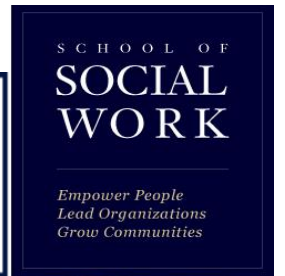


Evaluating Child Welfare Practice Model Fidelity and Supporting Practice and System Change through Assessment

PENNSYLVANIA'S WAIVER EXPERIENCE WITH THE CANS, FAST, AND SPANS



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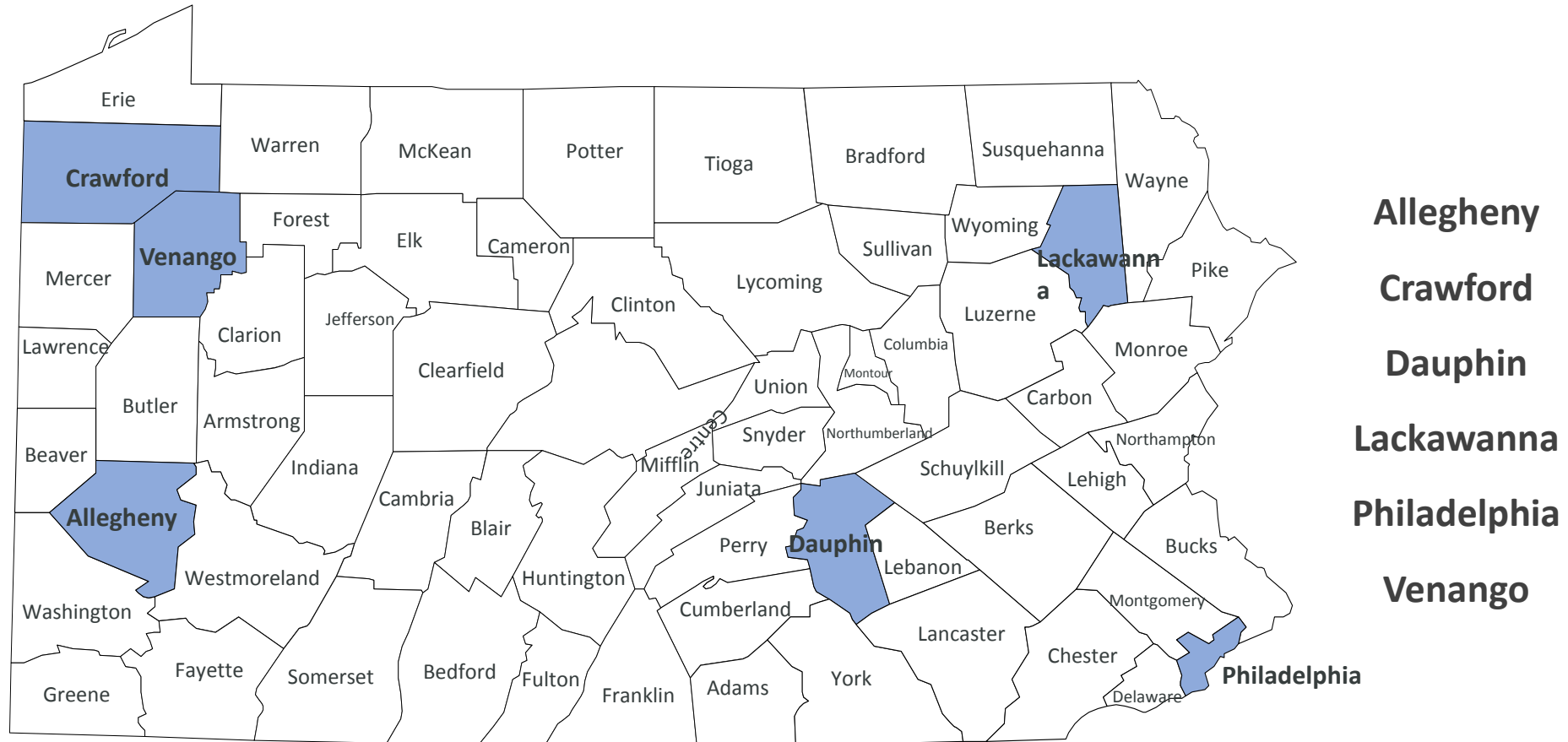
Overview

- ❖ Pennsylvania Title IV-E Waiver Overview
- ❖ CANS & FAST
- ❖ Evaluating Assessment Fidelity
- ❖ Measuring Fidelity with Targeting Trajectories
- ❖ Measuring Fidelity with the SPANS

Pennsylvania's Title IV-E Waiver Overview

- The State's Child Welfare Demonstration Project (CWDP) began on July 1, 2013 and is currently in its fourth year.
- Six Pennsylvania counties are participating
- The counties agreed to respond to a change in federal funding policy by
 - **(1) developing a new case practice model using family engagement and structured assessment, and**
 - (2) the introduction or expanded use of evidence-based programs (EBPs).
- The State's CWDP seeks to improve outcomes for children around permanency, safety, and wellbeing.

