

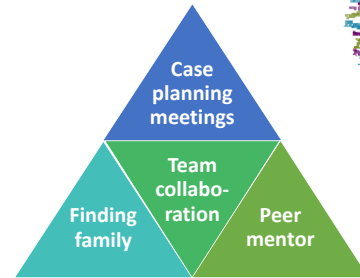
What is the research behind LIFE?

A review of the literature on finding family, family meetings, peer mentors, and team collaboration



Leveraging Intensive Family Engagement: Supporting structured case planning and timely permanency in Child Welfare Practice

LIFE Program Components



Key LIFE Outcomes

Family Engagement

- + family/youth/kin involvement in planning
- + participation in meetings, services
- + collaboration, service coordination

Child Outcomes

- time to permanency
- re-entry
- + reunification
- + well-being



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LIFE Program Components



Research on Finding & Engaging Family

Family Engagement

- + family/informal supports for planning
- + contact with siblings, grandparents, other relatives

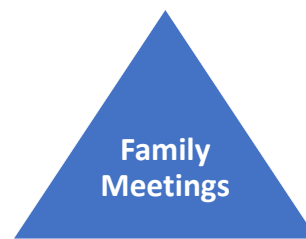
Child Outcomes

- + relational permanency
- + relative adoption
- age out of care



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LIFE Program Components



Research on Family Meetings

Family Engagement + satisfaction with service + service involvement + father/paternal family involvement + culturally responsive	Child Outcomes + relative placements + reunification + permanency with kin + child well-being
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Family Connections Oregon (FCO) Evaluation


Family Engagement + satisfaction with service + relationships/relative resources/support + empowerment	Child Welfare Trends - return to foster care after trial reunification - foster care days
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LIFE Program Components






Research on Parent Mentors

What PMs Do <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • system navigation • caring relationships • positive social comparison • range of supports • coping assistance 	How Parents Feel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • self-efficacy • understand current situation • self-worth • hope
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Example from Parent Peer Mentor Waiver III

What Mentors Do: Relationship & Positive Social Comparison

“I really needed someone at that time...I didn’t have any really good people in my life to steer me in the right direction. [Mentor] really helped me.”

– Parent

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Example from Parent Peer Mentor Waiver III

How Parents Feel: Understanding of Current Situation

“At first I kind of fought it, because I was like, ‘I don’t need this,’ but it was a whole learning experience. Everybody learns.”

– Parent

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Research on Parent Mentors

Parent Engagement

- + compliance with case plans
- + attendance at court hearings, visits
- + self-advocacy
- + proactive coping

Child Welfare Trends

- + reunification




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Example from Parent Peer Mentor Waiver III

Parent Engagement: Compliance with Case Plans

“Then he kind of explained how it works and what I needed to do...just get it done. So I did...I completed [the parenting class] and got my certificate...”

- Parent




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Example from Parent Peer Mentor Waiver III

Parent Engagement with DHS

“...but then when a Parent Mentor is attending meetings with them and are able explain, 'No, these people have your best interest at heart, they want to help you' ...I feel like they do eventually engage with us better.”

- Caseworker




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Example from Parent Peer Mentor Waiver III

Parent Engagement: Successful Case Closure


I believe [the mentor] was the reason that this family was able to come back together....They are functioning at a higher level. They are all healthy.”


- Caseworker



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LIFE Program Components






Research on Team Collaboration

Team Effectiveness

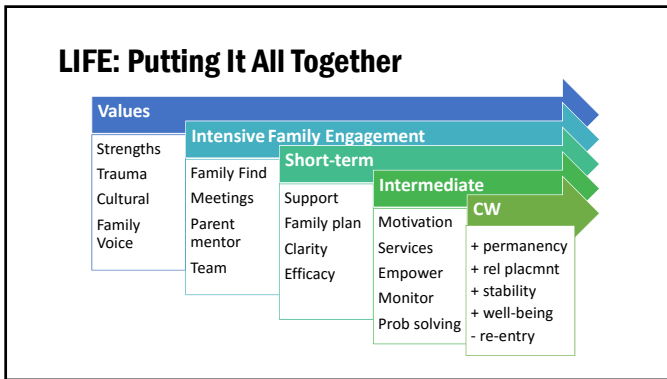
- + commitment to team
- + effective problem solving
- + goal achievement

Child Outcomes

- + relative placements
- + child well-being
- time in foster care
- placement changes



