



# Father Engagement and Father Involvement Evaluation Guide TABLE OF CONTENTS

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## **PURPOSE OF THE FATHER ENGAGEMENT/FATHER INVOLVMENT EVALUATION GUIDE**

The purpose of the evaluation guide is to:

1. Provide a framework for consideration when developing an evaluation plan for father engagement and/or father involvement
2. Provide suggestions on how to extract or export data about father engagement and father involvement so that counties can track how well they're doing in these areas.
3. Assist counties in knowing that reports can be run using Business Objects to get results for their father engagement/father involvement efforts

The target audience for this guide includes Directors, Managers, Analysts, Evaluators and other stakeholders with the responsibility of assessing and increasing father engagement and/or father involvement.

The following information in this guide will provide instructions on how to:

1. Think about conceptualizing questions you or your agency has about father engagement and father involvement,
2. Create a logic model that can be used as a guide for planning father engagement and father involvement efforts,
3. Collect and analyze data for the questions you have about father engagement and father involvement, and
4. Discuss methods for recording and analyzing information about fathers and their families.

This guide does NOT give instructions for conducting evaluation in the traditional sense; rather it is a systematic way to track father engagement and father involvement.

## **ORGANIZATION OF THE FATHER ENGAGEMENT DATA GUIDE**

This guide details the five (5) steps that counties can use to track and analyze father involvement and engagement, they are:

1. Identify questions that the county wants to know about fathers/father engagement
2. Develop a logic model for planning purposes (A logic model graphically depicts how an innovation, intervention, project or initiative might be understood from planning to implementation to evaluation)
3. Identify data systems to be used
4. Collect and Store Data
5. Analyze and Interpret Data

Each section contains instructions and examples that have practical utility in child welfare. It is the goal of this guide to provide direction for others endeavoring to be more friendly and inclusive of fathers and to track their outcomes.

## **DEFINITIONS OF FATHER ENGAGEMENT/FATHER INVOLVEMENT**

Fathers have a history of being underrepresented in child welfare, both in terms of their decision making and their involvement with their children. Federal, state and local governments have been making valiant attempts to address this issue in a number of ways. For the purpose of clarification, father engagement and father involvement is defined below,

although you may define it differently for your purposes. The lists are not exhaustive, however, they do provide examples of things that can be measured and tracked.

*Father Engagement* - The process whereby a father is actively participating in the child welfare department. Engagement is sustained over a period of time, determined by the agency or organization. It is not a one-time only phenomenon. Perhaps he might be:

- Having regular correspondence with social work staff
- Participating in the case plan development process
- Providing pertinent information related to the development of a court report
- Participating in Team Decision Meetings and Family Group Decision Meetings
- Working with social work staff to identify paternal relatives as prospective placement options

This participation may have been at the request of and/or during outreach by social work staff or at the initiation of the father himself.



Engagement is a reciprocal process and occurs over time

*Father Involvement* - The process whereby a father is actively participating in activities with his child(ren), social work staff, or social work organizations. Involvement does not necessarily have to be sustained over time, but it could be. It can also be a one-time only phenomenon, but doesn't necessarily have to be. Perhaps he might be:

- Infrequently present, moderately present or frequently present in the life of his child(ren)
- Visiting with his child(ren) infrequently, moderately frequently or regularly frequent
- Visiting with his social work staff infrequently, moderately frequently or regularly frequent
- Participating in school activities
- Purchasing gifts for birthday, holiday and other special occasions
- Taking his child(ren) to daycare and participating in daycare activities
- Putting his child(ren) to bed at night
- Paying child support, etc.

## THE EVALUATION PROCESS -A MODEL FOR CHILD WELFARE

This guide will:

1. Help users develop (research) questions about father engagement and father involvement that might be relevant to their organizational practice
2. Present a replica for the development of a logic model that can be used for program planning purposes
3. Give some examples of where to obtain data from the following data systems:
  - a. CWS/CMS
  - b. Safe Measures
  - c. CSSR
4. Give some suggestions for how to collect data and how to store it for analysis
5. Give some recommendations for how to analyze data for child welfare purposes

### **STEP ONE: IDENTIFY QUESTIONS ABOUT FATHER ENGAGEMENT and FATHER INVOLVEMENT**

Counties may be concerned about one or more aspects of father engagement and /or father involvement, what impact father engagement and/or father involvement is having on social work practice and organizational efficiency and effectiveness. In order to conduct an evaluation, counties should know what they are interested in knowing or acquiring about fathers. If, for example, counties do NOT know or need help to identify questions, some examples are provided here. You'll notice that some of the questions are directly related to the federal and state outcome measures.

