Case Workers	Court Staff	Ct. Appt. Atty	Foster Care	GAL	Judges	Private Atty	Prosecutor/Agency attorney
Parties being absent is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	2.63	2.75	2.68	3.20	2.36	2.44	2.57	2.25	2.74	2.33	2.60
Parties being tardy is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	2.65	2.70	2.47	2.46	2.20	2.75	2.23	2.20	2.37	2.30	2.33
Parties being unprepared is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	2.48	2.51	2.55	2.93	2.36	2.56	2.85	2.12	2.48	2.40	2.27
Court scheduling problems are a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	2.33	2.38	2.73	3.07	2.19	2.44	2.38	2.28	2.22	2.30	2.53
Inability to identify absent parent(s) is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	2.23	2.29	2.44	2.63	2.13	2.11	2.44	2.00	2.38	2.25	2.20
Inability to locate absent parent(s) a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	2.57	2.46	2.58	2.82	2.29	2.22	3.00	2.26	2.52	2.25	2.47
Problems with service of process on parties is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	2.67	2.40	2.77	2.90	2.36	2.44	2.63	2.41	2.78	2.57	2.60

Survey participants were asked their opinion concerning the burden of statutory and legal requirements. Overall, none of the survey participant groups felt that statutory, regulatory, and/or procedural requirements imposed were a source of significant administrative burden. Only three groups (court staff, court-appointed attorneys, and judges) felt that their jurisdiction was able to meet the Ohio specific case-related time frames (ORC HB 484). CASA staff, CASA volunteers, court staff, and court-appointed attorneys held the opinion that typically in their jurisdiction, they were able to meet the mandatory case-related timelines dictated by statute and court rule. All groups except PCSA case workers, foster care providers, and prosecutors/agency attorneys felt that in their jurisdiction, they were able to meet the Supreme Court of Ohio's case processing guidelines for child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases.

Concerning federal legislation, all groups except judges, private attorneys, and prosecutors/agency attorneys felt that their jurisdiction was in compliance with federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) regulations. In sharp contrast, only CASA volunteers, court-appointed attorneys, and GALs felt that their jurisdiction was in compliance with the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) time frames. Full survey results are located in Table 25.

Table 25. Statewide Survey Results: Statutory and Legal Requirements
Average Response (4=strongly agree, 3=agree, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree)

	CASA Staff	CASA Volunteers	Case Supervisor	Case Workers	Court Staff	Ct. Appt. Atty	Foster Care	GAL	Judges	Private Atty	Prosecutor/Agency attorney
Statutory, regulatory and/or procedural requirements impose significant administrative burden on the courts. Please specify sources of significant burdens in the comment section	2.57	2.21	2.40	2.72	2.23	2.14	2.71	2.31	2.64	2.17	2.25
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet OH specific time frames (ORC HB 484).	2.81	2.92	2.45	2.75	3.07	3.17	2.56	2.85	3.00	2.88	2.80
My jurisdiction is in compliance with the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) time frames.	2.80	3.15	2.21	2.67	2.78	3.20	1.89	3.00	2.82		2.90
My jurisdiction is in compliance with federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) regulations.	3.33	3.09	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.11	2.93		2.80
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet the mandatory case-related timelines dictated by statute and court rule. Please identify unmet requirements in the comment section	3.00	3.10	2.67	2.90	3.06	3.29	1.86	2.89	2.92	2.40	2.73
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet the Supreme Court of Ohio's case processing guidelines for abuse and neglect cases.	3.19	3.26	3.00	2.88	3.07	3.14	2.00	3.07	3.08	3.17	2.69

Focus Groups and Interviews

Timelines for Adjudication and Disposition

Ohio Revised Code (O.R.C.) 2151.28 and Ohio Rule of Juvenile Procedure (O.R.J.P.) 29(A) provide that adjudicatory hearings on complaints alleging child abuse, neglect, or dependency shall be held no later than 30 days after the complaint is filed. However, if there is good cause shown, the adjudicatory hearing may extend beyond 30 days either for ten days to allow any party to obtain counsel or beyond 30 days for a reasonable time to obtain counsel, obtain service on all parties, or complete any necessary evaluations. In any event, the statute and rule provide that the adjudicatory hearing shall be held not later than sixty days after the complaint is filed. O.C.R 2151.35 and O.R.J.P. 34 (A) require that the disposition hearing be held not more than 90 days from the date of the filing of the complaint. O.R.J.P 34(A) further provides that if the disposition hearing is not held within the 90 day period, the court, on its own motion or the motion of any party or the guardian *ad litem* of the child, shall dismiss the complaint without prejudice.

Assessments of the feasibility and value of meeting the 30 and 90 day timelines for adjudication and disposition varied across sites and focus group participants. It appears the timelines are at least used as guidelines or goals in all of the jurisdictions and the basis for initial scheduling of the adjudicatory and dispositional hearings. In one jurisdiction, the 90 day timeline was described as “reasonable” by judicial officers and in another as “achievable” if certain conditions were present; namely, that the request was for temporary custody, the plan was reunification, the case plan was realistic, and the necessary services were available. However, some prosecutors and defense counsel expressed the view that 90 days was a short time to trial in any type of case and that, at times, the interests of the child were better served by a longer time period to disposition. It was noted that more than 90 days is often necessary for parents to fully grasp what is occurring, receive services, resolve issues, and reach agreements in cases. The view was also expressed that meeting or not meeting the 90 day timeline had little impact on eventually achieving permanency for the child.

There was more unanimity on the question of whether the courts were currently meeting the timelines. With the exception of one court in which there was general agreement that the 90 days to disposition timeline was routinely being met, participants in the various focus groups described compliance as rare or occurring in a comparatively small percentage of cases; for example, compliance was estimated at 25 percent of the cases in one jurisdiction. In that jurisdiction, judicial officers noted that they were able to achieve compliance in the past, but, at the present time, 90 days more likely represented the median time to disposition rather than the norm. Despite scheduling to meet the designated timelines, most adjudication and disposition hearings end up being rescheduled in most of the sites. Even in the court which reports achieving substantial compliance with the 90 day limit, it was noted that adjudicatory hearings sometimes started for an hour and then continued for a month just to meet the deadline.

The courts in the sample respond in different ways when it is clear that a case is not going to meet the 90 day deadline for disposition. In one jurisdiction, cases are routinely dismissed without prejudice and re-filed. This is done more or less simultaneously so that the court does not lose jurisdiction over the child. In the other jurisdictions, the 90 day timeline is waived if the parties and counsel agree to extend the time. If it is not clear that there is agreement to extend or if a party is absent from the discussion of the waiver, one court re-files and another files an amended complaint. The advantage of filing an amended complaint rather than re-filing the case is that it allows service of process to proceed as if it were a motion rather than an original complaint.

Information from the on-site focus groups suggests that not only are courts not achieving substantial compliance with the time standards provided in O.R.C 2151.28 and 2151.35, but that the timelines, specifically the 90 day limit, result in practices that impose an administrative burden on the court and produce some unintended consequences. For instance, dismissal and re-filing of a case means that all of the processes, including service and requests for discovery, must start again. For the appointed counsel, it also means that the cap on the total fees that an attorney can charge in a case starts anew. Less clear is how the practice skews the interpretation of case statistics on filings, dismissals, and timeliness. If re-filing occurs only rarely or in a small percentage of cases, these issues are less salient and

outweighed by the interest in establishing standards that ensure the timely disposition of the majority of the cases. However, if re-filings are routine and more the norm than the exception, than, as one judicial officer said, it is counter-productive. Likewise, to the extent that the use of waivers, amended complaints, and scheduling maneuvers are routine, it suggests that the intent of the statutory provisions is being undermined.

When asked for possible solutions, most focus group participants dismissed the idea of establishing certain grounds for an extension of time, offering the view that such requests would be filed in almost all cases. Lengthening the time was also not supported by those who believed the 90 day standard was a worthy goal. Clearly, however, current procedures, especially the re-filing of cases, wastes time and other resources.

Case Management

Based on the NCSC project team's interviews with focus groups, the experience in meeting benchmarks for timeliness in processing child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases varies across counties. The majority of participants in all jurisdictions agree that the requirement for adjudication is not being met routinely. The experience in meeting goals for permanency varies across the jurisdictions visited. There are a number of issues that affect timeliness and case management in the courts visited.

Scheduling:

All groups in each of the jurisdictions visited reported that scheduling in child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases is difficult in view of the number of lawyers and participants involved in these case types. In view of the legal requirement that parents are entitled to separate representation and that children are entitled to legal representation and often are entitled to legal representation of their best interest, cases with four or more attorneys are not uncommon.⁸³ Scheduling can become a significant challenge, particularly in view of the frequency of hearings required in child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases and the short timelines for these case types.

Continuances:

Most jurisdictions reported that continuances were common in child abuse, neglect, and dependency matters. Attorney conflicts and unpreparedness, discussed in more detail below, were the most frequently cited reasons for continuances.

Judges and magistrates expressed frustration with the perceived inability to control the number of continuances. In most jurisdictions, there was a general understanding of the disruption caused by continuances, and the significant impact that continuances appeared to have on the courts' ability to ensure timely adjudication and disposition, and to reach

⁸³In those cases where there are multiple children with multiple fathers, or where there are multiple putative fathers, the number of attorneys required for representation of parents, children, and as lawyer guardians ad litem can actually involve virtually all of the private attorneys regularly practicing dependency law in a given jurisdiction.

permanency time goals. Most commented, however, that it was difficult if not impossible to impose strict continuance policies. They explained that continuances are often caused when parties come to hearings unprepared. Parents may appear for the first time at a pre-trial or adjudication without counsel. Even though the parents may be culpable for a lack of diligence, judges and magistrates are reluctant to proceed in those situations without counsel being appointed for the parents. As noted below, attorneys may be unprepared to proceed for a number of reasons. Again, although the judicial officer may believe that the attorney may have been dilatory, they are reluctant to proceed if the practical result will be ineffective counsel for a parent or for the child who is the subject of the hearing. In other cases, one or more of the parties may be unprepared due to no fault of their own. Regardless of the reason, judges and magistrates point out that the net result of not granting a continuance and proceeding with a hearing is a result that may be prejudicial to the best interests of the child(ren) who is the subject of the child abuse, neglect, or dependency case.

According to focus group participants, longer hearings, particularly permanent custody hearings, are heard on multiple dates over an extended period. In some cases, a hearing will begin on one date and is continued for further testimony if more time than anticipated is required, or a hearing will be initially scheduled to take place on several different dates.

Attorney Conflicts and Preparedness:

Where appointments of counsel are made after the shelter hearing or preliminary hearing, attorneys often have difficulty honoring scheduled hearings. Though, in most courts where appointments are made subsequent to initial hearings, the court staff makes an attempt to appoint counsel who indicate that their calendars are clear for the hearings already set.

If attorneys are appointed after the initial hearing, many have difficulty in making contact with their clients. Judges, magistrates, court staff, caseworkers, and government attorneys in most jurisdictions indicated that they believed that MOST, though not all, attorneys made an effort to contact their clients prior to hearings. Attorney groups echoed this belief. Most believed that, in the short term, attorneys often had difficulty in making contact with their clients, particularly for pre-adjudication and disposition matters, for a number of reasons:

- Clients frequently are transient, moving from one location to another.
- Many clients have no phones.
- Many clients have no reliable transportation.
- In a significant number of cases, clients are simply incapable of following through or taking responsibility.

Social workers noted that they also have many of the same difficulties in maintaining contact with clients. However, since the social workers must often travel to their clients' homes to provide services, they have greater success in establishing and maintaining client contact. The fact that they frequently meet parents and children in their homes will often result in the establishment of a certain level of trust. That trust serves to make ongoing contact easier. At a minimum, social workers must regularly check on the status and safety

of children, if they have remained in the home. If the children have been removed, social workers are usually engaged in providing services to parents, monitoring their behavior and compliance with case plans, and reviewing the status, condition, and suitability of living arrangements. That leads to the ironic experience that the social workers will be able to maintain better communications with parents, despite the fact that they may have initiated the request for court intervention.

Focus group participants in all jurisdictions reported that delays resulted from lack of preparedness on the part of attorneys. All participants reported this problem, from CASA volunteers to judges and magistrates. The degree to which this was perceived as a problem, however, varied across jurisdictions. The perceived cause of attorney unpreparedness and the nature of unpreparedness varied as well.

Most focus group participants agreed that it was most often the defense counsel or lawyer guardians ad litem who were unprepared at the time of court hearings. In one jurisdiction, however, defense counsel and social workers agreed that prosecuting attorneys were frequently not prepared. It was surmised that this may have been in part due to recent high turnover in the office, and there was a feeling that the problem had diminished significantly in recent months.

Focus group participants universally agreed that a significant cause of the unpreparedness of defense counsel for parents was the lack of cooperation and the frequent unavailability of the parents, as noted above. Parents in child abuse, neglect, or dependency cases often do not have stable housing or employment, and frequently do not have telephones or readily available transportation. In addition, parents are often unresponsive. Their unresponsiveness may be due to their own problems (for example, drug dependence), a lack of trust of the system and its participants,⁸⁴ or failure to comprehend the seriousness of the court proceedings.

Focus group participants across the board generally agreed that the problem of attorney preparedness attributable to lack of diligence on the part of the attorney was often isolated to a subset of private counsel and not pervasive among the entire child abuse, neglect, and dependency bar.

As noted elsewhere in this report, the issue of attorney preparedness appeared to be a more significant problem in those jurisdictions where appointments of counsel more frequently occurred AFTER the initial hearing. In those jurisdictions, attorneys pointed out that given the short timelines involved in child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases (particularly prior to adjudication and disposition), it was difficult to be prepared in advance because valuable time was lost to conduct appropriate discovery and make meaningful contact with their clients. Attorneys in one jurisdiction believed that defense attorneys and their clients were at a significant disadvantage due to the delay in appointment. A delay in appointment could mean that the interim case plan relating to custody and services was likely

⁸⁴ Ironically, however, as noted elsewhere, parents will sometimes establish a trusting relationship with social workers, even though those same social workers may have made the request that a dependency petition be filed.

to already be in place (making it more difficult to advocate for a different approach for their client), or that prejudicial admissions may have already been made by parents.

Attorney conflicts, according to all focus group participants, can be a source of delay despite best efforts to establish case schedules at early stages of a case. The degree to which this presented a problem varied across jurisdictions.

In larger jurisdictions, attorney conflicts appeared to be a more significant issue and were an issue for agency attorneys and prosecuting attorneys as well as defense counsel. According to agency and prosecuting attorneys, this occurred due to the fact that attorneys were often spread between several courtrooms, thus creating competition for their time. Even where cases could be scheduled without a conflict, delays in the start of hearings might ultimately cause a conflict leading either to delay in the start of subsequent hearings or continuance of subsequent hearings. This problem appeared to be most acute in a large jurisdiction where multiple hearings were scheduled for a single time block (for example, four or five hearings scheduled for a time block such as 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM).

Most of the defense attorneys and lawyer guardians ad litem also handle other trial work, ranging from civil matters to delinquency and criminal matters. Judges, magistrates, defense attorneys, and lawyer guardians ad litem all reported that child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases were treated as “low priority” in terms of scheduling in the local trial court system. In other words, when an attorney has a conflict between a child abuse, neglect, or dependency case hearing and a hearing in another court, the case in the other court was almost always accorded priority.⁸⁵ This appeared to be a more significant problem where magistrates held the majority of hearings and judges were less involved in conducting hearings and in day-to-day case management.

Judges, magistrates, prosecuting and agency attorneys, and social workers all commented that attorney-scheduling conflicts were aggravated by the shortage of attorneys available and willing to take appointments as defense counsel or guardian ad litem in child abuse, neglect, or dependency cases. In two jurisdictions, judges commented that on occasion they would “enlist” attorneys when the unavailability of counsel became a problem in moving specific cases. In one jurisdiction, where counsel appointments were largely the responsibility of the local public defender’s office, the shortage of attorneys regularly taking appointments for child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases was particularly acute. Judges, magistrates, and attorneys in that jurisdiction expressed significant frustration with the procedures for attorney appointments.⁸⁶

⁸⁵This was mentioned most frequently in the context of a conflict between a dependency matter and a criminal matter or domestic relations matter scheduled in another division of the Court of Common Pleas.

⁸⁶Many of the attorneys expressed confusion regarding the methodology used for appointments. There was a feeling that the distribution of appointments was not equitable. Both attorneys and magistrates expressed concern that there was little control exercised over the distribution of appointments or the quality of representation by that office.

Service of Process:

Assessment of the role of service of process issues in delay and continuance of proceedings varied across the jurisdictions included in the site visits. In one jurisdiction it was cited as the most significant factor contributing to delay and continuances; in another as a major but not necessarily the main reason for delay and continuances; and in the others it was described as problematic at times, but not a recurring or significant issue. The differences reflect, in part, the size of the counties and population served by the court. In one of the smaller jurisdictions, for example, focus group participants cited the relative stability of the population and, in another, respondents noted their ability to contact neighboring counties about the whereabouts of a family and the general advantage of a community where people know each other. However, even in these jurisdictions, it was also noted that improvements in the way PCSA case workers approached and prepared for service of process also contributed to more successful efforts to attain service.

In those jurisdictions that described service of process as a significant factor in delay, focus group participants identified locating parties as one of the reasons. Some focus group participants suggested that the court and the PCSA make more active inquiry into the location of absent parties at the initial hearings, even to the point of taking testimony under oath. In another jurisdiction, active inquiry at the initial stages is the practice, although parties are not sworn. All the jurisdictions face the problem of putative fathers being identified at later stages in the proceedings, a problem that is not easily resolved but which also causes subsequent delays. In addition to identifying the parties that need to be served, obtaining current and reliable addresses for those parties is often another problem. At times, this is due to the transient living patterns of some parties. However, some focus group participants also attributed it to a lack of diligence in pursuing other sources for the information and/or a lack of communication about updated or alternative addresses among caseworkers, prosecutors, and parents' counsel.

Most focus group participants expressed the view that the problem with service of process was more of a process issue than one of locating absent parties. Multiple factors and responsible offices/agencies were cited in this discussion, including errors, lack of back-up, backlog in docket entries, and insufficient training and instruction in the clerk's office; lack of diligent and timely submission of requests for service on the part of prosecutors; and lack of understanding of the service of process rules and the implications of non-service on the part of PCSA caseworkers and others. One specific example cited was delay and confusion about how to pursue the appropriate follow-up when initial attempts at service fail. In one jurisdiction, there appeared to be a diffusion of responsibility around service of process with focus group participants expressing some uncertainty about the roles of different offices/individuals in the process.

It appears that failure to obtain service on a party is often, if not always, identified at the hearing or on the day of the hearing, resulting in a continuance and waste of bench time. Checking on the completion of service is sometimes difficult because of delay in entries in the clerk's office; however, it is also simply a function of the time involved in making attempts at certified mail and receiving the returns. Some expressed the view that hearings

are scheduled without due consideration to the time demands of service by mail or publication.

Despite the problems, there are some promising practices that have been instituted and other attempts to address the issue. In one jurisdiction, service on complaints and motions is done through the clerk's office; however, service for other hearings is completed by the case managers in the courtroom at the conclusion of a hearing and hand-delivered to those parties that are present and mailed to those who are not. In the same jurisdiction, the prosecutors conduct training on service of process for PCSA case workers. Although the prosecutors express some reservations about its efficacy, at a minimum, it provides a forum for discussion and could enhance communication. Finally, as noted above, it appears that simply encouraging a greater focus on service of process issues and having a plan for the required procedures has made a difference in at least two courts.

Active Case Management:

Information system reports or exception reports useful for tracking and monitoring the status of caseload were either not available or not used in some of the jurisdictions visited. Judges and court staff in only one jurisdiction mentioned during interviews that they made active use of information system reports to assist in actively monitoring caseload. In another jurisdiction, while the information system appeared from discussions to have substantial data available, magistrates and court staff commented that obtaining reports from the system, particularly ad hoc reports, was difficult.

In one jurisdiction, however, the court staff, at the direction of the judges of the court, regularly generate a report of pending cases for review of case status. Court staff, at the direction of the judges, review all cases to identify those that appear to be delayed or in danger of exceeding time limits. Remedial action is then taken with respect to delayed cases. Remedial action depends on the apparent cause of delay, and may include calling upon the PCSA to expedite services to children or parents or scheduling an interim pre-trial to determine the status of a case.

This doesn't mean, necessarily, that other active case management techniques aren't employed in the other jurisdictions. For example, many of the jurisdictions scheduled hearings through disposition at the beginning of a case, in order to ensure that the parties were aware of the case timeline. By doing so, those courts ensured that cases, at least at early stages, had "next action" dates scheduled. However, when timely case management and monitoring reports are not available or not used, there is no safeguard against potential delay for cases that are continued without future action dates. Further, it is difficult if not impossible to have a clear picture of the status of the overall pending caseload.

All participants, including judges, magistrates, court staff, social workers, agency attorneys, and guardians are conscious of the timelines for adjudication and disposition, and for achieving permanency. Most jurisdictions have adopted procedures for establishing multiple dates for key hearings that helps to ensure that each case, at least at the outset of a case, has an established plan. For example, by the time of the initial appearance or shelter

care hearing, dates for pre-trial conferences and review, adjudication, and permanency plan hearings may be set. This allows participants to plan their schedules accordingly.

The jurisdictions reporting the greatest success in meeting timeliness guidelines were characterized by the active participation of judges in case management. In all counties visited, magistrates were responsible for some portion of the child abuse, neglect, and dependency case workload. The involvement of magistrates in smaller jurisdictions was minimal, however, and primarily involved emergency hearings and coverage when the judge was not available. As one might expect, magistrates handle a greater share of the workload in the larger jurisdictions. Given the fact that most of these cases are characterized by a large number of relatively brief hearings, and that the nature of child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases often demands specialized knowledge of child development as well as intimate knowledge of the applicable timelines and of the local social service delivery system, this workload allocation makes good sense. Even where magistrates shoulder a greater burden of the hearing workload, those courts where the judges were concerned about the pace of caseload and were actively involved in management or monitoring of these cases reported greater success in meeting timeliness requirements. During our group interviews in one jurisdiction where magistrates were responsible for a substantial share of the child abuse, neglect, and dependency workload, the NCSC project team found that a “culture of timeliness” existed, and that all participants, from court staff to defense counsel to agency attorneys to social workers, were focused on meeting deadlines to ensure that cases were able to meet court case processing guidelines. Participants attributed this focus on meeting deadlines to a clear expectation that has been established by the judges that deadlines be met. Judges in that jurisdiction regularly review case management data and require that pending caseload reports be regularly reviewed by their staff to take action on specific cases that require intervention.⁸⁷

Permanent Custody Scheduling:

In many of the courts visited, it was a common practice to schedule and hear permanent custody trials in portions, over several days.⁸⁸ Judges, magistrates, and court staff indicated during our interviews that, given the nature of child abuse, neglect, and dependency calendars, which are characterized by a high volume of relatively brief but time sensitive hearings, it was often not possible to find a time slot within an acceptable timeframe sufficient to accommodate a full trial. Accordingly, permanent custody trials were scheduled in “sections” in order to allow them to be heard in an acceptable time frame.

In one of the larger jurisdictions, retired judges have been assigned to assist the court in light of its high case volume. In that county, the retired judges hear the permanent custody trials. In most instances, the trials are more frequently heard in their entirety at one time. However, the retired judges are not available frequently enough to ensure timely

⁸⁷That jurisdiction has organized its work around teams, with magistrates and prosecuting attorneys assigned to work with cases assigned to a specific judge. This appears to help in minimizing scheduling conflicts and to increase accountability. Obviously, this contributes to ensuring timeliness.

⁸⁸It is also not uncommon for a permanent custody trial to be scheduled for a time slot on one date, and then continued to a subsequent date if the time allotted was not sufficient to complete testimony.

scheduling. In addition, the availability of funding for assigning retired judges has apparently been reduced.

Another jurisdiction attempted to set aside specific blocks of time for hearing permanent custody trials to enable scheduling full, continuous trials. However, that approach was abandoned since it resulted in an inordinate amount of “down” time when cases settled or were postponed. As in all of the jurisdictions visited, permanent custody trials (adjudication trials) are set one at a time without back-up trials or other hearings.⁸⁹

Judges and magistrates acknowledged that this approach to scheduling created both qualitative and quantitative problems. Attorneys were vocal in their criticism of the practice. When trials are conducted over several hearing dates, it is more difficult for the parties and the judicial officer to retain information obtained in testimony, which in turn affects both the quality and timeliness of decisions that must be made. Efficiency is eroded when the participants are forced to prepare for trial on multiple occasions. The increased number of scheduled hearings multiplies the opportunities for cases to be continued or otherwise delayed due to the unavailability of a key participant.

Discovery:

Defense counsel and lawyer guardians ad litem, and to a lesser degree, non-lawyer guardians identified timeliness and adequacy of discovery as a factor in delay. Attorneys in one jurisdiction, in fact, reported that it frequently took several months to obtain agency records. The degree of difficulty in obtaining discovery of agency records and the specific nature of the problem varied across jurisdictions. There were common factors reported, however:

- Agency records, which are the principal subject of discovery requests, tend to be voluminous, making the sheer physical task of duplicating and delivering records a substantial one in terms of labor and cost.
- Prosecutors and agency attorneys screen discovery requests to ensure compliance and that inappropriate records are not released. This is frequently a resource and coordination burden for those offices.
- Similarly, access to social workers by defense counsel is constrained by the availability of prosecutors and agency attorneys to represent their client agency in those contacts.
- The impact of delays in obtaining discovery material on defense counsel and guardians is aggravated by the fact that they are appointed after a petition is filed. Frequently, a family has been involved with the PCSA for some considerable period prior to court intervention. The information that must be obtained and reviewed by the attorney may therefore be considerable. Depending on the circumstances of the case, an attorney may not be appointed until some time after a petition is filed, further delaying discovery and

⁸⁹All of the jurisdictions that NCSC visited adhered to a one family/one judicial officer approach. Strict adherence to that approach makes it difficult to employ multiple or prioritized scheduling approaches frequently used for other case types, where more than one case is scheduled for a given date and time based on past experience with the frequency of settlement for the cases. In order to be successful in terms of resource and case management and effective use of participants' time, multiple calendaring depends to some degree on the ability of a court to divert back-up or lower priority hearings to another judicial officer when the primary hearing proceeds as scheduled.

compressing the time available for the assigned counsel to review available information and prepare his or her case.

PCSA staff, defense counsel, agency attorneys, and prosecuting attorneys commented that obtaining medical records was difficult and time-consuming and that doctors' offices and hospitals were frequently reluctant to provide records, and that there appeared to be confusion by those offices regarding who was entitled to have access to such records and under what circumstances.

Interstate Placements:

Investigations and placements can be a significant source of delay in some cases, particularly for the state's border counties where available placements (particularly relative placements) are frequently in bordering states. The Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children was enacted in order to ensure that the out-of-state homes to which children may be placed are safe and that needed services are available. In practice, the processes required pursuant to the ICPC can be very slow and can contribute significant delay to permanent placement of children. For border counties, this can be a substantial problem, particularly in view of the fact that relatives suitable for adoption or guardianship can frequently reside across state lines. Judges, magistrates, and PCSA case workers in two jurisdictions reported this to be a regular problem in their jurisdictions.

Service and Assessment Availability:

The orderly progress of child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases depends upon the availability and timeliness of a variety of assessment and treatment services that are typically beyond the direct control of the judiciary. Those services are frequently specialized and resource intensive. For example, in many cases, the paternity of children who are the subject of the petitions must be established. Drug dependence of parents is a frequent issue, meaning that drug and alcohol screening treatment services must be readily available. A variety of specialized education and training services should be available for both parents and children. Abused children and displaced children often require long-term treatment. The availability and adequacy of these services can have a significant impact on the timeliness of case processing and permanency and the quality of outcomes for children and families. Most often, these services are made available through the PCSA, but often from community providers under contract.

Focus group participants in all of the jurisdictions reported varying degrees of difficulty in obtaining relevant and timely assessment and treatment services. Limitations on agency budgets were most frequently cited as a problem in obtaining services. For specialized services such as counseling and treatment for sexual abuse, community availability of service was cited as a major consideration.

In four of the five counties visited, delays in paternity testing were mentioned as a frequent source of delay. Paternity tests are administered through the PCSA child support unit. In one of the smaller jurisdictions, the judge and the agency staff indicated that significant improvements had been seen in several months preceding our visit. In that

county, the time required for return of paternity results had been reduced from months to weeks. In the other counties where this was identified as a problem, court and agency personnel indicated that it took from one to three months to obtain paternity testing results.

Recommendation 10: Case Management Reporting. Model case management reports should be developed for implementation and use in all jurisdictions to assist judges, magistrates, and key court staff in actively managing child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases. Effective caseload management calls for a court to have appropriate expectations (such as time standards) by which to measure how well it is doing. In order to have a basis for responsible steps to improve caseload management, a court must have information about its current operations. Those reports should include at least the following:

- *Pending case list: With oldest cases listed first and, with cases beyond applicable time standards indicated, the age of each judge's pending cases*
- *Trial Certainty: Showing the frequency with which adjudicatory and permanent custody hearings take place on the dates scheduled, and reflecting the reasons that scheduled adjudication and permanent custody hearings do not take place as scheduled*
- *Number of continuances granted for the cases of each judicial officer, with reasons and who has requested them*
- *Pending Case Age: For pending cases, case age in relation to applicable standards for time to adjudication (90 days) and time to permanency hearing (12 months); and for cases where a motion for permanent custody has been filed, age of pending cases and elapsed time from permanent custody motion to trial or non-trial disposition*

Recommendation 11: Judicial Supervision of Case Management. The judges should show that effective and efficient caseload management in child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases is an ongoing matter of priority for the juvenile court, and judges should show a personal, continuing commitment to exercising active court control of the pace of these cases.

All of the research on delay reduction and caseload management based on national studies emphasizes the importance of judicial leadership for successful caseload management. Information obtained in focus group interviews in Ohio reinforces this fact. It is therefore critical for caseload management success that the administrative judges demonstrate a strong and unambiguous concern for active court management of child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases, even where magistrates handle the majority of hearings.

Recommendation 12: Supreme Court Emphasis on Caseload Management. The Supreme Court of Ohio should regularly reinforce

the importance of judicial oversight of caseload management in child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases.

Recommendation 13. Continuance Policies. The administrative judge of each juvenile court should be required to develop, in collaboration with other judges, and with magistrates, prosecuting attorneys, agency attorneys, and the local bar, a written continuance policy designed to minimize unneeded continuances. Plans should articulate guidelines for judges and magistrates to use in granting continuances, procedures for requesting continuances, means for documenting the frequency and reasons for continuances, and establish procedures for remediation of excessive continuances. Remediation may range from corrective procedures to be undertaken where a system deficiency causing excessive continuances is identified,⁹⁰ to specific responses to the conduct of participants in the court process.⁹¹

Recommendation 14: Creation of Case Management Teams. In larger jurisdictions with multiple judges and magistrates, juvenile courts should work with attorney agencies and the local private bar to explore the feasibility of developing case processing teams consisting of one or two judicial officers and an appropriate number of specifically assigned attorneys.

The development of case processing teams has the advantage of reducing scheduling conflicts, since attorneys are not faced with being available for scheduling in front of all of the judicial officers in a court in a number of different locations.

Teams of two or more judicial officers, with the required complement of attorneys, will minimize concerns regarding the possibility that the familiarity among team members may compromise their independence.

The development of teams with two or more judicial officers would also facilitate the ability of the court to reassign hearings on an emergency or back up basis to avoid continuances where a particular judicial officer's calendar becomes over-burdened, either on a particular day or for a short time period. The team approach would offer a balance between the need to manage temporary fluctuations in

⁹⁰For example, an inordinate number of continuances may be caused by delays in discovery. That should prompt a joint inquiry by the court, prosecuting attorneys/agency attorneys, the private bar, and the local PCSA into the causes of the delay, and adjustments to the discovery process.

⁹¹For example, if a specific attorney appears to be the cause of an inordinate number of continuances, the administrative judge could initiate a review to determine whether the attorney's caseload should be reduced, or even whether the attorney should be removed from the appointment list temporarily or permanently.

workload with the desirability of maintaining the advantages of familiarity gained through the one judge/one family approach to case assignment.

Recommendation 15. Case Processing Priority. At the state and local levels, steps should be taken to accord greater calendar priority to child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases.

The NCSC project team consistently heard from focus group participants that juvenile court cases, and child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases in particular, were given lower priority in situations where attorneys or other parties had a conflict with cases scheduled in other courts. Different court case types have differing sets of rules for case processing. Some, obviously, have stricter deadlines than others. Historically, substantial preference has been accorded to criminal cases as a means to protect the rights of the accused and maintain the effectiveness of the criminal justice process. To a lesser degree, that has been true for delinquency matters where juveniles have been placed outside the home. Until recent years, it was not uncommon for juvenile courts in general to have less prestige and, accordingly, to receive lower priority in terms of resources and case management. The impact of delay in the resolution of cases involving children who are alleged to be suffering from abuse or neglect and delay in permanency for children in foster care has received growing attention from state court leaders, national child welfare organizations, and the federal government. The Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) established stringent time guidelines for the handling of dependency cases as a requirement for federal aid. The National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges established model courts that were focused on improving court processes for dependency cases. The Pew Commission recently issued its final report calling for reforms in federal financing relating to programs for neglected and abused children and children in foster care and emphasizing the priority of the needs of dependency courts and the need for greater accountability of dependency courts for the manner in which dependency cases are handled. The Conference

of Chief Justices (CCJ) and Conference of State Courts Administrators (COSCA) issued a series of resolutions in support of the Pew Commission recommendations and in support of other initiatives to improve the handling of dependency cases.⁹²

Recommendation 16: At the state level, the Supreme Court of Ohio should take steps to emphasize the importance and priority of child abuse, neglect, and dependency court proceedings. That could include consideration of administrative orders or rules giving priority to these matters.

Recommendation 17: At the trial court level, administrative juvenile court judges should collaborate with administrative judges of other trial courts, the presiding judge of the county's court of common pleas, and key stakeholders within the county to establish mutually agreed upon policies for managing calendar priority. Child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases should be given the highest priority, keeping in mind the federal and state requirements for case processing and, as importantly, the significant impact on children of delays in achieving permanency.

Recommendation 18: Guidelines for Managing Discovery. Discovery delays can be a significant source of delay in child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases. The Supreme Court of Ohio should establish a group including judges and magistrates, prosecuting attorneys, bar representatives, and PCSA staff to establish model procedures for managing discovery in these cases. Because the principal target of discovery is local PCSA records for a family, the focus of the effort should be to develop model procedures for use by local agency

⁹²See the CCJ (<http://ccj.ncsc.dni.us/ChildWelfareResols.html>) and COSCA (<http://cosca.ncsc.dni.us/Resolutions/childwelfare-resols.html>) websites. In particular, see:

CCJ Resolution 31, COSCA 04-M-3

In Support of Strengthening the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children

CCJ Resolution 30, COSCA 04-M-1

In Support of Legislation to Improve the Management for Cases of Children in Foster Care

CCJ Resolution 19, COSCA 04-A-19

In Support of Increased Judicial Involvement in Inter-Jurisdictional Movement of Children Through the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC)

CCJ Resolution 17, COSCA 04-A-17

In Support of Measuring and Improving Court Performance and Judicial Workload in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases

CCJ Resolution 15, COSCA 04-A-15

In Support of the Recommendations Made by the Pew Commission on Children in Foster Care

personnel, prosecutors and agency attorneys, and the local bar to streamline the procedures for identification of agency information that should be readily available and procedures for the delivery of that information automatically as soon as counsel are appointed.

Recommendation 19: Expediting Interstate Placements. Juvenile courts in border counties should consider establishing memorandums of understanding with courts in neighboring counties in border states to assist one another in facilitating the process of interstate placement pursuant to the Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children. Washington, D. C. Metropolitan Area courts established a “Memorandum of Understanding in Regard to the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children.” The purpose of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was to facilitate cooperation between those courts in assisting one another with expediting placement processes in agencies within their respective jurisdictions. The Conference of Chief Justices and Conference of State Court Administrators endorsed the approach envisioned in the MOU and called for the establishment of state points of contact in each state’s administrative office.⁹³

⁹³ CCJ Resolution 19, (<http://ccj.ncsc.dni.us/ChildWelfareResolutions/ICPC.pdf>)
COSCA 04-A-19 (<http://cosca.ncsc.dni.us/Resolutions/ChildWelfare/ICPC.pdf>)
In Support of Increased Judicial Involvement in Inter-Jurisdictional Movement of Children Through the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC)

CHAPTER 7 REPRESENTATION AND DUE PROCESS

This theme emerged through data and information obtained from the case file review, court observation, the Statewide Stakeholder Survey and Focus Groups. Areas of inquiry included: (1) timelines for appointment of counsel; (2) attorney attendance at court hearings; (3) attorney training and standards; (3) attorney representation of PCSA, parents, and children; (4) recruitment, qualifications, and appointment of attorneys; (5) quality of representation; and (6) appointed attorney compensation.

Case File Review

The case file review indicates that for the majority of cases reviewed, counsel to mother was appointed within five days of the shelter hearing and the majority of GALs were appointed before or during the shelter hearing. The appointment of counsel to fathers was more varied, most likely due to issues of identification and notification. Tables 26, 27 and 28 present the case file review findings.

