



Differential Response NEWSLETTER

Ninth National Differential Response Conference: Summary and Interview

By Sonia Tillman, Differential Response and special projects manager

Nearly 50 Ohio child protection staff members attended the Kempe Center’s annual “Family & Community Engagement: The Keys to Child Safety” conference, held Nov. 12-14, 2014, in Seattle.

Thanks to the generous support of Casey Family Programs, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) awarded 18 conference attendance scholarships to county child protection staff. ODJFS has identified this conference as a skill-building opportunity to enhance Differential Response (DR) practice at the caseworker, supervisory and administrative leadership levels.

DR Leadership Council members conducted a workshop, as did many other fabulous Ohio presenters: Shelby Borchers, Stacy Cox, Cary Brown, Michelle Diehl, Monica Morton, Tracy Pedani and Gina Speaks-Eshler. Those from other states and even other countries were very interested to hear about Ohio’s DR and Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) practices. Conference participants came from all over the U.S. and Canada, as well as Hong Kong and Japan.

We had the opportunity to ask a few first-time Ohio participants what they thought of the experience. Here’s what they had to say:

“I was hired as an [Alternative Response (AR)] intake and ongoing worker for Clark County. AR just makes sense, and I can’t imagine working with my families any other way. I enjoyed hearing the differences between screening decisions in large and small counties. Also, [the] ‘This Little Light of Mine, I’m Going to Let It Shine’ presentation provided examples of caseworker burnout and strategies to use when it occurs. Having self-awareness allows me to recover [more quickly] and keeps compassion for my families. I enjoyed this conference and hope to attend more in the future.”

- Misty Board, M.A., social services worker II, Clark County Department of Job and Family Services



Continued on page 3

Articles

Ninth National Differential Response Conference: Summary and Interview 1

The Safe and Together™ Model and Alternative Response: The Intersectionality of Perpetrators’ Patterns and Substance Use 3

Regular Features

ODJFS Office of Families and Children DR News Corner 2

Monthly DR Statewide Teleconferences 4

Child Welfare Opiate Engagement Project 5

Do You Know About the SACWIS Knowledge Base? 7

Ohio Intimate Partner Violence Collaborative Updates 7

Featured DR Practice Profile Skill Set 6

Upcoming Meetings 5

Announcements 8



ODJFS Office of Families and Children DR News Corner

By Sonia Tillman, Differential Response and special projects manager



Sonia Tillman

Happy New Year!

The holiday season is my favorite time of year because it allows us to stop our busy lives, sit down with family and friends, and be thankful! As you may have noticed from our last two DR newsletters, Ohio has a lot to be thankful for. ODJFS would like to take a minute to give our child protection staff a huge THANK YOU for all their hard work over the last year supporting the completion of our statewide DR implementation.

ODJFS will continue its efforts to sustain this work and enhance our practices of keeping families safely together. Our DR Leadership Council and Statewide Implementation Team are committed to improving our processes and providing you with supportive tools and resources to encourage best practice across our state – so anticipate great things from us in 2015!

Kudos to members of the DR Leadership Council and Statewide Implementation Team for their dedicated passion to move this work forward, which has launched Ohio into an innovative leadership position for other states interested in DR!

Jennifer Justice (Leadership Council Chair)
 Darleen Shope (Leadership Council Co-Chair)
 Carla Carpenter (Statewide Implementation Team Chair)
 Stacy Cox (Statewide Implementation Team Co-Chair)

Leadership Council and Implementation Team Members: Nan Beeler (Institute for Human Services), Cary Brown (Lucas County), Michelle Diehl (ODJFS), Stefania Falke (Clark County), Lyn Fox (Cuyahoga County), Justin Gall (Fairfield County), Jennifer Horstman (Putnam County), Chad King (Greene County), Lara LaRoche (Franklin County), Michele Lidle and Leslie McGee (ODJFS), Sushila Moore (Summit County), Christine Parker (Belmont County), Gina Speaks-Eshler (Clinton County), Alice Stewart (Washington County), Dorothy Striker and Sonia Tillman (ODJFS), Tami Ward (Sandusky County), Lisa Wiltshire and Anna Wyss-Zilles (ODJFS), Matt Cebren (Geauga County), Donna Robison (Athens County), Jason Cupp (Mercer County), Trista Piccola (Cuyahoga County), Kelly Hickle (Wood County), Allison Metz (NIRN), Jennifer Hartmann (IPV Collaborative), Angela Sausser (Public Children Services Association of Ohio), and Caren Kaplan (DR Consultant).



