



Detroit Center for Family Advocacy Pilot Evaluation Report 7/2009-6/2012

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DETROIT CENTER FOR FAMILY ADVOCACY PILOT EVALUATION REPORT JULY 2009-JUNE 2012

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Detroit Center for Family Advocacy (CFA) is a grant-funded project of the University of Michigan Law School's Child Advocacy Law Clinic, which provides social work and legal advocacy to at-risk families to prevent children from unnecessarily entering or remaining in foster care. The CFA's work focuses on providing legal services to remove the danger to the child, thus preventing the child from entering foster care. The Center also removes legal barriers to facilitate a child's early exit from foster care. Often legal remedies like obtaining a custody or personal protection order, resolving criminal warrants or getting a divorce allow children to be protected by their family without requiring placement in foster care. Similarly, legal barriers can prevent children from being placed permanently with a caring and committed adult. The Detroit CFA's multidisciplinary team seeks to overcome these obstacles by providing families with the assistance of an attorney, a social worker and a family advocate.

All of the children served by CFA are from Wayne County, its target area. Roughly 60 percent are from the city's Osborn neighborhood - one of Detroit's most economically distressed. Osborn area zip codes have some of the highest poverty levels and rates of child abuse and neglect reports. This community also has some of Michigan's highest foster care placement rates. The CFA focuses on this locale for outreach and gives families with Osborn community ties priority consideration for services.

The Center works closely and cooperatively with its primary sources for case referrals: the Wayne County Department of Human Services (WC-DHS) and the Wayne County Juvenile Court. Most of CFA's referrals come directly from WC-DHS. The CFA accepts two types of cases, referred to as Prevention Cases and Permanency Cases. **Prevention Cases** involve children who WC-DHS has substantiated as abused or neglected, but where the department has not filed a petition with the juvenile court or removed the children from their parents' care. In these cases, legal and social work advocacy on behalf of the family can make the child safe and thus eliminate the need to remove the child from the home. **Permanency Cases** involve children in foster care where there is a caring adult willing to adopt or otherwise provide a permanent home for the child, but who faces legal impediments to doing so. Legal and social work advocacy by the CFA can overcome those legal impediments and enable the child to achieve legal permanency and possibly exit the foster care system. In both cases, the goal of the CFA's advocacy is to prevent the unnecessary entry and prolonged stay of children in foster care.

The central mission of the CFA is to provide legal services to families to empower them to protect and care for their children without court involvement or the need to place children in foster care. But families involved in the child welfare system have multiple needs - legal, social, and economic. Therefore, the Center's legal services are provided using a multidisciplinary model designed to take account of these multifaceted needs. A multidisciplinary team approach to child welfare services is a promising trend nationally. The Detroit CFA uses a multi-

disciplinary approach to serve both low-income parents and relatives in its efforts to preserve the integrity of the family. Equally distinctive to its multidisciplinary approach is the manner in which the CFA is funded, using private grant funds to leverage public dollars. Fifty percent of the CFA's funding comes from private grants and gifts and fifty percent comes from the State's Child Care Fund.

PROGRAM GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The CFA employs a number of strategies to achieve its three broad program goals.

1. Children served by the CFA live with a permanent family in a safe and stable environment independent of the child welfare system.
2. The CFA provides learning opportunities for law and social work students to engage in child welfare practice.
3. The CFA's multidisciplinary program is replicated in other jurisdictions.

The CFA attorneys guide parents and family members through the complex laws and procedures governing the child protection system, and provide legal services necessary to prevent or remove the need for foster care. Detroit CFA social workers assess the family's strengths and weaknesses and provide service referrals and case management. The CFA family advocate – a parent who has herself experienced the child welfare system – provides clients with a unique perspective on how to navigate the system. She also helps parents stay focused and motivated in the face of adversity

The Center has important relationships with many Detroit community agencies. One such agency is Matrix Human Services, which runs a community center in Detroit's Osborn neighborhood. The CFA strives to be embedded within the network of community service agencies, providing supportive, problem-solving legal services in coordination with social services available through other agencies to avoid duplication of services. The CFA staff conducts informational presentations at the WC-DHS, the court, local schools, head start programs, domestic violence shelters and other community locations about the child welfare system and the services available from the CFA to eliminate the need for a child's removal

This document reports on results of the CFA's progress in accomplishing its goals during the program's three-year pilot period, July 2009 through June 2012, for served and closed Prevention and Permanency cases. This retrospective formative analysis looked at the CFA's process, along with system and case level outcomes. It also provides an estimate of the return on investment (ROI) for the 55 served and closed Prevention Cases, representing 110 children at issue, and the 69 served and closed Permanency Cases with 128 children at issue.

Goal 1: Children served by CFA live with a permanent family in a safe and stable environment independent of the child welfare system.

The core objectives of the CFA is to keep children out of foster care, and for children who are in foster care, to get them out of care and living in a stable safe home.

Results

In 98.2 percent of *Prevention Cases*, the CFA accomplished their legal objectives. That is, of the 110 children at issue in 55 Prevention Cases, petitions were filed as to only four children and they were dismissed quickly. **None** of the 110 Detroit CFA Prevention Case children entered foster care.

Reflecting the multiple challenges confronting families with child protective services (CPS) involvement, there were 67 identified legal issues that brought these 55 families to the CFA. The CFA pursued a variety of legal actions in order to provide safety without foster care for the children served. About 36 percent of Prevention Cases involved legal guardianships; 25 percent involved custody issues; and 13.4 percent involved housing issues. Paternity, public benefits, domestic violence and power of attorney cases each represented 4.5 percent of cases. Other issues (9.5 percent) included resolution of parking tickets, central registry expunctions, educational advocacy, and obtaining divorce judgments.

For Permanency clients, the CFA eliminated the identified legal barriers to permanency in 95.7 percent of 69 cases, representing 128 children at issue. The legal issues faced in Permanency Cases were equally as varied. The chief legal barrier for Permanency Cases was the need for the caregiver to obtain a divorce (27.5 percent). Nineteen percent involved administrative advocacy such as resolving licensing issues. Another 15.9 percent, mostly for fathers, involved getting a custody order; 11 percent resolved outstanding criminal warrants; 8.5 percent involved interstate placement issues; and 4.9 percent involved housing matters. Other legal barriers included public benefits, paternity, and child support and guardianship issues.

Permanency outcomes for closed cases were: 31 adoptions, 19 living with a bio-parent, 4 guardianships, five others (two APPLA, one out of state placement with relative, one aged out after the Center arranged for the child to live with her uncle and one child aged out AWOL), and two unknown. Of the five cases that remained open, one had the children living with a relative out-of-state and the court would not recognize the guardianship from that state, two cases had the children still listed as permanent court wards, and the status of two were unknown.

Analyzing petition and court order dates allowed for the calculation of how much time the children at issue were in care before CFA became involved and how much time it took the court to terminate the wardship after the Center became involved. Three-quarters of the children had been in care longer than the national average of 21.1 months - 54.7 percent had been in care longer than two years, and 20.3 percent longer than three years. Once CFA became involved, 59 percent of the cases were closed within a year, 77 percent within 18 months, and 88 percent were closed within two years. None of these cases had another instance of maltreatment cited in the Court case file. In contrast 8.3 percent of all child welfare cases in Michigan have another instance of abuse or neglect within one year (DHS, 2012).

Costs Avoided:

Results of a preliminary return on investment (ROI) analysis reveals the average cost per family per annum to deliver Detroit CFA services is \$3,200. The total CFA annual budget is approximately \$500,000 per year. The average foster care payment per child per month in Michigan, not counting court costs, is \$2,248 ("DHS trend report," 2012). The national

average length of stay in foster care is 21.1 months,¹ so that the average cost to the government when a child enters foster care is \$47,433. If we assume conservatively that 25% of the 110 prevention case children would have entered foster care and stayed for the national average length of stay, the cost avoided by the Michigan child welfare system for these cases would be **\$1,304,407**. This calculation alone exceeds the annual CFA budget of \$500,000. The calculation does not include any of the cost-savings associated with decreased length of stay of children in foster care that occurs through our work in permanency cases. Neither have the cost or system benefits CFA is having on the court, by avoiding legal proceedings associated with foster placements and closing foster care cases early, been examined. Gelles and Perlman estimate the annual cost per abused and neglected in America is \$63,871 when direct costs such as foster care, legal representation, and indirect costs like special education, mental health and physical health care services, and juvenile delinquency are combined (2012).

A more complete and comprehensive ROI analysis is underway. The potential cost avoidance by the government child welfare system are substantial -- not to mention avoiding the serious trauma and disruption to children and families. Children ages birth to 5 years of age comprise 39 percent of Michigan children in foster care and the largest age group in care. Infants and toddlers comprised 54 percent of children at issue in served by CFA regardless of case type. Infants are especially likely to stay in foster care longer than older children, a situation which contributes to a host of mental health, developmental delays, and physical health concerns (Lou, et. al., 2006). These facts increase the likelihood of cost savings resulting from CFA's work.

Clients: The CFA's clients are primarily low-income parents and extended family members, along with a few foster parents (non-kin). In Prevention Cases, 69.1 percent of the CFA's clients were parents: two-thirds were mothers, the remaining one-third - fathers. When taken together parents, grandparents and other relatives (aunts, siblings) account for 91 percent of Prevention clients. In Permanency Cases, half of the clients were relatives (50.7 percent). Fourteen were birth fathers, and seven were birth mothers (20.9 and 10.4 percent respectively). Non-kin foster parents or friends of the family comprised the other 49.3 percent of clients in Permanency Cases.

Referrals: Since the CFA began operating in July 2009, the number of case referrals has steadily increased. Most referrals came from the WC-DHS for both Prevention and Permanency cases. For Permanency Cases, the Wayne County Juvenile Court was the second most frequent referral source. The steady increase in referrals including self-referrals, suggest that CFA services are viewed as a valuable resource in the county. This impression is supported by the results of *Stakeholder Surveys* and *Client Satisfaction Surveys*.

Stakeholder Surveys: The CFA staff has trained hundreds of case workers about the model, returning quarterly to collaborating WC-DHS district offices to reinforce training. Additionally, staff regularly conducts outreach presentations to private foster care and adoption agencies. The CFA has also trained judges, lawyers and social workers at the Wayne County Juvenile Court on its services. The evaluators administered *Stakeholder Surveys* to representatives of these organizations (N=55). One result of the CFA's training and outreach

¹ The national median length of stay for children exiting foster care in 2011 was 21.1 months, according to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *The AFCARS Report: Preliminary FY 2011 estimates as of July 2012* (19). Retrieved from <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/afcarsreport19.pdf>.

presentations was that roughly 80 percent of stakeholders report knowing which families to refer to the Detroit CFA for services.

Stakeholders were asked if they found the CFA staff open to collaboration and easy to work with in their client's best interest. Respondents largely found it "very easy" to collaborate and work with Detroit CFA staff (73.6 percent). Three-quarters of *Stakeholder Survey* respondents believe the CFA meets the needs of the families they referred. Perhaps most importantly, when stakeholders were asked if any changes were made in their agency's policies or service delivery due to the Center, over one-third of stakeholders report changes had been initiated within their organization. Samples of typical stakeholder comments follow.

- "People at the agency, lawyers to interns are very helpful. They ... are very passionate about what they do for the community. Their services are greatly needed and hope they can stay around."
- "CFA addresses legal barriers that may delay or even prevent timely adoptions of children in foster care and provide a service that would otherwise not be available to prospective adoptive parents."
- "CFA is an excellent source for the families in the child welfare system. The dedication and efforts to resolve legal and social concerns of the family is superb."

Client Satisfaction Surveys: Forty-three *Client Satisfaction Surveys* were analyzed. Clients report high levels of satisfaction with CFA services. Most clients praise CFA staff, stating they were doing great work in the community. Clients found the Center's staff to be helpful, hard-working, and supportive. Nearly all clients would recommend the CFA to a friend or family member with child welfare issues. When working with CFA staff, 97.7 percent of clients report valuing the time they spent with the staff. They gained a sense of hope, believed they were understood, important, listened to and staff cared for their well-being. The following client comments illustrate their perceptions of the CFA:

- "Without this center, I would have lost my children."
- "I just wanted to say thanks to all of you at the Center, and may God bless each and every one of you. Please continue to do what you have done for me."
- "They have an excellent team of individuals that work very hard and they actually care about the families!!!"

Service Duration and Scope: Time spent on Prevention Cases ranged from five hours to 150 hours. The average was 57.3, the median 42.7, and the mode 29. Time spent on Permanency Cases ranged from under 10 hours to 233 hours. The average was 49, the median 34.4, and the mode 18.3. In addition to taking less staff time, Permanency Cases used fewer social work services than Prevention Cases, but slightly more family advocate services.

Legal Services: All CFA clients received legal counseling and out-of-court advocacy/negotiation services. Common types of legal advocacy provided to Prevention Cases include: obtaining custody of the children at issue, resolving child support obligations, and obtaining divorce decrees. More Permanency Cases involved facilitating adoptions than guardianships. There were numerous legal barriers to permanency, but chief among these barriers was the need for the parent or other permanent caregiver to obtain a divorce from a spouse.

Social Work Services: As part of the Center's multidisciplinary intake and assessment process, CFA social workers (staff and interns) screen and assess all clients' social service needs. Three-quarters of Prevention clients (n=41) availed themselves of additional social work help. Sixty percent of Permanency Cases also used social work assistance. For both types of cases referrals, resource assistance with furniture, counseling and other needed services were most commonly used by clients.

Family Advocacy Services: Support from CFA's family advocate was used by 63.6 percent of Prevention clients and 62.3 percent of Permanency clients.

Goal 2: The Detroit CFA provides learning opportunities for law and social work students to engage in child welfare practice.

The CFA recruits talented students from local law and social work schools to join in its work. Between summer term 2009 and June 2012, 23 law students, nine social work students, two pre-law students and four volunteer attorneys worked at CFA. Students perceived the Detroit CFA as a caring environment, and felt that the Center's staff worked to ensure students benefit from a quality learning experience. The CFA interns have opportunities for learning, practical application of knowledge, and professional development. They provide meaningful services while gaining experience in the most important laboratory of all – the real world.

Goal 3: The Detroit CFA's multidisciplinary program is replicated in other jurisdictions.

The CFA has spent three years developing and refining its innovative service approach to blending legal, social work and family advocacy services. The CFA is now positioned to develop a replication manual for other jurisdictions to use. The CFA staff has already been invited to national and state conferences to train judges, caseworkers and attorneys on its approach to supporting and empowering families. They will continue to present the model at conferences, and consult with stakeholders in other jurisdictions to replicate the model.

Discussion

The CFA has developed and implemented a unique inter-disciplinary model of service delivery that is serving its intended target population. This combination of legal, social work and family advocacy services is a valuable asset for Detroit and Wayne County and is appreciated by the clients it serves, the community, its partners at WC-DHS and the Juvenile Court. Even opposing counsel appreciates the CFA's efforts.

