



Permanency Enhancement Project Technical Assistance Annual Report Update

Southern Region Mt.Vernon Action Team

This two-part report provides an update of all PEP Action Team and University Partner activities during the 2018 fiscal year (July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018). 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 **Mt.Vernon Action Team** encompasses the following counties listed below:

- Jefferson
- Marion

University Partner Activity Overview

During fiscal year 2018 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 2016. Consequently, the analytic report, provided by the University research team documents permanencies, by age and race, over the 2016 period and not the current 2018 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 **Meghan Miller** contacted representatives who had been identified as leaders of the **Mt.Vernon action team** and explored PEP goals, accomplishments, barriers and activities. Communication with the following individuals occurred:

Name	Role in DCFS or PEP Action Team
John Reeves	Action Team Leader

Research Assistant has made several successful contacts with the team leader.

** To see dates of contact and method of communication please refer to attached contact log document https://siuecougars-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/kimcart_siue_edu/EeZOqHN-wlVPsCF-hfhRWV4B0pVC4qbTwT29yb6k4U4HNQ?e=9mydOQ*

Context of Permanency Barriers for Action Team Catchment Area

This section includes a list of the permanency barriers discussed by action team members that are prevalent in the action team catchment area.

- Maintain current level of action team engagement and leadership
- No current data for the current fiscal year 2018 was provided by the Division, so current service and permanency data trends are based on data provided in 2016. FY2016 was the last time data was received from the Division
- Identification of community partners to help enhance action team efforts

This section provides a discussion of the permanency barriers identified above. This discussion is based on information provided by action team members and is supported by the data presented in the supplementary report.

Mt.Vernon Action team is diligent on permanency and actively addressing the permanency cases. Team expresses concerns about computer system not large enough for Lifebooks, so the entire office is updating their system in the coming months. Team says it becomes overwhelming when the leader of the team tries to initiate a lot of projects at once. This could be delayed due to lack of access to data. Team emphasizes that easy access to data would accelerate the work on the projects and delivers better outcomes.

Fiscal Year 2018 Action Team Goals

This section includes a current list of goals identified by the action team membership.

- Assist families in accessing proper hygiene/skin care/hair care for kids
- Gain community support for access to dress clothes for teens and parents in need of proper interview attire.
- Develop a format for writing summaries for youth in care that puts weight on the child’s present and more recent history rather than creating an image of the child from the past that is not accurate to the present.

Action Team Goal Related Activity Overview

Activity	Location	Date & Length of Time	Stakeholders Represented	University Partner Role	Other
Youth Coalition	Illinois Department of Children Family services foster care	November 2017-4/23/2018	Parenting service providers.	Retrieving information about and documenting community collaborations	

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

Mt. Vernon is the most active action team compared to other action teams Team created Youth Coalition of parenting providers in the area that collaborate with DCFS. Directors of these programs are a part of the coalition and subgroups are made for the actual providers so they can report needs, gaps in services, progression, accomplishments, etc. Action also created sample for Lifebooks. Team is also networking with area community partners. Team is working on refining action team goals and plans of addressTeam is addressing needs identified by action team members. Team is working on Youth Coalitions/looking to improve foster parent consistency and improve proper connections for parents in the system regarding their needs.

Action Team Next Steps:

- Team is working to sustain Action Team Membership as well as attendance
- Team will continue to identify action team partners
- Team planned to implement survey to assess support needs of 'Action Team' to garner ongoing specified support from University partner which will further specify work with local community
- Team is willing to solicit and await the arrival of updated data to continue to assess area permanency trends

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

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