Leadership Council



Conference continued from page 1

"I took the 'Teaming Domestic Violence Cases' training. During this, the instructor touched on the Safe and Together™ principles. This was very informative, and I feel it would be beneficial for my county to complete the Safe and Together™ training. [The instructor] also talked about teaming with different agencies to help the family, and also the difficulties in teaming with different agencies due to confidentiality.

I would recommend this conference to other counties. This would be very helpful for counties who are just starting out with Alternative Response. There was new information that I learned and there was also refresher information."

- Breanne McArthur, AR intake caseworker, Stark County Department of Job and Family Services

"I was able to learn many new engagement skills and [how to work] towards meeting families where they are and taking them where they need to be. I also learned more about how my attitude affects those around me.

I would recommend the training to others. The facility and amenities were fantastic. I found [one trainer to be] very inspirational and took more than one of his sessions."

- Angela Kidder, Alternative Response (AR) Intake Caseworker, Stark County Job and Family Services

"Clinton County staff learned new techniques [for] engaging with the teenage population, using social media and alternative means of communication to gather needed information that teenagers do not often like to talk about. Some of the creative techniques included asking them what would they post or tweet about how they are feeling today. They also showed how you could ask them about posting a 'throwback Thursday' photo of a fond memory and then use exception questions to explore the positive things about that time and build upon those things to move them forward.

The workshop, 'Don't Give Up! Planning for When a Fatality or Egregious Incident Occurs in FAR,' provided good insight into preparing an agency and community for [a fatality]. Having an agency policy is great, but really talking with staff, agency and commissioners prior is really the key."

- Sarah Smallwood, intake supervisor, Clinton County Department of Job and Family Services

The Safe and Together™ Model and Alternative Response: The Intersectionality of Perpetrators' Patterns and Substance Use

By David Mandel, principal, David Mandel and Associates, LLC

Domestic violence and substance abuse co-occur in both the alternative response and traditional response pathways. Despite the day-to-day contact many workers in the child welfare system have with families experiencing both domestic violence and substance abuse, the understanding of the intersectionality of these issues is still plagued with misconceptions, simplifications and a failure to apply existing knowledge of perpetrators' behavior patterns to improve assessment, case planning and outcomes for families. This lack of understanding can interfere with a number of areas: identification of underlying problems; thorough assessment of child safety and well-being; and the development of a successful child safety plan to mitigate the safety and risk concerns.



The Safe and Together™ model's foundation is a focus on assessing perpetrators' patterns of behavior and their nexus with child safety and well-being. When the model is combined with setting high standards for fathers and protective efforts of mothers, it forms a powerful, holistic assessment lens that can help us better understand

the intersection of domestic violence and substance abuse issues. Here are a few practical ideas and questions that use a perpetrator pattern-based approach to the intersectionality of substance abuse and domestic violence to guide assessment and improve positive outcomes for children and families:

- Even if the domestic violence perpetrator is using substances at the time of an incident, do not assume that coercive control, actions taken to harm the children or violence only occur when there is substance use. Assess the pattern for those behaviors even when the person is not using substances, e.g., "How does your partner handle his/her jealousy when he/she is not drinking?", "What is your partner's parenting like when he/she is sober?", or "How do you respond when your partner raises concerns about your use of the family's finances?"

