

Mockingbird Family Model Project Evaluation

Year Three Evaluation Report

Project Report Period – Jan. 1 through Dec. 31, 2006
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Project Period Jan. 1-Dec. 31, 2006

Executive Summary

Background to the Year Three Evaluation Report

The Mockingbird Family Model (MFM) has been developed and implemented as an innovative design to overcome several shortcomings of the current foster care system. These include multiple and ill-planned disruptions in placements, siblings not being placed together, and the lack of support for foster parents/caregivers who are often caring for children with challenging behavioral and emotional disorders. The MFM was developed by the Mockingbird Society Executive Director to address the needs of foster children for improved outcomes and increased placement stability. The MFM has offered caregiver support, connections for youth to their siblings and to the culture they identify with, and continuity for youth to remain in a Constellation in a familiar community.

The design of the MFM has been to form a Constellation that clusters 6 to 10 satellite foster homes with a Hub Home. The Hub Home has provided respite care, resources, and family-focused social activities to build a micro-community of social support among the foster families. The goal is that foster families could access respite care that is available nearly 24 hours a day/ 7 days a week on a planned basis or as needed for emergent needs or family crises. The Hub Home parent is licensed to have bed capacity for two to three foster children and keeps the beds available to be more responsive to the satellite foster families. The goal is that the location of a Hub Home and satellite homes in a Constellation would facilitate foster families attending community-building regularly scheduled activities at the Hub Home.

The MFM has completed a third year of project implementation, with an expansion from a single Constellation in 2004-05 to four Constellations in King County that connected 22 families who have a total of 44 foster children. An additional two Constellations have been implemented in Washington, DC in late 2006. These Washington, D.C. Constellations have supported 9 families who have 12 children. In King County, 5 of 22 families were kinship care providers who cared for a total of 12 children, that included caring for one grandchild to a sibling group of five children. In 2006, 52% of the children in the MFM Constellations in King County were African

American and 100% of the children in the two Constellations in Washington, D.C. were African American. In the four King County Constellations, 13 % of the children were Caucasian, 4 % were Native American, and 13% identified as Hispanic. The children in the King County satellite homes were 2-18 years of age, with an average age of 11.3 years (median-11 years, mode= 13 years). In the four Constellations in King County, 80% or four of five children were 8 years or older. There were 16 children who were identified as Behavioral Rehabilitation Services (BRS) level of care, and 28 children were a basic level of foster care, or Family Foster Home care. There were two Constellations that each had 8 BRS children. These two Constellations were implemented in partnership with a host agency that is experienced in the provision of therapeutic foster care. Children and youth in the BRS level of care had socioemotional or behavioral disorders that generally required medication management, special education, and more intensive supervision to ensure the safety of the child. The most common diagnoses were Attention Deficit & Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and Reactive Attachment Disorder (RAD).

During the implementation period, the Mockingbird Family Model (MFM) has contributed to improving outcomes for children in foster care by protecting the stability of placements, preserving connections to the child's community and heritage, and providing supervision by caring adults. All services are guided by the goals to protect children from abuse and neglect in a safe environment where the watchful supervision of foster parents and Hub Home parents provides additional support to children. The Mockingbird Family Model (MFM) has demonstrated how support services and resources can be effectively provided to a group of foster parents/ kinship caregivers to sustain their efforts, augment their capacity to care for their foster children's needs, and overcome their isolation.¹

Findings related to Improving Outcomes for Foster Children

The findings are based on analysis of data from implementation of the four Constellations in King County, one for a duration of eight months, one for a duration of seven, five and three months, respectively. The average duration of implementation of a Constellation in King County was 5.75 months during 2006. The two Constellations in Washington, D.C. had been implemented for three months in the last quarter of 2006.

¹ In this report the term foster parents is used to include both foster parents as well as kinship caregivers.

A typical Mockingbird Family Model foster family has been a foster family for at least four years with the same child in the home for nearly two years. A majority of MFM foster homes have just one child in the home, although the MFM kinship caregivers tend to have more than one child and tend to have sibling groups. A typical MFM family is a single parent family or a two parent family with an eleven year old boy who is experiencing his second placement and first entered the foster care system when seven years old.

The data from the MFM contribute to positive outcomes for foster children and youth that are to increase placement stability, ensure connections to siblings, and support the foster's child's cultural/ ethnic or racial identity:

- **Placement stability:** For the eight months in 2006 when the Mockingbird Family Model (MFM) was implemented, data were available on 44 children who were actively participating. For these 44 children, there were 7 changes in placement status:
 - two children aged out of the system when they turned 18 years old,
 - three children had their current placement disrupted when the foster parents' requested a change and the children were moved to other placements with families within their Mockingbird Constellation,
 - one child has a disrupted placement when the child's unmanageable behavior prompted the foster family to request that the child be removed from the home and the child was placed in residential treatment,
 - one older child ran from the foster home and is currently living with the biological mother.
 - 84% have remained in one foster home consistently during the 3 to 8 month implementation period of the Constellations during 2006.
- **Prevention of placement disruption:** In 2006, when the Constellations were implemented for 3 to 8 months, in three of four Constellations, a total of nine foster families reported that being able to access respite care had prevented a disruption in their child's placement in a total of ten instances. These disruptions would have occurred due to the aggressive or problematic behavior of the foster youth that had exhausted the foster parents' caregiving capacity. The availability and accessibility of respite care led to the older child or adolescent staying with

the Hub Home parent or with another Constellation parent that provided sufficient time for the foster parent and the child to re-establish the rules for interaction and behavior at home.

- **Connections with siblings:** 22 of 49 children or 45% of the children in the MFM model were placed in the same home with at least one sibling.² In a random sample of 100 foster children in the Children's Administration, Region 4, 26% were placed with at least one sibling.
- In 8 of 22 foster homes or 36%, foster parents cared for siblings and in one Constellation, two siblings were each cared for in different foster homes. Siblings who had been placed together did remain together during the period of the MFM implementation in May through December 2006. The siblings from one birth family who had been placed in two foster families visited each other at the Hub Home. The Hub Home functioned as an extended family member's home, as it provided a supportive environment for the older and younger siblings to play together.
- Of the 22 foster families in the MFM, 5 of these families (23%) were kinship care providers or relative caregivers. This compares with 16% of foster parents from a random sample of 80 foster families in Region 4 who reported being kinship care providers or relative caregivers. The MFM kinship caregivers cared for 12 or 27% of all children in the MFM and kinship care included sibling groups and grandchildren. Kinship caregivers had generally been the only out-of-home-placement for children in their care and the child's average length of stay was more than six years.
- **Cultural relevancy:** Overall, 39 children or 80% of the children in the MFM shared the same racial/cultural or ethnic identity as at least one of their foster parent(s). Through the Hub Home gatherings and activities the MFM offers opportunities for support and cultural exchange among foster parents, the Hub Home parent(s) and the foster children. Through the Hub, foster children have the chance to interact with other foster parents and other foster children, some of whom share the same cultural/ ethnic or racial identities. A majority of the foster

parents reported that their child had interactions “often” or “more frequently” during at least one month which the foster parent felt had promoted the child’s sense of cultural identity.

Summary of the characteristics of Foster Families in the MFM- 2006, King County, WA

Characteristics of Satellite homes		Ethnicity of Children	
Number of single parent homes	11	Asian/ Pacific Islander	3
Number of two-parent homes	11	African American	24
<i>Total number of satellite homes*</i>	<i>22</i>	Caucasian	6
		Native American	2
Number of Kinship caregivers (counted above in the type of family * and also included in sibling counts)	5	Mixed race	5
Number of homes with siblings placed in the home	8	Hispanic (refers to ethnicity and child may be of any race)	6
Number of homes with a child’s sibling in another satellite home	2	<i>Total number of children</i>	<i>46[#]</i>
Number of children in kinship care	12	Age of children	
Number of BRS level children	16	2-5 years of age	5
Number of basic level foster care	28	6-10 years of age	14
<i>*This is an unduplicated count of the number of homes. Kinship caregivers may be counted more than once- as kinship care, homes where siblings live, and as a single or two parent home.</i>		11-14 years of age	14
		15-18 years of age	13
		<i># Total number of children reflects one youth who aged out and another youth no longer in a satellite home</i>	

- **Support of Permanency Plan:** The Hub Home offers a supportive environment to facilitate meetings and visits for a foster child and birth family or an adoptive family. One Hub Home hosted a visit with a child and a family member and similar visits are likely to continue in the future.
- **Participation in social activities to build community:** The total number of hours of Hub Family activity for all Constellations was 1454 hours over an eight month period. This is an average of 363.5 hours per hub, with the Constellations being implemented between 3-8 months in 2006. These activities offered children and youth recreational opportunities, tickets to attractions, family meals,

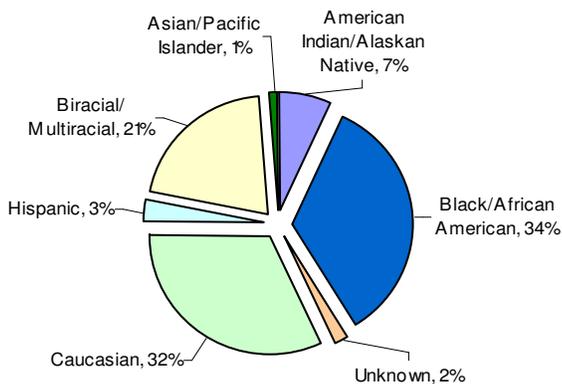
² The total number of children for whom initial data and monthly data are available is 44, but there is the initial project information, including placement information, on 49 children. These children were in families that were referred by the host agency to be in the MFM but did not continue to attend activities or participate.

and time together that was away from their foster homes. The children and youth who attended were sometimes accompanied by their parents but at other times were supervised by the Hub Home parent. Younger children were more likely to attend family activities at the Hub Home. The youth who were least likely to participate in the group activities were the youth who were 16 years and older, and who were the single child in a foster home, and who lived in a foster home that was located far from the Hub Home.

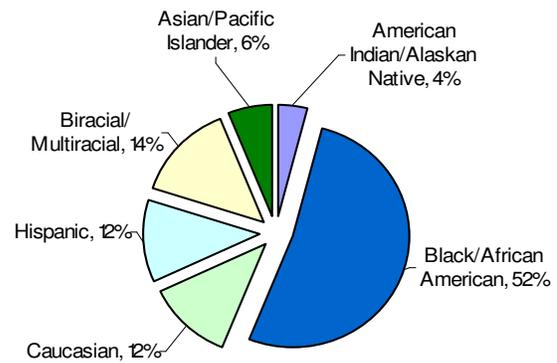
- ***Respite care that offers children and youth time away from their foster home:*** The availability of Hub Home parents to provide planned respite is facilitating sibling visits and is also providing normalizing experiences for the foster children to spend time with their peers, older youth, or younger children to do fun activities or take trips to local attractions. There was a total of 2,941 hours of planned respite, or an average of 735 hours per Hub for the total number of months that each hub was implemented. There was a range in the total number of planned respite hours in the 3-8 month intervals that each Hub was implemented as the lowest total was 50 hours and the highest was 1,723 hours. There was an average of 3.34 hours of planned respite per child per month. Eight children in three Constellations, or 18% of the total number of children, accounted for 72% of the total number of planned respite hours.
- There was a total of 1,343 hours of crisis respite that was provided by the Hub Home parents in the same period. One hub did not report providing any crisis respite and the three Hubs provided between 289 to 748 hours of crisis respite a month. There was an average of 1.53 hours per child per month of crisis respite care, but there was a very high pattern of use among a small number of high needs youth. Only 11% of the children/youth, or five children in three Constellations, accounted for 75% of crisis respite hours. Of these five children, there were four children in two treatment Constellations that accounted for 60% of the total number of crisis respite hours. The crisis respite was used generally for two reasons – either when the child’s behavior became too challenging for foster parents to handle or when the parents needed child supervision due to unexpected family emergencies or situations such as snow that hindered the parents’ travel and closed schools.

- Comparative data to other foster children:** Foster youth participating in the MFM differ somewhat with respect to their race/ethnicity when compared to a random sample of 100 foster youth from the same region.³ Higher percentages of African American children, Hispanic children and children with Asian/Pacific Islands backgrounds are participating in the MFM compared to the percent of children with the same ethnicities found in the random sample. A lower percent of children who identify as Native American or Alaska Native, Bi-racial or Multi-racial, or Caucasian are participating in the MFM compared to the percent of children from those same ethnicities in the random sample. The following charts show the ethnic and racial composition of the MFM foster youth in King County in the four Constellations and the random sample of 100 foster youth in Region 4 (King County, Washington).

Ethnicity of Random Sample (N=100)



Ethnicity of children in Mockingbird constellations (n=50)



- For children in the MFM, their age at first placement (and at first placement episode) is on average slightly younger than foster children's age at first placement in the random sample of 100 foster children in Region 4. Foster parents from the MFM reported that 45% of their foster children first entered the system as infants under the age of one. This compares to 20% of foster children from the random sample whose age at first placement was less than one year. This difference may be attributed to the high number of kinship families in the MFM model whose children entered care early and whose length of stay has

³ There were 50 MFM children/youth included in the total number of the MFM as the ethnicity and age data

been much longer (6 years or more on average) than other foster children in the MFM constellations or children from the random sample. In another comparison, 45% of MFM children's age at first placement was between six and twelve years compared to 57% from the random sample. While 15% of the foster children from the random sample were between the ages of 13 and 17 at their first placement, none of the MFM children entered the system at this age range.

- On average, there is a higher percentage of children in the Mockingbird Family Model whose current length of stay in out-of-home placement is between six and ten years than found in 100 foster children in Region 4. In the Constellations, there was a range of 20-40% of the MFM children who had been in a current out-of-home placement for 6-10 years compared to 3% of children in the random sample. Again, this may be due to the number of kinship families in the MFM who have had relative children in their care for six-10 years. For children whose length of stay was 3-5 years, the percentages between the MFM foster children and the random sample are comparable with 23% of the children in the random sample having a current length of stay between 3-5 years and a range from 8% to 30% of MFM foster children having a length of stay of three to five years. Percentages are similar between the two groups for length of stay between one to two years. In the random sample of foster children, 46% of children were in care for less than a year as compared to an overall mean of 41% for MFM foster children (ranged from 20-57% by Constellation).

- **Findings related to retention of Foster Parents**

The findings of the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) and the Braam Oversight Panel goals have identified that foster parents / kinship caregivers need adequate support to provide for the children in their care. The MFM aims to improve foster parent retention through the provision of respite care and peer support. The MFM contributed to the following outcomes for foster parents:

- As indicated under children's outcomes, in ten instances, foster parents reported that their use of respite contributed to maintaining the foster child in their home and prevented a placement disruption. The parents who used respite care

for these children were available, although four of these children did not have program participation data.

- reported having a positive experience in requesting and accessing respite that they had not had prior to the Mockingbird Family Model.
- The MFM foster parents reported using respite care nearly twice as often as the group of 80 foster parents in a random sample: 60% of the MFM foster parents reported using respite care as compared to 31% of the foster parents from the sample of foster parents in Region 4. In addition, many of the foster parents who were new to the MFM reported that they had rarely or never had access to regular respite in the past (particularly kinship caregivers) but looked forward to using this service through the MFM model.
 - The foster parents who attended and participated in the MFM monthly meetings and planned activities reported making positive connections with other foster parents in their Constellation. Even for those foster parents who did not participate in the activities as much because of distance or other obligations, they reported appreciating knowing that the support of a community of the MFM group is available to them.
 - 80% of MFM foster parents reported receiving support from their peers as compared to 53% of foster parents in a random sample of foster parents in Region 4. A much higher proportion of MFM foster parents, 73% to 93% reported receiving support through meeting other foster parents, calling them, and attending trainings with them than was reported by 17-36% of the random sample of foster parents.

Recommendations to improve implementation and service delivery

The data analysis led to the following recommendations to enhance the provision of services for foster parents and foster children:

- When there were more than six families in a Constellation who had two or more children in a family, the data indicated it was difficult to provide an adequate amount of planned and crisis respite care to foster children in the Constellation. The number of families, the number of children, and whether the children have high needs or are a BRS level of care should be considered in limiting the size of the Constellation.

