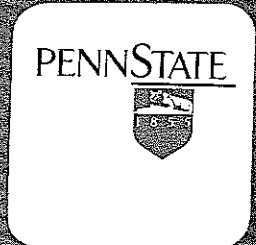




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INSTRUMENT-BASED PROGRAM MONITORING

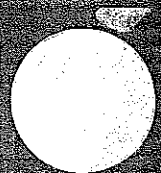
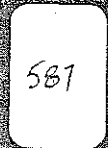


# Instrument-Based Program Monitoring for Child Welfare

Division of Research & Evaluation



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**Instrument-Based  
Program Monitoring  
for Child Welfare**

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## **Instrument-Based Program Monitoring for Child Welfare**

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Information regarding the Children's Services Monitoring Transfer Consortium can be obtained from Gibson Hunt Associates, 1629 H Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

— Richard Fiene, Ph.D.  
— Thomas McDonald, Ph.D.

1987

## Preface

This book is an introduction to instrument-based program monitoring for child welfare. It is written for public administrators of child welfare agencies at the state, county or local levels. It is not intended to be a comprehensive treatment of the program evaluation and monitoring of child welfare services. Additional information, including technical and detailed system information, can be obtained from the National Child Welfare Resource Center for Management and Administration at the University of Southern Maine. This book is one component of a comprehensive approach to monitoring and evaluation under development at the National Center. Other components include comprehensive checklists for monitoring child welfare programs and residential centers, a description of success measures for child welfare, and computer software to support the development of an indicator checklist as described in this volume.

— Helaine Hornby

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## Chapter 1

# Introduction to Instrument-Based Program Monitoring

The purpose of this book is to introduce an innovative approach and methodology for monitoring child welfare services—Instrument-Based Program Monitoring (IPM). The approach was originally developed in Pennsylvania for state monitoring of day care providers. The "instrument" referred to in the title is a comprehensive checklist that encompasses all of the state's regulations governing the particular program being monitored. In Pennsylvania's case, a comprehensive checklist that incorporated all of the state's day care regulations was drawn up; it consisted of 279 items that could be checked yes or no— in compliance or not. This was used by licensors to monitor compliance with regulations and replaced the narrative site visit reports that had been in use.

From the comprehensive checklist an *indicator checklist* was devised. This consisted of 28 items out of the original 279 that were the most *predictive* of compliance. To avoid the potential danger that providers would, in time, put all of their efforts into satisfying the requirements of the shortened indicator checklist, the comprehensive instrument was used every three years.

Pennsylvania found that the advantages of the instrument-based approach over the narrative site visit reports were:

1. It was faster to complete for the workers. This freed up the licensor's time to work with providers to improve quality.
2. It was less expensive due to the savings in time both at the worker and administrative levels.
3. It enhanced standardization, thereby making administrative actions more apt to be legally defensible, and also making it easier for those being monitored to understand and comply.
4. It could be computerized; therefore record-keeping was easier both at the local and state levels.

From its use in measuring compliance with day care regulation, the IPM has been adapted to other human service delivery systems. The technology is not limited to the field of licensing of facilities. Pennsylvania, and New York have promulgated state regulations and a comprehensive checklist for children and youth services based on the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980 (Public Law 96-272). The National Child Welfare Resource Center has devised a generic version which can be adapted for use in any state that wishes to benefit from the advantages offered by the IPM system.

While developed in a county-administered system for use in monitoring county agencies, the technology can be used to monitor any level of child welfare services: state, county, regional, district, local agency, or within an agency. An added advantage is that the IPM approach generates a quantified data base which describes the process used to deliver services. These data can be linked with:

– outcome data to determine "what works";

- intake data, to determine "who gets what";
- fiscal data, to determine "what it costs."

Instrument-based program monitoring relies on the use of a detailed questionnaire or checklist based on explicit regulations to determine how well a children and youth provider is meeting basic program requirements. When the assessment and questionnaire are completed, the results are scored using a common scoring manual and coded for entry into an information system, either manual or automated. The results are used to determine whether the monitor needs to intervene in order to improve the compliance of agencies being reviewed. The agency's scores on the questionnaires are also used to support state decisions concerning the granting and renewal of licenses and state funding. Aggregate, statewide scores can be used as a basis for broad policy decisions directed at improving the general quality of child welfare services and setting state funding levels.

Instrument-based program monitoring systems incorporate three important characteristics:

- *Instrument-Based.* IPM utilizes checklists or questionnaires developed by the monitor to structure monitoring reports. Highly specific questions incorporate the regulations in a simplified format that is easily completed and shows both providers and state agencies just how well the provider is complying with requirements. An integral feature of IPM is a system of assigning weights to the questions or items so that scores reflect the relative importance of the regulations. State systems have experimented with assigning weights based on the degree of risk (physical or psychological harm) to children if a particular regulation is out of compliance.

- *Program Monitoring.* In this book, monitoring is a broad term describing the management process of reviewing and controlling the delivery of program services according to predetermined criteria, with the intention of taking corrective action to assure and increase not only compliance with regulations, but also program quality and management efficiency. As such, monitoring encompasses a continuum of management activities, from licensing, contract compliance reviews and program quality assessments to corrective actions, technical assistance, and training.
- *Systems Approach.* A system is a group of related and coordinated procedures that are used to accomplish a give task. In this instance, the task is to monitor child welfare agencies according to federal and state regulations.

This book is organized into seven chapters. This chapter has given an introduction to the general principles which govern the operation of the IPM.

Chapter 2 provides a rationale for implementing the system and gives in more detail its advantages over present methods of monitoring for program compliance.

Chapter 3 gives an example of how Pennsylvania used this system for monitoring the providers of day care, and then of counties and residential facilities operating under the mandates of Public Law 96-272 and state licensing regulations.

Chapter 4 offers points that should be considered in determining whether the system is relevant to a monitoring agency's needs, and gives some caveats in implementing this system.

Chapter 5 introduces the concept of the child welfare indicator checklist (CWIC) which simplifies the IPM by reducing the large comprehensive instrument to a more manageable list of predictor items.

Chapter 6 gives a detailed description of the Indicator Checklist System Methodology for agencies that are considering developing their own indicator checklists.

Chapter 7 concludes with a challenge to researchers and policy makers in utilizing the approach presented in this book for monitoring and evaluating human service programs.

At the back of the book there is a list of resources containing more detail about the conceptual foundations of the instrument-based approach.



## Chapter 2

# Rationale for This Approach

Instrument-based program monitoring is the cornerstone to the systems approach to the state management of human services. The advantages of the approach are particularly relevant as states reassess their role in child welfare and other services in the current volatile fiscal environment. These advantages include:

- cost savings to states in financing services;
- better state allocation of resources;
- improved information for policy decisions; and
- enhanced quality of programs.

