SIP Cover Sheet

California's Child and Family Services Review
System Improvement Plan

County:	**Orange**
Responsible County Child Welfare Agency:	County of Orange Social Services Agency, Children and Family Services Division
Period of Plan:	**July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2009**
Period of Outcomes Data:	**(1) Quarter ending September 2007**
Date Submitted:	**(2) May 22, 2008**

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Submitted by each agency for the children under its care	
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CHILDREN'S CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES
SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT PLAN
INTRODUCTION
PERIOD OF PLAN:
2007/2008 CWSOIP EXPENDITURES

According to County Fiscal Letter 07/08-33, issued on December 21, 2007, Orange County Children and Family Services received a total CWSOIP GF Allocation CFL No. 07/08-19.of $229,67. Probation was issued on December 21, 2007, a total CWSOIP Probation GF Allocation of $50,519. The total revised fiscal year 2007 – 2008 CWSOIP GF Allocation was $350,189
Children and Family Services utilized their allocation to meet the following outcome measures:

1. Recurrence of Maltreatment:
    a. Expansion of Emergency Response services that included expanding staff, providing 24 hour 7 day per week services, and teaming and training with law enforcement,
    b. Expand services to promote early engagement of families by developing video, written materials in English and Spanish and curriculum for Parent Orientation program given Monday thru Friday Parent Orientation at court. Parent Orientation included facilitators who were former parents of children in the dependency cycle.
    c. Expand services to children ages 0 – 5 entering the dependency cycle by developing the Early Childhood System of Care. Assessments and services provided by nurses.
    d. Regionalize staff and facilitate TDMs in communities by co-locating with partners in schools, churches, law enforcement, cal-works and family resource centers.
    e. Expand participation in Dependency Drug Court and Wrap around services to serve additional families.
2. 1 – 2 Placements in foster care:
    f. Improve placement stability by expanding the use of ice breakers, examine barriers and track through CWS-CMS
    g. Continue use of Family Resource Centers and Expand services provided to caregivers.
    h. Explore expansion and use of youth and parent mentors for TDMs and strategy groups.
    i. Increase TDM meetings in the community
    j. Review placement data to identify commonalities and characteristics on why placements are most likely to fail.
    k. Evaluate effective services for caregivers by conducting a survey and including caregivers in strategy groups and work groups.
    l. Continue media recruitment and partner with community programs to recruit, train and support resource families.

m. Develop a system of tracking media recruitment outcomes, number of newly licensed foster homes and number of foster homes leaving system. Identify characteristics of successful recruitment events and foster families.

Probation utilized their allocation to meet the following outcome measures:

1. Children transitioning to self-sufficient adulthood:
    a. Collaborate with the Social Services Emancipation Unit by providing independent living services for foster youth, which probation youth would also benefit.
    b. Set up quarterly meetings with probation placement unit and Social Services Emancipation Unit by identifying a liaison that will provide guest speakers and special programs regarding probation youth.
    c. Identify barriers that prevent probation youth from being able to access services by collaborating with Social Services and Placement Probation staff.
    d. Collaborate with Orangewood Children's Foundation by identifying barriers that prevent youth from obtaining services. Identify a liaison that will link services between probation youth and Orangewood Children's Foundation and establish a protocol for submitting applications for services.
    e. Coordinate with Workforce Investment Board, One-Stop Employment and other entities to coordinate services that will assist youth with unemployment issues.
    f. Obtain educational passports for all probation youth and develop a system for updating passports.
2. Track percentage of probation foster youth that emancipates with a high school diploma, GED, employment and stable housing.
    a. Identify current percentage of minors who emancipated with a high school diploma, GED, employment and stable housing. Continue to evaluate mid-way through the SIP and identify current percentages to assess if percentages have increased during the SIP cycle.

Outcome/Systemic Factor:
Recurrence of Maltreatment

Of all children with a first substantiated referral during the 12-month study period, what percent did not have a subsequent substantiated referral within 6 months?

Orange County's Current Performance:

Recurrence rates in Orange County declined between 1998 (8.5%) and 2005 (6.8%) and have hovered around that level since then. The new Federal standard requires that 94.6% of substantiated referrals not be followed by a recurrence within 6 months. The initial baseline rate of 94.2% (July 2002-June 2003) has shown very slight fluctuations and is 92.9% for the most recent report period (October 2006 – September 2007), hovering just below the Federal Goal (94.6%).

Although Orange County's rate for "no recurrence of maltreatment" is slightly above the California State performance of 92.7%, Orange County data over the two and one-half years since the first Self Assessment has demonstrated a slight trend indicating an increase in subsequent substantiated referrals. This trend may be related to the increase in preventative services offered, resulting in more mandated reporters interacting with families and reporting abuse and neglect that would have otherwise gone unnoticed. Additional reasons for this fluctuation include data integrity issues, a change in practice that requires entry and supervisor review of all calls from mandated reporters to CWS/CMS, and increased efforts to maintain children in their home.

Due to the Agency's long-standing commitment to child safety, the following goals have been chosen to decrease recurrence of abuse:

- ☐ Promote early family engagement.
- ☐ Increase prevention and early intervention services.
- ☐ Improve family supports through linkages to community-based resources.
- ☐ Strengthen services for successful reunification.

Improvement Goal 1.0
Promote Early Family Engagement

Strategy 1. 1 **Expand Emergency Response (ER) Services**		**Strategy Rationale** An effective, strength-based and integrated response to initial referrals of suspected child abuse and neglect will decrease subsequent referrals.			
Milestone	1.1.1 Explore feasibility and seek funding for staffing to expand ER Services, with the goal of providing coverage 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. **UPDATE:** ER has been expanded and is now fully staffed from 7:00 am to 10:00 pm weekdays and 11:00am to 10:00 pm weekends. Funding options and cost effectiveness of going 24/7 was explored and it was determined to be more efficient and cost effective to have on call staff providing coverage from 10:00 pm to 7:00 am. Since implementation of the two second shift units 68% of the ER removals previously handled by on call staff are now managed by the second shift units. The availability of the second shift staff has made it possible to conduct TDMs on removals which when previously handled by on call staff was not occurring due to the workers unavailability.	**Timeframe**	May 21, 2010 **Completed**	**Assigned to**	Deputy Director, Intervention and Prevention Services

1.1.2 Expand the use of the field response protocol by teaming with law enforcement departments to facilitate joint assessments and emergency removals in localities where staff are assigned to regions. **UPDATE:** There are presently 22 law enforcement agencies participating. Currently, we are out-stationed at 13 law enforcement agencies and provided outreach and training to all law enforcement agencies because we respond to their request via field response protocol. The field response protocol was established for the purpose of making the best team decision between law enforcement and children services regarding the child's emergency placement. This is done by exploring the most appropriate and least intrusive method of assessment and placement of the child during an emergency situation. Collaboration is enhanced by establishing protocol that includes on-going training and communication with law enforcement and out-stationed social workers.		May 21, 2010 **In process**	Deputy Director, Intervention and Prevention Services
1.1.3 Increase the use of Imminent Risk Team Decision Making Meetings (TDMs) by 10%. **UPDATE:** During the past year, the number of meetings has increased by 25%. 99 Imminent Risk TDM meetings were facilitated in 2006 and 132 Imminent Risk TDM meetings were facilitated in 2007.		May 21, 2010 **Completed**	Deputy Director, Intervention and Prevention Services