- Hub parents are preferably two parent homes for maximum availability and accessibility to the foster parents. If the Hub Home parent is a single parent then he or she may best be available when only one foster child is placed in the home.
- The proximity of the satellite homes to the Hub Home has proven to be important to utilization of all types of respite. In urban settings, the satellite homes that were no more than 15 miles from the Hub Home tended to maximize use of services.
- Provide an opportunity for Hub Home parents in different Constellations to get together to exchange ideas and give each other support.
- Engage older teens in group activities by offering social and cultural events such as going to a sports event, a play, a dance concert or a music concert that would appeal more to this age group. Offer older teens from different Constellations an opportunity to get together so there are more teens in a group to add to the positive normalizing experience of interacting with peers.
- Provide training to Hub parents on several topics and encourage parents to suggest topics of interest. Suggested training topics are: communicating with school aged children, interacting with older youth, and providing culturally relevant experiences in foster care.
- Continue to have the Hub Home parent as a consistent provider of respite, as this was endorsed by the parents as a positive change from previous offers of respite when they were not in the MFM that would involve multiple respite providers who were not known to the foster parent. In their own words, the consistent respite provider “made all the difference” for foster parents’ willingness to access respite.

Conclusions

The accumulation of information from four local Constellations plus the interactions occurring in the two out-of-state Constellations is contributing to a growing body of evidence on the MFM as an alternative to traditional services for foster families. The initial project information gathered through foster parent and youth participant interviews, foster parent surveys, comparative data analysis and observation indicates

that the MFM provides a network of support, accessible respite care, and opportunities for community building that contribute to positive foster youth outcomes. While a more extended period for data collection and analysis is needed prior to drawing conclusions, in an eight month period in 2006, nine foster families in the Mockingbird Family Model reported ten instances when the use of respite care prevented them from requesting that a child in their care be removed from their foster home. The foster parents reported that use of respite provided a cooling off period sufficient for them to continue to interact with the older child or youth so the placement was not disrupted. There is also emerging evidence that the Hub Home offers the environment to facilitate birth family visits and sibling visits that may contribute to foster children and youth making progress toward their permanency goals. Parent and youth report that the hub /Constellation also provided interactions that supported youth in their connections to their cultural/ racial or ethnic identity.

The MFM foster parent survey data also indicated that 73-93% of MFM foster parents are receiving social support through interacting with other foster parents. The MFM foster parents are experiencing an amount of support and accessible respite care that they had not previously experienced. As the data from the Mockingbird Family Model continues to increase with the continuation of Constellations and the expansion of more Constellations, further evidence should accumulate to establish the MFM as a valuable resource for achieving positive outcomes for foster children and youth.

Introduction to the Mockingbird Family Model

Historical highlights and Current Implementation of the Model

The Mockingbird Family Model (MFM) was developed by the Mockingbird Society Executive Director to address the needs of foster children to have a safe, nurturing home life and to have improved outcomes and increased placement stability. The MFM refers to a Constellation that is a cluster of six to ten foster care families (referred to as satellite homes) with one Hub Home. A Hub Home is a central resource home for respite care, parent peer support and training, child-centered activities, and community building family-centered social events to the satellite foster families. The Hub Home is licensed and has available two or three beds for respite care to be readily available for the children in the satellite foster families.

The MFM has been implemented to meet the following goals:

- Placement stability: Support the foster/kinship family parents/ guardians' caregiving that will contribute to reducing the number of placements and stabilizing placements.
- Sibling contact: Help siblings to be together or in close contact with each other (unless this was not in the best interest of both children) so each child had connections to his or her family.
- Cultural relevancy: Help foster children to feel culturally connected with their heritage and feel supported in developing and maintaining their cultural/ ethnic or racial identity.
- Extended family network: Provide the children and youth with the benefits of a micro-community through the Hub Home and Constellation so foster youth feel supported and build a social network of support.
- The supportive context of the Hub Home offers space for children and youth to interact with their biological families or another caring family that may be a part of their permanency plan.

The Mockingbird Family Model ⁴ was first implemented in 2004 as a one-year demonstration project to improve outcomes, including the stability of placements of children and youth in the foster care system. There was one Hub/Constellation that provided services for five families who had a total of ten children. The MFM continued in a second year of implementation in 2005 and offered services and activities to a total of 21 children and 8 families through one Hub/ Constellation in South Seattle.

In 2006, in the third year of implementation, the MFM had a 400% increase in the number of Constellations in King County, Washington as there were four Constellations at the end of November 2006, and a fifth hub was identified in December 2006. There was a total of 22 families including 44 foster children in these four Constellations. In addition, there were two Hubs/Constellations in Washington, D.C. that formed in October 2006. There was a total of 9 families who had 12 children in these two Constellations.

The Mockingbird Society partnered with four host agencies in King County that recruited foster families to receive training and guidance to serve as Hub Home parents as well as Constellation foster families. The agencies were Youth Advocates, Ryther Child Center, Casey Family Programs, and the Washington State Children's Administration (CA) Region 4 foster family unit in South Seattle. In Washington, DC, the Mockingbird Society partnered with the Department of Human Services that served as the host agency in identifying Hub Home parents and Constellation families in the Northeast and Southeast sectors. The partnerships with the host agencies followed periods of communication and negotiation that were based on agency interest and common goals with the Mockingbird Society to work toward improvements in the existing foster care system. The Mockingbird Society has promoted a fast paced growth of the MFM in its three years of implementation. This year the MFM Executive Director and staff identified the elements for the fidelity of the MFM to ensure that in replication the Constellations would have consistent components and a common standard for implementation. The Executive Director and staff also refined the provision of the hub services in a training manual and training sessions for the participating satellite parents and the hub parents. Through monthly Project Leadership Team meetings, there is communication between the Mockingbird Society and four partnering agencies to identify policies and procedures that will be developed for the continuing implementation,

⁴ The Mockingbird Family Model was previously referred to as the Foster Family Constellation Project Model when first implemented in 2004.

expansion and replication of the Mockingbird Family Model. The Project Leadership Team meetings have also been a time for the host agencies and the Mockingbird Society representatives to discuss and agree on accessing and providing respite, offering family social activities, making resources available to families, providing an orientation to satellite foster families, and collecting some information on family participation.

Overview of the Report

The report is presented in five sections as highlighted below:

Section 1- Who are the MFM Participants?

- This section has a profile of the MFM participants, including foster children and foster parents, in relation to the bigger population of youth in foster care and foster parents in the Children's Administration, Region 4, (King County). This section provides the context for understanding how representative the MFM families are of other foster families.

Section 2- How well did the Mockingbird Family Model meet program goals for foster children?

- This section addresses how well the MFM has supported the stability of placements for the foster children and youth in the MFM, as well as other goals including keeping siblings together and providing a supportive social network. This section also includes the perceptions of older youth who participated in the MFM and interacted with the adults and the other children and youth in the MFM.

Section 3- How well did the MFM support foster parents?

- This section focuses on the foster parents as a goal of the MFM was the retention of foster parents who could offer stability to foster children. The section describes the extent to which the foster parents received support through their peers in the Constellation and how the hub provided a source of support and respite caregiving for them.

Section 4- What lessons have been learned through implementing the Mockingbird Family Model in different contexts?

- This section includes a description of the MFM and the patterns of participation among the foster parents and children. This section describes how the

Hub/Constellations functioned when there were different numbers of families in the Constellation and the families lived in the same neighborhood or at a distance from the Hub Home. This section describes how the model has worked in one region in Washington state as it is relevant in considering future implementation in new locations.

Section 5- Conclusions and recommendations

- This section contains recommendations for the future implementation of the MFM, as well as some conclusions based on information collected from the participants in the four Constellations.

Methods of Data Collection and Analysis

There were several means of collecting data including the use of questionnaires and interviews in addition to the observations made by two evaluators from the Northwest Institute for Children and Families at the University of Washington. The description of the approach as well as a copy of the tools are included in Appendix A.

Orientation to the Constellations

In this report, the Constellations are referred to by a letter to protect the privacy or prevent any identification of the foster children and the foster parents.

Each of the Constellations had a Hub Home parent or parents and there were four to seven families in each Constellation in the evaluation period in 2006. The four Constellations were located in King County and provided a source of social support to the families who lived in different neighborhoods from the southeast to north areas of the County. A discussion about the foster families' participation in services related to the proximity and location of the Hub Home and satellite homes is included in Section 4.

Constellation Reference Letter	Location of the Hub Home	Length of time as MFM Hub Home in 2006	Number of families (not including the hub parent(s))
A*	West Seattle	3 mos (Oct- Dec)	6
B	Southeast Seattle	7 mos (June-Dec) [#]	6
C	Federal Way	8 mos (May-Dec.	4
D	Southeast Seattle	5 mos (Aug.-Dec).	6

*Three families in this Constellation initially came together as a Constellation in April-May 2006 but did not continue to meet as a Constellation when the hub parent accepted full-time employment. The Constellation resumed meeting with a new hub parent in October 2006.

While some families participated in activities for eight months the monthly data on participation and on group social events were consistent for a seven month period.

In the Washington, DC there were two Constellations, each in a different sector with the satellite families in the Constellation living in close proximity to the Hub Home parents. The Hub Home families were single parent homes.

Constellation Reference Number	Washington ,D.C. Location of the Hub Home	Length of time as a MFM Hub Home in 2006	Number of families (not including the hub parent(s))
1	Southeast	3 months (Oct- Dec)	4
2	Northeast	3 months (Oct-Dec)	5

In this report, the data analysis refers primarily to the King County implementation of the MFM. The data from the Washington, D.C. have been included in Section 4 as some evidence of the implementation of the MFM in a different setting. The families in Constellations A and C were new to the Mockingbird Family Model in 2006. There were three families in Constellation B and one family in Constellation D who had participated in another Constellation when the Mockingbird Society had partnered with a different host agency in 2004-05. The length of participation is included as an indication that families were active for less than 12 months. The period of time for assessment of the program outcomes, including placement stability, was limited to eight months or less so those assessments will be more meaningful when conducted over a longer duration of time in 2007.

The current number of foster parents and foster children in each satellite home and Hub Home is listed on the following page along with the length of time of participation in the Constellation. This information places participating foster families in a Constellation where they are receiving services and participating in activities which will be described in the following sections of the report.

Constellation A

Family	Number of parents in family	Number of foster children	Number of months participating in MFM in 2006
A	1	1	6
B	2	2	3
C	1	1	6
D	1	1	6
E	1	1	6
F	1	1	3
G	*	1	3

* parents not part of MFM Constellation

Constellation B

Family	Number of parents in family	Number of foster children	Number of months participating in MFM
A	1	2	In MFM 2004-05 + 7 months
B	2	2	In MFM 2005 + 7 months
C	2	2	In MFM 2005 + 7 months
D	2	2	7 months
E	1	2	7 months
F	1	2	1.5 months

Constellation C

Family	Number of parents in family	Number of foster children	Number of months participating in MFM in 2006
A	2	1	8
B	2	3	8
C	2	1	4
D	1	1	8
E**	1	2	8

**Hub parent with two foster placements

Constellation D

Family	Number of parents in family	Number of foster children	Number of months participating in MFM
A	1	2	5 months
B	2	4	In MFM 2005 + 5 months
C	1	1	5 months
D	2	2	5 months
E	2	5	3 months
F	2	1	3 months
G**	1	1	5 months

** Hub Home foster placement

Who are the current participants in the Mockingbird Family Model?

⇒ **The Constellations in the MFM are composed of diverse families.**

As of early December 2006, there were 22 families and 44 children participating in four MFM Constellations in King County. These numbers are based upon children and families for whom initial information was provided by the foster parents and there was some monthly participation data or information that the parents continued to be involved in the Constellation. In 2006, 52% of the children in the MFM Constellations in King County were African American, 13 % of the children were Caucasian, 4 % were Native American, and 13% identified as Hispanic. The children in the King County satellite homes were 2-18 years of age, with an average age of 11.3 years (median-11 years, mode= 13 years). In the four Constellations, 80% or four of five children were 8 years or older. There were 16 children who were identified as Behavioral Rehabilitation Services (BRS) level of care, and 28 children were a basic level of foster care, or Family Foster Home care. There were two Constellations that each had eight children at the BRS level of care. These two Constellations were implemented in partnership with a host agency that is experienced in the provision of therapeutic foster care. Children and youth in the BRS level of care had socioemotional or behavioral diagnoses that generally required medication management, special education, and intensive supervision to ensure the safety of the child. The most common diagnoses were Attention Deficit & Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and Reactive Attachment Disorder (RAD).

The composition of each of the Constellations varied in the total number of children, ages of the children, number of siblings, and presence of kinship care providers in two of four Constellations. Five families, 23% of MFM families, were kinship care providers or relative caregivers. This is a higher proportion than 16% that was found in a random sample of 80 foster families in Region 4 who reported being kinship care providers. The MFM kinship caregivers cared for 12 or 27% of all children in the MFM and kinship care included sibling groups and grandchildren. Kinship caregivers had

generally been the only out-of home-placement for children in their care and the child's average length of stay was more than six years. There were further distinguishing characteristics in the number of families, proximity to the Hub Home, the length of time that the families had been in the MFM, and the level of foster care that the children required, as already indicated, there were two Constellations that had children at a BRS level of care. The profile of each of the Constellations is described below.

Constellation A was the first agency to begin meeting in April of 2006 with a Hub Home in south Seattle but discontinued after two months when the Hub parent accepted full-time employment. This Constellation came together again in October with a new Hub Home in West Seattle and six satellite families. There were three foster children from the original group of seven children that were part of the Constellation in April and May who did not continue when the new Constellation formed in October of 2006. The current Hub Home is a two parent family with one biological child who is 15 years old. There is one other two parent family in the Constellation with two foster children and five single parent families, each with one foster child. There are a total of eight children currently in this Constellation, including one child whose family (foster parents) are not in the Constellation. The child is in the Constellation in order to participate in sibling visits with a child living in another Constellation home. The children in Constellation A range in age from 10 to 14 years old and they need a BRS level of foster care services. Five children have Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and three were diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Constellation A: Ages of foster children

	Age 10	Age 11	Age 13	Age 14
Number of children	3	1	3	1

Constellation A: Ethnicity/Race of foster children

	African American	Asian/Pacific Islander	Caucasian
Number of children	4	2	2

There are no siblings living together in the same home in this Constellation but there are two siblings within the same Constellation. There are no kinship care providers in Constellation A.

Constellation B began family activities over the summer and officially started in June with five families. There are currently four families with eight foster children in this

Constellation through the host agency. There are two additional families with a total of five children who had been in the MFM through a different host agency in year two of the MFM implementation and these two families have participated in the hub activities provided in this Constellation this year. The Hub Home is a two parent family located in south Seattle and they have one adopted child who is nine living in the home. There are three 2 parent families in the Constellation and three single parent families. There is also one new family who joined the Constellation in December but no entry data were available at the time of this report. In Constellation B, a total of four families have sibling pairs or groups in the home and two of these four families are kinship caregivers. Below is a breakout of the children in this Constellation by ethnicity and age:

Constellation B: Ages of foster children

	Age 4	Age 5	Age 6	Age 7	Age 9	Age 11	Age 12	Age 13	Age 15	Age 16	Age 18
Number children	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1

Constellation B: Ethnicity/Race of foster children

	African American	Multi-racial	Native American	Caucasian
Number of children	7	3	2	1

Constellation C began meeting as a MFM Constellation in May of 2006. The Hub Home is located in Federal Way and is a single parent home with two foster children placed in the home. In addition to the Hub Home, there are four satellite families in this Constellation serving nine foster children. There are three 2 parent families and one single parent family in this Constellation. There are no siblings living together in any home in this Constellation. However, one of the children placed at the Hub Home has a sibling living down the street in the home of a satellite family, and this sibling has been adopted by the satellite family. There are no kinship caregivers in this Constellation. The foster children in Constellation C range in age from 11 to 17 years of age and need BRS level services. Four children in the Constellation had a diagnosis of Bi-polar disorder and four were diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.

Below is a breakout of foster children in this Constellation by age and ethnicity:

Constellation C: Ages of foster children

	Age 11	Age 13	Age 15	Age 16	Age 17
Number of children	3	1	1	1	3

Constellation C: Ethnicity/Race of foster children

	African American	Hispanic	Asian-Pacific Islander	Multi-racial	Caucasian
Number of children	3	1	1	1	3

In August of this year, one child aged out of the foster care system and the MFM Constellation and is living independently. Currently there are a total of eight children in this Constellation.

