

QIC-CT Project Evaluation

A Summary of the Components



Quality Improvement Center
for Research-Based
Infant-Toddler Court Teams

Evaluation Questions

The program evaluation of the Quality Improvement Center for Research-Based Infant-Toddler Court Teams (QIC-CT) is guided by five evaluation questions:

1. What factors and strategies are associated with successful partnerships and collaborative efforts to implement or sustain an infant-toddler court team using the Safe Babies Court Teams (SBCT) approach?
2. To what extent is there evidence that better practice is underway at each program site through implementation of the SBCT approach?
3. Which are the organizational and system conditions necessary to support successful implementation of the sites' selected evidence-based practices?
4. To what extent are there observable changes in roles and behaviors of infant-toddler court team members during hearings?
5. What short-term outcomes result for infants and toddlers served by the infant-toddler court teams (stability of placement, referrals, services, time to permanency)?

Evaluation Components

The proposed QIC-CT project evaluation is a nonexperimental, prospective design including a pre-post comparison conducted by a team of evaluators from RTI International. This evaluation has two components.

Evaluation Component One

The first component is a process evaluation. The evaluation team is conducting document reviews, telephone interviews with community coordinators, and a web-based survey to be completed by infant-toddler court team stakeholders before site visits. The evaluation team will conduct two rounds of semi-structured interviews: one round before initiation of training by the QIC-CT, and the second about 6 months later, once training has been completed. Site visits include in-person interviews with each member of the infant-toddler court team, observations of stakeholders' meetings and family court team meetings (or case staffings), court hearing observations, and interviews with the Court Improvement Program's representative, focusing on the state perspective on adoption of the SBCT approach.

Evaluation Component Two

The second component of the evaluation is secondary data analysis of the SBCT data set. The community coordinators at all sites oversee data collection and data entry into the SBCT web-based system maintained by the QIC-CT. The focus of analysis will be on the relationship between implementation of the court model at each site, service provisions, and child welfare outcomes (e.g., reduced maltreatment recurrence). The data set will be provided for analysis by RTI International with no personally identifiable information. The site will be identified so that information about implementation can be connected to service provisions and child welfare outcomes at a given site. The SBCT data set includes: family detail, child background, reasons removed, child placement status, child service needs, monthly service detail, immunizations, visitation, child case status, number and frequency of case hearings, placements and permanency, termination of parental rights, custody status, safety (maltreatment re-reports), and number and types of referrals and services provided. This information will allow the evaluation team to triangulate information, describe short-term outcomes among sites (e.g., access to health and mental health services for children, access to early intervention, changes in placement, concurrent planning, visitation) and intermediate outcomes (e.g., expedited permanency decisions).