The Center's next steps are to 1) undertake a more rigorous and comprehensive evaluation using an experimental design; 2) manualize the model to facilitate replication; and 3) obtain funds to replicate and evaluate the model in other U.S. jurisdictions.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
Detroit Center for Family Advocacy Target Population	2
Detroit Center for Family Advocacy Overview	2
Detroit Center for Family Advocacy’s Foundational Approach.....	3
Detroit Center for Family Advocacy Funding.....	6
Organization of the Report.....	6
THE DETROIT CENTER FOR FAMILY ADVOCACY EVALUATION DESIGN.....	7
Evaluation Methods and Limitations	7
STUDY 1: PROCESS EVALUATION	8
<i>Process Evaluation Question 1: What are the referral sources for CFA Prevention and Permanency cases?.....</i>	8
<i>Process Evaluation Question 2: what are the characteristics of CFA Prevention and Permanency cases?.....</i>	9
Demographics	9
Legal Issues	10
<i>Process Evaluation Question 3: What is the duration and scope of CFA services received by Prevention and Permanency Cases?</i>	12
Duration of Services	12
Scope of Services	13
<i>Process Evaluation Question 4: What are clients’ perceptions of CFA services?.....</i>	15
Client Satisfaction	15
Perceptions of the Detroit Center for Family Advocacy Services.....	16
Community Awareness	17
<i>Process Evaluation Question 5: What are stakeholders’ perceptions of CFA services?.....</i>	17
Stakeholder Knowledge of Services	18
Stakeholder Viewpoints on Making Referrals and Collaboration	18
Stakeholder Comments.....	19
<i>Process Evaluation Question 6: What was the nature and scope of CFA outreach, engagement and policy impact activities?.....</i>	20
<i>Process Evaluation Question 7: Are social work and law students participating in CFA internships?.....</i>	21
STUDY 2: OUTCOME EVALUATION	22
<i>Outcome Evaluation Question 1: Did CFA prevent placement into foster care through achievement of legal objectives for Prevention Cases?.....</i>	22
<i>Outcome Evaluation Question 2: Did CFA achieve permanency through achievement of legal objectives for Permanency Cases?.....</i>	22
<i>Outcome Evaluation Question 3: Do stakeholders perceive CFA services as meeting client needs resulting in positive outcomes?.....</i>	24

<i>Outcome Evaluation Question 4: Do stakeholders' perceive that the CFA model has resulted in policy or service changes within their agency?.....</i>	24
STUDY 3: COST ANALYSIS	24
SUMMARY, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	25
Summary	25
Discussion and Recommendations.....	26
REFERENCES.....	28
APPENDIX A: Organizational Chart	30
APPENDIX B: Logic Model	31
APPENDIX C: Process Maps and Narratives	32
APPENDIX D: GIS Map of Client Zip Codes	43

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“No child should grow up with a system as its parent.”¹

INTRODUCTION

The Detroit Center for Family Advocacy (CFA) is a grant-funded project of the University of Michigan Law School's Child Advocacy Law Clinic, which provides social work and legal advocacy to at risk families to prevent children from unnecessarily entering or remaining in foster care. The Center's work concentrates on removing the legal barriers that can cause children to enter foster care and to expedite permanent placement of children already in foster care. Often a parent or caregiver's unresolved legal issues such as obtaining a custody order or personal protection order, getting a divorce, and resolving outstanding warrants prevent children from remaining with their families. The CFA's multidisciplinary team seeks to overcome these obstacles by providing families with the assistance of an attorney, a social worker and a family advocate. The Center's target area is Detroit in Wayne County with a focus on the Osborn neighborhood in Detroit's east-side. Zip codes in the Osborn area have some of the lowest socio-economic status, highest rates of child abuse and neglect reports, and highest foster care placement rates in Michigan. The CFA has targeted this community for outreach and has given families with Osborn community ties priority consideration for services. The main CFA office is in mid-town Detroit. The CFA staff also work out of the Matrix Human Services Center in the Osborn neighborhood.

The CFA's clients are typically low-income parents and extended family members, with some foster parents (non-kin) who are seeking to provide permanency for children who have been in their care for an extended period of time. These clients do not have access to lawyers and legal representation. Legal advocacy in combination with social work services including assessment, case management and resource brokering is the essence of what CFA does. A family advocate also provides emotional support to clients one-on-one. An important service offered by the family advocate is helping clients understand and navigate the child welfare system.

The CFA has a unique partnership with the Michigan Department of Human Services (DHS) which is CFA's primary referral source. The principal goal of the DHS and its caseworkers is to protect children, not remove them from their homes. The caseworkers often encounter family problems, for instance, poor and even dangerous housing, where legal landlord-tenant remedies could resolve these environmental issues. However, if those housing problems are not resolved, the DHS may need to file a child protection petition and possibly ask the court to remove the children from the home. The CFA actions result in legal remedies addressing the underlying danger to the children so that the children are safe and the department need not file a child protection petition. Thus the interests of the DHS and the CFA align. The CFA's partnership

¹ Bryan Samuels, Commissioner of the Administration on Children, Youth and Families US Department of Human Services, keynote presentation at the Georgetown University 2012 Training Institutes, Improving Children's Mental Health Care in an era of Change, Challenge, and Innovation: The Role of the System of Care Approach (7/26/2012).

with the DHS also extends to expediting permanency for children already in foster care or other out-of-home living arrangements.

Detroit Center for Family Advocacy Target Population

Most referrals of families to the CFA are made by the Wayne County Department of Human Services (WC-DHS). Referrals for cases also come from the Wayne County Juvenile Court² and from people in the community that hear about CFA services.

The Detroit CFA accepts two types of cases:

Prevention Case: Legal and social work advocacy on behalf of the family can prevent the need to remove the child from the home. Michigan law sets out five risk categories for classifying child maltreatment allegations. In July of 2009, the Center began serving children with substantiated allegations in Categories I, II, and III.³

Category I: A court petition is required because a child is unsafe, a petition is mandated or a court order is needed to compel cooperation or compliance.

Category II: A preponderance of evidence shows that abuse or neglect occurred and the risk level is high or intensive. Child Protective Services (CPS) must open a service case.

Category III: A preponderance of evidence shows that abuse or neglect occurred and the risk level is low or moderate. CPS must refer the family to community-based services.

Permanency Case: Legal and social work advocacy is necessary to overcome a legal impediment, which is preventing a child in foster care from achieving permanency in the home of a relative, foster parent or birth parent. If the impediment is not removed, the child may not achieve permanency and may be at risk of being removed from the caregiver's home.

Detroit Center for Family Advocacy Overview

The Detroit CFA is a program of the University of Michigan Law School. It was conceived as a promising model for reducing the number of children requiring government foster care. The foster care system has long been plagued by an inability to finely tune government intervention in families where children are at risk. Far too often, too many children get placed into foster care and they stay too long. Founder, Clinical Professor of Law, Vivek Sankaran, teaches in the Michigan Law School's Child Advocacy Law Clinic and realized that legal services for a child's parents could sometimes remove the danger identified by child protection authorities -- and perhaps eliminate the need for court action and foster placement. Similarly, private legal

² Michigan Third Judicial Circuit Court Juvenile Division

³*Category IV:* A preponderance of evidence does not show that abuse or neglect occurred. However, the risk level may range from low to high/intensive. CPS must refer the family to community-based services, commensurate with the risk level.

Category V: There is no evidence that abuse or neglect occurred (a false complaint; no basis in fact). No further action is required by CPS.

representation for potential caregivers could clear up barriers that prevent some foster children from achieving legally secure permanent placements.

The Child Advocacy Law Clinic has a long and respected history of successfully incubating innovative approaches to children at risk and their families. With assistance from Don Duquette, Clinical Professor of Law and Director of the Child Advocacy Law Clinic, and the fund-raising expertise of the University of Michigan, Sankaran set about identifying funders and stakeholders interested in piloting this innovative idea. See the organizational chart in Appendix A for CFA's staffing configuration. The Detroit CFA had the potential to address the three major purposes of the University of Michigan – teaching, research and service. The University of Michigan also has an historic commitment to the city of Detroit. The research component, evaluating whether this concept could have a meaningful impact on America's child welfare system, is critical to the University mission.

Current and past private funders include Casey Family Program Foundation, the Skillman Foundation, the Kellogg Foundation, the Dewitt Holbrook Foundation, Quicken Loans, the Community Foundation of Southeast Michigan, the McGregor Foundation, and Pillsbury Family Advocacy Fund. In the three years of its existence, CFA has secured \$959,897 in private donations and \$981,180 in state financial commitments for a total of \$1,941,077 for its core program. Another \$150,000 was contributed by a private donor to fund an independent evaluation of the program. The total spent was \$1,766,062, half of which was paid by the private donor funds and the other half with match dollars from the State of Michigan's Child Care Fund

As the program has developed, the University of Michigan Law School continues to provide leadership, fiscal management, professional education, training, staff, and resources. The partnership with the University of Michigan Law School has provided a synergy to the Center that has and will benefit the individual children and families being served, the formal child welfare system and the goals of the University.

Detroit Center for Family Advocacy's Foundational Approach

The CFA's unique multidisciplinary approach blends legal advocacy, social work and peer-to-peer parent support services to prevent the unnecessary placement of children in out-of-home care and to expedite the permanency of children already in foster care. Families involved in the child welfare system have multiple needs impacting child welfare outcomes. In addition to the problems that contribute to out-of-home placement of children, many families have ancillary needs negatively affecting permanency including substance use, domestic violence and housing. The literature refers to these as "problem areas" and most families have limited resources to address these areas (Marsh et al., 2006). Choi, Ryan & Huang (2012) found mothers involved with the child welfare system who present with co-occurring problems and have limited access to resources are less likely to achieve family reunification. Programs working with these families need to facilitate access to coordinated, comprehensive services for resolution of "problem areas" and to achieve family reunification (Marsh et al., 2006). The CFA model is designed to address these families' multiple legal and other life domain needs for Wayne County families. Across the state, according to DHS, domestic violence was a contributing factor in 12 percent of removals from home in 2011 (2012) and was a caregiver risk factor in

54.2 percent of cases (Children's Bureau, 2012). Substance use and maternal mental illness have also been identified by DHS as factors that significantly impact child abuse and neglect (2012).

A study by Courtney and Hook (2012) found that programs using strong parental representation in the dependency court process combined with access to social work services increases family reunification. Additionally, similar interventions increase and expedite permanency for children who will not be reunified, but adopted or obtain a guardian. Social workers provide families with support to access needed resources, eliminate barriers to permanency, and to play an active role in their case plans. Children who have been in out-of-home care for long periods of time benefit from increases in supportive services and access to social work services (Fernandez & Lee, 2011). Courtney and Hook also found attorneys who attend trainings with other professionals from juvenile justice and child welfare increase their knowledge base and understanding of the multi-dimensional needs of these families. The integration of services supplies families with support to meet their personal and legal needs to achieve permanency through reunification, adoption or guardianship.

Advocates of the Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) approach claim it is effective in achieving outcomes for children by improving the quality of legal and social services, and through less duplication of efforts and decreasing service fragmentation (Lalayants & Epstein; 2005). The use of MDT models is widely seen as being effective in providing comprehensive, integrated services to families in the child welfare system. MDTs consist of professionals from a range of disciplines and are brought together by their involvement in a child welfare case. Professionals on the MDT may include representatives from social work, the legal system, child welfare, family advocacy and health care. Each team member brings their unique experience and knowledge to the table to collaborate and discuss cases. MDTs increase collaboration and communication across systems, reduce service replication and promote outcomes for clients through integrated, coordinated case planning for clients (Kolbo & Strong, 1997; Bell, 2001; Jackson, 2012). Four major categories of MDTs are recognized in the child welfare literature: 1) Treatment Teams which focus on diagnosis and treatment issues, 2) Case Consultation Teams that serve an advisory function to case managers 3) Community Action Teams that engage in planning and mobilization of resources, and 4) Mixed Model Teams that combine two or more disciplines and activities (Kaminer, et al; 1988).

Mixed Model Teams are the most common model in use. New York's State Office of Children and Family Services in 1996 funded the New York State Child Advocacy Resource and Consultation Center in Brooklyn to "work with Multi-disciplinary Teams and Child Advocacy Centers throughout New York State to promote and enhance multidisciplinary responses to child sexual abuse, severe child physical abuse, and child fatality reviews" <http://nyscarcc.org/about/index.php> This organization provides: training, assessment and consultation services, as well as technical assistance resources in collaboration with New York State Children's Justice Task Force and the New York State Children's Alliance. They also provide information on the Office of Child and Family Services program standards for the state's 70 Child Advocacy Centers which bring medical, social work and legal personnel together to conduct forensic interviews, medical evaluations, therapy, victim support and advocacy, case review, and case tracking services.

The CFA's multidisciplinary team approach resembles a patient-centered medical home (PCMH), more than a standard law practice. The PCMH concept evolved from the pediatric

field with an initial focus on children and youth with special health care needs. This model utilizes a team approach where the patient's primary care provider is the team leader working with an array of health care and behavioral health care specialists, care managers and community resources. In the CFA model, the *CFA attorney* serves as team leader and the *social worker* and *family advocate* serve as care coordinators (*case managers*) and broker the specialized services that CFA clients need. The CFA model, like a PCMH, is a team process for developing and implementing a coordinated plan that addresses the unique medical (*legal*) and non-medical (*non-legal*) needs of a child in the context of their family and community. At the heart of the team are the child and family (Sia, Tonniges, Osterhus & Taba; 2004).

The Detroit Center for Family Advocacy's Theory of Change A program's theory of change has two components: process and impact theory. It also articulates the program's primary assumptions about effective service delivery. Process theory relates to service utilization and service delivery, or how the target population receives the services. Impact theory addresses how the program intervention brings about the desired and expected program outcomes. Logic models visually display a program's theory of change or how program resources and activities work to produce its desired outcomes. The CFA's logic model depicts the program's theory of change at the program/system level and the individual child and family level. The assumptions, activities, objectives and goals found in the logic model are empirically based and align with the literature on child welfare, the MDT model and permanency. The activities described in the logic model are intended to support and promote stability for families utilizing Detroit CFA services. They include parental support, legal advocacy and social work services integrated in one office and delivered by a multidisciplinary team. The Center's Logic Model is found in Appendix B.

The CFA employs a number of strategies to achieve its three broad program goals which are listed below and in the logic model.

Goal 1: Children served by the CFA live with a permanent family in a safe and stable environment independent of the child welfare system.

Goal 2: The CFA provides learning opportunities for law and social work students to engage in child welfare practice.

Goal 3: The CFA's multidisciplinary program is replicated in other jurisdictions.

At the core of the CFA is its' multidisciplinary approach to addressing the multiple legal and other service needs of families. CFA *attorneys* guide parents and family members through the complex laws and procedures governing the child protection and foster care systems, and provide legal services that might remove any danger to the child, preventing the need for foster care. CFA *social workers* assess the family's strengths and weaknesses and provide service referrals and case management. The CFA *Family Advocate* – a parent who, herself, has experienced the child welfare system – provides clients with a unique perspective on how to navigate the system. She also helps parents stay focused and motivated in the face of adversity.

Detroit CFA Process Maps The entire CFA assessment/intake and service delivery process has been mapped and narrative descriptions of these processes drafted as a first step toward

development of a replication manual. Appendix C sets forth process maps and narratives going into depth about CFA activities and staff roles. Process maps are a visual representation of the flow of activities making up a program's process. These maps allow for the documentation of a process within a larger organization or program. The CFA has two process maps documenting: 1) the process of their overall program, and 2) their Screening Protocol. Due to the intricacies of the CFA's Screening Protocol, a separate map was made for this process. Each map outlines the step by step sequence of the CFA's program activities including the tasks and responsibilities of different staff members.

The Overall Process Map begins when a phoned, faxed or written referral is made to the CFA office by the WC-DHS, Wayne County Juvenile Court, private child welfare agency or a self-referral. The Overall Process map subsequently displays the sequence of activities ultimately leading to case closure. The CFA tasks described in the Overall Process Map include: determining client eligibility, the multidisciplinary assessment of the client's legal and social service needs by the team, legal counseling and other service processes. The Screening Protocol Process also begins when a phoned, faxed or written referral is made to the Detroit CFA office and leads to the CFA Screening Specialist completing a recommendation email on whether or not to take a referral as a case. Activities included in the Screening Protocol Process include determining eligibility criteria, making additional phone calls to determine if the CFA can take the case and data entry into PIKA, which is CFA's management information system.

Detroit Center for Family Advocacy Funding

Improving service to poor families in impacted communities motivated the University, Wayne County and many private foundations to support the project. Private foundations and the County of Wayne were excited about strengthening the capacity of families to protect their own children without court intervention and at less government cost. The Center receives in-kind administrative support from the University of Michigan Law School. The Center has also sought and received funding from private foundations. In partnership with the Wayne County Department of Child and Family Services (CAFS), the CFA has used private funds to leverage state matching funds through the County Child Care Fund (CCF). The CCF was created by the Michigan legislature (Public Act 280 of 1939, the Social Welfare Act as amended) to provide for cost-sharing 50 – 50 between the State and counties for expenditures that county governments incur providing services to children and youth at risk of child abuse and neglect or juvenile delinquency, in addition to youth adjudicated as abused/neglected or delinquent.

The CFA deposits private foundation dollars into the Wayne County CCF. For every dollar the Center contributes to the CCF that is used to serve a CCF eligible child, a dollar in state matching funds is leveraged. County Child Care Fund administrative rules allow counties to use private and other non-state funds as local match to leverage state funds. Fifty percent of the CFA's funding comes from the Child Care Fund state match.