Constellation D began meeting as a MFM Constellation in August of this year. The Hub Home is located in south Seattle and is a single parent home with one foster child placed in the home. In addition to the Hub Home, there are six satellite families participating in the MFM Constellation. There are four 2 parent families and two single parent families in this Constellation and a total of sixteen foster children. There were as many as six other families listed as being part of this Constellation but were not included because one family had already adopted their foster grandchild and there was insufficient entry data on the other five families. It is possible that the Hub Home and the host agency will refine the criteria of participation in the satellite and this will lead to collecting information from other families that will be identified in the future as being part of this Constellation. Foster children in this group range in age from 2 to 17 years of age. The age and race/ethnicity of the children in this Constellation is listed below:

Constellation D: Ages of foster children

	Age 2	Age 3	Age 4	Age 7	Age 8	Age 9	Age 10	Age 13	Age 16	Age 17
Number of children	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	2	2	2

Constellation D: Ethnicity/Race of foster children

	African American	Hispanic	Mixed race
Number of children	10	5	1

In Constellation D there are two kinship caregivers providing care to two groups of siblings and one kinship caregiver providing care to one grandchild. Of the two kinship caregivers, one family is providing care to their five grandchildren, all siblings. Another family is providing care to two grandchildren that are siblings. In addition, there are two other sibling pairs placed in two satellite homes that are not kinship care providers. Thus, there are a total of four satellite families with siblings placed in the same home and two of these are also kinship caregivers. The table below is a summary of the characteristics of the families in the four Constellations implemented in King County.

Summary of Characteristics of Families in four King County Constellations 2006

Characteristics of Satellite homes		Ethnicity of Children	
Number of single parent homes	11	Asian/ Pacific Islander	3
Number of two-parent homes	11	African American	24
<i>Total number of satellite homes*</i>	<i>22</i>	Caucasian	6
		Native American	2
Number of Kinship caregivers (counted above in the type of family * and also included in sibling counts)	5	Mixed race	5
Number of homes with siblings placed in the home	8	Hispanic (refers to ethnicity and child may be of any race)	6
Number of homes with a child's sibling in another satellite home	2	<i>Total number of children</i>	<i>46[#]</i>
Number of children in kinship care	12	Age of children	
Number of BRS level children	16	2-5 years of age	5
Number of basic level foster care	28	6-10 years of age	14
<i>*This is an unduplicated count of the number of homes. Kinship caregivers may be counted more than once- as kinship care, homes where siblings live, and as a single or two parent home.</i>		11-14 years of age	14
		15-18 years of age	13
		<i># Total number of children reflects one youth who aged out and another youth no longer in a satellite home</i>	

⇒ **The children and youth in the MFM are similar to other children who are in foster care in Region 4.**

This section describes whether the children and youth in the MFM differ in several characteristics and placement histories including length of time in foster care from a group of randomly selected foster youth in Region 4. One purpose of comparing the MFM children to a larger group of children and youth in foster care is to identify if the MFM children are similar or if they differ from other children and youth who are in foster care. The comparison helps to identify if the group of children in the MFM were somehow unique or if as a group they shared experiences in the foster care system and in out-of-home placement that were comparable to the experiences and situations common among a group of foster children.

Overview of the comparison: In the following section, there is description that the children in the MFM were more diverse than a random sample of foster youth, had a similar length of time in out-of-home placement, and had a higher percentage of children with a current length of stay in an out-of-home placement between six to ten years than in the random sample of foster children in the same region. More children in the MFM had entered out-of-home care under five years of age than the random sample of foster children and a slightly higher proportion of MFM children had been in the foster care system for more than 10 years compared to the random sample of foster youth. These differences between age at entry into the system and length of stay between six to ten years may be explained by the high number of kinship caregivers in the MFM, whose relative children entered care early (majority under age of 5) and have remained with these relative caregivers for six to ten years.

Typical MFM foster family: A typical MFM foster family has been a foster family for at least four years with the same child in the home for about two years (average). A majority of MFM foster homes have just one child in the home, although the MFM kinship caregivers tend to have more than one child and tend to have sibling groups. A typical MFM family would be a single parent family or a two parent family with an eleven year old boy who is experiencing his second placement and first entered the foster care system at age seven. This typical boy has a sibling—a sister—who is living with another family in the same Constellation who is four and entered the system for the

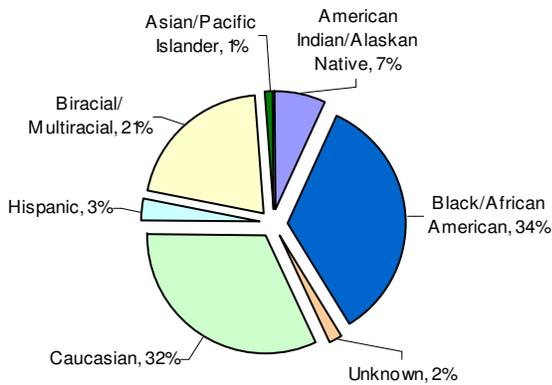
first time at age one; and she has had one prior placement to her current placement. These children have been in their current placements for approximately two years (current placement episode) and this compares to a random sample of 100 foster children in King County whose mean length of stay in their current placement is 1.5 years.

Some comparisons of foster children in the MFM and Foster children in a random sample: Foster youth participating in the MFM were more ethnically diverse when compared to a random sample of 100 foster youth from the same region.⁵ Higher percentages of African American children, Hispanic children and children with Asian/Pacific Islands backgrounds are participating in the MFM compared to the percent of children with the same ethnicities found in the random sample. A lower percent of children who identify as Native American or Alaska Native, Bi-racial or Multi-racial, or Caucasian are participating in the MFM compared to the percent of children from those same ethnicities in the random sample. In King County, African American and Native American children are over-represented in the child welfare system. Although these two groups represent 8% of the population, they represent one-third of all children removed from their homes and one-half of children in foster care for more than four years.⁶ The combined percent of Native American and African American children in the MFM is 56% that is more than half of all children in the MFM and parallels the proportion of foster children in King County who have been in the system for more than four years.

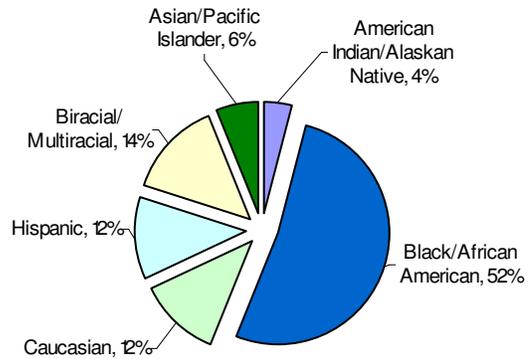
⁵ There were 50 MFM children/youth included in the total number of the MFM as the ethnicity and age data for these children were available, although four of these children did not have program participation data.

⁶ King County Coalition on racial Disproportionality, 2005

Ethnicity of Random Sample (N=100)

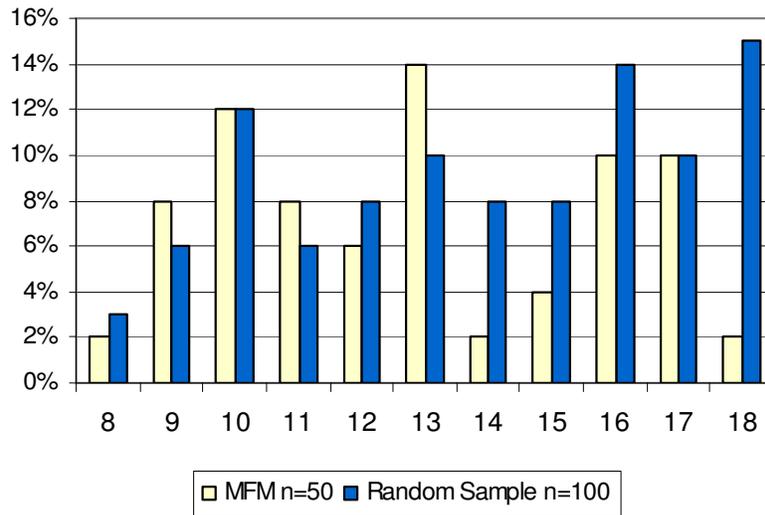


Ethnicity of children in Mockingbird constellations (n=50)



With respect to age, there are slightly higher percentages of older teens (ages 14 through 18) in the random sample compared to those participating in the Mockingbird Family Model. The age range in the MFM was 2-18 years and the age range in the random sample was 8-18 years. The average age of the youth in the random sample was 13.7 years and it was 11.3 years for MFM youth. The median age for the random sample was 13 years old and it was 11 for MFM youth. Eight of 50 children, or 16% of the Mockingbird foster children are under the age of eight. Three of the four host agencies focus their services on foster youth. In implementation in 2006, one Constellation included two families with younger children under 8 years old who had been participants in a different Constellation in Year 2 of the MFM. Another Constellation has two families with young children so the combined number of children under 8 years old in the MFM was slightly higher than was initially anticipated based on the ages that were usually served by three host agencies.

Age distribution for foster youth in MFM & random sample

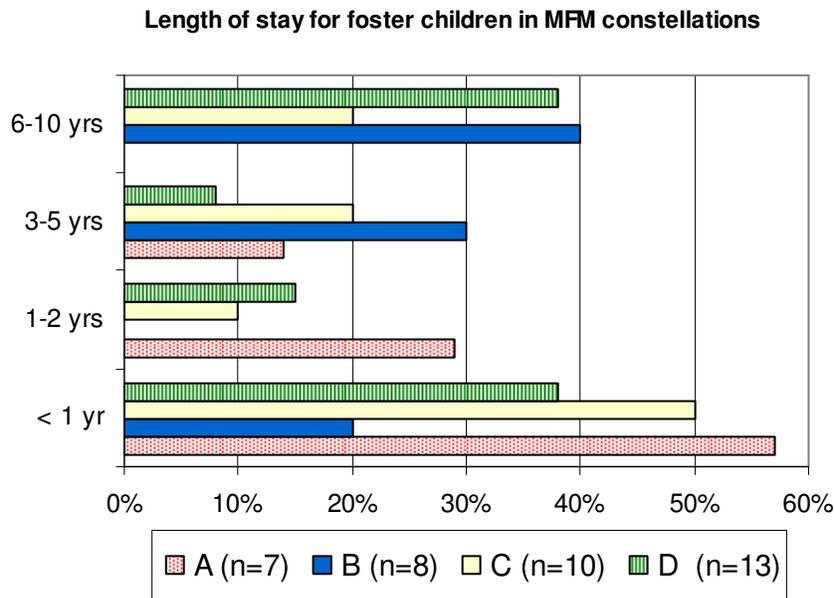
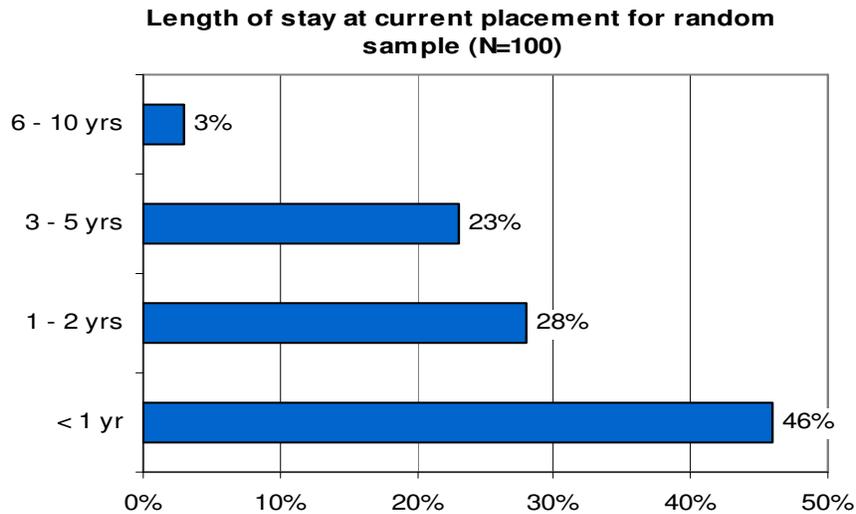


Length of stay in out-of-home placement

On average, there is a higher percentage of children in the Mockingbird Family Model whose current length of stay is between six and ten years than found in the random sample. By hub, there were 20%, 38% and 40% of children with 6-10 year out of home placement histories compared to 3% in the random sample. The differences between the random sample and the MFM foster children with respect to length of stay for those in placements between six to ten years may be explained by the high number of kinship caregivers in the MFM, whose relative children entered care early (majority under age of 5) and remained with those relative caregivers for six to ten years.

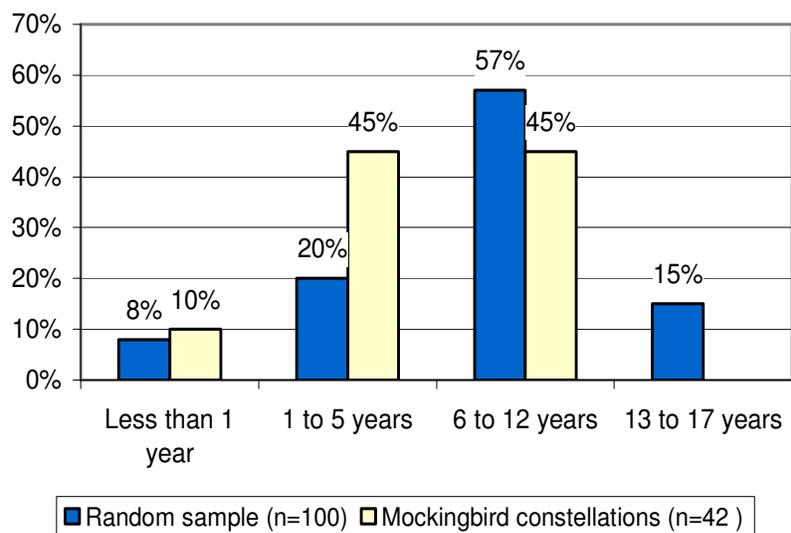
For children whose length of stay was 3-5 years, the percentages between the MFM foster children and the random sample are comparable with 23% of the children in the random sample having a current length of stay between 3-5 years and a range from 8% to 30% of MFM foster children having a length of stay of three to five years. Percentages are similar between the two groups for length of stay between one to two years with 28% of foster children from the random sample having been in their current placement for one to two years and a range of 10%, 15% and 29% of children in the Mockingbird Constellations having a length of stay between one and two years. There is a similar average in percentage length of stay for children in care for less than one year with 46% of children from the random sample being in care for less than a year as

compared to an overall mean percentage of 41% for MFM foster children (ranged from 20-57% by Constellation). In summary, it appears that the current length of stay for children who have been in their current placement for five years or less is similar to that of foster children in the random sample. There is, however, a higher percentage of children whose current length of stay is between six to ten years in the MFM model than in the random sample of foster children in the same region



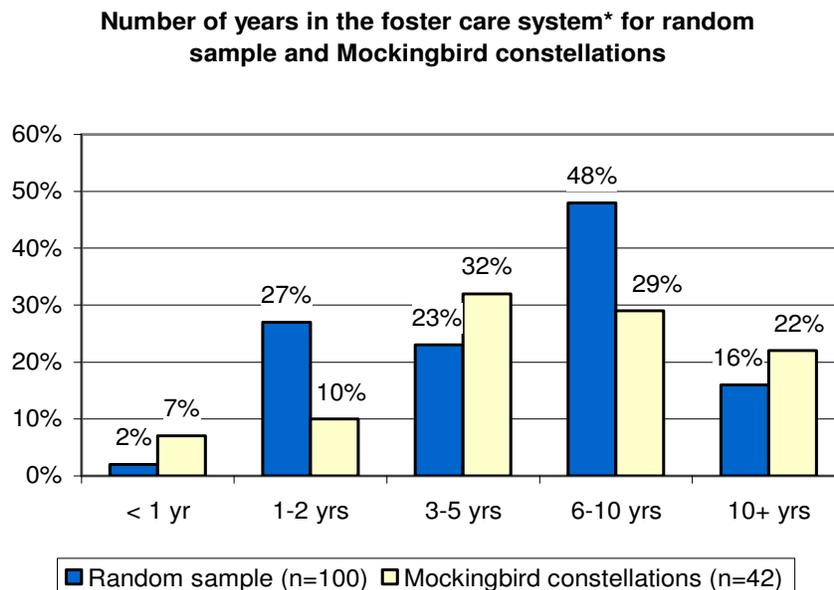
For children in the MFM, their age at first placement (and at first placement episode) is on average younger than foster children's age at first placement in the random sample. This difference may also be explained by the high number of kinship caregivers in the MFM whose relative children entered the system early (majority under the age of five years). Foster parents from the MFM reported that 45% of their foster children first entered the system as infants under the age of one. This compares to 20% of foster children from the random sample whose age at first placement was less than one year. For the MFM children, 45% of the children at first placement were between six and twelve years old compared to 57% from the random sample. In the random sample, 15% of the foster children were between the ages of 13 and 17 years old at their first placement, but none of the MFM children had entered the foster care system at these ages.

