California
Child and Family Services Review
County System Improvement Plan
County of Imperial

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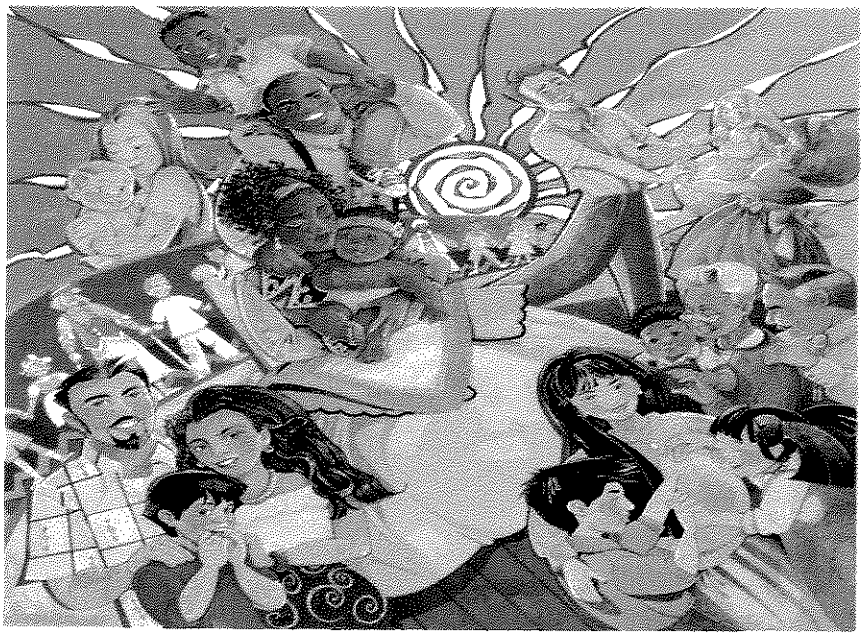

Vision.....
Every child in California lives in a safe, stable, permanent home, nurtured by healthy families and strong communities.

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California's Child and Family Services Review System Improvement Plan	
County:	Imperial
Responsible County Child Welfare Agency:	Imperial County Department of Social Services Children and Family Services
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Progress with SIP Milestones

Imperial County has completed many of our milestones since the initial System Improvement Plan (SIP) was submitted in September 2004 and the updated SIP submitted in May of 2006. This new updated plan includes completed milestones along with information on each outcome/systemic indicators, strategies and milestones that we have worked on throughout this past year.

Imperial County Child Welfare and the Probation Department have worked closely together throughout this process to compile information for this updated SIP. During this time we gained additional insight into the collaborative effort and resources needed to accomplish specific milestones; as a result we adjusted timelines with new target dates for this coming year.

Outcome Factor: 2B Child Abuse/Neglect Referrals with a Timely Response and 2C Timely Social Worker Visits with Child
Systemic Factor: D Quality Assurance

County's Current Performance:
2B. Percent of child abuse/neglect referrals with a timely response:
Our current performance for Immediate Response Compliance in Q2 (Apr-Jun 2005) is 100% compared to the state 96.3%. Current performance for 10-Day Response Compliance in Q2 (Apr-Jun 2005) is 88.5% compared to the state 92.4%. There is a 90% threshold for these outcome indicators that the county must work towards achieving and maintaining o`ver the next three years.
2C. Timely Social Worker Visits with Child:
The county's current performance for Q2 2005 in Apr 79.0%, May 79.5%, and Jun 80.6%. The county remains below the expected rate of 90%.

Improvement Goal 1.0
Improve timeliness of data input among staff to meet 90% threshold

Strategy 1. 1 Identify staff and redeploy to assist with data input	**Strategy Rationale** Having staff designated to ensure that data is entered on a timely basis will improve this outcome measure and demonstrate the department's commitment to addressing this issue.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
1.1.1 Identify units/staff with delinquent input issues via CWS/CMS	10/31/04 Completed	Supervisors and Program Managers
1.1.2 Staff redeployed from current duties to bring targeted untis/staff current in CWS/CMS data entry	11/30/04 Completed	Program Managers
1.1.3 Train redeployed staff to task specific duties to bring targeted units/staff current in CWS/CMS data entry	12/31/04 Completed	Staff Development Analyst and System Support Analyst

2007 SIP Update Completed activities within timeframes of SIP and have met our improvement goals for this strategy. This is an on-going effort to ensure our compliance in these areas. Our current performance for each measure is as follows:
2B Immediate Response Compliance Q1 2006 - 100%, Q2 2006 – 96.2%, Q3 2006 - 96.7%
2B 10 Day Response Compliance Q1 2006 – 95%, Q2 2006 – 94.1%, Q3 2006 95.7%
2C Timely Social Worker Visits with Child Q3 2006 91.4%, 91%, 92.2%

Strategy 1. 2 Set Timely Data Input Schedule	**Strategy Rationale** Supervisory staff wil confer, set up, and agree upon a reasonable schedule that will improve compliance for this outcome.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
1.2.1. Line staff meet with Unit Supervisor to strategize effective schedule	1 month (07/01/06) Completed	Supervisors
1.2.2 Unit Supervisors meet with Program Managers to develop reasonable and effective schedule	2 months (08/01/06) Completed	Supervisors and Program Managers
1.2.3 Staff trained on new policy and procedure for inputting information into CWS/CMS	3 months (09/01/06) Completed	Staff Development Analyst and System Support Analyst

2007 SIP Update Completed activities within timeframes of SIP and have met our improvement goals for this strategy. This is an on-going effort to maintain the 90% threshold. Our current county performance is within the standards as stated above for Improvement Goal 1.0.