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Update on LIFE Program

Eligibility/Recruitment
Implementation
Early Findings

LIFE Eligibility Characteristics

- 6-15 years old
- Been in out-of-home care 65+ days

Most Common Factors in Predictive Model

- History of IV-E Eligibility
- Removal reason: Behavioral problems
- Family stressor: Heavy childcare responsibility

- Likely to be in out-of-home care for 30+ more days

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LIFE by the Numbers (as of June 30, 2016)

106 Eligible cases	156 Eligible children
175 CPMs	63 Parent PM referrals

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Early Implementation Successes

- Training – Useful, ongoing
- Active leadership/governance structure
- Continuous quality improvement (CQI)
- Consultants/leadership support branch integration
- Parent Mentor community outreach

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What do parents think about LIFE?

Structure & Clear Focus

CPMs are “very focused on the kids returning home, what we need to do to make that happen as quickly as possible, basically. Those other [child welfare] meetings are often very unorganized.”

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What do parents think about LIFE?

Strengths Focus

[Parent] appreciated “focusing on strengths. I feel like a lot of times the meetings are about, ‘Well, you have done this and this and this wrong’, but [FEF] is, ‘Let’s focus on what she is doing and what the strengths are.’ I really appreciate that.”



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What do parents think about LIFE?

Service Coordination

“I don’t know how anybody would get anything done without these meetings in a case like ours where there are so many services and people involved.”



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LIFE Evaluation Design

Overview
Evaluation Questions



PSU’s Approach

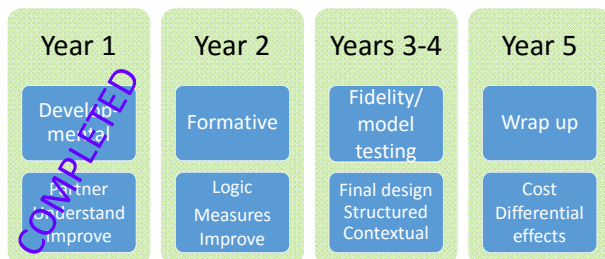
- Family engagement/motivation
- Discovery & development
- Evaluation partnerships & collaboration
- Continuous program improvement (CQI)
- LIFE values: culturally responsive, family-centered, trauma-informed, strengths-based

Youth Advisory Board

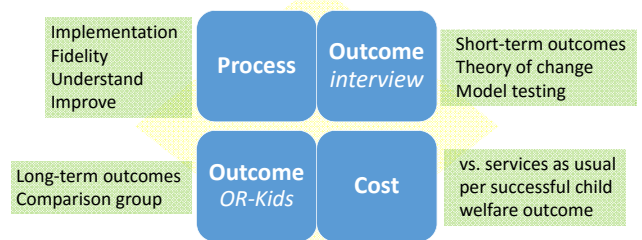


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Overview: Evaluation Phases



Overview: Evaluation Components



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Summary: Evaluation Phases & Components

	Phase 1: Development	Phase 2: Formative	Phase 3: Fidelity & Model Testing	Phase 4: Wrap Up
Component	July 2015 – June 2016	July 2016 – June 2017	July 2017 – June 2019	July – December 2019
Process	Completed			
Outcome - Interview				
Outcome - Admin				
Cost				

Key Process Evaluation Questions

- What system factors support/undermine fidelity to the LIFE model?
- How are underlying values (e.g., culturally responsive, trauma-informed) evidenced in staff practices?
- How do LIFE services help support engagement and timely progress on the case plan?
- What are the most important aspects of the collaborative team model?

Key Short-term Outcome Evaluation Questions

- Were family/kin involved over time?
- Were youth/family prepared to meaningfully participate in meetings?
- Did Peer Mentor supports promote parent engagement?
- Did LIFE services result in collaboration among providers?

Key Long-term Evaluation Questions

Did LIFE youth:

- Have reduced time to permanent placement (reunification, adoption, guardianship)?
- Reunify with parents or get placed with kin?
- Avoid re-entry into foster care?
- Experience greater well being?

LIFE Evaluation Team

Christine Cooper	Ron Joseph
Amanda Cross-Hemmer	Anna Rockhill
Thuan Duong	Angela Rodgers
Carrie Furrer	Mary Beth Sanders
Beth Green	Em Stauss

LIFE Youth Advisory Board

Anthony Abshire	Jini Martin
Joshua Cunningham	Taylor Putty

Questions? Contact Carrie Furrer at cfurrer@pdx.edu
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Leveraging Intensive Family Engagement (LIFE) Project

Supporting structured case planning and timely permanency in Child Welfare practice