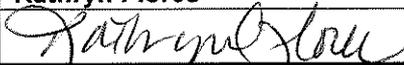
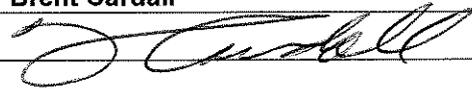


# **San Benito County System Improvement Plan**

**Children's Protective Services**  
Health & Human Services Agency  
San Benito County

Update  
January 2009

## California's Child and Family Services Review System Improvement Plan

<b>County:</b>	San Benito
<b>Responsible County Child Welfare Agency:</b>	San Benito County Health and Human Services
<b>Period of Plan:</b>	January 26, 2009 – January 26, 2010
<b>Period of Outcomes Data:</b>	Quarter ending March 30, 2008
<b>Date Submitted:</b>	
<b>County Contact Person for County System Improvement Plan</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	Maria C. Corona
<b>Title:</b>	Deputy Director
<b>Address:</b>	1111 San Felipe Road, Suite 206, Hollister, CA
<b>Phone/Email</b>	(831) 636-4190 mcorona@sanbenitohhsa.org
<b>Submitted by each agency for the children under its care</b>	
<b>Submitted by:</b>	<b>San Benito County Child Welfare Agency Director (Lead Agency)</b>
<b>Name:</b>	<b>Kathryn Flores</b>
<b>Signature:</b>	
<b>Submitted by:</b>	<b>San Benito County Chief Probation Officer</b>
<b>Name:</b>	<b>Brent Cardall</b>
<b>Signature:</b>	

RECEIVED MAR 10 2009

## System Improvement Plan Narrative

### I. Local Planning Bodies

Being a county large in area, but small in population, the stakeholders in the child welfare system are frequently involved on the same commissions and planning groups working to improve human services for San Benito citizens. The County's Self Assessment was attended by key members of the community which included: Health and Human Services, Probation, Child Abuse Prevention Council, law enforcement, legal community, Behavioral Health Services, local Education Agency, State Adoptions, Go Kids—community agency child care services, Chamberlains Children Center, Inc. Family Resource Center, Chamber of Commerce and other community leadership, and the regional training academy.

The on-going membership of the County Child Abuse Prevention Council (CAPC) of San Benito County includes participation from the above public service agencies as well as community representatives. The Council meets once every two months and organizations report on the services they are providing and provide data related to the provision of services to children and families in our community.

Probation was involved throughout the process although they have only four children in out of home placement receiving Title IV-E funding. Probation and Child Protection Services works closely together when needed and they continue to work together on various commissions and committees to best serve the children and youth of San Benito County.

These same groups are available to support the implementation of the System Improvement Plan.

**Self Assessment Team:** The following members and guests of the Self Assessment Team contributed to the analysis of current performance of the child welfare department and selection of those outcome indicators addressed in the System Improvement Plan.

Kathy Flores	Executive Director, SBCHHSA
Kay Gibson	Assistant Director, SBCHHSA, Team Chair
Brent Cardall	Chief Probation Officer, San Benito County Probation
Gifford Swanson	Executive Director, Child Abuse Prevention Counsel
Maria Corona	Deputy Director, SBCHHSA, Child Protective Services
Mari Davis	Board of Directors, Chamberlains Group Home, San Benito County Chamber of Commerce
Kendra Bobsin	Go Kids, Inc.

Irma Valencia	Deputy County Counsel
Carlos Reynoso	Sergeant, Hollister Police Department
Jeff Caires	Detective, Hollister Police Department
Don Pershall	Detective, Hollister Police Department
Roxie Kuluk	Supervisor, SBCHHSA, Child Protective Services
Jim Johnson	Clinical Supervisor, Behavioral Health Department
Juan Perez	Supervisor, SBCHHSA, Child Protective Services
Ana Cabrera	FRC Supervisor, SBCHHSA, Child Protective Services
Leticia Martinez	Social Worker, IHSS, SBCHHSA
Kim Dryden	Director of Categorical Programs, SBC Office of Education
Diana de Leon	CDSS, State Adoptions
Arnold Cortez	CDSS, State Adoptions
Jessica French	San Benito County Chamber of Commerce
Laura Schipper	Employment Training Services Counselor, Community Services and Workforce, 1-Stop
Jennifer Cannell	Training Coordinator, Bay Area Academy
Stephanie Jackson	Training Assistant, Bay Area Academy

**Social Workers**

Jennifer Cress	Jonathan Hudson	Rosalie Betancourt
Alice De Noris	Jim Plourd	Mary Macias
Jennifer Pimental	Josie Moreno	Tracey Belton
Lucy Perez		Oscar Ramirez

**II. Findings that Support Qualitative Change**

Given the small nature of the County and the recent stress placed on the system by staff turnover and staff professional development efforts it was difficult to engage feedback from parents and children who receive Child Welfare Services in this assessment. Parents and children were invited; however, they were not able to attend or to be reached at this time. There is a desire on the part of the Departments to re-engage at this level once staffing and training efforts have leveled out.

### III. Attach the Summary Assessment of the County Self-Assessment Report

#### Summary Assessment

#### Discussion of System Strengths and Areas Needing Improvements

San Benito County Health and Human Services Agency and Juvenile Probation have a dedicated staff that is committed to building the capacity of San Benito County's children and families with the resources and relationships available to them.

The County performs well in the following outcome areas and systemic factors:

- No Maltreatment in Foster Care
- Siblings placed together
- Foster care placement in least restrictive settings
- Children transitioning to self-sufficient adulthood
- Case review systemic factor – specifically court structure and relationship and timely notification of hearings are both strengths.
- Service array (while services are not plentiful, the Agency does a good job of maximizing those services available)
- Agency collaborations

Through the Self-Assessment the County has identified the following four outcome areas for inclusion in its System Improvement Plan in addition to including the Systemic Factors of Recruitment and Retention and Staff Training.

1. **Outcome Indicator 1B, recurrence of maltreatment within 12 months.** This was an outcome identified in the last System Improvement Plan and the County will continue to work to improve in this area.
2. **Process indicator 2B, percent of child/abuse/neglect referrals with a timely response and process indicator 2C, timely social worker visits with the child.** This is a main focus area for the County now that staffing levels have risen. Goals and strategies for improvement are included in the System Improvement Plan.
3. **Process composite indicators C1, C2, C3 and C4: family reunification and re-entry into foster care.** These measures affect the long-term capacity building of families so that family reunification is achieved and families develop the skills and abilities to parent their children and keep them safe long-term. It was decided at this juncture Juvenile Probation will focus on this improvement outcome in the System Improvement Plan.

**4. Process composite placement stability indicators C4.1, C4.2 and C4.3.**

This is a measure that overall the County will continue to focus on by developing relationships with local foster care providers and continuing with the excellent practices by social workers of carefully matching children with foster families. As a targeted area for improvement, Juvenile Probation will focus on this outcome in the System Improvement Plan.

**5. Overall Systemic Factor: recruitment and retention.** This systemic factor was discussed by the Self-Assessment team early on in the process and suggestions for improvement are included for Child Protective Services in the County's System Improvement Plan.

**6. Systemic Factor: staff training.** It is a State regulation that supervisors of child protection services possess a master's degree. Given the County's challenges with recruitment and retention and the County's commitment to the cultivation of experienced staff, the County is supporting current supervisors and manager in obtaining their Master's Degree. A plan for obtaining the required professional designation for staff is included as an improvement goal in the System Improvement Plan.

IV.

San Benito County has spent the CWSOIP allocation in Structured Decision Making technical assistance, and training for SDM assessment tools used to assess safety, well-being, and response time for referrals that are being screened. In addition, the funding allowed for other assessment tools that assist with permanency issues that include safety and risk assessments as a case goes through the court process. Allocation was also used for Safe Measures to provide case management tools that would help social workers visualize and plan their schedule to meet the required face to face contacts, placement re-assessments and other case management activities. In addition, Social Worker Core and CWS/CMS Training was provided with these funds to ensure Social Workers are prepared to assess, engage and provide services to the families and children in the least restrictive environment. Funds were expended for staff time preparing and implementing the Systems Improvement Plan to assess and identify attainable goals and objectives given San Benito County's size and limited resources.

The Probation Department's CWSOIP allocation expenditures amount submitted was \$19,843. This amount was derived from the time the juvenile officers spent servicing our "at-risk" and "imminent risk" minors that possibly would end up in placement and foster care. Another focus was on how to reduce the minor's recidivism rate at our juvenile hall.

## Update-January 2009

San Benito County continues to strive to improve in all areas, however, although positions were approved by the Board as stipulated in this update, due to budgetary issues the positions have not been filled. The caseload demands contribute to data entry falling behind given that limited resources in our county. Furthermore, the lack of local foster homes in our county contributes to high number of children being placed out of the county thus then creating long travel times for social workers, time that could be spent doing case management and/or data entry in to CWS/CMS. Nonetheless, our county has been successful in reducing the recurrence of maltreatment, and has successfully increased our percentages for timely social worker visits and required monthly visits.