Strategy 1. 3	**Strategy Rationale**
Monitor progress in improving this area in a positive and supportive manner	Monitoring the progress of this issue will assist in the incremental improvement expected in this measure. This also demonstrates to staff the importance and expectation of improvement in this area.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
1.3.1 Reports generated to review progress with Supervisors.	1 month (07/01/06) Ongoing	Staff Development Analyst and System Support Analyst
1.3.2 Supervisors review reports with staff.	2 months (08/01/06) Ongoing	Supervisors
1.3.3 Meet with Supervisors/Analysts to track and troubleshoot	3 months (09/01/06) Ongoing	Supervisors, Program Manangers and Analysts

2007 SIP Update Completed activities within timeframes of SIP. This has been instrumental in the importance and expectation of improvement to support our goal of timeliness in this performance measure.

Strategy 1. 4	**Strategy Rationale**
Research "Safe Measures" as a tool for Supervisors to use in monitoring staff compliance with this outcome measure	"Safe Measures" is a CWS/CMS application tool that allows Supervisors and Program Managers to monitor unit and worker performance on specific process and outcome indicators. The use of "Safe Measures" will improve the accountabilility of Social Workers regarding timely data entry and will increase compliance for this outcome measure.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
1.4.1 Research "Safe Measures" and other counties that are utilizing "Safe Measures" and draft findings	3 months (09/01/06)	Analyst
1.4.2 Review findings at meeting with Supervisors and Program Managers to discuss possible implementation of "Safe Measures".	5 months (11/01/06)	Analysts, Supervisors, and Program Managers
1.4.3 Present to Deputy Director and Director	6 months (12/01/06)	Deputy Director and Director
1.4.4 If approved, Supervisors and Program Managers trained on use of "Safe Measures"	8 months (02/01/07)	Analysts, Supervisors, and Program Managers
1.4.5 "Safe Measures" implemented and all Supervisors mandated to utilize program to monitor their individual units compliance with outcome measures	Starting at 9 months (03/01/07) through 21 months (03/01/08)	Analyst, Supervisors and Program Managers

2007 SIP Update Due to the recent mandate from the state, Imperial County will be implementing the Comprehensive Assessment Tool (CAT) in June 2007. CAT is a risk assessment tool that will serve as a replacement for Safe Measures and help to improve the quality of this outcome measure. We are currently working with our department's System Support Analyst to generate reports from CWS/CMS for monitoring performance and process of this outcome measure. These reports support our efforts of improvement and accountability of Social Workers regarding timely data entry.

Improvement Goal 2.0
Improve Quality Assurance of Timely Social Worker Visits

Strategy 2.1	**Strategy Rationale**
Follow up with training and monitoring of new process	Offering training and supervisory support of this important issue will demonstrate the importance to staff

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
2.1.1 Training developed and provided to staff	12/31/04 Completed	Staff Development Analyst and System Support Analyst
2.1.2 Supervisors discuss input issues at unit meetings in an on-going basis and troubleshoot areas of concern with staff	4 months (10/01/06) Ongoing	Supervisors

	2.1.3 Reports generated and reviewed between Supervisors-Program Managers and Supervisors-Staff		7 months (01/01/07) Ongoing		Program Managers, Supervisors, Analysts, and System Support Analyst
2007 SIP Update Completed activities within timeframe of SIP- We are currently working with our department's System Support Analyst to generate reports from CWS/CMS for monitoring performance and processes of this outcome measure. These reports are generated monthly and used as a tool to support our efforts in improving quality assurance of Timely Social Worker visits.					
Strategy 2. 2 Work with supervisors who excel in holding staff accountable for timely data input.			**Strategy Rationale** Some supervisors do a better job than others of supporting staff in timely data input and assuring timely input in an on-going basis.		
Milestone	**2.2.1** Identify supervisors who excel in holding staff accountable and encourage sharing of techniques at Supervisor meetings.	**Timeframe**	2 months (08/01/06) Completed On-going	**Assigned to**	Program Managers, Sueprvisors, and Analysts
	2.2.2 All supervisors are trained on expectations of accountability		5 months (11/01/06) Completed		Program Managers and Staff Development Analyst
	2.2.3 Supervisors and Program Managers review reports on a monthly basis		Starting at 6 months (12/01/06) - 12 months (06/01/07) On-going		Program Managers and Analyst
2007 SIP Update Completed activities within timeframe of plan. This is an on-going effort to ensure the timeliness of data entry into CWS/CMS that the supervisory and management staff value. There are regular discussions for areas of improvement for this process in our staff meetings when necessary to ensure compliance in this area. This is an on-going effort in our county.					
Strategy 2.3 Institutionalize expectation of timeliness and accuracy of CWS/CMS data input			**Strategy Rationale** During the CSA it was learned that staff does not see data entry for CWS/CMS as a priority. The creation of well defined expectations for both Social Workers and Supervisors in regards to data entry will increase the rate of compliance in both the timeliness and the quality of the visits.		

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
2.3.1 Expectations for both staff and Supervisors are written and reviewed with staff and Supervisors	2 months (08/01/06) Completed	Program Managers and Analyst
2.3.2 Supervisors discuss and support staff in unit meetings and during work time on an on-going basis	3 months (09/01/06) Completed	Supervisors
2.3.3 A means of recognizing and celebrating improvement in timely data input is identified and implemented	4 months (10/01/06) Completed	Analyst in consultation with Supervisors

2007 SIP Update Completed within the timeframe of plan. The creation of defined expectations has increased the rate of compliance in both timeliness and quality of visits. This is an on-going effort within the agency to meet the standards set by the state and to improve the quality of visits with children, parents and caretakers. The analyst provides information and reports to keep Supervisors and Management staff informed in the monitoring of this strategy and outcome measure.

Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal.
Quality and Assurance system will continue to develop and improve on internal case reviews to assure we remain focused on improving this outcome.

Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.
Training is needed on how to utilize available programs to run reports regarding current and previous compliance with outcome measures. This will allow for better understanding of areas that need improvement and how to specifically address those improvement needs.

Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.
This is an internal agency matter and thus, no involvement of other partners is required.

Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.
None identified at this time.

Outcome Factor: 3F and 3G Rate of Foster Care Re-Entry

County's Current Performance:
Our current performance for 3F is 14.2% for the period of 07/01/04 - 06/30/05, which is higher than the state 10.1%. Our current performance for 3G is 22.7% for the period of 07/01/02 - 06/30/03, which is higher than the state 12.5%.

Improvement Goal 1.0
Improve quality of services provided to parents and children

Strategy 1. 1	**Strategy Rationale**
Work with Behavioral Health through the Parents and Children Together (PACT) Program to ensure proper services are provided to parents	Social Workers will confer with Behavioral Health staff regarding services provided to parents through the PACT Program, which will increase the parents successful completion of case plan objectives resulting in reunification.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
1.1.1 Create flow chart for each agency regarding responsibilities of each department	1month (07/01/06) Completed	Analysts from both DSS and Behavioral Health PACT Program
1.1.2 Review flow chart at meeting between Behavioral Health PACT staff and DSS Supervisors and Program Managers	2 months (08/01/06) Completed	Analysts, Supervisors, and Program Managers from both BH and DSS
1.1.3 Revisions made and reviewed for approval by Deputy Directors from both BH and DSS	3 months (09/01/06) Completed	Analysts, Supervisors, Program Managers and Deputy Directors from both BH and DSS
1.1.4 Flow charts presented and all staff trained on responsibilities of each department in regards to services to be provided	5 months (11/01/06) Completed	Analysts from both BH and DSS

2007 SIP Update Completed within timeframe of plan. Both agencies continue to meet to develop and improve the partnership to assist in this area Foster Care Re-entry. The flowchart has been completed and has assisted both agencies in ensuring that parents are going through the process of PACT to receive services to assist in the successful completion of case plan objectives.

Strategy 1. 2	**Strategy Rationale**
Establish universal report format for PACT progress reports from BH Mental Health Rehabilitation Technicians (MHRT) to Social Worker assigned to case	MHRT's will provide Social Workers with monthly progress reports regarding parents participation and progress in the PACT Program. This will allow the Social Worker to properly assess whether the parents are receiving appropriate services in order to successfully reunify with their children without any future re-entry into foster care.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
1.2.1. Create universal report format for monthly progress reports	1 month (07/01/06) Completed	Analysts from both BH and DSS
1.2.2 Review report format at meeting between BH PACT staff and DSS Supervisors and Program Managers	2 months (08/01/06) Completed	Analysts, Supervisors, and Program Managers from both BH and DSS
1.2.3 Revisions made and reviewed for approval by Deputy Directors from both BH and DSS	3 months (09/01/06) Completed	Analysts, Supervisors, Program Managers and Deputy Directors from both BH and DSS
1.2.4. Report format presented and all staff trained on the proper monthly progress report format	5 months (11/01/06) Completed	Analysts from both BH and DSS

2007 SIP Update Completed within timeframes of plan. A universal report has been developed and is utilized by both agencies to verify that parents are receiving appropriate services through PACT. This report is also used in the evaluation piece of the project to assess the outcomes of this partnership. This is an on-going effort to strive for successful outcomes in this project.

Strategy 1. 3	**Strategy Rationale**
Collaborate with community partners on the development of an aftercare plan for all cases in which dependency is being dismissed.	An aftercare plan would allow community partners to informally follow families to ensure they receive the support and services necessary to maintain a successful reunification with their children and prevent future foster care re-entry's.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
1.3.1 Meet with community service providers to develop a referral system for those families in which dependency is being dismissed.	4 months (10/01/06) Update 01/31/08	Analysts and Program Managers
1.3.2 Review proposal for referral system at meeting between community service providers and DSS Supervisors and Program Managers	5 months (11/01/06) Update (02/28/08)	Analysts, Supervisors, and Program Managers in collaboration with community service providers
1.3.3 Revisions made and reviewed for approval by Deputy Director	6 months (12/01/06) Update (03/31/08)	Analysts, Supervisors, Program Managers and Deputy Director
1.3.4 Referral system to community service providers presented and all staff trained on how to fill out referral once case has been dismissed.	7 months (01/01/07) Update (04/30/08)	Analysts

2007 SIP Update Through PACT we have developed relationships with community resources for parents to utilize and seek assistance as needed to support them as they transition from formal monitoring to independence.

Improvement Goal 2.0
Improve the quantity and quality of visits between parents and children

Strategy 2.1 Increase the amount of visits between children and parents	**Strategy Rationale** It has been well noted that successful reunification is directly related to the amount of visits between children and parents. Therefore if we increase the quantity of visits between parents and children, we should see an increase in successful reunifications without subsequent re-entry into foster care.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
2.1.1 Explore what other counties are doing and draft policy	2 months (08/01/06) Completed	Analysts
2.1.2 Policy reviewed at meeting with Supervisors. Revisions made and reviewed for approval by Program Managers and Deputy Director	5 months (11/01/06) Completed	Analysts, Supervisors, Program Managers, and Deputy Director
2.1.3 Policy presented and staff trained on new policy	6 months (12/01/06) Completed	Analysts and Supervisors

2007 SIP Update 2.1.1 - Completed within timeframe of plan.
2.1.2 and 2.1.3 - Due to the understaffing issue, we are still working on these areas. This is an on-going effort that we hope to resolve through additional resources and staffing.