#### Demographics of Fathers

1. How many fathers (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) are being served in the following programs:
  - a. ER
  - b. FM
  - c. FR
  - d. Court
  - e. LT
2. What is the ethnic breakdown of fathers (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) who have been identified in each service component?
3. What, if any, is the increase in the number of fathers being served pre and post father engagement activities?
4. What percentage of fathers are living in the homes with their child(ren)?

#### Father visits

1. What is the averaging number of visits between fathers and their children within a certain time frame?
2. Number of (scheduled, attempted, completed) father/child(ren) visits that were:
  - a. In-person
  - b. By telephone
  - c. Written communication
  - d. By email
  - e. By fax
3. What is the ethnic breakdown of fathers (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) who scheduled, attempted or completed visits with their child(ren):
  - a. In-person

- b. By telephone
  - c. Written communication
  - d. By email
4. Number of (scheduled, attempted, completed) father/social worker visits that were:
    - a. In-person
    - b. By telephone
    - c. Written communication
    - d. By email
    - e. By fax
  5. What is the ethnic breakdown of fathers (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) who scheduled, attempted or completed visits with their social worker:
    - a. In-person
    - b. By telephone
    - c. Written communication
    - d. By email
  6. What is the average number of visits between fathers and their children in:
    - a. ER
    - b. FM
    - c. FR
    - d. Court
    - e. LT

#### Child Abuse and Neglect Allegations

7. Number of allegations that involve fathers (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) as the alleged perpetrators
8. Number of recurrence of allegations that involve fathers (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) as the alleged perpetrators
9. Number of recurrence of allegations after exit that involve fathers (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) as the alleged perpetrators
10. How many fathers (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) are identified in cases where allegations were:
  - a. Substantiated
  - b. Not substantiated
  - c. Unfounded
11. What is the ethnic breakdown of fathers (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) who are identified in cases where allegations were:
  - a. Substantiated
  - b. Not substantiated
  - c. Unfounded
12. Following the substantiation of an allegation, how many fathers are contacted by CPS within a certain timeframe (same day, two weeks, 1 month)?

#### Entry

13. For those children who enter CPS, how many fathers (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) have been identified
14. What is the ethnic breakdown of fathers (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) whose children have entered CPS?

### Reunification

15. For children who reunified within twelve months (entry cohort vs. exit cohort):
  - a. Was a father (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) identified in the case file?
  - b. Did they reunify with a father (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step)?
  - c. Did they reunify with a member of the father's family?
  - d. What was the average number of visits between fathers and their child(ren)?
16. What is the median time to reunification for children who have participated in visits with their fathers infrequently, moderately frequently or regularly frequent (as determined by the county)
17. For children who reentered CPS following reunification:
  - a. Was the father (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) the perpetrator
  - b. Was a father (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) identified in the case file?
  - c. Were they subsequently re-removed from a household where a father was presumed to be living?

### Adoption

18. For children who have been adopted (12 months vs. 24 months):
  - a. Was a father (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) identified in the case file?
  - b. Were they adopted by a member from the father's family?
  - c. What was the average number of visits between the father and child(ren) pre-adoption services?

### Permanency

19. When children exit to permanency (reunification, adoption, guardianship):
  - a. Was a father (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) identified in the case file?
  - b. Is the permanent placement with a father?
  - c. Is the permanent placement with a member from the father's family?
20. How many youth have a permanent connection identified and the permanent connection is a father and/or someone from the father's family?
21. For those youth aging out of foster care, how many reside with their fathers or father families post CPS intervention?

### Placement Stability

22. For children in care during a specific time period (to be determined by the agency):
  - a. What percentage of the cases had a father identified in the case file in which the children had less than 2 placement changes
  - b. What percentage of the cases had a father identified in the case file in which the children had more than 2 placement changes

### Siblings

23. Do fathers visit with sibling groups at the same rate as single children?

24. What is the percentage of fathers with sibling groups in CPS? How many children live with their bio mother(s) versus bio father(s)?

This list by no means includes all of the possible questions that counties or organizations may have about father engagement and/or father involvement. In fact, this section provides lots of suggestions for descriptive statistics (i.e. things that describe or provide a better explanation about a particular phenomenon by providing frequencies, distributions, means, etc.). If you are the one tasked with developing your questions, you may want to develop them in collaboration with others in your county.

