

Data Collection and Information Management Subcommittee: Preliminary Report

King County Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare Systems Integration Project

September 29, 2004

Introduction

The Data Collection and Information Management Subcommittee has surveyed the existing information collection and analysis landscape, entertained possible technology solutions to improve information-sharing and decision-making, and determined what data are needed to make case and agency level decisions. This work was completed with the understanding that, as suggested by the CWLA guide to this subcommittee's work, data are the foundation for successful system integration. Workers, managers and directors need easy and regular access to data about the youth served by each system in order to plan, correct, or create integrated programming. In addition, data are often the primary driver behind program, practice, and funding changes.

This subcommittee has reviewed existing data collection technology in the juvenile justice and child welfare systems, noting when data are shared and when they are not. Assessment tools used by staff that provide information for these databases were analyzed and catalogued for each system. Interviews with staff in each system were conducted to understand what barriers kept staff from sharing information about youth and families served by both systems. Finally, data elements were identified that would inform this systems integration project, workers serving cross systems families, and program managers making decisions about staff, funding, and program resources.

What follows is a full description of this undertaking, workload data for each system, a snapshot of youth served by DCFS and Superior Court through the Family Reconciliation Services Program and the At-Risk Youth Program, and recommendations from this committee to the full committee.

Data Requirements

Identifying the data elements required of this process was a central task of this subcommittee. The work was quickly divided into three distinct categories:

- 1) Data that are required of the larger systems integration committee in order to make informed decisions about integration planning, recognizing any gaps in service or populations shared by both systems.
- 2) Data that are required of workers who share responsibility for youth in King County in order to avoid duplication of services and improve multi-disciplinary case planning.
- 3) Data that are required of program managers and directors in the near future to effectively monitor the success and progress of integration efforts.

There is significant overlap within these three categories, but they are worth reviewing separately.

Much of the data is not available to members of this subcommittee without authorization or special permission. Nevertheless, access to these data are consistent with the primary goals of the systems integration process.

Data Needed to Make Systems Integration Decisions

- # of youth with offender and BECCA matters
- # of youth with offender and dependency matters
- # of dependent youth with offender histories
- # of youth with offender matters who are receiving services through FRS, CPS, and/or CWS
- # of youth with offender histories who are receiving services through FRS , CPS, and/or CWS.
- # of juvenile justice youth in the foster care
- # of youth in foster care who are on probation
- # of youth entering JRA who are dependent
- # of youth entering diversion with dependent, CPS, FRS or CWS contact or services
- # of youth engaged in the juvenile justice system who are entitled to child support payments
- % of youth in each of the above categories of the total served by the juvenile justice and the child welfare systems
- Qualitative descriptors for these youth including race/ethnicity, age, gender, mental health needs/histories, basic needs, drug and/or alcohol histories/needs.
- Cost of program responses for each category

Data Needed By Juvenile Justice System to Make Decisions with Families

- Does the youth have a prior CPS referral & what was the outcome of that referral
- Is the child or family being served by DSHS
- What services were offered to the family – what was accepted, what worked, etc.
- Current placement and placement history of the youth
- Current DCFS worker name and contact information
- Reason for placement or dependency
- Existing behavioral concerns, mental health history & diagnosis, learning disabilities, drug/alcohol concerns
- DSHS services, if any, for which the youth is eligible
- Medical alerts and current medications

Data Needed By Child Welfare System to Make Decisions with Families

- Criminal charges, court dates, and court orders
- Criminal, social, and probation history
- Services being provided by the juvenile justice system
- Existing behavioral concerns, mental health history & diagnosis, learning disabilities, medical alerts, drug/alcohol concerns
- Current JPC or case manager and contact information

- Actions taken by court or detention staff to locate parents or responsible adult for release
- Safety concerns about youth
- Medical alerts and current medications

Regular Aggregate Reports Needed to Monitor Integration Progress

- # of youth with offender and dependency matters
- # of youth with offender matters who are currently dependents
- # of youth with offender matters who are being served by DSHS
- # of youth with offender matters who are receiving services through FRS or CWS
- # of juvenile justice youth in foster care
- # of youth on probation in foster care
- # of youth entering JRA who are dependent
- Measure of the quality of information-sharing between systems
- Cost savings & program change information
- Impact of integration on youth of color in both systems

This committee acknowledges that these lists are not definitive and that individual systems and units may require more data to make informed decisions. Indeed, this committee wished for comprehensive data regarding mental health system involvement of youth engaged in juvenile justice or child welfare programming. Unfortunately, this information is not readily available or shared across systems. Finally, this committee recognized that neither the juvenile justice system nor the child welfare system has access to information on the educational needs of youth we serve. While DCFS has recently finalized an excellent protocol for information sharing with Seattle Public Schools, this kind of solution is the exception rather than the rule. Should system integration be successful, this committee urges all parties to seek out and make agreements with the other significant systems serving vulnerable youth in King County.

