

FY 2018 Directory of Funded Programs:
Organizational Profiles and Project Summaries
Strengthening Child Welfare Systems to Achieve Expected Child and
Family Outcomes
HHS-2018-ACF-ACYF- CO-1360
Administration for Children and Families - Administration on Children,
Youth & Families - Children's Bureau

Award Number:
90CO1137

Project Title:
Washington's Permanency
from Day One Initiative

**Department of Children,
Youth, and Families**
1500 Jefferson Street, SE
Olympia, WA 98504

**Project Director (PD) and
Principal Contact:**
Brandy Otto

PD Email:
brandy.otto@dcyf.wa.gov

PD Phone:
(360) 902-0863

Project Period:
60 Months

**Federal Program Officer
(FPO)/Specialist:**
Serena L. Williams

FPO Email:
Serena.Williams@acf.hhs.gov

Target Population:
Ten targeted counties by the
end of year two

**Geographic Area(s)
Served:**
Clark, Cowlitz, Grant,
Benton, Franklin, King,
Chelan, Okanogan, Clallam,
and Jefferson counties

Agency Region:
ACF Region 10

Department of Children, Youth, and Families

Organizational Description

The new Department of Children, Youth, and Families, launched July 1, 2018, was created as a commitment to institutionalizing systemic change efforts, in response to stakeholder and policymaker recognition that state agency leadership must solve difficult systemic issues if a strong system supporting child and family well-being is to be successful. Improving permanency for children is one of the primary imperatives of the new agency as written in its founding legislation: "The department [DCYF] must report to the legislature on outcome measures, actions taken, progress toward these goals, and plans for the future year, no less than annually, beginning December 1, 2018.... (iii) improving child and youth safety, permanency, and well-being..." (HB 1661, Section 101).

Use of Program Funds

The Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families will conduct the project, Washington's Permanency from Day One Initiative. In order to achieve more fitting and timely permanency plans and adoption for children and youth, the project aims to enhance system capacity to 1) support caseworkers in concurrent planning and early family engagement; 2) enable parents to partner more effectively and earlier with caseworkers; 3) align concurrent planning efforts with court improvement efforts; and 4) provide for adoption of legally free children. This is a multi-part approach: by building system capacity to support the workforce, families, and children, the state will achieve improved permanency outcomes.

Expected Outcomes

The expected outcomes are enhanced system capacity to 1) support caseworkers in concurrent planning and early family engagement; 2) enable parents to partner more effectively and earlier with caseworkers; 3) align concurrent planning efforts with court improvement efforts; and 4) provide for adoption of legally free children. The combination of a robust concurrent planning model — including fidelity monitoring, data feedback, and coaching supports — as well as strong biological parent partnerships and multi-system collaboration with courts and community partners, and enhanced adoption-support activities will build system capacity for timely permanency.