

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Family and Social Services

SACHI A. HAMAI
Chief Executive Officer



DATE: Wednesday, July 8, 2020
TIME: 1:30 PM

DUE TO THE CLOSURE OF ALL COUNTY BUILDINGS, MEETING PARTICIPANTS AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WILL NEED TO CALL IN TO PARTICIPATE:

Teleconference Call-In Number: (323) 776-6996/ Conference ID: 747311624#

AGENDA

Members of the Public may address agenda item. Three (3) minutes are allowed for each item.

- I. Call to Order
- II. **Presentation/Discussion Items:**
 - a. **Department of Children and Family Services:** Notice of Intent to Negotiate a Sole Source Contract with Sidebench Studios.
- III. Items continued from a previous meeting of the Board of Supervisors or from a previous FSS Agenda Review meeting.
- IV. Public Comment
- V. Adjournment



County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

425 Shatto Place, Los Angeles, California 90020
(213) 351-5602

Board of Supervisors

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First District

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Second District

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Third District

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Fourth District

KATHRYN BARGER
Fifth District

BOBBY D. CAGLE
Director

GINGER PRYOR
Chief Deputy Director

June 24, 2020

To: Supervisor Kathryn Barger, Chair
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl
Supervisor Janice Hahn

From: Bobby D. Cagle
Director

**NOTICE OF INTENT TO NEGOTIATE A SOLE SOURCE CONTRACT WITH
SIDEBENCH STUDIOS, LLC.**

In compliance with Board Policy 5.100, Sole Source Contracts, this is to notify the Board that the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) intends to negotiate a sole source contract with Sidebench Studios, LLC. (Sidebench) to finalized the development of a visitation (also known as “family bonding”) scheduling tool, Time2Connect.

On August 14, 2018, the Board unanimously approved a motion for the Chief Executive Officer to execute a contract with Sidebench to complete work on Time2Connect, with a fully developed application deployed with training and support as the final deliverable (Phase I – Pilot Program).

This sole source contract will allow Sidebench to build upon the work completed in Phase I for completion of Phase II, which will include the design, front-end development, and maintenance and support for Time2Connect. Part of the Phase II project will be funded by the County of Los Angeles Quality and Productivity Commission’s Productivity Investment Fund Award (PIF Award). The other part of Phase II, which will include completion of the back-end development for Time2Connect, is contingent upon the availability of departmental funding.

The department-wide implementation of Time2Connect will streamline coordination, communication, and data collection around visitation scheduling. This will allow the process to be more efficiently and easily standardized across all the DCFS offices. In

“To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service”

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
June 24, 2020
Page 2

addition, Time2Connect will increase the number of successful visits, thereby increasing the likelihood of reunification. Sidebench is in a unique position to seamlessly continue supporting the existing work from the pilot program to full implementation in Phase II.

The projected contract term with Sidebench will be effective upon Board approval or the date of execution by the Director or his designee, whichever is later for a contract term of 18 months, with a one-year option to extend at no additional cost. The Maximum Contract Sum is projected to be \$730,000, of this amount, \$330,000 is financed by the PIF Award, and \$400,000 is contingent upon approval of the Department's 2011 State Realignment Funds.

DCFS will proceed with the sole source contract negotiations within four weeks of this notice unless otherwise instructed by a Board Office.

If you have any questions or need additional information, you may contact me, or your staff may contact Aldo Marin, Board Liaison, at (213) 351-5530.

BDC:GP:CMM
KR:LTI:CP:ak

c: Chief Executive Officer
County Counsel
Executive Office, Board of Supervisors

Time2Connect (T2C)

Phase 2

July 2020



DCFS



Sidebench

Introduction

Pritzker
Foster Care
Initiative

#HACK
FOSTERCARE
Los Angeles

In **2017**, **DCFS** worked with the **Pritzker Foundation**, **Scale LA** and Los Angeles **Mayor Eric Garcetti** to host a *#hackfostercare* event, with a focus on creating a solution to one of their biggest internal challenges, **visitation scheduling**.

Time2Connect was **born**.