Continued on page 4



Model continued from page 3

- A pattern-based approach to assessing the impact of domestic violence perpetrators' behaviors invites us to consider the impact of the times that a perpetrator uses substances and does not get violent or abusive. Once someone has demonstrated his or her capacity to become violent or abusive when using, family members may experience heightened anxiety or anticipatory fear even when the violence or abuse does not occur. Assessments should seek to determine whether family members are affected by the potential for abuse associated with drinking, e.g., "Do you know when your partner begins to drink whether it will escalate into abuse?" or "How is it for the children when you start drinking? What do you think they worry about?"
- A perpetrator's pattern may involve influencing or encouraging use of substances and/or interference with his or her partner's recovery efforts. This might involve bringing drugs or alcohol into the house to sabotage recovery or forcing someone to use with the perpetrator. Some perpetrators will make it hard for their partners to attend a treatment program or a 12-step group. Accusations of cheating with program members and sabotage of transportation to and from a program are two tactics that perpetrators may use to prevent their partners from getting clean and sober. All these tactics should be viewed through the lens of the perpetrator's "parenting choices." If an abusive father sabotages his partner's recovery, then that should be considered part of the way we assess him as a parent.
- Perpetrators' coercive control, substance abuse and financial control may intersect. Some perpetrators will use control to gain access to money and resources, like a car, in order to maintain their addiction. Others may use intimidation, threats and manipulation to avoid the consequences of their uses. It is important to draw the nexus between these behaviors and the impact they have on child and family functioning. Documentation should describe the impact that taking the car or spending money on drugs has on family functioning. Without this being specifically documented, it is more likely assumed that unmet basic needs – such as housing instability, inadequate food and lack of medical care – are the sole responsibility of the non-perpetrator. This assumption effectively reduces the perpetrator's responsibility for these things.
- Because some perpetrators may be less dangerous when they are using, their partners may encourage either their overall substance use or one specific type of use over another as a way to reduce situational risk. On the surface, this can be challenging to workers, but it is important to remain pattern-based in our assessments of safety and well-being. Based on this specific perpetrator's pattern, are the behaviors of the adult survivor reasonable? Are they part of active efforts to manage safety for the adult survivor and his or her children? While these efforts may not afford the children adequate safety and well-being, it is important to see the adult survivor's behavior in the context of the perpetrator's pattern as a starting point for engagement. This perspective can help develop a meaningful partnership with the adult survivor regarding the safety and well-being of the children and improve our capacity to intervene with the perpetrator regarding his or her parenting choices and behavior.

For a 10-item checklist on the intersection of domestic violence, substance abuse and mental health issues, visit [this Safe and Together™ blog](#). Find more information about the Safe and Together™ model, click [here](#). For more information about the Ohio IPV Collaborative, click [here](#).



Monthly DR Statewide Teleconferences

Please remember to send us your suggested discussion topics and/or areas of interest for our monthly teleconferences. All Tuesday teleconferences are at 2 p.m., and all Friday teleconferences are at 9 a.m.

Bridge line teleconference number: (614) 728-7910
Meeting ID Code 3039#

2015 Dates and Times

Friday, Jan. 16
Tuesday, Feb. 10
Friday, Feb. 13
Tuesday, Mar. 10
Friday, Mar. 13
Tuesday, Apr. 14
Friday, Apr. 17
Tuesday, May 12
Friday, May 15
Tuesday, Jun. 9
Friday, Jun. 12
Tuesday, Jul. 14
Friday, Jul. 17
Tuesday, Aug. 11
Friday, Aug. 14
Tuesday, Sept. 8
Friday, Sept. 11
Tuesday, Oct. 13
Friday, Oct. 16
No Call Tuesday, Nov. 10
(Veteran's Day)
Friday, Nov. 13
Tuesday, Dec. 15
Friday, Dec. 18



Upcoming Meetings

2015 DR Implementation Team and Leadership Council Meetings

All meetings will take place at ODJFS, 4200 E. Fifth Ave., Columbus.

Mar. 2 – Implementation Team

Mar. 3 – Leadership Council

Jun. 1 – Implementation Team

Jun. 2 – Leadership Council

Sept. 1 – Implementation Team

Sept. 2 – Leadership Council

Dec. 7 – Implementation Team

Dec. 8 – Leadership Council

Child Welfare Opiate Engagement Project

A summary of a Public Children Services Association of Ohio (PCSAO) press statement and best practices from the white paper of the Child Welfare Opiate Engagement Project in September 2014



Last September, a consortium of Ohio state agencies and child welfare experts released a white paper with recommendations for how to address the fallout from child neglect and abuse brought on by opiate addiction.

According to Tim Dick, deputy director of the Clermont County Department of Job and Family Services and co-chair of the Child Welfare Opiate Engagement Project, opioid abuse has added to his agency's caseloads and complicated caseworkers' ability to reunify children with parents.