San Benito County plans to utilize the CWSOIP monies to implement Family Conferencing trainings and program development in an effort to help increase reunification. It furthermore plans to utilize the funding to provide training for data interpretation for supervisors and managers to improve CWS outcomes. In addition, funding will be used to continue supporting the Safe Measures program, which is instrumental in assisting social workers, supervisors and program managers with case management, and tracking tools for purposes of social worker-family contacts.

The Probation Department's CWSOIP allocation for FY2008-2009 is being derived from providing family reunification services to families with kids in placement. These services include transportation and related costs for visits to the placement by the family or visits home by the minor. Also, it provides parenting classes and trainings in preparation for the reunification of our "at risk" youth. Other costs are being derived from staff time and materials spent for special programs in our juvenile hall, such as the Aggression Replacement Training (ART) for our "at risk" and "imminent risk" youth. Another source of expenditure from this allocation will be from a professional service provider, who will be training staff at both the Probation Department and Juvenile Hall on the Health Realization Core Principles in the next couple of months. The staff will in turn apply this training in programs and services to this targeted group of minors.

## Component A: Safety

### **Safety Outcome S1.1: No Recurrence of Maltreatment**

**County's Current Performance:** For the current period January 1, 2008 to March 31, 2008 (the available data from UCB used for the Self-Assessment process, which allows for 12 month follow-up) 84% of children did not experience recurrence of maltreatment within the following 6 month period. This is a decrease from the baseline period July 1, 2002 to June 30, 2003 where the rate of no recurrence was 92.7%. The Federal Standard for this measure is 94.6%.

**Improvement Goal:** Increase the rate of no recurrence of maltreatment by 12.6% for the January 1, 2009 through December 31, 2009 (the latest period which will allow for July 2010 reporting).

Update-January 2009

San Benito County has increased the rate of no recurrence of maltreatment by 2%. The county expects this trend to continue as we continue to implement strategies that will reflect these changes.

**Strategy 1. 1** Explore and develop increased capacity for family assessment, review current Child Protective Services business processes, and explore family engagement strategies and family resources. Educate reporters and service providers and systematically plan for safety and prevention of recurrence of maltreatment.

Update-January 2009

This strategy has been implemented as San Benito County has provided training that included assessing the use of Structured Decision Making that included the safety, risk and needs assessments. SDM Needs Assessment also implemented to identify family needs for services. Furthermore, the County has collaborated with the Family Resource Center and other community agencies to ensure the family's identified needs are linked to appropriate services. Furthermore, mandated reporter trainings and outreach has been conducted in an effort to educate reporters/service providers about safety and prevention of recurrence of maltreatment.

**Strategy Rationale<sup>1</sup>**

By exploring evidenced based and promising practices and implementing strategies that build on existing resources; staff will have better information for decision making, families will have more input and buy-in to make positive, lasting change and families will have access to more supportive services. This will enhance family capacity and will decrease incidences of recurrence of maltreatment.

---

<sup>1</sup> Describe how the strategies will build on progress and improve this outcome or systemic factor

<b>No Recurrence of Maltreatment Milestone</b>	<p><b>1.1.1</b> Reassess the use of SDM by meeting and conferring with staff to determine if SDM is being used correctly, during the referral/case process and ensure all staff has an understanding of how it is supposed to be used to then develop a plan for the full utilization of the SDM assessment tools when using the SDM tool at screening, emergency response and continuing cases to make full family assessments of strengths, protective capacity and risk and safety concerns. This will support consistent, effective decision making and service delivery.</p>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<p>January 2008 – June 2010</p> <p>Completed by October 21, 2008 and ongoing</p>	<b>Assigned to</b>	<p>Child Protective Services Deputy Director</p> <p>Child Protective Services Supervisors</p>
	<p><b>1.1.2</b> Map current screening workflow process, including staffing, clearances, SDM, and reviewing and recording CWS history in CWS/CMS. Map current business processes for approving referrals and getting them to social workers. Develop and implement a plan to ensure that processes are streamlined, timely and consistent.</p>		<p>January 2008 – June 2010</p> <p>Completed 03/5/2008 and ongoing</p>		<p>Child Protective Services Deputy Director</p>
	<p><b>1.1.3</b> Train screening and ER staff (including back-up staff) on the requirements for recording and reviewing child welfare history for all referrals. Work with screening staff to help educate community callers on Child Protection risk and safety considerations and protective factors that can help reduce recurrence of maltreatment in the family, for which concerns are present.</p>		<p>July 2008 – December 2008</p> <p>Completed 8/5/2008 and ongoing</p>		<p>Child Protective Services Deputy Director</p> <p>Senior Staff Services Analyst</p> <p>Child Protective Services Supervisors</p>
	<p><b>1.1.4</b> Plan for the addition of a child welfare social worker position to support time for in-</p>		<p>January 2008 – June 2009</p>		<p>Health &amp; Human Services Agency Executive Director</p>

	depth family assessments, data entry and effective family engagement. This will be done by approaching San Benito County Board of Supervisors and providing an insight of daily emergency response social work situations and child welfare data. With additional staff, recurrence of maltreatment could be reduced as more time could be spent with family with case planning and preventative services		Completed June 24, 2008-Board approved position, however, due to budget constraints, we have not been able to hire additional staff		
	<b>1.1.5</b> Provide training to all staff to ensure full implementation of SDM. Training will be either of the following: Bay Area Academy, Department of Social Services or an SDM Technical Assistant Staff.		January 2008 – July 2008 and on-going Completed October 21, 2008 ongoing - Supervisors SDM Training scheduled for January 8, 2009		Child Protective Services Deputy Director  Senior Staff Services Analyst
	<b>1.1.6</b> Provide training and support for Safe Measures as a tool for Deputy Directors, Supervisors and Social Workers to effectively manage daily practice and service delivery.		January 2008 and on-going  Completed May 6, 2008 for Deputy Director Completed May 2008 for Supervisors and Social Workers Training is on-going		Child Protective Services Deputy Director  Senior Staff Services Analyst  Bay Area Academy  Children's Research Center
<p><b>Strategy 1. 2</b> Explore family meeting models and current resources available through collaborating with other agencies and community based organizations. Evaluate the feasibility of implementing a formal meeting strategy for families who experience child abuse and neglect or are at risk of experiencing child abuse and neglect.</p> <p>Update – January 2009 San Benito County is still looking at exploring and implementing family meeting model that is inclusive of the family members. During this period a few family meetings were held that included other agencies such as Behavioral Health.</p>			<p><b>Strategy Rationale</b> By exploring evidenced based and promising practices, implementing strategies and building on existing resources; staff will have better information for decision making, families will have more input and buy-in to make positive, lasting change and families will have access to more supportive services so that family capacity increases and incidences of recurrence of maltreatment decrease.</p>		

<b>No Recurrence of Maltreatment Milestone</b>		<b>Timeframe</b>		<b>Assigned to</b>	
	<p><b>1.2.1</b> Provide initial training to social workers and staff on strength based, solution focused, and family centered best practices to assist families with case planning activities that could reduce recurrence of maltreatment in the home. Training to be provided by Bay Area Academy or other entity.</p>		<p>January 2008</p> <p>Completed Family Conferencing training on January 5, 2008; this strategy is also on-going</p>		<p>Child Protective Services Deputy Director</p> <p>Senior Staff Services Analyst</p>
	<p><b>1.2.2</b> Develop a family meeting protocol and practice convening family meetings with family support systems, appropriate supportive agencies and community based organizations when a family has experienced child abuse and/or neglect or is at risk of experiencing child abuse and neglect.</p>		<p>January 2008 and on-going</p> <p>Still working on developing meeting protocol and practice</p>		<p>Child Protective Services Deputy Director</p> <p>Child Protective Services Supervisors</p>
<p><b>Strategy 1. 3</b> Continue to develop additional community resources to assist families in making positive behavior changes to support early intervention. Update 2009:</p> <p>San Benito County has started using FRC Great Beginnings Program for all referral evaluated out that had children under age 5); we have also participated in community and outreach events to promote safety, health and well-being of children in our community.</p>			<p><b>Strategy Rationale</b> As a small County it is imperative that all agencies and community based organizations work together to create a network of prevention, intervention and after care so that families have effective services that support meaningful and lasting change which builds the long-term capacity of the family and prevents recurrence of maltreatment.</p>		