Age at first placement for radom sample & Mockingbird constellation



Overall, 55% of the MFM foster children's age at first placement was between 0 and 5 years while 28% of the foster youth in the random sample first entered the system in the same age range. We can look at these two groups of foster children, and if we look at their current age and their age at first entry into the foster care system, we have

an approximate measure of the number of years in the foster care system. The bar graph below compares the overall number of years that MFM foster children have been in the system with the overall number of years the random sample of foster children in King County have been in the system.



The foster children from the random sample are most closely aligned with the foster children from the MFM in either having a short or very long out-of-home placement history. That is, children in the MFM and those in the comparison sample were most alike in having either been in the system less than a year or having been in the system for over ten years. For children who have been in the foster care system for one to two years, the random sample was quite a bit higher (17% higher), and was higher for children who have been in the system six to ten years (random sample 19% higher). Although there were a greater number of children from the random sample who had been in the system for three to five years, the difference was only 9%. The percentage of children in the system for less than a year was 5% greater for the MFM children. There was also a higher percent of MFM foster children who had been in the system for over ten years, 22%, compared to 16% in the foster children in the random sample.

⇒ **The MFM provides support to foster parents that is not experienced by other foster parents in Region 4.**

This section provides a comparison of the MFM foster parents and information from a sample of foster parents in King County. A survey was mailed in September of 2006 by Children’s Administration in Region 4 to a random sample of 200 foster parents in King County. There were 80 completed surveys, for a response rate of 40%, from this random sample. The results from the Children’s Administration foster parent sample were compared to responses on the same survey from a sample of 15 MFM foster parents to identify similarities and differences with respect to their histories and use of services, including respite and foster care training.

Four out of five MFM foster parents had been a foster parent for at least five years compared to one of two foster parents in the random sample. There were more foster parents in the random sample who had 1-5 years of experience than did the MFM foster parents. Both groups of foster parents had a similar representation of parents with less than six months experience as a foster parent.

Comparison of Length of Time as a Foster Parent for MFM Foster parents and sample of CA foster parents in Region 4

	<6 months	6 months-1 year	1-2 years	2-5 years	5+ years
CA foster parents	8%	4%	11%	27%	50%
MFM foster parents	7%	0	7%	7%	79%

⇒ **More children had been cared for in a MFM home for a longer stay than in other foster families in a random sample in Region 4.**

When asked how many children they had in their care over time, the MFM foster parents reported similar numbers of children in care for less than two years, fewer children in care than the random sample from three to four years, fewer children in care from five to ten years and higher numbers of children in care greater than ten years. The higher number of children in care over ten years among MFM foster parents may be related to a higher number of kinship caregivers in the MFM.

When asked the question, “how long does a child typically stay in your care?” Both foster parents from the random sample and foster parents from MFM reported comparable years in care for those in care five or more years. A higher percentage of foster parents from the random sample reported that children had been in their care from two to five years than the MFM foster parents. A much higher percentage, 33%, of MFM

foster parents reported that children typically stay in their care from one to two years than found in 18% of the random sample.

Average lengths of stay reported by foster parents

	6 months	6 months-1 year	1-2 years	2-5 years	More than 5 years
Random sample parents	8%	17%	18%	23%	34%
MFM foster parents	20%	7%	33%	7%	33%

Foster parents were asked how often they had requested that a child be removed from their home due to behavior problems or communication issues. This question referred to the total experience of foster parents and not current caregiving. The MFM parents and the foster parents from the random sample responded similarly, although a greater percentage of foster parents from the random sample reported never having to request that a child leave or asking just one time that a child be removed from their home. None of the foster parents from the random sample reported ever requesting four times that a child had to leave their home while 7% of foster parents from the MFM reported asking four times that children in their care had to be removed from the placement due to behavioral problems.

Number of times child has been asked to leave home

	Never	1 time	2 times	3 times	4 times
Random sample CA foster parents	38%	38%	10%	14%	0
MFM foster parents	20%	27%	27%	20%	7%

Foster parents were asked if they felt that had received adequate training to be a foster parent. Because most of the MFM foster parents had been foster parents for some time, they did not respond to the question based on any training through the Mockingbird Society but based on initial training they received through the state or their sponsor agency. A slightly larger percentage of foster parents from the random sample

(87%) felt that they had received adequate training to become foster parents, while 73% of the MFM foster parents felt that they had received adequate training.

⇒ **73-93% of MFM foster parents reported social support compared to 17-36% in the CA foster parent sample.**

A much higher percentage of MFM foster parents felt that they got support from other foster parents—80% of MFM foster parents as compared to 53% of the foster parents in the random sample. For those who reported getting support from other foster parents, the table below shows that MFM foster parents reported 2-4 times greater support through meeting other foster parents, calling them, and attending trainings with them than did the random sample of foster parents.

Types of foster parent support

	Meet with other foster parents	Call other foster parents	Attend trainings with other foster parents
Random sample CA parents	17%	36%	21%
MFM parents	93%	73%	87%

⇒ **60% of the MFM foster parents reported using respite care as compared to 31% of the foster parents from the random sample.**

Since increasing access and use of respite care is a goal of the MFM, we wanted to know if there were differences in utilization of respite care services among MFM foster parents and the random sample of foster parents. In the MFM, foster parents reported using respite care nearly twice as often as the foster parents in the random sample: 60% of the MFM foster parents reported using respite care as compared to 31% of the foster parents from the random sample. In addition, many of the foster parents who were new to the MFM reported that they had rarely or never had access to respite in the past (particularly kinship caregivers) but looked forward to using respite in the MFM.

For those foster parents who reported using respite care services, the table below describes how often foster parents utilized respite care. At the high end—twice a month or more and once a month, MFM foster parents reported much higher percentages of use than the random sample of foster parents. Respite use was comparable between the two groups at the lower end, that is, the percent of MFM foster parents and the parents in the sample were similar for respite use for every couple of months, every six months, and once a year.

Frequency of use of respite care

	Two or more times a month	Once a month	Every couple of months	Every six months	Once a year	As needed
Random sample Parents	20%	32%	16%	8%	20%	4%
MFM foster parents	45%	22%	11%	11%	11%	None

⇒ **More kinship caregivers are in the MFM than in a sample of foster parents.**

In comparing the number of kinship care or relative care givers in the MFM model to a random sample of foster parents, there were 22 foster families participating in the Mockingbird Family model and five of these families (23%) were kinships caregivers. This compares with 16% of foster parents from the random sample of 80 foster parents in King County who reported being kinship caregivers.

Section

2

How well has the Mockingbird Family Model met the program goals for foster children?

⇒ **During the MFM implementation period, in three of four Constellations the use of respite was indicated as preventing placement disruptions.**

In 2006, when the Constellations were implemented for 3 to 8 months nine foster families reported that the stability of the placement of a child in their home was maintained because they could access and use respite care. These nine foster families indicated that the MFM respite care had prevented a parent-child interaction or child behavior situation from becoming unmanageable that would have led to a placement disruption. Each month the Hub Home parents in each Constellation reported on whether respite care had prevented a placement disruption, using their own experience and input from the foster parent and youth. The Hub Home parent in Constellation A reported that four times during April-May and October-December respite had prevented a placement disruption. The Hub Home Parent in Constellation B indicated that in June-December there were two instances when the availability of respite care had prevented a parent-child interaction from developing into a placement disruption. In Constellation C (May-December), the Hub Home parent reported that four times respite had prevented a placement disruption and the Hub Home parent in Constellation D (August-December) did not report that respite had prevented any placement disruptions.

Number of times placement disruption prevented

Constellation	Number of times placement disruption prevented per the foster parents' report
Constellation A	4
Constellation B	2
Constellation C	4
Constellation D	0

⇒ **Based on the available data, the overall stability of placements in the MFM Constellations has been 84%.**

Over the total duration of eight months when the model was implemented, 44 children were actively participating in the Mockingbird Family Model. For these 44 children, there were 7 changes in placement status: two children aged out of the system when they turned 18 years old, three children had their current placement disrupted at the foster parents' request and the children were moved to other placements with families within their Mockingbird Constellation, one child has a disrupted placement when the child's unmanageable behavior prompted the foster family to request that the child be removed from the home and the child was placed in residential treatment, one older child ran from the foster home and is currently living with the biological mother. In 2006, 84% have remained in one foster home consistently during the 3 to 8 month implementation period.

Placement changes by type and Constellation

Constellation	Age out of foster care	Move to another home within Constellation	Move to another placement outside Constellation	Run	Total
A		1			1
B	1	1			2
C	1	1	1		3
D				1	1
Total	2	3	1	1	7

Emerging data suggests that the MFM does help prevent placement disruptions and that the availability of a consistent person to provide crisis respite contributes to preventing these disruptions. This emerging element of the MFM will continue to be tracked to identify future disruptions in placements.

When a placement move became necessary, the MFM had the capacity to move children to another home within the Constellation. This enabled the children to preserve their connection to their local network formed with friends in the Constellation. In two of the three situations observed to date in the MFM, the child could stay in the same school and keep contact with the same community of people which is a strong feature of the MFM.

⇒ **To date, there is some evidence that kinship care in the MFM Constellations relates to placement stability.**

In 2006, there were five kinship care givers participating in the MFM, all grandparents. Constellation B had two kinship caregivers, and both of these caregivers have been caring for grandchildren for almost four years at the time of this report. Constellation D had three kinship caregivers and one family had been caring for two grandchildren for 4.5 and 5.5 years, one family had been caring for one grandchild for approximately five years and one family had been caring for five grandchildren for between eight and fourteen years, depending on the ages of the children. Below is a breakout of length of time in care by Constellation, family and child:

Length of placement in kinship care

Constellation	Family	Child ID	Length of current placement in yrs
B	1	5	4 years
B	1	6	4 years
B	2	42	4 years
D	1	43	14 years
D	1	44	14 years
D	1	45	10 years
D	1	46	10 years
D	1	47	8 years
D	2	40	4.5 years
D	2	39	5.5 years
D	3	38	5 years

The stability and longevity of placements for these caregivers has been much longer than for MFM foster parents as a whole or for the random sample of foster parents in Region 4. In all of the MFM kinship care arrangements, these families have been taking care of their grandchildren since they were infants or toddlers with one exception. In this case, the foster child came to the home when she was 13 years old and recently ran from the home at age 17.5 to live with the biological mother.

⇒ **The increased availability and accessibility of respite contributed to placement stability for children and youth.**

Children in the MFM are clearly benefiting from the “re-defining” of respite care by the MFM, which includes opportunities for regular (more than once a month) planned respite time, overnights with siblings, and planned group and individual activities. As a result, the majority of crisis respite time has been used by only a few children repeatedly (month to month) in each Constellation. The regular planned respite is helping to maintain placements, particularly for some of the higher needs children. The planned respite is also being used by one Constellation to facilitate family meetings and is used by two Constellations to regularly facilitate sibling visits. All four of the Constellations use the planned respite time to provide the normalizing experiences for youth to spend time with other foster children and families doing fun activities.

Constellation A offers therapeutic care and therefore also generally has much higher utilization rates for crisis respite. In the first two months of implementation of the MFM, crisis respite was utilized by one child for a couple of days in both April and May and used for five days by another child in April. Four children used planned respite in April, five children in May and two children in June. Use of planned respite overall and month to month is quite high for this Constellation compared to the other three Constellations. The Constellation closed in June but re-organized and the agency identified a new Hub Home parent in October. For the months of October through December, three children used planned respite in October, four children in November and six children in December. There was no crisis respite in October, one child utilized two days of crisis respite in November and two children utilized crisis respite in December—one for only eight hours and one for a week. Below is a table showing the total number of planned and crisis respite hours utilized by this Constellation by month. Hours of respite data by child and month is included in Appendix B.

Constellation A: Planned respite total hours by month

April	May	June	October	November	December	Total
172	184	96	113	189	195	949

Constellation A: Crisis respite total hours by month

April	May	June	October	November	December	Total
154	96	0	0	48	8	306

Begun in June, Constellation B did not utilize planned or crisis respite until September and October. Over the summer months, the only respite utilized was for planned group activities attended by the families from agency one in the Constellation. In September, there was no planned respite utilized but one child utilized seven days of crisis respite and the same child utilized two days of crisis respite in October. In October, planned respite was utilized for the first time and used by six children for a total of 79 hours in October. In November, planned respite was utilized by two children for approximately two days each and in December, planned respite was utilized by one child for two days. In December, crisis respite was utilized by one child for four days. Below is a table showing the total number of planned and crisis respite hours utilized by Constellation B by month:

Constellation B: Planned respite total hours by month

October	November	December	Total
79	95.5	44.5	219

Constellation B: Crisis respite total hours by month

September	October	November	December	Total
160	32	0	96.5	289

In Constellation B, the hub has also been used for supervised family visits with a foster child and an aunt who had been the child's previous relative caregiver. The hub parent provided transportation for the aunt to attend the visits. In November, the hub parent and the foster parents attended a Family Group Conference at the host agency for another teen in the Constellation.

Emerging patterns of respite use in Constellation C indicate that three children have comprised the majority of the crisis respite use while the planned respite use has been more evenly used by all the children in the Constellation. Two children utilized crisis respite in May, one for six days and one for four hours. One of the same children utilized crisis respite for eight days in July, and this respite helped preserve his placement. In October, another child utilized crisis respite for a week. In November, the child who had utilized crisis respite for a week in July used it again for a week and was subsequently moved to a residential treatment placement in December. The child who

used crisis respite for a week in October utilized it again for two days in November and was then moved to another placement within the Constellation. Three children used crisis respite in December for two hours each due to bad weather. Use of regular planned respite is high in this Constellation, in part because all of the children in this Constellation are between eleven and seventeen years old and many have special needs. In May, one child used planned respite for twelve hours, one child for four days, another child for six days, and two others for two days each.

There was no planned respite utilized in June, but in July six children used planned respite anywhere from three hours to three days. In August, five children used planned respite, one for twenty hours, two for just over a day, one for eight days and one for ten days. In September, four children used planned respite: one for a day, one for two days, one for three days and one for four days. In October, five children used planned respite: one for nine hours, two for just over a day and two for two days. In December, four children used planned respite: one for three hours, two for two days and one for three and a half days. Below is a table showing the total number of planned and crisis respite hours utilized by this Constellation by month. Hours of respite data by child and month is included in Appendix B.

Constellation C: Planned respite total hours by month

May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
342	0	222	513	244	188	40	173	1,723

Constellation C: Crisis respite total hours by month

May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
147.5	0	182.5	0	0	183	228.5	6	747.5

Emerging patterns of respite utilization for Constellation D show that respite is used almost exclusively for activities in large and small groups. There has been no crisis respite utilized by this Constellation of families and this may be due to the fact that the majority of the children are under the age of twelve and that there are a high number of kinship care providers in this group with low rates of respite utilization. Another possible reason for the low rates of planned respite may be that the respite data was not recorded until December.

While the hub/Constellation began in August, there was no planned respite utilization until October. In October, planned respite was used by two siblings from the same home who utilized respite for five hours. In December, these same two siblings utilized planned respite for eight hours each. Planned respite was also used by three other children from the same home in December, two for six hours, one for twelve hours. Below is a table showing the total number of planned respite hours utilized by this Constellation by month.