Participating counties in Pennsylvania's Child Welfare Demonstration Project



Pennsylvania's Title IV-E Waiver Overview

THEORY OF CHANGE

IF families are ***engaged*** as part of a team, and

IF children and families receive comprehensive, structured ***screening and assessment*** to identify underlying causes and needs, and that assessment information is used to develop a service plan, and

IF that plan identifies roles for extended family members and various supports and connects them to ***evidence-based services*** to address their specific needs,

THEN, children, youth, and families are more likely to remain engaged in and benefit from treatment, so that they can remain safely in their homes, experience ***fewer placement changes***, experience less trauma, and experience ***improved functioning***

CANS & FAST Assessments

- Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS)
- Family Advocacy and Support Tool (FAST)
- Conversation with parent, child, youth
- Assessment gathers information about Strengths and Needs
- Creates a Common Language across disciplines and between professionals and families
- Provides a Mapping and Framework
 - Decision support for service planning
 - Data collection and analysis

FAST Rating Scale

Score	Level of Need	Appropriate Action
0	No evidence of need, can also indicate a clear strength	No action needed OR opportunities for strength-based planning
1	Significant history or possible need which is not interfering with functioning	Watchful waiting/prevention OR opportunities for strength building
2	Need interferes with functioning	Action/ Intervention
3	Need is dangerous or disabling	Immediate/ Intensive Action

CANS Rating Scale - Needs

Score	Level of Need	Appropriate Action
0	No evidence of need	No action needed
1	Significant history or possible need which is not interfering with functioning	Watchful waiting/ Prevention/ Additional assessment
2	Need interferes with functioning	Action/ Intervention
3	Need is dangerous or disabling	Immediate/ Intensive Action

CANS Rating Scale - Strengths

Score	Level of Strength	Appropriate Action
0	Centerpiece Strength	Central to Planning
1	Strength Present	Useful in Planning
2	Identified Strength	Must be Built/ Developed
3	No Strength Identified	Strength Creation or Identification may be Indicated

Evaluating CANS & FAST Fidelity

Are the assessments targeting the anticipated population?

- Embed assessment in CW trajectory
- Understand how timing relates to stated target population and system entry

Are the assessments leading to quality family service plans?

- Utilize the SPANS measure
- Review how the identified needs and strengths are present in the family service plans and services

CANS
& FAST
Fidelity

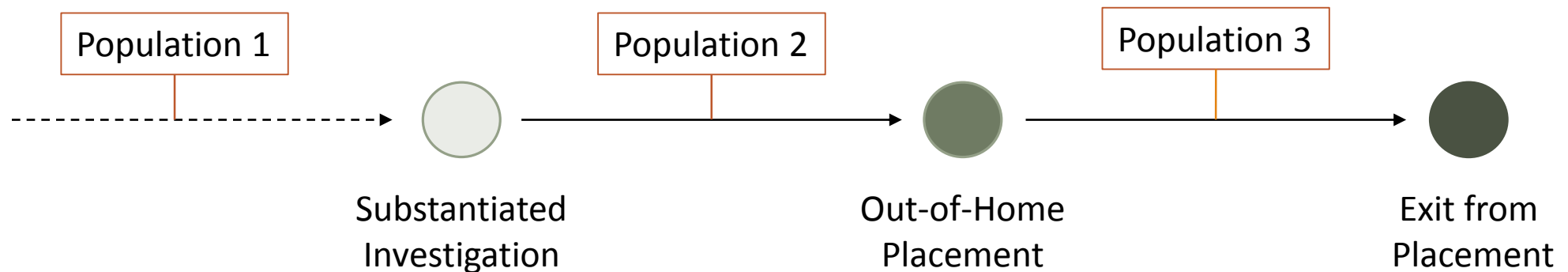
Measuring Fidelity with Targeting Trajectories

CANS & FAST Targeting

- **Target Populations** - Each of the 6 CWDP counties has their own stated target population for each assessment (although there is overlap)
- **Child Welfare Trajectory** - To evaluate targeting fidelity, determined where the child was in their child welfare event trajectory when they received their first assessment
- **Flash Reports** - Reviewed targeting analysis with the CWDP counties to gain qualitative data on discrepancies between intended and actual assessment targeting