Table 26. Case File Review: Time between Shelter Hearing and Appointment of Counsel to Mother		
Number of Days	Frequency	Percent of Total
Counsel Appointed before Shelter Hearing	7	5.30%
0 days	35	26.52%
1-5 days	35	26.52%
6-15 days	22	16.67%
16-25 days	8	6.06%
26-30 days	3	2.27%
More than 30 days	22	16.67%
	132	

Table 27. Case File Review: Time between Shelter Hearing and Appointment of Counsel to Father		
Number of Days	Frequency	Percent of Total
Counsel Appointed before Shelter Hearing	6	8.96%
0 days	10	14.93%
1-5 days	12	17.91%
6-15 days	13	19.40%
16-25 days	4	5.97%
26-30 days	1	1.49%
More than 30 days	21	31.34%
	67	

Number of Days	Frequency	Percent of Total
GAL Appointed before Shelter Hearing	62	33.88%
0 days	80	43.72%
1-5 days	17	9.29%
6-15 days	12	6.56%
16-25 days	4	2.19%
26-30 days	0	0.00%
More than 30 days	8	4.37%
	183	

As seen in Table 29, the case file review findings indicate excellent hearing attendance by GALs and fair attendance rates for mothers' attorneys. There were markedly lower attendance rates for father's attorneys, again most likely due in part to issues of identification of fathers.

	GAL	Mother's attorney	Father's attorney
Shelter Hearing (n=225)	80%	33%	16%
Adjudicatory Hearing (n=258)	78%	54%	26%
Disposition Hearing (n=200)	82%	56%	29%

Statewide Stakeholder Survey

As described earlier, court-appointed attorneys, private attorneys, and prosecutors/agency attorneys have generally similar opinions concerning their job training. Overall, these participant groups responded that they did not receive written guidelines or training before they started their job. However, the groups also responded that they had received subsequent training and that it was helpful to their work. Table 30 contains the average response to the training and standards survey questions.

Table 30. Statewide Survey Results: Attorney Training and Standards			
Average Response (4=strongly agree, 3=agree, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree)			
	Ct. Appt. Atty	Private Atty	Prosecutor/Agency attorney
Prior to starting my job, I was provided written guidelines concerning my role with child abuse, neglect, dependency, and permanent custody cases.	2.20	2.29	2.20
The written guidelines/manuals I received were helpful.	3.00	3.00	2.22
Prior to starting my job, I received training concerning my role with child abuse, neglect, dependency, and permanent custody cases.	2.43	2.29	2.27
The training I received prior to assuming my role was very helpful.	3.25	2.75	2.73
I have attended additional trainings since assuming my role.	3.50	3.00	3.73
Additional training I have received has been very helpful.	3.57	3.50	3.40

Focus Groups and Interviews

Representation of PCSA

The relationship between prosecutors and the PCSA varied across the jurisdictions included in the site visits. In most, assistant prosecutors serve as counsel for PCSA through all proceedings and stages of abuse and neglect cases. In some instances, these assistant prosecutors work out of local PCSA offices. In one jurisdiction, the prosecutor's office only handles the abuse and neglect cases through adjudication and disposition, and PCSA attorneys take over for permanent custody proceedings. In this same jurisdiction, prosecutors are not the legal representatives for the agency, do not have attorney-client privileges, and may take a different position than the agency on a case. In another jurisdiction, it was noted that there was a somewhat adversarial relationship between the prosecutors and the agency and that prosecutors would sometimes make their own determinations on how cases would proceed.

Representation of Parents

Rule 4(A) of O.R.J.P. provides that every party to a juvenile court proceeding shall have the right to be represented by counsel and every child, parent, custodian, or other person in loco parentis has the right to appointed counsel if indigent. A financial disclosure/affidavit of indigency form must be filed by each indigent defendant or parent so the court-appointed attorney or guardian ad litem can be compensated. Financially eligible parents may be represented by the public defender or a contract attorney depending on the jurisdiction. It was noted in one jurisdiction that the public defender will not take

appointments in cases in which the client has a mortgage or if a hearing in the case is scheduled in less than two weeks necessitating a continuance. In another, the public defender rarely takes appointments and the court routinely appoints contract attorneys. In one jurisdiction, the first person who asks for representation is assigned the public defender, who, in turn, contracts with a local law firm for representation through adjudication and up to the motion for permanent custody. The case is then picked up by contract counsel.

During the focus groups, attorneys representing parents expressed concern that the policy of the Ohio Public Defender's Office is that counsel are appointed through disposition and are asked to withdraw following disposition. This was perceived to be a cost-saving measure that did not serve the interests of the parents. Defense counsel argue that parents are in special need of an advocate/representation after disposition because this is the period when the case plan is developed and decisions are made concerning visitation and other issues. If there is an interim or annual review, clients are re-screened for eligibility and there are attempts to link them with the same attorney that handled the disposition; however, defense counsel believe this is a time-consuming and unnecessary procedure which leads to inconsistent results.

O.R.J.P. 4(B)(3) provides that the court must appoint a guardian ad litem when the parent is under 18 years of age or appears to be mentally incompetent. In one jurisdiction, the frequency and basis of the appointments of guardians based on mental incompetence was questioned by some focus group participants and concern was expressed about role-confusion when both an attorney and a guardian are appointed for a parent. Estimates of the actual frequency of appointments of guardians for parents varied, from 20 percent of the cases to 10 percent of the cases, including those for minors. According to some focus group participants, the determination of mental incompetence is not based on any formal diagnosis, but rather an estimation that the person is simply "not bright." The appointment of a guardian under such circumstances was described as a possible source of prejudice when objections are heard because it might lead the judge to question the ability of the person to parent. In addition, it was observed that the appointment of both an attorney and guardian sometimes results in the two acting as co-counsel, rather than as best-interest advocate and attorney. On the other hand, it was argued that the appointments are not that frequent, and that it is better to err on the side of due process when there are questions about mental competence. Still some focus group participants called for clearer guidelines for the appointment of guardians for parents who already have attorneys as well as the appointment of attorneys for children who already have guardians.

Representation of Children

Rule 4(A) of O.R.J.P. provides that when the complaint alleges that a child is an abused child, the court must appoint an attorney to represent the interests of the child. Rule 4(B) of the O.R.J.P. governs when a guardian ad litem should be appointed, and Rule 4(C) governs when the guardian ad litem is also acting as counsel for the party. In addition, a 2004 decision of the Supreme Court of Ohio, *In re Williams (2004-Ohio-1500)*, determined that a child who is the subject of a juvenile court action to permanently terminate parental rights is a party to that proceeding and is entitled to representation by an attorney when the wishes of the child differ from the recommendation of the guardian ad litem. All of the

jurisdictions included in the site visits appoint a lawyer guardian ad litem in abuse cases. In neglect and dependency cases, volunteer guardians ad litem, paid lay guardians ad litem, or social worker guardians ad litem may be used.

The requirement that an attorney be appointed to represent the interests of the child when there are allegations of abuse, as provided in O.R.J.P. 4(A), was questioned by some focus group participants in one jurisdiction, where the guardian ad litem unit consists of both attorneys and social workers. According to this group, abuse cases actually involve more social work issues and are more complicated in this respect than neglect and dependency cases. In addition, evidence of abuse may surface in later stages of cases initially involving only neglect or dependency allegations, and, in these instances, the child will only have a non-lawyer guardian ad litem. In their view, the requirement limits their flexibility and keeps the attorney caseloads higher than they need to be.

The requirement that an attorney be appointed for the child in permanent custody proceedings when the child's wishes differ from the recommendation of the guardian ad litem was cited as a source of delay in at least one jurisdiction. Clearly, an attorney appointed at this stage of the case will need time to become familiar with the history and discovery in the case, both of which will likely be voluminous at this point. However, it is not clear how frequently these appointments occur and apparently fears that there would be a dramatic increase in the need for lawyers for these cases have not materialized. In one jurisdiction, the court has construed the Supreme Court of Ohio's decision narrowly and developed guidelines for judicial officers to follow in these cases. (e.g., school age kids who are verbal, magistrates make inquiry, make a finding that the child did consistently express wishes contrary to the recommendations of the GAL).

Court-Appointed Special Advocates

There were CASA programs in four of the five jurisdictions included in the sample. In one county, the CASAs serve as lay guardians ad litem and are not appointed until after adjudication. In another jurisdiction, CASAs rotate through initial hearings in the same manner as the parent attorneys and guardians ad litem for appointment to cases, and the program also screens for cases involving children ages 0 to 3 and domestic violence. CASAs may also be appointed when the court determines that a child requires one-on-one attention due to the circumstances of the case. Programs vary in size and the number of children served from 40 volunteers and 141 cases in one of the smaller jurisdictions to more than 180 volunteers and approximately 300 cases in another. In one of the larger jurisdictions, it was estimated that CASAs were involve in approximately 15 to 20 percent of the total cases at any one time.

Attorney Training

PCSA Attorneys

Prosecutors in the selected sites generally cited CLEs, on-the-job training, and shadowing of a more experienced attorney as their primary training. In addition, several prosecutors mentioned the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services' annual seminar as

being very useful, especially in the discussion of the role of parents' attorneys. One prosecutor from a smaller jurisdiction cited the limited availability of training locally, noting that the only CLE available on abuse and neglect cases was presented by Legal Services. However, other prosecutors noted the support of their agency for continuing education and training and opportunities to attend specialized courses.

Attorneys for Parents and Children

Training opportunities for private counsel on child abuse, neglect, and dependency law and procedure were described as limited or non-existent by focus group participants. Education provided by the public defender in one jurisdiction was said to be more of an update on the law than a hands-on training session, and lawyers were no longer participating in the CASA training as they had in the past. In one jurisdiction, the local rule on appointment of counsel requires that attorneys wishing to remain on the lists for appointments must complete certain minimal training requirements. For instance, attorneys receiving appointments in the dual capacity of attorney and guardian ad litem are to attend a three-hour training program concentrating solely on the duties of guardians. Those accepting appointments as counsel for parents are to attend an orientation session presented by the Bar Association's Juvenile Law Committee and observe two cases with an experienced court appointed or other approved attorney. However, the rule notes that these requirements may be waived, and focus group discussion suggested that defense counsel were unsure if the requirements were even mandatory.

In an effort to fill the void, one court recently issued a practice manual for attorneys on Ohio abuse, neglect, and dependency laws and the hearing process. The manual also identifies key issues at each stage of the process and offers practice pointers for attorneys who represent the PCSA, parents, and children or their appointed guardians ad litem. While manuals are an important component of an overall training strategy and serve as a useful ongoing reference tool, they are not a substitute for workshops and seminars that provide a more interactive learning environment and cross trainings that allow participants to more fully understand the orientation, perspectives, and practices of other participants in the process.

Non-Lawyer Guardians/Court Appointed Special Advocates

Generally, non-lawyer guardians, such as social workers, will follow the continuing education requirements of their profession and, except for some internal training programs, also have limited access to trainings that are specific to child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases. However, training is one of five areas addressed by new set of standards for Ohio's guardians ad litem which were recently approved by the Supreme Court of Ohio's *Advisory Committee on Children, Families, and the Courts*. The standards call for a pre-service training requirement of six hours and three hours in-service instruction annually. According to an update in the Winter 2005 edition of the *Children, Families, and the Courts Ohio Bulletin*, the Supreme Court of Ohio has contracted with the Ohio CASA/GAL Association to develop a standardized curriculum for the initial six hours and is exploring methods for delivering the instruction statewide on an ongoing basis.

In general, Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) programs follow the national and Ohio CASA standards for advocate training. This includes 30 hours of pre-service training (38 hours in one jurisdiction) and 12 hours in-service training per year. One CASA program that has instituted specialized programs for children 0 to 3 years of age and cases involving domestic violence requires additional hours of training for advocates assigned to these cases. CASAs appear to be generally satisfied with their training and are clear about the requirements. While some focus participants expressed reservations about the adequacy of the training of CASAs in one jurisdiction, this was not an opinion that was shared across the sites.

Recruitment, Qualification, and Appointment of Attorneys

Local rules of court govern the procedures for appointment of parents' counsel and guardians ad litem in each jurisdiction. Rule 8 of the Ohio Rules of Superintendence requires that each court or division of a court adopt a local rule of court governing appointments and that the local rule include:

- A procedure for selecting appointees from a list maintained by the court that ensures an equitable distribution of appointments among all persons on the list.
- A procedure by which all appointments are periodically reviewed to ensure the equitable distribution of appointments.
- The compensation and rate or fee schedule for services rendered by the court appointee.

The rule may also include qualifications for inclusion on the appointment list and a process by which persons are added to or removed from the list.

The structure and processes for the determination of the financial eligibility of clients and attorney appointment varied across the jurisdictions which were the subject of site visits, reflecting their size, volume of cases, and pool of available counsel. In two of the larger courts, the task is centralized in one office, a court-connected assignment office in one and the Public Defender's Office in the other. Personnel in these offices review the affidavits, determine eligibility, manage the lists of eligible attorneys, assign attorneys, and, in the case of the Public Defender's Office, also pay the attorneys. In both of these courts, there is an attorney rotation system, supervised by the central office, whereby prospective attorneys for parents and guardians ad litem are assigned a particular day and pick up the cases that are heard at that day's court session, unless the parents do not show or do not want an attorney. This procedure is intended to allow for more timely appointment of counsel and promote early communication between the clients and their counsel. While the details vary in the other jurisdictions, generally the procedure is for the judge to ask the defendants to complete the affidavit at the initial hearing or defendants can come into the clerk's office before the hearing and complete the form. Personnel in the clerk's office screen the affidavits for eligibility and contact attorneys. In these courts, the judges will set the schedule for all or some of the subsequent hearings—pre-trial and adjudication, disposition, and annual review—at the initial hearing or subsequent to it, so that prospective attorneys can be informed of the dates and consider their availability when the clerk's office contacts them about possible appointment to the case. In all of the courts, there appears to be recognition of the importance of making counsel available to their clients in a timely manner and facilitating counsel's appearances in the cases. However, for a variety of reasons discussed elsewhere in

this report, such as continuances and delay in other aspects of the case, these efforts can not always ensure the availability of attorneys.

When appointments must be made at later stages of the case because one or more parties was not present at the initial hearing, a party is added to the case, an attorney withdraws, or other factors, focus group participants described a mixed system of contacting the next attorney on the list, or an attorney who has worked with the family before, or an attorney who is physically present and available in the court at the time. There is a shortage of attorneys available to take these cases in most of the jurisdictions, and it is often difficult to locate an attorney who does not have a conflict with the scheduled hearing dates in a case. In addition, attorneys who come on at a later stage of the case may have difficulty contacting their client and face the challenge of familiarizing themselves with the history and discovery in the case in a relatively short period of time.

Attorneys representing parents in at least one jurisdiction questioned the process and criteria, or lack thereof, for getting on the list for rotation into initial hearings for appointment and for receiving appointments at later stages of the proceedings. The process was described as ad hoc and haphazard and concerns were expressed about possible favoritism. Practices were not viewed as supporting an equitable distribution of cases or workload. In addition, a number of focus group participants expressed concern that there were no mechanisms for having attorneys who consistently perform poorly and fail in their responsibilities to their clients removed from the list or various rotations. The difficulty of holding attorneys accountable when there is no oversight agency, as is the case with private counsel, was also noted.

Quality of Representation

Concerns about the quality of representation for parents and children were expressed in a number of the focus groups across jurisdictions. Participants cited a lack of preparation, failure to meet with clients prior to hearings, and an overall lack of professionalism. In some instances, similar criticisms were applied to prosecutors who, in some larger jurisdictions, were described as being as unprepared and unavailable to their client as private attorneys, and who sometimes sent substitutes to court who were not familiar with the case. However, it was clear that these criticisms did not apply across the board in any court and, in a number of instances, positive comments were offered on the performance of attorneys for parents, guardians ad litem, and prosecutors. As noted elsewhere in this report and acknowledged by a number of the focus group participants, locating and establishing communication with clients is complicated due to their lack of stable homes and telephones and failure to immediately comprehend the implications of the situation and the need for the attorney's services. Even the best efforts at making contact prior to court may fail. In addition, attorneys appointed at later stages of the case do face a challenge in familiarizing themselves with the history and discovery in the case given the tight timelines of abuse and neglect cases. The frustration appears to be with a minority of attorneys who are consistently unavailable, double-booked, unprepared, and continuance-prone and the lack of consequences and accountability for this behavior.

Compensation of Attorneys

Compensation for contract counsel is set locally and ranged from \$40 per hour in- and out-of-court to \$60 in-court/\$50 out-of court in the sites selected for inclusion in the reassessment. While attorneys in the sample of jurisdictions are paid the same hourly rate for all types of cases for which they may be appointed—abuse and neglect, delinquency and unruly, custody, child support, felony, misdemeanor, and so forth—the caps for payment may differ by case type. For instance, in one county, the cap for abuse and neglect cases is \$1,000 while the cap for misdemeanors is \$500. There are provisions for the payment of extraordinary fees that exceed the cap. Some focus group participants expressed concern about the inability to recruit attorneys given the low rate of pay and attorneys were vocal about the poor comparison to fees charged in private practice. While it is not realistic to expect that fees for appointed counsel will ever equal those of private practice given the financial resources of most counties and the state, the low appointed counsel fees may encourage many attorneys to take more assignments than they can reasonably handle and contribute to the problems of overbooking and conflicts.

Recommendation 20: In order to ensure an equitable distribution of appointments and workload across eligible attorneys, courts should review local rules governing the appointment of counsel to ensure that they are clear and definitive in regard to the requirements and process by which attorneys are added to appointment lists and the procedure for appointment at various stages of a case. While time constraints and the interest in providing counsel as quickly as possible may necessitate departures from these routines in individual cases, efforts to maintain balance and monitor the distribution of appointments, as required by Rule 8, will encourage wider attorney participation and help to reduce scheduling conflicts.

Recommendation 21: Attorneys involved in child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases need training on the law and procedures, the goals of practice in this area and related areas such as substance abuse, domestic violence, mental health issues, and the availability and delivery of services. Some minimum training requirements should be established to be included on appointment lists initially and to maintain eligibility over time. These requirements should be clearly communicated to attorneys and monitored. Ideally, a program of training would include written materials, such as the manual developed in one of the selected jurisdictions, mentoring/shadowing experienced attorneys, courses and workshops, and opportunities for cross training.

Recommendation 22: The policy that attorneys withdraw from cases following disposition should be reviewed to determine if it serves the interests of the clients and results in unnecessary re-appointment

procedures. Or at a minimum, the policy needs to be clarified as to when an attorney can come back on a case.

Recommendation 23: Expediting Appointment of Counsel and Guardians. Early appointment of counsel helps to ensure that counsel are able to align their calendars with the scheduling needs of individual cases, to make early client contact, and to begin preparation for representation. Juvenile courts should be encouraged or required to develop means to appoint legal counsel and guardians for children and for indigent parents as soon after the filing of a petition as possible. Some courts have developed procedures that provide for assignment of counsel to specific days on which initial hearings are conducted. Counsel are then permanently appointed to cases scheduled for initial hearing on that day. This approach offers the advantage that in many cases, counsel are able to make initial client contact in person on that day.⁹⁴

⁹⁴This, of course, is not universally true. It is not uncommon that parents, particularly fathers, are not present at the initial hearing. This is particularly true for emergency shelter hearings.

CHAPTER 8 QUALITY OF HEARINGS

Data and information addressing this theme come from court observation, the Statewide Stakeholder Survey and Focus Groups. Areas of inquiry included: (1) length and sufficiency of time for proceeding; (2) parties present during hearings; (3) discussion of notice; (4) engagement of the parties by the court; (4) the conduct of the hearing by the court; and (5) the level of courtesy, respect, and understanding shown towards parties by the court.

Court Observation

For the hearings observed in which time data was recorded (n=44), the majority of proceedings lasted 20 minutes or less (65.21 percent). The length of the proceeding did not appear to be related to a particular type of hearing. Tables 31 and 32 present the court observation results.

1-10 minutes	16	34.78%
11-20 minutes	14	30.43%
21-30 minutes	6	13.04%
31-40 minutes	3	6.52%
41-50 minutes	3	6.52%
51-60 minutes	0	0.00%
Over 60 minutes	2	4.35%
	44	

Type of hearing being observed	1-10 minutes	11-20 minutes	21-30 minutes	31-40 minutes	41-50 minutes	51-60 minutes	Over 60 minutes	Total
Shelter hearing		3					1	4
Pre-trial	9	3	2	1				15
Adjudicatory hearing	3							3
Dispositional hearing			1				1	2
Six month case review		3	1					4
Interim review		1	2					3
Annual review	4	3		1	3			11
Motion for permanent custody				1				1
Other		1						1
Total	16	14	6	3	3		2	44

For the majority of court proceedings observed, the PCSA caseworker, a prosecutor/PCSA attorney and a GAL were present. All other parties were present at less than 50 percent of the proceedings observed. Table 33 displays these court observation results.

Table 33. Court Observation: Parties Present

Type of Court Proceeding	PCSA Case Worker	Prosecutor /PCSA Attorney	Child	Attorney for Child	GAL	Mother	Attorney for Mother	Father	Attorney for Father	Foster care parents	CASA
Shelter hearing (n=5)	5	4		1	4	2	3	2	1		
Pre-trial (n=16)	15	15	2	3	10	9	7	4	3		
Adjudicatory hearing (n=4)	3	3			3	2	2	2			
Dispositional hearing (n=2)	2	2	1		2	1	1	2	1		
Six month case review (n=4)	4	4		1	3	2	2	1	2	2	1
Interim review (n=3)	3	3		1	2	1	2	1	1		1
Annual review (n=11)	9	10			9	1	3	3	3	2	2
Motion for permanent custody (TPR) (n=2)	2	2			1		2	1	1		1
Other (n=1)	1	1			1						
Total observations present	44	44	3	6	35	19	22	16	12	4	5
Percent of total observations present	92%	92%	6%	13%	73%	40%	46%	33%	25%	8%	10%

For the hearings observed, there was not much discussion concerning the attempts of service to absent parties. However, where applicable, there was discussion of the right to counsel and the assignment/appointment of counsel and to a lesser degree, the importance of reaching a permanency goal within state and federal time frames. It appears that in the majority of cases observed, the reasons for the proceeding and the subsequent steps to be taken were explained to those present at the hearing. Tables 34 and 35 display these findings.

Table 34. Court Observation: Notice

Was there discussion about attempts at service of process to absent parties to provide notice:	Yes	no
Filing of the case (n=45)	26.67%	73.33%
Current hearing date, time and location (n=45)	35.56%	64.44%

Table 35. Court Observation: Engagement of the Parties

Did the court explain the following :	yes	no	unclear	not applicable
The right to counsel (n=47)	31.91%		2.13%	65.96%
The assignment/appointment of counsel (n=47)	23.40%	6.38%		70.21%
The importance of achieving reunification and/or permanency within deadlines established by law (n=45)	35.56%	35.56%	8.89%	20.00%
The reason for today's proceeding (n=47)	85.11%	4.26%	6.38%	4.26%
The process associated with the proceeding (n=47)	42.55%	27.66%	25.53%	4.26%
The next step after today's proceeding (n=47)	72.34%	10.64%	12.77%	4.26%

When applicable, the case plan, child placement, permanency goal, and visitation were discussed at the court proceeding observed. Both parents' and PCSA caseworker compliance with case plans and services was examined at the majority of the hearings observed. Also, the services needed and being provided to both child and parents were discussed at over half of the proceedings that were observed. These court observation findings are located in Table 36.

Table 36. Court Observation: Conduct of the Hearing

Did the court discuss the following:	yes	no	unclear	not applicable
Existence of a case plan or court report	74.47%	6.38%	6.38%	12.77%
Child placement-living arrangement	87.23%	2.13%	2.13%	8.51%
Child permanency goal	67.39%	8.70%	10.87%	13.04%
Parent-child visitation	47.83%	17.39%	6.52%	28.26%
Sibling visitation	6.52%	8.70%	4.35%	80.43%
Services to child	69.57%	13.04%	6.52%	10.87%
Services to the parents	60.87%	10.87%	4.35%	23.91%
Parents' compliance with case plans and services	63.04%	4.35%	6.52%	26.09%
Case worker/agency compliances with case plans	41.30%	28.26%	15.22%	15.22%

Statewide Stakeholder Survey

Opinions concerning how case processing practices affect the safety, permanency, due process and timeliness goals of child welfare proceedings were mixed. As a group, CASA staff, PCSA case workers, and foster care providers felt that case processing practices did not ensure any of these goals. Overall, only the GALs felt that case processing practice ensured permanency and stability for children in their living situations. The groups were more optimistic concerning the effect of child welfare case processing practices on the goals of safety and due process. Interestingly, all the groups agreed that the current child welfare case practices did not ensure timeliness in achieving permanency for children.

There were also varying viewpoints concerning the frequency of witness and evidence presentation, the overall time available for proceeding and immediate scheduling and notification of subsequent court proceedings. Interestingly, as a whole, all groups

except the PCSA case workers, court appointed attorneys and foster care providers felt that the participants in court proceedings were treated with courtesy, respect, and understanding. Results to these statewide survey questions are located in Tables 37 and 38.

Table 37. Statewide Survey Results: Hearings and Case Processing
Average Response (4=strongly agree, 3=agree, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree)

	CASA Staff	CASA Volunteers	Case Supervisor	Case Workers	Court Staff	Ct. Appt. Atty	Foster Care	GAL	Judges	Private Atty	Prosecutor/Agency attorney
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency, and permanent custody cases ensure the safety of children.	2.74	3.05	3.10	2.90	3.07	3.11	2.33	3.17	3.07	3.00	3.14
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency, and permanent custody cases ensure permanency and stability for children in their living situations.	2.57	2.82	2.67	2.41	2.93	2.56	1.83	3.08	2.89	2.90	2.73
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency, and permanent custody cases ensure due process for children and their parents.	2.88	3.02	3.00	2.79	3.00	2.44	1.95	3.00	3.19	2.70	3.13
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency, and permanent custody cases ensure timeliness in achieving permanency for children.	2.26	2.39	2.18	1.87	2.88	2.56	1.56	2.74	2.69	2.40	2.60
During hearings, parties and/or counsel frequently present witnesses, introduce evidence, and offer arguments.	2.68	2.81	2.91	2.69	2.93	3.00	2.38	3.13	3.00	3.20	3.00
Typically, the time available for hearings is sufficient to permit presentation of evidence and arguments.	2.68	2.97	2.75	2.79	3.00	3.22	2.40	3.13	2.93	2.90	2.36
Parties always leave a hearing with a scheduled next hearing or proceeding date.	3.09	3.20	2.77	2.71	2.86	3.11	2.60	3.24	2.81	3.00	2.87

Table 38. Statewide Survey Results: Courtesy and Respect
Average Response (4=strongly agree, 3=agree, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree)

	CASA Staff	CASA Volunteers	Case Supervisor	Case Workers	Court Staff	Ct. Appt. Atty	Foster Care	GAL	Judges	Private Atty	Prosecutor/Agency attorney
Participants in court proceedings are treated with courtesy, respect, and understanding.	3.29	3.32	3.09	2.86	3.27	2.89	2.53	3.40	3.48	3.20	3.20

Focus Groups and Interviews

Sufficient Time for Hearings and Extent to Which Parties and Counsel Present Arguments, etc.

Focus group participants expressed no dissatisfaction with the time allotted for hearings or the ability of parties and counsel to present witnesses, introduce evidence, and offer arguments. While hearings may be consistently delayed in some jurisdictions, it appears that once the participants are in the courtroom, they are not rushed or cut off. As noted in other sections of this report, a number of focus group participants commented on the extent to which many judicial officers made efforts to engage all the parties and ensure that everyone had a chance to be heard.

Courtesy and Respect

Participants in focus groups across the sites were uniform in their assessment that the parties in abuse and neglect cases were treated with courtesy and respect by the court. This perception was shared across the groups whether they were prosecutors, appointed counsel, CASAs, PCSA case workers, or court personnel. Participants also generally expressed the view that they, as individuals and representatives of their respective offices, agencies, or organizations, were treated with respect. Some prosecutors perceived that private attorneys received more deference from the court and that prosecutors were seen as interchangeable, but they did not interpret it as a sign of disrespect. Incidents of discourteous behavior or disrespect by the bench were described as rare and attributed to the “personality” or “style” of a few judicial officers who sometimes engaged in “theatrics” that crossed a line or could be interpreted negatively. Often noted in the discussion of courtesy and respect were judicial officers’ efforts to provide everyone present with an opportunity to speak and their engagement with the parties to a case. This practice was also noted in a number of the court hearing observations conducted across sites. Other focus group participants expressed the view that conducting proceedings with decorum and a degree of formality is also a key component in establishing an environment of respect. Looking

beyond interactions within the courtroom, however, it was noted by at least one focus group participant that delay in the start of hearings, crowded waiting areas, and the hasty efforts to get parties and attorneys together for pre-hearing conferences as well as hearings contributed to an atmosphere of disrespect for the participants as well as the proceedings. Observation of hearings in the jurisdiction corroborated this perception. A high volume of cases combined with multiple parties/attorneys, block scheduling of hearings, and limited waiting space makes it difficult to avoid what was described as the “herding” of people.

A related question on the treatment of parties is whether they leave court proceedings with a clear understanding of what has transpired. Responses were somewhat mixed on this issue across focus groups and jurisdictions, but most respondents believed it was generally the case that the parties understood the discussion and the court’s directives. A number of focus group participants noted the extra efforts made by certain judicial officers to ask parents if they understand and to clarify or reiterate statements made in court or the court’s orders. This was especially the case when the court perceived that the parties were mentally challenged or were not represented by counsel. However, other focus group participants offered the view that it was not the court’s responsibility to explain the proceedings or its results to the parties, but rather the responsibility of their counsel. In this regard, some participants noted that attorneys, for various reasons, including the need to rush off to other proceedings, failed to do this and that parents sometimes solicited assistance from others involved or present at the hearing, such as CASAs or court personnel.

In sum, all the courts appear to maintain decorum and an atmosphere of respect and dignity in the courtroom. Most judicial officers take the time and effort necessary to ensure that all participants are heard and understand the proceedings and the results.

Recommendation 24: Judicial officers should routinely explain the purpose of proceedings to parties at the start of the hearing and review the outcome and next step/hearing at the conclusion. Judicial officers should be sensitive to situations in which a party may require extra explanation or an opportunity to ask additional questions. Training of judicial officers who handle child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases should continue to emphasize the importance of the quality and manner of courtroom interactions and the treatment of parties while in court.

CHAPTER 9 CONTRARY TO THE WELFARE, REASONABLE EFFORTS, ICWA, AND ASFA FINDINGS

Data and information addressing these federal requirements comes from court observation, the Statewide Stakeholder Survey and Focus Groups. Areas of inquiry included: (1) the frequency of judicial “contrary to the welfare” and “reasonable efforts” findings; and (2) ASFA and ICWA compliance

Court Observation

The court observations found that at very few of the proceedings being observed were the findings of "contrary to the welfare of the child" or "reasonable efforts" discussed. Similarly, ICWA and ASFA compliance were very rarely discussed.

Table 39. Contrary to the Welfare Findings and Reasonable Efforts

Did the court discuss the following:	yes	no	unclear	not applicable
"Contrary to the welfare of the child" finding	26.09%	8.70%	17.39%	47.83%
"Reasonable efforts" finding	20.00%	11.11%	20.00%	48.89%

Table 40. Court Observation: ICWA and ASFA Compliance

Did the court discuss the following:	yes	no	unclear	not applicable
ICWA compliance	0.00%	4.35%	0.00%	95.65%
ASFA compliance	4.44%	66.67%	13.33%	15.56%

Statewide Stakeholder Survey

For those participating in the statewide survey, only CASA volunteers, court appointed attorneys, and GALs thought their jurisdiction was in compliance with ASFA time frames; while all groups except judges and prosecutors/agency attorneys felt that their jurisdictions were in compliance with ICWA regulations. Tables 39, 40 and 41 display these findings.

Table 41. Statewide Survey Results: ICWA and ASFA Compliance
Average Response (4=strongly agree, 3=agree, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree)

	CASA Staff	CASA Volunteers	Case Supervisor	Case Workers	Court Staff	Ct. Appt. Atty	Foster Care	GAL	Judges	Private Atty	Prosecutor/Agency attorney
My jurisdiction is in compliance with the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) time frames.	2.80	3.15	2.21	2.67	2.78	3.20	1.89	3.00	2.82		2.90
My jurisdiction is in compliance with federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) regulations.	3.33	3.09	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.11	2.93		2.80

Focus Groups and Interviews

ICWA

Focus group participants reported limited experience with ICWA cases in general and no recent experience with an ICWA case in which the tribe intervened. However, procedures for identifying ICWA cases appeared to be in place in most of the courts, with PCSA screening for ICWA status at the point of custody or while completing the family tree. In at least one court, ICWA status is part of the PCSA information sheet. The task of notifying the tribe was assigned to the prosecutor, or in one county, the PCSA attorney.

***Recommendation 25.** At each stage of the proceeding, judges should make an active inquiry about the applicability of ICWA and the status of the determination that the child is or is not an Indian child. This information should be included for the record of the case and the court order. Moreover, the Supreme Court of Ohio should adopt the standards and practices set out by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges- Indian Child Welfare Act Checklists for Juvenile and Family Court Judges, June 2003.⁹⁵ These checklists articulate best practice standards for the state court processing of ICWA cases.*

⁹⁵See National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, *Indian Child Welfare Act Checklists for Juvenile and Family Court Judges* (Reno, NV, 2003.).

CHAPTER 10 STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION AND JUDICIAL LEADERSHIP

These themes emerged through data and information obtained from the Statewide Stakeholder Survey and Focus Groups and Interviews. Areas of inquiry included: (1) relationships and collaboration between child welfare professionals; (2) communication and collaboration between the court and other child welfare professionals; and (3) judicial leadership.

Statewide Stakeholder Survey

The majority of the statewide survey participants responded having excellent or good working relationships with each of the child welfare groups. Unfortunately, only court staff, GALs, and private attorneys reported that court leadership and the PCSA regularly met to discuss ways to better collaborate on child abuse, neglect, dependency, and permanency custody cases. In addition to these three groups, PCSA case supervisors and prosecutors/PCSA attorneys also agreed that court leadership and the PCSA met to discuss local issues related to the Child and Family Service Review. These survey results are found in Tables 42 and 43.

Table 42. Statewide Survey: Rate your Current Working Relationship with the Following Groups

	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Fair	Poor
Judicial Officers	42%	39%	13%	5%	2%
Court Personnel	45%	41%	9%	4%	1%
Prosecutors	36%	43%	14%	6%	1%
Court Appointed Attorneys	30%	41%	18%	8%	3%
Private Attorneys	24%	45%	23%	6%	2%
Guardians Ad Litem	38%	40%	11%	5%	6%
CASA volunteers and staff	38%	39%	12%	7%	4%
Public Children Service Agency case workers	33%	39%	15%	8%	4%
Public Children Service Agency supervisors	31%	40%	17%	7%	5%
Foster Care Providers	34%	47%	13%	4%	2%
Foster Care Review Board	26%	44%	18%	8%	4%

Table 43. Statewide Survey Results: Court and Public Children Services Agency Interaction
Average Response (4=strongly agree, 3=agree, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree)

	CASA Staff	CASA Volunteers	Case Supervisor	Case Workers	Court Staff	Ct. Appt. Atty	Foster Care	GAL	Judges	Private Atty	Prosecutor/Agency attorney
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency regularly meet to discuss ways to better collaborate on abuse, neglect, dependency, and permanency custody cases.	2.64	2.97	2.70	2.86	3.17	2.17	2.63	3.00	2.93	3.00	2.54
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency have met to discuss local issues related to the Child and Family Service Review.	2.73	2.83	3.19	2.94	3.14	2.50	2.40	3.00	2.78	3.00	3.18
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency have participated in the Ohio Supreme Court's <i>Beyond the Numbers</i> initiative.	2.80	3.17	3.40	2.33	2.60	3.00	2.00	3.33	2.80		2.00
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency are planning to participate or continue participating in the Ohio Supreme Court's <i>Beyond the Numbers</i> initiative.	2.80	3.20	3.67	2.33	2.71	3.00	2.00	3.00	3.25		

Focus Groups and Interviews

In general, focus groups participants believed that the relationship between the judiciary and key stakeholders was positive, though some concerns were expressed in individual jurisdictions regarding specific relationships. Three of the jurisdictions reported having some form of regular contact with one or more stakeholder agencies. Only one jurisdiction reported regular meetings with all key stakeholders. Courts in all jurisdictions reported that they regularly engaged in “ad hoc” collaborative initiatives to resolve dependency system problems that were identified by the court or a stakeholder group.

- One of the larger jurisdictions has established a Court Management Committee that meets on a monthly basis to discuss court management implementation issues. The Committee includes representatives of the Prosecuting Attorney’s Office, Guardian’s Office, the CASA program, and the Department of Jobs and Family Services. The defense bar was represented in the past.⁹⁶ There is also an executive committee that addresses policy issues.
- One jurisdiction reported the formation of an integrated service partnership, focused on pooling resources for services to children and families. Although the focus of the group

⁹⁶ Attendance by bar representatives was difficult to maintain due to the meeting schedule and the fact that bar representatives could not be reimbursed for their participation.

is somewhat narrow, it provides an excellent forum for communication regarding child welfare issues.

- In one of the smaller jurisdictions, the judge meets monthly with local Department of Jobs and Family Services representatives to discuss case processing timelines and other issues affecting the court's management of cases.
- Another jurisdiction reported that in the past, quarterly stakeholder meetings were held to discuss court system issues, but that those meetings are no longer held. The meetings included prosecutors, CASA representatives, law enforcement agencies, mediators, the local bar, mediators, and magistrates. The court now relies on ad hoc meetings or workgroups to resolve court management issues.

