



REPORT | June 2021

# Compendium of Measures and Data Sources

Understanding Judicial Decision-Making and Hearing Quality in Child  
Welfare

OPRE Report 2021-95

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Understanding Judicial Decision-Making and Hearing Quality in Child Welfare

OPRE Report 2021-95

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Contract Number: HHSP233201500133I  
Task Order Number: HHSP23337010T

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This report is in the public domain. Permission to reproduce is not necessary. Suggested citation: Summers, A., Gatowski, S., Fromknecht, A., & Trowbridge, S. (2021). *Compendium of measures and data sources: Understanding judicial decision-making and hearing quality in child welfare* (OPRE Report 2021-95). Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

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# Acknowledgments

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The authors would like to thank Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation Project Officers Alysia Blandon, Christine Fortunato, and Sarah Blankenship for their review and feedback on the Compendium. Thanks are also extended to Joelle Ruben and Mary Mariani of JBA for their review and editing.

Members of our expert consultant team contributed measures and provided feedback on the Compendium's format and content. The authors would like to acknowledge Kyndra Cleveland, Britany Orlebeke, Christine Kiesel, and Brian Ostrom for their contributions. We would also like to thank the many authors who gave us permission to reprint their measures.

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# Introduction

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## Purpose of the Compendium

The purpose of the Compendium is to summarize information about the types and range of measures and data sources used to study judicial decision-making and hearing quality in child welfare cases. The information is designed to be useful to researchers and child welfare court practitioners alike by helping to inform decisions about how to measure hearing quality and judicial decision-making for research, evaluation, practice improvement, and policy-related purposes. Finally, the Compendium aims to highlight areas in this emerging field where there is a lack of information on measures and publicly available data sources.

## Background

The importance of understanding the quality and impact of decisions made by juvenile and family court judges cannot be overstated. Yet research on factors that support judicial decision-making, contribute to high-quality child welfare hearings, and result in improved case outcomes is limited. The Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) and the Children's Bureau (CB) funded James Bell Associates to deepen the understanding of judicial decision-making and hearing quality in child welfare cases through a comprehensive review of research and measures.

As part of this process, the project team developed a conceptual model to identify key components of judicial decision-making, hearing quality, and case outcomes. These components helped guide the search for relevant measures. Exhibit 1 lists the components and subcomponents from the model. Please see our Conceptual Model Brief available [here](#) for a visual representation and description of the components and subcomponents. The Compendium identifies which components and subcomponents of the model the measures assess.

### Key Terms

For the purposes of this Compendium:

- **Judicial decision-making** in child welfare cases is defined as both the factors judges consider when making decisions as well as the decisions they make.
- **Hearing quality** in child welfare is defined through standards for best practice and expectations set by federal and state law about what should happen in hearings.

## Exhibit 1. Judicial Decision-Making and Hearing Quality Components and Subcomponents

Components	Subcomponents
Judicial Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demographics</li> <li>Role/Authority</li> <li>Experience, knowledge, training, and skills</li> <li>Attitudes and beliefs about child welfare cases</li> </ul>
Hearing Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Judicial inquiry and engagement of hearing participants</li> <li>Breadth, depth, and relevance of discussion</li> <li>Parent attendance and engagement</li> <li>Child attendance and engagement</li> <li>Child welfare agency attendance and engagement</li> <li>Quality of representation for the parent, child, and child welfare agency</li> <li>Attention to and application of legal standards</li> </ul>
Judicial Decision-Making Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Case information considered</li> <li>Structures used to consider case information (e.g., benchcards)</li> <li>Interpretation of legal standards</li> <li>Self-reflection on practice and bias</li> </ul>
Judicial Decisions in Hearings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child placement</li> <li>Services ordered for the parents and child</li> <li>Findings made by the judge</li> </ul>
Case Process and Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child placement type and stability</li> <li>Family engagement in services and service progress</li> <li>Termination of parental rights</li> <li>Case progress and timeliness of hearings</li> </ul>
Case Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child safety</li> <li>Type and timeliness of child permanency</li> <li>Child and parent well-being</li> </ul>
Pre- and Between-Hearing Communication and Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mediation</li> <li>Prehearing/Pretrial conferences</li> <li>Multidisciplinary case staffing</li> <li>Family group conferences/Family team meetings</li> <li>Family service plan development</li> </ul>

Components	Subcomponents
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Court reports</li> <li>Prehearing preparation of parties</li> <li>Prehearing and between-hearing contact between parties</li> </ul>
Jurisdiction Context, Court Resources, Practices, and Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Judicial staff time</li> <li>Judicial caseload</li> <li>Court support staff</li> <li>Physical facilities</li> <li>Docketing/Calendar</li> <li>Frontloading (resources focused on early stages of the case)</li> <li>Judicial continuity</li> <li>Judicial assignment practices</li> <li>Parent assistance during case process</li> <li>Interaction of professionals in hearings</li> <li>Court and child welfare agency relationship</li> <li>Continuous quality improvement practices</li> <li>Frequency of appeals</li> <li>Consistency of judicial practice across system</li> <li>State laws which supplement federal child welfare court process requirements</li> <li>Level of detail in state law</li> <li>Statutory criteria</li> <li>Legal representation</li> <li>Socioeconomic status</li> <li>Urbanicity</li> <li>Substance use prevalence</li> <li>Service availability</li> </ul>

## Using the Compendium

The Compendium can be used as a starting point in developing and selecting measures and data sources to assess judicial decision-making and hearing quality in child welfare court cases. This Compendium and the measures identified should be viewed within the context of how the measures may be able to address specific research questions in a study. The measures identified were not stand-alone measures. Most measures have only been used once in practice, and information about the measures in terms of how they could be used in future studies is limited. Additionally, most of the

articles and reports did not include the actual measure itself. Information for measure profiles was inferred from the report or article. Information presented may vary slightly on the level of detail based on what could be determined from published materials.

The Compendium is organized into six parts.

1. **Table of Measures by Measurement Strategy and Component Measured.** This list shows which measures are available for each component (e.g., judicial characteristics, judicial decision-making, and hearing quality) and measurement strategy. Measurement strategy, for this table, is defined as the type of data collection strategy for which the measure is designed (e.g., court observation, case file review, survey).
2. **Measures that Assess Overlapping Components.** This diagram displays the number of measures of judicial characteristics, judicial decision-making, and hearing quality and the number of instances where measures assess one or more of these components.
3. **Measure Profiles.** The profiles provide detailed information about each measure. Once users have identified the set of components and related measures of interest, the profiles can be used to learn more about each measure to select the best fit for judicial decision-making and hearing quality assessments. Exhibit 2 describes the information summarized in each profile. Throughout the Compendium, measure names are linked. Clicking on the title will navigate the reader to the measure profile.

## Exhibit 2. Summary of Information Included in Measure Profiles

Profile sections	Description
Instrument Description	A brief description of the measure that includes how it has been used in research
Components Measured	A list of the components and subcomponents that the instrument measures
Unit of Measurement	The level at which the data is measured; for example, individual level data or group level data
Measurement Strategy	Information about how the measure was administered or used in practice for the specific study for which it was designed (if applicable), as well as how it could be used in practice (when known), including— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Data collection method:</b> How the measure has been administered in the past for data collection purposes. This includes—               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Court observation:</b> any data collection method designed to conduct a systematic observation of practice in court hearings, either in-person or via recorded hearings.</li> <li>○ <b>Case file review:</b> a strategy designed to systematically review documents generated by the child welfare court or agency, including paper files or electronically stored documents that are reviewed at the case level.</li> <li>○ <b>Survey:</b> a strategy designed to get information from specific people related to a child welfare case (e.g., parents, attorneys), including in-</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Profile sections	Description
	<p>person surveys, electronic surveys, or telephone surveys of persons involved in child welfare.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Interview:</b> a data collection method designed to elicit in-depth information via a series of questions and answers of persons involved in child welfare.</li> <li>○ <b>Focus group:</b> a data collection method designed to engage groups of participants in discussion around key components.</li> <li>○ <b>Secondary data review:</b> any tool developed to examine data from a secondary data source (e.g., a media outlet) to examine the components of interest.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Type of assessment: Identifies the assessment approach (e.g., self-report, structured observation, interview guide). When applicable, this includes whether the process was structured (i.e., totally planned with no deviation) or semi-structured (planned with opportunity for flexibility; allows for additional probing based on responses/discussion).</li> <li>● Location/context: Where the measure occurred/should occur (e.g., in a natural setting or a research lab).</li> <li>● Administrator/coder: Requirements for who can administer or code the measure or complete the measure (e.g., parent, judge).</li> <li>● Administration time/coding time: How long it takes to administer the measure. For many measures, this may be how long it takes the coder or participant to complete it.</li> <li>● Administration mode: How the measure was/could be administered. This includes its format, such as paper and pencil, electronic, or via phone.</li> </ul>
Psychometric Properties	Reliability (any measure of internal consistency or test-retest reliability), inter-rater reliability (any indication of agreement among multiple raters/coders), predictive validity (how the measure correlates to outcomes of interest), construct validity (the extent to which the measure assesses the theoretical construct of interest such as hearing quality or judicial decision-making) and content validity (the extent to which the measure includes all of the items necessary to measure the construct of interest). Few of the articles included information about measures' psychometric properties. Information is included when available. This is an important area for future research.
Scoring Method	What is measured and how the scores are coded and/or calculated for the measure
Reference	The article reference where the measure is described
Accessing the Measure	Information about how to obtain a copy of the measure, including whether it is located in the report/article referenced, whether it is included in the Appendix of Measures, or whether contact with the author or organization is needed for more information.

4. **Toolkit for Court Performance Measures in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases.** This section discusses a collection of court performance measures in child abuse and neglect cases. Performance measurement is the ongoing, regular collection of information to monitor how a program or system is doing on agreed upon indicators of success.<sup>1</sup> It is a systematic way of mapping the evidence of progress towards an expected result. In the child welfare context, court performance measurement refers to the measurement of the court's progress on safety, permanency, timeliness, due process/fairness, and child well-being outcomes. While performance measures and research and evaluation measures may overlap, evaluation is a specific, in-depth way to gather and analyze information to draw conclusions not only about the extent to which desired outcomes have been achieved, but also why or why not and to what extent a program, practice or policy has caused (or contributed) to the results.
5. **Data Sources Table.** The Data Sources Table includes information about currently available datasets or data dashboards that may be useful in assessing the identified key components related to judicial decision-making and hearing quality and their relationship to child welfare case outcomes. Datasets or data dashboards can be a useful source for context information about a jurisdiction's child welfare caseload (such as number of cases per judge/court), case characteristics (such as race/ethnicity of children in the child welfare case load), case processing information (such as timeliness of court events), and case outcomes. Child welfare case outcomes in data sources (as defined in Exhibit 1) include safety, type and timeliness of child permanency, and child and parent well-being. The table includes the following information:
  - Dataset title
  - Scope of the dataset (national, state, court specific)
  - Population or sample
  - Details about the data collection method used to compile the dataset (e.g., purpose of data collection, frequency of data collection)
  - Outcomes/Components measured by the dataset

There is a link in the table to get more information about the data, including how to directly access or request access to the dataset.

6. **Appendix of Measures.** The Appendix includes copies of all available measures if the corresponding author or organization gave permission for a reprint. The formatting of the instruments may vary slightly from their original use if they have been recreated in Word format for inclusion. If a measure has a full copy it is noted in the Profile with a link to the complete instrument.

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<sup>1</sup> Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. (2008). *Court performance measures in child abuse and neglect cases: Technical guide*. U.S. Department of Justice and the Children's Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

# Methods for Identifying Measures and Data Sources

*Measures.* Measures (or measurement tools) for the Compendium were identified from the following information sources:

1. Studies included in a review of the child welfare literature that were used to inform the judicial decision-making and hearing quality conceptual model
2. Materials identified during the literature review search that were not studies (e.g., reports on measures) but offered potentially useful measures
3. Materials obtained through inquiries to the field through the electronic OPRE newsletter
4. Materials referred by expert consultants and OPRE
5. Materials already known to the project team
6. Search of literature in other relevant fields including juvenile justice, family court, and domestic violence

*Data sources.* Data sources were identified from articles included in the literature review and through web searches using search criteria identified from databases listed in the articles and reports from the literature review. A web search was also conducted for publicly available state child welfare data dashboards. Note that these data sources only include those data dashboards that were identified in the literature review and subsequent web search. Other states may have dashboards that do not appear in web searches.

We reviewed 121 articles and reports. From these, we identified 49 measures and 13 data sources that are included in the Compendium based on the following criteria:

- **Inclusion Criteria:** Measures and data sources that support the measurement of judicial decision-making and hearing quality components identified in the literature review and conceptual model. Additionally, commonly known child welfare databases and data dashboards available at the state and county level for multiple measures were included as data sources.
- **Exclusion Criteria:** Measures and data sources that are not related to conceptual model components or subcomponents or the source material lacks the detail necessary to fully identify the measure or data source. Additionally, measures were excluded if they only measured case outcomes (see Exhibit 1) without any measurement of judicial decision-making and/or hearing quality components related to the outcome.

# Table of Measures by Measurement Strategy and Components Measured

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The table on the following page provides a list of all the measures available for each component (e.g., judicial characteristics, judicial decision-making, hearing quality) and the measurement strategy used. Measurement strategy is defined as the type of data collection strategy for which the measure is designed (i.e., court observation, case file review, survey, interview, and focus group).

Measure	Measurement strategy					Components measured							
	Court observation	Case file review	Survey	Interview	Focus group	Judicial Characteristics	Judicial Decision-Making Process	Hearing Quality	Judicial Decisions in Hearings	Pre- and Between-Hearing Communication and Activities	Jurisdiction Context, Court Resources, Practices, and Culture	Case Process and Progress	Case Outcomes
<a href="#">Assessing Quality of Permanency Hearings Toolkit: Focus Group Questions</a>													
<a href="#">Assessing Quality of Permanency Hearings Toolkit: Self-Assessment</a>													
<a href="#">Attorney Case Activity Periodic Survey</a>													
<a href="#">Best Interests Judicial Interview Guide</a>													
<a href="#">Child Abuse and Neglect Institute (CANI) Case Scenario Instrument</a>													
<a href="#">Case File Review – Impact of Courts Catalyzing Change Benchcard</a>													
<a href="#">Child Welfare Initial Hearing Court Observation Tool</a>													
<a href="#">Child’s Voice in Custody Litigation Survey</a>													

Measure	Measurement strategy					Components measured							
	Court observation	Case file review	Survey	Interview	Focus group	Judicial Characteristics	Judicial Decision-Making Process	Hearing Quality	Judicial Decisions in Hearings	Pre- and Between-Hearing Communication and Activities	Jurisdiction Context, Court Resources, Practices, and Culture	Case Process and Progress	Case Outcomes
<a href="#">Client-Directed Representation Court Record Review</a>													
<a href="#">Client-Directed Representation Informed Participant Interview</a>													
<a href="#">Cook County Juvenile CIP: Court Observation Instrument</a>													
<a href="#">Court Calendaring Court Observation Tool</a>													
<a href="#">Court Calendaring Parent Survey</a>													
<a href="#">Court Calendaring Stakeholder Survey</a>													
<a href="#">Described Experiences Interview</a>													
<a href="#">Family Treatment Drug Court (FTDC) Procedural Justice Study Case File Review Tool</a>													

Measure	Measurement strategy					Components measured							
	Court observation	Case file review	Survey	Interview	Focus group	Judicial Characteristics	Judicial Decision-Making Process	Hearing Quality	Judicial Decisions in Hearings	Pre- and Between-Hearing Communication and Activities	Jurisdiction Context, Court Resources, Practices, and Culture	Case Process and Progress	Case Outcomes
<a href="#">Family Treatment Drug Court Procedural Justice Study Parent Survey</a>													
<a href="#">Foster Parents Engagement in Dependency Court: Focus Group Guide</a>													
<a href="#">Hawaii Courts Catalyzing Change Case File Review Tool</a>													
<a href="#">Hawaii Courts Catalyzing Change Court Observation Tool</a>													
<a href="#">Indian Child Welfare Act Toolkit: Case File Review Tool</a>													
<a href="#">Indian Child Welfare Act Toolkit: Court Observation Tool</a>													
<a href="#">Interview Assessing Children’s Emotional Reactions to and Understanding of Child Welfare Court Hearings</a>													
<a href="#">Judicial Engagement of Parents in Child Welfare Hearings Survey</a>													

Measure	Measurement strategy					Components measured							
	Court observation	Case file review	Survey	Interview	Focus group	Judicial Characteristics	Judicial Decision-Making Process	Hearing Quality	Judicial Decisions in Hearings	Pre- and Between-Hearing Communication and Activities	Jurisdiction Context, Court Resources, Practices, and Culture	Case Process and Progress	Case Outcomes
<a href="#">Judicial Expertise and Decision-Making Survey</a>													
<a href="#">Judicial Leadership Survey and Interview</a>													
<a href="#">Judicial Questionnaire Regarding Expert Testimony in Juvenile/Domestic Court</a>													
<a href="#">Maryland Standardized Case File Review Instrument</a>													
<a href="#">Mississippi Legal Representation Case File Review Tool</a>													
<a href="#">Nevada Hearing Quality Court Observation Tool</a>													
<a href="#">New York Permanency Hearing Case File Review Tool</a>													
<a href="#">New York Permanency Hearing Court Observation Tool</a>													

Measure	Measurement strategy					Components measured							
	Court observation	Case file review	Survey	Interview	Focus group	Judicial Characteristics	Judicial Decision-Making Process	Hearing Quality	Judicial Decisions in Hearings	Pre- and Between-Hearing Communication and Activities	Jurisdiction Context, Court Resources, Practices, and Culture	Case Process and Progress	Case Outcomes
<a href="#">Oregon Case File Review Instrument</a>													
<a href="#">Oregon Standardized Semi-Structured Interviews</a>													
<a href="#">Parent Attitude Toward Court Measure</a>													
<a href="#">Parent Engagement Measure</a>													
<a href="#">Parent or Caregiver Post-Court Survey</a>													
<a href="#">Parental Engagement Court Observation Process</a>													
<a href="#">Parents' Understanding of Child Welfare Case Process, Hearings, and Judicial Decisions Interview</a>													
<a href="#">Structured Court Observation Instrument</a>													

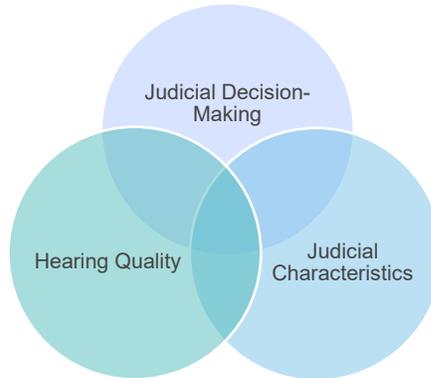
Measure	Measurement strategy					Components measured							
	Court observation	Case file review	Survey	Interview	Focus group	Judicial Characteristics	Judicial Decision-Making Process	Hearing Quality	Judicial Decisions in Hearings	Pre- and Between-Hearing Communication and Activities	Jurisdiction Context, Court Resources, Practices, and Culture	Case Process and Progress	Case Outcomes
<a href="#">Termination of Parental Rights Judicial Scenario Survey</a>													
<a href="#">Termination of Parental Rights Practices Review</a>													
<a href="#">Texas Hearing Observation/File Review Tool</a>													
<a href="#">Texas Placement Review Court Observation Tool</a>													
<a href="#">Washington Off the Bench Judicial Time Log</a>													
<a href="#">Wisconsin Parent Engagement Court Experience Survey</a>													
<a href="#">Wisconsin Parent Engagement Court Observation Instrument</a>													
<a href="#">Youth Attendance Judicial Interview</a>													

Measure	Measurement strategy					Components measured							
	Court observation	Case file review	Survey	Interview	Focus group	Judicial Characteristics	Judicial Decision-Making Process	Hearing Quality	Judicial Decisions in Hearings	Pre- and Between-Hearing Communication and Activities	Jurisdiction Context, Court Resources, Practices, and Culture	Case Process and Progress	Case Outcomes
<a href="#">Youth Attendance Youth Survey</a>													

# Measures that Assess Overlapping Components

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The diagram on the following page illustrates the number of measures that assess judicial characteristics, judicial decision-making, and hearing quality and shows instances where the identified measures assess one or more of these components.



**Hearing Quality**

Assessing Quality of Permanency Hearings Toolkit: Focus Group Questions  
 Assessing Quality of Permanency Hearings Toolkit: Self-Assessment  
 Attorney Case Activity Periodic Survey  
 Child Welfare Initial Hearing Court Observation Tool  
 Client-Directed Representation Court Record Review  
 Client-Directed Representation Informed Participant Interview  
 Cook County Juvenile CIP: Court Observation Instrument  
 Court Calendaring Court Observation Tool  
 Court Calendaring Parent Survey  
 Foster Parents Engagement in Dependency Court Focus Group Guide  
 FTDC Procedural Justice Study Parent Survey  
 Hawaii Courts Catalyzing Change Case File Review Tool  
 Hawaii Courts Catalyzing Change Court Observation Tool  
 Indian Child Welfare Act Toolkit: Case File Review Tool

Indian Child Welfare Act Toolkit: Court Observation Tool  
 Interview Assessing Children's Emotional Reaction to and Understanding of Child Welfare Hearings  
 Maryland Standardized Case File Review Instrument  
 Mississippi Legal Representation Case File Review Tool  
 Oregon Case File Review Instrument  
 Oregon Standardized Semi-Structured Interviews  
 Nevada Hearing Quality Court Observation Tool  
 New York Permanency Hearing Court Observation Tool  
 Parent Attitude Toward Court Measure  
 Parent Engagement Measure  
 Parent or Caregiver Post-Court Survey  
 Parental Engagement Court Observation Process  
 Parents' Understanding of Child Welfare Case Process, Hearings, and Judicial Decisions Interview  
 Structured Court Observation Instrument  
 Texas Hearing Observation/File Review Tool  
 Texas Placement Review Court Observation Tool  
 Youth Attendance Judicial Interview  
 Youth Attendance Youth Survey

**Total Number of Measures = 32**

**Hearing Quality and Judicial Decision-Making**

Case File Review-Impact of CCC Benchcard

**Total Number of Measures = 1**

**Judicial Decision-Making and Judicial Characteristics**

Judicial Questionnaire Regarding Expert Testimony in Juvenile/Domestic Court Termination of Parental Rights Judicial Scenario Survey

**Total Number of Measures = 2**

**Hearing Quality and Judicial Characteristics**

Judicial Engagement of Parents in Child Welfare Hearings Survey  
 Wisconsin Parent Engagement Court Observation Instrument  
 Wisconsin Court Experience Survey

**Total Number of Measures = 3**

**Judicial Decision-Making**

CANI Case Scenario Instrument

**Total Number of Measures = 1**

**Hearing Quality, Judicial Decision-Making, and Judicial Characteristics**

Best Interests Judicial Interview Guide  
 Child's Voice in Custody Litigation Survey

**Total Number of Measures = 2**

**Judicial Characteristics**

Judicial Expertise and Decision-Making Survey  
 Judicial Leadership Survey and Interview

**Total Number of Measures = 2**

# Measure Profiles

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## Overview of Information in Each Profile

The Measure Profiles provide detailed information about each measure included in the Compendium. Once users have identified the set of components and related measures of interest, the profiles can be used to learn more about each measure to select the best fit for their judicial decision-making and hearing quality assessments. The profiles summarize the following information for each measure:

- Instrument Description
- Components Measured
- Unit of Measurement
- Measurement Strategy
- Psychometric Properties
- Scoring Method
- Reference
- Accessing the Measure

See [Exhibit 2](#) on page 4 for more information about what each of these categories include.

# Assessing Quality of Permanency Hearings Toolkit: Focus Group Questions

## Instrument Description

The Focus Group Questions are part of the *Assessing Quality of Permanency Hearings Toolkit*. The toolkit shares measurement tools for how to assess the quality of permanency hearings in child welfare. The questions were used in New York state to gain a better understanding of how stakeholders defined a high-quality permanency hearing, including who should be present, what topics should be discussed, how the topics should be discussed in relation to legal statutes, and what is considered best practice. Findings from the questions were used in New York to create more objective measurement tools, including the [New York Permanency Hearing Case File Review Tool](#) and the [New York Permanency Hearing Court Observation Tool](#), also included in this Compendium.

## Components Measured

- Hearing Quality
  - Judicial inquiry and engagement of hearing participants
  - Breadth, depth, and relevance of discussion
  - Parent attendance and engagement
  - Child attendance and engagement
  - Attention to and application of legal standards
- Pre- and Between-Hearing Communication and Activities
  - Court reports

## Unit of Measurement

Individual stakeholders (e.g., agency workers; attorneys for the agency; parents; attorneys for parents; youth; attorneys for youth; and foster parents).

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Focus group
- Type of assessment: Stakeholders, foster parents, and youth self-report and discussion
- Location/context: Could be administered in multiple locations
- Administrator/coder: Trained researcher/observer
- Administration time/coding time: Unknown
- Administration mode: Group-administered; In-person/Could also use other methods of administration such as electronic (virtual) meetup

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

Focus group participants' responses were transcribed. Transcriptions were then analyzed to identify the major ideas or themes that emerged in participants' responses related to hearing quality and pre- and between-hearing communication and activities.

## Reference

Summers, A., & Kiesel, C. S. (2017). *Assessing quality of permanency hearings: Toolkit*. Albany, NY: New York State Unified Court System Child Welfare Court Improvement Project.

## Accessing the Measure

The full measure is available both in the document identified in the reference and in the Appendix of Measures, linked [here](#).

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# Assessing Quality of Permanency Hearings Toolkit: Self-Assessment

## Instrument Description

The Self-Assessment is part of the *Assessing Quality of Permanency Hearings Toolkit*. The toolkit shares measurement tools for how to assess the quality of permanency hearings in child welfare. The Self-Assessment was designed to be used in jurisdictions that lack the funding for more resource intensive data collection so they can gain a better understanding of their current child welfare court practice, specific to the quality of court hearings. It can be self or group administered and participants are asked to rate the frequency of specific practices, including how often parties are present, parents and youth are engaged with specific strategies, specific items are discussed, reports are submitted timely, and findings are made on the record.

## Components Measured

- Hearing Quality
  - Judicial inquiry and engagement of hearing participants
  - Breadth, depth, and relevance of discussion
  - Parent attendance and engagement
  - Child attendance and engagement
  - Child welfare agency attendance and engagement
  - Quality of representation for the parent, child, and child welfare agency
- Judicial Decisions in Hearings
  - Findings made by the judge
- Case Process and Progress
  - Case progress and timeliness of hearings
- Pre- and Between-Hearing Communication and Activities
  - Court reports
- Jurisdiction Context, Court Resources, Practices, and Culture
  - Judicial continuity

## Unit of Measurement

Individual or groups of stakeholders (e.g., judges, attorneys, agency workers)

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Survey or focus group
- Type of assessment: Stakeholders self-report and discussion
- Location/context: Could be administered in multiple locations

- Administrator/coder: Self-administered or group-administered
- Administration time/coding time: Unknown
- Administration mode: In-person/ could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

Items on the self-assessment survey are scored on a 5-point frequency scale, including 0 (never), 1 (rarely), 2 (sometimes), 3 (often), and 4 always/almost always).

## Reference

Summers, A., & Kiesel, C. S. (2017). *Assessing quality of permanency hearings: Toolkit*. Albany, NY: New York State Unified Court System Child Welfare Court Improvement Project.

## Accessing the Measure

The full measure is available both in the document identified in the reference and in the Appendix of Measures, linked [here](#).

New York State Unified Court System hereby grants the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, James Bell Associates and their partners a royalty-free, nonexclusive and irrevocable right to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the Compendium for government purposes.

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# Attorney Case Activity Periodic Survey – Quality Improvement Center-Child Representation Intervention

## Instrument Description

The Attorney Case Activity Periodic Survey is a self-report measure of attorney practices related to participation in pre- and between-hearing activities and measures of the quality of representation for the child. It assesses whether certain between-hearing activities (e.g., mediation) occur, whether the attorneys participate in those activities and the extent to which the child's attorney engaged in contact between other parties such as the parent, caseworker, or other attorneys on the case. The survey addresses specific research questions about attorney behaviors and how those may relate to case outcomes such as type and timeliness of permanency. The survey was part of a study that compared outcomes among a treatment group that received enhanced training and support and a control group that did not.

