

SJI NEWSLETTER

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NACM Midyear Meeting: The Power of Strategic Collaboration

Products and Resources

Since 2011, SJI has designated the library at the National Center for State Courts as the official repository of published work related to SJI-supported grant projects. You can search the ecollection online by using the term, State Justice Institute.



The National Association Court Management (NACM) is hosting its 2018 [midyear meeting](#), February 11-13, 2018, in Orange County, California. Recently, NACM announced that the midyear meeting, “Bridging the Gap – the Power of Strategic Collaboration,” was closed to new and walk-in registrations. If you were previously waitlisted, you should know by the end of January whether NACM can make arrangements for your attendance.

The midyear meeting will address how strategic collaboration is vital for courts that seek to establish stronger partnerships and a greater sense of connection with the community. When courts and their partners collaborate, they work productively toward solutions that result in sustainable outcomes that impact public safety and access to justice.

The midyear meeting will provide attendees with training and networking opportunities that will encourage them to consider how collaboration can be



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However, just because you are unable to attend in-person, does not mean you cannot participate. With a grant provided by SJI, live-streaming of midyear educational sessions and workshops will be available. In addition to the live-streaming and workshop broadcasts, there will be archived educational sessions for future viewing. SJI supports the development of educational content and its free dissemination online because court professionals are often unable to attend the NACM midyear and annual meetings in person.

used to address systemic issues that intersect with internal and external interests of the judicial branch. The midyear meeting theme highlights the collaborative intersections that exist between the work of the court and the needs of the community by engaging the private sector and other governmental entities, all of which are essential in building a more responsive and forward-thinking model of justice.

The [agenda and video streaming](#) will be available throughout the conference.

Military Families in Juvenile & Family Courts

Earlier this month, the [National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges \(NCJFCJ\)](#) announced [24 new and supplemental grant awards](#) from a variety of funders, including the State Justice Institute (SJI). This support, totaling more than \$11 million, will ensure justice and improve outcomes for families and children in courts nationwide.

SJI is pleased to support an initiative on military families in juvenile and family courts. In partnership with the [U. S. Department of Defense](#), this initiative will allow the NCJFCJ to identify and recruit juvenile and family courts in jurisdictions with significant military presence; create an online national resource center; develop a training curriculum for judges, military command, and key stakeholders; and hold a second summit on military families and state courts for continuing and sustaining these efforts.



“The NCJFCJ is ecstatic to continue its partnership with the State Justice Institute to address issues faced by military families in the juvenile and family court system,” said Judge Anthony (Tony) Capizzi, NCJFCJ president. “Military families face unique challenges including long separations from one another as a result of deployments or relocations, chronic pain, traumatic brain injury and mental health including depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder. The NCJFCJ looks forward to working with judges to address the needs of military-connected families, with access to resources like counseling and child care services, while being sensitive to the traumas they may have experienced.”

Inaugural Permanency Report Provides Key Data on Foster Care and Placement

The National Center for State Courts (NCSC) released its inaugural [Permanency Report](#). The report reveals state-by-state data on key foster care and permanency measures and the examples of strategies being implemented through the Reimagining Dependency Courts project, an effort supported by Case Family Programs. The project focuses on reducing court delay in achieving permanency for children and their families.

Providing judicial leaders with children and family and outcome data, in addition to the court process measures courts are used to seeing, has been a very powerful driver of change at the statewide leadership level and among local trial court judges.

Some of the measures found in the *Permanency Report* include the percentage of children in foster care who have been in

care for more than 24 months and the percentage of foster children in the state who are waiting for adoption. The eight-page report utilizes data from Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) with measures provided by the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect and the Children's Bureau CFRS State Performance Workbook. While the report acknowledges that this is not the only or exhaustive way of evaluating permanency and progress, it identifies solid benchmarks for consideration.

Permanency Report
A NATIONAL UPDATE

Every child deserves a lifelong family. Despite broad agreement on this point, children who experience the trauma of abuse or neglect and subsequent exit of home care may linger in foster care for years, with tens of thousands of youth aging out of care each year without achieving a permanent home. While every state court system tracks the percentage of children exiting care to permanency, it is also important to consider a range of national measures that indicate how well children in care may achieve timely permanency going forward.

