



# STATEWIDE SYSTEM REFORM PROGRAM COLORADO

## LEAD AGENCY

**Colorado Judicial  
Department**

## TOTAL NUMBER OF FTCS:

**12**

## TOTAL NUMBER OF ADULTS SERVED IN 2013

**256**

## STATE DEMOGRAPHICS<sup>1</sup>

**Population:** 5,268,367

**Children under 18:**  
1,238,066

**Persons below poverty  
level:** 695,424

## CHILD WELFARE NUMBERS<sup>2</sup>

**Children who received a  
CPS response for an  
allegation of  
maltreatment:** 41,284

**Child Maltreatment  
victims:** 10,482

**Number of children  
entering Foster Care:**  
5,034

**Number of children of  
substance abusers (60%  
estimate):** 3,020

## BACKGROUND AND PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Colorado Statewide System Reform Program (SSRP) will develop an informed implementation plan for infusing successful Family Treatment Drug Court (FTDC) principles into the larger child welfare system to change the landscape of the dependency and neglect system and ultimately improve the lives of the families and children affected by substance use and co-occurring disorders.

The first of Colorado's 12 FTDCs began operating in 2002. The historic evolution of family FTDCs in Colorado has been local, with minimal oversight from the State. As a result, there is wide variation in processes and procedures in FTDC programs across the State.

Statewide coordination of Problem-Solving courts began in 2007. The Problem Solving Court Unit in the State Court Administrator's Office (SCAO), in conjunction with the Colorado Problem-Solving Court Advisory Committee, provides training, resources, and guidance to support FTDCs in adhering to best practices identified in the current body of research.

In order for Colorado's Child Welfare System and Juvenile Courts to increase their collective capacity to effectively intervene in families affected by substance use and co-occurring mental health disorders, it is critical for the Colorado courts and the Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS), which includes the Division of Child Welfare (DCW) and Office of Behavioral Health (OBH), to collaborate at the system level. To successfully increase the number of families served, it is necessary that Colorado courts and the CDHS work together to review current statewide protocols, family drug courts' practices, performance measures and data systems to assess Colorado's capacity to infuse FTDC principles across systems. Colorado's SSRP will allow this process to move forward with vigor.

<sup>1</sup> United States Census Bureau. (2013). State and County Quick Facts. Retrieved from <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/08000.html>

<sup>2</sup> Children's Bureau. (2012). Child Welfare Outcomes Report Data. Retrieved from [http://cwoutcomes.acf.hhs.gov/data/tables/demo\\_stats?years\[\]=2012&viz=table&states\[\]=6&state=6&region=](http://cwoutcomes.acf.hhs.gov/data/tables/demo_stats?years[]=2012&viz=table&states[]=6&state=6&region=)

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## PROGRAM GOALS

The primary goals of the Colorado SSRP are to infuse the following six common ingredients of FTDC into Colorado courts, DCW, and OBH when managing substance use and co-occurring mental health disorders:

1. Develop a protocol of identifying families in need of treatment.
2. Ensure early access to assessment and treatment.
3. Increase judicial oversight
4. Increase management of recovery services and compliance.
5. Implement coordinated responses to participant behaviors (incentives and sanctions).
6. Use a collaborative approach across the service system and court.

## PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

The development of an Executive Oversight Committee (EOC) and workgroups will drive the implementation plan.

Key stakeholders will designate individuals to serve on a statewide oversight committee lead by the Chief Justice and Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Human Services. The membership will consist of individuals with discretion and authority to remove barriers to systems change. The EOC will also designate workgroups to focus on specific areas of statewide reform. The System Reform Liaison will coordinate and manage essential activities, work closely with key staff from each agency to build relationships, maintain cohesion and unity of shared goals and vision, and understand the unique qualities and culture of each organization.

The EOC will also examine existing policies, procedures, and practices across systems to identify necessary changes to allow for successful infusion of the six key ingredients of FTDC into Colorado courts, DCW, and OBH when managing substance use and co-occurring mental health disorders.

## SSRP DESCRIPTION



***The Statewide System Reform Program (SSRP) helps states infuse effective and collaborative local-level practices into a systemic, statewide initiative. SSRP is designed to increase effective service to all families in the child welfare system affected by parental substance use disorders. The project enhances and expands successful local-level programs and increases cooperation between state-level court, child welfare, and substance abuse treatment agencies. SSRP is funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP).***

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Analysis of data from the administration of the Collaborative Capacity Instrument (CCI) will guide the development of the technical assistance plan. During the first year of the planning process, the Multiple Management Information Systems (MIS) will be examined by the EOC in order to assess appropriate capacity to monitor reports and share client progress and cost savings.

The EOC will also review documents (policy and procedure manuals or client handbooks, for example) from each of the courts. Emphasis will be placed on constructing a recommended program model informed by current best practices research. The EOC will also develop recommendations for measuring the infusion of and fidelity to FTDC practices throughout the system.

As part of the planning phase, partners will identify what funding sources currently support similar activities and then measure additional funding on an on-going basis. This process will focus on allocation of system-level funding.

Colorado's Court Improvement Program (CIP) and DCW have developed performance measures and case management systems to improve the handling of dependency and neglect cases. These measures and systems will be helpful in implementation of the SSRP.

The National Center for State Courts (NCSC) will work with Colorado courts, DCW, and OBH to select a panel of stakeholders to identify and discuss performance measures relevant to FTDCs, the child welfare system, and the behavioral health system.

## **KEY PARTNERS & AGENCIES**

The members of the EOC and workgroups will consist of members of the Colorado Supreme Court Improvement Program and Colorado Problem-Solving Court Advisory Committee, representatives from DCW, OBH, local dependency and neglect courts, and local departments of human services. Although the final composition of the EOC and workgroups are yet to be established, they will include broad representation from all stakeholders. Colorado courts, DCW, and the OBH will work collectively, informed by the technical assistance provided through the grant, to implement key family treatment drug court practices into standard care for all dependency and neglect cases filed as a result of parents affected by substance use disorders.

Looking to the future success of the Colorado SSRP brings to mind many productive collaborations from Colorado's past. Historically, partnerships with the SCAO and additional agencies involved in the dependency and neglect realm have been very successful. The SCAO, in conjunction with the Colorado Court Improvement Program (CIP), has effectively implemented numerous grant projects to advance both dependency and neglect court cases and specialty courts, including family treatment drug courts. Working in conjunction with the CDHS and the SCAO, technical assistance was utilized to create a guide for counties, service providers, and judicial districts concerning child welfare families affected by substance use disorders.

## **STATE COURT SYSTEM**

The Colorado Judicial Branch is centrally administered by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. To assist the Chief Justice, the Supreme Court appoints the State Court Administrator. Colorado's 12 FTDCs are overseen by the SCAO, which also oversees Best Practice Court Teams and the CIP for dependency and neglect courts.

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## COLORADO CHILD PROTECTION COURT PROCESS