<b>Milestone</b>	<p><b>1.3.1</b> Include community agency presentations in the monthly staff meetings for San Benito County Child Welfare Social Workers in an effort to provide education about other community agencies and to promote relationships so when families are referred for services all agencies/service providers work together with social workers to reduce recurrence of maltreatment in the home..</p>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<p>September 2007 – On Going</p> <p>Completed – April 2007; we have been including presentations in monthly staff meetings; this is on-going</p>	<b>Assigned to</b>	<p>Child Protective Services Deputy Director</p> <p>Child Protective Services Supervisors</p>
	<p><b>1.3.2</b> Work with Probation and develop training for parenting facilitators to develop parenting classes for parents specifically tailored to the needs of parents that often enter child welfare systems so that parents are able to attend, and develop knowledge that will enhance their parenting abilities to prevent recurrence of maltreatment. Additional trained staff will also increase the availability of this type of service for parents and would alleviate the need to have to wait for long periods of time for the classes to be offered thus reducing the risk of recurrence of maltreatment. .</p>		<p>January 2008 – June 2008</p> <p>This is an area that has been explored, however, due to staffing and funding issues limited progress has been made</p>		<p>Child Protective Services Deputy Director</p> <p>Chief Probation Officer</p>
	<p><b>1.3.3</b> Partner and communicate with Behavioral Health to promote family centered therapy being offered to families in addition to individual therapy.</p>		<p>January 2008 – on-going</p> <p>Still in progress</p>		<p>Child Protective Services Deputy Director</p> <p>Child Protective Services Supervisors</p>
	<p><b>1.3.4</b> Explore ways through meetings, conference calls or e-mails to partner with community based agencies and County Agencies such as Community Workforce Development, First Five, Family Resource Center and others to learn about and apply for grants that would bring needed resources to the county such as: substance abuse prevention and treatment, child care, life skills training, in-home parenting and</p>		<p>February 2008 – on-going</p> <p>Completed February 2008; FRC applied and received a grant through First Five, which also provides services to Child Welfare Clients; this strategy is also ongoing</p>		<p>Health &amp; Human Services Agency Assistant Director</p>

skill building training.		
<p><b>1.3.5</b> Explore ways through meetings, conference calls, or e-mail so that the Family Resource Center (FRC) can develop and provide family engagement and resources for all families who are at risk of child abuse and neglect. Consider the feasibility of referring families to the FRC for families to obtain services for referrals that are evaluated out and for families where the referral is closed but there remains a need for services</p>	<p>May 2008 – January 2009 Completed May 1, 2008</p>	<p>Health &amp; Human Services Agency Executive Director  Family Resource Center Supervisor</p>
<p><b>Discuss changes in identified systemic factors needed to further support the improvement goals.</b> San Benito County needs additional funding for resources and services to assist children and families.</p>		
<p><b>Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.</b> Train staff and community partners in engagement and teaming strategies and any new procedures developed to provide families with collaborative services.</p>		
<p><b>Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.</b> Staff from other Departments, Agencies and Community Partners to assist in the development and implementation of new programs and routines of providing preventative and intervention to families and children at risk of abuse and neglect. Partner with community partners to review and apply for grants.</p>		
<p><b>Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.</b> None Needed.</p>		

**Component B & C: Safety**

<p><b>Outcome: 2B</b> Percent of Child Abuse/Neglect Referrals with a Timely Response</p>
<p><b>Improvement Goal 1.0</b> Achieve and maintain compliance at 90% or above for timely response. Update 2009: San Benito county has achieved an 89.4% timely response for period of January 01, 2008 to March 31, 2008.</p>

<p><b>Strategy 1. 1</b> Review staffing strategies, work-flow procedures, use of data and training plans to ensure screening and emergency response units are fully functional at all times. Update January 2009: Use of Safe Measures fully implemented; training in Safe Measures helped develop plans which include weekly data reports that assist the development of strategies to ensure screening and emergency response units are fully functional</p>		<p><b>Strategy Rationale<sup>2</sup></b> Adequately staffed screening and emergency response units with strategic procedures will run smoothly to ensure children receive a timely response.</p>			
<b>Timely Response &amp; Timely Visits Milestone</b>	<p><b>1.1.1</b> Reassess the use of SDM by meeting and conferring with staff to determine if SDM is being used correctly during the referral/case process and ensure all staff has an understanding of how it is supposed to be used so that we can then develop a plan for full utilization of the SDM assessment tools. The tools will then be used in used in screening, emergency response and in making full family assessments of strengths, protective capacity and risk and safety concerns to support effective decision making and service delivery. Follow SDM protocol when assessing out referrals.</p>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<p>January 2008 – June 2008  Completed October 2008 and ongoing</p>	<b>Assigned to</b>	<p>Child Protective Services Deputy Director  Child Protective Services Supervisors</p>
	<p><b>1.1.2</b> Develop a screening workflow process, including staffing coverage, SDM, and reviewing and recording CWS history in CWS/CMS. Map current business processes for approving referrals and getting them to social workers. Develop and implement a plan to make sure that processes are streamlined, timely and consistent.</p>		<p>January 2008 – June 2008  Completed 8/5/2008 and ongoing; referral calendar updated monthly that included back-up social worker; procedure developed to ensure referrals are assigned to social workers in a timely manner</p>		<p>Child Protective Services Deputy Director  Child Protective Services Supervisors  Child Protective Services Social Workers and support staff</p>
	<p><b>1.1.3</b> Train screening and ER staff (including back-up staff) on the requirements for recording and reviewing child welfare history for all referrals so that SW can have information and</p>		<p>July 2008 – December 2008  Completed and ongoing; part of SDM referral screening process</p>		<p>Child Protective Services Deputy Director  Senior Staff Services Analyst</p>

<sup>2</sup> Describe how the strategies will build on progress and improve this outcome or systemic factor

	does not spend time researching the information that could potentially impact a timely response and contact with family.		includes previous child welfare history		Child Protective Services Supervisors
	<b>1.1.4</b> Plan to work with Child Protective Services Deputy Director to gather and provide information/data to the San Benito County Board of Supervisors for the addition of a child welfare social worker position to support time data entry in CWS/CMS.		January 2008 – June 2009  Completed June 5, 2008 (presented an example of a typical day in social services-ER unit)		Health & Human Services Agency Executive Director
	<b>1.1.5</b> Continue to provide training and support for Safe Measures as a tool for Deputy Directors, Supervisors and Social Workers to effectively manage the daily practice, timely data input and service delivery.		January 2008 and on-going  Completed May and October 2008 and on-going		Child Protective Services Deputy Director  Senior Staff Services Analyst  Bay Area Academy  Children's Research Center
<b>Strategy 1. 2</b> Provide education to mandated reporters in the community so they are informed of their reporting responsibilities and reports are not made on families that do not meet the criteria for child welfare intervention. January 2009: Mandated Reporter trainings have been made throughout the community			<b>Strategy Rationale</b> If the mandated reporter population of the County is more informed regarding child protection practices they will be less likely to call in referrals that take up social workers time but do not meet the criteria for a child abuse and neglect investigation. The whole community will be better informed and better able to support children and families.		
<b>Milestone</b>	<b>1.2.1</b> Continue to work via meetings, conference calls, and/or e-mail with teachers and other non-profits during orientations and trainings to explain Child Protective Services decision making criteria and standards through Mandated Reporter Trainings.	<b>Timeframe</b>	January 2008- on going  Completed and ongoing (Oxacan Cultural Project, Child Care Providers, some schools)	<b>Assigned to</b>	Child Protective Services Deputy Director  Other staff as needed
	<b>1.2.2</b> Work with screening unit by meeting and discussing strategies to help educate community callers on Child Protection risk and safety considerations and protective factors to help		January 2008 – June 2008  Completed May 2008 and on-going		Child Protective Services Supervisors

determine type of response from Immediate response to 10-day.				
<p><b>Discuss changes in identified systemic factors needed to further support the improvement goals.</b>          Need Board of Supervisors Approval for an additional social work position.          Need on-going assistance from Human Resources to continue to recruit for bilingual staff.          Need alternate training modalities that minimize out-of-office time and travel.</p>				
<p><b>Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.</b>          Provide on-going training in Safe Measures.          Provide training to screening staff.</p>				
<p><b>Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.</b> Schools to be invited to orientation</p> <p>None Needed</p>				
<p><b>Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.</b></p> <p>None Needed</p>				

<p><b>Outcome 2C</b>          Timely Social Worker Visits with Children</p>	
<p><b>Improvement Goal 1.0</b>          Achieve and maintain compliance at 90% or above for timely social worker visits.</p>	
<p><b>Strategy 1. 1</b>          Work with all social workers and staff on retraining them to develop the skills to input visits timely into the computer as the main source of recording child and family visits.          Update January 2009:          Social workers were provided access to, and trained in how to use Safe Measures. This helped them strategize and plan for timely social worker visit input into the CMS/CWS system. Policy and</p>	<p><b>Strategy Rationale<sup>3</sup></b>          Social workers have a traditional practice of recording visits on notebooks. If social workers are given the resources and training to use the computer as their main source for recording timely visits and develop an effective practice of doing this, visits will get recorded in the computer timely.</p>

<sup>3</sup> Describe how the strategies will build on progress and improve this outcome or systemic factor

Procedure for timely data entry was reviewed and enforced.