	1.1.4 Increase the use of Emergency Removal TDMs by 20% when at least one parent is available to attend the meeting and social work staff was involved in the removal. **UPDATE:** During the past year, the number of meetings has increased by 16%. 389 TDM meetings were facilitated in 2006 and 462 TDM meetings were facilitated in 2007. CFS continues to provide training and outreach to staff regarding the positive benefits of the use of Emergency Removal TDMs and moving toward achieving the goal of 20%.		May 21, 2010 **In Process**		Deputy Director, Intervention and Prevention Services
Strategy 1.2 **Expand services to promote early engagement of families**		**Strategy Rationale** Early provision of services that meet parents' needs through information, support, and community-involved referrals will decrease recurrence of abuse.			
Milestone	1.2.1 Increase attendance at Parent Orientation sessions by 50% by relocating meetings to Juvenile Court. **UPDATE:** Monthly attendance at Parent Orientation sessions has increased by over 300%. The first floor at Juvenile Court was remodeled and the Parent Orientation Sessions relocated to Juvenile Court.	**Timeframe**	May 21, 2010 **Completed**	**Assigned to**	Deputy Director, Planning and Permanency Services
	1.2.2 Parent mentors will attend Parent Orientation sessions to provide support to parents and promote early engagement in family reunification services. **UPDATE:** Parent Mentors attend Parent Orientation sessions on a daily basis.		July 1, 2007 **Completed**		Deputy Director, Planning and Permanency Services

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
1.2.3 Assign Family Services Workers (FSW) to new Family Reunification cases, as program funding allows, engaging families early on and connecting them to services/resources. **UPDATE:** Since 3/1/07, FSWs have been assigned to Family Reunification (FR) cases in Dependency Investigations. Due to budgetary constraints, the number of FSW workers was reduced by 2 positions from 9/1/07 until 1/1/08. The FSW positions have been returned to their eight full positions since 1/1/08. An FSW is assigned to each FR case in Investigations at the time of the Detention Hearing. The FSW worker is assigned for a minimum of the first two weeks while the case is in Dependency Investigations. One of the objectives of the FSW is to engage the family early during the investigations phase and to connect the parent to resources which can help the family to reunify. In the first quarter of 2008, there was a total of 162 cases (children) assigned to the 8 FSW workers. In the first quarter of 2008, FSWs made 285 face-to-face visits with parents and 237 face-to-face visits with children, and completed a total of 390 referrals for assistance to services and resources. Specifically, the service and resource assistance from the FSWs in the first quarter of 2008 included 2 referrals for financial assistance, 49 for transportation, 239 for resources, 40 parent mentor referrals, seven basic needs referrals, 34 for services for incarcerated parents and 19 for housing assistance.	May 21, 2010 **Completed**	Deputy Director, Family Assessment and Shelter Services

	1.2.4 Provide Voluntary Family Reunification as an alternative to court-ordered placement. **UPDATE:** The Voluntary Family Reunification (VFR) workgroup was developed in September 2006 and meets monthly. A protocol was developed identifying the types of children and families that will be served and strategies for implementation. Approval from Administrative management was received to pilot Voluntary Placements in the Voluntary Family Services Program. The first draft protocol was completed in April 2008. A referral system was developed to identify the types of families and children that would be served. A plan is being developed that will provide training and recruitment of resource families.		May 21, 2010 **In process**		Deputy Directors, Family Assessment and Shelter Services, Intervention and Prevention Services

	1.2.5 Complete Differential Response Pilot and begin roll out of Paths I, II, and III. **UPDATE:** The Differential Response (DR) Pilot began February 2006. DR continues to be piloted. Path I: Currently, the foundation is being laid for Path I Response. A taskforce consisting of approximately 30 community partners has been assembled, and is developing an implementation plan for Path I. Two community chairs have recently been identified to join the leadership of this group and the meetings are occurring on a monthly basis. A leadership meeting is being arranged to structure the direction of the taskforce. The plan is to continue to "roll-out" DR to other cities if and when staff and financial support are available. Path II: DR is implemented in the cities of Santa Ana and Anaheim. ER is partnered with four Family Resource Centers (FRCs) – two in Santa Ana and two in Anaheim. At this point, there is not an anticipated end date for the pilot. Data collected from February 2006 to present indicates 33% of DR families agreed to on-going prevention services as opposed to 20% of families who received a traditional Emergency Response (ER). The strategy for implementation was to begin with the largest cities in the county and then move to the smaller cities. Santa Ana, Anaheim, Garden Grove and Orange are the largest cities in Orange County with the highest number of children in our dependency system. Path III: These are regular ER cases involving severe risk and safety referrals at times requiring Court intervention.	May 21, 2010 **In Process**	Deputy Director, Intervention and Prevention Services

Improvement Goal 2.0

Increase Prevention and Early Intervention Services					
Strategy 2.1 **Expand prevention services**		**Strategy Rationale** Assignment of Social Service Agency/Children and Family Services (SSA/CFS) social workers to current inter-agency programs that provide pre-allegation screenings and support for at-risk families will reduce recurrence of abuse and neglect.			
Milestone	2.1.1 Assign a Voluntary Family Services (VFS) Liaison to each CalWORKs regional office to participate in their Prevention Services Multi-Disciplinary Team and assist with assessments of at-risk families. **UPDATE:** There are VFS Senior Social Services Supervisor (SSSS) located at four CalWORKs regional offices. They attend the Multi-Disciplinary Team meetings with the purpose of providing a joint assessment between CalWORKs, Child Welfare Services and the families. Family needs are assessed and families are connected to services and resources. There are assigned Senior Social Workers (SSWs) who serve as back-up.	**Timeframe**	May 21, 2010 **Completed**	**Assigned to**	Deputy Director, Intervention and Prevention Services

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
2.1.2 Fully implement the Early Childhood System of Care (ECSOC) program. Children under the age of six and entering the child welfare system will be assessed by a public health nurse, who will complete/provide routine developmental screenings, coordination of health and behavioral health services, linkages to community resources, and education and support of caregivers. **Update:** ECSOC was funded on 7/1/06 for the purpose of serving children under the age of six and entering the Child Welfare System. ECSOC is fully operational with four public health nurses in March 2007. The following is data collected from January 2007 to April 2008. Data was not collected prior to January 2007. To date, there have been 1,241 referrals. Each ECSOC nurse case manages children for the first three months entering into the child welfare system. Hence, at any given time, each nurse provides services to 60 to 120 children on their case loads. The average number of children serviced per month is 222. From January 2007 to April 2008, the ECSOC public health nurses completed 587 developmental screenings; 329 coordinated health care service referrals; and 607 behavioral health service referrals.	May 21, 2010 **Completed**	Deputy Director, Planning and Permanency Services

Strategy 2. 2 **Expand early intervention services**			**Strategy Rationale** Addressing families' unique needs through individualized assessments utilizing specially trained staff will increase the success of referrals and services provided, decreasing recurrence of abuse and neglect.		
Milestone	2.2.1 Expand assessment timeline for Path II Differential Response referrals to enable staff to assess and provide services to families for up to 60 days prior to case plan development. **UPDATE:** A taskforce was formed to evaluate the pros and cons of changing current practice. Recommendation was to continue current practice of case plans within 30 days. Implementation would have unintended consequences to other outcome measures.	**Timeframe**	May 21, 2010 **Completed**	**Assigned to**	Deputy Director, Intervention and Prevention Services

	2.2.2 Implement Safe Families Project at four Domestic Violence (DV) Courts with two social workers stationed at each court to participate in multidisciplinary teams with the goal of providing resources and services to families. **UPDATE:** At this time, there are four SSWs assigned to the Safe Families Project. The SSWs are assigned to Central, West, North and Harbor Superior Courts. The Safe Families Project SSWs participate in weekly multidisciplinary team meeting at court. The Safe Families Project SSWs provide education and training to community partners and law enforcement. Currently, one SSW is assigned at each of the four courts. The original goal was to assign two SSWs to each court. However, due to staff and budget limitations this is not possible at this time. SSWs review cases that include domestic violence and involve minor children. The SSW verifies whether the child is currently a dependent or has a history of dependency. If the court and the SSW determine that the child and family require Children and Family Services (CFS) support and intervention a referral is made to CFS requesting contact between CFS and the family.		May 21, 2010 **In process**	Deputy Director, Intervention and Prevention Services