## Components Measured

- Pre- and Between-Hearing Communication and Activities
  - Mediation
  - Family group conferences/Family team meetings
  - Family service plan development
  - Court reports
  - Prehearing preparation of parties
  - Prehearing and between-hearing contact between parties
- Hearing Quality
  - Quality of representation for the parent, child, and child welfare agency

## Unit of Measurement

Individual attorney

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Survey
- Type of assessment: Attorney self-report
- Location/context: Could be administered in multiple locations
- Administrator/coder: Self-administered
- Administration time/coding time: Unknown
- Administration mode: Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

Attorney presence or participation in pre- and between-hearing activities (e.g., attorney participation in mediation, family group conferencing) were coded as no (0) or yes (1) for a series of events across the life of the case. This included all key hearings, mediation, family team meetings, and any other court proceedings. Contact with the child or other parties (e.g., parents, other stakeholders) was coded on a 5-point scale, including 0 (none), 1 (1 time), 2 (2–3 times), 3 (4–5 times), and 4 (more than 5 times). Attorney time on specific activities such as consulting/negotiating with parties, reviewing court file, revising records, and drafting motions was coded on 5-point scale including 0 (none), 1 (a half hour or less), 2 (about an hour), 3 (several [2 to 4] hours), and 4 (many 5+ hours).

## Reference

- Orlebeke, B., Zhou, X., Skyles, A., & Zinn, A. (2016). Evaluation of the QIC-ChildRep best practices model training for attorneys representing children in the child welfare system. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.
- Duquette, D., Orlebeke, B., Zinn, A., & Zhou, X. (2018). National Quality Improvement Center for the Representation of Children in Child Welfare (QIC-ChildRep) [Dataset]. National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect. <https://doi.org/10.34681/HXQ9-WD33>

## Accessing the Measure

The full measure is available in the Appendix of Measures, linked [here](#). Material(s) courtesy of Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago; may be reproduced and used with proper citation.

The data collected from this study and documentation of all items can be found on the [National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect](#) website related to Dataset #212.

# Best Interests Judicial Interview Guide

## Instrument Description

The Best Interests Judicial Interview Guide collects information from judges about best interest decision-making, guardian ad litem practice, and general strengths and weaknesses in family law and child welfare cases. The guide asks judges to reflect on the quality of guardian ad litem practice, including qualities and characteristics of guardians ad litem that do the best work. It consists of open-ended questions on these topics. The measure was used in a study to learn more about judicial discretion in applying the best interest standard in child welfare cases.

## Components Measured

- Judicial Characteristics
  - Experience, knowledge, training, and skills
- Judicial Decision-Making Process
  - Case information considered
  - Interpretation of legal standards
- Hearing Quality
  - Quality of representation for the parent, child, and child welfare agency

## Unit of Measurement

Individual judge

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Interview
- Type of assessment: Interview
- Location/context: Court/Could be administered in multiple locations
- Administrator/coder: Trained researcher/observer
- Administration time/coding time: Average of 58 minutes
- Administration mode: In-person or by phone with audio recording

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

Interviews assessed topics such as adequacy of the best practice standard, weighing of case information in hearings, quality of guardian ad litem practice, and judicial reliance on guardian ad litem recommendations. Interviews were recorded, and the transcripts were analyzed to determine

judicial characteristics of respondents, as well as to identify the major ideas or themes that emerged in the judges' responses to interview questions.

## **Reference**

Oshana, J. (2017). Family and juvenile court judges and the best interests of the child: Current practices, procedures, and recommendations (Doctoral Dissertation). Retrieved from <https://opencommons.uconn.edu/dissertations/1673/>

## **Accessing the Measure**

A copy of the complete measure can be found in the above referenced document.

# Child Abuse and Neglect Institute Case Scenario Instrument

## Instrument Description

The Child Abuse and Neglect Institute Case Scenario Instrument assesses judicial decisions about child placement, services for the child and parents, factors considered in decision-making, additional information judges would like to have to make decisions, and what legal findings and orders the judge indicated were required for a mock initial hearing. The instrument assesses judicial decision-making in a mock case scenario. The survey was used in a study that assessed changes in responses before and after the Child Abuse and Neglect Institute, a 4.5-day intensive training for child welfare judges.

## Components Measured

- Judicial Decision-Making Process
  - Case information considered
  - Interpretation of legal standards

## Unit of Measurement

Individual judge

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Survey
- Type of assessment: Judge self-report
- Location/context: Training venue/Could be administered in multiple locations
- Administrator/coder: Self-administered
- Administration time/coding time: Unknown
- Administration mode: Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

Participants were asked how likely they would be to make a specific decision (e.g., appointing a Court Appointed Special Advocate, referring family to specific services, or placing the child with a specific relative) on a 4-point scale ranging from 1 (very unlikely) to 4 (very likely). Open-ended questions (i.e., “What legal findings do you need to make at this hearing?” “What information (from the case scenario) was most important in your decision-making?” “What else would you like to know

to make an informed decision on this case?”) were analyzed using a grounded-theory approach to thematic coding. That is, researchers critically reviewed all responses to determine an appropriate coding scheme and formulated themes based on this review.

## Reference

Sicafuse, L. L., Wood, S. M., Summers, A., & DeVault, A. (2015). Evaluating the Child Abuse and Neglect Institute: Does training affect decision-making? *Juvenile and Family Court Journal*, *66*, 1–14.

## Accessing the Measure

For further information or details regarding the referenced tools, instrument, benchcard, forms, survey, interview questions, or time logs referenced in this specific National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges publication, please contact Melissa Gueller, MS, Program Director - Child Abuse and Neglect, at [mgueller@ncjfcj.org](mailto:mgueller@ncjfcj.org).

# Case File Review – Impact of Courts Catalyzing Change Benchcard

## Instrument Description

The Case File Review explores components of hearing quality (e.g., parent attendance at hearings), judicial decisions made at hearings (e.g., placement), child welfare case progress and timeliness between hearings, and child welfare case outcomes (e.g., type and timeliness of permanency). The instrument was designed as part of a multi-method study that included the [Child Welfare Initial Hearing Court Observation Tool](#), which is also included in this Compendium. This review was one of two measures used to assess whether the Courts Catalyzing Change Benchcard (a judicial checklist used at the first hearing on a case) affected judicial decisions (e.g., placement decisions, findings, and orders) and case outcomes.

## Components Measured

- Judicial Decision-Making Process
  - Case information considered
  - Self-reflection on practice and bias
- Hearing Quality
  - Parent attendance and engagement
- Case Process and Progress
  - Child placement type and stability
  - Family engagement in services and service progress
  - Termination of parental rights
  - Case progress and timeliness of hearings
- Case Outcomes
  - Child safety
  - Type and timeliness of child permanency
  - Reentry into care

## Unit of Measurement

Child welfare case file

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Case file review
- Type of assessment: Structured document review
- Location/context: Courthouse/Could be administered in multiple locations with remote access to a court case management system

- Administrator/coder: Trained researcher/observer
- Administration time/coding time: Unknown
- Administration mode: Document review; paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

The instrument was not included in the article; however, it was described in detail. Measures were categorical (e.g., placement decision, case outcome, presence or absence of parent at hearing) or numerical (e.g., dates).

## Reference

Gonzalez, C., & Summers, A. (2014). *Assessing the long-term effects of courts catalyzing change preliminary protective hearing benchcard*. Reno, NV: National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

## Accessing the Measure

For further information or details regarding the referenced tools, instrument, benchcard, forms, survey, interview questions, or time logs referenced in this specific National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges publication, please contact Melissa Gueller, MS, Program Director - Child Abuse and Neglect, at [mgueller@ncjfcj.org](mailto:mgueller@ncjfcj.org).

# Child Welfare Initial Hearing Court Observation Tool

## Instrument Description

The Child Welfare Initial Hearing Court Observation Tool collects information on parties present at the hearing, judicial engagement strategies for parents and youth, judicial inquiry, discussion of relevant topics, child's current placement, and findings made verbally on the record. It assesses the quality of the first child welfare court hearing and has been used in two research studies to explore how initial hearing practice, judicial decision-making at hearings, and case outcomes are related (case outcomes were collected via a case file review tool). It was also used in one study in combination with the [Case File Review - Impact of Courts Catalyzing Change Benchcard](#) identified in this Compendium to explore fidelity to a judicial Benchcard.

## Components Measured

- Hearing Quality
  - Judicial inquiry and engagement of hearing participants
  - Attention to and application of legal standards
  - Breadth, depth, and relevance of discussion
  - Parent attendance and engagement
  - Child attendance and engagement
  - Quality of representation for the parent, child, and child welfare agency
  - Child welfare agency attendance and engagement
- Case Process and Progress
  - Child placement type and stability

## Unit of Measurement

Child welfare court hearing

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Court observation
- Type of assessment: Structured observation
- Location/context: Court/Could be administered in multiple locations with remote access to audio or video recordings of court hearings
- Administrator/coder: Trained researcher/observer
- Administration time/coding time: Dependent on length of the court hearing
- Administration mode: Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## Psychometric Properties

Inter-rater reliability: Average 86 percent agreement

## Scoring Method

The Child Welfare Initial Hearing Court Observation Tool requires the coders to make a series of decisions on the presence or absence of items using a yes/no response. They must also make a judgment about whether the item is relevant to the specific hearing being observed.

Two dimensions of discussion in the court hearings were scored: breadth and depth. For depth of discussion, coders make a series of judgments related to the level of discussion observed. Specifically, they identify the level of a discussion topic on a scale including 1 (no discussion), 2 (statement only), and 3 (more than a statement). Depth of discussion is then calculated as the average score for each item and across items. To calculate discussion breadth, a count variable was used with the number of topic items that had a 2 or 3 coding. This number was divided by a count of all potential applicable topics to create a percentage. If an item was coded as not applicable, it was not included.

To score presence of parents and children at hearings, coders marked whether individuals were present or absent (yes/no). To score judicial engagement of parents and children present at hearings, coders noted whether a judge used, or did not use, a specific engagement strategy from a list of possible engagement strategies, marking a 1 for yes and a 0 for no.

## References

- Summers, A., Gatowski, S., & Gueller, M. (2017). Examining hearing quality in child abuse and neglect cases: The relationship between breadth of discussion and case outcomes. *Children and Youth Services Review, 82*, 490–498.
- Macgill, S., & Summers, A., (2014). Assessing the relationship between the quality of juvenile dependency hearings and foster care placements. *Family Court Review, 52*, 678–685.

## Accessing the Measure

Contact the authors for more information about the measure.

# Child's Voice in Custody Litigation Survey

## Instrument Description

The Custody Litigation Survey gathers information about attitudes, practices, and strategies around child and youth testimony in private child custody cases. Questions primarily ask about the relative importance of different factors (e.g., significance of the child's choice by age, other case factors) and frequency of practices (e.g., use of interviews in the judge's chambers). This survey was used in a study to inform state and national system improvements. While not specific to child welfare cases, this method of interviewing or talking with youth in chambers is a practice sometimes found in child welfare cases and thus relevant for inclusion.

## Components Measured

- Judicial Characteristics
  - Demographics
  - Role/Authority
  - Attitudes and beliefs about child welfare cases
- Hearing Quality
  - Judicial inquiry and engagement of hearing participants
  - Child attendance and engagement
  - Attention to and application of legal standards
- Judicial Decision-Making Process
  - Case information considered
  - Interpretation of legal standards

## Unit of Measurement

Individual judge

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Survey
- Type of assessment: Judge self-report
- Location/context: Could be administered in multiple locations
- Administrator/coder: Self-administered
- Administration time/coding time: Unknown
- Administration mode: Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

Attitudes and beliefs about child welfare cases, court case and practice information considered, judicial inquiry, attention to and application of legal standards, and child engagement were scored using 5-point Likert scales. Judges indicated the factors that influenced their decision-making regarding the child's wishes (e.g., child's age, maturity, emotional health) on a 5-point scale, including 1 (no significance whatsoever), 2 (possibly significant), 3 (significant), 4 (very significant), and 5 (extremely significant). Judges indicated their agreement with statements regarding children's preferences in custody litigations and assessment of judicial practices of interviewing children on a 5-point scale, including 1 (disagree strongly), 2 (disagree), 3 (no opinion), 4 (agree), and 5 (agree strongly). Judges indicated the frequency with which they used specific methods to determine children's wishes as well as the frequency with which they follow specific procedures on a 5-point scale including 1 (never), 2 (occasionally [about 25 percent of the time]), 3 (regularly [about 50 percent of the time]), 4 (very often [about 75 percent of the time]), and 5 (always or almost always). The same scale was used to determine judges' perceptions of circumstances in which they would be likely to interview a child or order a custody evaluation. Overall scale or subscale scoring was not reported.

## Reference

Atwood, B. A. (2003). The child's voice in custody litigation: An empirical survey and suggestions for reform. *Arizona Law Review*, 45, 629.

## Accessing the Measure

Copyright 2003 by Arizona Board of Regents and Barbara A. Atwood. Reprinted with permission of the author and publisher. This article originally appeared in *Arizona Law Review*, vol. 45, no. 3, p. 629.

The full measure is available both in the document identified in the reference as well as in the Appendix of Measures, linked [here](#).

# Client-Directed Representation Court Record Review

## Instrument Description

The Court Record Review instrument examines data related to the quality of legal representation and case outcomes in child welfare cases. This includes capturing data on key events, motion practice (i.e., whether and what types of motions attorneys file on the case), and outcomes for the case. The instrument was used in a study to examine differences in outcomes for a client-directed representation program for children (where attorneys are assigned to children and are required to represent the child's expressed wishes) compared to outcomes for those who did not participate in the program. This study also used the [\*Client-Directed Representation Informed Participant Interview\*](#), also included in this Compendium.

## Components Measured

- Hearing Quality
  - Quality of representation for the parent, child, and child welfare agency
- Case Process and Progress
  - Case progress and timeliness of hearings
  - Termination of parental rights
- Case Outcomes
  - Type and timeliness of child permanency

## Unit of Measurement

Child welfare case file

## Measurement Strategy

- Data Collection Methodology: Case file review
- Type of assessment: Structured document review
- Location/context: Courthouse/Could be administered in multiple locations with remote access to a court case management system
- Administrator/coder: Trained researcher/observer
- Administration time/coding time: Unknown
- Administration mode: Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

Data were primarily collected and scored as dichotomous yes/no variables along with dates of key events.

## Reference

Zinn, A., & Peters, C. (2015). Expressed-interest legal representation for children in substitute care: Evaluation of the impact of representation on children's permanency outcomes. *Family Court Review*, 53, 589–601.

## Accessing the Measure

Contact the authors for more information about the measure.

# Client-Directed Representation Informed Participant Interview

## Instrument Description

The Client-Directed Representation Informed Participant Interview examines the quality of representation by exploring strategies employed by a quality legal representation program. The interview inquired about program outcomes, services provided to families, and how these services may result in better outcomes. The instrument was used in a study to examine differences in outcomes for a client-directed representation program for children (where attorneys are assigned to children and are required to represent the child's expressed wishes) compared to outcomes for those who did not participate in the program. This study also used the [Client-Directed Representation Court Record Review](#), also included in this Compendium.

## Components Measured

- Hearing Quality
  - Quality of representation for the parent, child, and child welfare agency

## Unit of Measurement

Individual judges, attorneys, and service providers

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Interview
- Type of assessment: Semi-structured interview
- Location/context: Could be administered in multiple locations
- Administrator/coder: Trained researcher/observer
- Administration time/coding time: Unknown
- Administration mode: In-person or by phone with audio recording

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

The interviews were described as having three broad open-ended questions. Results were analyzed thematically with an inductive approach. That is, coding of themes was done without trying to fit the information into a specific theory or framework.

## Reference

Zinn, A., & Peters, C. (2015). Expressed-interest legal representation for children in substitute care: evaluation of the impact of representation on children's permanency outcomes. *Family Court Review*, 53, 589–601.

## Accessing the Measure

The full measure is available in the Appendix of Measures, linked [here](#).

# Cook County Juvenile Court Improvement Program: Court Observation Instrument

## Instrument Description

The Court Observation instrument gathers information about the court hearing process, including hearing type, presence of parties, discussion topics, and engagement of parents. It gathers data on court practices to explore changes in day-to-day practice and changes in case progression and outcomes. The instrument was used in a study in Cook County, Illinois to examine changes in timeliness of case processing and achievement of permanency for youth.

## Components Measured

- Hearing Quality
  - Parent attendance and engagement
  - Child attendance and engagement
  - Child welfare agency attendance and engagement
  - Breadth, depth, and relevance of discussion

## Unit of Measurement

Child welfare court hearing

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Court observation
- Type of Assessment: Structured observation
- Location/Context: Court/Could be administered in multiple locations with remote access to audio or video recordings of court hearings
- Administrator/coder: Trained researcher/observer
- Administration time/coding time: Dependent on length of hearing
- Administration mode: Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

Several items were scored as Yes/No variables, including parent, child, and stakeholder attendance at a hearing, whether a continuance occurred, whether the judge used the parent's proper name and addressed the parent directly, and specific case worker actions (e.g., Was the case worker

prepared, dressed appropriately, and treated respectfully?). Wait time and length of each hearing (in minutes) were noted. Discussion items were included on a checklist of items and marked if discussion of the item occurred at the hearing. Continuance reasons were coded from a list of categorical options with an option for “other.”

## Reference

Merry, S. M., Peters, C. M., Bilaver, L. M., George, R. M., & Lee, B. J. (1999). *The impact of reform in the Cook County Juvenile Court Child Protection Division*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall Center for Children.

## Accessing the Measure

The full measure is available in the Appendix of Measures, linked [here](#). Material(s) courtesy of Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago; may be reproduced and used with proper citation.

# Court Calendaring Court Observation Tool

## Instrument Description

The Court Calendaring Court Observation Tool gathers basic data about child welfare court hearings including hearing type, scheduled time, start and end time, presence of parties, and engagement of parents. The instrument was used in a multimethod study to explore docketing/calendaring systems that included combining court observation, parent surveys, and stakeholder surveys. The approach also included the [Court Calendaring Parent Survey](#) and the [Court Calendaring Stakeholder Survey](#), which are also included in this Compendium.

## Components Measured

- Hearing Quality
  - Parent attendance and engagement
  - Child attendance and engagement
  - Child welfare agency attendance and engagement

## Unit of Measurement

Child welfare court hearing

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Court observation
- Type of Assessment: Structured observation
- Location/Context: Court/Could be administered in multiple locations with remote access to audio or video recordings of court hearings
- Administrator/coder: Trained researcher/observer
- Administration Time/Coding Time: Dependent on length of hearing
- Administration mode: Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

Party presence in a hearing was scored as yes or no. Wait time and length of each hearing (in minutes) were noted. Parent and child engagement was scored on a series of yes/no responses about judicial behavior, such as whether the judge “explained the purpose of the hearings”, “spoke directly to the person”, “called the person by name”, “asked if the person had any questions”, “gave

the person an opportunity to be heard”, “asked if the next hearing date worked for the person”, and “identified the next steps to the person.”

## Reference

Gonzalez, C., Bohannon, T., & Summers, A. (2015). *Research report: Assessing time-certain calendaring dockets*. Reno, NV: National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

## Accessing the Measure

For further information or details regarding the referenced tools, instrument, benchcard, forms, survey, interview questions, or time logs referenced in this specific National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges publication, please contact Melissa Gueller, MS, Program Director - Child Abuse and Neglect, at [mgueller@ncjfcj.org](mailto:mgueller@ncjfcj.org).

# Court Calendaring Parent Survey

## Instrument Description

The Court Calendaring Parent Survey gathers data from parents as they exit a court hearing on how they experience the court process. It asks questions about satisfaction with court hearings, procedural fairness, the judge's decision, their wait time, and their attorney. The instrument was used in a multimethod study to explore docketing/calendaring systems that included combining court observation, parent surveys, and stakeholder surveys. The approach also included the [Court Calendaring Court Observation Tool](#) and the [Court Calendaring Stakeholder Survey](#), which are also included in this Compendium.

## Components Measured

- Hearing Quality
  - Parent attendance and engagement
  - Quality of representation for the parent, child, and child welfare agency

## Unit of Measurement

Individual parent

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Survey
- Type of assessment: Parent self-report
- Location/context: Courthouse/Could be administered in multiple locations
- Administrator/coder: Self-administered
- Administration time/coding time: Unknown
- Administration mode: Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

Most survey items were statements scored on a 5-point Likert scale of agreement, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Time was reported for scheduled, start, and stop times of each hearing.

## Reference

Gonzalez, C., Bohannon, T., & Summers, A. (2015). *Research report: Assessing time-certain calendaring dockets*. Reno, NV: National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

## Accessing the Measure

For further information or details regarding the referenced tools, instrument, benchcard, forms, survey, interview questions, or time logs referenced in this specific National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges publication, please contact Melissa Gueller, MS, Program Director - Child Abuse and Neglect, at [mgueller@ncjfcj.org](mailto:mgueller@ncjfcj.org).

# Court Calendaring Stakeholder Survey

## Instrument Description

The Court Calendaring Stakeholder Survey gathers data from court stakeholders (e.g., judges, attorneys, and volunteer child advocates) about their experiences with a specific docketing/calendaring system, including satisfaction with the court process, effectiveness of the calendaring system, and perceptions of the wait time and its effect on the client. The instrument was used in a multimethod study to explore docketing/calendaring systems that included combining court observation, parent surveys, and stakeholder surveys. The approach also included the [Court Calendaring Court Observation Tool](#) and the [Court Calendaring Parent Survey](#), which are also included in this Compendium.

## Components Measured

- Jurisdiction Context, Court Resources, Practices, and Culture
  - Docketing/Calendaring

## Unit of Measurement

Court stakeholders: Individual judges, attorneys, and volunteer child advocates

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Survey
- Type of assessment: Court stakeholders (e.g., individual judges, attorneys, and volunteer child advocates) self-report
- Location/context: Could be administered in multiple locations
- Administrator/coder: Self-administered
- Administration time/coding time: Unknown
- Administration mode: Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

Scale items included statements that participants rated on a 5-point Likert agreement scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Items included statements related to court stakeholders' perceptions of the court's calendaring system (e.g., "The wait time for hearings is frustrating to me," "I believe the calendaring system in my jurisdiction is effective in minimizing the

wait time for all parties,” “I believe the calendaring system utilized in my jurisdiction is effective in decreasing the number of case continuances”).

## Reference

Gonzalez, C., Bohannon, T., & Summers, A. (2015). *Research report: Assessing time-certain calendaring dockets*. Reno, NV: National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

## Accessing the Measure

For further information or details regarding the referenced tools, instrument, benchcard, forms, survey, interview questions, or time logs referenced in this specific National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges publication, please contact Melissa Gueller, MS, Program Director - Child Abuse and Neglect, at [mgueller@ncjfcj.org](mailto:mgueller@ncjfcj.org).

# Described Experiences Interview Protocol

## Instrument Description

The Described Experiences Interview Protocol gathers in-depth information about the experience of a small group of child welfare stakeholders/volunteers with a focus on child education in and out of foster care. The measure assesses what information is needed to order recommended placement out of the home, how much emphasis is placed on the child's education, how recommendations are made regarding the child's education, and what procedures are in place to ensure the child is receiving the best education possible. The measure was used in a case study looking in-depth at the practice of four individuals involved in child welfare. The study was used to better understand and describe practice surrounding a child's education when in foster care.

## Components Measured

- Case Process and Progress
  - Child placement type and stability
- Case Outcomes
  - Child well-being

## Unit of measurement

Individual judges, court appointed special advocates, caseworkers, and foster parents

## Measurement strategy

- Data collection method: Interview
- Type of assessment: Semi-structured interview
- Location/context: Could be administered in multiple locations
- Administrator/coder: Trained researcher/observer
- Administration time/coding time: Minimum 45 minutes
- Administration mode: In-person or by phone with audio recording

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

The interview protocol was a short list of four broad open-ended questions intended to elicit rich data from informed actors in the child welfare system. Interviews were transcribed and coders searched for themes or patterns in participants' responses using an inductive approach (coding that occurs without a preexisting theory or framework).

## Reference

Wilbourne, M. C. (2014). *Understanding the described experiences of court judges, court appointed special advocate volunteers, department of human resources' caseworkers, and foster parents* (Doctoral dissertation). University of Alabama at Birmingham. Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations Publishing. (3634648)

## Accessing the Measure

A copy of the complete measure can be found in the above referenced document.

# Family Treatment Drug Court Procedural Justice Study Case File Review Tool

## Instrument Description

The Family Treatment Drug Court (FTDC) Procedural Justice Study Case File Review Tool collects data from closed child welfare court case files. FTDC is a specialty child welfare court that focuses on parents with substance abuse concerns. The hearings held in FTDC include standard child welfare hearings (e.g., review or permanency hearings) and much more frequent hearings that may not be as substantive and only focus on parent progress in treatment. The tool collects information from court files, including from court orders on parent visitation, case plan compliance, services ordered for parents, and child welfare outcomes for the case. This tool was used in combination with the [Family Treatment Drug Court Procedural Justice Study Parent Survey](#), also included in this Compendium, to examine case processing and outcomes to compare FTDC participants to nonparticipants.

## Components Measured

- Judicial Decisions in Hearings
  - Services ordered for the parents and child
- Case Outcomes
  - Type and timeliness of child permanency

## Unit of Measurement

Child welfare case

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Case file review
- Type of assessment: Structured document review
- Location/context: Courthouse/Could be administered in multiple locations with remote access to a court case management system
- Administrator/coder: Trained researcher/observer
- Administration time/coding time: Unknown
- Administration mode: Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

All items were coded into categorical variables, typically into dichotomous (occurred/did not occur) variables (e.g., whether the case was adjudicated, what the petition allegations were, whether a specific case outcome occurred). For example, reunification was coded as 0 (not reunified) or 1 (reunified). Cases were also coded as 0 (not successful) or 1 (successful). Success was defined by whether the case resulted in a termination of parental rights (those cases were considered unsuccessful). Researchers coded whether parents were ordered to participate in specific service as 0 (not ordered) or 1 (ordered). Researchers also coded whether parents completed the ordered evaluation as 0 (not completed) or 1 (completed). When parents were ordered to participate in services, these services were coded based on participation level including 0 (did not participate), 1 (participated inconsistently), 2 (participated consistently), and 3 (completed participation).

## Reference

Fessinger, M., Hazen, K., Bahm, J., Cole-Mossman, J., Heideman, R., & Brank, E. (2019). Mandatory, fast, and fair: Case outcomes and procedural justice in family drug court. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*.

## Accessing the Measure

Contact the authors for more information about the measure.

# Family Treatment Drug Court Procedural Justice Study Parent Survey

## Instrument Description

The Family Treatment Drug Court Procedural Justice Study Parent Survey assesses parents' perceptions of the court process related to measures of procedural justice including perceptions of voice, neutrality, trust, and respect. The family treatment drug court (FTDC) is a specialty child welfare court focusing on parents with substance use disorders. Hearings held in FTDC include standard child welfare hearings (e.g., review or permanency hearings) and more frequent hearings that may not be as substantive and focus on the parent's progress in treatment. This tool was used in combination with the [Family Treatment Drug Court Procedural Justice Study Case File Review Tool](#), also included in this Compendium, to examine case processing and outcomes to compare FTDC participants to nonparticipants.

## Components Measured

- Hearing Quality
  - Parent Attendance and Engagement

## Unit of Measurement

Individual parent

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Survey
- Type of assessment: Parent self-report
- Location/context: Court/Could be administered in multiple locations
- Administrator/coder: Self-administered
- Administration time/coding time: Unknown
- Administration mode: Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## Psychometric Properties

Reliability: High internal consistency via Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha = 0.93$ )

## Scoring Method

Parents rated their agreement on 11 items on 5-point Likert agreement scales ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Items were related to procedural justice measures of voice,

respect, neutrality, and trust, such as “the process of getting my children back is fair,” or “I have a say in the decisions that affect me and my children.” Scores were averaged across all 11 items.