Counties might also have questions about father engagement and father involvement that require inference about variables. A few examples are:

1. Do fathers with high levels of involvement in the lives of their child(ren) display high levels of engagement with social work staff?
2. Are fathers who are more involved with their children more likely to have shorter times to reunification?
3. What is the relationship between father engagement and child health and well-being outcomes?
4. What is the relationship between low, medium and high levels of father involvement and placement stability?
5. When fathers are involved in decision making matters involving their children, how involved are they in their children's lives?
6. Are father friendly organizations predictive of better outcomes for children and families?
7. Are engaged fathers more likely to participate in service activities?

## **STEP TWO: DEVELOP A LOGIC MODEL FOR PLANNING PURPOSES**

After the county identifies the question(s) that it has about father engagement and/or father involvement, someone in the county might think about developing a logic model. A logic model graphically depicts how an innovation, intervention, project or initiative might be understood from planning to implementation to evaluation. Logic models are helpful in determining short, medium range and long term outcomes. They also depict how proposed activities will ultimately impact a project. [CLICK HERE](#) to view one example that was used in child welfare.

Logic models may look very differently; however, they mostly contain the same or similar elements. For more information about constructing logic models, some examples are included below:

- Administration for Children and Families, Child Information Gateway:  
<http://toolkit.childwelfare.gov/toolkit/>
- Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention:  
[http://ojjdp.gov/grantees/pm/logic\\_models.html](http://ojjdp.gov/grantees/pm/logic_models.html)
- University of Wisconsin:  
<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/evallogicmodel.html>



- W.K. Kellogg Foundation: <http://www.wkkf.org/knowledge-center/resources/2006/02/WK-Kellogg-Foundation-Logic-Model-Development-Guide.aspx>
- Innovation Network: [http://www.innonet.org/client\\_docs/File/logic\\_model\\_workbook.pdf](http://www.innonet.org/client_docs/File/logic_model_workbook.pdf)

Let's take a closer look at some things you may include in your logic model<sup>1</sup>:

**RESOURCES** - human, financial, organizational, and community resources that a program has available to direct toward "doing the work". Sometimes this component is referred to as Inputs. Examples include:

- Child welfare Staff
- Partner and Community staff
- General funds
- Specialized funding/grant money
- In-kind resources
- Specialized equipment

**PROGRAM ACTIVITIES** - what the program does (processes, tools, events, resources, technology and actions) that are an intentional part of the program implementation. These activities are used to bring about the intended program changes or results. Examples include:

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#### Assessment and Engagement

- Develop an assessment tool to determine an organization's father friendliness/father engagement
- Develop an assessment tool to assess an agency's readiness for implementation
- Develop an assessment tool for fathers to assess the level of father engagement and father involvement in child welfare
- Develop a family assessment form that seeks to collect contact information about paternal relatives.
- Develop a tracking tool that tracks the number of visits a father visits with his child(ren) within a certain time period
- Develop a father finding protocol that gives instructions for how to search for fathers
- Invite fathers to participate in Team Decision Making meetings or other decision making meetings or processes

NOTE: There are multiple levels of assessment that may have very different goals and very different expected outcomes.

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#### Recruitment and Outreach

- Send correspondence to fathers with an invitation to participate in a new program

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<sup>1</sup> These definitions are provided by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation Logic Model Development Guide

- Host “Father Friendly” community fairs and invite fathers to participate as special guests
- Make a Public Service Announcement about a new program on T.V. or the radio

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### Training Curriculum

- Develop curriculum related to the program goals and prospective outcomes
- Conduct staff training (and training for fathers) at the program site
- Conduct training at partner agencies, if appropriate and necessary

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### Practice Model and Policy

- Develop a practice model or approach that is related to your identified outcomes.
- Develop policy and procedural guidelines
- Establish Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) with partnering agencies, detailing program components, expectations, roles and desired outcomes.
- Develop consent forms (informed consent, releases of information, etc.).

