

Rapides Parish

Policy and Procedure Manual: Family in Need of Services (FINS) Program

**Institute for Public Health and Justice
in collaboration with the
Rapides Parish 9th JDC**

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Models for Change

Models for Change is an effort to create successful and replicable models of juvenile justice reform through targeted investments in key states, with core support from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. Models for Change seeks to accelerate progress toward a more effective, fair, and developmentally sound juvenile justice system that holds young people accountable for their actions, provides for their rehabilitation, protects them from harm, increases their life chances, and manages the risk they pose to themselves and the public. The initiative is underway in Illinois, Pennsylvania, Washington, and Louisiana.

Eight Principles of Models for Change: A Framework

Fundamental fairness

All system participants – including youthful offenders, their victims, and their families – deserve bias-free treatment.

Recognition of juvenile-adult differences

The system must take into account that juveniles are fundamentally and developmentally different from adults.

Recognition of individual differences

Juvenile justice decision makers must acknowledge and respond to individual differences in terms of young people's development, culture, gender, needs, and strengths.

Recognition of potential

Young offenders have strengths and are capable of positive growth. Giving up on them is costly for society. Investing in them makes sense.

Safety

Communities and individuals deserve to be and to feel safe.

Personal responsibility

Young people must be encouraged to accept responsibility for their actions and the consequences of those actions.

Community responsibility

Communities have an obligation to safeguard the welfare of children and young people, to support them when in need, and to help them grow into adults.

System responsibility

The juvenile justice system is a vital part of society's collective exercise of its responsibility toward young people. It must do its job effectively.

Louisiana Models for Change

Models for Change-supported reform efforts in Louisiana focus primarily on bringing about change in three areas: expanding alternatives to formal processing and secure confinement; increasing access to evidence-based services; and reducing disproportionate minority contact with the juvenile justice system. In addition, the initiative provides support for statewide efforts to ensure that work carried out at the local level through Models for Change is aligned with the state's goals for juvenile justice reform. Louisiana was the third of four states chosen to participate in the Models for Change initiative, including Pennsylvania, Illinois, and Washington.

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Introduction

This manual is intended to address the policies and procedures of Rapides Parish’s informal FINS agency, unless specifically addressed otherwise. It provides a detailed description of the policies and procedures of the Rapides Parish informal FINS system, including key definitions, process rules and guidelines, and information on the fundamental goals and principles of the informal FINS system. Its purpose is to offer direction and support to the Rapides Parish informal FINS staff and stakeholders, as well as to serve as a guide for other jurisdictions looking to enhance or reform their own informal FINS systems. All reform efforts should be determined based on each respective informal FINS agency and/or jurisdiction.

The fundamental intent of the informal FINS system in Rapides Parish is to divert status offending youth from the juvenile justice system by engaging families and providing them with information and support. By offering—in a voluntary setting—evidence-based screening, referrals to community-based services and supports, and targeted case monitoring for youth and families, Rapides Parish’s informal FINS program is designed to keep young people who have not committed criminal acts away from the courtroom, the justice system, detention, or longer-term placement, thereby preserving the unity and integrity of families and preventing future delinquency behavior from occurring.

History of Informal FINS in Louisiana

In Louisiana, FINS refers to “Family in Need of Services”. Youth can be designated as “FINS youth” when they are alleged to have committed “status offenses”, which are behaviors such as truancy, running away, and ungovernability. These are non-criminal behaviors that are deemed “offenses” purely because they are committed by youth. Under Title VII of the Louisiana Children’s Code, young people who are alleged to be exhibiting “status offending” behavior can be brought to court and adjudicated, but only after “all available voluntary alternatives have been exhausted”. In Rapides, the Informal FINS Department is the place where youth and families are connected with those alternatives, and where all efforts are made to ensure that the youth and family never reach a courtroom.

Legislative funding for informal FINS programs in Louisiana, which operate under the auspices of the judicial system, began in 1995 by an appropriation made through the Children’s Cabinet of the Governor. Distribution of those funds was made in accordance with a formula for allocation, devised with judicial input, for payments to juvenile courts (in the amount of \$30,000), multi-parish district courts (in the amount of \$28,000), and single parish district courts (in the amount of \$25,000). Funds appropriated for FINS in 1996, 1997, and 1998 were placed in the budget of Department of Social Services/Office of Community Services (DSS/OCS) and distribution continued to be made to juvenile and district courts in accordance with the formula. In 1998, the legislature appropriated an additional \$500,000 to provide support to judicial districts for FINS. In addition, the legislature requested that a study be conducted by LSU-OSSRD (Louisiana State University – Office of Social Services Research and Development) to determine equitable distribution of those funds throughout the 41 judicial districts, in accordance with the Louisiana Performance Audit Laws. In addition to a one-time distribution, LSU-OSSRD recommended that uniform data collection, centralized data analysis, and administrative program oversight be conducted by the Supreme Court. Accordingly, at the request of the Legislature, the Louisiana District Judges Association, and the Louisiana Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, the Supreme Court created the FINS Assistance Program (FINSAP) and assigned its Judicial Administrator’s Office to implement the recommendations made by LSU-OSSRD.

Currently, the Rapides Parish Juvenile Court and more than 50 other judicial district offices participate in the Families in Need of Services Assistance Program (FINSAP). In addition to monthly allocations, more than 70% of FINSAP participants have requested and received funding for enhancements including computer upgrades and technical assistance.

History of Rapides Parish Informal FINS

In 1991, laws governing FINS were established. The FINS program in Rapides Parish started in 1993 in Pineville City Court under the direction of Cathy Smith. Initially, she simply met with all families referred from city court and interviewed each family to determine how their needs could be met. During this first year, approximately 100-150 families received informal FINS services.

In 1994, the 9th Judicial District Judges decided to manage the FINS program and it was moved to the Rapides Parish Courthouse. Judge Henry Lemoine, Pineville City Court Judge, continued to oversee FINS, later followed by Judges Donald Johnson and Rae Swent. The workload began to increase as families came from court referrals, school referrals, mental health referrals, and walk-ins. For some informal FINS cases, Cathy Smith, who served as the director, simply worked one-on-one with the family to arrange a service referral plan. For other cases, the Family Team Conference (FTC) system was created, in which parent(s) and youth came into the office for a conference to discuss the family issue(s) and to reach a group agreement about the best solution(s). Representatives from mental health, substance abuse, school system, and court personnel participated as panel members for the FTC. The conferences were initially held once a month, but quickly expanded to twice a month due to the workload. At this time, the director did all of the interviews, scheduled FTCs, notified the families of the FTC, answered the phone, and completed all necessary paperwork.

In 1995, Judge Donald Johnson became the Juvenile Court Judge over FINS. An increase of referrals to FINS from the court system, District Attorney's Office, and the local police department followed.

From 1996 to December 2003, Judge Rae Swent was the Juvenile Court Judge. During those eight years, informal FINS cases continued to increase. Truancy cases also began to outweigh behavior issues. Judge Swent saw the need for a specific truancy intervention and created the first Truancy Round-Up accordingly. FINS averaged approximately 668 cases per year, excluding the Truancy Round-Up, and FTCs were conducted once a week, with the panel representing 10 agencies from the community. By this time FINS had four employees – a director, intake officer, FTC coordinator, and case manager/clerical.

In 2004, Judge Donald Johnson reaccepted the challenge of Juvenile Justice. He continued with Judge Swent's framework and left the bench in December 2005. In January 2006, Judge Patricia Koch became the Juvenile Court Judge. She saw a need for reform within the juvenile court system, including the pressing problem of status offending youth being funneled into the juvenile justice system for the purposes of receiving much needed services. In hopes of working to change the system and better serve young people and families, Rapides Parish applied for and received a grant from *Louisiana Models for Change*, an initiative of the John D.

and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, to study Rapides' existing FINS system and reform it according to national best practice models and unique local needs, strengths, and community characteristics.

Process for Reviewing Best Practice Models

As Rapides Parish began efforts to reform its status offender system, it wanted to ground its work by examining nationally recognized models from other jurisdictions. In July 2010, with planning and facilitation support from the Vera Institute of Justice (Vera) and the National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice (NCMHJJ) (both organizations funded by the *Models for Change* initiative as part of its National Resource Bank with the goal of providing technical assistance to selected localities), Rapides Parish held a day-long retreat in Chicago, Illinois to take a deeper look at national best practices in this area. The central goal of this meeting was to expose Rapides Parish to national models from which it could choose and build a reformed, local informal FINS system. The engagement was also designed to provide other local *Louisiana Models for Change* grantees and state-level system actors with a forum to gain insight, facilitate statewide discourse, and provide support to one another as they looked to improve the way informal FINS youth and families are served on the state and local levels.

In order to accomplish these goals, Vera brought associates and consultants from Florida, Orange County (New York), and Connecticut—all considered model status offender systems—to present at and participate in the meeting. In advance of the retreat, Rapides Parish—with assistance from its national consultants—worked to discern its unique needs, challenges, and interests; additionally, Vera worked with the associates to help them prepare presentations that would most effectively address those issues. Also in preparation for the meeting, an extensive packet of materials was assembled for the group that included, among other things, diagnostic reports on the informal FINS processes in Rapides and Calcasieu, relevant data as gathered and presented by partners at the University of New Orleans (UNO), and recommendations regarding the fundamental elements of successful status offender systems.

At the meeting itself, each “model” made an hour-long presentation to the group that included substantial time for questions and discussion. Then, the group moved into a discussion that focused on the local reform effort in Rapides Parish. Under the direction of Judge Koch and with Vera and NCMHJJ facilitating, local stakeholders discussed the next steps toward selecting a model, developing a concrete work plan, and implementing reform.

Rapides Parish quickly then delved into the next steps it had established in Chicago to develop a concrete vision for reform planning and implementation. Rapides decided to use the Florida Model as its primary model, while also infusing lessons from the other models. A more in-depth working relationship between Rapides and Florida was formed with the goal of having the Florida consultants gain an on-the-ground understanding of Rapides' system so they could

target their assistance strategically and for Rapides to gain hands-on insight into how the Florida model operates locally. To accomplish this, Rapides planned two additional site visits. First, in September 2010, two consultants from Florida visited Rapides Parish to provide perspective and insight into the fundamental principles and policies both in terms of a local manifestation of a model system and the process of reform. The Florida consultants provided the crucial “practitioner” perspective, sharing how the model actually operates day-to-day in programming and practice. In the day-and-a-half visit to Rapides, the Florida consultants visited a number of local sites, including the Renaissance Group Home/Shelter/Detention, the Office of Mental Health campus and cottage, and the local informal FINS office. They also met with police, mental health staff, and the local crisis team to learn about the relationship between those agencies and FINS. Most importantly, they engaged in extensive discussions with informal FINS staff and *Models for Change* leadership regarding local needs, strengths, challenges, and priorities.

Now armed with a comprehensive understanding of informal FINS in Rapides, the Florida consultants were ready to support the parish in acquiring and applying a relevant and in-depth understanding of Florida’s status offender system. The next step would be the planning and facilitation of a site visit to Gainesville, to have the Rapides team see the Florida system in action. Preparation for this site visit was extensive and involved numerous conference calls with both Louisiana and Florida stakeholders to craft an agenda that would give Rapides the opportunity to really understand how the Florida model works, how to approach reform, and how to tackle the questions and issues about which Rapides was most concerned. This day-and-a-half long site visit involved meetings with Florida CINS staff, shelter staff, law enforcement, mental health providers, the Department of Juvenile Justice, and more.