Strategy 2. 2 Improve the quality of visits between parents and children	**Strategy Rationale** Increasing the quality of the visits will allow the parents and the children to better interact with one another and increase their chances of reunifying successfully without future re-entry into foster care.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
2.2.1 Explore what other counties are doing and draft policy	2 months (08/01/06) (10/31/07)	Analysts
2.2.2 Policy reviewed at meeting with Supervisors. Revisions made and reviewed for approval by Program Managers and Deputy Director	5 months (11/01/06) Completed	Analysts, Supervisors, Program Managers, and Deputy Director

2.2.3 Policy presented and staff trained on new policy	6 months (12/01/06) Completed	Analysts and Supervisors	

2007 SIP Update - Completed within timeframe of plan.
2.2.2 and 2.2.3 - Although it is in draft form, our policy has been changed to increase the quality of visits so they are held in a setting more conducive to interaction necessary to support family stability. For example, conducting more visits in the community rather than in the CWS office. Additionally, this county applied for Opportunity Improvement Project funds to assist in this area but was not approved last year. We will continue to request this additional funding for these strategies to improve in this area.

Strategy 2.3 Identify staff who would be responsible for arranging and monitoring visits	**Strategy Rationale** Having designated staff to arrange and monitor these visits will allow for more flexibility for the visits which will increase the likelihood of successful reunification without future re-entry into foster care.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
2.3.1 Explore the possibility of having designated staff or Substitute Care Provider (SCP) arrange and monitor visits and draft policy	2 months (08/01/06) (10/31/07)	Analysts
2.3.2 Policy reviewed at meeting with Supervisors. Revisions made and reviewed for approval by Program Managers and Deputy Director	5 months (11/01/06) (12/31/07)	Analysts, Supervisors, Program Managers, and Deputy Director
2.3.3 Policy presented and staff and SCP trained on new policy	6 months (12/01/06) (01/31/08)	Analysts and Supervisors

2007 SIP Update Due to lack of resources we were unable to successfully complete this portion of our SIP plan. Although we will be inquiring about possibly hiring extra help Social Workers to complete this outcome. Additionally, we will continue to apply for Opportunity Improvement Project funds to support these strategies that will improve successful reunifications and reduce re-entry into foster care.

Improvement Goal 3.0
Improve the quality and quantity of drug treatment services available to parents and improve services provided to drug endangered children.

Strategy 3.1 Research what type of drug treatment programs other counties are utilizing to better serve parents with substance abuse problems.	**Strategy Rationale** Researching what types of programs other counties are utilizing to treat parents with substance abuse problems will enable us to provide the best treatment programs to parents. This will ensure that the parents are receiving the services that will allow them to first deal with their addiction to drugs and then teach them how to parent their children and avoid future re-entry into foster care.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
3.1.1 Research what programs other counties are utilizing to treat parents with substance abuse problems and draft proposal for program development.	12 months (06/01/07) (10/31/07)	DSS Analyst
3.1.2 Proposal reviewed at meeting with Supervisors. Revisions made and reviewed for approval by Program Managers and Deputy Director.	13 months (07/01/07) (11/31/07)	Supervisors, Program Managers, and Deputy Director
3.1.3 Proposal presented and staff trained on new drug treatment program available to parents	14-18 mo (08/01/07-12/01/07) (12/31/07-04/30/08)	DSS Analyst and Supervisors

2007 SIP Update In progress. There are continued efforts to research programs with successful outcomes for parents and children. There is a good working relationship with law enforcement in this county to ensure that children are protected when found in these environments and for parents to receive services.

Strategy 4.1	**Strategy Rationale**
Research Drug Endangered Children (DEC) Programs in other counties.	Researching DEC in other counties to learn about the impact and effectiveness of the program. This will assist us in safeguarding the welfare of children whose parents have exposed them to the dangers of substance abuse. This program includes not only drug treatment and parenting classes, but also other rehabilitative measures such as parent-child counseling to help the parent change his or her lifestyle and focus on the child's welfare.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
4.1.1 Research DEC Programs in other counties and draft policy for implementation	4 months (10/01/06) Completed	DSS Analyst
4.1.2 Look into training and protocol to implement DEC in Imperial County	6 months (12/01/06) Completed	DSS Analyst and Program Manager
4.1.3 Develop protocol and submit for approval to Department heads	7 months (01/01/07) Completed	DSS Analyst, Program Manager and Department heads
4.1.4 Provide training to partners and staff to implement DEC in Imperial County	8 months (02/01/07) (10/31/07)	DSS Staff Development Analyst

2007 SIP Update 4.1.1, 4.1.2, 4.1.3- Completed 4.1.4 - Due to some scheduling difficulties this training has not yet been provided in Imperial County. Coordination between the necessary parties is in progress to provide training to all disciplines who signed off on the protocol.
Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal. Quality Assurance system will be developed to improve the quality of visits between parents and children and to ensure that proper services are being provided to families to aid in their successful reunification.
Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals. Training through the Drug Endangered Children's Alliance has been identified to provide Technical Assistance and Training for DEC.
Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals. We will continue to collaborate with Behavioral Health to provide services to the parents through the Parents and Children Together (PACT) Program. PACT is a joint agency effort to provide improved services to both parents and children to aid in their successful reunification without subsequent re-entry into foster care. We will also collaborate with community service providers to create an aftercare referral system to ensure that parents and children continue to receive the services they need once dependency has been dismissed.
Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals. None identified at this time.

Outcome Factor: 4B Foster Care Placement in Least Restrictive Settings
Systemic Factor: C General Licensing, Recruitment and Retention

County's Current Performance:
Our current performance is 93.1% at Initial Placement for Group/Shelter during the period of 07/01/04 - 06/30/05, which is well above the state 16.1%. Lack of appropriate placement options for the County has influenced performance on this indicator.

Improvement Goal 1.0
Reduce the Initial Placement in Shelter and Group Homes.