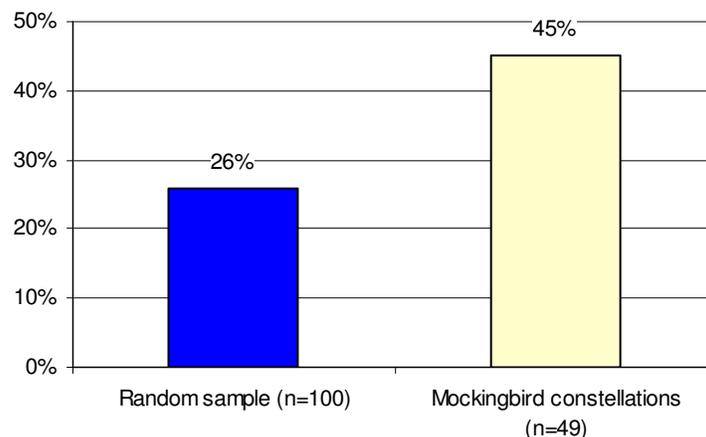
Constellation D: Planned respite total hours by month

October	November	December	Total
10	0	40	50

⇒ **Children in the MFM maintained connections to siblings more often than children who are not in the MFM**

The proportion of MFM foster children who are placed in the same home with their sibling(s) was compared to the proportion of siblings placed in the same home from a random sample of 100 foster children in Region 4. The MFM data indicates that there are 22 children out of a total of 49 or 45% of the children in the MFM model placed with siblings. This compares to 26% of the foster children or placements in the random sample who report being placed with at least one sibling.

Percentage of children with siblings in the home



⇒ **For the months when data were available, the MFM supported the formation of a micro-community where children and youth develop social connections to peers and adults.**

The children and youth in the MFM may attend monthly family focused activities at the hub with opportunities to interact with other foster children and youth in the Constellation. The pattern of attendance has varied associated with the age of the child as explained below for each Constellation.

In Constellation A, since October, there have been two monthly family activities and two smaller holiday activities in December. Attendance at the first family activity in October was almost 100% and in November and December participation in these planned activities was about 50%--that is about half of the families who are part of the Constellation attended the activities. Activity related hours for fall months were 24 hours for October, 22 hours for November and 33 hours for December.

Constellation A Family Activity hours by month

April	May	June	October	November	December	Total
60	50	0	24	22	33	189

Constellation B: In June, five foster children from the host agency and three children from the former host agency participated in a barbeque and clothing give away at the Hub Home. In July, three children and their families from the host agency and three children/families from the former host agency participated in a group outing to the Illusionz game center in Issaquah. In August five children and their families from the host agency and six children and their families from the former host agency participated in a family gathering at Wildwaves.

In September, five children and their families from the host agency and four children and their families from the former host agency participated in the group activity. At this time, foster parents from the host agency with older teens stated that they did not want to force their teens to participate in the meetings and activities. The foster parents brainstormed with the Hub parents about activities that might more readily engage older teens. In October, two children from the host and former host agencies participated in group activities. In November, three children from the host agency and six children from the former host agency, including two new children to the Constellation, participated in a group activity. In December, five children from the host agency and four children from the former host agency used respite. In looking at the use of respite hours for planned group activities by individual child/youth, a pattern emerges in Constellation B of regular

participation by families with younger children and little or no use of activity respite by the older teens.

Constellation B: Hub Family Activity hours by month

June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
24	18	44	27	18	32	39.5	203

Constellation C: Most of the youth in Constellation C knew each other from previous host agency functions and were more likely to attend the monthly events that included pool parties. There was a fairly consistent pattern of attendance at activities over the longest period of continuous activities for any of the Constellations.

Constellation C: Hub Family activity hours by month

May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
60	40	48	66	76.5	15	82.5	75	463

Constellation D: In August, twelve children and their families participated in two group activities for a total of 288 hours. In September and October, fifteen children participated in group activities for a total of 118 hours and 90 hours respectively. In November, eight children participated in respite activities for a total of 88 hours and in December three children participated in a group activity for a total of fifteen hours. In looking at patterns of individual child participation, the oldest teens have not participated in some of the activities but those older teens who are placed in homes with younger children and/or younger siblings tend to more readily participate in the family activities than those who are not placed in a home with younger youth.

Constellation D: Family activity hours by month

August	September	October	November	December	Total
288	117.5	90	88	15	599

The total number of hours of Hub Family activity for all Constellations was 1454 hours over an eight month period. This is an average of 363.5 hours per hub, with the hubs being implemented between 3 - 8 months in 2006.

⇒ **Older children and youth with younger siblings were more likely to attend activities, while older youth were less likely to attend.**

In Constellation A, there are no children over the age of fourteen. In Constellation B, there are four foster youth over the age of 14 (one 15 year old, two 16 year olds and one 18 year old); in Constellation C there are four foster youth over the age of 14 (one 15 year old, one 16 year old and two 17 year olds. In Constellation D there are four foster youth over the age of 14 (two 16 year olds and two 17 year olds). When interviewed the older teens state that they don't mind the activities and as one 16-year old stated, "it is fun to go swimming in the summer or go to Illusionz if I don't have anything else to do but when school starts, I would rather hang out with my friends." Another sixteen year old teen stated that he doesn't really like large group activities of any kind. Two 17 year olds stated that they did not really want to participate in the activities but were required to by their families and that overall, it was "ok." Participation in the group activities has not been very high for the older teens in the Constellations. It does seem that 13-15 year olds still maintain a higher rate of participation in the group activities and family activities, particularly if there are younger children placed in the same home. Even some of the older teens participated in the activities on occasion if there were other older teens participating and if they were participating in a family activity with their younger siblings who are in the same home or young foster placements who are in the same home.

Those least likely to participate in the group activities were the youth 16 years old and older who are in a single placement (single child in a home) or have only one other youth with them in a home and live further away from the Hub Home. In looking at the family group activities across all Constellations this year, they were geared towards younger youth. Examples of activities this year have included trips to Wild Waves, Illusionz Game Center, an overnight at the Woodland Park Zoo, Halloween parties, harvest parties, gingerbread house making events, holiday parties, barbeques and swimming. Some of the home barbeque and swimming events appealed more to the older teens than Illusionz, Wild Waves or the zoo.

⇒ **The MFM Constellations provide opportunities for children and youth to connect to others that supports a foster child's positive sense of racial/ ethnic/ cultural identity.**

Overall, 39 children or 80% of the children in the MFM shared the same race or ethnicity as at least one of their foster parent(s). In Constellation A, 86% of the foster

children shared the same race or ethnicity as one of their foster parents, in Constellation B, 77% of the children shared the same race or ethnicity as one foster parent, in Constellation C, 38% of the foster children shared the same race/ethnicity as the foster parent and in Constellation D, 100% of the foster children shared the same race/ethnicity as the foster parent(s). In Constellation B, one foster child did not share the same race as his foster parents but did share the foster home with his sibling who was of a different race. This child also shared race and ethnicity with one of the Hub parents and one other foster parent in the Constellation. Two foster siblings in Constellation B did not share the same race or ethnicity with their foster parent but did share religious identity and values. In Constellation C, three foster children did not share the same race/ethnicity as their foster parents but one child shared cultural identity and values around sexual orientation and the foster parents were supporting this type of cultural identity in a positive manner.

The model offers, through the Hub Home gatherings and activities, opportunities for support and cultural exchange between foster parents, the Hub parent(s) and the foster children. Through the Hub, foster children have the chance to interact with other foster parents and other foster children, some of whom share the same cultural/ ethnic or racial identities. They also get to participate in activities which positively support the development of cultural identity. Examples of this kind of naturally occurring exchange include: 1) sharing a Mexican meal at a monthly meeting where the foster youth have Mexican heritage and some of the African American youth and parents had never had this type of food before and asked for the recipe and 2) a group of families going to see an African dance performance together.

At the individual family level, foster parents were asked to report monthly on whether they thought their foster child had interactions with others to promote his/her cultural identity that month. Foster parents could state that no, the child had no interactions that promoted cultural identity, sometimes, often, or yes definitely had interactions that supported his/her cultural identity. Below is a table showing foster parent's perception of their child's interactions supporting the development of cultural identity for the months September through December of 2006.

Foster parent report on interactions promoting a sense of cultural identity

	No interactions to promote	Sometimes had interactions	Often had interactions	Yes definitely had interactions
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	cultural identity	promoting cultural identity	promoting cultural identity	supporting cultural identity
September		4	6	19
October		3	3	24
November	3	2	5	17
December	1	3	4	18

Although there is limited data at this time, a majority of the foster parents reported that their child had interactions often or definitely during the month which promoted his/her sense of cultural identity.

⇒ **The relatively short implementation period makes it hard to assess if any changes in the foster children’s behavior at home or at school could relate to their participation in the MFM.**

Previous research has shown that at elementary and secondary levels of education, twice as many foster youth as non-foster youth had repeated a grade, enrolled in special education, or changed schools during the year. Youth who are at risk for school failure are also at high risk for substance abuse and violence. The MFM children show a similar pattern to other foster youth in that at least 50% are in special education and at least 50% find school to be difficult.

Baseline performance data on MFM children in 2006

In special ed classes full or part day	Doing work below grade level	Reading at grade level	Enjoy going to school	Find school hard & time consuming	Find it hard to get along with others
30	25	11	12	20	12
73%	64%	31%	36%	54%	48%
*N=41	*N=39	*N=35	*N=33	*N=37	*N=25

While the MFM was not providing tutoring services to all foster children, the Hub Home parents supported foster parents in advocating for school based services that would support their child’s achievement in school. The MFM did provide regularly scheduled activities at the Hub Home when children and youth could socialize with each other and develop some of the social skills in getting along with peers that are useful at home and in school settings. Since foster children could practice their social interactions at the Hub Family Activities or in the planned group respite when several children could talk and interact with each other, the foster children could be more inclined to use the same social skills in school. The MFM children could feel more socially comfortable in

their respective classes so they could have improved attitudes to school or an increased willingness to work on classwork as they feel more at ease in fitting in with other classmates.

In looking at the patterns of individual MFM foster children's behavior at school and at home over time, we found that most children's behavior improved or stayed the same based on their foster parents' perceptions. Specifically, we looked at MFM children who were doing school work below their assigned grade level and who also reported (according to their foster parents) that school was "hard and time consuming." Not surprisingly, all the children in each Constellation who were identified as attending special education classes full or part time also fell into this category, although there were a few children who attended full time classes appropriate for their age but who were doing school work below their grade level and who also felt that school was hard and time consuming.

Areas we looked at by individual month to month included "participates in class/classwork," "completes homework," "gets along with classmates," and "gets along with foster parents." The scales used in looking at these items were: "not at all," "Sometimes," "Often" and "Definitely." Overall, approximately half of the children in each Constellation were doing school work below grade level and considered school to be hard and time consuming. Although this is only emerging data this year on a small number of children over a few months, this data will become more meaningful when tracked for a longer period of time.

Because Constellation A came together as a Constellation twice during the year, there was not enough data to look at individuals over time. Baseline data from this group in October indicate that six out of eight children were in special education classes full or part-time, two attended full time day classes for their age and five out of eight were doing school work below grade level. Four out of eight enjoyed school and three out of eight found school hard and time consuming. Six out of eight children made friends at school according to their foster parents, and two find it hard to get along with others.

In Constellation B, we looked at six children, three of whom were attending full or part time special education classes, five were doing work below grade level and three found school to be hard or time consuming according to their foster parents. In looking at their behavior and participation in school over six months, all of them stayed the

same or improved their level of participation in class, and three of them improved their ability to complete homework during that time. During the same six months, one improved his/her ability to get along with classmates at school and the others stayed the same. And lastly, all the children in this Constellation generally got along well with their foster parents and there were no significant changes in this ability over time.

In Constellation C, two out of eight children were in special education classes full or part time and these two children and two others were doing school work below their grade level. Three out of these four children also found school to be “hard and time consuming” according to their foster parents. Only two children, according to their foster parents, “enjoy school.” In looking at the four children who were doing school work below their assigned grade level, we found that one child significantly improved his participation in class and three children maintained the same levels of class participation over a seven month period, according to their foster parents. When it came to completing homework, two children showed some improvement and two maintained the same ability to complete homework, according to their foster parents. In looking at their ability to get along with others, the same two children who improved their participation in class and ability to do homework also slightly improved in their ability to get along with their classmates, while two children stayed the same in their ability to get along with classmates. In looking at their ability to get along with their foster parents, one youth was less able to get along with his foster parents over a three month period and this may have been because she/he was getting ready to live independently. Another child also had a decreasing ability to get along with his/her foster parents over time and this same child went into crisis and eventually was placed into residential treatment. The other two children stayed the same in their ability to get along with foster parents over time.

Constellation D: In this Constellation there were nine children who were identified as attending special education classes full or part time. These nine children and one other child were also identified as doing school work below their assigned grade level. Nine of these ten children also were identified by their foster parents as finding school to be “hard and time consuming.” In looking at these ten foster children over a five month period from August through December, one child significantly increased his/her participation in class, three children decreased their participation in class (all siblings) and six did not significantly change their participation over time. The same child who increased his/her participation in class significantly also increased his completion of homework over time. Two of the three siblings who decreased their

participation in class also decreased their completion of homework and one remained the same, according to their foster parents. Six other children's completion of homework remained about the same over time. Five children slightly increased their ability to get along with classmates over time in this group, three remained the same and the two siblings of the three siblings that had decreased participation in class also saw a decrease in ability to get along with classmates. In terms of getting along with foster parents, nine out of ten foster children got along with their foster parents often or most of the time. One child, who was also having difficulty with school work and difficulty getting along with others also had difficulty one month getting along with foster parents.

The data on the MFM foster children indicate that many do find school to be difficult, and that a smaller number appear to have made some changes in their school behavior. As the data are limited and other factors from home or available services at school could have influenced the child's behavior, these data will be assessed more over time. If the MFM develops child-focused services that are planned to assist children in their school behavior, connection to school, or experience in class then the data from individual children will be collected and analyzed in the future.

⇒ **Children and youth indicate some benefits from the MFM as expressed in interviews or in other information that was collected.**

- 1) 89% have remained in their Constellation in the MFM and only one child has been placed outside the Constellation in residential care.
- 2) 39 children, or 80%, of the children in the MFM shared the same race or ethnicity as at least one of their foster parent(s). The percent of children who are the same race as at least one foster parent ranges from 38% to 100%.
- 3) Youth reported they find out other "kids are like them" so they are having a normalizing experience of getting to do activities that other children and youth go places with other children in the Constellation.
- 4) Youth could establish friendships with peers and adults in the Constellation.
- 5) Children and youth had an increased opportunity to be placed in the same home with at least one sibling. If the sibling was not in the same home, there was an increased opportunity to visit with siblings overnight at the Hub Home

- 7) Children and youth had a consistent place to go for respite—someone who the foster parents know and trust. Respite was for fun activities and overnights and to hang out with other kids—not just to “chill out” or “take a time out.”

When older children who are participating in the MFM were interviewed, they reported that they liked going to the hub parent’s House and that they felt safe there and there were “fun things to do there.” They especially liked being able to have overnights with other children in the Constellation that they knew and liked and in some cases, getting to have overnights with a brother or sister who was placed in a different home. Some of the older teens who are 16 and 17 were less enthusiastic about going to the Hub Home and about participating in group activities. In general, however, the MFM children stated that they really liked participating in the activities and liked getting to “go new places” and see foster children and families that they know more often.

Section

3

Are foster parents supported through the Mockingbird Family Model?

⇒ **The foster parents in the MFM who attend and participate in peer support and social activities report positive connections with other foster parents.**

The foster parents who attended and participated in the MFM monthly meetings and planned activities reported making positive connections with other foster parents in their Constellation. Even for those foster parents who did not participate in the activities as much because of distance or other obligations, they reported appreciating knowing that the support of a community of the MFM group is available to them.

In Constellation A, some of the parents have known each other through their sponsoring agency prior to their involvement in MFM. Although this Constellation has only been implemented since October, one foster parent reported that she calls on another foster parent in the group who lives nearby for support or information when she needs it. Because this Constellation had only met for three months at the time of this report, it is not clear if this group of foster parents have yet come together as a supportive community. They are somewhat knowledgeable about the MFM but could benefit from more information. Foster parents in this group appear to be making positive connections with each other and with the hub parent at the monthly meetings, but participation at these meetings and at the activities is slightly lower than at the other Constellations.

