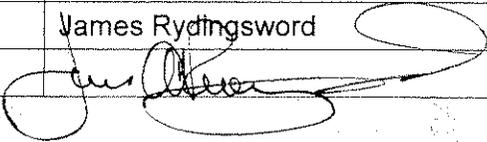
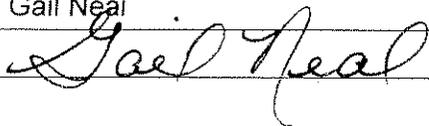


SIP Update Cover Sheet

County:	Mariposa County
Responsible County Child Welfare Agency:	Mariposa County Department of Human Services / Child Welfare Services
Period of Plan:	2007-2010
Period of Outcomes Data:	Quarter ending July 2008
Date Submitted:	September 2008
County Contact Person for County System Improvement Plan Update	
Name:	Nancy Bell
Title:	Deputy Director of Social Services
Address:	5085 Bullion Street / P.O. Box 7, Mariposa, CA 95338
Phone/Email:	(209) 966-2442 / nbell@mariposacounty.org
Submitted by: County Child Welfare Agency Director (Lead Agency)	
Name:	James Rydingsword
Signature:	
Submitted by: County Chief Probation Officer	
Name:	Gail Neal
Signature:	

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cc: N. Bell ; G. Neal (File)



Mariposa County Child Welfare Services Self Improvement Plan (SIP) Update September 2008

Since the implementation of our three year System Improvement Plan (SIP) in November 2007, Mariposa County Child Welfare Services (CWS) and the Mariposa County Probation Department continue to work toward achieving our targeted improvement goals.

Effective January 2008, outcome measures regarding recurrence of maltreatment and re-entry into foster care have been consolidated. Individual measures are grouped within a composite, which should give us a more complete picture of overall performance while still allowing us to improve in specific areas within the composite.

The measures that we have targeted for improvement remain challenges for us. The number of children represented within these percentages is between one (1) and four (4). It must be reiterated that, due to our very small population, a large percentage deviation is resultant from the real number of only one child. Regardless, we endeavor to improve outcomes for all our children.

Our Adoption Within 24 Months (exit cohort) has fluctuated between 0% and 100% within the last several years. Since this typically represents one or two children, if we miss the 24 month target we are at zero and vice versa. The national goal for this measure is 36.6%. We have implemented the proposed strategies of timely referrals to Adoptions. Adoptions staff have been meeting with CWS staff and have attended quarterly stakeholder meetings. Adoptions staff, along with CWS staff, have participated in community outreach at local events to generate interest in prospective foster and adoptive placements. Mariposa County has updated its agreement/MOU with State Adoptions.

Placement stability for children in care less than 12 months has fluctuated between 68.2% and 76.0%. The national standard for this measure is 94.6%. It is an ongoing challenge to increase the number of placements and specialized homes for children within the county. State Adoptions staff is participating in administrative reviews at CWS. The latter is exploring a change of assessment tools from Comprehensive Assessment Tool (CAT) to Structured Decision Making (SDM). Mariposa County CWS endeavors to enjoy an excellent relationship with our foster parents. We have contracted for a receiving home with the intent of having a period of time to evaluate family members and find the best concurrent placement for the children.



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We provide information to families regarding improving living conditions and ensuring proper care and supervision of children. Family Enrichment Centers within Mariposa County, with the first slated for North County, are being developed by Mariposa Safe Families, the Mariposa County Child Abuse Prevention Council entity and one of our community partners. In conjunction with the Central California Training Academy, we have provided advanced training for staff regarding Critical Thinking. We are utilizing case staffings and multi-disciplinary team (MDT) meetings to help in make better decisions. We are utilizing progressive trial visits before return of children home and are monitoring child safety during home visits for court ordered Family Maintenance (FM) and Voluntary Family Maintenance (VFM) cases. We are referring clients to comprehensive services, including parenting education provided through the Probation Department. The social worker follows up regarding provision of services, observes parents during visitations, and works with families to internalize and apply new skills, which evidences transfer of learning.

Regular review of SafeMeasures reports has had a significant positive impact on our compliance measures for timely in-person contacts during investigations and timely face-to-face monthly contacts by social workers. These reports are reviewed by the individual social worker, the supervisor, and the deputy director on a weekly basis.

Staff turnover, including promotions, has impacted staff's ability to realize their full potential. We have hired three new staff and lost two staff persons in Child Welfare Services since December 2007. We are currently operating at 60% of budgeted staff. Staffing changes including hiring and training, as well as case reassignment, continue to limit our ability to expand services to clients.

