

FY11 Annual Progress Report
Quad County
Decategorization Project

Serving: Lee, Louisa, Henry and Des Moines Counties

Submitted by:
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1) Summarize the project's key activities during the previous fiscal year:

Quad County Decategorization Project's intention for fiscal year 2011 was to stay true to the mission of Decategorization, helping youth and families by enhancing the infrastructure to include strength based services that are preventive, family centered and community-based in order to reduce use of restrictive approaches that rely on institutional, out-of-home, and out-of-community care to meet the diverse needs of the community. Quad County Decategorization continues to use the report that was written in response to the community forum hosted by Quad County Decategorization on March 3, 2010 as a guide (See Attachment A). Information gathered at the community forum revealed that agencies have experienced a decrease in funding, concerns of children "falling through the gaps", transportation barriers, and an under-reimbursed and over-worked children's mental health system (see Attachment A).

Quad County Decategorization continues to utilize an email distribution list that has increased over the last year; currently there are approximately 40 individuals on the list including State Legislators. One week prior to a Decategorization Board meeting the Quad County Decategorization Coordinator emails information regarding the meeting, including agendas to everyone on the distribution list. This community email list is a convenient way to distribute Request for Proposals (RFP) notices, program information, meeting agendas, job listings, and upcoming trainings. This strategy has increased the number of public attending our Decategorization meetings. This method was helpful during the release of the Parent Partner RFP to cover Cedar, Des Moines, Henry, Lee, Louisa, Muscatine, and Scott Counties.

Scott County Decategorization transferred \$2,000.00 to Quad County Decategorization for the purpose of starting Iowa Youth Dream Teams within Henry and Louisa Counties. Quad County Decategorization amended the Henry County CPPC contract to provide this service. Henry County CPPC hosted a kick-off event in both counties and provided training opportunities for individuals interested in becoming an Iowa Youth Dream Team facilitator. The Quad County Decategorization Coordinator shared resources from the Scott County Iowa Youth Dream Team project to assist with the successful implementation of Iowa Youth Dream Teams.

In order to stay in tune with the needs of the community, Quad County Decategorization staff members continue to participate on numerous community planning committees, community outreach, and training opportunities. The following is a list of the current meetings and trainings attended by Quad County Decategorization staff:

- Lee County Interagency Meetings
- Louisa County Interagency Meetings
- Henry County Interagency Meetings
- Des Moines County Interagency Meetings

- Henry County CPPC Shared Decision-Making Committee Meetings
- Statewide DMC
- Parent Partner Project Management Team
- National Association of Social Workers Iowa Chapter
- St. Ambrose Master of Social Work Continuing Education Committee
- NASW Disproportionality Diversity Work Group
- Iowa Permanency Summit
- Voices for the Silenced: Affirming & Empowering Approaches to Working With GLBT Youth, Racial Minority Youth, & Siblings in the Child Welfare System
- 4th Annual Mental Health Awareness Conference
- Disentangling Disproportionality: Race, Poverty, and the Overrepresentation of Children of Color in the Child Welfare System

Quad County Decategorization also continues to use the plan that was developed in fiscal year 2010 for building capacity and achieving outcomes (See Attachment B). Weaving together program requirements with board decision-making assists Decategorization Board members to focus on effective programming and fiscal accountability.

2) Describe the project's progress in reaching the desired outcomes of their project plan during the previous state fiscal year:

Quad County Decategorization identified the following goals in the fiscal year 2011 annual plan: provide services in the community that will assist in the achievement of the Child and Family Service Review outcomes of child well-being, safety and permanency; to keep youth from entering the more expensive child welfare and juvenile justice systems and to ensure a safe and permanent exit from those systems if already involved; to maintain positive leadership role in the community and a reputation for excellence through the continuity of qualified staff and board members; and to continue to be fiscally responsible with state funds. Quad County Decategorization was successful in meeting all goals identified in fiscal year 2011.

Quad County Decategorization achieved these goals by maintaining active relationships with community stakeholders, participating in and initiating community planning processes, working closely with the Iowa Department of Human Services and Juvenile Court Services, providing professional development opportunities to assist with staff development, completing all required contractual training as identified by the state of Iowa, promoting the importance of the 28E, and by maintaining a subcontract with Bi-State Regional Commission for the purposes of obtaining necessary financial and personnel services.

