

Department of Children and Family Services of Illinois

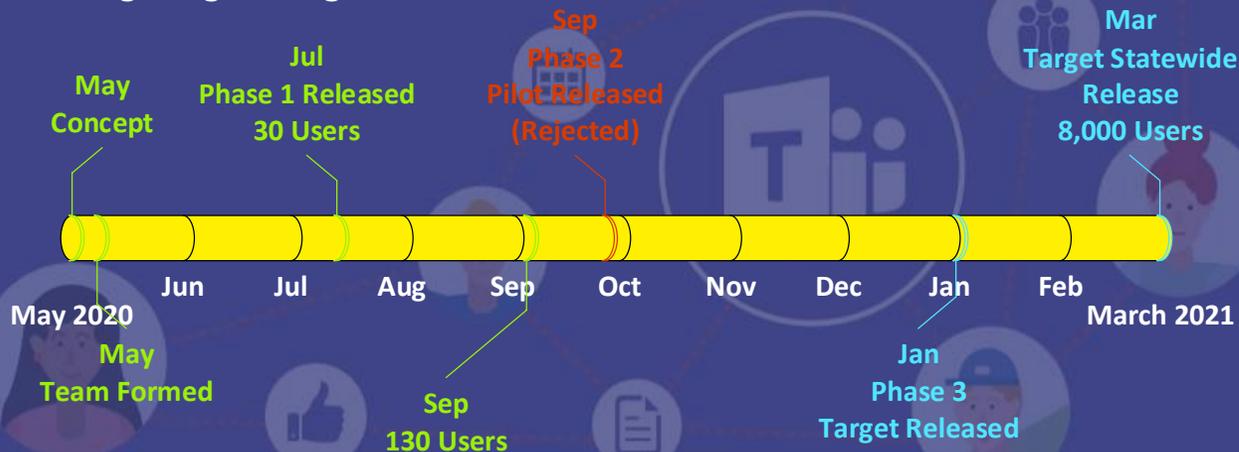
Youth Teams App

Youth in Care can text, voice and video chat with the DCFS Worker and a Support Team

More frequent, timely and fun communication for Illinois Youth in Care.

As the effects of the COVID pandemic were realized, it became apparent Illinois Department of Children and Family Services needed to stay in virtual contact with the youth in care. After utilizing many different offerings, DCFS determined a custom solution would benefit the youth and workers best.

The DCFS Worker adds trusted support people (teachers, coaches, clergy, family friends) to the team to offer the Youth encouragement and mentoring while navigating through a DCFS involved life .



Expected Results

Child Safety

Increasing contact with youth will provide more awareness of the happenings with the youth. The use of video chats will “put more eyes on each youth”

Child Well-Being

Youth Team App will provide an avenue to understand the needs youth may develop closer to real-time

Implementation

Great Team

This implementation required persons from several areas to work together from the very beginning. The Product Owner organized a team which included operations, youth in care, legal, policy, operations, permanency, and communications.

Expert Help

A custom template was built by a Microsoft SLATE team for the Microsoft Teams platform. The template provides a private team for each youth in care with specialized security. Microsoft now offers the Youth Team App template to all customers.

Agile

The Product Owner leveraged the cross-departmental team to build a minimally-viable-product (MVP) very quickly. The team continues to build, evaluate and adjust to refine the solution.