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PROMOTING REUNIFICATION THROUGH FAMILY FOCUSED COLLABORATIVE TREATMENT SERVICES AND SYSTEM CHANGE

ASC ANNUAL MEETING
SAN FRANCISCO
NOVEMBER 17, 2010
Background Problem: Substance Abuse and Child Maltreatment

- Children of substance abusing parents are more likely to be abused and neglected
- Suffer poorer outcomes
- Increased reports of abuse and neglect have overwhelmed foster care systems
- Adoption and Safe Families Act (1997)
Response

- Legislation: Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006

- Funding:
  - Improve permanency outcomes
  - Enhance safety

- Integrated, collaborative, and comprehensive services for:
  - Families whose children are at risk of removal
  - Families with children in out-of-home care
Collaboration & Change

**Partners**
- Treatment provider
- Circuit court
- CASA
- Regional Child Welfare office
- Children’s crisis relief nursery
- Mental health care service provider

**Interagency advisory committee**

**Cross-Systems:**
- Training
- Policies and procedures
- Information and data sharing

**Co-location of staff**

**Result: Systems change**
Family Treatment Services

- Early intervention:
  - Treatment specialists at initial investigations
  - Shelter hearing within 24 hours
  - Access to treatment

- Family-centered treatment programs
  - Treatment retention, completion, and service utilization
  - Residential, day, and intensive outpatient
  - Gender-specific and evidence-based
  - Recommended: One year
Family Treatment Services

- Service plans and case management
- Mental health treatment for parents
- Housing: Emergency and sober housing units
- Assessments: Physical, developmental, education, and mental health
- Parent skills training: Attachment & bonding
- Family therapy and relationship counseling
- Removals:
  - Trained foster parents mentor bio parents
  - Early and routine visitation
Research Questions

- Is there an association between treatment and comparison groups in terms of:
  - Reunification rates
  - Speed of reunification
  - Time spent in out of home placement
  - Subsequent occurrence of child abuse or neglect
  - Subsequent foster care placement
Population Description

- Population size: 150 children and 108 parents
- Age: 67% children 5 years or less at entry
- Type of abuse: Neglect or deprivation (includes parental substance abuse)
  - 37% prior victims
- Parent’s drug of choice: Methamphetamine
  - 39% primary drug of choice
  - 60% any meth use
Preliminary Results

- Reunification rate: 87.7%
- Timely reunification: 100% reunified within 1 year of removal
  - Average: 9 months
- Time in out of home care: Average of 70 days
- Subsequent maltreatment:
  - 6 months (N=122): 4.1%
  - 12 months (N=100): 10%
  - 18 months: (N=69): 14.5%
- Subsequent foster care placement: 12.5%
Conclusions & Next Steps

- Promising preliminary findings
- Next steps
  - Analysis of comparison group
  - Continued follow up
  - Pre-post analyses
- Sustainability and dissemination
- Statewide implementation
- Promote:
  - Long-term funding
  - Collaboration
  - Data sharing
  - Systems change