Quad County Decategorization stayed true to the mission of Decategorization with all contracts. Programs that were funded in fiscal year 2011 had projected

outcomes to keep youth out of the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, improving family functioning, improving the educational wellbeing of children, and increasing informal family supports. These outcomes were closely monitored by the Decategorization Coordinator and were reported to the Quad County Executive Board. During Decategorization Board meetings the members reviewed the outcomes and gave input on modifications and recommendations to contract holders.

3) Describe any planning adjustments and lessons learned during the fiscal year:

The Quad County Decategorization Board has always tried to find ways of implementing preventative, stable funding within our service area to better assist youth and families. In previous years this has been difficult due to the administrative rules in Iowa Code Chapter 232.188, Decategorization projects were permitted to carryover unspent funding for one additional year. However, Decategorization sites are not notified of the carryover amount until October or November which has limited the competitive bidding process and the ability to execute a long term contract and effectively begin a new service prior to the end of the fiscal year. DHS contracting specialists outline that an RFP process can take anywhere from six to nine months to complete, which in return makes it challenging for new programs to get started. Contractors have a short amount of time to hire and train staff, become established in the community, and have an effective referral process. Decategorization board members and contractors have been reluctant to take the considerable financial risks to embark on such projects when they do not know if the project can be sustained from year to year due to the unstable carryover funding process.

Nevertheless, Quad County Decategorization staff remained committed to educating local legislators about the funding regulations. Local legislators were invited to Decategorization board meetings and community events. During fiscal year 2011 legislative changes were made in House File 649 allowing Quad County Decategorization to carry forward funds for two succeeding years, which will allow the board to make more impactful decisions to meet community needs.

4) Quad County Decat Funded Programs

Project 1) Community Partnership for the Protection of Children Initiative, DCFS8-08-041, Healthy Henry County Communities

Description:

This contract provides leadership and coordination of activities to implement the Community Partnership for the Protection of Children initiative in Henry County.

Key Activities:

The Performance Measures for this service are:

All four strategies will be implemented during the contract period

- Shared decision making board will meet at least quarterly with 80% of attendance of all members
- Family Team Meeting trainings held will result in 90% satisfaction by all participants completing the training
- At least, one neighborhood networking activity will be undertaken in the contracting period
- At least one activity aimed at changing practice or policy will be undertaken in the contract period
- At least one activity during the contract period addressing the Iowa Youth Dream Team initiative in Henry County
- At least one activity during the contract period addressing the Iowa Youth Dream Team initiative in Louisa County.

Progress in reaching desired outcomes:

- The shared decision making board met September, October, November, January, February, March, April, May, and June with an average of 63.9% of attendance of all members
- 100% satisfaction by all participants completing Family Team Meeting training
- Six neighborhood networking activities were undertaken in the contracting period
- Four activities aimed at changing practice or policy were undertaken in the contract period
- Two activities during the contract period addressed the Iowa Youth Dream Team initiative in Henry County
- Two activities during the contract period addressed the Iowa Youth Dream Team initiative in Louisa County.

Planning adjustments and lessons learned:

Contract was renewed for another year.

Expenditures:

FY11 Contract Amount: \$19,500.00

FY11 Total Expended: \$19,262.52

Project 2) Decat Coordination, DCAT-07-027, Scott County Decategorization

Description:

This contract provides Decategorization Coordination and support services for the Quad County Decat Project. This contract also includes the function of the Day to Day Manager from July 2010 to December 2010 for the Casey Family Breakthrough Series Collaborative to reduce disproportionality and desperate outcomes for children and families of color in the child welfare system.

Key Activities:

Coordination Performance Measures:

- 95% of board meetings conducted by Decategorization staff shall be conducted by the State of Iowa open meeting laws.
- 90% of contracts will be implemented according to DHS contracting guidelines as they are published at the time the contract is written.
- 95% of bills will be submitted to Bi-State Regional Commission within 5 business days upon receipt by Scott County Decategorization unless there is an error on the bill that the Decategorization Coordinator is resolving prior to submission to Bi-State Regional Commission.

Casey Performance Measures:

- 100% of Pre-Work assignments will be completed on time
- 100% of data assignments will be completed on time
- 100% of Day to Day Managers calls will be attended
- 100% of All Collaborative calls will be attended
- 100% of Learning Sessions will be attended

Progress in reaching desired outcomes:

Coordination:

- 100% of board meetings conducted by Decategorization staff were conducted by the State of Iowa open meeting laws.
- 100% of contracts were implemented according to DHS contracting guidelines as they are published at the time the contract is written.
- 100% of bills were submitted to Bi-State Regional Commission within 5 business days upon receipt by Scott County Decategorization unless there was an error on the bill that the Decategorization Coordinator is resolving prior to submission to Bi-State Regional Commission.

