

Alaska’s Court Improvement Program 2015 Annual Self-Assessment Report
[October 1, 2014 – September 30, 2015]

Project # 1 – CINA Core Curriculum

In 2012, CIP began its Child In Need of Aid (CINA) Core Curriculum project to develop a comprehensive child welfare curriculum for delivery to multi-disciplinary CINA stakeholders around the state. The curriculum will have eight modules, consisting of: Legal; ICWA; Family Well-Being; Services/Resources; Creative Advocacy in CINA Cases; Information Sharing; Community & Culture; and Education Law. All modules are designed as full-day in person trainings, except the Legal module is delivered over three consecutive days.

1. **Identify and assess needs.** Each CINA stakeholder agency/entity had their own orientation/training program for new CINA practitioners, but Alaska did not have a multi-disciplinary “core” training program designed for all CINA practitioners. There were anecdotal concerns regarding the competency level of new practitioners in the CINA system. Additionally, there also appeared to be a lack of ongoing training opportunities for more experienced CINA stakeholders.
2. **Develop theory of change.** With CINA training occurring in silos in each respective CINA agency/entity, CIP believed that this led to a lack in consistency regarding the “baseline” information that practitioners received at separate trainings. CIP embraced the concept that the most effective CINA training (both for new & experienced practitioners) would occur with a multi-disciplinary audience. While agencies/entities would still understandably conduct other internal trainings for their staff, CIP felt certain that the cross-pollination effect of providing “core” training together for all CINA stakeholders would be the optimal means to deliver training and lead to enhanced competency/practice for CINA stakeholders in Alaska. With improved competence for individuals (“micro-level”) level, the over-arching goal is a more efficient, fair, and effective child welfare system for Alaska’s children and families (“macro-level”).
3. **Develop/select solution.** Alaska CIP looked to Colorado CIP for best practices regarding development and delivery of a “core” training program. Alaska’s curriculum is modeled after Colorado’s “training wheel” curriculum, with its incorporation of adult-learning best practices. While Colorado’s curriculum provided the foundation for Alaska’s project, CIP has made significant adaptations to tailor the curriculum for Alaska.
4. **Describe the implementation of the project.** In order for all CINA agencies/entities to be able to support the core curriculum (and encourage their employees to attend), CIP formed a curriculum development workgroup with representation from each respective CINA group. With this balance in place, all agencies/entities remain committed to the project and have consistently had their employees attend the “pilot” trainings that CIP has sponsored. Following the initial pilot in April 2014, during this reporting period CIP conducted a second pilot curriculum rollout in October 2014 of three modules: Family Well-Being; ICWA; and Services/Resources. Based on participant feedback and workgroup member observations during delivery of the pilots, the modules are being revised and further adapted for finalization.

5. **Describe any monitoring/evaluations/assessments of your project and how you intend to apply the findings.** The project has not yet been evaluated/assessed – the CIP Coordinator and Curriculum Project Lead are in preliminary discussions with NACC staff regarding potential incorporation of their Training Evaluation Toolkit into the project.
6. Is this project a priority for you in 2016? Yes No
7. Would you like a CQI consult around this project? Yes No

Project # 2 – CINA Therapeutic Court (pilot in Anchorage)

Following technical assistance from Children & Family Futures (CFF) to review the functioning of the prior therapeutic courts in Anchorage, in 2012 CIP assisted with a restructuring of the therapeutic court, including formation of a governance committee. In July 2014, the new pilot CINA Therapeutic Court (CTC) began in Anchorage – during this reporting period, the pilot phase was extended for another year as of July 2015.

1. **Identify and assess needs.** The Family Care Court (FCC) and the Family Preservation Court (FPC) were Alaska’s only therapeutic courts for CINA cases. An outcome evaluation completed in 2011 (by an outside vendor) identified several gap areas in the functioning and operations of the two courts. One issue of concern to CIP is that CINA stakeholders were dedicating significant resources to the courts, but only a very limited number of CINA families were being served by the courts.
2. **Develop theory of change.** CIP has supported the governance committee’s efforts at restructuring the court into a parallel-track model. CIP believes that by having CTC court only focus on substance abuse treatment/progress for CINA parent, and all other CINA issues dealt with in a separate “regular” CINA court (with a different judge), CTC will be able to “go to scale” with a much larger population of CINA parents being served and benefitting from the best practices of a family drug court approach.
3. **Develop/select solution.** The evaluation completed in 2011 provided some empirically-supported analysis of the gaps within the prior therapeutic courts. Then, CFF assisted CIP by reviewing the evaluation and helping to incorporate national best practices into the restructured court, with the input and consensus of the steering committee.
4. **Describe the implementation of the project.** CTC is in the second year of its pilot phase, with a target end date of July 2016. The governance committee has reviewed and approved the CTC policies & procedures manual, with occasional revisions being made based on experience during the pilot phase.
5. **Describe any monitoring/evaluations/assessments of your project and how you intend to apply the findings.** The project has not yet been evaluated/assessed. CIP is exploring the possibility of partnering with a research team at the University of Alaska – Anchorage to conduct data collection and assessment, as well as performance evaluation.
6. Is this project a priority for you in 2016? Yes No
7. Would you like a CQI consult around this project? Yes No