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### Evaluation

- Develop pre and posttest measures to evaluate (knowledge or skill) training.
- Use or construct a survey instrument that has been constructed using the identified outcomes as things to measure
- Conduct focus groups with staff
- Conduct focus groups with fathers
- Observe staff as they work with fathers and systematically record findings for analysis
- Case Reviews
- Identify administrative data fields that can be used as indicators of change. Some administrative fields for the fatherhood initiative are listed below:
  - Name of biological father
  - Contact information for biological father
  - Social worker contacts with father
  - Case plans for father
  - The number of children removed from home who are placed with non-offending and/or non-resident fathers
  - The number of children placed with paternal relatives

NOTE: Staff who participates in any of these should have expertise or be trained in one or more of these approaches to get the best results possible.

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**OUTPUTS** - the direct products of program activities and may include types, levels and targets of services to be delivered by the program. Examples include:

- More fathers are engaged in services
- A higher percentage of fathers are visiting their child(ren) more regularly
- Fathers families are being contacted more by CPS
- A higher percentage of children are placed in the home of their father’s relatives
- Child welfare departments are more friendly to fathers
- A father finding protocol has been developed

- MOUs with partnering agencies have been developed

**OUTCOMES** are the specific changes in program and participants' behavior, knowledge, skills, status and level of functioning. The outcomes will depend on the goals and objectives that have been selected by the program.

- Short term outcomes are typically identified as those things can be completed within the 1<sup>st</sup> year, but may be determined by the agency or organization
- Medium term outcomes are those things can be completed within 1 - 5 years and
- Long term outcomes are those things that are likely to be completed between 5 - 10 or more years.

**IMPACT** is the fundamental intended or unintended change occurring in organizations, communities or systems as a result of program activities.

Consider the following outcomes and their resultant anticipated impact(s).

***Short-Term Outcomes (within 1 year)***

**Locating Fathers (includes Identification, Contact, Location, and Engagement)**

OUTCOME	IMPACT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More staff will start to review birth certificates as part of their normal practice</li> <li>• Staff will begin to ask the mother, maternal family members, (alleged) paternal family members, and children to identify fathers during the intake process</li> <li>• Staff will document information about fathers in CWS/CMS that they obtain:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ in birth certificates</li> <li>○ by asking paternal relatives</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Staff will correctly identify fathers and make accurate relationship connections to their children in CWS/CMS in the client notebook.</li> <li>• A father finding checklist will be developed and staff will start to use it</li> <li>• Child welfare workers will be to report their progress about their father finding activities via:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ survey,</li> <li>○ as a participant in a focus group and/or</li> <li>○ during an interview</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Increased identification of fathers</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff will become aware of the necessity to enter their information about fathers into CWS/CMS correctly, accurately and timely.</li> <li>• Staff will begin to identify fathers' (and paternal relatives) current addresses and will document them</li> </ul>	<p>Increased numbers of fathers located</p>

<p>in CWS/CMS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff will begin to successfully locate fathers and document their locations on the father finding checklist.</li> <li>• Child welfare worker will report their progress about their father finding activities via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ survey,</li> <li>○ as a participant in a focus group and/or</li> <li>○ during an interview</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
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Father Engagement and Father Involvement

OUTCOME	IMPACT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff will begin to document contacts in CWS/CMS completely, accurately and more timely in the contact notebook on the associated services page</li> </ul>	Increased monthly contacts of fathers and their children
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff will begin to document contacts in CWS/CMS completely, accurately and more timely in the contact notebook</li> </ul>	Increased monthly contacts of fathers and social workers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff will encourage fathers to verbalize and write their plans and goals for their child(ren)</li> <li>• Staff will include fathers in the family case planning process.</li> <li>• Staff will document their increased attempts to contact fathers in the contact notebook</li> <li>• Child welfare worker will report their progress about their service planning activities via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ survey,</li> <li>○ as a participant in a focus group and/or</li> <li>○ during an interview</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Increased father participation in CW service planning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff will begin to assess fathers' (and paternal family members) homes as viable placement options</li> <li>• Fathers will begin to have overnight visitations with their child(ren) in their homes.</li> <li>• Staff will correctly, accurately and timely document fathers/children home visits in CSW/CMS.</li> <li>• More fathers will have more children formally placed with them in their homes or in their relatives' homes.</li> <li>• Child welfare workers will report their progress about their placement activities via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ survey,</li> <li>○ as a participant in a focus group and/or</li> <li>○ during an interview</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Increased placements in paternal homes

