

Public Act 11-109
Results-Based Accountability
Report Card on
Connecticut Children:

Project Progress Report
September 2012

Connecticut General Assembly
Select Committee on Children

Building the CT Kids Report Card: Progress to Date

In 2011, the Connecticut legislature enacted a law requiring the Select Committee on Children to create and maintain a report card, using the principles of Results-Based Accountability (RBA), on the state of the state's young people (see Public Act 11-109). As mandated, a diverse group representing public and private agencies, organizations, and individuals involved in making things better for all children in the Connecticut is helping the committee with its RBA report card project. The Offices of Legislative Research (OLR) and Fiscal Analysis (OFA) and the Connecticut Commission on Children (COC) also are assisting the children's committee build what has become known as the "CT Kids Report Card."

The current status of major tasks required to develop the CT Kids Report Card is summarized below in Table 1. The table also shows how the data-driven RBA approach, while relatively simple, is neither quick nor easy to implement. Often, the best information for tracking outcomes of state policies and programs is not readily available. In many cases, research about what works to improve outcomes for children and their families is lacking or there is disagreement about best practices. Despite these challenges, the children's committee and its working group have made considerable progress since the first of many RBA report card meetings was held in September 2011.

To date, dozens of primary and secondary indicators about the well-being of Connecticut children and youth have been identified. Indicator data are being compiled in a central, electronically accessible location. Work has begun on analyzing the story behind these data, assessing the impact of existing state policies and programs for children, and determining what state agencies and their partners need to do to achieve the desired quality of life result: *"All Connecticut children grown up in stable environments, safe, healthy, and ready to lead successful lives."*

An initial RBA report card highlighting statewide and disaggregated data related to four key indicators of Connecticut children's well-being can be accessed from the select committee's website (www.ckidsreportcard.org). It demonstrates the CT Kids Report Card's potential as an accountability tool for legislators and the public, as well as program managers, parents, and other stakeholders. More work is underway to refine, expand, explain, and address report card information about how Connecticut children are doing and what's needed to improve results. But it is clear already that while statewide trends may appear promising, drilling down into the data by race, ethnicity, age, gender, income, and other important characteristics can reveal a very different picture.

The goal of the select committee on children is to make the CT Kids Report Card website a central source for all the data collected now and in the future on the well-being of Connecticut's children and youth. In the future, the committee expects the report card data to be used by policymakers, agency staff, service providers and others to answer the three central RBA performance questions: *How much are we doing? How well we are doing it? Is anyone is better off?* Most important, the report card can: inform decisions about budgets, policies, and programs in ways that promote the well-being of Connecticut children and their families; and help ensure efficient and effective investment of public funds.

Next steps for the committee and its working group are continuing to develop the initial report card by adding indicator data and using it to assess progress, diagnose problems, and come up recommended actions that can "turn the curve" toward better results. A top priority is finding ways to maintain the CT Kids Report Card, in this time of limited government resources, as the data-based guide for policy and program decisions that improve the quality of life of Connecticut children and youth.

A crucial source of data and a model for the report card working group has been KidsCount, a national initiative of the Annie E. Casey Foundation for tracking and improving the well-being of children. The KidsCount Scorecard for our state, which is prepared by the Connecticut Association of Human Services (CAHS), permits data comparisons with other states and national trends on an annual basis. The CT Kids Report Card, as a legislative tool focused on understanding Connecticut trends and the impact of our state policies, and programs, will supplement the annual KidsCount reports. It also is

intended that the Connecticut report card will be updated as new state indicator information becomes available.

CAHS is an essential partner now and going forward for making the CT Kids Report Card a success. Others helping to sustain the children's committee report card effort include: the Results Leadership Group, which is providing its scorecard software for the project; the Connecticut Data Partnership, which has offered to manage updates of the report card indicator data through its CTData.Org initiative; and the Commission on Children, which may serve as the "webmaster" for the report card and undertake some data coordination and management tasks.

