



# Permanency Enhancement Project Technical Assistance Annual Report Update

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## **Southern Region Metropolis Action Team**

*This two-part report provides an update of all PEP Action Team and University Partner activities during the 2019 fiscal year (July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019). 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 **Metropolis Action Team** encompasses the following counties listed below:

- Hardin
- Johnson
- Massac
- Pope

### **University Partner Activity Overview**

During fiscal year 2019 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 2019. Consequently, the analytic report, provided by the University research team documents permanencies, by age and race, over the current 2019 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 **Gideon Nketsia Sampson** contacted representatives who had been identified as leaders of the **Metropolis action team** and explored PEP goals, accomplishments, barriers and activities. Communication with the following individuals occurred:

Name	Role in DCFS or PEP Action Team
Esther Mead	Metropolis Action Team Chair

Research Assistant has made only three successful contacts with the team leader through emails and SIUE zoom conference call. Early interaction with the metropolis action team reveals that the team has been inactive for quite a while now due to some financial constraints, change in leadership and clarity of the action team’s purpose and goals.

Several efforts to gather information from the team have proven futile. For that reason, the information presented on this part of reports is from previous years’ reports.

### **Context of Permanency Barriers for Action Team Catchment Area**

It was gathered from earlier interaction that the team is:

1. Experiencing some transitional challenges- Team is trying to keep up with the transition period due to new leadership. The Team is still trying to stabilize leadership and membership.
2. Concerned about the lack of data or availability of limited data in addressing the permanency.

### **Fiscal Year 2019 Action Team Goals**

It is the team’s goal:

- To revitalize the action team to its upmost operational level.
- Build partnerships with different providers in the community.

## **Action Team Goal Related Activity Overview**

The action team is working on having quarterly meetings, although no specific dates were shared with the University partner.

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

The Team is currently supporting new Action Team Leader, Esther Mead in her new role and offer assistance from past/current Action Team Leaders across the system, past/current Action team members, and University Partners. The Team is also working on reinstating Quarterly Meetings. The Team is building partnerships with the providers at Family advocacy center and Hope Unlimited.

## **Action Team Next Steps**

Metropolis action team plans to:

1. Continue to build Action Team membership by outreach to identify new potential members.
2. Set up regular meeting schedule, at least quarterly, for Action Team and market to constituents and prospective members.
3. Identify necessary resources and capabilities to engage in innovative, efficient communication strategies, such as conference calls and videoconferencing.

The University Partner will continue to support this team's efforts by:

- ✓ Helping the action team revitalize their operation
- ✓ Helping them understand data trends
- ✓ Maintaining communication with team members and division leaders
- ✓ Provide guidance on the implementation of action team goals.

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

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