Organization of the Report

The Detroit Center for Family Advocacy Pilot Period Evaluation Report covers the Center's first three years (July 2009 – June 2011). It begins with an overview of the methods used for this retrospective pilot period evaluation. This is followed by the process evaluation section

wherein participant characteristics, services received and the duration of services delivered are discussed. Outcome evaluation results succeed the second section, and precede the discussion of estimated program cost savings. The report closes with a summary discussion of evaluation results, as well as recommendations.

THE DETROIT CENTER FOR FAMILY ADVOCACY EVALUATION DESIGN

Process evaluation research questions, for the current retrospective pilot period study relate to the characteristics of families served and the model's services array, scope and duration. Initial outcome evaluation research questions relate to CFA program goals/objectives of preventing placement and advancing permanency.

Process Evaluation Questions

1. *What are the referral sources for CFA Prevention and Permanency cases?*
2. *What are the characteristics of CFA Prevention and Permanency cases?*
3. *What is the duration and scope of CFA services received by Prevention and Permanency cases?*
4. *What are clients' perceptions of CFA services?*
5. *What are stakeholders' perceptions of CFA services?*
6. *What was the nature and scope of CFA outreach, engagement and policy impact activities?*
7. *Are social work and law students participating in CFA internships?*

Outcome Evaluation Questions

1. *Did CFA prevent placement into foster care through achievement of legal objectives for Prevention Cases?*
2. *Did CFA achieve permanency through achievement of legal objectives for Permanency Cases?*
3. *Do stakeholders perceive CFA services as meeting client needs resulting in positive outcomes?*
4. *Do stakeholders perceive that the CFA model has resulted in policy or service changes within their agency?*

Evaluation Methods and Limitations

This pilot period process report relies in part on retrospective data collected via CFA's PIKA system and focuses on documenting the CFA service delivery process and participant characteristics. Data were extrapolated for Prevention and Permanency Cases served and closed during the July 2009 through June 2012 period using PIKA's reports/query function. Case closing summaries and case notes were also reviewed to fill in missing information from PIKA queries. Data bases were created for both Prevention and Permanency cases in the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) for analysis. SPSS was used for all other extant data and supplemental data collected. Descriptive and bivariate analyses were run on these and other data. Charts and tables were then created to illustrate results where applicable.

To supplement PIKA data, the evaluator entered consumer satisfaction data collected by CFA staff from 2009 through June 2012 into SPSS. As clients reach case closure status they are asked by CFA staff to complete a *Client Satisfaction Survey*. The surveys, with attached cover letter, are distributed one of two ways. Staff will either administer surveys to clients when they come to their last Case Conference meeting, or the surveys can be sent via the U.S. Postal Service along with a self-addressed stamped envelope to clients. Surveys are mailed to clients if

they are unable to attend the last Case Conference meeting. The surveys were created to capture participants' perceptions of the Center's program, and to inform program development and implementation.

The evaluator, law student research assistants hired by CFA and CFA staff also conducted a retrospective review of court case files to ascertain outcomes for Permanency Cases. Court case files were reviewed in December 2012 and January 2013 to determine whether the removal of legal barriers to permanency had in fact resulted in permanency for the child (ren) at issue.

To provide context and insight into outcomes for families and system impact, the evaluator and CFA staff designed a survey of stakeholders (referral sources, community partners, members of the bench and judiciary). From May 2012 through early July 2012 the evaluator conducted *Stakeholder Survey* interviews with CFA's stakeholders to capture their perceptions of the CFA's program implementation and impact. To complete the interviews, the CFA provided contact information for 137 stakeholders to the evaluator. These stakeholders were referral sources from public and private child welfare agencies, members of the bench, Assistant Attorney Generals and Lawyers-Guardians Ad Litem, as well as representatives of community organizations.

Of the 137 names, contact information for 28 stakeholders was not unusable and these individuals could not be contacted for an interview. Various reasons contribute to this barrier including: 1) old or disconnected phone numbers, 2) duplicate stakeholder listings, and 3) the fact that the stakeholder was no longer employed at the listed organization. This left 109 viable phone numbers or email addresses to contact interview participants during the months of May and June. All stakeholders with valid contact information were called at least three times and had the survey emailed to them. Members of the judiciary and referees at the Wayne County Juvenile Court were also sent hard copies of the surveys with a cover letter and a self-addressed stamped return envelope. There were a total of 55 responses for a response rate of 50.5 percent. Twenty-eight participant interviews were conducted over the phone, 25 via email, and 2 were mailed to the respondent and returned.

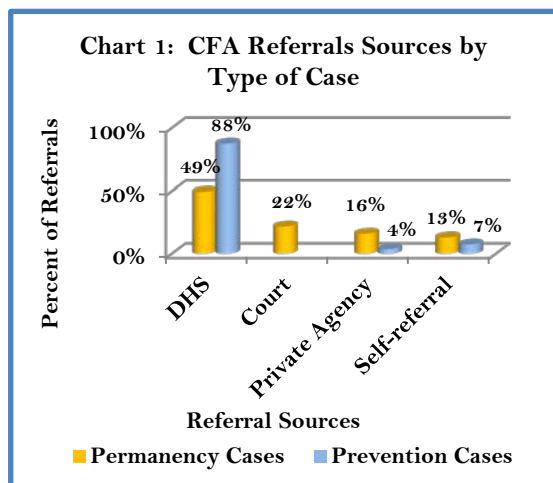
Detroit CFA staff also provided the evaluator with extant data relative to: 1) the program's organization and staff roles; 2) the number of students who had benefited from having a practicum/internship with CFA; and 3) community outreach and/or professional education activities.

STUDY 1: PROCESS EVALUATION

Process evaluations ensure that a program is implemented as designed, providing vital information about program fidelity. Process evaluations are also a necessary first step in conducting outcome evaluations by describing what took place in the program. A process evaluation is crucial for drafting a program manual enabling the CFA to achieve its replication goal. Data from process evaluations also provide the explanatory variables for outcome evaluations. The process evaluation serves both functions. Two kinds of process information are being collected: 1) documentation of program activities, and 2) documentation of target population characteristics. These data are discussed in the context of initial process evaluation questions. This section of the report will provide information on the characteristics of the two target populations (Prevention and Permanency clients) their referral sources, along with the

scope and duration of services they received.

Process Evaluation Question 1: What are the referral sources for CFA Prevention and Permanency cases?



Most of the CFA's referrals came from the WC-DHS, 88 percent of Prevention Cases and 49 percent of Permanency Cases. The bulk of referrals to the CFA were from the WC-DHS North Central Office. The South Central Office began making referrals to the CFA in 2011. Child Protective Services staffs from unspecified WC-DHS offices were the second most common referral source during the pilot period for Prevention Cases. The Wayne County Juvenile Court comprised one-fifth of Permanency Case referrals across the three year period, and was the second most common referral

source for these types of cases. Self-referrals, a category that includes family and friends of clients, accounted for 13 percent of Permanency Case referrals to the CFA. Chart 1 presents the Center's referral sources by type of case.

A small number of CFA clients served are involved with what is known locally as "Baby Court," and are not included in this retrospective evaluation. The Detroit CFA's work with "Baby Court" clients reflects the partnerships it has with the WC-DHS, Court and the Detroit-Wayne County Community Mental Health Services Program (CMHSP).

Process Evaluation Question 2: What are the characteristics of CFA Prevention and Permanency cases?

Demographics

Prevention Cases There were 55 served and closed Prevention Cases for the period July 2009 through June 2012, representing **110 children** identified as being at issue by WC-DHS⁴. The number of children at issue in any given case ranged from one (n=28) to seven children (n=1), with an average of two children per case. Altogether, for Prevention Cases, the CFA helped 149 children and adults. Per case, the average number of persons helped was 2.7, three individuals was both the median and mode. Age was known for 103 children. The age range was from infants 12 months old or younger (n=9) to 21 (n=1), with a mean of eight years of age and a median age of 10.5.

In three-quarters of Prevention Cases, the identified client was a female (n=42), primarily the birth mother (n=25). All 13 males were fathers. Fathers and mothers represent 69.1 percent of all Prevention clients. When taken together parents, grandmothers and other relatives (aunts,

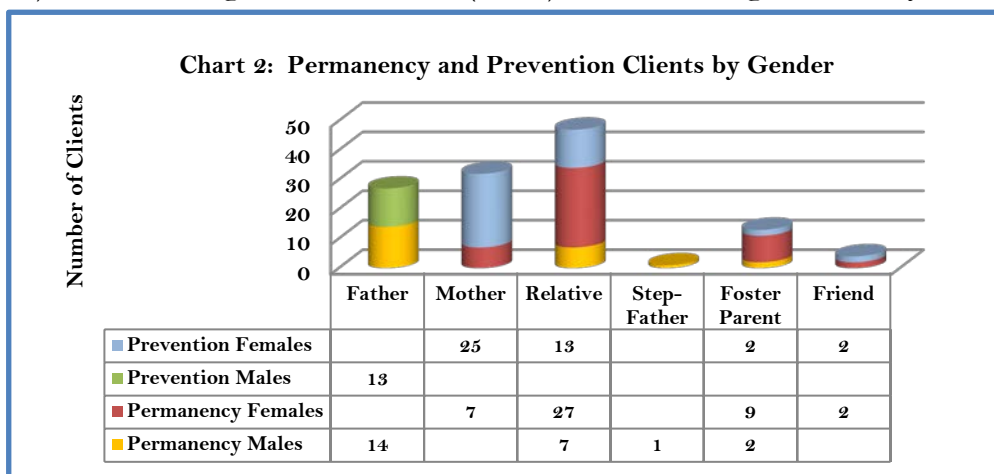
⁴ The term "at issue" is used throughout this report to refer to the children who have been the subject of a CPS allegation and investigation resulting in substantiation by WC-DHS at Categories I, II and III and is the subject of CFA's representation objectives.

siblings) combined to total 51, or 91 percent of Prevention clients. Two clients were friends of the family and two were foster parents.

All CFA clients are from Wayne County; 44 lived in Detroit. Among the Detroit residents 22 or 40 percent had a connection to the Osborn community.

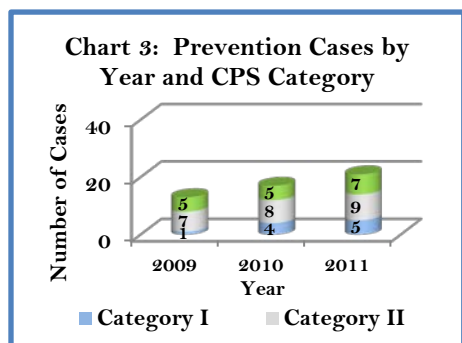
Permanency Cases The CFA served and closed 69 Permanency Cases during the three year study period, for a total of **128 children** at issue. Per case the average number of children at issue was 1.9. The number of children per case ranged from one (n=37, 53.6 percent) to nine (n=1). The CFA staff helped 180 people in Permanency Cases. The mean number of persons helped per case was 2.61, and the median 2.0. Children ranged in age from 19 (n=2) to less than one year of age (n=3). The modal age was one or less (n=17), and the average was nine years of age.

Over one-third of Permanency Case clients were males (n=24; 33.3 percent). One was a stepfather and 14 were fathers. Two were foster parents and the remaining male



clients were relatives of the children at issue (n=7). Female relatives such as aunts, grandmothers, and siblings predominate within identified Permanency clients (n=27). Staff served slightly more female foster parents (n=9) than biological mothers (n=7) as seen in Chart 2.

All children served by CFA are from Wayne County. The residence of adult clients was more diverse for Permanency than Prevention Cases. Ten Permanency clients resided outside of Wayne County and seven clients in another state. Appendix D presents a geographic information systems map depicting client zip codes by case type. Another difference between Permanency and Prevention Cases was that while 79 percent of Prevention adult clients lived in Detroit, only 58 percent of Permanency clients resided in Detroit (n=40). Also fewer Permanency Cases had a connection to Detroit's Osborn neighborhood (n=16; 23 percent).



Legal Issues

Prevention Cases The number of cases referred to, and served by the Detroit CFA grew during the study period as the program established itself as a resource in Wayne County. 2011 saw the most served and closed cases at 21 or 40.4 percent of total cases in the pilot period. CFA served and closed 17 cases in 2010, 13 in 2009 and one in the first half of 2012. Nearly half of Prevention Cases were Category II (n=24, 46.2 percent), followed by

Category III (n=18), and Category I (n=10). In three cases the CPS category was unknown. Chart 3 presents these data by year and category. Children older than 16 and between the ages of 1 to 5 comprised the two largest clusters of Category 1 cases. Six to 10 year olds and 11 to 15 year olds were the largest age groups within Category II. For Category III cases, the 11 to 15 year old age group, and one to five years of age set were more than double the remaining age clusters.

Reflecting the multiple challenges confronting families with CPS involvement, there were 67 identified legal issues that brought these 55 families to CFA. Establishment of probate or juvenile guardianship was the most often mentioned reason (n=23), followed by the need to obtain a custody order (n=17) and housing matters (n=9). The four items comprising the “other” category in Table 1 includes: resolution of parking tickets, getting a client’s name expunged from the central registry, and educational advocacy.

Table 1: Prevention Cases (N=55) - Legal Issues

Legal Issues	#	%
Guardianship	23	34.3
Custody	17	25.4
Housing	9	13.4
Paternity	6	9.0
Other	4	6.0
Domestic Violence	3	4.5
Public Benefits	3	4.5
Divorce	2	3.0
Total	67	100.0

Permanency Cases Permanency goals for these cases and legal barriers preventing permanency were analyzed by year and client gender. There were no clear trends for goals when examined

Table 2: Permanency Cases (N=69) – Permanency Goals

Permanency Goal	Males		Females	
	#	% within Gender	#	% within Gender
Adoption	7	30.4	31	67.4
Supervised Independent Living			3	6.5
Reunification	11	47.8	9	19.6
Custody	4	17.4		
Guardianship	1	4.3	3	6.5
Total	23	100.0	46	100.0

by year, but there were patterns when analyzed by gender. For females the permanency goal was more likely to be adoption and for male CFA clients reunification. These data are distributed in Table 2.

It was not uncommon for the Center’s Permanency clients to face several legal barriers. The 69 Permanency

Cases faced 82 legal barriers. Chief among these was the need for the caregiver (n=21) to obtain a divorce. Fathers were more likely to be in need of a custody order (n=10). Table 3 distributes data on legal barriers to permanency. The “other” category in table 3 includes:

Table 3: Permanency Cases (N=69) – Legal Barriers

Legal Barriers	#	%
Needs a divorce	21	25.6
Needs to obtain a custody order	13	15.9
Licensing (some issue is threatening the placement’s license)	13	15.9
Needs to resolve warrants	9	11.0
Interstate Compact (out-of-state placement hindering permanency)	7	8.5
Needs to resolve housing issues	4	4.9
Other	5	6.1
Administrative (Advocacy with DHS)	3	3.7
Needs to resolve child support issues	2	2.4
Tickets/Fines related to parking/traffic violations	2	2.4
Total	82	100.0

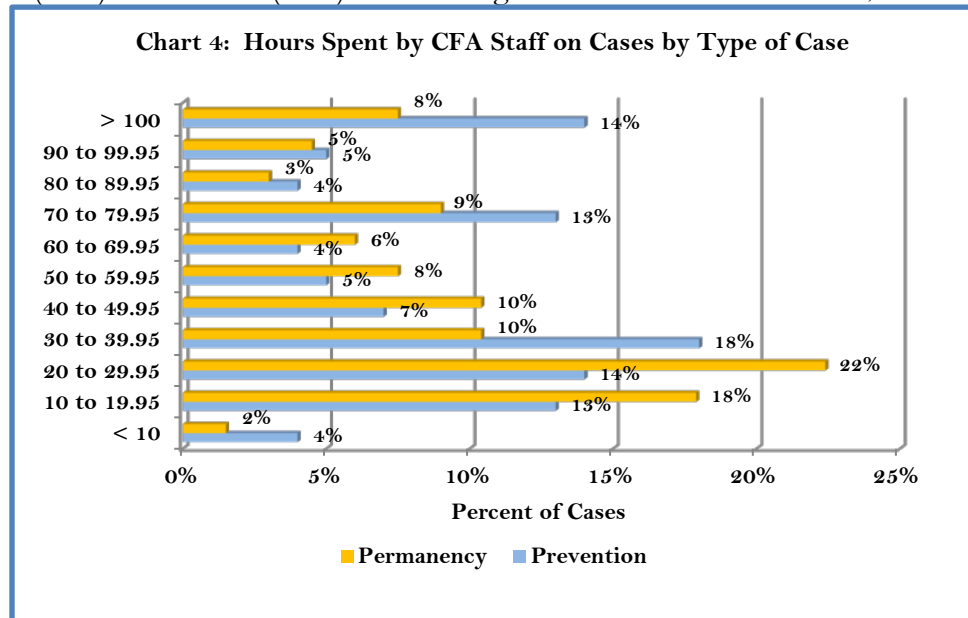
- Needs to establish paternity;
- Needs a personal protection order for domestic violence issues;
- Needs public benefits;
- Needs to get off DHS central registry; and
- Seeking placement.

