



TPR Timeliness Project *Juvenile Clerks Meet-Up*

December 14, 2022

TPR Timeliness Project – Background

- Formally started in 2017 as part of CCIP grant requirement for collaborative, data-driven project with DCF
 - ▶ Prior timeliness data from Institute for Research on Poverty (IRP)
 - ▶ Federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) results and state performance improvement plan
 - ▶ Anecdotal input from counties regarding TPR delays
- CCIP-DCF-IRP workgroup convened to analyze causes for delay, develop theory of change, and implement response
- NOT intended to increase number of TPRs or reliance on TPR as a permanency option, except when necessary
 - ▶ Children deserve timely permanence, regardless of what that looks like

TPR Timeliness Project – Workgroup

- Workgroup activities
 - ▶ Agency and court TPR process mapping
 - ✓ Identification of potential bottlenecks
 - ▶ Additional IRP case analysis in effort to identify trends and correlation
 - ✓ Ultimately useful, but not conclusive as to connection between case characteristics and timeliness outcomes
 - ▶ 16 county review
 - ✓ Stakeholder surveys
 - ✓ Focused eWisACWIS and CCAP file reviews
 - Under/Over 120 days from filing of TPR to entry of disposition

TPR Timeliness Project – Counties

Dodge	Milwaukee*
Dunn	Monroe
Eau Claire	Ozaukee
Fond du Lac	Racine
Jefferson	Rock
Juneau	Sauk
La Crosse	Sheboygan
Marathon	Wood

*reported on separately due to size and difference in practice

TPR Timeliness Project – Report

- Reviews are complete and project will conclude by end of year
- Report of full findings has been drafted and is being reviewed and edited for release in early 2023
 - ▶ To be provided to all project counties, including Milwaukee
 - ✓ Information separated into “Other Project Counties” and Milwaukee
 - ▶ Will be made publicly available; anticipated to be used at a policy level

TPR Timeliness Project – Resources

- Practice resources developed to provide in conjunction with summary report
 - ▶ TPR Readiness Meeting Checklist
 - ▶ Judicial Checklists
 - ✓ Voluntary Consent
 - ✓ Hearing on the Petition
 - ✓ Dispositional Hearing
 - ▶ Motion and Order Samples (pre-trial)
- Future technical assistance and TPR-focused training opportunities to be offered following conclusion of formal project
 - ▶ Includes *2023 Conference on Child Welfare and the Courts*

TPR Timeliness Project – Recommendations

- **Child Welfare Workforce**
 - ▶ Focus on supporting caseworkers
 - ✓ More support may help in addressing turnover rates
 - ✓ Ensure that caseworkers have the tools they need
 - ▶ Review and improve training curriculum
 - ✓ Emphasis on court practice; area of stress for caseworkers
 - ✓ Readiness Checklist can serve to guide practice and establish clear expectations

TPR Timeliness Project – Recommendations

- **Child Welfare Process**
 - ▶ Focus on effectiveness of services provided to parents pre-TPR
 - ▶ Support placement with relatives and siblings
 - ✓ Streamline relative foster licensing process and place children with family earlier in the life of the case
 - ▶ Address marital status barrier to adoption licensing
 - ✓ Currently, couple must be married at least one year prior to adoption application and must be living together
 - ▶ Support continued connections to birth parents, siblings, and relatives
 - ▶ Modernize notice procedures and requirements

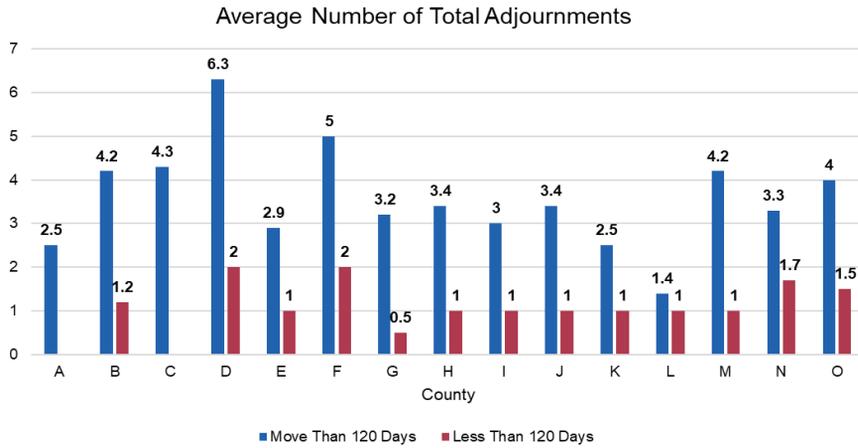
TPR Timeliness Project – Recommendations

