CHILD WELFARE

RFI PROCESS DOCUMENTATION

5/20-6/9

FJORD™
Design and Innovation from
Accenture Interactive

THE BRIEF

BRIEF:

Build a working prototype that will allow parents of foster children to establish and manage their profile, and view children's residential facilities in their zip code, and communicate with the case worker via a private inbox. The working prototype will access open data through the HHS API to retrieve data about foster family agency locations that are nearby.

PROCESS

HYPOTHESIZE
FORM INSIGHTS
DESCRIBE
OBSERVE PEOPLE
DEFINE THE CHALLENGE
DISCOVER
DESCRIBE
ITERATIVE DELIVERY
DESIGN
DISCOVER
SPRINT 0
SPRINT CYCLES

TIMELINE & PLAN

* Actual team, duration, and cost is approximate and may vary.

TEAM

Michael Green
Delivery Lead

Z. Henry-Frazer
Product Manager

Craig Mertens
Technical Architect

David Hindman
Interaction Designer/User Research/
Usability Tester

Essi Salonen
Visual Designer

Daniel Haab
Back End Developer

Matt McCloskey
Front End Developer

Zane Sadler
Scrum Master

Jeffery Miles
DevOps Engineer

WORKING TOGETHER – STATUS & ACCOUNTABILITY

For day-to-day communication and status updates, we relied on HipChat and JIRA to track progress.

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DISCOVER

Key Activities:

Interviews

Parent Survey

Research Synthesis

DISCOVER – INTERVIEWS

DISCOVER – INTERVIEWS

To ground our research in user needs, we spoke with experts who understand the concerns of parents. In an actual project, we would plan to interview biological parents of foster children.

LISA
Independent Social Services Consultant
Former CPS Social Worker

JANAY
Clinical Social Worker
Former CPS Social Worker
Former foster child

DISCOVER – INTERVIEWS

LISA
Independent Social Services Consultant
Former CPS Social Worker

"When you design this, make it like for a fourth-grader. You don't want to be complicated it at all."

"They [the parents] are in total crisis. We need it to be soothing, and easy."

DISCOVER – INTERVIEWS

LISA
Independent Social Services Consultant
Former CPS Social Worker

"There isn't currently a system like this in place. Parents don't have input into where their child is placed and they have no ability to check-in with that placement."

"That's what parents want to know... is there a dog in the house, or a cat they can play with? Things that will ease parents' minds about their child."

DISCOVER – INTERVIEWS

Janay
Independent Social Services Consultant
Former CPS Social Worker

"They [the parents] aren't in a positive place. It should be calming, not too energetic."

"I would use an easy font with big text. You'll be often dealing with people who have altered state of mind."

DISCOVER – INTERVIEWS

Janay
Independent Social Services Consultant
Former CPS Social Worker

"This tool would be awesome because it gives [parents] a way to document preferences on their family, because they are the experts on their family."

"It gives them an opportunity to say this is how she goes to sleep… these are some of the things that would happen in our routine."

DISCOVER – INTERVIEWS

Janay
Independent Social Services Consultant
Former CPS Social Worker

"Keep it simple and to a second to third grade level."

DISCOVER – PARENT SURVEY

Another key method for learning about users is collecting data. With limited time and participants available, we conducted a survey of parents to learn about what routines are important to maintain in a child's home.

We used Survey Monkey and targeted parents across the Fjord North America Studios. With 28 respondents, we began to see meaningful patterns. In a longer project, we would target hundreds of respondents.

DISCOVER – PARENT SURVEY

The survey validated what we learned from Our interviewees: daily household routines are extremely important for a child's well being.

We learned that giving parents the ability to share family routines with case workers and foster agencies would be crucial functionality in a parent portal.

DISCOVER – PARENT SURVEY

We also learned that parents are generally very unfamiliar with their state's foster care processes, and had little knowledge of FFAs.

This knowledge gap indicates that the successful design should include an educational component for many parents who will be unfamiliar with foster care.

DISCOVER – PARENT SURVEY

Another takeaway from the survey was that parents were generally ok with communicating about important topics using a wide range of methods. While the most preferred method was face to face, other options were definitely used and valid.

This finding supports the caseworker chat functionality in the parents portal.

DISCOVER – PARENT SURVEY

There were three key takeaways from the parent survey. These became foundations for our user stories.

- A child's home routines are very important to maintain.
- In general, parents have little knowledge of the foster care process.
- Families prefer face to face communication, but use many other methods to talk about important matters.