It became clear during the trip to Florida and in the conversations that followed, that Rapides Parish had – in response to the meetings, discussions, and planning that preceded it – already come a long way with its reform efforts, but had not formalized or documented those accomplishments. Additionally, the group realized that articulating what it had already done would help concretize the reform gaps that still needed to be addressed. Accordingly, after the trip to Florida, Rapides Parish wrote a report that documented in narrative form all that it had already accomplished under its grant, and, using what it had learned from Florida and the other model jurisdictions, what work had yet to be accomplished. Rapides Parish then held another day-long meeting in March 2011 with local grantees, informal FINS staff, and the *Louisiana Models for Change* staff to take stock of all the reforms it had successfully enacted during this grant period and to create a final plan for the remainder of the grant.

Rapides Parish Key Principles

Following the review of the best practice models and the collaborative efforts of the members of Rapides Children and Youth Planning Board (CYPB) alongside law enforcement and key school leadership, certain key principles became the guiding force for the reform within

informal and formal FINS work within the parish. Key features exist within the FINS system, which require recognition that:

- Youth do best when they can remain in their own homes and schools;
- Families of these youth do want their home lives to improve; however, they are ill-equipped to initiate change, necessitating involvement with families through voluntary engagement techniques;
- Court or the juvenile justice system should always be the last resort for families that need services to repair disrupted relationships;
- Schools are the best systems to address learning challenges and behaviors that occur within the school setting; and
- Services are available for families through other state agencies such as the Office of Behavior Health or the Department of Child and Family Services.

With the *Louisiana Models for Change* guidance, FINS has taken successful steps to reduce the number of status offenders reaching the court system. Indeed, Rapides has managed to reduce the number of formal FINS cases per year that are petitioned to court and has high hopes to eventually stop juvenile status offenders from reaching juvenile court all together. FINS currently has two FINS officers sharing an average annual caseload of 213 cases of targeted informal FINS families and an additional informal Truancy Round-Up to address basic truancy concerns coupled with additional status offenses.

Informal FINS Overview

Programmatic Objectives of Informal FINS

- Address the needs of youth and families by providing them with an array of voluntary services designed to preserve the unity and integrity of the family and to prevent delinquent behavior.
- Engage families and support necessary change through the use of Motivational Interviewing, behavior contracts, Informal Service Plan Agreements, FINS Family Team Conference(s), referrals to outside agencies, case monitoring, and a willingness to change and tailor service plans to help youth and families address their individual needs. Only if status offending behavior persists after all other options have been exhausted and the family requests court intervention will informal FINS staff consider requesting that a formal petition be filed.
- Form and enhance local partnerships to develop a community-wide network of potential service providers.
- Enhance family support networks and other protective factors for youth.
- Welcome returning families to the office to address needs that may arise in the future. The open door policy ensures court intervention is utilized as a “last resort” measure.

Resource Network

In order to meet its goals and objectives, the informal FINS department maintains a comprehensive and up-to-date inventory of services within the Rapides Parish community. These referral services are selected based on their ability to respond to the needs of youth and families. These general needs (e.g., crisis response, family counseling, etc.) are established via regular reviews of available data collected from clients. Ideally, these services are outcome-based, thus demonstrating effectiveness at engaging, providing, and sustaining timely and quality services for FINS referrals. This outcome-based programming may often be found in referrals to established evidence-based programs in the community. FINS also retains an active list of resources that might provide preventive education and information to families. Informal FINS staff is therefore required to work within the community to maintain these inventories. It is also important that informal FINS develop and maintain informational materials on the available services and written interagency agreements defining local relationships and protocol toward service linkage of FINS cases. Maintaining such networks affords FINS personnel a more effective role in linking families to services and decreasing barriers that families might encounter in accessing service.

More specifically, informal FINS should retain as comprehensive as possible an inventory of service providers that address issue areas including, but not limited to:

- Alcohol and Other Drug Use/Abuse
- Adolescence/Adolescent Behavior
- Mental and Behavioral Health

- Parenting Classes/Family Functioning
- Youth Educational Issues
- Health/Pediatric
- GED, Vocational, and Technical Services

Within these issue areas, the service types in the informal FINS resource network should include, but not be limited to, the following:

- **Information Services:** A specifically time-limited presentation, delivered through a variety of selected means and utilizing a wide range of resources, to a targeted audience for the purpose of increasing awareness of children and families in need.
- **Education Services:** An educational service is a planned activity or a series of activities with specific educational objectives delivered to a specific population on a predetermined time plan.
- **Alternative Services:** An alternative service is a structured activity directed at a specific risk demonstrating general risk factors that may lead to running away, being truant, or becoming ungovernable.
- **Early Intervention Services:** A series of structured contacts over time delivered to identify participant(s) and designed to address issues as determined by demonstrated risk factors, by linking families with appropriate services as described in the FINS process.
- **Community Development Services:** Participation in and/or mobilization of community efforts dedicated to the promotion of healthy families through community action and/or advocacy.

In addition, the United Way has provided Central Louisiana with twenty-four hour, seven days a week access and 2-1-1 hotline. Through this service, FINS accesses information on social, community, health, and government services available in the Central Louisiana regions as well as areas throughout Louisiana.

Community Engagement

In addition to retaining a resource network, FINS should also participate in community engagement activities, designed to bring awareness to Rapides Parish community members about informal FINS and to develop and maintain positive working relationships with other youth-serving entities in the area.

Community engagement activities include:

- First Friday monthly meetings with the Juvenile Judge and local providers who offer services to Rapides Parish youth
- Yearly meeting with Rapides Parish School Board/Law Enforcement
- Task Force: Children’s Area Planning Board/Children’s Cabinet

Referral to Informal FINS

All referrals to informal FINS (currently known as “complaints”) shall be investigated to determine eligibility for services by the criteria provided in this section. Those meeting the criteria will have access to a continuum of protective factors described within this manual. This process is carried out pursuant to Louisiana Children’s Code Articles 726-732 and 743-745.

Before being served by FINS, the FINS program must also determine that the youth and family are not “excluded” from FINS eligibility because of current involvement in another youth-serving agency and fit the “inclusion” criteria, based on the Louisiana Children’s Code, Title VII, Article 730. (See “Eligibility Determination” below for exclusion and inclusion criteria details)

Referrals to Informal FINS

Anyone can make a referral to informal FINS, but generally cases come to the FINS intake officer in one of three ways: walk-in/call-in referrals from parents/guardians, written referrals from other agencies as referenced below, or a court order from a judge in lieu of formal processing.

Walk-in/Call-in Referrals from Parents/Guardians

When a guardian calls FINS and wishes to become involved in the program, he or she should be advised and/or encouraged to schedule an initial intake interview and/or appointment to file a referral. The intake officer will enter the appointment into the FINS calendar and call and/or mail the family with confirmation of the appointment location, date, and time.

When a guardian brings the youth directly to the FINS office to file a referral it is considered a “walk-in”. Walk-ins are seen Monday-Friday from 8:30am-4:30pm (exclusive of holidays). Outside of regular office hours, an answering service provides information for guardians on available after hours resources.

The receptionist will advise the intake officer of the “walk-in”. The intake officer will sign the family in and guide them through the Eligibility Determination process.

Written Referrals from Other Agencies and the Court

Written referrals come from a variety of agencies including:

- Law Enforcement Officers
- School Personnel
- District Attorney’s Office (DA)

- Office of Behavioral Health (OBH), other private/state agencies

Referral Criteria for Law Enforcement Agencies

Referrals to the informal FINS office should only occur if the status offender meets criteria of the Louisiana Children’s Code and the following efforts have been exhausted by Law Enforcement:

- (1) The guardian of the minor must be notified of the offense verbally and be made aware that the juvenile is at risk of being referred to the Juvenile Court system.
- (2) Youth and guardian must verbally be “counseled and cautioned” and voluntarily agree to an informal FINS referral in lieu of juvenile court.
- (3) The Law Enforcement agency must submit demographic information and the incident report to the informal FINS Office.

If all of these criteria ARE MET, the youth will move on to the Eligibility Determination process.

If all of these criteria ARE NOT MET, Law Enforcement is notified of rejection of the informal FINS referral.

Referral Criteria for School-Referred Youth

In addition to meeting the inclusion criteria of the Louisiana Children’s Code, the Rapides Parish School System must make two attempts at intervention before the youth is eligible for referral to the informal FINS Office:

- (1) The parents must be notified of the problem verbally and made aware that the youth is at risk of being referred to the informal FINS Office. Written documentation of this conversation must be maintained.
- (2) The youth must be referred to one of the following:
 - a. Behavior Strategist, if classified Special Education; or
 - b. Designated Disciplinarian, if in regular education classes.

If the status offending behavior persists after these steps are taken, and after speaking with the youth, authorized school personnel can make a referral to the informal FINS Office via the completion of the School Exhaustion Form. (See *Appendix A: School Exhaustion Form*)

If a student is truant without the presence of behavioral issues, he or she is referred to Rapides Parish School Board’s Child Welfare and Attendance office where the truancy issue is addressed in-office.

If all of the above criteria ARE MET, the youth will move on to the Eligibility Determination process.

If all of the above criteria ARE NOT MET, the FINS Denial Letter is used to notify the school. (See *Appendix L: FINS Denial Letter*)

Referral Criteria for District Attorney and Court

District Attorney (DA) and court referrals come to FINS when an order is rendered in court or the DA amends a juvenile's charges to a FINS offense at the time of adjudication. Usually court referrals are accompanied by recommendations from the judge, which are subsequently implemented by the FINS office. With the creation of Rapides Parish's Neighborhood Accountability Board, referrals from the District Attorney to FINS are rare.

Referral Criteria for Office of Behavioral Health and Other Private Agencies

In addition to meeting the inclusion criteria drawn from the Louisiana Children's Code, attempts must be made by the referral agencies to engage families before the youth is eligible for referral to the informal FINS Office. Attempts include a phone call and correspondence to the last known address provided by the school database.

The family must agree voluntarily to attend a meeting with the informal FINS office and if an IFSPA is signed, the family must voluntarily agree to follow any prescribed instructions of the referral source (e.g., counseling, medicine).

If all of these criteria ARE MET, the youth will move on to the Eligibility Determination process.

If all of these criteria ARE NOT MET, referring agency/provider is notified of rejection of the informal FINS referral and the notification is documented in the case file.

Crisis Intervention

If at any time during the informal FINS process, a family or youth shows sign of mental health crisis, the family/youth should immediately be referred to the Child and Adolescent Response Team (CART).

CART provides emergency screening, intervention, and treatment planning for youth with critical emotional/mental distress and their families. The service is available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week for children throughout the region. Services are provided in the

community at an identified site selected by the family (i.e., home, local ER, or mental health center). Rapid response to children in acute psychiatric distress and their families is necessary to prevent the escalation of behaviors and family stress which place the youth at risk for out-of-home placement, legal/juvenile justice involvement, and removal from school. The goals of CART include intervening immediately, providing brief and intensive treatment, involving the family in treatment, and linking clients and families with other community support staff. Services are rendered by Mental Health professionals and paraprofessional staff.