CANS & FAST Targeting – Trajectory Populations

1. **Population 1** - Children with no prior substantiations or placements prior to this assessment (not risen to level of an “official” child welfare action: substantiation or placement)
2. **Population 2** - Children with at least one substantiation or placement, but not in an out-of-home placement at the time of this assessment (has been subject to an official action, but not in care at the time our agency conducted this CANS/FAST)
3. **Population 3** - Children in an out-of-home placement at the time of this assessment (deeply involved at the time of this CANS/FAST)



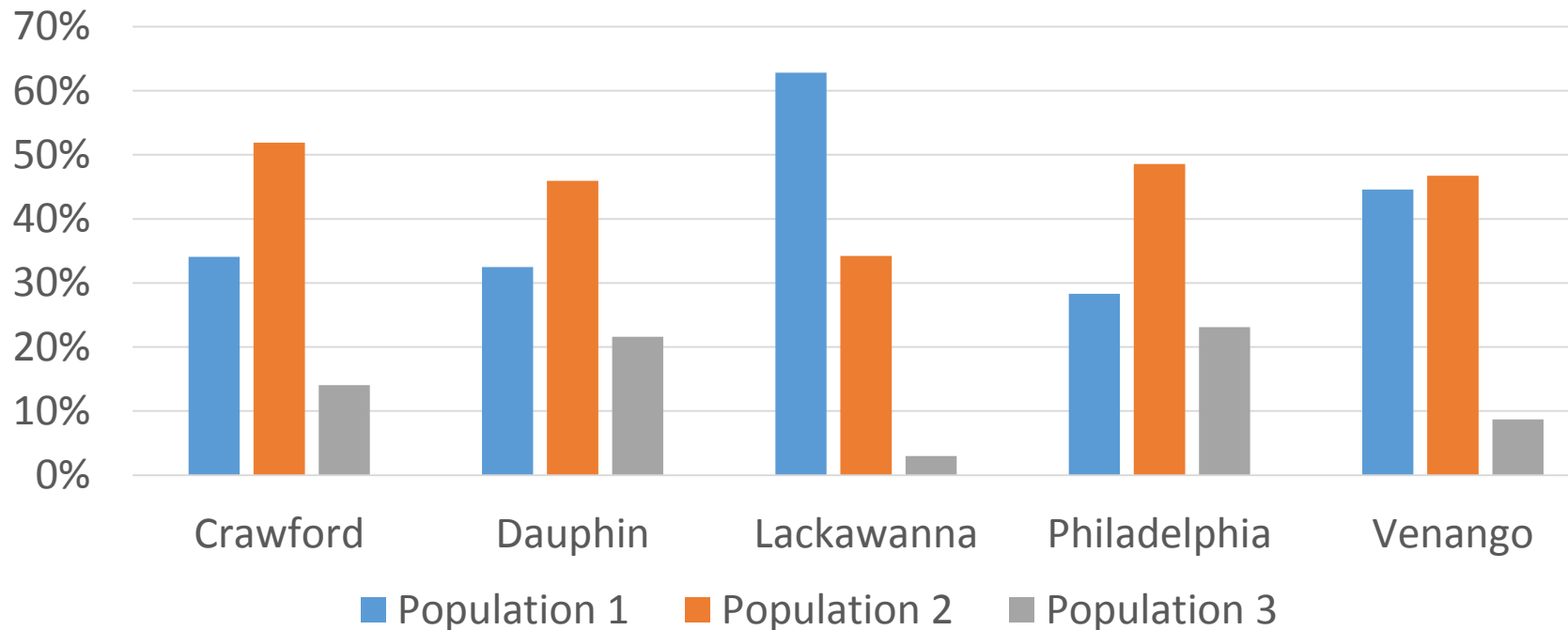
FAST Targeting

1. **Population 1** - Children with no prior substantiations or placements prior to this assessment
2. **Population 2** - Children with at least one substantiation or placement, but not in an out-of-home placement at the time of this assessment
3. **Population 3** - Children in an out-of-home placement at the time of this assessment

How many children received their first FAST assessment in SFY14, SFY15, & SFY16?

	SFY 2014	SFY 2015	SFY 2016
Crawford	0	395	185
Dauphin	707	389	727
Lackawanna	3,513	1,861	1,079
Philadelphia	4,610	6,112	4,365
Venango	208	43	92

For children who received their first FAST assessment in fiscal year 2016, where were they in their child welfare trajectory?