Improvement Goal 3.0 **Improve family supports through linkages to community-based resources**	
Strategy 3.1 **Increase community-based resources**	**Strategy Rationale** Access to regionalized, community-based services will support family engagement and enable parents to remedy child welfare concerns. Community-based resources will also provide a continuum of services after the SSA/CFS assessment or case closure, reducing recurrence of abuse.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
3.1.1 Meet with foundations and community stakeholders currently supporting CFS efforts to discuss ways to expand and support efforts to provide culturally appropriate resources throughout high-risk communities. **UPDATE:** Orange County is a Family to Family Anchor site and recipient of Annie E. Casey Foundation and Stuart Foundation grants. Recently, Annie E. Casey awarded $300,000 over three years and Stuart Foundation awarded $270,000 for CC25I. The purpose of these funds is to implement the Family to Family Initiative in targeted communities where children are most likely to become dependents. The goal of this initiative is to collaborate with our communities, keep children safe and when possible, keep them with their families in their communities. The National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare (NCSACW) is providing technical support to CFS with the goal of assisting professionals who work with children and families affected by substance abuse disorders and involved in the child welfare system. This was a competitive bid process where Orange County was awarded technical assistance. The objective is to facilitate positive outcomes for these families by developing, implementing and maintaining intensive cross system collaboration between multiple agencies working in the communities with these families. Additionally, the Child Welfare Services Redesign Planning Council continues to meet monthly to evaluate the current system, note strengths and concerns, establish goals for a redesign and look at funding resources	May 21, 2010 **In process**	Division Director

	3.1.2 Assign SSA/CFS staff to geographic regions and regionalize caseloads. **UPDATE:** Staff is assigned to regions and cases are being regionally assigned in both Non-Court and Court Programs. Quarterly community forums are being held between our community partners and CFS social workers to establish and maintain resources/services within the communities.		May 21, 2010 **In process**		Deputy Directors, Intervention and Prevention Services, Continuing Family Services
	3.1.3 Co-locate ER and VFS units with other SSA divisions in all geographic regions of the county. **UPDATE:** VFS and ER are co-located at CalWORKs West office on CHIP street in Cypress and the North region Sand Dollar Office in Anaheim. VFS is co-located with CalWORKs at CalWORKs East office (SARC) in Santa Ana and CalWORKs South office in Laguna Niguel. Plans for future collocation will continue as space becomes available.		May 21, 2010 **In process**		Deputy Directors, Intervention and Prevention Services, Specialized Services and Program Support

	3.1.4 Collocate divisions (e.g., ER and continuing court programs) by geographic regions within existing SSA/CFS buildings. We continue to evaluate the ability to collocate regional SSA/CFS staff with court programs. There are continued efforts to coordinate collocation with CFS court programs and other regional programs at Eckhoff, Orangewood Children's Home and Dependency Investigation Manchester Office Building (MOB). For example, there are eligibility technicians, Emergency Response social workers and Voluntary Family Services workers who are collocated at several of the facilities listed above who work directly with the Court Services programs. Additionally, CFS has begun to assign and locate staff within different geographic regions. Thus far, we have assigned staff to: ER West – with a unit consisting of seven SSWs and one SSSS at the CalWORKs West office on Chip street in Cypress. ER North – On 4/25/08 a unit of seven SSWs and one SSSS moved to the North Sand Dollar office in Anaheim.		May 21, 2010 **In process**		Deputy Directors, Intervention and Prevention Services, Continuing Family Services, Family Assessment and Shelter Services, Specialized Services and Program Support

	3.1.5 Develop a plan to hold TDMs in community locations. **UPDATE:** The plan developed is to assess FRCs, and sister agencies serve our families and faith-based organizations to allow TDM facilitators and families use of their facilities for TDM meetings. Training and outreach to community and CFS staff are included for the purpose of increasing TDM meetings in the community. FRCs: There has been an assessment of 12 FRCs to determine which FRCs would be able to accommodate families and staff for TDM meetings. To date, there are three identified FRC sites available to host TDM meetings. Limitations of ability to accommodate TDM meetings are due to the FRCs limited space, limited office hours and limited or no security. CalWORKs: TDM and CalWORKs managers and staff have identified CalWORKs facilities that would be able to accommodate families and staff for TDM meetings. Currently, there are two CalWORKs locations that have been identified. Faith-based organizations: There are approximately 38 faith-based organizations partnering with CFS for the purpose of providing recruitment of resource families and support of resource and birth families. Several of the faith-based organizations are interested in offering their facilities for TDMs. To date, there have been 10 TDMs held in FRCs, 17 TDMs held in a CalWORKs facility and 3 TDMs held in a faith organization. In addition, five TDMs have been held at local medical facilities and three TDMs have been conducted at private residences. There continues to be outreach and training to the community providers and staff regarding TDM meetings.		May 21,2008 **Completed**		Deputy Director, Planning and Permanency Services

	3.1.6 Begin holding TDMs in community locations with the goal of holding 15% of Exit From Placement TDMs in community settings. **UPDATE:** During 2007, 4 % of Exit from Placement TDMs were conducted in a community setting. This is due to TDM Facilitator staff limitations and availability of community facilities to hold TDMs. CFS continues to work with the FRCs, sister agencies and faith-based organizations to increase the number of community facilities and support services available for TDMs.		May 21, 2010 **In process**		Deputy Director, Planning and Permanency Services
	3.1.7 Increase families' knowledge of and access to available services at Family Resource Centers (FRCs) by participation of Community Advocates in TDM Meetings. **UPDATE:** The goal was to have Family Resource Centers provide Community Advocates for the TDM meetings. Initially, there were two community advocates. However, these positions did not receive funding for continued services. CFS ER, Placement Coordinators and FSW SSWs provide written pamphlets, addresses and phone numbers of FRCs to each caregiver at the time of placement and assessment. Court Program SSWs and ER, Placement Coordination, and FSW workers may submit referrals directly to the FRCs when they identify clients that could benefit from their services. Due to bidding constraints, we were not able to proceed with a community advocate contract and will continue to evaluate.		May 21, 2010 **In process**		Deputy Director, Intervention and Prevention Services
	3.1.8 Increase the attendance of Parent and Youth Advocates at TDM Meetings. **UPDATE:** Parent Mentor attendance increased at TDM meetings. Parent Mentors attend TDM meetings after they receive a referral and are assigned to a case. Youth advocates currently attend Placement Preservation TDMs for youth age 14 years and above.		May 21, 2010 **In process**		Deputy Director, Planning and Permanency Services

Improvement Goal 4.0
Strengthen services for successful family reunification

4.1 Expand reunification services	**Strategy Rationale** Provision of comprehensive services to reunifying families that emphasize early and intensive engagement of families and provision of services, as well as parent mentorship and team decision-making throughout and beyond the life of the child welfare case will decrease recurrence of abuse.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
4.1.1 Explore capacity and fiscal feasibility to expand participation in Dependency Drug Court (DDC), to serve 75 additional families each year. **UPDATE:** DDC began April 2005 and served 68 families through December 2005. An additional 68 families were served in 2006, 47 families in 2007 and to date, 44 families in 2008. A total of 357 children in the 183 families were served by DDC from 2005 to 2007. Of all of these children (2005 – 2007), the following outcomes occurred: 192 reunified; 21 were adopted and 144 continue to be in placement. Graduating parents from DDC (2005 – 2007) include 79 mothers and 21 fathers. DDC continues to be assessed by an oversight committee on a monthly basis to address program currently has capacity to serve ongoing needs and expansion of the program. CFS continues to collaborate with the parent's attorneys and court for the purpose of increasing DDC awareness, benefits, and referrals. This is done by maintaining regular contact between court and CFS staff.	May 21, 2010 **In process**	Deputy Director, Continuing Family Services
4.1.2 Expand Wraparound service capacity to serve up to 500 families. **UPDATE:** As of July 2007, Wraparound expanded from four to seven contract providers. As of March 2008, we have a capacity to serve 500 families and are currently serving 455.	May 21, 2010 **Completed**	Deputy Director, Planning and Permanency Services

