



CDSS

JOHN A. WAGNER
DIRECTOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
744 P Street • Sacramento, CA 95814 • www.cdss.ca.gov



ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER
GOVERNOR

December 30, 2008

Mary Sawicki, Deputy Director
Calaveras County
Calaveras Works and Human Services Agency
509 E. St. Charles Street
San Andres, CA 95249

Dear Ms. Sawicki:

The purpose of this letter is to approve Calaveras County's 3 year System Improvement Plan (SIP) submitted to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) on August 15, 2008, as part of the California Child and Family Services Review (C-CFSR).

The Children's Services Outcomes & Accountability Bureau (CSOAB) has conducted an analysis of Calaveras Quarterly County Data Reports and SIP. At this time, we concur with the direction and the overall strategies for improvement. We also concur with the county's prioritization of activities for this upcoming SIP period.

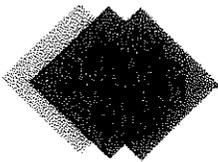
On a quarterly basis, Calaveras County will continue to be contacted by Nina Dyba, MSW, your CSOAB consultant, to obtain updates on SIP implementation and county performance on all of the outcome indicators. In the event that the Quarterly County Data Report indicates a negative data trend or insufficient progress in any of the outcome indicators, including those not contained within the SIP, CDSS will contact the county to request an amendment to the SIP.

I appreciate Calaveras' commitment to the C-CFSR process and to continuous improvement of outcomes for children and families. Should you have any questions, please contact Nina Dyba at (916) 651-8150, or send an email to: chldserv@dss.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

LINDA HOCKMAN, Bureau Chief
Outcomes & Accountability Bureau

c: Michael Krietch, Assistant Deputy Chief Probation Officer



Calaveras Works and Human Services Agency

509 East St. Charles Street • San Andreas, CA 95249

Mary Sawicki, Director

Phone (209) 754-6452

Fax (209) 754-3293

October 29, 2008

RECEIVED OCT 30 2008

State of California - Department of Social Services
744 P Street, MS 8-12-90
Sacramento, CA. 95814

Attention: Nina Dyba, Program Consultant
Children and Family Services Operations and Evaluations

SUBJECT: Calaveras County System Improvement Plan (SIP)

Enclosed is the Calaveras County SIP, which has been signed by the Calaveras County Board of Supervisors Chair, the Director of Calaveras Works and Human Services Agency, and the Chief of Probation. Enclosed also is the Resolution from the Calaveras County Board of Supervisors.

Thank you for your patience in getting this to you. Please contact me if you need any further information.

Sincerely,

Mikey Habbestad
Services Program Manager
209-754-6615
Mikey.Habbestad@cws.state.ca.us

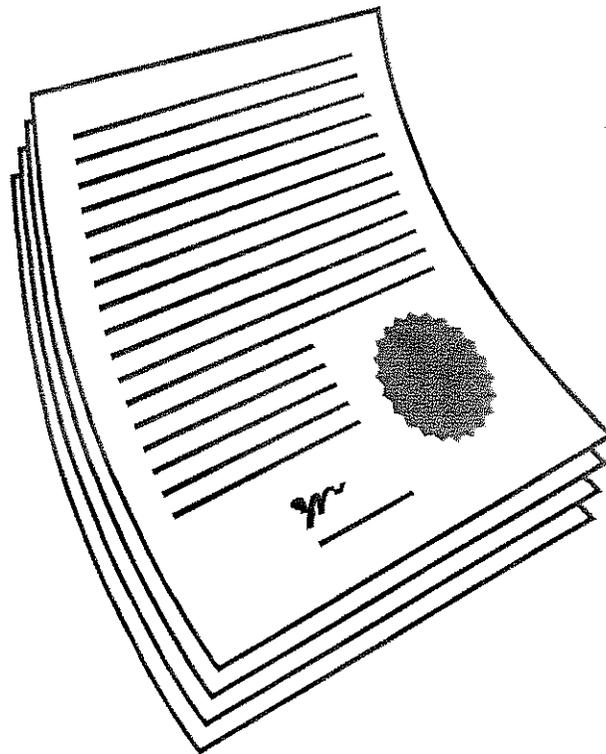
Our Mission . . .

To create and provide services to individuals and families in Calaveras County that enrich and improve their quality of life.

California Child and Family Services Review

Calaveras County System Improvement Plan

May 3, 2008 – May 2, 2011



4. SIP Plan Components

SIP Cover Sheet

California's Child and Family Services Review System Improvement Plan	
County:	Calaveras
Responsible County Child Welfare Agency:	Calaveras Works and Human Services Agency
Period of Plan:	July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2011
Period of Outcomes Data:	Quarter ending March 31, 2008
Date Submitted:	
County Contact Person for County System Improvement Plan	
Name:	Mikey Habbestad
Title:	Program Manager
Address:	509 E. St. Charles Street, San Andreas, CA 95249
Phone/Email	(209) 754-6615 / Mikey.Habbestad@cws.state.ca.us
Submitted by each agency for the children under its care	
Submitted by:	County Child Welfare Agency Director (Lead Agency)
Name:	Mary Sawicki
Signature:	<i>Mary Sawicki</i>
Submitted by:	County Chief Probation Officer
Name:	Michael Kriletich
Signature:	<i>Michael Kriletich</i>

County System Improvement Plan

1. Identify Local Planning Bodies

Purpose: The purpose of this section is to demonstrate to CDSS the collaborative and planning relationships the county child welfare agency engaged for the Self-Assessment and SIP processes.