IPM systems are more comprehensive, objective, and consistent than the narrative report approach. They are also easier to read and understand. They are ideally suited to achieve the following objectives of a child welfare monitoring system, that is, to:

- *Ensure equitable, enforceable monitoring of child welfare services.* Most states have requirements concerning the health and safety of children in their care or custody who are placed out of home. It is essential that health and safety standards are clearly specified, clearly understood, easily evaluated, and consistently enforced.
- *Provide for efficient and cost-effective funding and monitoring procedures.* Administrators need to achieve the

benefits of monitoring as efficiently as possible and at the minimum necessary cost.

- *Permit sound policy decision-making.* States are concerned that their funds be spent in a way that ensures the best possible child welfare services. To address this concern, state policymakers need consistent, objective, quantifiable indicators of how many individuals are at different levels of program quality. Further, policymakers require an information base for deciding how policy should evolve in the future and for developing and maintaining appropriate legislation, regulations and policy guidelines.

Achieving these objectives requires timely, reliable, concise information about a state's child welfare program. An IPM system can provide this kind of information and has the following additional beneficial characteristics:

- *Quantitative and objective.* Using a program monitoring instrument produces clear, specific, and objective information about programs. The use of highly structured questions and records of on-site observations minimizes ambiguous results and biased observations. Instrument items lend themselves to quantitative analyses and produce readily summarized and easily interpreted data that are of value to policymakers.
- *Easily administered and consistent.* The instruments can be administered by monitors with varying academic backgrounds who have been trained to gather information quickly and with a minimum of interference with the ongoing activities of the agency.
- *Supportive of agencies offering services.* Many agencies welcome the use of such instruments because they know

what specific areas are covered and they can structure their programs to meet state expectations. Involvement of all parties in developing the tool further ensures that the questions will be comprehensive without being burdensome. The use of questions that explicitly cover all regulations, and establish a uniform set of requirements, increases the agency's perception that the requirements are equitable, necessary, and desirable.

- *Focus on results.* The design of the instrument reduces bias that may result from differences in temperament and philosophy between the agency and the monitor. The IPM focus is entirely on the services provided and how they affect children and families.
- *Based on state-of-the-art child welfare research.* Instrument items can be designed to reflect current "best practice" in child welfare. In this way, the questions may be used to encourage agencies to experiment with and adopt successful approaches that have been shown to be effective in child welfare research. IPM can be used to *improve* child welfare services, and not just regulate it to ensure that minimum requirements are met.
- *Easy to modify and improve.* The instrument format with specific and unambiguous responses is easily adapted to changing developments in policy and practice. State and Federal requirements can be communicated easily to district offices, counties and other provider agencies by incorporating new or revised questions on which assessments will be made.

These positive features of IPM may have particularly beneficial results for a state if Pennsylvania's experience can be used as a guide. Since Pennsylvania's system was introduced in 1982, it has produced the following improvements:

- *Cost reductions.* By linking the results of their IPM to the state's information system, Pennsylvania has been able to identify key indicators of regulatory compliance that have a more positive impact on children who are in foster care. These regulatory predictor items can then be used in what is called an indicator checklist (this methodology is described in Chapters Five and Six). Through the use of the indicator checklist substantial time is saved in monitoring reviews.
- *Improved program performance.* An agency's scores on the comprehensive instrument have improved over time as they focus on meeting the administrator's clearly defined expectations. Because these expectations reflect both state and federal requirements, these improved scores indicate that the state-funded child welfare services have become markedly better in a short period.
- *Improved information for policy and financial decisions.* There is also the potential of linking the results from the IPM system to information systems that provide financial and statistical information on child welfare. By doing so, regulatory and financial policies can be revised on the basis of solid data, rather than mere intuition. The administration is also in a potentially strong position to complete the implementation of unit costing and competitive procurement systems in a way that explicitly considers program quality.

### Chapter 3

## Description of Pennsylvania's System

Having described the advantages of the IPM approach, it is useful to examine the features of a successful, currently operating system to get a more concrete idea of the costs and operating characteristics. Pennsylvania's Children and Youth Monitoring Information System (PACYMIS) is an example of a working IPM system.

The instrument-based program monitoring system developed by Pennsylvania is known as the Children and Youth Compliance Review (CYCR). It was implemented for child welfare in 1982 and has been used continuously since then as the principal basis for licensing all public providers (counties) in the state. Pennsylvania is one of a handful of states that is presently using an IPM system for measuring compliance with Public Law 96-272.

The CYCR includes items that are designed to ensure compliance with basic federal and state regulations (in some states these items also begin to assess state of the art research and program quality). They are very specific with regard to required practices and standards and are grouped into the following categories: administrative and program, responsibilities of the county executives, duties of advisory committees, availability of agency rules, administrative reports and records, hiring practices, staff orientation and training, responsibilities of county agency, staffing requirements, use of volunteers, required services, placement

prevention and reunification services, adoption services, emergency and planned temporary services, services and facilities to be used, delivery of services through other service providers, requirements related to interstate placement, interstate placement in non compact states, permanent documents, child placement registration index, confidentiality of family case records, family service plans, review of service plans, placement of children, placement planning, voluntary placement agreements, parent appeals and fair hearings, placement reviews, and dispositional review hearings.

The complete instrument, which consists of approximately 300 items each clearly linked to a particular regulation, is administered annually to all public children and youth agencies. The score sheets are precoded for easy scoring and entry into a computerized data processing and information system, or for manual processing.

Recently, Pennsylvania has developed a shorter version of the CYCR, referred to as the Child Welfare Indicator Checklist (CWIC), which includes selected items from the comprehensive instrument and can be used to predict performance. The CWIC contains only 26 items and is contained in the appendix. When used on an alternating basis with the comprehensive instrument, the CWIC is a good predictor of program performance and reduces monitoring costs to the state. Pennsylvania's experience with developing the indicator checklist has indicated that similar methodologies can be applied to reduce the length of many different types of state licensing and monitoring instruments, while preserving the validity of the instruments' measures of compliance and program quality.

Pennsylvania has taken the additional step of linking the CYCR system with the state's statistical outcome reporting

systems. The result has been Pennsylvania's ability to make sensitive policy decisions and reduce costs based on accurate and timely information.

The CYCR system generates three levels of information:

- information on agencies
- regional information
- statewide information.

The system produces information needed to make all of the monitoring decisions about a particular provider. Agency information includes scores for each of the categories of regulations covered by the CYCR and a composite score. It is possible to obtain historical trends for the performance of a particular agency and to perform analyses of the extent to which performance in one category (e.g., case reviews) is correlated to performance in another (e.g., permanent placements for children).