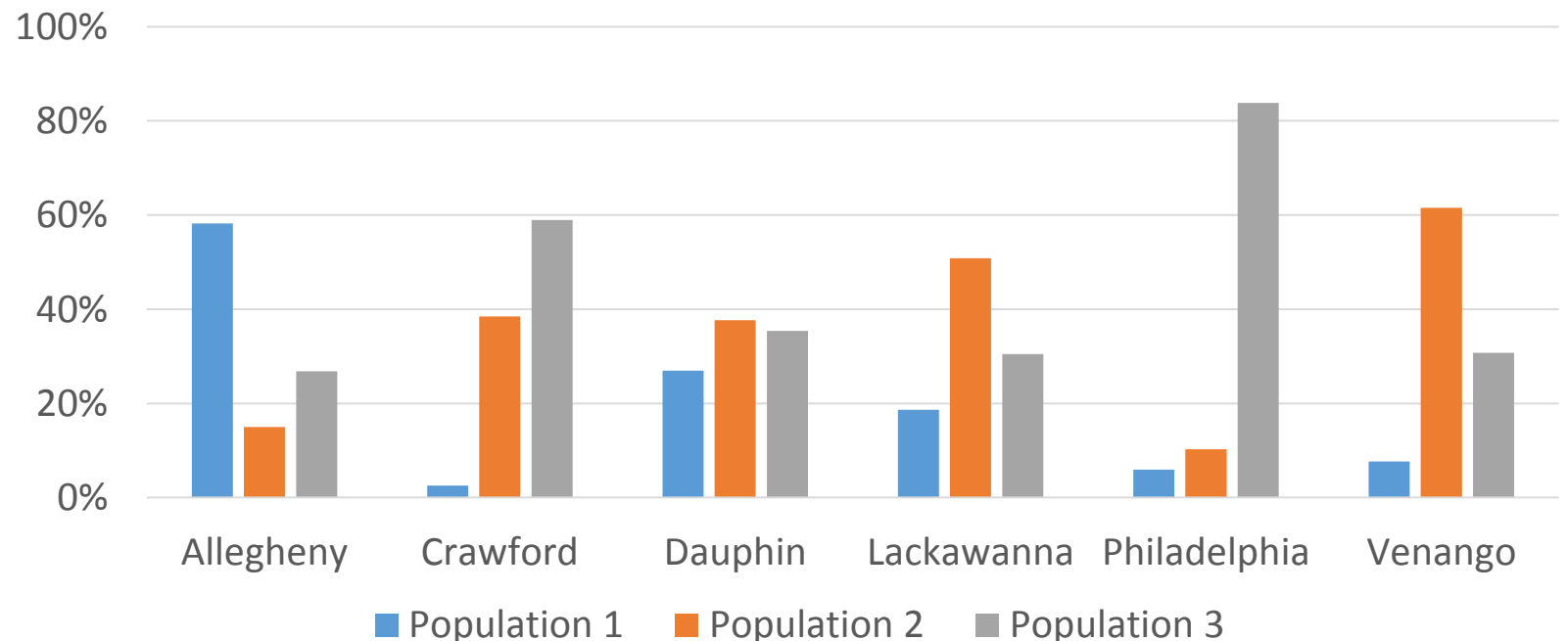
CANS Targeting

1. **Population 1** - Children with no prior substantiations or placements prior to this assessment
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3. **Population 3** - Children in an out-of-home placement at the time of this assessment

How many children received their first CANS assessment in SFY14, SFY15, & SFY16?

	SFY 2014	SFY 2015	SFY 2016
Allegheny	1,929	1,123	866
Crawford	0	88	39
Dauphin	304	192	271
Lackawanna	357	229	59
Philadelphia	661	1,149	761
Venango	0	51	26