Statutory Eligibility Determination

General Criteria to Determine Statutory Eligibility

To be eligible for informal FINS services, a youth and family must meet the following “inclusion criteria”:

- The youth must have been referred to informal FINS for one or more of the following grounds as defined in Article 730 within Title VII of the Children’s Code:
 - Running away or threatening to run away from parents or legal guardian or custodian;*
 - Ungovernable as defined in 728(5) or being beyond their control of parent/guardian;
 - Truancy;
 - Repeatedly and willfully violating school rules;
 - Having a caretaker that caused, encouraged, or contributed to the youth’s behavior or delinquent acts; or
 - Having a caretaker who has, after notice, willfully failed to attend a meeting with the youth’s teacher, school principal, or appropriate school employee to discuss the youth’s truancy, repeated violation of school rules, or other serious educational problems.
- The youth must be under the age of 18 and not emancipated judicially or by marriage.
- The referral would be better handled by informal FINS rather than another agency.
- The complaint is not eligible, as defined in the aforementioned eligibility statement, to be referred to FINS Formal Process or other formal court process.
- The youth must live either within the parish for which he or she is domiciled, or the parish in which the incident occurred. Both options are considered and selected based on the most appropriate venue. If not, he or she is referred to the appropriate informal FINS office.
- FINS must be able to contact and obtain guardian consent to participate in informal FINS.
- Some youth may be inappropriate for certain informal FINS services due to behaviors that may create a danger for themselves and others. These youth will be provided with screening and appropriate referrals to further assessment and services.

**Ungovernable behavior related to running away*

An intake officer shall complete the Intake Eligibility Form to determine eligibility for each family. This form determines statutory eligibility for informal FINS services, outlines the presenting problems of the families seeking assistance, and provides staff with insight into the family dynamics. (See *Appendix B: Intake Eligibility Form*)

If the youth DOES NOT MEET the inclusion criteria, referrals to outside services are offered if available, and the informal FINS case is opened in the FINS Case Information System and rejected. The referral source is notified of the rejection and the referral status is documented.

If the youth DOES MEET the inclusion criteria, they are then screened against the following exclusion criteria:

- Is the youth/family currently involved with the Department of Child and Family Services?
- Does the youth have an open delinquency charge?
- Is the youth currently under OJJ supervision?
- Is the youth currently under local probation supervision?
- Does a previous mental health treatment failure indicate a need for an Interagency Service Coordination (ISC)?

If the youth DOES MEET the exclusion criteria, the youth is referred back to the appropriate agency and the FINS case is not opened.

If the youth DOES NOT MEET the exclusion criteria, the family is contacted to schedule a FINS intake appointment.

- If the family cannot be located through a phone call or correspondence to the last known address provided by the school database, the case is not opened.
- If the family accepts the offer and sets up an intake appointment they proceed to the intake process.
- If the family is located, but does not accept the offer to set-up a FINS intake appointment, the case is opened and flagged with a warning/flag in FINSAP.

Intake

Purposes: To assess the youth and family's strengths, risks, and needs in an effort to determine the most appropriate services and the most appropriate setting for those services. To link and provide ongoing support to the youth and family based upon an IFSPA service plan developed with the youth and involved family members

If a referral to FINS is initiated by telephone and the referring party is the person/family to be scheduled for an interview, the interview shall begin by phone with the intake eligibility form. If the family fails to appear for their scheduled initial intake interview, a phone call will be made to the family to inquire about the missed appointment. If no answer, no message service, or the letter is returned and indicates an incorrect address, a phone call will be made to the referring agency to verify the family's current address and/or phone number. If the letter is not returned, it will be assumed the address is correct. The intake officer will attempt to reschedule the initial intake interview. If the family does not appear for the intake interview, the case will not be opened. The complaint is filed in the "CLOSED" file after noting that there was no response to the initial attempt contacts.

When a write-in referral (from a source other than a guardian) is received, the guardian is contacted by phone/letter, and an initial intake interview is scheduled.

Once the family is considered eligible for FINS through the eligibility determination process, the intake officer conducts an intake interview with the youth and guardian. Once the FINS intake officer has determined that the family meets the eligibility criteria, the youth and guardian are provided the consent information. (See *Appendix D: Consent for Services*, *Appendix E: Consent to Disclosure of Information and Waiver of Confidentiality*)

If the guardian and youth indicate they will voluntarily participate in FINS, a plan is set into action to identify the needs of the family as a whole.

If the youth IS NOT deemed eligible during an eligibility determination in conjunction with the intake interview, the FINS case is officially not opened.

If the family DOES NOT provide voluntary consent for services, disclosure of information/waiver of confidentiality and drug screening, the FINS case is officially opened and marked in FINSAP as "refused services".

If the youth IS deemed eligible AND voluntary consent for services, disclosure of information/waiver of confidentiality and drug screening (if needed) HAS BEEN obtained, the youth continues on to the Screening Process.

Mental Health Screening

In addition to the intake interview, the intake process includes the MAYSI-2, a mental health screening tool. The information from this tool, together with intake interview information, is designed to provide youth and their families with the least restrictive services that are responsive and individualized to best meet family needs.

A trained agency staff member shall screen each youth by completing the MAYSI-2 to identify presenting problems, risk to self, and needed referrals to other programs or services.

If the youth IS under the age of 12, the MAYSI-2 is not administered and the family proceeds to complete an IFSPA with the intake officer.

Purpose and Nature of the MAYSI-2

The Massachusetts Youth Screening Instrument, Second Version (MAYSI-2) consists of 52 “yes/no” items concerning whether something has been true for them “in the past few months”. The tool includes a combination of mental, emotional, and behavioral dimensions and was developed for use with juvenile justice-involved youth ages 12 to 17 years. The MAYSI-2 consists of seven scales: Alcohol/Drug Use, Angry-Irritable, Depressed-Anxious, Somatic Complaints, Suicide Ideation, Thought Disturbance (boys only), and Traumatic Experiences. Scale lengths range from five to nine items. The score on a given scale is the number of “yes” answers to the scale’s items.

There are cut-off scores for two levels. “Caution” cutoff scores represent the best estimate for identifying youths who would score in a “clinically significant” range on other, more extensive psychological tests of mental and emotional disturbances. These scores are set to identify as many youths as possible who are truly in need while minimizing false positives. The MAYSI-2’s “Warning” cutoffs identify youths whose scores would place them among the top 10% of youths in the study used to develop the instrument.

“Critical cases” on the MAYSI-2 are identified as those scoring over the caution cutoff on the Suicide Ideation scale or over the warning cutoff on any of the other clinical scales.

Introducing the MAYSI-2: The following script will be used to introduce the MAYSI-2 to each youth.

Introduce the tool by saying: “I’d like you to answer some questions about what may be happening in your life or how you may be feeling right now. It should only take you about 10 minutes to complete the questions on the computer. You will see the questions on the screen and you will hear them read to you. For each question, answer ‘yes’ or ‘no’ as to whether the question has been true for you in the past few months. (Pick a holiday or date approximately two months prior so they have a reference point.) You will also see a couple of questions that ask if something has EVER happened to you. Be as truthful as you can so that we can get the right assistance for things like family issues, school, friends, work, or other areas you choose. Please let me know if there is anything that is not clear, and I will explain it.”

Give the confidentiality warning by saying: “Results of this test may be shared with your family and service providers chosen to provide treatment based on your case plan needs. If we believe that you might be planning to harm yourself, we might need to tell your parents or someone else so that we can help keep you safe. Do you understand? Do you have any questions? Let’s begin.”

Administering the MAYSI-2: In preparation for and during the administration of the MAYSI-2, engagement of the juvenile should employ Motivational Interviewing strategies. (See Motivational Interview Section for more details)

The MAYSI-2 is administered using MAYSIWARE, with the exception of a very few youth whose computer knowledge makes use of the software difficult. In these rare situations, the paper-and-pencil version of the tool is used and scores are entered into the MAYSIWARE so that they can be entered into the database.

Directions for administering the tool via computer and via paper are as follows.

Via Computer:

- (1) Escort youth to computer and follow the introductory script (above).
- (2) Reassure youth that there are no right or wrong answers on MAYSI-2.
- (3) Log in to MAYSIWARE.
- (4) Fill in youth’s appropriate demographic information.
- (5) Ensure that the youth has a proper level of computer knowledge (i.e., familiar with using a computer mouse) in order for MAYSIWARE to be used.

- (6) Ensure that headphones are comfortable on the youth's head and there is sound coming out of the headphones at a comfortable volume level.
- (7) Ensure that proper language is selected. (English or Spanish)
- (8) Periodically check on the youth to ensure they are progressing. Answer any questions that the youth may have.
- (9) After the youth has completed the MAYSI-2, escort the youth back to parent(s).
- (10) Print out the full MAYSIWARE report.
- (11) If the youth seems to have completed the MAYSI-2 very quickly and answered "yes" or "no" to all the items, go back to the youth and explain that it is important to try to answer all of the questions and have them complete the MAYSI-2 again.
- (12) If the Second Screening forms are generated for a youth (over the caution cutoff on the Suicide Ideation scale and/or over the warning cutoff on any of the other clinical scales) use them to follow up on a youth's responses. (See *Second Screening Process* for more details)
- (13) If youth is found to be actively suicidal, disclose this information to parents and seek assistance from a professional.
- (14) Always log out of MAYSIWARE when the administration process is complete.
- (15) The MAYSIWARE report and the second screening forms are maintained in the juvenile's folder. (See *Second Screening Process* for more details)

Via Paper Copy:

- (1) After explaining to parent and youth what MAYSI-2 is, place youth in a quiet area away from parent to take the MAYSI-2. If unable to separate parent and youth, ensure that youth is the one who is answering MAYSI-2 questions.
- (2) Follow the introductory script.
- (3) Point to the right side of the answer sheet, and instruct the youth to circle "Y" for "yes" and "N" for "no". Advise the youth that there are more questions to be completed on the back of the page.
- (4) Ensure that youth has the ability to read and understand the questions.
- (5) Leave youth to answer the MAYSI-2 questions.
- (6) Periodically check on youth to make sure that they are progressing. Answer any questions that youth may have.
- (7) Score the MAYSI-2 by following the directions provided on the scoring key from the MAYSI-2 manual.
- (8) Note any answers that look as if they may have been changed. Youth may have questions or issues with that particular item.
- (9) If the youth seems to have completed the MAYSI-2 very quickly and answered "yes" or "no" to all the items, go back to the youth and explain that it is important to try to answer all of the questions and have them complete the MAYSI-2 again.
- (10) Follow up scores over the caution cutoff on Suicide Ideation and/or over the warning cutoff on any other clinical scales with questions from the appropriate Second Screening form(s).

- (11) If youth is found to be actively suicidal, disclose this information to parents and seek assistance from a professional.
- (12) The completed MAYSI-2 form, scoring profile, and Second Screening forms are maintained in the juvenile's folder.

Second Screening Process

If the youth DID score above the caution cutoff on the suicide ideation scale and/or over the warning cutoff on any of the other clinical scales, additional questions (second screening) will be asked to clarify the youth's responses in these areas.

If the above criteria are met, MAYSIWARE automatically generates the appropriate second screening forms right after the main report. Following these forms is a summary form on which the MAYSI-2 user can indicate if there will be a follow up with the youth and a space for the user to explain the follow up decision. Staff can print these forms and complete them by hand or can enter the youth's responses directly into the form within MAYSIWARE and then print the form. It is important to note that once entered into MAYSIWARE, the second screening information can only be accessed by viewing it on screen.

