



Research Snapshot



Advancing Continuous Improvements in the Family Justice System in Saskatchewan: The Collective Impact of a Well-being focus in Family Law

Post-Workshop Summary and Next Steps Report

What is this about?

This report captures the proceedings and key findings from a two-day workshop on **Advancing Continuous Improvements in the Family Justice System in Saskatchewan: The Collective Impact of a Well-being Focus in Family Law** (November 2025). Family justice system stakeholders gathered together to share data, brainstorm ideas, and contemplate improvements and transformation in Saskatchewan's family justice system.

What you need to know:

The report details the project's grounding in a participatory action research methodology. This methodology creates opportunities for reflection, dialogue, and co-learning across professional and organizational boundaries, while supporting collective action and continuous improvement. The value of the report lies in demonstrating both the appetite for change and the breadth of innovative thinking already present within the system. The ideas presented in the report must be appropriately resourced through coordinated funding, leadership, and commitment across sectors to translate into meaningful and sustainable improvements in Saskatchewan's family justice system.

What did the researchers do?

The workshop that researchers held marks the beginning of the second phase of the project to advance continuous improvements and transformation in Saskatchewan's family justice system. This broader initiative is designed to explore ways to better support those who are interacting with the family justice system and was split into two phases.

Phase 1 (2024-2025) undertook an action research methodology in order to map existing family justice system processes, conduct focus group sessions, and produce written reports of these findings. This research was shared through a final report, presentations, and a peer-reviewed publication.

Phase 2 (2025-2026) advanced the action research methodology by engaging family justice stakeholders through a workshop. The primary objective was to analyze and interpret as a collective the data collected in Phase 1. The ultimate goal is to develop alignment around some ideas to advance and measure family justice system improvements.

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This workshop brought together participants from multiple disciplines that interact with the family justice system. Over the course of the two-day workshop, facilitators presented concepts such as the use of interdisciplinary tools for change, Causal Layered Analysis, and strategy mapping to encourage creative thinking about how a wellness-focused family justice system could continue to be advanced in Saskatchewan.

What did the researchers find?

As a foundation for next steps, this report identifies common priorities to inform strategic planning, pilot initiatives, policy development, and future collaborative work, with opportunities to explore through further consultation, implementation, and evaluation. Some common themes that emerged among participants about the ideal family justice system include:

- 1. Reframing language to support cultural change**
- 2. Increasing prevention and early intervention through education and cultural change**
- 3. Improving outcomes through enhanced triage of family disputes**
- 4. Improving outcomes through greater consistency in the process**
- 5. Leveraging generative AI to improve access and service delivery**
- 6. Supporting families through interdisciplinary collaboration**

The ideas presented here must be appropriately resourced through coordinated funding, leadership, and commitment across sectors to translate into meaningful and sustainable improvements in Saskatchewan's family justice system.

How can you use this?

This report provides background information on the project, highlights how the workshop demonstrated systems change theory in action, presents participants' reflections on the content and processes, and identifies potential next steps. It is intended to serve as a resource beyond the event by highlighting concepts and approaches that may support systems change in Saskatchewan and beyond.

The report illustrates that through qualitative inquiry and reflective practice, systems can develop the capacity to learn, adapt, and evolve. This is where systems thinking and brain science intersect: when we understand the conditions that support human learning, health, and healing, we can intentionally create systems that embody those same conditions.

About the researcher:

This research was conducted by Brea Lowenberger in her capacity as Coordinator of the Saskatchewan PT-Collaborative (SK A2J Network) and Director of Saskatchewan A2J Lab, CREATE Justice, in collaboration with Dr. Judy Jaunzems Fernuk, Well-Being Coordinator, College of Law, and Faculty, College of Education, and Leah Howie, SK A2J Network Liaison.

Laura Chartier, CREATE Justice Student Innovator, drafted this research snapshot in 2026.

Sources:

Advancing Continuous Improvements in the Family Justice System in Saskatchewan: The Collective Impact of a Well-being Focus in Family Law – *Post-Workshop Summary and Next Steps Report (August 2026)*

Advancing Continuous Improvements in the Family Justice System – *Focus Group Project Report (August 2025)*

Contact:

If you have any further questions or would like to connect with the researchers, please contact CREATE Justice at createjustice@usask.ca.

Funder:

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