Children's Bureau

National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) Review

Quick Reference Guide: System Demonstration and Survey Methodology Review

The **system demonstration and survey methodology review** occur on Day 1 of the onsite phase of the NYTD Review, following the entrance conference. This document offers an overview and suggested tips for preparing to participate in these onsite activities. A more detailed description of the system demonstration and survey methodology review can be found in Section 5 of the ***Guide to the NYTD Review*** (https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/cb/nytd_review_guide.pdf).

The **purpose** of the system demonstration is to observe and review a live demonstration of the state's child welfare information system and other case management sections within the system used to collect and report demographic, services, and NYTD outcomes information on young people in transition.

The role of state review team members is to discuss any data sharing that happens with other state-level partners like the education department or the court system. State caseworkers attend the demonstration and provide additional insights about how they utilize the system, including challenges they have when entering or updating information about young people.

The role of the federal review team members is to validate that the state's system can collect all required **58 NYTD data elements** and that the staff who input these data are well-trained and supported in gathering data that accurately reflect their case practice. They also examine a state's NYTD survey methodology process, from invitation to survey completion, including validating that the state's survey instruments use the required NYTD survey questions and response options.

Through asking questions and facilitating discussion, the federal review team identifies gaps in the state's data collection process, identifies possible data quality concerns, and understands the data collection practices that are working well in the state. The federal review team may also refer to the mock case scenarios or "test cases" the state submitted to demonstrate how the state collects data about a typical young person in transition.

Below is a **checklist** of items you have available in your review information package or on the NYTD Virtual Network (https://nytdnetwork.jbsinternational.com/), **tips,** and **questions to consider** to help you as a NYTD Reviewer successfully prepare for the state system demonstration and survey methodology review:

Preparation Checklist

- ✓ State's pre-onsite phase documentation
- ✓ Requirements Workbook (Appendix C of the *Guide to the NYTD Review*) related to data mapping
- ✓ Test case finding
- ✓ National and state data snapshots
- ✓ NYTD Review Quick Reference Guide: General Requirements, Data Elements, and Rating Factors handout

Tips

- Actively listen, take notes, ask questions (if unsure about a question, discuss with the federal review team ahead of time).
- Note overarching themes or best practices within state documents that we may want to address while on site.
- Note unique terms and acronyms used by the state, to aid in following along when on site.
- Note additional items to follow up on and clarify during case record reviews, stakeholder/partner interviews, and the young people focus group.
- Note in advance any questions you have after reviewing the recommended documents.

Questions to Consider

General

- How and when are caseworkers trained in how to use the state's data system?
- Are there any screens with unclear instructions to the user?
- Does the data system use default values when fields are left blank? For example, a state may automatically report "no" for an element before a worker has had an opportunity to collect that information.
- Is case information being entered timely?

Demographics

- How does the state collect race and ethnicity data (**elements 6–13**) from young people? Does the state include the option for a young person to decline to provide this information? Does the state only enter this data at intake, and does it match what was provided by young people in the NYTD survey responses?
- How is a young person's foster care status defined (**elements 14 and 36**)? Which placements are included in the state's definition?
- What is the state's process for collecting information on Tribal membership (**element 16**), particularly if that membership is "pending verification"?
- How does the state conduct quality assurance (QA) on young people's records to ensure accuracy on demographic elements that often change over time (e.g., a young person's education, special education, adjudicated delinquency)?
- If there is a wide difference between the state's demographic (e.g., sex, race, educational level) data and the data reported by other states, what explains the difference?

Independent Living (IL) Services

- Who inputs information into the state's data system regarding the IL services that young people receive? How and how often is this information updated?

- If there is a wide difference between the state's IL services data and the data reported by other states, what explains the difference?
- How and who conducts QA to determine whether IL service providers are reporting information accurately?
- Do workers typically provide a narrative description of the activities and supports they consider to be reportable NYTD "services"?

Outcomes

- What is the policy and process used to let caseworkers know that a survey needs to be completed? Are young people in the baseline population (age 17) and follow-up populations (ages 19 and 21) clearly identified in the state's data system?
- Did the state use the correct survey questions for the baseline and follow-up survey efforts?
- Does the state use an incentive to encourage survey participation?
- How does the state train their staff in how to introduce and administer the survey? Is this a one-time training, or are staff trained more than once, and how often?
- How does the state ensure that the survey data are collected consistently since the survey may be administered in a variety of formats (web, by paper, by mail, in person, by phone)? Are young people choosing one method over another?
- How does the state ensure that the young person, and not a foster parent or another supportive adult, is responding to the surveys (if not administered by a worker directly)?
- How and when does the state determine a non-participation reason for young people who do not take the survey?
- If there is a wide difference between the state's outcomes data and the data reported by other states, what explains the difference?

If you have questions about the System Demonstration and Survey Methodology Review information presented, please email the Child Welfare Compliance Reviews Team at cw@jbsinternational.com.