Social Work Supervisors obtain weekly Safe Measures reports, which indicate which contacts have not been entered into CMS/CWS. Supervisors have established bi-weekly reviews with line staff to ensure social worker contact compliance and input into CMS/CWS. Staff is required to utilize Safe Measures as a case management tool. Additionally, a process was established to have clerical and legal support staff assists with data entry as necessary to assist social workers with timely data input into CMS/CWS.

Lastly, per Safe Measures, San Benito County has made significant improvement with timely social worker visits and data entry.

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>1.1.1</b> Using Safe Measures, supervisors work with social workers during regular one-on-one supervision and/or during unit meetings to develop effective time management data input strategies for entering contacts into the computer timely. Supervisors will follow-up to ensure that work is completed. Supervisors will require the use of Safe Measures amongst staff for purposes of monitoring data entry. Supervisors will run reports through Safe Measures to evaluate data related to timely response and social worker visits. Reports will be discussed with line staff to measure effectiveness of planning to improve performance.	<b>Timeframe</b>	January 2008- on going Completed May and October 2008 and on-going	<b>Assigned to</b>	Child Protective Services Supervisors
	<b>1.1.2</b> Work on developing a policy and implementation of having clerical assistants, legal clerk and vocational assistants assist the social workers with data input to ensure that contacts are entered into the CWS/CMS computer		January 2008 – December 2008 Completed February 2008		Child Protective Services Deputy Director  Child Protective Services Supervisors

	system.			
	<b>1.1.3</b> Continue to recruit via job announcements for Spanish Speaking/Bilingual social workers so that the social workers that do speak Spanish are not overloaded with referrals thus impacting their ability to enter data entry. Job Announcements would be posted on line through Merit Systems and on County Job Announcement bulletin board.		January 2008 and on-going  On-going (due to no vacancies and inability to hire new staff, this milestone is not yet achieved)	Health & Human Services Agency Executive Director  Health & Human Services Agency Assistant Director  Child Protective Services Deputy Director
<b>Milestone</b>	<b>1.1.4</b> Map current Emergency Response and Court workflow process, to ensure that social workers have time for data input of contacts. Develop and implement a plan for social work processes that allow for time to input contacts in addition to Court and other work that social workers must complete	<b>Timeframe</b>	March 2008 – October 2008  Completed March 2008 and on-going	<b>Assigned to</b>
<b>Strategy 1. 2</b> Use Policy development and data review to resolve barriers to increasing compliance with timely social worker visits.  Update January 2009: San Benito County has incorporated trainings, discussions and plans into Staff Meetings to get Social Worker buy-in and ideas to help work on backlog as well as to stay current with timely social worker visits and data input. Supervisors have met with line staff to ensure a plan is in place that will help them remain current in all social worker contacts and data input. The use of Safe Measures is required for all social workers to ensure compliance.			<b>Strategy Rationale <sup>1</sup></b> Clear, consistent, policy expectations directives that support social worker accountability	

Milestone		Timeframe		Assigned to	
	<p><b>1.2.1</b></p> <p>Continue to update social worker policy and procedures for screening and assigning referrals, interviewing children, transferring cases, relative and NREFM placements, teaming protocols, etc by revising these policy and procedures with Social Work Supervisors and key staff at the supervisor's bi-weekly meeting. Implement expectations and directions consistently among supervisors and line staff.</p>		<p>September 2007 and on-going Completed and on-going</p>		<p>Child Protective Services Deputy Director</p> <p>Child Protective Services Supervisors</p>
	<p><b>1.2.2</b></p> <p>Consistently use Safe Measures and provide ongoing training to staff and supervisors to enhance use of Safe Measures by staff as a tool to assess on-going compliance</p>		<p>January 2008 – December 2008 Completed May and October 2008 and on-going</p>		<p>Child Protective Services Deputy Director Child Protective Services Supervisors</p>
<p><b>Notes:</b></p>					

<p><b>Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal.</b>          Need on-going assistance from Human Resources to continue recruit for bilingual staff          Need Board of Supervisors Approval for an additional social work position, and funding</p>
<p><b>Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.</b>          Provide on-going training in Safe Measures          Provide training to screening staff</p>
<p><b>Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.</b>          none needed</p>
<p><b>Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.</b>          none needed</p>

<sup>1</sup> Describe how the strategies will build on progress and improve this outcome or systemic factor

<p><b>Systemic Factor:</b>          Recruitment and Retention</p>	
<p><b>County's Current Performance:</b>          San Benito County faces on-going human resource challenges due to surrounding counties being more urban and offering more attractive salaries and community resources. The County has been plagued by on-going staffing shortages and staff turnover which has negatively impacted the County's ability to meet all improvement goals. At the current time, the County has been able to recently hire supervisors, social workers and there is a new Child Protective Services Deputy Director. Practice has been to send new hires to training located out of county which has continued to strain the system.</p>	
<p><b>Improvement Goal 1.0</b>          Develop a highly trained fully staffed child protective services program that focuses on hiring bilingual staff and retaining staff that get hired.          Update 2009: San Benito County, for the first time, has five MSW level staff, and one LCSW. Several staff have completed CORE and others are still going through the training.</p>	
<p><b>Strategy 1. 1</b> Develop a competitive recruitment and benefits program that supports attaining and maintaining qualified social workers.          Update 2009:          Due to budgetary issues, no recruitment plans have been developed.</p>	<p><b>Strategy Rationale<sup>4</sup></b> Developing a progressive recruitment and retention program will gain highly qualified staff that remain in their jobs and develop excellent practices and skills to serve children and families. With a fully staffed Department social workers have the time and skills to fully engage with families and complete all of the necessary social</p>

<sup>4</sup> Describe how the strategies will build on progress and improve this outcome or systemic factor

<p>however, San Benito County has collaborated with Behavioral Health to offer supervision for MSW's who wish to pursue LCSW licensure. Additionally, collaboration with Santa Clara County has allowed for two spots in the Forensics Training Course. San Benito County Agency is also part of the planning team to bring MSW program to the CSUMB campus, which will increase opportunity for social workers to pursue MSW degree.</p>		<p>work tasks so that improvement goals can be met.</p>			
<b>Recruitment &amp; Retention Milestone</b>	<p><b>1.1.1</b> If funding allows, work with County Human Resources by meeting and providing information regarding the benefits of developing an incentive program for workers possessing Master's and other appropriate licensure such as LCSW.</p>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<p>September 2007 – June 2009</p> <p>Due to budgetary issues, not completed</p>	<b>Assigned to</b>	<p>Health &amp; Human Services Agency Executive Director</p>
	<p><b>1.1.2</b> Explore with surrounding Universities to offer Master of Social Work programs that could help current working social worker professional pursue Master Level educational goals while also meeting the County's needs.</p>		<p>September 2007 – on-going</p> <p>On-going Started attending meetings on March 2008</p>		<p>Health &amp; Human Services Agency Executive Director</p> <p>Health &amp; Human Services Agency Assistant Director</p> <p>Child Protective Services Deputy Director</p>
	<p><b>1.1.3</b> Explore the possibility of hiring interns from local universities to assist with needed support for social workers. This will be done by contacting University Internship Coordinators to determine what is needed for interns to work in the Child Welfare Office.</p>	<p>June 2008 – July 2009</p> <p>Still working on this milestone</p>	<p>Health &amp; Human Services Agency Executive Director</p> <p>Health &amp; Human Services Agency Assistant Director</p> <p>Child Protective Services Deputy Director</p>		
	<p><b>1.1.4</b> Work with the 20 Small Counties Committee of Child Welfare Directors and Training Academies through the CWDA meetings to develop more available training on-site for small counties. It over burdens small counties when staff has to travel long distances to attend training.</p>	<p>June 2008 – July 2009</p> <p>Completed-Director has attended these meetings since 01/2005</p>	<p>Health &amp; Human Services Agency Executive Director</p>		
<p><b>Strategy 1. 2</b> Support staff with needed resources, supplies, training,</p>		<p><b>Strategy Rationale</b> When social workers feel supported and have the</p>			