Defense counsel and representatives of CASA groups in several of the jurisdictions expressed frustration regarding lack of consistency in approach to service delivery by PCSA caseworkers, with slow response by PCSA in providing agreed upon or ordered services, and with slowness and inconsistency in the delivery of case information to attorneys and guardians.⁹⁷ Magistrates in one jurisdiction reported that the local PCSA was less cooperative now than it once was, and more resistant to change.⁹⁸ In another, magistrates reported that a once "adversarial" relationship with the local PCSA had improved as the new administration of the agency was making significant efforts to address specific concerns of the court and to create a more collaborative climate.

Magistrates in one jurisdiction reported that relationships with the private bar were strained due to the inability to communicate directly with appointed counsel or to hold those appointed counsel accountable. In this jurisdiction, defense attorneys are appointed by a local public defender agency.

PCSA case workers in several jurisdictions expressed reservations regarding communication with prosecutors. In one jurisdiction, workers expressed concern that prosecutors did not communicate effectively prior to key hearings, which limited the effectiveness of both caseworkers and prosecutors in court proceedings. Some made the observation that though the assistant prosecutors were supposed to act as "their attorney," in fact they frequently disagreed with the caseworkers' recommendations. Interestingly, in that same jurisdiction, assistant prosecutors expressed the concern that caseworkers did not consistently communicate with them prior to court hearings, even though the assistant prosecutors made time available for that purpose.

While with some exceptions, stakeholder relationships were perceived to be positive by focus group participants. However, it did not appear that the courts were engaging in regular, formal communication with child welfare system partners in order to continuously assess and improve the operation of the court or of the local child welfare system as a whole. Only one of the jurisdictions visited was currently convening a group of stakeholders on a

⁹⁷As indicated elsewhere in this report, access to information (discovery) is also affected by the role of the prosecuting or agency attorney in screening discovery requests.

⁹⁸Interestingly, regular stakeholder meetings in this jurisdiction no longer take place. Magistrates also reported that at one point an administrative judge sat on the PCSA Board, but that this is no longer true, and as a result, the court has no systematic input to the Board.

regular basis to address child welfare system issues. In that jurisdiction, the defense bar is not currently participating.

Collaboration by juvenile courts with other participants in the child welfare system is a key factor to ensuring positive outcomes for dependent children. The success of the judiciary in meeting its burden in processing family cases relies more heavily on collaboration than with most other cases. Several of the Key Principles for Permanency Planning for Children adopted by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges address issues relating to collaboration. Key principle 11, Collaboration, for example, calls on courts to "...regularly convene representatives from all participants in the child welfare system so as to improve the operations of the system."⁹⁹ Other key principles call for judicial leadership to "convene and engage the community in meaningful partnerships to promote the safety and permanency of children,"¹⁰⁰ and for judicial oversight in order to ensure "...reasonable and necessary services to children and families under court jurisdiction to ensure safe, permanent outcomes for children and a fair opportunity for parents to become competent and safe caretakers."¹⁰¹

The Pew Commission on Children in Foster Care, in its final report issued in May, 2004, recommended that "Courts and agencies on the local and state levels should collaborate and jointly plan for the collection and sharing of all relevant aggregate data and information which can lead to better decisions and outcomes for children."¹⁰² Pew Commission Member Chief Justice Maura D. Corrigan commented, "It is incumbent upon us to collaborate with each other for the sake of the children."¹⁰³ An excellent resource to guide collaboration entitled "Improving Outcomes Together: Court and Child Welfare Collaboration"¹⁰⁴ has been authored by the Honorable Nancy Sidote Salyers, co-founder of

⁹⁹The full text of key principle 11 is as follows:

"11. Collaboration

The juvenile court must encourage and promote collaboration and mutual respect among all participants in the child welfare system.

The court should regularly convene representatives from all participants in the child welfare system so as to improve the operations of the system.

Judges should convene the community so that professionals, volunteers, agencies and politicians can join together to work on behalf of children and families.

Judges should regularly appear in the community in order to inform the community about children and families in the child welfare system and to develop better working relationships with schools, service organizations, health care providers and volunteers.

Judges should encourage cross training among all members of the child welfare system.

Judges should encourage the development of volunteer programs, particularly Court Appointed Special Advocate Programs and foster care review boards, to assist children and families within the courts and the child welfare system."

See National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, *Key Principles for Permanency Planning for Children, Technical Assistance Brief* (Reno, NV 1999).

¹⁰⁰Key Principle 4.

¹⁰¹Key Principle 6.

¹⁰²The Pew Commission On Children In Foster Care, "FOSTERING THE FUTURE: Safety, Permanence and Well-Being for Children in Foster Care, Washington, DC, 2004.

¹⁰³Fostering Results, School of Social Work at the University of Illinois, "Improving Outcomes Together: Court and Child Welfare Collaboration," Champaign, IL, 2005, p2.

¹⁰⁴Fostering Results, School of Social Work at the University of Illinois, "Improving Outcomes Together: Court and Child Welfare Collaboration," Champaign, IL, 2005.

Fostering Results at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, and former Presiding Judge of the Cook County Juvenile Court's Child Protection Division; and Cecilia Fiermonte J.D., Assistant Director of Child Welfare for the National Child Welfare Resource Center on Legal and Judicial Issues. It can be found on the Fostering Results website: www.fosteringresults.org

The Supreme Court of Ohio has recognized the value of collaboration in its joint initiative with the Department of Jobs and Family Services entitled Beyond the Numbers - Ohio's Response to the Child and Family Services Review. The initiative promotes collaboration at the community level between courts, child services agencies, and other stakeholders to improve local practice and compliance with federal requirements relating to child welfare. The Ohio Association of Juvenile Court Judges has endorsed the initiative, passing a resolution advanced by Judge Frederick E. Mong, Hocking County, making it an association priority.¹⁰⁵

Recommendation 26: The administrative judge of each juvenile court should be required or strongly encouraged to establish formal collaboration programs with stakeholders to review performance of the juvenile court and stakeholders in processing child welfare cases and to develop and implement initiatives to improve the performance of the court and stakeholder agencies. The approach should be left flexible to allow for trial courts to adapt the collaboration process to the local environment. However, the collaboration should be initiated and led by the administrative judge. The collaborative process should include all key stakeholders to ensure a full and balanced view and to ensure maximum commitment to implementation of system improvements. The administrative judge should secure the commitment of the leadership of each key stakeholder agency. The collaborative initiative should, as a first step, articulate agreed upon principles for the collaborative process and a mission statement.

Recommendation 27: The Supreme Court of Ohio should continue its strong support of the "Beyond the Numbers" initiative. The continued, active support of the Supreme Court and its Chief Justice will provide critical support for local administrative judges in bringing stakeholders into the collaborative process. The efforts of the judicial planning

Available on the Fostering Results website: http://www.fosteringresults.org/results/reports/pewreports_06-22-05_improvingoutcomes.pdf

¹⁰⁵The resolution reads as follows: "Be it resolved that the trustees of each district of the Ohio Association of Juvenile Court Judges be encouraged to convene a district-wide meeting regarding the statewide effort entitled Beyond the Numbers – Ohio's Response to the Child and Family Services Review which is being guided by The Supreme Court of Ohio and Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. The OAJCJ encourages Ohio's juvenile court judges to take the lead in improving permanency planning to address the best interests of Ohio's children and encouraging other local stakeholders to cooperate in this effort designed to improve local practice and state compliance with federal requirements so as not to forfeit federal monies."

committee to address model agenda and related materials for local meetings, development of a bench book, development of judicial ethics guidelines to address collaboration issues, and development of increased legal education on child welfare practice deserve particular state-level attention and support.

Recommendation 28: The Supreme Court of Ohio, in collaboration with the Beyond the Numbers judicial planning committee, should consider developing a collection of “leadership best practices” drawn from the experience of juvenile court presiding judges in Ohio and other states to supplement the model agenda being developed for local meetings. It would also be helpful to identify “mentor” judges who have demonstrated expertise in developing productive collaboration initiatives and who are willing to assist other courts in the development of collaboration initiatives for their courts. Outside facilitators are frequently very helpful in facilitating collaborative planning. Other juvenile justice system experts might also be identified to assist with facilitating such initiatives as well.¹⁰⁶ State level representatives of other child welfare system participants can be encouraged to identify mentors or experts in their professions. This would allow the formation of mentor teams where appropriate.

¹⁰⁶National organizations can frequently provide facilitation and planning resources or can help in identifying local facilitation and planning resources. The development and publication of such a resource list could be helpful to administrative judges and court administrators. A few of the national organizations providing such assistance include: Center for Research and Professional Development -Michigan State University (<http://njda.msu.edu>), Child Welfare League of America (www.cwla.org), Children and Family Research Center-University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign (<http://cfrcwww.social.uiuc.edu>), Justice Management Institute (www.jmijustice.org), National Center for State Courts-Court Consulting Services (www.ncsconline.org), National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (www.ncjfcj.org), National Resource Center on Legal and Judicial Issues-American Bar Association (www.abanet.org/child/rclji).

CHAPTER 11 CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The Ohio judiciary has made significant improvements in its handling of abuse, neglect, and dependency matters since the inception of the Court Improvement Program. The leadership of the Supreme Court and local juvenile court judges, collaboration with the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services, and the focus brought by the introduction of central administrative staff support (through the Supreme Court's Judicial and Court Services Division) for these cases are important ingredients to the successes of the last several years.

Continued improvements are possible with continued and increased judicial leadership from the Supreme Court and trial court judges; thoughtful, collaborative examination and implementation of improvements in case processing and related procedures; and informed decisions regarding priorities for the use of resources.

As a result of the findings contained within this *Reassessment Report*, the NCSC project team makes the following recommendations.

Recommendation 1: The Supreme Court of Ohio should continue and strengthen its support of mediation in child protection cases. That support should include assisting courts in assessing and reporting on the positive qualitative and quantitative outcomes for mediation of child abuse, neglect, and dependency matters, and assisting courts in identifying funding sources for program implementation and maintenance.

Recommendation 2: Administrative judges of the juvenile division of Courts of Common Pleas should be encouraged by the Supreme Court of Ohio to provide leadership in their communities in establishing collaborative initiatives that focus on the improvement and integration of services for families and children that come before the court on child abuse, neglect, or dependency petitions or families and children in crisis that are likely to be subject to these proceedings. Support for administrative judges should be provided through training and/or mentoring by administrative judges with demonstrated success in establishing such community collaboration.

Recommendation 3: Counties that are currently unable to produce a report of cases that will soon exceed the 90 day rule for dispositions should explore with their software vendor the possibility that they can run their Supreme Court report with future parameter dates to find cases that will soon exceed that limit.

Recommendation 4: Counties that are unable to fully track their cases at the child level should explore with their software vendor the possibility of doing so.

Recommendations 5: The Supreme Court of Ohio should facilitate a broad users group or develop a newsletter so that all counties may share their child welfare system IT experiences. One model could involve the experiences of individual counties on a rotating basis.

Recommendation 6: “Quality Assurance Reports” should be created to ensure that the data stored in the computer is accurate. These reports will be different for each system since they need to be based on the data collected by that individual system, but examples of possible reports include: cases pending a certain number of days; pending cases without a future hearing set; various date inconsistencies (e.g., filing date prior to child’s birth date, disposition prior to adjudication date); and hearing results not entered for hearings held in past.

Recommendation 7: The courts should create reports that will allow it to assess the court’s performance in child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases. Reviewing the “Performance Measures” developed by the ABA, NCSC, and NCJFCJ and funded by the Packard Foundation is a good place for the courts to start.

Recommendation 8: The Supreme Court of Ohio should monitor the data sharing pilot project in Lucas County and explore funding options to expand the project should the results of that project suggest that other counties could benefit.

Recommendation 9: The Supreme Court of Ohio should explore funding options to provide a caseload management system to all juvenile courts in the state that would incorporate the recommendations made in this report. The new system might be from one of the current vendors or might be from a new vendor.

Recommendation 10: Case Management Reporting. Model case management reports should be developed for implementation and use in all jurisdictions to assist judges, magistrates, and key court staff in actively managing child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases. Effective caseload management calls for a court to have appropriate expectations (such as time standards) by which to measure how well it is doing. In order to have a basis for responsible steps to improve caseload management, a court must have information about its current operations. Those reports should include at least the following:

- *Pending case list: With oldest cases listed first and, with cases beyond applicable time standards indicated, the age of each judge's pending cases*
- *Trial Certainty: Showing the frequency with which adjudicatory and permanent custody hearings take place on the dates scheduled, and reflecting the reasons that scheduled adjudication and permanent custody hearings do not take place as scheduled*
- *Number of continuances granted for the cases of each judicial officer, with reasons and who has requested them*
- *Pending Case Age: For pending cases, case age in relation to applicable standards for time to adjudication (90 days) and time to permanency hearing (12 months); and for cases where a motion for permanent custody has been filed, age of pending cases and elapsed time from permanent custody motion to trial or non-trial disposition*

Recommendation 11: Judicial Supervision of Case Management. The judges should show that effective and efficient caseload management in child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases is an ongoing matter of priority for the juvenile court, and judges should show a personal, continuing commitment to exercising active court control of the pace of these cases.

Recommendation 12: Supreme Court Emphasis on Caseload Management. The Supreme Court of Ohio should regularly reinforce the importance of judicial oversight of caseload management in child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases.

Recommendation 13. Continuance Policies. The administrative judge of each juvenile court should be required to develop, in collaboration with other judges, and with magistrates, prosecuting attorneys, agency attorneys, and the local bar, a written continuance policy designed to minimize unneeded continuances. Plans should articulate guidelines for judges and magistrates to use in granting continuances, procedures for requesting continuances, means for documenting the frequency and reasons for continuances, and establish procedures for remediation of excessive continuances. Remediation may range from corrective procedures to be undertaken where a system deficiency causing excessive continuances is identified, to specific responses to the conduct of participants in the court process.

Recommendation 14: Creation of Case Management Teams. In larger jurisdictions with multiple judges and magistrates, juvenile courts should work with attorney agencies and the local private bar to explore the feasibility of developing case processing teams consisting of one or

two judicial officers and an appropriate number of specifically assigned attorneys.

The development of case processing teams has the advantage of reducing scheduling conflicts, since attorneys are not faced with being available for scheduling in front of all of the judicial officers in a court in a number of different locations.

Teams of two or more judicial officers, with the required complement of attorneys, will minimize concerns regarding the possibility that the familiarity among team members may compromise their independence.

The development of teams with two or more judicial officers would also facilitate the ability of the court to reassign hearings on an emergency or back up basis to avoid continuances where a particular judicial officer's calendar becomes over-burdened, either on a particular day or for a short time period. The team approach would offer a balance between the need to manage temporary fluctuations in workload with the desirability of maintaining the advantages of familiarity gained through the one judge/one family approach to case assignment.

Recommendation 15. Case Processing Priority. At the state and local levels, steps should be taken to accord greater calendar priority to child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases.

Recommendation 16: At the state level, the Supreme Court of Ohio should take steps to emphasize the importance and priority of child abuse, neglect, and dependency court proceedings. That could include consideration of administrative orders or rules giving priority to these matters.

Recommendation 17: At the trial court level, administrative juvenile court judges should collaborate with administrative judges of other trial courts, the presiding judge of the county's court of common pleas, and key stakeholders within the county to establish mutually agreed upon policies for managing calendar priority. Child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases should be given the highest priority, keeping in mind the federal and state requirements for case processing and, as importantly, the significant impact on children of delays in achieving permanency.

Recommendation 18: Guidelines for Managing Discovery. Discovery delays can be a significant source of delay in child abuse, neglect, and

dependency cases. The Supreme Court of Ohio should establish a group including judges and magistrates, prosecuting attorneys, bar representatives, and PCSA staff to establish model procedures for managing discovery in these cases. Because the principal target of discovery is local PCSA records for a family, the focus of the effort should be to develop model procedures for use by local agency personnel, prosecutors and agency attorneys, and the local bar to streamline the procedures for identification of agency information that should be readily available and procedures for the delivery of that information automatically as soon as counsel are appointed.

Recommendation 19: Expediting Interstate Placements. Juvenile courts in border counties should consider establishing memorandums of understanding with courts in neighboring counties in border states to assist one another in facilitating the process of interstate placement pursuant to the Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children. Washington, D. C. Metropolitan Area courts established a “Memorandum of Understanding in Regard to the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children.” The purpose of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was to facilitate cooperation between those courts in assisting one another with expediting placement processes in agencies within their respective jurisdictions. The Conference of Chief Justices and Conference of State Court Administrators endorsed the approach envisioned in the MOU and called for the establishment of state points of contact in each state’s administrative office.

Recommendation 20: In order to ensure an equitable distribution of appointments and workload across eligible attorneys, courts should review local rules governing the appointment of counsel to ensure that they are clear and definitive in regard to the requirements and process by which attorneys are added to appointment lists and the procedure for appointment at various stages of a case. While time constraints and the interest in providing counsel as quickly as possible may necessitate departures from these routines in individual cases, efforts to maintain balance and monitor the distribution of appointments, as required by Rule 8, will encourage wider attorney participation and help to reduce scheduling conflicts.

Recommendation 21: Attorneys involved in child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases need training on the law and procedures, the goals of practice in this area and related areas such as substance abuse, domestic violence, mental health issues, and the availability and delivery of services. Some minimum training requirements should be established to be included on appointment lists initially and to

maintain eligibility over time. These requirements should be clearly communicated to attorneys and monitored. Ideally, a program of training would include written materials, such as the manual developed in one of the selected jurisdictions, mentoring/shadowing experienced attorneys, courses and workshops, and opportunities for cross training.

Recommendation 22: The policy that attorneys withdraw from cases following disposition should be reviewed to determine if it serves the interests of the clients and results in unnecessary re-appointment procedures. Or at a minimum, the policy needs to be clarified as to when an attorney can come back on a case.

Recommendation 23: Expediting Appointment of Counsel and Guardians. Early appointment of counsel helps to ensure that counsel are able to align their calendars with the scheduling needs of individual cases, to make early client contact, and to begin preparation for representation. Juvenile courts should be encouraged or required to develop means to appoint legal counsel and guardians for children and for indigent parents as soon after the filing of a petition as possible. Some courts have developed procedures that provide for assignment of counsel to specific days on which initial hearings are conducted. Counsel are then permanently appointed to cases scheduled for initial hearing on that day. This approach offers the advantage that in many cases, counsel are able to make initial client contact in person on that day.

Recommendation 24: Judicial officers should routinely explain the purpose of proceedings to parties at the start of the hearing and review the outcome and next step/hearing at the conclusion. Judicial officers should be sensitive to situations in which a party may require extra explanation or an opportunity to ask additional questions. Training of judicial officers who handle child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases should continue to emphasize the importance of the quality and manner of courtroom interactions and the treatment of parties while in court.

Recommendation 25. At each stage of the proceeding, judges should make an active inquiry about the applicability of ICWA and the status of the determination that the child is or is not an Indian child. This information should be included for the record of the case and the court order. Moreover, the Supreme Court of Ohio should adopt the standards and practices set out by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges- Indian Child Welfare Act Checklists for Juvenile

and Family Court Judges, June 2003. These checklists articulate best practice standards for the state court processing of ICWA cases.

Recommendation 26: The administrative judge of each juvenile court should be required or strongly encouraged to establish formal collaboration programs with stakeholders to review performance of the juvenile court and stakeholders in processing child welfare cases and to develop and implement initiatives to improve the performance of the court and stakeholder agencies. The approach should be left flexible to allow for trial courts to adapt the collaboration process to the local environment. However, the collaboration should be initiated and led by the administrative judge. The collaborative process should include all key stakeholders to ensure a full and balanced view and to ensure maximum commitment to implementation of system improvements. The administrative judge should secure the commitment of the leadership of each key stakeholder agency. The collaborative initiative should, as a first step, articulate agreed upon principles for the collaborative process and a mission statement.

Recommendation 27: The Supreme Court of Ohio should continue its strong support of the “Beyond the Numbers” initiative. The continued, active support of the Supreme Court and its Chief Justice will provide critical support for local administrative judges in bringing stakeholders into the collaborative process. The efforts of the judicial planning committee to address model agenda and related materials for local meetings, development of a bench book, development of judicial ethics guidelines to address collaboration issues, and development of increased legal education on child welfare practice deserve particular state-level attention and support.

Recommendation 28: The Supreme Court of Ohio, in collaboration with the Beyond the Numbers judicial planning committee, should consider developing a collection of “leadership best practices” drawn from the experience of juvenile court presiding judges in Ohio and other states to supplement the model agenda being developed for local meetings. It would also be helpful to identify “mentor” judges who have demonstrated expertise in developing productive collaboration initiatives and who are willing to assist other courts in the development of collaboration initiatives for their courts. Outside facilitators are frequently very helpful in facilitating collaborative planning. Other juvenile justice system experts might also be identified to assist with facilitating such initiatives as well. State level representatives of other child welfare system participants can be

encouraged to identify mentors or experts in their professions. This would allow the formation of mentor teams where appropriate.

APPENDIX A
REVIEW OF PRIOR REPORTS

Review of Prior Reports and Evaluations By Theme				
	Family Court Feasibility Study, 1997 CIP Assessment	CFSR (including Self Assessment)	PIP	ABA Court Improvement Progress Reports
Court Structure, Organization, Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Overall, CIP survey respondents were satisfied with juvenile court handling of child abuse, neglect and dependency cases (p 7-31) - Data required for analysis of case management and timeliness is not available. (P.1-17) - Resource constraints were considered a major impediment limiting the effectiveness of courts handling family matters. - Need for expansion of mediation alternatives. (p. 5-83) - Lack of ability to share information (p. 6-84) - Lack of sufficient coordination of dependency cases with other family-related cases (p. 7-32) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop tracking tool for counties and courts to use to identify delayed cases, extract data to identify counties and courts with case processing delays. (Systemic Factor 2, Item 27, Goal 1, Action Step A). - Supreme Court’s creation of Family Law Case Manager will allow the State to address systemic issue causing delay, and specifically will facilitate liaison between ODJFS, local courts and the Supreme Court, coordinate allocation of extra judicial resources, and make available technical assistance to juvenile courts (Systemic Factor 2, Issue 27, Goal II, Action Step D). - State to develop “best Practice” guidelines for courts handling of dependency cases. (Systemic Factor 2, Item 27, Goal III, Action Step A). -State will increase opportunities for family law education for judges. (Systemic Factor 2, Item 27, Goal III, Action Step C). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -A new Model Court (supported by the National Council of Juvenile and Family court Judges) was established in Lucas County in 2003. Goals for 2003-2004 included increased oversight of educational plans for children, and improved intervention in domestic violence situations. - Supreme Court’s Advisory Committee on Technology and the Courts reviewing the feasibility of a statewide court information system for all Ohio courts. - Family Law Case Manager position is maintained with CIP funding. FCLM is the liaison to ODJFS and other state child welfare organizations, provides technical assistance to juvenile courts, developed best practice manual for juvenile clerks, and assists in developing training curricula for Ohio Judicial College. - Web based statistical reporting will be made available to juvenile courts pending evaluation of the process in Ohio municipal courts. - Funding is being made available to four family drug courts. A Family and Juvenile Drug Court manager position was created in collaboration with ODJFS.

Review of Prior Reports and Evaluations By Theme				
	Family Court Feasibility Study, 1997 CIP Assessment	CFSR (including Self Assessment)	PIP	ABA Court Improvement Progress Reports
Rules and Statutes, Legal Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ohio statutes governing family matters are relatively uncoordinated, and confusing. (P 4-26) - CIP survey respondents considered re-filing of child abuse, neglect and dependency petitions due to expiration of 90-day limit on disposition was a moderate to serious problem. (p. 7-19). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Process for permanency hearing identified as an area needing improvement in view of inconsistent court rules (ODJFS has determined that this is a factual error) and unavailability of case management data. (Systemic Factor 2, Item 27) - State exceeds standards for process for termination of parental rights (required for children in custody 12 of 22 months vs. 15 of 22 months. (Systemic Factor 2, Item 28). 		

Review of Prior Reports and Evaluations By Theme				
	Family Court Feasibility Study, 1997 CIP Assessment	CFSR (including Self Assessment)	PIP	ABA Court Improvement Progress Reports
Case Processing; Timeliness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Substantial number of court and stakeholder survey respondents believed that the time children remain in placement is a moderate to serious problem, particularly for cases proceeding to permanent placement. (p. 7-22). - Hearings do not start timely (p.7-33) - Too many continuances are granted (p 7-33.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - State's compliance with six-month court or administrative review process was rated as strength (Systemic Factor 2, Item 26). - - State did not meet standard for percent of reunifications within 12 months, crowded dockets cited as one barrier (Permanency Outcome P-1, Item 8) - State did not meet standard for percent of children having finalized adoption within 24 months, crowded dockets cited as one barrier. (Permanency Outcome P-1, Item 9) - Adoption delays are in part attributable to delays in resolution of appeals and continuances of permanency hearings -Supreme Court has established pool of judges to assist courts, but few courts have taken advantage of the resource. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ODJFS to work with Supreme Court to develop case processing information and identify best practices to reduce delay in conducting permanency hearings. (Permanency Outcome 1, Item 9, Action Step A) - Identify counties and courts that consistently do not meet case processing requirements, develop formal process with Supreme Court for response. (Systemic Factor 2, Item 27, Goal 1, Action Step A). - Overcrowded dockets were cited by CFSR as an issue in timeliness of case reviews. Ohio will determine if there is a causal connection. (Systemic Factor 2, Item 27, Goal 2, Action Step A) - State will determine whether "excessive continuances" result from improper practice or unrealistic expectations. (Systemic Factor 2, Item 27, Goal II, Action Step B). - State will determine whether appellate delay results from judicial practice or unrealistic expectations. (Systemic Factor 2, Item 27, Goal 2, Action Step C). 	

Review of Prior Reports and Evaluations By Theme				
	Family Court Feasibility Study, 1997 CIP Assessment	CFSR (including Self Assessment)	PIP	ABA Court Improvement Progress Reports
Representation and Due Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some jurisdictions have a limited number of counsel to accept assignments. (P.5-73) - Availability of GAL's is important to coordination of services to children and families. (p. 5-79) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participation of parents and children in case planning was identified as an area needing improvement. Parents indicated defense attorneys inadequate in addressing this issue. (Well-Being Outcome 1, Item 18) - Process for notice of hearings and right to be heard identified as an area of strength for agency and court hearings. (Systemic Factor 2, Item 29) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proposed Guardian ad Litem Standards to be presented to Supreme Court Advisory Committee for adoption, and training will be provided to GALs. (Systemic Factor 2, Item 27, Goal III, Action Step B). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some jurisdictions have a limited number of counsel to accept assignments. (P.5-73) - Availability of GALs is important to coordination of services to children and families. (p. 5-79)
Quality of Proceedings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A majority of court and stakeholder respondents were satisfied with the court's fairness and thoroughness in addressing child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases. (P 7-8) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some stakeholders perceive that permanency hearings are not as meaningful as they should be, and that courts could exercise more oversight as to plan development and activities. (Self Assessment, p. 21) 		

Review of Prior Reports and Evaluations By Theme				
	Family Court Feasibility Study, 1997 CIP Assessment	CFSR (including Self Assessment)	PIP	ABA Court Improvement Progress Reports
Reasonable Efforts and Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is a pervasive deficit in availability of in-patient and outpatient mental health treatment services for children. (p. 5-80) - There is a need for widely available custody investigation and psychological assessment services. (p. 5-82) - System participants believe that there were problems in delivery of services to children. (p. 7-23, 7-32) - Insufficient number of adequate foster homes. (P 7-32) - Inability to identify and recruit sufficient number of adoptive homes. (Pp. 7-23&24, 7-32) - High Caseworker turnover is a problem in providing services. (p. 7-32) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assessment of service need of parents and children and delivery of services was identified as an area needing improvement, due to inadequate assessments and lack of resources (Well-Being Outcome 1, Item 17). - Delivery of mental health services and mental health assessments was identified as an area needing improvement, due to inadequate availability (Well Being Outcome 2, Item 23). - Inadequacy in identifying relatively relative placements determined to be partly due to lack of paternity establishment for fathers. (Permanency Outcome 2, Item 15) 		

Review of Prior Reports and Evaluations By Theme				
	Family Court Feasibility Study, 1997 CIP Assessment	CFSR (including Self Assessment)	PIP	ABA Court Improvement Progress Reports
Collaboration and Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Judicial leadership at state and local level is critical to adequate processes and resources (p. 5-76) - Over 45% of court survey respondents indicated greater need for juvenile court oversight and coordination of services to children and families. (p. 7-26) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collaboration by ODJFS with community and with the court rated as a strength. Supreme Court is an active partner in the development of the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) (Agency Responsiveness, Item 38). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve communications and relationships between state and local agency personnel and courts to reduce adverse relationships and improve system performance. (Permanency Outcome 1, Item 9, Action Step A) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Education specialist position established to collaborate with ODJFS and provide training on ASFA requirements for court personnel. - A statewide symposium was provided regarding the role of judges in child abuse, neglect, and dependency cases. Follow-up regional training will be provided on implementing NCJFCJ Resource Guidelines and local collaboration planning. - Ohio's 2003 CIP application was developed through collaboration with and input from the ODJFS and the Advisory Committee on Children, Families, and Courts.

APPENDIX B

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

Section 1 – BASIC CASE INFORMATION

- 1.1 Jurisdiction: _____ 1.2 Coders: _____
1.3 Judge: _____ 1.4 Date of Observation: ____/____/____
1.5 Docket #: _____
1.6 Scheduled Start Time _____ am/pm
1.7 Actual Start Time _____ am/pm 1.8 End Time _____ am/pm
[Note: If delay(s) of hearing, record all start and stop times]

Section 2 – TYPE OF HEARING

Identify the type of hearing(s) (more than 1 hearing type may apply):

- Shelter care
 Pre-trial
 Adjudicatory
 Dispositional
 6 month court case review
 Initial 12 month review
 Interim court review hearing (after 12 month review – in lieu of agency administrative case review)
 Subsequent 12 month case review (also called Annual Review)
 Motion for permanent custody (also called TPR)
 Other Specify _____

Section 3 – PERSONS PRESENT

Indicate all persons attending hearing (If more than 1 of any type is in attendance, indicate how many):

1. Agency social worker 8. Father
2. Agency attorney/prosecutor 9. Attorney for Father (PD or pool or private)
3. Child 10. Foster Parent
4. Attorney for Child 11. Other Caretaker (e.g., relative)
5. Guardian ad litem 12. CASA assigned to child
6. Mother 13. Other: _____
7. Attorney for Mother (PD or Pool or Private) 14. Attendee(s) not clearly observable or identified

Section 4 – Delay and Continuance

4.1 Was the proceeding delayed or continued?

- 1. Yes, delayed
- 2. Yes, continued to future time or date
- 3. Part of hearing was continued
- 4. No (skip to Section 5)
- 5. Unclear (skip to Section 5)

4.2 What are the reasons for the delay or continuance? (check all that apply)

- 1. Agency social worker (case worker) a. absence b. tardiness c. lack of preparation
- 2. Agency attorney/prosecutor a. absence b. tardiness c. lack of preparation
- 3. Attorney for Child a. absence b. tardiness c. lack of preparation
- 4. Guardian ad litem a. absence b. tardiness c. lack of preparation
- 5. Parties (Mother, Father, child) a. absence b. tardiness
- 6. Attorney for parent(s) a. absence b. tardiness c. lack of preparation
- 7. Witness a. absence b. tardiness
- 8. Agency social worker (case worker) a. absence b. tardiness c. lack of preparation
- 9. Court a. not ready b. hearing took longer than time allotted

Please explain the reason for the delay and/or continuance – if unsure please write “unclear”.

Did the Court discuss the following:

- 6.7 the existence of a case plan or court report 1. Yes 2. No 3. Unclear 4. Not applicable
- 6.8 the child(ren)'s placement (living arrangement) 1. Yes 2. No 3. Unclear 4. Not applicable
- 6.9 the child(ren)'s permanency goal(s) (e.g., reunification, termination of parental rights, independent living, kinship legal guardianship?) 1. Yes 2. No 3. Unclear 4. Not applicable
- 6.10 the finding that it would be "contrary to the welfare of the child" to remain in the home 1. Yes 2. No 3. Unclear 4. Not applicable
- 6.11 the finding regarding "reasonable efforts" were made to prevent removal 1. Yes 2. No 3. Unclear 4. Not applicable
- 6.12 parent-child visitation 1. Yes 2. No 3. Unclear 4. Not applicable
- 6.13 sibling visitation 1. Yes 2. No 3. Unclear 4. Not applicable
- 6.14 services to children (e.g., medical, dental, mental health, counseling, education) 1. Yes 2. No 3. Unclear 4. Not applicable
- 6.15 services to parents (e.g., medical, mental health, counseling, vocational, education) 1. Yes 2. No 3. Unclear 4. Not applicable
- 6.16 parents' compliance with case plan & services 1. Yes 2. No 3. Unclear 4. Not applicable
- 6.17 caseworker/agency compliance with case plan and services 1. Yes 2. No 3. Unclear 4. Not applicable
- 6.18 ICWA compliance 1. Yes 2. No 3. Unclear 4. Not applicable
- 6.19 ASFA compliance 1. Yes 2. No 3. Unclear 4. Not applicable
- 6.20 date (and time) for the next hearing 1. Yes 2. No 3. Unclear 4. Not applicable

Please describe the discussions of placement, visitation, service provision and compliance:

Section 7 – HEARING OUTCOME

7.1 Did the Court close the child(ren)'s case(s)? 1. Yes 2. No 3. Unclear 4. Not applicable

7.2 If case is closed, what reason does the Court give? (check all that apply)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Compliant with case plan and services –
Case dismissed | 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Permanency Goal Achieved: Permanent
Commitment/TPR |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Prosecution decides not to proceed | 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Permanency Goal Achieved: Kinship |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Allegation(s) Not Sustained, i.e., not
proven | 8. <input type="checkbox"/> Child Reached Age of Majority |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Permanency Goal Achieved: Reunification | 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Emancipation |
| 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Permanency Goal Achieved: Adoption | 10. <input type="checkbox"/> Unable to determine |
| 11. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

Please describe the outcome/closing of the proceeding:

Instrument adapted from Court Observation Forms, Packard Dependency Court Performance Project *Toolkit* ©2004 ABA, NCJFCJ, NCSC

Overall Observer Comments:

OH CIP Reassessment-File Review Instrument

Reviewer _____ Date _____

Location _____ Case # _____

Child Identifier (C1) _____

DOB _____ Ethnicity _____

Is this an ICWA Case _____ If yes, was the tribe notified? _____

Date of Removal _____

Date of Complaint _____

Date of Shelter Hearing _____

Date of Adjudicatory Hearing _____

Date of Dispositional Hearing _____

Date of Pretrial Hearing _____

Date of Trial _____

Date of First Review _____

Date of S.A.R. _____

Date of First Annual Review _____

Date Sent to Mediation _____

Appointment of Counsel

Mother _____ Father _____

Child _____ GAL _____

Other _____ Other _____

Other children

	Name	Age/DOB	Case #
C2	_____	_____	_____
C3	_____	_____	_____
C4	_____	_____	_____
C5	_____	_____	_____
C6	_____	_____	_____
C7	_____	_____	_____
C8	_____	_____	_____

1. Was this an emergency removal?
 - Yes, Date _____
 - No

2. Did court find that remaining in the home was contrary to welfare of child?
 - Yes, the earliest court order with this finding _____
 - No, this finding _____ Not applicable

3. Was the court's finding detailed specific to the child, based on specific facts
 - Yes, specifically described
 - Yes, cites complaint/other document
 - No

4. Did court find that reasonable efforts to prevent the child's removal were made?
 - Yes, the earliest court order that includes finding is _____
 - No
 - Not applicable

5. Was the court's finding detailed, specific to the child, and based on specific facts?
 - Yes, earliest court order that includes finding is _____
 - No

6. Were reasonable efforts made to reunify the family?
 - Yes, earliest court order that includes finding is _____
 - No

7. Did the court find that reasonable efforts to reunify family were not required?
 - Yes, earliest court order that includes finding is _____
 - No

8. Was a review hearing to approve perm. plan within 30 days of this finding?
 - Yes, perm plan order dated _____
 - No, perm plan order dated _____

9. Who received notice of the following hearings (circle all that apply) (codes on reverse side)
 - Shelter Hearing: M F C GAL SW MA FA CA O _____
 - Adjudicatory: M F C GAL SW MA FA CA O _____
 - Dispositional: M F C GAL SW MA FA CA O _____
 - Pretrial: M F C GAL SW MA FA CA O _____
 - Trial: M F C GAL SW MA FA CA O _____

Annual Review: M F C GAL SW MA FA CA O _____

10. Who attended the following hearings (circle all that apply) (codes on reverse side)

Shelter Hearing: M F C PA GAL SW MA FA CA O _____

Adjudicatory: M F C PA GAL SW MA FA CA O _____

Dispositional: M F C PA GAL SW MA FA CA O _____

Pretrial: M F C PA GAL SW MA FA CA O _____

Trial: M F C PA GAL SW MA FA CA O _____

Review: M F C PA GAL SW MA FA CA O _____

Annual Review: M F C PA GAL SW MA FA CA O _____

11. Were the following hearings continued:

Shelter: Yes # times _____ No

Adjudicatory: Yes # times _____ No

Dispositional: Yes # times _____ No

Pretrial: Yes # times _____ No

Trial: Yes # times _____ No

Annual review: Yes # times _____ No

S.A.R.: Yes # times _____ No

12. Which hearings were continued for following reasons?

- Want of service
- Court's motion
- Unavailability of party
- Case preparation
- Attorney conflict
- Other (specify)

13. Was a motion for perm. custody filed?

Yes Date _____ No

14. PC trial commended _____

15. Parental rights were:

- Terminated
- Voluntarily relinquished
- Not terminated

16. Was PC order appealed

Yes Date _____

No

Not applicable

17. If child was not returned home after initial 12 month review, which, if any, of the following occurred with in 90 days?