The results of the MAYSI-2 and its associated second screening information indicate whether or not there is a need for the FINS Officer to confer with the appropriate providers for further services.

If the youth DID NOT score above the caution cutoff on the Suicide Ideation scale or over the warning on any of the other clinical scales, the family proceeds to FINS Plan Development with the intake officer.

Parents, family members, and/or guardians are never to be given the actual MAYSI-2 scores. Rather, information should be discussed as a result of the full/total intake process. A FINS officer, however, can communicate any dire needs of the juvenile to the parent, especially if the youth states he or she plans to harm him or herself. This kind of information can be communicated by using more general language like, "based on the intake interview and screening, we believe that your child may be feeling suicidal."

Using Intake Interview and Mental Health Screening to Identify Needs of the Youth

Identification of Potential Harm to Self or Others

Suicide is deemed an immediate risk.

If, prior to the completion of the assessment by the licensed professional, the youth:

- Engages in suicidal/homicidal gestures,
- Repeatedly states he/she wishes to harm themselves or others, and/or
- States a specific plan for suicide, and/or
- Is over the caution cutoff on the MAYSI-2 Suicide Ideation scale, and Second Screening questions identify an immediate suicide risk.

The youth will be supervised and referred immediately to Child Adolescent Response Team (CART) or, if unavailable, the Office of Behavioral Health (OBH). Youth awaiting assessment by a licensed professional will be placed on Constant Sight and Sound Supervision provided by guardians.

At any time the Office of Behavioral Health or CART is unavailable and a youth has made suicide gestures, repeatedly stated a desire to harm themselves or others, and/or described a specific suicide plan, emergency protocol is followed. The guardians of the youth shall be notified and informed what procedures have been put into place to ensure the youth's protection. Law enforcement may be notified by the mental health provider and requested to respond to the facility to conduct Order of Protected Custody (OPC). In the event that the law enforcement officer does not feel that an OPC is justified, the parents or guardians shall be requested to transport the youth to the nearest Emergency Hospital receiving facility.

Identification of Substance Abuse Risk

If the juvenile scores above the caution cutoff on the MAYSI-2 Alcohol/Drug use scale, or the intake officer has reason to believe the youth may have a drug or alcohol problem, or at the request of a parent/guardian, appropriate steps shall be taken to complete a drug screen. (See *Instructions for Voluntary Juvenile Drug Testing* for instructions) A parent/guardian can request a drug screen be performed in the absence of an elevated score on the MAYSI-2 Alcohol/Drug use scale. Before the drug testing is carried out, the parent/guardian must have completed and signed a Drug Screen Consent Form (See *Appendix F: Consent for Drug Screen*).

Other Risk Indicators

Additional risk indicators identified by scores over the warning cutoff on other MAYSI-2 clinical scales will result in a referral to the appropriate provider if available. In the case of elevated scores on the Somatic Complaints scale, the parent is notified and encouraged to make an appointment with the youth's family physician.

Instructions for Voluntary Juvenile Drug Testing

Administering a voluntary juvenile drug test is easy to do and only requires a few minutes.

Administering a voluntary juvenile drug test requires the following materials:

- (1) Drug test packet (contains the actual test inside)
- (2) Cup to collect the specimen (urine)
- (3) Gloves
- (4) Drug screen paper for personal information, as well as drug test results



Figure 1 – Materials required to administer a consensual juvenile drug test.

To successfully administer a consensual juvenile drug test, you must follow these six outlined steps as provided.

Step 1: PREPARATION

- (1.1) Attain parental consent on the drug test consent form for the participant involved in the drug test to be administered. (See *Appendix F: Consent for Drug Screen*)
- (1.2) Collect all essential materials to be used to administer the drug test.

Step 2: FILLING OUT THE PAPERWORK



Figure 2 – Drug screen information paper.

- (2.1) Fill in the drug screen document as you go through the process in the following manner: date and time the test is given; your name and title since you are the individual giving the test to the participant; fill in the participants name and other identifying information; and the type of drug test being given to the participant.

Step 3: OBTAINING A SPECIMEN FOR THE DRUG TEST

Caution

Due to the risk of potential contamination, please utilize gloves for your protection against contact with bodily fluids and thoroughly wash hands after the test has been administered.

- (3.1) Take the participant into the bathroom.
- (3.2) Give the participant the cup to collect the specimen (urine) in.
- (3.3) Tell the participant to fill the specimen cup halfway with urine.
- (3.4) Observe the participant urinating in the specimen cup.
- (3.5) Put gloves on while participant is filling the cup.



Figure 3 – Specimen cup with urine.

Step 4: STEPS TO ADMINISTER THE DRUG TEST

- (4.1) Once the specimen has been formally collected; take the specimen from the participant.
- (4.2) Place the collected urine specimen on a flat surface, such as a table.
- (4.3) Tear the drug test open in front of the participant where the participant can view you doing so.



Figure 4 – Picture of drug test.

- (4.4) Remove the cap from test, so that the testing strips are exposed.

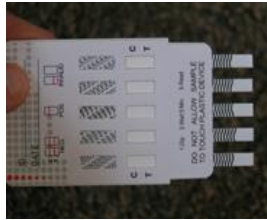


Figure 5 – Cap removed from drug test.

- (4.5) Dip the test strips into the urine for approximately thirty seconds.
(4.6) Replace the cap back on the test.
Note: The test takes one or two minutes to read

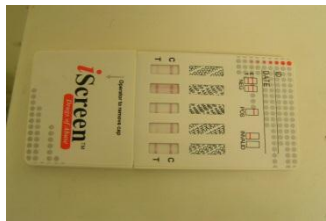


Figure 6 – Used drug test recapped.

Step 5: DISPOSAL OF URINE AND GLOVES

- (5.1) Dispense of the remaining urine in the toilet.
(5.2) Flush the toilet.
(5.3) Throw the specimen cup in the trashcan.
(5.4) Remove gloves.
(5.5) Throw the used gloves in the trashcan.
(5.6) Thoroughly wash hands.

Step 6: DETERMINING THE RESULTS

- (6.1) Upon attaining a negative result, you notate this result in the case notes of the FINS Case Information System.
(6.2) Upon attaining a positive result, you notate this result in the case notes of the FINS Case Information System.

- (6.3) Next, you photocopy the test with both the tester and participant's signature detailing the outcome.



Figure 5 – Negative test reading.

Always follow these instructions and precautions, when preparing and administering drug tests. Following these instructions and precautionary measures will ensure an accurate drug screening and avoid any contamination.

If the youth tests positive for any substance, refer to substance abuse assessment/services immediately then continue with FINS plan development.

Informal FINS Plan Development

Depending on the severity of the youth’s behavior, the presenting needs of the youth and the family, and the youth’s history of past FINS involvement, there are three different types of intervention plans that the informal FINS office can develop with the youth and family.

- (1) For youth who have never been involved in FINS before and who are deemed “low need”, FINS will develop an Informal Family Services Plan Agreement (IFSPA) without service referrals for the youth and family. (See Behavior Monitoring section)
- (2) For youth who have never been involved in FINS before but who present as “mid need” or “high need”, an informal FINS officer will develop an IFSPA with service referrals for the youth and family.
- (3) For “mid need” or “high need” youth who have already gone through the informal FINS system in the past and for those referred directly by the court, the DA, or a school behavior strategist, FINS will convene a Family Team Conference (FTC) panel to develop an IFSPA with service referrals for the youth and family.

The IFSPA is developed from a combination of the MAYSI-2 results combined with those problem behaviors identified by the referring agency. Details on these three types of informal FINS plan development are as follows.

IFSPA Development without Referral to Services

A behavior contract is an IFSPA in which there were no recommendations for services, but by which the informal FINS office continues to monitor the youth through contact with the family to assure that the presenting behaviors resolve.

IFSPA Development with Referral to Services

The informal FINS intake officer meets with both youth and parent, and information is shared about what the family understands as the real underlying problem. This problem is then discussed to assess what services are available within the community to best address the needs of the family. The family and the informal FINS officer sign a written (IFSPA) contract agreeing to voluntarily enter into services with the chosen providers. The intake officer will provide family with initial appointment dates, times, and the provider’s location/phone number.

Family Team Conference (FTC) IFSPA Development

If the youth has been referred by the District Attorney, Law Enforcement, Court or school behavior strategists or has been deemed mid or high need and has been previously involved in the informal FINS system, an informal Family Team Conference (FTC) Panel will be convened for the development of the informal FINS plan following the Eligibility Determination and Screening processes. The youth and family are notified of the FTC via a Family Team Conference Notice

delivered via mail and/or via phone. The FTC is also known as a mandatory conference. (See *Appendix H: Family Team Conference Notice*)

During the FTC (La. Children's Code Article 743), the intake officer, along with FTC panelists, assess the youth's presenting problems, family dynamics, and determines appropriate referrals to address youth and family needs.

- A brief assessment of the family should be in the case record at the time of the conference.
- The MAYSI-2 screening tool results should be in the case record at the time of the conference.
- At the time of the FTC, the intake officer will make the appropriate referrals to agencies in the community (e.g., mental health, substance abuse, etc.). The families must be given the address and phone numbers of these agencies, along with any other information or documentation that will be helpful. An appointment date and time is set in-office, given to the family, and made part of the IFSPA.
- The IFSPA is completed. This contract should include both behavioral expectations of the juvenile and referral agencies with which the family is encouraged to participate with direction that the FTC is a collaborative process in which the family is a participant and has a crucial say in terms of service referrals mandated to cooperate in lieu of formal processing.

Every IFSPA shall be reduced to writing (contract). The contract shall be signed by the legal guardian of the youth, the youth, and the contracting FINS staff member and, where an FTC has been held, the FINS Director and the participating panel members. (See *Appendix C: Informal Family Services Plan Agreement*)

Every contract shall contain the following:

- When the conference was held;
- Guardian responsibilities (what they will do);
- Youth responsibilities (what the youth will do);
- Assessment and services needed as related to the presenting problem(s);
- Parties signing; and
- Alleged behavior(s) listed in Article 730.

A multi-agency consent and authorization for the disclosure and release of confidential information is signed by individuals and agencies represented at the FTC, authorizing the disclosure and release of the youth's information between and among FTC participants for the purpose of referral, intake, assessment, planning, implementation and follow-up. (See *Appendix G: Multi-Agency Consent and Authorization for Release of Information*)

Case Monitoring

For a behavior contract, the youth's negative behaviors are identified and the FINS Officer develops a plan to monitor the youth where the behaviors occur. For example, if the youth is having problems at school, the informal FINS Officer will contact the school and let them know that they are actively involved with the youth and that if the youth is at risk for school suspension/expulsion, and/or are experiencing severe behavior issues, as defined by the referring school, he or she should be reported to FINS as well as to the parent. The youth will then be checked on periodically – as defined by the terms of the IFSPA – by the FINS Officer via contact with the school and/or Behavior Strategist if the youth is categorized as Special Education or with the school's designated disciplinarian if the youth is categorized as Regular Education. If office duties permit, the FINS Officer may visit the youth at school. When a youth is having problems at home, the FINS Officer will make weekly check-in phone calls to the youth and family. All of these measures will remain in place until the behaviors correct themselves, or it is determined that the youth needs further services.