Process Evaluation Question 3: What is the duration and scope of CFA services received by Prevention and Permanency cases?

Duration of Services

Length of Service in Hours The number of hours CFA staff spent on Prevention Cases ranged from under five hours (n=2) to over 150 (n=2). The average number of hours was 57.3, the median 42.7, and the mode 29.

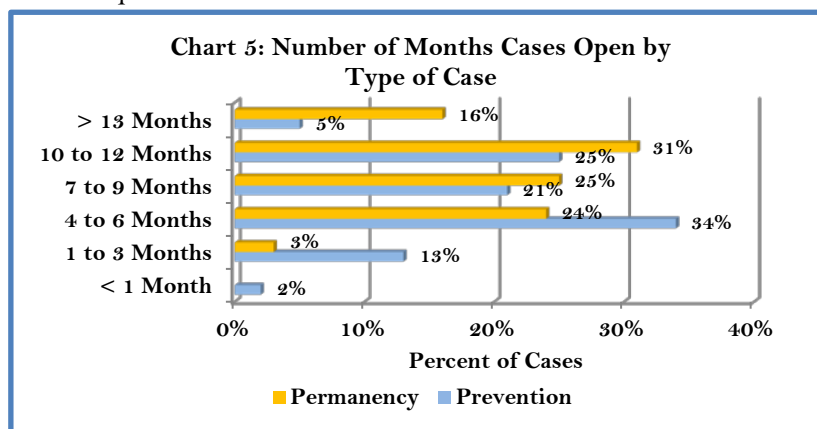
Permanency Cases took less time on average than Prevention Cases. Permanency Case hours ranged from under 10 hours (n=1) to 233 hours (n=1). The mean hours spent on Permanency Cases was 48.8, the median 34.4, and the mode 18.3. Chart 4 presents the percent of



cases by hours spent in 10 hour increments with the exception of cases that took over 100 hours. This last increment represents eight Prevention and five Permanency Cases.

Length of Service in Days and Months In addition to the number of hours spent on a case by type, the number of days and months from case opening to case closing was also calculated. The number of days Prevention Cases were open ranged from seven days (n=1) to 540 (n=1). Prevention Cases were open on average 57.3 days. The median length of service days was 42.7 and the mode 29 days.

Chart 5 presents the number of months Prevention and Permanency cases were open.



Permanency Cases took fewer hours on average than Prevention Cases, but were open for longer periods of time. The mean length of service in days for Permanency Cases was 276, the median 262 days, and the mode was 240 days. The average length of service in days for Permanency Cases ranged from 69 days (n=1) to

630 (n=1). None of the Permanency Cases were open for less than a month. There were 11 Permanency Cases and only three Prevention Cases that were open for 13 months or longer.

Scope of Services

Legal Services Among both Prevention and Permanency cases clients have a complex mix of challenges across multiple life domains including legal issues. Legal issues the Detroit CFA clients face were described earlier in this section of the report. All of the Center's clients receive legal counseling, and out-of-court advocacy/negotiation services. The Detroit CFA attorneys engaged in advocacy on behalf of their clients outside of the court room with DHS, the schools, landlords and others. Assisting clients in obtaining custody of the children at issue, establishing paternity, receiving or relieving a parent of child support obligations, and divorce decrees were the most common types of legal advocacy provided. Below are a few examples of the type of advocacy conducted by the CFA team.

- As a result of a serious landlord-tenant dispute, a single mother with a severely disabled child was in danger of having her children removed from her home. Her substandard living conditions included mold, mildew, pipe damage, caving in the ceiling, a cracking front porch, missing doorknobs, worn carpet, and damage to kitchen flooring. When CPS learned of the condition of the home, the worker referred the mother to the CFA for help. In time, more communication with the client revealed that her living conditions were just one problem that she had to contend with. This client was marked with nearly every possible characteristic of a disenfranchised individual. She was unemployed, undereducated, depressed, indigent, and immobile due to lack of transportation. In addition to her personal obstacles, the client's children needed appropriate clothing, since their clothing had been destroyed by the home's water damage; her youngest child needed to be enrolled in school.

The CFA staff went to work to secure safe and stable housing for the client and her family. But soon, the disabled child had to be hospitalized in order to undergo major eye surgery in hopes of avoiding losing her vision. At the same time, the client's landlord suddenly filed for her eviction. CFA staff represented the client in landlord-tenant proceedings and negotiated an agreement with the landlord. CFA staff successfully secured new housing for the client and her family and linked her to resources available through State Emergency Relief (SER) funds. Ultimately, the staff got the Client moved to a safe home, enrolled the client's children in school, connected her to an employment assistance program and made sure she had reliable transportation. CPS closed its case.

- The Client was referred to the CFA by the DHS for assistance in obtaining a divorce to expedite his adoption of his niece and nephew who had lived with him for three years. The Client had been separated from his wife for over ten years. He could not adopt his young family members without either a divorce from his wife or his wife's consent as a co-adoptive parent. His wife did not offer her consent, so, without a divorce judgment, the Client would have been unable to move forward with the adoption.

The CFA Staff Attorney was able to achieve a timely divorce for the Client by convincing the Court to waive the statutory six month waiting period required for obtaining a divorce where minor children are involved. In addition, the Staff Attorney was able to negotiate child support obligations that better suited the parties, even

though they deviated from the child support guidelines. As a result, the Client was able to obtain a divorce judgment and move forward with the adoption of his niece and nephew. Today, the children remain with the Client as permanent members of his family.

- DHS referred the Client, a 36-year-old recently divorced mother, to the CFA. The Client was living with her four children and three nephews in a single-family home. The Client had been trying to adopt her three nephews for over a year without success, and DHS believed that the CFA could help the Client do so. The Client had several pending legal issues that need to be resolved, and the private adoption agency wanted to remove her nephews and place them in foster care. Additionally, one of the Client's nephews was performing poorly in school and required educational services. The CFA successfully assisted the family in resolving all of their social and legal issues. First, staff helped the Client resolve her legal issues, which included addressing an outstanding criminal warrant. Second, the CFA obtained services for the Client, her children and nephews, including memberships at a local mentoring site. Finally, the CFA assisted the Client in providing all the necessary paperwork to the adoption agency. Although there were several obstacles to overcome, the adoptions were finalized without any costs to the Client. With all the legal issues resolved, the adoption of her nephews finalized, and significant social supports, the Client is now well prepared to care for her children and her newly adopted nephews.

Social Work Services As part of Detroit CFA's multidisciplinary intake and assessment process CFA social workers (staff and interns) screen and assess clients' social service needs. Three-quarters of Prevention clients (n=41) availed themselves of additional social work help. Referrals for Resource Assistance with furniture, counseling and other needed services were most commonly used by clients (n=39), followed by Case Management services (n=36), which includes but is not limited to:

- Assistance securing documentation for housing, financial assistance;
- School education assistance/advocacy;
- Safety planning with client (e.g., domestic violence cases);
- Transporting clients as needed;
- Help with concrete services (e.g., holiday food baskets); and
- Advocacy on behalf of clients.

The provision of Emotional Support was recorded on 23 or 41.8 percent of CFA case closing summaries. Since most clients receive Emotional Support (some more than others), it is highly likely the *Case Closing Summary* is undercounting the provision of this service.

Like Prevention clients, all of the Detroit CFA's Permanency Cases (N=69) also participated in a multidisciplinary intake and assessment process. Fewer Permanency Cases (n=41) used multiple social work services. Well over half of Permanency clients used Referrals for Resource Assistance (n=37), and Case Management services (n=36). Emotional support was noted for one-third of Permanency Cases on the *Case Closing Summary* (n=20).

Bivariate analyses were run on use of social work services by who was the identified client. The Results of this analysis are seen in Chart 6. For Permanency Cases, fathers were the most

likely to use social work services (78.6 percent and 100 percent respectively). Two of the clients classified as friends used these services, and 71.4 percent of mothers did as well. Foster parents were the least likely to use CFA social work services. However, among Prevention client all the foster parents, and clients identified as friends used social work services, as did three-quarters of mothers and relatives. Fathers and grandparents used fewer social work services than other types of Prevention clients.

Family Advocacy Services Of the served and closed Prevention and Permanency Cases, more families than not used Family Advocate services, (63.6 percent; n=35 and 62.3 percent; n=43 respectively). Families categorized as Prevention Cases made use of one or more Family Advocate service for a total of 76 services used. Emotional support was the most often used service 56.4 percent, but was again undercounted on CFA *Case Closing Summary*. Over one-third of Prevention Cases also received Referrals for Resource Assistance (32.7 percent) from the Family Advocate. System navigation services such as helping the CFA's clients understand the child welfare and other public systems, accompanying families to Court or medical appointments were used by over one-fifth of Prevention Cases (21.4 percent). Roughly the same percentage took advantage of parent education and support services offered by the Family Advocate.

Fewer Permanency Cases used Family Advocate services. They most frequently availed themselves of the Family Advocate's emotional support and parent education/support services. Referrals for Resource Assistance and help with navigating the system/accompanying the client to court accounted for 10 percent each of utilized Family Advocate services.

Process Evaluation Question 4: What are clients' perceptions of CFA services?

Forty-seven *Client Satisfaction Surveys* administered between 2009 and 2012 were completed and returned. The year in which the survey was administered was known for 31 cases, most were from 2010 (n=15), followed by 2011 (n=11), three from 2009 and 2 from 2012. For 29 Detroit CFA clients information was available to determine if they were Prevention Cases (n=20) or Permanency Cases (n=9). The *Client Satisfaction Survey* was revised in 2012 to include the date of administration and CFA client identification number.

Client Satisfaction

Clients report high levels of satisfaction with Detroit CFA services. Most participants had high praise for CFA staff, stating they were doing great work in the community. *Client Satisfaction Survey* respondents' found the Center's staff and students to be helpful, hard-working, and supportive. Clients largely agreed CFA staff understood (n=45) and met their legal and social work related needs. When working with CFA staff, nearly all participants agreed with the statement that the time they spent with staff was valuable. They gained a sense of hope and family, believed they were understood, important, listened to and staff cared for their well-being. One respondent stated working with CFA, "Helped me gain insight into all I needed to do to keep my kids".

Table 4 presents the number and percent of clients' responses that were in agreement with *Client Satisfaction Survey* statements. Nearly all clients would recommend the Center to a

Table 4: Clients Responding Strongly Agree or Agree to Survey Statements (N=47)

Survey Statements	#	%
The Center staff helped me solve my legal issues involving the child welfare system.	45	95.8
As needed the Center staff connected me to resources in the community.	45	97.8
The time I spent with Center staff was valuable.	46	97.9
I felt emotionally supported by the Center staff.	44	95.6
The Center staff understood my needs.	46	97.9
I would recommend the Center to a friend or family member who is involved in the child welfare system.	46	97.8

friend or family member who was involved in the child welfare system. One participant commented, “They take time to listen to your problems and then they help in every way they can.” Having participants’ willing to recommend CFA and share their positive experiences about the program promotes referrals to CFA and increased service utilization.

Participants’ individual comments were very positive regarding the quality and helpfulness of Detroit CFA staff and services. Many respondents expressed their gratitude for CFA services by including a “thank you” statement to CFA staff on the *Client Satisfaction Survey*. The following comments are illustrative of clients’ perceptions of CFA staffs’ impact on the clients’ lives and their gratitude.

- “She (Staff Attorney) guided me through the steps I need to take for custody. She was able to do a lot of the stuff on her own which really took the stress off me and gave me more time to spend with my child.”
- “All of the people I dealt with seem to have the children welfare at heart which encouraged me. The entire office was wonderful”.
- “I just wanted to say thanks to all of you at the Center, and may God bless each and every one of you. Please continue to do what you have done for me.”
- “They have an excellent team of individuals that work very hard and they actually care about the families!!!”

Perceptions of the Detroit Center for Family Advocacy Services

Legal Services Nearly all clients felt the Center helped them resolve their legal issues involving the child welfare system (n=45; 95.8 percent). Participants praised Detroit CFA staff and the work they do to prevent unnecessary placement and keep children at home with their families. In addition to having their legal issues resolved, participants report they appreciated the staff’s willingness to understand their specific legal issues and needs. Especially appreciated was staff taking the time to explain the legal system, and providing advice to clients on resolving legal problems. Clients see CFA as removing legal barriers to family stability and making the legal system more accessible for families. One client asserted, “Without this Center, I would have lost my children.”

Helpfulness of CFA Services When participants were asked to describe what was most helpful about the Center’s services, several responded; “Everything,” and many stated CFA services were “Great”. When respondents were asked what the Center could do to improve services, most said CFA is “already doing good work” and “no improvements are needed.” Some respondents provided specific examples of what they found to be the most helpful in CFA’s advocacy array. These included: 1) obtaining the appropriate paperwork for families and completing it in a timely fashion, 2) assistance with divorces, 3) helping clients obtain Personal Protection Orders (PPO), and 4) resolving custody issues. Clients also reported increased

knowledge about the legal process, their rights, and “...how to do things legally” as a result of their involvement with the Detroit CFA.

Resources Overall participants reported high levels of satisfaction with the resources provided by CFA staff. Eighty-three percent of respondents “strongly agreed” with the statement “As needed, the Center staff connected me to resources in the community.” Some participants offered recommendations for more assistance with specific resources such as housing services, transportation, and bus tickets. Another respondent suggested follow-up with clients three months after case closure would be beneficial. A few participants reported it would be helpful if additional inquiries were made into cases where conflicting information was presented by involved parties.

Community Awareness

Participants stressed the need for CFA to increase the community’s awareness of their services to assist families similar to theirs. Clients indicated they did not know CFA existed until they were referred by the legal system. They clearly want more people to be able to obtain CFA’s services without having the legal system as an interface. As one client stated, “...let other families like mines [sic] know that there is help out here and someone who cares.” Participant recommendations to increase the Center’s exposure included: 1) billboard advertising, 2) giving presentations, 3) becoming involved with the Michigan Association for Foster, Adoptive and Kinship Parents (MAFAK), and 4) getting information out into the community about CFA.

Process Evaluation Question 5: What are stakeholders’ perceptions of CFA services?

Fifty five stakeholders responded to the *Stakeholder Survey* to secure the insights of public and private referral sources and other stakeholders about CFA’s implementation. *Stakeholder Surveys* were administered to child welfare agencies, members of the bench, Assistant Attorney Generals and Guardians Ad Litem, and representatives of community organizations. Stakeholders’ perceptions of impact are discussed in the Outcome Evaluation section of this report.

Stakeholder Affiliation and Job Classification Fifty participants described their affiliation with CFA as referring families for legal advocacy services. Some added descriptions of their affiliation with CFA including being an Assistant Attorney General, or as one respondent put it

Table 5: Respondent Job Title/Classification			“the opposing counsel” (n=3). One stakeholder each offered the remaining “other” classifications: having a CFA Parent Advocate on their steering committee, neighborhood work with CFA, and receiving referrals from CFA as their affiliation. Over half of respondents identified themselves as Prevention Services/Foster
Job Title/Classification	#	%	
Administrator/Manager of Public Agency	2	(4)	
Administrator/Manager of Private Agency	2	(4)	
Member of Bar or Judiciary	6	(12)	
Prevention Services/Foster Care Worker for Private Agency	3	(6)	
Prevention Services/Foster Care Worker for Public Agency	32	(65)	
Other	4	(8)	
Total	49	(100)	

Care Worker for Public Agency (n=32; 65.3 percent). Six respondents were members of the Bar or Judiciary, four answered “Other”, three were Prevention Services/Foster Care Worker for Private Agency and four were Administrators/Managers of Private or Public Agencies. The job title/classification of stakeholder respondents is distributed in table 5. Most respondents have been involved with CFA for more than 2 years (n=23; 44.2 percent).