4.1.3 Expand Parent Leadership activities to include mentorship, warmline, and parent orientation sessions. **UPDATE:** Parent leadership activities are fully implemented. The Parent Leadership Program has implemented the warm-line; mentors are paired with parents when entering the dependency system with their children and parent orientation sessions are facilitated by parent mentors.	December 31, 2007 **Completed**	Deputy Director, Planning and Permanency Services
4.1.4 Increase Exit From Placement TDMs by 15%. **UPDATE:** During the past year the number of TDM meetings has increased by 23%. 201 TDMs were completed in 2006 and 262 TDMs were completed in 2007.	May 21, 2010 **Completed**	Deputy Director, Continuing Family Services
4.1.5 Provide referrals for services that address ongoing mental health, substance abuse, and domestic violence services at the time of case closure. **UPDATE:** An Exit Placement TDMs is held to identify needs and provide referrals for resources in the family's community at the time of case closure. Collaborative efforts between CFS and community partners are made to identify and provide services. Our VFS workers complete a safety plan at the time of case closure. The VFS SSW works with the family to identify needs and provide referrals. The safety plan outlines FRC information, counseling for mental health, substance abuse, domestic violence and anger management resources.	May 21, 2010 **In process**	Deputy Directors, Planning and Permanency Services, Continuing Family Services

Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal. • Social work positions are needed to increase ER hours, FSW, and DD caseloads. • Recruitment for ER swing shift and graveyard positions will be needed, as it may be more difficult to fill these positions. • Limited funding may reduce the Agency's ability to increase positions. • Building space is needed to regionalize staff in the community. • County policies require a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for collocation of SSA/CFS staff in non-county buildings. • TDM facilitator positions are needed to facilitate increased number of meetings, and availability at additional locations. • Health Care Agency (HCA), Public Defender's Office, and County Counsel will require increased funding to staff expansion of DDC and corresponding increase in testing and treatment expenses.
Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals. • Community partners and SSA/CFS staff will need training regarding Differential Response Program. • Process groups will be held with staff to discuss relevance and benefits of Exit from Placement TDMs.
Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals. • Juvenile Court will provide space for Parent Orientation meetings. • Juvenile Court, HCA, Public Defender's Office, and County Counsel need to fiscally support expansion of DDC. • FRCs and community-based organizations (CBOs) will partner with SSA/CFS to provide Differential Response services. • Truancy Court, Probation, HCA, and CBOs will team with SSA/CFS to provide assessments of at-risk students and their families. • DV courts, HCA, Probation, SSA/CFS, and DV Shelters will collaborate to provide the Safe Families Project. • Parent and youth advocates will participate in TDM Meetings. • HCA and CBOs will partner with SSA/CFS to provide Wraparound services for youth, families, and caretakers. • SSA/CFS will collaborate with CalWORKS, HCA, and CBOs to provide Differential Response services
Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals. • No changes have been identified.

Recurrence of Maltreatment
May 2008

Outcome/Systemic Factor:
1-2 Placements in foster care
For all children in child welfare supervised foster care, what percent has no more than two placements?

(C4.1) For all children in child welfare supervised foster care during the 12-month study period who had been in care for less than 12 months, what percent had no more than two placements.

Data for this Federal measure demonstrates an increase in the percent of children who had no more than two placements while in care. The initial baseline rate of 69.5% (July 2002-June 2003) has increased to 83.5% for the most recent report period (October 2006-September 2007), hovering just below the Federal Goal of 86%, and just above the California State average of 81.6%.

(C4.2) For all children in child welfare supervised foster care during the 12-month study period who had been in care 12 to 24 months, what percent had no more than two placements?

Data for this Federal measure demonstrates an increase in the percent of children in care 12 –24 months who had no more than two placements while in care. The initial baseline rate of 46.7% (July 2002-June 2003) has increased to 60.5% for the most recent report period (October 2006-September 2007). Orange County is within 92.6% of the Federal Goal of 65.4%, and just below the California State average of 61.5%.

(C4.3) For all children in child welfare supervised foster care during the 12-month study period who had been in care more than 24 months, what percent had no more than two placements?

Data for this Federal measure demonstrates an increase in the percent of children in care more than 24 months who had no more than two placements while in care. The initial baseline rate of 24.1% (July 2002-June 2003) has increased to 31.2% for the most recent report period (October 2006-September 2007). Orange County is within 74.6% of the Federal Goal of 41.8%, and somewhat below the California State average of 34.9%.

Placement stability was chosen as a goal for improvement in the 2004 System Improvement Plan. Through intensive, agency-wide efforts that analyzed and improved policies, programs, and services, Orange County Social Services Agency/Children and Family Services (SSA/CFS) has succeeded in significantly improving placement stability for children in foster care, particularly during the first 12 months of out of home care Orange County recognizes placement stability as a significant contributor to the well being of foster children and wishes to make further improvement in this area and, therefore, selected this outcome measure as a goal for the 2007 System Improvement Plan. In the current SIP, particular emphasis is being placed on addressing improvement in the placement stability of children in care longer than 24 months as assessed by measures C4.2. and C4.3.
The following goals have been chosen to improve placement stability:

- Increase support to caregivers.
- Preserve existing placements.

- Increase foster parent and relative caregiver resources.

Improvement Goal 1.0 **Increase support to caregivers**					
Strategy 1. 1 **Expand the use of Icebreakers by reviewing protocols and goals, and examine barriers to implementation.**			**Strategy Rationale** Icebreaker meetings bring parents, caregiver, and social worker together to provide an environment for parents to share pertinent information about their children with caregivers. In addition to encouraging parents and caregivers to work together, Icebreaker meetings support caregivers through early provision of detailed information about the child, leading to more stable placements. SSA/CFS has initiated Icebreaker meetings and continues to strive towards full implementation. Barriers to implementation have included workload issues and development of tracking systems for case management. A review of current protocols, goals, and barriers is needed to improve implementation.		
Milestone	1.1.1 Develop workgroup to assess current Icebreaker protocol, goals, and implementation. **UPDATE:** A workgroup has been developed consisting of program managers, supervisors, social workers, and Self Evaluation Team (SET) members who meet regularly for the purpose of developing policy, procedures, protocol, training, data tracking and implementation. Policy, procedures, and identification of goals have been completed. An ongoing review of implementation is in process and includes outreach and training to direct line staff, supervisors and program managers.	**Timeframe**	May 21, 2008 **Completed**	**Assigned to**	Deputy Directors, Continuing Family Services, Self Evaluation Team (SET) CFS Systems Group

	1.1.2 Develop and pilot tracking tool to evaluate Icebreaker data and compliance. **UPDATE:** Data tracking has been established by utilizing a CWS/CMS special code to input data related to completed icebreakers. This code tracks the number of ice breakers completed by Placement, Diversion, Court Programs, Temporary Shelter Homes and Emergency Shelter homes.		May 21, 2009 **Completed**		CFS Systems Group, SET