If the case monitor is **unable to contact the family** after making attempts for 60 days (two case monitoring cycles), the case is closed as **“unsuccessful”**.

If the case monitor is able to contact the family and the family reports that the **problem behaviors have improved** and informal FINS monitoring is no longer necessary, the case is closed as **“successful”**.

If the family reports that the **problem behaviors have not improved**, but the youth and/or guardian no longer would like to participate in informal FINS monitoring, the case is closed as **“unsuccessful”**.

If a youth has been **charged with a delinquent act or placed in foster care**, the case is closed as **“unsuccessful”** due to informal FINS' inability to render services.

If the problem behavior has not improved and the guardian and youth would like to continue monitoring, the case will remain open and the informal FINS office will take the following steps:

- The FINS monitor will discuss with guardian whether the behavior problems have escalated.
- If the problems have not escalated, monitoring phone calls will be made and referrals to services as necessary.
- If the problems have escalated, the FINS monitor may suggest an FTC be conducted or referral to CART if a mental health crisis is present.

- The monthly monitoring process continues with adjustments made to the IFSPA if needed. If the youth is referred to services, monitoring is increased to the level of IFSPA with a service referral.

IFSPA with Service Referral (NON-FTC)

The FINS officer in charge of monitoring must confirm within one month of the IFSPA signing whether or not the family has engaged in the assessment and services to which they agreed. The monitor should contact service providers, and continue to do so on a monthly basis, to make this determination.

If the service provider confirms that the **family attended their first appointment** and engaged with the service provider, that case is closed as **“successful”**.

If the family or youth has not attended their first appointment, the FINS officer should reach out to the family to discuss any obstacles to engaging with services. If the initial service appointment has not taken place within eight weeks of the initial informal FINS office intake and signing of IFSPA, the monitor should assist the family with making appointments, etc. in order to get services in place. If this is not successful, the FINS officer should work with the family immediately to refer them to another appropriate agency. The case shall remain open and active until the family engages with services, and until that point, the FINS officer shall continue to reach out to the family on at least a monthly basis to create a service plan that will work for the family.

Once the family **attends its first appointment** and engages with a service provider, the case is closed as **“successful”** and further service planning is in the hands of the provider.

If the family reports that the **problem behaviors have resolved or improved** to the point where they no longer need services or informal FINS involvement, the case is closed as **“successful”**.

If the provider reports that the family has **not engaged with services** and the FINS officer is **unable to contact the family**, the case is closed as **“unsuccessful”**.

If the family reports that the **problem behaviors have not improved and the family refuses to engage in services**, the case is closed as **“unsuccessful”**.

If a youth has been **charged with a delinquent act**, the case is closed as **“unsuccessful”**.

If the youth is **placed in foster care**, the case is closed as **“referred to appropriate agency”**.

If both the parent and youth are **no longer willing to participate** in the informal FINS process, the case is closed as **“unsuccessful”**.

If **problems continue** despite referrals and monitoring and the **family still wants informal FINS support**, the case remains **“open and active”**, and the case monitor must proceed with one of the following courses of action:

- Talk to the youth and parent(s), advise them that the behavior has not been corrected and further case planning will take place.
- Schedule an informal FINS FTC conference to address the matter and amend the IFSPA.
- A conference should be requested if additional services are needed to address a continuing problem or if there is reason to believe the youth’s behavior might improve after a second informal FINS meeting.
- The goal of the informal FINS conference is to draft a new IFSPA.
- Intake officers must schedule the conference by sending an appointment letter and contacting the family by phone to notify them that the meeting is mandatory to continue participation in the informal FINS program.
- In cases where a serious mental health need has been identified possibly resulting in out-of-home placement, an Interagency Service Coordination is conducted. (See *Interagency Service Coordination* for more details)

IFSPA with Service Referral (FTC)

Monitoring protocol for FTC IFSPAs are primarily the same as for non-FTC IFSPAs, as are the criteria for case closures and continued monitoring. Distinctions include the following:

- If problem behaviors persist and the family wants to continue with FINS services, the FINS officer can re-convene the FTC to make adjustments and alterations to the service plan.
- In certain narrow circumstances, a formal court petition can be requested after a failed FTC IFSPA. (See Formal FINS Petition section)

Interagency Service Coordination (ISC)

In a process that is not part of the informal FINS process itself, the Rapides Parish School Board, Department of Children and Family Services, Office of Juvenile Justice, Office of Behavioral Health, Parish Probation, and Families In Need of Services – along with any private Mental Health agency that bears interest in a youth – may come together to convene what is known as an Interagency Service Coordination (ISC). The purpose of the ISC is to coordinate services that

professionals in their field believe would best benefit the family/juvenile with the ongoing behaviors that could lead to an out-of-home placement. An ISC is done for any youth that is deemed HIGH level risk for out-of-home placement thus avoiding a formal court intervention by best servicing them in the community and is often at the request either of the school or parents for additional help with an identified mental health youth. These meetings are held bi-weekly at the Office of Behavioral Health on Central Grounds.

Formal FINS Petition

The informal FINS office may refer the case to the DA for the filing of a formal petition only under the following conditions:

- The youth is a chronic runaway, has been gone from home for seven or more days, and the guardians are requesting court intervention. Historically, the guardians report the youth as a runaway to Law Enforcement which then intervenes through the power of an arrest to generate the formal filing of a FINS petition for the chronic runaway behavior.
- The youth continues to commit status offenses and the family requests court intervention.

This informal FINS office shall not refer a case to the District Attorney (DA) for the filing of a formal FINS petition if there is a pending investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse, neglect, or abandonment in the family, if there is a pending referral alleging the youth is delinquent, or if the youth is under the supervision of the Department of Corrections or Department of Children and Family Services for adjudication of dependency or delinquency.

Preparation of a Request Packet for a Formal FINS Petition

- To request formal adjudication by the filing of a petition by the DA, the intake officer must first obtain current school and agency reports relative to the problem behavior(s).
- Cases must be staffed within the informal FINS department prior to requesting a petition.
- Once all records are obtained, the intake officer completes a Request Packet for FINS petition and refers it to the DA who then makes the determination for formal filing of a petition. (*See Appendix I: Formal FINS Petition*)
- The intake officer must note in the case file and the FINS case management system, that adjudication had been requested.
- The case is then closed in the FINS Case Management System as “petition filed” noting that the informal FINS office has forwarded the request packet to the DA.

NOTE: Any services provided outside of behavior monitoring remain active through the petition process.

FINS Case Management System Journal Entries

- Any contact with family, school, or referral agencies must be noted online in case notes immediately upon contact. Also, any referrals, case staffing, adjudication requests, or court hearings must be recorded in the case notes.
- Phone messages/responses are to be transcribed in the case notes.
- Case notes must include specific information about the youth's behavior and family's participation in informal FINS. When information is available, the exact dates of offenses and rule violations should be noted.
- Copies of all documentation related to the case must be included in the case record. FINS-generated material (screening form, correspondence, IFSPA, consent forms, case notes, adjudication request, and disposition recommendations) is placed inside folder. Documentation from other agencies (school records, referral forms, psychological evaluations, arrest reports, and judgments) is placed on the left side of the folder.

Truancy Round-Up

Overwhelmed by the number of truancy referrals, FINS, in collaboration with the Rapides Parish School System, Child Welfare and Attendance, and Special Education, devised a way to keep juveniles out of formal adjudicatory hearings on most truancy matters. Unlike other Louisiana parishes, Rapides does not have a local Truancy Assessment Center (TASC) program.

The following steps are taken by the office during the school calendar year to reduce truancy and educate parents.

- (1) Obtain a list for all youth in the Rapides Parish School System who have missed (a predetermined number of days, varying depending on the total yearly count).
- (2) Using Microsoft Excel, review the list and remove any of the following criteria:
 - a. Youth above 17 years old; Youth not in grades K-12;
 - b. Youth on probation (Send list to OJJ and Parish Probation);
 - c. Any youth whom the school states should be removed because of failure to enter excuses (Send list to all schools via fax to allow them to modify); and
 - d. Youth identified as Special Education exempt
- (3) Count the number of youth left on list and divide schools to no more than 100 per court room per session. There will be three sessions beginning at 5:00pm, 6:00pm, and 7:00pm, in courtrooms 3, 4, 5, and 6. Court rooms 3 and 4 are the largest court rooms.
- (4) Send out the truancy letter to all parents using Microsoft Excel's mail merge function. This letter shall detail dates, time, court rooms, and amount of days missed. The letter shall state, "Contact your youth's school if you feel this is an error". (See *Appendix J: Truancy Round-Up Notice to Appear*)
- (5) Make copies of all letters sent for your records.
- (6) Make Truancy Round-Up IFSPA contracts. Two for each youth – one office record and the other for the parents to take with them. (See *Appendix K: Truancy Court Agreement*)
- (7) Each contract, two per student, shall be placed in a binder arranged by school and courtroom.
- (8) Create a list of where juveniles should be the night of the Truancy Round-Up. List by schools not names.
- (9) Obtain 16 receipt books and money bags (four for each court room). Distribute them to approved personnel who shall remain in charge of the \$35.00 administration fee until it is time for them to be picked up.
- (10) Upon families arriving and finding their proper courtroom, the truancy meeting is called to order. Judges begin to speak with the families about the importance of attending school and the current attendance policy. The court is open for questions and families with questions are connected to the personnel from the School Board who best can assist them. Monies are collected and contracts are signed by parents, juveniles, and juvenile service staff.

Personnel Responsibilities

Code of Ethics

The following matters are considered an abuse of your position and a conflict of interest and are prohibited:

- A FINS officer shall not accept, agree to accept, dispense, or solicit any gift or favor based upon an understanding that the official actions of the FINS officer would be influenced.
- Use or attempt to use his/her official position to secure unwarranted privileges or exemptions for himself/herself or any other person.
- Act so that he/she is unduly affected or appear to be affected by a relative, position, or influence of any party of person.
- A FINS officer shall not request or accept any compensation or fee beyond what he/she received from the employer for work done in the course and scope his/her public employment.
- A FINS officer may not engage in any outside employment that conflicts with the performance of his/her official duties.
- A FINS officer shall avoid any conflicts of interest or any appearance of conflicts with his/her official duties.

Confidentiality

- A FINS officer shall not disclose confidential information of any nature, except as permitted through the formal written consent waiver of the guardian
- A FINS officer shall not give legal advice and shall refer family seeking such to an attorney.
- A release of information must be signed by a legal guardian and witnessed in order for the agency to release or obtain information by phone or in writing.

Mandatory Reporters – Suicidal or Homicidal Ideations

See the section on Screening for procedures to follow after identification of suicidal ideations.

Motivational Interviewing

Rapides Parish has adopted Motivational Interviewing (MI) as a mandatory practice as it relates to interactions with youth and their families who have come in contact with the local juvenile justice system. Motivational Interviewing is utilized by each FINS Officer throughout the process of engaging a youth and family in informal FINS procedures. This includes, but is not limited to, intake, triage, administering of the MAYSI-2, and other screening tools as well as in the case planning interview with the juvenile and his or her family.