I. Trainings, Projects, and Activities

1. Trainings

<i>Topical Area</i>	<i>Did you hold or develop a training on this topic?</i>	<i>Who was the target audience?</i>	<i>What were the intended training outcomes?</i>	<i>How did you evaluate this training?</i>
Data	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No			
Hearing quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No			
Improving timeliness/permanency	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No			
Quality legal representation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Attorneys for CINA youth	Raise awareness for CINA youth attorneys of special issues for youth in care, as well as distinction between expressed wishes and best interests	Ongoing feedback from foster youth/alumni members (Facing Foster Care in Alaska) regarding experiences with CINA youth attorneys
Engagement & participation of parties	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No			
Well-being	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	multi-disciplinary CINA stakeholders	Increase abilities of CINA stakeholders to focus on and analyze indicators of overall family well-being in CINA cases	Pre & post training test/quiz for participants
ICWA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	multi-disciplinary CINA stakeholders	Enhance knowledge of CINA stakeholders regarding requirements of ICWA and the reasons ICWA compliance is important	Pre & post training test/quiz for participants
Sex Trafficking	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No			

Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
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2. Data Projects. Data projects include any work with administrative data sets (e.g, AFCARS, SACWIS), data dashboards, data reports, fostering court improvement data, case management systems, and data sharing efforts.

Do you have a data project/activity? Yes No

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
Use of common identifier for CINA youth among agencies/entities (ORCA ID# from state child welfare agency)	Case management systems	Implementation
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

Do you have **data reports** that you consistently view? Yes No

If **Yes**, around which topics?

- Hearing quality Timeliness Permanency Well-being Education Engagement of youth Engagement of Parents Other Engagement Quality Legal Representation
 ICWA DCST Runaway Youth Other: _____
 Other: _____

3. Hearing Quality. Hearing quality projects include any efforts you have made to improve the quality of dependency hearings, including court observation/assessment projects, process improvements, specialty/pilot court projects, projects related to court orders or title IV-E determinations, mediation, or appeals.

Do you have a hearing quality project/activity? Yes No

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

4. Improving Timeliness of Hearings or Permanency Outcomes. Timeliness and permanency projects include any activities or projects meant to improve the timeliness of case processing or achievement of timely permanency. This could include general timeliness, focus on continuances or appeals, working on permanency goals other than APPLA, or focus on APPLA and older youth.

Do you have a Timeliness or permanency project/activity? Yes No

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

5. Quality of Legal Representation. Quality of legal representation projects may include any activities/efforts related to improvement of representation for parents, youth, or the agency. This might include assessments or analyzing current practice, implementing new practice models, working with law school clinics, or other activities in this area.

Do you have a quality legal representation project/activity? Yes No

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
CINA Youth Attorney trainings	New Practice Models	Selecting Solution
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

6. Engagement & Participation of Parties. Engagement and participation of parties includes any efforts centered around youth, parent, foster family, or caregiver engagement, as well as projects related to notice to relatives, limited English proficiency, or other efforts to increase presence and engagement at the hearing.

Do you have an engagement or participation of parties project/activity? Yes No

	How would	Work Stage (if
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Project Description	you categorize this project?	applicable)
Youth engagement in court & Youth Bill of Rights rollout	Youth Engagement	Selecting Solution
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

7. Well-Being. Well-being projects include any efforts related to improving the well-being of youth. Projects could focus on education, early childhood development, psychotropic medication, LGBTQ youth, trauma, racial disproportionality/disparity, immigration, or other well-being related topics.

Do you have any projects/activities focused on well-being? Yes No

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

8. ICWA. ICWA projects could include any efforts to enhance state and tribal collaboration, state and tribal court agreements, data collection and analysis of ICWA compliance, or ICWA notice projects.

