

Family Treatment Court Program Performance Measures

Introduction

A family treatment court (FTC) is a juvenile or family court docket, for which selected abuse, neglect and dependency cases are identified, when parental substance use is a primary factor. Judges, attorneys, child protection services and treatment personnel unite with the goal of providing safe, nurturing and permanent homes for children while simultaneously providing parents the necessary support and services to become drug and alcohol abstinent. FTC programs aid parents in regaining control of their lives and promote long-term stabilized recovery to enhance the possibility of family reunification within mandatory legal timeframes.

For many family treatment court programs (FTC), graduation rates have been the default measure of program effectiveness. However, graduation rates alone do not assess many of the other criminal and child welfare outcomes that are considered important program effectiveness indicators*. These include:

- Treatment Outcome
 - Treatment completion rate
 - Length of time spent in treatment
- FTC Program Completion
 - Graduation rate
 - Length of time in the program
- Criminal Justice Outcome
 - Subsequent arrests
 - Subsequent arrests for drug charges
- Child Welfare Outcome
 - Time spent in foster care
 - Time to permanent placement
 - Time in out of home placement
 - Likelihood of reunification
 - New foster care episodes
 - Placement stability

This report presents evidence of effectiveness of FTC programs using a variety of measures, including program completion rates, criminal recidivism, likelihood of reunification and time to permanency. Some of these FTC participant data are also compared with those for a group of individuals charged with drug-related offenses who did not receive FTC programming. Data presented were extracted from Missouri's Judicial Information System (JIS) using the eleven FTC programs operating in Missouri's 11th, 16th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 31st, 32nd, 33rd, 35th, 40th and 45th judicial circuits between C2009 and C2016.

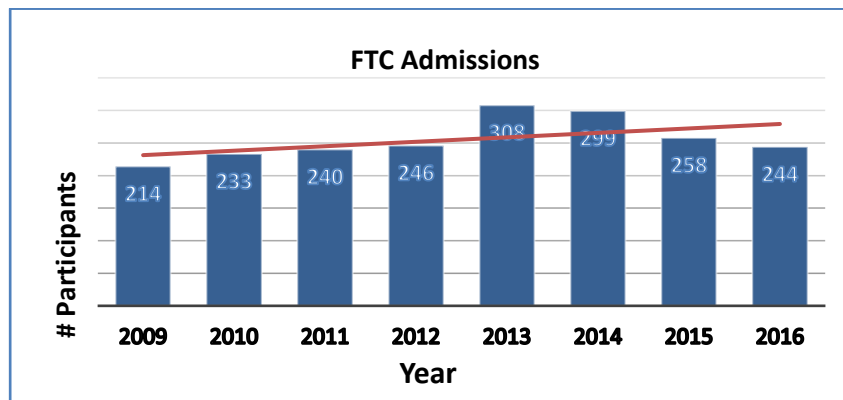
**Burrus, S. W. M., Mackin, J. R., Finigan, M. W. (Summer 2011). Show me the Money: Child Welfare Cost Savings of a Family Drug Court. Juvenile and Family Court Journal, 62 (3), 1-14.*

General Information (*Figure 1*)

FTC Admissions

- Between Jan 1, 2009 and Dec 31, 2016, a total of 2,042 participants were admitted to FTC programs, peaking in C2013 at 308 from a low in C2014 of 214. As the red trend line in Figure 1 shows, there was a slight increasing trend of FTC admissions for the reporting period.
- Jackson County accounted for nearly 42% of admissions, followed by Greene County (14%). St. Louis County, St. Louis City, St. Charles and Stoddard/Dunklin counties, each contributed approximately (7%) to total admissions, with 16% originating from the five remaining, generally less populated, counties.
- The average age of FTC participants at the time of their admission was 30 years old.
- As of December 31, 2016, there were 229 active participants in FTC programs.
- Over 90% of FTC admissions originated from some form of child abuse and neglect case filing.

