

2020 & 2021 Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) Collaboratives on Quality Visits: Practice Themes Summary

Background

Fifteen agencies used the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) model to design and test practice changes to improve the quality of their visits. All agency teams were comprised of Child Protective Services (CPS) professionals and/or Youth Justice (YJ) professionals and a supervisor(s).

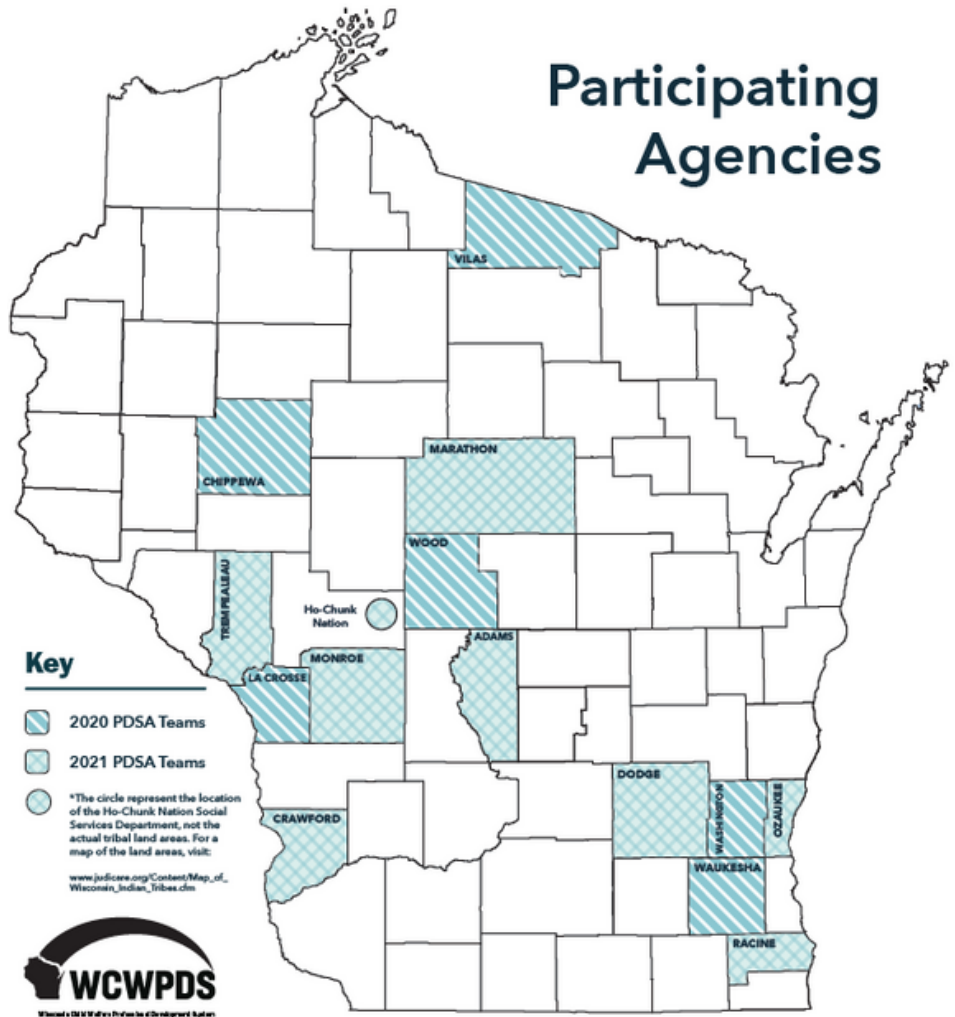
Mission

The mission of the 2020 & 2021 PDSA Collaboratives was to have intentional, purposeful, and goal-directed visits with children, parents, and out-of-home care providers that are respectful, tailored to the unique needs of the child and family, and reflect critical-thinking about assessment and case planning in order to build trusting relationships.

Focus Areas

Teams self-selected one or more of three focus areas for improving the quality of visits. Several teams implemented similar tools or processes.