<p>support and supervision. Update: 2009 Social work supervisors and Staff Analyst ensure CMS/CWS is set up and all supplies are in place to ensure new staff is ready to commence their job; in addition, the Agency provides a red binder will all policies and procedures to new staff on their first day of work. Also, immediate enrollment in CORE training is planned.</p>		<p>needed resources to be competent they have more piece of mind, experience higher levels of job satisfaction and are more likely to stay in their positions.</p>			
<b>Recruitment &amp; Retention Milestone</b>	<p><b>1.2.1.</b> Provide new staff with needed supplies and information that includes Policies and Procedures, Community Resources, maps, computer, office supplies and CWS/CMS set-up on their first day of work.</p>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<p>December 2007 – on-going  Completed and on-going</p>	<b>Assigned to</b>	<p>Child Protective Services Deputy Director  Child Protective Services Supervisors  Senior Staff Services Analyst</p>
	<p><b>1.2.2</b> Provide on-going training for social workers to develop skills, and knowledge about community resources during one on one and/or unit meetings. This will reduce the frustration encountered by social workers with small county resources, and allow for the maximization available resources as well as keeping them abreast of new resources within the community.</p>		<p>September 2007 – on-going  Completed and on-going</p>		<p>Child Protective Services Supervisors  Senior Staff Services Analyst</p>
	<p><b>1.2.3</b> Continue to meet weekly with County Counsel to prepare for Court hearings, and to also prepare social workers so that the Court process goes smoothly and social workers experience less stress. Preparedness will include, but is not limited to calendared court case discussion, role playing for contested hearings and service component recommendation.</p>		<p>January 2008- on-going  Completed February 2008 And on-going</p>		<p>Child Protective Services Deputy Director  Child Protective Services Supervisors  County Counsel</p>
	<p><b>1.2.4</b> Continue to update social worker policy and procedures and implement expectations and directions consistently among supervisors so that</p>		<p>January 2008-On-Going  Completed and on-going</p>		<p>Child Protective Services Deputy Director</p>

social workers get clear, consistent supervision and training.		Child Protective Services Supervisors
<p><b>Discuss changes in identified systemic factors needed to further support the improvement goals.</b>          Need support from Human Resources and other County Agencies to develop incentive programs.          Need support from the Board of Supervisors for an additional social work position.          Need alternate training modalities to minimize out-of-office time and travel.</p>		
<p><b>Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.</b>          None Needed</p>		
<p><b>Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.</b>          Partner with surrounding universities to develop education programs that allow candidates to work and meet their job requirements.          Partner with CWDA and training academies to develop on-site training for small counties.</p>		
<p><b>Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.</b>          None Needed</p>		

<p><b>Systemic Factor: F. Staff/Provider Training</b></p>	
<p><b>County's Current Performance:</b> Currently management and some supervisory staff do not have their master's degree. Some are currently pursuing their Master of Social Work degree with the support of the San Benito County Health and Human Services.</p>	
<p><b>Improvement Goal 1.0</b>          Promote and facilitate the opportunity for staff to obtain their master's degree in social work or a related field.          Update 2009.</p> <p>Currently, two staff is enrolled in the MSW program and are being supported by Agency to attend and complete MSW program. With the addition of the MSW program to CSUMB, it is anticipated that more staff will be inclined to attend the MSW program.</p>	
<p><b>Strategy 1. 1</b> Partner with surrounding universities to develop Master's of Social Work (MSW) programs that work with the County's work schedule so that candidates are able to continue at their jobs. Support staff in attending a Master's program.          Update: 2009</p>	<p><b>Strategy Rationale<sup>5</sup></b> The Agency supports the on-going professional development of experienced county staff to promote and continue on with their careers at the County. This provides an experienced and committed staff to support San Benito County's children and families.</p>

<sup>5</sup> Describe how the strategies will build on progress and improve this outcome or systemic factor

San Benito county has been participating in the support and development of MSW program at CSUMB located in Monterey County. Other universities that offer MSW program have provided informational workshops to line staff.					
<b>Staff Training Milestone</b>	<b>1.1.1</b> Explore with Universities by calling and/or contacting MSW program representatives that offer Master of Social Work programs that meet the needs of the social work working professional so that the County's needs are met and the staff member has the opportunity to further their education.	<b>Timeframe</b>	January 2008 – January 2010 Still in progress	<b>Assigned to</b>	Health & Human Services Agency Executive Director
	<b>1.1.2</b> Support management, social workers and supervisor staff in attending and completing their Master's program. Support will include adjusted work schedules, work schedule flexibility and workload re-assignment that will permit the Staff person's participation in classes.		January 2008 – January 2010  Currently two staff attending MSW three year program (on-going)		Child Protective Services Deputy Director
<b>Discuss changes in identified systemic factors needed to further support the improvement goals.</b>					
The continuance of educational funding that supports MSW programs such as Title IV-E scholarships.					
<b>Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.</b>					
None Needed					
Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals. Continue to partner with the universities.					
<b>Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.</b>					
None Needed					

**Composite Indicator: Family Reunification**

<b>Outcome/Systemic Factor: Family Reunification Outcome C1.1 - C1.2</b>	
<p><b>County's Current Performance:</b>                  San Benito County currently fails to meet the State target for Measure C1.1- C1.2, which measures the percent of children reunified within 12 months of removal from their home. Although this outcome has not been met, San Benito County has a very low reentry rate following reunification. Update: Current Performance for C1.1 is 42.1% and for C1.2 is 12.6%.</p>	
<p><b>Improvement Goal 1.0</b>  <b>Improve successful reunification of families within 12 months or sooner.</b></p>	
<p><b>Strategy 1.1</b>                  Collaborate with the court system, county counsel, CASA, families and social workers to reduce the time lost in continuances or contested hearings.</p> <p>Update: 2009</p> <p>San Benito County has established weekly in-person or phone meetings to discuss upcoming court cases and calendar. Staff is now required to follow W&amp;I Code for timely filing of court reports and to discuss their upcoming court cases with county counsel to ensure smooth process through the court system. CASA has also been actively involved by providing reports to social workers regarding children's progress</p>	<p><b>Strategy Rationale<sup>6</sup></b>                  The majority of time the timeline to exit foster care to reunification is fixed, due to legally mandated timing of court hearings. There is an opportunity for improvement in reducing the number of continuances and contested hearing by working collaboratively with family, attorneys and other pertinent parties to the case. Social Workers may request continuances because they are unable to complete reports during the required timeframe, or they may submit late reports, not allowing enough time for discussion with families and attorneys. Such instances are primarily due to the social worker caseloads or because of last minute developments in the case.</p>

<sup>6</sup> Describe how the strategies will build on progress and improve this outcome or systemic factor

<b>Milestone</b>	<p><b>1.1.1</b> Have weekly meetings before calendared court hearings to discuss cases and court reports to avoid possible continuances. The person's involved in these discussion will include, but not limited to the following: County Counsel, Social Work Supervisor, Social Worker, and Child Protective Services Deputy Director.</p>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<p>January 2008 – July 2008</p> <p>Completed June 5, 2008 and on-going</p>	<b>Assigned to</b>	<p>Child Protective Services Supervisors</p> <p>San Benito County Counsel</p> <p>San Benito County Child Welfare Social Workers</p>
	<p><b>1.1.2</b> Develop and implement a plan to establish meetings between CASA and Social Workers to explore how CASA's can be enlisted to help move cases through the court system</p>		<p>January 2008 – July 2008</p> <p>Still in progress (completed on April 17, 2008-for some families in FR Service component)</p>		<p>Child Protective Services Deputy Director</p> <p>San Benito County Child Welfare Social Workers</p> <p>CASA</p>
	<p><b>1.1.3</b> Work with supervisors to monitor and hold their staffs accountable to ensure reports are completed in a timely manner by developing a new policy and procedure and coordinating a training workshop by County Counsel about court report context and information and importance of deadlines.</p>		<p>January 2008 – July 2008</p> <p>Completed on 02/14/2008 and 06/19/2008 and on-going</p>		<p>Child Protective Services Deputy Director</p> <p>San Benito County Child Welfare Social Workers</p>
<p><b>Strategy 1. 2</b> Reduce the number of social workers assigned to any one case and ensure cases are transitioned with all completed information regarding family status.</p> <p>Update 2009: Efforts have been made to minimize staffing caseload changes; current practice has a case going from ER social worker to Court worker and then a continuing workers; process involves a transition period in which the court worker involves the continuing worker to ensure the family knows who they will be working with upon transfer of case. Cases are not transferred unless discussion is held with</p>		<p><b>Strategy Rationale <sup>1</sup></b> Reunification efforts are positively impacted when a consistent social worker is assigned to each case. Case transitions should be consistent and cases should be accurate to minimize multiple social worker involvements.</p>			

supervisor, staff and program manager.				
<b>Milestone</b>	<b>1.2.1.</b> Monitor and minimize staff transfers from unit to unit by not transferring without first assessing the Agency's need for the transfer and unless a meeting is held to discuss the pros and cons of transferring the staff person to a different unit.	<b>Timeframe</b>	January 2008-ongoing  Completed February 2008 and on-going	<b>Assigned to</b>
	<b>1.2.2</b> Develop and implement a method that includes smooth transition of the family's case from the ER Unit to the continuing Unit for FR/FM services by meeting with the supervisor, and social workers. Utilizing check off list to ensure case transition is accurate thus reducing the involvement of more than one social worker and developing a Transfer Case Protocol to ensure all documentation is complete.		January 2008-ongoing  Completed February 2008 and on-going	
<b>Notes:</b> None				

**Improvement Goal 2.0**

**Increase the use of an evidence based approach, family case planning and involvement of parents, youth, and family support system in case plan for Family Reunification Cases to promote early reunification not to exceed 12 months.**

**Update 2009:** San Benito county has made slight improvement in promoting early reunification by implementing family conferencing meetings to develop a plan that can promote early reunification between families and children.

