



Improving Court Case Coordination and Addressing Parental Substance Use

A model for supporting parents and protecting children in dependency court

The Challenge

Parental substance use is a leading reason children enter the child welfare system. Yet systemic gaps, such as limited early screening, delayed access to evidence-based treatment, and fragmented case planning, make it harder for families to achieve stability. These challenges also make it harder for child welfare agencies to meet the requirements of the federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA), and Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA), especially when treatment for parental substance use is necessary.

The Solution

All Rise's Center for Advancing Justice equips dependency courts, child welfare agencies, and local treatment partners to strengthen case coordination and support timely and effective substance use treatment to promote family stability and reunification.

Our Approach

The Center for Advancing Justice has developed the AIRS framework (Assess, Implement, Review, and Sustain) to facilitate our work with local jurisdictions.

Assess: We begin with a comprehensive system assessment to evaluate the readiness of dependency courts, child welfare agencies, and treatment providers to strengthen coordination of services for parents and children affected by substance use related neglect. Using stakeholder interviews, data analysis, and resource mapping, we examine how parents are screened for substance use disorders, referred to treatment, and supported in recovery and how current policies and practices can be improved to meet CAPTA and ASFA standards.

Implement: After identifying areas for improvement, we work with court, child welfare, and treatment leaders to create an implementation plan that builds on existing resources and partnerships. The plan sets clear performance measures, such as permanency outcomes, reasonable and active efforts findings, referral patterns, and service timelines, while supporting staff training and piloting procedures that promote early treatment engagement and lasting recovery.

Review: As jurisdictions begin to implement changes, we provide real-time support to help evaluate impact, track fidelity to new procedures, gather feedback from families and partner agencies, and make necessary adjustments.

Sustain: To ensure that changes last beyond the initial implementation period, we support the development of sustainability plans. This may include long-term funding strategies, staff training plans, cross-system coordination protocols, and the identification of local champions who will lead ongoing efforts.

Why partner with the Center for Advancing Justice?

Our mission is to advance effective interventions for individuals impacted by substance use and mental health challenges at every stage of the criminal and civil legal systems. We have the expertise and experience required to develop trusted, pragmatic solutions to meet your unique needs.

Experts in implementation science: Our team brings a deep understanding of how to translate best practices into real-world, sustainable actions to improve outcomes.

Driven by results: We deploy proven strategies for success and rely on data to tell us what's working and what's not.

Customized, ongoing support: Our process is collaborative and adapted to your local community, capacity, and statutory requirements.

Let's Get Started

Whether your state or jurisdiction is responding to federal oversight, reviewing its use of "no reasonable efforts" findings, or seeking to improve alignment between courts and local agencies, the Center for Advancing Justice can help. Contact us today to start the conversation!



Contact us for a custom
proposal! Scan the QR
code or visit allrise.org/caj