## Reference

Fessinger, M., Hazen, K., Bahm, J., Cole-Mossman, J., Heideman, R., & Brank, E. (2019). Mandatory, fast, and fair: Case outcomes and procedural justice in family drug court. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*.

## Accessing the Measure

Contact the authors for more information about the measure.

# Foster Parents Engagement in Dependency Court Focus Group Guide

## Instrument Description

The Foster Parents Engagement in Dependency Court Focus Group Guide captures foster parent perspectives on what facilitates and impedes engagement in the child welfare court process including their participation and engagement in child welfare hearings. This guide was used in a study to obtain foster parent perspectives on the factors that promote and impede engagement in child welfare cases, including child welfare hearings.

## Components Measured

- Hearing Quality
  - Judicial inquiry and engagement of hearing participants
- Jurisdiction Context, Court Resources, Practices, and Culture
  - Docketing/Calendaring

## Unit of Measurement

Foster parents of children currently involved in the child welfare system

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Focus group
- Type of assessment: Foster parent self-report and discussion
- Location/context: Could be administered in multiple locations
- Administrator/coder: Two trained researchers/observers
- Administration time/coding time: 90–120 minutes
- Administration mode: Group administered; in-person, audio-taped, and transcribed/Could also use other methods of administration such as electronic (virtual) meeting

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

Focus group questions were open-ended (e.g., “How does scheduling of hearings work for you?” “How do you usually hear about hearings?” “What is the wait like for court?” “How are you treated when you are in court?”). Coders transcribed focus group responses and used thematic analysis to identify patterns. Coding was based on concerns identified by prior research (i.e., sensitizing

concepts) and issues that arose in the focus groups (i.e., emergent codes). Coded data were sorted according to major themes.

## Reference

Shdaimah, C. S., & Alexander, I. T. (2018). Foster parents' experience of dependency court: Laying the groundwork for engagement. *Children and Youth Services Review, 94*, 265–273.

## Accessing the Measure

The full measure is available in the Appendix of Measures, linked [here](#).

# Hawaii Courts Catalyzing Change Case File Review Tool

## Instrument Description

The Hawaii Courts Catalyzing Change Case File Review Tool collects data from child welfare court case files including parent visitation, case plan compliance, services ordered, judicial engagement, parties present, and child welfare outcomes for the case. It was used in a study to examine child welfare court practice and outcomes before and after implementation of the Courts Catalyzing Change Benchcard. This intervention is aimed at changing judicial practice, such as increasing judicial inquiry, judicial engagement of parents, discussion of relevant topics at the hearing, and verbal findings on the record. The [Hawaii Courts Catalyzing Change Court Observation Tool](#) was also part of the study and is included in this Compendium.

## Components Measured

- Hearing Quality
  - Parent attendance and engagement
  - Child attendance and engagement
  - Quality of representation for the parent, child, and child welfare agency
  - Attention to and application of legal standards
  - Child welfare agency attendance and engagement
- Judicial Decisions in Hearings
  - Child placement
  - Services ordered for the parents and child
  - Findings made by the judge
- Case Process and Progress
  - Child placement type and stability
  - Case progress and timeliness of hearings
- Case Outcomes
  - Type and timeliness of permanency

## Unit of Measurement

Child welfare case

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Case file review
- Type of assessment: Structured document review
- Location/context: Courthouse/Could be administered in multiple locations with remote access to a court case management system

- Administrator/coder: Trained researcher/observer
- Administration time/coding time: Unknown
- Administration mode: Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

Coders mark dates of key court events, yes/no presence or absence of specific items (e.g., parent presence at hearings, services ordered for family, case plan compliance), and select the appropriate case outcome from a list of possible case outcomes (e.g., reunification, adoption).

## Reference

Bohannon, T., Nevers, K., & Summers, A. (2015). *Research brief: Hawaii CCC case file review and court observation pre and post benchcard*. Reno, NV: National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

## Accessing the Measure

For further information or details regarding the referenced tools, instrument, benchcard, forms, survey, interview questions, or time logs referenced in this specific National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges publication, please contact Melissa Gueller, MS, Program Director - Child Abuse and Neglect, at [mgueller@ncjfcj.org](mailto:mgueller@ncjfcj.org).

# Hawaii Courts Catalyzing Change Court Observation Tool

## Instrument Description

The Hawaii Courts Catalyzing Change Court Observation Tool collects data from observation of a child welfare court hearing, specifically the first court hearing on the case, including parties present, judicial inquiry and engagement of parents, discussion of relevant topics, and child placement. It was used in a study to examine child welfare court practice and outcomes before and after implementation of the Courts Catalyzing Change Benchcard. This intervention is aimed at changing judicial practice, such as increasing judicial inquiry, judicial engagement of parents, discussion of relevant topics at the hearing, and verbal findings on the record. The [Hawaii Courts Catalyzing Change Case File Review Tool](#) was also part of the study and is included in this Compendium.

## Components Measured

- Hearing Quality
  - Judicial inquiry and engagement of hearing participants
  - Attention to and application of legal standards
  - Breadth, depth, and relevance of discussion
  - Parent attendance and engagement
  - Child attendance and engagement
  - Quality of representation for the parent, child, and child welfare agency
  - Child welfare agency attendance and engagement
- Judicial Decisions in Hearings
  - Child placement

## Unit of Measurement

Child welfare hearing

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Court observation
- Type of assessment: Structured observation
- Location/context: Court/Could be administered in multiple locations with remote access to audio or video recordings of court hearings
- Administrator/coder: Trained researcher/observer
- Administration time/coding time: Dependent on length of hearing
- Administration mode: Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

The Hawaii Courts Catalyzing Change Court Observation Tool requires the coders to make a series of decisions on the presence or absence of items using a yes/no response. They must also make a judgment about whether an item is relevant to the specific hearing being observed. Coders must also make a series of judgments about the level of discussion observed and must identify for each topic of discussion whether the judicial officer made an inquiry related to the discussion topic.

Two dimensions of discussion in the court hearings were scored: breadth and depth. For depth of discussion, coders make a series of judgments related to the level of discussion observed. Specifically, they identify the level of a discussion topic on a scale including 1 (no discussion), 2 (statement only), and 3 (more than a statement). Depth of discussion is then calculated as the average score for each item and across items. To calculate discussion breadth, a count variable was used with the number of topic items that had a 2 or 3 coding score. This number was divided by a count of all potential applicable topics to create a percentage. If an item was coded as not applicable, it was not included.

To score presence of parents and children at hearings, coders marked whether individuals were present or absent (yes/no) and the percentage of all hearings in which parents and children and youth were present was calculated. To score judicial engagement of parents and children present at hearings, coders noted whether a judge used, or did not use, a specific engagement strategy from a list of possible engagement strategies (e.g., Do you understand what this hearing is about? Do you understand what happened here today?), marking a 1 for yes and a 0 for no. A percentage of yes and no responses across all possible engagement strategies was calculated for an average judicial engagement score.

## Reference

Bohannon, T., Nevers, K., & Summers, A. (2015). *Research brief: Hawaii CCC case file review and court observation pre and post benchcard*. Reno, NV: National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

## Accessing the Measure

For further information or details regarding the referenced tools, instrument, benchcard, forms, survey, interview questions, or time logs referenced in this specific National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges publication, please contact Melissa Gueller, MS, Program Director - Child Abuse and Neglect, at [mgueller@ncjfcj.org](mailto:mgueller@ncjfcj.org).

# Indian Child Welfare Act Toolkit: Case File Review Tool

## Instrument Description

The Indian Child Welfare Act Toolkit: Case File Review Tool is part of the *Measuring Compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act: An Assessment Toolkit*. This toolkit outlines ideas for measuring court compliance with the requirements of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA). This case file review tool is one of several measures suggested. It collects data on findings on the record at hearings, presence of parents at the hearing, child's placement type, timeliness of case processing, when notice is provided, and case outcomes. It was used previously to assess ICWA compliance in statewide assessments.

## Components Measured

- Hearing Quality
  - Parent attendance and engagement
  - Child attendance and engagement
- Judicial Decisions in Hearings
  - Child placement
  - Findings made by the judge
- Case Process and Progress
  - Child placement type and stability
  - Case progress and timeliness of hearings
- Case Outcomes
  - Type and timeliness of permanency

## Unit of Measurement

Child welfare case

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Case file review
- Type of assessment: Structured document review
- Location/context: Courthouse/Could be administered in multiple locations with remote access to a court case management system
- Administrator/coder: Trained researcher/observer
- Administration time/coding time: Unknown
- Administration mode: Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## **Psychometric Properties**

Inter-rater reliability: Agreement averaged .78.

## **Scoring Method**

Not reported.

## **Reference**

Summers, A., & Wood, S. (2014). Measuring compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act: An assessment toolkit. Reno, NV: National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

## **Accessing the Measure**

A copy of the complete measure can be found in the above referenced document.

# Indian Child Welfare Act Toolkit: Court Observation Tool

## Instrument Description

The Indian Child Welfare Act Toolkit: Court Observation Tool is part of the *Measuring Compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act: An Assessment Toolkit*. This toolkit outlines ideas for measuring court compliance with the requirements of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA). The tool is one of several measures suggested. It collects data on parties present, judicial inquiry, discussion of specific topics, child placement at the hearing, and judicial findings on the record. The tool primarily focuses on the findings required for ICWA and was pilot tested in four jurisdictions.

## Components Measured

- Hearing Quality
  - Judicial inquiry and engagement of hearing participants
  - Attention to and application of legal standards
  - Breadth, depth, and relevance of discussion
  - Parent attendance and engagement
  - Child attendance and engagement
  - Quality of representation for the parent, child, and child welfare agency
  - Child welfare agency attendance and engagement
- Judicial Decisions in Hearings
  - Child placement
  - Findings made by the judge

## Unit of Measurement

Child welfare hearing

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Court observation
- Type of assessment: Structured observation
- Location/context: Court/Could also be administered in multiple locations with remote access to audio or video recordings of court hearings
- Administrator/coder: Trained researcher/observer
- Administration time/coding time: Dependent on length of hearing
- Administration mode: Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## **Psychometric Properties**

Inter-rater reliability: Agreement averaged .94.

## **Scoring Method**

Example scoring was reported. Most items were yes/no items or categorical items that were checked if they applied (e.g., presence of specific parties or case outcomes).

## **Reference**

Summers, A., & Wood, S. (2014). *Measuring compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act: An assessment toolkit*. Reno, NV: National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

## **Accessing the Measure**

A copy of the complete measure can be found in the above referenced document.

# Interview Assessing Children’s Emotional Reactions to Child Welfare Court Hearing and Understanding of Judge’s Hearing Decision

## Instrument Description

The Interview Assessing Children’s Emotional Reactions to Child Welfare Court Hearing and Understanding of Judge’s Hearing Decision asks children for their feelings about attending child welfare court hearings and their understanding of hearing decisions. Before the hearing, children are shown pictures of faces depicting different emotions (e.g., happy, sad) and asked to pick which one best describes how they feel waiting for their hearing, about being in court, and about what the judge might decide. After attending, children are asked about their understanding of what happened using a series of open-ended questions. They are also asked about their emotions again. The interview was used in a study that compared the children’s emotional states before and after attending the hearings.

## Components Measured

- Hearing Quality
  - Parent attendance and engagement
  - Child attendance and engagement

## Unit of Measurement

Individual child (aged 4 to 15 years old)

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Interview
- Type of assessment: Child interview
- Location/context: Court/Could be administered in multiple locations
- Administrator/coder: Trained researcher/observer
- Administration time/coding time: Unknown
- Administration mode: In-person or by phone with audio recording

## Psychometric Properties

Inter-rater reliability: Cohen’s Kappa ( $\kappa = 0.88$ )

## Scoring Method

Children’s self-reported emotional states before and after hearings are noted. Emotional reactions were scored on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (very negative) to 5 (very positive). Interview

responses to open-ended questions about children’s pre- and post-hearing understanding (e.g., “What happened in court?”, “What did the judge decide?”, “Who will you live with after today?”, and “Will you have to come back to court again?”) are scored on a three-point Likert scale including 0 (no correct information, including incorrect and do not know responses), 1 (correct but not complete answer [e.g., child who is correct about parts of the decision but not everything that was decided]), and 2 (correct and complete answer [e.g., child is able to explain the full decision made in court]).

## Reference

Quas, J. A., Wallin, A. R., Horwitz, B., Davis, E., & Lyon, T. D. (2009). Maltreated children’s understanding of and emotional reactions to dependency court involvement. *Behavioral Sciences and the Law*, 27(1), 97–117.

## Accessing the Measure

Contact the authors for more information about the measure.

# Judicial Engagement of Parents in Child Welfare Hearings Survey

## Instrument Description

The Judicial Engagement of Parents in Child Welfare Hearings Survey obtains judges' perspectives on their roles in engaging parents in child welfare hearings (i.e., belief that judges should engage parents in hearings) and in their comfort level and the strategies used when engaging parents. The survey also collected demographic and judicial experience information. The survey was used in a study of judicial engagement of parents. Survey responses were analyzed to determine if responses varied by judicial demographic variables and role or specialization. Specific strategies used by judges to engage parents were described.

## Components Measured

- Judicial Characteristics
  - Demographics
  - Role/Authority
  - Experience, knowledge, training, and skills
- Hearing Quality
  - Judicial inquiry and engagement of hearing participants

## Unit of Measurement

Individual judges

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Survey
- Type of assessment: Judge self-report
- Location/context: Could be administered in multiple locations
- Administrator/coder: Self-administered
- Administration time/coding time: 15–20 minutes
- Administration mode: Web-based/Could also use other methods of administration, such as paper-and-pencil

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

Individual responses to fixed response categories, including judicial characteristics and parental engagement questions (e.g., how often judges reported using specific engagement strategies such as speaking directly to parents, explaining the goals and purpose of the hearing, and asking if parents understood what happened in the hearing) were coded. Open-ended question responses were reviewed and coded for common themes and unique responses.

## Reference

Gatowski, S. I., & Gueller, M. (2019). *Engaging parents in child abuse and neglect hearings: Lessons learned from judicial leaders*. Reno, NV: National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

## Accessing the Measure

For further information or details regarding the referenced tools, instrument, benchcard, forms, survey, interview questions, or time logs referenced in this specific National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges publication, please contact Melissa Gueller, MS, Program Director - Child Abuse and Neglect, at [mgueller@ncjfcj.org](mailto:mgueller@ncjfcj.org).

# Judicial Expertise and Decision-Making Survey

## Instrument Description

The Judicial Expertise and Decision-Making Survey asks attorneys who represent children questions about judges' expertise and decision-making in child welfare cases. The survey was used in a mixed-method study to examine how jurisdiction-level judicial expertise (obtained via this survey) and the rates of exit to different types of permanency and timeliness of different child welfare court processing timelines (obtained via administrative case data review) were related.

## Components Measured

- Judicial Characteristics
  - Experience, knowledge, training, and skills

## Unit of Measurement

Individual attorney

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Survey
- Type of assessment: Attorney self-report
- Location/context: Could be administered in multiple locations
- Administrator/coder: Self-administered
- Administration time/coding time: Unknown
- Administration mode: Web-based/Could also use other methods of administration, such as paper-and-pencil

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

Attorneys were asked to indicate their level of agreement to the following: judges and judicial officers presiding over child welfare cases (1) make sound legal decisions, (2) have a clear understanding of child welfare law and practice, and (3) understand the service needs of children and families who appear before the court. Agreement rated on a scale including -2 (strongly disagree), -1 (somewhat disagree), 0 (neither agree nor disagree), 1 (somewhat agree), and 2 (strongly agree).

## Reference

Zinn, A., & Orlebeke, B. (2017). Juvenile court judicial expertise and children's permanency outcomes. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 77, 46–54.

## Accessing the Measure

The data collected from this study and documentation of all items can be found on the [National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect](#) website related to Dataset #212. The items for this measure are available in the Appendix of Measures, linked [here](#).

# Judicial Leadership Survey and Interview

## Instrument Description

The Judicial Leadership Survey and Interview assesses leadership skills of judges both on the bench in child welfare cases and off the bench in collaborative systems change efforts. The survey asked court stakeholders whether judges demonstrate on-the-bench leadership and whether they demonstrate off-the-bench judicial leadership. The interview asked court stakeholders to provide an example of judges' use of and skill in a number of leadership domains. This instrument was used in a study of judicial leadership in two child welfare jurisdictions in a western state to examine how judicial leadership may relate to case outcomes.

## Components Measured

- Judicial Characteristics
  - Experience, knowledge, training, and skills
- Jurisdiction Context, Court Resources, Practices, and Culture
  - Docketing/Calendaring
  - Frontloading (resources focused on early stages of the case)

## Unit of Measurement

Individual court stakeholders (e.g., court staff, social workers, attorneys, judges)

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Survey and Interview
- Type of assessment: Court stakeholder self-report and semi-structured interview
- Location/context: Could be administered in multiple locations
- Administrator/coder: Self-administered (survey) or trained researcher/observer (interview)
- Administration time/coding time: Web-based survey (time not reported) or 30 minute in-person interview
- Administration mode: Web-based/Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as telephone

## Psychometric Properties

Inter-rater reliability: Holsti's coefficient (0.52). Because of this low reliability, a third person coded the interview notes; then each leadership score rating was averaged and aggregated across the three coders' scores. A final inter-rater reliability score was not reported; instead a qualitative scoring of the interviews was produced, emphasizing items agreed upon more often by scorers.

## Scoring Method

The web-based survey asked respondents to select from a list of on the bench judicial leadership skills (e.g., judges are active listeners; judges are respectful to people of all races, legal, ethnic and socio-economic statuses) and off the bench leadership skills (e.g., judges motivate others into action for system improvement, judges create an empowering environment) and to rate the degree to which judges in their jurisdictions currently exhibited those skills on a scale ranging from 1 (never) to 6 (always). Interviews were scored based on a predetermined scoring rubric that identified 10 leadership domains (e.g., organizational change, teamwork, problem solving). Interviews asked respondents for specific examples of judicial leadership skills and coders rated those examples as indicative of low, medium, or high judicial leadership depending on whether the respondent could provide an example and how detailed the example was.

## Reference

MacGill, S. O., & Russel, J. (2013). Effective judging within the child welfare system: The correlates of judicial leadership. *Judicature*, 97(144), 1–14.

## Accessing the Measure

Contact the authors for more information about the measure.

# Judicial Questionnaire Regarding Expert Testimony in Juvenile/Domestic Court Cases

## Instrument Description

The Judicial Questionnaire Regarding Expert Testimony in Juvenile/Domestic Court Cases measures judicial perceptions and attitudes about mental health expert testimony. This survey assessed how judges rated extralegal factors influence on the perceived credibility of mental health expert testimony and was part of a study to inform training on court testimony for mental health professionals. While not specific to child welfare cases, it does assess judicial decision-making in a family court context and may apply to child welfare cases.

## Components Measured

- Judicial Characteristics
  - Demographics
  - Role/Authority
  - Experience, knowledge, training, and skills
- Judicial Decision-Making Process
  - Case information considered
- Jurisdiction Context, Court Resources, Practices, and Culture
  - Interaction of professionals in hearings

## Unit of Measurement

Individual judge

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Survey
- Type of assessment: Judge self-report
- Location/context: Could be administered in multiple locations
- Administrator/coder: Self-administered
- Administration time/coding time: Unknown
- Administration mode: Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

Judges completed the short answer questionnaire. The testimony, case, and expert characteristic questions were largely scored on a 10-point Likert scale that asked judges to rate the importance of specific information (e.g., credibility ratings on different factors in testimony, various case factors in custody decision such as parenting style, child's testimony, child's age). The 10-item scale ranged from 0 (no importance) to 10 (extremely important). While demographic questions (e.g., judge's role, experience, knowledge, training and skills) were included, no scoring information for the responses to those questions was provided.

## Reference

Nolan, M. (2015). *Extralegal factors important to judges' decisions in child abuse custody cases* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies.  
<http://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations/1203>

## Accessing the Measure

A copy of the complete measure can be found in the above referenced document.

# Maryland Standardized Case File Review Instrument

## Instrument Description

The Maryland Standardized Case File Review Instrument captures a wide array of information on child welfare cases including case demographic information, case allegations, dates of key court events, information from the court order regarding services, continuances, findings regarding parents' compliance, a count of judicial changes, and parties present at each hearing. This case file review instrument was used in a study to assess the effects of greater judicial continuity, specifically the One Family, One Judge model using a pre- and posttest design.

## Components Measured

- Hearing Quality
  - Parent attendance and engagement
- Case Outcomes
  - Type and timeliness of child permanency
- Jurisdiction Context, Court Resources, Practices, and Culture
  - Judicial continuity
  - Judicial assignment practices

## Unit of Measurement

Child welfare case

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Case file review
- Type of assessment: Structured document review
- Location/Context: Courthouse/Could be administered in multiple locations with remote access to a court case management system.
- Administrator/coder: Trained researcher/observer
- Administration time/coding time: Unknown
- Administration mode: Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## Psychometric Properties

Inter-rater reliability: Holsti's coefficient (0.87)

## Scoring Method

Scoring was largely conducted on closed-ended categorical questions. Categorical variables included selection of an appropriate response about child gender, child race/ethnicity, whether specific allegations were part of the case, whether parties were present at a hearing, whether the judge changed on the case, and the case outcome (e.g., reunification, adoption). Some of these were check all that apply, and many were yes/no options (e.g., was the hearing continued, was notice provided) for each major hearing type across the life of the case. Date variables throughout the case were also collected. Coders also responded to open-ended questions that asked for numbers, such as the total number of judicial officers who oversaw a case.

## Reference

Summers, A., & Shdaimah, C. (2013). Improving juvenile dependency case timelines through use of the One Family, One Judge Model. *Juvenile and Family Court Journal*, 64(1), 23–24.

## Accessing the Measure

The full measure is available in the Appendix of Measures, linked [here](#).

# Mississippi Legal Representation Case File Review Tool

## Instrument Description

The Mississippi Legal Representation Case File Review Tool collects data on case-related decisions and outcomes such as services ordered, child placements, case timeliness, and case outcomes. It includes quality of representation variables such as the type of attorney appointed (i.e., private attorney, no attorney, or project attorney with special training), timing of attorney appointment, and presence of the attorney across the life of the case. The tool was used in a study to compare case processing and outcomes in cases where parents were represented by a project attorney with cases where parents were not represented.

## Components Measured

- Hearing Quality
  - Quality of representation for the parent, child, and child welfare agency
  - Parent attendance and engagement
  - Child attendance and engagement
- Judicial Decisions in Hearings
  - Services ordered for the parents and child
- Case Process and Progress
  - Child placement type and stability
  - Termination of parental rights
- Case Outcomes
  - Child safety
  - Type and timeliness of child permanency

## Unit of Measurement

Child welfare case file

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Case file review
- Type of assessment: Structured document review
- Location/context: Courthouse/Could be administered in multiple locations with remote access to a court case management system.
- Administrator/coder: Trained researcher/observer
- Administration time/coding time: Unknown
- Administration mode: Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## Psychometric Properties

Inter-rater reliability: Cohen's Kappa ( $\kappa = 0.85$  in Forrest County,  $\kappa = 0.88$  in Rankin County)

## Scoring Method

The tool was not included in the article but was described in sufficient detail. Scoring was primarily conducted on categorical responses (such as case outcome or yes/no responses regarding presence of parties at key hearings or whether specific services were ordered) and time between key court events (captured by subtracting one date from another date and generating an average time between specific events).

## Reference

Sicafuse, L., Wood, S., & Summers, A. (2014). *Research report: Exploring outcomes related to legal representation for parents involved in Mississippi's juvenile dependency system*. Reno, NV: National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

## Accessing the Measure

For further information or details regarding the referenced tools, instrument, benchcard, forms, survey, interview questions, or time logs referenced in this specific National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges publication, please contact Melissa Gueller, MS, Program Director - Child Abuse and Neglect, at [mgueller@ncjfcj.org](mailto:mgueller@ncjfcj.org).

# Nevada Hearing Quality Court Observation Tool

## Instrument Description

The Nevada Hearing Quality Court Observation Tool measures aspects of hearing quality including parent and youth engagement, breadth and depth of discussion, party presence, and judicial findings/orders. The court observation instrument was designed to capture these data elements across multiple hearings types throughout the life of the case. The instrument was used in 10 judicial districts within Nevada. The instrument was used in a study that compared changes in hearing quality over time and explored how hearing quality was related to case outcomes.

## Components Measured

### Hearing Quality

- Judicial inquiry and engagement of hearing participants
- Attention to and application of legal standards
- Breadth, depth, and relevance of discussion
- Parent attendance and engagement
- Child attendance and engagement

### Judicial Decisions in Hearings

- Findings made by the judge

## Unit of Measurement

Child welfare court hearing

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Court observation
- Type of assessment: Structured observation
- Location/context: Court/Could be administered in multiple locations with remote access to audio or video recordings of court hearings
- Administrator/coder: Trained researcher/observer
- Administration time/coding time: Average 23 minutes per hearing
- Administration mode: Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

The observational tool requires coders to make a series of decisions on the presence or absence of items using a yes/no response. They must also make judgments about whether the items are relevant to the specific hearing being observed. Coders must also make a series of judgments related to the level of discussion observed.

Two dimensions of discussion in the court hearings were scored: breadth and depth. For depth of discussion, coders make a series of judgments related to the level of discussion observed. Specifically, they identify the level of a discussion topic on a scale including 0 (no discussion), 1 (statement only), 2 (a few statements), and 3 (substantive discussion). Depth of discussion is then calculated as the average score for each item and across items. To calculate discussion breadth, a count variable was used with the number of topic items that had a 1, 2, or 3 coding score. This number was divided by a count of all potential applicable topics to create a percentage. If an item was coded as not applicable, it was not included.

To score presence of parents and children at hearings, coders marked whether individuals were present or absent (yes/no). To score judicial engagement of parents and children present at hearings, coders noted whether a judge used, or did not use, a specific engagement strategy from a list of possible engagement strategies (e.g., Do you understand what this hearing is about? Do you understand what happened here today?), marking a 1 for yes and a 0 for no.

## Reference

Summers, A., & Gatowski, S. (2018). *Nevada Hearing Quality Study: Examining the quality of child welfare court hearing practice in Nevada*. Reno, NV: Nevada Administrative Office of the Courts.

## Accessing the Measure

The full measure is available in the Appendix of Measures, linked [here](#).

# New York Permanency Hearing Case File Review Tool

## Instrument Description

The New York Permanency Hearing Case File Review Tool collects data from closed child welfare cases from a court case file or case management system. It collects information on the permanency hearings in the case, goal changes at the hearings, data on other key events (e.g., removal date, closure date), and the case outcome. It was used in a study of court practice and case outcomes in permanency hearings and across the lifespan of the case in multiple sites in New York. The [New York Permanency Hearing Court Observation Tool](#) was also part of the study and is included in this Compendium.

## Components Measured

- Jurisdiction Context, Court Resources, Practices, and Culture
  - Judicial continuity
- Case Process and Progress
  - Child placement type and stability
  - Case progress and timeliness of hearings
- Case Outcomes
  - Type and timeliness of child permanency

## Unit of Measurement

Child welfare case

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Case file review
- Type of assessment: Structured document review
- Location/context: Courthouse/Could be administered in multiple locations with remote access to a court case management system
- Administrator/coder: Trained researcher/observer
- Administration time/coding time: Unknown
- Administration mode: Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

Most items were date variables, coded as the date the event occurred. Scoring for date variables included subtracting one date from another to calculate time between events. In addition, the number of continuances, judicial officers, and permanency hearings were captured, and categorical variables were used to identify reasons for continuances and case outcomes (e.g., reunification, adoption).

## References

- Summers, A. (2017). *Exploring the relationship between hearing quality and case outcomes in New York*. Albany, NY: New York Court Improvement Program.
- Summers, A. (2017). *New York quality permanency hearings statewide findings report*. Albany, NY: New York Court Improvement Program.

## Accessing the Measure

The complete instrument and companion instruments are available in the *Assessing Quality of Permanency Hearings: Toolkit* available [here](#) and in the Appendix of Measures in this document, linked [here](#).