Agenda

- Introduction
- Why Time2Connect?
- Where are we?
- What we will do in Phase 2
- Product Roadmap
- Questions





Streamline coordination, communication, data collection around scheduling visits

Background

Keeping Children Safe

What is Visitation? DCFS' #1 goal is to keep children safe. When children are abused or neglected by parents or caregivers, and must be removed from their homes, DCFS social workers and aides:

1. Help find temporary care with foster parents or relatives
2. Maintain the parent-child bond through family visits
3. Support parents in providing a safe home so the child may return and be reunified with his/her parents

Streamline coordination, communication, data collection around scheduling visits

In line with LA County's Strategic Objectives

Make Investments that transform Lives

- **Reunification:** With regular visitation between a parent and child, reunification is **10X more likely** to occur.
- **Time in Foster Care:** Children w/o visits spend 45 mos in care, vs 29 mos with irregular visits, and 19 mos if visited regularly.
- **Improved Child Outcomes:** Frequency & duration correlate with stronger attachment, better future relationships, improved health & mental health outcomes.
- **DCFS Role:** Parents are 4x more likely to attend visits when the caseworker helps resolve scheduling conflicts.

The Big Picture Problem:

2M
staff hours

Scheduling

4M
visit hours



THE PROCESS OF SCHEDULING VISITS

- DCFS averages 18,000 children in out-of-home care, and scheduling visits for each child is a complex process
- CSWs need to coordinate with parents, caregivers, monitors
- Visitation locations and transportation for the child to the sites also need to be identified
- In addition, there is no system specifically designed to track and record information, such as availability, cancellations, changes, or no-shows

THE CHALLENGE

As the largest foster care system in the country, DCFS utilizes a manual and time consuming scheduling process, in which they spend **2 million hours scheduling 4 million visitation hours each year.**

Currently all **20 offices** in LA county have their own process and rely on pen, paper and phone calls to organize the visits.

THE GOAL

Streamline coordination, communication, and data collection around scheduling visits. **Increase** number of successful visits to **increase** likelihood of reunification.



Streamline coordination, communication, data collection around scheduling visits

In line with LA County's Strategic Objectives

Realize tomorrow's government today

Internal Impact (Staff Productivity): T2C was designed to vastly improve internal processes so that staff hours can be reallocated to other value-add activities.

Remove administrative burdens so that staff **spend more time with children & families**. There is a **direct correlation** between time spent with families and **reunification**.

Current State

3,928

Total Childrens Social
Workers
(excludes HSAs)

2M

Staff Hours Spent
Scheduling Visits per
Year

\$122K

*Average Cost / Staff
Turnover

335

Total DCFS CSW
Turnover
(2017 - 2018)

*Assumes turnover costs an average of 115% of exiting employees salary from Casey.Org Turnover report.

Potential Impact: Less time scheduling. More time keeping children safe!



DCFS

Current Process

Hours Spent

2,000,000

Scheduling visits last year

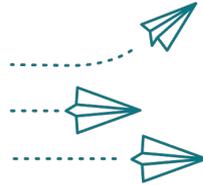
Proposed Process

Potential Hours Saved

25% = 500,000

*Reduction in
Scheduling Visits

Hours Saved / Year



*Florida's Children Home Society launched CaseAIM, which was a similar tech initiative to streamline case management and coordination. CaseAIM led to a 25% reduction in time spent on administrative tasks, while increasing facetime with families by 24%.

Source: [Children's Home Society of State of Florida](#)

Imagine the social impact when 500,000 hours are directed towards personal attention to children & families.



Employee turnover in Child Welfare costs organizations anywhere from 30%-200% of exiting employees salary.

Source: Casey.Org [Child Welfare Turnover Report](#), 2017

High caseload and administrative workload is a key contributor to worker turnover