"Counties are seeing more children coming into care – at a younger age – than with any previous drug epidemic, and because of the likelihood of relapse, these children get stuck in our foster care system for much longer periods of time," Dick said. "The engagement project and white paper are an attempt to give child welfare agencies some models for responding to this epidemic."

Dick said the engagement project examined cross-system models that bring together courts and child welfare agencies to help caregivers follow a treatment case plan, recover from addiction and have their children returned in a timely fashion.

"All of the best practices we outline – both in child welfare and in court process – require more intensive case management than what many of our county agencies are capable of managing right now," Dick said. "We need to invest in additional quality child welfare casework to ensure that these families can succeed over the long term."

Excerpts from the white paper's recommended best practices are highlighted below. To read the full paper and descriptions for each best practice, visit the PCSAO [website](#).

- Encourage implementation of the Screening and Assessment for Family Engagement, Retention and Recovery (SAFERR) model: Support cross-system collaboration at the local, regional and state levels based on the SAFERR model, including increased capacity for technical assistance and training to support the development process.
- Increase the number of Family Dependency Treatment Courts (FDTCs): Ohio has 16 Family Drug Treatment Courts and should increase the number across the state. Currently, \$4.4 million is available through the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services to expand the state's existing drug courts, including FDTCs.

Featured DR Practice Profile Skill Set



Michelle Diehl

By Michelle Diehl,
Differential
Response coordinator

Ohio's child welfare practice model identifies the principles, core elements, foundational tenets, worker skill sets and indicators of quality practices with families.

The 10 worker skill sets are key to the implementation of the DR practice model at all levels of the public child welfare system. Each of the skill sets has a corresponding profile: engaging, assessing, partnering, planning, implementing, evaluating, advocating, communicating, demonstrating cultural and diversity competence, and collaborating.

The "Ohio Differential Response Practice Profiles" guide practitioners and supervisors in effectively implementing DR by providing examples of ideal, developmental and unacceptable practice for each DR skill set.

The featured skill set for this edition of the Differential Response Newsletter is **Partnering** (respectful and meaningful collaboration with families to achieve shared goals). Here are some examples that illustrate ideal practice of this skill:

- * Encourage family members to locate and select services they feel will best meet their needs. Consider offering other known services, as needed, for the family to consider.
- * Give family members copies of blank documents, such as family service plans, to complete with you, using the family's words.
- * Give transparent, accurate and understandable information to the family, to help them make informed decisions and choices in ensuring the safety of their children.
- * Share assessment results with the family, ask the family members how they see their progress during home visits and reviews, and share the agency's perspective of their progress.
- * Recognize that the family is the expert and they know their family best; share this with the family and encourage them to do most of the talking.
- * Accompany the family to their first appointments with providers and go to any additional appointments if the family requests.

Engagement Project continued from page 5

- Establish time-limited prioritization of drug treatment counseling and recovery services for child welfare cases: House Bill 484, Ohio's Adoption and Safe Families Act, demands that children services agencies, drug and alcohol treatment providers, and juvenile courts ensure timely assessments, services and permanency decisions for children of substance-abusing parents.
- Increase access to Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT): MAT is not just a best practice but the standard of care for this population. All forms of MAT should be available for all parents in the child welfare system where opiate addiction has been determined.
- Expand access to recovery support and intensive child welfare case management: Evaluations show that Sobriety Treatment and Recovery Teams (START) programs using the Annie E. Casey Foundation model of pairing a child protective services caseworker with a parent mentor helped reunify children and parents twice as effectively as traditional programs.

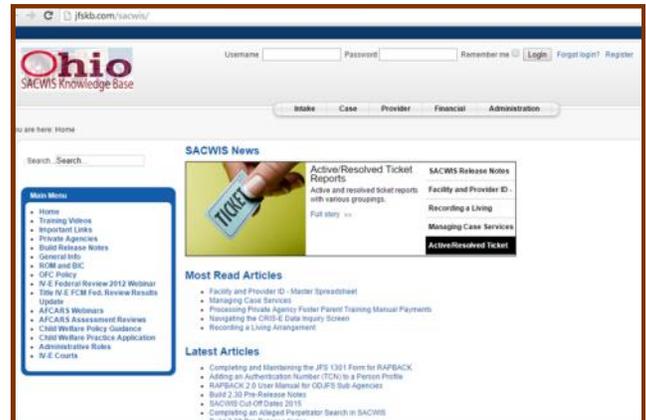




Do You Know About the SACWIS Knowledge Base?