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# New York Permanency Hearing Court Observation Tool

## Instrument Description

The New York Permanency Hearing Court Observation Tool collects data from observations of a permanency court hearing on a case. It collects data on parties present, judicial engagement of parties, discussion topics, and findings on the record. It was used in a study of court practice and case outcomes in permanency hearings and across the lifespan of the case in multiple sites in New York. The [New York Permanency Hearing Case File Review Tool](#) was also part of the study and is included in this Compendium.

## Components Measured

- Hearing Quality
  - Judicial inquiry and engagement
  - Attention to and application of legal standards
  - Breadth, depth, and relevance of discussion
  - Parent attendance and engagement
  - Child attendance and engagement
  - Child welfare agency attendance and engagement
- Judicial Decisions in Hearings
  - Child placement

## Unit of Measurement

Child welfare hearing

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Court observation
- Type of assessment: Structured observation
- Location/Context: Court/Court/Could be administered in multiple locations with remote access to audio or video recordings of court hearings
- Administrator/coder: Trained researcher/observer
- Administration time/coding time: Dependent on length of hearing
- Administration mode: Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

Most items were scored as yes/no items with an option for not applicable. Discussion items were rated on a scale including 0 (no discussion), 1 (statement only), and 2 (more than a statement).

Two dimensions of discussion in the court hearings were scored: breadth and depth. For depth of discussion, coders make a series of judgments related to the level of discussion observed. Specifically, they identify the level of a discussion topic on a scale from 0 (no discussion), 1 (statement only), to 2 (more than a statement). Depth of discussion is then calculated as the average score for each item and across items. To calculate discussion breadth, a count variable was used with the number of topic items that had a 1 or 2 coding score. This number was divided by a count of all potential applicable topics to create a percentage. If an item was coded as not applicable, it was not included.

To score presence of parents and children at hearings, coders marked whether individuals were present or absent (yes/no). To score judicial engagement of parents and children present at hearings, coders noted whether a judge used, or did not use, a specific engagement strategy from a list of possible engagement strategies (e.g., “Did the judge speak directly to the person?” “Did the judge explain the hearing process?”), marking a 1 for yes and a 0 for no or NA for not applicable \*such as when the person was not present).

## References

- Summers, A. (2017). *Exploring the relationship between hearing quality and case outcomes in New York*. Albany, NY: New York Court Improvement Program.
- Summers, A. (2017). *New York quality permanency hearings statewide findings report*. Albany, NY: New York Court Improvement Program.

## Accessing the Measure

The complete instrument and companion instruments are available in the *Assessing Quality of Permanency Hearings: Toolkit* available [here](#) and in the Appendix of Measures, linked [here](#).

# Oregon Case File Review Instrument

## Instrument Description

The Oregon Case File Review Instrument assesses parties present at hearings, placement of the child, services ordered for the family, and the docketing/calendaring practices of the court. It is based on Oregon statutes, shelter hearing policies, and national best practice standards including the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges' (NCJFCJ) Enhanced Resource Guidelines (Gatowski, Miller, Rubin, Escher, & Maze, 2016). The instrument was used in a multimethod study of an early hearing pilot project. The approach also included the [Oregon Standardized Semi-Structured Interviews](#), which is included in this Compendium.

## Components Measured

- Hearing Quality
  - Parent attendance and engagement
  - Child attendance and engagement
  - Child welfare agency attendance and engagement
  - Attention to and application of legal standards
- Case Process and Progress
  - Child placement type and stability
  - Family engagement in services and service progress
- Jurisdiction Context, Court Resources, Practices, and Culture
  - Docketing/Calendaring

## Unit of Measurement

Child welfare case

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Case file review
- Type of assessment: Structured document review
- Location/context: Courthouse/Could be administered in multiple locations with remote access to a court case management system
- Administrator/coder: Trained researcher/observer
- Administration time/coding time: Unknown
- Administration mode: Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

Instrument was scored largely with closed-ended questions with check boxes and discrete categories depending on question type. Coders marked the dates of key events in the case to calculate the elapsed time (in days) between events (e.g., the time between notice of a hearing and hearing date).

## Reference

Gatowski, S., Dobbin, S., & Litchfield, M. (2002). *The Portland Model Court Expanded Second Shelter Hearing Process: Evaluating best practice components of front-loading*. Reno, NV: National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges

Gatowski, S., Miller, N., Rubin, S., Escher, P., & Maze, C. (2016). *Enhanced resource guidelines: Improving court practice in child abuse and neglect cases*. Reno, Nevada. National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

## Accessing the Measure

For further information or details regarding the referenced tools, instrument, benchcard, forms, survey, interview questions, or time logs referenced in this specific National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges publication, please contact Melissa Gueller, MS, Program Director - Child Abuse and Neglect, at [mgueller@ncjfcj.org](mailto:mgueller@ncjfcj.org).

# Oregon Standardized Semi-Structured Interviews

## Instrument Description

The Oregon Standardized Semi-Structured Interviews guide collects stakeholder opinions about, and experiences with, the second shelter hearing process, which was a pilot program to have additional hearings early in child welfare cases. Questions assess perceptions of the timing and usefulness of the second shelter hearing and strategies to improve early appointment of attorneys and around discovery and location of parents. The instrument was used in a multimethod study of an early hearing pilot project. The approach also included the [Oregon Case File Review Instrument](#), which is also included in this Compendium.

## Components Measured

- Pre- and Between-Hearing Communication and Activities
  - Prehearing and between-hearing contact between parties
- Hearing Quality
  - Attention to and application of legal standards
  - Parent attendance and engagement
  - Quality of representation for the parent, child, and child welfare agency
- Case Outcomes
  - Type and timeliness of child permanency
- Jurisdiction Context, Court Resources, Practices, and Culture
  - Frontloading (resources focused on early stages of the case)

## Unit of Measurement

Child welfare/legal stakeholders (e.g., attorneys, social workers)

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Interview
- Type of assessment: Semi-structured Interview
- Location/context: Court/Could be administered in multiple locations
- Administrator/coder: Trained Researcher/Observer
- Administration time/coding time: Unknown
- Administration mode: In-person or by phone with audio recording

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

The interviews were open-ended and coded for themes such as identified strengths and challenges of the second shelter hearing process.

## Reference

Gatowski, S., Dobbin, S., & Litchfield, M. (2002). *The Portland Model Court Expanded Second Shelter Hearing Process: Evaluating best practice components of front-loading*. Reno, NV: National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

## Accessing the Measure

For further information or details regarding the referenced tools, instrument, benchcard, forms, survey, interview questions, or time logs referenced in this specific National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges publication, please contact Melissa Gueller, MS, Program Director - Child Abuse and Neglect, at [mgueller@ncjfcj.org](mailto:mgueller@ncjfcj.org).

# Parent Attitude Toward Court Measure

## Instrument Description

The Parent Attitude Toward Court Measure assesses parental trust, satisfaction, and relational fairness with the child welfare court system. This was used in a quasi-experimental comparison study between drug court and treatment as usual participants. Family drug court is a specialty court within the child welfare court process for parents with substance use disorders who may benefit from a higher level of interaction with the court system. In addition to required child welfare hearings (e.g., review, permanency), drug courts typically hold regular status reviews to assess parents' treatment progress. This measure is relevant to child welfare court measures as it assesses attitudes toward the court for parents involved in child welfare cases.

## Components Measured

- Hearing Quality
  - Parent attendance and engagement

## Unit of Measurement

Individual Parent

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Interview
- Type of assessment: Structured interview
- Location/context: Court/Child Welfare Office/Could be administered in multiple locations
- Administrator/coder: Trained researcher/observer
- Administration time/coding time: Unknown
- Administration mode: In-person or by phone with audio recording

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

Parents responded to 23 items on either a 5-point Likert agreement scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) or a 4-point frequency scale ranging from 1 (seldom/never) to 4 (always). Items included statements such as "I get an opportunity to express my point of view before the [drug court judges/CPS caseworker] will make a decision" and "the [drug court judge/CPS caseworker] respected my rights when making decisions about my case."

## Reference

Ashford, J. B. (2006). Comparing the effects of judicial versus child protective service relationships on parental attitudes in juvenile dependency process. *Research on Social Worker Practice, 16*, 582–590.

## Accessing the Measure

Contact the author for more information about the measure.

# Parent Engagement Measure

## Instrument Description

The Parent Engagement Measure assesses parent experience with the caseworker, including perception of the caseworker when conducting family-focused actions and the degree to which a parent feels empowered, respected, understood, and supported. This instrument was used in a study of parent engagement in foster care in a large urban jurisdiction to examine how to quantify parent engagement and how engagement may relate to parent's experience in the foster care process, including how far parents live from the social worker's office and how long they have worked with their caseworker.

## Components Measured

- Hearing Quality
  - Parent attendance and engagement

## Unit of Measurement

Individual parent

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Survey
- Type of assessment: Parent self-report
- Location/context: Could be administered in multiple locations
- Administrator/coder: Self-administered
- Administration time/coding time: 10 minutes
- Administration mode: Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## Psychometric Properties

Reliability: High internal consistency via Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha = 0.93$ )

## Scoring Method

Parents responded to 31 statements that focused on parent perceptions of whether the caseworker was doing family-focused actions (e.g., "My caseworker involves me in meetings about my case" and "My caseworker is available when I need them") and the degree to which parents felt empowered, respected, understood, and supported (e.g., "I have control over whether or not I succeed in the foster care process." "When I talk with my caseworkers about my personal situation, I

feel like they really listen to me.”). These statements were coded on a 6-item Likert agreement scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree).

## Reference

Alpert, L. T., & Britner, P. A. (2009). Measuring parent engagement in foster care. *Social Work Research, 33*(3), 135–145.

## Accessing the Measure

Survey items from the full measure are available in the document identified above.

# Parent or Caregiver Post-Court Survey

## Instrument Description

The Parent or Caregiver Post-Court Survey gathers data on parent and caregiver experiences of the court process including understanding, voice, and fairness of the child welfare or juvenile delinquency court process. The instrument was used in a study of family court reform efforts, including the “One Family, One Judge” model in which one judge hears all matters pertaining to a case. The study examined parents’ perceptions of the court process and explored associations between parent perspectives and having multiple judges on their case.

## Components Measured

Hearing Quality

- Parent attendance and engagement

## Unit of Measurement

Individual parent

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Survey
- Type of assessment: Parent self-report
- Location/context: Could be administered in multiple locations.
- Administrator/coder: Self-administered
- Administration time/coding time: Unknown
- Administration mode: Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

The survey used a combination of closed- and open-ended questions to assess perspectives. Closed- ended questions were reported in terms of frequency of specific responses. For open-ended questions, the researcher used an inductive coding method that developed themes for responses without any pre-existing theory or framework.

## Reference

Shdaimah, C., & Summers, A. (2014). Families in waiting: Adult stakeholder perceptions of family court. *Children and Youth Services Review, 44*, 114–119.

## Accessing the Measure

The full measure is available in the Appendix of Measures, linked [here](#).

# Parental Engagement Court Observation Process

## Instrument Description

The Parental Engagement Court Observation Process assesses engagement between judges and parents in child welfare hearings. The process includes an ethnographic observation method whereby extensive data is collected from observing court hearings. The process collects information on presence of parents at child welfare hearings, judicial engagement of parents at hearings, the breadth of discussion during hearings, and the tone of interactions between judges and parents. This process was used in two studies. The first study describes how judges interact with parents in child welfare hearings, including how they encourage or inhibit parent participation. The second study explores how race, gender, and class can manifest in child welfare hearings.

## Components Measured

- Hearing Quality
  - Judicial inquiry and engagement of hearing participants
  - Parent attendance and engagement
  - Breadth, depth, and reliance of discussion

## Unit of Measurement

Child welfare court hearing

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Court observation
- Type of assessment: Ethnographic observation
- Location/context: Court/Could be administered in multiple locations with remote access to audio or video recordings of court hearings
- Administrator/coder: Trained researcher/observer
- Administration time/coding time: Dependent on length of hearing
- Administration mode: Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

Coders maintained a detailed hearing log, recording what was said in the hearing and their observations about the courtroom environment, party emotional state, topics of discussion, and

nature of interactions between judges and parents. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify patterns or themes related to parent participation in the process. The length of the hearing was also recorded.

## Reference

Lens, V. (2017). Engaging parents in family court: Lessons from an observational study of child protection cases. *Journal of Social Work, 17*(2), 129–146.

Lens, V. (2019). Judging the other: The intersection of race, gender, and class in family court. *Family Court Review, 57*, 72-87.

## Accessing the Measure

Contact the author for more information about the measure.

# Parents' Understanding of Child Welfare Case Process, Hearings, and Judicial Decisions Interview

## Instrument Description

The Parents' Understanding of Child Welfare Case Process, Hearings, and Judicial Decisions Interview assesses parents' general and case-specific understanding of a child welfare case including understanding of commonly used terms (e.g., guardian ad litem, termination of parental rights,) case processes generally, and understanding of their own case. This instrument was used in a study to assess level of parent understanding of court processes to identify factors that predict general and case-specific understanding of a parent's own child welfare case. For example, researchers analyzed whether parent demographic and background characteristics (e.g., race, income, education) and length of time involved in the child welfare system (including number of child welfare hearings attended) were predictive of level of understanding.

## Components Measured

- Hearing Quality
  - Parent attendance and engagement

## Unit of Measurement

Individual parent

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Interview
- Type of assessment: Interview
- Location/context: Could be administered in multiple locations
- Administrator/coder: Trained researcher/observer
- Administration time/coding time: 30 minutes
- Administration mode: In-person or by phone with audio recording

## Psychometric Properties

Inter-rater reliability: Proportional agreement ( $\geq 0.87$ ), Cohen's Kappas ( $\kappa = 0.75 - 0.78$ )

## Scoring Method

The interview tool was largely scored using scales to determine level of understanding of items. Parent understanding regarding definitions of commonly used terms (e.g., family service worker, guardian, petition) was scored as 0 (no correct information), 1 (partially correct but incomplete), or 2 (correct and complete). Parent understanding of child welfare generally (e.g., "What is the purpose

of key hearings?”) and case specifics (e.g., “What was the judges most recent decision in your case?”) were scored on a 3-point scale: 0 (no demonstration of knowledge or understanding), 1 (limited or partial understanding), or 2 (comprehensive understanding of relevant facts).

## **Reference**

Cleveland, K. C., & Quas, J. A. (2018). Parents’ understanding of the juvenile dependency system. *Psychology, Public Policy and Law*, 24(4), 459–473.

## **Accessing the Measure**

The full measure is available in the Appendix of Measures, linked [here](#).

# Structured Court Observation Instrument

## Instrument Description

The Structured Court Observation Instrument collects data on judicial inquiry (e.g., what topics were raised by the judge), discussion of key items, presence of parties, engagement of parents (e.g., strategies such as speaking directly to the party or giving the party an opportunity to be heard), and making verbal findings on the record. The instrument was used in a study of how hearing practices change before and after judicial participation in the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judge's (NCJFCJ's) Child Abuse and Neglect Institute (CANI).

## Components Measured

- Hearing Quality
  - Judicial inquiry and engagement of hearing participants
  - Breadth, depth, and relevance of discussion
  - Parent attendance and engagement
  - Child attendance and engagement
  - Quality of representation for the parent, child, and child welfare agency

## Unit of Measurement

Individual judge

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Court observation
- Type of assessment: Structured observation
- Location/context: Court/Could be administered in multiple locations with remote access to audio or video recordings of court hearings
- Administrator/coder: Trained researcher/observer
- Administration time/coding time: Unknown
- Administration mode: Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

All relevant discussion topics were scored on a 3-point scale including 0 (no discussion), 1 (statement only), and 2 (more than a statement). Breadth of discussion was also scored for the

study. To calculate breadth, a count variable was used with the number of topic items discussed in the hearing (i.e., items scored as a 1 or 2). All 1s and 2s were counted to create a numerical value for the number of items discussed. This number was divided by a count of all potential applicable topics to create a percentage. Items coded as not applicable were not included. This created a percentage of items discussed in the hearing (breadth variable).

## Reference

Summers, A., Gatowski, S., & DeVault, A. (2016). *Research report: Child Abuse and Neglect Institute Evaluation: Training impact on hearing practice*. Reno, NV: National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

## Accessing the Measure

For further information or details regarding the referenced tools, instrument, benchcard, forms, survey, interview questions, or time logs referenced in this specific National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges publication, please contact Melissa Gueller, MS, Program Director - Child Abuse and Neglect, at [mgueller@ncjfcj.org](mailto:mgueller@ncjfcj.org).

# Termination of Parent Rights Judicial Scenario Survey

## Instrument Description

The Termination of Parent Rights Judicial Scenario Survey collects data on judicial decision-making in a mock scenario about termination of parent rights. Data collected includes judicial training and experience, demographics, case outcome decisions, and identification of factors that contributed to the decision-making process. The instrument was used in a study that compared judicial decision-making by the judge's expertise. The study examined the association between expertise and specific case factors in a mock termination of parental rights case to determine how expertise may relate to a judge's use of case factors to make a termination of parental rights decision.

## Components Measured

- Judicial Characteristics
  - Demographics
  - Role/Authority
  - Experience, knowledge, training, and skills
- Judicial Decision-Making Process
  - Case information considered
  - Interpretation of legal standards

## Unit of Measurement

Individual judge

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Survey
- Type of assessment: Judge self-report
- Location/context: Could be administered in multiple locations
- Administrator/coder: Self-administered
- Administration time/coding time: Unknown
- Administration mode: Web-based/Could also use other methods of administration, such as paper-and-pencil

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

Most items were categorical or scale item variables. Participants chose the response, including a yes/no response of whether to terminate parental rights in a given vignette. Decision-making variables included open-ended questions (e.g., “Please indicate what factors you considered when determining if termination was in the best interest of the child.”) which were scored using thematic coding of responses. Participants indicated how much they considered a list of 13 case factors (e.g., age of the child, testimony of the mother) on an 8-point scale ranging from 0 (did not consider) to 7 (heavily weighed on decision). Judges also responded to several demographic variables as yes/no items, including whether they currently preside over child welfare cases, if they only oversee child welfare cases, and whether it was their choice to oversee child welfare cases. Expertise was coded as how many years and months the judge oversaw child welfare cases, whether they had had trainings on child welfare (yes/no), and the number of total trainings on child welfare related topics.

## References

- Summers, A., Gatowski, S., & Dobbin, S. (2012). Terminating parental rights: The relation of judicial experience and expectancy-related factors to risk perceptions in child protection cases. *Psychology, Crime, & Law, 18*, 95–112.
- Summers, A. (2009). The Role of Expertise in Legal Decision Making in Juvenile Dependency Cases: Comparing Judges to Mock Jurors [Doctoral Dissertation, University of Nevada, Reno]. Scholarworks: <http://hdl.handle.net/11714/4064>

## Accessing the Measure

The full measure is available both in the dissertation identified in the references and in the Appendix of Measures, linked [here](#).

# Termination of Parental Rights Practices Review

## Instrument Description

The Termination of Parental Rights Practices Review collects data from published court opinions and associated court documents (e.g., caseworker reports to the court, attorney briefs and motions) to gather information about termination of parental rights practices and potential biasing threats to parental perceived fairness. Court opinion and document review of termination of parental rights cases in one state were used in a study to identify termination practices that may hinder parental perceptions of the fairness of the process.

## Components Measured

- Pre- and Between-Hearing Communication and Activities
  - Court reports

## Unit of Measurement

Court documents in termination of parental rights cases

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Case file review
- Type of assessment: Structured document review
- Location/context: Courthouse/Could be administered in multiple locations with remote access to a court case management system
- Administrator/coder: Trained researcher/observer
- Administration time/coding time: Unknown
- Administration mode: Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## Psychometric Properties

Inter-rater reliability: Agreement averaged .94.

## Scoring Method

Researchers read all documents associated with the first several cases to identify and label instances of conceptual value to the study. Initial codes were developed based on this review. After initial creation of the codebook, similar codes were identified in subsequent cases and new ones were added when necessary. Court opinions and supporting documents (e.g., caseworker reports, attorney briefs or motions) were reviewed for presence or absence of nine categories of threats to perceived fairness.

## Reference

Wayne, R. H., & Smith, B. D. (2016). Threats to perceptions of fairness in the termination of parental rights. *Juvenile and Family Court Journal*, 67(4), 27–41.

## Accessing the Measure

Contact the authors for more information about the measure.

# Texas Hearing Observation/File Review Tool

## Instrument Description

The Texas Hearing Observation/File Review Tool captures key information about hearing quality and legal representation including questions about due process, child well-being, family demographics, the type, length, and timing of hearings, Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) elements, and whether the hearing included interpretation and translation. This instrument was used in multiple sites in Texas as part of a descriptive study assessing hearing quality.

## Components Measured

- Hearing Quality
  - Judicial inquiry and engagement of hearing participants
  - Attention to and application of legal standards
  - Breadth, depth, and relevance of discussion
  - Parent attendance and engagement
  - Child attendance and engagement
  - Quality of representation for the parent, child, and child welfare agency
- Case Outcomes
  - Child and parent well-being
  - Type and timeliness of child permanency
- Jurisdiction Context, Court Resources, Practices, and Culture
  - Judicial staff time
  - Docketing/Calendar

## Unit of Measurement

Child welfare court hearing and child welfare case (as needed)

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Court observation and case file review
- Type of assessment: Structured observation and structured document review
- Location/Context: Court/Could be administered in multiple locations with remote access to audio or video recordings of court hearings and remote access to court case management system
- Administrator/coder: Trained researcher/observer
- Administration time/coding time: Unknown
- Administration mode: Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

The tool was largely scored via marking yes on a set of matrices with rows for components and columns for whether the component was discussed, found in the file, or did not apply. Coders answered yes if a specific practice occurred or checked a specific box in a list of categorical items. In addition, engagement of parents and youth was scored on a 3-point scale of low, medium, and high. Quality of legal representation was scored on multiple dimensions, including whether the party was present (yes/no), whether the attorney was substituting for the regularly attorney (yes/no), and a list of attorney practices that could be checked off (e.g. oral advocacy, motion filing).

## Reference

Supreme Court's Children's Commission. (2014). *Supreme Court's children's commission hearing quality observation project*. Texas.

## Accessing the Measure

The full measure is available in the document identified in the reference and in the Appendix of Measures, linked [here](#).

# Texas Placement Review Court Observation Tool

## Instrument Description

The Texas Placement Review Court Observation Tool assesses the quality of child welfare court hearings in Texas including exploring engagement strategies used by the judge, discussion of key topics, presence of parties, and hearing length. This instrument was used in a study to examine court practice in four sites and explore differences in court practice between high performing and low performing courts.

## Components Measured

- Hearing Quality
  - Judicial inquiry and engagement of hearing participants
  - Attention to and application of legal standards
  - Breadth, depth, and relevance of discussion
  - Parent attendance and engagement
  - Child attendance and engagement
  - Quality of representation for the parent, child, and child welfare agency
  - Child welfare agency attendance and engagement

## Unit of Measurement

Child welfare court hearing

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Court observation
- Type of assessment: Structured observation
- Location/context: Court/Could be administered in multiple locations with remote access to audio or video recordings of court hearings
- Administrator/coder: Trained researcher/observer
- Administration time/coding time: Dependent on length of hearing
- Administration mode: Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## Psychometric Properties

Inter-rater reliability: Agreement averaged .82.

## Scoring Method

The observation tool requires coders to make a series of decisions on the presence or absence of items using a yes/no response. They must also make a judgment about whether the item is relevant to the specific hearing being observed. Coders must also make a series of judgments related to level of discussion observed. Specifically, coders identify the level of a discussion topic on the following scale: 0 (no discussion), 1 (statement only), or 2 (more than a statement).

Two dimensions of discussion in the court hearings were scored: breadth and depth. For depth of discussion, coders make a series of judgments related to the level of discussion observed. Specifically, they identify the level of a discussion topic on a scale from 0 (no discussion), 1 (statement only), to 2 (more than a statement). Depth of discussion is then calculated as the average score for each item and across items. To calculate discussion breadth, a count variable was used with the number of topic items that had a 1 or 2 coding. This number was divided by a count of all potential applicable topics to create a percentage. If an item was coded as not applicable, it was not included.

To score presence of parents and children at hearings, coders marked whether individuals were present or absent (yes/no). To score judicial engagement of parents and children present at hearings, coders noted whether a judge used, or did not use, a specific engagement strategy from a list of possible engagement strategies (e.g., explaining the process, asking if parties have questions) marking a 1 for yes and a 0 for no.

## Reference

Summers, A., & Darnell, A. (2015). What does court observation tell us about judicial practice and the courts in child welfare? *Journal of Public Child Welfare, 9*, 341–361.

## Accessing the Measure

Contact the authors for more information about the measure.

# Washington Off the Bench Judicial Time Log

## Instrument Description

The Washington Off the Bench Judicial Time Log measures a broad scope of judicial workload within a daily log. The log captures both on and off bench work on specific cases and work nonspecific to cases such as participation on collaborative teams and trainings. The log was used in a study to understand the demands on judges' time by logging the time judges spent on different activities. The goal was to understand the context to help determine resources needed to provide quality judicial service.

## Components Measured

- Pre- and Between-Hearing Communication and Activities
  - Multidisciplinary case staffing
  - Court reports
  - Prehearing and between-hearing contact between parties
- Jurisdiction Context, Court Resources, Practices, and Culture
  - Judicial staff time
  - Judicial caseload

## Unit of Measurement

Individual judge

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Survey
- Type of assessment: Judge self-report
- Location/Context: Could be administered in multiple locations
- Administrator/coder: Self-administered
- Administration time/coding time: Unknown
- Administration mode: Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

The log required judges to classify and recall how their time was spent during the day. Judges report their time (in minutes) to complete specific tasks from a list of possible tasks.

## Reference

Dobbin, S., Gatowski, S., & Summers, A. (2010). *Measuring judicial work in dependency cases: Lessons learned from Washington State*. Reno, NV: National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

## Accessing the Measure

A copy of the complete measure can be found in the above referenced document.

# Wisconsin Parent Engagement Court Experience Survey

## Instrument Description

The Wisconsin Parent Engagement Court Experience Survey measures parent perceptions of the court process. It was derived from procedural justice/procedural fairness tools that assess perceptions of trust, respect, and fairness in a court process. The survey was used in a study to explore how well parents were being engaged in juvenile court hearings and how those experiences relate to their perceptions of the courtroom experience. The study also used the [\*Wisconsin Parent Engagement Court Observation Instrument\*](#), which is also included in this Compendium.

## Components Measured

- Judicial Characteristics
  - Demographics
  - Role/Authority
  - Attitudes and beliefs about child welfare cases
- Hearing Quality
  - Judicial inquiry and engagement of hearing participants
  - Breadth, depth, and relevance of discussion
  - Parent attendance and engagement

## Unit of Measurement

Individual parent

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Survey
- Type of assessment: Parent self-report
- Location/context: Could be administered in multiple locations
- Administrator/coder: Self-administered
- Administration time/coding time: Unknown
- Administration mode: Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

The survey includes 17 items about parents' experiences during hearings. Each item is scored on a Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). It includes items such as "I understood what happened in court today," "The judge listened to me," "I agree with the decisions made in court today," and "The judge was fair." There is space to provide additional comments. The 17 items were collapsed into 4 subscales: case understanding, respectful treatment, child protective services fairness, and child protective services trust. Items in each subscale were averaged to create a composite subscale score.

## Reference

Wood, S., & Gonda, R. (2014). *Assessing parental engagement in juvenile court hearings*. Reno, NV: National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

## Accessing the Measure

A copy of the complete measure can be found in the above referenced document.

# Wisconsin Parent Engagement Court Observation Instrument

## Instrument Description

The Wisconsin Parent Engagement Court Observation Instrument measures how well parents are engaged in child welfare hearings. Items address whether the parent was given an opportunity to be heard, the judge identified next steps, the judge made eye contact with the parent, and there was respectful treatment between the judge and parent. Engagement strategies also included statements about whether the judge spoke directly to the parent, addressed the parent by name, asked if the parent had any questions, and asked if the parent understood the next steps. The study also used the [Wisconsin Parent Engagement Court Experience Survey](#), which is also included in this Compendium.