DISCOVER – SYNTHESIS

DISCOVER – SYNTHESIS

Based on our research, we defined goals for what the portal should do, how it will work, and how it will feel.

CONTENT & FEATURES

- Enter Housing Criteria for Child
- FFAs By Location
- Recommend Agencies
- Chat with Caseworker
- Educational Onboarding

INTERACTIONS

- Extremely Simple
- Large text
- Large click/tap zones
- Straightforward interface
- Well-known patterns

LOOK & FEEL

- Soothing
- Calm
- Clear

PROCESS

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FORM INSIGHTS
DESCRIBE
OBSERVE PEOPLE
DEFINE THE CHALLENGE
DISCOVER
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ITERATIVE DELIVERY
DESIGN
DISCOVER

DESCRIBE

Key Activities:

Sketch Creation

Click-through prototypes

Concept Validation

DESCRIBE - SCENARIO

Based on our learnings in the discovery process, we defined a scenario that addresses the user's unique situation and mindset:

Janay, a single parent has recently had her son Jaden removed and placed in foster care. Janay's caseworker, Lisa, has informed Janay of a digital portal that she can access to view information about her son's experience. Lisa sends Janay the information about the portal over email. Interested to explore this option, Janay checks her email, clicks the link and is directed to the Parents Caring Portal. She signs in.

DESCRIBE - KEY ASSUMPTIONS

Audience & Use Case: We focused on the scenario in which a parent has recently had a child removed and placed in foster care. The user will be a first time user.

Connectivity: The parent has access to a digital device and the internet.

Family Size: For the purposes of the prototype, we focused on a scenario for one child but acknowledge the need to accommodate siblings and multiple children.

DESCRIBE – CONCEPT DIAGRAM

We created an initial overall concept and system diagram based on the learnings from discovery. It allows for parental data entry, FFA browsing, and agent chat – all in an extremely simple framework.

DESCRIBE – CONCEPT SKETCHES V1

Building on the concept diagram, we created high-level screen sketches/wireframes.

Welcome Screen

FFAs by location

Agency Detail

Parents Portal Home

DESCRIBE – CONCEPT SKETCHES V1

Insights from discovery directly impacted our initial concepts.

"I would use an easy font with big text. You'll be often dealing with people who have an altered state of mind."

DESCRIBE – CONCEPT SKETCHES V1

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"Keep it simple and to a second to third grade level."

DESCRIBE – CONCEPT SKETCHES V1

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"That's what parents want to know… is there a dog in the house, or a cat they can play with? Things that will ease parents' mind about their child."

DESCRIBE – CONCEPT VALIDATION

We solicited feedback on our first round sketches to gauge our initial design direction. Feedback directly impacted and informed our revisions.

JANAY
Clinical Social Worker
Former CPS Social Worker
Former foster child

LISA
Independent Social Services Consultant
Former CPS Social Worker

DESCRIBE – CONCEPT REVISIONS

Feedback from concept validation sessions impacted our refinements.

"Ask them 'what is the family makeup that your child is used to' ... what type of home? ... Do they shower before bed or in the morning? Did they share a bed with someone?

Solution: updated selection items to family organization, bed and bath times.

DESCRIBE – CONCEPT REVISIONS

Feedback from concept validation sessions impacted our refinements.

"Many parents don't have cars... [Parents] want an FFA that's close to them because they'll be walking or taking the bus there."

"A lot of times, parents become homeless as a result of the intervention, and they go and stay with a friend or family member."

Solution: Default FFA list to within 5 miles. Give option for parents to update their location, as it may change.

DESCRIBE – CONCEPT REVISIONS

Feedback from concept validation sessions impacted our refinements.

"As a social worker, would I get messages at eleven at night?... I respect the need for real time, but I wouldn't want to go back and forth late at night."

Solution: Use a synchronous messaging paradigm but use display text that sets expectations for response time.

DESCRIBE – FINAL CONCEPT SKETCHES

Our final concept incorporates the ideal attributes for the service that were revealed in research.

Service Attributes:

- Extremely Simple
- Large text
- Large click/tap zones
- Straightforward interface
- Well-known patterns
- Enter Housing Criteria for Child
- FFAs By Location
- Recommend Agencies
- Chat with Caseworker
- Educational Onboarding

DESCRIBE – RESPONSIVE SCREENS

We designed the small-screen translation alongside the larger desktop and tablet screen size. The responsive philosophy informed our use of scaleable and extendable elements.