Plan Do Study Act (PDSA) Collaboratives on Quality Visits



Participating Agencies

Focus Area	Preparation and planning ahead of visits tailored to circumstances of child, youth, or family		Documentation to support monitoring and follow-up	Follow-up on tasks or concerns discussed previously
Practice Change	Agenda for visits that is shared with family	Preparation checklist for visits	Structured case note documentation	Duplicate to-do lists of next steps for direct service staff and for family
# Of Agency Teams that Implemented Change	2	5	8	8

Follow-up on tasks: Several PDSA teams also implemented projects unique to their agency.

- Spent time in visits with families doing first next step together (e.g., making phone call, filling out form)
- Created a process for facilitating case consults with direct practice staff, supervisor, and legal staff
- Created a case management log for displaying visit and service outcomes over several months
- Implemented an accountability system for tracking direct service staff follow up within case notes

Documentation:

- Created new structured documentation formats for comprehensive coordinated services (CSS) team members and family visitation specialists

Practice Evaluation Outcomes Summary

CPS / YJ professionals and supervisors were asked to describe how the collaborative impacted their practice. Over half of both groups stated that they **they experienced increased quality in their practice, improved productivity, and better organization in their work.** The figures for both groups are seen in the table below.

“I have seen an impact in the following areas as a result of the PDSA Collaborative”
2020 and 2021 PDSA Collaborative

Areas of Improvement	Supervisors		Workers	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Increased quality in my practice	11	69%	35	69%
Improved productivity	10	63%	26	51%
Better organization in my work	10	63%	42	82%
Increased personal confidence	7	44%	20	39%
Stronger relationships with my peers	7	44%	16	31%
Stronger relationships with my clients	5	31%	15	29%
More respect from my peers	1	6%	5	10%
TOTAL	16	100%	51	100%

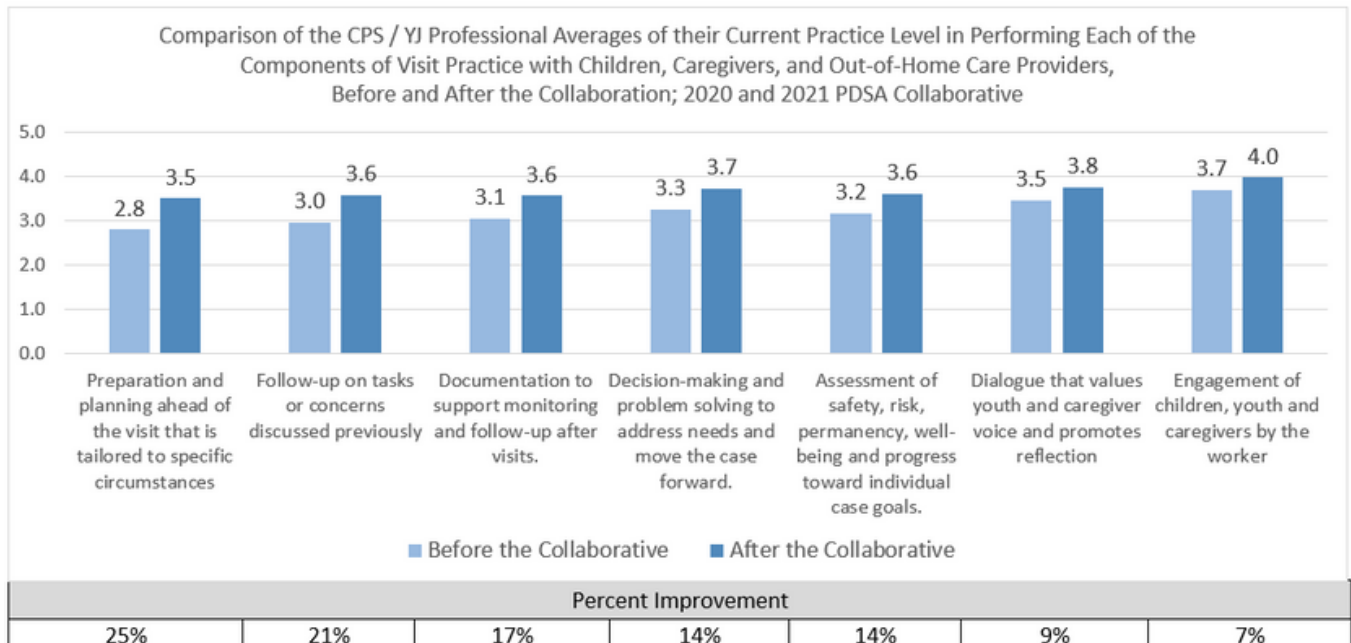
"I am seeing positive practice changes as a result of the PDSA Collaborative" - Supervisor
2020 and 2021 PDSA Collaborative