Strategy 1. 1 Increase placements in Relative and Foster Homes	**Strategy Rationale** Expedite Relative Approval Process so children can be placed with relatives within 23 hours of removal from their home.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
1.1.1 Explore what other counties are doing and draft policy	1 month (07/01/06) (01/31/08)	Analyst
1.1.2 Policy reviewed at meeting with Supervisors. Revisions made and reviewed for approval by Program Manager.	3 months (09/01/06) (03/31/08)	Analysts, Supervisors, and Program Managers
1.1.3 Policy presented and staff trained on new process.	4 months (10/01/06) (04/30/08)	Analysts and Supervisors

2007 SIP Update Imperial County has increased our placement of children in relative and foster homes, largely due to the efforts of our licensing staff to place emergency home assessments as a priority. We currently are placing up to 70% of children with relatives

Strategy 1. 2 Identify staff who would be responsible for completing Emergency 23 hour Relative Placement	**Strategy Rationale** Having Relative Approval Process so children can be placed with relatives within 23 hours of removal from their home will allow us to meet compliance with this outcome measure.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
1.2.1. Explore the possibility of having designated staff run Relative Clearances on CLETS	2 months (08/01/06) Completed	Analyst
1.2.2 Develop an MOU between DSS and Probation to access CLETS	3 months (09/01/06) (12/31/07)	Program Managers and Deputy Directors of both DSS and Probation

	1.2.3 MOU presented and discussed at unit meetings with staff		4 months (10/01/06) (01/14/08)		Supervisors
2007 SIP Update Due to a delay in hiring of staff we were unable to fulfill all of this strategy. This is an on-going strategy that we hope to fulfill in this next fiscal year.					
Strategy 1. 3 Measure our progress in reducing initial placements restictive settings and assess the 23 hour Placement Process			**Strategy Rationale** It is necessary to measure our progress in applying this process to establish a baseline so we know if we have improved our performance in this area. Measures also reward staff for progress and demonstrates that the SIP is being applied and working.		
Milestone	**1.3.1** Develop tracking process for 23 hour Placement Process	**Timeframe**	3 months (09/01/06) (12/31/07)	**Assigned to**	Analyst
	1.3.2 Develop training for staff on tracking process for 23 hour Placement Process		4 months (10/01/06) (01/31/07)		Analysts, Program Managers, and Deputy Director
	1.3.3 Provide training to staff on policy and procedures for providing identified information for tracking process		5 months (11/01/06) (02/28/08)		Staff Development Analyst
2007 SIP Update The completion of these milestones is pending the hiring of new staff to conduct the Emergency 23 Hour Relative Placement process. Although, priority has been placed on completing the Emergency Relative Home Assessments. The quarterly reports provided by the state are utilized at this time to measure our success in this area.					
Strategy 1. 4 Ensure that inquiry of all possible relatives for placement occurs at the beginning of a case and at all subsequent points throughout the life of the case.			**Strategy Rationale** Early and on-going inquiry of all available relative information will expand the possibility of placing children with relatives in a least restrictive setting.		
Milestone	**1.4.1** Develop form for parents to complete identifying possible suitable relative caregivers and provide to assigned social worker for follow-up.	**Timeframe**	2 months (08/01/06) Completed	**Assigned to**	Analyst
	1.4.2 Meet with County Counsel and Social Workers to advise then of the process and how it can be supported in Court.		3 months (09/01/06) Completed		Analysts, Supervisors, Social Workers, Program Managers, and County Counsel

	1.4.3 Train Social Workers to inquire about available relatives prior to every court hearing.		4 months (10/01/06) Completed		Analyst
	1.4.4 Complete a survey of parents whose children are currently placed in foster care to determine if there are known relatives that could be considered for placement.		5 months (11/01/06) (02/28/08)		Analyst

2007 SIP Update 1.4.1, 1.4.2, 1.4.3 - Completed within timeframe of plan. The courts have acknowledged that the department has made improvements in this area and encourage us to continue to place children with relatives and Non-Related Extended Family Members (NREFM) when ever possible. This is an on-going effort in our county.
1.4.4 - Due to staffing issues this SIP milestone has not been completed. Although the survey or questionnaire is not utilized at this time, staff inquires of possible relatives for placement at every contact with parents and children. Any possible relative or NREFM that is provided to staff is seen as a viable placement unless licensing standards prohibits the placement. The plan is to complete this milestone prior to the next PQCR

Improvement Goal 2.0
Increase number of qualified foster families

Strategy 2.1 Identify staff responsible for recruitment and campaign efforts for foster family homes.	**Strategy Rationale** Having a staff person dedicated to this assignment is necessary for the success of this effort and to show the commitment by our agency to this area.

Milestone		Timeframe		Assigned to	
	2.1.1 Explore what other counties are doing to recruit foster homes and emergency placement homes		2 months (08/01/06) Completed		Analyst and Licensing Supervisor
	2.1.2 Seek and attend training on Recruitment and Retention		4 months (10/01/06) Completed		Social Worker IV Completed by SW Supervisor assigned to Licensing unit

2007 SIP Update Completed. Staff has networked with other counties and attended training to meet this strategy.

Strategy 2. 2 Conduct needs-assessment of Foster Homes needed in this county	**Strategy Rationale** Assessing our agency's needs will help determine our priorities and guidelines for recruiting Foster Homes.

Milestone		Timeframe		Assigned to	
	2.2.1 Develop, conduct and report on Needs Assessment		3 months (09/01/06) (01/31/08)		Analyst and Licensing Supervisor

	2.2.2 Review Report and prioritize our needs with the Program Managers	4 months (10/01/06) (02/28/08)	Analyst and Licensing Supervisor

2007 SIP Update Due to staffing issues we have not been able to complete this SIP milestone, although we have produced reports that provide geographic information of where most of the children in placement resided and attended school. This has been helpful in discussions around provisions for AB 490 and working with the school districts to ensure that children attend the school that is in their best interest.

