



Florida's Early Childhood Courts Best Practice Standards



Target Population

The target population is abused and/or neglected children ages 0-36 months who are removed from their homes and placed in out-of-home care (relative, non-relative, or foster care homes).



Disadvantaged Groups

Individuals from groups who have experienced discrimination or reduced opportunities receive the same opportunities as others to participate and succeed in Early Childhood Court.



Roles & Responsibilities of Judge/Magistrate

The judge/magistrate is up-to-date on law and best practices, interacts frequently and respectfully with participants and child caregivers, and gives due consideration to the input of team members.



Child Parent Therapy

Participants receive an evidence-based intervention, Child Parent Psychotherapy, based on an assessment of the parent, the child, and the attachment relationship. The therapist informs the case plan and treatment recommendations.



Additional Treatment & Social Services

Participants receive additional treatment and social services necessary to address co-occurring disorders and other needs of the family to ensure case plan compliance and successful permanency.



Family Time

Early Childhood Court ensures individualized, frequent, and meaningful contact between parents and children to enhance the child-parent relationship, as well as expedite permanency.



Multidisciplinary Team

A multidisciplinary team participates in the operation of the Early Childhood Court, reviews participants' progress, provides observations, and makes recommendations.



Caseloads

The Early Childhood Court serves as many eligible individuals as practicable while maintaining continuous fidelity to the best practice standards.



Monitoring & Evaluation

The Early Childhood Court routinely monitors its adherence to best practice standards and employs scientifically valid and reliable procedures to evaluate its effectiveness.