

**State of Florida
Department of Children and Families
Semi-Annual Progress Report
October 2015 through March 2016
Title IV-E Demonstration Waiver**

I. Overview

This document updates the information in the initial design and implementation report that was submitted as required by section 2.3 of the Waiver Terms and Conditions. This report is the semiannual progress report for the period ended March 31, 2016 providing an update on the status of each activity or task identified in the Initial Design and Implementation Report (IDIR). This report is submitted in accordance with section 5.2 of the Waiver Terms and Conditions.

In November and December 2015 the Office of Child Welfare (OCW) completed a series of visits to the six different regions of the state to assess implementation of Florida's Child Welfare Practice Model and to initiate an assessment of the available service array in the regions. During these visits, a Process Mapping activity was completed to assess how closely the operationalization of the new child welfare practice model (safety methodology) was aligned with the intent it was originally designed. Additionally, each Community-Based Care lead agency participated in a separate meeting to discuss and assess the service array for their individual area.

Although there is a wide array of services available across the state, improvements are needed in the availability and accessibility of some critical services in the more rural areas and with ensuring that the services available are in alignment with the new practice model. The strengths and challenges identified varied by service area, however, there are a couple of identified challenges related to the service array that are consistent statewide:

- Lack of safety management service array for duration of safety management.
While most areas had identified safety management service providers for the investigation portion of safety management, very few areas in the state had created safety management services for ongoing case management.
- Services are provided without change in delivery or reporting of behavior change.
Some of the safety management providers continued to provide the same service previously identified as a diversion, prevention, or treatment service without shifting their service provision to match the need for safety management.

To address this, OCW is conducting a thorough service array assessment that will capture every service provider in the state and evaluate their services. Specifically, whether the service is evidence-based and the target population for each service. This information will be used to develop a standardized array of services that is defined and aligned with the practice model. Of particular note is the expansion of the model courts evidence-based parenting initiative. This evidence-based program is in 13 of the 20 circuits including the 11th circuit (Miami-Dade) and the 20th circuit (Collier County).

II. Demonstration Status, Activities, and Accomplishments

Provide a detailed overview of the status of the demonstration in the following areas:

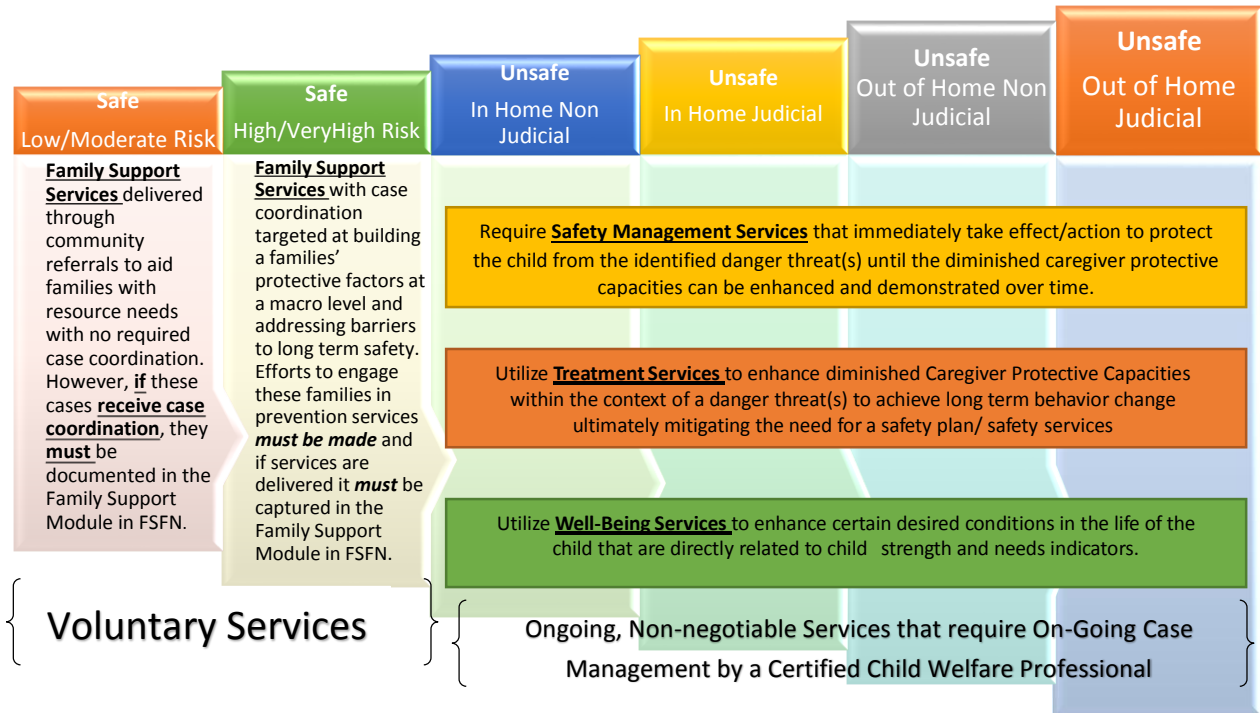
A. Numbers and types of services provided to date. Note in particular the implementation status of any innovative or promising practices.