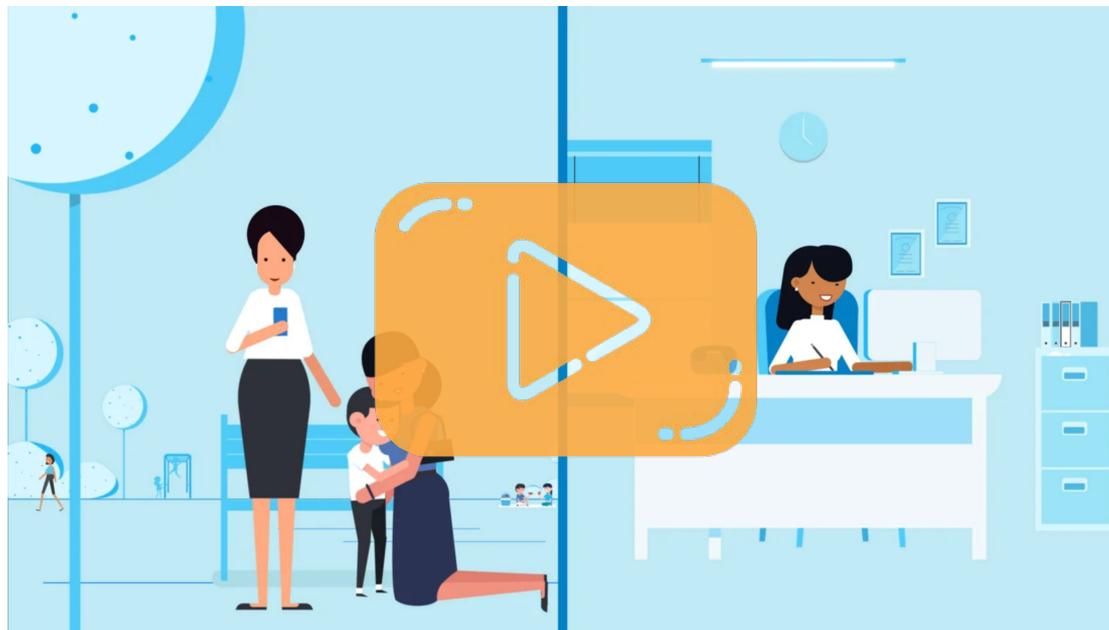
What's at stake?

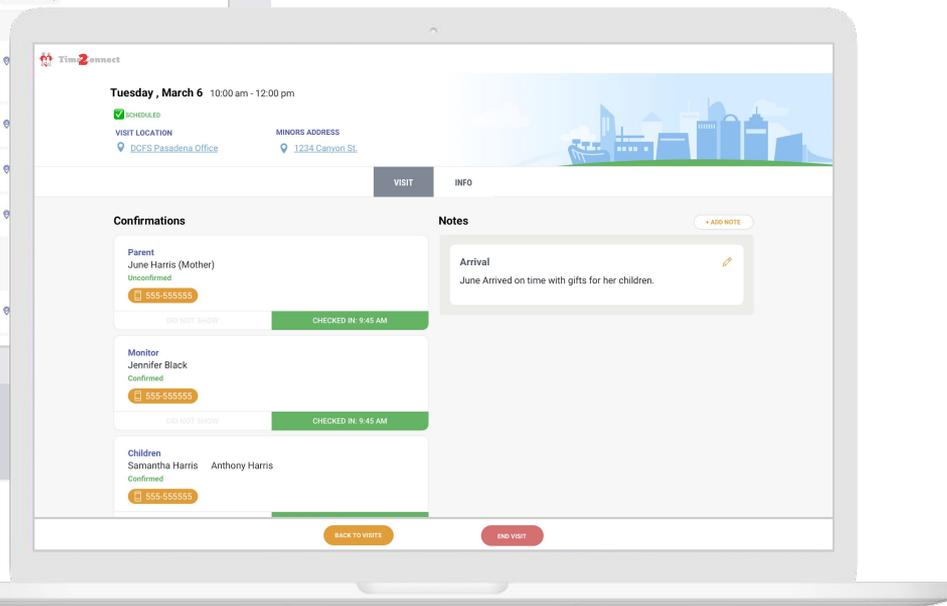
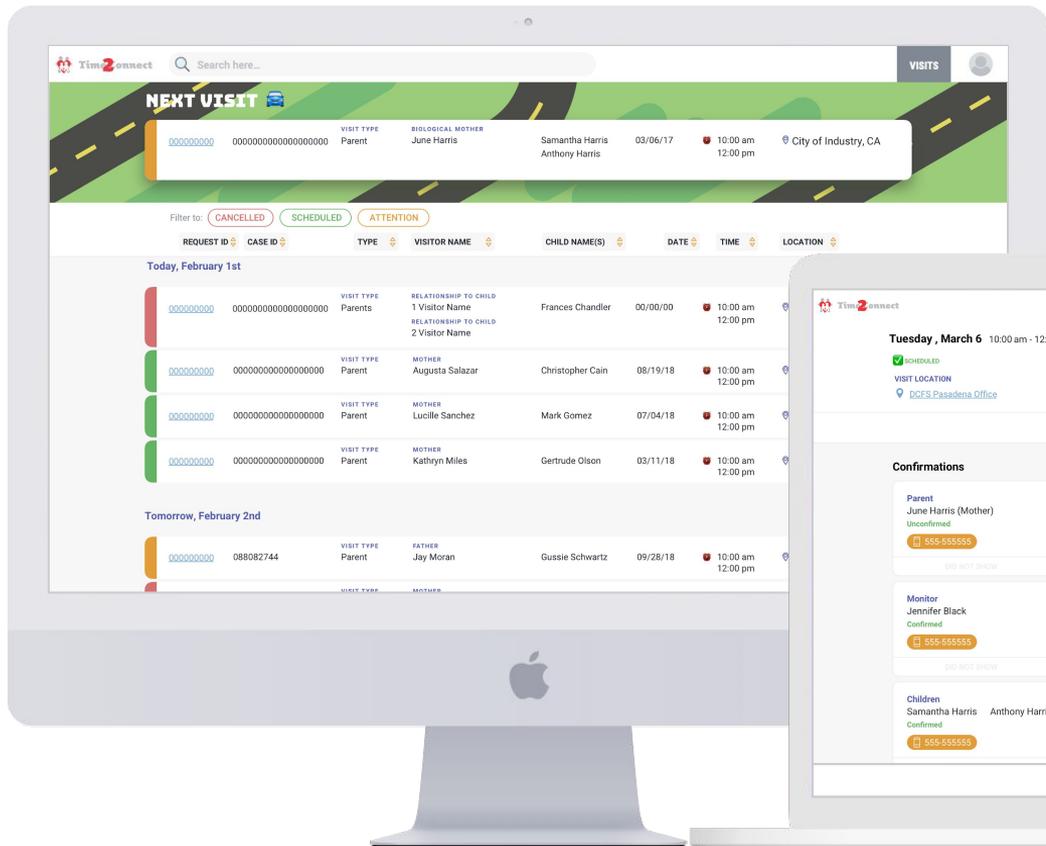
- Staff burn-out and stress lead to staff attrition that can result in decreased worker-family contact and failure to meet professional standards for investigation response and completion.