- Motion to TPR _____
- Motion to appoint kinship guardian _____
- Perm. plan changed to planned perm. living arrangement _____

18. Which orders/hearings included any of the following (circle all that apply):

- Reasonable efforts made: S A D PT T SAR AR R
- Inquiry into relatives as guardians: S A D PT T SAR AR R
- Services/treatment for parent: S A D PT T SAR AR R
- Services/treatment for child: S A D PT T SAR AR R
- Parent’s compliance with case plan: S A D PT T SAR AR R
- Agency’s implementation of case plan: S A D PT T SAR AR R
- Amending case plan: S A D PT T SAR AR R
- Continued need for state custody: S A D PT T SAR AR R
- Continued need for placement: S A D PT T SAR AR R
- Continued appropriateness of perm. goal: S A D PT T SAR AR R

Hearing Codes for Question 18:

S = Shelter Hearing

A = Adjudicatory Hearing

D = Dispositional Hearing

PT = Pretrial Hearing

T = Trial

SAR = Semi-Annual Review

AR = Annual Review

R = Review

19. What was outcome of case? (perm. placement for child)

- Child returned home date _____
- Placed w/non-custodial parent date _____
- Child was adopted date _____
- Child in legal custody of relative date _____
- Child in legal custody of non-relative date _____
- Child emancipated date: _____ Case dismissed date: _____
- Other: _____

PLACEMENTS

	Child	Date	Type
e.g.	C1, C2	1/1/01	Foster Care

Original Placement

Subsequent Placements

Dates of subsequent reviews: (Please note whether referred to as SAR or AR)

CODES

- C = Child CA = Child's attorney PA = Prosecutor
- M = Mother MA = Mother's attorney SW = Social Worker
- F = Father FA = Father's attorney GAL = Guardian ad litem
- O = Other (specify)

COMMENTS

NCSC Ohio Court Improvement Program Reassessment 2005: Focus Group Protocol

NOTE: The focus group questions are listed in order of importance. Please attempt to complete discussions for as many areas as possible given the allotted time frame (1-1½ hours). The first question on Area 1 and Area 2 are meant to be very open-ended in the spirit of a focus group interview. The subsequent questions are more structured and will help if you do not have a very talkative group.

Introduction

Welcome, we are here today to conduct focus group interviews for the 2005 reassessment of the Ohio Court Improvement Program (CIP). The Ohio CIP is funded by the Children's Bureau, a division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. As a condition of this federal funding, the CIP must go through periodic review and assessment. Thus, the Supreme Court of Ohio Administrative Office of the Courts has contracted with the National Center for State Courts (NCSC), to perform the reassessment of the Court Improvement Program.

We are . . . (introduce yourself).

The information we are gathering today focuses on a variety of topics and will explore the Ohio Court Improvement Program's progress towards the court performance goals of safety, permanency, due process and timeliness in child abuse, neglect, dependency and TPR cases. We estimate that this focus group discussion will last approximately 1 – 1½ hours.

Before we begin, are there any general questions concerning the CIP reassessment, why we are here or what we will be discussing today?

To begin, please tell us your name, your title, and how many years you have been involved with child welfare cases including child abuse, neglect, dependency and TPR cases?

NCSC Ohio Court Improvement Program Reassessment 2005: Focus Group Protocol

Area 1: Case processing practices

First, we would like to discuss how the current case processing practices and procedures impact the court performance goals of safety, permanency, due process and timeliness in child abuse and neglect or dependency cases. When discussing case processing, we would like to reflect on the following activities: calendaring, case file management, hearings, trials, and permanency planning.

1.1 Please explain how current case processing practices and procedures impact the **permanency** of children involved in child abuse and neglect or dependency cases. **DEFINITION: permanency-** to ensure children have permanency and stability in their living situations

1.1.1 Permanency Planning:

What are the court practices and procedures related to deciding whether 1) to assume court jurisdiction over children 2) the permanency plan for the child should be reunification, adoption, legal guardianship, or placement with a relative, terminate parental rights?

How effective are these practices and procedures?

What suggestion(s) do you have to improve these practices and procedures?

Note: capture the source of the practice and procedure, (i.e., whether from rule, statute, or because the “judge says so.”)

1.1.2 Regulation:

Describe how statutory, regulatory and procedural requirements impact the permanency of child abuse and neglect or dependency cases.

1.1.3 Improvement:

Overall, what changes in case processing practices and procedures would aid the court performance goals of permanency in child abuse and neglect or dependency cases?

1.2 Please explain how current case processing practices and procedures impact the **due process** of children involved in child abuse and neglect or dependency cases. **DEFINITION: due process-** to ensure cases are decided impartially and thoroughly, based on evidence brought before the court.

1.2.1 Evidence and Witnesses:

Is the time available for hearings sufficient to permit presentation of evidence and arguments?

If not, how much time is needed to allow for appropriate evidence presentation for the various types of hearing and what are the implications for the court?

To what extent do parties and counsel present witnesses, introduce evidence, and offer arguments in the various types of hearing?

How could court practices and procedures be changed to enhance the presentation of evidence and witnesses?

NCSC Ohio Court Improvement Program Reassessment 2005: Focus Group Protocol

1.2.2 Representation:

How often are parents and children represented by counsel?

Please describe the process for appointment of counsel in your jurisdiction?

Is representation adequate?

How often are children represented or assisted by CASAs?

1.2.3 Regulation:

Describe how statutory, regulatory and procedural requirements impact the due process of child abuse and neglect or dependency cases.

1.2.4 Improvement:

Overall, what changes in case processing practices and procedures would aid the court performance goals of due process in child abuse and neglect or dependency cases?

1.3 Please explain how current case processing practices and procedures impact the **timeliness** of child abuse and neglect or dependency cases. DEFINITION: **timeliness**- to expedite permanency by minimizing the time from the filing of the petition or shelter care order to the achievement of permanency

1.3.1 Delay and Continuance:

In your experience, what are the typical sources of court delay/continuance in your jurisdiction? Are there specific kinds of cases that typically result in delay?

In your experience, to what extent is court delay a significant problem in your jurisdiction?

What suggestion(s) do you have to alleviate the problem of court delay and continuance?

1.3.2 ASFA Compliance:

How well do you think your jurisdiction is doing with respect to the meeting ASFA and statutory time frames?

How do current case processing and procedures hinder compliance with ASFA requirements?

How could current practices and procedures be adapted to aid compliance with ASFA requirements?

What sources of data are available to assist the court in determining compliance?

1.3.3 ICWA Compliance:

How frequently do you encounter ICWA cases?

Do you make active inquiry regarding the applicability of ICWA?

How effectively do the state and tribal courts coordinate in ICWA cases?

NCSC Ohio Court Improvement Program Reassessment 2005: Focus Group Protocol

1.3.4 Regulation:

Describe how statutory, regulatory and procedural requirements impact the timeliness of child abuse and neglect or dependency cases.

1.3.5 Improvement:

Overall, what changes in case processing practices and procedures would aid the court performance goals of timeliness in child abuse and neglect or dependency cases?

1.4 Please explain how current case processing practices and procedures impact the **safety** of children involved in child abuse and neglect or dependency cases. **DEFINITION: safety-** to ensure that children are safe from abuse while under court jurisdiction

1.4.1 Regulation:

Describe how statutory, regulatory and procedural requirements impact the safety of child abuse and neglect or dependency cases.

1.4.2 Improvement:

Overall, what changes in case processing practices and procedures would aid the court performance goals of safety in child abuse and neglect or dependency cases?

1.5 Treatment of Participants:

How do court practices and procedures impact the quality of treatment of all participants (e.g., children, parents, foster parents, case workers, etc.)?

How could current practices and procedures be adapted to assure that all participants are treated with courtesy, respect, and understanding?

1.6 Quality Control:

What, if any, mechanisms are there for external review of system performance?

For clients to participate in system review (parents, foster parents, wards) ?

What data and information are available to determine the effectiveness of the court's handling of child abuse and neglect or dependency cases?

1.7 Personal Performance:

How do current case processing practices and procedures impact your performance?

NCSC Ohio Court Improvement Program Reassessment 2005: Focus Group Protocol

Area 2: Court resources

Next, we would like to discuss how the current court resources (e.g., number of judicial officers, court staff, GAL, CASA, public defender/court appt attorney, etc.) impact the processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and TPR cases.

2.1 Please explain how the current level of court resources impact the processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and TPR cases.

2.1.1 Regulation:

Describe how statutory, regulatory and procedural requirements impact the court resource levels for child abuse and neglect or dependency cases.

2.1.2 Improvement:

Overall, what changes in court resources would aid the processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and TPR cases?

2.2 Training:

Describe the training that that is available to you concerning the handling of child abuse, neglect, dependency and TPR cases? How could training enhance your performance?

2.3 Caseload:

Explain how cases are assigned in your office?

Please estimate what proportion of your overall caseload is accounted for by child abuse, neglect, dependency and TPR cases? (Note: may be 100% for CASA)

Do you feel this is a manageable caseload?

Please explain. How does your court caseload size impact your performance?

2.4 Personal Performance:

How does the current level of court resources impact your performance?

Area 3: Stakeholder Relationships/Communication

Finally, we would like to talk about your working relationship and communication with other CIP stakeholders. Please describe your relationship with the following agencies, groups and organizations involved in child abuse, neglect, dependency and TPR cases

3.1 judges/judicial officials

3.2 court personnel

3.3 prosecutors

3.4 defense attorneys (attorneys representing children and parents)

3.5 CASAs

3.6 JFS case workers/supervisors/court liaisons

3.7 foster care providers

3.8 Other

NCSC Ohio Court Improvement Program Reassessment 2005: Focus Group Protocol

Any final comments or thought concerning the effectiveness of the Ohio Child Welfare System or the CIP?

NCSC Ohio Court Improvement Program Reassessment 2005

Statewide Survey

The Ohio Court Improvement Program (CIP) is funded by the Children's Bureau, a division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. As a condition of this federal funding, the CIP must go through periodic review and assessment. The Supreme Court of Ohio has contracted with the National Center for State Courts (NCSC), a non-profit court services organization, to perform the reassessment of the Court Improvement Program.

NCSC has developed several methods to collect information regarding the CIP Program and to assess the quality and timeliness of children in court case processing. One way that NCSC is assessing the CIP Program is through this statewide survey of children in court professionals. Individual survey responses and comments will be kept confidential and anonymous.

Survey responses are due by June 10, 2005.

Please send completed surveys to:

Ann Jones
National Center for State Courts
Court Consulting Division
707 17th Street, Suite 2900
Denver, CO 80202

This survey can be complete and submitted through the Internet. The survey instrument is located at <http://www.ncscsurveys.com/OH-CIP/survey.php>

General Information

Contact Information:

This information will be used by the personnel from the National Center for State Courts only if they need to contact you regarding questions they may have about your responses or problems in survey transmission.

Name: _____

Phone number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

1. Please identify your **PRIMARY** role:

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Judge/Judicial Officer | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor | <input type="checkbox"/> Court Appointed Attorney for parent |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Court staff | <input type="checkbox"/> CASA staff | <input type="checkbox"/> Court Appointed Attorney for child |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prosecutor | <input type="checkbox"/> CASA volunteer | <input type="checkbox"/> Private Attorney |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker | <input type="checkbox"/> Guardian Ad Litem | <input type="checkbox"/> Foster Care Provider |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

2. How long have you been at this job (or performed this role in child welfare cases)? _____ Year(s)

3. Please specify the county in which you work. If you are involved in child welfare cases in more than one county, please answer these questions about the county with which you are most familiar and select only that county below

<input type="checkbox"/> Adams	<input type="checkbox"/> Darke	<input type="checkbox"/> Hocking	<input type="checkbox"/> Miami	<input type="checkbox"/> Scioto
<input type="checkbox"/> Allen	<input type="checkbox"/> Defiance	<input type="checkbox"/> Holmes	<input type="checkbox"/> Monroe	<input type="checkbox"/> Seneca
<input type="checkbox"/> Ashland	<input type="checkbox"/> Delaware	<input type="checkbox"/> Huron	<input type="checkbox"/> Montgomery	<input type="checkbox"/> Shelby
<input type="checkbox"/> Ashtabula	<input type="checkbox"/> Erie	<input type="checkbox"/> Jackson	<input type="checkbox"/> Morgan	<input type="checkbox"/> Stark
<input type="checkbox"/> Athens	<input type="checkbox"/> Fairfield	<input type="checkbox"/> Jefferson	<input type="checkbox"/> Morrow	<input type="checkbox"/> Summit
<input type="checkbox"/> Auglaize	<input type="checkbox"/> Fayette	<input type="checkbox"/> Knox	<input type="checkbox"/> Muskingum	<input type="checkbox"/> Trumbull
<input type="checkbox"/> Belmont	<input type="checkbox"/> Franklin	<input type="checkbox"/> Lake	<input type="checkbox"/> Noble	<input type="checkbox"/> Tuscarawas
<input type="checkbox"/> Brown	<input type="checkbox"/> Fulton	<input type="checkbox"/> Lawrence	<input type="checkbox"/> Ottawa	<input type="checkbox"/> Union
<input type="checkbox"/> Butler	<input type="checkbox"/> Gallia	<input type="checkbox"/> Licking	<input type="checkbox"/> Paulding	<input type="checkbox"/> Van Wert
<input type="checkbox"/> Carroll	<input type="checkbox"/> Geauga	<input type="checkbox"/> Logan	<input type="checkbox"/> Perry	<input type="checkbox"/> Vinton
<input type="checkbox"/> Champaign	<input type="checkbox"/> Greene	<input type="checkbox"/> Lorain	<input type="checkbox"/> Pickaway	<input type="checkbox"/> Warren
<input type="checkbox"/> Clark	<input type="checkbox"/> Guernsey	<input type="checkbox"/> Lucas	<input type="checkbox"/> Pike	<input type="checkbox"/> Washington
<input type="checkbox"/> Clermont	<input type="checkbox"/> Hamilton	<input type="checkbox"/> Madison	<input type="checkbox"/> Portage	<input type="checkbox"/> Wayne
<input type="checkbox"/> Clinton	<input type="checkbox"/> Hancock	<input type="checkbox"/> Mahoning	<input type="checkbox"/> Preble	<input type="checkbox"/> Williams
<input type="checkbox"/> Columbiana	<input type="checkbox"/> Hardin	<input type="checkbox"/> Marion	<input type="checkbox"/> Putnam	<input type="checkbox"/> Wood
<input type="checkbox"/> Coshocton	<input type="checkbox"/> Harrison	<input type="checkbox"/> Medina	<input type="checkbox"/> Richland	<input type="checkbox"/> Wyandot
<input type="checkbox"/> Crawford	<input type="checkbox"/> Henry	<input type="checkbox"/> Meigs	<input type="checkbox"/> Ross	
<input type="checkbox"/> Cuyahoga	<input type="checkbox"/> Highland	<input type="checkbox"/> Mercer	<input type="checkbox"/> Sandusky	

Training and Standards

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	Not Applicable
4a. Prior to starting my job, I was provided written guidelines concerning my role with child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comment:						
4b. The written guidelines/manuals I received were helpful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comment:						
4c. Prior to starting my job, I received training concerning my role with child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comment:						
4d. The training I received prior to assuming my role was very helpful.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comment:						
4e. I have attended additional trainings since assuming my role?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comment:						
4f. Additional training I have received has been very helpful.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comment:						

4g. What topics would you like covered in future job-related trainings?

Caseload and Court Resources

5a. Please estimate what **percentage of your overall caseload** is accounted for by child welfare cases (i.e., child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody)? _____ %

5b. Please estimate the **average amount of time per week** you spend working on child welfare cases (i.e., child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody)? _____ hrs

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	Not Applicable
5c. Generally speaking, my child welfare caseload is manageable. Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5d. The procedure for assigning cases in my office is fair and reasonable. Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5e. The number of available judicial officers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases. Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5f. The number of available court personnel in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases. Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5g. The number of available prosecutors in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases. Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5h. The number of available public defenders and/or court appointed attorneys in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases. Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5i. The number of available guardians ad litem in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases. Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	Not Applicable
5j. The number of available CASA volunteers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comment:						
5k. The number of available Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case workers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comment:						

The following is a list of definitions for the court performance goals referenced in some survey items::

Safety - to ensure that children are safe from abuse while under court jurisdiction

Permanency - to ensure children have permanency and stability in their living situations

Due process - to ensure cases are decided impartially and thoroughly, based on evidence brought before the court

Timeliness - to expedite permanency by minimizing the time from the filing of the petition or shelter care order to the achievement of permanency

Source: ABA Center on Children and the Law, National Center for State Courts, and National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges Permanency Planning Department (Spring 2004). Building a Better Court: Measuring and Improving Court Performance and Judicial Workload in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases.(page 8)
http://www.ncsconline.org/WC/Publications/Res_CtPerS_TCPS_PackGde4-04Pub.pdf

Hearings and Case Processing

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	Not Applicable
6a. Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure the safety of children.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comment:						
6b. Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure permanency and stability for children in their living situations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comment:						
6c. Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure due process for children and their parents.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comment:						

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	Not Applicable
6d. Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure timeliness in achieving permanency for children. Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6e. During hearings, parties and/or counsel frequently present witnesses, introduce evidence, and offer arguments Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6f. Typically, the time available for hearings sufficient to permit presentation of evidence and arguments Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6g. Participants in court proceedings are treated with courtesy, respect, and understanding Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6h. Parties always leave a hearing with a scheduled next hearing or proceeding date. Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6i. Please feel free to make additional comments concerning the processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases in your jurisdiction.

Continuance and Delay

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	Not Applicable
7a. Parties being absent is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction. Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7b. Parties being tardy is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction. Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7c. Parties being unprepared is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction. Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7d. Court scheduling problems are a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction. Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	Not Applicable
7e. Inability to identify absent parent(s) is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction. Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7f. Inability to locate absent parent(s) a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction. Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7g. Problems with service of process on parties is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction. Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Statutory and Legal Requirements

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	Not Applicable
8a. Statutory, regulatory and/or procedural requirements impose significant administrative burden on the courts. <i>Please specify sources of significant burdens in the comment section</i> Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8b. Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet OH specific time frames (ORC HB 484). Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8c. My jurisdiction is in compliance with the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) time frames. Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8d. My jurisdiction is in compliance with federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) regulations. Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8e. Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet the mandatory case-related timelines dictated by statute and court rule. <i>Please identify unmet requirements in the comment section</i> Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8f. Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet the OH Supreme Court case processing guidelines for abuse and neglect cases. Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Case Tracking Information

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	Not Applicable
9a. Case tracking information is available and sufficient to meet your needs. Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9b. Case tracking information is available concerning the number or proportion of children who are subject to additional allegations of abuse or neglect while under court jurisdiction. Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9c. Case tracking information is available concerning reunification rates of children before the court. Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9d. Case tracking information is available concerning adoption disruption rates. Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9e. Case tracking information is available concerning the permanency strategy of awarding legal custody to relatives. Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9f. Case tracking information is available to identify positive or problematic trends regarding the use of Ohio's new Grandparent Power of Attorney or Caregiver Authorization Affidavit forms created under HB 130. Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Agency Relationships and Communications

Please indicate your current relationship with the following groups/agencies:

	I am a member of this group	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Fair	Poor	Don't Know	Not Applicable
10a. Judicial Officers Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10b. Court Personnel Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10c. Prosecutors Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	I am a member of this group	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Fair	Poor	Don't Know	Not Applicable
10d. Court Appointed Attorneys	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comment:								
10e. Private Attorneys	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comment:								
10f. Guardians Ad Litem	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comment:								
10g. CASA volunteers and staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comment:								
10h. Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case workers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comment:								
10i. Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comment:								
10j. Foster Care Providers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comment:								
10k. Foster Care Review Board	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comment:								
10l. Other <i>Please identify group in the comment section</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comment:								

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	Not Applicable
11a. Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) regularly meet to discuss ways to better collaborate on abuse, neglect, dependency and permanency custody cases.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comment:						
11b. Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) have met to discuss local issues related to the Child and Family Service Review.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comment:						

11c. Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) has participated in the Ohio Supreme Court's Beyond the Numbers initiative.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comment:						
11d. Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) is planning to participate or continue participating in the Ohio Supreme Court's Beyond the Numbers initiative.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comment:						

Use of Mediation

12a. Please estimate the **percentage** of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases are referred to mediation. _____ %

12b. For the cases referred to mediation, please estimate the **percentage** of cases successfully resolved through mediation. _____ %

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	Not Applicable
12c. In my jurisdiction, mediated cases are resolved more quickly than non-mediated cases.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comment:						
12d. In my jurisdiction, mediated cases move to permanent living situations for children more quickly than non-mediated cases.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comment:						
12e. In my jurisdiction, mediated cases are less costly to the court than non-mediated cases	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comment:						

13. Please feel free to make additional comments concerning the handling of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases in your jurisdiction or the OH Court Improvement Program.

APPENDIX C
STATEWIDE SURVEY RESULTS

CASA Staff	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation
Prior to starting my job, I was provided written guidelines concerning my role with child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases	22	3.09	3.00	1.06
The written guidelines/manuals I received were helpful	19	2.95	3.00	0.97
Prior to starting my job, I received training concerning my role with child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	22	2.86	3.00	1.04
The training I received prior to assuming my role was very helpful.	21	2.71	3.00	1.01
I have attended additional trainings since assuming my role?	23	3.61	4.00	0.89
Additional training I have received has been very helpful.	24	3.50	4.00	0.88
What topics would you like covered in future job-related trainings?	24			
Please estimate what percentage of your overall caseload is accounted for by child welfare cases (i.e., child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody)?	24	89.04	100.00	25.80
Please estimate the average amount of time per week you spend working on child welfare cases (i.e., child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody)?	23	29.26	30.00	12.19
Generally speaking, my child welfare caseload is manageable.	19	2.74	3.00	0.65
The procedure for assigning cases in my office is fair and reasonable.	23	3.30	3.00	0.56
The number of available judicial officers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	23	2.61	3.00	0.84
The number of available court personnel in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	22	2.95	3.00	0.65
The number of available prosecutors in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	20	2.50	3.00	0.95
The number of available public defenders and/or court appointed attorneys in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	22	2.18	2.00	0.91
The number of available guardians ad litem in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	23	2.39	3.00	0.84
The number of available CASA volunteers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	22	2.36	2.00	0.95
The number of available Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case workers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	23	2.04	2.00	0.77
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure the safety of children.	23	2.74	3.00	0.54
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure permanency and stability for children in their living situations.	23	2.57	3.00	0.73
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure due process for children and their parents.	24	2.88	3.00	0.80
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure timeliness in achieving permanency for children.	23	2.26	2.00	0.81

During hearings, parties and/or counsel frequently present witnesses, introduce evidence, and offer arguments.	22	2.68	3.00	0.78
Typically, the time available for hearings sufficient to permit presentation of evidence and arguments.	22	2.68	3.00	0.72
Participants in court proceedings are treated with courtesy, respect, and understanding.	24	3.29	3.00	0.75
Parties always leave a hearing with a scheduled next hearing or proceeding date.	23	3.09	3.00	0.85
Please feel free to make additional comments concerning the processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases in your jurisdiction.	24			
Parties being absent is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	24	2.63	3.00	0.88
Parties being tardy is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	23	2.65	3.00	0.88
Parties being unprepared is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	23	2.48	3.00	0.59
Court scheduling problems are a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	24	2.33	2.00	0.70
Inability to identify absent parent(s) is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	22	2.23	2.00	0.69
Inability to locate absent parent(s) a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	23	2.57	2.00	0.79
Problems with service of process on parties is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	24	2.67	3.00	0.92
Statutory, regulatory and/or procedural requirements impose significant administrative burden on the courts. Please specify sources of significant burdens in the comment section	14	2.57	2.50	0.65
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet OH specific time frames (ORC HB 484).	21	2.81	3.00	0.81
My jurisdiction is in compliance with the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) time frames.	20	2.80	3.00	0.77
My jurisdiction is in compliance with federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) regulations.	6	3.33	3.00	0.52
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet the mandatory case-related timelines dictated by statute and court rule. Please identify unmet requirements in the comment section	22	3.00	3.00	0.69
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet the OH Supreme Court case processing guidelines for abuse and neglect cases.	16	3.19	3.00	0.54
Case tracking information is available and sufficient to meet your needs.	22	2.64	3.00	0.79
Case tracking information is available concerning the number or proportion of children who are subject to additional allegations of abuse or neglect while under court jurisdiction.	19	2.42	3.00	0.77
Case tracking information is available concerning reunification rates of children before the court.	19	2.42	3.00	0.90
Case tracking information is available concerning adoption disruption rates.	16	2.13	2.00	0.81
Case tracking information is available concerning the permanency strategy of awarding legal custody to relatives.	18	2.22	2.00	0.94
Case tracking information is available to identify positive or problematic trends regarding the use of Ohio's new Grandparent Power of Attorney or Caregiver Authorization Affidavit forms created under HB 130.	9	1.78	2.00	0.67

Current relationship with: Judicial Officers	21	4.38	5.00	0.80
Current relationship with: Court Personnel	23	3.30	4.00	3.61
Current relationship with: Prosecutors	21	3.86	4.00	0.96
Current relationship with: Court Appointed Attorneys	22	3.91	4.00	0.81
Current relationship with: Private Attorneys	22	3.73	4.00	0.70
Current relationship with: Guardians Ad Litem	19	2.16	4.00	4.62
Current relationship with: CASA volunteers and staff	19	(8.00)	(8.00)	-
Current relationship with: Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case workers	23	3.52	4.00	1.27
Current relationship with: Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisors	23	3.52	4.00	1.16
Current relationship with: Foster Care Providers	20	4.20	4.00	0.89
Current relationship with: Foster Care Review Board	3	4.00	4.00	-
Current relationship with: Other Please identify group in the comment section	2	5.00	5.00	-
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) regularly meet to discuss ways to better collaborate on abuse, neglect, dependency and permanency custody cases.	14	2.43	3.00	0.76
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) have met to discuss local issues related to the Child and Family Service Review.	11	2.73	3.00	0.65
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) has participated in the Ohio Supreme Court's Beyond the Numbers initiative.	5	2.80	3.00	1.10
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) is planning to participate or continue participating in the Ohio Supreme Court's Beyond the Numbers initiative.	5	2.80	3.00	1.10
Please estimate the percentage of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases are	20	(4.10)	(9.00)	14.52
For the cases referred to mediation, please estimate the percentage of cases successfully resolved through	19	0.63	(9.00)	27.20
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases are resolved more quickly than non-mediated cases.	3	2.67	3.00	0.58
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases move to permanent living situations for children more quickly than non-mediated cases.	3	2.67	3.00	0.58
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases are less costly to the court than non-mediated cases	6	2.83	3.00	0.41

CASA Volunteers	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	
Prior to starting my job, I was provided written guidelines concerning my role with child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases	62	3.82	4.00	0.50	
The written guidelines/manuals I received were helpful	62	3.69	4.00	0.56	
Prior to starting my job, I received training concerning my role with child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	62	3.81	4.00	0.51	
The training I received prior to assuming my role was very helpful.	61	3.74	4.00	0.63	
I have attended additional trainings since assuming my role?	59	3.83	4.00	0.42	
Additional training I have received has been very helpful.	58	3.67	4.00	0.60	
What topics would you like covered in future job-related trainings?	62				
Please estimate what percentage of your overall caseload is accounted for by child welfare cases (i.e., child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody)?	62	90.77	100.00	25.78	
Please estimate the average amount of time per week you spend working on child welfare cases (i.e., child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody)?	62	5.31	4.00	5.98	
Generally speaking, my child welfare caseload is manageable.	60	3.72	4.00	0.45	
The procedure for assigning cases in my office is fair and reasonable.	53	3.79	4.00	0.41	
The number of available judicial officers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	45	2.93	3.00	0.81	
The number of available court personnel in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	47	2.79	3.00	0.81	
The number of available prosecutors in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	43	2.86	3.00	0.77	
The number of available public defenders and/or court appointed attorneys in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	44	2.84	3.00	0.83	
The number of available guardians ad litem in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	43	2.51	3.00	0.96	
The number of available CASA volunteers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	52	2.50	2.00	0.90	
The number of available Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case workers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	50	1.98	2.00	0.89	
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure the safety of children.	59	3.05	3.00	0.63	
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure permanency and stability for children in their living situations.	60	2.82	3.00	0.75	

Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure due process for children and their parents.	58	3.02	3.00	0.76	
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure timeliness in achieving permanency for children.	59	2.39	2.00	0.79	
During hearings, parties and/or counsel frequently present witnesses, introduce evidence, and offer arguments.	58	2.81	3.00	0.74	
Typically, the time available for hearings sufficient to permit presentation of evidence and arguments.	58	2.97	3.00	0.72	
Participants in court proceedings are treated with courtesy, respect, and understanding.	60	3.32	3.00	0.72	
Parties always leave a hearing with a scheduled next hearing or proceeding date.	60	3.20	3.00	0.68	
Please feel free to make additional comments concerning the processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases in your jurisdiction.	62				
Parties being absent is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	55	2.75	3.00	0.91	
Parties being tardy is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	53	2.70	3.00	0.80	
Parties being unprepared is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	57	2.51	2.00	0.80	
Court scheduling problems are a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	53	2.38	2.00	0.81	
Inability to identify absent parent(s) is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	52	2.29	2.00	0.64	
Inability to locate absent parent(s) a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	52	2.46	2.00	0.75	
Problems with service of process on parties is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	50	2.40	2.00	0.78	
Statutory, regulatory and/or procedural requirements impose significant administrative burden on the courts. Please specify sources of significant burdens in the comment section	24	2.21	2.00	0.59	
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet OH specific time frames (ORC HB 484).	26	2.92	3.00	0.74	
My jurisdiction is in compliance with the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) time frames.	20	3.15	3.00	0.59	
My jurisdiction is in compliance with federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) regulations.	11	3.09	3.00	0.70	
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet the mandatory case-related timelines dictated by statute and court rule. Please identify unmet requirements in the comment section	29	3.10	3.00	0.49	
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet the OH Supreme Court case processing guidelines for abuse and neglect cases.	23	3.26	3.00	0.45	
Case tracking information is available and sufficient to meet your needs.	38	2.97	3.00	0.54	

Case tracking information is available concerning the number or proportion of children who are subject to additional allegations of abuse or neglect while under court jurisdiction.	25	2.88	3.00	0.44	
Case tracking information is available concerning reunification rates of children before the court.	24	2.96	3.00	0.46	
Case tracking information is available concerning adoption disruption rates.	15	2.93	3.00	0.46	
Case tracking information is available concerning the permanency strategy of awarding legal custody to relatives.	21	2.90	3.00	0.30	
Case tracking information is available to identify positive or problematic trends regarding the use of Ohio's new Grandparent Power of Attorney or Caregiver Authorization Affidavit forms created under HB 130.	11	3.00	3.00	0.45	
Current relationship with: Judicial Officers	52	4.12	4.00	0.78	
Current relationship with: Court Personnel	53	4.17	4.00	0.73	
Current relationship with: Prosecutors	51	3.94	4.00	0.93	
Current relationship with: Court Appointed Attorneys	55	3.71	4.00	1.07	
Current relationship with: Private Attorneys	47	3.68	4.00	1.00	
Current relationship with: Guardians Ad Litem	54	0.15	3.50	5.64	
Current relationship with: CASA volunteers and staff	60	(6.12)	(8.00)	4.53	
Current relationship with: Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case workers	55	2.89	4.00	2.85	
Current relationship with: Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisors	54	2.87	4.00	2.90	
Current relationship with: Foster Care Providers	48	3.19	4.00	3.47	
Current relationship with: Foster Care Review Board	26	3.54	4.00	2.50	
Current relationship with: Other Please identify group in the comment section	2	(1.50)	(1.50)	9.19	
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) regularly meet to discuss ways to better collaborate on abuse, neglect, dependency and permanency custody cases.	16	2.81	3.00	0.75	
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) have met to discuss local issues related to the Child and Family Service Review.	18	2.83	3.00	0.71	
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) has participated in the Ohio Supreme Court's Beyond the Numbers initiative.	6	3.17	3.00	0.41	
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) is planning to participate or continue participating in the Ohio Supreme Court's Beyond the Numbers initiative.	5	3.20	3.00	0.45	
Please estimate the percentage of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases are	57	2.25	(9.00)	25.42	
For the cases referred to mediation, please estimate the percentage of cases successfully resolved through	57	0.60	(9.00)	24.57	
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases are resolved more quickly than non-mediated cases.	10	3.30	3.00	0.48	
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases move to permanent living situations for children more quickly than non-mediated cases.	7	3.29	3.00	0.49	

In my jurisdiction, mediated cases are less costly to the court than non-mediated cases	10	3.40	3.00	0.52	
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Case Workers	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation
Prior to starting my job, I was provided written guidelines concerning my role with child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases	31	2.68	3.00	0.94
The written guidelines/manuals I received were helpful	28	2.64	3.00	0.87
Prior to starting my job, I received training concerning my role with child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	30	2.63	3.00	0.96
The training I received prior to assuming my role was very helpful.	27	2.70	3.00	0.99
I have attended additional trainings since assuming my role?	32	3.69	4.00	0.47
Additional training I have received has been very helpful.	31	3.35	3.00	0.71
What topics would you like covered in future job-related trainings?	32			
Please estimate what percentage of your overall caseload is accounted for by child welfare cases (i.e., child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody)?	32	92.53	100.00	22.68
Please estimate the average amount of time per week you spend working on child welfare cases (i.e., child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody)?	30	39.23	40.00	7.09
Generally speaking, my child welfare caseload is manageable.	26	2.54	3.00	0.99
The procedure for assigning cases in my office is fair and reasonable.	28	2.64	3.00	0.91
The number of available judicial officers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	28	2.29	2.50	0.90
The number of available court personnel in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	29	2.28	2.00	0.80
The number of available prosecutors in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	28	2.50	3.00	0.84
The number of available public defenders and/or court appointed attorneys in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	27	2.52	3.00	0.85
The number of available guardians ad litem in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	29	2.34	3.00	0.90
The number of available CASA volunteers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	18	2.50	3.00	0.79
The number of available Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case workers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	28	1.96	2.00	0.84
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure the safety of children.	31	2.90	3.00	0.60
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure permanency and stability for children in their living situations.	32	2.41	3.00	0.71

Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure due process for children and their parents.	29	2.79	3.00	0.68
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure timeliness in achieving permanency for children.	31	1.87	2.00	0.81
During hearings, parties and/or counsel frequently present witnesses, introduce evidence, and offer arguments.	29	2.69	3.00	0.81
Typically, the time available for hearings sufficient to permit presentation of evidence and arguments.	28	2.79	3.00	0.79
Participants in court proceedings are treated with courtesy, respect, and understanding.	29	2.86	3.00	0.74
Parties always leave a hearing with a scheduled next hearing or proceeding date.	31	2.71	3.00	0.82
Please feel free to make additional comments concerning the processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases in your jurisdiction.	32			
Parties being absent is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	30	3.20	3.00	0.85
Parties being tardy is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	28	2.46	2.00	0.88
Parties being unprepared is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	29	2.93	3.00	0.80
Court scheduling problems are a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	28	3.07	3.00	0.77
Inability to identify absent parent(s) is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	27	2.63	2.00	0.79
Inability to locate absent parent(s) a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	28	2.82	3.00	0.86
Problems with service of process on parties is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	29	2.90	3.00	0.82
Statutory, regulatory and/or procedural requirements impose significant administrative burden on the courts. Please specify sources of significant burdens in the comment section	18	2.72	2.00	0.89
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet OH specific time frames (ORC HB 484).	20	2.75	3.00	0.64
My jurisdiction is in compliance with the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) time frames.	12	2.67	3.00	0.65
My jurisdiction is in compliance with federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) regulations.	15	3.00	3.00	0.38
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet the mandatory case-related timelines dictated by statute and court rule. Please identify unmet requirements in the comment section	21	2.90	3.00	0.54
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet the OH Supreme Court case processing guidelines for abuse and neglect cases.	17	2.88	3.00	0.49
Case tracking information is available and sufficient to meet your needs.	21	2.86	3.00	0.79

Case tracking information is available concerning the number or proportion of children who are subject to additional allegations of abuse or neglect while under court jurisdiction.	18	2.72	3.00	0.83
Case tracking information is available concerning reunification rates of children before the court.	16	3.13	3.00	0.72
Case tracking information is available concerning adoption disruption rates.	14	2.93	3.00	0.73
Case tracking information is available concerning the permanency strategy of awarding legal custody to relatives.	11	2.73	3.00	0.79
Case tracking information is available to identify positive or problematic trends regarding the use of Ohio's new Grandparent Power of Attorney or Caregiver Authorization Affidavit forms created under HB 130.	11	2.36	3.00	1.03
Current relationship with: Judicial Officers	24	3.58	4.00	0.97
Current relationship with: Court Personnel	25	3.88	4.00	0.88
Current relationship with: Prosecutors	27	3.93	4.00	1.00
Current relationship with: Court Appointed Attorneys	24	3.63	4.00	1.10
Current relationship with: Private Attorneys	23	3.57	4.00	1.04
Current relationship with: Guardians Ad Litem	27	3.59	4.00	1.34
Current relationship with: CASA volunteers and staff	16	3.38	3.50	1.09
Current relationship with: Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case workers	30	(4.37)	(8.00)	5.68
Current relationship with: Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisors	29	4.21	4.00	0.73
Current relationship with: Foster Care Providers	30	4.17	4.00	0.83
Current relationship with: Foster Care Review Board	11	3.73	4.00	0.90
Current relationship with: Other Please identify group in the comment section	3	0.67	5.00	7.51
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) regularly meet to discuss ways to better collaborate on abuse, neglect, dependency and permanency custody cases.	18	2.61	3.00	0.85
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) have met to discuss local issues related to the Child and Family Service Review.	16	2.94	3.00	0.68
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) has participated in the Ohio Supreme Court's Beyond the Numbers initiative.	3	2.33	3.00	1.15
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) is planning to participate or continue participating in the Ohio Supreme Court's Beyond the Numbers initiative.	3	2.33	3.00	1.15
Please estimate the percentage of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases are	28	(0.46)	(9.00)	11.98
For the cases referred to mediation, please estimate the percentage of cases successfully resolved through	28	3.61	(9.00)	26.46
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases are resolved more quickly than non-mediated cases.	6	2.50	2.50	1.05
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases move to permanent living situations for children more quickly than non-mediated cases.	5	2.20	2.00	1.30