Motivational Interviewing is a non-judgmental, non-confrontational, and non-adversarial, yet directive approach to communication aimed at increasing the youth and family's awareness of the potential problem(s), consequences experienced, risks faced as a result of the behavior(s) in question, and solution options. The strategy enhances the FINS officer's ability to establish rapport and help youth and families think differently about their behavior and ultimately consider what might be gained through change. Most critically, the youth and family's own values and beliefs are linked by the FINS Officer to the recommendations for services. This encourages the youth and family's own motivation for change in a more voluntary, culturally competent, and less coercive way that has been demonstrated to increase follow-through, adoption of recommended change, and sustained change over time. For these reasons, MI strategies are integrated into the agency's existing intake and case supervision processes in order to facilitate an understanding of the client's perceptions and willingness to participate in the services offered. MI-based interactions are evidence-based, designed to improve engagement, and can be used to enhance quality and supervision of screening practices.

Quality Assurance (QA), including training, supervision, feedback, coaching, and instruction, for improving MI skills are necessary as FINS Officers learn to use MI skills effectively and consistently. The key to successful implementation of MI is supervisory feedback and coaching as outlined in the following QA guidelines:

- At a minimum, all new employees will receive no less than eight hours of introductory training in MI skills delivered by a trained facilitator. This training will include skills demonstration and observed practice. Following the initial training, new employees will receive skills checks done by trained supervisors monthly for no less than three months in conjunction with brief (30 minutes or less) skills "booster" (i.e., overview) sessions. Thereafter, all staff will receive an annual in-service/skills building training of no less than two hours and will be observed once or twice a year with feedback provided regarding their MI utilization strengths and areas for improvement. Feedback is standardized and achieved using an MI Skills Development Plan which incorporates the following elements:
 - Strengths Demonstrated in Session/Meeting Observed
 - MI Skill Development Recommended
 - MI Skill Targeted for Improvement from the Motivational Interviewing Basics of FRAMES, EARS, OARS, DARN-C, etc. (See *Appendix M: Motivational Interviewing Basics*)
 - What specifically will be developed or improved?
 - How will the goal be reached?
 - Date of next supervision/observation

Supervisors will distinguish between the FINS Officer's (1) Adherence: frequency and extensiveness of using skills/strategies and (2) Competence: skill level of implementing those strategies.

Data Collection, Management, and Reporting

Policy: Informal FINS cases managers collect and enter timely and accurate data regarding all clients referred to the informal FINS program. This information shall document client demographic characteristics, assessment results, referral information, eligibility criteria and referral decision, case management plan and service referrals, and case closure information. All data is electronically stored primarily in the FINS Case Management System (when applicable), in a FINS Excel spreadsheet if the FINS Case Management System cannot produce aggregate data for customized inquiries, and in MAYSWARE. A FINS Application (FINS-AP) User Manual is located in the FINS-AP database under the tab labeled “Manual”.

Purpose: The purpose of the data collection procedures summarized below are to monitor the characteristics and needs of the youth served by the Rapides Parish informal FINS office and to track the success of the informal FINS program. This effort involves electronic data entry into three different sources that will allow the local FINS office to access, analyze, and report data that will help FINS officials track client needs and program effectiveness on a regular basis. The specific data collection procedures are outlined below.

Procedures: There are two primary areas that case managers address in collecting data – population served and program success, which is defined as a successful linkage to services. Client-level data is entered into the FINS Case Management System, the FINS Excel file, and MAYSWARE on an as-needed basis, which typically involves daily data entry into at least one of these data bases. All FINS case managers are diligent about data collection and case tracking.

As part of the Supreme Court funding requirements, all informal FINS offices are required to collect information on every youth served by each jurisdiction’s informal FINS program. The Supreme Court requires informal FINS offices to enter client-level information on demographic characteristics, referral type, and case management activity. This information is reported to the Supreme Court on a quarterly basis for statewide monitoring of contractual obligations with the Supreme Court.

When establishing data collection and management parameters, several concepts were recognized as vital to the reform initiative in Rapides Parish, most notably tracking screening/assessment results, monitoring program success, and accessibility of local data.

In its current form, the FINS Case Management System has the capability of producing an Excel spreadsheet that can then be merged with other data obtained from a separate collection source, and it provides qualitative tracking for the following data elements:

- Age
- Race
- Gender
- School Name
- Date of Referral
- Referral Source
- Primary Problem Behavior
- Date of Referral Decision
- IFPSA Type
- Closure Date
- Closure Reason

Rapides Parish FINS developed an additional data collection procedure by collecting and tracking the following data elements in an Excel file:

- Ethnicity
- Grade
- Educational Status (Special Education, Regular Education)
- Secondary Presenting Behavior
- Third Presenting Behavior
- Referral Decision
- Treatment Provider Referral
- Status of Treatment Referral
- Number of Family Contacts
- Number of Youth Referred to the DA for Formal Processing

The additional data collection process involves two steps: entry into an Excel file and linking this file with data entered into MAYSWARE as part of the screening and assessment procedures. (See the *Mental Health Screening* for more details) The Excel file will be merged with data obtained via MAYSWARE when requested by FINS stakeholders.

Information entered into the Excel spreadsheet is gathered through various methods including intake sheets, interview with parent and/or child, screening/assessment procedures, paper files, school records, and service providers. As a result of the collection of data from multiple sources, a data sharing agreement and a waiver of confidentiality is required for all participating families to sign. The data sharing agreement informs the family of all the agencies that might have access to the data. Table 1 indicates the primary data elements collected by the informal FINS office.

Collecting accurate and reliable data, and actively using that data, can help drive system reform. Rapides Parish FINS utilizes student interns from local universities on an as-needed basis for assistance with, among other tasks, case management data entry. All interns are required to sign confidentiality agreements.

There are two procedures in place for accessing aggregate-level informal FINS data for evaluation and monitoring purposes. Basic information including the number of referrals in a given period, referral source, primary problem behavior, case status, successful vs. unsuccessful case closures, and demographic breakdowns of referrals by age, race, and gender is easily produced by the Supreme Court's FINS Case Management System data base. This information is required to be reported to the Supreme Court on a quarterly basis.

More detailed analyses of the FINS Case Management System data require a formal request to the FINS Case Management System administrator from the Supreme Court.

Internal evaluation procedures, using the FINS Excel spreadsheet and MAYSIWARE data, are also in place. The data outlined in the table below are aggregated and analyzed on a monthly basis summarizing the number of complaints, complaint source, gender, race, complaint grounds, and number of IFSPAs. This information is shared in the monthly supervisory meetings.

By consistently collecting and sharing data, the Rapides Parish informal FINS office is able to make informed decisions about particular youth and families, as well as monitor, evaluate, and respond to the successes and failures of the system as a whole.

Table 1: Primary Data Elements Collected by the Informal FINS Office

LIST OF AGGREGATE DATA BY SOURCE		
Data Element	Definition	Data Source
Population Served		
Age	Age at the time of referral	FINS Case Management System, Excel spreadsheet
Race	White, Black, Asian, American Indian, Other	FINS Case Management System, Excel spreadsheet
Ethnicity	Hispanic/Latino, Non-Hispanic/Latino	Excel spreadsheet
Gender	Male, Female	FINS Case Management System, Excel spreadsheet
School Name	Name of current school	FINS Case Management System, Excel spreadsheet
Grade	Grade at the time of referral	Excel spreadsheet
Educational Disability	No, Yes	Excel spreadsheet
Referral Information		
Date of Referral	Date referral was received by the FINS office	FINS Case Management System, Excel spreadsheet
Referral Source	Agency/Individual responsible for FINS referral	FINS Case Management System, Excel spreadsheet
Primary Problem Behavior	Presenting behavior specified as the cause of referral (per LA CHC 730)	FINS Case Management System, Excel spreadsheet
Secondary Behavior, Third Behavior	Additional behaviors listed on referral (LA CHC 730)	Excel spreadsheet
Date of Referral Decision	Date referral decision was made	FINS Case Management System, Excel spreadsheet
Referral Decision	Accept/Reject (if rejected, reason)	Excel spreadsheet

Screening/Assessment		
Date of MAYSI administration	Date MAYSI was administered to youth	MAYSIWARE
Alcohol Drug Use	None, Caution, Warning	MAYSIWARE
Angry/Irritable	None, Caution, Warning	MAYSIWARE
Depression/Anxious	None, Caution, Warning	MAYSIWARE
Somatic Complaints	None, Caution, Warning	MAYSIWARE
Suicide Ideation	None, Caution, Warning	MAYSIWARE
Thought Disturbance	None, Caution, Warning	MAYSIWARE
Traumatic Experience	None, Caution, Warning	MAYSIWARE
Service Linkage		
IFSPA Type	Informal, Mandatory	FINS Case Management System, Excel spreadsheet
Treatment Provider Referral (up to 3)	Name of each agency	Excel spreadsheet
Status of Treatment Referral	Open, Closed	Excel spreadsheet
Number of Family Contacts	The number of contacts made to family by a case manager	Excel spreadsheet
Closure Date	Date the case was closed	FINS Case Management System, Excel spreadsheet
Closure Reason	Successful (engagement/problems resolved), unsuccessful, petition	FINS Case Management System, Excel spreadsheet

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Appendix A: School Exhaustion Form

Families in Need of Service School Exhaustion Form

726 Washington Street, Suite 200 • Alexandria, LA 71301

Office: 318-445-8084 • Fax: 318-445-7297

Child's Name: _____ Date of Birth: ____/____/____ Age: ____

Sex: ____ Race: Caucasian, African American, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, Native America Other: _____

Child's SS#: ____ - ____ - ____ School Attending: _____ Grade: _____

Special Education: (Y) or (N) Classification / Comments: _____

Legal Guardian(s) : _____ Relationship: _____ Contact Phone: _____

Mailing Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Students Physical Address: _____ City: _____

Place of Employment: _____ Work Number: _____ Cell Number: _____

Article 730 Grounds from the Louisiana Children's Code: Allegations that a family is in need of services **must** fall in one or more of these following categories: Be specific as possible. School officials must use articles 730.1 or 730.8.

DATE: ____/____/____

___730.1 Minor child violate school rules and/or Minor is Truant.

Total Absent ____ Days Excused ____

(Please note: Suspensions are not excused absences / Letters from home do not excuse attendance)

___730.2 Minor child is ungovernable.

___730.3 Minor child is a runaway.

___730.4 Minor has repeatedly possessed or consumed intoxicating beverages, misrepresented age to purchase such beverages or repeatedly loitered around a place that sells such beverages.

___730.5 Minor child has committed an offense applicable only to children. (ex. Curfew, under age drinking)

___730.6 Minor child under 10 years of age committed an act that would be a crime if committed by an adult.

___730.7 The Caretaker causes, encouraged or contributed to the minor child's behavior.

___730.8 The Caretaker refused to attend a meeting with the child's teacher, school principal, or other employee regarding truancy, violation of school rules or other educational problems.

___730.9 Child incompetent to proceed with a delinquency matter under Article 832

___730.10 Child found to be in possession of a handgun

___730.11 Child found to have engaged in cyberbullying

Additional Information: (Please describe behavior and tell us what services you think the child needs.)