Services for children and families are delivered in all geographic areas of the state with the oversight of either Department regions, sheriffs (child protective investigation), or Community-Based Care lead agencies (CBCs) and their subcontractors. CBC contracts fully delineate the

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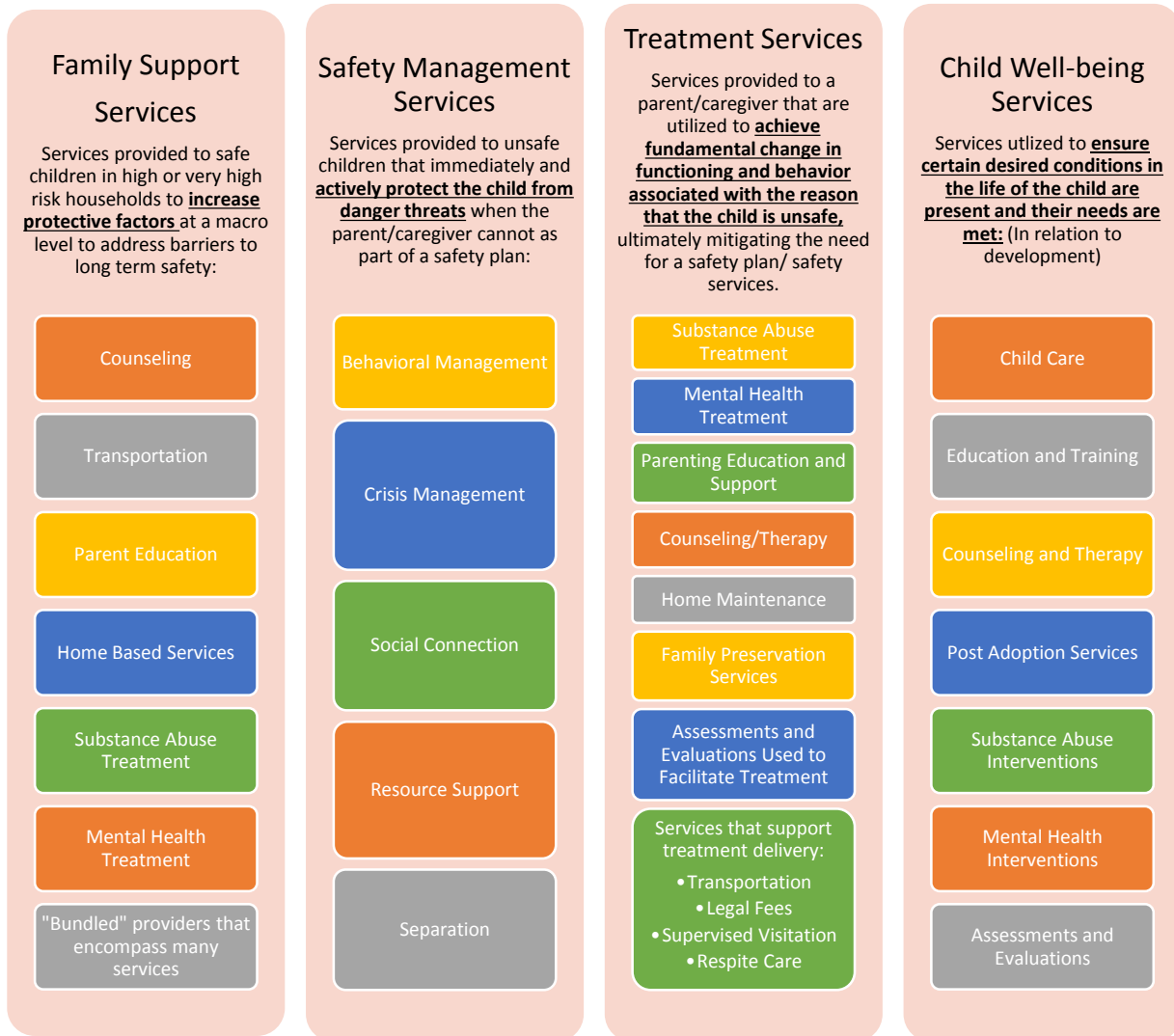
service array, including assessments (family functioning, behavioral health, risk, and others), and individualized services based on the child and family's needs. Our goal is to improve the quality and quantity of available services statewide, especially in rural areas.