Clearly, the children's report card, like goal of ensuring Connecticut kids are stable, safe, health, and successful, takes many partners working collaboratively to achieve. The Select Committee on Children is grateful to all of its partners, particularly the dedicated members of its working group, for contributing to making the CT Kids Report Card a reality in 2012.

**TABLE 1. SUMMARY OF PROGRESS TO DATE:
RBA REPORT CARD ON CONNECTICUT CHILDREN
(MANDATED BY P.A. 11-109)**

What	Who	When	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and maintain annual report card that evaluates state policies and programs intended to promote child well-being • Include (but not limit to) primary indicators for measuring progress contained in PRI final RBA pilot project report prepared under PA 09-166 (see next page for details) • Make available to public (on CGA website) and send electronically to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ APP, HS Committees ○ DCF, DPH, SDE ○ OPM ○ Child Advocate ○ Chief Court Admin. 	KID Committee in consultation with: OFA OLR COC	Annually January 15 beginning 2012	<p><i>Report card with primary indicators and initial data was drafted by January 2012; improved and expanded indicators/data in progress</i></p> <p><i>With generous support of Results Leadership Group, “CT Kids Report Card” exists on line as working draft; in September 2012, test version (with just four headline indicators) accessible to public put on KID Committee website , see: www.ctkidsreportcard.org</i></p> <p><i>Finalized version expected to be accessible at same site and provided electronically to all parties listed in the public act later in the year</i></p> <p><i>All background material for the RBA report card project also available electronically on KID Committee website</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form a working group of public and private partners with significant roles in promoting child well-being; representatives to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ State agencies and departments ○ Community organizations ○ Private provider agencies ○ Families, parents, other caretakers ○ Child advocacy organizations ○ Health care professionals ○ Schools ○ Child care providers 	KID Committee		<p><i>The committee created a work group of over 50 members representing all sectors required by law that has met on eight occasions since October 2011; four subgroups formed to research in-depth each major indicator area (stability, safety, health, future success) are meeting more frequently to refine the report card data and format</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and develop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Additional primary and secondary indicators; and ○ Key performance measures for child welfare system 	KID Comm. in consultation with working group	By January 15, 2012	<p><i>To date, over a dozen additional primary indicators, including 4 that address stability, and more than 20 secondary indicators have been identified; the most recent available trend data, overall and disaggregated (e.g., by race/ethnicity, age, income)are being compiled and entered into electronic report card database (See following table for details on indicators and measures identified to date</i></p>

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			<i>DCF as part of current agency RBA strategic planning/program report card efforts is developing system measures that can be included in committee's report card in the future (See following table for details on system measures)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review adequacy of indicators, measures, related data sources and determine whether there may be more appropriate alternatives 	KID Comm. with working group assistance	At least annually	<i>Ongoing effort</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify child welfare system programs that significantly contribute to desired result; require administering agencies to prepare RBA report cards on them annually (in format developed by APP RBA subcommittee) 	KID Comm. in consultation with APP RBA subcommittee		<i>Next step for committee and workgroup (program selection expected to start during fall 2012)</i>

Acronyms:

APP: Appropriations Committee
COC: Commission on Children
DCF: Dept. of Children and Families
DPH: Department of Public Health
HS: Human Services Committee
KID.: Select Committee on Children
OFA: Office of Fiscal Analysis
OLR: Office of Legislative Research
PRI: Program Review & Investigations Committee
RBA: Results-Based Accountability
SDE: State Department of Education

Table 1. CT Kids Report Card: Primary and Secondary Indicators Included, Identified and In Development as of September 2012

RESULTS STATEMENT : "All Connecticut children grow up in stable environments, safe, healthy, and prepared to lead successful lives."