Foster parents in Constellation B who participate in the meetings and activities report a high level of positive connection to the other foster parents in their group and occasionally call on each other for support. The families in this Constellation are, for the most part, knowledgeable about the MFM. In this Constellation several of the families have been involved with MFM for some time – one family and the hub parent for three

years--through another agency and now have strong connections and relationships with the hub parents and with each other. The families participating this year who are new to the MFM have also made positive connections, and one foster parent reported that she did not know if she could have continued to be a foster parent without the support of the other foster parents and the hub parents. While participation at monthly meetings and activities has been inconsistent, the parents who participated most often reported the highest level of connection. These are the parents who have been with MFM for several years.

In Constellation C, a majority of the foster parents have known each other for some time through their agency prior to their involvement with the MFM. This group appears to be knowledgeable about the MFM and their participation in the model. They have come to trust and support one another and often provide respite for each other's foster children. The newer family in the Constellation (and new to foster care) has also made positive connections to the other foster parents in the group and has called on one foster family in the Constellation for support and crisis respite. On average, participation in monthly meetings and activities has been high—around 75% of the foster parents participate and those that live closest to the Hub Home generally have the highest participation and use of respite in this Constellation.

In Constellation D, a majority of the foster parents live in the same community and have been coming together with the hub parent for some time as a support group prior to their involvement with the MFM beginning in August 2006. While this group of foster parents had very little knowledge about the MFM, they exhibited strong ties to each other and to the hub parent. Their attendance and participation in the monthly meetings and social activities is uniformly high—evidence of their degree of connectedness.

⇒ **Some foster parents see the MFM as a resource to support them and retain them in their roles as foster parents.**

Constellation A: Begun in October, foster parents are beginning to view MFM as a resource and the Hub in particular as a support for them, as evidenced by the fact that every child in this Constellation received respite care through the Hub Home during the month of December. The Hub Home is a two parent home with a high degree of availability and no other foster placements. Because a majority of the satellite homes in this Constellation are located some distance from the Hub Home, one of the hub parents

has been doing a great deal of transportation assistance to facilitate respite and participation in activities.

One foster parent in Constellation A, when interviewed, reported that she does not use the Hub for regular respite because she relies on her own family. She reported that the main advantage to being part of the MFM is that her foster child gets to have overnight visits with his biological brother at a neutral place. While she stated that she is very familiar with the model and “loves the concept,” she reported that her agency already provides many of the features of the model and that the MFM model would best serve foster parents that contract directly through the state because they don’t have any of the supports in place (e.g. additional staff support, mental health services, crisis respite) that some foster parents enjoy if they contract through an agency. It was also noted that her particular agency specializes in therapeutic foster care, and that, because of this, these foster parents necessarily have access to higher levels of support.

Constellation B: This hub started group activities in June. This hub has satellite homes with parents through the host agency but also invited families from a former Constellation who have caseworkers assigned through a different agency than the host agency. The foster parents who are from the host agency in year two that is no longer a host agency clearly see MFM and the Hub Home as a strong source of support, and this support has definitely helped them continue in their role as foster parents. Foster parents in this Constellation from the host agency also see the Hub Home as a great resource, but it is less clear whether they view the MFM as a resource because this particular group has access to so many other resources. In fact, the host agency has often scheduled events and trainings which have conflicted with the MFM schedule, making it more difficult for families from this agency to participate in the MFM. This Hub Home is a two parent home with no foster placements. For those foster parents who have participated in this Constellation, the fact that the Hub Home is a two parent home with a high degree of availability and accessibility has been an important part of its success. In addition, the Hub Home parents in this Constellation have a high level of clinical experience with foster youth and this has helped several foster parents retain their placements on a number of occasions. In addition, this Constellation is the only one that has utilized the Hub Home for supervised family visits.

Constellation C: All of the foster parents from this Constellation view the MFM as a valuable resource and all have utilized the Hub Home for activities and meetings.

The Hub Home in this Constellation is a single parent home with two foster care placements. While most foster parents have looked to the hub for respite and activity planning, they have also looked to one of the satellite homes with three foster children in the home for support and respite. This satellite home is a two parent home and both parents have years of clinical experience in working with foster youth. Many of the foster parents in this Constellation in fact provide respite for each other and have longstanding relationships. The foster parents who utilize the Hub Home the most are those who live close by. There are two satellite homes farther away, both with older teens, and they rarely use the Hub Home for respite and have lower participation in activities. When interviewed, these foster parents, both of whom have many years of experience, stated that “for them it would be better if the Hub Home were closer.” The newest family who joined the Constellation in August has stated that the support from both the hub parent and one of the satellite homes has made all the difference in retaining them as foster parents. In Constellation C, the role of the hub as resource, is really shared by the hub parent and the two parent satellite family that lives two blocks away.

Constellation D: Foster parents, while still somewhat unfamiliar with the MFM, regard the Hub Home as a source of great support and view the hub parent as their advocate and liaison to services. The hub parent in this Constellation has had high levels of participation in all planned activities and there have generally been at least two activities a month.

This Hub Home has acted as broker for all kinds of services for foster parents including but not limited to school interventions and meetings with foster parents, medical appointments, adoption proceedings, mental health services and has established a new partnership with Odessa Brown Children’s clinic. Foster parents are very enthusiastic about being part of the MFM and are appreciative of the increased access to services and activities for their foster children. At this time, Constellation D is utilizing respite care primarily for planned daytime activities and appointments and not for overnight care. There has been no crisis respite used in this Constellation and this may be because a majority of the children are younger (under twelve) and many are in kinship care.

What lessons have been learned through implementing the Mockingbird Family Model in different contexts?

- ⇒ **The host agency target population, size of the Constellation, and geographic proximity to the Hub Home have influenced the participation of satellite families in the implementation of the Mockingbird Family Model.**

This chapter describes how the unique qualities of the population of children and families within the Constellation, as well as the geographic proximity of satellite families to the hub, and size of the Constellation have influenced the participation of families in the MFM. This discussion describes the emerging patterns of service utilization that primarily refers to the families' use of respite. In the MFM, respite includes scheduled group activities for children and youth, planned respite care for individual children, and crisis or emergency care.

How the host agency influenced the MFM implementation - The MFM was implemented in partnership with four different agency contexts this year in King County and a fifth agency in Washington, DC. The partnering host agencies each had a unique population focus and well established histories of working with youth who had high needs or complex behavioral and mental health diagnoses. One agency specializes in therapeutic care for youth including residential treatment for youth with complex or co-occurring disorders. A second host agency serves youth at risk in regular and treatment foster care. The third agency uses many resources to offer an array of services for foster youth and families with goals to find permanent homes and keep youth connected to their roots and values. Two host agencies are public entities that provide foster care, as well as health, social, and financial programs for children and families through different programs. The partnering host agencies' social workers, case managers, and program managers are all working within the state regulations and agency licensing requirements. Contextually, each agency also has a specific theoretical and conceptual practice model for the target population that influences how the agency staff commonly interacts with foster children and parents. Each agency also adopts and practices a working philosophy that is evident in the patterns of communication with children and foster

parents. This influences agency procedures for worker-parent communication, supervision provided to foster parents, and training offered to foster parents.

The differences among the agencies became apparent as each host agency brought to the new Mockingbird Society partnership their collective commitment to work toward improvements in the foster care system and improved outcomes for children and youth. The management at each host agency worked to arrive at an understanding of how the MFM would be implemented in relation to the agency philosophy and patterns of interaction with foster parents. The goals of the MFM and the essential elements of the MFM were conveyed to the host agency leadership and to the service delivery staff. The host agencies embraced the development of micro-communities, foster parent peer support, and expanded dimensions of respite care for children and youth. One local agency committed to have all foster homes function in Constellations, while the other agencies moved forward with implementing one to two Constellations of a sample of the agency's foster homes. The local agency staff representatives also varied in their consistent presence at the monthly project partnership meetings and at the hub activities held usually on evenings and weekends.

Hub/ Satellite Selection - Each of the host agencies identified a hub parent or parents, following the direction from the Mockingbird Society Executive Director, the MFM Project Training Manual, and the components for model fidelity. The host agencies also selected the foster families for the Constellation based on each family's receptivity to being in the MFM, the potential for positive interaction of the foster children, and the foster parents' need for respite care.

Factors slowing the pace of the implementation of the MFM- The MFM was not implemented in a new Constellation until April of 2006, and then when the hub parent withdrew from the MFM, a new Hub Home had to be identified. The approval of the foster home license for the new Hub Home took over three months, which was noted by some of the agency managers and other foster parents to be a typical length of time. Nevertheless, the necessity of meeting the Department of Social and Health Services licensing requirements contributed to slowing the pace to start a new hub, and it began in October 2006. The other host agencies had selected Hub Homes that were currently licensed or could renew. The process that each agency took to identify foster parents to be satellite homes and to locate 4-6 homes also took longer than first anticipated. The host agency Program Managers were working at finding families who would meet the

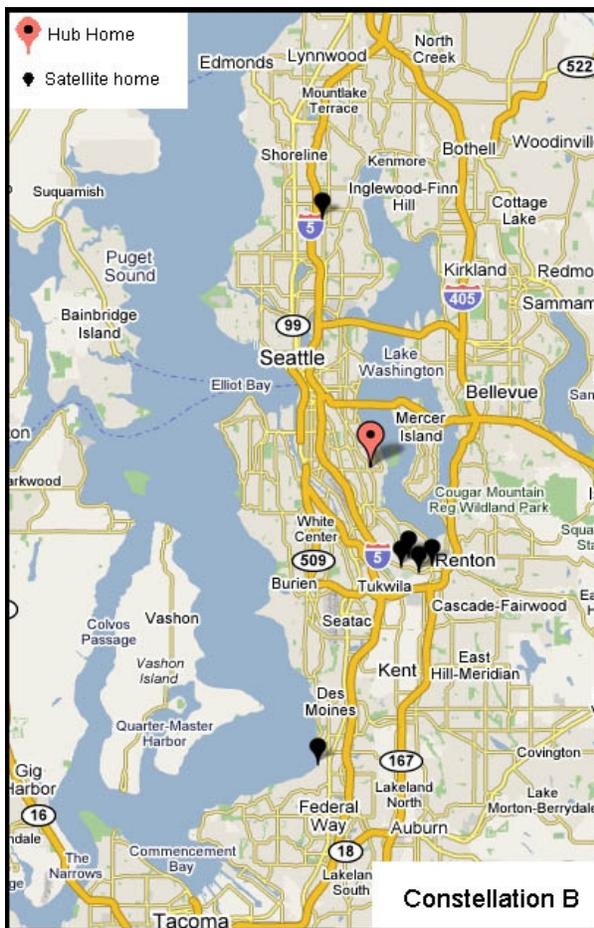
criteria of benefiting from interaction with peers and who could use respite care in a social support network.

Differences among the Constellations in the proximity of hub and satellite homes - Constellation A initially formed in April of 2006 with a single parent Hub Home located in southeast Seattle. At that time, there were two satellite homes located within ten miles of the Hub Home, two homes a little further south in Renton and one home north in Lynnwood. Because the agency specializes in treatment foster care, there were a number of clinical implementation issues to overcome related to having adequate supervision for high needs children and children for whom “line of sight” supervision is necessary at all times. This means that certain youth cannot mix or be in contact with other youth without additional supervision. Because the Hub Home activities encourage all foster youth in the Constellation to come together, the agency was faced with figuring out how to do this safely. In addition, certain children in the Constellation were not able to be in larger groups of children safely and therefore activities sometimes had to be geared for just two or three children at a time.

Due to clinical concerns and safety issues, the sponsoring agency of this Constellation required that all foster parent requests for respite, including planned activities, first go through the agency case manager and then to the hub parent so as to better coordinate additional staffing for activities or respite as necessary. The first Hub parent in this Constellation did not adhere to this host agency requirement and also initiated contact with only selected satellite homes. These two situations raised issues from the perspective of the host agency and conflicted with the hub parent’s role of including all members of the MFM Constellation on a regular basis. These situations proved to be extremely useful lessons in helping the agency and MFM determine the role and responsibilities of the hub parent and their relationship to their sponsoring agency. This particular Constellation ended in June when the hub parent secured a full time job.

In October, the agency resumed their MFM Constellation, this time with a two parent Hub Home in West Seattle. Many of the foster children who were in the earlier Constellation are also in this Constellation, but three are not in the new group and there are several new foster children and families as well. The Hub Parent reported that although it has taken some time to get to know the families, they are starting to “come around” more and in December, every child in the Constellation had respite at the Hub Home. Four foster parents in this Constellation were interviewed and for these four

As part of the evaluation, two foster parents in this Constellation were interviewed. One foster parent stated that the increased support from the Hub Home has “made all the difference” in her ability to maintain the stability of one of her foster child placements. This parent stated that although she was initially “leery of the hub” and rarely used respite before participating in the MFM, she has come to know and trust the MFM hub parents and now uses respite twice a month for one child. This foster parent also stated that the support given and received by other foster parents in the Constellation has “created a whole new support network” for me. The other foster parent interviewed also felt that the MFM model was a good one, but also stated that their sponsoring agency often had events and trainings that competed with the MFM activities and that the two organizations needed to better coordinate their schedules so as not to offer competing events.

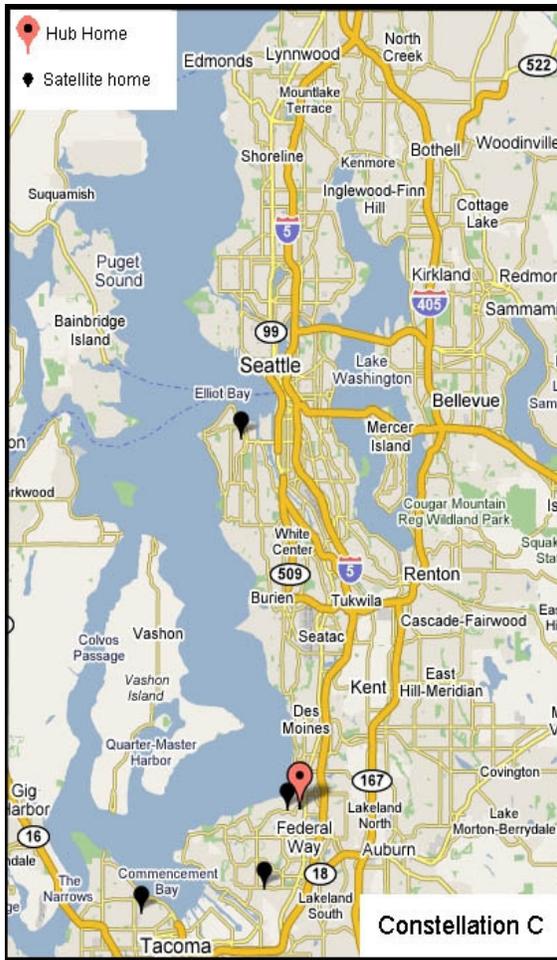


To the left is a map of the Hub Home in relationship to the satellite homes for Constellation B.

In Constellation B, most of the satellite homes are located in fairly close proximity to the Hub Home. Use of planned and crisis respite has been minimal for this Constellation. The families that participated most in the planned activities were the families with younger children (under 12) from the host agency and the families with younger teens (14 and under) who were initially part of a satellite with the former host agency in year two.

Constellation C: Constellation C was formed in May of 2006 with three foster families and eight foster children. A new family with one foster child joined the Constellation in August and an older youth in a different family aged out of the foster care system and the Constellation in August. In the same month, a new child was placed in the Hub Home. These changes convey the fluidity in the number of children in each Constellation each month. In this Constellation there is a single hub parent Home located in Federal Way. This Constellation has children ranging in age from 11 to 17 with a range of needs from very high to average.

This Constellation has had several small activities each month over the summer and one monthly activity each month in the fall. Generally, two thirds of the Constellation families participate in the planned activities. Although this Constellation serves a high number of teenagers, participation by the teens has been good. It may be that teen participation in the planned activities is high because 1) they are required by their families to attend, 2) there are older teens and younger youth within the same homes and 3) the children in the Constellation have known each other for several years prior to their participation in the MFM model so they like to get together and the families already had established relationships with each other. However, the two families that have one older teen each in their homes and who live further away from the Hub Home have not utilized respite activity as much as the other families. It appears that consistent participation in the monthly meetings and activities is directly related to the proximity of the satellite homes to the Hub Home. In this Constellation, there is one satellite home with three foster children and an adopted youth located almost “down the street” from the Hub Home and another satellite home is located within five or six miles of the Hub Home. These families participate most often in the Hub activities and have the highest use of respite. Below is a map showing the proximity of the satellite homes in Constellation C to the Hub Home.