Adele Baroni	Supervisor, Calaveras Works and Human Services Agency, Employment Services
Andrea Luka	Manager, CDSS Adoptions District Office
Ann Dasch	Special Education Teacher, Calaveras High School
Arleen Garland	Former Program Director, Human Resource Council - Child Care Resources
Barbara Bernstein	Coordinator, Calaveras County Office of Education, Foster Youth Services
Colleen Tracy	Director, Calaveras County Public Health Department
Karen Pekarcik	Executive Director, First 5 – Calaveras
Kathryn Eustis	Program Director, Calaveras Youth Mentoring Program
Marcie Jo Caywood	Public Health Nurse, Calaveras County Public Health Department
Mary Sawicki	Director, Calaveras Works and Human Services Agency
Michael Kriletich	Probation Chief, Calaveras County Probation Department
Mike Carll	Parent Partner, Children's System of Care
Rick DiBasilio	Deputy, Calaveras County Sheriff's Department / Foster Parent
Rita Downs	Director, Calaveras County Behavioral Health Services, Mental Health Department
Robin Bunch	Public Health Nurse and Prevent Child Abuse Council Chairperson
Sandy Morrill	Deputy Director, Calaveras Works and Human Services Agency
Sherrie Sperry	Deputy Probation Officer, Calaveras County Juvenile Probation Department
Tammy Beilstein	Parent / Consumer
Terri Hall	Deputy Probation Chief, Calaveras County Probation Department

Calaveras Works and Human Services Agency Children's Services staff:

Alisa Gehrke, Supervisor
Alisha Dozier, Social Worker I
Dave Godzina, Supervisor
David Hoos, Social Worker III
Debbie Schifflea, Social Worker II
Jeanette O'Brien, Staff Services Analyst
Justin Simko, Social Worker III
Karen Karam, Social Worker III
Kristy Kardas, Social Worker I
Michelle Brown, Social Worker III
Mikey Habbestad, Program Manager
Sharon Connell, Social Worker III
Tamara Threet, Social Worker I
Tami Keck, Social Worker II
Teresa Dominguez, Social Worker III

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, COUNTY OF CALAVERAS

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

September 9, 2008

(Date)

RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION APPROVING THE CALAVERAS COUNTY CHILD
WELFARE SERVICES SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR MAY 3, 2008
THROUGH MAY 2, 2011.

08-204

WHEREAS, AB 636 Child Welfare Services Outcome and Accountability System is a requirement for counties to measure their child welfare program in performance outcomes in Safety, Permanence and Child and Family Well-Being, and

WHEREAS, the Calaveras Works and Human Services Agency completed in May of 2008 a Self-Assessment of its own Child Welfare Services program including Probation youth; and

WHEREAS, Calaveras Works and Human Services Agency collaborated with their local partners and Calaveras County Probation Department to develop the Calaveras County Child Welfare Services System Improvement Plan to establish program priorities and to define the actions steps necessary to achieve improvements and establish increases in performance within the term of the plan.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Calaveras County Board of Supervisors approves the May 3, 2008 through May 2, 2011 Calaveras County Child Welfare Services System Improvement Plan

ON A MOTION by Supervisor Claudino, seconded by Supervisor Thomas the foregoing Resolution was duly passed and adopted by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Calaveras, State of California, this 9th day of September 2008 by the following vote:

AYES: Supervisors Claudino, Wilensky, Callaway, Tryon and Thomas

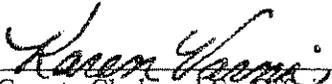
NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None


Chair, Board of Supervisors

ATTEST:


County Clerk and Ex-Officio Clerk
Of the Board of Supervisors of the
County of Calaveras, California

2. Share Findings that Support Qualitative Change

Purpose: CDSS would like to learn about the data collection that you performed in the Self-Assessment that assisted with your analysis of qualitative practices such as customer service, family assessment, service delivery, case planning, etc. This is the section to share findings from client and service provider focus groups, surveys, interviews, and other data collection mechanisms. This section will also include the findings and analysis of the PQCR.

Calaveras County's Peer Quality Case Review (PQCR) was conducted between April 30, 2007 through May 4, 2007. The focus for Children's Services was on "Foster Care Re-Entry". The focus for Probation was "Timely Reunification and Case Planning". The recommendations from the PQCR are summarized here:

CHILDREN'S SERVICES RECOMMENDATIONS

Practice Change Recommendations

The recommendations included re-assigning the social worker who was assigned during the successful family reunification phase to offer assistance to the family when there is a call of concern of a family subsequent to reunification and consider ways to increase the number of contacts and visits between the child and the family for Family Reunification (FR) cases.

Training Needs

Although a formalized in-house training has since been development, interviewees agreed at the time that more training needed to be available in the county and within the CWHSA itself.

System and Policy Changes

Recommendations in this area included the following:

- Work with Mental Health to provide more evidenced based practices for Children's Services families (*we are working closely with Behavioral Health Services' (BHS) Mental Health Department on a number of EBP items, including Wraparound Services and parent education programs such as the Triple P Program and Parent Child Interactive Therapy (PCIT)*),
- Re-instate Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) (*currently under development*),
- Partner with agencies to develop more in-home services for parenting (*we are exploring options to offer this service through our Agency*),
- Adopt Family-to-Family initiatives (*one such initiative is included in this SIP below*),
- Offer Wraparound services (*again, this is currently in development with BHS and Juvenile Probation*),
- Meet with the foster family agencies to develop better partnerships and to be on common ground about expectations of both agencies (including working with them to develop and train their foster families to better meet the needs of Children's Services children and families and working with them to recruit more specialized foster placements) (*included in this SIP below*),
- Offer after-care services for families who reunify (*included in this SIP below*),
- Change the current policy for transferring cases by having the Continuing social worker work the case with the Emergency Response social worker,
- Update the Children's Services Policy and Practices manual as needed (*currently underway*),

- Work with the legal community on a common understanding and procedure for accessing psychotropic medication (*training has since been provided*),
- Continue to work on recruitment and retention of social workers (*Much effort has been given in this area. A 12-week internal training program was developed and delivered during the past year, as well as an Agency-wide reorganization which included social work staff salary increases to current market salaries. These two major changes have both helped with social worker stability. There have not been any additional social worker staff or recruitments since August 2007.*),
- Enhance communication and access to services through the Regional Center via a designated interagency liaison (*a CWHSA staff member is on the Mountain Valley Regional Center Advisory Board*),
- Partner with community based organizations to explore the development of a Parent Child Interactive Therapy (PCIT) (*again, this is currently in development with BHS*), and
- Develop a system for the strategic implementation of practices; including ongoing monitoring, evaluation and an improvement process for new programs and initiatives developed and implemented.