Strategy 1. 2 **Identify and support Family Resource Center (FRC) based resources for caregivers.**	**Strategy Rationale** FRCs provide community-based supports that will enhance caregivers' ability to provide appropriate care for foster children.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
1.2.1 Continue and increase the provision of resources for caregivers through FRCs, including: • Support group services to parents and relative caregivers. • Day respite services. • Family Fun Days. • Family advocate support services and counseling services to adopting parents. **UPDATE:** Initially, there were 10 Orange County sponsored FRCs. Today, there are 12 FRCs that provide supportive and respite services to caregivers. There is an increase in the number of FRCs that participate with CFS and an increase in the services mentioned above because of the outreach and training provided to all of the FRCs and social workers regarding the referral process and benefits of these services. A brochure and information sheet is distributed by CFS staff at intake and placement, identifying the FRCs and the services they offer addresses and phone numbers are included. This allows families and social workers easy access to the FRC that is closest to their community. CFS and the FRCs conduct monthly Case Management Team meetings to review referrals, service challenges and successes. In 2007, six FRCs provided support groups for caregivers and parents, five FRCs provide respite services, six FRCs provide Family Fun Days and 12 FRCs provide support services including counseling to foster and adopting parents. This increase is due to FRCs collaborating with CFS and increase of services provided to caretakers and birth families.	May 21, 2010 **Completed**	Deputy Director, Intervention and Prevention Services

Improvement Goal 2.0 Preserve existing placements					
Strategy 2.1 **Expand services to youth and foster parents**		**Strategy Rationale** Intensive, individualized services that emphasize needs assessment, timely provision of information, and needed resources, as well as an integrated team approach to decision making will stabilize placements. Inclusion of foster parents in team meetings encourages placement stability.			
Milestone	2.1.1 Explore expansion of contract with provider of Youth Orientation Services to serve foster care youth, ages 6 to 17, within 30 days of initial detention. **Update:** Youth Orientation Services are provided to all youth ages 6 -17 entering Orangewood Children's Home (OCH). A workgroup consisting of three community partners and OCH are evaluating current efforts, ongoing needs and expanding services to all youth in out-of-home care.	**Timeframe**	May 21, 2010 **In process**	**Assigned to**	Deputy Director, Specialized Services and Program Support

	2.1.2 Assign Family Services Workers (FSW) to new Family Reunification cases, as program funding allows, engaging families early on, and connecting them to services and resources. **UPDATE:** Since 3/1/07, FSWs have been assigned to new Family Reunification (FR) cases in the Dependency Investigations Program. Due to budgetary constraints, the number of FSW workers was reduced by two positions from 9/1/07 until 1/1/08. The FSW positions were restored to eight FTEs on 1/1/08. A FSW is assigned to each FR case at the time of the Detention Hearing. The FSW worker is assigned for a minimum of the first two weeks while the case is in Dependency Investigations. One of the objectives of the FSW is to identify and stabilize the placement of the child. This is accomplished by meeting the parent to identify potential placement resources. Once a youth is placed, the FSW works with the caregiver to stabilize the placement by providing resources, referrals, and support. From 1/1/08 through 3/1/08, FSWs had 237 face-to-face contacts with children on their caseloads, provided assistance on educational issues 36 times, made referrals for caregiver support 76 times, performed 23 Icebreakers, facilitated 125 parent and child visits, assisted with transportation 58 times, provided three basic needs referrals for the caregiver, and provided childcare assistance 12 times.		May 21, 2010 **Completed**		Deputy Director, Family Assessment and Shelter Services

2.1.3 Develop a protocol with Health Care Agency (HCA) to provide mental health services to resource families when a child enters placement. **UPDATE:** This continues to be assessed due to the differing eligibility requirements of the people served. A workgroup consisting of the Health Care Agency and CFS was developed to address this. It was determined that some families were not able to access services because they were not Medi-Cal eligible and not able to pay for services. However, all children who are dependents of SSA/CFS receive Medi-Cal coverage and are eligible for mental health services.	Extend to May 21, 2010 **In process**	Deputy Directors, Continuing Family Services, Family Assessment and Shelter Services
2.1.4 Expand Wraparound services capacity to serve 40 Emergency Response (ER) and Investigation families. **UPDATE:** As of July 2007, Wraparound was able to expand their services to serve 25 large sibling set families in the programs of Investigations and 35 Emergency Response/VFS families for a total of 60 slots.	May 21, 2010 **Completed**	Deputy Director, Planning and Permanency Services

	2.1.5 Evaluate Family Reunification meeting compliance through data and social work input. **UPDATE:** **UPDATE:** The Child Abuse Prevention Center and Family Preservation Program (OCCAPC) keep a daily log of FR meeting referrals. This log indicates the number of FR meetings held and dates of the meetings. OCCAPC and Family Preservation Program reports this information each month at the Family to Family TDM Strategy meeting. A data tracking system was developed that would measure FR meeting compliance. This tracking system included information regarding dates when Six Month Reviews (SMR) were scheduled. Thus comparing the number of FR meetings completed with the number of SMR's scheduled in each month. This method was tested. We found that CWS/CMS provides SMR information but that it was not always completely accurate. Therefore, we were not able to accurately track FR Meeting compliance. A new database software ETO will be installed in late June 2008 and will assist with data collection. Application of the ETO software will assist us in determining which data will be collected and tracked and if further enhancements will be necessary to accurately collect and report FR meeting compliance,		May 21, 2010 **In process**		Deputy Directors, Continuing Family Service, Planning and Permanency Services, and SET
	2.1.6 Increase Family Reunification meetings by 30%. There was a 28 % increase in FR meetings. CFS began conducting and tracking FR meetings in September 2006;14 FR meetings were completed in 2006. During 2007, 77 FR meetings were completed. Based on a full year projection for 2006 (or 56 meetings) as compared to FR meetings actually completed in 2007, there was a 28% increase. The increase in the number of FR meetings during 2007 is attributed to the availability of contracted staff to facilitate these meetings and the positive feedback received from CFS staff and clientele regarding the value of these meetings.		May 21, 2010 **In process**		Deputy Directors, Continuing Family Services, Family Assessment and Shelter Services

	2.1.7 Increase Team Decision Making (TDM) Placement Move meetings to 90% of all potential placement moves. **UPDATE:** It appears that there is a slight decrease in TDM Placement Move Meetings as there were 84.4% completed in 2006 and 77.9% in 2007. Efforts to increase Placement Move meetings in 2008 include a focus on scheduling TDM meetings at the earliest possible date when a child's placement appears to be at risk and continued monitoring of placement changes to ensure that required TDM meetings are occurring. It is difficult to accurately measure compliance on this goal until we have a strong tracking system regarding placement moves in relation to associated TDMs completed. ETO for TDMs is being implemented in mid-May 2008 to begin an accurate collection and tracking of Placement moves as they relate to TDM meetings.		May 21, 2010 **In progress**		Deputy Directors, Continuing Family Services, Planning and Permanency Services
Milestone	2.1.8 Partner with HCA to determine the feasibility of an after hours and weekend caregiver support line and develop an implementation plan. **UPDATE:** Wraparound developed a fee for service contract offering crises services through the provider network to Wraparound families. An expansion to non-Wrap CFS families was piloted using 24/7 Intake staff at Orangewood Children's Home (OCH), for post–TDM families to contact if they needed phone or in-person assistance from contracted crises services staff. The pilot generated a few calls which resulted in preservation of placements. It will not be expanded at this time due to contractual issues. OCH, group counselor staff are available 24/7 for crises calls. They receive calls from caregivers. Immediate referrals to the appropriate service providers; i.e. FRCs, Health Care Agency, Educational Liaison, assigned social worker, etc. are provided.	**Timeframe**	May 21, 2008 **Completed**	**Assigned to**	Deputy Directors, Family Assessment and Shelter Services, Continuing Family Service

	2.1.9 If feasible, provide after hours and weekend coverage for caregiver support line. **UPDATE:** OCH group counselor staff are available 24/7 for crises calls. They receive calls from caregivers. Immediate referrals to the appropriate service providers; i.e., FRCs, Health Care Agency, Educational Liaison, assigned social worker, etc. are provided. Placement Coordination social worker staff are available by telephone seven days per week from 8:00 am – 8:00 pm to provide additional support, information and resources for resource families.		May 21, 2010 **Completed**		Deputy Director, Family Assessment and Shelter Services