Do you have any projects/activities focused on ICWA? Yes No

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
Cooperation/communication between CIP and Tribal/State Collaboration Group	Tribal Collaboration	Implementation
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

9. Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act (PSTFSA). PSTFSA projects could include any work around domestic child sex trafficking, the reasonable and prudent parent standard, a focus on runaway youth, focus on normalcy, collaboration with other agencies around this topic, data collection and analysis, data sharing, or other efforts to fully implement the act into practice.

Do you have any projects/activities focused on PSTSFA? Yes No

Project Description	How would you categorize this project?	Work Stage (if applicable)
CIP collaboration with Office of Children’s Services (OCS) regarding court assistance in implementation	Collaboration with other agencies	Selecting Solution
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.
	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

II. Priority Areas & CIP Resources

a. What would you consider your top **two** priority areas for FY 2016?

- Data projects
- Hearing quality
- Timeliness/permanency
- Quality of legal representation
- Engagement of Parties
- Well-being
- Preventing Sex Trafficking & Strengthening Families
- ICWA
- Other: _____

b. Are there any outside driving forces that determine your priorities or consume a lot of your time? n/a

III. CIP Collaboration and Participation in Child Welfare Program Planning and Improvement Efforts

10. For FY2014, you described how the CIP planned to assist with and participate in round three of the CFSR and program improvement process.

We are interested in your progress or any changes to this plan.

- a.** Has your plan changed? n/a
- b.** How have you moved this plan forward in FY2015? CIP Coordinator participated in Court & Agency Collaboration webinar in February 2015, and Coordinator maintains open communication with both Region X and OCS staff regarding CFSR planning.
- c.** What barriers have you encountered (if any) in increasing your participation with round three of CFSR? n/a
- d.** Have you received any technical assistance on this issue? If so, what was it and how was it helpful to you? n/a

11. For FY2014 you described how the CIP will assist with and participate in the CFSP/APSR processes with the child welfare agency in an ongoing fashion. We are interested in your progress or any changes to this plan.

- a. Has your plan changed? n/a
- b. How have you moved this plan forward in FY2015? CIP Coordinator provided input to OCS for CFSP and OCS presented on the CFSP at the Statewide CINA Conference (October 2015).
- c. What barriers have you encountered (if any) to working with the child welfare agency in the CFSP/APSR process in an ongoing fashion? n/a
- d. Have you received any technical assistance on this issue? If so, what was it and how was it helpful to you? n/a

12. How are you involved, if at all, with the child welfare agency's CQI efforts?

- Contributing data Receiving data Jointly using data
- Collaborative meetings Collaborative systems change project(s)
- Other: _____

IV. CQI Current Capacity Assessment

- a. How is the CIP progressing with CQI overall? Our CIP has encountered difficulties in developing outcome measures to monitor effectiveness of our projects. CIP is now looking to outside partners to assist us with the evaluation/assessment phases of projects, since CIP has shown that it has limited time/resources to conduct this important phase in its projects.
- b. Do you have any of the following resources to help you integrate CQI into practice?
 - CIP staff with CQI (e.g., data, evaluation) expertise
 - Consultants with CQI expertise a University partnership
 - Contracts with external agencies to assist with CQI efforts
 - Other resources: CBCC state liaison _____

- c. Describe the largest challenges your CIP faces with implementing CQI into your work: While CIP members value CQI and wish to infuse it into our projects, they have limited time to volunteer on CIP projects. With outside expertise and assistance in developing a plan for the evaluation/assessment phase for projects, then CIP can be relied upon to sustain the process and review data/information to inform the future path of a project.
- d. Please review the list of capacities below. Select the three capacity areas that you would like to increase your knowledge of or enhance your ability to do in the next fiscal year.

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> CQI generally | <input type="checkbox"/> Data collection methodologies | <input type="checkbox"/> Data analysis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Understanding/applying data | | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Evaluation design | <input type="checkbox"/> Tool development | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy change implementation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CQI commitment (buy-in) | <input type="checkbox"/> Collaboration w/agencies | <input type="checkbox"/> Data-driven decision-making |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Participation in CFSR process | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Performance measurement | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Participation in CFSP/APSR process | <input type="checkbox"/> Community partnerships | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Awareness of evidence-based practices | <input type="checkbox"/> Research partnerships | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership | <input type="checkbox"/> Data systems | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Currently available data (e.g., AFCARS) | <input type="checkbox"/> Tracking implementation/changes | |

V. Self-Assessment – Capacity

We would like you to assess your current capacities related to knowledge, skills, resources, and collaboration by responding to the following 3 sets of questions.