Completed by: _____ Your Title: _____ Phone: _____

Possible Measures Taken: (at least 3 of these must be checked with 2 being behavior strategist/counselor and talked to parent)

___ Administrator/s talked with student (Date: ____/____/____)

Number of ISS/Out Suspensions: ____

___ Called and talked with guardian (Date: ____/____/____)

1. _____

___ Sent letter (Date: ____/____/____)

2. _____

___ Home visit (Date: ____/____/____)

3. _____

___ Had meeting with guardian (Date: ____/____/____)

___ Child was expelled:

___ Child talked to SRO (Date: ____/____/____)

Notes: _____

___ Referred to Child Welfare Attendance Office (Date: ____/____/____)

___ Counseled by School Counselor (Name: _____)

___ Referred to Behavior Strategist (Special Ed.)

___ Referred to School-Based Health

___ Referred to _____ (Date: ____/____/____)

Families In Need of Services Complaint Criteria

In addition to completion of the check list of Louisiana Children's Codes, two additional attempts must be made by the Rapides Parish School System before the youth is eligible for referral to the informal FINS Office:

- (1) The parents must be notified of the problem verbally and made aware that the youth is at risk of being turned over to the informal FINS Office.**
- (2) The youth must have been referred to one of the following:**
 - a. Behavior Strategist, if classified Special Education**
 - b. School Counselor, if in regular education classes**

The school counselor and/or behavior strategist, after speaking with the youth, can make the recommendation to the informal FINS Office.

Below is our contact information:

**Families In Need of Services
726 Washington Street, Suite 200
Alexandria, La 71301**

Derrick Kirk
318.445.8084 ext 203
Title: FINS Officer (full time)

Veronica Clark
318.445.8084 ext 202
Title: FINS Officer (full time)

Appendix B: Intake Eligibility Form

**Families in Need of Services
Intake Eligibility Form**

Intake Date: _____

Completed by: _____

Youth's Demographics:

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Date of Birth: ____/____/____ Current Age: ____ SS#: _____ - _____ - _____

Sex: ____ Race: **Black White (Black/Hispanic) (White/Hispanic) American Indian Asian (Latino/Hispanic)**

Other

Height: ____' ____" Weight: ____ lbs. Eye Color: _____ Hair Color: _____

Place of Birth: _____ Reside in which parish: _____

Guardian's Demographics:

Guardians Name: _____ Relationship: ____ Biological Parent(s)

Address: _____ Grandparent

City: _____ Zip: _____ Home Phone: (____) _____ Relative: _____

Work Phone: (____) _____ Cell Phone: (____) _____ Legal Guardian

YES NO Do you live: in City Limits?

YES NO Receive Child Support?

YES NO Do you have reliable transportation?

YES NO Anyone Receiving SSI?

YES NO Receive Food Stamps?

Insurance Type: _____

List of Others in Home:

1. _____ Age: ____ Relation: _____ 5. _____ Age: ____ Relation: _____

2. _____ Age: ____ Relation: _____ 6. _____ Age: ____ Relation: _____

3. _____ Age: ____ Relation: _____ 7. _____ Age: ____ Relation: _____

4. _____ Age: ____ Relation: _____ 8. _____ Age: ____ Relation: _____

Place of Employment: _____ Household Income: \$ _____ (Monthly)

School Information:

(This School Year)

School Attending: _____ Grade: _____

Regular Ed: ____ Special Ed: ____ Learning Disabled: ____ Gifted: _____

YES NO Suspended, this year? YES NO Suspended, past years?

YES NO Expelled, this year? YES NO Expelled, past years?

Mental Health History:

YES NO Actively Suicidal? YES NO Threatening to harm anyone? YES NO 911 called?

YES NO Prior Self Harm? How Long Ago? _____ How Many Times? _____

YES NO Been treated Inpatient for Mental Health? Location: _____

Doctor: _____ Last Visit: _____ Diagnosis: _____

YES NO Does the youth currently see an outpatient mental health Doctor? Where: _____

Doctor: _____ Last Visit: _____ Diagnosis: _____

Medications: _____ Dosages: _____

FINS Criteria

Name of Youth: _____

YES NO Threatening runaway, or a runaway For How Long? _____ How Many Times? _____

YES NO Truancy or other school-related problems

YES NO Involved with Child protection for abuse, neglect or abandonment.

YES NO Prior involvement with the police? Agency: _____

YES NO Ungovernable: Beyond the control of parents or guardians (See checklist below)

PRESENTING PROBLEMS- UNGOVERNABLE BEHAVIORS: (Check ALL applicable for youth)

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> truant | <input type="checkbox"/> school related issues | <input type="checkbox"/> relocation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> runaway | <input type="checkbox"/> substance abuse | <input type="checkbox"/> beyond parental control |
| <input type="checkbox"/> stealing | <input type="checkbox"/> excessive lying | <input type="checkbox"/> peer issues |
| <input type="checkbox"/> anger | <input type="checkbox"/> eating/sleeping | <input type="checkbox"/> depression |
| <input type="checkbox"/> divorce/marriage | <input type="checkbox"/> violent/assaultive | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ongoing disrespect of authority figures | <input type="checkbox"/> at risk of causing harm or do cause harm to person or property | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> extreme level of acting stubborn or unruly | <input type="checkbox"/> failing to follow reasonable rules & lawful demands of adults | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> others(indicate below) | | |

****A brief description of what is going on at home and school.****

YES NO Does the youth have a history of drug use?

What kind? _____ How Much? _____

How Often? _____ Use Alcohol? _____

Has your child been held in Renaissance Detention Center? Y or N Why? _____

Been in Juvenile Court Before? Y or N Charged With? _____

Outcome of Court? <input type="checkbox"/> Probation (officer: _____)	<input type="checkbox"/> Group Home Placement
<input type="checkbox"/> Community Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Charge Dropped <input type="checkbox"/> Still in process
<input type="checkbox"/> Court ordered FINS	Other: _____

Services family may be interested in:

<input type="checkbox"/> LaChip	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Consult	<input type="checkbox"/> Community Service
<input type="checkbox"/> Counseling	<input type="checkbox"/> Tutoring	<input type="checkbox"/> Anger Mgt. Education
<input type="checkbox"/> Self Esteem Ed.	<input type="checkbox"/> Alternative schooling	<input type="checkbox"/> Parenting
<input type="checkbox"/> DCFS Referral	<input type="checkbox"/> Special Ed. Referral	<input type="checkbox"/> Youth Challenge
	<input type="checkbox"/> Sports	<input type="checkbox"/> Mentor

Staff Only

Length of Interview: ___minutes Completed by: _____

YES NO Is the guardian receptive to help? Explain: _____

YES NO Is the child receptive to help? Explain: _____

Grounds (Art. 730)

- (i) That a child is truant or has willfully and repeatedly violated lawful school rules.
- (ii) That a child is ungovernable. (ex. Beyond the control of parents or guardians)
- (iii) That a child is a runaway.
- (iv) That a caretaker has caused, encouraged, or contributed to the child's behaviors enumerated in this Article or to the commission of delinquent acts as defined in Title VIII.
- (v) That, after notice, a caretaker has willfully failed to attend a meeting with the child's teacher, school principal, or other appropriate school employee to discuss the child's truancy, the child's repeated violation of school rules, or other serious educational problems of the child.

Referred by: ___Parent ___School ___Court ___Special Ed. ___Police(agency: _____) Other: _____

Action Taken: ___Accepted ___Rejected ___Warn/Flag ___Other: _____

Given info for: _____

Appendix C: Informal Family Services Plan Agreement (IFSPA)

RAPIDES PARISH FAMILIES IN NEED OF SERVICES

726 Washington Street • Alexandria, LA 71301

State of Louisiana in the interest of: _____

Date: _____

Court Name: Ninth Judicial District Court

INFORMAL FAMILY SERVICES PLAN AGREEMENT

Pursuant to the provisions of LA. Ch. Code Art 743-745, a pre-adjudicatory conference was held on the ___ day of _____, 20__ . At that time the FAMILY agreed to enter into a voluntary INFORMAL SERVICES PLAN AGREEMENT.

Youth’s Identified Presenting Behavior:

Violate School Rules Truant Ungovernable Runaway Other

Assessment/Services Needed Providers Contact Information Date/ Appt Time

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Conditions of INFORMAL FAMILY SERVICES PLAN:

(The conditions stated in the above plan should be directly related to the presenting behavior and any additional behaviors discussed as part of the agreement.)

We understand that this Informal Family Services Plan Agreement is voluntary and is in the best interest of our child and we agree to cooperate fully with the person who will monitor this agreement. Witness by signature this ___ day of _____, 20__.

Intake Officer

Juvenile

Guardian

Guardian

FTC Representative

FTC Representative

FTC Representative

FTC Representative

FTC Representative

FTC Representative

Appendix D: Consent for Services

Families In Need of Services
726 Washington St
Alexandria, LA 71301

CONSENT FOR SERVICES

I, _____, give permission for staff of Families In Need of Services to provide services to my child, _____/_____ at school and in the community. Families In Need of Services staff may also discuss my child with the school administrative staff and other services providers, if deemed necessary.

Signature

Witness

Date

Appendix E: Consent to Disclosure of Information and Wavier of Confidentiality

Families In Need Of Services

726 Washington Street Alexandria, LA 71301
(318)445-8084 (318)445-7297 Fax

CONSENT TO DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION
WAIVER OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Request Date: _____

Copies of the following Information:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drug Screens | <input type="checkbox"/> Individualize Education Program (IEP) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medical/Mental Health Records | <input type="checkbox"/> School reports with comments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> History of Attendance to appointments | <input type="checkbox"/> Suspension Letters |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social and Psychological Records | <input type="checkbox"/> Letters regarding Attendance problems |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluations Reports (_____) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Child's Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Social Security #: _____

I authorize Families In Need of Services to:

Release Information Obtain Information

Agency's Name: _____

The following information is for the purpose of evaluation, continuity of care and service planning:

This consent is subject to written revocation at any time except if action has already been taken in reliance upon this consent. This consent will automatically expire upon completion of this transaction and no later than 365 days from the date signed unless stated otherwise herein.

It is further understood that information released is for professional purposes only and may not be provided in whole or part of any agency, organization, or person other than stated above.

I understand that treatment services are not contingent upon my signing or not signing this consent. I also understand and consent that this information may be sent via facsimile transmission.

WITNESS

SIGNATURE

WITNESS

DATE

Appendix F: Consent for Drug Screen

Consent for Drug Screens

I _____, agree that my child, _____, submits to a supervised urine screen upon request for the purposes of conducting a Drug Screen.

