



# Permanency Enhancement Project Technical Assistance Annual Report Update

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## **Southern Region Cairo Action Team**

*This two-part report provides an update of all PEP Action Team and University Partner activities during the 2017 fiscal year (July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017). Information herein is based off of communication and correspondence with key Action Team members and all other stakeholder group members. These individuals potentially include action team lead contact persons, PEP regional staff, other division employees, area community members, and families involved in the PEP initiative in the related counties.*

### **Action Team Catchment Area**

The **Cairo Action Team** encompasses the following counties listed below:

**Alexander**  
**Pulaski**

### **University Partner Activity Overview**

During fiscal year 2017 the Department of Children and Family Services worked with the University Partner (Southern Illinois University Edwardsville- SIUE) to retain faculty researchers and graduate students (who serve in the role of PEP Action Team Community Liaisons) to explore barriers to permanency, including but not limited to trends in racial disparity and disproportionality as it impacts child outcomes in the Southern Region of Illinois.

In the month of **May** the Department of Children and Family Services Quality Assurance Department provided county level permanency data for **Quarter 4 of fiscal year 2016**. The data provided spans the following months: **March - June FY 2016** to SIUE, so that the University research team could analyze trends in permanencies, by age and race, over the period in question. This data analysis will be provided in a **supplementary report**.

In addition to analyzing permanency data, the PEP Community Liaison (University Graduate Student **Bethany Richards** contacted representatives who had been identified as leaders of the **Cairo action team** and explored PEP goals, accomplishments, barriers and activities. Communication with the following individuals occurred:

Name	Role in DCFS or PEP Action Team
Trina Mayfield	Action Team Leader
Michael Burns	DCFS Partner
Lisa Thomas	Cairo High School Principal

*\* To see dates of contact and method of communication please refer to attached contact log document*

## **Context of Permanency Barriers for Action Team Catchment Area**

*This section includes a list of the permanency barriers discussed by action team members that are prevalent in the action team catchment area.*

- **Closure of public housing**
- **Closure of Delta Center - Local social service provider**
- **No current data available to the action team**

*This section provides a discussion of the permanency barriers identified above. This discussion is based on information provided by action team members and is supported by the data presented in the supplementary report.*

**The closure of the public housing in Cairo is going to lead to 201 families being displaced. There is great concern regarding where these families will go and what will happen to them. The Delta Center also recently closed, which is very impactful as it was a major social service provider in the area. At this time, data has only been recently been supplied by the Department of Children and Family Service Quality Assurance Department. However, the action team has been lacking current data for a long period of time and does not yet have access to this data. Such data will influence goals, activities, and help encourage action team participation.**

## **Fiscal Year 2017 Action Team Goals**

*This section includes a current list of goals identified by the action team membership.*

- **Work and partner with Family Advocacy Center**
- **Assess and monitor impact of current housing crisis resulting from the closure of the public housing developments**
- **Address ways to help families affected by the closure of the public housing developments**
- **Communicate with potential partners including the Cairo High School Principal regarding issues related to the health and well-being of families and Cairo as well as issues related to permanency**

## Action Team Goal Related Activity Overview

Activity	Location	Date & Length of Time	Stakeholders Represented	University Partner Role	Other
Action Team Meeting	Cairo	2/17/17	Action Team Members Family Advocacy Center Staff	Asked for update and meeting minutes	
Interview	Cairo High School	5/17/17	Lisa Thomas, Cairo Principal	Interviewed principal	

### Discussion of Action Team Activities to Improve Permanency in the Catchment Area

Cairo Action Team held its last meeting on February 17, 2017. Michael Burns and Eugene Grandberry attended the meeting. They met the action team members and Family Advocacy Center staff. At the meeting, the team discussed the new Family Advocacy Center program criteria and referral process. Other represented agencies also discussed their programs' criteria and referral processes.

On May 17, 2017, university partner Bethany Richards interviewed Lisa Thomas, a local high school principal. University partner asked questions about her background, her district, barriers in the area, and her thoughts surrounding permanency. Information was shared with other university partners, Cairo Action Team, and Michael Burns for the African American Advisory Council newsletter.

### Action Team Next Steps:

Cairo Action team plans to continue to work with and partner with the new Family Advocacy Center in Cairo. The team also plans to monitor all that is happening with the closure of the public housing and address needs as they arise. The university partners also ask that the Cairo Action team participate in the survey that has been developed.

Include all meeting minutes, contact logs, event flyers, and other relevant materials with the report document.