With the implementation of the new practice model, Florida's service array is defined as follows:



We continue to assess and address challenges with the service array in an effort to improve the quality and expand the availability of appropriate services across the state. Through this ongoing assessment process, we are identifying the services available within each of the four categories (or "buckets") below:

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Adequate capacity and accessibility does not exist across the state, primarily in rural areas.

Enhanced service capacity was identified as a need in the availability and accessibility of some critical services in the more rural areas and ensuring that the services available are in alignment with Florida's new practice model. To address this need, we are completing a thorough service array assessment that captures every provider in the state and evaluates the services provided. The assessment will determine whether the services are evidence-based and the target population for the service. This assessment is scheduled to be complete by the end of 2016.

Across the state, there are pockets where insufficient treatment services are available, or have extensive wait times to access treatment or child well-being service providers. Capacity building, system integration, and leveraging the involvement of community resources and partners will yield improvements in this area.

Expanded services, supports, and programs may include:

- Enhancement of prevention services that target parental protective factors and preventing future maltreatment.

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- Development and implementation of family-centered evidence-based programs and case management practices to assess child safety; support and facilitate parents and caregivers in taking responsibility for their children's safety and well-being; enhance parent and family protective capacities; develop safety plans; and facilitate families' transition to formal and informal community-based support networks at the time of child welfare case closure.
- Evidence-based, interdisciplinary, and team-based safety management services to prevent out-of-home placement.
- Services that promote expedited permanency through reunification when feasible, or other permanency options as appropriate.
- Improved needs assessment practices that take into account the unique circumstances and characteristics of children and families.
- Long term supports for families to prevent placement recidivism.
- Strategies that increase children's access to consistent medical and dental care; improve adherence to immunization schedules and well-child check-ups; and holistically address the physical, social/emotional, and developmental needs of children.

B. Other demonstration activities begun, completed, or that remain ongoing (e.g., introduction of new policies and procedures, staff training).

Oversight– Since the October 1, 2006 implementation and subsequent renewal of the waiver in 2013, the waiver oversight committee has continued to meet via conference call or in person on as needed basis. In January 2016, the oversight committee co-chairs, fiscal lead, and the evaluator attended the Waiver Convening hosted by Casey Family. The Convening provided an opportunity to network with other waiver states; Florida's oversight committee then met to review and discuss Florida's progress and future plans.