Strategy 2.3	**Strategy Rationale**
Define our goals of recruitment and retention based on the Needs-Assessment.	Defining our goals will help us to stay focused on a specific population to improve this outcome.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
2.3.1 Explore what resources are necessary to achieve these goals.	4 months (10/01/06) (03/31/08)	Analyst, Social Worker IV and Licensing Supervisor
2.3.2 Develop a Recruitment and Retention Plan.	5 months (11/01/06) (04/30/08)	Analyst, Social Worker IV and Licensing Supervisor
2.3.3 Implement the Recruitment and Retention Plan.	6 months (12/01/06) (05/31/08)	Analyst, Social Worker IV and Licensing Supervisor

2007 SIP Update This SIP strategy is pending the completion of the Needs Assessment. There is an on-going campaign effort to recruit foster parents in this county. Through these efforts we have increased our foster family homes in this community.

Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal.
General Licensing, Recruitment and Retention as stated above. In addition, a more concentrated effort to place children with relatives or foster parents. Placing prior to the fifth day will improve this outcome measure by reducing the rate of children placed in restrictive settings.

Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.
As stated abive, Retention and Recruitment for staff person assigned to this responsibility. Also, we would like to learn from other counties who have addressed this issue or are already performing to expectation on this issue in order to learn from them.

Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.
We will need to collaborate with the Probation Department to expedite access and training on the CLETS system. We will also have to work with the Licensing Unit on streamlining the Relative Approval Process for emergency placements.

Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.
Changes in the laws that interpret regulations in favor of relatives. A strict criterion for Relative Placement makes it difficult to place children with their families. We can improve performance for this measure but may not be able to influence the number of approvable relative placements due to economic issues or because of prior criminal history that prevents them from meeting the criteria for placement into their homes.

Outcome Factor: 8A Children Transitioning to Adulthood (Probation and Department of Social Services (DSS))

County's Current Performance: Our current performance for 10/01/03-09/30/04 is the following: 87 Received ILP services, 13 High School Diploma, 17 Enrolled in College/Higher Education, 32 Completed Vocational Training, 42 Employed or other means of support. In completing the CSA we learned that continued improvement in this area will require working closely with service providers and partners. This may require the development of joint policies and procedures or standards that not only address CWS youth but also Probation youth serviced by the Independent Living Program (ILP).

Improvement Goal 1.0
Improve referral process for Independent Living Program services

Strategy 1. 1 Standardize ILP referral process	**Strategy Rationale** Standardizing the referral process will increase number of participants in ILP

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
1.1.1 DSS/Probation meet to review and update ILP guidelines	3 months (09/01/06) Completed	DSS ILP Coordinator Probation Division Manager
1.1.2 Probation/DSS develop desk guide/protocol for ILP referral process	4 months (10/01/06) 01/31/08	DSS - ILP Coordinator Probation Division Manager
1.1.3 Desk guide/protocol approved by Directors	5 months (11/01/06) (02/28/08)	DSS Program Manager Chief Probation Officer

2007 SIP Update Completed 1.1.1 within timeframes of plan. There is an on-going effort to support this strategy through regular meetings with staff and partners. New dates have been developed to achieve these milestones.

Strategy 1. 2 Train staff on updated ILP desk guide/protocol	**Strategy Rationale** Training staff on the new desk guide/protocol will improve timeliness of ILP services and increase compliance

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
1.2.1. Develop training and jointly train staff on desk guide	6 months (12/01/06) (03/31/08)	DSS ILP Coordinator, DSS Staff Development, DSS Analyst and assigned Probation Officer
1.2.2 Monitor implementation of referral process (Deskguide)	6 months (12/01/06) (03/31/08)	DSS Social Worker Supervisors, Probation Officer III's, and Probation Division Manager
1.2.3 DSS/Probation meet quarterly to discuss issues and troubleshoot for improvements. Provide on-going training based on quarterly updates	11 to 12 mos (06/01/07 - 07/01/07) (09/30/08)	DSS ILP Coordinator and Probation Division Manager/DPO III

2007 SIP Update Completed within timeframes of plan. There is an on-going effort to ensure that this process is followed to improve timeliness of ILP services and increase compliance.

Improvement Goal 2.0
Improve Quality and Delivery of Independent Living Program (ILP) services to children

Strategy 2.1 Promoting (full range of) ILP services	**Strategy Rationale** By promoting ILP services we will increase awareness of the program and our commitment to delivery of services to our children eligible for these services.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
2.1.1 Identify target groups/individuals	3 months (12/31/04)	DSS ILP Coordinator and Probation Division Manager
2.1.2 Develop materials to increase awareness	4 months (1/31/05)	DSS Analyst
2.1.3 Target groups trained on services available to ILP eligible children	7 months (4/30/05)	Staff Development DSS

2007 SIP Update Completed within timeframes of plan. This department has committed a unit of social workers to work with this population of children to increase awareness of the program and show our commitment to these teens in our community.

Strategy 2. 2 Improve quality of ILP services	**Strategy Rationale** By improving the quality of ILP services we will increase the attendance, participation, and success rate for these children.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
2.2.1 Form committee (IVC, DSS, Probation, IVROP, Foster parents, Youth, Behavioral Health) to assess ILP services	3 months (12/31/04)	DSS ILP Coordinator/Probation Division Manager
2.2.2 Perform assessment of current services (assessing pre/post IVC Assessment data, satisfaction survey, life skills assessment)	4 months (1/31/05)	DSS Analyst and System Support Technician
2.2.3 Report results to Foster Care Advisory Committee and both DSS Program Manager and Probation Division Manager then forward recommendations to Directors.	7 months (4/30/05)	DSS ILP Coordinator and Probation Division Manager

2007 SIP Update Completed - Due to the completion of the strategies for this SIP outcome, there has been an increase in the participation in ILP services in our community.

Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal.
This portion of the SIP is about systemic change of the ILP referral process. Although, during the County Self Assessment it was learned that improved SAWS reporting that would identify only targeted (eligible for ILP) youth is necessary to further support this improvement goal.

Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals. Local education needs are noted in milestones.
Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals. Participation from the following partners is needed to achieve the above improvement goals: Probation, Imperial Valley College, Imperial Valley Regional Occupational Program, Behavioral Health, Foster Parents and Youth. A committee will need to be formed with these partners to assess current services and make recommendations for improvement.
Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals. State required standardized ILP services of youth placed out-of county and provide funds for other counties to serve our children who have been placed there. Services are needed for 14 and 15 year olds therefore funding should be available for this age group. Improved after care for ILP participants with mandated services and funding.

Outcome/Systemic Factor: Improve Safety Outcomes for Foster Youth **(Probation)**

County's Current Performance:
Currently the probation department has no parenting classes being offered to parents whose children are on probation, either in out-of-home placement or at the risk of being in out of home placement.

Improvement Goal 1.0
Provide a safe and stable home environment for Probation children to return to, if placed in out-of-home care, or remain in when removal is not necessary.

Strategy 1. 1	**Strategy Rationale**
Provide parenting classes to all parents whose children are on Probation, regardless of whether child is in out-of-home placement or still remains home.	Providing court ordered parenting classes to all parents of youth who are wards of the court through the probation department will ensure that parents not only comply with the court order, but also receive the skills and knowledge that they need to parent their children. This will result in an increase in stable homes for youth to return to and decrease out-of-home placements.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
1.1.1 Identify probation officers to provide parenting classes and have officers certified in parenting classes.	1 to 3 months (07/01/06 to 09/01/06) (07/31/08)	Probation Officer III and Probation Officer
1.1.2 Draft a policy regarding the referral of parents to Parenting classes and review at Department meeting	3 months (09/01/06) (07/31/08)	Probation Program Manager
1.1.3 Revisions made and policy reviewed for approval by Department head	4 months (10/01/06) (08/31/08)	Probation Program Manager
1.1.4 Implement policy and begin referring parents to Parenting classes	6 months (12/01/06) (10/31/08)	Probation Officer III and Probation Officer

2007 SIP Update Outcome Improvement Plan funds were anticipated to fund these projects, but those funds were not received and therefore this strategy has not been completed. There is an on-going effort to ensure that parents are referred to parenting classes available in the community.

Strategy 1. 2	**Strategy Rationale**
Provide transportation and child care to parents who are referred to Parenting Classes	Providing transportation and child care to those parents referred to the Parenting classes will ensure greater participation in the program as the parents will not be worried about how they are going to get to the classes and then who is going to watch their children while they attend.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
1.2.1 Research possible community agencies to provide transportation and child care for parents attending Parenting classes	1 month (07/01/06) (07/31/08)	Probation Assistant
1.2.2 Draft an MOU between Probation and community agency that will be providing the transportation and child care and review at Department meeting	3 to 4 months (09/01/06 to 10/01/06) (09/30/08)	Probation Program Manager
1.2.3 Revisions made and reviewed for approval by Department head	5 months (11/01/06) (10/31/08)	Probation Program Manager
1.2.4 Implement use of community agency as transportation and child care provider for all parents attending Parenting classes	11 months (05/01/07) (04/30/09)	Probation Officer II

2007 SIP Update Outcome Improvement Plan (OIP) funds were anticipated to complete these milestones. Those OIP funds were not received and therefore we were unable to complete this SIP strategy. Although they are limited to meet their needs, parents are referred to resources within the community to provide transportation. We will continue to apply for these additional funds to support this strategy.

Improvement Goal 2.0
Probation Officers to work after hours and on weekends to monitor wards and youth going through the court process, compliance at home and to respond to any crisis situation involving wards or youth pending adjudication in order to reduce the need for removal from their homes.

Strategy 2. 1	Strategy Rationale
Create after hours Probation coverage to respond to emergency and crisis situations for after hours.	Providing after hours coverage by Probation staff will allow a Probation Officer to monitor and respond to emergency and crisis or any situation involving probation youth, without the need to involve Law Enforcement. This will also allow the Probation Officer to attempt to alleviate or minimize the problems before they escalate to the point where the child must be brought into custody.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
2.2.1 Draft policy and procedure for after hours Probation staff regarding duties and compensation and review at Department meeting	3 months (09/01/06) (12/31/07)	Probation Program Manager
2.2.2 Revisions made and reviewed for approval by Department head	7 months (01/01/07) (01/31/08)	Probation Program Manager

	2.2.3 Provide training for staff on policy and procedure for after hours coverage		8 months (02/01/07) (02/28/08)		Deputy Probation Officer III

	2.2.4 Implement use of after hours Probation staff to respond to emergency and crisis situations	9 months (03/01/07) (03/31/08)	Probation Officer III and Probation Officer
2007 SIP Update Outcome Improvement Plan funds were anticipated to fund these projects, but those funds were not received and therefore this strategy has not been completed. We will continue to apply for these funds to support this strategy.			

Outcome/Systemic Factor: Improve Permanency Outcomes for Foster Youth **(Probation)**			
County's Current Performance: Input from our PQCR indicates that we do not have an MOU in place where probation can conduct Relative Home Assessments for relatives of children defined as wards of the court under Welfare and Institutions Code Section 602. There is a need to have Relative Home Assessments completed specifically for probation children due to the lack of Foster Homes available to these children in our county.			
Improvement Goal 1.0 Develop Relative Home Assessment for relatives of Probation Children			
Strategy 1. 1 Research what programs other counties have in place to ensure that probation children are placed with relatives, rather than in group homes out of county.	**Strategy Rationale** Ensuring that children are placed with relatives will allow these children to remain in their communities and their schools, which is recommended by the court whenever possible.		
Milestone	**Timeframe**	**Assigned to**	
1.1.1 Research what programs other counties are using to provide relative placements for their probation children	1 to 2 months (07/01/06 to 08/01/06) Completed	Probation Assistant	
1.1.2 Develop policies and procedures regarding Relative Home Assessments that follow State Licensing guidelines and review at Department meeting.	5 months (11/01/06) Completed	Probation Program Manager	
1.1.3 Revisions made and reviewed for approval by Department head and approval by Board of Supervisors	8 months (02/01/07) Completed	Probation Program Manager	
1.1.4 Implement Relative Home Assessment policies and procedures	11 months (05/01/07) Completed	Probation Officer III and Probation Officers	
2007 SIP Update Completed within timeframes of plan. The licensing unit in child welfare provided this training to probation staff to improve in the area of permanency outcomes for probation foster youth.			