DESCRIBE – CLICKTHROUGHS

For getting a quick understanding of the user flow, we built fast InVision prototypes. These helped us make information architecture refinements before beginning development.

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DISCOVER

DESIGN & DELIVER

Key Activities:

Visual Design
User Testing
Development
QA

VISUAL DESIGN

The visual design direction was created to support the interaction design philosophy as well as the desired look and feel for the service.

INTERACTIONS

- Extremely Simple
- Large text
- Large click/tap zones
- Straightforward interface
- Well-known patterns

LOOK & FEEL

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VISUAL DESIGN

The visual design direction was created to support the interaction design philosophy as well as the desired look and feel for the service.

VISUAL DESIGN

To define the overall layout, fonts, colors, and feel of the service we created style guides. We kept style guides lean and functional as shown here. Style guides were also used to streamline the initial handoff between design and development. Subsequent improvements were made in rapid and close dialog between team members.

USER TESTING

We tested the work-in-progress prototype with users with direct knowledge and experience with the child welfare system.

JANAY
Clinical Social Worker
Former CPS Social Worker
Former foster child

VENNY
Child Abuse Prevention Council,
Advocate, mentor, and teacher.
Biological Parent

USER TESTING: PROCESS

We guided each user through the core screens and measured their success using key experience metrics.

Key metrics included:

- Ease of Use
- Use of Language
- Functionality
- Navigability
- Content
- Information Architecture

USER TESTING: RESULTS & UPDATES

The sign-in screen scored high in **usability** but required some updates to the **content** and **functionality.**

1. Separate login item was not needed
ACTION: Remove

2. Many parents won't know their case number
ACTION: Consider substituting with child's name and birth date.

USER TESTING: RESULTS & UPDATES

The welcome screen performed well on **usability and navigation** but could use improvements on **language and content:**

1. From a parent's perspective, welcome message should indicate that a separate home is not best place for the child. ACTION: update text.

2. Parents found the interactive component to feel like a test, answers should be aspirational, not actual. ACTION: update text. For example "What time should Jaden go to bed".

USER TESTING: RESULTS & UPDATES

Content was the main item to address on the FFAs page, while **usability** ranked very high.

1. Current text indicates that children may be staying in foster family agencies, which is not the case. ACTION: update text to explain that children will be housed in foster homes associated with FFAs.

2. Parents may have a hard time knowing that their child is within 5 miles. It could create anxiety even though it's intended to comfort parents. ACTION: Consider removing the mileage display on FFA listings.

USER TESTING: RESULTS & UPDATES

The FFA detail screen tested well in all areas: it was considered to be usable, simple and provided the right content and language.

USER TESTING: RESULTS & UPDATES

Similar to the other screens, the parent homepage did well regarding **usability**, **functionality** and **navigation**, but testing revealed some issues with the **language** and **content**.

1. “House” has a cold feeling to it. ACTION: Use the word “home” instead.
2. Miles could create parental anxiety. ACTION: consider removing but validate with more users.
3. Caseworkers would likely not use emojis. ACTION: consider removing heart emoji in designs.

USER TESTING: KEY TAKEAWAYS

- A key learning from user testing was that participants found the service extremely easy to navigate and use.
- Where the service struggled was in the subtle use of language and content for the highly unique audience.
- Most of the content gaps could easily be addressed by refining the product copy.

DEVELOPMENT: QA

We developed a test strategy based on the specific requirements of the project: the prototype must work on **multiple devices** and present a **responsive design**.

Working with the Product Manager and project team, we insured that User Stories had sufficient detail and clearly defined acceptance criteria to support development of **Test Plan.**

	Pass	Fail	Not Implemented	Blocked	N/A	Not Checked	Complete
PM:				0			
Architect:	Pass	Fail	Not Implemented	Blocked	N/A	Not Checked	Complete
QA POC:	0	0	0	0	0	34	0%
App Health				0			
Dev Deck	Pass	Fail	Not Implemented	Blocked	N/A	Not Checked	Complete
Jira Bug Filter	0	0	0	0	0	34	0%
iPhone Build Rev:				0			
Android Build Rev:	Pass	Fail	Not Implemented	Blocked	N/A	Not Checked	Complete
iOS Handset:	0	0	0	0	0	34	0%
iOS Tablet:				0			
Android Handset:	Pass	Fail	Not Implemented	Blocked	N/A	Not Checked	Complete
Android Tablet:	0	0	0	0	0	34	0%
Browser 1:				0			
Browser 2:	Pass	Fail	Not Implemented	Blocked	N/A	Not Checked	Complete
Total Time: 0:00:00	0	0	0	0	10	132	7%
				0			
	Pass	Fail	Not Implemented	Blocked	N/A	Not Checked	Complete
	0	0	0	0	10	132	7%