Eligibility – All eligibility related tasks are complete. Enhancements and modifications to Florida Safe Families Network (FSFN), Florida's SACWIS, were implemented to support title IV-E foster care eligibility determinations. The Department amended the statewide operating procedure on eligibility and conducted statewide training webinars. In addition, ongoing technical assistance is provided as necessary.

Fiscal Accounting and Reporting –Procedures are in place to ensure that demonstration financial information that is reported reflects effective management of the demonstration as well as information needed by the Administration for Children and Families, Region IV Office and Central Office. This also includes assuring cost neutrality is achieved as specified in section 4.0 of the Terms and Conditions.

Communication and Training –Technical assistance and training is provided on an ongoing basis as needed. During the Casey Family Title IV-E Waiver Convening in January 2016, the workshop on communication provided samples of effective communication strategies regarding the demonstration waiver. As learned from the survey interviews with various stakeholders, the waiver has become a way of work and the newer child welfare professionals are not as familiar

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with the waiver. Florida plans to increase the awareness of the demonstration waiver over the next few months. See V. below for activities planned for next reporting period.

C. Challenges to implementation and the steps taken to address them.

Florida's demonstration waiver was implemented in October 2006. To date, no significant implementation problems have been identified. Meetings are occurring to discuss succession planning and to identify potential solutions for operating Florida's Child Welfare System outside of the demonstration waiver.

D. All demonstrations with a trauma focus (e.g., implementing trauma screening, assessment, or trauma-focused interventions) should report on each of the data elements listed below. For activities that are not being implemented as part of the demonstration, please indicate this with "N/A." If information is currently unknown, please indicate an approximate date that the data will be available.

- Target population(s) age range(s)
- Type of trauma screens used
- Number of children/youth screened for trauma
- Type of trauma/well-being assessments used ¹
- Include any trauma and well-being assessments for which data is available.
- Number of children/youth assessed for well-being/trauma
- Type of trauma-focused evidence-based interventions (EBI's) used
- Number of children/youth receiving trauma-focused EBIs²
- Percentage of children and youth receiving trauma-informed EBIs who report positive functioning at follow up³

N/A for Florida.

III. Evaluation –The Phase 2 – Florida Title IV-E Waiver Demonstration Evaluation Semi-Annual Progress Report is attached.

IV. Significant Evaluation Findings to Date

See III. above. No significant evaluation findings identified at this point in Phase 2.

V. Recommendations and Activities Planned for Next Reporting Period

- A statewide meeting with eligibility specialists is planned for June 2016. The statewide meeting will feature a workshop on eligibility and the importance of eligibility determinations and how this relates to the demonstration waiver. The goal of this

¹ Include any trauma and well-being assessments for which data is available

² Include all children that have received any portion of the EBI(s).

³ A jurisdiction may define "positive functioning" in any manner that is consistent with the definition used for the local evaluation of the waiver demonstration.

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workshop is to provide each participant with a fundamental understanding of Child Welfare funding, the demonstration waiver, eligibility, and services. This workshop will focus on understanding program funding, policies, and regulations in such areas as Title IV, federal regulations, eligibility, foster care, adoption assistance, audit and reporting requirements.

- Workshops are planned for both the Florida Coalition for Children Conference in July and the Department's Dependency Summit in September to help raise awareness about the demonstration waiver. Participants will gain an understanding of program funding, policies, and regulations in such areas as Title IV, federal regulations, eligibility, foster care, adoption assistance, audit and reporting requirements. The audience for these conferences is broad and will include case managers, eligibility specialists, leadership, financial staff, foster parents, judges, attorneys, youth, and other stakeholders.
- Ongoing meetings will continue to identify strategies for sustaining waiver interventions following the Demonstration waiver period.

VI. Program Improvement Policies.

Recommendations for improvement will be included with the interim waiver evaluation report.