

# Response to Annie E. Casey Foundation Assessment

## Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF)



### Kansas Protection Report Center

AECF Recommendation	DCF Response
Expedite hiring and training of screeners	The agency has been working diligently to expedite training. KPRC is aware of the need to get staff trained in a timely manner. KPRC continues to seek ways to be creative and flexible with hiring staff and staff schedules and base stations.
Identify additional temporary staff to screen until permanent staff are hired and trained or support more overtime	DCF has identified additional temporary staff to help screen calls. There are staff in administration and in the regions who are able to assist at the KPRC for short periods of time. The option of overtime for KPRC staff is utilized on a regular basis.
Reduce screening duties for supervisors so they can train and provide in-the-moment supervision	DCF enacted a procedure change and supervisors are no longer screening. Now, they are to be on the floor offering support and supervision to their staff. We anticipate this increased supervision will help with staff retention.
Continue streamlining staff roles	KPRC has now identified staff roles so the tasks completed by each individual are clearly delineated. Training for staff is now more tailored for their specific role. We continue to review and look for ways to streamline policy and procedure.
Streamline screening process by focusing only on reporter information and CPS history	DCF has implemented a streamlined screening process in line with this recommendation.
Engage reporting sources to educate on when and what information to share in calls.	The Regional Directors have been encouraged to reach out to local school districts and local law enforcement to meet and discuss these needs. KPRC has put an online request for mandated reporter training on the public website. The KPRC Administrator has met with numerous law enforcement agencies about reporting and partnering strategies. This recommendation is an ongoing task and will continue to be a focus of discussion.
Complete changes underway to improve the web-based reporting tool to gather more information from web reporters	Some changes have been made to the web-based reporting tool. This recommendation is complete for now, pending further information about CCWIS funding. Additionally, the agency created a one-page guide for mandated reporters detailing information needed on a web report. This guide will be mailed to schools and law enforcement, as well as posted on the mandated reporter web page.
Message to staff the urgency of timely screening	Staff at both the KPRC and in the DCF Regions are keenly aware of the importance and urgency of timely screening. We will continue to message the urgency to staff on a regular, ongoing basis.

### Child Protective Services

Revise onboarding process to provide core training and enhanced supervision before assigning cases	Regional directors have worked with their personnel staff to support enhanced hiring processes so that front line staff are moved through the process more quickly. Strategic Development and Prevention and Protection Services (PPS) worked together to develop the PPS Academy which is a rigorous, three-week training for new staff which provides comprehensive training that leaves new staff ready to conduct the job they were hired to perform. This is an ongoing progress that we will continue to emphasize and focus on.
Require regular, documented supervision, not just in-the-moment case conferencing	Each supervisor is required to staff each open case with their Child Protection Specialist regularly. This is an ongoing progress that we will continue to emphasize and focus on.
Enforce more timely case closures	Each regional worker and supervisor is aware of the need to close cases timely. The Deputy Secretary completed a forum on documentation and a component revolved around how timely findings impact child safety globally. Additionally, each region is now provided with a report monthly detailing which cases remain open. This is an ongoing work effort which will be more successful as new staff are hired, trained and in the field, allowing caseloads to decrease.
Re-assign Family Preservation monitoring responsibilities from CPS	DCF has re-purposed two Child Protection Specialists per region to be used as Family Preservation/Family Service Liaisons. These staff will carry all Family Preservation and Family Service cases and will work with the providers to ensure the families are receiving adequate services. These positions are currently posted. Once filled, these positions will complete work currently allocated to the Child Protection Specialists workload.
Increase administrative support to conduct clearances	PPS has worked with the Office of Background Investigations and with the Office of Personnel Services to decrease the time it takes to conduct and receive background checks for new hires. This has helped immensely to streamline the hiring process.
Develop and launch an aggressive recruitment campaign for CPS staff	Each regions personnel staff have been working diligently to attend as many job fairs as possible in a variety of educational settings. Regions have also increased the number of students accepted from local universities. One region just started the school year with 13 students. This is one of our best recruiting tools. Additionally, we developed a social media campaign to promote Child Protection Specialist openings. The campaign ran for a month and reached thousands of individuals. This is an ongoing progress that we will continue to emphasize and focus on.
Message urgency and importance of thorough and	DCF addressed this by changing the response time from 20 working days to seven working days. Thorough and timely

timely investigations (already started by changing 20 day priority to 7 day)	investigations have been and will continue to be a regular topic of conversation with staff at all levels within the agency.
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## Structural and Programmatic Changes to Align with Best Practice

Structured Decision-Making Tool (SDM)	Kansas is in the process of implementing this tool. The initial meetings have begun. The anticipated go live date for KPRC is January 1, 2019.
Family Team Decision Making	PPS is in the process of initiating new Child Welfare grants. Family Team Decision Making was mentioned in the Request for Proposal as a service the agency wishes to see the potential grantees utilize. The proposals are currently being reviewed. The agency hopes to have grants awarded by Dec. 31, 2018.
More preventive evidence-based services	DCF is planning to enact the Family First Prevention Services Act immediately. Some states will be requesting the two-year delay, which is allowable in the legislation. Kansas plans to move forward immediately and believes we are in a good position to implement this legislation, as we already have a low number of youth in congregate care. Kansas has teams in place to work on ensuring there are evidence-based practices in place and that our providers are suited up and ready to meet the need. This recommendation is moving forward and will take time and support from the legislature to fully fund and implement.
Teen-focused prevention and diversion	While not specifically called out in the FFPSA, some of the services the agency will be pursuing will be specifically aimed at this population. This is one our largest out-of-home populations, so we will be specifically targeting this population for prevention. PPS has recently implemented Risk for Removal Staffings. These staffings are required prior to PPS requesting the County or District file a petition for removal of a child/youth for neglect or FINA reasons. These teams, which include DCF staff from across the state and different programs, help consider all DCF and community services and supports available to maintain children safely in their home, and prevent children being placed in foster care. This recommendation is moving forward and will take time and support from the legislature to fully fund and implement.
A new comprehensive, high-functioning IT system	Kansas is in the process of completing the required feasibility study in order to move forward with the Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS) system. DCF needs support from the legislature to fund this initiative. The new CCWIS will help with efficiencies in all aspects of child welfare; taking reports, screening reports, case assignment, investigation

	and case management. The efficiencies will help with case load management, worker retention, job satisfaction and most importantly, child safety.
Adequate number of staff to achieve desired workload	PPS positions are filled immediately upon vacancy. The agency has requested funding from the legislature to increase the number of staff. After opening up the qualifications and allowing more qualified professionals to join our team as Child Protection Specialists, our vacancy rate has greatly decreased. As of April 26, 2018, the protection specialist vacancy rate was 20.7 percent, and as of August 27, 2018, it was 11.9 percent. Additionally, we have had a staff member conducting a comprehensive review of all caseloads and compared them to national standards. At the conclusion of his review, we will better know what other staffing needs the agency may have. The agency is committed to having a robust workforce to help best serve the children and families of Kansas. We will continue to evaluate this piece, but this past legislative session, the Kansas Legislature funded an additional 20 child welfare positions. Additionally, we will ask for additional funding for more positions this next legislative session as well.
24/7 agency response	The agency agrees this may be a good goal for the agency to work towards with law enforcement. With the agencies current staffing abilities, this is not currently a possibility. Although, we are evaluating enacting a 24/7 agency response. In the meantime, we are piloting a program soon in Wichita with a dedicated line for law enforcement and hospital staff to contact us. This will help streamline priority calls.