"I am seeing positive practice changes as a result of the PDSA Collaborative" - CPS / YJ Professional
2020 and 2021 PDSA Collaborative



CPS / YJ professionals and supervisors also ranked their current practice level in performing the seven components of visit practice before and after the collaborative. Again, every measure was seen to improve, and especially in the three areas focused on by the collaborative: preparation and planning, follow-up, and documentation. These results are seen below.



Average Rankings by Supervisors of their CPS / YJ Professional's Strengths by the Seven Components of Visit Practice with Children, Caregivers, and Out-of-Home Care Providers; Before and After the 2020 and 2021 PDSA Collaborative			
Seven Components of CPS / YJ Professional Visit Practice	Before the Collaborative	After the Collaborative	Percent Difference
Preparation and planning ahead of the visit that is tailored to specific circumstances.	3.4	4.0	17%
Follow-up on tasks or concerns discussed previously.	3.3	3.8	14%
Documentation to support monitoring and follow-up after visits.	3.5	3.9	10%
Decision-making and problem solving to address needs and move the case forward.	3.6	3.9	9%
Assessment of safety, risk, permanency, well-being and progress toward individual case goals.	3.7	4.0	7%
Dialogue that values youth and caregiver voice and promotes reflection.	3.8	4.0	7%
Engagement of children, youth and caregivers by the caseworker.	4.0	4.3	6%

Practice Themes

Qualitative data from PDSA team storyboards, forms submitted by PDSA teams, and focus group questions were analyzed for implementation and practice themes from the 2020 and 2021 PDSA teams.

Practice changes were more likely to be adopted when:

- Processes and tools were **FLEXIBLE** allowing professionals to work in their own way while achieving common goals. If a tool/process was borrowed from others, the agency still tweaked it to fit their needs.
- Changes were designed and implemented in **TEAMS**. Shared learning improved individual practice, created diverse ideas, helped staff bond, and improved workplace satisfaction.
- Changes had clear **ALIGNMENT** and **CONNECTION** to laws and policy standards.
- Implementation started **SMALL**, involved ample **COMMUNICATION**, was adapted by direct service staff **FEEDBACK**, clearly matched **MISSION** of the work, and had targeted **MEASUREMENT** to see progress and encourage accountability.

Prepping before visits has positive impacts but is hindered by time pressures and mindset

- Direct service staff that implemented processes to prepare and plan before a home visit reported improved **CONSISTENCY, PRODUCTIVITY, TRANSPARENCY, AND FOCUS** in conversations. In addition, direct service staff experienced increased **EFFICIENCY** in visit length, fewer missed tasks to follow up on, and quicker documentation post-visit.
- However, teams experienced **BARRIERS** such as overall workload and crises making it difficult to be consistent. Mindset shifts to prioritizing preparation occurred when direct service staff experienced the benefits of improved visits and saved post-visit time and resources.

Using structured documentation for notes impacted time and practice outcomes

- Teams reported improved **EFFICIENCY** and **CONSISTENCY** as notes were inputted sooner and took less writing time; some found that organized notes led to saved time writing plans and court documents. Supervisors found that writing clarity improved and they had a better understanding of family circumstances.
- Improving documentation impacted direct practice as the information categories on the structured note reinforced **INFORMATION-GATHERING** and **COMMUNICATION** at visits. Categorizing information into a structure post-visit required **CRITICAL-THINKING** and **DECISION-MAKING SKILLS** regarding family circumstances which improved practice.

Consistent follow-up improved trust and aided in case progress

- Families and direct service staff had improved mutual **CLARITY** and **ACCOUNTABILITY**.
- Clear, identified next steps spilled over to more **FAMILY VOICE** in planning and direct service staff understanding of **PROGRESS** or lack of progress on goals

Questions? Contact us at:

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