



## **REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP GRANTS**

### **PARENTS AND CHILDREN TOGETHER (PACT) EXTENSION GRANT**

**Lead Agency: JUDICIAL BRANCH OF IOWA, CHILDREN'S JUSTICE**

**LOCATION:** Des Moines, Iowa

**PROGRAM OPTION:** Two-Year Extension

**GEOGRAPHIC AREA AND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT SERVED:**  
3rd Congressional District; Rural

**NUMBER SERVED:** Children: 1,041 | Adults: 639 | Families: 542

#### **Project Abstract**

During the extension period, Parents and Children Together (PACT): A Family Treatment Court Initiative built on the successes and addressed some of the remaining needs of the six RPG-I funded PACT pilot sites across the state of Iowa. These successes included: establishing judge-led collaborative teams in the family treatment court sites; creating Iowa Family Treatment Court Standards to assist in maintaining the quality and fidelity of services; significantly increasing the availability, participation in, and retention in substance abuse treatment for FTC participants; maintaining children in their homes; increasing reunification rates; and shortening lengths of out-of-home stays.

#### **Target Population**

The target population of RPG I PACT was parents with children ages 0-5 years. Based on experiences from the initial five-year grant and the fact that 85% of children served by the FTCs were 10 or under, the extension grant expanded the target population to parents with children ages 0-10. The goal for the extension period was to serve an additional 180 families.

## **Major Program Services**

### **Case Management and In-Home Services**

- “Traditional” Case Management
- Intensive/Coordinated Case Management
- Family Group Decision Making/Family Case Conferencing
- “Regular” or “Traditional” In-Home Services

### **Parenting/Family Strengthening**

- Standard Parenting Skills Training/Education or Parenting Classes
- Evidence-Based Parenting or Family Strengthening Program - Strengthening Families Program, Celebrating Families!

### **Visitation Services**

- Supervised Visitation

### **Mental Health and Trauma Services for Adults**

- Mental Health Services
- Trauma-Specific Services - Cross-system training on trauma informed services and gender responsiveness, Beyond Trauma

### **Substance Abuse Treatment for Adults**

- Long-Term Residential/Inpatient (more than 30 days)
- Residential/Inpatient Treatment – Specialized for Parents with Children
- Intensive Outpatient
- Non-Intensive Outpatient or Other Step-Down
- Aftercare/Continuing Care/Recovery Community Support Services

### **Specialized Outreach, Engagement and Retention**

- Cognitive Behavioral Strategies – Motivational Interviewing/Motivational Enhancement Therapy, Moral Reconciliation Therapy
- Co-location of Staff
- Recovery Coach/Specialist
- Peer/Parent Mentor
- Family Navigator

### **Substance Abuse Prevention Services**

- Alternative Activities
- Community-Based Process

## **Screening and Assessment – Child Welfare and Other Children’s Issues**

- Screening and Assessment for Child Welfare Issues

## **Screening and Assessment – Substance Use and Other Adult Issues**

- Screening and Assessment for Substance Use Disorders

## **Housing Services**

- Housing Support Services

## **Cross-Systems Collaboration**

- Clinical and Program Training
- Cross-systems Policies and Procedures
- Regular Joint Case Staffing Meetings
- Co-location of Staff
- Cross-systems Information Sharing and Data Analysis
- Partner Meetings – Regional Partnership and Program Management

## **Family Treatment Drug Courts/Dependency Drug Courts**

### **Other**

- Phase Restructuring using Stages of Change

## **Major Program Goals**

**Goal 1:** Enhance collaboration, communication, and practices in the family treatment court process

**Goal 2:** Enhance family support and the joint case planning process to reduce unsuccessful discharges

**Goal 3:** Increase the safety, permanency, and well-being of children by addressing the gap in available children’s services

## **Key Partner Agencies**

The RPG encouraged service providers to develop and/or strengthen cross-system linkages between substance abuse treatment, child welfare, dependency court, and other service systems. The PACT project included the following partners:

### **Child Welfare**

- Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS)

### **Substance Abuse**

- Iowa Department of Public Health

### **Courts**

- Iowa Children’s Justice (Division of State Court)

- PACT Family Treatment Courts (FTCs)
- Office of Criminal and Juvenile Justice

### **Criminal Justice, Law Enforcement, Legal and Related Organizations**

- Office of Drug Control Policy
- Attorney General
- Drug Endangered Children

### **Mental Health**

- Southern Iowa Mental Health Services
- Iowa Behavioral Health Association and Training Resources

### **Health Services**

- Child Health Specialty Clinics

### **Evaluation**

This project proposed a quasi-experimental design. The treatment group consisted of clients receiving PACT services. The comparison group consisted of clients receiving typical child welfare and substance abuse services prior to the RPG grant period but not the RPG enhanced services. Data for the comparison group was matched at the case level.

Grantees measured performance indicators in the following domains: safety, permanency, child and adult well-being, and adult recovery. For additional information regarding program outcomes, please contact key personnel.

### **Sustainability Strategies and Activities**

The Judicial Branch of Iowa was successful in securing resources to completely sustain their RPG efforts and services beyond the Federal grant period. The grantee successfully promoted the family treatment court model throughout their state. In January 2014, the Chief Justices State of the Judiciary Speech highlighted the successes and raised the profile of these courts. This legislative attention and increased local media and community attention helped to secure state funding for local coordinators for the family treatment court sites around the state. The marketing and dissemination of outcomes from these courts has led to three more courts in planning stages. Additionally, other judges around the state have expressed interested in replicating and proving the services offered by the RPG-initiated sites. There will soon be family treatment courts in all eight Iowa Judicial Districts.

## Key Personnel Information

### PROJECT DIRECTOR

**Gail Barber**

*Iowa Children's Justice  
State Court Administration*

1111 E. Court Avenue  
Des Moines, IA 50319

Phone: (515) 281-6209

[Gail.Barber@iowacourts.gov](mailto:Gail.Barber@iowacourts.gov)

### PROJECT DIRECTOR

**Laura Roeder-Grubb**

*Division of Criminal and Juvenile Justice  
Planning*

321 E. 12th St.  
Des Moines, IA 50319

Phone: (515) 242-5042

[Laura.Roeder-Grubb@iowa.gov](mailto:Laura.Roeder-Grubb@iowa.gov)

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