Figure 1

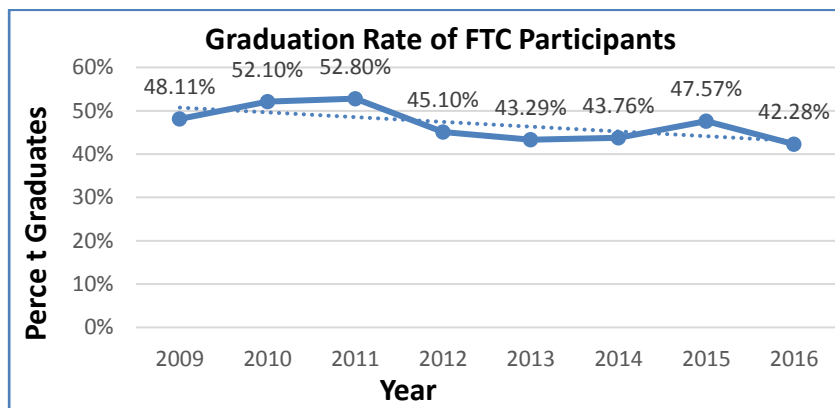


FTC Program Completion Outcomes (*Figure 2*)

FTC Graduation Rate

- Between C2009 and C2016, the range of graduation rates for FTC programs varied, with a high of 53% in C2011 to a low of 42% in C2016. The Figure 2 blue dotted trend line shows a slightly decreasing trend in FTC graduations for the reporting period.

Figure 2



Length of Stay

- The overall average length of FTC stay changed minimally over the five year period, with only a 29 day difference between the maximum average program stay in C2011 of 509 days, and the minimum average stay of 480 days in C2015.
- The average length of stay for graduates exiting FTC programs between C2009 and C2016 was 494 days. For terminated participants and voluntarily withdrawals, the average length of stay was 259 days.

Criminal Justice Recidivism of FTC Participants and a Non-FTC Comparison Group (Table 1)

FTC Group

- Includes program participants exiting FTC between January 1, 2009 and December 31, 2012.
- Recidivism was defined as a plea or finding of guilt for a felony or class A misdemeanor within the same circuit following program admission, assessed at 12, 24, 36 and 48 month intervals.

Comparison Group

- Includes putative father, legal mother, natural mother, grandparent, step parent, natural father or legal father who were parties to a formal juvenile case with a “child taken temporary protective custody” (VCTPC) docket entry and a filing initiation date between January 1, 2007, and December 31, 2012, but were **not** admitted to any form of treatment court programming.
- Includes individuals charged with class A misdemeanor, or felony drug-related offense that resulted in guilty plea or outcome within the same circuit, with a charge date of no more than one year prior to, OR two months after the filing of the protective custody juvenile case to ensure inter-case contiguity.
- Recidivism was defined as a plea or finding of guilt for a class A misdemeanor, or felony occurring within the same circuit after an “equivalent” treatment court admission date. Equivalence defined by the average number of days (71) between the filing initiation date of the juvenile case and the contract signed date for the associated treatment court case.

Table 1

Program	Exit Status	# of Exits	% Recidivism (within 12 Mo)	% Recidivism (within 24 Mo)	% Recidivism (within 36 Mo)	% Recidivism (within 48 Mo)
Family Treatment Court	Grad.	378	1.0%	4.2%	7.4%	9.8%
	Term.	474	6.3%	13.0%	16.9%	18.8%
	Total	852	3.9%	9.2%	12.6%	14.8%
Comparison Group	Female	241	7.8%	15.3%	22.4%	23.6%
	Male	330	6.6%	14.2%	21.8%	26.4%
	Total	571	7.0%	14.7%	22.1%	25.2%

Permanency Outcomes for Youth by Parental Treatment Court Status (*Table 2*)

- Fostering Court Improvement (FCI) is a court-agency model promoting a working partnership between the courts, child welfare agencies, the legal community and other key stakeholders. It includes the implementation of an on-going collaborative “team” approach to implement, at the local level, system reforms designed to improve safety and permanency outcomes for children in foster care.
- Circuits with active FCI sites during the study period were located in the following: 2, 5, 11, 12, 13, 19, 22, 23, 25, 26, 31, 35, 42 and 45. Program categories displayed in Table 2 are based on FCI, FTC, and/or other treatment court program simultaneously available.
- Reunification rates were separated out and reported as a potentially preferred child welfare outcome, however information on permanency outcomes overall are presented for the five year time period as well (see information on, “Achieving” and “Any” Permanency).