**Strategy 2.1**

Develop and plan the use of family – focused social work to increase participation by families during case planning process.

Increase appropriate utilization of SDM strengths and needs assessment for case development that includes the family.

Update 2009:

San Benito County has implemented the full use of SDM family and strengths and needs assessment for case plan development which includes the family input; training was conducted for staff on SDM use on October of 2008.

**Strategy Rationale <sup>1</sup>**

Staff has been inconsistent about the use of SDM strengths and needs assessment; family focused/family participation in case planning.

<b>Milestone</b>	<p><b>2.1.1</b> Reassess the use of SDM by meeting and assessing in conjunction with staff to determine if SDM is being used correctly, during the case management service component, and to ensure staff has an understanding of how it is supposed to be used. After reassessment of the use of SDM, a plan will be developed to implement the full utilization of the SDM family reunification, assessment tools to make full family assessments of strengths, protective capacity and risk/safety concerns. This will support consistent, effective decision making and good service delivery.</p>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<p>January 2008 – July 2008</p> <p>Completed October 13, 2008 and on-going</p>	<b>Assigned to</b>	<p>Child Protective Services Deputy Director</p> <p>Social Work Supervisors</p>
	<p><b>2.1.2</b> Develop and implement a process that ensures family engagement and participation in case planning activities that include strengths and</p>		<p>January 2008-ongoing</p> <p>Completed October 13, 2008 and</p>		<p>Child Protective Services Deputy Director</p> <p>Social Work Supervisors</p>

needs assessment. Family's participation in case planning activities can help motivate the family to improve family reunification.	on-going		
<b>Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal.</b> Strengthen and improve relationship with court and CWS			
<b>Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.</b> Train staff and supervisors			
<b>Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.</b>			
<b>Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.</b> None			

**Composite Indicator: Placement Stability**

<b>Outcome/Systemic Factor: Placement Stability Composite C4.1 to C4.3</b>	
<b>County's Current Performance:</b> San Benito County currently fails to meet the State target for Measure C4.1- C4.3, which measures placement stability for children in foster care to 2 or less placements within a 12 month period. Update: Current performance for C4.1 its 59.3%; for C4.2 its 63.2; for C4.3 its 20%.	
<b>Improvement Goal 1.0</b> Increase the number of children with two or fewer placements within 12 months Update 2009: San Benito County has made some improvement in this area as NRFEM homes approval have increased and the emphasis of having children immediately placed in a foster home. However, the due to limited foster homes in the county, children are placed in out of county foster homes thus creating challenges for social workers and increase time spent traveling.	
<b>Strategy 1. 1</b> Continue efforts to recruit and retain Foster Homes in San Benito County in an effort to prevent multiple placements for children	<b>Strategy Rationale<sup>7</sup></b> San Benito County does not have enough Foster Family Homes available for placement of children. Low foster care reimbursement rates and limited staffing time to recruiting new foster homes are factors

<sup>7</sup> Describe how the strategies will build on progress and improve this outcome or systemic factor

<p>Update 2009:          Flyers and brochures have been distributed throughout community events to promote foster home licensing in San Benito County; advertisements have been made through the local movie theater as well, however, due to low paying county foster care rates, and the fact that San Benito County is more of a bedroom community, it is very challenging to get families that are interested in becoming foster parents.</p>		<p>that make recruitment and retention very challenging. Lack of foster homes contribute to multiple placements as children are either placed in the shelter, or a temporary receiving home or sometimes both, pending the location of a more stable home. In addition, resources such as child care subsidies would be helpful, but cannot be afforded by San Benito County for foster parents.</p>			
<b>Milestone</b>	<p><b>1.1.1</b>            Work with the licensing Social Worker to develop strategies to recruit foster homes by publishing and advertising the need of more foster homes in the community. By getting more foster homes in the community, children will be kept closer to their schools, family, friends and community. This would help minimizing the foster child's tension, frustration and acting out behaviors that often occurs when being moved out to out of their residence community.</p>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<p>January 2008- ongoing             Completed February 2008 and ongoing</p>	<b>Assigned to</b>	<p>Licensing Program Supervisor             Child Protective Services Deputy Director</p>
	<p><b>1.1.2</b>            Explore the possibility of Team Decision Making and/or some type of Family to Family Model to increase Placement Stability by meeting with Supervisors, Deputy Director and visiting how other counties have developed these models.</p>		<p>January 2008- ongoing             Completed Family Conferencing Training Jan 5, 2008; still in progress</p>		<p>Child Protective Services Deputy Director             Child Protective Services Supervisors</p>
	<p><b>Strategy 1. 2</b>            Evaluate and enhance internal capacity for placement decision making in an effort to minimize multiple placement movements.             Identify concurrent placements in early Family Reunification Stages             Update: 2009            San Benito County has successfully implemented this strategy; Social workers and supervisors meet and confer to determine what can be</p>		<p><b>Strategy Rationale</b>             It has been determined that the Placement Committee has not been as active as in previous years. Placement Committee meeting was initiated to address issues related to higher placement of care for children in foster care for children with behavioral problems, mental health or substance abuse issues. By re-establishing the Placement Committee meeting, early determination of the most appropriate placement level will be made, however, past practice has been to wait</p>		

done minimize multiple placements by working with families, developing plans and ensuring services are in place. In addition, Social Workers and Supervisors work closely with Foster Family Agencies and the county licensing unit to locate concurrent homes for children that are coming into foster care. Placement Committee meetings are also held for children who might require higher level of placement care. Through these meetings efforts are made to salvage current placement by providing intensive services through Behavioral Health. Additionally, social workers and supervisors work with State Adoptions and FFA's to ensure concurrent home is immediately sought in the event that there is a low prognosis of reunification between children and parents

for a child to blow out of 2-3 placements before a meeting was held to discuss and obtain a consensus of a more appropriate placement level approval.

Additionally, it has been determined that children are not being placed in concurrent homes. Therefore, when reunification services are terminated for the parents the Social Worker has to move the children into a concurrent home, which extends the adoption process.

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>1.2.1.</b> Reassess current Policy and Procedure by meeting with key players that include, but not limited to Behavioral Health, Probation, and CASA to, develop and implement updated procedures for Placement Committee meetings that includes families, and the understanding of the importance of minimal placement changes.	<b>Timeframe</b>	January 2008- July 2008  Completed July 2008 and on-going	<b>Assigned to</b>	Child Protective Services Deputy Director  San Benito County Probation Supervisor  San Benito County Behavioral Health
	<b>1.2.2</b> Develop a tracking system to evaluate the effectiveness of Placement Committee meetings effectiveness for placement recommendations that could minimize frequent placement changes		January 2008 – Ongoing  Completed July 2008 and on-going		Child Protective Services Deputy Director  San Benito County Probation  Child Protective Services Supervisors  San Benito County Behavioral Health
	<b>1.2.3</b> Develop and implement procedures to ensure concurrent homes are being sought for placement by assessing type of home when		January 2008 – July 2008  Completed March 2008 and on-going		Child Protective Services Deputy Director  Child Protective Services

	working with FFA's and NREFM homes. Social Work Supervisors will work with Social Workers to keep track of concurrent homes for children who are not reunifying with parents.				Supervisors
<b>Strategy 1.3</b> Increase efforts to place children with relatives and near kin.  Promote and increase efforts for Non-Relative/Relative Extended Family Member (NREFM) placement homes  Update 2009: San Benito County has partially accomplished this strategy by developing policies and procedures for NREFM homes and promoting the use of such homes for children. However, due to staffing issues and the time it takes to process NREFM homes, at times they are not approved very quickly. There is one part time staff that assists social workers with NREFM's as well as with other duties. Due to this, several social workers conduct their own NREFM assessments and certifications.			<b>Strategy Rationale <sup>1</sup></b> San Benito County does not have a placement unit. Social Workers are responsible for placement, eligibility paperwork related to placement, court reports and the intense case management required during the initial stages of the case. There is not enough time to assess and determine the appropriateness of relative placement. Frequent placements occur when the Social Worker has the child in an Emergency Placement while assessing relatives for possible placement. Occasionally, when such assessments, background checks, fingerprints and paperwork are completed, the child has been in the Emergency Shelter, to a Foster Home and then to an approved relative home if one is located and approved. Although placing children with relatives and near kin could improve stability of placement, such task can be very challenging due to limited staffing resources.		
<b>Milestone</b>	<b>1.3.1</b> Assess the possibility by evaluating changing current part time staff to determine the possibility of re-assigning the workload to allow for the dedication of staffing time to finding and approving relatives and near kin.	<b>Timeframe</b>	January 2008- July 2008 Completed July 2008	<b>Assigned to</b>	Child Protective Services Deputy Director
	<b>1.3.2</b> Develop and Implement a policy and procedure for the approval and assessment of Non-Relative/Relative Extended Family Foster Homes that simplifies the process and includes all regulations and ACIN's.		January 2008 - July 2008 Completed December 9, 2008		Child Protective Services Supervisors
	<b>1.3.3</b> Establish a policy and procedure to ensure Placement Data Entry is completed timely and accurately for placements.		January 2008 - July 2008 Completed March 2008		Child Protective Services Deputy Director  Child Protective Services Supervisors

**Notes:**

**Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal.**

The need to increase recruitment and retention of foster families in San Benito County

**Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.**

Provide training for the assessment and approval of NREFM homes; Provide educational workshop on TDM and/or other type of model

**Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.**

San Benito Behavioral Health will be a key partner in developing Placement recommendations for children with behavioral and/or mental health issues

**Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.**

Additional State funding to provide higher foster care reimbursement rates for foster families  
The State to release more efficient and less complicated relative assessment process  
Additional State funding for the development of TDM development programs

**Composite Indicator: Adoption**

**Outcome/Systemic Factor: Adoption Outcome C2.1 to C2.5**

**County's Current Performance:**

San Benito County currently fails to meet the State target for Measure C2.1- C1.5, which measures the percent of children free for adoption, or adopted within 12 months after being in care for 17 months. Update: Current performance for 2008 is 44.4%.