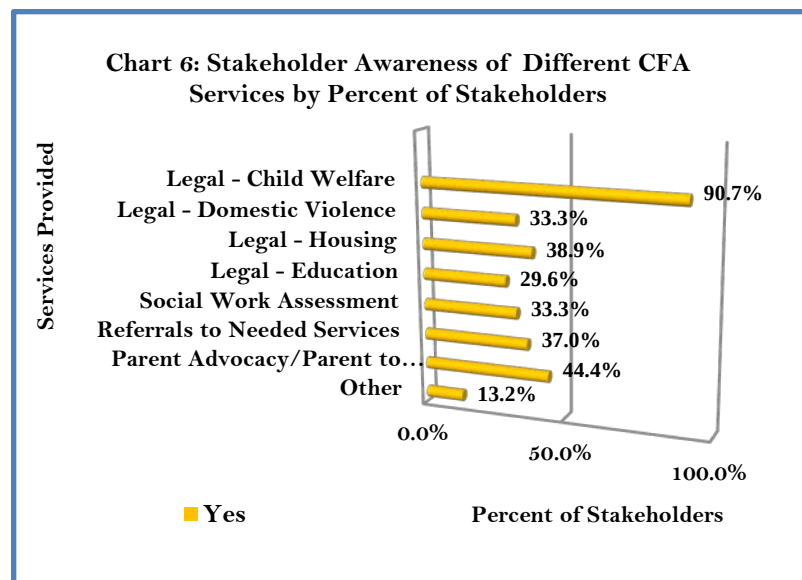
Stakeholder Knowledge of Services

Twenty-nine participants reported receiving technical assistance or training directly from CFA staff on the services they provide. Over half of respondents receiving technical assistance or training agreed it was “very useful” (66.7 percent). Over a quarter of participants stated it was “somewhat useful”, while 6.7 percent were neutral on the usefulness of the technical assistance or training they received. Half of stakeholders indicated one of the ways they learned about the CFA and its services was from outreach by the CFA staff through presentations to their agencies or trainings. Participants also stated they learned about the Center through word of mouth from a co-worker or friend (n=16), or from brochures or other marketing materials (n=9).

Chart 6 displays the percent of stakeholders who are aware of the Center’s various services.

Nearly all participants reported they knew CFA provides legal services related to child welfare cases (n=49, 90.7 percent). Smaller percentages of participants reported being aware of CFA’s multiple services. These include: legal representation for domestic violence (33.3 percent), legal representation for housing (38.9 percent), legal representation for education (29.6 percent), social work assessments (33.3 percent) and providing referrals to needed services (37 percent).

Seven stakeholders answered “Other” when asked which services the Detroit CFA provides. Some described additional services they perceive CFA as providing: decreasing legal barriers to help families with reunification and adoption; divorce representation; having a multidisciplinary approach; and various therapies. However, over half of stakeholder respondents stated they did not know CFA provided parent related services such as Parent Advocacy/Parent-to-Parent Mentoring.



Stakeholder Viewpoints on Making Referrals and Collaboration

Thirty-five respondents reported receiving training or technical assistance on the eligibility

criteria for CFA's target population and how to make a referral to the program. Twenty-six stakeholders found the technical assistance or training "very useful", seven found it "somewhat useful" and two rated the usefulness of the assistance "neutral". Most stakeholders reported they were clear on which families to refer to CFA for services (n=43; 79.6 percent).

Forty-two participants reported it was "very easy" to make a referral to CFA for services, while seven respondents stated it was "somewhat easy" to make referrals. Four participants reported that they do not make referrals in their position. The average number of families referred to CFA in the past year by stakeholders was 2.96 (n=54). The range was zero (n=7) to 40 (n=1) families referred. The mode was one.

Collaboration with CFA Staff Stakeholders were asked if they found CFA staff open to collaboration and easy to work with in their client's best interest. Participants largely found it "very easy" to collaborate and work with Detroit CFA staff (n=39; 73.6 percent). Some respondents (13.2 percent) stated it was "somewhat easy;" while 5.7 percent found it to be "difficult." After case closure 42 percent of stakeholders (n=21) continued to work collaboratively with the Center. For half of respondents, their collaborative work with CFA on a case ended at case closure (n=25).

Stakeholder Comments

At the end of the survey stakeholders were asked two open ended questions and were able to provide individual responses. The first question asked stakeholders why they chose to invest in and/or make referrals to CFA. Respondents stated they support CFA because they address legal barriers and meet the multiple needs of clients. Participants praised Detroit CFA staff and their dedication to clients.

- "People at the agency, lawyers to interns are very helpful. They ... are very passionate about what they do for the community. Their services are greatly needed and hope they can stay around."
- "CFA addresses legal barriers that may delay or even prevent timely adoptions of children in foster care and provide a service that would otherwise not be available to prospective adoptive parents."
- "CFA is an excellent source for the families in the child welfare system. The dedication and efforts to resolve legal and social concerns of the family is superb. The dedication to bring resolution has most definitely assisted me to bring case closure."
- "The Center offers supportive services to our clients that we cannot offer, In addition, they provide legal services. They made it easy to buy in ... great presentation, great program."

The second question let stakeholders add any additional comments about CFA and its impact. Participants stated CFA is valuable, staff are hardworking, and helps the community they serve. Additionally, respondents provided comments about specific aspects of CFA's program they found beneficial. These include: having a family advocate, working with the DHS and providing training to agencies. Stakeholders largely believe Detroit CFA is doing good work and helping families. Participants also addressed the sustainability of CFA by expressing their

hope for CFA to stay in the community and be continually funded to serve families. Sample comments are bulleted below.

- “Thank you CFA for the impact you make in the community and to the child welfare system We NEED YOU!!!!”
- “CFA does a good job on all the cases that they've handled on my docket!!”
- “They are very helpful and it is great for this community to have them in place and to have a family advocate.”
- “The agency has made a tremendous impact on the population that DHS serves in relation to housing issues, custody issues and social work assessments/ the agency is servicing a population that has a high zip code for crime and CPS referrals. To have an agency that identifies a need and is willing to assist with an intervention program and resources is phenomenal to our clients not to mention City of Detroit residents who generally have a bad outlook on professional such as social workers or attorneys. Keep up the good work and continue to provide the much needed services to our low income families.”

Process Evaluation Question 6: What was the nature and scope of CFA outreach, engagement and policy impact activities?

Since its inception, Detroit CFA staff members have engaged in a diverse array of outreach, engagement, and policy impact activities. Reflecting the Center’s roll out, the number and type of activities has grown and evolved over the three year period. In 2009, a total of 27 distinct activities were tracked in CFA staff activity log. The number of staff activities rose to 89 in 2010 and to 206 in 2011, during the first six months of 2012 there were 68 activities recorded. CFA outreach, engagement and policy impact endeavors fall into six categories. Outreach activities average 28 percent or roughly one-third of overall non-case specific program activities listed below.

1. *Outreach* to professionals and local organizations to make them aware of CFA and to explain the CFA client referral process.
2. *Community engagement* wherein CFA staff educate the community about child welfare issues and resources.
3. *Training and outreach* for WC-DHS and Court personnel.
4. *Networking/community service* efforts in partnership with local community organizations primarily in the Osborn neighborhood.
5. *Policy impact* activities include individual team member’s involvement on boards, task forces, and work groups intended to affect policy or legislative changes that impacts CFA’s work.
6. *Conference presentations* about CFA model.

A major first year activity was training of DHS staff, attorneys and Circuit Court Judges and Referees about the Detroit CFA and how to make a referral to the program. These training efforts continue. During the pilot period 46 trainings were held for Wayne County members of the bench and bar, as well as staff and supervisors in Wayne County DHS offices. The effectiveness of these efforts is reflected in stakeholders’ responses on *Stakeholder Surveys* as discussed above.

One of the most impressive strategies CFA has engaged in to win community support and to build networks it can call upon as service resources for its families, are its Networking/Community Service activities. Led by the Detroit CFA social worker, staff and students have been involved in book drives, neighborhood clean-ups, community festivities, and is one of 19 mission partners co-located at the Matrix Human Services Center <http://www.matrixhumanservices.net/MatrixHumanServicesCenter/>.

2010 saw staff begin to engage universities to recruit social work and law students for internships. These university engagement efforts tripled in 2011. Policy impact activities which started modestly in 2010, took off in 2011 with staff participating in child welfare leadership groups, policy work groups and task forces intended to affect policy or legislative changes. There were 20 national and state conference presentations made by CFA staff to share CFA model with attorneys and others. Some examples of these presentations are:

- National Leadership Summit on the Protection of Children in Austin, Texas;
- Annual Permanency Forum organized by the Michigan State Court Administrative Office;
- Statewide conference on reunification and removal organized by the Governor's Task Force on Children's Justice;
- National Black Administrators in Child Welfare Annual Conference in Chicago; and
- American Bar Association's Second Annual Conference for Parents' Representation in Washington, DC.

Process Evaluation Question 7: Are social work and law students participating in CFA internships?

Having interns and volunteers is part of CFA's interdisciplinary workforce development mission. Between fall term 2009 and summer term 2012, 33 students, and four volunteer attorneys worked at CFA. Most were law students either pre-law (n=2) or legal interns (n=23). Six Masters in Social Work students and three BSW students also had a professional practicum placement with CFA. Universities which CFA has placement agreements with include:

- University of Michigan Law School and School of Social Work;
- Wayne State University Law School;
- Michigan State University Law School;
- Detroit Mercy Law School;
- Cooley Law School; and
- Marygrove College Social Work Department.

A formal exit survey for interns was designed by the Detroit CFA staff in 2012 with administration beginning in July. Results of the exit survey will provide a mechanism for assessing student perceptions of the skills and knowledge gained through their practicum experiences with CFA.

One of CFA's first law interns conducted informal interviews with his peers and wrote a paper for CFA on their collective experience. Take away points from his paper provide insights into

what students found beneficial. Foremost was that interns' felt valued. Students perceived CFA as a caring environment, and that staff work to ensure students have a quality learning experience. Being able to job shadow staff attorneys was viewed as an excellent way for students to truly experience a 'day in the life' of a family lawyer. Students also appreciated the substantive nature of the writing and research assignments they were tasked with completing. Much prized by the students were opportunities to appear in court representing clients in divorce and other proceedings. Finally, students appreciated the paralegal assignments they were given by staff attorneys as a means to learn the basic skills that practicing attorneys need. These hands on experiences were seen as extremely beneficial in helping students learn legal skills that cannot be mastered through their course work (Hambley, 2010).

Student interns also offered suggestions on ways to improve the students' experience and capitalize on the additional staffing opportunities student labor provides. Their recommendations related to minimizing student down time at the mid-town office by assigning them to more than one staff attorney, using them to conduct community outreach activities and to recruit the next cohort of students. In addition, they offered insights into organizing the paperwork flow and to maximize the legal case management system's capacity for documenting case activities and outcomes (Hambley, 2010).

STUDY 2: OUTCOME EVALUATION

Research questions addressed in this section of the report relate to the Center's success in achieving its stated goals of preventing children from entering foster care and promoting permanency. The perceptions of stakeholders on CFA's achievement of these goals are also discussed as are stakeholder perceptions of CFA's system impact. The outcome evaluation design under development will assess outcomes at the client/family level, as well as the program and system level.

Outcome Evaluation Question 1: Did CFA prevent placement into foster care through achievement of legal objectives for Prevention Cases?

Preventing entry into foster care through achievement of legal objectives was the outcome sought for CFA's 55 served and closed Prevention Cases. The Detroit CFA's legal objective was achieved for 98.2 percent of Prevention Cases and CFA prevented the filing of petitions in 92.7 percent of its Prevention Cases. However, the four cases in which petitions were filed in Juvenile Court were all dismissed quickly with the children remaining with or returning to their parents. In none of the Detroit's CFA Prevention Cases were children placed in the home of unrelated foster parents.

Outcome Evaluation Question 2: Did CFA achieve permanency through achievement of legal objectives for Permanency Cases?

At CFA case closing, legal barriers to permanency were overcome and the legal objectives achieved for 95.7 percent of the 69 served and closed Permanency Cases representing 128 children at issue.

As described in the Evaluation Methods and Limitations section of this report, the Court case

file for each family was reviewed to ascertain the current status of the case and current legal status of the child (ren) for served and closed pilot period Permanency Cases. Fifty-nine of 69 Permanency Case files were found and reviewed. For the remaining ten: two were already in off-site storage; three were “out” for hearings; three had incorrect case file numbers that could not be corrected; and two were missing. To fill in missing data from both found Court files and those that were not, CFA staff with the necessary attorney privileges to access the Wayne County Juvenile Court, Juvenile Information System (JIS) queried JIS to pull petition dates, court orders and legal statuses for Permanency Cases missing those data.

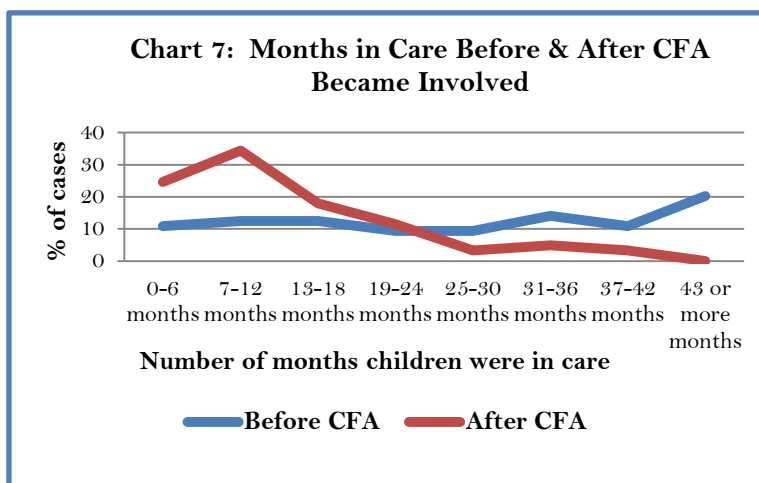
At the time of Court data review, 61 cases were closed and five were still open, thus 88.4 percent of CFA cases had closed at the time of file review. None of these cases had another instance of maltreatment cited in the Court case file. In contrast, 8.3 percent of all child welfare cases in Michigan have another instance of abuse or neglect within one year (DHS, 2012). The closing statuses for three cases are unknown, due to not being able to locate their case file number.

Closed Permanency Cases’ outcomes were: adoptions (n=31); living with a bio-parent (n=19); guardianships (n=4); and “other” (n=5). The outcomes for the remaining two cases were unknown. Among the five “others” their permanency outcomes were as follow:

- APPLA (n=2);
- Placement with an out-of-state relative (n=1);
- Aged out of the system after the CFA arranged for the child to live with her uncle (n=1); and
- Child aged out while AWOL (n=1).

Of the five cases that were still open at the time of case review the legal/permanency status of two were unknown. The children were still listed as permanent court wards in two cases. In one case the children were living with a relative out-of-state and the Court would not recognize the guardianship from that state.

Analyzing petition and court order dates allowed for the calculation of how much time the children at issue were in care before CFA became involved and how much time it took the Court to terminate wardship after CFA became involved. Three-quarters of the children had been in care longer than the national average of 21 months; 54.7 percent had been in care longer than two years, and 20.3 percent longer than three years. Once CFA became involved, 59 percent of the cases were closed within a year, 77 percent within 18 months, and 88 percent were closed within 2 years. Chart 7 distributes these data for time in care pre and post Detroit CFA involvement.



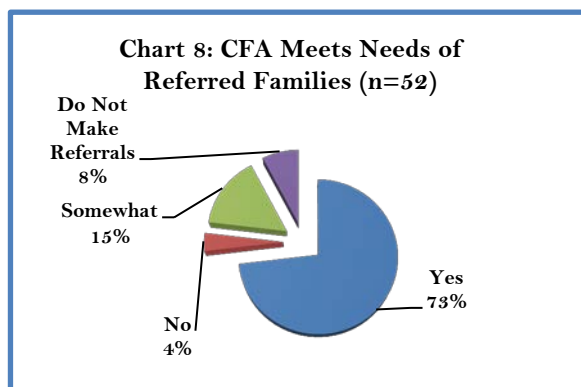
Outcome Evaluation Question 3: Do stakeholders perceive CFA services as meeting client needs resulting in positive outcomes?