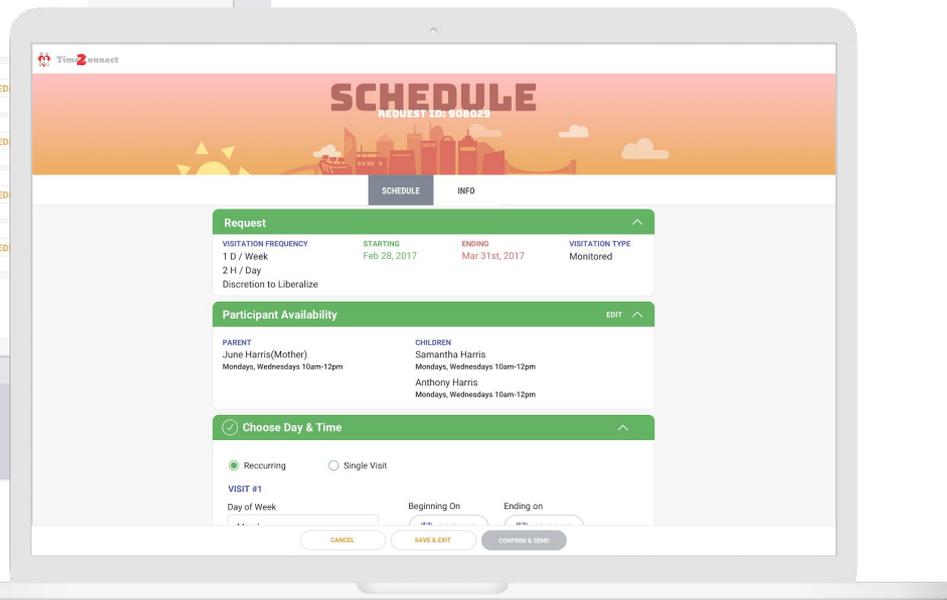
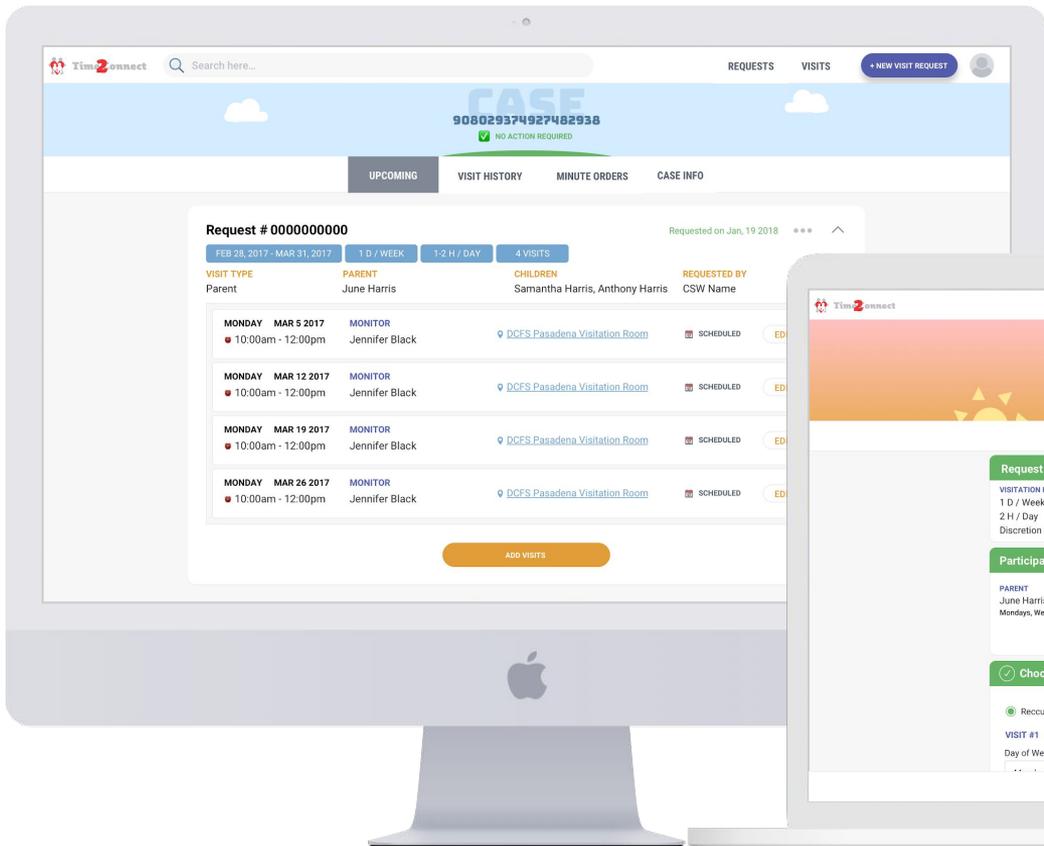
IMPLICATION: With high turnover, reunification outcomes are at risk for families & children.