Training

OUTCOME	IMPACT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 90% of program (and agency) staff will attend the Fatherhood Initiative Training</li> </ul>	Staff are knowledgeable about father awareness and father

	inclusion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>90% of staff will report satisfaction with training</li> </ul>	Staff become more friendly and inclusive to fathers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>90% of staff will report knowledge acquisition as a direct result of training</li> </ul>	Staff performance related to father engagement increases
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quick guides on the Fatherhood Initiative Training will be developed for CWS/CMS</li> </ul>	Father engagement and involvement can be tracked in CWS

**Medium-Term Outcomes (1 to 5 years)**

**Family Permanency**

OUTCOME	IMPACT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff will schedule and participate in more permanency planning meetings</li> <li>Families will show an increased in their progress on their family reunification goals</li> <li>More children will be reunified with their fathers and/or fathers' family members</li> <li>Organizations will see an increase in finalized adoptions within 24 months of removal</li> <li>Organizations will see an increase in formalized guardianships within 24 months of removal</li> <li>Child welfare workers will report their progress about their permanency planning activities via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>survey,</li> <li>as a participant in a focus group and/or</li> <li>during an interview</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Increase in child permanent placements

**Re-Entry**

OUTCOME	IMPACT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More children will be successfully placed in permanent homes</li> <li>Less children will re-entry the child welfare system</li> <li>Child welfare workers will report their progress about decreased re-entries via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>survey,</li> <li>as a participant in a focus group and/or</li> <li>during an interview</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Decreases in Child Welfare Re-Entry

**Placement Moves**

OUTCOME	IMPACT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More children will be successfully placed in</li> </ul>	Decreases in placement moves

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• permanent homes</li> <li>• More children will experience less disruptions in their placements</li> <li>• Child welfare workers will report children’s progress toward having less placement moves via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ survey,</li> <li>○ as a participant in a focus group and/or</li> <li>○ during an interview</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
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**Father Involvement**

OUTCOME	IMPACT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fathers will become more involved in the service planning process</li> <li>• Fathers and children will have increased contacts with each other</li> <li>• More fathers will report improved relationships with their children</li> <li>• More fathers will report improved relationships with their child(ren)’s mothers</li> <li>• More paternal relatives will have children placed with them</li> <li>• More fathers will report satisfaction with their social workers and with CPS via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ survey,</li> <li>○ as a participant in a focus group and/or</li> <li>○ during an interview</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Improved relationships between children and their fathers</p>

**Long-Term Outcomes (5 - 10+ years)**

**Fewer Children in Foster Care**

OUTCOME	IMPACT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20% reduction in foster care placements at four years post program implementation based on data retrieved from CWS/CMS.</li> </ul>	<p>The County child welfare system will experience a sustained reduction in the number of children who enter foster care</p>

**Decreases in Length of Stay**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30% increase in family reunification placements made within 12 months of removal as documented in CWS/CMS.</li> <li>• 30% increase in permanent adoptive placements made within 24 months of removal as documented in CWS/CMS.</li> </ul>	<p>Decrease in the number/rate of children who spend the majority of their life in long-term foster care</p>
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|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30% increase in permanent guardianships made within 24 months of removal as documented in CWS/CMS.</li> <li>• 20% reduction in child re-entry rates as documented in CWS/CMS</li> <li>• 50% reduction in length of stay at four years post program implementation as compared to pre-program implementation rates, based on data retrieved from CWS/CMS.</li> </ul> |  |
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### STEP THREE: IDENTIFY THE NECESSARY DATA SYSTEMS

Counties may begin to think about what data they need to answer their questions and how to obtain the data from their county computer systems, including CWS/CMS and Safe Measures. The Center for Social Services Research (CSSR) is a public database that provides data extracted from CWS/CMS. Counties may or may not find the information that they are looking for, especially if it is related to father engagement and/or father involvement because what's included on the site is aggregate data for ALL children. However, the CSSR is a dynamic reporting system so counties may be able to extract data for their purposes. There may also be other county specific data systems, like Efforts to Outcomes (ETO), etc.

