A Family First Child Welfare System

IJC on Health, Welfare, and Family Services

Department for Community Based Services

December 9, 2019
START History and Sites

- START adapted from a model developed in Cleveland in the 1990s with support from the Annie E. Casey Foundation.
- KY began planning for START in 2006 and has evolved the model to fit the needs of KY families.
- START has been implemented in eight unique counties in KY: Kenton, Boone, Campbell, Jefferson, Boyd, Martin, Daviess, and Fayette.
- START also in Bloomington, IN; Asheville, NC; and several counties in OH and MD.
• Child Protective Services (CPS) program for families with parental substance use disorders and child maltreatment

• Combines best practices in child welfare, courts, and substance use disorder treatment

• Helps parents achieve recovery and keeps children in home with family when safe and possible

• START is recognized on the California Evidence Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare
What is START?

- Serves CPS involved families with a substance exposed infant and/or young children 0-5
- Intense and coordinated CPS service delivery model with quick intervention for families upon receipt of CPS referral
- Partners with substance use disorder and mental health treatment for services
- Represents different approach to working with families involved with CPS due to parental substance use concerns
Essential Elements

- CPS worker and family mentor paired and co-located under CPS START supervisor
- Shared caseload of 12-15 families for each CPS worker/family mentor dyad
- Rapid timeline for early family identification and engagement
- Weekly home visits by START team
- Non-punitive approach and shared decision making
- Quick access to holistic SUD assessment and treatment within 48 hours
KY START Outcomes

• Women in START have nearly double sobriety rate of non-START counterparts (66% vs 37%)
• Children in START are about half as likely to enter foster care (21% vs 42%)
• At case closure, over 75% of START kids remained with or were reunified with their parent(s)
• For every dollar spent on KY START, $2.22 is saved in off set of foster care costs

Kentucky Strengthening Ties and Empowering Parents (KSTEP)

- Similar to the START program, created to serve rural/resource poor areas
- Established in July 2017 in Carter, Greenup, Mason, and Rowan counties
- Expanded in July 2019 to Bath, Fleming, Lewis, and Montgomery counties
- Provides immediate access to intensive in-home services and substance abuse treatment from community mental health centers
- KSTEP has served 578 children since July 2017
- Program evaluation shows 95% of children have been able to remain safely in their home.
Willa’s Story