State Technical Assistance

Recommendations included more funding for low income housing, improving FR timeline constraints, improving access to mental health services for children placed out of County, and improving services and transitions for 18 year olds who age out of system.

Resource Issues

The following were identified as resource needs:

- Need better public transportation,
- Need more low-income housing,
- Develop transitional housing programs for youth (*currently under development*),
- Develop mediation programs,
- Develop parenting skills training to parents of teens (*currently under development*),
- Need evening hours for appointments, classes from services providers (*BHS has their clinic open until 8:00 p.m. once a week, and Parent Education and Parent Support groups are offered in the evenings in various locations*),
- Consider developing in-house service providers for in-home services, rather than having to rely on other agencies (*currently being considered*),
- Continue to develop Family Preservation Services (*in place*).

PROBATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Practice

Recommendations included utilizing a strengths-based/home-based approach in lieu of foster care, and working with Wraparound staff to aggressively develop local programs for youth (*currently under development*).

Training Needs

Recommendations included a strengths based/home based approaches to working with probation youth and families, use collaborative, team building and educational training between Probation Officers and service providers, and collaborative, team building, education and expectations training between Probation (perhaps include Children's Services) and the legal community so that all understand each other's policies and practices.

System and Policy Changes

Recommendations in this area included the following:

- Work with human resources on recruitment and retention of Probation Officers. Consider on-going hiring so that attrition does not burn out the staff. Work to attract qualified high level candidates. Explore ways to improve pay and benefits.
- Work with the community to seek grants to expand services, particularly for alcohol and drug challenges.
- Improve outreach for foster care homes.
- Work with the Judge/legislature to eliminate unfunded court mandates.
- Pursue the construction of a Juvenile Hall.
- Consider ways of developing local care providers for probation youth including foster homes and group homes.

State Technical Assistance

Recommendations in this area included develop better Medi-Cal funding for children placed out of county (particularly to access mental health services) and assist the County with developing local care providers for probation youth including foster homes and group homes.

Resource Issues

The following were identified as resource needs:

- Improve staffing/funding for Wraparound.
- Improve local treatment options.
- Increase availability of in-home services.
- Offer anger management counseling.

Additionally, Calaveras County has a Citizen's Review Panel (CRP), which also chose to focus on the subject of Foster Care Re-Entry. The CRP recommended the following in the annual report that was submitted to CDSS in November of 2007. The recommendations included:

1. Policies and Procedures:

The Policy and Procedures sub-committee recommended that the CWHSA continue to update their written internal Policies and Procedures (*this effort is currently underway*). The group also recommended the State Policies and Procedures be considered for update as well (*this effort is currently underway as well*).

The CWHSA was in the process of providing a 12 week in-house training program for all social workers as recommended by the PQCR. The sub-committee recommends that CWHSA continue to monitor the trainings effectiveness, and continue to make any needed modifications that are identified (*the next round of training is scheduled to begin in September 2008*).

2. Case Review

The Case Review sub-committee recommended that CWHSA consider offering Parent-Partner services to families (*BHS has been very successful in this area and there doesn't appear to be a need for CWHSA to hire our own at this time*).

The sub-committee also recommended families continue to be included in the development of their case plan and that the case plan is reviewed several times to assure families understand what is expected of them (*a concerted effort has been made in this area*).

3. Focus Groups

The Focus Groups sub-committee recommended CWHSA review the use of Family Group Decision Making services; parents, providers and some social workers all felt the service was valuable and saw it as a non-threatening win-win for everyone (*currently under development*).

The sub-committee further recommended that CWHSA and community service providers continue to work and support families after reunification, when the children are back in the home and extra support is needed (*this element is included in this SIP below*).

In addition, we utilized Business Objects and SafeMeasures® to rebut or substantiate some of the statistical data provided on our quarterly data reports.

3. Attach the Summary Assessment (Section V) of the Self-Assessment.

SUMMARY ASSESSMENT

C-CFSR OUTCOMES

1. *Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.*
2. *Children are maintained safely in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.*
3. *Children have permanency and stability in their living situations without increasing reentry to foster care.*
4. *The family relationships and connections of the children served by the CWS will be preserved, as appropriate.*
5. *Children receive services adequate to their physical, emotional and mental health needs.*
6. *Children receive services appropriate to their educational needs.*
7. *Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.*
8. *Youth emancipating from foster care are prepared to transition to adulthood.*

A. Discussion of System Strengths and Areas Needing Improvements

In summary, according to our most recent Quarterly Data Report (April 2008), we are meeting and/or exceeding the Federal standards/goals thresholds in the following measures:

- The number of children experiencing maltreatment in foster care;
- The number of children reunified within 12 months;
- The number of children re-entering foster care following reunification;
- The number of children declared Legally Free for adoption within 6 months of ending reunification;
- The number of children exiting to permanency (other than emancipation) after being Legally Freed for adoption;
- Timely social worker immediate response compliance (State measure only);
- Timely social worker 10-day response compliance (State measure only); and
- Timely social worker monthly visits with children (State measure only).