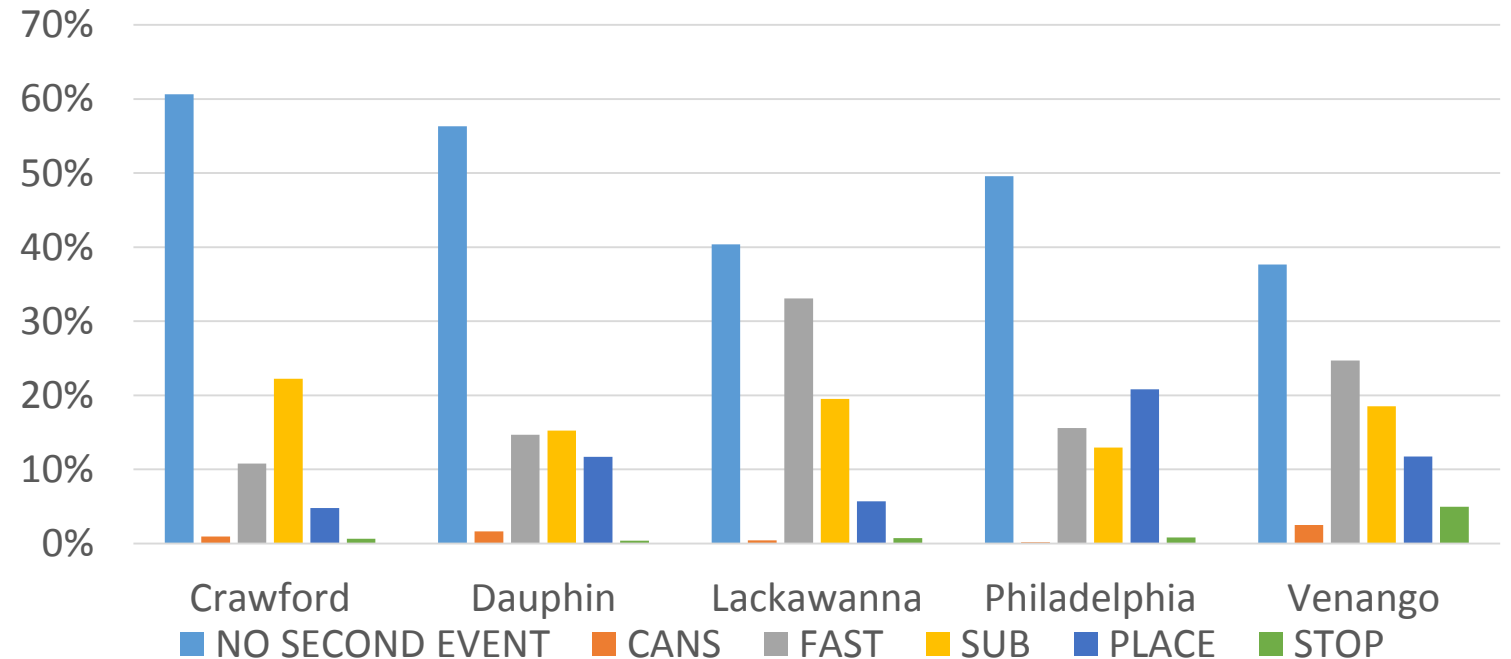
For children who received their first CANS assessment in fiscal year 2016, where were they in their child welfare trajectory?



Proximal Event following a first Substantiated Investigation

For children who received their first SUB in fiscal year 2016, what was their next event?

	Crawford	Dauphin	Lackawanna	Philadelphia	Venango
NO SECOND EVENT	191	588	389	2,604	61
CANS	0	17	4	8	4
FAST	3	153	319	819	40
SUB	34	159	188	680	30
PLACE	70	122	55	1,092	19
STOP	15	4	7	43	8
TOTAL 1ST SUBs IN SFY2016	313	1,043	962	5,246	162



Measuring Family Service Plan Fidelity with the SPANS

What is the SPANS?

