**PRACTICE**

Practice data will be gathered from self-reports from workers, service, legal and law enforcement professionals, among others. The responses to the survey questions for these populations can be coded into variables for summary and analysis in your county.

Measurable data on family finding and engagement in social work practice encompass:

* time, effort, and strategies utilized in identifying, locating and contacting family members[[1]](#footnote-1),
* service activities and planning forums in which family members are engaged,
* ways in which family members are considered as potential resources for foster care and for permanent placements for the children served.

Some of the variables, such as number of family members routinely engaged, are quantitative, and you can calculate frequencies based on these estimates, for example. Some of the variables are nominal (yes/no), ordinal (1st, 2nd, 3rd) or scaled (agree, moderately agree, disagree or strongly disagree). You can assign numerical values to obtain a variety of outputs. Finally, there are open-ended questions designed to evoke qualitative data related to:

* identification of barriers or strategies to overcome them and
* identifying future improvements in practice.
1. This framework informed the 2006 report on father engagement. Malm K., Murray J. and Geen R. *What About the Dads? Child Welfare Agencies’ Efforts to Identify, Locate and Involve Nonresident Fathers*. (Washington, D.C.: The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation,

2006). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)