According to this Quarterly Data Report, we are not meeting the Federal standards/goals thresholds in the following measures:

- The number of children experiencing recurrence of maltreatment;
- Median number of months to reunification;
- The number of children adopted within 24 months of entering foster care;

- The median number of months to adoption finalization;
- The number of children in foster care for 17 continuous months or longer who were then adopted within 12 months;
- The number of children adopted within 12 months of being declared Legally Free for adoption;
- The number of children exiting to permanency within 24 months of entering foster care; and
- The number of children with less than 3 out of home care placements.

B. Areas for further exploration through the Peer Quality Case Review (PQCR)

The three target areas that we see as needing the most improvement in Children's Services are as follows:

1. Foster Care Re-entry

Although our most recent statistic in this area is slightly below the national standard/goal, we welcome the opportunity to continue to work on some of the recommendations that were made during our PQCR, and by the CRP. Further, we anticipate that our newly developed Family Preservation program, as well as implementing Wraparound Services, re-implementing FGDM/TDM, and our Behavioral Health Services' newly developed perinatal drug treatment program, the number of children re-entering foster care will continue to decline.

2. Placement Stability

We have consistently struggled in this area and would like to see all of our children with less out-of-home placement moves. In an effort to reduce the number of placement moves, we plan to strategize solutions to further prioritize placing children with relatives, implementing Wraparound Services and re-implementing FGDM/Team Decision Making (TDM).

3. Timely adoptions

Although we do not have primary responsibility for adoptions services here in Calaveras County, we should be able to strategize some potential suggestions and/or solutions with our adoptions partners to help increase the number of children adopted within 24 months of entering foster care, and the number of children adopted within 12 months of being declared Legally Free for adoption.

SIP Narrative

Foster Care Re-Entry

Calaveras County's rate of Re-entry into Foster Care following reunification has decreased, as follows:

Twelve-month review period	Percentage	% Increase / Decrease
7/1/2004-6/30/2005	12.0%	N/A
10/1/2004-9/30/2005	13.0%	+1.0%
1/1/2005-12/31/2005	17.1%	+4.1%
4/1/2005-3/31/2006	9.1%	-8.0%
7/1/2005-6/30/2006	9.4%	+0.3%
10/1/2005-9/30/2006	12.1%	+2.7%
1/1/2006-12/31/2006	11.9%	-0.2%
	Total over-all change	-0.1%

Data analysis has been conducted in an effort to understand why the re-entry rate into foster care has essentially, remained the same. It is typical that in counties with small caseload sizes, any slight variation in caseload size can exponentially affect the reported data. The total open cases for their respective, corresponding time periods were as follows: 107, 102, 99, 93, 95, 100, and 119 resulting in the average caseload size of 102. There was no significant decrease or increase in caseload size to account for remarkable variations in the data. The time period of 4/1/2005 to 5/31/2006 had a -8.0% decrease in re-entry into foster care which also correlates with the lowest reported caseload size of 93.

The total number of children who re-entered foster care within twelve months of discharge was 12 for the entire period of analysis, (7/1/2004 to 12/31/2006). The corresponding breakdown for each respective time period is as follows: 6, 6, 6, 2, 3, 4, and 5. Each of these time periods had cases that overlapped. All six of the cases overlapped during each of the first three time periods. During the remaining time periods, two cases overlapped with two additional cases overlapping the final two time periods.

An analysis of the cases that re-entered explains that during the first three time periods, the re-entry of 5/6 or 83.3% was one sibling group. A demographic breakdown of the families who re-entered during this time period include: One family in each of the towns of West Point, Valley Springs, and Copperopolis. The most significant re-entry rates occurred in the town of San Andreas that included a total of 3 families. The age spectrum of the children ranged from ages 1 to age 15 with the median age of 7. There was no significance in re-entry as to gender. Disproportionality was also not significant in the re-entry cases, in fact 100% of the re-entry cases were reported to be Caucasian.

Of the twelve cases that were reviewed, two of the cases had re-entered foster care following their transfer to another county. Both of these cases were involved in Family Reunification Services upon transfer to another county. One large family, 5/12 cases, re-entered into foster care following initial case closure. The remaining families had re-entered into foster care

during the Family Maintenance Services case component. Each of these families had re-entered between 4 and 8 months of Family Maintenance Services. An analysis was conducted as to factors influencing the re-entry into foster care. In all but one case, substance use by the parent was the primary factor influencing re-entry into foster care. The second most prevalent factor was the child's behavior, including substance use by the child that occurred in 2 cases. The last factor that occurred in 1 case was the mental health issues of the parent.

During the entire period of analysis, (7/1/2004 to 12/31/2006), there were a total of 10 social workers (83%) and 1 supervisor (50%) who vacated their positions. Among the 12 cases that re-entered into foster care, there were a total of 5 social workers (42%) who vacated their positions during the period of analysis accounting for 8/12 or 66.7%. The number of social workers assigned to the twelve cases ranged between 1 and 6 with the average number of social workers at 4.4.

Outcome/Systemic Factor: Rate of Re-Entry into Foster Care following Reunification

County's Current Performance:

According to the April 2008 report for the third quarter of 2007, our most recent performance indicates that our re-entry rate into foster care has remained virtually unchanged at 12.1%. We recognize that there is a need for collaboration between community agencies and the need for enhanced post reunification services.

Improvement Goal 1.0.

The rate of Re-Entry into foster care following Reunification will be reduced.

Strategy 1. 1

Implement Family Preservation Services within three months of the initiation of Family Maintenance Services.

Strategy Rationale

Preliminary analysis shows that the majority of cases re-entered into foster care during the Family Maintenance services stage of the case within the range of 4 to 8 months. If intensive services are provided within three months of the child returning to the care of the parents under family maintenance services, re-entry into foster care will be reduced.