2.1.10 Evaluate data to determine common characteristics of failed placements and recommend effective interventions. **UPDATE:** In March 2008, The SET completed a report in order to gain a better understanding and assessment of factors associated with placement disruption. A one-page bulletin was produced that will be circulated to staff. In addition, SET hosted a brainstorming session with social workers from the Continuing programs and the Placement Coordination Program. Themes and patterns associated with stability and disruption of children's placements were identified. Administrative data was analyzed and shared at a SET-Technical Subcommittee meeting and with Placement Coordination staff. The data suggest a number of recommended interventions that include early engagement with birth families, including both birth parents when possible in TDMs, "Icebreaker" sessions with birth parents and foster parents, and providing services in the community nearest both families and their children. These interventions are currently being put into practice. For example, Placement Coordination have conducted a pilot project designed to promote stable placements by building stronger connections with relative caregivers and resources in their communities. Staff who facilitate Icebreakers and TDM meetings are making every effort to include both birth parents when available and locate resources near their communities.		March 1, 2008 **Completed**	SET and Deputy Directors, Continuing Family Services, Family Assessment and Shelter Services

	2.1.11 Evaluate effective support services for caregivers and make recommendations for improvement. **UPDATE:** The Recruitment, Development & Support (RDS) Family to Family Strategy group developed a survey in English and Spanish that was administered by social workers in 2007 to resource families. The survey results indicated that resource families were primarily interested in: (1) collaborating with CFS staff as a team in placements, TDMs and Icebreakers, (2) participating in support groups (3) access to 24 hour emergency service assistance and (4) increase in foster care payments. Recommendations to our agency for consideration are: • Increased participation and attendance of resource families at Family to Family strategy meetings and Foster Care Advisory Board. • Development of a 24 hour "hot-line". • Increased outreach and training regarding TDMs and Icebreakers. • Increased communication to our Resource families regarding the current foster care rates, Medi-Cal and other resources, benefits and resources. • Increased communication and support regarding agency and caretaker interaction regarding traumatic events such as child death, injury, or serious illness.	September 30, 2008 **Completed**	Deputy Director, Continuing Family Services, and Recruitment, Development and Support Strategy Group (RDS)
	2.1.12 Partner with Annie E. Casey and Youth Law Center to assess attachment issues for children ages 0-6 years who are placement. **UPDATE:** Orange County attended the orientation session in Sacramento and determined we will not participate in this project.	May 21, 2010 **Completed**	Deputy Director, Family Assessment & Shelter Services, and RTS.

2.1.13 Pursue State funding to implement Perinatal Substance Abuse HIV Infant program to support caregivers of infants with special care needs. **UPDATE:** CFS submitted for funding in 2007 but was denied. Our agency will pursue State funding if funds become available in future budget cycle.	May 21, 2010 **Completed**	Deputy Director, Specialized Services and Program Support

Improvement Goal 3.0
Increase foster parent and relative caregiver resources

Strategy 3.1 **Recruit and support foster parents and relative caregivers in targeted areas**	**Strategy Rationale** Recruitment and support efforts for foster parents in targeted communities utilizing pre-existing community groups will increase available resource homes, and stabilize placements in those homes through culturally appropriate supportive services.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
3.1.1 Continue media recruitment to increase foster parent placements. **UPDATE:** The media activities are designed to reach specific audiences in communities in the three highest removal areas in Orange County: Santa Ana, Anaheim and Garden Grove, as well as the general public in Orange County. Targeted media efforts include: running tailored advertisements on web sites to recruit homes for teenagers, teen mothers and the medical community; airing public service announcements in the three highest removal areas in Orange County; running print ads in multi-language (English, Spanish and Vietnamese), faith-based, and professional publications, and radio stations; creating print and web ads that highlight teens, sibling sets and infants and children with special needs; and creating a child-specific recruitment calendar in partnership with a professional Southern California sports team. Another major effort is maintaining a user-friendly web site for prospective foster and adoptive parents and community members who want to learn more about becoming caregivers or helping in other ways. Our data indicates that there have been 1,200 responses from our web site, 12 calls from television advertisement, no responses from newspapers, 10 responses from magazines and 350 responses from radio. As a result of focused recruitment efforts, training requests to become a foster or adoptive family increased. Consequently, Parent Resource for Information Development and Education (PRIDE) foster/adoptive parent training classes' attendance increased. For example, in FY 2005-2006, there were 251 PRIDE Training graduates, 30 of whom were Spanish Speaking. In FY 2006-2007, there were 340 PRIDE Training graduates, 62 of whom were Spanish Speaking. A new database software ETO will be installed in mid-May 2008 and will assist with data collection.	*May 21, 2010 (on-going)* **In process**	Deputy Director, Family Assessment and Shelter Services, and RTS

	3.1.2 Develop a tracking system to evaluate effectiveness of recruitment efforts. **UPDATE:** The Foster and Adoptive Family Development Team (FAFDT) currently utilizes a tracking system that identifies types of recruitment media techniques and their impact on recruitment efforts. Our county is moving forward to begin using ETO software during May 2008. This data system will enable tracking types of recruitment efforts used, responses to specific recruitment and overall effects.		*May* 21, *2008* **Completed**		Deputy Director, Family Assessment and Shelter Services, and RDS

	3.1.3 Increase placement resources in targeted communities by 5%. **UPDATE:** FAFDT has experienced an increase in the number of newly licensed foster homes. This is largely due to the collaboration with faith-based organizations and targeted media recruitment for siblings, teens and medically fragile children. For example in 2005, there were 85 newly licensed foster homes. In 2006, there were 84 newly licensed foster homes. In 2007, there were 91 newly licensed foster homes and within the first five months of 2008, there are 33 newly licensed foster homes. Targeted recruitment in our largest cities: Santa Ana and Anaheim have yielded higher recruitment results. A new data tracking system "ETO" will begin in mid-May 2008. This data system will assist with the gathering and comparison of newly licensed foster families' throughout Orange County. FAFDT has collaborated with several community based organizations targeting on the most difficult to place children; i.e. siblings, teens and the medically fragile. Organizations such as the faith organizations have experienced increased success in reaching out to the communities and recruiting new resource families. Additionally, the same community organizations are collaborating to offer supportive services to resource families, children and birth families. Additionally, development of a user-friendly web site with information regarding becoming a foster family has been met with great demand. Usually, potential foster families utilize the web site, sign up for foster parent training and attend.		May 21, 2010 **In Process**		Deputy Director, Family Assessment and Shelter Services, and RDS

	3.1.4 Partner with county faith-based communities to recruit and support placements. **UPDATE:** FAFDT invited 55 faith-based organizations throughout Orange County to partner in efforts to recruit and support foster families in their communities. Consequently, FAFDT has partnered with over 30 faith-based organizations in 18 months. The faith organizations represent and reflect the diverse religious organizations located in Orange County. A faith convening was held on 6/29/06, and second was held on 9/9/07. A follow-up session was held on 2/28/07 and provided resource family training and support by CFS and the faith-based organizations.		May 21, 2010 (on-going) **In process**		Deputy Director, Family Assessment and Shelter Services, and RDS

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
3.1.5 Hold focus groups with caregivers to address caregiver retention issues. Discuss support services needed and develop a plan to implement recommended changes. **UPDATE:** The Foster Care Advisory Board (FCAB) and Recruitment, Development and Support (RDS) workgroup hold monthly meetings and gather input that include the participation of caregivers. Caregivers offer their personal experiences through the meeting and give recommendations as to what they see needed in training and supportive services. Thus far and based on caregivers input, they have participated in workgroups that addressed policy, foster care rates, safety issues and PRIDE training curriculum. Policies affected by caregiver input were: • Placement Notification to foster parents • Visitation between birth families and foster parents • A completed survey by caregivers regarding methods to increase contact and visitation between birth parents and foster parents • Increased communication and support regarding agency and caretaker interaction when child death occurred in the home • Traumatic Events Policy	May 21, 2010 **In process**	Deputy Director, Family Assessment and Shelter Services, and RDS

Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal. • Social work positions are needed to increase FSW caseloads and increase TDM Meetings. • Limited funding may reduce the agency's ability to increase positions.
Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals. • No training has been identified.
Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals. • FRCs will provide resources for caregivers. • Social work staff will participate in process groups to discuss the values of Icebreakers and FR Meetings. • Caregivers will be asked to provide feedback regarding support services that positively affect caregiver retention. • SSA/CFS will partner with faith-based community to support and recruit placements. • SSA/CFS will partner with Annie E. Casey and Youth Law Center to assess the attachment issues of children under the age of six. • SSA/CFS will partner with Orange County HCA in the development of a support line for caregivers and provision of mental health services to children in foster placements. • CFS, Probation, and HCA will expand Wraparound Program Services.
Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals. • No changes have been identified.

