



Permanency Enhancement Project Technical Assistance Annual Report Update

Southern Region Madison County Action Team

This two-part report provides an update of all PEP Action Team and University Partner activities during the 2019 fiscal year (July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019). Information herein is based off of communication and correspondence with key Action Team members and all other stakeholder group members. These individuals potentially include action team lead contact persons, PEP regional staff, other division employees, area community members, and families involved in the PEP initiative in the related counties.

Action Team Catchment Area

The **Madison County Action Team** encompasses the following counties listed below:

- Madison

University Partner Activity Overview

During fiscal year 2019 the Department of Children and Family Services worked with the University Partner (Southern Illinois University Edwardsville- SIUE) to retain faculty researchers and graduate students (who serve in the role of PEP Action Team Community Liaisons) to explore barriers to permanency, including but not limited to trends in racial disparity and disproportionality as it impacts child outcomes in the Southern Region of Illinois.

During the year, the Department of Children and Family Services Quality Assurance Department did not provide updated annual county level permanency data. Thus, this report is based on the last data received. That data was received in Quarter 4 of FY 2019. Consequently, the analytic report, provided by the University research team documents permanencies, by age and race, over the current 2019 fiscal year. This data analysis will be provided in a **supplementary Permanency Action Team Data Report**.

In addition to analyzing permanency data, the PEP Community Liaison (University Graduate Student **Gideon Nketsia Sampson**) contacted representatives who had been identified as

leaders of the **Madison County action team** and explored PEP goals, accomplishments, barriers and activities. Communication with the following individuals occurred:

Name	Role in DCFS or PEP Action Team
Shiela Reed	Madison County Action Team Chair

Research Assistant has made several successful contacts with the team leader through emails, phone calls, text messages and attending action team meetings. The team has been very active: They have conducted several successful meetings regarding permanency. They meet quarterly, lots of involvement of community stakeholders who take ownership and demonstrate high engagement. Attendees have a voice and feel like they part of the larger team.

Context of Permanency Barriers for Action Team Catchment Area

- Need to network for enhancing the lives of children and families in foster care
- Need to be more involved in the court system – wants to become involved with CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates)
- Expansion of programs/locations/services

The Madison County Action Team expressed major concerns with the lack of data, in regard to addressing permanency. The team also expressed the struggle with networking within the community to enhance the lives of children and families in foster care.

Fiscal Year 2018 Action Team Goals

Madison Action team has a goal to:

1. Be more involved in court systems- wants to involve with CASA
2. Gather new data regarding permanency
3. Network with private organizations and community stakeholders
4. Expand programs/ services/ for parenting, substance abuse, violence prevention, youth, opioid hostile, head start, home-based things related to B-3services.
5. Keep communication open between members

Action Team Goal Related Activity Overview

Team meetings are every first Wednesday of the month-quarterly. Thus, in March, June, September, and December. Next meeting –Sept 4th, 2019.

Substance abuse programs

The group has initiated a substance abuse program to connect to inpatient and outpatient services. Great program, great group, Fundraising. Coming up - Outdoor concert- sober event- Family oriented- Bethalto – Flier.

Bon Eau foundation – The 2nd set of NCTSN courses begins this summer to resource parents and/or caregivers of traumatized children.

Refuge -Has taken and run with the classes and formed them more into Foster parent/caregiver group therapy. They will be implementing them hopefully this Fall

Discussion of Action Team Activities to Improve Permanency in the Catchment Area

The Team wants to network with community members, private organizations, and other important organizations to make relationships that will ultimately enhance the lives of children within DCFS and help spread awareness of permanency enhancement and racial disparities. The team expressed the issues with those involved in the court system not completely understanding how everything works within DCFS, especially the judges so they expressed an interest in becoming more involved with the court system, especially with the Court Appointed Special Advocates.

The Team is constantly trying to get involved in the community and to address issues related to permanency and children from birth to three years old. Team is working on increasing case management at Riverbend and the need for expanding programs/locations/services for parenting, substance abuse, violence prevention, youth, opioid hotline, head start, home-based things to do related to B-3 services. The team also expresses concerns about not having a departmental data to exploring regarding their practices and how it is improving outcomes for kids

Action Team Next Steps:

The Madison County Action Team truly works diligently to make community connections and to use these relationships to improve permanency enhancement.

For the next fiscal year, the Action Team plans to:

1. Build on relationships they've created and to keep spreading awareness of the work DCFS does.
2. The team is considering having a Co-Chair.
3. Maintain existing collaboration with all stakeholders.

The University Partner will continue to support this team's efforts by:

- ✓ Helping them understand data trends
- ✓ Maintaining communication with team members and division leaders
- ✓ Provide guidance on the implementation of action team goals.

Attached you will find related meeting minutes, correspondence, event flyers, and/or other relevant materials that document Action Team activities.

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