## Components Measured

- Judicial Characteristics
  - Demographics
  - Role/Authority
  - Attitudes and beliefs about child welfare cases
- Hearing Quality
  - Judicial inquiry and engagement of hearing participants
  - Breadth, depth, and relevance of discussion
  - Parent attendance and engagement
- Jurisdiction Context, Court Resources, Practices, and Culture
  - Parent assistance during case process

## Unit of Measurement

Child welfare court hearing

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Court observation
- Type of assessment: Structured observation
- Location/context: Court/Could be administered in multiple locations with remote access to audio or video recordings of court hearings
- Administrator/coder: Trained researcher/observer
- Administration time/coding time: Dependent on length of the court hearing
- Administration mode: Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

The instrument scored the depth of discussion over various topics. Raters judged whether discussion on topics (such as child placement, visitation, well-being) had 0 (no discussion), 1 (statement only), or 2 (more than statement). It also required the rater to judge respectful treatment of parents and judicial engagement strategies (e.g., “Was parent given opportunity to be heard?”) on a scale of 0 (not at all), 1 (somewhat), to 2 (definitely).

## Reference

Wood, S., & Gonda, R. (2014). *Assessing parental engagement in juvenile court hearings*. Reno, NV: National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

## Accessing the Measure

A copy of the complete measure can be found in the above referenced document.

# Youth Attendance Judicial Interview

## Instrument Description

The Youth Attendance Judicial Interview gathers information about judicial experiences, attitudes, and beliefs about engagement in court including prevailing practices and their ideas for improvement. This includes judicial perceptions of the barriers to youth attending court, strategies to make court more comfortable for youth, and factors judges think predict higher likelihood of attendance. The instrument was used in a study to better understand how judges engage youth in child welfare cases in Colorado. The study also used the [Youth Attendance Youth Survey](#), which is also included in this Compendium.

## Components Measured

- Judicial Decision-Making Process
  - Case information considered
- Hearing Quality
  - Attention to and application of legal standards
  - Child attendance and engagement

## Unit of Measurement

Individual judge

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Interview
- Type of assessment: Interview
- Location/context: Could be administered in multiple locations
- Administrator/coder: Trained Researcher/Observer
- Administration time/coding time: Unknown
- Administration mode: In-person or by phone with audio recording

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

The majority of the interview questions are open-ended (e.g., “What, if any, modifications have you (your district) made to increase youth attendance at court hearings?”, “Describe other factors that may influence child welfare professionals’ perspectives on youth attendance?”). The judges were also provided statements of findings from a youth survey and asked if these findings were accurate

for their district (e.g., “The study findings indicate that youth are not routinely attending D&N hearings. Does that seem true in your district?”) Responses to these items were scored as yes, no, or somewhat, with an option for judges to comment. Interview responses were recorded and transcribed and then coded for themes.

## Reference

Sullivan, A. (2018). *Youth attendance at dependency court proceedings a mixed methods study of judicial officers and youth*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation.) Colorado State University, CO.

## Accessing the Measure

The full measure is available in the document identified in the reference and in the Appendix of Measures, linked [here](#).

# Youth Attendance Youth Survey

## Instrument Description

The Youth Attendance Youth Survey gathers information about youth experiences, attitudes, and beliefs about engagement in court including perceptions of voice, barriers to attending hearings, transportation concerns, being prepared for court, suggestions for improving communication in court, and the benefits of attending court. The survey includes self-report items and a follow-up focus group discussion. The study also used the [Youth Attendance Judicial Interview](#), also included in this Compendium.

## Components Measured

- Hearing Quality
  - Attention to and application of legal standards
  - Child attendance and engagement
- Case Outcomes
  - Child and parent well-being

## Unit of Measurement

Individual youth ages 16–21

## Measurement Strategy

- Data collection method: Survey and focus group
- Type of Assessment: Youth self-report and discussion
- Location/context: Could be administered in multiple locations
- Administrator/coder: Self-administered in a group/Trained researcher/observer to facilitate focus group
- Administration Time/Coding Time: Up to 1 hour
- Administration mode: Paper-and-pencil/Could also use other methods of administration, such as electronic

## Psychometric Properties

Not reported.

## Scoring Method

Most survey questions have multiple response options with the instruction to select all that apply and an open-ended “other” or “comment” option. The survey also included some open-ended questions. Responses were recorded and coded for themes.

## Reference

Sullivan, A. (2018). *Youth attendance at dependency court proceedings a mixed methods study of judicial officers and youth*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation.) Colorado State University, CO.

## Accessing the Measure

The full measure is available in the document identified in the reference and in the Appendix of Measures, linked [here](#).

# Toolkit of Court Performance Measures in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases

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The *Toolkit of Court Performance Measures in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases* (2008), funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, represents the most comprehensive collection of proposed child welfare court performance measures. Performance measurement is the ongoing, regular collection of information to monitor how a program or system is doing on agreed upon indicators of success. It is a systematic way of mapping the evidence of the progress towards an expected result. In the child welfare context, court performance measurement refers to measuring the court's progress on safety, permanency, timeliness, due process or fairness and child well-being outcomes. While performance measures and research and evaluation measures may overlap, evaluation is a specific, in-depth way to gather and analyze information to draw conclusions, not only about the extent to which desired outcomes have been achieved, but also why or why not and to what extent a program, practice or policy has caused (or contributed) to the results.

The court performance measures toolkit was a combined effort of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, National Center for State Courts, and the American Bar Association to identify and clearly define a set of measures for courts to use in assessing performance. The *Toolkit for Court Performance Measures in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases* is a compendium-like series that offers guidance on about 30 court performance measures for child abuse and neglect court cases across four child welfare case process and outcome domains:

- Safety (2 measures)
- Permanency (5 measures)
- Due process and fairness (10 measures)
- Timeliness (13 measures)

The five-volume toolkit includes technical, implementation, user, and judicial workload guides. Exhibit 3 maps the court performance measures to the relevant components of interest. The complete toolkit is available [here](#).

## Exhibit 3. Comparison of Court Performance Measures to Related Judicial Decision-Making and Hearing Quality Components.

Court performance measure	Related judicial decision-making and hearing quality component
<b>Safety</b> Child safety while under court jurisdiction	<b>Case Outcomes</b> Child safety

Court performance measure	Related judicial decision-making and hearing quality component
Child safety after release from court jurisdiction	
<p><b>Permanency</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achievement of child permanency</li> <li>Children not reaching permanency</li> <li>Reentry into foster care after return home</li> <li>Reentry into foster care after adoption or guardianship</li> <li>Children moved while under court jurisdictions</li> </ul>	<p><b>Case Outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Type and timeliness of child permanency</li> </ul> <p><b>Case Process and Progress</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child placement type and stability</li> </ul>
<p><b>Due Process and Fairness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of judges per case</li> <li>Early appointment of advocate for children</li> <li>Early appointment of counsel for parents</li> <li>Service of process to parties</li> <li>Advance notice of hearings to parties</li> <li>Advance written notice of hearing to foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers</li> <li>Presence of advocates during hearings</li> <li>Presence of parties during hearings</li> <li>Continuity of advocates for children</li> <li>Continuity of counsel for parents</li> </ul>	<p><b>Jurisdiction Context, Court Resources, Practices, and Culture</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Judicial continuity</li> </ul> <p><b>Pre- and Between-Hearing Communication and Activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prehearing and between hearing contact between parties</li> </ul> <p><b>Hearing Quality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parent attendance and engagement</li> <li>Child attendance and engagement</li> <li>Quality of representation for the parent, child, and child welfare agency</li> </ul>
<p><b>Timeliness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time to permanent placement</li> <li>Time to adjudication</li> <li>Timeliness of adjudication</li> <li>Time to disposition hearing</li> <li>Timeliness of disposition hearing</li> <li>Timeliness of case review hearings</li> <li>Time to first permanency hearing</li> <li>Time to termination of parental rights petition</li> <li>Time to termination of parental rights</li> <li>Timeliness of termination of parental rights proceedings</li> <li>Time from disposition hearing to termination of parental rights petition</li> </ul>	<p><b>Case Process and Progress</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Case progress and timeliness of hearings</li> </ul>

Court performance measure	Related judicial decision-making and hearing quality component
Timeliness of adoption petition Timeliness of adoption proceedings	

## Reference

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. (2008). *Court performance measures in child abuse and neglect cases: Technical guide*. U.S. Department of Justice and the Children's Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Available [here](#).

# Data Sources Table

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The Data Sources Table on the following page includes information about currently available datasets or data dashboards that may be useful in assessing the key components of judicial decision-making and hearing quality and their relation to child welfare case outcomes. Child welfare case outcomes (as defined in Exhibit 1) include safety, type and timeliness of child permanency, and child and parent well-being.

Dataset	Scope (national, state, specific court)	Population/ Sample size	Methods	Available years <sup>2</sup>	Outcomes/Components that can be measured
<a href="#">Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) - Adoption</a>	National	All children in foster care and those who have been adopted	Administrative data collected twice a year from state tribal title IV-E agencies	1999–2018	Termination of Parental Rights Type and Timeliness of Child Permanency
<a href="#">Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) - Foster Care File</a>	National	All children who have entered foster care, are currently in foster care, or exited care at a point in time for the fiscal year	Administrative data collected bi-annually from state tribal title IV-E agencies	1999–2019	Child Placement Type and Stability Case Process Termination of Parental Rights Child Safety Type and Timeliness of Child Permanency
<a href="#">California Child Welfare Indicators Project</a>	Statewide: California	All children in foster care for the state; updated in 2020	Child welfare agency sends data to University of California, Berkeley; data transformed by university into publicly accessible dashboard by county and year	Updated in 2020	Family Services Ordered Termination of Parental Rights Case Process Child Safety Type and Timeliness of Child Permanency
<a href="#">Florida's Child Welfare Statistics Data Dashboard</a>	Statewide: Florida	All children reported, investigated, and	Uses administrative child welfare data to populate a dashboard that includes	2014–2020	Child Placement Type and Stability Case Process Family Services Ordered

<sup>2</sup> Available years were updated until time of publication for this document and may not reflect all currently available data at the time of review of this document.

Dataset	Scope (national, state, specific court)	Population/ Sample size	Methods	Available years <sup>2</sup>	Outcomes/Components that can be measured
		substantiated for abuse or neglect	child welfare and court performance data		Termination of Parental Rights Child Safety Type and Timeliness of Child Permanency Child Well-Being
<a href="#">Fostering Court Improvement Website</a>	Multistate (public) Nevada, Idaho, Nebraska, Missouri, Tennessee, Vermont, North Carolina, Georgia, Louisiana, and Florida	All children in foster care for the states	Administrative data collected from state title IV- E agencies and reported by county or district	Varies by state	Child Placement Type and Stability Case Process Termination of Parental Rights Child Safety Type and Timeliness of Child Permanency
<a href="#">Kids Count Data Book</a>	National	All children in the United States	Compiles census data into scorecards for each state on specific measures	2009–2018	Child Well-Being
<a href="#">Minnesota Child Welfare Data Dashboard</a>	Statewide: Minnesota	All children in foster care in Minnesota	Uses administrative child welfare data to populate state and federal performance measures by county	2015–2018	Child Placement Stability Child Safety Type and Timeliness of Child Permanency
<a href="#">National Quality Improvement Center for Representation of</a>	Multistate: Georgia and Washington	Sample of child welfare cases in multiple	Survey, administrative data, and file review data collected from two project sites that implemented	2015	Quality of Legal Representation Type and Timeliness of Child Permanency Child Placement Type and Stability

Dataset	Scope (national, state, specific court)	Population/ Sample size	Methods	Available years <sup>2</sup>	Outcomes/Components that can be measured
<a href="#">Children in Child Welfare</a>		jurisdictions within each state	quality legal representation programs		Termination of Parental Rights
<a href="#">National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being</a>	National	Sample of all children and families that entered child welfare system in a given year	Survey data collected from children and families who have experienced child welfare system	1999–2008	Child Well-Being
<a href="#">National Youth in Transition Database</a>	National	Sample of youth in foster care at age 17 in the surveying years	Survey data from youth sampled from an entry cohort of cases for youth in care at age 17 and surveyed again at ages 19 and 21	2011–2018 (intermittent years)	Type and Timeliness of Child Permanency Child Well-Being
<a href="#">New York Child Welfare Court Data Metrics</a>	Statewide: New York	All children in foster care in New York	Uses administrative data to populate a report of court performance measures over time	2015–2018	Case Progress and Timeliness of Hearings Child Placement Stability Child Safety Type and Timeliness of Child Permanency
<a href="#">Washington State Center for Court Research Data Dashboard</a>	Statewide: Washington	All children in foster care in Washington state	Data extracted from child welfare agency case management system; updated monthly	2017–2020	Case Process Termination of Parental Rights Child Safety

Dataset	Scope (national, state, specific court)	Population/ Sample size	Methods	Available years <sup>2</sup>	Outcomes/Components that can be measured
					Type and Timeliness of Child Permanency
<a href="#">Wisconsin Child Welfare Data Dashboards</a>	Statewide: Wisconsin	All children in foster care in Wisconsin	Data extracted from child welfare case management system; portrays county level summary data	2015–2020	Child Placement Type and Stability Child Safety Type and Timeliness of Child Permanency Child Well-Being Parent Well-Being

# Appendix of Measures

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This Appendix includes reprints of the actual instruments if the lead author or organization provided written permission for a reprint of the measure within the Compendium. The Appendix includes at least one instrument for each of the identified data collection methods discussed in the Compendium. Each measure is hyperlinked from the appropriate profile.

## Assessing Quality of Permanency Hearings Toolkit: Focus Group Questions

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1. What comes to mind when you hear “Permanency Hearing”?
2. In a perfect world, what is the purpose(s) of the permanency hearing?
3. Who should be present?
4. Do you think the presence of youth and children adds value to permanency hearings?
5. How, if at all, should permanency hearings be adjusted based on the age of the child?
6. Do you think the presence of foster parents adds value to permanency hearings?
7. When a child or youth is not present, how does the “meaningful consultation” requirement occur with the court?
8. What are some of the best practices that occur in permanency hearings?
9. How valuable is the permanency hearing report to you in your role?
10. How should current placement, placement options and moves be addressed?
11. What are the most important elements to address during permanency hearings in order to achieve more timely and appropriate permanency for children?
12. What child well-being issues are being regularly addressed in your permanency hearings?
13. How is the permanency plan discussed within the framework of the best interest of the child?
14. Of what importance is it to have inquiries made that are culturally sensitive and/or trauma-informed?
15. Should ICWA be addressed in a permanency planning hearing? If so, how?
16. Do permanency hearings assist in achieving more timely permanency for children? If so, how? If not, why not?
17. Do permanency hearings look and feel different depending on how long the child has been in care? If so, how?

# Assessing Quality of Hearings Toolkit: Self-Assessment

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Consider “typical” practice in your jurisdiction. For each section below, identify how often these practices occur in a permanency hearing in your jurisdiction. Complete the items only when applicable in your jurisdiction. For example, Rule out statutorily preferred perm goals is only applicable when the goal is not reunification.

How long do permanency hearings typically take from start to finish?

\_\_\_\_\_ minutes (non-Freed hearings) \_\_\_\_\_ minutes (Freed hearings)

Activity	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always/ Almost Always
<b>PRESENCE OF PARTIES</b>					
How often are the following parties typically present (when applicable) at permanency hearings?					
Mothers					
Fathers					
Child(ren)					
Attorney for Parents					
Attorney for Children					
Foster Parents					
Relatives					
<b>ENGAGEMENT:</b>					
When parties are present, how often does the court...					
<b>Parent Engagement</b>					
Speak directly to the parent					
Address the parent by name					
Explain the hearing process to the parent					
Explain legal timelines to the parent					
Ask if the parent has any questions					
<b>Youth Engagement</b>					
Speak directly to the youth					
Address the youth by name					
Explain the hearing process					
Explain legal timelines					
Ask if the youth has any questions					
<b>Parents have an opportunity to be heard</b>					
Parents are treated with respect					
Children have an opportunity to be heard					
<b>DISCUSSION</b>					
How often are the following items discussed at applicable permanency hearings?					

Activity	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always/ Almost Always
Permanent plan for the child					
Mothers progress on alleviating concerns					
Mother's compliance with case plan					
Father's progress on alleviating concerns					
Father's compliance with case plan					
Additional services needed (parents or child)					
Barriers to achieving permanency					
Identified steps to achieve final permanency					
15 of 22 months/compelling reasons					
Efforts to finalize permanency					
Rule out statutorily preferred perm goals					
Financial support of the children					
DISCUSSION continued (how often are the following items discussed at applicable permanency hearings?)					
Possibility of kinship/relative placement					
Sibling placement					
Current placement meets child and family needs					
Least restrictive placement					
Anticipated or recent placement move					
Agency efforts to reunify					
Child – Educational placement stability					
Child _ Educational needs					
Child – Physical health/ development					
Child – Mental health needs					
Child – Transitional planning					
Child – General well-being					
Parent-child time (visitation)					
Sibling family time					
REPORTS					
Agency reports are submitted timely to the court					
Agency reports are mailed timely to all parties 14 days prior to the hearing					
Agency reports are up to date					
Other reports to the court are timely (e.g., substance use assessment, mental health)					
FINDINGS ON THE RECORD					
Reasonable Efforts findings are made verbally on the record					
The judge makes a finding of no reasonable efforts when appropriate					
The judge sets the date of the next hearing on the record					
COURT PROCESS					
There is continuity of judges across the life of the case (only 1 judge per case)					
The permanency hearing is continued or adjourned					

# Attorney Case Activity Periodic Survey – Quality Improvement Center-Child Representation Intervention

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## Survey Introduction

This survey contains questions regarding the deprivation (dependency) or termination case of one of the children you represent: **[pre\_fill: child\_fname] [pre\_fill: child\_lname]** (henceforth "this child"). These questions cover a number of different topics, including the status of this child's case, the nature and frequency of your contacts with this child, and your advocacy on behalf of this child.

Please note that there are no "right" answers. We understand that circumstances differ from case to case, and that you can't accomplish everything that you would like to on each and every case. The intent of these surveys is to obtain a realistic picture of the prevailing practice of law in deprivation (dependency) cases. Accordingly, we would ask that you be as honest as possible, and answer these questions to the best of your knowledge. And remember, all of your answers will be kept strictly confidential.

*Also, if you believe there are extenuating circumstances concerning this case, or would like to provide additional details about the answers you provide in this survey, we have included a comment field at the end of the survey.*

If you have any questions or concerns, please click on the "Contact Us" link on the front page of the website and call or email the study team.

**GA – Attorney Case Activity Periodic Survey**

#	Question	Response	Rule	Field
1.0	<b>Prologue</b>		No rule	
1.1	What best describes the role you are serving for this child?	Radio button Attorney for the child Guardian ad litem Dual or hybrid role	No rule	[role]
1.2	Is this child <u>currently</u> in out-of-home care (i.e., foster care)?	Radio button Yes No	No rule	[in_care]
2.0	<b>Current Status Of This Child’s Deprivation / Dependency Or Termination Case</b>		No rule	
2.1	Have you participated in any of the following hearings or events that have occurred in this child’s deprivation / dependency or termination case [pre_fill: reference_event_text]?		No rule	
	72-hour / probable cause hearing	Check boxes		
	Adjudication hearing			
	Disposition hearing			
	Review hearing of any type (i.e., case plan, compliance, citizen panel)			
	Permanency hearing			
	Termination proceeding/hearing			
	Pre-trial hearing/settlement conference			
	Motion hearing (non-reunification, placement change, etc.)			
	Mediation			
	Family team or treatment team meeting			

GA – Attorney Case Activity Periodic Survey

#	Question	Response	Rule	Field
	Other judicial, administrative, or educational proceedings <i>{include text field for attorneys to write-in a description}</i> None of the above			
3.0	<b>Nature And Frequency Of Your Contacts With This Child</b>		No rule	
3.1	Approximately, how many times have you spoken on the phone, emailed, or texted with this child [pre_fill: reference_event_text]?	Radio button None 1 time 2 - 3 times 4 - 5 times More than 5 times	No rule	
3.2	Approximately how many times have you met in person with this child [pre_fill: reference_event_text]?	Radio button None 1 time 2 - 3 times 4 - 5 times More than 5 times	No rule	[met_child]
3.2.1	At which of the following locations did you meet with this child [pre_fill: reference_event_text]? Your office or firm The county court building This child's foster home or placement This child's school DFACS office Visitation center	Check box; at least one check required	[met_child] ~= "None"	

GA – Attorney Case Activity Periodic Survey

#	Question	Response	Rule	Field
	Other community setting (e.g., park, restaurant) Other location			
3.3	Approximately, how many times have you met in person, spoken on the phone, emailed, or texted with the following individuals [pre_fill: reference_event_text]? Caseworker(s) Mother Father Foster parent(s), including relative foster parent Other relatives Attorneys Teacher(s) CASA Mental Health professional(s) (therapist, psychologist, psychiatrist) Doctors or other medical or health professionals? Other service provider	Radio buttons None 1 time 2 - 3 times 4 - 5 times More than 5 times	No rule	
4.0	<b>Case-Related Activities</b>		No rule	
4.1	Approximately how much time have you spent involved in the following activities <u>in furtherance of this child' case</u> [pre_fill: reference_event_text]? Developing your strategy for the case Legal research Consulting or negotiating with other parties to the case	Radio buttons None A half hour or less About an hour Several (2 to 4) hours Many (5+) hours	No rule	

GA – Attorney Case Activity Periodic Survey

#	Question	Response	Rule	Field
	Obtaining / reviewing this child's court file			
	Obtaining / reviewing third-party records (e.g., educational, medical, psychological)			
	Conducting interviews or reviewing interview notes			
	Drafting and filing pleadings, motions, and court orders			
	Assessing this child's safety with respect to removal or return to their home of origin (i.e., assessing threats, vulnerabilities, and protective factors)			
	Assessing this child's safety with respect to a relative, foster, adoptive or permanent placement other than their home of origin			
	Reviewing, assessing or seeking to influence this child's case plan			
4.2	Have you made any efforts to initiate a non-adversarial case resolution process (e.g., negotiation, mediation, case conferences) on behalf of this child [pre_fill: reference_event_text]?	Radio button Yes No	No rule	
5.0	<b>Child's Visitation With Family</b>		No rule	
5.1	What type of visitation is this child's primary caregiver (henceforth 'parent') currently <u>allowed</u> with this child?	Radio button Parent has not been available for visitation with this child No visitation allowed at this time Supervised (i.e., line of sight or sound) Monitored (i.e., periodic check in)	[in_care] = yes	[parent_visit]

GA – Attorney Case Activity Periodic Survey

#	Question	Response	Rule	Field
		Unsupervised		
5.1.1	On average, how much time (in hours) per month did this child visit with his/her parent [pre_fill: reference_event_text]?	Radio button None About an hour More than an hour, but less than 2 hours More than 2 hours, but less than 4 hours More than 4 hours, but less than 12 hours More than 12 hours	[parent_visit] not in ("No visitation allowed at this time", "Parent has not made herself available,...")	
5.2	Have you advocated for (more extensive and frequent) visitation with parents for this child [pre_fill: reference_event_text]?	Radio button Yes No	[in_care] = yes	
6.0	<b>Sibling visitation</b>		No rule	
6.1	Does this child have any siblings?	Radio button Yes No Don't know	[svy_prev: has_sib] = "Don't know" or missing	[has_sib]
6.2	Are any of this child's siblings currently in out-of-home care?	Radio button Yes No	[in_care] = yes and ( [svy_prev: has_sib] = yes or [has_sib] = yes )	[sib_care]
6.2.1	Have you advocated for this child and his/her siblings to be placed in the same foster home or other placement [pre_fill: reference_event_text]?	Radio button Yes No	[in_care] = yes and (	

GA – Attorney Case Activity Periodic Survey

#	Question	Response	Rule	Field
		This child lives with all of their siblings who are also currently in out-of-home care	[svy_prev: has_sib] = yes or [has_sib] = yes ) and [sib_care] = yes	
6.3	Does this child currently have visitation with any siblings with whom they do <u>not</u> live?	Radio button Yes No This child currently lives with all of his/her siblings	[in_care] = yes and ( [svy_prev: has_sib] = yes or [has_sib] = yes )	
6.3.1	Have you advocated for (more extensive and frequent) visitation with siblings for this child [pre_fill: reference_event_text]?	Radio button Yes No This child lives with all of their siblings	[in_care] = yes and ( [svy_prev: has_sib] = yes or [has_sib] = yes )	
7.0	<b>Service Advocacy</b>		No rule	
7.1	Have there been substantive changes in the services ordered for, or provided to, this child [pre_fill: reference_event_text]?	Radio button Yes No	No rule	
7.2	Did you argue for, or make other concerted efforts to change, the array of services	Radio button Yes	No rule	

**GA – Attorney Case Activity Periodic Survey**

#	Question	Response	Rule	Field
	provided to this child [pre_fill: reference_event_text]?	No		
7.3	Have there been substantive changes in the services ordered for, or provided to, this child's family [pre_fill: reference_event_text]?	Radio button Yes No	No rule	
7.4	Did you argue for, or make other concerted efforts to change, the array of services provided to this child's family [pre_fill: reference_event_text]?	Radio button Yes No	No rule	
8.0	<b>Your Relationship With, And Advocacy For, This Child</b>		No rule	
8.1	Currently, how would you describe the quality of your working relationship with this child?	Radio button Very good Good Fair Poor Very poor No relationship	No rule	
8.2	Currently, how would you describe your level of understanding of this child's own goals and objectives concerning his / her deprivation / dependency or termination case?	Radio button Very clear understanding Fairly clear understanding Somewhat unclear understanding Limited understanding Little or no understanding	No rule	
9.0	<b>Child's Dispositional Order</b>		[svy_prev: dispo] = "No" or missing	
9.1	Does this child have a dispositional order?	Radio button Yes No	[svy_prev: dispo] = No or missing	[dispo]
9.1.2	What was the approximate date of this child's disposition hearing?	Date field; range 5/1/2000 – present	[dispo] = yes	

GA – Attorney Case Activity Periodic Survey

#	Question	Response	Rule	Field
9.2	Which of the following statements best describes the process that lead up to the establishment of this child's dispositional order	<p>Radio button</p> <p>All parties agreed to order proposed by the Department</p> <p>Parties agreed to all major conditions, no issues were contested</p> <p>General agreement between parties on substantive issues, contested in court on pleadings only</p> <p>General agreement between parties on substantive issues, contested in court with testimony from witnesses</p> <p>No or little agreement on substantive issues, contested in court on pleadings only</p> <p>No or little agreement on substantive issues, contested in court with testimony from witnesses (i.e., case went to trial)</p>	[dispo] = yes	
9.3	To what extent do the obligations and services described in this child's dispositional order address parental deficiencies and other conditions that required Court supervision?	<p>Radio button</p> <p>To a great extent</p> <p>To a moderate extent</p> <p>To a slight extent</p> <p>Very little or not at all</p>	[dispo] = yes	
9.4	To what extent do the provisions of this child's dispositional order describe responsibilities or obligations for (1) this child's parents or family <u>or</u> (2) the caseworker or agency?	<p>Radio button</p> <p>Almost entirely for the parent(s) or family of this child, with none or few pertaining for the caseworker or agency</p> <p>Mostly for the parent(s) or family of this child, with some for the caseworker or agency</p>	[dispo] = yes	

GA – Attorney Case Activity Periodic Survey

#	Question	Response	Rule	Field
		Equally for this the parent(s) or family of this child <u>and</u> the caseworker or agency Mostly for caseworker or agency, with some for the parent(s) or family of this child Almost entirely for the caseworker or agency, with none or few for the parent(s) or family of this child		
9.5	To what extent do the provisions of this child's dispositional order pertain to (1) completion of tasks like attending programs or classes <u>or</u> (2) achievement of performance standards or goals like improved parenting and other behavior changes?	Radio button Pertain (almost) exclusively to concrete tasks Pertain mostly to concrete tasks, with some mention of performance standards or goals Consist of an even mix of concrete tasks and performance standards or goals Pertain mostly to performance standards or goals, with some mention of concrete tasks Pertain (almost) exclusively to performance standards or goals	[dispo] = yes	
9.6	To what extent are the provisions of this child's dispositional order described in terms that are (1) specific and objective <u>vs.</u> (2) general and subject to argument?	Radio button Very specific terms that can be evidenced by objective standards or measures Moderately specific terms that can be evidenced by objective standards or measures Moderately broad terms evidenced by subjective standards requiring argument to establish	[dispo] = yes	

