

Child Abuse and Neglect Investigation's Team

"building capacity to help more kids"



The Problem

The average child abuse neglect investigation requires between 9 and 13 hours to complete. Workers get between 5 and 7 new reports per week, or 45-91 hours of new work, every 40 hour work week. Of all those hours, only 14 will be spent face to face with the family.

The safety of a child is the most risky and critical decision government makes on a daily basis, and we are not giving our workers time to do it right.



It became apparent that with Missouri's diverse population and family makeups, no single process would work for everyone

90% of the families we assess will not need further involvement
80% of those presented as clearly safe in the first 5 days

15% more can be safe at home
if we can provide prevention strategies quickly

The remaining kids are unsafe and need the love and care of a different home until a final permanency decision can be made...

Yet in many ways, we were treating all of these families the same

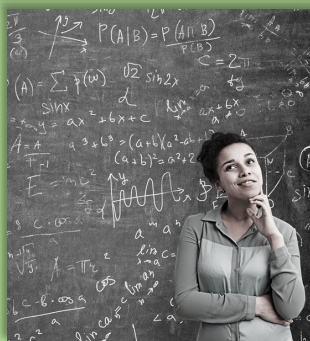
"something had to change... something radical. We asked this team to get outside the box, and they came back with the most innovative approach child welfare has seen in the last 20 years. Missouri will be a leader and model for the nation before this effort is done!"

Joanie Rogers, Team Sponsor



The team tore down the traditional ways of working and began construction of a new process that reduces work time and the intrusion on safe families, and quickly moves families in need to the people who can help them get to supports.

The most innovative change was building a centralized support center for local workers. As soon as they reach a decision that the children are safe, they can call a supervisor level expert who will conduct a clinical staffing, complete all the documentation, and close the report so the worker can go directly to the next family.



The math doesn't work.... Every year in Missouri over 74,000 allegations of abuse or neglect need to be investigated. Those require over 690,000 hours of staff time to complete. That would require 461 investigators, and the agency has about half of that now. Even if we could get the funding to double our size, we cannot find the people with the right hearts and skills for this difficult work.

The work is overwhelming, turnover is at 42%, and we regularly rely on the good hearts and dedication of our social workers to put in the extra effort needed to keep kids safe. But the current way of doing business is not sustainable. Backlog was growing at a rate of several hundred per month. We needed to cut through the red tape and build a better process



The results are already showing!

- 4 regions already have 40%+ reductions in open caseload!
- Average days to close is 27 and should shrink every month until steadying out at 15
- Most weeks we are closing more investigations than come in and have seen the backlog drop by 10% in less than six months!
- Kids are being seen and assessed timely and 245 of our workers have caseloads under 16!
- Better for children, better for families, better for our workers, better for Missouri

Caseload Reduction

