



New Jersey's Fellows Program

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) is the recipient of a federally funded technical assistance grant from the Northeast and Caribbean Implementation Center (NCIC), which is a service of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Children's Bureau. The program is designed to provide an opportunity for 100 DCF staff to utilize data to support improved case practice and outcomes for the children and families of New Jersey.

The "Fellows Program" was crafted with the intent that DCF would build capacity in the area of "managing by data" in a way that supports the Department's emerging quality improvement efforts, using both quantitative and qualitative data, on the ground, at the front line level, and throughout the organization.

The program includes 18 day long seminars (one a month, over 18 months), that involve interactive and applied learning. The course work falls into three progressive modules:

- Becoming Knowledgeable Consumers of Data – learning about data points and data sources, with an emphasis on case practice in the area of safety
- Utilizing Data to Manage Change – working on business process and data flow, with an emphasis on permanency and well-being
- Improving Outcomes – using data in a systemic context, and deploying data and information as leadership tools

The program also has a secondary intent of developing the Fellow's skills in the areas of presenting information, leadership, and team building.

The program began when DCF invited staff to become "Fellows" through a competitive application process. Of the 147 staff who applied, 100 were selected and began the program in January 2011. As of today, 93 Fellows remain with the program and they are grouped geographically into 5 groups, each with their own Facilitator.

You will be hearing from some of the Fellows and the Facilitators during several panel presentations today. The Fellows are approximately two-thirds of the way through their seminars and related project work, which will conclude in June 2012. So while this program is a work in progress, the Department is proud to share with you the work the Fellows are currently engaged in. We believe it demonstrates our commitment to managing by data, and using it as a catalyst for continuous quality improvement at all levels of the organization.