Casey:

- 100% of Pre-Work assignments were completed on time
- 100% of data assignments were completed on time
- 100% of Day to Day Managers calls were attended
- 100% of All Collaborative calls were attended
- 100% of Learning Sessions were attended

Planning adjustments and lessons learned:

Contract was renewed for another year.

Expenditures:

FY11 Contract Amount: \$54,255.00

FY11 Total Expended: \$34,279.95

Project 3) Brief Intensive Services, DCAT8-08-201, Young House Family Services

Description:

This contract provides in-home family-centered brief intensive services to children (ages six to seventeen) living in Des Moines, Henry, Lee, and Louisa Counties who are not currently involved with but who are at-risk of becoming involved in the juvenile justice system and/or child welfare system.

Key Activities:

The Performance Measures for this service are:

- 90% of children and families will have no involvement in the child welfare system for a period of 12 months post discharge.
- 90% of children and families will have no involvement in the juvenile justice system for a period of 12 months post discharge
- 90% of families will demonstrate an increase in family functioning at the point of case closure based on the approved assessment instrument
- 75% of families will have increased their informal support network at the close of the case
- 80% of children will have no contact with law enforcement during services and for a period of 6 months post discharge
- 60% of school age children will improve school performance during services and for three months after services are completed

Progress in reaching desired outcomes:

- 100% of children and their families had no involvement in the child welfare system for a period of 12 months post discharge
- 99.25% of children and families had no involvement in the juvenile justice system for a period of 12 months post discharge
- 94.25% of families demonstrated an increase in family functioning at the point of case closure based on the approved assessment instrument
- 93% of families increased their informal support network at the close of the case
- 83.75% of children had no contact with law enforcement during services and for a period of 6 months post discharge
- 81.75% of school age children improved school performance during services and for three months after services are completed.

Planning adjustments and lessons learned:

Contract was renewed for another year.

Expenditures:

FY11 Contract Amount: \$226,440.00

FY11 Total Expended: \$98,371.88

Project 4) Community Restitution Program, DCAT8-10-138, Young House Family Services

Description:

This contract provides community restitution services for youth who are sentenced to community restitution hours by either the Juvenile Court Officer or a court judge in Lee, Louisa, Henry and Des Moines County.

Key Activities:

The Performance Measures for this service are:

- 100% of youth will be safe during their participation in the program
- At least 80% of youth will not re-offend during or up to 3 months after completing restitution
- At least 65% of youth completing restitution will indicate that their attitudes have changed about the impact of their actions on their families and community
- 80% of youth assigned to the program will complete their assigned restitution hours

Progress in reaching desired outcomes:

- 99.75% of youth were safe during their participation in the program
- 94.25% of youth did not re-offend during or up to 3 months after completing restitution
- 100% of youth completing restitution indicated that their attitudes have changed about the impact of their actions on their families and community
- 73.5% of youth assigned to the program will complete their assigned restitution hours.

Planning adjustments and lessons learned:

During FY11 there was an incident involving lack of supervision at one of the community restitution work sites. The contractor notified the Decategorization Coordinator of the incident within 48 hours and filed a report with the Coordinator. Contractor took all appropriate actions and the Decategorization Coordinator conducted a site visit with the contractor to verify that all background checks were completed on program employees. The board chose to renew this contract for another year due to the contractor appropriately handling the situation.

Expenditures:

FY11 Contract Amount: \$35,000.00

FY11 Total Expended: \$28,248.45

Attachment A:

QUAD COUNTY COMMUNITY FORUM

Planning with Henry, Lee, Louisa, and Des Moines Counties

March 3, 2010

Community members representing various private agencies, public agencies, and the community at-large in the Quad County (Lee, Louisa, Des Moines and Henry Counties) Decategorization area gathered at the Burlington Public Library to discuss their successes and concerns within their local communities. While the discussion was framed by the five formal threads presented in Figure 1, the unique themes in the dialogue revealed strained dynamic for service providers and their consumers (Figure 2). The formal threads are presented to document the group's ideas which served as a mechanism for the dialogue.