Milestone	1.1.1 Social workers will receive necessary ongoing training as to Structured Decision Making and the Family Preservation Process.	Timeframe	Ongoing	Assigned to	All Children's Services social workers
	1.1.2 Social Workers will routinely complete necessary out-of-home Reunification Re-assessments through Structured Decision Making process to determine if a child may be safely returned to the care of their family.		6 months (10/1/2008)		All Children's Services social workers
	1.1.3 A formalized referral to the Family Preservation program will be completed and routinely utilized by Social Work staff.		9 months (1/1/2009)		All Children's Services social workers

	1.1.4 All Families will receive Family Preservation services to begin within the first 90 days of the initiation of Family Maintenance Services.		12 months (4/30/2009)		All Children's Services social workers
Strategy 1. 2 Social Workers will be outstationed at schools with the highest rates of re-entry into foster care.			Strategy Rationale Preliminary analysis shows that there are distinct demographic areas within Calaveras County that have high rates of re-entry into foster care. An outstationed social worker is available to resolve issues and offer preventative services and therefore, reduce the risk that a child will re-enter into foster care.		
Milestone	1.2.1 Identify the target age and geographic location with the highest rate of re-entry into foster care.	Timeframe	6 months (10/1/2008)	Assigned to	Services Program Manager, Children's Services Supervisors
	1.2.2 Arrange an agreement between CWHSA and the school(s) where the identified target population attends.		9 months (1/1/2009)		Services Program Manager, Children's Services Supervisors, Services Staff Analyst
	1.2.3. Social Workers and school personnel at the identified school will receive necessary training as to the social worker's duties and responsibilities.		12 months (4/30/2009)		Services Program Manager, Children's Services Supervisors, All Children's Services Social Workers
	1.2.4 Arrange and maintain weekly social worker "office hours" at the identified school(s) in conjunction with the Differential Response program.		18 months (1/1/2010)		Services Program Manager, Children's Services Supervisors
	1.2.5 Evaluate the impact of the outstationed social worker(s) on the rate of re-entry into foster care in the target population.		3 years (5/1/2011)		Services Program Manager, Children's Services Supervisors

<p>Strategy 1.3 Collaborative Programs (such as Team Decision Making (TDM), Family Group Decision Making (FGDM), Wraparound Services, Differential Response (DR), Beyond Talking and Linkages); will be utilized to assist families with coordinating post-reunification services with multiple agencies.</p>	<p>Strategy Rationale Through a collaborative approach, multiple agencies can coordinate efforts to provide non-duplicative services. These agencies will also be responsible for meeting the needs of the family post reunification. It is through this multi-disciplinary effort that service providers will engage families following case closure and therefore reduce the rate of re-entry into foster care.</p>
--	--

Milestone	<p>1.3.1 Social Worker assigned to lead Team Decision Making (TDM) and Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) will be identified and receive applicable training.</p>	Timeframe	<p>9 months (1/1/2009)</p>	Assigned to	<p>Services Program Manager, Children's Services Supervisors, All Children's Services Social Workers</p>
	<p>1.3.2 All Children's Social Workers and applicable Community Agencies will receive the necessary training as to applicable collaborative programs that are available to families.</p>		<p>12 months (4/30/2009)</p>		<p>Services Program Manager, Children's Services Supervisors, All Children's Services Social Workers</p>
	<p>1.3.3 Team Decision Making (TDM) and Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) will be implemented and regularly utilized in casework practice.</p>		<p>18 months (1/1/2010)</p>		<p>Services Program Manager, Children's Services Supervisors, All Children's Services Social Workers</p>
	<p>1.3.4 Families will be routinely referred for collaborative services at least 90 days prior to case closure to ensure continuity of care through post-reunification services upon exit from the child welfare system.</p>		<p>3 years (5/1/2011)</p>		<p>All Children's Services Social Workers</p>

Describe any additional systemic factors needing to be addressed that support the improvement plan goals.
 There are current ongoing efforts in the use and the support of community-based service organizations (CBSOs) in the provision of services. Within the provision of services, there is the trend of a 'team approach' between recipients of services, the service providers, and Children's Services who are all working in tandem to achieve the goal of the protection of children. One organization that is often underutilized in the provision of services and the prevention of child maltreatment includes the educational system. Through the coordination and utilization of services within the already existing parameters of the educational system and Child Welfare System should provide the ideal marriage for the prevention of re-entry into foster care.

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

For each of the above listed strategies there is the common need for ongoing training as to the utilization of collaborative services both within Children's Services and CBSOs. There also appears to be a need for training as to the application of aspects learned into casework practice. Since prevention and post reunification services have been identified as the most significant factors that contribute to the rate of re-entry into foster care, training is needed in both arenas.

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

Many of the identified strategies rely on the premise of collaborative services and the utilization of CBSOs to reduce the rate of re-entry into foster care and therefore achieve this improvement goal. Close collaboration with our Behavioral Health Services – Mental Health Department and Juvenile Probation Department (among others) will be crucial in order to achieve success in our Wraparound Program. Additionally, although collaborative programs such as Linkages, Beyond Talking, and the Multi-Disciplinary Team have been functioning in Calaveras County for a significant period of time, a community partnership with the education system is underutilized and often forgotten. It is through these newly identified community partners that will embrace a family, provide for their needs, and reduce the rate of re-entry into foster care.

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

Among the regulatory or statutory changes that are needed to support the accomplishment of reducing the rate of reduction into foster care is the need to relax privacy/confidentiality laws and allow for key community partners, particularly in the field of health care, to efficiently partner with other service providers.