GA – Attorney Case Activity Periodic Survey

#	Question	Response	Rule	Field
		Very broad terms evidenced by subjective standards requiring substantial argument to establish		
9.7	In your opinion, to what extent do the following aspects of this child's dispositional order agree with his/her goals and objectives concerning his/her deprivation / dependency or termination case		[dispo] = yes	
	Permanency plan goal Services for his/her parents Visitation plan with his/her parents Placement or living arrangement Other services for this child School placement Other educational issues	Radio button Almost complete agreement Substantial agreement Substantial disagreement Mostly in disagreement N.A.	[dispo] = yes	
10.0	<b>Termination of Parental Rights</b>		[svy_prev: tpr] = "No" or missing	
10.1	Has a TPR proceeding for this child's primary caregiver (i.e., parent) been completed?	Radio button Yes No	[svy_prev: tpr] = "No" or missing	[tpr]
10.1.1	What was the approximate date of this child's TPR proceeding?	Date field; range 5/1/2000 – present	[tpr] = "Yes"	
10.2	Which of the following statements best describes the process through which the termination of parental rights petition on this child's parent was resolved? (If both parents have been subject to TPR, please respond with respect to this child's mother.)	Radio button Termination found by default of the parent Termination was granted after (voluntary) relinquishment by the parent Termination was granted by court after trial	[tpr] = "Yes"	

GA – Attorney Case Activity Periodic Survey

#	Question	Response	Rule	Field
		Termination was denied by court after trial The Department voluntarily dismissed petition prior to trial Court denied petition by summary judgment or similar process prior to trial		
11.0	Case Closure		[svy_prev: rep_ended] = "No" or missing	
11.1	Have you completed your legal representation of this child?	Radio button Yes No	[svy_prev: rep_ended] = [rep_ended] "No" or missing	
11.1.1	What was the approximate date that you concluded your legal representation of this child?	Date field; range 5/1/2000 – present	[rep_ended] = "Yes"	
11.2	To what extent did your relationship with the child help you reach decisions in this case?	Very little 1 2 3 4 5 Very great	[rep_ended] = "Yes"	
11.3	To what extent did you share information concerning his/her case with this child?	Very little 1 2 3 4 5 Very great	[rep_ended] = "Yes"	
11.4	Did the child generally express his or her wishes about the decisions over the course of the case?	Radio button Yes No Child does not have the capacity to express his or her interests	[rep_ended] = "Yes"	
11.5	In general, how much weight did you attach to the child's wishes over the course of this case?	Very low 1 2 3 4 5 Very high	[rep_ended] = "Yes"	

GA – Attorney Case Activity Periodic Survey

#	Question	Response	Rule	Field
11.6	In general, over the course of this case, to what extent did your recommendations to the court differ from the stated wishes of the child?	Very little 1    2    3    4    5 Very great N.A.	This child was unable to express wishes	[rep_ended] = "Yes"
11.7	In general, over the course of this case, to what extent did your recommendations to the court differ from the recommendations of the public agency?	Very little 1    2    3    4    5 Very great		[rep_ended] = "Yes"
11.8	Over the course of this case, did you ever request an evaluation of the child's health, mental health, or educational needs?	Radio button Yes No		[rep_ended] = "Yes"
11.9	Over the course of this case, did you ever request an evaluation of a parent or caregiver's health or mental health needs?	Radio button Yes No		[rep_ended] = "Yes"
11.10	Over the course of this case, how would you characterize your involvement in planning for the safety of the child?	Not involved at all 1    2    3    4    5 Very involved		[rep_ended] = "Yes"
<b>12.0 Comments</b>				
12.1	If there are any extenuating circumstances concerning this case, or additional details that were not addressed during the survey that you would like to include, please briefly describe them below.	Open text field; no limit		

## Child's Voice in Custody Litigation Survey

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1. **Your age ---**  
**Your sex ---**  
**Year of first appointment or election to bench \_ \_ \_ \_ \_**  
**State court or tribal court - - - -**
  
2. **Approximately how many child custody disputes have been assigned to you since January 1995? \_ \_ \_ \_ \_**
  
3. **Of the total number of child custody disputes assigned to you since January 1995, about what percentage were contested? \_ \_ \_ \_ \_**
  
4. **About what percentage of these contested custody cases involved children within the following age brackets, going by the age of the youngest child?**
  - A. Youngest child was infant to 2 years old: \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
  - B. Youngest child was 3 to 5 years old (early childhood): \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
  - C. Youngest child was 6 to 10 years old (elementary school age): \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
  - D. Youngest child was 11 to 13 years old (middle school age): \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
  - E. Youngest child was 14 to 17 years old (high school age): \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
  
5. **About what percentage of these contested custody cases resulted in the following custodial arrangements?**
  - A. Joint legal custody and physical custody with approximately equal physical access \_
  - B. Joint legal custody with primary physical custody in mother \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
  - C. Joint legal custody with primary physical custody in father \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
  - D. Sole legal and physical custody in mother \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
  - E. Sole legal and physical custody in father \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
  - F. Sole legal and physical custody in nonparent care-giver \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
  - G. Other (please describe):

Comments:

6. In adjudicating child custody disputes, how significant to you are children's preferences within the following age brackets? In answering this question, assume you have found that the parties seeking custody are equally fit to exercise custody.

*Please use a 5-point scale, with 1 = of no significance whatsoever, 2 = possibly significant, 3 = significant, 4 = very significant, and 5 = extremely significant (i.e., the child's preference is the presumptive custodial arrangement, absent a strong showing to the contrary)*

- A. Infancy to 2 years: \_\_\_\_\_
- B. 3 to 5 years (early childhood): \_\_\_\_\_
- C. 6 to 10 years (elementary school age): \_\_\_\_\_
- D. 11 to 13 years (middle school age): \_\_\_\_\_
- E. 14 to 17 years (high school age): \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

7. In deciding on the weight to give a child's wishes or preferences as to custody and visitation, how important to you are the following factors? In answering this question, assume you have found that the parties seeking custody are equally fit to exercise custody.

*Please use a 5-point scale, with 1 = of no significance whatsoever, 2 = possibly significant, 3 = significant, 4 = very significant, and 5 = extremely significant*

- A. The age of the child \_\_\_\_\_
- B. The psychological and cognitive maturity of the child \_\_\_\_\_
- C. The apparent emotional health of the child \_\_\_\_\_
- D. The apparent intensity of the child's preference \_\_\_\_\_

- E. Your general impression of the child' s relationship with each party \_  
\_ \_
- F. Your understanding of the reasons for the child' s preference \_ \_ \_
- G. The wishes or preferences of siblings \_ \_ \_

Comments:

**8. In general, do you tend to give children's wishes or preferences more weight, the same weight, or less weight when the proceeding is for a *modification of custody* as compared to a proceeding for an initial custody decree? Please circle one.**

- A. Less weight in modification proceeding than in original custody proceeding.
- B. Same weight in modification proceeding as in original custody proceeding.
- C. More weight in modification proceeding than in original custody proceeding.

Comments:

**9. Indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements about children's preferences in custody litigation.**

***Please use a 5-point scale, with 1 = disagree strongly, 2 = disagree, 3 = no opinion, 4 = agree, and 5 = agree strongly.***

- A. Most children prefer a custodial arrangement that poses the least disruption to their continuity with home, school, and friends. \_ \_ \_
- B. Most children prefer to be in the physical custody of the parent with whom they have the closer emotional bond. \_ \_ \_
- C. Most children prefer a custodial arrangement that offers them more freedom and less discipline. \_ \_ \_

- D. Children often prefer a custodial arrangement that will allow them to avoid contact with a parent's new partner. \_\_\_
- E. Children often prefer a custodial arrangement that will allow them to avoid contact with an abusive parent. \_\_\_
- F. Children often express a preference in custody litigation that is based on sympathy for a parent or care-giver. \_\_\_

Comments:

- 10. Which of the following methods, if any, do you use in ascertaining a child's wishes or preferences as to custody? Please indicate if your answer varies according to the age of the child.**

*Please use a 5-point scale, with 1= never, 2 = occasionally (about 25% of the time), 3 = regularly (about 50% of the time), 4 = very often (about 75% of the time), and 5 = always or almost always.*

- A. Testimony by child in open court, subject to cross-examination \_\_\_
- B. *In camera* interview of child \_\_\_
- C. Testimony by parties \_\_\_
- D. Report from GAL \_\_\_
- E. Submission from child's attorney \_\_\_
- F. Testimony by mental health expert \_\_\_
- G. Evaluation by court personnel \_\_\_

Comments:

- 11. Indicate the circumstances under which you would be likely to interview a child, order a custody evaluation, appoint a GAL, or appoint an attorney for the child.**

*Please use a 5-point scale, with 1 = never, 2 = occasionally (about 25% of the time), 3 = regularly (about 50% of the time), 4 = very often (about 75% of the time), and 5 = always or almost always*

**A. Judicial interview of child**

1. When a party requests such an interview \_\_\_
2. When the parties agree to such an interview \_\_\_
3. When there is a high degree of conflict between the parties  
\_\_\_
4. When one party alleges child abuse by the other \_\_\_
5. When one party alleges domestic violence by the other \_\_\_
6. Other (please explain):

**B. Court-ordered custody evaluation**

1. When a party requests an evaluation \_\_\_
2. When the parties agree to an evaluation \_\_\_
3. When there is a high degree of conflict between the parties  
\_\_\_
4. When one party alleges child abuse by the other \_\_\_
5. When one party alleges domestic violence by the other \_\_\_
6. Other (please explain):

**C. Appointment of guardian ad litem**

1. When a party requests that a GAL be appointed \_\_\_
2. When the parties agree to such an appointment \_\_\_
3. When there is a high degree of conflict between the parties  
\_\_\_
4. When one party alleges child abuse by the other \_\_\_
5. When one party alleges domestic violence by the other \_\_\_
6. Other (please explain):

**D. Appointment of attorney for child**

1. When a party requests that counsel be appointed for the  
child \_\_\_
2. When the parties agree to such an appointment \_\_\_
3. When there is a high degree of conflict between the parties  
\_\_\_
4. When one party alleges child abuse by the other \_\_\_
5. When one party alleges domestic violence by the other \_\_\_
6. Other (please explain):

*Comments:*

12. In those cases, in which you do interview children, which of the following techniques or procedures do you follow? Please indicate if your answer varies according to the age of the child.

**If you never interview children during custody litigation, go on to the next question.**

***Please use a 5-point scale, with 1=never, 2 = occasionally (about 25 % of the interviews), 3 = regularly (about 50% of the interviews), 4 = very often (about 75% of the interviews), and 5 = all or almost all/judicial interviews.***

- A. I permit attorneys to be present during the interview, and I require that the interview be transcribed by a court reporter. \_\_\_
- B. I permit attorneys to be present during the interview, but I do not allow any stenographic or electronic recording. \_\_\_
- C. I do not permit attorneys to be present during the interview, but I do require that the interview be transcribed by a court reporter. \_\_\_
- D. I do not permit any other persons to be present during the interview, but I do require that the interview be recorded electronically. \_\_\_
- E. I do not permit any other persons to be present during the interview, and I do not allow any recording to be made of the interview. \_\_\_
- F. During the interview, I ask children *directly* for their preferences as to custody and parenting time. \_\_\_
- G. During the interview, I avoid direct questions, but I ask children *indirect questions* that will reveal their preferences as to custody and parenting time. \_\_\_
- H. During the interview, I ask children questions that will reveal the quality of their relationship with each parent or care-giver but I do not try to ascertain their preferences. \_\_\_
- I. During the interview, I explain to children that their stated preferences are important but are not binding on me as the decision maker. \_\_\_
- J. During the interview, I explain to children that what they tell me will remain confidential. \_\_\_
- K. During the interview, I explain to children that what they tell me will be shared with others. \_\_\_
- L. I make available to the parties a record of the interview. \_\_\_
- M. I seal the record of the interview and make it available only in the event of an appeal. \_\_\_
- N. My interviews with children generally last about \_\_\_ (Please state in minutes.)

Comments:

**13. Indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following assessments of the judicial practice of interviewing children to ascertain their preferences during custody litigation.**

***Please use a 5-point scale, with 1 = disagree strongly, 2 = disagree, 3 = no opinion, 4 = agree, and 5 = agree strongly.***

- A. Children may benefit emotionally by expressing their preferences or wishes to the judge during custody litigation. \_\_\_
- B. Parties may settle more readily if children's preferences are communicated to the judge. \_\_\_
- C. Children have a right to be heard during litigation affecting their interests. \_\_\_
- D. The child's expressed preference is important evidence in a judge's determination of the child's best interests. \_\_\_
- E. By use of an *in camera* interview, the judge can acquire a better understanding of the child and the parties. \_\_\_
- F. Children's expressed preferences are unreliable because children are subject to influence and manipulation by parents or care-givers. \_\_\_
- G. Children may suffer emotionally if they feel that they must choose one parent or care-giver over another. \_\_\_
- H. Judges generally lack the necessary training to interview children and evaluate children's statements. \_\_\_
- I. Parties' procedural due process rights are at risk if judges rely on unrecorded *in camera* interviews in resolving custody disputes. \_\_\_

*Comments:*

OPTIONAL: Please identify two ways in which the procedural or substantive law of child custody dispute resolution could be improved.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS SURVEY.

## Client-Directed Representation Informed Participant Interview

1. Please state your job title and briefly describe your responsibilities.
2. Could you describe your understanding of the *intended* effect of the FCP (FCP services)? Specifically, (a) what types of outcomes (e.g., permanency, child well-being, and safety) do you think FCP is supposed to help achieve and (b) how are FCP services/activities supposed to help achieve these goals?

Examples/definitions of outcomes (if needed):

Permanency:

Disposition and timing of exit from care

Pre-exit outcomes: Placement w/relatives, placement stability

Child well-being:

Children's understanding of court process

Parental visitation; sibling visitation/co-placement; proximity to parent(s)

Needed assessments

For instance, our understanding is that FCP services are thought to help children exit care more quickly, in part, because FCP involvement helps to leverage needed services that, in turn, help establish reasonable efforts.

Other examples (if needed):

FPC helps to improve the timeliness of court milestones (e.g., filings and rulings) and reduce the number of continuances, which helps to expedite permanency.

FCP helps to ensure contact with family (e.g., placement with relatives/siblings, frequent visitation).

3. What are your thoughts about the actual impact of the FCP (FCP services)?  
If different than intended effect just described:  
How is the impact different (i.e., is effect greater/ lesser, different, unintended)?
4. Besides the FCP services/activities just described, what other types of services/activities does FCP routinely provide/engage in?
5. Is FCP more effective in some types of cases than in others? If so, what types of cases are most influenced by FCP involvement?
6. To FCP staff only] Are there specific aspects of FCP operations, either formal or informal, that contribute to (lack of) FCP success (in achieving intended outcomes)?

Examples (if needed):

Staffing (e.g., caseload distribution), Support/Resources (e.g., availability/quality of para-professionals and investigators) Philosophy, Culture, Work environment  
Representational approach (i.e., extent to which it is adversarial)

7. How do FCP services impact the work or performance of other parties?

For instance, in what ways does FCP involvement affect the work or performance of:

- (a) Child welfare staff (e.g., DCF, CFC, subcontractors)
- (b) Other attorneys
- (c) CASA, mediators, etc.
- (d) Parents, adoptive parents, foster parents

8. Are you aware of other important initiatives, reforms, etc., besides the FCP, that may have also affected the disposition/timing of children's outcomes and experience?

# Cook County Juvenile Court Improvement Program: Court Observation Instrument

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## Cook County Juvenile CIP: Court Observation Instrument – Daily Cover Sheet

Court observer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / 98

Time first case was called \_\_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_\_

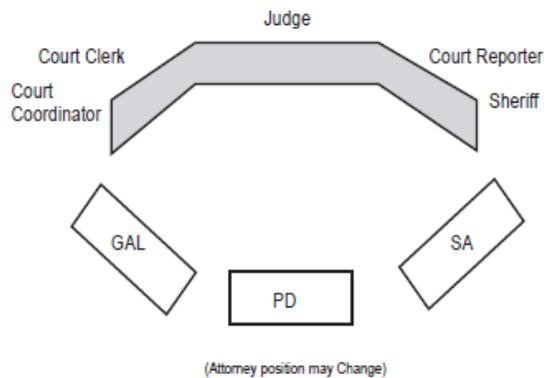
Calendar # \_\_\_\_\_ Breaks Begin \_\_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_\_:

Room \_\_\_\_\_ Breaks End \_\_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_\_:

Judge \_\_\_\_\_ Time last case was adjourned \_\_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_\_

### Useful (optional) abbreviations

Adjudication/Trial . . . . .	Adj
Administrative Case Review . . . . .	ACR
Assistant State's Atty . . . . .	SA
Asst. Public Defender . . . . .	PD
Continuance . . . . .	Cont
Court Facilitator . . . . .	CF
Court Coordinator . . . . .	CC
Court Reporter . . . . .	CR
DCFS Worker . . . . .	D-W
Disposition . . . . .	Dispo
Father . . . . .	F
Foster Parent . . . . .	FP
Guardian ad Litem . . . . .	GAL
Judge/Hearing Officer . . . . .	J
Mother . . . . .	M
Permanency Planning . . . . .	PP
Private Attorneys . . . . .	PA
Private Agency Workers . . . . .	POS



Reasonable Efforts . . . . . RE  
 Termination of Parental Rights . . . . . TPR  
 Witness . . . . . W

**Optional:** Enter your impressions or observations of the day not captured by the instrument, using the back of this sheet if necessary.

**Cook County Juvenile CIP: Court Observation Instrument**

Scheduled for \_\_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_\_ am pm  
 Case name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Case number(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Number of Children \_\_\_\_\_ Time Begin \_\_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Passed to Later in the Day (*Use New Sheet*)

Type of Hearing	
_____	TC — Temporary Custody Hearing
_____	Did the Parties Verbally Address Efforts Made by DCFS So That the Children Could Remain at Home? <span style="float: right;">Y N</span>
_____	Progress Report — PR (for _____)
_____	Status Hearing — ST (for _____)
_____	Motion MO _____ Attorney fees
_____	Other _____
_____	Trial — TR — Adjudication
_____	Dispo — DH — Disposition
_____	PH — Permanency Hearing — USE OTHER FORM
_____	TPR — CTP or TRM — “Prove up”
_____	Termination of Parental Rights
_____	Vacate Guardianship/Close Case (Motion)
_____	JD - Judicial Determination
_____	Other

Continuances	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/> Denied <input type="checkbox"/> Granted
_____	Insufficient Notice to _____ for Publication
_____	Report Not Available _____ To Provide Services
_____	Had Services Been Previously Ordered? <span style="float: right;">Y N</span>
_____	To Complete Drug Test — “Drops”
_____	Need for More Discovery
_____	Party Not Present _____
_____	Attorney Unavailable _____
_____	Witness No-show _____
_____	For “Diligent Search”
_____	Party Unprepared _____
_____	_____ New to case. Assigned _____
_____	_____ Other _____
_____	To obtain foster parent waiver
_____	Had waivers been previously requested? <span style="float: right;">Y N</span>
_____	Other _____

	Present	NA/ Don't know	Judge addressed directly
Mother	Y N		
Father	Y N		
Children	Y N		
POS worker	Y N		
DCFS	Y N		
Private Atty	Y N		
	Y N		
	Y N		

Did the judge use parents' proper names? Y N NA  
 Was anyone "Sworn In"? Y N NA  
 Was the worker prepared? Y N NA  
 dressed appropriately? Y N NA  
 treated respectfully? Y N NA  
 respectful of the court? Y N NA

Continuance requested by:  
 \_\_\_ J \_\_\_ GAL \_\_\_ SA  
 \_\_\_ PD \_\_\_ Private Attorney  
 \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Next Hearing for:  Will be before the Hearing Officer  
 \_\_\_ Progress Review/Progress Report  
 \_\_\_ Status Hearing  
 \_\_\_ "Trial" — Adjudication  
 \_\_\_ Dispo — Disposition  
 \_\_\_ Permanency Hearing  
 \_\_\_ TPR - Termination of Parental Rights  
 \_\_\_ COA - Completion of adoption  
 \_\_\_ Vacate Guardianship/Close Case (Motion)  
 \_\_\_ No Purpose Provided  
 \_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Date for Next Appearance: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Time End \_\_\_:\_\_\_

**Permanency Hearing Form Case # or name \_\_\_\_\_**

Continued/Not Begun because:  
 \_\_\_ Party Not Present  
 \_\_\_ DCFS \_\_\_ POS \_\_\_ Parent  
 \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_ Problems With ACR/Filing of Service Plan  
 \_\_\_ ACR Not Held  
 \_\_\_ Service plan not filed  
 \_\_\_ Service plan filed late: \_\_\_\_\_ days  
 \_\_\_ Service plan incomplete  
 \_\_\_ Service plan filed on time but not received by \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_ GAL failed to see client  
 \_\_\_ Party unprepared \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_ New to case  
 \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Current/Recommended Permanency Goal  
 \_\_\_ Return Home (in \_\_\_ months)  
 \_\_\_ Subsidized Guardianship  
 \_\_\_ Adoption \_\_\_ Independence  
 \_\_\_ Long-Term Foster Care  
 \_\_\_ Relative  
 \_\_\_ Non-relative  
 \_\_\_ Residential Care  
 \_\_\_ Substitute Care Pending Court Decision  
 \_\_\_ Concurrent Planning  
 \_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_  
 Was the goal:  
 \_\_\_ Accepted  
 \_\_\_ Achieved: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_ Changed  
 \_\_\_ Unresolved  
 \_\_\_ Date set for achievement: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Which of the following did the parties discuss during the proceedings:

- Appropriateness of permanency goal
- Appropriateness of the plan to achieving the permanency goal
- Appropriateness of the services contained in the plan
- Whether or not services in the plan have been provided
- Whether or not the goal/plan has been achieved
- Reasons for changing the goal
- Reasonable Efforts determination
- Services to parents
- Whether or not minor's placement is the least restrictive necessary to achieve goal
- Concurrent Planning

If changed, what is new goal?

- Return Home (in \_\_\_\_\_ months)
- Adoption
- Independence
- Subsidized Guardianship
- Substitute Care Pending Court Decision
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Next Hearing: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

- Permanency Hearing
- Progress Review/Status Hearing for \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Time End \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_

**Cook County Juvenile Court Assessment — 1998  
Hearing Officer Observation Instrument<sup>22</sup>**

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Court observer \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / 98      Hearing Officer \_\_\_\_\_

Calendar # \_\_\_\_\_      Courtroom area \_\_\_\_\_

Time first case was called      \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_

Breaks Begin      \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_

Breaks End      \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_

Time last case was adjourned      \_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_

**Optional:** Enter your impression of observations of the day not captured by the instrument, using the back of this sheet if necessary

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<sup>22</sup> The hearing officer instrument was printed on legal-sized paper. It has been reformatted to fit the confines of this volume.

**Cook County Juvenile Court Assessment — 1998  
Hearing Officer Observation Instrument**

Scheduled for \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ am pm  
 Case name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Case number(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Number of Children \_\_\_\_\_ Time Begin \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Passed to Later in the Day (*Use New Sheet*)

**Type of Hearing**

\_\_\_\_\_ Progress Report — PR (for \_\_\_\_\_)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Status Hearing — ST (for \_\_\_\_\_)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Motion MO \_\_\_\_\_ Visitation \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ PH — Permanency Hearing  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Vacate Guardianship/Close Case (Motion)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Continuances**  Yes  No  
 Denied  Granted

\_\_\_\_\_ Party/Attorney Not Present  
 \_\_\_\_\_ DCFS \_\_\_\_\_ POS \_\_\_\_\_ Parent  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Party Unprepared \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ New to case. Assigned \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Problems With ACR/Filing of Service Plan  
 \_\_\_\_\_ ACR Not Held  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Service plan not filed  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Service plan filed late: \_\_\_\_\_ days  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Service plan incomplete  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Service plan filed on time but not received by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Insufficient Notice to: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Other Report Not Available \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ To Provide Services \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Had Services Been Previously Ordered? Y N  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Continuance requested by:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Hearing Officer \_\_\_\_\_ GAL \_\_\_\_\_ PD  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Private Attorney \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

	Present	NA/ Don't know	H.O. addressed directly
Mother	Y N		
Father	Y N		
Children	Y N		
POS worker	Y N		
DCFS	Y N		
Private Atty	Y N		
	Y N		

Did H.O. use parents' proper names? Y N NA  
 Was anyone "Sworn In"? Y N NA  
 Was the worker prepared? Y N NA  
 dressed appropriately? Y N NA  
 treated respectfully? Y N NA  
 respectful of the court? Y N NA

**Current/Recommended Permanency Goal**

\_\_\_\_\_ Return Home \_\_\_\_\_ 5 months \_\_\_\_\_ 1 year  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Subsidized Guardianship  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Adoption \_\_\_\_\_ Independence  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Substitute Care Pending Court Decision  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Concurrent Planning  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Goal**

\_\_\_\_\_ Accepted \_\_\_\_\_ Achieved \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Changed \_\_\_\_\_ Unresolved

\_\_\_\_\_ Date set for achievement: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ No date set

**If goal changed, new goal is:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Return Home \_\_\_\_\_ 5 months \_\_\_\_\_ 1 year  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Subsidized Guardianship  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Adoption \_\_\_\_\_ Independence  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Substitute Care Pending Court Decision  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Concurrent Planning  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Y N Was there substantial disagreement between the caseworker and HO about the change? (Explain)

**Cook County Juvenile Court Assessment — 1998**  
**Hearing Officer Observation Instrument**

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Which of the following did the parties discuss during the proceedings:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Appropriateness of permanency goal
- \_\_\_\_\_ Appropriateness of the plan to achieving the permanency goal
- \_\_\_\_\_ Appropriateness of the services contained in the plan
- \_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not services in the plan have been provided
- \_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not the goal/plan has been achieved
- \_\_\_\_\_ Reasons for changing the goal
- \_\_\_\_\_ Reasonable Efforts determination
- \_\_\_\_\_ Services to parents
- \_\_\_\_\_ Whether or not minor's placement is the least restrictive necessary to achieve goal
- \_\_\_\_\_ Concurrent Planning

Next Hearing for  Will be before the judge

- \_\_\_\_\_ Progress Review/Progress Report/Status Hearing for: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ Permanency Hearing
- \_\_\_\_\_ TPR - Termination of Parental Rights
- \_\_\_\_\_ Vacate Guardianship/Close Case (Motion)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Date for Next Appearance: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Time End \_\_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_\_

# Foster Parents Engagement in Dependency Court Focus Group Guide

## Foster care/caregivers in Child Welfare Proceedings Focus Group Guide

Researcher will introduce herself and thank participants for coming. She will review the consent form and participants will be offered the opportunity to ask questions. Those who choose not to participate will be thanked for coming and asked to leave. Researcher will explain that this is a facilitated conversation, and that participants should respond to each other rather than directing their responses to her. She will underscore that she is interested in their experiences and there are no wrong or right answers. She will ask that participants protect each other's confidentiality. She will also assure the family members that this is an open and safe space and encourage them to share as much as they are comfortable.

1. Please introduce yourself and tell us how long have you been a foster parent/caregiver?
  - a. How long have you been involved with the court process?
2. Learning about the court process
  - a. How do usually hear about hearings?
    - i. modes- probes: prior hearing from judge, lawyer, mail, phone call
    - ii. difficulties – probes: phone or address changes, correct names, hard to remember/plan
3. How does the scheduling of hearings work for you?
  - a. Convenience: probes: notice; in/convenient time; changes
  - b. Scheduling conflicts: probes: work, child care, other obligations
4. What is it like coming into the court
  - a. Getting there (transportation)
  - b. Security
  - c. Feeling of having to come
5. What is the wait like for court?
  - a. Physical environment
  - b. (dis)comfort
  - c. Material concerns: food, drink, bathroom, place to sit
  - d. Stress
  - e. Concerns for others (children, other family members) who are with them
  - f. Wait time
6. What is it like to be in the courtroom?
  - a. Waiting
  - b. When you are call
  - c. Is courtroom open or close

7. How are you treated when you are in the court?
  - a. With the magistrate or judge
  - b. With lawyers
  - c. With other family members
  - d. If the judicial officer ask if foster parent/caregiver is presentProbes: Talk directly with you? Ask questions? Treated with respect, interest?