STAGE 1: IDENTIFICATION OF THEMES, CONTRIBUTING FACTORS, AND IDEAS

The reduction in funding in FY09 and FY10 and the anticipated reduction in FY11 created an initial service strain across the state as providers scrambled continue services with less funding. This was combined, in the Quad County area, with an increase in utilization of services and no formalized access point to communicate available public and private funding opportunities. As a result, community members shared agencies stressors however; the discussion focused was on trying to increase collaboration and decrease service disparities to children and families. The community concerns included the integration of several topics:

- (1) Children “falling through the gaps” of various program requirements and stipulations from funding sources
- (2) Transportation barriers for clients combined with high costs of travel for agencies
- (3) An under-reimbursed and over-worked children's mental health system further impaired by a lack of awareness in accessing the system

Formal Threads

Solutions & Celebrations

- Crisis Childcare
- United Way Funding
- Remedial Services
- Brief-Intensive Services
- Mid-Iowa Telepsych
- Interagency Meetings
- Volunteers to provide Interpretation Services
- Des Moines County Bus System
- Community Foundation

School Issues

- Schools need to know who to coordinate with for MH
- Unfunded Mandates
- Needs of children are up in schools
- After school programs

Needed Programs

- Parenting Classes
- Flexible Services that meet families where they are at
- Substance abuse for youth

Community Concerns

- Higher substance abuse
- More DHS referrals
- Drop out rates
- Bullying in schools
- Transportation to services/work
- Less resources available, even less after July 1
- Limited # of Psychiatrists
- No local DHS
- Increase in need for bilingual services and staff
- After school programs in the schools
- Rural area needs are different
- Rural areas usually have less funding

Agency Concerns

- Need for mentoring is up; funding is down
- More funding cuts after agencies already took 10% cuts
- Inability to serve children who fall between the gaps
- DHS taking less referrals for families in crisis
- Having a better connection between agencies in helping each other out
- Increase in on-call