THE VALUE OF STREAMLINING SCHEDULING

- **Increase Reunification:** With regular visitation between a parent and child, reunification is **10X more likely** to occur.
- **Decrease Time in Foster Care:** Children w/o visits spend 45 mos in care, vs 29 mos with irregular visits, and 19 mos if visited regularly.
- **Improve Child Outcomes:** Frequency & duration correlate with stronger attachment, better future relationships, improved health & mental health outcomes.
- **Increase Parent Participation:** Parents are 4x more likely to attend visits when the caseworker helps resolve scheduling conflicts.
- **Decrease Scheduling Hours:** T2C was designed to vastly improve internal processes so that staff hours can be reallocated to other value-add activities.
- **Increase Reporting Quality:** A place to collect data on information such as; completed visits, last minute cancellations, and no-shows, needed to advise the court on permanency solutions







User Interviews

Monitors

Requesters

Coordinators

Ecommerce | Media | Social Networking | Healthca

Goals and Research Questions

Goals

- Understand current usage and friction points of V1 for monitors, requesters, and coordinators.
- Identify wants and dream features for ideal workflow.
- Prioritize new features for product roadmap.

Research Questions

- What are the main points of friction in T2C?
- What are key features that would improve T2C adoption and workflow?
- In what ways might T2C grow to accommodate new use cases?
- What feature tweaks can be made to increase success?