The CYCR also generates summary information on category scores and composite scores by region. Comparisons among providers are possible both by type of provider (e.g., large agency versus small agency) and by general statistics for the region (e.g., score ranges, average scores by regulatory category, item by item comparisons, trend analyses, and cross sectional studies).

Statewide category scores and composite scores provide perspectives on whether agencies and counties as a whole are improving in general and on the effects of changes in regulations and policy. Relative improvements in monitoring efforts in various regions can be observed. When CYCR results can be linked to financial statistical information

systems, then even a broader range of policy questions can be addressed. For example, by comparing monitoring and fiscal data from one agency to the next, program administrators can determine if the most costly service providers are also the most effective. After Pennsylvania did such an analysis for day care agencies it established a ceiling on unit cost.

Each of these levels and types of informations aggregated at the state level is readily available to the staff who make use of the information. For example, monitors at the regional level can potentially obtain feedback on performance of particular agencies. Regional directors can compare the performance of agencies in their region to those of other regions. Central office staff, state budget personnel, and legislators have convenient access to general state levels of performance as these change over time.

Use of the CYCR instrument began in 1982. The implementation process, however, is ongoing, with constant improvements being made in the basic system. Pennsylvania staff estimate that it took roughly 24 months to establish a functioning system. The total cost for developing Pennsylvania's system has been estimated at \$250,000 including the development of data processing systems. This cost could be substantially reduced for a state interested in transferring Pennsylvania's technology and methodology and adapting it to its own requirements.

Annual monitoring costs have held constant over the past four years since the introduction of the CYCR system. Further improvements to the CYCR are likely to reduce these costs however. For example, the Child Welfare Indicator Checklist has resulted in \$90,000 savings per year.

In addition to the time and costs involved, two factors were especially critical in Pennsylvania's implementation process: the involvement of all agencies affected and the level of state commitment to implementation. From the very beginning of the project program designers recognized the importance of involving agencies and regional staff who could serve both to enhance the quality of the items on the instrument and to minimize the suspicion and distrust that are often aroused when major administrative and regulatory changes are made. Continuous participation of regional staff and the agencies they supervise in designing the instrument and conducting field trials helped to maintain a high level of reliability and validity of the instrument.

Pennsylvania's level of commitment to implementation was high, and a key element in the success of the implementation process. The substantial costs and the long duration of the implementation effort required careful planning and execution on the part of child welfare staff. The establishment of the CYCR was clearly not a quick panacea but a comprehensive and thoughtful solution to particular concerns that Pennsylvania faced in its monitoring effort to come into compliance with the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980. A lower level of state commitment would have endangered the entire concept of an IPM system.

Pennsylvania's experience with the CYCR suggests many of the issues that other states will need to address in implementing an IPM. These issues are presented in the next chapter.

## Chapter 4

# Evaluating the Need and Developing the Initial Tool

An instrument-based program monitoring system is a useful tool for policymakers, but not all states need such a system. An interested state may follow five steps to assess whether IPM is appropriate and to initiate development. These steps are as follows.

1. *Evaluate the state's social services environment.*

Pennsylvania's motivation for establishing its IPM was a response to changes in the social services environment, such as decreased federal and state funding of child welfare, the major revision of Federal child welfare and adoption requirements, and expansion in the number of child welfare facilities. The need for regulatory accountability, the large amounts of public funds committed to child welfare, and a potentially larger and more politically active group of providers were major concerns to Pennsylvania that may be shared by other states.

A state's view of its role in child welfare monitoring is of fundamental importance in decisions about whether to implement IPM systems. The IPM approach typically assumes that administrators will take an active role in program monitoring, including visits to regional offices, counties and private facilities in order to assess the compliance and quality of programs.

To decide whether an IPM system is useful the administrative entity will have to examine both its current situation and future directions in its approach to monitoring.

*2. Review materials on IPM.*

The concept of IPM has been tested now for several years, and the best descriptive materials available are a series of publications, handouts and audiotapes available from the National Child Welfare Resource Center for Management and Administration. Interested states may wish to arrange for consultation with the Resource Center's staff.

*3. Evaluate costs and potential benefits of the IPM approach.*

The costs and benefits that Pennsylvania has realized from its implementation of an IPM have been described above. Each administrator will need to base cost and benefit estimates on the particular design of its own planned system and on its budget for developing new systems. In particular, costs may be reduced if a state has easily adaptable regulations, positive relationships with the agencies it is monitoring, and well developed computerized information systems.

*4. Make a state commitment to implement the IPM system.*

The level of state commitment must be sufficient to support the implementation process through potentially difficult periods. Typically, the commitment must be made by top officials in the state's department that is concerned with child welfare monitoring (e.g., Department of Public

Welfare, Department of Human Services), and supported by legislative bodies that are responsible for budget approval. Often, coordination is required among several subdepartment organizations, such as program development, management information systems, and operations units.

*5. Assess regulations and legal requirements.*

A successful IPM system must be supported by explicit regulations that can be easily translated into questions on the monitoring instrument. Some work to improve the presentation and specificity of regulations may be required for designing the instrument and implementing the system.

Two examples of instrument questions used in Pennsylvania follow. The first is drawn from the Children and Youth Compliance Instrument and the second from the Residential Service Compliance Review Instrument.

Note that each item includes a numerical citation drawn from Federal or state law or policy. In this way monitors or agencies being reviewed can look up the derivation of the question.

Similarly, a state must address basic legal and policy issues such as:

- Will the system cover all agencies providing services or only those which are publicly funded?
- How will a new system be "grandfathered" or phased in?
- Will system scores be used to deny public funding to low-scoring agencies in the private sector or serve only as a

**Sample Items  
Pennsylvania's Children and Youth Compliance Instrument**

State	Federal	Family Case Records Item/Regulation	IN/OUT	COMMENT
	x	Does the county agency establish and maintain a family case record for each family accepted for service? (3130.43(a))		
	x	Does the family case record contain: Date family was accepted for service? (3130.43(b)(1))		
	x	Name and address of parents? (3130.43(b)2))		
	x	Name, race, sex and date of birth of each family member? (3130.43(b)(3))		
	x	x A record of service activity— Dates of contact with any family member (3130.43(5)(i))		
	x	x The parties involved in the contact? (3130.43(5)(ii))		
	x	x Actions taken? (3130.43(5)(iii))		
	x	x Results of those actions? (3130.43(5)(iv))		
	x	Correspondence between agencies and individuals involved in the case? (3130.43(b)(6))		
	x	Appropriate medical information on family members? (3130.43(b)(7))		

**Sample Items  
Pennsylvania's Residential Service Compliance Review  
Instrument**

ITEM	IN/OUT	COMMENTS
Are all medical prescriptions stored in the original containers? 3810.5(c)		
Are all medications stored under lock and key in an area which does not allow access by unauthorized persons? (3810.52(c))		
Are medications that require refrigeration kept refrigerated? 3810.53(c)		
Is there a written medication schedule for each child which staff use when the child receives each dosage? 3810.53(d)		
Does each child have access to all necessary toiletry items? 3810.54(a)(2)		
Are children's clothing identifiably their own? 3810.56(b)		
Do rooms used by children either have air conditioning or direct access to fresh air ventilation if the temperature exceeds 90°F (32°C)? 3810.61(g)		

basis for technical assistance and comparisons among those that compete for public funding?