Age: ____ Sex: ____ Race: _____

Date: ____/____/____ _____

Client

Date: ____/____/____ _____

Guardian

Date: ____/____/____ _____

FINS Representative

Appendix G: Family Team Conferences Multi-Agency Consent and Authorization for the Disclosure and Release of Confidential Information

Family in Need of Services Program
Family Team Conferences
Multi-agency Consent and Authorization for the
Disclosure and Release of Confidential Information

I. Regarding the information and/or records of:			
Youth:			
DOB:	SSN:		
Address:			
Phone Number:			
II. Authorized Individuals/Agencies: (Please list all authorized individuals/schools/service providers/law enforcement agencies, etc.) <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border: none;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Rapides Parish School Board <input type="radio"/> Office of Behavioral Health <input type="radio"/> Department of Children & Family Services <input type="radio"/> Crossroads Regional Hospital <input type="radio"/> Judicial Wrap Around <input type="radio"/> Multisystemic Therapy (MST) <input type="radio"/> Rapides Parish Drug Court </td> <td style="width: 50%; border: none;"> In addition: 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ </td> </tr> </table>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Rapides Parish School Board <input type="radio"/> Office of Behavioral Health <input type="radio"/> Department of Children & Family Services <input type="radio"/> Crossroads Regional Hospital <input type="radio"/> Judicial Wrap Around <input type="radio"/> Multisystemic Therapy (MST) <input type="radio"/> Rapides Parish Drug Court 	In addition: 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Rapides Parish School Board <input type="radio"/> Office of Behavioral Health <input type="radio"/> Department of Children & Family Services <input type="radio"/> Crossroads Regional Hospital <input type="radio"/> Judicial Wrap Around <input type="radio"/> Multisystemic Therapy (MST) <input type="radio"/> Rapides Parish Drug Court 	In addition: 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____		
III. Authorization to Release: I authorize the above-named agencies/individual team members to disclose and release to each other the following information from my records for the purpose of referral, intake, assessment, planning, implementation and follow-up. Please check the specific type of information/records authorized for release:			
<input type="checkbox"/> School Records/Reports(incl. Sp Ed)	<input type="checkbox"/> Treatment Plans/Service Agreements		
<input type="checkbox"/> Law Enforcement Reports	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Notes and Progress Notes		
<input type="checkbox"/> Psychiatric/Psychological Evaluations	<input type="checkbox"/> Discharge Summaries		
<input type="checkbox"/> Social Histories	<input type="checkbox"/> Medical Reports		
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____		
IV. Understanding of Consent: This authorization for consent to disclose and release will be effective for information and records generated to the date of signature and the release of information created after the date of signature until the expiration date or the release is revoked by me in writing. I also understand that I may revoke this authorization for consent at any time, except to the extent that action has been taken in reliance on it, and that in any event this authorization for consent expires in one year or by _____ (specified date). This authorization for consent will last no longer than reasonably necessary to service the purpose for which it is given. The information disclosed is restricted to the minimum amount necessary to accomplish the intended purpose. The information disclosed may no longer be protected once it is used or disclosed in accordance with this authorization. This authorization for disclosure of information has been explained to me and I understand it. I have been offered a copy of this form. A copy of this authorization for consent has the same force and effect as the original.			
V. Signature of Authorization:	Date:		
Youth:			
Parent(s):			
Legal Guardian(s):			

Appendix H: Family Team Conference Notice

Date

«Parents_Info»
«Address»
«City», «St» «Zip»

RE: «Childs_Name»

****FAMILY TEAM CONFERENCE NOTICE ****

«Childs_Name» and his/her parents or guardians are hereby given notice that an Informal Family Service Plan Conference is set on the date indicated below. The **Families In Need Of Services Conference Room** is located at **726 Washington Street, Alexandria, Louisiana.**

This case is set for review on **DAY** the **DATE**, at **TIME**. Please sign in when you arrive, as we will take each family in the order of sign in. Panel members may include representatives from the Youth Challenge Program, Office of Behavioral Health, Inpatient Mental Health Specialist, Department of Children and Family Services, Rapides Parish School Board Child Welfare and Attendance, JB Lafargue Special Education, and Office of Addictive Disorders.

Also, be aware that if a contract is signed, there will be a (\$7.50) dollar fee assessed. If required to pay this fee it is to be paid monthly, over a six-month period, while your child is participating in an informal FINS probation. Work and school excuses will be provided on request as this is an informal court proceeding.

Derrick Kirk
FINS Officer
9th JDC Juvenile Services
Judges Office

Appendix I: Formal FINS Petition

**Families in Need of Services
Formal FINS Petition**

In the Interest of:

First Name: _____ **Last Name:** _____

Date of Birth: ____/____/____ **Sex:** _____ **Race:** _____ **School Attending:** _____

Guardians Name : _____ **Relationship:** _____

Home Phone: _____ **Cell Phone:** _____ **Work Phone:** _____

Address: _____ **City:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Grounds:

___ **730.1 Truancy/ Violate school Rules.**

___ **730.2 Minor Child is Ungovernable.**

___ **730.3 Minor Child is a Runaway.**

___ **730.4 Minor has repeatedly possessed or consumed intoxicating beverages, misrepresented age to purchase such beverages or repeatedly loitered around a place that sells such beverages.**

___ **730.5 Minor Child has committed an offense applicable only to children.**

___ **730.6 Minor child under 10 years of age committed an act that would be a crime if committed by an Adult.**

___ **730.7 The Caretaker Causes, Encouraged or contributed to the minor child's behavior.**

___ **730.8 The Caretaker refused to attend a meeting with the child's teacher, school principal, or other employee regarding truancy, violation of school rules or other educational problems.**

___ **730.9 Child incompetent to Proceed with a Delinquency Matter under Article 832**

___ **730.10 Child found to be in Possession of a Handgun**

___ **730.11 Child found to have engaged in cyberbullying**

The FINS Office has used the following service providers:

1. _____ **Outcome:** _____
2. _____ **Outcome:** _____
3. _____ **Outcome:** _____

Additional Information:

Date: ____ / ____ / ____ _____

**Derrick Kirk, FINS Officer
Veronica Clark, FINS Officer**

Appendix J: Truancy Round-Up Notice to Appear

<<Date>>

«FAM1»
«ADRSS»
«CTYSTE»

RE: «SNAME»

****Truancy Notice to Appear****

Dear «FAM1»,

The Juvenile Court of Rapides Parish has received a complaint from the Rapides Parish School Board concerning attendance. It has been reported that your child has missed 10 or more days of school since the 20XX-20XX school year began. Thus, they have been turned over to the FINS Truancy Office.

Per the Louisiana Children's Code, a mandatory conference will be held for you and for your child. You are **REQUIRED** to attend this conference at the **Rapides Parish Courthouse, 701 Murray Street, Alexandria, Louisiana** on the ___th day of _____, 20XX at 5:30 p.m. in **Court Room 6**. **You must bring \$35.00 for the administrative fee when you come, cash or money order only.**

Please keep in mind that a school can only excuse absences with medical excuses, a death in the family, two religious holidays, or extenuating circumstances, which must be approved by the principal or the Truancy Welfare and Attendance Officer, Ruby Smith. All other excuses are considered unexcused, including suspensions and written notes from home.

**** If you feel the number of absences is an error, you must **contact your child's school** and **our office immediately**.**

Your child's school should then send a copy of the correct information to our office to excuse any unexcused days. If the absences were caused due to a medical reason and/or a death in the immediate family, you must turn in the appropriate information to the school within 5 day of your child being absent, in order to correct this issue. You are responsible for insuring your school stays on top of this. Below is a copy of the **Louisiana Compulsory School Attendance Law**.

To reach us with questions please call, 445-8084. Again, attendance is required, not optional.

Sincerely,

Honorable Patricia Koch
Juvenile Judge
9th Judicial District

Compulsory School Attendance Law

In compliance with Louisiana Revised Statute 17:221, it is the policy of the Rapides Parish School Board System to require that a child from the age of seventh birthday to the eighteenth birthday attending a public or private day school in regular assigned class during the regular school hours or participate in an approved home study program. Any child below the age of seven who is legally enrolled in school is subject to the compulsory school law.

Whoever violates this provision of this Subsection or R.S. 17:234 shall be fined not more than \$250 or imprisoned not more than 30 days or both. Whoever violates any other provisions of this Subpart or any of the law that provides for the penalty provided for in R.S. 12:221 shall be fined not more than \$15 and for such violation,

Appendix K: Truancy Round-Up Agreement

IN THE INTREST OF: «Childs Name»
DATE OF BIRTH: «DOB»
SS #: «SS »

SEX/RACE: ____/____

NINTH JDC
PARISH OF RAPIDES
STATE OF LOUISIANA

TRUANCY ROUND-UP AGREEMENT

Pursuant to the provisions of the LA. CH. Code Art 743-745, a pre-ad judicatory Conference was held on the __th day of _____, 2011. At this time the Family agreed to enter in and TRUANCY ROUND-UP AGREEMENT instead of Court Intervention.

The Following Services were agreed upon:

1. Increased supervision by the Rapides Parish Juvenile Services Office
2. Phone Calls Monthly for excessive absences
3. _____

Conditions of the TRUANCY ROUND-UP AGREEMENT:

1. Obey all local, state and federal laws.
2. Attend «School_Name».
3. Attend school regularly; do not be truant, suspended or expelled.
4. Notify Juvenile Services Office of address changes or change of phone number.
5. Obey all reasonable and lawful demands of your parent or guardian.
6. Pay \$35.00 Administrative fee.

We understand that if the agreement if kept, the complaint will be satisfied at the end of the 2010-2011 school year.

We understand that if the agreement is not followed, the matter will be set for a Formal Court hearing.

We understand that this Truancy Round-Up Agreement is voluntary and is in the best interest of our child and we agree to cooperate fully with the person who will monitor the agreement.

This done and said on __th day of _____, 2011.

Court Officer

Juvenile

Paid _____
Not Paid _____ * (see below)

Parent/Guardian

*Agree to submit payment within 30 days to:
726 Washington St
Alexandria, La 71301

Parent/Guardian SS#

Appendix L: FINS Rejection Letter

<<Date>>

«FAM1»
«ADRSS»
«CTYSTE»

RE : «SNAME»

****Criteria Not Met / Letter of Denial****

The Families In Need of Services office regrettably must inform your office that the below listed minor child does not meet the criteria of FINS. Below you will find the reason for denial. If you have questions regarding this matter feel free to contact us back at 318-445-8084.

Child's Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Social Security #: _____

The following reason caused the case to be denied :

- Criteria was not met (lack of 2 or more interventions prior to sending the child to our office).
- The child is in the custody of the State of Louisiana.
- Child must be reported to the local policing agency as a runaway.
- The child has been adjudicated.
- The child is 17 years of age or older.
- The family refused services through our office. (We are a voluntary program.)
- Other: _____

Sincerely,

Derrick Kirk
FINS Officer
Ninth Judicial District Court

Last updated: 12/14/2012 4:28:14 PM / KRH

Appendix M: Motivational Interviewing Basics

Motivational Interviewing Basics

Common Strategies

- ▶ Feedback
- ▶ Responsibility
- ▶ Advice
- ▶ Menu of options
- ▶ Empathy
- ▶ Self-efficacy



Principles of MI:

- ▶ Express empathy
- ▶ Amplify ambivalence
- ▶ Roll with resistance
- ▶ Support self-efficacy

Backbone of MI:

- ▶ Open-ended questions
- ▶ Affirmations
- ▶ Reflective listening
- ▶ Summarize



Change Talk Model



- ▶ Desire to change
- ▶ Ability to change
- ▶ Reason to change
- ▶ Need to change
- ▶ COMMITMENT to change

Resources: Dr. Stephen Phillippi @ sphill2@lsuhsc.edu,
Motivationalinterview.org, MI Guide for Probation & Parole @ NIC/U.S. DOJ

The Institute for Public Health and Justice (IPHJ) is the Lead Entity for the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation's Louisiana Models for Change Initiative. IPHJ is a research, education and outreach institute within the LSU Health Sciences Center in New Orleans. Its mission includes disseminating and sustaining the successful outcomes of the Initiative.

For more information, contact:
Institute for Public Health and Justice
<http://www.publichealth.lsuhscc.edu/iphj/>