In my jurisdiction, mediated cases are less costly to the court than non-mediated cases	4	2.25	2.50	0.96	
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Case Worker Supervisors	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation
Prior to starting my job, I was provided written guidelines concerning my role with child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases	30	3.07	3.00	0.69
The written guidelines/manuals I received were helpful	27	3.15	3.00	0.36
Prior to starting my job, I received training concerning my role with child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	31	3.13	3.00	0.72
The training I received prior to assuming my role was very helpful.	29	3.10	3.00	0.62
I have attended additional trainings since assuming my role?	33	3.70	4.00	0.53
Additional training I have received has been very helpful.	31	3.58	4.00	0.56
What topics would you like covered in future job-related trainings?	33			
Please estimate what percentage of your overall caseload is accounted for by child welfare cases (i.e., child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody)?	33	77.88	100.00	40.48
Please estimate the average amount of time per week you spend working on child welfare cases (i.e., child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody)?	32	34.53	40.00	16.40
Generally speaking, my child welfare caseload is manageable.	22	2.55	3.00	0.80
The procedure for assigning cases in my office is fair and reasonable.	33	3.15	3.00	0.51
The number of available judicial officers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	31	2.61	3.00	0.80
The number of available court personnel in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	32	2.59	3.00	0.76
The number of available prosecutors in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	27	2.81	3.00	0.68
The number of available public defenders and/or court appointed attorneys in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	28	2.61	3.00	0.74
The number of available guardians ad litem in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	28	2.57	3.00	0.79
The number of available CASA volunteers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	18	2.83	3.00	0.51
The number of available Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case workers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	33	2.52	2.00	0.76
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure the safety of children.	31	3.10	3.00	0.40
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure permanency and stability for children in their living situations.	33	2.67	3.00	0.78
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure due process for children and their parents.	32	3.00	3.00	0.67

Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure timeliness in achieving permanency for children.	33	2.18	2.00	0.85	
During hearings, parties and/or counsel frequently present witnesses, introduce evidence, and offer arguments.	32	2.91	3.00	0.73	
Typically, the time available for hearings sufficient to permit presentation of evidence and arguments.	32	2.75	3.00	0.76	
Participants in court proceedings are treated with courtesy, respect, and understanding.	32	3.09	3.00	0.78	
Parties always leave a hearing with a scheduled next hearing or proceeding date.	31	2.77	3.00	0.62	
Please feel free to make additional comments concerning the processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases in your jurisdiction.	33				
Parties being absent is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	31	2.68	3.00	0.65	
Parties being tardy is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	30	2.47	2.00	0.73	
Parties being unprepared is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	31	2.55	2.00	0.68	
Court scheduling problems are a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	30	2.73	3.00	0.78	
Inability to identify absent parent(s) is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	32	2.44	2.00	0.72	
Inability to locate absent parent(s) a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	31	2.58	2.00	0.72	
Problems with service of process on parties is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	30	2.77	3.00	0.73	
Statutory, regulatory and/or procedural requirements impose significant administrative burden on the courts. Please specify sources of significant burdens in the comment section	15	2.40	2.00	0.51	
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet OH specific time frames (ORC HB 484).	29	2.45	3.00	0.91	
My jurisdiction is in compliance with the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) time frames.	24	2.21	2.00	0.83	
My jurisdiction is in compliance with federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) regulations.	26	3.00	3.00	0.49	
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet the mandatory case-related timelines dictated by statute and court rule. Please identify unmet requirements in the comment section	24	2.67	3.00	0.76	
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet the OH Supreme Court case processing guidelines for abuse and neglect cases.	15	3.00	3.00	0.53	
Case tracking information is available and sufficient to meet your needs.	23	2.70	3.00	0.70	
Case tracking information is available concerning the number or proportion of children who are subject to additional allegations of abuse or neglect while under court jurisdiction.	18	2.94	3.00	0.54	
Case tracking information is available concerning reunification rates of children before the court.	21	2.95	3.00	0.50	

Case tracking information is available concerning adoption disruption rates.	16	2.81	3.00	0.54	
Case tracking information is available concerning the permanency strategy of awarding legal custody to relatives.	19	2.79	3.00	0.71	
Case tracking information is available to identify positive or problematic trends regarding the use of Ohio's new Grandparent Power of Attorney or Caregiver Authorization Affidavit forms created under HB 130.	8	2.25	2.50	0.89	
Current relationship with: Judicial Officers	33	3.79	4.00	1.17	
Current relationship with: Court Personnel	33	3.88	4.00	1.14	
Current relationship with: Prosecutors	31	4.03	4.00	1.05	
Current relationship with: Court Appointed Attorneys	33	3.64	4.00	0.86	
Current relationship with: Private Attorneys	32	3.50	4.00	0.84	
Current relationship with: Guardians Ad Litem	33	3.79	4.00	1.02	
Current relationship with: CASA volunteers and staff	21	3.52	4.00	1.12	
Current relationship with: Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case workers	30	2.40	4.00	4.77	
Current relationship with: Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisors	33	(4.64)	(8.00)	5.59	
Current relationship with: Foster Care Providers	32	3.38	4.00	3.07	
Current relationship with: Foster Care Review Board	11	3.64	4.00	1.12	
Current relationship with: Other Please identify group in the comment section	4	(2.00)	(2.00)	6.93	
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) regularly meet to discuss ways to better collaborate on abuse, neglect, dependency and permanency custody cases.	30	3.00	3.00	0.91	
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) have met to discuss local issues related to the Child and Family Service Review.	27	3.19	3.00	0.56	
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) has participated in the Ohio Supreme Court's Beyond the Numbers initiative.	5	3.40	4.00	0.89	
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) is planning to participate or continue participating in the Ohio Supreme Court's Beyond the Numbers initiative.	6	3.67	4.00	0.52	
Please estimate the percentage of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases are	31	(2.19)	(9.00)	10.27	
For the cases referred to mediation, please estimate the percentage of cases successfully resolved through	28	1.93	(9.00)	26.41	
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases are resolved more quickly than non-mediated cases.	8	2.25	2.00	0.46	
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases move to permanent living situations for children more quickly than non-mediated cases.	8	2.25	2.00	0.46	
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases are less costly to the court than non-mediated cases	6	2.67	3.00	0.52	

Court Appointed Attorneys	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation
Prior to starting my job, I was provided written guidelines concerning my role with child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases	5.00	2.20	2.00	0.84
The written guidelines/manuals I received were helpful	2.00	3.00	3.00	-
Prior to starting my job, I received training concerning my role with child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	7.00	2.43	2.00	0.53
The training I received prior to assuming my role was very helpful.	4.00	3.25	3.50	0.96
I have attended additional trainings since assuming my role?	8.00	3.50	4.00	0.76
Additional training I have received has been very helpful.	7.00	3.57	4.00	0.53
What topics would you like covered in future job-related trainings?	9.00			
Please estimate what percentage of your overall caseload is accounted for by child welfare cases (i.e., child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody)?	9.00	53.33	50.00	35.46
Please estimate the average amount of time per week you spend working on child welfare cases (i.e., child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody)?	9.00	19.33	20.00	13.07
Generally speaking, my child welfare caseload is manageable.	8.00	3.63	4.00	0.52
The procedure for assigning cases in my office is fair and reasonable.	6.00	3.33	3.00	0.52
The number of available judicial officers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	8.00	2.63	3.00	0.92
The number of available court personnel in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	8.00	2.38	2.50	0.74
The number of available prosecutors in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	9.00	2.67	3.00	0.71
The number of available public defenders and/or court appointed attorneys in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	9.00	2.78	3.00	1.20
The number of available guardians ad litem in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	8.00	3.13	3.00	0.99
The number of available CASA volunteers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	4.00	3.50	3.50	0.58
The number of available Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case workers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	8.00	2.50	3.00	1.07
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure the safety of children.	9.00	3.11	3.00	0.60
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure permanency and stability for children in their living situations.	9.00	2.56	3.00	0.73
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure due process for children and their parents.	9.00	2.44	3.00	1.01

Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure timeliness in achieving permanency for children.	9.00	2.56	3.00	0.73	
During hearings, parties and/or counsel frequently present witnesses, introduce evidence, and offer arguments.	8.00	3.00	3.00	0.76	
Typically, the time available for hearings sufficient to permit presentation of evidence and arguments.	9.00	3.22	3.00	0.67	
Participants in court proceedings are treated with courtesy, respect, and understanding.	9.00	2.89	3.00	0.93	
Parties always leave a hearing with a scheduled next hearing or proceeding date.	9.00	3.11	3.00	1.05	
Please feel free to make additional comments concerning the processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases in your jurisdiction.	9.00				
Parties being absent is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	9.00	2.44	2.00	0.73	
Parties being tardy is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	8.00	2.75	2.50	0.89	
Parties being unprepared is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	9.00	2.56	3.00	0.53	
Court scheduling problems are a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	9.00	2.44	2.00	1.01	
Inability to identify absent parent(s) is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	9.00	2.11	2.00	0.33	
Inability to locate absent parent(s) a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	9.00	2.22	2.00	0.44	
Problems with service of process on parties is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	9.00	2.44	2.00	0.73	
Statutory, regulatory and/or procedural requirements impose significant administrative burden on the courts. Please specify sources of significant burdens in the comment section	7.00	2.14	2.00	0.90	
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet OH specific time frames (ORC HB 484).	6.00	3.17	3.00	0.41	
My jurisdiction is in compliance with the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) time frames.	5.00	3.20	3.00	0.45	
My jurisdiction is in compliance with federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) regulations.	2.00	3.00	3.00	-	
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet the mandatory case-related timelines dictated by statute and court rule. Please identify unmet requirements in the comment section	7.00	3.29	3.00	0.49	
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet the OH Supreme Court case processing guidelines for abuse and neglect cases.	7.00	3.14	3.00	0.38	
Case tracking information is available and sufficient to meet your needs.	6.00	2.17	2.00	1.17	
Case tracking information is available concerning the number or proportion of children who are subject to additional allegations of abuse or neglect while under court jurisdiction.	4.00	2.25	2.50	0.96	
Case tracking information is available concerning reunification rates of children before the court.	3.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	
Case tracking information is available concerning adoption disruption rates.	3.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	

Case tracking information is available concerning the permanency strategy of awarding legal custody to relatives.	4.00	2.25	2.50	0.96	
Case tracking information is available to identify positive or problematic trends regarding the use of Ohio's new Grandparent Power of Attorney or Caregiver Authorization Affidavit forms created under HB 130.	3.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	
Current relationship with: Judicial Officers	9.00	4.56	5.00	0.73	
Current relationship with: Court Personnel	9.00	4.67	5.00	0.71	
Current relationship with: Prosecutors	9.00	4.11	4.00	0.93	
Current relationship with: Court Appointed Attorneys	8.00	(1.63)	(2.00)	6.82	
Current relationship with: Private Attorneys	9.00	0.22	4.00	6.20	
Current relationship with: Guardians Ad Litem	8.00	(1.63)	(2.00)	6.82	
Current relationship with: CASA volunteers and staff	4.00	4.50	5.00	1.00	
Current relationship with: Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case workers	8.00	4.13	4.00	0.83	
Current relationship with: Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisors	9.00	2.56	4.00	4.03	
Current relationship with: Foster Care Providers	6.00	3.33	4.00	1.51	
Current relationship with: Foster Care Review Board	2.00	2.50	2.50	0.71	
Current relationship with: Other Please identify group in the comment section	-				
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) regularly meet to discuss ways to better collaborate on abuse, neglect, dependency and permanency custody cases.	4.00	3.00	3.50	1.41	
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) have met to discuss local issues related to the Child and Family Service Review.	2.00	2.50	2.50	2.12	
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) has participated in the Ohio Supreme Court's Beyond the Numbers initiative.	1.00	3.00	3.00		
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) is planning to participate or continue participating in the Ohio Supreme Court's Beyond the Numbers initiative.	1.00	3.00	3.00		
Please estimate the percentage of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases are	7.00	13.29	5.00	32.03	
For the cases referred to mediation, please estimate the percentage of cases successfully resolved through	7.00	16.00	(9.00)	39.51	
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases are resolved more quickly than non-mediated cases.	4.00	2.75	2.50	0.96	
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases move to permanent living situations for children more quickly than non-mediated cases.	2.00	3.50	3.50	0.71	
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases are less costly to the court than non-mediated cases	4.00	3.00	3.00	0.82	

Court Staff	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation
Prior to starting my job, I was provided written guidelines concerning my role with child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases	14	2.36	2.00	0.84
The written guidelines/manuals I received were helpful	7	2.57	3.00	0.79
Prior to starting my job, I received training concerning my role with child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	15	2.27	2.00	1.03
The training I received prior to assuming my role was very helpful.	8	2.75	3.00	0.89
I have attended additional trainings since assuming my role?	16	3.06	3.00	0.85
Additional training I have received has been very helpful.	14	3.21	3.00	0.80
What topics would you like covered in future job-related trainings?	16			
Please estimate what percentage of your overall caseload is accounted for by child welfare cases (i.e., child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody)?	16	20.06	12.50	27.47
Please estimate the average amount of time per week you spend working on child welfare cases (i.e., child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody)?	15	6.37	4.00	12.92
Generally speaking, my child welfare caseload is manageable.	11	3.18	3.00	0.40
The procedure for assigning cases in my office is fair and reasonable.	12	3.33	3.00	0.49
The number of available judicial officers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	16	2.88	3.00	0.34
The number of available court personnel in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	16	2.94	3.00	0.25
The number of available prosecutors in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	16	2.75	3.00	0.58
The number of available public defenders and/or court appointed attorneys in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	16	2.25	2.00	0.77
The number of available guardians ad litem in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	16	2.50	3.00	0.73
The number of available CASA volunteers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	10	2.80	3.00	0.63
The number of available Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case workers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	12	2.75	3.00	0.62
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure the safety of children.	15	3.07	3.00	0.26
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure permanency and stability for children in their living situations.	15	2.93	3.00	0.59
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure due process for children and their parents.	16	3.00	3.00	0.63
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure timeliness in achieving permanency for children.	16	2.88	3.00	0.62

During hearings, parties and/or counsel frequently present witnesses, introduce evidence, and offer arguments.	15	2.93	3.00	0.46
Typically, the time available for hearings sufficient to permit presentation of evidence and arguments.	14	3.00	3.00	0.55
Participants in court proceedings are treated with courtesy, respect, and understanding.	15	3.27	3.00	0.46
Parties always leave a hearing with a scheduled next hearing or proceeding date.	14	2.86	3.00	0.66
Please feel free to make additional comments concerning the processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases in your jurisdiction.	16			
Parties being absent is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	14	2.36	2.00	0.74
Parties being tardy is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	15	2.20	2.00	0.56
Parties being unprepared is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	14	2.36	2.00	0.74
Court scheduling problems are a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	16	2.19	2.00	0.54
Inability to identify absent parent(s) is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	15	2.13	2.00	0.52
Inability to locate absent parent(s) a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	14	2.29	2.00	0.61
Problems with service of process on parties is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	14	2.36	2.00	0.63
Statutory, regulatory and/or procedural requirements impose significant administrative burden on the courts. Please specify sources of significant burdens in the comment section	13	2.23	2.00	0.60
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet OH specific time frames (ORC HB 484).	15	3.07	3.00	0.46
My jurisdiction is in compliance with the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) time frames.	9	2.78	3.00	0.44
My jurisdiction is in compliance with federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) regulations.	8	3.00	3.00	0.53
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet the mandatory case-related timelines dictated by statute and court rule. Please identify unmet requirements in the comment section	16	3.06	3.00	0.57
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet the OH Supreme Court case processing guidelines for abuse and neglect cases.	15	3.07	3.00	0.46
Case tracking information is available and sufficient to meet your needs.	12	3.17	3.00	0.39
Case tracking information is available concerning the number or proportion of children who are subject to additional allegations of abuse or neglect while under court jurisdiction.	10	2.90	3.00	0.74
Case tracking information is available concerning reunification rates of children before the court.	9	2.56	3.00	0.53
Case tracking information is available concerning adoption disruption rates.	6	2.33	2.00	0.52
Case tracking information is available concerning the permanency strategy of awarding legal custody to relatives.	8	2.63	3.00	0.52

Case tracking information is available to identify positive or problematic trends regarding the use of Ohio's new Grandparent Power of Attorney or Caregiver Authorization Affidavit forms created under HB 130.	9	2.11	2.00	0.60	
Current relationship with: Judicial Officers	15	4.93	5.00	0.26	
Current relationship with: Court Personnel	16	(4.06)	(8.00)	6.04	
Current relationship with: Prosecutors	15	4.47	5.00	0.83	
Current relationship with: Court Appointed Attorneys	15	4.27	4.00	0.80	
Current relationship with: Private Attorneys	15	4.27	4.00	0.80	
Current relationship with: Guardians Ad Litem	15	4.40	5.00	0.74	
Current relationship with: CASA volunteers and staff	7	4.14	4.00	0.90	
Current relationship with: Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case workers	15	4.20	4.00	0.68	
Current relationship with: Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisors	15	4.33	4.00	0.72	
Current relationship with: Foster Care Providers	8	3.75	3.50	0.89	
Current relationship with: Foster Care Review Board	4	4.00	4.00	0.82	
Current relationship with: Other Please identify group in the comment section	0				
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) regularly meet to discuss ways to better collaborate on abuse, neglect, dependency and permanency custody cases.	12	2.83	3.00	0.58	
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) have met to discuss local issues related to the Child and Family Service Review.	7	3.14	3.00	0.38	
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) has participated in the Ohio Supreme Court's Beyond the Numbers initiative.	5	2.60	3.00	0.55	
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) is planning to participate or continue participating in the Ohio Supreme Court's Beyond the Numbers initiative.	7	2.71	3.00	0.49	
Please estimate the percentage of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases are	15	(5.67)	(9.00)	8.00	
For the cases referred to mediation, please estimate the percentage of cases successfully resolved through	15	1.87	(9.00)	28.69	
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases are resolved more quickly than non-mediated cases.	4	3.25	3.00	0.50	
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases move to permanent living situations for children more quickly than non-mediated cases.	3	3.00	3.00	-	
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases are less costly to the court than non-mediated cases	2	3.50	3.50	0.71	

Foster Care	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	
Prior to starting my job, I was provided written guidelines concerning my role with child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases	18	3.06	3.00	0.80	
The written guidelines/manuals I received were helpful	16	2.75	3.00	0.58	
Prior to starting my job, I received training concerning my role with child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	19	3.11	3.00	0.57	
The training I received prior to assuming my role was very helpful.	19	3.05	3.00	0.78	
I have attended additional trainings since assuming my role?	20	3.75	4.00	0.44	
Additional training I have received has been very helpful.	20	3.35	3.50	0.75	
What topics would you like covered in future job-related trainings?	20				
Please estimate what percentage of your overall caseload is accounted for by child welfare cases (i.e., child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody)?	20	23.45	(9.00)	50.87	
Please estimate the average amount of time per week you spend working on child welfare cases (i.e., child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody)?	18	4.67	(9.00)	28.33	
Generally speaking, my child welfare caseload is manageable.	7	2.86	3.00	1.07	
The procedure for assigning cases in my office is fair and reasonable.	4	3.00	3.00	0.82	
The number of available judicial officers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	10	1.70	1.50	0.82	
The number of available court personnel in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	10	1.90	2.00	0.88	
The number of available prosecutors in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	9	1.89	2.00	0.93	
The number of available public defenders and/or court appointed attorneys in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	10	2.00	2.00	1.05	
The number of available guardians ad litem in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	10	1.50	1.50	0.53	
The number of available CASA volunteers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	10	1.50	1.00	0.71	
The number of available Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case workers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	13	1.92	2.00	0.95	
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure the safety of children.	18	2.33	3.00	0.97	
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure permanency and stability for children in their living situations.	18	1.83	2.00	0.79	
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure due process for children and their parents.	19	1.95	2.00	0.85	
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure timeliness in achieving permanency for children.	18	1.56	1.00	0.70	

During hearings, parties and/or counsel frequently present witnesses, introduce evidence, and offer arguments.	16	2.38	2.50	0.89	
Typically, the time available for hearings sufficient to permit presentation of evidence and arguments.	15	2.40	3.00	0.91	
Participants in court proceedings are treated with courtesy, respect, and understanding.	19	2.53	3.00	0.96	
Parties always leave a hearing with a scheduled next hearing or proceeding date.	15	2.60	3.00	0.83	
Please feel free to make additional comments concerning the processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases in your jurisdiction.	20				
Parties being absent is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	14	2.57	3.00	0.85	
Parties being tardy is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	13	2.23	2.00	0.83	
Parties being unprepared is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	13	2.85	3.00	0.80	
Court scheduling problems are a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	13	2.38	2.00	0.87	
Inability to identify absent parent(s) is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	9	2.44	2.00	0.88	
Inability to locate absent parent(s) a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	9	3.00	3.00	0.71	
Problems with service of process on parties is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	8	2.63	2.50	1.06	
Statutory, regulatory and/or procedural requirements impose significant administrative burden on the courts. Please specify sources of significant burdens in the comment section	7	2.71	3.00	0.76	
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet OH specific time frames (ORC HB 484).	9	2.56	3.00	1.13	
My jurisdiction is in compliance with the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) time frames.	9	1.89	2.00	0.93	
My jurisdiction is in compliance with federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) regulations.	2	3.00	3.00	-	
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet the mandatory case-related timelines dictated by statute and court rule. Please identify unmet requirements in the comment section	7	1.86	2.00	0.90	
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet the OH Supreme Court case processing guidelines for abuse and neglect cases.	3	2.00	2.00	1.00	
Case tracking information is available and sufficient to meet your needs.	8	2.63	3.00	0.74	
Case tracking information is available concerning the number or proportion of children who are subject to additional allegations of abuse or neglect while under court jurisdiction.	6	2.50	3.00	0.84	
Case tracking information is available concerning reunification rates of children before the court.	7	2.00	2.00	1.00	
Case tracking information is available concerning adoption disruption rates.	5	1.60	1.00	0.89	
Case tracking information is available concerning the permanency strategy of awarding legal custody to relatives.	5	1.60	1.00	0.89	

Case tracking information is available to identify positive or problematic trends regarding the use of Ohio's new Grandparent Power of Attorney or Caregiver Authorization Affidavit forms created under HB 130.	6	2.17	2.50	0.98	
Current relationship with: Judicial Officers	11	3.45	4.00	1.21	
Current relationship with: Court Personnel	11	3.36	4.00	1.29	
Current relationship with: Prosecutors	11	3.27	3.00	1.01	
Current relationship with: Court Appointed Attorneys	11	3.00	3.00	1.41	
Current relationship with: Private Attorneys	8	3.13	3.00	0.99	
Current relationship with: Guardians Ad Litem	13	2.69	3.00	1.60	
Current relationship with: CASA volunteers and staff	10	2.40	3.50	3.95	
Current relationship with: Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case workers	13	2.15	3.00	3.34	
Current relationship with: Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisors	12	3.00	3.00	1.60	
Current relationship with: Foster Care Providers	18	(5.17)	(8.00)	5.46	
Current relationship with: Foster Care Review Board	7	2.14	4.00	4.67	
Current relationship with: Other Please identify group in the comment section	5	(2.80)	(8.00)	7.12	
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) regularly meet to discuss ways to better collaborate on abuse, neglect, dependency and permanency custody cases.	6	2.50	3.00	0.84	
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) have met to discuss local issues related to the Child and Family Service Review.	5	2.40	3.00	0.89	
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) has participated in the Ohio Supreme Court's Beyond the Numbers initiative.	3	2.00	2.00	1.00	
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) is planning to participate or continue participating in the Ohio Supreme Court's Beyond the Numbers initiative.	3	2.00	2.00	1.00	
Please estimate the percentage of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases are	18	(3.50)	(9.00)	23.33	
For the cases referred to mediation, please estimate the percentage of cases successfully resolved through	19	(6.42)	(9.00)	11.24	
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases are resolved more quickly than non-mediated cases.	2	2.00	2.00	1.41	
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases move to permanent living situations for children more quickly than non-mediated cases.	2	2.00	2.00	1.41	
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases are less costly to the court than non-mediated cases	1	1.00	1.00		
Please feel free to make additional comments concerning the handling of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases in your jurisdiction or the OH Court Improvement Program.	20				

GAL	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation
Prior to starting my job, I was provided written guidelines concerning my role with child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases	24	3.25	3.50	0.90
The written guidelines/manuals I received were helpful	21	3.52	4.00	0.60
Prior to starting my job, I received training concerning my role with child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	24	3.29	4.00	0.91
The training I received prior to assuming my role was very helpful.	20	3.50	4.00	0.69
I have attended additional trainings since assuming my role?	24	3.63	4.00	0.49
Additional training I have received has been very helpful.	24	3.42	4.00	0.72
What topics would you like covered in future job-related trainings?	25			
Please estimate what percentage of your overall caseload is accounted for by child welfare cases (i.e., child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody)?	25	54.64	50.00	39.11
Please estimate the average amount of time per week you spend working on child welfare cases (i.e., child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody)?	23	15.78	10.00	20.71
Generally speaking, my child welfare caseload is manageable.	23	3.39	3.00	0.50
The procedure for assigning cases in my office is fair and reasonable.	19	3.32	3.00	0.75
The number of available judicial officers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	20	3.10	3.00	0.79
The number of available court personnel in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	21	3.10	3.00	0.83
The number of available prosecutors in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	19	3.00	3.00	0.58
The number of available public defenders and/or court appointed attorneys in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	20	3.00	3.00	1.03
The number of available guardians ad litem in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	20	3.10	3.00	0.72
The number of available CASA volunteers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	16	2.69	3.00	0.87
The number of available Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case workers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	19	2.95	3.00	0.78
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure the safety of children.	24	3.17	3.00	0.56
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure permanency and stability for children in their living situations.	25	3.08	3.00	0.49
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure due process for children and their parents.	25	3.00	3.00	0.50

Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure timeliness in achieving permanency for children.	23	2.74	3.00	0.75	
During hearings, parties and/or counsel frequently present witnesses, introduce evidence, and offer arguments.	24	3.13	3.00	0.54	
Typically, the time available for hearings sufficient to permit presentation of evidence and arguments.	24	3.13	3.00	0.54	
Participants in court proceedings are treated with courtesy, respect, and understanding.	25	3.40	3.00	0.58	
Parties always leave a hearing with a scheduled next hearing or proceeding date.	25	3.24	3.00	0.78	
Please feel free to make additional comments concerning the processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases in your jurisdiction.	25				
Parties being absent is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	24	2.25	2.00	0.61	
Parties being tardy is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	25	2.20	2.00	0.71	
Parties being unprepared is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	25	2.12	2.00	0.53	
Court scheduling problems are a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	25	2.28	2.00	0.68	
Inability to identify absent parent(s) is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	24	2.00	2.00	0.51	
Inability to locate absent parent(s) a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	23	2.26	2.00	0.75	
Problems with service of process on parties is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	22	2.41	2.00	0.73	
Statutory, regulatory and/or procedural requirements impose significant administrative burden on the courts. Please specify sources of significant burdens in the comment section	16	2.31	2.00	0.60	
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet OH specific time frames (ORC HB 484).	20	2.85	3.00	0.67	
My jurisdiction is in compliance with the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) time frames.	12	3.00	3.00	0.60	
My jurisdiction is in compliance with federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) regulations.	9	3.11	3.00	0.60	
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet the mandatory case-related timelines dictated by statute and court rule. Please identify unmet requirements in the comment section	18	2.89	3.00	0.76	
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet the OH Supreme Court case processing guidelines for abuse and neglect cases.	14	3.07	3.00	0.47	
Case tracking information is available and sufficient to meet your needs.	14	3.00	3.00	0.55	
Case tracking information is available concerning the number or proportion of children who are subject to additional allegations of abuse or neglect while under court jurisdiction.	10	2.80	3.00	0.79	
Case tracking information is available concerning reunification rates of children before the court.	8	2.88	3.00	0.64	
Case tracking information is available concerning adoption disruption rates.	7	2.86	3.00	0.69	

Case tracking information is available concerning the permanency strategy of awarding legal custody to relatives.	8	2.88	3.00	0.64	
Case tracking information is available to identify positive or problematic trends regarding the use of Ohio's new Grandparent Power of Attorney or Caregiver Authorization Affidavit forms created under HB 130.	17	2.86	3.00	0.69	
Current relationship with: Judicial Officers	21	4.52	5.00	0.60	
Current relationship with: Court Personnel	22	4.55	5.00	0.60	
Current relationship with: Prosecutors	21	4.19	4.00	0.60	
Current relationship with: Court Appointed Attorneys	19	1.68	4.00	5.21	
Current relationship with: Private Attorneys	20	2.20	4.00	4.49	
Current relationship with: Guardians Ad Litem	22	(2.86)	(8.00)	6.33	
Current relationship with: CASA volunteers and staff	19	2.05	5.00	5.35	
Current relationship with: Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case workers	23	4.13	4.00	1.01	
Current relationship with: Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisors	23	4.00	4.00	1.04	
Current relationship with: Foster Care Providers	21	4.33	5.00	0.97	
Current relationship with: Foster Care Review Board	9	4.22	4.00	0.83	
Current relationship with: Other Please identify group in the comment section	3	4.33	5.00	1.15	
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) regularly meet to discuss ways to better collaborate on abuse, neglect, dependency and permanency custody cases.	8	2.88	3.00	0.83	
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) have met to discuss local issues related to the Child and Family Service Review.	7	3.00	3.00	0.58	
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) has participated in the Ohio Supreme Court's Beyond the Numbers initiative.	3	3.33	3.00	0.58	
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) is planning to participate or continue participating in the Ohio Supreme Court's Beyond the Numbers initiative.	1	3.00	3.00		
Please estimate the percentage of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases are	22	4.32	(9.00)	22.21	
For the cases referred to mediation, please estimate the percentage of cases successfully resolved through	22	7.05	(9.00)	32.61	
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases are resolved more quickly than non-mediated cases.	8	3.13	3.00	0.83	
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases move to permanent living situations for children more quickly than non-mediated cases.	7	3.00	3.00	0.82	
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases are less costly to the court than non-mediated cases	8	3.13	3.00	0.64	

Judges	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation
Prior to starting my job, I was provided written guidelines concerning my role with child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases	24	2.13	2.00	0.99
The written guidelines/manuals I received were helpful	11	3.36	3.00	0.67
Prior to starting my job, I received training concerning my role with child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	25	2.28	2.00	1.10
The training I received prior to assuming my role was very helpful.	14	3.21	3.00	0.80
I have attended additional trainings since assuming my role?	26	3.62	4.00	0.70
Additional training I have received has been very helpful.	25	3.68	4.00	0.48
What topics would you like covered in future job-related trainings?	27			
Please estimate what percentage of your overall caseload is accounted for by child welfare cases (i.e., child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody)?	27	39.41	25.00	37.56
Please estimate the average amount of time per week you spend working on child welfare cases (i.e., child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody)?	26	14.10	10.00	15.43
Generally speaking, my child welfare caseload is manageable.	26	3.23	3.00	0.71
The procedure for assigning cases in my office is fair and reasonable.	26	3.27	3.00	0.60
The number of available judicial officers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	26	2.92	3.00	0.80
The number of available court personnel in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	26	2.77	3.00	0.82
The number of available prosecutors in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	25	2.80	3.00	0.65
The number of available public defenders and/or court appointed attorneys in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	26	2.12	2.00	0.82
The number of available guardians ad litem in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	25	2.60	3.00	0.71
The number of available CASA volunteers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	17	2.76	3.00	0.66
The number of available Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case workers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	25	2.68	3.00	0.69
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure the safety of children.	27	3.07	3.00	0.47
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure permanency and stability for children in their living situations.	27	2.89	3.00	0.51
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure due process for children and their parents.	27	3.19	3.00	0.62
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure timeliness in achieving permanency for children.	26	2.69	3.00	0.47

During hearings, parties and/or counsel frequently present witnesses, introduce evidence, and offer arguments.	27	3.00	3.00	0.68
Typically, the time available for hearings sufficient to permit presentation of evidence and arguments.	27	2.93	3.00	0.55
Participants in court proceedings are treated with courtesy, respect, and understanding.	27	3.48	3.00	0.51
Parties always leave a hearing with a scheduled next hearing or proceeding date.	26	2.81	3.00	0.90
Please feel free to make additional comments concerning the processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases in your jurisdiction.	27			
Parties being absent is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	27	2.74	3.00	0.76
Parties being tardy is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	27	2.37	2.00	0.63
Parties being unprepared is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	27	2.48	2.00	0.70
Court scheduling problems are a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	27	2.22	2.00	0.70
Inability to identify absent parent(s) is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	26	2.38	2.00	0.75
Inability to locate absent parent(s) a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	27	2.52	3.00	0.85
Problems with service of process on parties is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	27	2.78	3.00	0.85
Statutory, regulatory and/or procedural requirements impose significant administrative burden on the courts. Please specify sources of significant burdens in the comment section	25	2.64	3.00	0.81
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet OH specific time frames (ORC HB 484).	27	3.00	3.00	0.48
My jurisdiction is in compliance with the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) time frames.	22	2.82	3.00	0.59
My jurisdiction is in compliance with federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) regulations.	14	2.93	3.00	0.27
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet the mandatory case-related timelines dictated by statute and court rule. Please identify unmet requirements in the comment section	26	2.92	3.00	0.56
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet the OH Supreme Court case processing guidelines for abuse and neglect cases.	26	3.08	3.00	0.48
Case tracking information is available and sufficient to meet your needs.	27	2.93	3.00	0.55
Case tracking information is available concerning the number or proportion of children who are subject to additional allegations of abuse or neglect while under court jurisdiction.	21	2.71	3.00	0.72
Case tracking information is available concerning reunification rates of children before the court.	20	2.55	2.50	0.76
Case tracking information is available concerning adoption disruption rates.	16	2.19	2.00	0.66
Case tracking information is available concerning the permanency strategy of awarding legal custody to relatives.	18	2.39	2.00	0.70

Case tracking information is available to identify positive or problematic trends regarding the use of Ohio's new Grandparent Power of Attorney or Caregiver Authorization Affidavit forms created under HB 130.	19	2.11	2.00	0.66
Current relationship with: Judicial Officers	27	(6.63)	(8.00)	3.95
Current relationship with: Court Personnel	27	3.89	5.00	3.45
Current relationship with: Prosecutors	27	4.63	5.00	0.49
Current relationship with: Court Appointed Attorneys	27	4.41	5.00	0.75
Current relationship with: Private Attorneys	27	4.41	4.00	0.64
Current relationship with: Guardians Ad Litem	27	4.59	5.00	0.57
Current relationship with: CASA volunteers and staff	16	4.31	4.00	0.60
Current relationship with: Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case workers	27	4.15	4.00	0.72
Current relationship with: Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisors	27	4.04	4.00	1.06
Current relationship with: Foster Care Providers	12	3.75	4.00	0.62
Current relationship with: Foster Care Review Board	6	4.17	4.00	0.75
Current relationship with: Other Please identify group in the comment section	0			
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) regularly meet to discuss ways to better collaborate on abuse, neglect, dependency and permanency custody cases.	22	2.64	3.00	0.66
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) have met to discuss local issues related to the Child and Family Service Review.	23	2.78	3.00	0.67
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) has participated in the Ohio Supreme Court's Beyond the Numbers initiative.	15	2.80	3.00	1.08
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) is planning to participate or continue participating in the Ohio Supreme Court's Beyond the Numbers initiative.	12	3.25	3.00	0.62
Please estimate the percentage of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases are	26	(2.92)	(9.00)	17.31
For the cases referred to mediation, please estimate the percentage of cases successfully resolved through	24	0.33	(9.00)	24.35
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases are resolved more quickly than non-mediated cases.	5	3.00	3.00	1.00
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases move to permanent living situations for children more quickly than non-mediated cases.	5	3.00	3.00	1.00
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases are less costly to the court than non-mediated cases	5	3.40	3.00	0.55

