

Methamphetamine and Child Welfare Services: A Four County Case Review Study

Aggregate Data for All Counties

- In approximately 60%, or 177 (N=297) cases sampled in all counties, methamphetamine was found to be a contributing factor.
- Where methamphetamine was a contributing factor, case records reflected the following:
 - Polysubstance abuse was documented in 41% of cases. Of those, 26% included marijuana, 14% included alcohol, and other substances were found at lower rates.
 - In 77% of cases, the mother was the primary caregiver, followed by both parents at 20%.
 - Hispanics/Latinos comprised 52% of the primary ethnicities, Whites 33%, Native Americans 7%, African Americans 4%, and 4% were identified as other categories.
 - The primary language of primary caregivers was English in 86% of cases and Spanish in 14% of cases.
 - The Juvenile Court found allegations of neglect to be true in 98% of cases. Other forms of abuse, such as physical abuse, were rarely found to be true.
 - Mandated reporters initiated referrals in 95% of cases; law enforcement comprised 44% of the total, followed by medical/health professionals at 40%.
 - Family Reunification services were ordered in 72% of cases, Family Maintenance services in 13%, and no services in 21% (Percentages for FM and no services include duplicative counts, i.e. the Court ordered both FR and FM for a family).
 - Mental health services were ordered by the court in 60% of these cases, and 81% of these cases had substance abuse services ordered. Substance abuse and mental health services were both ordered in 59% of these cases. Parenting education was court ordered in 58% of these cases and domestic violence related services were ordered in 22% of these cases.
 - The average number of previous referrals on the primary caregiver was 6.24, with a range of 0 to 33. Of all cases reviewed, 13% had no previous referrals, 31% had 1 to 3 previous referrals, and 21% had 9 or more previous referrals.
 - Primary caregivers had previously experienced removal of at least one child due to substance abuse in 32% of cases.
 - Of those cases that had not experienced a previous removal, 18% had no previous referrals, 33% had 1 to 3 referrals and 20% had 11 or more. The most referrals one case had was 33.
 - Children age five or less were removed in 92% of these cases and children age six or older were removed in 60%.
- In all counties, information regarding special needs, such as homelessness, CalWORKS recipient, mental health history, was not readily available. Data concerning such special needs was not found in 63% of cases. For most counties, information regarding employment

(60% of cases), criminal justice (64% of cases) and educational status (75% of cases) was not readily available.

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