90	**Dashboard:**	Dashboard allows users to navigate between areas without issue
91	https://chaoticmoon.atlassian.net/browse/CHHSRFI-23	Upon clicking YOUR FAMILY, the YOUR FAMILY section opens without
92		Upon clicking FOSTER CARE, the FOSTER CARE section opens without
93		Upon clicking the CASE WORKER CHAT, the CASE WORKER CHAT
94		
95	**Child Details / Recommendations:**	Thumbnail of Child appears without issue
96	https://chaoticmoon.atlassian.net/browse/CHHSRFI-22	Childs Name appears without issue
97		Icons representing details about their child's preferences appear without
98		Icons representing details about their child's household appear without issue
99		Update Link is provided for the user to update the childs preferences
100		Update Link works without issue
101		Update Link either opens a Modal or returns user to the previous page**TBD
102		Previous selected recommendations appear in a highlighted state
103		Updated text appears on the "Update" version of the screen**Final Content
104		Child Recommendations section is updated without issue after updates have
105		Page text appears without misspellings / issues
106		
107	**Foster Agencies:**	
108	https://chaoticmoon.atlassian.net/browse/CHHSRFI-24	Recommended Foster Agencies apear without issue
109		Detail Tile for each recommended Agency appears without issue
110		Updated Location Link appears without issue
111		Updated Location Link updates the users location and provides a new list of
112		Page text appears without misspellings / issues
113	https://chaoticmoon.atlassian.net/browse/CHHSRFI-18	Zip Code Search: User can enter a zip code and recieve a list of Foster
114		User can click on the link to update the zipcode which launches a modal
115		Zip Code last entered should remain or a default zip (based on location?)
116		Value entered by user shall persist until changed by user
117		Only Locations with a Licensed state should be shown in the list (how can
118	https://chaoticmoon.atlassian.net/browse/CHHSRFI-17	User can filter the list by multiple zip codes which will show the closest
119		Clicking on an Agency takes the user to Agency's page within the website.
120	https://chaoticmoon.atlassian.net/browse/CHHSRFI-19	Detailed information about the agency is shown without issue.
121		Icons for "Benefits for (CHILD'S NAME) are shown and appear without issue
122		Agency Name appears without issue
123		Agency address is shown without issue
124		Distance from user location appears without issue
125		Brief desription of Agency Appears without issue
126		Back button on details page takes user back to search
127		**TBD User can click on address to view on map?
128		Agency phone number is shown without issue
129		Link to agency's website is provided and once clicked opens the correct
130		NEXT button at the bottom of the page can be highlighted and selected for
131		BACK button at the bottom of the page can be highlighted and selected for
132		Page text appears without misspellings / issues

DEVELOPMENT: QA

We created an initial Test Plan based on User Stories then developed additional iterations of the plan as Stories were modified based on User Research, Product Manager feedback and User Testing.

As Development commenced, we began testing of specific features and functionality as they became available. As subsequent iterations of the product were deployed, we continued that process and also began regression testing. We documented bug reports for all issues and worked with the Product Manager and project team to insure they were accurately prioritized and addressed.

FINAL RESULTS

Over the course of three weeks, we researched, designed, and built a viable service to improve the lives of parents, caseworkers, and foster children.

The research-driven approach revealed user-centric insights that were crucial to informing our solution. Paired with our agile design and development methodology, our end prototype is the result of thoughtful design and rapid iteration towards a human-centered initial MVP.

This prototype offers a promising glimpse into how technology can ease the transition to foster care. We'd love to partner with the State of California to develop similar concepts in the future.

APPENDIX

ASSUMPTIONS & NOTES

- Parents have internet connectivity
- Showing only one child – full version would show multiple siblings
- Focused on first time user with knowledge that their child has just been placed in foster care.
- Chats are stored per session for demonstration purposes. In full version they would persist.
- Default location is tied to the parents address associated with the case. They may change location as needed.
- We used a responsive framework and design to optimize for mobile and typical desktop/ tablet screen sizes.
- For demonstration purposes, we limited login fields to case number. In a full version we would use child's name and date of birth.