Such legal considerations must be resolved by the top policymakers in the state's government before implementation begins.



## 6. Formulate an Implementation Plan.

The successful implementation of an IPM system is largely dependent on having a clear, well organized implementation plan that includes the following:

- clear objectives that specify what is to be accomplished, why the administrator is developing an IPM, and what issues are likely to arise that will influence the development effort;
- clear assignments of specific responsibilities to the individual staff members who will perform the implementation;
- a schedule for implementation that shows all of the tasks to be accomplished, their sequence for completion, critical completion dates, and the timing of progress reports; and
- budgets that cover the allocation of staff time and other resources to particular implementation tasks.

When the plan is complete, it should be reviewed and approved by all officials who have control over the work to be done and the resources needed to accomplish the tasks. The plan should be reviewed periodically in the course of implementation, and necessary revisions should be made and agreed upon by all managers and staff involved. By formulating and adhering to the plan, the administrator has a greater chance of anticipating potential problems and ensuring a higher degree of satisfaction with the IPM system that is produced.

## Chapter 5 Understanding the Indicator Checklist

An indicator checklist is an instrument or checklist that contains selected predictive items from a longer, comprehensive instrument that an administrator uses to monitor agency conformance to specific requirements. The requirements may include health and safety regulations, fiscal compliance provisions, service contracts, or programmatic requirements.

The indicator checklist is a shortened version of the comprehensive instrument. It contains items that have been determined to be most effective in discriminating between agencies that typically receive high overall scores on the comprehensive instrument and those that typically receive low overall scores. Because these items distinguish well between those who are in strong compliance and those who are in weak or non-compliance, they have been called "predictor" items. That is, an individual who conducts a monitoring review should be able to use scores on the indicator checklist to "predict" whether a given agency would have scored well or poorly on the comprehensive instrument.

Once an IPM system like the one described in previous chapters is developed, the next logical question is whether the comprehensive version of the instrument or checklist needs to be administered for every review of all agencies, even those who have maintained consistently high levels of compliance over the years. That is, would it be possible to

eliminate certain instrument items for particular agencies that have good records of compliance without sacrificing the quality of the monitoring effort or reducing regulatory requirements below desired levels? The indicator checklist was developed in response to this question.

The advantages of using an indicator checklist selectively in place of the comprehensive instrument are readily apparent:

- The quality of the monitoring effort is maintained. There is no reduction in the need for all agencies to comply with all state requirements, and the state still has an objective, consistent basis for determining whether their agencies are in compliance.
- The burden of undergoing a comprehensive review is reduced substantially for agencies that have a history of high compliance and quality service.
- The administrator has the potential for substantial cost reductions in such areas as staffing and information processing.
- The administrator can reallocate staff resources that would have been applied to administering the comprehensive instrument to other areas such as providing technical assistance to problem agencies and taking more effective action against providers who refuse to comply.
- Reviews of providers may be consolidated. For example, staff who perform fiscal/contract compliance audits of agencies might be trained to administer the indicator checklist during their audit.

These advantages are considerable for public agencies that are currently under pressure to operate more efficiently and with the minimum necessary interference into the operations of private sector organizations.

State, regional and local agencies may find the advantages of the indicator checklist appealing, but some will have specific concerns that must be addressed before a decision is made to proceed.

1. *Can every agency benefit from an indicator checklist?*

Practically every state that now has some form of questionnaire or checklist for licensing facilities or monitoring programs which contains weighted items can potentially profit from using a shortened form of the instrument. If they are not currently weighted, they can be, as described in the next chapter. Naturally, if a monitoring instrument is already sufficiently short, then little will be gained by being even more selective about questions or items to include. However, many agencies are confronted with lengthy instruments that cover a wide range of requirements. These agencies are prime candidates for indicator checklists.

On the other hand, if an administrator does not currently have an instrument-based system, then consideration of an indicator checklist may be premature. The first logical step would be to generate the comprehensive instrument from a review of federal and state law, policy and regulation. The comprehensive list would have to be administered several times before the predictor items could be generated for the indicator checklist.

To develop a successful indicator checklist, it is important that the items on the existing instrument be clearly linked to:

- program requirements (e.g. regulations); and
- results or outcomes that are considered desirable with respect to monitoring and program quality.

Unless there is a clear correspondence between instrument items and requirements, there is a danger that the items selected for inclusion on the indicator checklist may be perceived by the receiving agency as improper or illegal.

Similarly, if items on the comprehensive instrument are only weakly linked to the results that are expected from services agencies, then the grounds for selecting particular items as good predictors will not be solid enough.

## *2. How can the quality of monitoring be assured?*

Administrators may wonder whether the shortened instrument will compromise the quality of their current monitoring efforts. Our view is that the indicator checklist will enhance current monitoring efforts by increasing the efficient and effective utilization of monitoring staff; however, there are precautions that should be taken in developing and using indicator checklists.

First, the short instrument should not be used as a substitute for the comprehensive instrument, but rather as its complement. If the short form is viewed as the monitoring instrument, then over time agencies may have a tendency to meet only the requirements covered on the indicator checklist. This could indeed compromise overall levels of

compliance. Therefore administrators should keep the comprehensive instrument as the definitive set of compliance expectations and administer it for the initial review of an agency. It could subsequently use the indicator checklist as:

- a screening device to determine whether, for a given agency, it is necessary to administer the longer version; and
- an interim review instrument for agencies who have a good record of compliance.

The longer version would continue to be used both for "problem" agencies and, on a periodic basis, perhaps every three years, for those that are regularly in compliance. Naturally, if the indicator checklist were used with an agency and problems were discovered, then the longer version, or some portions of it, could be administered.

Over time, as conditions change, it will be necessary to update and revise both the comprehensive instrument and the indicator checklist. Using the comprehensive instrument at least periodically with all agencies will establish a basis for modifying the shortened version to reflect changing compliance patterns.