Major Interview Takeaways (Monitors)

Theme	Description	Priority	Implication for Product
Low Caseload in T2C	Monitors haven't used the program too often, since few of their cases are in the system and parents/caregivers don't want to sign forms	High	Lower barrier to entry with forms and staffing resources.
Lack of Notifications	Monitors need reminders day before and/or hour before for changes to their schedule.	High	Reminder/notifications designed for monitors to use (mobile).
Integration with Outlook Calendar	Monitors look at their Outlook calendar for visit information and daily schedule. Accepted visit does not populate this schedule.	High	Integration of Outlook schedule into T2C.
Inaccurate Contact Information in T2C	Parent address and phone numbers change constantly, so information on platform can be inaccurate.	Medium	Ability to edit information in app.
Language Options	Notifications and consent forms in Spanish for parents/caregivers.	Medium	Translations in notifications and forms.

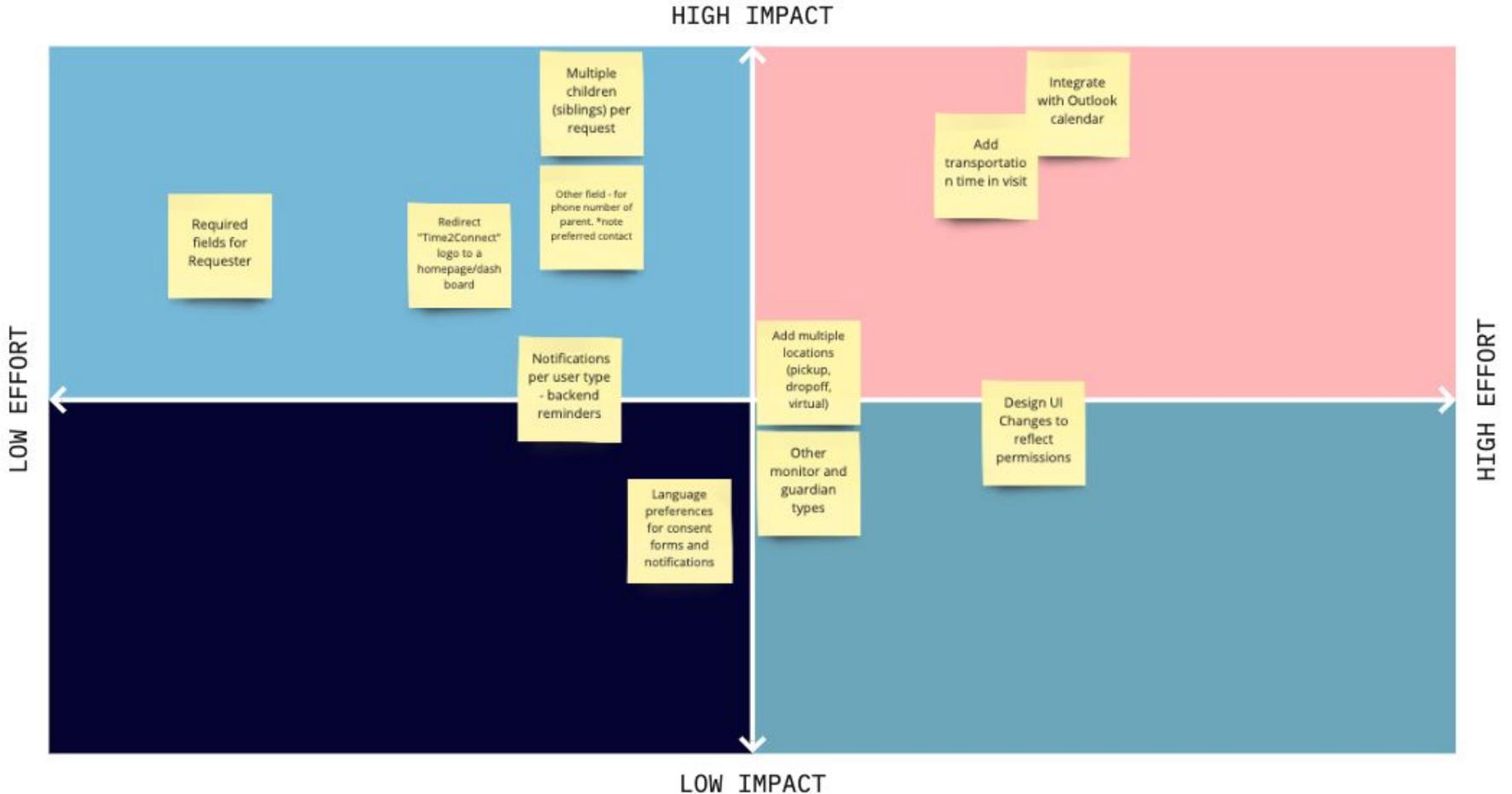
Major Interview Takeaways (Requesters)