Outcome/Systemic Factor:
Children Transitioning to self-sufficient Adulthood

The percent of probation foster youth eligible for Independent Living services who receive appropriate education and training, and/or achieve employment or economic self sufficiency

County's Current Performance:
Enhancing emancipation services for high-risk probation placement youth was selected as the System Improvement Goal in 2004. The focus at that time was on improving technology in order to assist probation in the identification and tracking of youth to be able to provide services. The focus of this SIP goal is on increasing emancipation services, which not only includes ensuring probation foster youth are participating in ILP classes, but that they are accessing and benefiting from the various programs and opportunities available through the Orangewood Children's Foundation. In addition, probation wants to explore other opportunities provided by community/private programs for education, employment, and transitional living. As Probation and the Orange County Social Services Agency become more collaborative in the delivery of services to foster youth, probation has become more aware of services that heretofore have been underutilized by probation officers working with probation foster youth. Under current practices Probation youth have difficulty getting accepted by transitional housing programs, and are at great risk of becoming homeless. While 61% of probation youth emancipate to parents/legal guardians/relatives homes, those living arrangements are frequently temporary and do not provide a stable residence. Another area of focus is on education. Currently only 34% of probation foster youth emancipate with a high school diploma, while 14% emancipate with a GED. Further, 19% of the youth are enrolled in college. In addition, 43% of probation foster youth are employed at the time of emancipation. In that 72% of probation foster youth placed in group homes are placed in out of the county group homes, they are not eligible for many ILP services, and emancipate without employment, or a place to reside. These youth are at great risk to recidivate and return to custody. Probation's goal will be to collaboratively work with SSA (especially the Emancipation Unit), the Orangewood Children's Foundation, group homes, and other agencies/businesses/organizations to seek out services and funding for probation foster youth to improve the outcomes of the youth end probation supervision.

Improvement Goal 1.0
Identify existing, and develop new emancipation services and transitional living options for probation youth.

Strategy 1.1	**Strategy Rationale**[1]
Collaborate with the Social Services Emancipation Unit	The SSA Emancipation Unit holds the contract with the Orangewood Children's Foundation for providing independent living services for foster youth. In addition, the unit provides various services to the SSA foster youth, which probation youth would also benefit.

[1] Describe how the strategies will build on progress and improve this outcome or systemic factor

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
1.1.1 Set up on-going quarterly meetings with the Placement Unit and the SSA Emancipation Unit. **UPDATE:** In June, an Emancipation SSW was designated as a liaison to the Placement Unit. The liaison attended the Placement Unit's weekly staff meetings throughout the remainder of the calendar year. She coordinated with the Placement SPO to have guest speakers/programs, as well as provided information herself. She has been a constant resource to the unit and has been pro-active in recognizing possibilities/issues for Probation youth. It was decided that quarterly meetings were not needed given the liaison was providing information regularly, as well as both probation officers and Senior Social Workers (SSWs) were both attending a number of other training events together (Emancipation Excellence Training (2/07) and ETO Planning (3/08). However, the SSA Emancipation Unit and Probation held a meeting, along with Foster Youth Services and Orangewood Children's Foundation on October 31, 2007.	6/30/07 **Completed**	Probation Placement Supervising Probation Officers (SPOs)

1.1.2 Identify available services/opportunities offered by the SSA Emancipation Unit that are not currently being accessed. **UPDATE:** In April, Probation began using a modified version of the SSA Emancipation Unit's "Emancipation Verification Letter." (We are now using the Verification Letter provided by the State.) Procedures were created between the supervisor of the Placement Unit and SSA Emancipation Unit for probation placement youth to receive emancipation binders and "bear hug bags" (these bags contain callings cards, blanket, hygiene items, etc.). The emancipation binders are comprehensive collection of information regarding services, shelters, etc. Placement officers have now been holding emancipation planning conferences with SSA Emancipation social workers to create strategies for emancipating placement youth assisting them with housing, employment and continued education. In June, the Emancipation Liaison presented information regarding the other county's ILP programs and distributed reference material. The Emancipation Liaison SPO coordinated to have the following programs present to the Placement Unit: 6/24/07 - Rising Tides Transitional Housing Program (A majority of probation youth are not accepted by this program. The presentation helped identify what the program's requirements were which in turn helped officers in only referring appropriate youth.); 9/13/07 - STAY Program (This is a new program geared to work	9/30/07 **Completed**	Probation Placement SPOs Probation Placement Unit SSA Emancipation Unit Supervisor SSA Emancipation Unit

	with mental health minors. It is anticipated to be a huge resource for emancipating youth who suffer from mental health issues.) 10/17/07–Special Juvenile Immigrant Status Program (This specialized unit presented on the procedures for seeking residency for appropriate undocumented probation youth. To date, this unit has assisted the Placement unit in obtaining residency for one youth, as well as renewing residency for another.) 11/14/07 – Creating Family Connections (This program assists caseworkers and minors in finding family members for the youth. To date, they have assisted in three probation cases, and were very successful in one.) In June, a Placement DPO and 3 probation youth, along with several members of the SSA Emancipation Unit attended the Annual Teen Forum that was held at Cal State San Francisco.		Placement Unit DPOs
	1.1.3 Refer/submit applications for services/benefits for probation youth. Identify barriers that prevent probation youth from being able to access services. **UPDATE:** Many services are not offered to minor's who are either placed out of county or remain in custody. ILP programs in other counties either offer no or limited services. For some programs, if minors were not prior dependents, it is more difficult to process case (i.e. Special Juvenile Immigration Status, Creating Family Connections). Probation youth, due to their behavior, are usually not candidates for transitional housing. The Placement SPO Has coordinated with the Eligibility Worker/Supervisor to ensure that the birth certificates and social security cards are requested on all new placement youth. Further, DPOs have increased their efforts to ensure minors are emancipating with their documentation, including CA ID, and have taken minors to obtain their documents. Further, we are working with our group homes to acquire their assistance in this process. Lastly, we are tracking emancipating youth to ensure the documents have been received and provided.	10/31/07 **Completed**	Placement Unit DPOs

Strategy 1.2 Collaborate with the Orangewood Children's Foundation	**Strategy Rationale** The Orangewood Children's Foundation provides a wide range of activities, scholarships, support and programs for Orange County foster youth.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
1.2.1. Establish a liaison with the Orangewood Children's Foundation. Identify available services/opportunities that can benefit probation youth. **UPDATE:** An Orangewood Children's Foundation (OCF) liaison was established in May. Further, the Emancipation Liaison and the entire Placement Unit met with representatives of OCF on May 16, 2007. The various programs offered through the Foundation were shared with the unit and a tour of the facility. The unit learned that we can provide the OCF address to emancipated youth to utilize as a mailing address. This can assist the youth in a number of ways. We also learned that bus passes for other counties could be given to youth placed in other counties. The ILP providers of the other counties were not able to provide the passes.	9/30/07 **Completed**	Probation Placement SPOs Probation Placement Unit
1.2.2 Establish a protocol for submitting applications for services/benefits for probation youth. **UPDATE:** The Bridge's Program was shared at the above meeting. We were able to coordinate a procedure for referral of probation youth.	10/31/07 **Completed**	Probation Placement SPOs Probation Placement Unit

