

FFTA



Foster Family-based Treatment Association

Benchmark TFC! Project FAQs

What is *Benchmark TFC!*?

With a half million children placed in foster care at any given time, stakeholders are demanding to know what the impact of foster care is. These stakeholders also want to know that children are being cared for in a safe and responsible manner. Without established standards of care it is difficult to address these issues.

The *Benchmark TFC!* project is an effort to develop benchmarks for Treatment Foster Care. FFTA members are invited to join in this project. The project consists of agencies collecting a relatively small set of core data elements on each foster care youth admitted to the agency beginning October 1st, 2005.

Brief History of the Project

Over four years ago, FFTA partnered with the 10,000 Foster Kids Benchmark project (otherwise known as the Quality Outcomes Leadership Alliance (QOLA)). QOLA developed an outcome survey specifically for foster care as a way to try and develop benchmarks in Foster Care. The survey developed by QOLA (which is used with their permission by FFTA for the *Benchmark TFC!* project) was developed by four well established agencies in foster care. These four agencies are: Casey Family Programs, Girls and Boys Town, PATH, and Pressley Ridge.

Following a pilot of the survey, an initial grant from the Annie E. Casey Foundation, and continued financial support from FFTA, over 30 agencies have enrolled in *Benchmark TFC!*

Benefits to Participating in the *Benchmark TFC!* Project

- ⊙ Well-chosen data elements that are practical for program evaluation and CQI efforts.
- ⊙ Gaining access to a socially validated, peer developed system for evaluating foster care performance;
- ⊙ Contributing to the foster care industry by establishing benchmarks for outcomes;
- ⊙ Benchmarking in an anonymous manner.
- ⊙ Learning how your agency compares to an aggregate of peer foster care agencies from around the county;
- ⊙ Enjoying quick start-up in the project with low costs and reasonable effort to participate;
- ⊙ Gaining a greater understanding how your agency uses its resources to achieve specific outcomes;
- ⊙ Being able to use the project's results to promote best practices within your agency and beyond.

How do I get started?

Getting started is easy. To participate you need to begin collecting data in one of 3 ways:

1. If you subscribe to KaleidaCare Solutions, version 6x you can enter the data directly into this system;
2. If you do not subscribe to KaleidaCare Solutions you have 2 options:
 - a. FFTA will provide you access to a secure web-based system that your agency can input data.

OR

- b. Your agency can have the additional data elements entered into your current Management Information System. The data would need to be downloaded and transmitted to the FFTA project director on a quarterly basis.

What Time Frame are we using for data collection?

You may either start with new admissions or go back in time and enter in previous admissions.

What else do we need to do?

Once your agency is enrolled in the project you will be asked to complete a taxonomy which will ask you questions about your foster care program(s). The information from the taxonomy will be used to develop comparison reports so that you can see how your program compares to agencies with similar types of programs, in addition to all participating programs.

When will we receive reports?

Comparison reports will be provided on a quarterly basis.

What is the cost to participate?

Beginning on July 1, 2008 all participants will be asked to pay a small fee to sustain this important project. FFTA members will pay an annual fee of \$595 per site, and nonmembers will pay \$995.

Who do I contact to get started?

Call or e-mail Melissa Cole at the FFTA office (800) 414-3382, ext. 113 or email: mcole@ffta.org.