Second, it is expected that both versions of the instrument would be used by agency staff who are trained and competent to assess compliance (not necessarily only licensing staff). These staff would certainly not limit themselves to using the indicator checklist if they determined in the process that conditions warranted using the comprehensive instrument.

The purpose of the indicator checklist is to increase the options available to the administrator for monitoring in a flexible and cost-effective manner, not to put unreasonable "blindness" on monitoring staff.

### 3. *What are the potential drawbacks?*

As with all innovations, the introduction of an indicator checklist as the basis for routine monitoring may create problems. Now that several states have begun widespread use of such checklists, it is possible to identify concerns that may arise in practice.

First, some states' laws require that all providers be reviewed every year on all requirements (e.g., licensing regulations). In such situations, the use of an indicator checklist may require a state to change its legal provisions concerning the frequency and scope of reviews. A strong basis for making such a change is the cost-effectiveness of the shorter form without reduction in the quality of the monitoring effort.

Second, the staff who are responsible for monitoring may resist the introduction of the indicator checklist. They may view the checklist as a reduction in the importance of their professional roles and may fear that the cost savings will take the form of fewer jobs for monitors.

If this resistance occurs, there may be a need to assure staff that the indicator checklist is not intended to reduce either their professional judgments or the scope of the monitoring function. Rather it must complement, not substitute for, the shortened form to have validity. If anything, the professional judgment of the monitoring staff

may be called upon even more frequently as it becomes necessary to decide whether, in a particular case, the short instrument will be sufficient. Monitors must be persuaded that the indicator checklist is an aid that is designed to reduce their workload, while offering clear-cut review guidelines, for those agencies where the indicator checklist is appropriate.

The reduction in workload could potentially change the relationship between monitors and agencies from one of only regulatory to one of active support in improving the quality of the agency's services. This change in the monitors' role could enable administrative entities to make even better use of the current monitoring staff's knowledge and experience.

With respect to costs and staff reduction, there is little question that substantial decreases in workload could also result in reduced staffing levels. However, before considering cutbacks in staff, administrators should consider reallocating staff time that is saved because of the indicator checklist. This time could be earmarked for other monitoring activities such as technical assistance and training of agency staff.

### 4. *Other legal issues?*

Since the first introduction of the indicator checklist methodology, questions have been raised about its legal status. For example,

- Can a state use the results of administering the indicator checklist as a basis to issue a license?

- Can a state licensing agency take action against a service provider based only on the results of the indicator checklist?

In the first case, at least one state has received an opinion from its legal counsel that such a use of the checklist may be supportable under its statutes.

In the second, it should be noted that the indicator checklist was designed as a management tool and a productivity tool, not as an enforcement tool. Neither the results of an indicator checklist review nor a comprehensive review are a substitute for the investigation and evidence-gathering required to support an administrative or legal action against a provider.

Other questions about the appropriateness and legality of the indicator checklist will surely arise. In all uses, the only safe answer is to consult with your state's legal staff before implementing the indicator checklist to ascertain areas of possible legal exposure.

## Chapter 6

# Developing and Implementing an Indicator Checklist

This chapter describes the method for constructing an indicator checklist which consists of the following steps:

1. *Evaluate comprehensive instrument and weight items.*

We assume that your comprehensive instrument contains a sufficiently large number of items that greater efficiency is desirable. Each item on the comprehensive instrument should be assigned a score or weight that reflects its relative importance. These weights ensure that the items selected for the indicator checklist according to the method prescribed in this chapter are the most important to the state.

2. *Obtain at least one year's data.*

Obtain at least one year's data on a group of agencies (counties, district offices, private providers, etc.) as measured by the comprehensive instrument. The scores will be used to categorize providers as either "high-group" (those in strong compliance) or "low-group" (those in weak or non-compliance). Consequently, the administrator must have sufficient confidence in the comprehensive instrument to use scores as the basis for distinguishing between high- and low-group ratings.

3. *Use phi correlational coefficient to identify predictor items.*

Use the phi correlational coefficient formula to identify the items from the comprehensive instrument that are most useful in distinguishing between high-group and low-group agencies. These "predictor" items become the basic items included on the indicator checklist.

4. *Add essential items.*

Make certain that all "essential" items from the comprehensive instrument are included on the indicator checklist. Essential items cover compliance areas that are so important that non-compliance with them might be the basis for denying a license or funding to an agency provider. It is possible that essential items will not be among the items that distinguish between high- and low-group agencies because practically every agency meets these minimum requirements. It is expected that in most cases essential items are few in number. An example from licensing is: "Are all heaters, space heaters that are fixtures, hot water pipes, heated radiators, and other sources of heat exceeding 110°F that are accessible to children equipped with wrapping, insulation, partitions, or screens?"

5. *Construct indicator checklist.*

The predictor items plus the essential items constitute the indicator checklist.

What follows is a detailed procedure for developing an indicator checklist. It is based on Pennsylvania's experience.

1. *Evaluate your comprehensive instrument and weight items.*

The first step is to review your current instrument to determine that an indicator checklist would be useful and assign weights to items on the instrument. An instrument with more than 50 items provides a good basis for developing an indicator checklist.

Let's look at Pennsylvania's comprehensive instrument as an example. Pennsylvania's comprehensive instrument contains 279 items grouped into categories by state regulation, e.g., responsibilities of the county executives, staff orientation and training, placement prevention and reunification services, adoption services, emergency and planned temporary services, and family service plans. If an agency is in compliance with a particular item it receives a 0; if it is out of compliance it receives the numerical value assigned to that item by the weighting system (see below). If no weighting system is employed, it receives a 1. Thus, low scores indicate high compliance while high scores indicate low or non-compliance.

Instrument items may be assigned weights on the basis of some criterion or standard. States have used the "degree of risk to children" criterion. The term "risk" includes all types of risk, such as risk of physical harm (e.g., from unsafe facilities), risk of psychological harm (e.g., from callous and uncaring treatment), and risk of developmental harm (e.g., from not having some form of developmental program).

Using degree of risk as the criterion, Pennsylvania asked 100 individuals to rate each item on the state's comprehensive instrument on a scale of zero (no risk) to 5 (high risk). The 100 individuals represented a variety of perspectives,

including providers, state human services staff, and other child welfare professionals (e.g., university researchers). The results of the survey were compiled and averages for each item calculated. Because the range of the averages was so narrow (.28 to 4.80), very small differences (e.g., the difference between 2.8 and 3.0) represented substantial differences in perceived risk. Pennsylvania multiplied all item values by a factor of ten to produce a range of 2.80 to 48.00. States intending to conduct a similar survey to establish weights are advised to begin with a 10-point scale rather than the 5-point scale used by Pennsylvania.