Data Collection, Information and Technology Concerns

Data Collection

Through the course of this subcommittee's work, it became clear that much of the information needed was not readily available to staff internal to each system, much less shared across systems. Information is collected and stored in several ways in the juvenile justice system with the bulk of it being entered in a statewide system (SCOMIS) and a local system (JJWAN/JJWEB). No one from the child welfare system currently has access to either of these systems. Information is collected and stored in one major statewide system in the child welfare system (CAMIS), and no one from the juvenile justice system currently has access to the information in this system. Both systems allow varying levels of access to the data for internal staff based on permissions and need. Information-sharing that currently occurs between the two systems happens on an as-needed basis.

Information-Sharing

Members of the DCFS FRS and CWS units, probation intake unit, and At-Risk Youth unit were asked a series of questions about how and when they share information with staff from the other system. Information gathered was not attributed to the individual staff

member, and staff were permitted to share additional insights via e-mail if they did not feel comfortable speaking in a group. The following questions were asked:

- 1) What do you need to know about kids who are being served by the juvenile justice or child welfare system?
- 2) When do you share information with your counterparts in the other system?
- 3) What keeps you from sharing information with your counterparts in the other system?
- 4) What additional information or concerns do you have about sharing information?

Staff interviewed in both systems reported that the barriers that kept them from sharing information with each other were relational and not policy or rule-based. Each group expressed concern that the other would not use the information appropriately or would make decisions based on the information that would adversely effect the youth. Both sets of staff indicated that they did not know the various rules that govern information sharing and that, while this did not inhibit them from sharing information when they knew and trusted each other, they wanted to understand these rules.

Technology

As this subcommittee considered the various data elements needed to create, plan, and adjust integrated programming, it contemplated technological solutions to the identified information-sharing problems. Despite the desire to point to such a solution, conversations about the details of an integrated database frequently ended in some degree of territoriality or turf protection – each system wanted access to the information collected by the other but felt uncomfortable granting access to its own data.!

The subcommittee did identify two ways to learn more about shared or integrated data collection systems. The first is training provided by the Center for Network Development, an agency contracted by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to provide workshops on information sharing. This training is called the Juvenile Integrated Information Sharing Workshop. It is designed to help representatives from multiple agencies plan for ongoing collaboration, understand confidentiality practices, and identify technology requirements. While this sounds similar to CWLA's role in the planning process, the JIIS training provides another perspective on what occurs after an agreement to integrate has been reached. The training took place September 22nd & 23rd of this year in Virginia. With help from the Governor's Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee and JRA, five individuals from DCFS and the Court attended this training in order to facilitate this important work.

The second technological solution this subcommittee entertained is a web-based product created by a Global Vision Technology called FAMCare. This tool can draw information from multiple sources and allow varying access to multiple users based on set permissions. Its creators assert that it is flexible and expandable based on changing needs of the systems. This system has been used in a systems integration project at the Michigan Family Independence Agency, which sought to "improve case management for Michigan's child welfare and juvenile justice population to ensure timely and appropriate placements".

At Risk Youth		x	13%	3%	46%	15%	77%
CHINS		35%	x	11%	36%	7%	89%
Dependency		5%	7%	x	37%	3%	52%
Offender		14%	4%	8%	x	8%	34%
Truancy		23%	4%	3%	49%	x	80%

* On dependency cases, juveniles are only assigned a public defender after age 12

Recommendations

- 1) Identify ways in which data will drive integration decision-making and mid-course corrections.
- 2) Identify method for evaluation and quality control measures to ensure that changes are effective and meaningful for both systems.
- 3) Provide or authorize the use of system data necessary for decision-making at all levels.
- 4) Consider feedback from those who attended the JIIS training regarding the development of any integrated information system.
- 5) Invite Global Vision Technology to provide demonstration of FAMCare tool.
- 6) Use technology to provide information across both systems to those who share responsibility for youth accountability and well being .
- 7) Clarify information-sharing rules and policies with staff in both systems on a regular basis.
- 8) Cross-train DCFS and JJ administration, judicial officers, and staff to clarify roles and build relationships – consider ongoing team-building efforts.
- 9) Authorize and encourage multi-disciplinary staffings on youth served by both systems.
- 10) Invite representative from King County Mental Health community to join the committee.
- 11) Consider using JUVIS at court-level as interim step before broad-based technology solution is created.

Subcommittee Membership

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