<i>Table 2 Category</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Circuits</i>
NO TREATMENT COURT - all FCI Circuits	Participants in FCI sites with any offense type, but not receiving any type of treatment court programming.	2, 5, 11, 12, 13, 22, 23, 25, 26, 31, 32, 33, 35, 42, 45
NO TREATMENT COURT - FCI Circuits with FTCs	Participants in FCI sites with FTC’s but receiving no treatment or FTC programming. Any offense type.	2, 11, 12, 22, 23, 31, 32, 35, 45
NO TREATMENT COURT - FCI Circuits with FTCs	Participants in FCI sites with FTC’s, but receiving no treatment or FTC programming. Drug related offense only.	2, 11, 12, 22, 23, 31, 32, 35, 45
FAMILY TREATMENT COURT Participants – FCI Circuits	Participants in FCI sites with any offense that graduated from FTC programming.	2, 11, 12, 22, 23, 31, 32, 35, 45
	Participants in FCI sites with any offense that were terminated from a FTC programming.	
OTHER TREATMENT COURT Participants – all FCI Circuits	Participants in FCI sites with any offense that graduated from some form of treatment court other than an FTC program.	2, 5, 11, 12, 13, 22, 23, 25, 26, 31, 32, 33, 35, 42, 45
	Participants in FCI sites with any offense that were terminated from some form of treatment court other than an FTC program.	

Table 2

Program Participation Categories	Exit Status	Child Permanency Outcome	C12	C13	C14	C15	C16	5 Year Total for Achieving Permanency & Avg for All Others
NO TREATMENT COURT - all FCI Circuits	(includes drug related and non-drug related charges)	# Achieving Permanency	1954	1935	2088	2277	2410	10664
		% Reunified	50.61%	47.86%	47.17%	49.76%	48.84%	48.86%
		Days to Reun	418	384	384	410	398	399
		Days to Any Permanency	757	722	689	698	666	704
NO TREATMENT COURT - FCI Circuits with FTCs	(includes drug related and non-drug related charges)	# Achieving Permanency	1464	1353	1452	1524	1572	7365
		% Reunified	49.80%	46.71%	42.63%	45.14%	46.95%	46.25%
		Days to Reun	420	394	382	420	411	406
		Days to Any Permanency	773	771	737	722	684	736
NO TREATMENT COURT - FCI Circuits with FTCs	(includes drug related charges only)	# Achieving Permanency	166	195	177	164	187	889
		% Reunified	53.01%	51.79%	54.24%	41.46%	51.87%	50.62%
		Days to Reun	456	429	405	364	393	412
		Days to Any Permanency	588	525	514	542	555	544
FAMILY TREATMENT COURT Participants – FCI Circuits	Grad.	# Achieving Permanency	61	66	49	96	55	327
		% Reunified	98.36%	98.48%	87.76%	86.46%	79.63%	90.18%
		Days to Reun	519	493	437	558	556	518
		Days to Any Permanency	515	488	442	553	523	511
	Term.	# Achieving Permanency	27	68	63	56	55	269
		% Reunified	66.67%	52.94%	26.98%	33.93%	45.45%	42.75%
		Days to Reun	843	600	765	788	571	687
		Days to Any Permanency	835	580	623	631	637	638
OTHER TREATMENT COURT Participants – all FCI Circuits	Grad.	# Achieving Permanency	40	37	36	22	33	168
		% Reunified	75.00%	70.27%	61.11%	68.18%	72.73%	69.64%
		Days to Reun	385	465	472	471	407	435
		Days to Any Permanency	438	472	562	541	488	495
	Term.	# Achieving Permanency	34	19	28	31	46	158
		% Reunified	52.94%	26.32%	46.43%	45.16%	56.52%	48.10%
		Days to Reun	320	417	424	274	520	404
		Days to Any Permanency	431	617	505	567	558	530

Summary Findings

- FTC admission rates trended slightly higher over the five year period.
- FTC graduation rates trended slightly lower over the five year period.
- FTC overall length of stay changed minimally over the five year period, but the length of stay for graduates remains considerably longer than that for individuals terminated from the program.
- Individuals terminated from the FTC had criminal recidivism rates that were more than double that of graduates at nearly every time interval examined (12, 24, 36, 48 months).
- Compared with circuits offering FCI programming only, reunification rates were considerably higher for families in circuits where both, FCI and FTC (or other treatment court program) are simultaneously active, particularly for FTC graduates, although the number of days to reunification was generally greater for these individuals. However, the number of days to achieving permanency of any type was generally less for FCI and FTC (or other treatment court program) participants, graduates included, when compared with circuits offering FCI programming only.