Other Titles	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation
Prior to starting my job, I was provided written guidelines concerning my role with child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases	4	3.00	3.50	1.41
The written guidelines/manuals I received were helpful	4	2.75	3.00	1.26
Prior to starting my job, I received training concerning my role with child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	4	3.50	3.50	0.58
The training I received prior to assuming my role was very helpful.	3	3.67	4.00	0.58
I have attended additional trainings since assuming my role?	4	3.25	3.50	0.96
Additional training I have received has been very helpful.	3	3.33	3.00	0.58
What topics would you like covered in future job-related trainings?	4			
Please estimate what percentage of your overall caseload is accounted for by child welfare cases (i.e., child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody)?	4	29.75	17.50	34.16
Please estimate the average amount of time per week you spend working on child welfare cases (i.e., child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody)?	4	14.13	8.00	17.68
Generally speaking, my child welfare caseload is manageable.	2	3.00	3.00	-
The procedure for assigning cases in my office is fair and reasonable.	1	3.00	3.00	
The number of available judicial officers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	2	2.00	2.00	1.41
The number of available court personnel in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	3	1.33	1.00	0.58
The number of available prosecutors in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	1	3.00	3.00	
The number of available public defenders and/or court appointed attorneys in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	2	2.00	2.00	-
The number of available guardians ad litem in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	2	2.00	2.00	-
The number of available CASA volunteers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	3	2.00	2.00	1.00
The number of available Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case workers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	2	2.00	2.00	1.41
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure the safety of children.	2	3.00	3.00	-
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure permanency and stability for children in their living situations.	4	1.75	1.50	0.96
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure due process for children and their parents.	3	2.33	3.00	1.15
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure timeliness in achieving permanency for children.	4	1.25	1.00	0.50
During hearings, parties and/or counsel frequently present witnesses, introduce evidence, and offer arguments.	2	1.50	1.50	0.71

Typically, the time available for hearings sufficient to permit presentation of evidence and arguments.	2	3.00	3.00	-
Participants in court proceedings are treated with courtesy, respect, and understanding.	3	2.67	3.00	0.58
Parties always leave a hearing with a scheduled next hearing or proceeding date.	2	2.00	2.00	-
Please feel free to make additional comments concerning the processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases in your jurisdiction.	4			
Parties being absent is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	1	3.00	3.00	
Parties being tardy is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	1	3.00	3.00	
Parties being unprepared is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	3	3.00	3.00	-
Court scheduling problems are a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	2	3.50	3.50	0.71
Inability to identify absent parent(s) is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	2	2.50	2.50	0.71
Inability to locate absent parent(s) a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	2	2.50	2.50	0.71
Problems with service of process on parties is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.		3.33	3.00	0.58
Statutory, regulatory and/or procedural requirements impose significant administrative burden on the courts. Please specify sources of significant burdens in the comment section	1	3.00	3.00	
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet OH specific time frames (ORC HB 484).	1	2.00	2.00	
My jurisdiction is in compliance with the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) time frames.	1	2.00	2.00	
My jurisdiction is in compliance with federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) regulations.	0			
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet the mandatory case-related timelines dictated by statute and court rule. Please identify unmet requirements in the comment section	1	2.00	2.00	
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet the OH Supreme Court case processing guidelines for abuse and neglect cases.	1	2.00	2.00	
Case tracking information is available and sufficient to meet your needs.	1	2.00	2.00	
Case tracking information is available concerning the number or proportion of children who are subject to additional allegations of abuse or neglect while under court jurisdiction.	1	2.00	2.00	
Case tracking information is available concerning reunification rates of children before the court.	1	2.00	2.00	
Case tracking information is available concerning adoption disruption rates.	1	2.00	2.00	
Case tracking information is available concerning the permanency strategy of awarding legal custody to relatives.	1	2.00	2.00	
Case tracking information is available to identify positive or problematic trends regarding the use of Ohio's new Grandparent Power of Attorney or Caregiver Authorization Affidavit forms created under HB 130.		2.00	2.00	
Current relationship with: Judicial Officers	2	4.00	4.00	-
Current relationship with: Court Personnel	3	3.67	4.00	0.58
Current relationship with: Prosecutors	3	3.00	3.00	1.00

Current relationship with: Court Appointed Attorneys	4	2.25	2.00	1.26
Current relationship with: Private Attorneys	2	4.00	4.00	-
Current relationship with: Guardians Ad Litem	3	3.33	4.00	2.08
Current relationship with: CASA volunteers and staff	1	4.00	4.00	
Current relationship with: Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case workers	4	3.25	3.50	1.71
Current relationship with: Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisors	4	3.25	3.50	1.71
Current relationship with: Foster Care Providers	4	(2.00)	(2.00)	8.08
Current relationship with: Foster Care Review Board	1	2.00	2.00	
Current relationship with: Other Please identify group in the comment section	2	(9.00)	(9.00)	-
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) regularly meet to discuss ways to better collaborate on abuse, neglect, dependency and permanency custody cases.	1	2.00	2.00	
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) have met to discuss local issues related to the Child and Family Service Review.	1	2.00	2.00	
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) has participated in the Ohio Supreme Court's Beyond the Numbers initiative.	1	2.00	2.00	
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) is planning to participate or continue participating in the Ohio Supreme Court's Beyond the Numbers initiative.	1	1.00	1.00	
Please estimate the percentage of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases are	3	(9.00)	(9.00)	-
For the cases referred to mediation, please estimate the percentage of cases successfully resolved through	3	(9.00)	(9.00)	-
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases are resolved more quickly than non-mediated cases.	0			
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases move to permanent living situations for children more quickly than non-mediated cases.	0			
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases are less costly to the court than non-mediated cases	0			

Private Attorneys	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation
Prior to starting my job, I was provided written guidelines concerning my role with child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases	7	2.29	2.00	0.95
The written guidelines/manuals I received were helpful	3	3.00	3.00	1.00
Prior to starting my job, I received training concerning my role with child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	7	2.29	2.00	0.95
The training I received prior to assuming my role was very helpful.	4	2.75	2.50	0.96
I have attended additional trainings since assuming my role?	8	3.00	3.00	1.07
Additional training I have received has been very helpful.	6	3.50	3.50	0.55
What topics would you like covered in future job-related trainings?	10			
Please estimate what percentage of your overall caseload is accounted for by child welfare cases (i.e., child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody)?	10	26.10	15.00	28.36
Please estimate the average amount of time per week you spend working on child welfare cases (i.e., child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody)?	10	8.20	4.00	12.26
Generally speaking, my child welfare caseload is manageable.	9	3.44	3.00	0.53
The procedure for assigning cases in my office is fair and reasonable.	6	3.83	4.00	0.41
The number of available judicial officers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	9	3.00	3.00	1.22
The number of available court personnel in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	9	3.11	3.00	1.05
The number of available prosecutors in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	10	3.30	3.00	0.48
The number of available public defenders and/or court appointed attorneys in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	8	2.75	2.50	0.89
The number of available guardians ad litem in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	8	3.13	3.00	0.64
The number of available CASA volunteers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	8	3.38	3.00	0.52
The number of available Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case workers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	7	2.86	3.00	1.07
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure the safety of children.	10	3.00	3.00	0.47
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure permanency and stability for children in their living situations.	10	2.90	3.00	0.57
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure due process for children and their parents.	10	2.70	2.50	0.82
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure timeliness in achieving permanency for children.	10	2.40	2.50	0.97
During hearings, parties and/or counsel frequently present witnesses, introduce evidence, and offer arguments.	10	3.20	3.00	0.63
Typically, the time available for hearings sufficient to permit presentation of				

evidence and arguments.	10	2.90	3.00	0.88	
Participants in court proceedings are treated with courtesy, respect, and understanding.	10	3.20	3.00	0.79	
Parties always leave a hearing with a scheduled next hearing or proceeding date.	9	3.00	3.00	0.50	
Please feel free to make additional comments concerning the processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases in your jurisdiction.	10				
Parties being absent is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	9	2.33	2.00	0.71	
Parties being tardy is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	10	2.30	2.00	0.67	
Parties being unprepared is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	0	2.40	2.00	0.70	
Court scheduling problems are a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	10	2.30	2.00	1.06	
Inability to identify absent parent(s) is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	8	2.25	2.00	0.71	
Inability to locate absent parent(s) a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	8	2.25	2.00	0.71	
Problems with service of process on parties is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	7	2.57	2.00	1.13	
Statutory, regulatory and/or procedural requirements impose significant administrative burden on the courts. Please specify sources of significant burdens in the comment section	6	2.17	2.00	0.41	
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet OH specific time frames (ORC HB 484).	8	2.88	3.00	0.83	
My jurisdiction is in compliance with the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) time frames.	0				
My jurisdiction is in compliance with federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) regulations.	0				
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet the mandatory case-related timelines dictated by statute and court rule. Please identify unmet requirements in the comment section	5	2.40	3.00	0.89	
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet the OH Supreme Court case processing guidelines for abuse and neglect cases.	6	3.17	3.00	0.41	
Case tracking information is available and sufficient to meet your needs.	4	3.00	3.00	0.82	
Case tracking information is available concerning the number or proportion of children who are subject to additional allegations of abuse or neglect while under court jurisdiction.	0				
Case tracking information is available concerning reunification rates of children before the court.	0				
Case tracking information is available concerning adoption disruption rates.	0				
Case tracking information is available concerning the permanency strategy of awarding legal custody to relatives.	0				
Case tracking information is available to identify positive or problematic trends regarding the use of Ohio's new Grandparent Power of Attorney or Caregiver Authorization Affidavit forms created under HB 130.	0				
Current relationship with: Judicial Officers	10	4.50	4.50	0.53	
Current relationship with: Court Personnel	10	4.10	4.50	1.29	
Current relationship with: Prosecutors	10	4.30	4.00	0.67	
Current relationship with: Court Appointed Attorneys	8	1.13	4.00	5.72	
Current relationship with: Private Attorneys	7	(2.86)	(8.00)	6.44	

Current relationship with: Guardians Ad Litem	8	2.75	4.00	4.40	
Current relationship with: CASA volunteers and staff	9	3.67	4.00	1.12	
Current relationship with: Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case workers	10	3.60	4.00	1.26	
Current relationship with: Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisors	10	3.50	4.00	1.18	
Current relationship with: Foster Care Providers	5	2.60	3.00	1.14	
Current relationship with: Foster Care Review Board	3	3.33	4.00	2.08	
Current relationship with: Other Please identify group in the comment section	1	5.00	5.00		
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) regularly meet to discuss ways to better collaborate on abuse, neglect, dependency and permanency custody cases.	2	3.00	3.00	1.41	
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) have met to discuss local issues related to the Child and Family Service Review.	2	3.00	3.00	1.41	
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) has participated in the Ohio Supreme Court's Beyond the Numbers initiative.	0				
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) is planning to participate or continue participating in the Ohio Supreme Court's Beyond the Numbers initiative.	0				
Please estimate the percentage of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases are	9	(6.88)	(9.00)	4.22	
For the cases referred to mediation, please estimate the percentage of cases successfully resolved through	8	(3.63)	(9.00)	15.20	
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases are resolved more quickly than non-mediated cases.	2	3.50	3.50	0.71	
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases move to permanent living situations for children more quickly than non-mediated cases.	0				
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases are less costly to the court than non-mediated cases	2	3.50	3.50	0.71	

Prosecutors	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation
Prior to starting my job, I was provided written guidelines concerning my role with child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases	15	2.20	2.00	0.77
The written guidelines/manuals I received were helpful	9	2.22	2.00	0.67
Prior to starting my job, I received training concerning my role with child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	15	2.27	2.00	0.70
The training I received prior to assuming my role was very helpful.	11	2.73	3.00	0.65
I have attended additional trainings since assuming my role?	15	3.73	4.00	0.46
Additional training I have received has been very helpful.	15	3.40	3.00	0.63
What topics would you like covered in future job-related trainings?	15			
Please estimate what percentage of your overall caseload is accounted for by child welfare cases (i.e., child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody)?	15	90.33	100.00	19.32
Please estimate the average amount of time per week you spend working on child welfare cases (i.e., child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody)?	15	35.00	40.00	12.02
Generally speaking, my child welfare caseload is manageable.	14	2.36	2.50	0.93
The procedure for assigning cases in my office is fair and reasonable.	11	3.18	3.00	0.87
The number of available judicial officers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	15	2.40	3.00	0.91
The number of available court personnel in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	14	2.43	3.00	0.76
The number of available prosecutors in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	14	2.43	2.00	0.94
The number of available public defenders and/or court appointed attorneys in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	15	2.40	2.00	0.63
The number of available guardians ad litem in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	5	2.60	3.00	0.63
The number of available CASA volunteers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	13	2.85	3.00	0.38
The number of available Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case workers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.	15	1.87	2.00	0.83
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure the safety of children.	14	3.14	3.00	0.77
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure permanency and stability for children in their living situations.	15	2.73	3.00	0.88
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure due process for children and their parents.	15	3.13	3.00	0.74
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure timeliness in achieving permanency for children.	15	2.60	3.00	1.06
During hearings, parties and/or counsel frequently present witnesses, introduce evidence, and offer arguments.	14	3.00	3.00	0.78
Typically, the time available for hearings sufficient to permit presentation of				

evidence and arguments.	14	2.36	2.00	0.84	
Participants in court proceedings are treated with courtesy, respect, and understanding.	15	3.20	3.00	0.86	
Parties always leave a hearing with a scheduled next hearing or proceeding date.	15	2.87	3.00	0.99	
Please feel free to make additional comments concerning the processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases in your jurisdiction.	15				
Parties being absent is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	15	2.60	2.00	0.83	
Parties being tardy is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	15	2.33	2.00	0.98	
Parties being unprepared is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	15	2.27	2.00	0.80	
Court scheduling problems are a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	15	2.53	2.00	0.83	
Inability to identify absent parent(s) is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	15	2.20	2.00	0.56	
Inability to locate absent parent(s) a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	15	2.47	2.00	0.74	
Problems with service of process on parties is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.	15	2.60	3.00	0.99	
Statutory, regulatory and/or procedural requirements impose significant administrative burden on the courts. Please specify sources of significant burdens in the comment section	12	2.25	2.00	0.62	
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet OH specific time frames (ORC HB 484).	1				
	5	2.80	3.00	0.86	
My jurisdiction is in compliance with the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) time frames.	10	2.90	3.00	0.74	
My jurisdiction is in compliance with federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) regulations.	10	2.80	3.00	0.79	
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet the mandatory case-related timelines dictated by statute and court rule. Please identify unmet requirements in the comment section	15	2.73	3.00	0.88	
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet the OH Supreme Court case processing guidelines for abuse and neglect cases.	13	2.69	3.00	0.63	
Case tracking information is available and sufficient to meet your needs.	13	2.54	3.00	0.88	
Case tracking information is available concerning the number or proportion of children who are subject to additional allegations of abuse or neglect while under court jurisdiction.	9	2.78	3.00	0.44	
Case tracking information is available concerning reunification rates of children before the court.	11	2.55	3.00	0.52	
Case tracking information is available concerning adoption disruption rates.	9	2.44	2.00	0.53	
Case tracking information is available concerning the permanency strategy of awarding legal custody to relatives.	8	2.50	2.50	0.53	
Case tracking information is available to identify positive or problematic trends regarding the use of Ohio's new Grandparent Power of Attorney or Caregiver Authorization Affidavit forms created under HB 130.	9	2.78	3.00	0.67	
Current relationship with: Judicial Officers	15	4.13	4.00	1.19	
Current relationship with: Court Personnel	15	4.60	5.00	0.51	
Current relationship with: Prosecutors	12	(1.92)	(3.00)	6.40	
Current relationship with: Court Appointed Attorneys	15	4.27	4.00	0.59	
Current relationship with: Private Attorneys	15	4.07	4.00	0.80	
Current relationship with: Guardians Ad Litem	15	4.47	5.00	0.64	

Current relationship with: CASA volunteers and staff	13	4.31	5.00	1.18	
Current relationship with: Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case workers	15	.87	4.00	4.44	
Current relationship with: Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisors	15	2.73	4.00	4.40	
Current relationship with: Foster Care Providers	8	3.38	4.00	1.06	
Current relationship with: Foster Care Review Board	4		2.00	5.48	
Current relationship with: Other Please identify group in the comment section	3	(8.00)	(8.00)	-	
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) regularly meet to discuss ways to better collaborate on abuse, neglect, dependency and permanency custody cases.	14	2.79	3.00	0.97	
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) have met to discuss local issues related to the Child and Family Service Review.	11	3.18	3.00	0.60	
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) has participated in the Ohio Supreme Court's Beyond the Numbers initiative.	3	2.00	2.00	-	
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) is planning to participate or continue participating in the Ohio Supreme Court's Beyond the Numbers initiative.	0				
Please estimate the percentage of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases are	15	(5.87)	(9.00)	6.58	
For the cases referred to mediation, please estimate the percentage of cases successfully resolved through	14	1.86	(9.00)	25.22	
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases are resolved more quickly than non-mediated cases.	2	3.00	3.00	-	
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases move to permanent living situations for children more quickly than non-mediated cases.	2	2.50	2.50	0.71	
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases are less costly to the court than non-mediated cases	2	2.50	2.50	0.71	

COMMENTS FROM STATEWIDE SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

Prior to starting my job, I was provided written guidelines concerning my role with child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I began in 2000 as a CASA volunteer and went through training, later becoming a GAL, and eventually being hired on staff as CASA Manager and Volunteer Training Coordinator, and since I now actually do coordinate the training for CASAs, and carry a caseload also, I am very educated on what guidelines there are.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I volunteered for CASA for 5 years before becoming Director
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We were just starting the CASA program and we were the 4th in the state so there were no written guidelines available.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am referring to my employer, CASA of Franklin County, which is a private non-profit separate from the county. I don't work for the county, so I didn't receive training from the court system.
<u>CASA volunteer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think this helps a person to better understand what their role will be and the limits of that role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very good training, this group took the training very seriously
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CASA training is excellent.
<u>Court Appointed Attorney for parent</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> re panel attorneys @ Shelter Care
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I was provided training at a clinic in law school and had access to local rules
<u>Court staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ohio Revised Code
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> different time; different era
<u>Guardian Ad Litem</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 1979 when I started doing this work, The initial training was not as complete as it is now. Now, you must attend all day training and attend two half day trainings each year to be able to stay on the list of approved GALs. I participate in training attorneys.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> court rules now exist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I'm not sure to what "job" you are referring. Being GAL is not my job; it's something I do through my law practice.
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> read and studied the law
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SB 89 resources from OJC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statutes & Rules Provided
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> statutes and rules of procedure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> only "written guidelines" were the statutes
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> started in Summit County Prosecutors Office before coming to Stark County
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The position was just created
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I knew what my role would be based upon prior experience as GAL and parents' counsel, in addition to information received orally during interview process.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (IFS or CSB) case worker</u>

• It was on the job training.
• I was a part of the Title IV-E program at OSU
• I was shown my desk, phone and files and my co-workers were my trainers!!!
• Verbal discussion only
• <u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
• I didn't receive any guidelines, but knew my job, I had been an assessment worker for six plus years and had other experiences at the agency in social services.
• we did not get appropriate training when I first started 17 years ago
• I had already been with the agency 10 years in the roles of caseworker and supervisor before becoming Assistant Director
• I received IHS CORE supervisory training and I had been a line worker for 17 years.



The written guidelines/manuals I received were helpful

CASA staff

• Better materials have been developed
• Our manual is extremely informative and educational, I would welcome your organization reviewing it. I am told by outside service providers that have seen our manual that they wish we could open our training up to outside agencies.
• Some information was very outdated
• THERE WERE NONE

CASA volunteer

• It also gives you a reference point

Foster Care Provider

• so long ago - most things have changed completely

Guardian Ad Litem

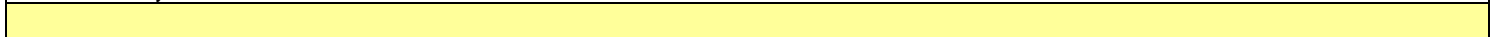
• Again, the materials we use now are much better than in 1979.
• As they now exist

Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker

• difficult to understand prior to actually working cases as terms are not clearly understood at that time
--

Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor

• they are now



Prior to starting my job, I received training concerning my role with child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.

CASA staff

• Program was just starting. many things not in place.
• VERY LITTLE TRAINING

CASA volunteer

• Excellent Training

Foster Care Provider

• in Washington DC
• permanency issues were not addresses well

Guardian Ad Litem

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Again, I don't work for the court; if you are asking if the court gave me any written material re GAL the answer is no.
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • training was minimal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was not available 20 years ago.
<u>Other</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I retired from the child welfare system before I took this position.
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My position was new
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training did not begin until employment began. However, I did receive training prior to working on my own.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • training was with Hocking County
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training took place in the early months of my job.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I was just assigned a caseload and was taught on the job.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • received training throughout the first year
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core training and on the job training occurred after employment started.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I was a supervisor before I became a manager but I did not have training before I began work; Supervisor CORE after I started
The training I received prior to assuming my role was very helpful.
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TRIAL BY ERROR
<u>CASA volunteer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could not do my job without the training
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could not do this job without the training
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • excellent foster parent training in 1968
<u>Guardian Ad Litem</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am also a LISW; that training was very helpful.
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have only been in Franklin three years. My other 17 years were in Cuyahoga. Franklin County operates much different than Cuyahoga, especially in the way they interpret the law. Despite my knowledge and experience, training would have been helpful.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • training was very helpful, but did not continue hands-on as I started the job
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • training was with Hocking County
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No training was received prior, attended Core work shops within the first year which do not even touch on the realities of the job.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The training for caseworkers and supervisors should be more about OAC requirements and less about theory in order to have standardized training and counties interpreting OAC rules consistently and thus

implementing OAC correctly in their county.
I have attended additional trainings since assuming my role?
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CASA Managers at ProKids are required to attend continuing Ed. given by outside agencies • The court has been very generous in sending me to any training available and applicable.
<u>CASA volunteer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • required
<u>Guardian Ad Litem</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mini-conferences, not formal trainings • For my social work license, yes.
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OJC seminars
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided by PCSAO • Training is on-going • We are required to obtain CLEs to remain active in the bar.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required for the agency and to maintain my LSW
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Met 36 hrs per year as required and also am completing my M.S.W. 6-11-05. • none offered by the court
Additional training I have received has been very helpful.
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HCJFS has opened their training
<u>CASA volunteer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodic in-service and Ohio CASA seminar
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Somewhat helpful, a lot is repeated, especially after 10 years.
<u>Guardian Ad Litem</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of the additional training has been during the day or conferences. I am not interested in spending a day at a conference and since I work I am unable to attend daytime training.
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OJC seminars
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some have, other are not so interesting.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tier 1 and 2 Adoption Assessor training does not prepare you to complete an adoption home study. It is about theory and not practical application (i.e. This is how to complete a home study) • Received Risk Assessment in years past and last year the Safety training as required.

What topics would you like covered in future job-related trainings?
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kinship care and funding availability. How is this administered and what criteria is used. Appears inconsistent.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual Abuse, Chemical Dependency, Domestic Violence, Laws concerning child abuse & neglect.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methamphetamine
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unfortunately CASA is not a part of the court system in this county and therefore does not participate in these trainings.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviewing Children - Mental Health Issue - parents and children - Prevention of abuse by the system
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More interviewing techniques and more "show and tell" of drug related items (we don't know what they look/smell like).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth and gang affiliation, i.e. - what red flags to look for, colors, graffiti, tatoos, etc. Youth and drug use - most popular drugs of choice and what to look for. Delinquency -vs- Dependency court issues. Emotionally troubled youth and maintaining placements. How to get foster homes to teach independent living skills to foster children close to emancipation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training in the area of drug and alcohol addiction and the effects on the families including the co-dependency piece. Also, domestic violence and the effects on the children again with the co-dependency pieces. Both these areas are found in over 80% of the families we serve.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SINCE EVERYONE HAS DIFFERENT COMPUTER SKILLS, WE NEED A COMPUTER PERSON WHO WOULD BE AVAILABLE FOR ON-SITE VISITS IF NEEDED. AS A NON-PROFIT, WE NEED ASSISTANCE IN FUNDING; A GRANTWRITER WHO KNOWS WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO. THIS JOB TAKES TOO MUCH TIME AWAY FORM SMALL PROGRAM DIRECORS, SOME WORKING PART-TIME AND DOING ALL THE RECUITING, TRAINING, MAINTAINING AND PR!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'm the Director of Finance and Technology...hence, the trainings that would assist me most are administrative trainings (e.g. finances, grants, advanced technology...)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't think this question applies to me since I don't receive training from the court system. CASA of Franklin county holds regular in-services plus I take CLE courses, so I feel that I don't need to make any special requests because I'm already exposed to a lot of topics.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislation Legal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates and changes in Juvenile Law
<u>CASA volunteer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More information on child care availability, cost etc. More information on tutoring availability (when not done by schools) More information on services from neighboring counties, which are often closer to people we work with.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • current services available to youth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing a child for "aging out" of the system and the best way to work with Childrens' Services on this issue. Sometimes it seems CSB is only interested in getting the older child off their rosters.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviewing. Legal changes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What social service agencies are out there that I can connect my child with that I advocate for. There are so many, hard to keep up with them and understand each of their functions. Also, need more info on surrogates for education and IEP conferences.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More sources that you can direct families to for help.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In depth training on interviewing a child

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Court proceedings, statuses, etc..
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we have cooperative interactions with children services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cross-cultural aspects which influence my job as CASA/GAL sexual abuse
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processes for keeping sibling placements together -
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates on new laws effecting our jobs; general topics such as organization of cases, dealing with difficult people, time management, etc.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More substance abuse training. Joint training with JFS caseworkers. Understanding their role and an opportunity to help them think out of the box.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interaction with public school and better responsibility of schools to account for behavioral issues with children especially those with PTSD.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic Violence, Drug Abuse, Sexual Abuse
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know more about the various programs to which parents are "assigned" as part of their case plans.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equine Assisted Growth and Learning (Eagala.org/)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I would like an opportunity for small group discussions with magistrates on topics related to child abuse and neglect.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race differences, addressing special needs parents and adults, more interviewing techniques
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More placement information. More information on what help is available to our children other than CSB recommendations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • testifying
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Success rate of families with whom the child(ren) have been reunified.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I would be interested in field trips to see and learn about court recommended services for children and their caregivers.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child interviews.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowing what resources are available to help the families, i.e.-Help Me Grow, WIC, other counseling services. Info on mental illnesses and how to relate to children that have mental illnesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources for families and their children
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children who have been neglected and/or abused need long term follow up or we end up losing them anyway. The first case I was assigned to recently came back into court for many of the same reasons it was there in the first place. Now the children are teenagers: tough, angry, doing poorly in school' and in trouble with the law. No one did any checking on them after placement with family. We need training on this issue.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic Violence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing effective court reports and case plan objectives. Effects on children who are separated from family. Successful transition out of foster care. Anything advanced.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can't think of anything. My training was excellent.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity among races
<u>Court Appointed Attorney for parent</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs directed specifically to Representing Parents in Juvenile Court Proceedings.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • case law
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dealing with parents who have mental health issues; Dealing with parents who are dual-diagnosis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic Violence, understanding the cycle, Drugs and Rehab, does it work, Dual diagnosis, Bipolar disease, sexual abuse, and programs that assist parents in their duties and responsibilities.
<u>Court staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The foster care system and how does it work. Drafting and understanding case plans.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am currently an appellate law clerk. My coworkers and I would like to see training for new attorneys who are "cutting their teeth" by taking juvenile court appointments without an understanding of the ramifications of some of their actions. In particular, we see a lot of appeals from a final disposition in a DNA case, where the parents initially stipulated to the adjudication of the child as dependent. Training should include the ramifications of such stipulations and making a record, if the stipulation was made in exchange for some benefit to the parent. Also, a panel discussion, including not only those involved at the trial level, but appellate practitioners as well, would offer perspective. Finally, my coworkers would like to see seminars regarding "best interest" and the application of the standard at various stages of child welfare cases. What do the various courts in the state emphasize or consider less important? What is the connection between "best interest of the child" and case plan compliance throughout the state? Thank you for your consideration of these topics.
<p><u>Foster Care Provider</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updates on new laws pertaining to child abuse & neglect. Better ways to educate the community about children in the system. More ways and tools to deal with troubled youth. Mandatory training for school staff on dealing with children in foster care. A better way to allow children to be more like normal children and less singled out as a "foster child"
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training for new Foster families to help them grow into their jobs since this is very much a learn as you go. A lot of the training goes right over your head and it is only when you receive that child that it starts to make sense. An experienced Mentor should be required. Much more sexual abuse training.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding the system and its processes would be a good class for foster and adoptive parents. Too often we have to learn it as we go. Also, "Understanding the stresses of the child welfare system on foster and adoptive parents" would be another good topic. All of the classes are based on parenting, and get monotonous. We need classes to help us understand and deal with the stresses of the system, focusing on our rights and our roles, and explaining the process. I believe lack of this support and information is mostly to blame for low retention of good foster homes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I believe it to be very critical that Courts and their staff, as well as Children Service workers, receive intensive training in what is needed to re-unify families. There MUST be services available in every Ohio County, to permit services needed by dysfunctional families that MIGHT well permit children to return to a safe home. There needs to be a time limited effort to provide ANY service needed by a family, and their children, that COULD result in reunification instead of permanent removal, or extended periods of time of removal with NOTHING being done.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> court's oversight responsibilities in child abuse, etc.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A class that covers various topics that would enable foster parent to take a test for training credit hours i.e. 10-15 hours. Thirty hours annually is excessive. When a two year license is issued, 30 hours is sufficient for the length of the license. Further, primary and secondary foster parent training hours should be reinstated. It is a true hardship for some families to have both parents attempt to complete 30 hours each. There are other states that require 12 hours for two years!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I would like to be able to attend Ohio Foster Care Association meetings and get credit for them. I would like to be able to get credit for my nursing training when it is related to the care I give. It is frequently more informative (I am a school nurse) than the general foster parent classes are for me. My agency only accepts from their classes and wastes a lot of my time on remedial information.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In training for foster parent role, there should be some emphasis on our roles, if any, in the court process. Foster parents should be informed during training if they have any input into the court process.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding the court system and how it works in regards to the Permanency of foster kids. Why does it take so long for children to placed in adoptive homes when the parents clearly aren't making any efforts to reform?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • keeping sibs together
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discipline that might actually WORK with a toddler
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of fathers in custody issues and stopping the assumption that mothers are by default the best placement for the child. How to handle cases that may lead to adoption.
<u>Guardian Ad Litem</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence issues for Juvenile Court Dependency/Neglect/Abuse and Permanent Custody Hearings.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainings by personnel involved in the various services offered to parents and children would be helpful (i.e., drug treatment, counseling, law enforcement, community centers, etc.). This would help see how the services offered to the people I work with are tied in to the case work.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviewing techniques for children.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information regarding ways to help children deal more smoothly with foster care.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case service access for the children; permanent placement procedures for the children
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What services are most appropriate for certain issues (e.g. domestic violence, substance abuse, physical abuse, neglect, etc.)for both children and parents.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attorney GAL vs. CASA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dealing with primary families when kids have been removed from the home and placed in Foster Care.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is necessary to keep informed of the decisions of the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court. It is necessary to have training on the local rules as well as the Juvenile Rules, and the Rules of Evidence. Issues of conflict should be discussed regularly. Conflict between the role as GAL and counsel for a ward must be regularly addressed in order to make sure that attorneys recognize such conflicts when they exist. How to obtain records from the Public Service Agencies and how to obtain information from social workers and experts should be constantly reviewed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None that I can think of.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you asking about CLEs or about training the courts are to give? Unless I am totally misunderstanding what you are asking, I don't think these training questions apply to attorneys.
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IN CAMERA INTERVIEWS OF CHILDREN, CASE LAW UPDATE, ROLES OF EXPERTS IN COURTROOM,
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tips for improving systems collaboration. Methods for reducing continuances. Ideas for improving educational outcomes for children in agency care.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for Judicial staff: Case Management training. Mediation training Creative solutions to the problem of hard to place children.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines for preparation of entries to pass audit review; use of testing and evaluation in appropriateness and effectiveness of case plan services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues pertaining to adoptive parents refusing to continue to care for their child because of child's behaviors and seeking to undo the adoption.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • service issues, immigration issues as it impacts our caseload, training of social workers of their roles in the courtroom process
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent Custody Standards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanency hearings and determinations
<u>Private Attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common errors & misconduct by Childrens Services should be better known. Attorneys should accompany their clients to meetings with CS to obtain information and, supervise the writing of agreements...