Placement Stability

Calaveras County's placement stability rate (the number of children with 1-2 placements) has increased from the baseline of 82% for children placed less than 12 months and decreased from 55% of all children in care*, as follows:

For children placed between 8 days and 12 months:

Twelve-month review period	Percentage	% Increase / Decrease
7/1/2004 - 6/30/2005	69.0%	- 13.0%
10/1/2004 - 9/30/2005	77.8%	+ 8.8%
1/1/2005 - 12/31/2005	71.4%	- 6.4%
4/1/2005 - 3/31/2006	72.1%	+ 0.7%
7/1/2005 - 6/30/2006	55.9%	- 16.2%
10/1/2005 - 9/30/2006	60.9%	+ 5.0%
1/1/2006 - 12/31/2006	70.8%	- 9.9%
4/1/2006 - 3/31/2007	74.2%	+ 3.4%
7/1/2006 - 6/30/2007	73.8%	- 0.4%
10/1/2006 - 9/30/2007	84.6%	+ 10.8%
	Total over-all change	+ 2.6%

For children in out-of-home placement between 12 months and 24 months:

Twelve-month review period	Percentage	% Increase / Decrease
7/1/2004 - 6/30/2005	42.4%	- 12.6% *
10/1/2004 - 9/30/2005	46.4%	+ 4.0%
1/1/2005 - 12/31/2005	53.6%	+ 7.2%
4/1/2005 - 3/31/2006	51.7%	- 1.9%
7/1/2005 - 6/30/2006	48.5%	- 3.2%
10/1/2005 - 9/30/2006	41.4%	- 7.1%
1/1/2006 - 12/31/2006	36.7%	- 4.7%
4/1/2006 - 3/31/2007	44.4%	+ 7.7%
7/1/2006 - 6/30/2007	42.3%	- 2.1%
10/1/2006 - 9/30/2007	53.3%	+ 11.0%
	Total over-all change	- 1.7% *

For children in out-of-home care at least 24 months:

Twelve-month review period	Percentage	% Increase / Decrease
7/1/2004 - 6/30/2005	27.7%	- 27.3% *
10/1/2004 - 9/30/2005	25.3%	- 2.4%
1/1/2005 - 12/31/2005	26.5%	+ 1.2%

4/1/2005 - 3/31/2006	25.0%	- 1.5%
7/1/2005 - 6/30/2006	25.4%	+ 0.4%
10/1/2005 - 9/30/2006	33.3%	+ 7.9%
1/1/2006 - 12/31/2006	29.2%	- 4.1%
4/1/2006 – 3/31/2007	31.4%	- 2.2%
7/1/2006 – 6/30/2007	34.8%	+ 3.4%
10/1/2006 – 9/30/2007	38.1%	+ 3.3%
	Total over-all change	- 16.9% *

** Note that the baseline figures were only provided for two categories – the number of children placed less than 12 months, and the number of children placed for more than 12 months. The newest statistics now separate the number of children placed for more than 12 months into two categories – the number of children placed between 12 and 24 months, and the number of children placed for more than 24 months.*

Data analysis has been conducted in an effort to better understand these placement stability statistics. Of the children placed between 8 days and 12 months, there was a high of 30 children out of a total 70 placed in out-of-home care (42.9%) who experienced more than 2 placements in that timeframe ending on 6/30/2006. According to SafeMeasures®, we had a low of 3 children out of a total 45 placed in out-of-home care (6.7%) who experienced more than 2 placements in the 8 days to 12 months timeframe. This is the most recent statistic available. The 3 children were moved for various reasons. One child experienced a total of 3 placements. He was initially placed in an Emergency Shelter placement, then moved to a Non-Related Extended Family Member with his older sister, but then eventually moved to a higher level placement (through a foster family agency) due to his own negative behaviors. The other two children are older teens. One is 15-years-old and has had 4 placements due to running away. The other child is 16-years-old and has had a total of 6 placements, also due to running away.

Of the children in placement between 12 and 24 months, we had a high of 19 out of 28 children (67.9%) with more than 2 placements during the period ending 12/31/2006. We currently have a low of 14 out of 31 children (45.2%) with more than 2 placements during the period ending 3/31/2008, the most recent statistic available. Of these 14 children, 11 have had a total of 3 placements. One child has had 4 placements, one child has had 5 placements, and one child has had 8 placements.

Of the children in placement for longer than 24 months, we had a high of 56 of 77 children (72.7%) with more than 2 placements for the period ending 6/30/2005, and a low of 21 out of 35 children (60%) with more than 2 placements for the period ending 12/31/2007. Of these children, there was an average of 7.6 placements, with a median of 9. These children were in placement ranging between 3 years and 9 years.

Of all children in placement since 7/1/2004, the placement changes ranged from “positive” reasons (placement with relative or NREFM, lower level of care, adoption agreement signed, placed with siblings, moved from emergency shelter, placed in

transitional housing program, guardian requesting payment) to "negative" reasons (child ran away from placement, child's behavior, complaint on foster home, 7 day notice from foster parents/foster family agency, higher level of care required, child incarcerated) to reasons that may be corrected with better data entry (child is not physically moved, but placement type changes due to foster parent adopting, or becoming Legal Guardian, or moving, or switching foster family agency, or inter-county transfer).

Outcome/Systemic Factor: Placement Stability					
County's Current Performance: According to the April 2008 report for the 3 rd quarter of 2007 (10/1/2006 to 9/30/2007), our most recent performance indicates that our placement stability rate for children placed less than twelve months has increased to 84.6%, children placed between twelve and twenty-four months has increased to 53.3%, and children placed more than twenty-four months has increased to 38.1%. Despite improvement, we recognize that there is still a need for reducing the number of out-of-home placement for our foster children.					
Improvement Goal 2.0. The number of placement changes for Calaveras County's foster children will be reduced.					
Strategy 2. 1 Through collaboration with various community partner agencies, provide and/or enhance training for our Substitute Care Providers (SCPs).		Strategy Rationale If our SCPs are given the proper training and support, the number of notices to move children will be reduced.			
Milestone	2.1.1 Conduct analysis of the foster children who are currently in out-of-home placements to determine what the "typical" foster child looks like in Calaveras County.	Timeframe	6 months (10/01/2008)	Assigned to	Services Program Manager
	2.1.2 Continue to work with the Columbia College Foster/Kin Advisory Board to develop a series of quarterly SCP trainings, the first of which will be a "Foster Care 101" type of training on what to expect from the "typical" foster child in Calaveras County.		6 months to 3 years (10/01/2008 to 4/30/2011)		Columbia College Foster/Kin Advisory Board, All Children's Services social workers, Local Foster Family Agency (FFA) social workers
	2.1.3 Contact the substitute care providers and local FFA staff to receive the series of foster care trainings on a quarterly basis.		6 months to 3 years (10/01/2008 to 4/30/2011)		Columbia College Foster/Kin Advisory Board, All Children's Services social workers, Local Foster Family Agency (FFA) social workers
Strategy 2. 2 Social Workers will continue to inquire about any potential relative and Non-Related Extended Family Member (NREFM) placement		Strategy Rationale Preliminary analysis shows that SCPs who are relatives are less likely to ask for the children in their care to be moved than non-related foster			

