

CCI

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Please SUPPORT SB12-11

Expanding the Differential Response Pilot Project for Child Welfare (Spence/Summers)

- CCI strongly supports expansion of the Differential Response model of child protection practice. This bill expands the five county limit in HB10-1226.
- The five counties, Arapahoe, Jefferson, Larimer, Fremont, and Garfield, are piloting this model. Many other counties would like to begin to practice DR in their counties but cannot do so until legislation is passed.
- Differential Response is an alternative to traditional child protection investigative response. It sets aside investigation, fault finding and the substantiation decision for some reports, usually those reports that do not allege serious and imminent harm. DR seeks safety through family engagement and collaborative partnerships.
- The practice of DR in the five pilot counties is proving to have some significantly positive outcomes for the families served.

Some of the positive outcomes so far:

1. The Family Assessment Review (FAR) approach to families is achieving the same high level of safety as traditional response,
2. Read Evaluate and Determine (RED) Team has greatly improved the front door decision about what to assign and why -- the overall assignment rates have declined across the five counties with evidence of no increase in re-referrals,
3. Family feedback is very positive, especially from those who experienced a traditional response first and now have experienced a FAR -- not nearly as much fear, anger, animosity. (we anticipate that this will decrease re-referral to the child protection system and shortened length of service overall in the system)
4. Caseworker feedback is extremely positive, with stress decrease, improved satisfaction with work given the relationship building and level of family engagement they now experience as a result of the differential approach
5. The DR framework designed for Colorado is not a front door approach only, but a model that supports completely full family and community engagement from the front door and beyond discharge from the system aimed to improve sustained family preservation.

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