Strategy 1. 2 Work with DSS Licensing Unit to provide training to Probation staff on Relative Home Assessments.			Strategy Rationale Working closely with DSS Licensing Unit to provide training on Relative Home Assessments will allow Probation staff to learn the relative licensing process to ensure that their children are placed in a safe and stable home.		
Milestone	**1.2.1.** Coordinate with DSS Licensing Unit to provide training for Probation staff regarding Relative Home Assessments	Timeframe	16 months (10/01/07)	Assigned to	Probation Program Manager, DSS Licensing Supervisor and Staff Development Analyst
	1.2.2 Work with DSS Licensing Unit to create Relative Home Assessment Tool specifically for Probation staff		21 months (03/01/08)		Probation Program Manager and DSS Licensing Supervisor
	1.2.3 Implement Relative Home Assessment procedures for Probation		22 to 27 months (04/01/08 to 09/01/08)		Probation Officer III and Probation Officer
2007 SIP Update Completed within timeframe of plan. The licensing unit with child welfare provided this training to probation staff to improve in this area of permanency outcomes for probation foster youth					
Strategy 1. 3 Designate Probation staff to conduct Relative Home Assessments for all relatives of probation children who are interested in placement.			**Strategy Rationale** Designating a specific staff person to conduct the Relative Home Assessments will ensure that all procedures are followed correctly and uniformly for all relatives.		
Milestone	**1.3.1** Determine what staff is qualified and suitable to conduct Relative Home Assessments	Timeframe	16 months (10/01/07)	Assigned to	Probation Program Manager
	1.3.2 Ensure designated staff are equipped with all relavent forms and guidelines necessary to conduct Relative Home Assessment		9 months (03/01/07)		Probation Program Manager
	1.3.3 Probation staff begin conducting Relative Home Assessments on all interested relatives of probation children		22 to 27 months (04/01/08 to 09/01/08)		Probation Officer
2007 SIP Update These strategies are in progress. Child welfare staff is currently working with probation staff to ensure the success of this strategy for probation foster youth.					

Outcome/Systemic Factor: Improve Well-Being Outcomes for Foster Youth **(Probation)**

County's Current Performance:
Currently we have no formal MOU in place for 241.1 Protocols. In developing a jointly written 241.1 protocol the Probation Department and DSS shall initially determine which status will serve the best interests of the minor and the protection of society.

Improvement Goal 1.0
Develop 241.1 Protocol between Probation Department and DSS

Strategy 1. 1 Develop a written 241.1 protocol to ensure appropriate local coordination in the assessment of a minor described in subdivision (a) of Welfare and Institutions Code 241.1	**Strategy Rationale** The written 241.1 protocol will have guidelines and recommendations that will make it easier for the social workers and probation officers to submit timely reports to the juvenile court.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
1.1.1 Develop MOU between DSS and Probation Department	2 to 3 months (08/01/06 to 09/01/06) Completed	DSS Program Manager, Probation Program Manager, and County Counsel
1.1.2 Approval of MOU by department heads	1 month (07/01/06) Completed	DSS Director and Chief Probation Officer
1.1.3 Implementation of MOU by both departments	1 month (07/01/06) Completed	DSS and Probation Departments

2007 SIP Update In progress. The 241.1 protocol has been submitted to our County Counsel and is pending approval.

Strategy 1. 2 Develop 241.1 protocol reports for both DSS and Probation	**Strategy Rationale** A standardized protocol report will expedite the court hearings and eliminate the need for continuances. It will also provide guidelines for resolving issues with cases where there is disagreement between DSS and Probation.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
1.2.1 Develop draft of standardized 241.1 protocol report for both DSS and Probation Department	2 months (08/01/06) Completed	DSS Analyst
1.2.2 Approval of standardized 241.1 protocol report by both department heads	3 months (09/01/06) Completed	DSS Program Manager and Probation Program Manager
1.2.3 Implementation of standardized 241.1 protocol reports by both departments	4 months (10/01/06) Completed	Social workers and Probation Officers

2007 SIP Update In progress as stated above.

Improvement Goal 2.0
Develop program that would track information such as, Health and Education passport, mental health assessments, placement history, family demographics, and contact history.

Strategy 2. 1	**Strategy Rationale**
Research what programs other counties have in place to track pertinent information needed to report to the court.	Researching what programs other counties are using will allow us to create a better system of tracking information so that the information is readily available to any Probation staff that needs to access the information.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
2.1.1 Research what programs other counties are using to track information on Probation children	2 months (08/01/06) (12/31/07)	Probation Assistant
2.1.2 Draft proposal for program that would meet county Probation Department needs and review at Department meeting	4 to 5 months (10/01/06 to 11/01/06) (02/28/08)	Probation Program Manager
2.1.3 Revisions made and reviewed for approval by Department head	6 months (12/01/06) (04/30/08)	Probation Program Manager
2.1.4 Implement use of new program to track information on Probation children	12 to 18 months (06/01/07 to 12/01/07) (12/31/08)	Probation Officer III, Probation Officer and Probation Assistant

2007 SIP Update Due to lack of funding this SIP strategy has not been completed. Although there is no current program, staff does document this information in the child's case file.