### STEP FOUR: COLLECT and STORE DATA

These things are important to consider during the data collection process:

1. Use of Administrative Data and Databases
2. Data collection through non-administrative databases
3. Timeframe for collecting data
4. Data collection resources

#### Data that is collected using administrative databases

- **(CWS/CMS)** - Data should be entered into the CWS/CMS system completely, accurately and on time in order to yield the best results. Users can extract data from CWS/CMS to answer their research/evaluation questions.
- **(SAFE MEASURES)** - Safe Measures is not a data collection system, as such, however, it does store data from CWS/CMS and in that regard, can be thought of as a data collection system. Safe Measures requires a county-specific login on a county specified IP address. (<http://www.safemeasures.org/>). Safe Measures may be an effective method for analyzing information related to visitation, completion of case plans and court reports, etc. One good thing about Safe Measures is its "drill down" functionality. Aggregate data is available for the whole state, a specific county, department or unit. In fact, Safe Measures allows users to drill down to the specific case and worker levels.
- **(CSSR)** - The Center for Social Services Research stores CWS/CMS data. It is a public website that anyone can access. ([http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb\\_childwelfare/](http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb_childwelfare/)).

#### Data that is not collected through administrative databases

If your county is gathering data from surveys, direct observation, interviews, or other types of assessment, it may be very useful to have a system or process for storing data, even if the

method is a table, chart or an excel spreadsheet. Let's consider that County A was interested in gathering the following information:

- Attitudes and beliefs of fathers who are involved in child welfare.
- Perceptions of non-resident and non-offending fathers who receive placement services for children who are removed from home.
- Comparing paternal relatives vs. maternal relatives' interactions with social work staff.
- Quality of relationships between child and father.

Because of the nature of the information sought, surveys (paper or online), interviews, and/or focus groups may be an effective way to gather data.

### Time frame for Collecting Data

Determine whether the data that you need requires:

- A baseline - typically occurs prior to initiative roll-out, and can be used to compare changes from the beginning of a project as compared to specified time frame typically after an intervention has been implemented.

Example: A county might want to examine father/child visits over time. They determine the average number of visits between fathers/children before the start of the program (i.e. the baseline) and after the intervention has been implemented. This way, counties are able to see changes over time and may be able to conclude that changes over time were attributable to a specific intervention.

- Point in time data -data collected on a specific date

Example: A county might want to know, after recruitment, how many fathers actually participated in services. They may want to collect data at 3 month intervals, like:

- 1/1/12,
- 4/1/12,
- 7/1/12 and
- 10/1/12

- Specific time period - data collected for a specific duration of time

Example: A county might want to know the number of all children who have been removed from home during a 12-month period.

- Cohort data - collecting data about children who share similar characteristics, i.e. who enter (entry cohort) or exit (exit cohort) the child welfare system together.

Example: A county might want to know the number the children who were adopted who entered the system at the same time OR a county might want to know the number of children who exited into permanency in a given year.



## Data collection resources

Data collection can be an arduous process, but it may be necessary to obtain accurate and complete information about children, fathers and families. The following list contains suggestions for gathering additional information if necessary. The entities and people below may be asked to administer a survey to their staff, they may be asked to participate in a focus group, or they may be asked to complete a form soliciting information about fathers and children. If, for example, an organization decides to conduct observations, kin provider homes and foster family agencies are good sources whereby an observation may take place between a father and child(ren) because the observation could occur in a safe and non-threatening environment. Educational staff may be asked to provide information about father involvement in the educational setting, like, do fathers participate in parent-teacher events?

- **Fathers and their Families:** Fathers and their family members are an important resource and can be great place to start collecting data.
- **Kin Provides:** Children may currently or have been previously placed with family members. These family members may know a lot about the habits of children and their fathers and should be included as resources for data collection.
- **Foster Family Agencies:** Foster families and foster care agencies may be able to provide important family and contact information.
- **CASA:** CASA employees and volunteers may be able to provide important historical information about fathers and their families.
- **Education:** Any educational system that the family has engaged with may be able to provide pertinent school and health information.
- **Mental Health:** If the family or a family member has received mental health services in the past, the mental health organization may be an important resource for gathering information.
- **Public Health:** If the family has received services from the public health department, the department may be an important resource for gathering health related information.
- **Head Start:** Head Start may be an excellent resource as a place to learn more about children and their fathers.
- **Child Abuse Prevention Council:** These agencies could provide valuable information about the family's history and father's contact information.
- **Jail and/or Prison:** When seeking to locate a father, it may be helpful to determine if he is currently incarcerated in a jail or prison.

- **Probation and/or Parole:** The probation/parole department can be an excellent resource for locating information about fathers and criminal histories.

## **STEP FIVE: ANALYZE and INTERPRET DATA**

Data analysis should be done by someone who is familiar with the analysis process. The analysis can be done by conducting one or more the following activities:

### **Physical case file review**

One way to obtain data is to gather it from the actual case file. Let's say that you want to find out the answer to the following question: How many fathers (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) are being served in the following programs?