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How GAL's can better work with JFS caseworkers.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I would like a panel discussion with Magistrates from the surrounding counties to discuss how they would handle certain fact scenarios.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further instruction on how to deal with Sexual Abuse cases as it relates to child victims and serving as a GAL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think some counties remove children from the home too quickly. I think some children services workers do not want to cooperate directly with private attorneys regarding children being removed from the home. I think some children services workers feel as if they "lost" the case when there is reunification. I think more children services workers should develop the skills and the mindset to help bring about reunification between parent and child. Also, I think grandparents should be entitled to more time with their grandchildren, especially in juvenile or split-family relationships.
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the role of third parties/relatives as possible custodians? Do they have standing in all csb matters?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination of child support with DNA cases.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More quicker trainings on law changes and more trainings on permanent custody cases.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasonable efforts bypass when we have already removed a child permanently from a parent from the point of alleging it in the complaint to proving it at permanent custody.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how children's status as an immigrant impacts permanency planning.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For new attorneys entering the job there needs to a boot camp style training at least a week in duration focused On Ohio law/procedure. There are boot camp type trainings usually offered out of state and not jurisdictional specific.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case worker investigations vs. Parental/due process/constitutional rights
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethical considerations specifically related to PCSA attorneys; trainings specifically related to recurrent topics in child welfare and ideas to deal with reunification as it relates to those particular topics such as domestic violence, sexual abuse, drug abuse.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More Legal training for caseworkers and supervisors. Specific training on how to navigate through the (local) child protection judicial system.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with family's from a strength's perspective. Substance abuse training including information on drug tests and when and how they should be used to reduce the risk to a child in a users home.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • refreshers and updates to existing training on a regular basis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have had extensive training over the years I have been with CPS. I also see a lot work that has been done by other workers in various counties and states. The quality of work is not consistent worker to worker or agency to agency. I would like to see additional training on interviewing, writing, documenting, and doing home studies/ assessments for substitute care givers, so that the standards are clear and the assessments are more consistent.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for me, any current, updates on child behaviors, how to deal with adult negative behaviors, how to direct clients to services they see no need for.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainings in what rights foster children have.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substance abuse trainings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More training on preparing for PC trials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • perpetrator interviewing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More relevant information in the Court training.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creative safety planning ideas for children to avoid custody

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education-training on civil and constitutional rights. Ethics. Effects of removing children and placing them into foster care.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pertinent on the job trainings. I would like to be trained in things that are really affect my job not things that seem very rare in happening.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oppositional defiant children, Ractive attachment children, supervisor training
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • time management tools
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • various types of drugs our clients are involved with, what they look like, how to identify them.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to properly document a case. Mediation. How to help families as the availability of community resources are depleting due to lack of funding.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current laws and updates on practice issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anytime that a change has happened either with court expectation or any new laws are enacted that directly affect casework, there should be a training.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to appropriately disagree with a magistrate when you feel you know the true best interest of the child.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents Rights (specifically for absent fathers/parents) Advanced Mediation Training Preparing teens for emancipation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training on including Fathers.
<p><u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainings related to the multi-disciplinary team concept, sex abuse, advanced interviewing, severe physical abuse and child fatalities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It would be helpful if there was a training that actually taught you how to testify. After all this time I still never feel prepared when I go into a court room. Granted I don't have to testify as often now as when I was a caseworker but I would like to feel confident when I do.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding the culture of poverty and how it impacts public child welfare and the court system.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your questionnaire is problematic. The use of the words "Prior to starting my job" does not fit well. When Caseworkers are hired, they typically come untrained in the Child Protective Services field but do have a minimum of a BA/BS in Social Work or related field. They are trained through the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program where they receive 90 hours of training on range of topics including ca/n investigation, risk assessment and court procedures. The workers we hire receive over 40 hours of training internally within the first 6 months. We also have new workers shadow experienced workers. We do not assign abuse cases to new workers, only low risk cases.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I would like to see more trainings that are related to Executive Director and Assistant Director. The majority of the trainings are for caseworkers and supervisors.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation for PC cases. Reasonable Efforts Bypass Use of "adoptability issues" in PC trials
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The meaning of permanency to children. Moving and delays and the effect on attachment for children in the system.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MEPA, concurrent planning, permanent custody preparation; court's perspective on PPLA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work ethic issues with younger generations entering the social work field. Ways to handle the generations and train them to understand the importance and implications of our daily job tasks.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value and Ethics to be a required training trainings on the OAC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CORE training for supervisors and caseworkers should be about practical application of OAC rules and less about theory. Train you to do the job.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialized training on mental health disorders of children, specialized training on certain mental health issues such as Bi-Polar and ADD as well as ODD and Conduct Disorder that would also address how to better support foster parents in stabilizing these children.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific trainings related to the Ohio Revised Code- covering laws regarding child abuse and neglect.
<p>Generally speaking, my child welfare caseload is manageable.</p>
<p><u>CASA staff</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am program director
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of time
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need more volunteers and staff!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AGENCY USUALLY WAITS UNTIL THE 1ST 6 MONTH REVIEW TO REQUEST A CASA/GAL. HAVE A 4-6 WEEK WAITING LIST THAT IS RETURNED TO MAGISTRATES CASE MANAGER IF A VOLINTEER IS NOT AVAILABLE
<p><u>CASA volunteer</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • keeping in mind I am a volunteer
<p><u>Court Appointed Attorney for parent</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cases are more time consuming delinquency and adult criminal cases and usually cause me to spend less time on these.
<p><u>Foster Care Provider</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally, when active, I pretty well called the shots for my kids, due to the overload of the workers.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the caseworkers are overloaded
<p><u>Guardian Ad Litem</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am a GAL in difficult Custody cases. I handle only two or three AND and PC cases at any one time.
<p><u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would like more time to spend on each case. Time constraints limit available docket time for each case.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I facilitate voluntary support groups, and provide workshops and telephone support for the general population, including both parents involved in child welfare system and foster parents.
<p><u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short an attorney for the last 2 years, agency has been unwilling to allow the vacancy to be filled
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as support staff, yes
<p><u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • of course this fluctuates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • varies month to month.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case loads are too high, and there are not enough case workers to make the caseload manageable.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case loads are app. 10 cases per case worker.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are very little resource in this county
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at times it is overwhelming to have several court involved cases as time is a constraint.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • families are continuously involved with child welfare agencies because community resources are so limited, which contributes to the high case load.
<p><u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't currently carry a caseload of CAN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I do not carry a caseload in my role of Assistant Director. However, I do staff cases occasionally with direct service staff.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I do not carry a caseload at this time. As a rule caseloads are generally too high; lower case loads = more time case worker can provide to each case and would ensure higher quality of case management delivered to

clients.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'm in supervision
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am carrying a few cases; my staff has an average of 16.1 currently. However, mandates are making it more difficult to have the time to assess children and families for anything.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • workers caseloads are too high making it difficult for them to manage
The procedure for assigning cases in my office is fair and reasonable.
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of our cases are assigned based on caseload/hired hours percentage.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We often have a waiting list.
<u>Court Appointed Attorney for parent</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'm a sole practitioner.
<u>Court staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All cases are mine
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My former foster agency was very good about assigning youth to the home best suited to meet the youth's needs.
<u>Guardian Ad Litem</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am the only attorney in my office.
<u>Other</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voluntary participation
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Counsel assigns cases after initial staffing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there's no assigning - I'm the only one who does it.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I was the only prosecuting attorney assigned to child welfare
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are three Intake Workers in our agency, out of these three Intake Workers, myself and another Intake Worker do the majority of the work.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some workers have very few, yet are paid thousands of dollars more a year. Caseworkers have difficulty telling the truth, are behavior problems, management does not deal with the problems, just does not assign them cases or create a new position.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It sometimes feels as if you work your cases, you seem to get the more difficult cases as well as if you work to close your cases, you continue to get extra cases.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are having alot of turnover right now and I am assigned cases to who is available not whom the best worker would be
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • caseloads are below average
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have liaison duties for each facility, network, etc. We rotate based on these assignments.
The number of available judicial officers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.
<u>CASA staff</u>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Juv. Judge is very attentive to timeliness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only because the Judge hears cases until they are finished even if the hearing continues into the evening.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 PART-TIME MAGISTRATES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Afternoon trials get bumped because of other older on-going cases, but I guess that can't be avoided.
<u>CASA volunteer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • usually
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • we wait too long between court dates
<u>Court Appointed Attorney for parent</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality varies greatly
<u>Court staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # adequate; competency maybe not so due to lack of experience
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Court calendar is always full - sometimes a long wait for hearings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I believe, in the counties I was involved with, the number of court personnel was adequate. I believe their training was not.
<u>Guardian Ad Litem</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have been trying finish our trial for my CASA family since last fall. The amount of continuances is unacceptable. It is not only due to the caseload for the magistrate, but the scheduling of all the attorneys involved. This is not fair to the child.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judge Hamilton always makes time; I'm sure it is often difficult for his schedule.
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional courtroom space and docket time is the major issue
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • actually, too many jurists
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional Magistrates would of assistance.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is improving
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dockets are very far behind
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • we have one judge and when he is gone, we have very little back-up
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PC hearings could be expedited. I feel court does not utilize its time efficiently and effectively. Alot of down time and not making attorney's, case workers accountable.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It takes months to get court dates, decisions and court orders
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unless this includes the prosecutor's office, we have one assistant prosecutor to do all of the JFS filings and court proceedings and there are times when things are not done timely at all.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have one Judge and he is just starting to let the magistrate hear CAN cases
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cases are not always set for hearing timely
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are sometimes waiting a year for the adjudicatory hearing. Much of this is due to continuances.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In our county we wait months for court entry and orders regarding decisions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is enough personnel, just very poor organizational skills toward timely processing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are judicial officers? Magistrates? Case presenters? Probation officers?
<p>The number of available court personnel in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child</p>

abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.
<u>CASA volunteer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> not enough magistrates or defense lawyers, calendars are always a problem
<u>Court Appointed Attorney for parent</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the quality varies greatly
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> timely is the key word and in no way is this Court system timely. They should be ashamed of themselves. Our smaller counties seem to do a creditable job processing cases.
<u>Guardian Ad Litem</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> very good
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional courtroom space and docket time would require additional personnel.
<u>Other</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I don't know what the problem is, but it's slow. In one case, the local judge took a year just to write his decision on a permanent custody case before the case could even go to appeals. It was traumatic for all involved.
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> However, the court could hire additional intake staff to properly handle filings timely, overall satisfactory. Additional intake, scheduling and clerk of court personnel would be of assistance.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It can take anywhere from 4-5 months to get a hearing. I think this is unfair to the families and children who are forced to wait in limbo.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are enough, just very poor organizational skills toward a timely processing
The number of available prosecutors in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The JFS agency has one attorney on staff who handles all such cases.
<u>Court Appointed Attorney for parent</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We often are in the position of waiting for a LCCS atty to be available to begin a hearing. Quality varies
<u>Court staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The experienced prosecutors in my jurisdiction do a fine job, but there is frequent turnover and inexperienced prosecutors often start their careers as juvenile prosecutors with the understanding that it is merely a stepping stone to "the real court."
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I wouldn't have any way of knowing that but there is so much lacking that I wouldn't know who or what to blame. Prosecutors are a contract employee of the Children Service Agencies. They should be under the courts.
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have only one prosecutor handling these cases and need at least one additional too many courtrooms, not enough prosecutors
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All done by in house counsel
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are five attorneys in my office one of which is responsible for administration of the office, and who carries a case load of over fifty cases. The other four average just below 100 cases each.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was only one prosecuting attorney assigned to child welfare.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency has own attorney
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The prosecutors do not take the time or do not have the time to meet with the caseworkers prior to the hearing to prepare the case for trial or inform the caseworker what to expect in the line of questioning. This could expedite the ct decision.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • currently our prosecutors don't work on our cases and we have only a part time agency attorney who is very 'green'
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our prosecutor is over worked. He does all the cases by himself.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our attorney does a good job but could use assistance. Agency could utilize another attorney in order to better prepare for cases.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our prosecutors rotate through and so we are always getting new people with no child welfare background that we have to train. They are no match for experienced defense attorneys.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We use the inhouse agency attorney and not the prosecutor's office
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We don't have too long a wait for an exp[edited] but then my unit rarely does EO's. We do go before magistrates on reviews, custodial changes, etc. Usually anywhere from a few times a year to more.
<p>The number of available public defenders and/or court appointed attorneys in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.</p>
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local list is small and creates some scheduling conflicts.
<u>Court Appointed Attorney for parent</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is 1 public defender who also handles all delinquencies. Court appointed counsel is used, in conflicts only, but the court orders that indigent parents pay \$200 for this. If unable to pay, counsel is dismissed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be equal numbers of public defenders as prosecutors and there are not. Clients are not being adequately represented through all phases of their cases.
<u>Court staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are many fine attorneys in this jurisdiction, who regularly practice in the juvenile court.
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As with ALL connected with these cases, additional intensive training is needed by ALL involved.
<u>Guardian Ad Litem</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Again, trying to get sometimes 3 attorneys together for my CASA case is hard due to the public defenders time constraints, other trials, etc.
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of representation is uneven. Some perform admirably and well, but others do not provide as high quality representation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Court is always recruiting attorneys who are willing to take CSB case appointments. These are the most difficult cases to secure counsel for. A few attorneys always take the major of cases.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • need pd's assigned to each courtroom
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Public Defenders in this county have a separate Juvenile division staffed appropriately
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a lack of financial incentive to private counsel to take appointments in this area.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is improving
<u>Public Children Service Agency (IFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usually the PD's are given the case just before the court hearing and have not had the opportunity to have met the parents or custodians.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varies at times
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some do not qualify who still need guidance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our agency does not have much contact with public defenders.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (IFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since sometimes there are continuances due to the fact that the attorney has a conflicting hearing, maybe more available attorneys would be beneficial.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several of the court appointed att openly despise working with child welfare cases, but they have to be on the court appt list for all the courts and thus have to handle child welfare cases in order to get on the court appt list for Mun and Common Pleas C
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on the issues surrounding filings occasionally, I would surmise anther prosecutor could be utilized.
The number of available guardians ad litem in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cases are assigned within days of complaint being filed in court.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is definitely a greater need for more GALs, most are over caseload, and many of us have children involved in Delinq. as well as Depend. and must attend all hearings.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our CASA volunteers act as Guardian Ad Litem
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A FEW COURT APPOINTED ATTORNEYS KNOW WHAT THE ROLE OF A GAL INTAILS. THE REST DON'T HAVE A CLUE!
<u>CASA volunteer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GALs are too few in our county and do not spend nearly enough time with the children.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Court Appointed Attorney for parent</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Court uses CASA only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality vaies
<u>Court staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One concern: The Summit County Juv. Ct. recently hired a staff Atty/GAL to handle abuse cases w/o the expense of atty appointments. I wonder about a conflict of interest when the GAL is on the court payroll.
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paid GAL are sparse
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't know if they are adequate in numbers but they are certainly inadequate in how they do their jobs. To make decisions for children they have never talked to or laid eyes on is horrible in every sense of the word.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There needs to be MANY more CASA volunteers. They generally spend considerable more time on a case than a court appointed GAL.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guardian Ad Litem doesn't spend any time with my foster children.
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As with representation of parents, the quality of service as Guardian Ad Litem is uneven.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we need more of the good ones
<u>Other</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number may or may not be adequate, but quality of their service is at times appalling
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sufficient amount of CASA volunteers but few Attorney GAL's in the area There is no financial incentive for private attorneys to do this work when there is a cap placed on the amount they can bill.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most don't do the job they are hired to do and rely on the caseworkers to give them information. Concern on appropriateness of GAL's. Some do very little to prepare for a case. Most guardians do not see the children as they should, contact caseworkers a few days before the hearing to get updates, addresses for the children, often do not see the children but talk with foster parents over the telephone.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sometimes they are slow to be appointed but that's not often Many GAL's never even see the child or do a visit the day before court and don't have the time to do a thorough investigation of what is in the child's best interest. However, most of them don't get involved and see the children. The issue is the same as above, and only a few attorneys actually even see the kids and attend SARs I can't speak to this as I don't know turnover, caseload size, etc. Need for more GALs-some never even see or talk with the child
<u>The number of available CASA volunteers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.</u>
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CASA/GALs handle all new cases. We have an average of 80 actively assigned CASAs at this time, and 26 in training, to serve Hamilton Co. Our dream would be that every child involved in Dependency could have a CASA, but of course we do not serve all of the children in Ham. Co. Not really, we have recently lost some volunteers, but we are in the process of recruiting and will be training Again. we need more volunteers and staff! NEED 50 VOLUNTEERS TO NOT HAVE A WAITING LIST While we always want to increase our volunteer base, we have been careful not to take in more cases than we can fill with a volunteer.
<u>CASA volunteer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More cases should be assigned CASA/GALs every child deserves a CASA and we are no where near that We always need more.
<u>Court staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The volunteer GAL program in Summit County is well run and staffed. They consistently recruit and train new guardians. There are also many competent and caring attorneys who take the GAL appointments.
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CASA volunteers are always needed especially due to the high rate of student volunteers leaving for summer

and winter breaks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CASA in my opinion does a much better and adequate job , at least they see the children they are representing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muskingum County has NONE, unless that has changed in the past couple of years.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the CASA workers completely overstepped his bounds by making unannounced visits (in one case 3 times in a 10 day period) and even questioned our own son regarding his care in our home.
<u>Guardian Ad Litem</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We do not have CASAS in Cuyahoga County.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'm not aware of any CASA volunteers.
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have no CASA program
<u>Other</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unfortunately, our court has declined to support having a CASA here
<u>Private Attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a CASE vol. cannot enter a case without bias in favor of everything CSB says or prejudice against the accused parent, that CASA is worthless.
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you can not afford to pay private attorneys to do GAL work, imagine how hard it is to find volunteers.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usually the CASA doesn't have a good understanding of the court/agency's procedures or policies.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • we only use GAL's
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We could use more. They tend to get burned out.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no casa in Warren Co.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I find most CASA do not have the experience necessary to appropriately assess a situation involving abuse neglect or dependency. Therefore there are too many CASA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • program is not active in Cuy.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our court does not utilize CASA.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no CASA volunteers in my jurisdiction
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We don't use CASA as far as I can tell
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We do not have this program in our county, but our Juvenile Court Judge is looking into this.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't have CASA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marion does not have the CASA program
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This county only has GAL's
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can't speak to this.
The number of available Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case workers in my jurisdiction is adequate for the timely processing of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases.
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enough line workers, especially compared to supervisors.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The turnover at JFS is to high. Caseworkers are undertrained, and overworked
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CSB case workers have too big of a case load to manage properly
<u>CASA volunteer</u>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From the agencies worker I have worked with they are overloaded and over worked and will do anything to reduce their caseloads
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They need better training and more efficient training.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It appears that JFS needs more case workers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> not only are there not enough the turnover in CSB is so great that any one child could have multiple (three or more) caseworkers. There is no stability for the child.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These folks are way over worked and way under appreciated
<u>Court Appointed Attorney for parent</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They seem very overworked.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2-3 JFS workers attend all cases.
<u>Court staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case workers appear to be overextended, although most work hard to do the best job possible.
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There you go with timely again. Nothing, in my opinion, in these courts is timely.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of adequately trained workers is lacking.
<u>Guardian Ad Litem</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> more qualified and better trained case workers would be a tremendous help.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> case workers are puppets, not allowed to have real say, decisions made by "Agency" who does NOT see or know the children
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As everywhere, case loads are too high.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> never enough of the good ones; some are downright terrible
<u>Private Attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSB caseworkers waste time on minor allegations unsupported by any evidence and then, complain about their large caseload.
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> too few workers, too high of case loads.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to budget constraints the number of staff is directly related to your local community's willingness to pass a levy to make up for gaps in state and federal funding. Ohio has no income generator (tax) assigned solely to raise funds for child protection
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It could be if they were not so bogged down with repetitive paperwork.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we need either more caseworkers or case aids
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case loads are too high.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case workers are being over worker and being required to carry unmanageable caseloads due to lack of staff. Due to the issues mentioned, family contact is less .
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have workers but are not used effectively as some do nothing, or have low case loads.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sometimes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> need more workers and less paper work
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We don't have the money to hire more staff we average 25 to 35 cases per worker
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our average caseload is 10-11 cases

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The agency's caseloads need to be lower, but we do not have funding for additional staff.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asking for more staff now
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childrens Services is in a permanent crisis in terms of shortage of case workers.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We could use more workers in each unit as our county's population has grown very rapidly.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more requirements means we need to reduce caseload further
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I do think that the national recommended average is 15 cases or less. Frankly, this is actually difficult to answer as we have so many paper demands now and database documentation that it is difficult to answer except anecdotally. I firmly believe that is
<p>Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure the safety of children.</p>
<p><u>CASA staff</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TAKE TOO LONG FOR DECISIONS
<p><u>CASA volunteer</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not always
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • our county focus is on parents first, children later
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • safety for children is too difficult to ensure
<p><u>Court Appointed Attorney for parent</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have noted an increase of problems with safety in foster parents' homes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If anything the CSB is too quick to remove children.
<p><u>Foster Care Provider</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lot of overworked Caseworkers try to do their best but are to some extent thwarted by the people who head up these agencies and courts.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • placement processes are dangerous
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is so much focus on family unity right now that it is in the detriment of children. The only thing that keeps it from public outcry is that the media can't have the info. Children are severely abused, and neglected and taken out of the home for a while and then returned with no changes to the home.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • takes far too long for the "court" to determine the case should be permanent custody. TOO MUCH time is given to "BIOLOGICAL" parents. to get their act together. Too much damage is done to children prior to being placed in foster care.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • we have been involved with this 1 case for almost 5 years
<p><u>Guardian Ad Litem</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too many cases are filed to late.
<p><u>Other</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I do not receive feed back regarding reports of abuse/neglect that I have provided.
<p><u>Private Attorney</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When CSB workers are permitted to open & process cases that have no evidence & no merit, they waste time & cannot properly care for the children who need their attention.
<p><u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the adoption of CAPTA, this remains to be seen.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I often felt that Portage County Juvenile Court was more concerned about the rights of the parents, or of a juvenile alleged to have committed abuse than they were about the safety of the alleged child victims
<p><u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Want telephonic ex parte emergency custody
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too much stipulating dependency and not enough trials to adjudicate the children as abused or neglected
<p>Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure permanency and stability for children in their living situations.</p>
<p><u>CASA staff</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • THE PARENTS ARE THE NUMBER 1 CONCERN, NOT THE CHILDREN.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kids are left in placement for too long without a permanent disposition.
<p><u>CASA volunteer</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The parent has more rights than do the children!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • children are left in unsafe settings for far too long
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • children still seem to be moved around within the system too many times
<p><u>Court Appointed Attorney for parent</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too many permanency cases are filed that have little or no merit.
<p><u>Court staff</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a degree of instability built into many of these cases. Our procedures minimize the degree of the instability.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in most cases, however parental actions determine some procedures and practices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • limited foster parents
<p><u>Foster Care Provider</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies leave children waiting in limbo for far too long at times
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't even go there for me. I have a child who should have been freed up 2 yrs. ago and now she will be in my home 5 yrs. and still is not free!! 2 yrs. in appeal is disgusting!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out of home care does NOT always provide stability for youth.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The focus is on what is cheapest not what is best.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It takes too long.
<p><u>Guardian Ad Litem</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The constant delaying of court proceedings increases the child's anxiety about where they are going to go next.
<p><u>Other</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agencies are able to determine if they will or will not investigate a report of abuse/neglect.
<p><u>Private Attorney</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The law should be changed to permit those granted legal custody (by Order of Juv. Ct.) to adopt the child when the parents fail to support or visit for 1 year or more.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some county employees seem eager to place children outside of the home.
<p><u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visiting Judges, due to limit time in the county, account for most PC motions pending well over a year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although when permanent custody was sought in most cases it was granted, in other areas I felt that the court was not concerned with permanency or stability, often ordering a child removed from a facility they didn't like (even if the PCSA determined it was the best placement) or refusing to allow a child to remain in custody past the age of 18 for the purpose of completing high school
<p><u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Magistrates don't follow the HB 484 at all.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • when good evidence is available that parents do not have either the desire or capacity to address the problems that cause an unsafe environment for their children, we still have to meet the 12 of 22 mandate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More supportive services are needed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many delinquent/unruly children are being placed into foster care in this county due to lack of fund for detention facilities. In this county, foster care is becoming a threat sometimes in the court.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Montgomery County Juv. Court has a history of granting PPLA of children ages 2-10 and will take up to two years to review an objection to a ruling. This is a slap in the face to 484.!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes children are in limbo waiting for the court process.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PPLA is not a permanent plan for children.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The judges place children under the age of 16 into the PPLA at a higher rate than any other county
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note: There are rarities of multiple placements that no Court can impact. Children are more severe in their behaviors than years before and present with far more difficult dynamics in their bio families to impact.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have seen several cases reopen after court involvement due to future CA/N and instability with relatives
<p>Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure due process for children and their parents.</p>
<p><u>CASA staff</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ONLY IF THE GAL KNOWS HOW OR EVEN CARES TO PROVIDE DUE PROCESS FOR THE CHILDREN. ATTORNEYS WANT TO BE ATTORNEYS NOT GALS, BUT THE MONEY IS GOOD FOR PETTY CASH
<p><u>CASA volunteer</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • many children need own attorneys
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • again the parents needs are met first
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I truly feel that all involved try, but it is certainly not always achieved
<p><u>Court Appointed Attorney for parent</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attorneys are appointed only if the parent requests one. Most do not do so until a motion for permanent custody is filed against them.
<p><u>Foster Care Provider</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In my opinion, after 25 yr. experience I think we are over-board on our due process when we are talking about the lives of children you are in limbo for years.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I do not believe ALL attorney's are properly trained and educated in these type cases.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents are given too much time in the current processing practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The focus is on due process for the parents not the children.
<p><u>Guardian Ad Litem</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forcing and adjudication/disposition in a case in 90 days does not always insure a right to a fully investigated well thought out long-term plan for the resolution of the case.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some officials lean greatly toward what CSB wants, they get
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The level of knowledge of attorneys social workers and jurists is not adequate.
<p><u>Other</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I do not receive feed back regarding reports of abuse/neglect that I have provided.
<p><u>Private Attorney</u></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too many cases (some with no credible evidence) and too few qualified magistrates & judges.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children are removed too quickly.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children services case workers serve dual role as aides to parents, then as witnesses against them in judicial proceedings.
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is still a huge focus on parental rights, children's rights are secondary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree for the most part, although the court refused to appoint Guardian Ad Litem for adults with severe mental illness, in most areas I think the court almost went too far in assuring that due process was given.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TEC process does not
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Especially for the children
Generally speaking, current case processing practices and procedures for child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases ensure timeliness in achieving permanency for children.
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 OUR OF 22 CONSECUTIVE MONTHS IS RIDUCLOUS!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Except, there are many times cases are needlessly continued because the children services agency fail to issue notice to parents. But that is not a function of the court. (Perhaps it should be?)
<u>CASA volunteer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From case to case, this varies a lot!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think the cases could be expedited in a more rapid manner
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groundless objections to the court decision can delay for months
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continuances due to lack of service and difficulty in rescheduling are a problem.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it is a three-four month wait to get a court date, if someone does not show up for court things are delayed for months
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • again, we try but often fail. Timeliness in a child's eye is very different than in an adult's
<u>Court Appointed Attorney for parent</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trials are spread out of many many months and cases are well over a year old.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geauga JFS moves quickly to file for permanent custody; often not exploring placement with family members and have discouraged family members from involvement.
<u>Court staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appellate proceedings delay timely outcomes for children.
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies leave children waiting in limbo for far to long at times
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My, My here we go again. I state clearly that there is nothing timely about permanency for children. To me, this is something that should not be tolerated . When you have parents that have and are still using drugs and alcohol just how many chances to we give them before they destroy their children. I do believe that parents can get better but we have to raise the bar to get them there.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not in every case.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The way Franklin County Childrens services interprets the law is that it is 1 yr from when they get through final placement in court so a child can still end up with continuances and be in foster care for 2-4 years before PCC takes place.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too many exceptions are made. Too much time is wasted by cases being "CONTINUED" Nothing

changes..parents just get more time to try to control the children.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Guardian Ad Litem</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A rush to judgment is not always in the best interests of the child or the family.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too many cases take to long to file for PC.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through the court, I agree; however, I believe when the agency brings a case before the court largely depends on whether or not the caseworker likes the parents.
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Docket and representation issues cause significant delays in achieving permanency.
<u>Other</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too Slow a process. 2+ years is not unseal.
<u>Private Attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some people dealing with dependency or abuse issues need more than a year to become stable and become established enough to provide a safe and loving home environment.
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are very good at getting quick court dates for shelter care to disposition, however permanent custody hearings are sometimes 4 months after filing and motions to amend visitations take forever keeping the children out of the home longer than needed when we are trying to reunify.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Franklin county does not understand nor does it keep track of statutory time lines. There system makes time lines difficult to follow and determine.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The court was very strict about sticking to deadlines in the statute and scheduling hearings in a timely manner
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is improving
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delays in hearings take months to process.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are problems with the area of Kinship cases being too open ended. Too often they are in the court for years, unresolved.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • process is still too slow. It takes too long to schedule hearing b/c the dockets are too full.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even with the assistance of House Bill 484 it still take too long to secure permanency for children.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • timeframes are not followed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • timelines are not met due to continuances and delays
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just today I signed a 9th amended complaint on a permanent custody case. In December I received PC on a case that took over a year to hear. I have another case that the magistrate gave JFS PPLA on a 7 and 9 year old, when they had not seen there father in 4 years, but she referenced the positive relationship the children had with their father.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our court waives the timeline so we have cases going on 2 or 3 years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent custody cases are still in need of shorter time frames
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes way too long
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • way too many delays and continuances even with current laws. Most attorneys don't honor the 12 out of 22 month rule, but think all parents are entitled to the full 2 years before permanency is even looked at. For many children this is already too late.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prosecutors do not file motions in a timely manner which slows up establishing permanency for families.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tremendous improvement has been made since October 2004

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too many rescheduling of court hearings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contested cases and PCC cases take way too long to get on the court calendar. Too many continuances without just cause
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I supervised one PC case when supervising in ongoing and it took almost 3 years for a decision - this is only one example
During hearings, parties and/or counsel frequently present witnesses, introduce evidence, and offer arguments.
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depends on what you mean by "hearings." There are informal hearings for temporary orders with all parties present, and usually just oral arguments. But for full contested matters, yes, there must be evidence and witnesses.
<u>CASA volunteer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When needed, but we usually negotiate prior to hearing. • this is discouraged by court
<u>Court Appointed Attorney for parent</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I object to our court's acceptance of preferred evidence in Shelter Care hearings
<u>Court staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Again I am concerned by the number of attorneys for parents who stipulate to the adjudicatory finding instead of challenging the jurisdiction of the court.
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally, I am THE person advocating for the youth that were placed in my home. • Caseworkers rarely go to court, they have a liaison and just send notes and recommendations.
<u>Other</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am rarely involved in hearings
<u>Private Attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents cannot afford experts to contradict the county's experts. The County uses experts that have an office very far from the home or county.
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not majority • Parents' counsel generally stick to cross-examination of DJFS' witnesses.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seems everyone is more interested in making deals, not what is best for children. • There are some APA and defense counsel that present evidence other than case work staff but not enough. • Mostly never does opposing counsel present witnesses, introduce evidence, only offer arguments on what the client has told them.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I do assessment/intake and for the most part, the complaints are resolved without an adjudicatory hearing. • Yes on contested trials, no for all other hearings • Most hearings are uncontested and do not require a great deal of testimony or evidence.
Typically, the time available for hearings sufficient to permit presentation of evidence and arguments.
<u>CASA staff</u>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only due to the Judge holding hearings until finished even if after normal court hours.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PART-TIME MAGISTRATES HAVE TIME RESTRAINTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depends on how much evidence a party wants to bring in. But the court does clear their entire afternoon for contested matters.
<u>CASA volunteer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • #1 priority of court is getting through as many cases as possible
<u>Court Appointed Attorney for parent</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most scheduled hearings revert to an agreement being reached
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varies with jurist and magistrates
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I generally have had the opportunity to have my say.
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are usually able to schedule adequate time for contested hearings
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although six month and annual reviews are allotted 20 minutes of time. Sufficient in many cases, however insufficient in quite a few. 30 minutes would be sufficient in the great majority of the cases.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is not time in the morning and when a case is set in the afternoon, they are late to get started and often are "bumped" for other cases.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearings sometimes had to be re-scheduled because the court did not anticipate presentation of evidence on a case. Often when parties were attempting to negotiate a settlement, parties were forced to appear in court and proceed to keep the court on schedule. PCDJFS was occasionally made to appear in court without counsel because there was only one prosecuting attorney assigned to represent them and the court double scheduled the prosecutor anyway, believing it was the prosecutor's responsibility to provide additional coverage/representation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Another hearing is scheduled
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cases usually settle, but often the appropriate amount of time is not permitted for the cases we know will run and will require additional time. If we ask for over one hour, we have to obtain permission from a Magistrate.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It varies, but is mostly adequate.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NO!!! If a hearing starts at 2, all the attorney's talk until appx. 3, then we proceed with the hearing. But of course, it is continued (4 months later) because all the parties didn't have time to present all their witnesses. WHY schedule a PC hearing at 2 p.m.?????!!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It seems that the time is not the issue. I have found that parties are not always prepared to go forward or someone has called in sick and the hearing has been continued.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most cases are settled without a full hearing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • often need multiple hearings to complete testimony
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depends on the case; sometimes not enough time is allowed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the court calendar permits
Participants in court proceedings are treated with courtesy, respect, and understanding.
<u>CASA volunteer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in the courtroom - yes

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exception: George Stricker, he is rude to the CASA and client.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents attorney: George Leach and Jo Kaiser
<u>Court Appointed Attorney for parent</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varies with jurist and magistrates
<u>Court staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are times when parties are not doing what is expected of them and they are lectured accordingly.
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally, yes. Not always by the prosecutor.
<u>Guardian Ad Litem</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Except by CSB
<u>Other</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I've only attended a couple of hearings. At one of them, a Children's Services worker and the prosecutor sat at their table glancing at the parent, whispering comments, and smirking and snickering, rolling eyes, that sort of thing. I don't know if it is appropriate for the magistrate to ask them to knock it off, but it was obvious and disrespectful.
<u>Private Attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some juv. judges or magistrates are rude to attorneys in front of their clients.
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portage County Juvenile Court often treated PCDJFS and the prosecuting attorney with contempt, disrespect, personal attacks, etc. PCDJFS staff were not recognized as parties to the proceedings either in introductions to cases or on court journal entries (IE: They weren't named specifically only listed as PCDJFS) As the prosecuting attorney I was personally attacked both in the court room and in chambers, sometimes brought to tears. I saw the Court treat others the same. This court has a reputation in the county as being a "very difficult court"
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is the caseworkers that are treated like the abusers or the ones on trial.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • although some parties will disagree no matter how well they are treated
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't feel that some attorney treat caseworkers with respect or courtesy
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Welfare professionals are generally not treated with the professional respect that we deserve. We are often made to feel that we are the ones on trial instead of the parents.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agency staff are treated as if they are trying to steal children, when we are a voluntary agency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have witnessed horrible verbal abuse by magistrates toward CSB personnel and other attys
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is true in general. However, there are times when clients and casework staff are forced to wait anywhere between 1 hour and 3 hours for hearings to take place. These delays show little regard for the family or caseworker's time.
Parties always leave a hearing with a scheduled next hearing or proceeding date.
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearing notification is done by Court Entry through mail
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The next hearing date is given on the entry of the last hearing
<u>Court staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • never
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A DATE but not TIME...you can set all day waiting to fine out the case has been continued.
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We establish dates for preliminary conferences, adjudication and disposition at the time of shelter care hearing. After the initial disposition, they are not now provided with the date for annual review, extensions, and the like.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parties know the time frame for review hearings, but the actual date is mailed to them.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • but not always for post-disposition review hearings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parties are notified of the annual review two months prior to the hearing.
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notices were sent to the parties or hearing dates appeared on the journal entries when they were served
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working on
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most parents don't remember when the next date is scheduled.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there are times this is not possible and parties are notified soon after the hearing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not always possible, but generally this is done.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • usually have next hearing date but not always
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes it is mailed to us
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearing notices are usually sent out later.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not always
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not with delinquency cases.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since October 2004....definitely
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We just implemented this and this has been very helpful especially so that attorneys can check their calendars right then and agree on a court date!!!
Parties being absent is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.
<u>CASA volunteer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes....
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as above it delays the process another three to four months as scheduling is a terrible problem
<u>Court Appointed Attorney for parent</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearings proceed whether a party is present or absent.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to problems with service
<u>Court staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One Parent shows up
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continuations because the attorneys don't have it together is the real reason.
<u>Guardian Ad Litem</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It happens but it's not a major source of delay.
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • finding and serving them creates the delay
<u>Other</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since I attend very few hearings, I'm not in a position to have an opinion on these issues.
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The court and PCDJFS made every effort possible to ensure that service was perfected before hearings took place.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents do not show
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of service often prohibits going forward regarding the interests of absent parties.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents/guardians believe if they are not present the case will be continued.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cases are reviewed over and over with out resolution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If parties don't show up, the hearing should still proceed!!!!
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the court does not have the paper proof that a parent has been served, even when their attorney has discussed the hearing with them, they will continue the case.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Especially other attys being a no show and no communication that they had a conflict
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our court provides a more than fair opportunity for families to appear, but this does cause delays.
Parties being tardy is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.
<u>CASA volunteer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes... and our courts don't assign times, it's a 9:00 for all parties on all cases.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents Attorney: George Leach
<u>Court staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • our court is usually on time and attorneys are aware of that
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if I have service on the parties, I can proceed without them if appropriate
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mainly private counsel being tardy.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The court allowed no more than 15 minutes most of the time and then went forward on cases.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It happens sometimes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certain GAL's and attorneys are always late or sometimes do not show for hearings.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If service is complete, magistrates are fairly consistent with proceeding
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Especially the attys
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other attorneys (as GAL's or representing parents) are frequently late for hearings and sometimes don't show up at all. This causes some problems.
Parties being unprepared is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The attorneys or public defender representing the parents or child are the most unprepared. this is often due to large caseload.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While the attorneys are usually prepared, the parents come to court with no documentation as to what they've accomplished.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COUNSEL IS USUSALLY NOT PREPARED BECAUSE THEY USUALLY HAVE NOT MET WITH CLIENTS UNTIL THAT DAY
<u>CASA volunteer</u>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This does happen, usually with attorneys representing the parents.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not having an attorney assigned at the beginning of a case
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents Attorneys: George Leach and Jo Kaiser
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It happens, but infrequently
<u>Court staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it happens but not alot
<u>Guardian Ad Litem</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • occasionally
<u>Other</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ? I see biological parents who come for therapy after custody hearings makes we worry that there are significant delays.
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not major source
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
and this has come to be used as a strategy by attorney's
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being unprepared I would say is a minor source of delay.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Clerk Of Courts info line has had me feel out the wrong forms for court, creating a continuance.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attorneys, GAL and CASA have the right to discovery. They should do this instead of requesting continuances. Specifically for GALs and CASA's who don't bother to see the children and then can't submit reports. They shouldn't be given the opportunity to request a continuance, they should have seen the child!!
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More so in the past, but has improved greatly
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Especially the GAL's
<u>Court scheduling problems are a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.</u>
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PART-TIME MAGISTRATES ONLY CAN WORK PART-TIME AND HAVE A PRIVATE PRACTICE WHICH COMES FIRST+
<u>CASA volunteer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Docket time is often 2 months out
<u>Court Appointed Attorney for parent</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuances are usually denied.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often cases are scheduled for preliminary hearings without consulting attorneys
<u>Court staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some dispositions begin one day and continue a month or more later.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sometimes attorneys get scheduled for both courtrooms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • few attorneys; other courts
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need juvenile Judges and a lot of them. We also need a strong person to head up these Juvenile Judges.
<u>Guardian Ad Litem</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An additional Magistrate will start June 1,2005
<u>Private Attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It sometimes takes a long time to get a Court date in cases where the parent feels there is an emergency or

urgent situation.
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • double booking cases specially permanent custody cases lead to continuances
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not only do juries stack trials, but Franklin county does not have enough court rooms to hold the hearings! there very often are delays do to trying to locate a courtroom to have a hearing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parties calendars are full for a few months out
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • we only have one judge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Montgomery County needs to pay attention to what they are scheduling and the time frames they are setting. Why schedule a trail for 1 hour when there are 5 children, 4 dads, 1 CASA and 1 GAL and everyone has an attorney
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This May and were setting hearing down for September
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearings for permanent custody of a newborn are scheduled two and three months out for the first hearing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used to be an issue, but has improved greatly
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This was a much bigger problem, but over the past several months, the Family Court and CSB have been meeting (along with the Clerk of Courts) to resolve this issue. Much much much better!
Inability to identify absent parent(s) is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They'll just do a "John Doe" publication notice.
<u>CASA volunteer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Minor' is appropriate
<u>Court staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • publication definitely takes additional time
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We go forward with one parent
<u>Guardian Ad Litem</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • occasionally
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • we have lots of service problems; many of our moms don't know the identity of the fathers
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a mother wants to wait until the hearing to provide the fathers name, the hearing should proceed. More than likely she was given ample time to provide information prior to the hearing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have concerns about efforts made to truly identify/locate absent parents.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An attorney from CSEA attends all hearings.
Inability to locate absent parent(s) is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We sometimes are not able to locate an absent parent
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No address known, they'll do publication notice.
<u>CASA volunteer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Minor' is appropriate