8. How do you feel about asking questions during court?

9. How do you feel about sharing your opinion during court?

10. Who do you go to if you have questions between court hearings?

11. Can you talk about what is the best part about being at the court hearing?

12. Can you talk about what is the hardest part about coming to court?

Probe: Dealing with family members.

13. What would you want the judges and magistrates to know about your experience as a foster parent in the court process?

Final question (go around to each participant): Since you are the experts here, is there anything else that you think that I should know about your experience that I haven't asked?

Researcher will thank the participants for their time and ask them to please contact me with any questions or concerns that arise, reminding them that my contact information is on the copy of the informed consent form that they received at the beginning.

## Judicial Expertise and Decision-Making Survey

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements using the scale provided.

### Judges and judicial officers presiding over deprivation cases ...<sup>3</sup>

1. Make sound legal decisions.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree

2. Have a clear understanding of child welfare law and practice.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree

3. Understand the service needs of children and families who appear before the courts.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree

4. Allow their own viewpoint about children and parents involved in the deprivation cases to affect their legal decisions.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree

5. View appointment of legal representation for children in dependency cases to be important.

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree

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<sup>3</sup> Response options scored as strongly disagree [-2], somewhat disagree [-1], neither agree nor disagree [0], somewhat agree [1], and strongly agree [2].

# Maryland Standardized Case File Review Instrument

## ONE FAMILY /ONE MASTER BALTIMORE

### PRIMARY CHILD:

CASE NO.: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

SEX:  Male  Female

ETHNICITY:  Caucasian  African-American  ND  
 Native American/Alaska Native  Hispanic/Latino  
 Asian/Pacific Islander  Other \_\_\_\_\_

### OTHER CHILDREN:

Number of **other** children on the case \_\_\_\_\_  
 List case numbers for remaining children:

Was the ethnicity of the child clearly identified?  
 Yes  No

Parent's Primary Language:  
 English  Spanish  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### MOTHER

ETHNICITY:  Caucasian  African-American  Native American/Alaska Native  ND  
 Asian/Pacific Islander  Hispanic/Latino  Other \_\_\_\_\_

FATHER  Biological  Alleged  Step  UD

ETHNICITY:  Caucasian  African-American  Native American/Alaska Native  
 Asian/Pacific Islander  Hispanic/Latino  Other \_\_\_\_\_  ND

Parents' Status:  Single parent  Not single parent

### COUNTS/ ALLEGATIONS/ PRESENTING PROBLEMS as Listed in Petition

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> O Physical Abuse                | <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> O Criminal Activity/Incarceration   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> O Sexual Abuse                  | <input type="checkbox"/> O Child's behavior problems   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> O Emotional Abuse               | <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> O Domestic Violence   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> O Neglect                       | <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> O Failure to Protect  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> O Educational Neglect           | <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> O Homelessness  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> O Medical Neglect               | <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> O Substance Abuse, Type:<br><input type="checkbox"/> M: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> F: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> O Abandonment                   | <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> O Mental Health Issues  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> O Unsafe/unfit home environment | <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> O Child left alone/ unsuitable supervision  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> O Other: _____                  | <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> O Other: _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> O Other: _____                  | <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> O Other: _____  |

Date petition filed: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Was the child removed from the home?  Yes  No Date of removal: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Where was the child placed?

- Protective Supervision with Non-Charged Parent
- Shelter/ Foster Care with Relative: \_\_\_\_\_ Which side of the family  M  F
- Shelter/Foster Care with Non-Relative
- Medical, Psychiatric, or Treatment Facility
- Congruent (group) home/placement
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- UD

Who is listed as a party to the case on the petition?  M  F  O: \_\_\_\_\_

Does the family have a history with the Court:  Yes  No  UD

Does the family have a history with the Agency:  Yes  No  UD

Shelter Care Hearing Date: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_ Scheduled Start Time \_\_:\_\_:\_\_ Start \_\_:\_\_:\_\_ Stop \_\_:\_\_:\_\_

Was the Initial Hearing Continued?  Yes  No Number of Continuances: \_\_\_\_\_

Date 1st Continuance Ordered: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_ Judge: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for first continuance:  Attorney not available  Incarcerated parent not transported  
 Late reports  Parent not available  Lack of or late notice  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_  UD

Date 2nd Continuance Ordered: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_ Judge: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for first continuance:  Attorney not available  Incarcerated parent not transported  
 Late reports  Parent not available  Lack of or late notice  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_  UD

If more than two continuances were ordered, please fill in the information in writing on the bottom of this page.

**Parties Present:**

Notice: Was notice of the hearing provided to parties?  Yes  No  UD

Parties Present at Shelter Care Hearing: **Judge** \_\_\_\_\_

Mother  Atty. for Mother  Sub  Foster Parent  
 Father  Atty. for Father  Sub  Atty. for Foster Parent  
 Child(ren)  Atty. for Child  Sub  Relative Caretaker  
 Social Worker  Sub  Atty. for Agency  Sub  Interpreter  
 State Atty.  Sub  GAL/CASA  Sub  Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Child's Placement Order:**

Protective Supervision with Charged Parent  Medical, Psychiatric, or Treatment Facility  
 Placement w/ Non-Charged Parent  Group Home  
 Shelter/ Foster Care w/ Relative: \_\_\_\_\_  Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
 M  F  UD  
 Shelter/Foster Care w/ Non-Relative

**Services Ordered:**

Did the Court order services for the parent(s)?  Yes  No  UD  INAP  
Did the Court order services for the child?  Yes  No  UD  INAP

**Did the court make findings of:**

*Contrary to the welfare:*  Yes  No  
*Best interests of the child:*  Yes  No  
*Reasonable efforts to prevent removal:*  Yes  No / to return home:  Yes  No  
*Reasonable efforts were not required :*  Because: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Active efforts regarding ICWA*  Yes  No  INAP

Did the court set date for next hearing?  Yes  No  ND Date of next hearing \_\_/\_\_/\_\_

Initial Hearing Date: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_ Scheduled Start Time \_\_:\_\_:\_\_ Start Time \_\_:\_\_:\_\_ Stop Time \_\_:\_\_:\_\_

Was the Preliminary Hearing Continued?  Yes  No Number of Continuances: \_\_\_\_\_

Date 1st Continuance Ordered: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_ Judge: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for first continuance:  Attorney not available  Incarcerated parent not transported  
 Late reports  Parent not available  Lack of or late notice  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_  UD

Date 2nd Continuance Ordered: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_ Judge: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for first continuance:  Attorney not available  Incarcerated parent not transported  
 Late reports  Parent not available  Lack of or late notice  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_  UD

If more than two continuances were ordered, please fill in the information in writing on the bottom of this page.

**Parties Present:**

Notice: Was notice of the hearing provided to parties?  Yes  No  UD

Parties Present at Preliminary Hearing: **Judge** \_\_\_\_\_

Mother  Atty. for Mother  Sub  Foster Parent  
 Father  Atty. for Father  Sub  Atty. for Foster Parent  
 Child(ren)  Atty. for Child  Sub  Relative Caretaker  
 Social Worker  Sub  Atty. for Agency  Sub  Interpreter  
 State Atty.  Sub  GAL/CASA  Sub  Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Child's Placement Order:**

Protective Supervision with Charged Parent  Medical, Psychiatric, or Treatment Facility  
 Placement w/ Non-Charged Parent  Group Home  
 Shelter/ Foster Care w/ Relative: \_\_\_\_\_  Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
 M  F  UD  
 Shelter/Foster Care w/ Non-Relative

**Services Ordered:**

Did the Court order services for the parent(s)?  Yes  No  UD  INAP  
Did the Court order services for the child?  Yes  No  UD  INAP

**Did the court make findings of:**

*Contrary to the welfare:*  Yes  No  
*Best interests of the child:*  Yes  No  
*Reasonable efforts to prevent removal:*  Yes  No / to return home:  Yes  No  
*Reasonable efforts were not required :*  Because: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Active efforts regarding ICWA*  Yes  No  INAP

Did the court set date for next hearing?  Yes  No  ND Date of next hearing \_\_/\_\_/\_\_

Adj/Disp Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Scheduled Start Time \_\_\_:\_\_\_ Start Time \_\_\_:\_\_\_ Stop Time \_\_\_:\_\_\_

Was the hearing continued?  Yes  No Number of Continuances \_\_\_\_\_

Date 1st Continuance Ordered: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Judge: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for first continuance:  Attorney not available  Incarcerated parent not transported  
 Late reports  Parent not available  Contested/No Agreement  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_  UD

Date 2nd Continuance Ordered: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Judge: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for first continuance:  Attorney not available  Incarcerated parent not transported  
 Late reports  Parent not available  Contested/No Agreement  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_  UD

If more than two continuances were ordered, please fill in the information in writing on the back of this page.

Was disposition held in conjunction with adjudication?  Yes  No  UD

Was adjudication a stipulated agreement?  Yes  No  UD

Charges stipulated:

M: \_\_\_\_\_  
F: \_\_\_\_\_

Founded Allegations:

M: \_\_\_\_\_  
F: \_\_\_\_\_

Dismissed allegations:

M: \_\_\_\_\_  
F: \_\_\_\_\_

### Parties Present:

Notice: Was notice of the hearing provided to parties?  Yes  No  UD

Parties present at Adjudication/Disposition Hearing: Judge \_\_\_\_\_

Mother  Atty. for Mother  Sub  Foster Parent  
 Father  Atty. for Father  Sub  Atty. for Foster Parent  
 Child(ren)  Atty. for Child  Sub  Relative Caretaker  
 Social Worker  Sub  Atty. for Agency  Sub  Interpreter  
 State Atty.  Sub  GAL/CASA  Sub  Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 Shelter/Foster Care w/ Non-Relative

### Child's Placement Order:

Protective Supervision with Charged Parent  
 Placement w/ Non-Charged Parent  Medical, Psychiatric, or Treatment Facility  
 Shelter/ Foster Care w/ Relative: \_\_\_\_\_  Group Home  
 M  F  Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
 UD

### Service Order:

Did the Court order services for the parent(s)?  Yes  No  UD  INAP  Continue prior orders

Did the Court order services for the child?  Yes  No  UD  INAP  Continue prior orders

### Did the court make findings of:

*Contrary to the welfare:*  Yes  No  
*Best interests of the child:*  Yes  No  
*Reasonable efforts to prevent removal:*  Yes  No / to return home:  Yes  No  
*Reasonable efforts were not required :*  Because: \_\_\_\_\_

### Permanency Goal:

Reunification with Charged Parent  UD  
 Placement with Non-Charged Parent  Guardianship  
 Relative Placement: \_\_\_\_\_  M  F  Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
 TPR/Adoption

**DISPOSTION HEARING (If separate from Adjudication)**

Disposition Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Scheduled Start Time \_\_\_:\_\_\_ Start Time \_\_\_:\_\_\_ Stop Time \_\_\_:\_\_\_

Was the Disposition Continued?  Yes  No Number of Continuances: \_\_\_\_\_

Date 1st Continuance Ordered: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Judge: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for first continuance:  Attorney not available  Incarcerated parent not transported  
 Late reports  Parent not available  Contested/No Agreement  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_  UD

Date 2nd Continuance Ordered: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Judge: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for first continuance:  Attorney not available  Incarcerated parent not transported  
 Late reports  Parent not available  Contested/No Agreement  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_  UD

If more than two continuances were ordered, please fill in the information in writing on the bottom of this page.

**Parties Present:**

Notice: Was notice of the hearing provided to parties?  Yes  No  UD

Parties Present at Disposition Hearing: Judge \_\_\_\_\_

- Mother  Atty. for Mother  Sub  Foster Parent
- Father  Atty. for Father  Sub  Atty. for Foster Parent
- Child(ren)  Atty. for Child  Sub  Relative Caretaker
- Social Worker  Sub  Atty. for Agency  Sub  Interpreter
- State Atty.  Sub  GAL/CASA  Sub  Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Child's Placement Order:**

- Protective Supervision with Charged Parent  Medical, Psychiatric, or Treatment Facility
- Placement w/ Non-Charged Parent  Group Home
  - Shelter/ Foster Care w/ Relative: \_\_\_\_\_
  - M  F
- Shelter/Foster Care w/ Non-Relative  Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- UD

**Service Order:**

Did the Court order services for the parent(s)?  Yes  No  UD  INAP  Continue prior orders  
Did the Court order services for the child?  Yes  No  UD  INAP  Continue prior orders

**Did the court make findings of:**

- Contrary to the welfare:*  Yes  No
- Best interests of the child:*  Yes  No
- Reasonable efforts to prevent removal:*  Yes  No / to return home:  Yes  No
- Reasonable efforts were not required :*  Because: \_\_\_\_\_

**Permanency Goal:**

- Reunification with Charged Parent  UD
- Placement with Non-Charged Parent  Guardianship
- Relative Placement: \_\_\_\_\_  M  F  TPR/Adoption
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Did the court set date for next hearing?  Yes  No  ND Date of next hearing \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

6 Month Review Date: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_ Scheduled Start Time \_\_:\_\_:\_\_ Start Time \_\_:\_\_:\_\_ Stop Time \_\_:\_\_:\_\_

Was the 6-month Review Continued?  Yes  No Number of Continuances: \_\_\_\_\_

Date 1st Continuance Ordered: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_ Judge: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for first continuance:  Attorney not available  Incarcerated parent not transported  
 Late reports  Parent not available  Lack of or late notice  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_  UD

Date 2nd Continuance Ordered: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_ Judge: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for first continuance:  Attorney not available  Incarcerated parent not transported  
 Late reports  Parent not available  Lack of or late notice  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_  UD

If more than two continuances were ordered, please fill in the information in writing on the bottom of this page.

**Parties Present:**

Notice: Was notice of the hearing provided to parties?  Yes  No  UD

Parties at 6-month Review Hearing: **Judge** \_\_\_\_\_

Mother  Atty. for Mother  Sub  Foster Parent  
 Father  Atty. for Father  Sub  Atty. for Foster Parent  
 Child(ren)  Atty. for Child  Sub  Relative Caretaker  
 Social Worker  Sub  Atty. for Agency  Sub  Interpreter  
 State Atty.  Sub  GAL/CASA  Sub  Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Child's Placement Order:**

Protective Supervision with Charged Parent  Medical, Psychiatric, or Treatment Facility  
 Placement w/ Non-Charged Parent  Group Home  
 Shelter/ Foster Care w/ Relative: \_\_\_\_\_  Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
 M  F  UD  
 Shelter/Foster Care w/ Non-Relative

**Services Ordered:**

Did the Court order services for the parent(s)?  Yes  No  UD  INAP  Continue prior orders  
Did the Court order services for the child?  Yes  No  UD  INAP  Continue prior orders

**Did the court make findings of:**

*Contrary to the welfare:*  Yes  No  
*Best interests of the child:*  Yes  No  
*Reasonable efforts to prevent removal:*  Yes  No / to return home:  Yes  No  
*Reasonable efforts were not required :*  Because: \_\_\_\_\_

**Court Findings:**

Has mom made substantive progress toward alleviating problems?  Yes  No  UD  
Has dad made substantive progress toward alleviating problems?  Yes  No  UD

**Permanency Goal:**

Reunification with Charged Parent  UD  
 Placement with Non-Charged Parent  Guardianship  
 Relative Placement: \_\_\_\_\_  M  F  TPR/Adoption  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Did the court set date for next hearing?  Yes  No  ND Date of next hearing \_\_/\_\_/\_\_

Permanency Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Scheduled Start Time \_\_\_:\_\_\_ Start Time \_\_\_:\_\_\_ Stop Time \_\_\_:\_\_\_

Was the Permanency Hearing Continued?  Yes  No Number of Continuances: \_\_\_\_\_

Date 1st Continuance Ordered: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Judge: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for first continuance:  Attorney not available  Incarcerated parent not transported  
 Late reports  Parent not available  Lack of or late notice  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_  UD

Date 2nd Continuance Ordered: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Judge: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for first continuance:  Attorney not available  Incarcerated parent not transported  
 Late reports  Parent not available  Lack of or late notice  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_  UD

If more than two continuances were ordered, please fill in the information in writing on the bottom of this page.

### Parties Present:

Notice: Was notice of the hearing provided to parties?  Yes  No  UD

Parties at Permanency Hearing: **Judge** \_\_\_\_\_

Mother  Atty. for Mother  Sub  Foster Parent  
 Father  Atty. for Father  Sub  Atty. for Foster Parent  
 Child(ren)  Atty. for Child  Sub  Relative Caretaker  
 Social Worker  Sub  Atty. for Agency  Sub  Interpreter  
 State Atty.  Sub  GAL/CASA  Sub  Other \_\_\_\_\_

### Child's Placement Order:

Protective Supervision with Charged Parent  Medical, Psychiatric, or Treatment Facility  
 Placement w/ Non-Charged Parent  Group Home  
 Shelter/ Foster Care w/ Relative: \_\_\_\_\_  Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
 M  F  UD  
 Shelter/Foster Care w/ Non-Relative

### Services Ordered:

Did the Court order services for the parent(s)?  Yes  No  UD  INAP  Continue prior orders  
Did the Court order services for the child?  Yes  No  UD  INAP  Continue prior orders

### Did the court make findings of:

*Contrary to the welfare:*  Yes  No  
*Best interests of the child:*  Yes  No  
*Reasonable efforts to prevent removal:*  Yes  No / to return home:  Yes  No  
*Reasonable efforts were not required :*  Because: \_\_\_\_\_

### Court Findings:

Has the mother made substantive progress toward alleviating problems?  Yes  No  UD  
Has the father made substantive progress toward alleviating problems?  Yes  No  UD

### Permanency Goal:

Reunification with Charged Parent  UD  
 Placement with Non-Charged Parent  Guardianship  
 Relative Placement: \_\_\_\_\_  M  F  Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
Did the court set date for next hearing?  Yes  No  ND Date of next hearing \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

## ADDITIONAL DATES/INFORMATION

**Key Dates:**

Date of Appointment, Mother's Attorney \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Did attorney change  Yes  No # of times \_\_\_

Date of Appointment, Father's Attorney \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Did attorney change  Yes  No # of times \_\_\_

Date of Appointment, Child's Attorney \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Did attorney change  Yes  No # of times \_\_\_

Date of Appointment, Child's GAL \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Did GAL change  Yes  No # of times \_\_\_

Date of Appointment, CASA \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Did CASA change  Yes  No # of times \_\_\_

## POST DISPOSITION EVENTS AND CASE OUTCOMES SERVICES ORDERED

**Services Ordered for Parties:**  Mother  Father  Child

Drug/Alcohol Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/> M	<input type="checkbox"/> F	<input type="checkbox"/> C		Medical Services	<input type="checkbox"/> C
Drug/Alcohol Treatment	<input type="checkbox"/> M	<input type="checkbox"/> F	<input type="checkbox"/> C		Dental Services	<input type="checkbox"/> C
Random UAs	<input type="checkbox"/> M	<input type="checkbox"/> F	<input type="checkbox"/> C		Educational Services	<input type="checkbox"/> C
Parenting Skills	<input type="checkbox"/> M	<input type="checkbox"/> F	<input type="checkbox"/> C		Independent Living Skills	<input type="checkbox"/> C
Psychological Evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/> M	<input type="checkbox"/> F	<input type="checkbox"/> C			
Individual Counseling	<input type="checkbox"/> M	<input type="checkbox"/> F	<input type="checkbox"/> C			
Group Counseling	<input type="checkbox"/> M	<input type="checkbox"/> F	<input type="checkbox"/> C			
Anger Management	<input type="checkbox"/> M	<input type="checkbox"/> F	<input type="checkbox"/> C			
Domestic Violence	<input type="checkbox"/> M	<input type="checkbox"/> F	<input type="checkbox"/> C			
Job Skills Training	<input type="checkbox"/> M	<input type="checkbox"/> F	<input type="checkbox"/> C			

**Level of compliance with services from:**

Mother	Father	Child
<input type="checkbox"/> Completed all services ordered	<input type="checkbox"/> Completed all services ordered	<input type="checkbox"/> Completed all services
<input type="checkbox"/> Completed ¾ of services	<input type="checkbox"/> Completed ¾ of services	<input type="checkbox"/> Completed ¾ of services
<input type="checkbox"/> Completed ½ of services	<input type="checkbox"/> Completed ½ of services	<input type="checkbox"/> Completed ½ of services
<input type="checkbox"/> Completed ¼ of services	<input type="checkbox"/> Completed ¼ of services	<input type="checkbox"/> Completed ¼ of services
<input type="checkbox"/> Failed to complete any services	<input type="checkbox"/> Failed to complete any services	<input type="checkbox"/> Failed to complete any services
<input type="checkbox"/> NA	<input type="checkbox"/> NA	<input type="checkbox"/> NA

**Status of Case:**  Open  Closed

If Closed, Case Closure Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

**What is the case outcome?**

<input type="checkbox"/> Reunification with Charged Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Placement with Non-Charged Parent <input type="checkbox"/> Relative Placement <input type="checkbox"/> TPR/ (Adoption <b>NOT</b> documented) <input type="checkbox"/> TPR/Adoption <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Guardianship with _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Child Reached Age of Majority <input type="checkbox"/> Dismissed: Conditions ameliorated <input type="checkbox"/> Dismissed: Unable to prove case <input type="checkbox"/> Dismissed: Unable to determine
---	---

**Indicate if the following petitions/events appear in this case and the relevant dates:**

<input type="checkbox"/> TPR Motion Filed-Mom ___/___/___ <input type="checkbox"/> Final TPR Order-Mom ___/___/___ <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary Relinquishment-Mom ___/___/___ <input type="checkbox"/> Adoption Motion Filed ___/___/___	<input type="checkbox"/> TPR Motion Filed-Dad ___/___/___ <input type="checkbox"/> Final TPR Order-Dad ___/___/___ <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary Relinquishment-Dad ___/___/___ <input type="checkbox"/> Adoption Order ___/___/___
--	---



## **New York Permanency Hearing Case File Review Tool**

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**NY Permanency Case File Review Form**

Docket No.  Family File #  Coder  County

Child DOB		
MONTH	DAY	YEAR
J1		
F2		
M3	00	00
A4	11	11
M5	22	22
J6	33	33
J7	44	44
A8	55	55
S9	66	66
O10	77	77
N11	88	88
D12	99	99

1st PPH Start		
MONTH	DAY	YEAR
J1		
F2		
M3	00	00
A4	11	11
M5	22	22
J6	33	33
J7	44	44
A8	55	55
S9	66	66
O10	77	77
N11	88	88
D12	99	99

2nd PPH Start		
MONTH	DAY	YEAR
J1		
F2		
M3	00	00
A4	11	11
M5	22	22
J6	33	33
J7	44	44
A8	55	55
S9	66	66
O10	77	77
N11	88	88
D12	99	99

3rd PPH Start		
MONTH	DAY	YEAR
J1		
F2		
M3	00	00
A4	11	11
M5	22	22
J6	33	33
J7	44	44
A8	55	55
S9	66	66
O10	77	77
N11	88	88
D12	99	99

4th PPH Start		
MONTH	DAY	YEAR
J1		
F2		
M3	00	00
A4	11	11
M5	22	22
J6	33	33
J7	44	44
A8	55	55
S9	66	66
O10	77	77
N11	88	88
D12	99	99

Case Closed?  Y  N

Closure Date		
MONTH	DAY	YEAR
J1		
F2		
M3	00	00
A4	11	11
M5	22	22
J6	33	33
J7	44	44
A8	55	55
S9	66	66
O10	77	77
N11	88	88
D12	99	99

# Other children  0  1  2  3  4  5

Child removed?  Y  N  J  I

Child removed? MO  Y

FA  Y

UD  Y

1st PPH End		
MONTH	DAY	YEAR
J1		
F2		
M3	00	00
A4	11	11
M5	22	22
J6	33	33
J7	44	44
A8	55	55
S9	66	66
O10	77	77
N11	88	88
D12	99	99

2nd PPH End		
MONTH	DAY	YEAR
J1		
F2		
M3	00	00
A4	11	11
M5	22	22
J6	33	33
J7	44	44
A8	55	55
S9	66	66
O10	77	77
N11	88	88
D12	99	99

3rd PPH End		
MONTH	DAY	YEAR
J1		
F2		
M3	00	00
A4	11	11
M5	22	22
J6	33	33
J7	44	44
A8	55	55
S9	66	66
O10	77	77
N11	88	88
D12	99	99

4th PPH End		
MONTH	DAY	YEAR
J1		
F2		
M3	00	00
A4	11	11
M5	22	22
J6	33	33
J7	44	44
A8	55	55
S9	66	66
O10	77	77
N11	88	88
D12	99	99

Case Outcome

1 Reunified

2 Guardian.

3 TPR/Adoption

4 Age Out

5 Custody

6 Dismissed

7 Other:

Removal Date		
MONTH	DAY	YEAR
J1		
F2		
M3	00	00
A4	11	11
M5	22	22
J6	33	33
J7	44	44
A8	55	55
S9	66	66
O10	77	77
N11	88	88
D12	99	99

# Adj.  0  1  2  3  4

Adj Reasons  1  2  3  4  5  6  7

#Hearing Days  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8

# Adj.  0  1  2  3  4

Adj Reasons  1  2  3  4  5  6  7

#Hearing Days  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8

# Adj.  0  1  2  3  4

Adj Reasons  1  2  3  4  5  6  7

#Hearing Days  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8

# Adj.  0  1  2  3  4

Adj Reasons  1  2  3  4  5  6  7

#Hearing Days  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8

Court ordered TPR

Mo  Day  Year

TPR Filed Date

Mo  Day  Year

Judge

Judge

Judge

Judge

Freed child?  Y  N

Current perm. goal appropriate?  Y  N

Freed child?  Y  N

Current perm. goal appropriate?  Y  N

Freed child?  Y  N

Current perm. goal appropriate?  Y  N

Freed child?  Y  N

Current perm. goal appropriate?  Y  N

Adj Reasons

1=late/absent person

2=court calendar delay

3=late/missing report

4=emergency hearing

5=perm achieved

6=NO out of home placement

7=Other

Date of Disposition appropriate?  Y  N

Mo  Day  Year

Did goal change at this hearing?  Y  N

Pending Crim Case?  Y  N  J  I

Mom Incarcerated?  Y  N  J  I

New Perm Goal

P  1  2  3  4  5  6  7

C  1  2  3  4  5  6  7

IG -  1  2  3

New Perm Goal

P  1  2  3  4  5  6  7

C  1  2  3  4  5  6  7

IG -  1  2  3

New Perm Goal

P  1  2  3  4  5  6  7

C  1  2  3  4  5  6  7

IG -  1  2  3

New Perm Goal

P  1  2  3  4  5  6  7

C  1  2  3  4  5  6  7

IG -  1  2  3

Original Perm Goal

P  C Reunification (1)

P  C Adoption (2)

P  C Guardianship (3)

P  C Fit/willing rel (4)

P  C APPLA (5)

P  C UD (6)

P  C Other (7)

Original Inappropriate Goal (IG)

1 Reunification - >2 years noncompliant

2 Reunification - removal reasons not resolved

3 APPLA for child < 14

# Jurists  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8

# Additional PPHs  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8

For goals, P = primary permanency goal, C= concurrent goal. IG= an inappropriate goal.