- ER
- FM
- FR
- Court
- LT

Someone could open each case file in CWS/CMS and record this information in a table in a Microsoft Word file or in an Excel spreadsheet. This method may work in smaller counties, but for larger counties, this method is less likely to be the most effective way to gather this data because it can be quite time consuming and laborious. In larger counties, perhaps, a Business Objects query could be run.

### **Direct Observation**

This method is an effective way to get pertinent information because it involves an experienced or trained neutral third party person who watches someone else and judiciously takes notes and makes observations about a particular phenomenon. This person may be gathering information about behavior, actions, inactions, feelings, attitudes, beliefs, thoughts, etc. Let's say that you want to know more about the quality of the relationship between a father and his child(ren). You might be making note of:

1. The response from the child when he/she sees his/her father at the start of a visitation
2. How many times the father and child(ren) hug each other
3. Whether hugging appears "real" or "staged"
4. How many time the father and child(ren) tell each other that they love each other
5. Whether or not the father and child(ren) make eye contact
6. Whether the father disciplines the child(ren) and what type of discipline he uses
7. The response from the child when the father disciplines him
8. Whether or not a child appears withdrawn from his/her father
9. Whether or not a child appears fearful of his/her father
10. Appropriate vs. inappropriate touching

This is a good method of obtaining data and information, because a presumably unbiased professional has first-hand experience of what may be going on in a particular case and can speak to it because they have experienced it firsthand. However, one might note that people may not act, do and say things in situations where they know they are being watched.

### **Synthesizing information collected in an interview**

An interview is a good way to collect information because it occurs between a professional staff member and typically one or more people. Generally speaking, however, an interview occurs between an interviewer and an interviewee. This method may be effective especially if the interviewer and the interviewee have had an established relationship or if the interviewee trusts the interviewer. Participants may be asked to participate in a discussion-like interview, may be asked to complete a survey or respond to a set of questions. This is the most direct, and perhaps, best method for gathering information, but because it is resource intensive, it is used less often.

### **Synthesizing information collected in a Focus Group (or interviews with fathers)**

A group setting is a good way to collect information on several people at the same time. It can be an efficient method for collecting data on multiple people rather than interviewing each person individually. Members can be asked to complete a survey. Members can be asked to share their experiences, beliefs, perspectives, actions, etc. Members can be asked questions directly by a facilitator, similar to an interview. The facilitator can take notes and/or ask permission from the group members to record the session so that he/she can synthesize and analyze them later.

### **Examine results from the administration of surveys**

The information collected from surveys can be both *quantitative* and *qualitative*.

#### **Quantitative Data**

Quantitative data may include analyzing and interpreting questions with numerical values and the numerical values may be assigned to a category or phenomenon. A likert type scale, for example, can be used. Here's a sample of a quantitative question that could be used in a father's support group: My social worker includes me in decisions that need to be made about my child(ren)?

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Disagree
4. Strongly Disagree

An analysis can be done in the following ways:

- Analyze aggregate data for all members of the group
- Score and interpret the survey data in its entirety, if it applies
- Score and interpret the survey data by category, if it applies
- Recode member responses into two variables: 1) those who agree and 2) those who disagree

Here's another sample of a question that could be used in a father's support group - Rate your social worker's level of friendliness:

1. Very Friendly
2. Moderately Friendly
3. Friendly
4. Moderately Unfriendly
5. Very Unfriendly

An analysis can be done in the following ways:

- Analyze aggregate data for all members of the group
- Score and interpret the survey data in its entirety, if it applies
- Score and interpret the survey data by category, if it applies
- Recode member responses into variables: 1) friendly and 2) unfriendly

### Qualitative Data

Focus groups and/or interviews with fathers are also good for gathering qualitative data. Qualitative data may be used to describe or explain something from someone's own perspective or worldview. Here are samples of qualitative questions that can be used related to father engagement and/or father involvement:

1. How would you describe your parenting style? How might others describe your parenting style?
2. Describe the relationship you have with your Social Worker
3. Explain what happens during visitation with your child(ren)
4. In your own words, how do you feel that you have been treated by CPS?
5. What do you believe are the most important things to facilitate reunification with you and your child(ren)?
6. Explain how you would like to be included in decision making matters that involve your child(ren)
7. Describe your communication style with your child(ren)'s mother?
8. Describe the relationship you have with your child(ren)

Interpretation of this data can include grouping similar statements into themes and/or synthesizing the data into categories and subcategories.