The multiplied averages constitute the weighting/scoring system. As might be expected, the survey results indicated considerable agreement among the respondents concerning which items involve risk to children, and the face validity of these results was sufficient to adopt the averages as the relevant weights without further statistical testing and refinement.

The importance of assigning weights to items on the comprehensive instrument is revealed in the types of items that were selected for the indicator checklist. Practically all of the items on the indicator checklist are highly weighted, reflecting their importance with respect to the degree of risk for children. The likelihood that these items would appear on the indicator checklist was enhanced because their high weights were crucial in placing an agency under review in either the high group or the low group (as described in Step 3 below). If no weighting system had been established, then agencies may have been placed in the high or low groups based on percentage scores of items in compliance. Using simple, unweighted percentages increases the possibility that 100% compliance with administrative regulations such as administrative records for staff would take on undue importance in differentiating high- and

low-group providers and that items based on such regulations would be chosen as predictor items.

2. *Obtain at least one year's data on the comprehensive instrument.*

The availability of agencies' scores on the comprehensive instrument for a period of at least one year is a necessary prerequisite for development of an indicator checklist.

3. *Use phi coefficient to identify good predictor items.*

The phi correlational coefficient can be used to select predictor items once certain preliminary steps have been taken to identify the groups of agencies whose scores will be used in the formula. The sections below describe these steps, as well as the basic logic involved in using the formula.

- Identify "high-group" and "low-group" agencies.

The first step in selecting predictor items is to take a sample of agencies for whom scores are available and to identify subgroups of agencies who have histories of high and low compliance. These subgroups' scores are used in applying the formula.

Pennsylvania selected a random sample of 200 providers from the state's roster of 1,000 licensed public and private providers. This 20 percent sample was representative of the state as a whole. A sample of 200 also allowed quartile figures (50 providers to a quartile) that were large enough to create confidence in the analytical results.

The 200 providers in the sample were then listed, according to their recent scores on the comprehensive instrument, from the provider in the highest compliance (lowest numerical score) to the provider in worst compliance (highest numerical score).

The top 50 providers (highest quartile) were designated the high group, while the bottom 50 providers (lowest quartile) were designated the low group. The middle group of 100 providers were excluded from the rest of the analysis.

- Tabulate item non-compliance.

For each item on the comprehensive instrument, a frequency count was made of how many high-group providers and how many low-group providers were out of compliance with the item. The results of this analysis were then tabulated.

*Figure 1*  
**Frequency Table of Items Out of Compliance**

Comprehensive Instrument Item Number	Number of Providers Out of Compliance	
	High group (n=50)	Low group (n=50)
1	4	7
2	0	6
3	0	0
4	0	1
5	0	30
6	10	20
7	0	0
8	0	50
9	50	50
10	25	35
11	30	26
12	50	0

- Sort and select predictor items.

The objective of the sorting and selection procedure is to identify those items for the comprehensive instrument that are useful for distinguishing between high- and low-group providers. These items are designated predictor items.

The logic of the sorting and selection procedure may be illustrated as follows. For every item on the frequency table above it is possible to construct a table like that below.

*Figure 2*  
**Example of Good Predictor Item  
(Item 8 in Frequency Table)**

	Providers In Compliance	Providers Out of Compliance	Row Total
High Group	50	0	50
Low Group	0	50	50
Column Total	50	50	100

Figure 2 illustrates a good predictor item. It shows that all 50 of the high-group providers were in compliance with the selected item (in this case Item 8 from Figure 1) and that all 50 of the low-group providers were out of compliance. Clearly, this item from the instrument is useful for making distinctions. Thus, if a monitor found a randomly selected provider to be in compliance with this item, then there is a good probability that the provider would be among the high group providers as measured by the comprehensive instrument. This item would be included in the indicator checklist.



Figure 3 illustrates another possible situation. In this case, none of the high-group providers was in compliance with the item while all of the low-group providers complied. It is difficult to imagine a questionnaire or checklist item for which this situation would occur, but it is a logical possibility. An item that reflected this pattern could *not* be used as a positive predictor of a high-group or low-group program. It would not be included in the indicator checklist.

*Figure 3*  
**Example of Terrible Predictor Item  
(Item 12 in Frequency Table)**

	Providers In Compliance	Providers Out of Compliance	Row Total
High Group	0	50	50
Low Group	50	0	50
Column Total	50	50	100

Figures 4 and 5 illustrate other situations that could occur for particular items. In Figure 4, all of the providers, both high-group and low-group, are out of compliance on the item. This could occur if the item is very difficult to comply with, too costly to correct, or out of the agency's control to correct. In any case, this type of item would not be a good predictor for distinguishing between high- and low-group agencies.

*Figure 4*  
**Example of Item That is Too Difficult  
(Item 9 in Frequency Table)**

	Providers In Compliance	Providers Out of Compliance	Row Total
High Group	0	50	50
Low Group	0	50	50
Column Total	0	100	100

The opposite situation is illustrated in Figure 5, where all agencies are shown to be in compliance with the item. One could easily expect this to occur if the item were very easy to comply with or if the item represented a minimum necessary requirement for operating, for example, if the agency were a residential facility, a building that met fire safety code requirement. The item shown in Figure 5 would not be a good predictor item for distinguishing between high-group and low-group providers. A state might want to include certain items like this on its indicator checklist, however, if they are essential to the health and safety of children.

*Figure 5*  
**Example of Item That is Too Easy  
(Item 3 in Frequency Table)**

	Providers In Compliance	Providers Out of Compliance	Row Total
High Group	50	0	50
Low Group	50	0	50
Column Total	100	0	100

- Apply statistical formula.

Figures 2 and 5 illustrate situations that may be atypical in actual practice, since they portray all 50 of the high-group and low-group providers as in compliance or out of compliance with particular items. In practice, it is more likely that some of each group would be in compliance and others in each group would be out with a given item (e.g., Item 11 in Figure 1). It is necessary, then, to have a method for measuring gradations and degrees of an item's usefulness in distinguishing between high-group and low-group providers. One such method is to calculate a phi correlation coefficient using a computer program. The correlation coefficient simply provides a convenient quantitative method for identifying which instrument items are better and worse for distinguishing between high- and low-group providers using a logical approach identical to that illustrated in Figures 2 through 5.

#### 4. Add essential items.

An administrator might find it desirable to include certain instrument items that are not good predictors but are nonetheless extremely important for ensuring that essential minimum requirements are met by all agencies. These essential items are usually few in number and pertain to basic considerations of child welfare. Typically, all agencies that are being reviewed will conform because of this essential nature. It is possible that some of these essential items will also be good predictor items and would be included on the indicator checklist because of their ability to distinguish between good and unacceptable programs.