## **New York Permanency Hearing Court Observation Tool**

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**Court Observation - Permanency Hearing (NY)**

Docket No.  Family File #  Judge  Coder  Start Time:

**Hearing Date**

MONTH	DAY	YEAR
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

J  
 F  
 M  
 A  
 M  
 J  
 J  
 A  
 S  
 O  
 N  
 D

County

Which PP Hearing?  1  2  3  4  5

Child Freed?  Y  N  IP

Did the court inquire about parties not present?  Y  N  
 Require explanation about parties not present?  Y  N

Child's Age:

**Parties Present**

- Y  N Mother  Y  N Agency Caseworker
- Y  N Father  Y  N Provider Caseworker
- Y  N Child(ren)  Y  N Foster Parent
- Y  N Mother Atty  Y  N Relative
- Y  N Father Atty  Y  N Interpreter
- Y  N Child Atty  Y  N Tribal Rep.
- Y  N CASA  Y  N Treatment Provider
- Y  N GAL  Y  N Agency/County Atty
- Y  N Other

**Current Placement**

- 1 Direct Relative
- 2 Kinship Care
- 3 Foster Care
- 4 Congregate Care
- 5 Unable to determine (UD)
- 6 Other

**Goal**

- 1  2 Reunification  Y  M  Y  F
- 1  2 >2 yrs non-compliant
- 1  2 Removal reasons not resolved
- 1  2 Adoption
- 1  2 Guardianship
- 1  2 Custody
- 1  2 APPLA
- 1  2 Child < 14
- 1  2 Unable to determine
- 1  2 Other

Father Identified?  Y  N  IP

If no, discussions about efforts to identify and locate?  Y  N

Were foster parents noticed?  Y  N  IP

**Judicial Engagement of Persons**

**Did the judge....**

- Speak directly to the person?  Y  N  IP  Y  N  IP
- Address by name?  Y  N  IP  Y  N  IP
- Explain the hearing process?  Y  N  IP  Y  N  IP
- Explain the legal timelines?  Y  N  IP  Y  N  IP
- Ask if the person has any questions?  Y  N  IP  Y  N  IP

**Parent(s) Child(ren)**

Number of prior PP Hearings held

Does ICWA apply in this case?  1  Y  N  IP

**Discussion** 0=No discussion, 1=Statement only, 2=>Statement

**General**

- Permanent plan for the child  0  1  2
- Mother's progress  0  1  2
- Mother's compliance  0  1  2
- Father's progress  0  1  2
- Father's compliance  0  1  2
- Additional services needed for parents, or child(ren)  0  1  2
- Barriers to achieving permanency  0  1  2
- Identified steps to achieving final permanency  0  1  2
- 15 of 22 months/ compelling reasons  0  1  2
- Efforts to finalize permanency plan  0  1  2
- Rule out statutorily preferred perm goals  0  1  2
- Financial support of the children  0  1  2

**Placement**

- Kinship/relative placements or relative resources  0  1  2
- Sibling placement  0  1  2
- Current placement meets child's & family's needs  0  1  2
- Least restrictive placement  0  1  2
- Anticipated or recent move  0  1  2

**Efforts to Reunify**

- Discussion of efforts to reunify  0  1  2
- Did this discussion include: Services  Y  N In-home safety plan  Y  N

**Child Well-Being**

- Educational placement stability  0  1  2
- Educational needs  0  1  2
- Physical health/Development  0  1  2
- Mental health needs  0  1  2
- Transitional planning  0  1  2
- Other/general well-being  0  1  2

**Family Time**

- Parent-child family time  0  1  2  IP
- Discussion of why supervision required?  Y  N  IP
- Sibling family time  0  1  2

**Reports**

Was the report submitted to the court timely?  Y  N  IP  
 Were reports submitted provided to all parties prior to hearing?  Y  N  
 If no, who did not receive it?

Were there other reports expected to be rec'd in advance of hearing?  Y  N  
 If yes, what reports?

**Judicial Findings & Orders**

**Did the judge make a finding of:**

- RE to effectuate permanency goal  Y  N  IP
- RE not necessary  Y  N  IP
- Agency did not make RE  Y  N  IP
- RE directed at new goal  Y  N  IP
- Other findings on the record  Y  N  IP
- Expected finalization date (for perm)  Y  N  IP
- Did the judge set the next hearing date on the record?  Y  N  IP

**Qualitative Impressions**

0=Not at all, 1=Somewhat, 2=Definitely

- Focused on family strengths  0  1  2
- Held agency accountable  0  1  2
- Held parents accountable  0  1  2
- Treated parents with respect  0  1  2
- Gave parents opportunity to be heard  0  1  2
- Gave child opportunity to be heard  0  1  2

# Parent or Caregiver Post-Court Survey

## Survey of Parents and Guardians

I am a student at the University of Maryland, Baltimore School of Social Work. We are trying to help the court understand what people think about how the court is working. Your answers to these questions can be used to help improve our court system. Your answers will be recorded anonymously and will not affect your case in any way. You do not have to answer these questions if you do not want to and you can stop the survey at any time.

Please tell us about yourself.

1. Are you a:
  - a. Parent
  - b. Guardian
  - c. Foster parent
  - d. Adoptive parent
  - e. Relative
  - f. Other \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. How many children do you have in the court system? \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. How long have you or your child/ren been involved with the court?
  - a. Less than six months
  - b. Between 6 months and a year
  - c. Between 1 and 2 years
  - d. Between 2 and 4 years
  - e. 4 years or more
  
4. Is your child/children in the court system for:
  - a. Child Welfare
  - b. Delinquency
  - c. Both
  - d. Other \_\_\_\_\_

Now we would like to ask you some questions about your court experiences

5. Do you usually have the same judge or master each time you are in court?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. Not sure
  
6. Did the court ever offer you any services (Mentor services, therapy, drug rehabilitation)?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. Not sure

d. I did not need services

7. Did the court ever offer your child/ren any services (Mentoring services, therapy, drug rehabilitation)?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Not sure
- d. My child/ren did not need services

If respondent did not answer yes to question 6 or 7, skip to question 9.

8. Did the court provide you with clear instructions about how and where to receive services?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Sometimes
- d. Unsure

9. How do you feel about the progress of your case?

- a. It moves too quickly
- b. It moves at a reasonable pace
- c. It moves too slowly
- d. I'm not sure what I think about the pace

10. Do you feel that the judge or master handling your case cares about how you and your child/ren are doing?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Unsure

11. Do you feel like the judge or master in charge of your case knows enough about you or your family to make a fair decision in your case?

- a. Does not know enough
- b. Knows enough
- c. Knows too much
- d. Unsure

12. Are you able to voice your opinions to the judge or master in charge of your case?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Unsure

13. Do you think that your child/ren respect the decisions of the judge or master in charge of your case?

- a. Yes
- b. No

- c. I don't know

14. How satisfied are you overall with the way you are treated by the judge or master in charge of your case?

- a. Very satisfied
- b. Somewhat satisfied
- c. Somewhat dissatisfied
- d. Very dissatisfied

15. Do you think that the decisions made the judge in charge of your case are fair?

- a. Usually fair
- b. Sometimes fair
- c. Sometimes unfair
- d. Usually unfair

16. How satisfied are you with your understanding of the court system overall?

- a. Very satisfied
- b. Somewhat satisfied
- c. Somewhat dissatisfied
- d. Very dissatisfied

Please share with us any recommendations or feedback that you have for the courts

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Thank you for taking the survey.

# Parents' Understanding of Child Welfare Case Process, Hearings, and Judicial Decisions Interview

The following article must be cited when using any items from this measure: Cleveland, K. C. & Quas, J. A (2018). Parents' understanding of the juvenile dependency system. *Psychology, Public Policy and Law*, 24(4), 459–473.

*Part I.*

*In this first part, I am going to ask you to define some terms that you may have heard your lawyer or the judge use either in or outside of the court.*

**Please explain what each of the following terms and phrases mean in the context of the dependency court.**

1. **Dependent Child:**
  
2. **Family Preservation:**
  
3. **Case Plan:**
  
4. **Guardian:**
  
5. **Petition:**
  
6. **Dependency Court:**
  
7. **Guardian Ad Litem:**
  
8. **Family Service Worker:**
  
9. **Termination of Parental Rights:**

*Part II.*

**Now I am going to read you a brief story. Then, based on that story, I'm going to ask you some questions about how the dependency system works.**

***Here's the story:*** A father, Tony, and his 6-year-old son, Michael, are playing pool in the family room at their home. Tony becomes angry with his son for not following instructions and hits him with the stick. Michael falls and hits his head on the floor and has to go to the Emergency Room.

The following article must be cited when using any items from this measure: Cleveland, K. C. & Quas, J. A (2018). Parents' understanding of the juvenile dependency system. *Psychology, Public Policy and Law*, 24(4), 459–473.

The nurse, after talking with Michael and his dad, asks that a social worker come and talk with Michael as well. The social worker learns that this is the second time Michael has been to the Emergency Room, and he has missed school because of injuries and illnesses. She files a petition with Child Protective Services, which then pursues a dependency case against Tony, the father.

1. A detention/initial hearing is scheduled. Tony gets a lawyer. Tony's lawyer is the "Attorney for the parent".

What is the job of Tony's lawyer?

2. There is another lawyer involved in the above case, the "Attorney for the child or the Guardian Ad Litem".

What is the job of this lawyer?

3. Finally, there is a lawyer who tries the case on behalf of the State/County. This lawyer may be called the "County Counsel" or "District Attorney".

What is the job of this lawyer?

4. Child Protective Services thought it was necessary to remove Michael from Tony's home, so the court orders a detention/initial hearing.

What is the purpose of this hearing?

5. Next, an arraignment hearing is scheduled for Tony to attend. What is the purpose of the arraignment hearing?

6. In the arraignment hearing, Tony, the father, denied the allegations that he had been injuring his son. So, next the case goes to a jurisdictional or adjudication hearing.

What is the purpose of this hearing?

7. Let's say that the judge decides at the jurisdictional hearing that the allegations of maltreatment are true and that Michael cannot yet safely return to his father's custody. What might the court order for Tony (the father) next? What might the court order for Michael next?

8. After deciding that the allegations of maltreatment are true, a disposition hearing is held and the judge orders Tony to participate in family reunification services and allows scheduled visitations as a part of Tony's case plan. After 6 months, there is a review hearing to determine if Michael should be returned to Tony's custody. What does Tony need to do to get his son returned to his custody?

9. There are several reasons why the court may terminate a parent's rights. List some of these reasons.

The following article must be cited when using any items from this measure: Cleveland, K. C. & Quas, J. A (2018). Parents' understanding of the juvenile dependency system. *Psychology, Public Policy and Law*, 24(4), 459–473.

*Part III.*

### **Specific Understanding**

1. What was the name of the hearing you just attended?
2. What was the judge's most recent decision in your case?

*Part IV.*

### **Please answer the following questions regarding your family background.**

1. How many children do you have?
2. Did you ever have contact with the dependency court system as a child or teenager?
  - a. Yes, I was involved in a case
  - b. Yes, someone in my family was involved in a case
  - c. No
- 2a. When was the dependency case? Please provide a month and year, if possible.
3. How many of your children have had contact with the dependency court system?
4. Have you ever been convicted of a crime?
5. Have any of your children had contact as a delinquent in the juvenile justice system?
  - 5a. If yes, is this the same child that is in the dependency case?
6. Have you ever been arrested?
7. Have any of your children been arrested?
  - 7a. If yes, is this the same child that is in the dependency case?
8. Have you ever witnessed a crime and spoke with the police about what you witnessed?
9. Have any of your children ever witnessed a crime and spoke with the police about what happened?
  - 9a. If yes, is this the same child that is in the dependency case?

### **Please answer the following demographic questions.**

1. What is your current age?
2. What is your gender?

The following article must be cited when using any items from this measure: Cleveland, K. C. & Quas, J. A (2018). Parents' understanding of the juvenile dependency system. *Psychology, Public Policy and Law*, 24(4), 459–473.

3. Please indicate what level of schooling you have completed.

- Some High School
- High School Diploma
- Some college
- 2-Year Degree
- 4-Year Degree
- Post-Baccalaureate Degree

4. What is your marital status?

- Married
- Single
- Divorced
- Separated

5. What is your race/ethnicity?

- African American
- American Indian
- Caucasian
- Hispanic or Latino
- Asian American
- Multi-ethnic
- Other

--If Multi-ethnic or other, please specify.

6. What is your household income?

- Less than \$25,000
- \$25,000-\$34,999
- \$35,000-\$49,999
- \$50,000-\$74,999
- \$75,000-\$99,999
- \$100,000-\$149,999
- \$150,000 or more

7. What is your current occupation?

## Termination of Parent Rights Judicial Scenario Survey

Considering all the testimony and evidence presented at the hearing, please respond with a verdict decision to the best interest allegation.

Termination of Debra Burn's parental rights is in the best interest of the child, Carl Burns. (check one)

Proven by clear and convincing evidence (**Terminate parental rights**)

Not proven by clear and convincing evidence (**Do NOT terminate parental rights**)

How confident are you that this is correct decision?

Not at all confident

Very Confident

0

1

2

3

4

5

6

In addition to your verdict decision, we would like you to answer a few more questions about your decisions in this case, including factors which you considered in the decision making process. Following this, we have a few short demographic questions and the survey will be complete. Thank you for your patience.

### *Decision-making Factors*

Please indicate what factors you considered when determining if termination was in the best interest of the child:

When thinking about the case, which facts, or information, stand out the most in your mind?

### *Perception of Risk*

When you were considering the facts of the case, please indicate your evaluation of risk to the child on the following scale:

No Risk

Moderate Risk

High Risk

0

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

If the parent's parental rights are not terminated, there is a chance he will be returned to the home. How risky is it to the child's welfare for him to be returned to the home at this point?

0    1    2    3    4    5    6    7

How risky do you think it would be for the child to be returned at a later time?

0    1    2    3    4    5    6    7

If the parental rights are terminated, the child will remain in foster care for the time being. How risky is it to the child's welfare for him to be in foster care?

0    1    2    3    4    5    6    7

*Decision-making Factors*

When making your case decision regarding termination, several factors may have been considered. Please read the following list of case factors and indicate how heavily you relied on each factor in making your decision. You may choose as many or as few factors as necessary. We understand that you may not use all of these factors, so please be as honest as you can in your responses.

Evaluate each factor using the following scale:

	Did Not Consider		Considered Slightly			Heavily Weighed on Decision				
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Testimony of the social worker			0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Age of the child			0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Adoptability of the child			0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Testimony of guardian <i>ad litem</i>			0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Testimony of respondent mother			0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mom's compliance with case plan			0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The mother's substance abuse			0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The child's current placement			0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The long term placement goal			0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Placement of sibling			0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Mother's support system			0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Perception of risk to the child			0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Understanding of case law			0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

*[Judge Specific Demographics]*

Do you currently preside over juvenile dependency hearings? Yes No

How many years have you (or did you) presided over juvenile dependency (i.e., child abuse and neglect) cases? \_\_\_\_ Years \_\_\_\_ Months

Have you every received any trainings specific to juvenile dependency cases? Yes No

[If Yes] How many different trainings (i.e., different topics) have you had? \_\_\_\_\_

Approximately how many hours of trainings have you had related to juvenile dependency? \_\_\_\_ Hours

Do you *only* oversee juvenile dependency cases? Yes No

What type of court do you (or did you) work in when you oversee juvenile dependency (i.e., child abuse and neglect cases)?

- General jurisdiction court
- Juvenile court
- Family Court
- Other-Please Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Was it your choice to preside over child abuse and neglect cases? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

As a judge, you may have oversight in many different types of cases. Thinking about all the types of cases you have overseen, please indicate your level of interest in child abuse and neglect cases?

- I am not at all interested in continuing to oversee to child abuse cases
- I am only marginally interested in continuing to oversee child abuse cases
- I am very interested in continuing to oversee child abuse cases

*Demographics:*

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_\_ Female

Race/Ethnicity (circle one): Caucasian      Hispanic      African American      Asian/Pacific

Native American    Other-Please Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a parent (i.e., do you have any biological, step, or adopted children)? Yes No

# Texas Hearing Observation/File Review Tool

Site \_\_\_\_\_ Judge \_\_\_\_\_ Case No. \_\_\_\_\_ # of Judges \_\_\_\_\_ No. of cases set on docket/hour \_\_\_\_\_ Rural/Urban/UFC Language Assisted: Y/N  
 Date filed \_\_\_\_\_ Dismissal Date \_\_\_\_\_ Ext. Y/N Hearing Date \_\_\_\_\_ Hearing Set Time \_\_\_\_\_ Start \_\_\_\_\_ End \_\_\_\_\_ Witnesses Sworn Y/N  
 Hearing Type: Inj \_\_\_\_\_ NE \_\_\_\_\_ MTP \_\_\_\_\_ MTC \_\_\_\_\_ Adv \_\_\_\_\_ Status \_\_\_\_\_ IPH \_\_\_\_\_ SP \_\_\_\_\_ Final \_\_\_\_\_ Extn \_\_\_\_\_ Plcmt \_\_\_\_\_ Svc Rev \_\_\_\_\_ Recorded: Y/N  
 Current Placement: Home \_\_\_\_\_ Relative/Kin \_\_\_\_\_ Pre-Adopt \_\_\_\_\_ Foster \_\_\_\_\_ Group Home \_\_\_\_\_ RTC \_\_\_\_\_ TYC \_\_\_\_\_ Runaway \_\_\_\_\_ UDT Hearing Postponed: Y/N

QUALITY HEARING INDICATORS			
DUE PROCESS	Hearing	File	NA
ID all Parties Present			
Inquired about Absent Parties			
Addressed service on Mother			
Addressed service on Father 1			
Addressed service on Father 2			
Addressed service on Father 3			
Addressed service on Other			
Orders regarding parties without service			
Admonished Parents re: Right to Attorney			
Admonished Parents re: TPR			
ICWA (previously established Y/N)			
Reasonable Efforts Discussed/Addressed			
Clear, Child /Party-Specific Orders/Next steps			
Set Next Hearing			

COURT ENGAGEMENT				
Party	Present	Oppty	Speak	Engaged (L/M/H)
Child 1				
Child 2				
Child 3				
CW				
GAL/CASA				
MO				
FA				
FP/Rel				
Other				
Other				

QUALITY HEARING INDICATORS			
DUE PROCESS	Hearing	File	NA
<b>Discussed Current Placement</b>			
<b>Alternative Placement Discussed</b>			
<b>Discussed Other Conferences (mediation/FGDM)</b>			
<b>Visitation with Parents</b>			
<i>Frequency of Visitation</i>			
<i>Rate of Attendance</i>			
<i>Changes to Visitation Plan/Schedule</i>			
<b>Visitation with Siblings</b>			
<b>Educational Plans and Needs</b>			
<i>School Readiness (ECI)</i>			
<i>Educational Decision-Maker</i>			
<i>School Stability</i>			
<i>IEPs/Special Ed.</i>			
<i>Enrollment/Records</i>			
<i>Extracurricular Activities</i>			
<i>Grades/Passing (Placement Services)</i>			
<i>Post-Secondary Educational Goal</i>			
<b>Medical Care</b>			
<b>Psychotropic Medication</b>			
<i>Taking as Prescribed</i>			
<i>Appropriateness of Medication</i>			
<i>Side Effects</i>			
<b>Other</b>			

PARENT LEGAL REPRESENTATION HISTORY				
	Mother	Father 1	Father 2	Father 3
Appeared in Opposition				
Advised of Right to Attorney				
Request Attorney				
Indigence Determined				
Attorney Appointed/Denied				
Stage Appointed				

QUALITY LEGAL REPRESENTATION INDICATORS													
	Present	Sub.	Pleadings	Motions	Oral	Report	Services	Fam Contact	Plmt Chg	Other	Docs	Witness	
State													
Mo Atty													
FA1 Atty													
FA2 Atty													
AAL/Child													
GAL/CASA													
Intervenor													
Other													
CHILD PERMANENCY PLAN REVIEW													
	Perm Plan				Concurrent Plan				Eval Progress	Changes			
Child 1	F/H	Fam. Reun.	Rel. PMC	Rel Adopt	F/H	Fam. Reun.	Rel. PMC	Rel Adopt					
	NonRel. Adopt	NonRel. Adopt	NonRel. Adopt	APPLA IL/AO	NonRel. Adopt	NonRel. Adopt	NonRel. Adopt	APPLA IL/AO					
Child 2	F/H	Fam. Reun.	Rel. PMC	Rel Adopt	F/H	Fam. Reun.	Rel. PMC	Rel Adopt					
	NonRel. Adopt	NonRel. Adopt	NonRel. Adopt	APPLA IL/AO	NonRel. Adopt	NonRel. Adopt	NonRel. Adopt	APPLA IL/AO					
Child 3	F/H	Fam. Reun.	Rel. PMC	Rel Adopt	F/H	Fam. Reun.	Rel. PMC	Rel Adopt					
	NonRel. Adopt	NonRel. Adopt	NonRel. Adopt	APPLA IL/AO	NonRel. Adopt	NonRel. Adopt	NonRel. Adopt	APPLA IL/AO					

TRANSITIONAL LIVING PLAN REVIEW																
	Y/N		Living Plan		Relationships		PAL		Docs		Disability		Over 18		Changes	
Youth 1																
Youth 2																
FAMILY SERVICE PLAN REVIEW																
	Rev	Eval Comp	Chng	Cnslg	Pntg	Job	Home	FV Cslg	RDT	Drug Assess	No Crime	Visit	C/S	CW Contact	Psych Eval	Other
Mother																
Father 1																
Father 2																
Father 3																

	Y/N	Type	Date	Signed	Filed
Last Orders					

Court Reports	Y/N	Timely?	Dt Filed
CPS			
CASA			
Ext. at Hearing		Reason:	

# Youth Attendance Judicial Interview

## Judicial Officer Interview Questions

### Section A: Current Court Practices

#### Modifications

1. How would you describe current practices for youth participation in dependency court in your judicial district?
2. What, if any, modifications have you (your district) made to increase youth attendance at court hearings?
3. One strategy that has been used in child welfare has been the use of the ABA bench cards that support approaches to effectively engaging children and youth in D&N proceedings when appropriate. Are you familiar with the ABA Bench Cards?
  - Yes
  - No
  - Other (please explain)
4. Are there tactics/strategies from the ABA Bench Cards that you perceive to be most useful?
5. What else would be helpful for judicial officers that are working to include children and youth participation in D&N hearings?

#### District Plan

6. Does your District Plan address children and youth participation in D&N court? If so, how?
7. Is your District Plan useful to you in your work with D&N court proceedings?
8. What, if any, barriers exist to implementing the District Plan?

#### Ranking Benefits and Barriers

9. These are the “whys” that we have heard about youth attendance at D&N hearings...of these, which seem the most true for you? (top 2)
  - Youth Voice
  - Empowering experience for the youth
  - Provides the court with valuable information about the youth’s wishes
  - Access to justice for the youth
  - Promotes ‘youth-centered’ decision making
  - Allows the youth to see what is happening at court
  - Other

Comment:

10. These are some of the barriers identified to youth attendance at hearings, of these, which seem the most true for you? (top 2)

- Missing school
- Transportation
- Exposure to too much information about parents/family
- The court docket (long waits)
- Youth does not wish to participate
- Child's age and comprehension
- Open court room
- The court facilities are not youth friendly
- The youth are not prepared to attend court
- Professionals are not skilled/comfortable with speaking to youth
- Other (Please specify)

Comment:

### Section B: Court Perceptions

#### Follow-Up from Survey Components

The Office of the Child Representative (OCR) collected survey data in 2014 and gathered data to barriers to youth attendance at dependency court hearings.

1. The study findings indicate that youth are not routinely attending D&N hearings. Does that seem true in your district:

- Yes
- No
- Somewhat

Comment:

2. What are your perceptions of youth attendance at dependency court hearings?

3. The study findings indicate that (1) the age of the youth, (2) the type of hearing, and (3) the youth's wishes are all factors for professionals in supporting youth attendance in court. Do those factors hold true for professionals in your courts?

- Yes
- No
- Somewhat

Comment:

4. Describe other factors that may influence child welfare professionals' perspectives on youth attendance?

Describe:

### **Perceptions of Youth Focus Group Feedback**

Since the completion of the 2014 study mentioned above, youth in four districts participated in focus groups. Focus groups with youth found that youth did not find court to be welcoming.

5. Do you think that court is welcoming to youth in attendance?
6. What ideas do you have about increasing youth's positive perceptions about their experiences with dependency court hearings?

### **Demographic Information**

7. What Judicial District(s) do you serve in at this time?
8. How many years have you served as a Magistrate/Judge?
9. Estimate for how long you have served on a D&N Court Rotation.
10. Estimate the number of D&N filings in your district.

**Thank you** very much for your time. I am working to gather feedback from both judicial officers and from youth and to develop a summary of the findings.

Would you be interested in receiving a copy of the findings?

## Youth Attendance Youth Survey

### A) Past Dependency Court Experience

1. My family was (or is) involved in the dependency court process:
  - Yes
  - No
  - I am not sure(If No, Skip to part B. If Yes, Proceed with Part A)
  
2. Have you ever attended a hearing about your dependency court case?
  - Yes
  - No
  - I am not sure
  
3. If you have participated in dependency court on your case, how have you let the court know your wishes (select all that apply):
  - I attended, Judge/Magistrate talked to me in open court
  - Judge/Magistrate had an In-chambers interview with me
  - The GAL, CASA or Caseworker reported my wishes to the judge
  - I submitted a letter to the court
  - Do not know/do not remember
  - Other (please specify)
  
4. If you attended a hearing, did you feel welcome at court?
  - Yes
  - No
  - I am not sure
  
5. Who told you when you had upcoming court dates? (select all that apply)
  - GAL
  - CASA
  - DHS
  - Caseworker
  - Court/Judge/Magistrate
  - Do not know
  - No one told me/I was not notified
  - Other (please specify)
  
6. Who helped you get ready to attend court? (select all that apply)
  - GAL
  - CASA
  - Caseworker
  - Foster parent/caregiver
  - Do not know
  - No one helped me prepare for court

- Other (please specify)
7. How were you prepared to attend court? (Select all that apply)
- I visited the courthouse before my hearing
  - I talked with a professional on my case about what to expect
  - I watched a video or met with someone who explained it
  - Do not know
  - I was not prepared to attend court
  - Other (please specify)
8. Who gave you a ride to court? (Select all that apply)
- GAL
  - CASA
  - Caseworker
  - Foster parent(s)/caregiver/group home
  - Do not know
  - No one
  - Other (please specify)
9. Were any of the following things reasons why you did not attend hearings? (Please select all that apply. If none apply, leave this question blank)
- Missing school or an appointment
  - Transportation
  - Information about my parents that I did not want to hear
  - Information about my parents that professionals did not want me to hear
  - The court schedule had too long of waits
  - I did not want to go to court
  - The court is not youth friendly
  - I was unsure about how to participate in the court hearing
  - Other (please specify)
10. Is there anything else you would like to share with me about your participation at D&N court hearings? (Open Questions)

### **Recommendations for Youth Attendance at Dependency Court Hearings**

1. Do you believe there were (or would have been) benefits to attending the court hearings?
- Yes
  - No
  - I am not sure

If you answered Yes or Not Sure to the above, “Do you believe there are benefits to youth attending court hearings?” Do you consider any of the following to be benefits of youth attendance at hearings (Select all that apply):

- Your voice
- Empowering for you
- Provides information for the court about my wishes
- It feels like it is my right to attend
- Decisions that the judge makes include what I want
- Allows me to see what's happening at court
- Other (please specify)

2. What could professionals do to help make court a welcome experience for youth that want to attend the hearing?

## **B) Demographic Information**

1. How old are you? \_
  
2. Do you have an email account?
  - Yes
  - No
  - Sort of
  
3. If yes, how often do you check your e-mail account?
  - Daily
  - Weekly
  - Monthly/Not often
  
4. Do you have easy access to the internet?
  - Yes
  - No
  - Sort of
  
5. Estimate, how old you were when your family was participating in D&N court? (best guess at your age or age range) \_\_\_\_\_
  
6. Were you ever placed out of your family home?
  - Yes
  - No
  - I am not sure

If yes, (Select all that apply):

- Relative's house (family member or friends house)
- Foster care
- Group home
- Residential care
- Detention
- Hospital

Other

7. What County did your family attend court in? \_\_\_\_\_

8. Do you recall if you also had a juvenile delinquency court case (JD)?

Yes

No

I am not sure

### **C) Your Feedback – Open Discussion**

1. What does having a meaningful voice in court mean to you?
2. How do you feel most comfortable communicating your opinion about your GAL and Court Experience?
3. What would keep you from giving your feedback about your GAL?
4. What would keep you from giving your feedback about your court experience?
5. What suggestions do you have for change?

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