



OACCA

Ohio Association of Child Caring Agencies, Inc.

Outcomes Data Project NEWSLETTER

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This will be the first of quarterly updates planned to keep you informed about the OACCA Outcomes Data Project (ODP). Many individuals and organizations have developed a connection to the ODP over the past several months. We "at the office" who experience the project on a daily basis can easily forget that not everyone has the most recent knowledge about the happenings of the project – therefore, this short note to keep you updated.

The project rolled out on January 1, 2007 with 10 participating agencies, 9 of whom submit data. Two additional agencies quickly joined the project. Most of the agencies phased in the ODP by implementing the project in only one of their multiple programs. For example several agencies with both residential treatment and foster care services initiated the project in their residential treatment program until becoming comfortable with project operations. Now, six months into the project, these agencies plan to begin roll out of the project in their other programs.

Agencies participating in the project include Adriel, Focus on Youth, Lighthouse, Lutheran Homes (LHS), Marsh Foundation, National Youth Advocate Program (NYAP), Oesterlen, Parmadale, SAFY, The Twelve, The Village Network, and United Methodist Children's Home (UMCH).

All agencies submit data only on children admitted since the first of the year. At the present time the data base has nearly 450 child files. As agencies broaden the implementation of the project within their respective organizations the number of files will quickly increase. By the end of the year the database may approach 1000 files.

The first three years of the project is the pilot phase. During this period constant re evaluation happens. As a result two significant adjustments are underway.

First, a few of the questions asked on instruments developed by the project committee seemed to result in confusion. Rewording these questions and adding several questions seemed the best solution to achieve the results desired for the project. Consequently, Version 1.1 of the tools and instruments rolled out on July 17, 2007.

Second, we discovered that a significant number of children under 5 years of age enter the care of agencies in the project. Ohio Scales (our tool for measuring the severity of problems and issues children bring to placement) is not designed for children this young. A subcommittee of the ODP Steering committee searched for an instrument(s) to measure the issues these little people bring to placement. Earlier this month the oversight committee approved the use of the DECA and DECA IT to assess children under 5. We hope to have a contract with Kaplan soon and begin using these instruments in the project.

The Council on Accreditation gave its support to the OACCA Outcome Data Project earlier this summer. A conversation with CARF promises the same level of support. Support for the project will also be sought from JACHO.

Generous support from key partners makes the Outcomes Data Project a reality. The Greater Cincinnati Foundation, The Columbus Foundation and the Gund Foundation have joined with OACCA with timely grants to make the project possible.

Reports from the data collected comprise a major function of the project. You may know that the Outcomes Data Project partners with the Ohio University to compile, analyze, and report on the data. Several different kinds of reports are planned.

Each agency participating in the project receives reports (agency reports) on its data compared to the aggregate data collected from all participating agencies. The agency reports include nine sections – six sections that reports on how the agency performs in each of the six outcomes measured, a section that reports on the agency's demographics, a section that reports on the agency's effectiveness of placement with the clients it serves, and a section that reports on the satisfaction of the agency's consumers. The reports on outcomes measured each get cross tabulated with a number of predetermined factors such as age, race, gender, diagnosis, etc. These reports, available only to the participating agencies, give each agency a wealth of information about the clients served.

A second report generated by Ohio University, a report reviewing the aggregate data in depth, will be published annually beginning next year.

From time to time the ODP Steering Committee will ask OU to publish a Special Report. These reports focus on the correlations between the risk and environmental factors children bring to placement and the outcomes children experience. Additionally, the data in the ODP database (which is entirely de identified by agency and child) will be made available through a formal process to graduate students from universities for analysis and reports. Through these avenues OACCA hopes to glean quality information about the outcomes experienced by children and their families as a result of services received in member agencies and the correlation with various factors that impinge upon the outcomes.