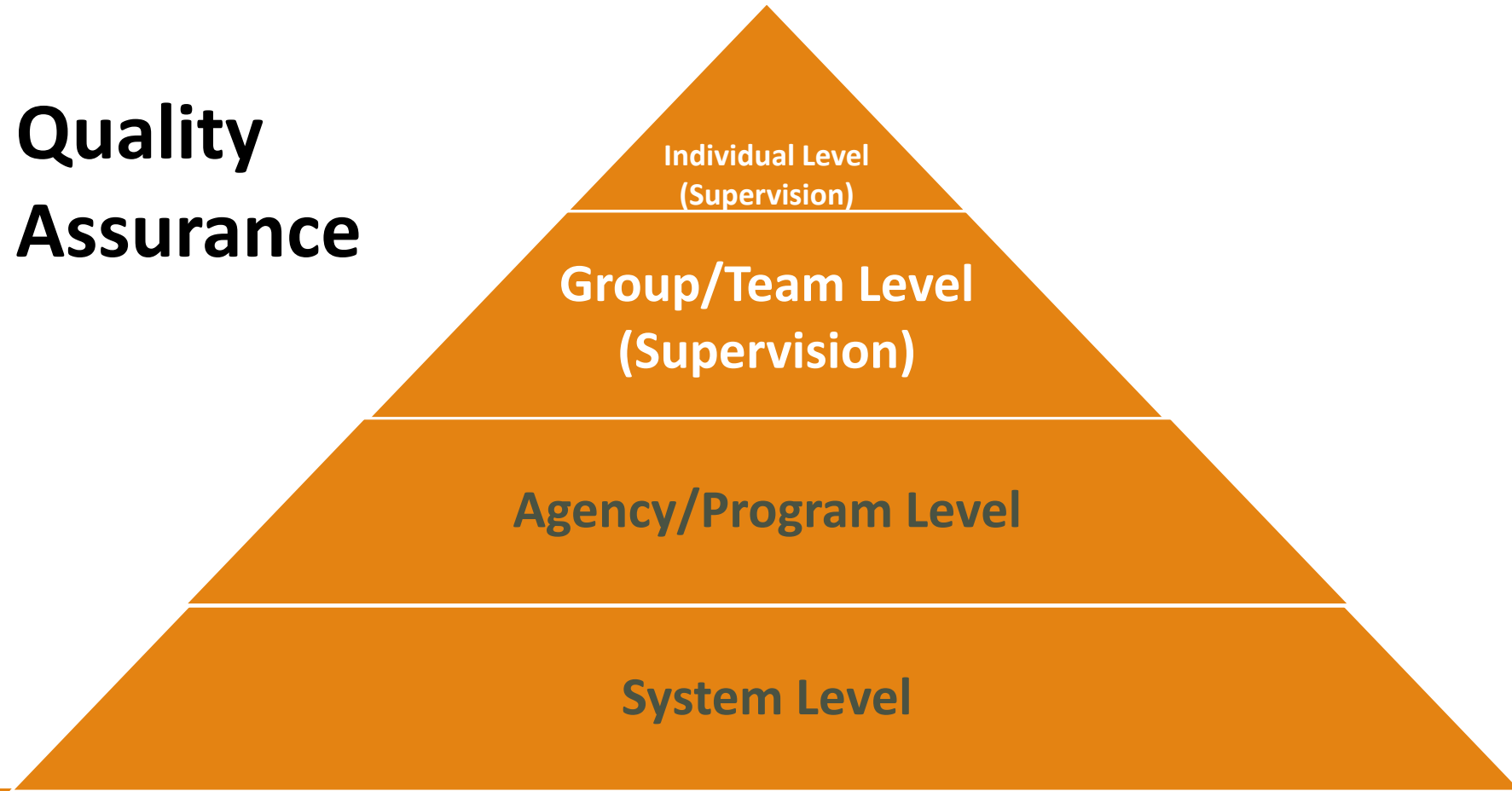
Service Process Adherence to Needs and Strengths (SPANS): A fidelity tool that determines the degree to which child and family needs and strengths identified in the FAST/CANS are being addressed or used in planning and service provision.

SPANS-CANS

SPANS-FAST

How is the SPANS Used to answer the question *“Are we doing what we said that we would do?”*

Quality Assurance



How is the SPANS Implemented in the Waiver

Random Sample of cases selected from each county within various categories e.g. new, continuing

- The size of the sample is based upon the size of the county CWS with Philadelphia and Allegheny the largest samples, Venango and Crawford are the smallest

Case files (focusing on plan and notes but all of the file is read) read by two reviewers and independently scored and then consensus scores are given for each case

Scoring only “Actionable” items

CANS

- Any need rated “2” or “3” is the focus of the scoring
- any strength rated “0” or “1” is the focus of the scoring

FAST

- Any need rated “2” or “3”

Quality Assurance Questions:

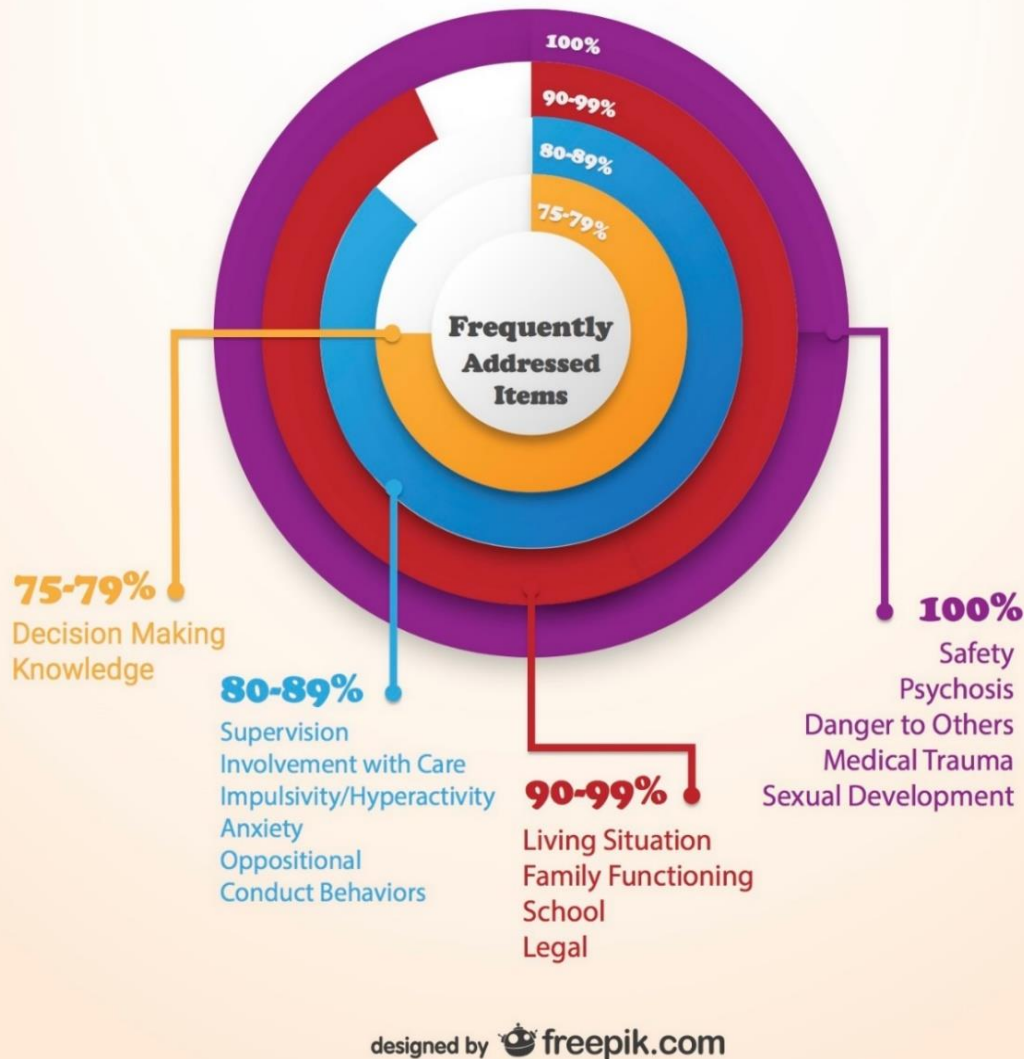
When items are rated **actionable in the CANS** how likely are they to appear in the **Family Service Plan**? **Is this supported in documentation? If not, how is the absence supported.**

When items are rated **actionable in the FAST** how likely are they to appear in the **treatment plan**?

How are needs **prioritized**?

Rating	Rating Definition
0	Mostly (consistently)
1	Partially (inconsistently)
2	Rarely (not addressed/absent)

CANS-SPANS



Actionable Items in CANS less likely to appear in the Plan

Within Life Functioning: Intellectual Developmental; Physical/Medical; Sleep; Social Functioning; School Behavior; School Achievement; School Attendance

Within Caregiver Strengths and Needs: Social Resources; Organization; Residential Stability

Within Youth Behavioral/ Emotional Needs: Anger Control; Substance Abuse; Depression; Adjustment to Trauma; Attachment