The indicators in this report include:

- Children in care:** While court leaders likely have a sense of the number of children entering care due to social activity, the number and rate of children under 18 who remain in care at the end of the year and/or contact, in addition to the number of children in care, considering a new per 1,000 children allows for comparative across states with different population sizes.
- Children in care for less than 2 years who had 2+ placements:** Research has demonstrated that placement changes can negatively affect a child's educational, health, and emotional development, while children who remain in care for an extended period of time are more likely to experience multiple placements. Children who have been in care for less than two years that have experienced multiple placement changes may have difficulty achieving permanency in their family of origin or another family setting.
- Children in care for 2+ years:** The proportion of children under 18 in care for more than two years, sometimes referred to as "long stays," speaks to the extent to which children who enter care remain in the child welfare system for an extended period of time. From a system perspective, it is helpful to know the distribution of length of stay to assess the population of children currently in care.
- Children waiting for adoption:** Children are considered to be waiting for adoption if they are in care at the end of the year and either of the following are true: 1) the child's case goal is adoption; or 2) the child is under the age of 18 and at least one parent's rights have been terminated, unless the child is 16 or 17 and the case goal is emancipation. States with high proportions of children waiting for adoption may have difficulty achieving permanency for children in care due to the additional judicial proceedings required to terminate parental rights and finalize adoptions.
- Children in care 2+ years who exit to permanency within 12 months:** This measure assesses the extent to which "long stays" lead to permanent home. It is calculated by determining the proportion of children in care at the beginning of the year with a length of stay greater than two years who exit care by the end of the year. Children who remain in care for extended periods of time may have more difficulty achieving permanency due to the trauma associated with out of home care.
- States that are re-entries:** This critically important indicator is helpful in identifying the extent to which children under 18 return to the protection of child welfare systems after exiting to a permanent home. It is determined by identifying which children entering care in a given year had previously been in foster care. A high proportion of children re-entering care may suggest the need for additional supports or services while the case is under court jurisdiction, as well as other case closure.

The National Center for State Courts launched the Reimagining Dependency Courts (RDC) initiative in 2016 to partner with Case Family Programs. The initiative goal is to partner with state courts or systems to re-define the number of children in foster care, while also increasing the percentage of children exiting care to permanency. The initiative is currently active in: Alaska, Florida, Illinois, and Oregon. The work is based on the recently developed RDC Practice and Strategy which focus on strengthening the leadership and governance of dependency cases to improve the experience of children in care, family members, and the court system, and availability of child welfare services. The

A NATIONAL LOOK AT FOSTER CARE FY2015

412,482
Number of children in foster care

BY AGE GROUPS

- 40% 0-5 years
- 33% 6-12 years
- 28% 13-17 years
- 4% 18+ years

25%
of children have been in care for 2+ years

REASONS CHILDREN ENTER CARE

- 18% Abuse
- 84% Neglect

EXITS FROM FOSTER CARE

- 33% A. Reunited 121,420
- 22% B. Adoption 91,631
- 38% C. Relative Guardianship 111,124
- 9% D. Age Out 35,142
- 3% E. Other 7,161

SJI and NJC Continue to Support Judicial Education

SJI and the [National Judicial College \(NCJ\)](#) continue to partner together to provide education for state court judges.

In addition to funds leveraged through the [SJI Educational Support Program](#), the NJC has also offered some of its our web-based, faculty-led courses for free.



Please reference the [2018 NJC Course Catalog online](#), as well as [scholarship requirements](#).

Scholarships are provided by individuals, foundations, the [Bureau of Justice Assistance \(BJA\)](#), the [National Highway Traffic](#)

[Safety Administration \(NHTSA\)](#), and the [State Justice Institute \(SJI\)](#).

Among the upcoming NJC web-based courses of interest are:

- [Evidence Challenges for Administrative Law Judges](#) - February 19 - April 6, 2018
- [Fundamentals of Evidence](#) - March 12 - April 27, 2018
- [Fundamentals of Evidence](#) - March 12 - April 27, 2018

To learn more about financial assistance to attend NJC programs, please email njc-scholarships@judges.org or call (800) 25-JUDGE.

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The State Justice Institute is a federally-funded, non-profit corporation established by federal law in 1984 to improve the quality of justice in the state courts.

