Court Improvement Training Academy (CITA)
“Evolving Leadership to Promote Justice in Child Welfare”

CITA engages the Washington legal community in training and collaboration, improving outcomes for children and families

Helping Courts Improve Their Handling of Child Maltreatment Cases
Data-Informed Court Improvement
Multi-System Collaboration
Liberating Structures

Contacts
Robert Wyman and Kelly Warner-King
Co-Directors, CITA
www.uwcita.org
kwk@uw.edu

WA Dependency Courts Out of Compliance

- Dependency courts, which hear child abuse and neglect cases, work with multiple parties and systems
- Courts are accountable for meeting federal case processing timelines designed to give children safe, permanent homes within a reasonable timeframe
- Statewide, Washington was out of compliance on a key measure in 2012: filing petitions to terminate parental rights

Targeted Data Analysis and Collaboration

- Analyzed county data to target six dependency courts where we could make the biggest impact
- Using local case data, helped each court identify the unique issues impacting their case processing
- Convened multi-disciplinary work groups in each county to develop local action plans
- Liberating Structures used to engage stakeholders, co-create plans and move people to action

Efforts in Six Courts Reduced Statewide Non-Compliance

- Statewide non-compliance rate for termination of parental rights improved from 21% (2012) to 10% (2014)
- On average, target counties reduced non-compliance by 15.8% in 14 months
- One county improved its non-compliance rate by 22%
- Washington found in compliance by federal regulators and federal oversight ended in late 2014

Other Court Improvement Applications

- CITA uses targeted data analysis to help dependency courts identify barriers to other case processing targets, including returning children home within 15 months.
- CITA facilitates local dependency collaborations called Tables of Ten, which are data-informed and utilize Liberating Structures
- CITA is expanding data system options to train children’s attorneys appointed under new legislation requiring legal representation of children in dependency cases.