1. Please indicate your level of agreement to the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have a good understanding of CQI.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
I understand how to integrate CQI into all our work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am familiar with the available data relevant to our work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand how to interpret and apply the available data.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The CIP and the state child welfare agency have shared goals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The CIP and the state child welfare agency collaborate around program planning and improvement efforts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
We have the resources we need to fully integrate CQI into practice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have staff, consultants, or partners who can answer my CQI questions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

2. How frequently do you engage in the following activities?

	<i>Never</i>	<i>Rarely</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>Always</i>
We use data to make decisions about where to focus our efforts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We meet with representatives of the child welfare agency to engage in collaborative systems change efforts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We evaluate newly developed or modified programs/practices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We use evaluation/assessment findings to make changes to programs/practices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CQI is integrated into all our projects.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Please review the descriptions of the different levels of collaboration. Using the scale provided, please indicate the extent to which you currently interact with each other partner identified below.

	Networking 1	Cooperation 2	Coordination 3	Coalition 4	Collaboration 5	
Relationship Characteristics	--Aware of organization --Loosely defined roles --Little communication --All decisions made independently	--Provide info to each other --Somewhat defined roles --Formal communication --All decisions made independently	--Share information and resources --Defined roles --Frequent communication --Some shared decision making	--Share ideas --Share resources --Frequent and prioritized communication --All member have a vote in decision-making	--Members belong to one system --Frequent communication is characterized by mutual trust --Consensus is reached on all decisions	
	No Interaction at all 0	Networking 1	Cooperation 2	Coordination 3	Coalition 4	Collaboration 5
State Child Welfare Agency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Tribal Child Welfare Agencies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tribal Courts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Department of Education/ School	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Law enforcement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Juvenile justice agency (e.g., DOJ)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Behavioral/mental health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Substance abuse/addictions management agency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

VI. Timeliness Data & Performance Measurement (please see attached Appendix A for detailed timeliness measures reports)

1. Timeliness. The data provided below is from the court’s case management system, CourtView. CourtView is a centralized database with each court location responsible for entering data according to statewide protocol. The data is extracted, formatted, and calculated using Crystal Reports. For each timeliness measure, the first parameter in the report views CINA cases closed during the last federal fiscal year. Additional parameters are added to each individual report to extract the appropriate data.

The Data Analyst works closely with court staff to audit data, provide training to new staff, and assist with questions regarding proper data entry. Data errors still occur; however, the frequency has decreased and court staff have a better understanding of the importance of accurate data entry.

	Baseline Measure (FY 2013)	FY 2014	FY 2015	CIP Projects Targeting Measures (if applicable) <i>[If this measure was targeted by an intervention (e.g., efforts made to improve timeliness), please list the project or activity here]</i>
Required Timeliness Measures				
4G. Time to First Permanency Hearing	352	364	351	
4H. Time to Termination of Parental Rights Petition	481	473	485	
4I. Time to Termination of Parental Rights	See categories below.			
<i>Order Terminating Father’s Rights by Voluntary Relinquishment</i>	622	618	632	
<i>Order Terminating Father’s Parental Rights</i>	717	677	711	
<i>Order Terminating Mother’s Rights by Voluntary Relinquishment</i>	636	596	692	
<i>Order Terminating Mother’s Parental Rights</i>	709	679	724	
4A. Time to Permanent Placement	See categories below.			
<i>Time to Reunification</i>	593	486	520	
<i>Time to Adoption</i>	921	969	1008	

<i>Time to Guardianship</i>	920	1143	916	
<i>Time to Aged Out and Released</i>	1124	1305	1181	
<i>Other Disposition</i>	686	814	604	
<i>Transfer to Tribal Court Jurisdiction</i>	301	128	343	
Optional Measures				
4G. Time to Subsequent Permanency Hearings				
<i>Time between 1st & 2nd hearing</i>	212	212	209	
<i>Time between 2nd & 3rd hearing</i>	185	249	241	
<i>Time between 3rd & 4th hearing</i>	215	208	220	
<i>Time between 4th & 5th hearing</i>	194	268	219	
<i>See attached report for additional subsequent hearings.</i>				
1B. Percentage of Cases that Re-enter within 1 year	We are unable to report on this measure because we do not have a way to link the child's identity in the old and new case. In August 2015, we started receiving and entering a unique identifier (ORCA ID) from our child welfare agency. This will help us link cases in the future so we can report on this measure.			

2. **Other Measures.** Time to First Permanency Order. The average for FY 2015 is 399 days. We use this report for comparison to the Time to First Permanency Hearing Measure (351 days for FY 2015). We have not collected any data on quality of legal representation or quality of court hearings.