In Constellation C, two of the satellite homes are located quite close to the Hub Home and two are located further away, one in West Seattle and one in Tacoma. These two homes have lower rates of participation in activities as well as respite.

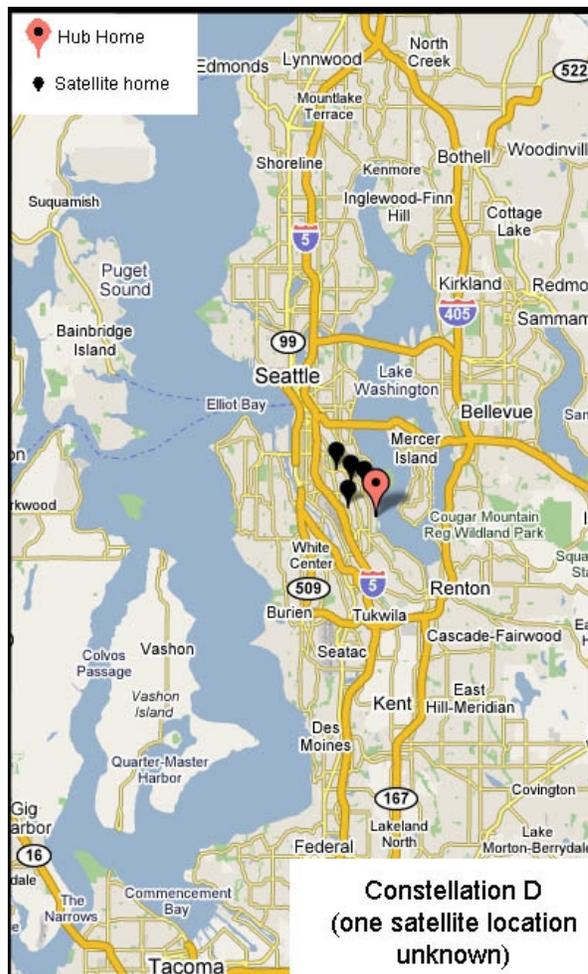
One of these families commented that although they don't use respite at the Hub, they provide respite to the child placed at the hub because their foster child is "like an older sister" to this child. In this way, the Hub parent gets a break and the two children get to spend time together, have overnights, etc. like other non-foster children do. The opportunity provided by MFM for these kinds of "normalizing" experiences is clearly a positive feature of the MFM.

Emerging patterns of respite utilization for Constellation C indicate a fairly consistent use of both planned and crisis respite from month to month since the inception of the MFM in May of 2006. While the same three children comprised the majority of the use of crisis respite in 2006, planned respite was used by all foster children in the Constellation. Respite consisting of planned group activities was used every month by a majority of children in the Constellation. In May, five children and their families participated in a group activity, in June four children participated in a group activity. In July and August six children and their families participated in group activities and in September, seven children participated in respite activities. In October, five children participated in planned activities and in November six children participated in group activities. In December five children utilized respite for group activities

Constellation D: Constellation D began in August of 2006 with a single parent Hub Home with one foster placement located in southeast Seattle. Prior to their participation in the MFM, the hub parent conducted a support group for a larger group of

foster parents in the area, including the families who are now part of the MFM Constellation. Thus, most of the families in this Constellation have known each other and the Hub parent for some time and have already established strong, supportive relationships. In addition, there was one family who joined Constellation D this year who had previously been part of the MFM model through another agency.

This Constellation has had a monthly meeting, often accompanied by a training and a separate activity for families each month since August. Both the meetings and the activities are well attended with at least two-thirds of the Constellation participating every month. A majority of the satellite families live in close proximity to the Hub Home. Below is a map of the satellite homes and Hub Home in Constellation D:



It would appear that because most of these families live in the same community and have a strong, trusting relationship with the Hub parent, participation in respite activities has been high. There is no available data however, on hours of planned respite in this Constellation until October and even then, there has been very little planned respite used by this group and no crisis respite used at all. This lack of use of planned and crisis respite may be because 1) there are a larger number of kinship caregivers in this Constellation who are not used to having any respite or it may be due in part to the fact that many of the children in Constellation D are younger or It may be that this Constellation

was not recording their respite use regularly until December. Unlike the use of planned and crisis respite, participation at the hub planned activities and outings has been very high with a majority of children participating in most group activities.

Washington, D.C. Constellations: The Washington D.C. Department of Human Services enthusiastically endorsed the MFM and had training for supervisors and staff in the Fall of 2006. They identified that one Family Caseworker would have children assigned to a hub which has facilitated communication between the Caseworker and the hub parent.

The two Constellations in Washington, DC each have a single parent Hub Home with the families living in the same geographic sector. The children range in age from 2 to 17, with one hub having a 5,6,9 and 17 year old. The other hub has 3 children who were 11-14 years old and five children who were under 7 years old. The attendance and participation at the group activities has been good, with the parents actively contributing ideas on field trips and historic attractions to visit. Both Constellations have a schedule of planned activities for the next quarter, including games for the families to attend, guest speakers, and events. In terms of planned respite care, the families initially were reluctant to use respite care although they acknowledged that they were interested. The foster parents were now using the hubs for planned respite, including an overnight stay for a child and respite care during the day for another child. In one hub, the hub parent provided emergency respite when a parent could not use her regular child care provider and the hub parent also provided emergency respite when a parent was unexpectedly hospitalized and the hub parent was able to care for the children at the Hub Home. A hub parent was also available to provide emergency respite when a foster parent was asked to provide receiving care for an infant in her home but the foster parent caring for the infant could not provide full-child care for one day. The hub parent was able to care for the young infant and this prevented the infant from having to be placed into another foster home outside of the Constellation.

What is unique about the Constellation is one hub parent visited each of the satellite homes to get to know the children and their parents. The hub parent includes birth children in a family at any of the planned events in order to encourage full participation from the foster children. The hub parent also keeps up weekly contact with the satellite parents to identify if they have any new concerns or needs.

⇒ **Lessons learned include assessing for proximity in satellite –Hub Homes and selecting an agency most compatible with the Mockingbird Family Model goals.**

Proximity increases participation: The evidence from the four King County Constellations and two Washington, D.C. Constellations relates proximity of hub and satellite home to the family's increased attendance at scheduled hub family activities and the use of planned respite care. This finding supports a preference to select satellite homes in proximity to the Hub Home other to facilitate the satellite families engagement in the MFM.

Selecting for compatibility- One other emerging finding is that foster parents from the agencies that did not already offer supplemental services to foster parents were more enthusiastic and consistent in engaging in the MFM. Several foster parents suggested that the MFM should focus on foster parents who do not have an assigned case manager through a specialized or sponsor agency and who work directly with a state agency Social Worker. This suggestion from foster parents would guide the Mockingbird Society to focus recruitment efforts with the Washington State Children's Administration or comparable offices outside of the state.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

The Mockingbird Family Model experienced a year of extraordinary growth and expansion. The accumulation of information from four local Constellations, plus the interactions occurring in the two out-of-state Constellations, is contributing to a growing body of evidence on the MFM as an alternative to traditional services for foster families. The initial project information gathered through foster parent and youth participant interviews, foster parent surveys, comparative data analysis and observation indicates that the MFM provides a network of support, accessible respite care, and opportunities for community building that contribute to positive youth outcomes. While a more extended period for data collection and analysis is needed prior to drawing conclusions, the initial data indicate that over an eight month period, nine foster families reported that in ten instances, the use of respite care through the Mockingbird Family Model had prevented situations from occurring that could have disrupted the foster youth's placement. These foster parents felt that if the MFM respite had not been available to them, the older youth could have been out of the current placement, could have been re-referred with resulting costs to locate a new placement, or the youth could have left the home and become homeless.

There is also emerging evidence that the Hub Home offers an environment to facilitate birth family visits and sibling visits that may contribute to foster children and youth making progress toward their permanency goals. Foster parent and youth report that the Constellation also provided interactions that supported youth in their cultural/ racial or ethnic identity.

The MFM foster parent survey data compared to other foster parent responses also indicated that 73-93% of MFM foster parents are receiving social support through interacting with other foster parents. The MFM foster parents also used respite care nearly twice as often as the foster parents in a random sample. In addition, many of the foster parents who were new to the MFM reported that they had rarely or never had access to respite in the past (particularly kinship caregivers) but looked forward to using respite in the MFM. The MFM appears to be effectively providing peer support to foster parents that helps to sustain them in their roles.

As the data were collected for a limited period this year, the data from the Mockingbird Family Model should continue to be assessed. The longer duration of services may generate data to identify positive changes for foster children and for foster parents and kinship caregivers. Through the data collection, there were several areas where the MFM participants or the host agency representatives suggested changes that could be considered in the continuing implementation of the MFM. There are several implications for project replication and expansion in the recommendations that follow for: 1) the administration of the project and 2) the implementation of the Mockingbird Family Model services.

Recommendations for the Administration of the MFM:

- When there were more than six families in a Constellation who had two or more children in a family, the data indicated it was difficult to provide an adequate amount of planned and crisis respite care to foster children in the Constellation. The number of families, the number of children, and whether the children have high needs or are a basic level of care or a BRS level of care should be considered in determining the size of the Constellation.
- Hub Parents are preferably two parent homes for maximum availability and accessibility. If Hub Parent is a single parent home, there should not be more than one foster child placed in the home.
- The proximity of the satellite homes to the Hub Home has proven to be a factor important to utilization of all types of respite. Satellite homes that are no more than 15 miles from Hub Home tend to maximize use of services in urban settings. In more rural settings, the driving distance between hub and Constellation may be greater.
- Training for a host agency should occur prior to the formation of a MFM Constellation. Training on the MFM for foster parents and Hub parents should occur within the first six weeks of the formation of a Constellation.
- A quality assurance person or project manager should be hired by Mockingbird Society to monitor implementation fidelity to the model and to improve the data collection process.
- Continue ongoing efforts to reach agreement on the core elements of the model and those which must absolutely be implemented at a specific standard to use the MFM name. Continue with the plans to put fidelity measures and processes into place in 2007.
- Develop fidelity measures for the host agency as well as the Constellation families.

- Create a means for host agencies to communicate with MFM and the evaluation team when families join or leave a Constellation.
- Identify what features in selecting future host agencies, such as the agency work philosophy or the client communication procedures, would be most compatible with the active engagement of the agency representatives in the MFM partnership. Identify if some host agencies will more readily endorse the MFM that will lead to the agencies recruiting foster families that will more fully engage in the MFM services.

Recommendations to enhance MFM Service Delivery

- Consider how to provide a time for Hub parents in different Constellations to get together to exchange ideas and give each other support
- Require the use of written calendars at monthly meetings for the scheduling of planned and activity respite.
- Strongly encourage the hub to offer at least two planned social/recreational activities per month in addition to the monthly meeting.
- Engage older teens in group activities by offering social and cultural events such as going to a sports event, a play, a dance concert or a music concert that would appeal more to this age group. Offer older teens from different Constellations an opportunity to get together so there are more teens in a group as this will add to the positive normalizing experience of interacting with peers.
- Provide training to Hub parents on several topics and encourage parents to suggest topics of interest. Suggested training topics are: communicating with school aged children, interacting with older youth, and providing culturally relevant experiences in foster care.
- Identify if any provision of school support services such as tutoring or after school programs or other special services including referrals for mental health counseling would be consistent with the MFM focus to support foster children and youth. If these services are offered through the Hub Home, or if the Hub Home parent is trained to help families to identify resources for these services, then develop a means to assess any changes or outcomes that are related to receipt of these services.

Appendix A

Data Collection Tools

- Overview of Data Collection Approaches
- Initial Data Collection Form
- Monthly Participation Form
- Monthly Respite Form
- Foster Parent Survey
- Youth Interview form

Overview of Data Collection Approaches

Data collection from MFM participants: The evaluators collected information using several means that included program-specific tools, interviews, and observations. Foster parent participants completed an initial data collection form for each foster child in the MFM and also completed a monthly participation form to indicate any perceived change or progress. Copies of the data collection tools are in Appendix A. The Hub Home parents completed a Monthly Respite Form for each child who received planned or crisis respite and the form included interaction during respite as well as child's response to having respite care. The Hub Home parents kept a log of foster parent and foster child attendance at family social activity as well as total hours of foster child's attendance in respite during a month. The information from the Monthly Participation Forms, Monthly Respite Forms, and Monthly Attendance and Participation Logs was compiled to determine the total hours of MFM services and to describe participation among foster children.

The evaluator regularly attended the monthly social activities held by the four Constellations as these events provided an opportunity to observe the level of participation among the foster families in the Constellation, the interaction of the Hub Home parent and foster families, and interaction among foster parents and children. While attending the monthly social activity, the evaluator heard the perceptions of parents who were participating in the MFM and collected additional comments and reactions in discussions with the foster parents that followed monthly activities. The evaluator conducted brief interviews with participating children who were at least eight years old after following the required consent procedures.

Data collected for comparison purposes: In addition to the data collected from the participating foster parents and children, the evaluators requested data from the Children's Administration for a random sample of 100 children in foster care in Region 4. The data were requested following the established procedures and the data were then used to identify if the foster children in the MFM were similar in any characteristics, including placement histories, to the sample of children in Region 4. The available data on ethnicity, length of time in out-of-home placement, and age at first placement were calculated for the group of children in the MFM to compare to the random sample of foster children.

One other means of collecting data was a survey for foster parents that was completed by 15 foster parents in the MFM. The survey asked parents about number of years as a foster parent, number of children in their care, and training received as a foster parent. In order to describe if the foster parents in the MFM differed or were similar to other foster parents, we collected data from a random sample of other foster parents in Region 4. The survey that was

completed by the MFM foster parents on experiences of being a foster parent was also mailed to 200 foster families randomly selected by the Children's Administration. Following the established procedures, a Children's Administration representative mailed a letter and the survey to the families asking them to complete the survey and return it to the evaluators. The evaluators received 80 completed surveys and tabulated the results for comparison to the total responses of foster parents in the Mockingbird Family Model.

Data Analysis: The Initial Participant Data and Monthly Participation Data that included parents' responses to questions on their child's behavior as well as the services received by the child were entered in a database. The information from the monthly logs and the Monthly Respite Forms that indicated hours in respite care and hours in family activity time were also entered in a database using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). The data on attendance in respite was tracked by child for each month and is included in tables in Appendix B. The data analysis included determining totals for hours of participation, foster parents and children's responses to participating in the MFM, and perceived changes in child behavior as identified by foster parents. The tables that list parents' perceptions of their child's school related behavior are included in Appendix B. The qualitative data that were obtained through observation at the Constellation family activities and in interviews with the program youth plus additional comments provided by the foster parents were analyzed using content analysis. One evaluator initially identified the frequency of some comments that were heard from the participants as well as the content of the comments. The comments focused on reactions to participating in the MFM including attendance at activities and respite. The comments from the foster parents focused on what the parents perceived to be different about being in the MFM compared to their previous experiences as foster parents. A second evaluator reviewed the content of the data collected through observation, interviews, and discussion and the content of participants' comments is summarized where it was relevant to the data presented in sections of this report.

Mockingbird Family Model

INITIAL Data Collection Form (to be completed by Foster Parent)

Today's Date _____ Date that Child/Youth came to your home _____

Child Identifier _____ Child Gender _____ Child Ethnicity _____

Does this child/youth have a sibling in your home? No Yes, please give the identifier for the brothers or sisters. _____

Please answer the following (if known to you)

How old was child/youth when first placed in an out-of-home placement? _____

Number of placements (foster homes) this child/youth had before coming to your home _____

Please check any of the following that you know about this child/youth:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> In Special Education class (all day) | <input type="checkbox"/> Attends regular full-day classes for age |
| <input type="checkbox"/> In a Special Education class for part of the day | <input type="checkbox"/> Other school option _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Has a counselor (in school <input type="checkbox"/>) | <input type="checkbox"/> Does school work below assigned grade level |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Has a counselor (outside of school <input type="checkbox"/>) | <input type="checkbox"/> Reads at grade level (e.g. 7 th grade when in 7 th grade) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Has a (academic) tutor | <input type="checkbox"/> Does math and other work at grade level |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Has behavioral therapy | <input type="checkbox"/> Enjoys school and completes school work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Receives physical therapy | <input type="checkbox"/> Finds school very hard and time consuming |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other therapy _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Makes friends with classmates |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Diagnosis (if applicable) _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Finds it hard to get along with others. |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Enjoys team activities |

Please add any comments on the back.