Reprinted from the ODJFS website, <http://jfskb.com/sacwis>

SACWIS is Ohio's Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System, developed and implemented by ODJFS in partnership with the 88 public children service agencies. SACWIS is a comprehensive case management system to help county staff manage their workloads and provide accurate and current data to assist in decision-making and program modification. It meets state and federal quality assurance and reporting requirements, such as those for the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS). SACWIS is the official record for all child welfare cases in Ohio.



Where can I find help with using SACWIS?

1. Use the SACWIS Knowledge Base at <http://jfskb.com/sacwis> to search for articles and/or training videos related to the subject you need assistance with.
2. Contact your agency's SACWIS point of contact and/or "super user" for technical assistance. A list of SACWIS coordinators for each county may be found at <http://jfskb.com/sacwis/index.php/general-info/340-sacwis-coordinators>.

How can I find out more about SACWIS?

1. Explore the newly updated SACWIS Knowledge Base.
2. Read about new SACWIS initiatives at <http://jfs.ohio.gov/sacwis/>.
3. Arrange to meet with a SACWIS super user at your agency.



Ohio Intimate Partner Violence Collaborative Updates

By Jennifer Hartman, Ohio IPV Collaborative coordinator at the National Center for Adoption Law and Policy (NCALP)* at Capital University Law School

Second Annual Safe and Together™ Symposium Summary

Ohio had great representation at the second annual Safe and Together™ Symposium this October in Seattle. Eleven project partners and Safe and Together™-trained participants attended. Dorothy Striker and Jenny Hartmann presented on the great work of the Ohio IPV Collaborative, and Kenny Steinman and Sheri Chaney Jones presented results from their fabulous evaluation of Ohio's Safe and Together™ implementation.

Way to go, O-H-I-O! Thank you, HealthPath, for sponsoring several of Ohio's participants!



Top (left to right): Christine Mulvin, HealthPath Foundation of Ohio; Jenny Hartmann, NCALP; Suzan Carroll-Decker, EVE, Inc.; and Dorothy Striker, ODJFS
Bottom (left to right): Jo Simonsen, Ohio Domestic Violence Network; Kenny Steinman, Galade Research and Project Management, LLC; Sheri Chaney Jones, Measurement Resources Company; Kim Ensign, Washington County Children Services; Rona Curtis and Samantha Rotz-Toney, Mahoning County Children Services

Continued on page 8



Collaborative Updates continued from page 7

Delaware Site Visit

On Nov. 5 and 6, five visitors traveled from Delaware to Ohio to learn about our implementation of Safe and Together™ within a DR system. The visitors met our project partners and panelists from throughout Ohio on their first day, then toured Fairfield and Franklin counties with DR Manager Sonia Tillman to see how the integration is possible. Both counties gave the Delaware team a very warm welcome and shared a great deal of helpful information that our visitors took back with them to discuss.

Thank you, Casey Family Programs, for making this visit possible! A special appreciation also goes out to all of the wonderful caseworkers, supervisors, advocates, project partners and panelists who helped make Delaware's visit to Ohio such a success! Your work is inspiring.



Ohio IPV Collaborative panelists during Delaware's immersion visit on Nov. 5, 2014

** NCALP will rebrand as the Family and Youth Law Center (FYLaw) in early 2015.*

Announcements



Michelle Diehl and Sonia Tillman

DR Implementation Funding Reminder

Round 7-10 counties may invoice up to \$40,000 for completing their DR implementation activities. We have compiled a list of counties with DR implementation funds still available and will contact the DR lead and director in those counties to let them know their remaining balances.

The deadline for completing all remaining implementation activities is **June 30, 2015**. Implementation funding will not be available after that date. However, Child Welfare Experiential Learning funds will continue to be available for peer-to-peer learning opportunities and for participation in the regional DR in-person meetings.

Coaching and Sustainability Opportunities

Our wonderful DR consultants will be available only until June 30, 2015, so please contact us to schedule coaching or sustainability visits before that date.

If you have any questions, please call Sonia Tillman at (614) 752-0050 or Michelle Diehl at (614) 752-2701.



We are looking forward to partnering with you in 2015!