possibilities from the parents and children that we are working with.		parents. Additionally, Emergency Response social workers are accustomed to inquiring about potential relative and NREFM placements than are Continuing social workers.			
Milestone	2.2.1 Include inquiring about potential relative and NREFM placements on the case check lists.	Timeframe	6 months (10/1/2008)	Assigned to	All Children's Services social workers
	2.2.2 If placement cannot be made with any identified relatives, then at least include them in the child's visitation plan.		6 months (10/1/2008)		All Children's Services social workers
	2.2.3 Inquire from all identified relatives that are located about any other relatives with whom the children can potentially be placed.		6 months (10/1/2008)		All Children's Services social workers
Strategy 2. 3 Work more closely with the SCPs and applicable FFAs.		Strategy Rationale Keeping each other alerted to what is going on with our foster children's placements will help identify potential placement issues before notices to move foster children are given.			
Milestone	2.3.1 Social workers will meet with the SCPs in person, in the placement home, at least once per month. If in-person contact cannot be made, the social workers will at least contact the SCPs via telephone. Telephone contact in lieu of in-person contact will only occur at a maximum of once every 3 months.	Timeframe	6 months (10/1/2008)	Assigned to	All Children's Services social workers
	2.3.2 If placement issues are identified, the social worker will meet with all parties involved in the issue individually, and then as a collective group to discuss the issue and identify possible solutions. The gathering may be held informally or through a formal Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) or Team Decision Making (TDM) meeting.		9 months (1/1/2009)		All Children's Services social workers, FGDM/TDM social worker

	2.3.3 If the placement cannot be salvaged, the social worker will make arrangements for the child being moved to meet with the proposed new SCPs prior to the formal move taking place so that the social worker, foster child and SCPs can gauge if the new placement is going to be a good fit.		9 months (1/1/2009)		All Children's Services social workers
Milestone	2.3.4 Maintain a binder of the strengths of the foster parents that we have placed children with so that we can better tailor the placement.	Timeframe	9 months (1/1/2009)	Assigned to	All Children's Services social workers
	2.3.5 Work with the Columbia College Foster/Kin Advisory Board and local FFAs to develop a "foster parent support group".		12 months (5/1/2009)		Children's Services social worker assigned to the Columbia College Foster/Kin Advisory Board
	2.3.6 Encourage local FFAs to recruit and train foster parents in Calaveras County to become Family to Family foster homes.		12 months (5/1/2009)		Services Program Manager, Children's Services Supervisors
	2.3.7 Refer foster youth to local mentoring programs to help the child adjust to their out-of-home placement as needed.		6 months (10/1/2008)		All Children's Services social workers

Describe any additional systemic factors needing to be addressed that support the improvement plan goals.

Currently, foster parents who are certified through a FFA are required to receive a certain number of training hours annually in order to have children placed in their homes. They are provided with a menu of topics to choose from. Additionally, the only annual training that is required for relatives/NREFMs to continue to have children placed in their homes happens during the annual placement assessments. Therefore, we can only encourage all of the Calaveras County foster parents and relative/NREFM SCPs to attend the series of quarterly trainings. We mandate their attendance.

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

We envision the series of quarterly SCP training will also include our Children's Services social workers as well as the local FFA social workers. We have also identified various FFA training topics for our staff, such as what rules are theirs versus what is governed through Community Care Licensing (for example, alone time for older teens).

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

The CWHSA does not perform foster family licensing functions, and as a result there are very few county licensed foster homes. We will be

relying heavily on our FFA partners, since virtually all of our non Relative/NREFM placements are through FFAs. We will also need to continue working closely with the Columbia College Foster/Kin Advisory Board. Additionally, the Calaveras County Behavioral Health Services already offers monthly "Parents Unplugged" support groups for parents (including foster parents) of children with serious behavioral difficulties. The Parent Partner suggested that we could use this forum for the proposed foster parent support group meetings.

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

None known at this time.

Timely Adoptions

Calaveras County's rate of timely adoptions has decreased as follows:

Adoption within 24 months:

Twelve month review-period	Percentage	% Increase / Decrease
01/01/2005 – 12/31/2005	0.00%	0.00
01/01/2006 – 12/31/2006	0.33%	-40.0%
04/01//2006- 03/31/2007	22.2%	-60.0%
07/01/2006-06/30/2007	25.0%	-55.0%
10/01/2006-09/30/2007	25.0%	-55.0%
	Total over-all change	-2.0 %

Adoption within 12 months:

Twelve month review-period	Percentage	% Increase / Decrease
01/01/2005 – 12/31/2005	0.00%	0.00
01/01/2006 – 12/31/2006	0.00%	-0.00%
04/01//2006- 03/31/2007	22.2%	-61.0%
07/01/2006-06/30/2007	22.0%	61.0%
10/01/2006-09/30/2007	26.8%	96.70%
	Total over-all change	96.7%

Data analysis has been conducted in an effort to understand why the rate of timely adoptions has over the reporting period slowly changed until the last reporting period of 10/01/2006-09/30/2007. It is of noteworthy that during the timeframe of 10/01/2006 and 09/30/2007 a few cases that had been outstanding in the previous reporting periods were finalized which shows in the dramatic increase during 10/01/2006-09/30/2007.