Three-quarters of *Stakeholder Survey* respondents believe CFA meets the needs of the families they have referred in the past year (n=38). An additional 15 percent of respondents stated the CFA “somewhat” meets the needs of referred families. See Chart 8.

Three-quarters of stakeholders stated families are “very satisfied” with the services they receive from the Detroit CFA (n=36).

Seventeen percent of participants reported families are “somewhat satisfied” with services

the remaining clients were either “neutral” or “not satisfied” with CFA services.



Stakeholder satisfaction with CFA client outcomes is similar to their perceptions of client satisfaction. Seventy-two percent of participants reported being “very satisfied” with the outcomes of families they have referred to CFA. Eighteen percent of stakeholders were “somewhat satisfied” with client outcomes. Six percent stated they were “neutral” and four percent were “not satisfied” with client outcomes.

Outcome Evaluation Question 4: Do stakeholders’ perceive that the CFA model has resulted in policy or service changes within their agency?

Respondents were asked if any changes were made in their agency’s policy or service delivery due to CFA. Eighteen participants stated “I don’t know” in response to the question asking if any changes were made within their agency as a result of working with the Detroit CFA (35.3 percent). Sixteen stakeholders reported “no change” had been made (31.4 percent). However over one-third of stakeholders reported “moderate” to “significant change” or “some change” had been initiated within their organization (19.6 percent and 13.7 percent respectively).

STUDY 3: COST ANALYSIS

Including cost analysis in outcome evaluations enables reasoned decisions about the economic implications of resource allocations. Cost analysis results in better understanding of the relationships between inputs and outcomes, and cost and benefits. Due to the limitations of retrospective data and the lack of a comprehensive outcome and cost evaluation design, this present study was limited to an estimated return on investment (ROI) analysis.

Preliminary ROI analysis reveals that CFA is likely saving the child welfare system thousands of dollars. The potential cost savings from only the Detroit CFA’s Prevention Cases which comprise roughly half of all served and closed cases during the pilot period CFA more than pays for itself with the estimated costs avoided. About half of the annual CFA budget is spent on Prevention Cases, for a total of **\$883,031** spent during the three-year pilot period. The average foster care payment per child per month in Wayne County, not counting Court costs, is \$2,248 (“DHS trend report,” 2012). The national average length of stay in foster care is 21.1

months,⁵ based on these average monthly costs and length of stay, an estimate of the average cost when a child enters foster care in Wayne County is \$47,433.

If one assumes only 25 percent of the 110 Prevention Case children would have entered foster care and stayed for the national average length of stay, the cost avoided by the Michigan child welfare system for these cases would be **\$1,304,407**, or a net \$421,376. This number, however, does not include any of the cost-savings associated with decreased length of stay of children in foster care that occurs through the Center's work in Permanency Cases. The cost of system benefits CFA is having on the Court by avoiding foster placements and closing foster care cases early, and thus reducing the number of court hearings, has not yet been examined. Gelles and Perlman estimate the annual cost per abused and neglected in America is \$63,871 when direct costs such as foster care, legal representation, and indirect costs like special education, mental health and physical health care services, and juvenile delinquency are combined (2012).

This rudimentary ROI analysis suggests the CFA model has the potential to avoid sizeable public expenditures on the child welfare system, while avoiding the trauma and disruption to children and families resulting from out-of-home placement. Children ages birth to five years of age comprise 39 percent of Michigan children in foster care and are the largest age group in care statewide. Infants and toddlers comprised 54 percent of children at issue served by CFA regardless of case type. Infants are especially likely to stay in foster care longer than older children, a situation which contributes to a host of mental health, developmental delays, and physical health concerns (Lou, et. al., 2006). This fact only increases the likelihood of cost savings that have occurred as a result of CFA's work.

The proposed future evaluation of CFA's effectiveness in meeting prevention and permanency outcomes for children and families from July 2012 forward will inform the cost analysis. Studies of cost are an extension of process and outcome evaluations, data from these studies will be linked to the cost data. The design for CFA's cost-effectiveness study will be developed through the participatory action process.

SUMMARY DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The central mission of the CFA is to provide legal services to families to empower them to protect and care for their children without court involvement or the need to place children in foster care. Families involved in the child welfare system also have multiple needs - legal, social, and economic. Therefore, the Center's legal services are supported by a unique multidisciplinary model that blends legal advocacy, social work services and peer-to-peer parent support services to prevent unnecessary placement of children in out-of-home care and to promote permanency. This innovative approach to legal advocacy evolved from the work of the Child Advocacy Law Clinic at the University of Michigan Law School.

The conclusion of this evaluation of the three year pilot period is that the Detroit CFA has

⁵ The national mean length of stay for children exiting foster care in 2011 was 21.1 months, according to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *The AFCARS Report: Preliminary FY 2011 estimates as of July 2012* (19). Retrieved from <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/afcarsreport19.pdf>.

successfully implemented its innovative model and has met its objectives. Nearly all of the children served were diverted from foster care or realized an earlier exit from foster care than they would have without the CFA involvement. During the period July 2009 through June 2012, CFA helped 290 children and adults with child welfare system involvement. There were 55 served and closed Prevention Cases representing 110 children at issue. For most Prevention Cases (91 percent) the identified clients were parents or a close relative (e.g., grandparent, aunt) of the children at issue. During the same period, there were 69 served and closed Permanency Cases with 128 children at issue. Over half of Permanency clients were relatives (n=34).

Both Prevention and Permanency clients had multiple legal challenges. CFA staff eliminated these legal impediments in order to provide permanency for the children they served. In 98.2 percent of Prevention Cases, the Detroit CFA accomplished their legal objectives. For Permanency clients, CFA removed the identified legal barriers to permanency in 95.7 percent of cases.

Three-quarters of Prevention Cases also availed themselves of social work assistance. Nearly 60 percent of Permanency Cases also used multiple social work services. Referrals and Resource Assistance was the most common followed by Case Management. Permanency Cases used fewer social work services than Prevention Cases. More Prevention and Permanency clients than not used family advocate services. Emotional support was the most often used, followed by Referrals for Resource Assistance and System Navigation services.

Professional education at the Detroit CFA is becoming a reality. The teaching vision for CFA over the long run is analogous to the role of a teaching hospital in the urban environment which provides high-quality service to a mostly poor population while furthering professional education. Like the teaching hospital, CFA is providing excellent service through the combination of the best clinical professors, highly skilled lawyers, social work expertise and other support services, and trainees. CFA is able to extend to its clients the advantages and quality of a high-priced law firm – which benefits the clients and the students who are assisting and learning. The Detroit CFA has become a site for interdisciplinary professional education in service to the urban poor and prepares students for professional leadership roles within communities and non-profit organizations.

Equally distinctive as its multidisciplinary approach is the manner in which CFA is funded, using private funds to leverage public dollars. The program was able to leverage \$883,031 in match dollars from the State of Michigan's Child Care Fund using an equivalent amount in private donor funds for a total spent of \$1,766,062.

The pilot period successfully demonstrated the significance of the Detroit CFA in fulfillment of the University mission of teaching, research and service. CFA is poised to move to an even greater integration within the University and its mission. Based on the preliminary data from this pilot period, the unique multidisciplinary CFA model is also ready for dissemination to other communities within the U.S.

Discussion and Recommendations

The Detroit Center for Family Advocacy has spent the past three years developing and refining

its innovative service approach to blending legal, social work and family advocacy services. One is reminded of the analogy of building an airplane while flying it, when reflecting on CFA's progress in the past three years. Having built the plane and learned how to fly it successfully, CFA is now positioned to develop a replication manual for other jurisdictions to use. Completion of the manual and its dissemination will allow CFA to accomplish its third goal of replicating the CFA model in other jurisdictions. To facilitate CFA's goal achievement these recommendations are offered.

Recommendation 1: Implement a comprehensive evaluation of the Detroit Center for Family Advocacy model.

The overall goal of the future comprehensive evaluation is to test the validity of CFA model's theory of change. The evaluation is being designed to gather information on the activities and outcomes as identified in CFA logic model and consists of three interrelated studies. The first study is a process evaluation, the second is an outcome evaluation, and the third is a cost analysis.

Using a participatory action evaluation approach the current evaluator is working with CFA staff to draft a comprehensive process, outcome and cost evaluation design. Center staff invested time and effort to develop a logic model articulating CFA theory of change, process mapping the service delivery approach. They are now developing evaluation research questions, identifying needed variables and data sources, and establishing data collection protocols. Completion of the evaluation design and its implementation will employ a participatory action approach. Participatory action evaluation approaches ensure that evaluation results are useful to agency and community stakeholders and used by them (Patton, 2007).

The purpose of the outcome evaluation will be to determine the efficacy of CFA services in preventing children with substantiated allegations of child abuse and neglect from entering the foster care system (Prevention Cases), and expediting permanency for children and youth already in placement (Permanency Cases). A true random assignment experimental design is not possible given CFA approach and funding sources. However, the evaluator is working with CFA staff and DHS to construct a matched comparison group experimental design for Permanency Cases. A quasi-experimental time series design will be used for Prevention Cases. Evaluation objectives for the cost analysis will focus on the cost-effectiveness or return on investment for CFA model.

Significant progress has been made on documenting CFA model's processes and the model's theory of change. CFA will work with WC-DHS and the Juvenile Court to ensure access to needed information for a comparison group. Once the design is complete and data collection mechanisms are in place, a Human Subjects Research Application will be submitted to the University of Michigan's Institutional Review Board and to the DHS Research Office. Work on the designing the evaluation, and the pilot period evaluation process itself is facilitating refinement of CFA's information collection systems and procedures. One of the benefits of participatory action evaluations is continuous quality improvement activities.

Recommendation 2: Develop a replication manual of the Detroit CFA model.

In their meta-analysis of MDT evaluations (Lalayants & Epstein, 2005) suggest an evaluation agenda for future studies. The Detroit CFA is addressing one of the items on this agenda through the first recommendation by designing and implementing a comparative quasi-experimental study of MDT effectiveness. CFA's retrospective process evaluation facilitated documentation of the model's components and case flow processes. Completion of the prospective evaluation will allow it to finish that documentation allowing creation of a replication manual. That achievement will contribute to the knowledge base relative to another item on Lalayants and Epstein's evaluation agenda for MDT — a descriptive quantitative study of variations in MDT designs and structures (Lalayants & Epstein, 2005).

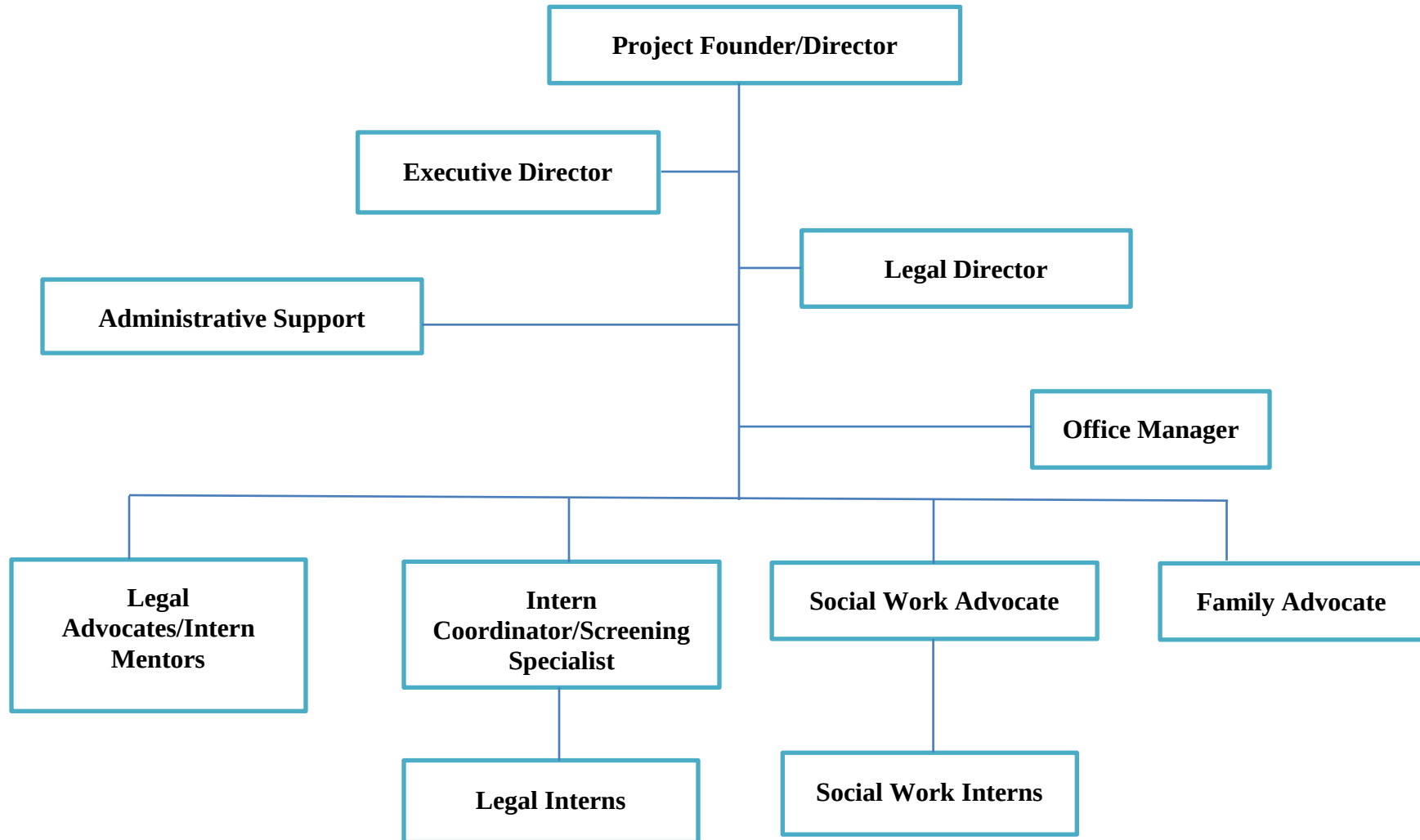
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Appendix A: The Detroit Center for Family Advocacy Organizational Chart



APPENDIX B: DETROIT CENTER FOR FAMILY ADVOCACY LOGIC MODEL

Assumptions	Inputs	Activities	Short-term & Intermediate Objectives (1 – 3 yrs.)	Long-term Goals (3 – 5 yrs.)
Low income families lack access to quality legal advocacy. Removal of a child and placement into foster care is a traumatic experience for children. Families need assistance navigating the complexities of the child welfare system. Multi-disciplinary teams (social work, parent support/mentoring & legal) providing assessment & needed services to CPS Category I, II & III families can divert them from the formal child welfare system preventing out-of-home placement. Legal assistance, social work assessment & parent support/mentoring to extended family/fictive kin takes advantage of children’s natural networks & creates a stable & safe environment outside the formal child welfare system. CFA’s multi-disciplinary approach can be replicated in other jurisdictions. CFA’s multi-disciplinary team approach will result in public child welfare system cost savings.	• Families • Referral Sources • Out-referrals to legal & other services • Circuit Court members of the bench & the bar, AAGs & GALs • JAC & Wayne County CAFS • CFA Staff: Attorneys, Social Workers & Family Advocates • Universities student interns • Advisory Board • U of M Law School & CALC Admin. Support • Community-based Orgs. • Private Funders • Evaluators	<u>Goal 1: Child & Family Level Activities</u> 1. Attorneys conduct intake screening/consultation with referral source for fit with eligibility criteria. 2. Multi-disciplinary team conducts case staffing at intake & as needed during service delivery. 3. Multi-disciplinary team intake assesses legal & other barriers, strengths & opportunities for achievement of plan goals. 4. Attorneys communicate legal issues to family & other stakeholders. 5. Attorneys provide legal assistance/representation in court hearings, other legal procedures (e.g., filing restraining orders, divorce, and guardianship). 6. Social worker provides referrals & linkages to community-based services & resources. 7. Social worker & family advocate assists family with applications for public assistance (Medicaid/MI-Child, FIP, SSDI, SSI, Food Stamps). 8. Social worker attends Court hearings & provides other social work services as needed. 9. Family advocate provides social support, mentoring & system navigation services to families through phone calls, meetings, home visits & accompanying family to court. 10. Discharge follows achievement of legal outcomes, case closing meeting w/ family & satisfaction survey completion. <u>Goal 2: Program/System Level Activities</u> 1. Outreach & marketing to area law schools & schools of social work results in establishment of placement agreements. 2. Students are recruited & trained in the CFA model through curriculum & job shadowing. 3. Students assist with intake screening & provide legal and/or social work services. <u>Goal 3: Program/System Level Activities</u> 1. Private & public funding for program obtained. 2. Team members are trained in the model. 3. All team members engage in on-going outreach & marketing to referral sources & other stakeholders. 4. Process evaluation documents CFA model & contributes to replication manual development. 5. Standardization of data collection informs selection of comparison group. 6. Submit research request to DHS for outcome & cost studies. 7. DHS conducts central registry check of CFA clients & comparison group pre & post services. 8. Collect CFA services & related costs, as well as costs for standard legal & social work services. 9. Evaluators analyze data & produce evaluation reports. 10. CFA leadership uses evaluation results to advance CFA model.	<u>Goal 1: Child & Family Level Objectives</u> 1. CFA prevention cases are diverted from the formal child welfare/court system. 2. CFA permanency cases exit the child welfare system in less time than comparison group. 3. CFA permanency cases achieve & sustain permanency in less time than comparison group. 4. Children receiving CFA services are free of future abuse & neglect substantiations up to 12 months post-service. <u>Goal 2: Program/System Level Objectives</u> 1. Relationships with area law & schools of social work established. 2. CFA curriculum created. 3. Student learning objectives are met. <u>Goal 3: Program/System Level Objectives</u> 1. Implement CFA multi-disciplinary approach. 2. Evaluate CFA multi-disciplinary approach (process, outcome & cost). 3. CFA multi-disciplinary approach cost savings for the public child welfare system are documented. 4. Create CFA replication manual. 5. Disseminate CFA manual.	<u>Goal 1: Child & Family Level</u> Children served by the CFA live in a safe & stable environment independent of the child welfare system. <u>Goal 2: Program/System Level</u> The CFA provides learning opportunities for law and social work students to engage in child welfare practice. <u>Goal 3: Program/System Level</u> The CFA’s multi-disciplinary program is replicated in other jurisdictions.