Because essential items on Pennsylvania's comprehensive instrument were so highly weighted, many of them were

selected as good predictor items. (Please note that whenever weighted items are used the Pennsylvania day care IPM is being described; all other references in this chapter are to Pennsylvania's child welfare instrument-based program monitoring system.)

#### 5. Construct the indicator checklist.

The complete indicator checklist will contain both predictor items and essential items. (See the Appendix for Pennsylvania's Child Welfare Indicator Checklist.) Several refinements to the indicator checklist are possible depending on the administration policies and the resources available for developing and maintaining an IPM system.

First, an administrator may refine its indicator checklist by segregating the predictor items by area of regulation. The procedure described above for selecting predictor items did not involve a conscious attempt to include items from each area of the comprehensive list.

Second, an administrator may consider revising the comprehensive instrument scoring to account for partial compliance with particular items and then revise the indicator checklist on the basis of these revised scores. For example, agencies would be given credit for being in 80 percent compliance with a particular item rather than being marked out of compliance for not meeting the item's standard 100 percent.

While these kinds of refinements are appealing conceptually, it is difficult to tell how different the indicator checklist would be without testing the refinements in practice. To our knowledge no state has yet performed such tests.

Items on the indicator checklist will need to be reviewed and changed periodically. For example, it is likely that regulations will change over time and that agency's compliance with particular items will change as their clientele, management, staff, and even physical facilities change. The checklist should be revised in response to this evolution. An administrator should plan on revising its checklist at least every three years, following the procedures described above.

An alternative approach would be for the administrator to develop three different checklists (e.g., a new one each year for the first three years) and then to administer the three instruments to agencies on an alternating basis for three or four years. Having more than one version of the shorter instrument gives the state greater flexibility in assessing agency compliance with a broader range of checklist items.

Each time the administrator prepares a version of its indicator checklist, it will need scores from the comprehensive instrument for agencies in both high and low compliance. To ensure an adequate number of strong agency scores on the comprehensive instrument, the administrator should consider using the comprehensive instrument to monitor some low percentage of the strong agencies on a random basis each year.

Successful implementation of the indicator checklist will depend heavily on three main factors:

- Confidence in the indicator checklist;
- Clear expectations on the part of top administrators, monitoring staff, and agencies about what the indicator checklist is intended to accomplish; and
- Organization of the implementation effort.

The administrator must be convinced that the indicator checklist will ensure that agencies still comply with all state regulations. The administrator can foster this confidence by:

- developing an indicator checklist that has face validity, covers the critical areas to be enforced, and contains predictor items that are good indicators of high and low compliance; and
- testing the indicator checklist to make sure that it will yield useful results.

An instrument is said to have "face validity" if an experienced practitioner in the occupation for which the instrument is designed judges the instrument to be accurate and appropriate. This underscores the importance of professional opinion and professionals' ability to weigh numerous subjective factors that statistical tests can only approximate. To check the face validity of the indicator checklist, the administrator could circulate the newly designed instrument to monitoring staff (especially top administrators), independent researchers such as university faculty, and a cross section of child welfare agencies. The reactions of these reviewers can be invaluable in detecting problems with predictor items and also in suggesting additional essential items that should be included regardless of their predictive value.

The second method for building confidence is to pilot test the indicator checklist. This can be done in two ways. The least expensive is to conduct a statistical test of the instrument using historical data that are already in the files. It is reasonable to expect that if the items on the indicator checklist had been used in the past in place of the comprehensive

form, the administrator would have reached similar conclusions concerning compliance.

To conduct this test, the administrator simply selects a random sample of provider evaluations that were completed in the past using the comprehensive instrument. It then calculates the scores that the agencies would have received if the short form had been used. (Remember: the checklist questions are a subset of the questions on the comprehensive instrument.)

Then, the results of using the indicator checklist versus the comprehensive instrument are compared. If both forms would have resulted in similar conclusions concerning appropriate actions to take, then the administrator can have greater confidence in the indicator checklist.

A second way to test the indicator checklist is to use it on a pilot basis with agencies in current monitoring situations. This kind of test can build confidence that the right items have been included on the shortened instrument. It can also yield necessary information on how agencies will respond, what types of discretion must be used by the monitors in deciding whether the indicator checklist should be employed with a particular agency, and how use of the indicator checklist can increase efficiency.

The administrator should conduct both types of tests before full-scale introduction of the indicator checklist. On the basis of these tests the instrument can be improved to yield even more accurate findings.

Administrators must establish exactly how the indicator checklist is to be used and communicate their decision to both the monitoring staff and agencies. Policies concerning the monitors' range of discretion in using the short and

comprehensive versions of the instrument should be specified so that monitors know clearly the extent and limits of their authority in particular situations.

Finally, administrators must recognize that the move to an indicator checklist inevitably means a reduction in the amount and detail of compliance information about individual agencies. The indicator checklist clearly generates greater uncertainty with respect to an agency's compliance with all regulations, and it is possible that instances of non-compliance will be overlooked by monitors with adverse consequences for children and for the administering entity. A well designed indicator checklist can overcome these potential problems to a large extent. Before making the commitment to using the indicator checklist, top administrators should, however, explicitly weigh the trade-offs between the benefits of cost savings, reduced burdens on agencies, and more effective allocation of resources against the costs of increased uncertainty.

The successful implementation of any change in a system will depend on having a clear, well organized implementation plan that includes the following:

- Clear objectives that specify what is to be accomplished, why the administrator is developing its indicator checklist, and what issues are likely to arise that will influence the development effort.
- Clear assignments of specific responsibilities to the individual staff members who will develop and implement the indicator checklist. These staff will typically include the head of the licensing or monitoring unit, individuals with knowledge of research and evaluation methods, selected supervisors in field offices, if applicable, and management

information systems staff. Care should also be taken to include assistance from the legal staff in developing and reviewing the checklist.

- A schedule for implementation that shows all of the tasks to be accomplished, their sequences for completion, critical completion dates, and the timing of progress reports.
- A budget that covers the allocation of staff time and other resources which may include funds for printing and computer time.

When the plan has been drafted, it should be reviewed and approved by all officials who have control over the work to be done and the resources to accomplish the tasks. The plan should be reviewed periodically in the course of implementation, and necessary revisions should be made and agreed upon by all managers and staff involved.

## Chapter 7

### Research Implications

This book has presented a relatively new approach to program monitoring and evaluation which incorporates the use of instruments and aggregated data. This approach becomes even more comprehensive when the IPM is linked with outcome monitoring systems.