REQUIRED PRIMARY INDICATORS Statewide and disaggregated by:	<i>Live with Family/Stable Living Environment* (Stability)</i>	<i>Child Abuse (Safety)</i>	<i>Low Birth Weight (Health)</i>	<i>3rd Grade Reading Proficiency (Future Success)</i>	<i>Child Poverty (Future Success)</i>	<i>CT Social Health Index (Overall)</i>
	<i>Students Chronically Absent From School*</i>	<i>Substantiated Abuse/Neglect Cases</i>	<i>Babies Born At Low Birth Weight</i>	<i>3rd Grade Students Reading At/Above State Goal</i>	<i>Children Living In Poverty</i>	
Race/ethnicity*	✓	✓	✓	✓		Working group recommends committee reconsider use of SHI as funding to support and update it is no longer. Also, the index incorporates many of the indicators, primary and secondary, tracked individually by the report card. This or a similar index could be retained as an overall child and family well-being measure, but as a report card primary indicator
Gender *			n/a	✓		
Geography*						
Age*		✓				
Other relevant characteristics* – e.g., income	Free/Reduced Price Meals Special Education English Language Learner	Abuse-only cases Neglect-only cases		Free/Reduced Price Meals Special Education English Language Learner		
INDICATORS MUST IDENTIFY/DEVELOP*	Stability*	Safety*	Health*	Education/ Future Success*		
ADDITIONAL PRIMARY (Statewide and disaggregated)	- Food insecurity* - No parent with full-time employment - Spend over 30% income on rented housing	- Referrals to Juvenile Court - Unexpected deaths - ER visits for injuries	- <i>Obesity</i> - <i>Health insurance coverage</i> - Seriously considered suicide	- Kindergarteners needing substantial instructional support - On-time high school graduation		
SECONDARY (Statewide and disaggregated)	- Out of home placements - Single parent households - Eligible for FRPMs - SNAP participation - Spend over 30% income on owned housing - Eat meals with family - Have love & support	- ER visits for TBI - High school students who don't feel safe - <i>Fatalities</i>	- 2 yr. old immunizations - ER visits for asthma - Childhood asthma prevalence - <i>Binge drinking</i> - <i>Tobacco use</i> - <i>Illicit drug use</i>	- <i>Teen births</i> - Kindergartners with pre-school - Age 25-34 with at least assoc. degree - Age 16-24 in school/employed - 3 rd graders at/above CMT math goal - 8 th graders at/above CMT reading goal - 8 th graders at/above CMT math goal		
DATA DEVELOPMENT AREAS	- Family homelessness - School transiency - Domestic violence - Incarcerated parent(s) - Teen parent household	- Human trafficking of children - School restraint & seclusion	- <i>Teen depression</i> - <i>Oral health</i>	- Completed vocational certificate/ professional license - Youth unemployment - Infant/toddler achieve dev. milestones - Infant/toddler identified for services receiving them		

NOTES: * = identified/in development by select committee on children and report card working group as required under PA 11-109; Blue bold text = "headline" primary indicators; Red italic text = indicators developed for PRI 2011 adolescent health study and recommended for inclusion in CT children's report card by the legislative program review committee.

Required Child Welfare System Performance Measures

(Under P.A. 11-109, to be identified and/or developed by select committee and working group)

<i>Rate of repeat maltreatment among victims of child abuse and neglect</i>	<i>Rate of out-of-home placements for children at risk of abuse and neglect</i>	<i>Rates of reunification and permanency for children removed from homes</i>	<i>Developmental and health status of at-risk children and youth</i>	<i>Educational progress of at-risk children and youth</i>	<i>Other appropriate measures of well-being and success in life</i>
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Working with DCF, as part of current agency strategic planning, on these and other system performance measures; data in development at present

Significant Child Welfare Programs: Required Annual RBA Performance Report Card

(Under P.A. 11-109, KID committee and RBA subcommittee of Appropriations to identify specific programs subject to requirement)

Components	Program A	Program B	Program C	Program D	Etc.
<i>How Much (core measures)</i>					
<i>How Well (core measures)</i>					
<i>Better Off (core measures)</i>					
<i>Story Behind the Data</i>					
<i>What Works/ Proposed Improvements ("Actions to Turn the Curve")</i>					
	<i>With RBA subcommittee and report card working group expect to select four to six state programs for annual performance report cards; those with a prevention emphasis, such as the new DCF differential response approach or school health initiatives carried out by DPH and SDE, are being considered at present</i>				