- Court Process
 - ▶ Standardized/consistent TPR referral and communication between child welfare professionals and TPR prosecutor
 - ▶ High-quality legal representation
 - ✓ Increased training opportunities and resources to support practitioners; incentivize more attorneys to engage in TPR practice
 - Include training on effective discovery and motions practice to streamline cases and narrow issues OR resolve earlier
 - ✓ Support use of Title IV-E funds for both prosecution and court-appointed attorneys
 - ✓ Encourage robust motion practice

TPR Timeliness Project – Recommendations

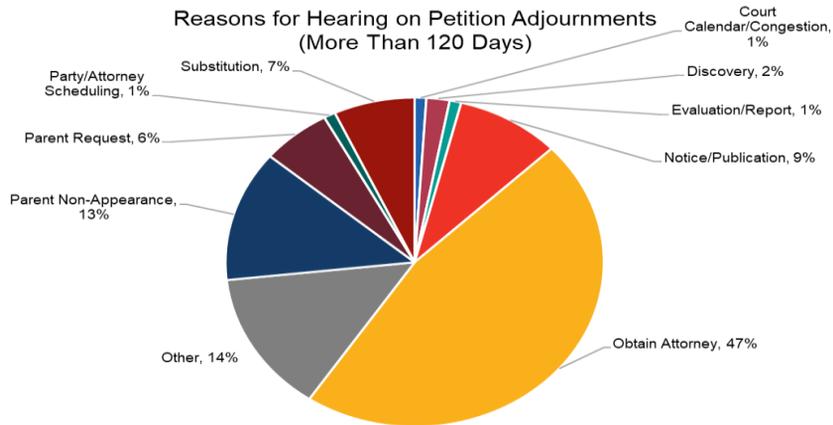
- Court Process (cont'd)
 - ▶ Timely Appointment of Counsel
 - ✓ Analyze local practice and communications to encourage early contact between parents and SPD/court
 - ✓ Court oversight and goal to reduce adjournments means inquiring about cause of delays in appointment (parent inaction vs. lack of available attorneys)
 - ▶ Increased and focused judicial case management in TPR cases
 - ✓ Regular use of Scheduling Orders and Orders to Appear
 - ✓ Confidence in making default judgment findings, when appropriate, through clearly-stated orders and warnings
 - ✓ Increased scrutiny of adjournment requests

TPR Timeliness Project – Select Data

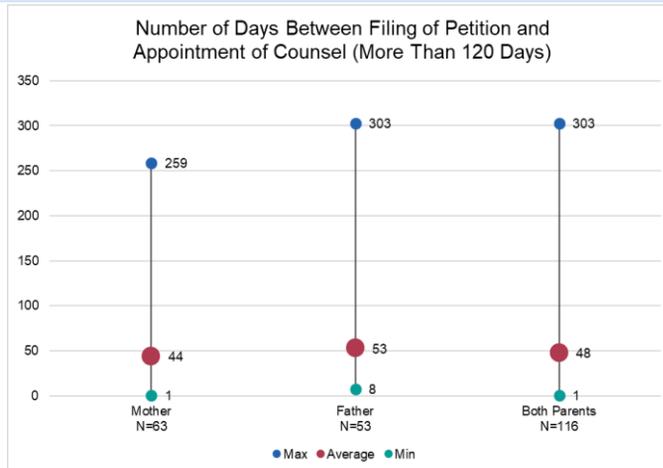


Milwaukee: 7 adjudgments (>120 Days)/1.5 adjudgments (<120 Days)

TPR Timeliness Project – Select Data (Other Project Counties Only)



TPR Timeliness Project – Select Data



Milwaukee: Range for Both Parents – 1 to 284 Days (Avg. 55 Days)

TPR Timeliness Project – Recommendations

- Collaboration
 - ▶ Communication is an essential ingredient for success
 - ✓ Regular and ongoing consultation throughout life of case (beginning with CHIPS) between CW supervisors and staff, as well as legal partners
 - ▶ Examining current court and child welfare processes can lead to improved practices and efficiencies
 - ✓ Multi-disciplinary workgroups to improve practices
 - ▶ Title IV-E reimbursement programs provide funding to counties to support the expansion of legal services and representation in child welfare proceedings
 - ✓ Agency and courts have a shared interest in ensuring there are adequate and skilled attorneys to provide both prosecutorial services and parent representation