Figure 1

STAGE 2: FROM IDEAS TO PROCESS

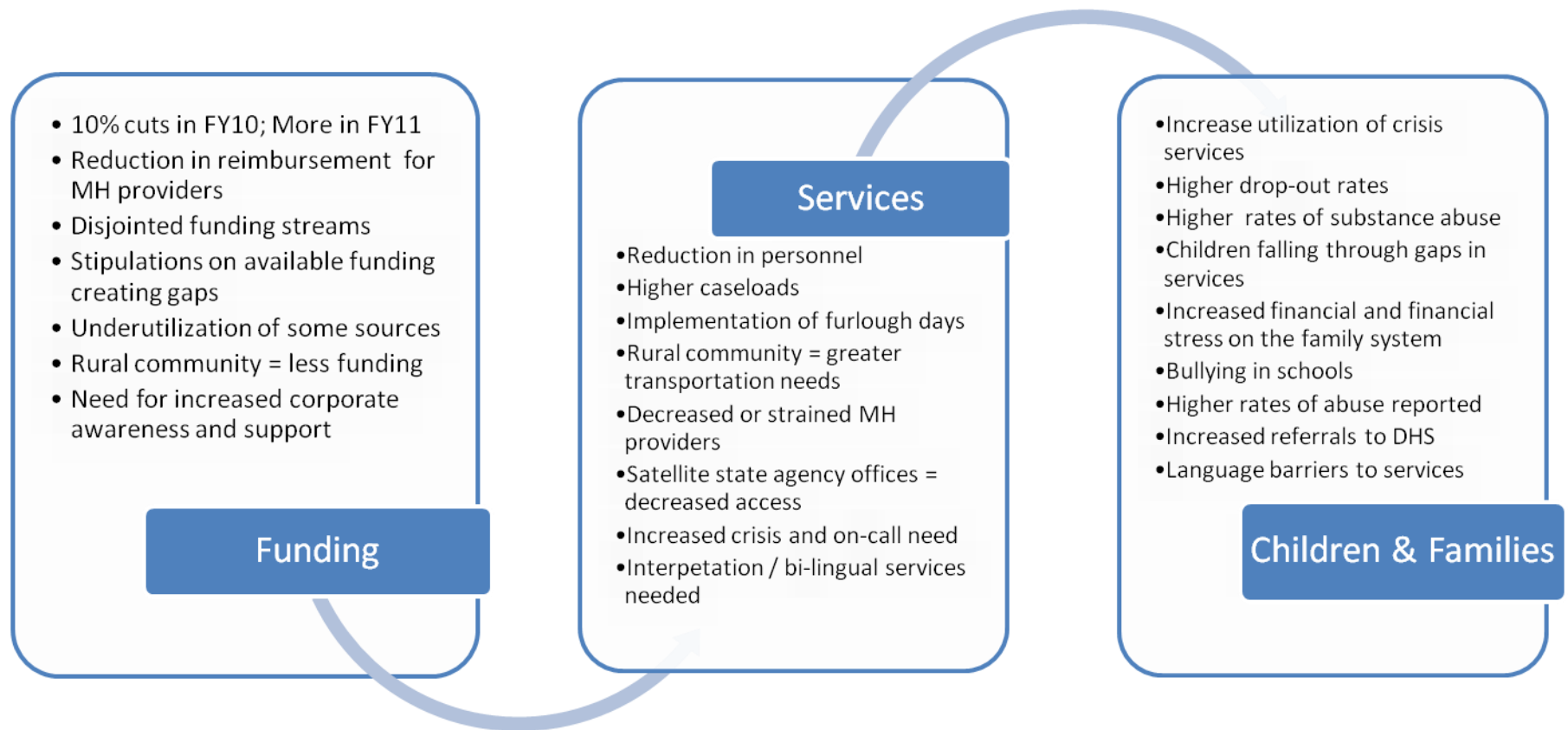


Figure 2

I. Funding Streams

Throughout the discussion, it became clear that the Decategorization project in the Quad County area was not as visible as the project would hope. This was indicated by the voiced concerns of several group members on the lack of knowledge of Decat’s activities or processes. United Way and Community Foundation shared their funding shared their agency priorities and how to access funds. Community members learned where to find state funded RFPs.

II. Community Resources

While agencies demonstrated resiliency to reduced funding however, the funding changes nonetheless created higher strain on agency employees with less compensation with which to maintain seasoned and quality staff. Agency and program representatives discussed the overall personal knowledge of resources their seasoned staff had collected. Experienced staff members know which programs have certain admission criteria and which programs have specialized staff unique to the needs of the clients they intend to refer. While this can serve as a great resource for these agencies, this knowledge leaves the agency when the staff member does. Subsequently, newer staff might not be as adept at navigating the system as their predecessors. Whereas most communities have some form of a resource guide specific to their own community to enhance both the worker’s and the family’s knowledge of available resources, these guides vary in their distribution breadth, comprehensiveness, and user friendliness. Indeed the Quad County area is not resource poor, which echoes participants in the forum. Instead, the area has some reported gaps preventing a smooth service continuum.

III. Strength and Resilience

Despite the financial shortcomings imposed with the current economic status, many solutions were already in place for agencies throughout the Quad County area. These included, among others: crisis childcare, interagency meetings, volunteer interpretation services, a county bus system, TelePsych, remedial services, and brief-intensive services. Forum participants discussed the successes of these services in addressing the needs of their clients and the community as a whole. It was discovered that although some services were available to select areas within the Quad County area, they were not universally accessible throughout the Decat area. This serves as a point for further review for the capacity of the Decategorization Board.

STAGE 3: FROM IDEAS TO PRACTICE

SYNTHESIZING SOLUTIONS

School and Community Collaboration

- Continue interagency meetings, where implemented, and explore this as a collaboration effort for other communities
- Greater communication on available funding sources between service providers and funding bodies.
 - Implement an information share-point for available funding sources that are known to the community.
- Work towards a collaborative community approach where agencies are open to refer individuals and families between programs, despite agency affiliation, so that their needs are appropriately met.
- Resource Guides are available in multiple communities; explore their dissemination to providers and clientele including cross-community sharing.
- Schools can act as a hub for services to integrate services and decrease strain on individual agencies, multiple and distant appointments for families, and subsequent transportation costs

Mental Health

- Work toward greater collaboration regarding available MH professionals and available client slots
- Work toward greater collaboration in decreasing barriers to access of services for limited resources
- Schools need to know who to coordinate with regarding Mental Health services
- A central point of information, such as United Way, is needed to access information for available services for the community.

Transportation

- Continue to utilize creative solutions to identified transportation barriers in the area
- Team with local school districts wherever possible to integrate services including use or implementation of after-school programming
- Affordable, reliable transportation was a recurrent theme expressed for the community which warrants further exploration.

Attachment B: DECATEGORIZATION: BUILDING CAPACITY AND ACHIEVING OUTCOMES