Theme	Description	Priority	Implication for Product
Multiple Children per Request	Current functionality only allows one child per request.	High	Enable multiple children to be scheduled in one visit.
Lack of Notifications	Requesters want reminders to alert for reassessment, span of court order, new request on T2C, summary of visits, etc.	High	Reminder/notifications designed for Requester use.
Integration with Outlook Calendar	Requesters need to know availability of HSA's to coordinate visits. They also need to see calendar to schedule with driving time in mind.	Medium	Integration of Outlook schedule into T2C.
Multiple Locations in Request	Requesters need to input pick up, location of visit, and drop off.	Medium	Allow multiple locations in request.
Requester permission inadequate for specific offices	Requesters need functionality to assign HSA's, edit information, select locations. Requesters in certain offices were unsure what roles they could or could not complete.	Medium	Permission reassessment, design changes.
Required fields for visit	Require transportation & Visit Concerns.	Medium	Required fields on visit request form.
Data Export	Requesters would like to export/print visit information from T2C for internal use.	Low	Allow ability to export visit information.

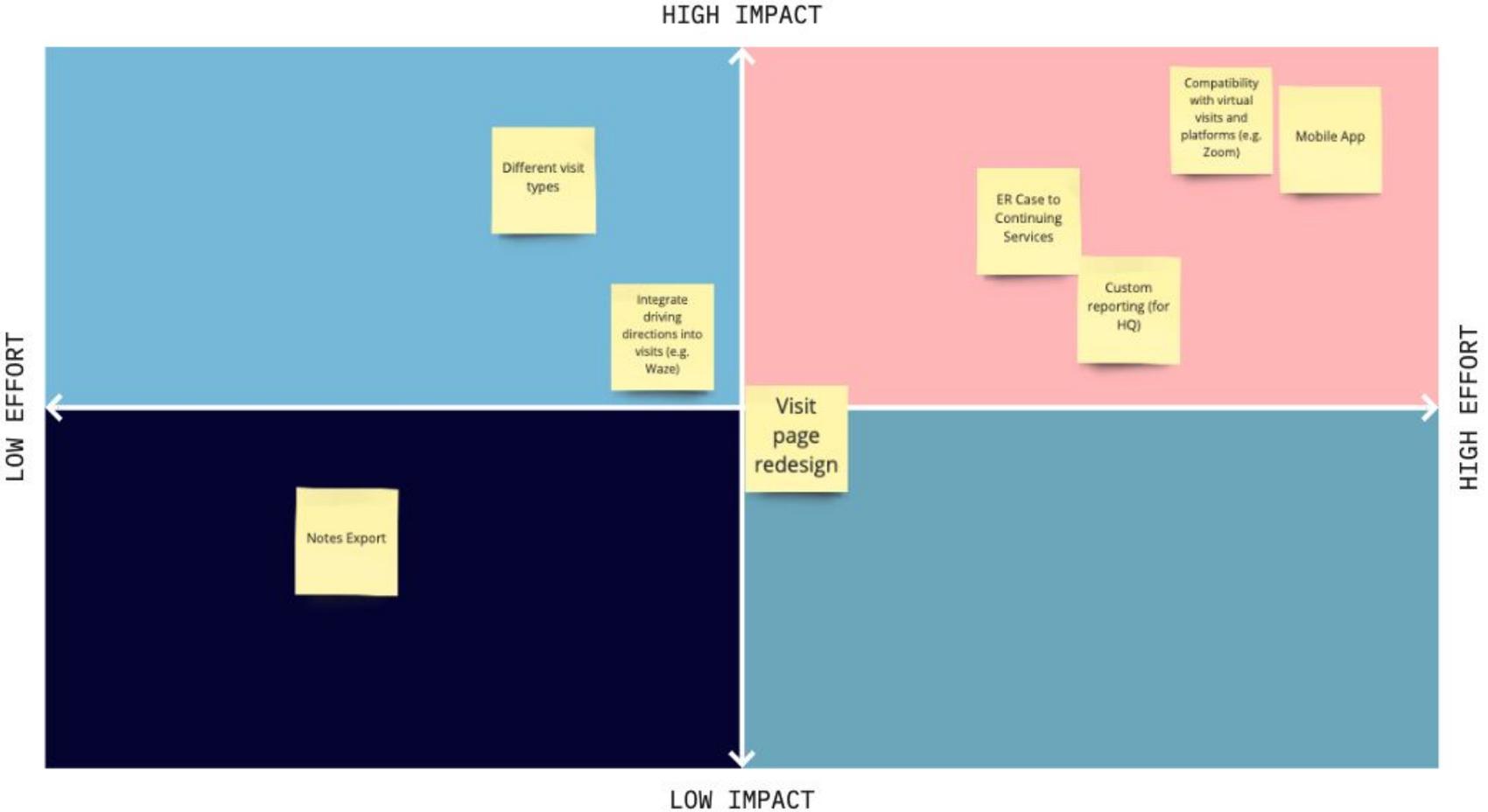
Major Interview Takeaways (Coordinators)