### **Set up analyses in Excel**

An Excel file can be used to store data. Excel is a good way to analyze quantitative data quickly because of its ability to perform mathematical calculations. For example, we posed the following question earlier: How many fathers (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) are being served in the following programs?

- ER
- FM
- FR
- Court
- LT

D20		fx					
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1		ER	FM	FR	Court	LT	
2	Adopted	Barter, John	Mason, Calvin	Geyser, Michael	Cortelco, Tony	Green, Walter	7
3					Cortez, Luis	Mine, Robert	
4	Alleged	Job, Anthony	Breaker, Robert	Clark, Thomas	Zara, Ruben	McDonald, Ron	9
5		Chin, Jason	Cortez, Jesus	Boots, Michael	Belser, Don		
6	Birth	Webb, George	Waters, Tom	Woo, Chuck	Maps, Daniel	Alexander, David	10
7		Pencil, Johnathon	Chain, Rodolpho	Glasser, Stuart	Styles, Michael	Holmes, Phil	
8	Foster	Major, Jesus	Thompson, Terry		Dawson, Bill	Walls, Christopher	4
9	Presumed	Tyler, Juan	Turner, Steven	Smith, Edward	Walton, Sam	Ellis, Benjamin	15
10		Washington, Kyle	Adams, Gregory	Watson, Barry	Hatfield, Larry	Schools, Perry	
11		Davis, Samuel	Williams, Stan	Paper, Bart	McKey, Troy	Taylor, Roy	
12	Step	Graham, Charles	House, Randy		Johnson, Leon	Nix, Richard	4
13		10	10	8	11	10	49
14							

Here are some things you can conclude from this table: There are seven (7) adopted fathers, There are nine(9) alleged fathers, There are ten (10) birth fathers, There are four (4) foster fathers, There are fifteen (15) presumed fathers and There are four (4) step fathers

There are ten (10) fathers in the ER service component, There are ten (10) fathers in the FM service component, There are eight (8) fathers in the FR service component, There are eleven (11) fathers in the court service component, There are ten (10) in the LT service component.

### Extract data directly from CWS/CMS, Safe Measures or CSSR

Users can extract:

- Case level data from CWS/CMS
- County level, program level, unit level, and individual case level data from Safe Measures
- Aggregate state and county level data from CSSR

#### *CWS/CMS*

Let's see how we can extract the data from CWS/CMS to answer the following question: For children who have been adopted (at 12 months vs. at 24 months):

- Was a father (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) identified in the case file?
- Were they adopted by a member from the father's family?

This kind of analysis would require a review of each child's CWS/CMS electronic case. An analyst would need to check the relationships in the client notebook to assess whether or not a father had been identified. Also, they would need to check the placement section to obtain information about whether or not the child had been adopted by someone in the father's family.

#### *Safe Measures*

An analyst might use Safe Measure to track whether social workers had been making compliance visits and other visits with fathers. It might be useful to record this information for the entire county, for specific programs and/or units and for particular staff.

### **CSSR**

CSSR does NOT provide specific data on fathers. Rather, it provides aggregate state level and county level data. Counties might cross reference the information contained in the CSSR with their county level data. However, this involves more sophisticated evaluation and, as such, will not be explained in this guide.

### **Run queries in Business Objects**

Business Objects must be purchased from an outside vendor. All counties do not have Business Objects (BO). However, there may be someone in counties who is familiar with BO. By using a program such as Business Objects, one can write his/her own very specific queries in order to gather the information that they need. There are a large number of queries that are available already through the Business Objects community. These shared queries can be found after logging into InfoView (the web-based version of Business Objects). Further, as you develop queries, please consider sharing these through the Business Objects CAD Users Group Meetings. Business Objects queries may help to answer some of the questions posed earlier:

1. Number of recurrence of allegations after exit that involve fathers (adopted, alleged, birth, foster, presumed, step) as the alleged perpetrators
2. Following the substantiation of an allegation, how many fathers are contacted by CPS within a certain timeframe (same day, two weeks, 1 month)?
3. What is the median time to reunification for children who have participated in visits with their fathers infrequently, moderately frequently or regularly frequent (as determined by the county)
4. For those youth aging out of foster care, how many reside with their fathers or father families post CPS intervention?

Users should consult with their Business Objects representative to run queries related to father engagement and/or father involvement.