Mockingbird Family Model

MONTHLY Participation Report (to be completed by Foster Parent)

Today's Date _____ Date that Child/Youth came to your home _____

Please check how your child is doing.

For this MONTH :	Have not done this yet	Planned on but this did not happen	Tried this once	Did this more than once
1. Child/Youth has gone to an activity at the Hub Home (e.g. movie night, field trip, sleepover)				
2. Child/Youth has gone to the Hub Home for planned respite (foster parent night out)				
3. Child/Youth has gone to the Hub Home when an emergency situation happened.				

Please circle your answer to tell us how your child/youth is doing:

For this MONTH The child/youth:	O No	N Could improve but not yet	1 Sometimes	2 Often	3 Yes definitely
4. Completes homework.	O	N	1	2	3
5. Has time and supplies (books, worksheets) to study.	O	N	1	2	3
6. Participates in class work (listens, answers questions).	O	N	1	2	3
7. Participates in tutoring	O	N	1	2	3
8. Gets along with classmates.	O	N	1	2	3
9. Makes friends with other foster children or youth.	O	N	1	2	3
10. Had interactions to promote his/her cultural identity	O	N	1	2	3
11. Attends school regularly	O	N	1	2	3
12. Youth secures employment	O	N	1	2	3

Please circle the one that applies best to your child

For this MONTH:
The child/ youth

	0 No	1 Sometimes	2 Often	3 Yes, definitely
13. Gets along with Foster Parents	○	1	2	3
14. Gets along with siblings	○	1	2	3
15. Child bonds with Foster Parents	○	1	2	3
16. Child has Sibling visit at HUB or elsewhere	○	1	2	3
17. Child has Bio family visit at Hub Home at attends event with Bio family	○	1	2	3

Did your foster child have a change in placement status this month? aged out of system, new placement outside Constellation, new placement within Constellation, family reunification adoption other

Mockingbird Family Model
Monthly Respite Report

Monthly Respite Report (to be completed at the end of the month by the Hub Home Parent for children/youth who received Respite during the month)

Today's Date _____ Child Identifier _____ Month _____

1. In the past month, how many times has the child/youth come for respite care?

- One time Two times 3-4 times 5 or more times

2. What is the reason for the the child/youth to attend Respite Care?

- Planned activity Study time with other children or youth Time away from the foster home & a chance to be with other adults Child/youth asks for time to hang out with other kids
- Youth or Child's challenging behavior at home Parent request due to a family situation or need Crisis Other

3. What was the quality of interaction while child/youth was in respite?

- Difficulty or problem in interacting with peer or adult Controlled emotions or expressed self appropriately Showing appropriate interaction (e.g. responded, shared with another child) Improving in skills in interacting with peer or adult
- Child/youth preferred to be alone (not participate in what was going on) Engaged in activity, seemed to enjoy what was happening Other _____

4. Did the HUB respite prevent a placement disruption for the child this month?

- yes no

5. Did any other MFM feature preserve a placement? yes no Which feature? _____

6. What is the outcome of Respite Services? Please check all that apply and write-in.

- Finds it hard to settle in again after time at Hub Home Does not ask to go to an activity at Hub Home Child seems to enjoy time in Hub Home, asks to come back Shows improved interactions after time at the Hub Home
- Other _____ Other _____

**Mockingbird Family Model Project Evaluation
Survey for Foster Parents**

Dear Foster Parent,

The Mockingbird Society has asked the Northwest Institute for Children and Families to help evaluate the Mockingbird Family Model. We are asking you as a foster parent to answer some questions so we can tell what services foster parents use. This letter was mailed to you in a random group of foster families from all the foster parents known to the Department of Social and Health Services.

Please answer the following questions. You do not have to put your name on this form—we are only collecting information to compare your experience with other foster parents. You may skip a question if you wish. Please put your completed form in the envelope and return to us in one week. Thanks for helping us—your opinion is important.

1. How long have you been a foster parent?

- less than 6 months between 6 months and a year 1-2 years
- between 2-5 years More than 5 years

2. Since being a Foster Parent, what is the total number of children you have had in your care ?

- One Two Three
- Four Five Six
- Seven Eight Nine or more

3. How long does a foster child usually stay in your care?

- less than 6 months between 6 months and a year 1-2 years
- between 2-5 years More than 5 years

4. How often have you asked to have a child removed from your home due to communication or behavior problems?

- One time Two times Three or more times

5. Do you now have or have you had foster children who are brothers and sisters in your home?

- No Yes – Number of children _____

6. Are you a relative of your foster child(ren)? No Yes
7. How many foster children are currently in your home ?
 One Two Three
 Four Five Six or more
8. Do you have your own birth children in your home now? No Yes
If yes, number of birth children living at home
 One Two Three or more
9. Do you feel you received enough training to be a foster parent? No Yes
10. How often do you have contact with your foster child's caseworker? (Mark all that apply).
 Once since placement Twice since placement Once a month
 Two or more times a month Once a week I call the caseworker as needed.
 Caseworker contacts me two or more times a week Other
11. Do you get any support from other foster parents? No Yes-
Please check what you do with other foster parents
 Meet monthly Call other parents Attend trainings together
12. Do you use respite care? No Yes **If yes, how often do you use respite?**
 Once a month 2 or more times a month Once every couple of months
 Once every 6 months Once a year or less I call the caseworker as needed.
13. Have children in your care typically had to re-locate to a new school when they come to you? No Yes

14. **Is your foster child receiving any academic tutoring?** No Yes. **If you have more than one foster child, please answer for each child**

Child 2 No Yes.

Child 3 No Yes.

15. **Are you a therapeutic foster care provider or is your foster child in need of special services.....**

Once a week

Once a month

Twice a month

Once every couple of months

Once in six months

Other _____

16. **If your foster child (ren) is in need of mental health services, does he/she have access to these services** No Yes.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Please submit your form in the envelope. If the envelope is missing, please return it to Kate Grossman, NICF-School of Social Work, 4101-15th Ave. NE, Seattle, WA 98105-6299. Thanks for answering these questions. If you write your return address on the envelope we will send a \$5 gift card to thank you for your time. We will separate the envelope from the questionnaire.

If you are a foster parent in the Mockingbird Family Model, please check this box.

Mockingbird Family Model Foster Child Interview Questions

1. Do you like going to the Hub Home (or ____'s house)?
2. What kinds of things do you like to do there?
3. Do you feel safe at the Hub Home or ____'s house?
4. Do you feel like you have your own space there?
5. Do you feel like you can talk to _____ about things? *Restate this question if necessary as* Do you feel like you can talk with the Hub parent(s) about things that are bothering you?
6. Do you ever go to the HUB to cool off or take a break from your foster family? If yes, how does that work out for you?
7. Does the Hub Home help you relax or "chill out"?

Appendix

B

Additional Data Tables with supporting information

- Respite & Activity Hours Utilization Tables
- School Information Tables

Appendix B- Respite & Activity Hours Utilization tables

Constellation A: Planned Respite by child and month

Child ID	April	May	June	October	November	December	Total
24	36	24	48			7	115
28	36	8	48	42	62		196
27	48	56					104
20	46	48					94
49		48		46	29	44	167
26				25	48	44	117
25	6				50	10	66
50						45	45
51						45	45
Total	172	184	96	113	189	195	949

Constellation A: Crisis Respite by child and month

Child ID	April	May	June	October	November	December	Total
24							
28					48	8	56
27							
20	46	48					94
49	108						108
26							
25							
29		48					48
Total	154	96	0	0	48	8	306

Constellation A: Activity hours by child and month

Child ID	April	May	June	October	November	December	Total
24	10	10		4		3	27
28	10	10		4	4	7.5	35.5
27	10	10					20
20	10	10		4			24
49				4	3	3	10
26					3	3	6
25	10	10		4	4	7.5	35.5
29	10						10
50				4	4	3	11
51					4	3	7
Total	60	50		24	22	30	186

Constellation B: Planned Respite by child and month

Child ID	October	November	December	Total
5	48	45	44.5	137.5
3	8			8
4	8			8
7	6	50.5		56.5
9	4.5			4.5
10	4.5			4.5
Total	79	95.5	44.5	219

Constellation B: Crisis Respite Hours by child and month

Child ID	September	October	November	December	Total
5	160	32			192
52				96.5	96.5
Total	160	32		96.5	288.5

Constellation B: Activity hours by child and month

Child ID	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
5	3		4	3		6.5	1	17.5
6			4	3				7
7	3	3	4			3.5	3	16.5
8	3		4					7
11	3	3	4	3		3	2	18
13	3	3	4	3		3	2	18
14	3	3	4	3		3	2	18
9	3		4	3	4.5		9.5	24
10	3		4	3	4.5		9.5	24
3		3	4	3	4.5	3	3	20.5
4		3	4	3	4.5	3	4	21.5
52						3.5		3.5
53						3.5	3.5	7
Total	24	18	44	27	18	32	39.5	202.5

Constellation C: Planned Respite by child and month

Child ID	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
12	12		3						15
15	103.5		80	27.5		8.5		3	222.5
16	144.5		3.5	239.5	76.5	54			518
17	36.5		64	195.5	89	27		79.5	491.5
19	46.5		62.5			44			153
18			9		25			45	79
21				30	53	54.5	40	45.5	223
23				20.5					20.5
Total	342		222	513	244	188	40	173	1,722.5

Constellation C: Crisis Respite hours by child and month

Child ID	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
12	144								144
16	3.5		182.5				180.5		366.5
15								2	2
17								2	2
19									
18									
21						183	48	2	233
23									
22									
	147.5		182.5			183	228.5	6	747.5

Constellation C: Activity hours by child and month

Child ID	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
12	12	10	8						30
15	12	10	8	11	15.5	3	11.5	15	86
16	12	10	8	11	9.5	3	14.5		68
17	12	10	8	11	15.5	3	14.5	15	89
19	12		8			3			23
18			8		4.5				12.5
21				11	4.5	3	14.5	15	48
23				11	13.5		13	15.5	53
22				11	13.5		14.5	14.5	53.5
	60	40	48	66	76.5	15	82.5	75	463

Constellation D: Planned Respite by child and month

Child ID	October	November	December	Total
32	5		8	13
33	5		8	13
34			6	6
36			12	12
37			6	6
	10		40	50

Constellation D: Activity by child and month

Child ID	August	September	October	November	December	Total
31	24	6.5	6	11		47.5
32	24	6.5	6	11		47.5
33	24	6.5	6	11		47.5
34	24	11.5	6	11	5	57.5
35	24	11.5	6	11		52.5
36	24	11.5		11	5	51.5
37	24	11.5	6	11	5	57.5
43	24	6.5	6			36.5
44	24	6.5	6			36.5
45	24	6.5	6			36.5
46	24	6.5	6			36.5
47	24	6.5	6			36.5
38		6.5	6			12.5
39		6.5	6	11		23.5
40		6.5	6			12.5
48			6			6
Total	288	117.5	90	88	15	599

Appendix B- School and Home Behavior Tables

Constellation B:

Tables showing foster children in Constellation B who do work below grade level and who also find school hard and time consuming.

Participates in class/classwork

	June	July	August	September	October	November
3	sometimes	sometimes	No	Sometimes	Sometimes	sometimes
4	Yes, definitely	Yes, definitely	Yes, definitely		Often	Often
5	Often			Often	Often	Often
7	Often	Often		Sometimes		Often
8	Often		Yes, definitely		Often	Often

Completes Homework

	June	July	August	September	October	November
3	No	Sometimes	No	Yes!	Sometimes	Often
4	No	No	No	Sometimes	Often	Sometimes
5	No	No		Sometimes	Often	Sometimes
7	Often	Often	Often	Often		Often
8	Often	Often	Sometimes	Often	Often	Often

Gets along with classmates

	June	July	August	September	October	November
3	Often	Often	Yes, definitely	Yes, definitely	Often	Often
4	Sometimes	Sometimes	Often	Yes, definitely	Sometimes	Often
5	Often	Often	Often	Yes!	Often	Often
7	Often	Often	Often	Yes!		Often
8	Often	Often			Yes!	Often

Gets along with Foster parents

	June	July	August	September	October	November
3	Often	Often	Yes!	Yes!	Often	Often
4	Sometimes	Sometimes	Often	Yes!	Sometimes	Often
5	Often	Often	Often	Yes!	Often	Often
7	Often	Often	Often	Yes!		Often
8	Often	Often			Yes!	Often

Constellation C

Tables showing foster children in Constellation C who do work below grade level and who also find school hard and time consuming.

Participates in class/classwork

	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov
12	Sometimes	Sometimes	Sometimes				
15	No	No	Sometimes	Often	Yes!	Often	Often
16	No	Sometimes	Sometimes	No	Sometimes	No	No
22					Often	Sometimes	Sometimes

Completes Homework

	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov
12	Often	Often	Often				
15	Sometimes	No	No	Sometimes	Often	Often	Often
16	No, not yet	No	No	No	Sometimes	Sometimes	Sometimes
22					Sometimes	Sometimes	Sometimes

Gets along with classmates

	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov
12	Yes!	Yes!	Yes!				
15	Yes!	No	No	Yes!	Yes!	Often	Yes!
16	No, not yet	Sometimes	No	No	Sometimes	Sometimes	Sometimes
22					Sometimes	Often	Often

Gets along with foster parents

	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov
12	Often	Yes!	Sometimes				
15	Often	Sometimes	Sometimes	Often	Often	Often	Sometimes
16	Sometimes	Sometimes	Sometimes	Often	Sometimes	Sometimes	No
22					Sometimes	Sometimes	Sometimes

Constellation D

Tables showing foster children in Constellation D who do work below grade level and who also find school hard and time consuming.

Participates in class/classwork

	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
31	No, not yet	No		Sometimes	Sometimes
34	Yes!	Yes!	Sometimes	Yes!	Yes!
35	Yes!	Yes!	No	Often	Sometimes
36	Yes!	Yes!	Yes!	Yes!	
38	Yes!	Yes!		Often	Often
39	Yes!	Yes!		Yes!	Yes!
43	Yes!		No	No	No
44	Yes!		Sometimes		No!
45	Yes!	Yes!	No	No	No
46	Yes!	Yes!	No	No	No
47	Yes !	Yes!	Sometimes	Sometimes	Sometimes

Constellation D

Tables showing foster children in Constellation D who do work below grade level and who also find school hard and time consuming.

Completes Homework

	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
31	No, not yet	No		Sometimes	Sometimes
34	Yes!	No	Sometimes	Yes!	Yes!
35	Yes!	No	No	Often	Sometimes
36	Yes !	No	Yes!	Yes!	
38	Yes!	Yes!		Often	Often
39	Yes!	Yes!	Yes!	Yes!	Yes!
43	Yes!		No, not yet	No	No
44	Yes!		Sometimes		Sometimes
45	No, not yet	No	Sometimes	Sometimes	Sometimes
46	No, not yet	No	Sometimes	No	Sometimes
47	No, not yet	No	Sometimes	Yes!	

Gets along with classmates

	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
31	Yes!	Yes!		Sometimes	Sometimes
34	Sometimes	Yes!	Yes!	Yes!	Yes!
35	Sometimes	Sometimes	Sometimes	Yes!	Yes!
36	Sometimes	Sometimes	Sometimes	Yes!	
38	Sometimes	Sometimes		Often	Often
39	Sometimes	Sometimes		Yes!	Yes!
43	Sometimes		Yes!	Yes!	Often
44	Sometimes		Sometimes		Sometimes
45	Sometimes	Sometimes	No	No	No
46	Sometimes	Sometimes	No	No	Sometimes
47	Sometimes	Sometimes	No	No	

Gets along with foster parents

	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
31	Often	Often	Often	Often	Often
34	Yes!	Yes!	Yes!	Yes!	Yes!
35	Yes!	Often	Often	Often	Sometimes
36	Yes!	Yes!	Often	Yes!	
38	Yes!	Yes!		Yes!	Yes!
39	Yes!	Yes!		Yes!	Yes!
43	Yes!		Sometimes		Often
44	Often		Often	Often	Often
45	Yes!	Often	Often	Often	No
46	Yes!	Often	Often	Often	Often
47	Yes!	Yes!	Often	Often	