**Improvement Goal 1.0**

Increase the number of children who exit foster care to adoption within 24 months or sooner when a child is identified as legally free for adoption.

Update 2009:

San Benito County made significant improvement in ensuring adoptions is processed in a timely manner. Since April of 2008, there were 10 adoptions finalized. State Adoptions, Fresno District Office has been working with San Benito County to streamline process to ensure adoptions are not pending for more than 12 months after child is freed for adoption.

<p><b>Strategy 1. 1</b> Collaborate with State Adoption Services Bureau-Fresno District Office to streamline process and move cases through Adoptions system in a timelier manner.</p> <p><b>Update 2009:</b> Several meetings were held between San Benito County CWS and State Adoptions-Fresno District office to discuss and strategize a plan to streamline the process and finalize adoptions in a timely manner. State Adoption Services Bureau-Fresno District Office now meets with social workers and supervisor on a monthly basis and maintains frequent e-mail/phone contact to discuss, and closely track cases that have been referred for Adoption Services.</p>		<p><b>Strategy Rationale<sup>8</sup></b> Not having an adoptions unit in San Benito County makes it challenging for social workers to effectively address Adoptions issues as appropriate. State Adoption Services Bureau-Fresno District Office visits San Benito County once a month, and often times both, the Adoptions Worker and Social Worker wait until this once a month contact to discuss Adoptions Cases, new referrals and prospective referrals to Adoptions. In addition, the collection of information and documentation needed for the Adoptions process to move more quickly is often delayed until the monthly Adoptions on site visit. The Social Workers and State Adoptions Worker need to communicate more frequently with each other to check on the status of cases that are going through the Adoptions Process. An effort will be made to collaborate with State Adoption Services Bureau-Fresno District Office to find solutions to delays in Adoptions proceedings when a child has been freed for Adoption.</p>			
<b>Milestone</b>	<p><b>1.1.1</b> Identify and implement strategies to improve communication between State Adoptions in Fresno and Social Workers for purposes of assessing and staffing referred cases by increasing the use of e-mail and correspondence.</p>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<p>January 2008 – July 2008  Completed April 14, 2008</p>	<b>Assigned to</b>	<p>Child Protective Services Deputy Director  Social Work Supervisors  State Adoption Services Bureau-Fresno District Office Supervisor  State Adoption Services Bureau-Fresno District Office Manager</p>
	<p><b>1.1.2</b> Assess and review Adoptions procedures to determine areas of improvement for Social Worker and Adoptions Worker in an effort to improve response to timeframes that could promote sooner adoption finalization.</p>		<p>January 2008 – July 2008  Completed April 14, 2008 and on-going</p>		<p>Child Protective Services Deputy Director  Social Work Supervisors</p>

<sup>8</sup> Describe how the strategies will build on progress and improve this outcome or systemic factor

			<p>State Adoption Services Bureau- Fresno District Office Supervisor</p>
	<p><b>1.1.3</b>  Explore the requirements needed to have an Adoptions Unit and/or Adoptions Worker in San Benito County by talking with State Adoptions and/or the Department of Social Services.</p>	<p>January 2008 – July 2008  Still in progress</p>	<p>State Adoption Services Bureau- Fresno District Office Manager Child Protective Services Deputy Director  Social Work Supervisors  San Benito County Assistant Director</p>
<p><b>Strategy 1. 2</b> Collaborate with the court system to streamline the process and move cases through the system more quickly</p> <p>Collaborate with Adoptive families to ensure all documentation is submitted to Adoptions in a timely manner to prevent further delays in adoptions finalizations.</p> <p>Quarterly meetings are held with the Judge to discuss court system process, areas in need of improvement and processes to improve timely adoption case hearings; social workers work to reinforce and assist families with the completion of necessary paperwork to ensure a speedy adoption process.</p>		<p><b>Strategy Rationale <sup>1</sup></b> Long delays in obtaining orders to end reunification services and to terminate parental rights can make it impossible to achieve this goal. Parents often contest one or both of these orders. In addition, San Benito County Superior Court calendars all hearings only once a week, which also contributes to delays. This causes further delays in the timeframes required to achieve adoption services.</p> <p>In addition, we have found that Adopting families have a difficult time turning in all necessary documentation for Home Studies during the Adoptions process thus contributing to the further delays. Families feel overwhelmed by the amount of paperwork and some perceive the documents as being complex and confusing.</p>	

<b>Milestone</b>	<p><b>1.2.1.</b> Develop a checklist that will have all the documents needed by State Adoptions so that the Social Worker can also work with the family to ensure all needed documentation is submitted in a timely manner</p>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<p>January 2008 – July 2008  Completed May 2008</p>	<b>Assigned to</b>	<p>Child Protective Services Deputy Director  Social Work Supervisors  State Adoption Services Bureau-Fresno District Office Supervisor  State Adoption Services Bureau-Fresno District Office Manager</p>
	<p><b>1.2.2</b> Collaborate with State Adoptions to assist the Adoptive families with completion of documentation.</p>		<p>January 2008 – July 2008  Completed May 2008 and on-going</p>		<p>Child Protective Services Deputy Director  Social Work Supervisors  State Adoption Services Bureau-Fresno District Office Supervisor  State Adoption Services Bureau-Fresno District Office Manager</p>
<p><b>Strategy 1. 3</b> Develop procedures as problems related to the delay of a home study completion and/or finalization of an adoption is identified so that they can be addressed to prevent long delays in the Adoption Process.</p> <p>Update 2009: State Adoptions Fresno District Office has implemented a tracking system to ensure referred out home studies are completed in a timely manner. Monthly meetings also help collaborate and share information to help process in timely manner.</p>			<p><b>Strategy Rationale <sup>1</sup></b> San Benito County depends on State Adoption Services Bureau-Fresno District for the completion of Home Studies. Due to the high number of children placed out of San Benito County inhibits Fresno State Adoptions ability to complete the Home Study and they in turn refer Home Study to a private Foster Family Agency (FFA) for completion. We have found that these FFA's are taking a very long time to complete the Home Studies and this has caused further delays in the Adoption Process.</p>		

Milestone		Timeframe		Assigned to	
	<p><b>1.3.1</b> Collaborate and follow-up on referrals made to FFA's for the completion of home studies for pending cases in San Benito County by creating reasonable time frame for such home studies to be completed.</p>		<p>January 2008 – July 2008  Completed June 2008 and on-going</p>		<p>State Adoption Services Bureau-Fresno District Supervisor  State Adoption Services Bureau-Fresno District Social Worker  Child Protective Services Deputy Director</p>
	<p><b>1.3.2</b> Develop a listing of all pending Adoptions Cases to monitor the Adoption Process, timelines and pending Home Studies and Adoption documentation.</p>		<p>January 2008 – on going  Completed April 2008</p>		<p>Social Worker Supervisors  State Adoption Services Bureau-Fresno District Social Worker</p>
	<p><b>1.3.3</b> Explore the requirements needed for the county to conduct its own Home Studies by talking with State Adoptions or California Department of Social Services to determine the prerequisites for a Social Worker to acquire certification to conduct Home Studies.</p>		<p>January 2008 – July 2008  Still in progress</p>		<p>Child Protective Services Deputy Director</p>

**Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal.**

- Exploring the possibility of San Benito having its own adoptions unit. San Benito County depends on State Adoption Services Bureau-Fresno District to conduct all adoption related activities
- Improve tracking system for pending Adoptions Cases
- Assessing the possibility of having an Adoptions Unit and/or a certified social worker to conduct Home Studies could speed up the Adoption Process
- Locate and secure more concurrent homes for children in foster care and concurrent planning that includes integration of adoptions practices earlier in case management activities

**Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.**

- Training on Adoption Process

**Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.**

- State Adoption Services Bureau-Fresno District Unit Adoption Worker

**Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.**

- Legislation that provides reasonable response an appeals court for purposes of ruling on an appeal. For cases that are moving through the Adoption process quickly, such appeals by parents can delay cases indefinitely as there is nothing to compel a quick decision by the appeals court

**Composite Indicator: Family Reunification – Probation**

<p><b>Outcome C1 – C4: Family Reunification, Re-Entry into Foster Care</b>                  This is an outcome that Probation is targeting as a way to better support children and families while a child is in placement. The goal is to fully engage the family so that when a child returns home there is a successful transition back into the home and the family has the ability to successfully parent the child without the child returning to out of home care.</p>	
<p><b>County's Current Performance:</b>                  The County Probation Department has worked very hard on providing preventative services to families so that children are very rarely placed out of the home. Currently Juvenile Probation has only four children in out of home placement receiving Title IV-E funding.</p>	
<p><b>Improvement Goal 1.0</b> Improve successful reunification of families when children return from placement so that children do not re-enter the Juvenile Probation system.                  UPDATE – December 2008: Probation Officers are writing more comprehensive investigation social study reports in conjunction with a full screen risk assessments to determine case plan goals, objectives and supervision needs.</p>	
<p><b>Strategy 1. 1</b> Develop and implement services that target the whole family system so that positive change is effective among all family members and overall family capacity for successful parenting is achieved. UPDATE: JANUARY 2009- We have been making great progress. Aggression Replacement Training (ART) has been ongoing serving our at-risk youth. Our At Risk youth are on Intensive Supervision Caseloads. Officers monitor academics, associates, and overall compliance with case plan. Parents of At-Risk youth are referred to local parenting courses. Officers are currently transporting parents to their child's placement facility to ensure a smooth transition home. Family therapy will be provided to the placed family during these placement visits. Youth are provided will substance abuse in GH's and we a re-implementing treatment in JH. We are in the process of implementing a life skills course.</p> <p>MEASUREMENT USED: New law violation and/or ranch/placement order during the term of probation.</p>	<p><b>Strategy Rationale<sup>9</sup></b></p> <p>There are eight (8) characteristics considered "criminogenic" factors that contribute to delinquent behavior. Our strategy targets all of these identified areas. The eight (8) are: (1) Extent of anti-social attitude, belief, values. Our Health Realization Model (1.1.3) will address this; (2) Regular exposure to criminal associates and violence and isolation from pro social associates. Hollister Youth Alliance, a non-profit agency, addresses this are (1.1.4); (3) High degree of psychopathy and impulsivity, addressed in (1.1.3); (4) Chronic history of anti-social behavior, address in (1.1.3), (1.1.4)and (1.1.5); (5) High level of conflict/violence in the family leading to trauma/post-traumatic stress, address in (1.1.5); (6) Poor school performance/lack of education, addressed in (1.1.2); (7) Lack of marketable job skills, addressed in (1.1.4); and (8) Heavy substance use and abuse, addressed in (1.1.1). Refer to Andrew, D. and James Bonta. 1994. <i>The Psychological and Criminal Conduct</i>. Cincinnati.Anderson. Gendreau, Paul 199. <i>The Principals of Effective Intervention with Offenders</i>.</p>

<sup>9</sup> Describe how the strategies will build on progress and improve this outcome or systemic factor

<b>Family Reunification Milestone</b>	<b>1.1.1</b> Continue to provide a drug and alcohol counselor at juvenile hall. Expand the program so that the counselor continues to work with the child once they have left juvenile hall and to work with children that come back home from placement. UPDATE: DECEMBER 2008: A Mental Health clinician and Substance Abuse counselor will offer weekly co-occurring treatment groups in the juvenile hall.	<b>Timeframe</b>	January 2008 – July 2008 UPDATE – December 2008: Progressing, briefly interrupted due to funding issues but to resume by end of March of 2009.	<b>Assigned to</b>	Chief Probation Officer
	<b>1.1.2</b> Expand the reading tutor program to allow more children to work towards literacy and more fulfilling futures. UPDATE: January 2009 - This service has been expanded to include siblings of our at risk youth as well.		January 2008 – December 2008  UPDATE – December 2008: COMPLETED		Chief Probation Officer
	<b>1.1.3</b> Expand the Health Realization program to have more trainers so that the program can be expanded to include training in Juvenile Hall and for parents and children when children are home or in placement in the community. UPDATE: In progress.		January 2008 – July 2009  UPDATE-December 2008: In progress to be completed by June 2009.		Chief Probation Officer
	<b>1.1.4</b> Develop life skills classes for youth in collaboration with a local community based organizations. UPDATE: In progress of implementing.		January 2008 – July 2009 UPDATE – December 2008: To be Completed by June 2009.		Chief Probation Officer
	<b>1.1.5</b> Develop a strengths based parenting class for parents while children are in placement that would continue to provide parenting assistance once a child has returned home. UPDATE: January 2009: Parenting Courses are offered and we are in the process of providing our own department parenting course.		January 2008 – July 2009 UPDATE – December 2008: To be completed by September 2009.		Chief Probation Officer
<b>Discuss changes in identified systemic factors needed to further support the improvement goals.</b> None Needed					
<b>Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.</b> Training for other staff on the Health Realization program and parenting techniques.					
<b>Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.</b>					

Partner with Community Based Organizations to develop life skills classes.  
Partner with Linda Mood Bell provide to expand reading program.  
Consider partnering with Health and Human Services in developing a parenting program.

**Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.**  
None Needed

**Composite Indicator: Placement Stability – Probation**

<p><b>Outcome C1 – C4: Placement Stability</b>                  This outcome is targeted by Probation as a way to ensure that excellent placements are found for each child that meet their needs and that there are systems in place to support successful placement and permanency. This will ensure the child’s placement is successful and they do not experience disruption.</p>					
<p><b>County’s Current Performance:</b>                  The County Probation Department has worked very hard on providing preventative services to families so that children are very rarely placed out of the home. Currently Juvenile Probation has only four children in out of home placement receiving Title IV-E funding.</p>					
<p><b>Improvement Goal 1.0</b> Provide successful placement matching, service delivery and supportive systems so that children remain in excellent placements and do not experience multiple placements.</p>					
<p><b>Strategy 1. 1</b>                  Through best practices of staff and on-going supportive systems provide resources that ensure that children experience excellent treatment and stability of placement. UPDATE: January 2009 – Actively progressing. We have an evidence based risk assessment tool in place –currently being utilized. A MACI is completed on all in custody intakes. Our collaborating agencies are strongly encouraged to use Evidence Based programs when serving our youth. Multi-Discipline Team (MDT) meetings are held for at risk youth which includes the youth, the parent, the program case manager, the Probation Officer and any interested parties.</p> <p>MEASUREMENT USED: New law violation and/or ranch/placement order during the term of probation.</p>		<p><b>Strategy Rationale<sup>10</sup></b>                  The Probation Department will utilize evidence based tools and techniques to assess minors risk factors. We collaborate with local agencies that use this same modality such as our local Behavioral Health and Social Services Department. We will use our Assessment.com, Static 99 (if applicable), JSORRAT tool, MACI, and the recommendations of professionals working directly with the minors and their families to determine measurable goals and objectives. These Goals and Objective will be monitored by the probation staff. We will expect an exit report to include a transition plan to include the family as a whole and we will incorporate this plan into the minor’s regular case plan. The overall goal of all involved is rehabilitation of the family unit and the plan will be driven from beginning to end.</p>			
<p><b>Placement Stability</b></p>	<p><b>1.1.1</b> Send all placement staff through the State Core Placement Training to ensure that they are aware of all current placement resources available and have knowledge of how to make excellent placement matches for children.                  UPDATE: January 2009: Nearly completed.</p>	<p><b>Timeframe</b></p>	<p>January 2008-July 2009                  UPDATE – December 2008: To be complete in whole by April of 2009.</p>	<p><b>Assigned to</b></p>	<p>Chief Probation Officer</p>
	<p><b>1.1.2</b> Continue to use the County Mental Health</p>		<p>January 2008-July 2009</p>		<p>Chief Probation Officer</p>

<sup>10</sup> Describe how the strategies will build on progress and improve this outcome or systemic factor

<p>System of Care as a place to develop the best understanding of the child's needs and gain support for excellent placements that have the treatment that the child needs. UPDATE: December 2008: In Place</p>	<p>UPDATE --: COMPLETED and on-going</p>	<p>Placement Probation Officer</p>
<p><b>Discuss changes in identified systemic factors needed to further support the improvement goals.</b></p> <p>None Needed</p>		
<p><b>Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.</b></p> <p>Send placement staff to Placement Core Training</p>		
<p><b>Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.</b></p> <p>Continue to partner and communicate with Mental Health System of Care.</p>		
<p><b>Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.</b></p> <p>None Needed.</p>		