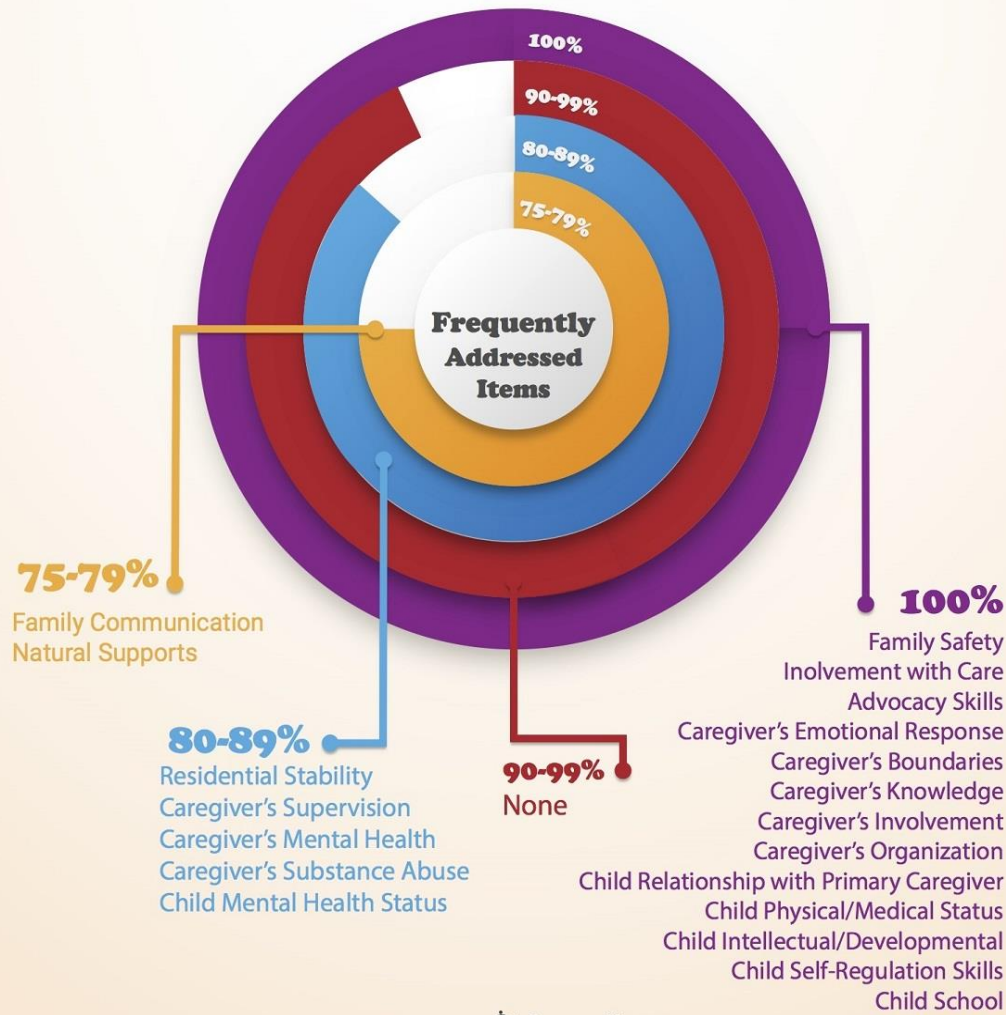
Within Youth Risk Behaviors/Factors: Exploited, Runaway; Suicide Risk; Sanction Seeking Behavior; Sexual Aggression

Within Transition Age: Job functioning; Independent living; Peer Social Experience

Within Trauma Experiences: Physical Abuse; Sexual Abuse; Witness/Victim Criminal Acts; Neglect; Emotional Abuse; Disruption in Caregiving; Witness to Family Violence

Within Youth Strengths: Spiritual Religious; Vocational; Community Connection; Interpersonal Skills; Interests; Relationship Permanence; Family

FAST-SPANS



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Actionable Items in FAST less likely to appear in the plans

Within Family Together: Extended Family Relations; Financial Resources; Parental/Caregiver collaboration; Family Conflict

Within Caregiver A Status; Caregivers Posttraumatic Reactions; Caregiver's Partner Relations

Within Child A Status: Relationship with bio Mother; Relationship with Bio Father; Social Functioning

Summary

Discussions from the FLASH Talks suggested that as a waiver program early in the implementation, that while safety and permanence related items (family and parents needs and housing and safety) immediate needs were being addressed, well-being items in terms of child behavioral health and trauma were identified, prioritized but not addressed as completely in the plans.

Why? Differed by county but some reasons were caseworker training, limited services, family engagement

Using the CANS and FAST with the SPANS

Poorly done FAST or CANS means that the SPANS is more difficult to score accurately

Inadequate paper filing results in missing information in paper files—less of a problem with electronic records

Time-intensive

- As a research project we required 2 independent raters
- Implementing as a quality improvement activity, the SPANS would be done by a supervisor and not require a second independent rater

Summary: SPANS

- Although there was a waiver with an emphasis on trauma-informed care and well-being, plans and documentation about services was more focused on safety.
- Plans were often “cookie cutter” with little individualization despite the use of individualized Assessments.
- Strengths were difficult for workers to operationalize in plans.
- Need to do a better job in training on assessments to move beyond how to **do** the assessment and Focus on how to **use** the assessment.

Summary: Targeting

- Targeting analysis highlighted differences in counties' practices around assessment implementation – both in intended and actual target populations.
- Understanding differences in targeting population is necessary to understand how assessments may impact county outcomes.
- Bringing these findings to the counties in the Flash Report forum helped the evaluation team gain insight into the context and challenges around assessment implementation at the county level.

Questions?

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