In looking at systemic factors of the gross difference of timely adoptions between 01/01/2005 to 09/30/2007 we found that the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Adoptions District Office had multiple turnovers in management and personnel and (as noted above) the CWHSA vacated 10 social workers (83%) and 1 supervisor (50%). This could have resulted in a delay in the timeliness of referrals being submitted by the county social worker to the CDSS Adoptions District Office and the assignment and completion of home studies by the assigned adoptions social worker.

In two cases that were reviewed where adoption was not completed within a twenty four month period, it was found that the home study was not completed in a timely manner by the contracted agency that was utilized for the CDSS Adoptions District Office. The home study was not completed in a twelve month period.

An additional case showed that due to lack of paternity established through the dependency case on the onset of the case, paternity was not determined until the child had been in permanent placement, which created a significant delay.

In determining the significant increase during 10/01/2006-09/30/2007 both the CWHSA and the CDSS Adoptions District Office had secured staff for a significant amount of time and implemented a new program called "Kaleidoscope". This new program focuses on the older foster youth and hard to adopt children that previously would continue to be placed in long term foster care.

Outcome/Systemic Factor: Timely Adoptions					
County's Current Performance: The County's rate of timely adoptions within twenty four months were 0 during 2005 (0.0%), 2 out of 6 (33.3%) were finalized during 2006, and during the review period of 10/01/2006 to 09/30/2007 three out of twelve (25%) were finalized.					
Improvement Goal 3.0. Decrease the time from termination of reunification to finalization of adoption for children, thus reducing the length of time children are in permanent placement.					
Strategy 3. 1 Improve the County's timeliness in determining Paternity Status.			Strategy Rationale Preliminary analysis shows that there may have been significant delays in determining paternity status on parents who are absent or fail to participate in court hearings.		
Milestone	3.1.1 Emergency Response social workers will determine paternity status by the Dispositional Hearing. If parents are absent and paternity cannot be determined before the Dispositional Hearing, Continuing social workers will continue efforts to determine paternity status.	Timeframe	Ongoing	Assigned to	All Children's Services Social Workers
	3.1.2 The case transfer checklist used by the CWHSA Emergency Response social workers will be revised to include paternity status, indicating whether paternity status has been established, or whether there is a need for the continuing social workers to continue efforts.		6 Months (10/01/2008)		All Children's Services Social Workers
Strategy 3. 2 Utilize the Judicial Council Form JV500 (Inquiry to Parentage) to determine absent parent paternity status.			Strategy Rationale The JV500 Form will be utilized at the onset of the dependency case, so that efforts to locate absent parents will be expedited. The form will help parentage to be determined before permanency is reached.		

Milestone	3.2.1 At the onset of the dependency case, Emergency Response social workers will conduct a due diligence search on absent parents and mail the JV500 form to the last known address.	Timeframe	Ongoing	Assigned to	Emergency Response social workers
	3.2.2 Continuing social workers will file Notices of Publication on absent parents when all efforts to locate have been unsuccessful.		Ongoing		Continuing social workers
	3.2.3 Referrals to CDSS Adoptions District Office will be completed with paternity information completed and updated as necessary.		Ongoing		All Children's Services social workers
Strategy 3.3 Develop timelines for CWHSA, CDSS Adoptions District Office and prospective adoptive parents to ensure prompt completion of the adoption process.		Strategy Rationale Through a collaborative effort with CDSS Adoptions District Office and prospective adoptive parents, we can reduce the timeframe of adoptions being stalled or delayed due to the lack of progress continuing that is required by all parties.			
Milestone	3.3.1 CWHSA Emergency Response social workers will submit adoptions referrals prior to transfer of cases to the Continuing social workers.	Timeframe	Ongoing	Assigned to	Emergency Response social workers
	3.3.2 CWHSA social workers and CDSS Adoptions social workers will meet monthly to discuss the progress of referred cases. Updated status will be tracked by both agencies to ensure efficiency and timeliness.		Ongoing		All Children's Services social workers, Children's Services Supervisors, CDSS Adoptions social workers
	3.3.3 CWHSA social workers and CDSS Adoption social workers will meet with the families together to assist in completing their requirements for the home study.		6 months (10/01/2008)		All Children's Services social workers, CDSS Adoptions social workers

Describe any additional systemic factors needing to be addressed that support the improvement plan goals.

Concurrent Planning referrals are made by the CWHSA Children's Services social workers to the CDSS Adoptions social workers whenever the subject of the referral is under the age of 4 years old. CDSS Adoptions social workers may need to start working on these referrals sooner so that there is not a delay in finalizing the adoption of these children if the case progresses to that stage.

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

The Calaveras County Counsel's Office's Deputy County Counsel will be providing a refresher training on legal issues in regards to establishing paternity to all Children's Services social workers. The CDSS Adoptions District Office will provide refresher training to the CWHSA Children's Services social workers on the adoption process. It is also anticipated that the CDSS Adoptions District Office will provide refresher training for the CWHSA Children's Services social workers on the Kaleidoscope program and the use of the Heart Gallery for the older and hard to place children.

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

The CDSS Adoptions District Office will be partnering with Lilliput Children's Services to assist in completing home studies. CDSS Adoptions District Office may partner with other FFAs in Calaveras County to assist with completing the home studies with families in Calaveras County.

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

There are some confidentiality laws that prohibit the sharing of certain adoption information. Open communication between CWHSA and CDSS Adoptions District Office is essential so that we can improve the timeliness of pending adoptions.