APPENDIX C

Center for Family Advocacy (CFA) Process Map

Referral is made to CFA

The Screening process for CFA services and representation begins when an individual calls or sends a faxed or written referral into CFA. This individual may be a potential client completing a self-referral or an individual making a referral on behalf of a potential client. The staff Screener will receive the call or referral document, and/or contact the referral source to begin the Screening process.

Screening Protocol Process

The Screener begins Screening Protocol process. See attached Screening Protocol Process Map and Narrative.

Preliminary Case Decision

Upon receiving the case acceptance or rejection recommendation email from the Screener, email communication goes back and forth between the CFA Director, Legal Director, and Family Advocate/Office Manager for case assessment and team recommendations. Additional phone calls are made to the potential client, referral source(s), and anyone else involved in the case to inform CFA's decision to accept or reject the case.

If the CFA team decides they cannot take the case, the Family Advocate/Office Manager or Screener will contact the potential client and/or the referral source and make connections to the appropriate referral source to assist the individual.

If the CFA team decides to take case, CFA staff will contact the potential client and set up the Intake meeting.

Notification is sent to the original referral source informing them CFA has either accepted or rejected the case

Second Conflict Check

Once CFA services are offered to the potential client staff performs a second conflict check on the individual. Staff runs searches in PIKA for the individual's name to see if a case conflict exists. The first conflict check is performed during the Screening process.

Attorney Assignment

The Legal Director and CFA Director decide which staff Attorney will be assigned to the case.

Intake and Multidisciplinary Team Meeting

The potential client comes to the CFA office to meet staff and begin the Intake process. The Intake process begins with the Multidisciplinary Team meeting where CFA staff explains legal representation, rights and responsibilities, retainer agreement, mandated reporting/confidentiality, and other requirements of CFA legal representation. Together, the team educates the client on how CFA will approach case and what DHS wants. Given this information, the client can decide how to proceed with CFA services.

The Attorney(s), Social Worker, and Family Advocate are present at the meeting to provide their respective services. The Attorney facilitates and leads the meeting. Legal representation may begin at this meeting, or the legal issue may be resolved at the meeting and CFA can close the case.

During the meeting the Social Worker engages the client and assesses social work needs related to the substantiation. If a laptop is available the Social Worker will bring it to the meeting and simultaneously document this information into PIKA. The Social Worker and client develop an Action Plan for the client to take home with them after the meeting. Both the Attorneys and Social Worker have intake forms they complete with the client at the meeting. The social work intake form includes mutually agreeable goals and objectives for the client, developed by the Social Worker and the client together during the meeting.

The Family Advocate/Office Manager provides support, guidance, explains next steps and asks questions if something seems unclear to the client.

The client is provided with Intake Folder that contains CFA contact information, retainer agreement, and other supporting materials. The client leaves this meeting with the Intake folder, legal goal, and knowing how the Attorney will proceed with their case.

Role of Family Advocate The Family Advocate/Office Manager engages the client and provides a variety of services during the CFA process. They provide support, guidance, what to expect/next steps, a listening ear and relatable experiences to assist the client.

Role of Social Worker The Social Worker provides a variety of services to the client during the CFA process. Some of the Social Worker's tasks include writing letters, calling caseworkers, providing advocacy at DHS & school meetings, and providing some crisis intervention. The Social Worker will work with the Attorneys to remove barriers for the client including getting children physicals, assisting client with existing housing barriers, getting therapy arranged for the whole family, and providing client with additional resources/referrals.

The CFA team officially decides to accept the case after this meeting. CFA staff can still make recommendations if necessary on whether or not to take case after the Intake meeting.

Legal Process

The assigned Attorney drives the case depending on type: Type A Prevention or Type B Permanency.

In a Type A Prevention case the Attorney will focus legal advocacy work on preventing the child(ren) from entering the foster care system. At this point DHS has not yet filed a petition with the court and the Attorney will take steps to prevent this from happening. Examples of Type A casework include finishing a custody order or guardianship.

In a Type B Permanency case the child(ren) are in foster care and a legal barrier exists preventing them from achieving permanency in the home of relatives or a foster parent. The Attorney will focus legal advocacy work on removing the legal barriers to permanency and reducing the likelihood the child(ren) will be removed from the caregiver's home. Examples of

Type B casework include a relative being unable to obtain a state foster care license due to unpaid tickets or a caregiver has outstanding warrants.

During the legal process collaboration between the Attorney and other CFA staff occurs. Collaboration takes the form of email, information sharing, and face to face meetings between staff. Collaboration, advocacy, and negotiation also takes place with other professionals involved in the case. Both types of cases are open until the stated legal goal is achieved.

Case Closure

The assigned Attorney recommends case closure to the Legal Director upon achievement of the case's legal goal. The recommendation for case closure is made via email or during a conference with the Legal Director.

Note: All case closure activities (including emails and letters) are to be entered into PIKA by the Office Manager.

Next, team members hold a Case Conference discussing case closure. Ultimately, the Attorney will decide when to close the case, using the criteria of whether or not the legal goal has been achieved. If the legal goal has been achieved the case can be closed.

The Legal Director reviews the case and either approve or reject case closure. The Legal Director notifies the Attorney of their decision.

The Legal Director notifies the Office Manager via email of case closure and copies the Attorney.

The Attorney meets with the client to administer the Client Satisfaction Survey, at least 30 days before case closure. The Attorney will have the client complete the survey at their last court date or at an event where the client will be present if the client may not come back to the CFA office for the last Case Conference. If the client does not complete the survey at either of these, the Attorney will have the client complete the survey during the last Case Conference meeting.

The Office Manager drafts the "client closing letter". The letter thanks the client for hiring CFA and asks for future referrals.

When the Attorney receives the case closure confirmation email from the Legal Director, the Case Conference is scheduled with the client.

The Attorney begins circulating the Closing Summary via email to support team members. The assigned Attorney oversees the Closing Summary process and ensures support team members complete their pieces of the summary. The summary should be completed within 30 days of closing the case. At this point the Case Conference with the client is pending.

Upon completion, the Closing Summary is forwarded to the Legal Director for review. If revisions to the summary are necessary the Office Manager will inform the team member it concerns and copy the Attorney. When the Legal Director approves the summary it is

forwarded to the Office Manager to upload to PIKA. The Attorney and support team members are notified.

Upon receiving the final draft of the Closing Summary, the Office Manager closes the case on PIKA, sends the final Closing Summary to the Legal Director, and sends confirmation of case closure on PIKA to the Legal Director, while copying the Attorney. The case is considered officially closed when the Office Manager closes the client's case on PIKA.

Case Conference

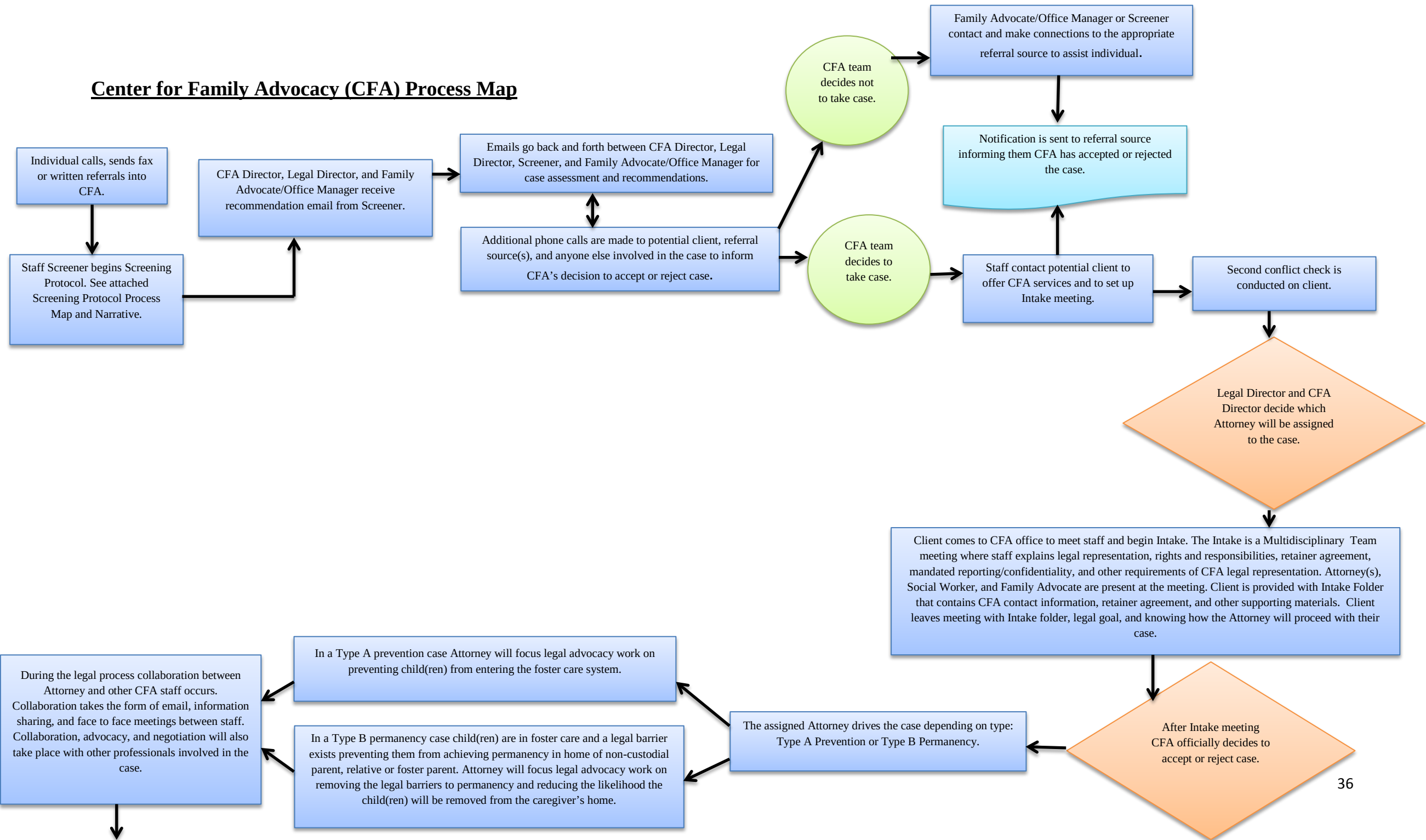
The Attorney holds the final Case Conference with the client to advise on follow-up, provide case closure letter, and to complete any final paperwork and the Client Satisfaction Survey, if it has not yet been completed.

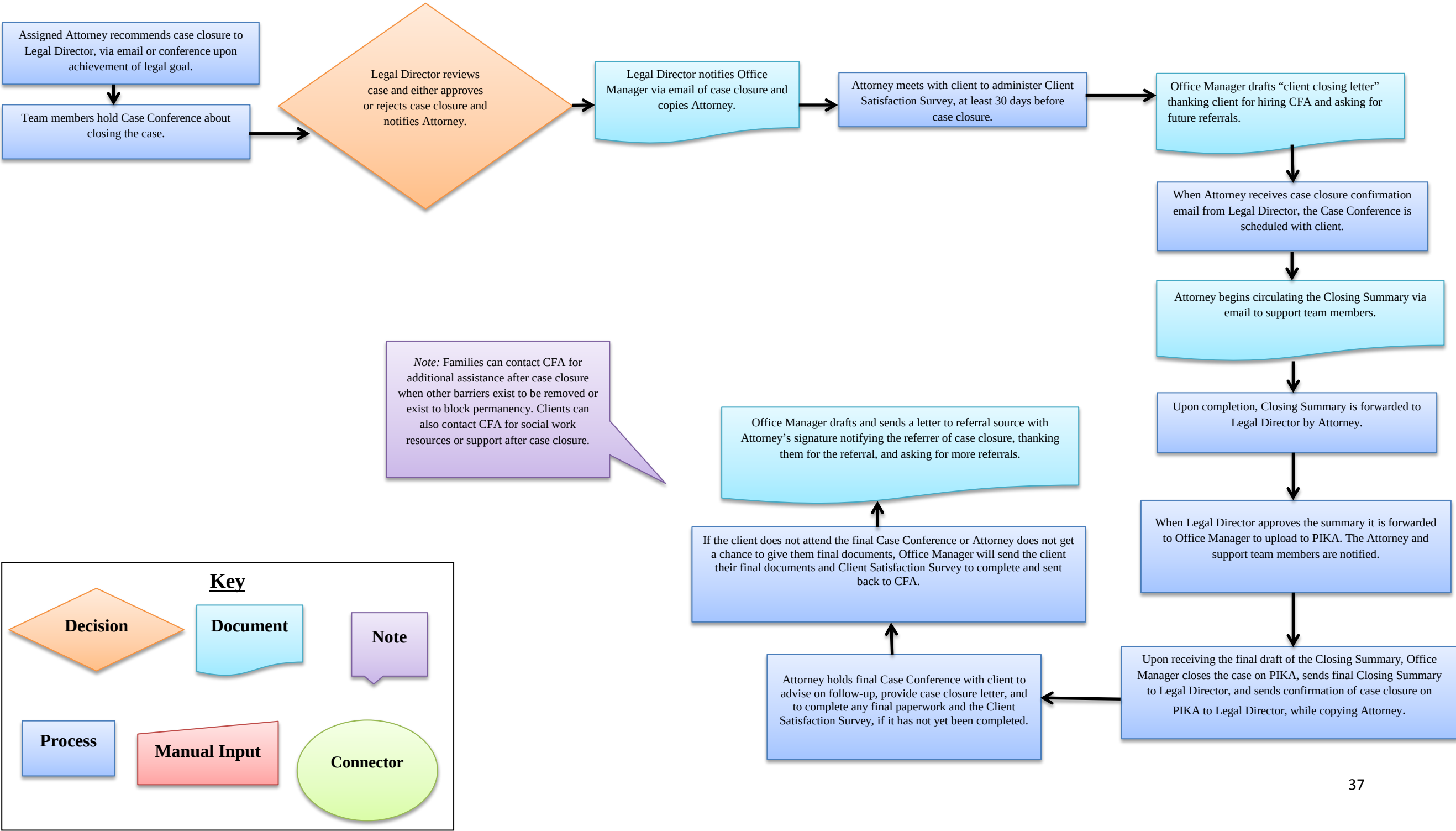
If the client does not attend the final Case Conference or the Attorney does not get a chance to give them final documents, the Office Manager will send the client their final documents and the Client Satisfaction Survey to complete and sent back to CFA.

