

## FDC BEST PRACTICES

Supporting the publication *Guidance to States: Recommendations for Developing Family Drug Court Guidelines*, the self-assessment is designed to assist FDC practitioners to determine the alignment with FDC Guidelines of their own policies, procedures and operations. Assessment results may be used for action planning and discussion to identify program strengths and opportunities for improvement

### Response Alternatives for FDC Guidelines Self-Assessment

1. **Have not yet considered**
2. **Exploration** (Court has identified the need to implement this guideline and begun to assess organizational capacity to do so)
3. **Installation** (An individual or team has been assigned to begin the process of implementing this guideline, ensuring that resources for implementation exist, engaging the stakeholders it affects, aligning systems and identifying and addressing barriers to implementation)

4. **Initial Implementation** (Behavior and processes have begun to change, new skills may be developing, and new practices are being incorporated)
5. **Full Implementation** (The guideline is integrated into the service, organization, and system settings. The processes and procedures to accomplish the activities associated with the guideline are now in place).
6. **Recommendation Sustained** (This guideline has been institutionalized and is adapting as needed to changes among stakeholders, funding streams, and organizational priorities)

### CREATE SHARED MISSION AND VALUE

- The FDC has included the judicial officers, attorneys, child welfare, substance abuse treatment providers as well as other service providers as partners in the development of the FDC.
- The FDC has used a formal values assessment process and negotiated shared principles or goal statements that reflect a consensus on issues related to families with substance abuse-related problems in child welfare and the dependency court.
- The FDC has prioritized parents in the child welfare system for receipt of substance abuse treatment services.
- The FDC has discussed and developed responses to the conflicting time frames associated with child welfare, TANF, substance abuse treatment and child development.
- The FDC has a process in place to revisit the mission, goals, target population, and policies and procedures of the FDC on a regular basis.

### ENSURE CROSS-SYSTEM KNOWLEDGE

- The FDC team receives training and education on working with substance abuse-affected families in the child welfare system; the training includes gender-specific and trauma training.
- The FDC team receives training and education on the principles of effective drug treatment.
- The FDC attorneys receive training on effective advocacy and basic education regarding substance abuse and addiction.
- The FDC has developed joint training programs for substance abuse treatment, child welfare, court staff and providers to learn effective methods of working together.
- The FDC has a multi-year staff development plan that includes periodic updates to the training and orientation received by the staff on working together.
- The FDC has training and educational programs that include cultural issues to improve the team's cultural competency in working with diverse substance abuse treatment-child welfare client groups.
- The FDC has a formal process for orienting and training new team members.



## ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF PARENTS

- FDC has created a phase system with benchmarks of accomplishments that define progress that have been explained and made available to participants.
- FDC tracks behavior and the accomplishment of phase benchmarks.
- The FDC has implemented integrated case plans that include the substance abuse recovery plan integrated or coordinated with the child welfare case plan.
- The FDC has adequate access to treatment monitoring information to determine how participants are progressing through treatment in a timely way.
- The FDC understands what motivates behavior change and how to apply those principles when working with and responding to client behavior.
- The FDC's staff provides outreach to clients who do not keep their initial substance abuse treatment appointment or drop out of treatment.
- The FDC's staff follows up with the substance abuse treatment agency that the parent is ordered to attend if a parent fails to keep a court date.
- The FDC's staff tracks the status of their clients' progress in the child welfare system.
- Client relapse and other risk indicators typically lead to an FDC intervention to re-engage the client in treatment and to re-assess child safety.
- The FDC uses drug testing effectively and in conjunction with a treatment program to monitor clients' compliance with treatment plans.
- The FDC ensures that substance abuse treatment and other services are: 1) Evidenced Based; 2) Gender specific; 3) Culturally relevant; 4) Geographically accessible; 5) Family focused; and, 6) Trauma Informed
- The FDC utilizes Peer Mentors/Recovery Coaches.

## ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN

- The FDC has implemented substance abuse prevention and early intervention services for the children of parents in the FDC using national models and evidence-informed practice (such as PCT, Celebrating Families, etc.).
- The FDC ensures that children of parents in the FDC have a comprehensive mental health assessment that includes screening for developmental delays and neurological effects of prenatal exposure to alcohol and other drugs, and the emotional and mental effects of their parents substance use and, if placed in out-of-home care, the separation experience.
- The FDC has developed linkages to a range of programs for children of parents in the FDC that are targeted on the special developmental needs of these children.
- The FDC is familiar with national models of prevention and intervention for substance abuse-affected children.
- FDC has identified gaps in services for children and advocates for services to fill those gaps.
- The FDC has established linkages to residential substance abuse treatment for women and children.
- The FDC ensures children are receiving routine visits that ensure quality and safety.