Theme	Description	Priority	Implication for Product
Visits for extended family and monitors other than HSA's	Currently only parents are an option in the system, but that isn't always the case. Also there are monitors that are not HSA's but family members.	High	Allow edit functionality.
Lack of Notifications	Coordinators want reminders to alert for reassessment, span of court order, new request on T2C, etc.	High	Reminder/notifications designed for coordinator use.
Integration with Outlook Calendar	Coordinators need to know availability of HSA's to coordinate visits. They also need to see calendar to schedule with driving time in mind.	Medium	Integration of Outlook schedule into T2C.
Integrate Transportation Time into Visit	Coordinators need to take into account drive time and communicate that information with HSA's.	Medium	Add drive time.
Extending visits with new court orders	Coordinators need to update date range and increase number of visits without creating a new request.	Medium	Create date range field that is editable.
T2C functional for certain visit types	Transport, court visits, and detention visits do not work with current UX/UI.	Low	Create new visit types.

Current System Updates & Improvements



Future Feature Ideas



Time2Connect: Product Roadmap

Release 1 (Phase 2)

- Add optional and estimated Transportation Time
- Integrate with Outlook
 - View Availability When Scheduling
- Add Multiple Children per Request (Siblings)
- Add Multiple Locations per Visit
- Add Notifications for Coordinators
 - New Requests in T2C
- Design Enhancements to Communicate User Permissions
- 'Other' Field for Parent Phone Number
- 'Other' Guardian Types for Assigning Transportation
- Required Fields for Requester Flow
- Redirect Time2Connect Logo to Home Page
- Option for parents and caregivers to receive notifications in their preferred language

Potential Future Release 2

- Compatibility with virtual visits and platforms (e.g. Zoom)
- Edit Functionality During Visit
- Custom Reporting for HQ
- Notification Enhancement
 - Day-of Visit
 - Court Date
 - Multiple Cancels
- Add Views/Functionality for FFA
- Export Notes

Potential Future Release 3

- Add Different Visit Types
- ER Case → Continuation Case
- New Coordinator Abilities
 - View availability and schedule visits in DCFS Office Rooms
- Visit Page Redesign
- SMS Text Parents
 - Resources
 - Tips
 - Reminders

Potential Future Release 4

- Native Mobile App

Where are we?

PAST



Paper-based, **manual processes** at each DCFS office

PHASE 1



V1.0 Design,
Development & **Pilot Launch** at **3 DCFS Offices** in February

PHASE 2



Gather **feedback & analytics** from pilot phase for **new features and feature enhancements**, roll out to **ALL 20 offices**

What will we do in phase 2?

Design & develop feature enhancements that will facilitate user adoption across all 20 Offices

Gather Feedback from Phase 1



User Interviews + Experience Sampling

Interview T2C pilot users to gather feedback on what works well, what is missing, what can be improved, etc.



Analyze Data

Review analytics and data points from pilot launch to identify issues and validate what can be improved



Story Mapping

Map and prioritize new features and feature enhancements

Design Enhancements



Prototyping

Design and create interactive prototypes



User Testing

Test prototypes on actual users to ensure what we are designing is the optimal solution

Development



Code the features

Develop the feature enhancements and code the front end designs



Quality Assurance

Continuous QA testing to ensure stability & optimal performance



Launch & Support

Roll out T2C phase 2 to all DCFS offices



QUESTIONS?



Thank you!