After the Case Conference with client the Office Manager prepares and sends a letter to the original referral source with Attorney's signature. The letter advises the referrer of case closure, thanks them for the referral, and asks for more referrals.

Note: Families can contact CFA for additional assistance after case closure when other barriers exist to be removed or exist to block permanency. Clients can also contact CFA for social work resources or support after case closure.

Center for Family Advocacy (CFA) Process Map





APPENDIX C

Center for Family Advocacy (CFA) Screening Protocol Narrative

Referral is made to CFA

The Screening Protocol process begins when an individual calls or sends a faxed or written referral into CFA. This individual may be a potential client completing a self-referral or an individual making a referral on behalf of a potential client.

The staff Screener receives the call or referral document, or contacts the referral source to begin the Screening process. The referral calls and/or documents are always forwarded to the Screener. The Screener may or may not be an attorney and can be an intern who can complete screenings with supervision and in consultation with their supervisor. The Screener who administers the Screening process with potential clients or referral sources does not need to have legal training.

Conflict Check

Once contact is made with the referral source the Screener performs a conflict check on the individual. The conflict check is made before the individual discloses any information about themselves or the case they are calling to refer to CFA. Conflict checks are used to check if an opposing party of an existing CFA case is calling for services or representation. The Screener runs searches in PIKA for the individual's name to see if a case conflict exists.

Eligibility Criteria

Before beginning the Screening process, the Screener asks the individual if they are familiar with CFA and their services. If they are not familiar with CFA, the Screener explains CFA's mission and the types of cases CFA can accept. The individual is then asked a) If there has been a Wayne County DHS substantiation of abuse or neglect, and b) If a collateral legal issue exists in the case they are referring to CFA. Both must be true for CFA to accept the case to be in compliance with their funders. If there is no substantiation reported they cannot submit the case to the Juvenile Assessment Center (JAC) in Wayne County.

If the case does not meet CFA criteria, CFA cannot take the case. The Screener makes appropriate referrals to the individual to assist with stated legal issue at this point.

Screening Process

If the case does meet CFA criteria, the Screener begins the Screening Protocol process. Information about the case is collected and documented during this interaction with the individual. The information collected includes the name of referrer (self-referral or referral source), contact information, number of child(ren) at issue, child(ren) at issue birth date(s), case worker(s) information, and information about anyone else involved with the case (social workers, referees, lawyers, other parents, or relatives). The individual is also asked to describe the reason for referral to CFA.

The information collected during the Screening process is sent to the Office Manager. The Office Manager opens a new case on PIKA, creates a case profile and enters the information collected during the Screening process into the database. The Office Manager is the only CFA staff who opens cases in PIKA and is responsible for all data entry.

Note: The information collected during the Screening process is entered into PIKA by the Office Manager even if CFA does not take decide to take the case in later decision stages. The information will also be entered into PIKA if the client's legal issue is solved in the stages before the case is officially accepted. This is due to CFA's desire to be a basic advocacy resource on the front end for clients by beginning to organize their case in PIKA if it is referred to another service organization.

Note: The Screener will periodically check PIKA during the Screening process to ensure any additional information collected has been documented and entered.

Case Type Determination

During the Screening process the Screener determines if the caller is describing a Type A Prevention or Type B Permanency case. The Screener makes this determination based on a set of questions asked to the referring individual. The Screener will ask the individual;

- a) Whether or not there is an open Wayne County CPS case, and
- b) Whether or not the child(ren) at issue has/have already been placed into care.

CFA must accept the case at CAN I, II or III level.

If the individual answers no to both questions, CFA cannot take the case. The Screener will make the appropriate referrals to the individual to assist with the stated legal issue.

If referrer answers no to the second question, and there is a legal issue that, if resolved, would keep the child(ren) at issue out of care, it is a Type A Prevention case. The Screener captures and documents information about the present procedural status of the case (i.e. if petition has been filed), CAN substantiation level, the collateral legal issue and its procedural status, and whether or not client has been informed of the referral (if the caller is not the potential client). The documented information is forwarded to the Office Manager. The Office Manager enters this information into the recently opened PIKA profile for the case.

If the individual answers yes to the second question and there is a legal issue that, if resolved, would enable the child to come out of care, it is a Type B Permanency case. The Screener collects the following information from the caller: name of jurist, name of Guardian ad Litem, attorney contact information (if client has one), present procedural status of the case, current placement of child(ren), and whether or not client has been informed of referral (if the caller is not the potential client). These cases are automatically Category I. This information is documented and forwarded to the Office Manager. The Office Manager enters this information into the recently opened PIKA profile for the case.

Note: If call is a self-referral and the case requires the resolution of warrants, tickets, or citations, the Screener asks the individual if they have or can obtain money to pay the bond.

After the Screener determines case type they inform the individual CFA will complete the screening of the case within the next two business days and will contact them with CFA's decision of whether or not to take the case.

Contacting Potential Client

If someone other than the potential client made the referral, the Screener will contact the potential client. Upon contacting the potential client, the Screener introduces themselves and describes the mission and services of CFA. The Screener then explains a referral has been made to CFA from a referral source and asks the potential client to describe the circumstances of the case. The Screener compares the potential client's information to the information received from referral source and notes any major discrepancies. If the case requires the resolution of warrants, tickets, or citations the Screener will ask the potential client if they have or can obtain money to pay the bond.

The Screener explains to the potential client CFA is in the process of screening their case and asks the potential client if they are willing to work with CFA to resolve the collateral legal issue. Potential clients are informed CFA services are voluntary and they do not have to use the services, even if they are being told otherwise. The Screener informs the potential client that CFA will contact them with their decision about the case and if they cannot take the case, they will refer them to a pro-bono clinic. This information is documented and forwarded to the Office Manager. The Office Manager enters this information into the recently opened PIKA profile for the case.

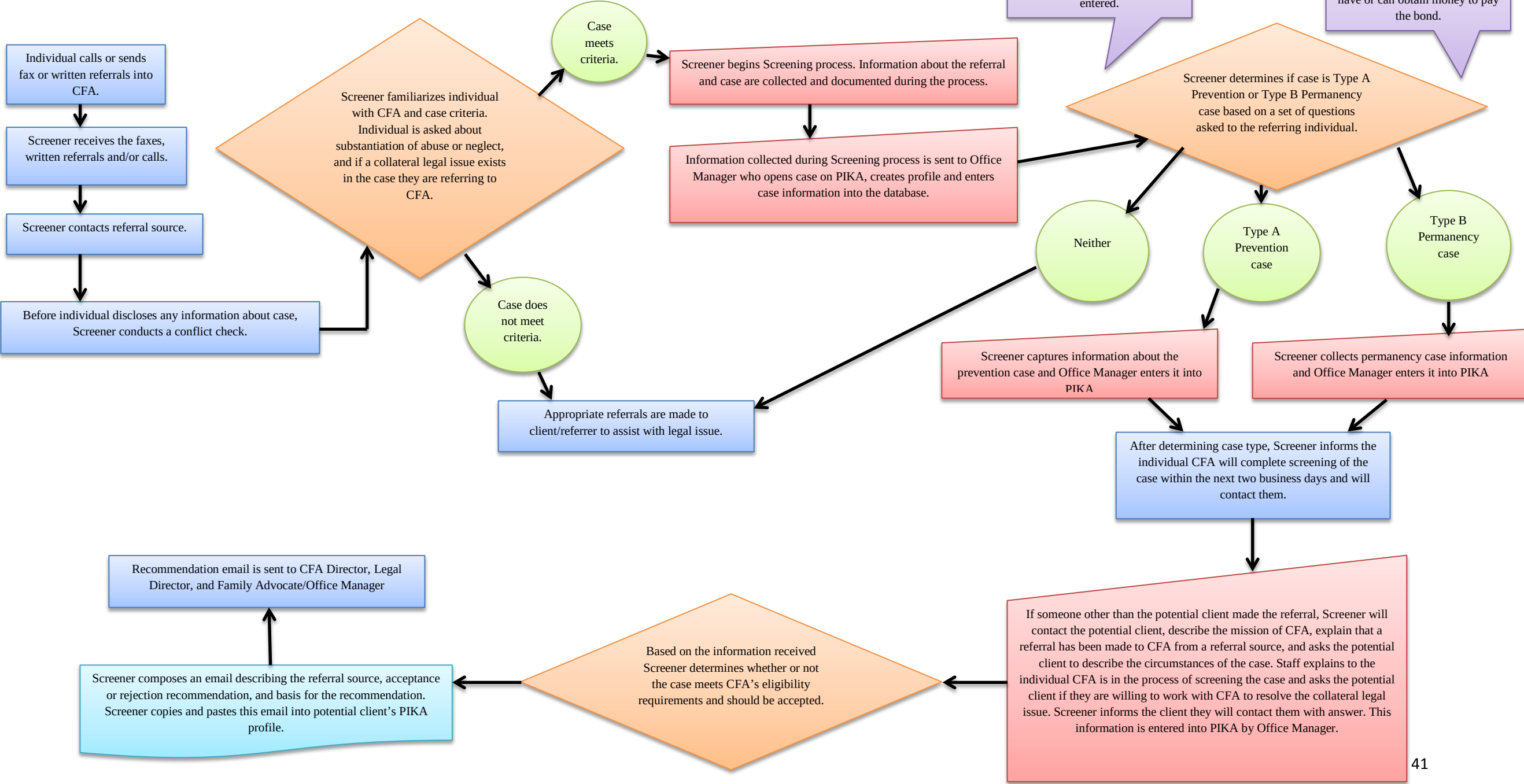
Case Recommendation

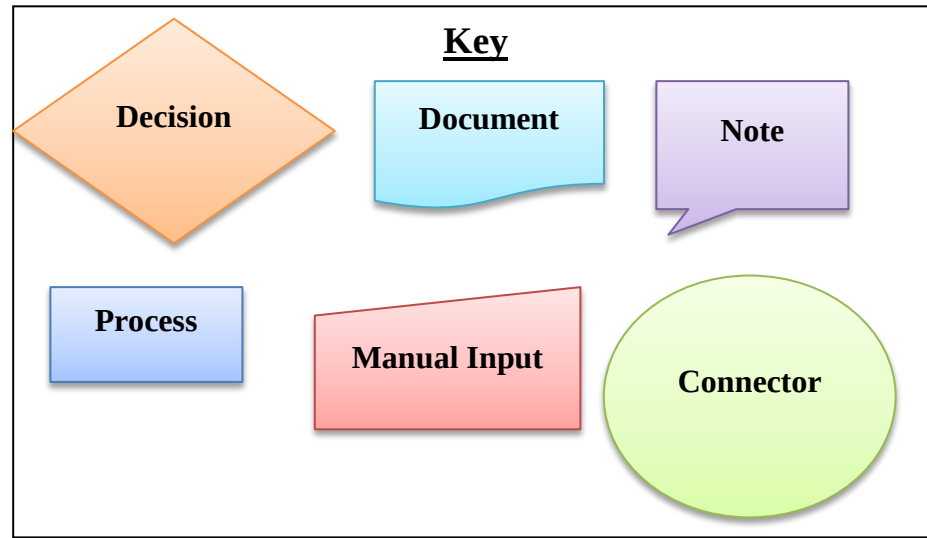
Based on the information received the Screener determines whether or not the case meets CFA's eligibility requirements and should be accepted.

Next, the Screener composes an email describing the referral source, how the individual learned about CFA, a recommendation to either accept or reject the case, and the basis for the recommendation. The email includes the information captured during the Screening process describing the case. The Screener copies and pastes this email into the potential client's PIKA profile.

The recommendation email is sent to the CFA Director, Legal Director, and Family Advocate/Office Manager.

Center for Family Advocacy (CFA) Screening Protocol Process Map

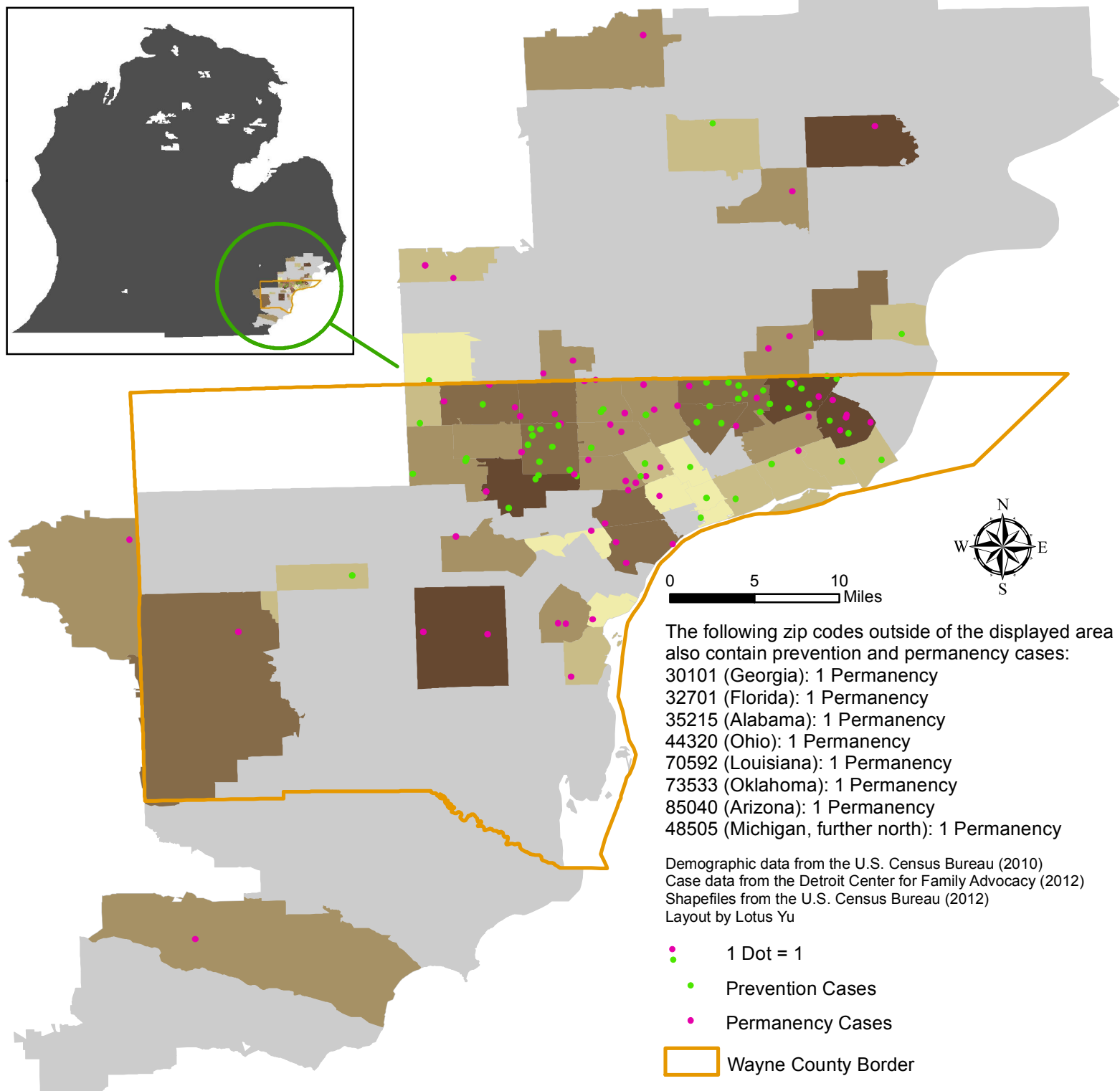




APPENDIX D

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Map Showing Location of the Detroit Center for Family Advocacy Client Zip Codes of Residence

Prevention and Permanency Cases Handled by the Detroit Center for Family Advocacy from July 2009 to June 2012 by Zip Code



Number of Individuals Under Age 18 and Corresponding Zip Codes

275 - 3,400:	48226, 48201, 48208, 48229, 48120, 48033, 48202
3,401 - 6,500:	48301, 48215, 482007, 48081, 48184, 48240, 48230, 48214, 48206, 48192, 48317
6,501 - 9,700:	48124, 48162, 48223, 48204, 48203, 48237, 48306, 48213, 48313, 48238, 48089, 48239, 48221, 48146
9,701 - 12,800:	48234, 48111, 48210, 48235, 48066, 48209, 48212, 48219, 48227
12,801 - 16,000:	48224, 48205, 48044, 48180, 48228