In Pennsylvania, for example, researchers measured the effectiveness of state and federal regulations in relation to permanency outcomes for children, i.e., was there any correlation between compliance with specific regulations and a permanent placement? The result was that items on the indicator checklist indeed were highly correlated with children leaving foster care. As reported in the **New England Journal of Human Services** (Spring 1985) some of the most highly predictive items were:

- Is there a completed written service plan?
- Has the county agency reviewed service plans at least every six months?
- Has the agency petitioned the court to conduct a placement review before the end of the sixth, twelfth and eighteenth months of continuous placement . . . and each twelve months thereafter?

Although this article describes an interesting discovery in the relationship between child welfare outcomes and the

child welfare indicator checklist, at present this theory of compliance is but a theoretical construct that needs further study.

One interesting development in the children services field and in particular child welfare is that the instrument-based program monitoring approach is gaining a solid research base as more states are experimenting with this methodology. Therefore, researchers should not have too much difficulty in finding data bases for conducting replication studies.

A specific study that could be undertaken is to attempt to establish a series of relationships between the Child Welfare Management Self Evaluation Technology (CWMSET) and the Child Welfare Indicator Checklist (CWIC) predictors. These are two management tools that help to reduce many incoming data sources and could constitute a first attempt in utilizing the latest information technology with integrating outcome monitoring and program monitoring systems.

Administrators and researchers at all levels of government who utilize the IPM and CWIC systems and the systems mentioned in the Resource Notes Section that follows will have the basis for a comprehensive approach to monitoring and evaluation. The IPM is one of the cornerstones of this new paradigm. The National Center believes that this is a major step forward for the more effective and efficient monitoring and evaluation of children's services in the United States and abroad.

## Appendix

### Child Welfare Indicator Checklist

#### CWIC

##### ABSTRACT

The Child Welfare Indicator Checklist (CWIC) is Pennsylvania's list of child welfare predictor items based on The Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980 (Public Law 96-272). The twenty-six items were found to be statistical predictors of overall compliance with state children and youth regulations. Many of the items were also predictors of desired outcomes for children—i.e., the number of children who returned home or became adopted was significantly higher when agencies were in compliance with these items.

In administering the Child Welfare Indicator Checklist, if an item is found to be out of compliance then the comprehensive instrument for that particular component area should be administered in its entirety. If all component areas are in compliance, then the Child Welfare Indicator Checklist predicts that the agency is in full compliance.

For a detailed discussion of the Indicator Checklist Statistical Model, please see Fiene and Nixon's (1983) Guide Book: *The Indicator Checklist: Improving Instrument Based Program Monitoring Systems* available from Gibson Hunt Associates, 1629 H Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006.

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August 1984

## **Child Welfare Indicator Checklist CWIC**

### **Predictor Items**

1. Is there a written service plan for each family receiving services through the county agency?
2. Was the service plan prepared within 30 days of accepting the family for service?

Does the family service plan include:

3. Identifying information pertaining to both the child and other family members?
4. A description of the specific circumstances under which the case was accepted?
5. The service objectives identifying changes needed to protect the health and safety of the child and prevent placement and the anticipated amount of time to achieve the objectives?
6. The services to be provided to achieve the objectives of the plan?
7. The actions to be taken by the parent, the child, the county agency and/or other agencies and the dates when these actions will be completed?
8. Is the service plan signed by the county agency staff person responsible for the management of the case?

9. Does the county agency inform the parent or guardian that signing the plan constitutes agreement with the service plan?
10. Has the county agency reviewed service plans at least every six months?
11. Has the service plan review been recorded in the plan?

Does the service plan review include:

12. An assessment of the progress made toward alleviating the conditions necessitating service?
13. An assessment of whether planned actions have occurred and services have been provided?
14. Amendment to the plan as determined by the review?

Does the amendment to the family service plan include:

15. A description of efforts that have been made to prevent placement?
16. Identification of the type of home or facility in which the child will be placed?
17. The anticipated duration of placement stated in months?
18. A description of the service objectives that must be achieved by the child?

19. Identification of the steps the county agency shall take to ensure that the service plan is implemented?

Does the county agency provide to the parents, along with a copy of the plan, a written notice of their right to appeal to the Office of Hearings & Appeals, any determination which:

20. Results in denial, reduction or termination of service?
21. Results in a determination that the parent or child must participate in a service?
22. Fails to take into account the parents' or child's choice of service?
23. Fails to act upon a request for service with reasonable promptness?
24. Does the notice include the name and address of the local legal services?
25. In addition to the written notice, does the county agency notify the parents of children, who are under the jurisdiction of the court, in writing of their right to petition the court regarding any action of the county agency affecting their children?
26. Has the county agency petitioned the court to conduct a placement review before the end of the sixth, twelfth, and eighteenth months of continuous placement of the child and each 12 months thereafter?



## Resource Notes:

The following items that relate either directly or indirectly to Instrument-based Program Monitoring Information Systems are available or will be available by writing to:

National Child Welfare Resource Center for  
Management and Administration  
Human Services Development Institute  
University of Southern Maine  
96 Falmouth St.  
Portland, Maine 04103  
207 780-4430

**The Child Welfare Indicator Checklist** — this includes the 26 predictor items of compliance with PL 96-272 that had the greatest impact on child welfare outcomes (also available in Appendix of this book).

**Children and Youth Information System** — a description of Pennsylvania's program monitoring system.

**The Comprehensive List** — a listing of the key comprehensive indicators that a state will need to come into compliance with PL 96-272.

**Child Welfare Software** — being developed by the National Center which will provide states with microcomputer software that can be used as a provider performance monitoring system and indicator checklist system.

**Child Welfare Standards for Success** — describes the latest research concerning the identification of outcome indicators

that states can use to monitor outcomes in their respective child welfare delivery systems.

**Children's Services Monitoring Paradigm** — a conceptual framework that can be used for the effective and efficient management and monitoring of children's services through the use of data integration and reduction.

**Indicator Checklist System** — audiotape and handouts from 1986 teleconference by Dr. Fiene.

**Evaluation and Outcome Monitoring** — conference proceedings booklet, audiotapes and handout package encompassing four sessions: Putting Existing Systems to Better Use, Outcome Measures for Child Welfare, Assessing and Enhancing the Quality of Human Services, and Data Reduction Techniques: The Indicator Checklist System.

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## About the authors:

**Richard Fiene, Ph.D.** is presently Director of Research and Information Systems at the Pennsylvania Office of Children Youth and Families and Lecturer at Pennsylvania State University at Harrisburg, The Capital College. Dr. Fiene has served as research consultant and adjunct professor with several universities and has published over 100 research papers. He designed the Children's Services Monitoring System and his research has been disseminated in the United States, Canada, and Europe.

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