1.2.3 Identify barriers that prevent youth from obtaining services. **UPDATE:** Barriers initially included: the program was a non-approved probation resource and there were concerns regarding unsupervised contact of the mentors with probation youth. Initially, fourteen youth were identified/referred to the program. An additional barrier was the placement of youth in out-of-county facilities/homes.	10/31/07 **Completed**	Probation Placement SPOs SSA Emancipation Unit Supervisor

Strategy 1.3 Seek employment options for probation youth through collaboration with SSA, and other entities, such as the Workforce Investment Board, One-Stop Employment, etc	**Strategy Rationale** Currently 43% of probation foster youth are employed at the time of emancipation. In that stable employment can be key to a successful transition to emancipation, the identification or creation of increased employment options serves the goal of improved emancipation outcomes.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
1.3.1 Coordinate with Workforce Investment Board, One-Stop Employment, and other entities that specialize in youth employment to confirm eligibility and suitability of probation foster youth for employment opportunities. **UPDATE:** Coordinated with Working Wardrobes, a program we have found that has been extremely helpful in providing placement minors with clothing in order for them to obtain clothing for employment. To date, a number of placement youth have accessed this program. Several officers have referred youth to Workforce Investment Board. The officers have met with site representatives at all three of the Orange County offices (Garden Grove, Santa Ana, and Anaheim). Further, the minors who have been referred have been extremely successful with a couple of them receiving paid internships, as well as assistance in enrolling and paying for college. DPO's report ease of connectivity with the program, and acknowledged the program actually provides transportation and assists the youth through the entire process of becoming employed. Further, the centers create a safe place for minors to go and "hang-out, while supervised, and without a commitment for participation. One Stop – The services provided at the one-stops has not met the needs of the minors. While the program provides referrals, they do not provide transportation, work with the youth, or provide any kind of follow through. This program requires youth to be self-motivated and higher functioning. Additional collaboration included staff that attended A Bridge to Independence for Transitional Age Youth on 10-22-07.	9/30/07 **Completed**	Juvenile Supervision Director Probation Placement Supervisors

	1.3.2 Create a listing or catalogue of agencies that specialize in providing employment opportunities to youth and make the information available to probation placement officers for use as additional resources during case planning. **UPDATE:** This goal has not yet been achieved. Due to staff shortages, staff turnover, multiple trainings (STC and Placement CORE), as well as other projects, there has not been sufficient time or staff to focus on this goal. Placement officers are still using a variety of sources to seek resources (Probation Resource Directory, Emancipation Excellence Binder, 211, emancipation binders, etc.		9/30/07 **In process** **Require extension to 5/21/2010**		Probation Placement Supervisors
Strategy 1.4 Coordinate with the probation educational liaison in to ensure educational requirements are met, education passports are prepared, youth are on target to graduate or are encouraged to take GED, and to seek opportunities for furthering education.				
Milestone	**1.4.1** Obtain Educational Passports for all probation placement youth **UPDATE:** This goal was met in December of 2007. On 1-30-08, the Placement Unit and Foster Youth Services (FYS) had a luncheon meeting to celebrate. There was discussion of future goals and the services to be provided by Transitional Specialist for placement youth in custody who are nearing emancipation.	**Timeframe**	5/31/07 **Completed**	**Assigned to**	Foster Youth Services Transitional Specialist-Department of Education

	1.4.2 Develop on going procedure for updating passports **UPDATE:** In order for Foster Youth Services (FYS) to be immediately informed of new placement minors, the supervisor forwards an email immediately upon a minor receiving a placement order. Subsequently, an Educational Passport Request is forwarded to the Transition Specialist to assist in the creation of the passport. The Transition Specialist will complete an educational passport within 10 days of receiving the form. A process whereby education passports would be reviewed by FYS on an annual basis is to be implemented. DPO's will initiate the review by forwarding information to FYS several months prior to the 12-month Placement review, and then every year thereafter. FYS will utilize information received by the DPO, as well as their Foster Focus Database to complete the update. The review process has not yet been implemented due to staff shortages, staff turnover, and an abundance of training since January 2008.	12/31/07 **Completed**	Foster Youth Services Transitional Specialist-Department of Education Probation Placement Supervisors
	1.4.3 Establish a process for making referrals to the "Bridges to Higher Education" program (the program is design to support foster children efforts to attend higher education). **UPDATE:** This is addressed above under Section 1.2.2.	12/31/07 **Completed**	Probation Placement Supervisors

Improvement Goal 2.0 Track percentage of probation foster youth that emancipate with a high school diploma, GED, employment, and stable housing.			
Strategy 2.1 Within the Probation Placement Unit's Emancipation Access Database, identify the current percentages for the above areas from January 2005 through the present (February 2007).		**Strategy Rationale** [1] In order to be able to accurately assess outcomes in targeted emancipation areas, baseline figures must be established.	
Milestone	**Timeframe**	**Assigned to**	
2.1.1 Identify current percentage of minors who emancipate with a high school diploma, GED, employment and stable housing. **UPDATE:** 2005-2007 – 91 Minors High school diploma – 34% GED – 14% Employment – 43% Stable Housing - 99% (This includes reunification with parents, living with friends, transitional housing, college campus, etc.) Unstable Housing – 5% (This includes homeless and shelters)	3/31/07 **Completed**	Placement Unit SPO Placement Coordinator (Senior DPO)	
2.1.2 Identify current percentages mid-way through the SIP to evaluate if percentages are increasing. **UPDATE:** 2007 – 41 Minors High school diploma – 24% GED – 27% Employment – 32% Stable Housing* - 99.5% % (This includes reunification with parents, living with friends, transitional housing, college campus, etc.) Unstable Housing – 5% (This includes homeless and shelters) (* This includes everything from reunifying parents, friends, transitional housing, and college campus. It excludes minors that were homeless/referred to a shelter.)	9/30/08 **Completed**	Placement Unit SPO Placement Coordinator (Senior DPO)	

	2.1.3 Identify current percentages to assess if percentages have increased during SIP cycle.		1/10/10		Placement Unit SPO Placement Coordinator (Senior DPO)

Strategy 2. 2 Obtain education, employment and housing data from the ETO CC25 database.	**Strategy Rationale** [1] The ETO database is designed to track transition outcomes for foster youth. But utilizing the data from this database and comparing probation captured data it is anticipated valuable information learned that assist in making decisions about transition services and probation's' program design.

Milestone	**2.2.1** Compare data collected via ETO CC25 database against the Placement Unit's Emancipation Database to ascertain if figures are consistent.	**Timeframe**	1/10/10	**Assigned to**	Placement Unit SPO

Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal.
Probation placement officers support the implementation of dual delinquent/dependant status for foster youth. Dual status could facilitate the delivery of services to probation foster youth as they prepare for emancipation. Additionally, in that 72% of probation foster youth are placed outside of Orange County and as a result not eligible for many ILP services, efforts need to be made to either reduce barriers that prevent access to these services or to increase the number of placements within Orange County.

The implementation of ETO CC25I database will assist in providing valuable information regarding foster youth preparation for emancipation and outcomes.

There needs to be an increase in programs that provide transitional housing and or provide opportunities for at lest temporary housing options for transition youth (i.e. greater access to motel vouchers for probation foster youth who are emancipating).

Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.
As part of the PQCR process, probation officers identified a need to have training in working with highly dysfunctional/resistive families, and severely emotionally disturbed youth. As probation officer skills are enhanced in the areas it is hoped probation officers can play an even more effective roles in assisting youth prepare for emancipation. Additional training needs include; assessing minor's educational status, and opportunities, as well as learning more about educational law.

[1] **Describe how the strategies will build on progress and improve this outcome or systemic factor**