<u>Court staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service by posting has helped this tremendously
<u>Guardian Ad Litem</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • occasionally
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a parent hasn't been able to be located through publications, PROCEED with the hearing!!!!
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sometimes can be a factor
Problems with service of process on parties is a major source of delay and/or continuance in my jurisdiction.
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not a lot
<u>CASA volunteer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • occasionally • 'Minor' is appropriate
<u>Court staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no funds for publication
<u>Guardian Ad Litem</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • occasionally • Identifying an unknown may cause delay in service • The clerk of court does not have the expertise to follow the rules.
<u>Other</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bio parents complain about this issue.
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parties move often
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • happens occasionally
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • having to have the pieces of paper is the problem. • sometimes can be a factor, but not a major source of delay • Our bailiff is not great with service!!! We are working on this problem. Often, the parents are there because CSB caseworker let them know about the hearing date and time! • Court would have to respond to this issue itself.
Statutory, regulatory and/or procedural requirements impose significant administrative burden on the courts. Please specify sources of significant burdens in the comment section
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timelines for adjudication after the filing of complaint is too soon to be prepared with needed information and preparation of a case plan. • Docket time is booked within our county. • When genetic testing, location of absent parent, service provider evaluations (psych - mental health - substance abuse) cause delays. The system becomes constrained and may be unable to meet statutory time

frames.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GET BEHIND WITH PART-TIME MAGISTRATES. ALSO WE HAVE GREAT BUDGET RESTRAINTS BECAUSE WE ARE A FREE STANDING COURT WITH A LOCKED JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER AND A SEPARATE BUDGET+
<u>CASA volunteer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents or family mbrs get OK even if they are not suitable--laws demand this it seems • The Court's inability to "override" FCCS on various administrative matters can be problematic - or said in reverse, it would often be helpful for the Courts to be able to intervene when FCCS is not fulfilling its obligations. Also, regulatory timelines can serve as an impediment to reaching timely permanence. Also, the concept of reunification can serve as a huge barrier to achieving permanence in some cases. • documentation and the distribution of it. Should use more automated solutions
<u>Court Appointed Attorney for parent</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 90-day time frame is strictly interpreted.
<u>Court staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time line • time constraint guidelines
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An exception would be the length of time required for an adoption.
<u>Guardian Ad Litem</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Court should have more discretion in having the adjudication/disposition hearings held within the 90 day rule. A rush to judgment can be contrary to the best interests of the child.
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PAM • This Crt has one judge for all divisions and scheduling is very tight. These cases require the Juvenile Clerk to rearrange the schedule, contact numerous people, and often work late to process the cases. • It is frequently difficult to obtain service within 90 days. • All of the case plans and reviews require intensive work by the deputy clerk to serve and keep the file in order. • 90 day requirement to dispose of a matter is too short in many cases. In this appellate district, service by publication on an unknown parent (Jane or John Doe) is problematic and a waste of public funds. • parents often request Court-appointed counsel at the time of the hearing on P.C., even though notice of their right to counsel and the contact person is provided to them, IN BOLD TYPE, months before in the summons • 90 day time period • Statutory time limit • service on unknown parties/locating putative fathers
<u>Private Attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Court appointed attorneys for anyone who ask really is a financial drain on the county
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A complaint that has a prayer for PC, if contested, often will take over two years to adjudicate. This is due to Franklin county relying after 90 days. It is difficult to get service, discovery and necessary trial time completed in ninety days. When a case is set with a visiting Judge, you can forget time lines. • The Juvenile Rules of procedure with respect to dispositions permits bifurcation of disposition, the statute does not require such a step they need to be in harmony

<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • service to birthfather • Trying to get a case heard before the deadline. • specifically loopholes in service requirements and discovery burden dockets and lead to numerous continuances • Custody issues pertaining to cases were there are pending interstate home studies.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple court reviews are often necessary. • the amount of paper work to follow Child Abuse Neglect and Dependency Cases is burdensome. • not being able to publish at the same time as attempting service is an unnecessary delay. • The PCC appeal time is too long. We wait a long time to get the judges decision on PCC cases.
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet OH specific time frames (ORC HB 484).
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JUST RECENTLY IS PUSHED
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always a problem and they continue so it really doesn't count • They misinterpret this time frame
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a general rule. However, as stated about, the 90 day time frame to dispose of all matters is too short.
<u>Private Attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many DSM refiles
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has improved
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOT AT ALL! • we are forced to regardless
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not always • HB 484 is a guide, but is not followed based on too many continuances • Except for sunset dates as prosecutors take a long time to file motions. • again, improvement has been made since October 2004, but this used to be a huge issue • This has gotten better
My jurisdiction is in compliance with the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) time frames.
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Juvenile judge is strict about this. • Generally speaking. We have a few cases that have been pushed out of the timeframes due to extraordinary circumstances. • RECENTLY IF PUSHED
<u>Court Appointed Attorney for parent</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • most cases are in compliance now, although prior to 2005, there were cases out of compliance
<u>Court staff</u>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unknown 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> most times 	
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They misinterpret this time frame! 	
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally court processes are. However, I do not believe the county agency is in achieving permanency. 	
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I do not think they have an understanding of permanency. There is no structured decision making in Franklin County. For instance, they complete a risk assessment and have it in their file because it is required, but they do not use it in decision making. They do not understand or keep track of time lines. Ohio actually has a much stricter period for permanency than ASFA. This has been the law in Ohio since 1989. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has improved 	
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> most times because of the discussion at the SAR at the year mark 	
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To the best of my knowledge we are. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partially 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not on all timeframes 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Especially when it comes to placing too many children in the PPLA status 	
My jurisdiction is in compliance with federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) regulations.	
<u>CASA staff</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In fifteen years we have never had a child identified as a child of Indian heritage. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have not had an occasion to use this regulation 	
<u>Court staff</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unknown 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cases requiring compliance with the ICWA are rare in this jurisdiction, but the juvenile court has resource documents to guide the addressing of those issues. 	
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I would like information regarding this Act 	
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> haven't had one in the 5 years I've done this 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They seemed to have just discovered this law recently and are totally clueless on how to proceed when this issue is presented. There was a recent case where a tribe actually attended a hearing and represented they wanted jurisdiction. The court's response was we do not send children across state lines! 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I believe so 	
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we have very little diversity and quite possibly have not had this issue come about 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very few cases have this issue. 	
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To the best of my knowledge. 	
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet the mandatory case-related timelines dictated by statute	

and court rule. Please identify unmet requirements in the comment section
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having shelter care within 72 hours limits the time available to explore potential alternative placements to foster care. • dispositions outside 90 days often • Short fall in the prosecution and continuances for compelling reasons to not file for permanency • RECENTLY
<u>CASA volunteer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the clock is ticking the caseworker tries to pull it together where prior to the deadline the caseworker is guilty of sloppy work. • permanency
<u>Court staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • except in permanent custody hearings due to time for preparation, time for hearing and then appeal process • due process, difficult in time lines
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 of 24 or the 90 abandonment rule not used
<u>Guardian Ad Litem</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As the Disagree above, the addition of the new Magistrate should help will meeting time frames • If not, CSB just dismisses and refiles • Majority of cases are not adjudicated in 60 days; also not disposed of within 90 days • Adjudication rarely timely
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of adjudication/disposition within 90 days is problematic at times. Often due to the continuance issues identified above. • there are a certain number of cases that exceed the ASFA time frames for permanency placement. These are often "hard to place" children. They are the exception to the rule. • Again, service is a problem. Attorneys are over burdened and underpaid, frequently arriving late or missing hearings altogether. • In most cases, but not all. Once again, the 90 day statute is problematic in some cases. • 90 day time limit • 90 days for disposition
<u>Private Attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A recent permanent custody case was not heard and decided within the required time frame. • Many DSM refiles
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even at the detriment of the children • PCC Motion to decision/judgment • PC Cases are a BIG concern - We cannot get timely decisions from the Court
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • case plans and journal entries not filed in a timely manner • Difficulty meeting seven day requirements for amendments being submitted to court. CPS issue more than court issue. • Paperwork is not always completed on time due to no clerical support and no case aides.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Montgomery County courts allows parties to object to decisions even after the time frame on the entry and order has elapsed!
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timelines are routinely waived timelines are not kept because of the court's heavy schedule. case plans cannot be accepted by the court before dispo; PDs often suggest parents not agree until court accepts plan which slows initiation typically we meet them, but still need work on permanent custody issues, especially with older children
Typically, in my jurisdiction, we are able to meet the OH Supreme Court case processing guidelines for abuse and neglect cases.
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RECENTLY
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maybe in theory on paperwork
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The primary reason for these cases not being resolved within the Supreme Court's guidelines is "11th hour" activity on the part of parents or other relatives--request for counsel, filing complaint for custody(with the related issues of psychological evaluations, home studies, etc.),none of which is within the Court's control.
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not always
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To the best of my knowledge we do.
Case tracking information is available and sufficient to meet your needs.
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our office does not have access to any case tracking information gathered by our local Job and Family Services.. We have our own internal program the CASA programs use, called "COMET."
<u>CASA volunteer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FOR casa YES. FOR THE COURT, I DO NOT KNOW CSB case records are usually incomplete especially on cases that have returned to the court system multiple times
<u>Court Appointed Attorney for parent</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attys do not have access to juvenile cases/dockets, etc. online.
<u>Other</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although I haven't requested data, I'm glad to see stats are being tabulated at the county level by the courts. Makes sense. Many years ago, the local children's services declined to provide stats and the state compiled info rather than providing it by county.
<u>Private Attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The information is not available online. It could be available online and protected through the use of passwords.
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I do not know about the court, but the agency does not have a real system of tracking cases. It can not tell

you what court cases it has more than three days in advance!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PCSA tracks with program of agency
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This information is not shared with workers.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occasionally some forms need assertions or corrections. • Would like to be able to use a statewide system so you could get history from other counties. • the court loses paperwork, and the clerk of courts does not enter data in a timely fashion. • the agency does its own • It is horrible when it comes to receiving entry and orders. We can not enroll children into school without the entry and orders. The court officials do not listen nor do we receive the E & O timely. Extreme cases is over 90 days. • Our Executive Director is a computer and statistical guru so we have always had a lot of tracking information available, we have been sharing this with the court and it has been very helpful. For CSB it is, but I do not know about the court • What case tracking are you referring to? JFS or the Court's?
Case tracking information is available concerning the number or proportion of children who are subject to additional allegations of abuse or neglect while under court jurisdiction.
<u>Guardian Ad Litem</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data is one of our Children Services Agencies best kept secrets. We know there are children re-victimized in foster care because of specific cases, but finding a depository of those numbers would be unheard of.
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • further development of crystakl reports will enhance our ability to track these • I've not asked our PCSA for this info
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PCSA tracks
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not all allegations are counted and investigated as separate complaints. • not shared with workers
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PCSA keeps it's own records • Through DCFS system • Again- don't know what the Court's database tracks- it is a different database than ours.
Case tracking information is available concerning reunification rates of children before the court.
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JFS doesn't typically share outcome measures. Nor does the court
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSB can provide this info. We need to address this from the Court side • I've not asked our PCSA for this info
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PCSA tracks

<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not shared with workers
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PCSA's keep their own records • Through DCFS system • I know within JFS FACTS system such data can be retrieved as to custodial children.
Case tracking information is available concerning adoption disruption rates.
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The court only has this information if a new abuse, neglect and dependency complaint is filed. • I've not asked our PCSA for this info
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PCSA tracks
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not shared with workers
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PCSA's keep their own records • Through DCFS system
Case tracking information is available concerning the permanency strategy of awarding legal custody to relatives.
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • THERE IS NO STRATEGY NOR ACCOUNTABILITY WITH LEGAL CUSTODY BEING GIVEN TO RELATIVES.
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I've not asked our PCSA for this info
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as far as I know, we do not track this information • It's my understanding that LC to relatives is NOT permanency.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PCSA's keep their own records • Through DCFS system • Strategy implies an understandable link written expressly in the plan that outlines a date for reunification and the risk elements that service delivery will overcome. Our case plans are now so generic in nature so that filings do not have to be done as frequently as they are so burdensome, that such direct language is not always present.
Case tracking information is available to identify positive or problematic trends regarding the use of Ohio's new Grandparent Power of Attorney or Caregiver Authorization Affidavit forms created under HB 130.
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We haven't come across the use of such document yet in CASA's cases.
<u>CASA volunteer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of these items are not within my short experience base
<u>Court staff</u>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • just getting into the grandparent affidavits
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Court has no system in place to track this info
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't even know what this is • No tracking is being done
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information is not shared with workers, do not know if any one is tracking the information. Our court does not like the POA's.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A list of the forms filed is available, but now sure if trends are noted.
Current relationship with: Judicial Officers
<u>CASA volunteer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not interact frequently enough to establish relationships
<u>Court Appointed Attorney for parent</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The judge seems to have little regard for the rights of my clients (parents).
<u>Court staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regarding appellate judges; no contact with juvenile trial court judge/magistrates
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no interaction
Current relationship with: Court Personnel
<u>CASA volunteer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not interact frequently enough to establish relationships
<u>Other</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'm a volunteer mediator for juvenile court.
<u>Private Attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent with most just a couple who are capricious and have crossed the line of professionalism.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no interaction
Current relationship with: Prosecutors
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They do not represent us in cases.
<u>CASA volunteer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not interact frequently enough to establish relationships
<u>Court Appointed Attorney for parent</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is one prosecutor for JFS cases. He is difficult to work with, i.e., slow discovery response time, refuses to negotiate and compromise.
<u>Court staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communications through briefs only
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency personnel frequently decline to follow Prosecutor's advice

<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am legal counsel for a PCSA.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we are not working with them rare interaction
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> do not have much contact with them, therefore do not know them very well Please note that our prosecutors handle criminal cases only
Current relationship with: Court Appointed Attorneys
<u>CASA volunteer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not interact frequently enough to establish relationships Parents Attorneys: George Leach and Jo Kaise
<u>Court staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> communication through briefs only
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> most times children don't even meet their assigned attorney until right before the court hearing
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> no interaction
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> some better than others! We have private, court appointed attorneys. Some are excellent and others are poor
Current relationship with: Private Attorneys
<u>CASA volunteer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not interact frequently enough to establish relationships
<u>Court staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> communication through briefs only
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> no interaction
Current relationship with: Guardians Ad Litem
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> some could do a better job of meeting with the child should be assigned to children in custody cases as well.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> rare interaction
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent with the ones from the private attorney/court appointed list who take the job seriously and poor with the ones who "hate" dealing with child welfare cases. There are some appointed GALS who never see or talk with the child they are assigned-yet feel comfortable making recommendations-feel they should be held more accountable.

<u>Current relationship with: CASA volunteers and staff</u>
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • great program but not all kids get a CASA worker • Former • Exception of one person that had been assigned to one of my foster children.
<u>Other</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would like to see a CASA here.
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am always asked to participate in the training of new CASA volunteers.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • we use GAL's only • I do not believe in the CASA program because they are under trained and not qualified to may life changing discussion regarding peoples lives.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • do not have CASA
<u>Current relationship with: Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case workers</u>
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significant delays in returning phone calls to all involved. • Mostly positive, however it depends on the individual caseworker.
<u>CASA volunteer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managed care contractors are sub-standard. • Some CWs are fabulous to work with, a few are very unpleasant.
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most are overloaded and are working in a crisis mode. So children who are placed in foster care are safe and not always serviced in a timely manner.
<u>Private Attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depends on the case worker involved.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For those who are prepared and have excellent casework skills, excellent, for those who have no idea as to what they are doing, poor
<u>Current relationship with: Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisors</u>
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delays in returning phone calls
<u>CASA volunteer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most are good, but a few are rude and nasty. • JFS Caseworker
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is easier to get to a supervisor.
<u>Guardian Ad Litem</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case workers really do not like to be challenged to do their job more professionally.
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency personnel appear to resent the Court's oversight responsibilities
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Services Director is inappropriate, rude to employees, sarcastic, unprofessional
Current relationship with: Foster Care Providers
<u>Court staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> no contact
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retired
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very little contact with Foster Care Providers.
<u>Other</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Former foster parent, member of Ohio Family Care Assoc.
Current relationship with: Foster Care Review Board
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am not part of this group
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This should be statewide. I believe very few counties have this program.
<u>Guardian Ad Litem</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have not interacted with this group and do not know any details about this group
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> don't know what this is Do not have a Review Board.
Current relationship with: Other Please identify group in the comment section
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both juvenile and adult probation officers PRIVATE PLACING AGENCIES, TEACHERS, COUNSELORS
<u>CASA volunteer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adoptions - Match committee. Child Assault Prevention Project
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have been a Therapeutic Foster Parent and a CASA during my 15 years. Treatment Foster Care Agency Advisory Committee OFCA I am the President of the Midwest Support Group associated with OFCA F.A.S.T. Foster & Adoption Support Team
<u>Guardian Ad Litem</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service providers Home Based Workers
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Court actively attends the CSB CET meetings (county Evaluation team)

<u>Other</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PCSA Management
<u>Private Attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health Staff
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal Specialist • Children Services Staff attorney • PCSA Paralegal
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other community service providers. • Probation Officers
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PCSA Administration • PCSA Executive Director • Providers, Hamilton Choices • Our agency is represented by an inhouse attorney. He is a good attorney, but I wish we could regularly meet and staff cases ahead of time so that all of us are prepared ahead of time. He talks with us at court right before the hearing. I don't think this is the time to strategize and prepare.
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) regularly meet to discuss ways to better collaborate on abuse, neglect, dependency and permanency custody cases.
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task Panel is discussing these Issues. • Know they meet but not sure it is on a regular schedule. • I know there has been regular meetings this past year. Prior to that I'm not sure.
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss is one thing but doing something is another. • Since at least one county's Juvenile Judge was on the CSB Board at one time, I would think there is some degree of discussion. • They need to because a couple of them have no idea how important the decisions they are making are and just because they don't like a caseworker or info isn't in when they want doesn't mean they just say then the child returns until you get it to me. Who suffers then?? THE CHILD! • if they do, I have never heard about this
<u>Guardian Ad Litem</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes defense attorneys feel excluded
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One to two times per year
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doubt it • Could meet more often. • The Court rules the roost around here, it's their way or the highway • started 7 months ago • Meetings are held, but I would not say they are held on a regular basis, only when major issues arise.

<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That is not done at a caseworker level which should be since CW's are the one's in court. • the caseworkers are never involved in these meetings • regularly is a relative term.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most often court administrator, not a Judge • We started this about 7 months ago and this has been very helpful. I have been pleasantly surprised by the court's and the judges willingness to meet and make changes that benefit both of us.
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) have met to discuss local issues related to the Child and Family Service Review.
<u>Court staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are scheduling meeting to do so
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If it's just leadership meeting the info they get is skewed they need to meet with the people who aren't in the "ivory towers" the people who actually see these children and work with them. Talk to the caseworkers, foster parents, schools, doctors, nurses, counselors, who deal with them after they keep sending them home. • if they do, I have never heard about this
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • just started
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • however, there doesn't ever appear to be outcomes from these meetings.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most often court administrator, not a Judge • over a year ago. We need to do it regularly
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) has participated in the Ohio Supreme Court's Beyond the Numbers initiative.
<u>Court staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are scheduling meeting to do so
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if they do, I have never heard about this
<u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSB failed to attend or participate.
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCALP Permanency by the Numbers Oct 18 & 19, 2004
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • never heard of this
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The meeting for Scioto County is scheduled for July. The local Juvenile Judge hosted an informational meeting about this topic in November 2004. • They have surveyed me regarding a Youth Summit- but I am not familiar with Beyond the Numbers.
Court Leadership and the Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) is planning to participate or

continue participating in the Ohio Supreme Court's Beyond the Numbers initiative.
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have never heard of any of this section ever taking place
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> if they do, I have never heard about this
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases are resolved more quickly than non-mediated cases.
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mediation not used in juv. court We do not use mediation in abuse, neglect or dependent cases Such a small number are referred it is difficult to tell.
<u>CASA volunteer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most of the time what is decided in mediation is challenged by the magistrate I've only had 1 case to go to mediation - unresolved. Not aware of mediation services
<u>Court staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I don't know the current status of mediation for juvenile cases or even if it continues to be an option. No mediation is available
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am not aware of mediation in our local counties. at the cost of the children's rights
<u>Guardian Ad Litem</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We do not currently have mediation as an option. The Court has advised that this is coming within the next few months about the same Typically one or more parents do not show up for mediation.
<u>Other</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To my knowledge, children's services cases do not utilize mediation. I wish they did.
<u>Private Attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have had only one case referred to mediation in five years. It improved the relationship between the parties, but it did not fully resolve the issues. I think it helps when parents are required to take separate parenting classes that focus on the children and communication skills.
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Court does not use mediation
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Too few to assess
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Don't have access to this data.
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases move to permanent living situations for children more quickly than non-mediated cases.
<u>CASA volunteer</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not aware of mediation services

<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I would think they would. at the cost of the children's rights
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Court does not use mediation
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50/50
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Don't know data
In my jurisdiction, mediated cases are less costly to the court than non-mediated cases
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I would think they would be.
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> court does not use mediation
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No because they still have to go through court for the final say.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I don't even know baseline costs for such court involve cases.
Please feel free to make additional comments concerning the handling of child abuse, neglect, dependency and permanent custody cases in your jurisdiction or the OH Court Improvement Program.
<u>CASA staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At this time, we do not provide mediation services for abuse, neglect and perm.custody. Butler County is planning on beginning mediation of cases in the near future, which we see as a positive step. Children are at times waiting to long for permanent custody hearings to be completed. This is difficult for the children. The Magistrates and Judges in Butler County are respectful to all parties involved in the cases. I SO KNOW MEDIATION IS USED IN PRIVATE CASES BECAUSE FAMILIES ARE ABLE TO PAY. WE HAVE NOTHING FREE IN OUR COURT OR ON A SLIDING SCALE THAT I KNOW OF IN ORDER FOR MEDIATION TO BE USED IN OTHER CASES. Mediation and Family conferencing are needed in our cases. Also more communication between the court and Children's Services. Our local child welfare agency, Job and Family Services, does not file on some cases where indications are that children are in danger. Subsequently, some individuals have filed cases in court as per Ohio Revised Code. The court has, in 100% of those cases, found the children to be at least dependent and has taken appropriate action. Our program has not heard of the mediation piece outlined above, but could see where it could be extremely helpful in fast tracking through the permanency process. We no longer have a Mediation Program but we would support the reinstatement of mediation. The outcomes were more likely to address the presenting problem and were more likely to be followed by the parties. The Atty. GALs need training in their role when representing an adult client. They are more likely to support the defense position than the "best interest" of their adult client. Atty. GALs need more training in the Culture of Poverty. Magistrates need training regarding PC cases. Currently, they would like an adoptive home identified prior to granting PC. Atty. GALs need to be more diligent in their investigations and monitoring of their

<p>cases. A GAL's recommendation carries a great deal of weight but is not always as factually based as it should be. There needs to be more accountability for GALs. Paperwork needs to be streamlined. We are able to track outcomes of our cases and see trends but the Court does not track the same info. The information would be attainable through Children Services tracking of data. Fortunately, we are a very collaborative community and work together in most instances to problem solve. The greatest factor deterring best practice is economic which results in the reduction of services to both parents and children. Thus delaying the reunification of families where possible. This becomes a bigger issue when we have the time constraints set by the law.</p>
<p><u>CASA volunteer</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good and caring attorneys and children's services caseworkers are too rare and the really impressive ones seem to move on to other things (jobs) too quickly!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I believe the Miami County Courts do a very good job and try to put the children first. I do however also believe that the CSB workers are overworked and carry too large of a caseload. They do try and do the job, but often do not have the time or available resources.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't know much about the relationship of the court with JFS so I cannot answer those questions. Mediation would be great if it was court ordered. I have not had a case ordered into mediation because most of the cases I have handled have been post-disposition.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If cases are being mediated, I am unaware of it. In my role as the former director of CASA/GAL, I was a strong advocate of mediation as was Juvenile Court. I became a trained mediator in order to assist CSB in this endeavor, but it did not happen then. Maybe mediation has begun in the past few years, but I doubt it.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In my experience the magistrates are caring, knowledgeable about each child's situation, interested in each child's welfare. I am very impressed with the magistrates in the Hamilton County Juvenile Dependency Court.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's great that you're conducting this survey. Importantly, you should make the results available to those who participate in the survey. Additionally, there is no sense in conducting a survey unless you intend to make positive change based on the results - I'm hoping that's your goal!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mediation can be a very effective tool, but I don't know that it can be effective or is wise to use for A/N/D cases
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mediation is good however, it's only as good as it is enforced. If the biological parent fails to comply nothing seems to happen. If the custodian of the child/children fails to comply they're asked to explain before the court and held accountable. Biological parents who still have their rights should be held to the same standard.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The court supports the work of us CASA's in Wood county and we are very blessed. Everyone works very well together. I am glad to be working as a CASA and helping children.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The system needs to provide some minimal follow-up after the case is closed to substantiate that the best interests of the child are still being met.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are blessed to have a wonderful Judge and Chief Magistrate in our county that handle our cases. They are both very fair, but most of all they protect the rights of our children, and they see to it that every child's voice is heard.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When we had a well functioning mediation program it was extremely beneficial. Unfortunately the court discontinued the program rather than address the problems with staff
<p><u>Court Appointed Attorney for parent</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I believe mediation would be a great addition to our system and would encourage cooperation between CSB and parents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 18 years of private practice and court appointments, last week I had my very first case referred to

mediation in Juvenile Court. I was shocked by the action of the court because it had never been done before.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is frustrating to be an attorney representing parents in my jurisdiction because their arguments are never heard, even when grounded in Ohio law. Our job has become one of making a record for appeal because the parent will lose at the local level. JFS refuses to negotiate or cooperate with parents; the social workers often are not upfront with parents, attorneys or children. JFS moves quickly when it files for permanent custody (the court of appeals has chastised the agency for doing so) yet the court does not encourage anything otherwise.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The CCBA began the Mediation Project 7 years ago in Cuyahoga County which is now run under the County Dept. Of Justice Affairs.
<u>Court staff</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am the Court Administrator for this court and I am not directly involved in these cases.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In a rural small court the time limits are too constraining due to continuances and rescheduling.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reunification with family as #1 goal may not be the best interests of the child family members adopt similar measures of standards in raising children and may have learned to use the system to their advantage. Common sense may be more suitable in establishing stable living conditions for children instead of state mandates.
<u>Foster Care Provider</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a foster parent for many years I have seen the system change much. However so has the difficulty of caring for children changed. I am not sure if the system has keep up with the kind of children being placed today. Children are being abused in so many ways (not just physical)- the system can also sometimes be a form of abuse. The school systems are not in tune with the child welfare system or the court system, the children are no longer being nurtured at school. Many are being labeled as trouble makers, when indeed they are just troubled youth. Caseworkers overall do the best they can, but they too, are overwhelmed by the cases they are getting. The fix is better communication between all parties, the problem is getting all parties together at the same time in the same room. Foster Parents are not always given the resources to do what they need to do for each child placed in their homes. Money is tight all the way around and we all know that "money talks". In my opinion until the outside community is educated on child abuse and neglect things are not going to get any better. If they understood, then maybe we who work in this system would get more of their time and money. Society as a whole has a "out of sight out of mind" attitude, they pay their taxes and that should take care of these children. As we all know it is more than just that. Thank you for allowing me to give my opinion.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am a therapeutic Foster Home so my use of medication is probably more likely. You need to understand that with therapeutic comes a lot of kids who are bi-polar, ADHD, RAD, PTSD, mood disorders and etc. Medication does help a lot of these kids but that is not the whole issue. Along with medication you must have therapy and behavior management. It would be wonderful if you could cure everyone with medication. We, as foster parents, are asked to do the impossible but it takes years of living in a therapeutic setting to make a difference for these children that have been so severely damaged. The Court has to take responsibly in some of this thru their lack of following through and for not giving us a strong juvenile system that we can depend on. I cannot emphasize enough how much we need a system that only handles juveniles and their problems. Judges don't want to be, for the most part, a juvenile judge and only a juvenile judge because it is too hard. No body wants to make the hard decisions that need to be made.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I believe we will have a much better system to protect BOTH children and families when ALL of us connected with the system are trained together, and receive much of the training offered foster parents. Ohio, by far, has the best foster parent training program in the U.S. Others involved in the "system" would benefit greatly by also having much of this training.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is too late for my step-children. They claim that their mother is abusive. We have gone as far as we possibly

<p>can afford to in the courts. The court finds no proof and keeps them in the home with their claimed abuser. Meanwhile, the children continue to act out in terrible ways. We have had 25 foster children here in PA. None of those children have been as messed up as my step-children. All because the court feels that they should reside in permanency at all costs and against the desires of the children. It is too late for these children. They are already in their teens and most likely it is too late to turn them around. We have spent thousands of dollars without being able to help them. Please reconsider the permanency rulings.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most foster parents in Butler County are not part of the child's court hearing or are involved in the court process. Foster parents are not invited or encouraged to show up in court for any type of hearing pertaining to the kids in their care. We get no letters advising us when the hearings are, and usually have to wait for a call from the case worker to let us know how the hearing went.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Much of this information is not in view of the foster parent. It is difficult to access the reasons. I just know that children are not moved smoothly home from foster care or moved expediently into permanency with adoptive parents or attached relatives.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our children are drowning in the buearacracy of the courts and systems that are supposed to be protecting them. Please take the legislation we have and utilize it to the welfare of our children instead of letting each county interpret it to the cheapest way to provide services and that seems to be to cut to the voices that can't be heard the children. We can't speak for them because of their "privacy" and they can't speak for themselves. The parents fight with their lawyers, the media and whatever they can, but the kids can't use their voices. Judges would throw the book at a person who treated a dog in the same manner as most of the kids who have been in my home and if they didn't it would be all over the news and that judge would be out of office in a heart beat. Don't our kids deserve safety, permanency and stability, not just on paper, but in reality?!?!?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Guardian Ad Litem and CASA program needs to be in place and in a way that allows people to be aware of their services and how to obtain help with this. There needs to be equal consideration for custodial parent status. The courts should not be bias towards the mother. MCCSB needs to not be afraid to take action in their cases to ensure the best interests of the child. If there are issues above and beyond the initial complaint that opened the case, they should not disregard it because they are afraid to deal with it. (ex - case is opened because of lack of housing, then later in the case plan they find out the mother is on drugs, they should not close the case after the mother obtains an apartment on the basis she completed the plan when, sure she got the housing issue covered, but she is on drugs. The case should be amended to reflect her needing rehabilitation and other services and the child placed appropriately.) I would appreciate an email discussing the initiatives Ohio is taking toward these matters. Thank you!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need better foster homes. This will only happen when foster parents are better respected by the agencies. More money will not do it. In our experience, we have been greatly respected and appreciated by judges and magistrates when we have appeared at court hearings and written letters to court officials, but we've been constantly (and subtly) reminded by case workers and supervisors and CSB administrators that we are not wanted at hearings. Sometimes when it's obvious that a case worker is incompetent, a foster parent is the child's only hope. (We have adopted three foster children.)
<p><u>Guardian Ad Litem</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Again, I believe the problems handling these cases is not with the court but rather with case workers.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel that in Lucas County, we have a very good group of people who care about the job they do. I enjoy being part of this group and enjoy the work.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have stated above that the constant delays in starting and finishing a PCC trial is not right or fair to the children that have already endured abuse. Our system just puts them through another hell because it takes so long to determine where they are going to be sent next. Will it be another foster care home if their behavior isn't acceptable by the time the trial is over or will they be adopted? Haven't they been through enough? I'm

<p>sorry I can't offer a solution. I am a CASA GAL Volunteer and not in the court system day after day. Maybe there is no other way. It just doesn't seem right to make these kids suffer even more while all of the professionals try to find enough time in their busy schedule to deal with the case. Does the attorney for these children really take the time to get to know their client? Maybe if they went to visit the child every month, they would understand that this system and the constant delays can be just as frustrating as their life has been. Maybe if there were more judges/magistrates so once a trial is started, there are no interruptions until it is over and a decision has been made. Attorneys should not take on more cases than they can handle. Court hours could be extended beyond 3:30 - 4:00 when necessary to hear more testimony. There are times when everyone has to work beyond an 8-5 job. How is a magistrate supposed to remember the testimony from 5 months prior? This is not fair to these kids. They have already been through enough. The child that I am talking about was removed from her home in 12/02. The trial began 11/16/04 and we are getting ready to start again on 6/1/05. Maybe this is really good for the system. I don't think so. But this child still doesn't know where she is going to live. I know there's no easy answer but these are my thoughts on the court system. I'm sure everyone tries their best but sometimes I think the system gets too far removed from the kids that they are trying to help. Thank you for letting me voice my opinion. I would love a response to my survey so I know that I was heard just as in our goal as a CASA GAL is to speak up for our children - to be their voice in court.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think a change in attitude toward the expectation that Adjudications can and will be scheduled sooner and go forward will require a firmer hand by the bench. Requiring counsel to bring their calendar to hearings would cut weeks off the time from pre-trial to adjudication. Since most counsel are Court appointed it will be easy to not appoint attorneys who have calendars that will not let them stay within the statutory time limits. This will also require a change in CSB case preparation, a change I am sure they can make if the Court requires it.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our jurisdiction has an immensely untapped mediation resource. The mediators that we use are highly skilled, highly trained and exceptional at what they do. However, when the Children Services Agency is responsible for screening the cases for mediation, the cases fail to be referred there because the Agency prefers a more adversarial process where their decisions receive a rubber stamp.
<p><u>Judge/Judicial Officer</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A combination of service problems and availability of parties for hearing sometimes results in dismissal for failure to meet the statutory guideline of 90 days for disposition.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I find the Cuyahoga Court Juvenile Court has no leadership, limited organization and almost no procedures. I only serve as a visiting judge and I think major changes are necessary to make sure Mothers and Fathers have due process and to ensure they have competent attorneys and guardians. There are too many continuances. Compliance officers would be helpful to check files for necessary pleadings and to make sure service requirements have been satisfied. Important details are ignored or missing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To the best of my knowledge, the Court is no longer using mediation in these cases.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We continue to meet regularly with our Permanency team. We continue to address the problems in our particular situation and work together to find solutions. The Beyond the Number initiative has helped us focus. The continued follow up is beneficial to us as well.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We do not have mediation available at this time with our dependency, neglect, abuse docket
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we have a domestic relations mediator but will not refer child protection cases to her until she notifies me she has received additional training and is ready to accept them.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we use pre-hearing conferences to attempt to resolve issues vs mediation
<p><u>Other</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am concerned about the time permanent custody cases take to get through the courts. It puts their little lives on a "hold button" that can takes a terrible toll. I am also concerned that the court may disengage its

oversight once a child is in permanent custody--but oversight is definitely required to ensure that Children's Services does a timely adoptive placement.
<u>Prosecutor/Agency attorney</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I once had a county employee send a mother and child to Children's Hospital requesting a full body x-ray of the child when the facts did not warrant it and when the County was not agreeing to pay for it. The hospital said the x-ray was not medically necessary, and the hospital had to get its attorney involved for advice. The full body x-ray was not performed. Some county employees go too far. Also, some counties do not keep informants and information confidential.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have no mediation---How do we get it? And what is the Beyond the Numbers program referenced above?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We need a plan to help expedite cases and limit dismiss refilings. Also PCC need to be streamlined so that permanency can be achieved sooner and more smoothly. Our current resources are not meeting the needs of our current case load.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marion Juvenile/Family Court and MCCSB has always had a fair relationship, but we are just now starting to work good together to meet timeline issues and permanency goals for all children/families involved with both agency and court. We will continue to maintain and do better by open communication and team meetings with every 3 to 4 months.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stark County has begun the process of exploring a mediation program.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) case worker</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am a worker in the Foster Care department. I work directly with the foster parents. I do not get to the court hearings as I use to when I worked a Children and family caseload.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am concerned about the efforts invested in identifying/locating absent parents (specifically absent fathers) before publishing on them and moving forward with life altering decisions for their children.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have had 2 cases go to mediation. Both times the agency's position was that the children could not have contact with the parents. We were never able to come to an agreement and the case went to trial.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have not had a case go to mediation in over two years. When they did, it was often resolved more quickly
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have not much success with mediation in the 9 1/2 years I have been a caseworker.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mediation is under used.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There does not appear to be sufficient judges/magistrates/staff to handle the number of child welfare/juvenile court cases, causing extreme and lengthy delays not observed in other counties in Ohio.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was never trained on Case tracking or mediation.
<u>Public Children Service Agency (JFS or CSB) supervisor</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> continuances and delays play a major role in delaying permanency for children. This mainly seems to involve attorney's involved in each case. The attorney assigned to JFS from the prosecutor's office was not given enough time to deal with JFS cases, which are complex.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Courts and attorneys in the juvenile system here use adult perspectives on their role, and the needs of children. Those perceptions generally do not meet the needs of children in the system.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have only had a few mediation cases with my staff's caseloads. I do not recall them going any more quickly to resolution than other cases. I would like to see aggregate data regarding the mediation initiative for Hamilton County, and feel that publication of such data for Hamilton County JFS workers and sups to see would be good information.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think that mediation has assisted with Delinquency/ Unruly cases.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In September 2004 our two Family Court Judges, Director of Family Court Services, one magistrate, the Court Scheduling Clerk, PCSA Executive Director, PCSA Agency Attorney, PCSA Intake/Investigation

Supervisor, PCSA Ongoing Services Supervisor, PCSA Paralegal began to meet regarding issues that affected the achievement of CFSR and CPOE requirements. I shared the CPOE requirements and where we stood in relation to these including the potential for loss of \$100,000 per year in IV-E Admin funds if we did not meet the standards. We decided to form a team at that time which we later called our "Permanency Team". In October 2004, we all attended the "Permanency By the Numbers: Improving Dependency Caseflow Management through Data Driven Strategies" Conference. At that time we began planning and implementing procedures to speed the flow. Some were very simple things to change and these have made a significant difference. The average length of time from complaint filing to adjudicatory hearing went from 157 days on average for the 1st Quarter 2004 to an average of less than 50 days for the 4th Quarter 2004. For the 1st Quarter 2005 it is anticipated to be less than 30 days on average. Our Permanency Team has been very helpful and willing to evaluate and change things as needed. If you have any questions, please feel free to e-mail me. We are also working on developing other reports to help us assess caseflow.

- Our agency and the Juvenile Court have had a discussion regarding mediation of cases and we are in the process of obtaining information about this.
- Our court to my knowledge does not do mediation services we send people to counseling for mediation.
- There has been a long standing concern in all the counties about the Courts sending Juvenile Delinquent and Unruly cases to Children Services where there are no findings of Abuse or Neglect. These cases usually end up in Court Ordered Protective Supervision and take Caseworkers time and effort that best could be used for children who are abused and neglected.
- There is a definite issue that has been identified in our county related to what constitutes child abuse. The Ohio Revised Code has one definition & the Ohio Administrative Code has another.