The Mariposa County Probation Department continues to work to improve the rate of timely probation officer contacts with parents of children under their care. Efforts have included: management meetings with staff to intensify efforts to see resistant parents, increasing numbers of staff home visits to assist parents who do not keep appointments at the Probation Office, establishing a date each month with the parents to meet and discuss the most recent developments regarding their child's case plan while in placement, and setting evening appointments for parents who work during the day. As indicated, these efforts are reflected in improvement performance on the Improvement Goal reported here at 70%.



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Summary Performance Chart

Plan Component	Measure Description	Explanation	Jan '07 (Q2 '06)	July '07 (Q4 '06)	Jan '08 (Q2 '07)	July '08 (Q4 '07)	National Standard Goal
1	C2.1 Adoption within 24 months (Exit Cohort)*	Of all children discharged from foster care to a finalized adoption during the year, what percentage were discharged in less than 24 months from the date of the latest removal from home?	0.0%	100.0%	50.0%	41.7%	36.6%
2	C4.1 Placement Stability (8 days to 12 Months in Care)**	Of all children served in foster care during the year who were in foster care at least 8 days but less than 12 months, what percentage had two or fewer placement settings?	75.9%	71.9%	76.0%	68.2%	86%
3,4 & 5	S1.1 No Recurrence Of Maltreatment *** Recurrence Where Children Not Removed*** Foster Care Re-entry***	Of children with a substantiated allegation during the period, how many had a subsequent substantiated allegation within six months?	84.1%	93.0%	93.3%	82.5%	94.6%
6	2C Timely Probation Officer Visits with Parent ****	What percentage of required monthly contact with parents of children under their care do probation officers make?	25.0%	33.0%	83.0%	70.0%	N/A

*Revisions in 1/08 now provide for a Composite of Adoption factors including Timeliness, Progress and "Legally Free". These are measures C2.1 Adoption within 24 Months (exit cohort), C2.2 Median Time to Adoption (exit cohort), C2.3 Adoption Within 12 Months (17 Months in Care), C2.4 Legally Free Within 6 Months (17 Months in Care) and C2.5 Adoption Within 12 Months (Legally Free). This Composite is one of four Permanency Indicators for the overall Placement Stability Composite.

**Revisions in 1/08 now provide for a Composite of Placement Stability including C4.1 Placement Stability (8 Days to 12 Months in Care), C4.2 Placement Stability (12 to 24 Months in Care) and C4.3 Placement Stability (At Least 24 Months in Care). This Composite is one of four Permanency Indicators for the overall Placement Stability Composite.

***Effective 1/08 these Safety Indicators have been consolidated into one S1.1 No Recurrence of Maltreatment.

****Plan Component 6 has recently been identified by Probation Staff and included as part of the update.



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Outcome/Systemic Factor: C2.1 – Adoption Within 24 Months (Formerly 3D Time to Adoption (Adoption within 24 mo)			
County’s Current Performance: For the time period of July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2008 Mariposa County had a 0.0% compliance rate of children who exited care to finalized adoption within 24 months of their removal from the home.			
Improvement Goal 1.0: Work with State Adoptions to expedite adoption finalization to achieve expected percentages of >36.6%.			
Strategy 1.1: Make early referrals to the CDSS Adoptions Unit and collaborate on adoptive placements.		Strategy Rationale: Timely referrals will expedite the finalization of adoptions.	
Permanency	Milestones	Timeframes	Assigned To
	1.1.1 Make referrals to Adoptions as soon as possible before the WIC§366.26 hearing to minimize court delays and continuances.	At termination of FR services	CWS social worker
	1.1.2 State Adoptions to expedite adoptive placement and finalization after the WIC§366.26 hearing.	ASAP after WIC§366.26 hearing	CDSS Adoptions social worker
	1.1.3 Finalization of adoption within 24 months.	Within 24 months	CDSS Adoptions social worker
1.1.4 Invite CDSS Adoptions staff to CWS staff meetings to discuss ways to improve timeliness of referrals to CDSS.	Adoptions staff joined staff meeting on 3/25/08 and now participate in Administrative Reviews at CWS.	CWS Supervisor; CDSS staff	
Strategy 1.2: Effect concurrent placements ASAP. Use community outreach to recruit adoptive homes. Review and evaluate process for placing children with relatives and non-related extended family members (NREFM).		Strategy Rationale: Early identification and increase in the number of concurrent placements will expedite adoption finalization.	



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Milestones	1.2.1 Utilize foster parent association meetings to generate word of mouth to recruit	Timeframes	Monthly meetings	Assigned To	Department licensing staff; foster parents
	1.2.2 Advertise in the local newspaper to recruit.		Weekly		Department licensing staff
	1.2.3 Operate Adoptions vendor booths at local events for purpose of generating interest in becoming a foster home.		Mariposa Butterfly Festival occurred on May 3 and 4, 2008, and the Mariposa County Fair occurred August 29 – Sept. 1, 2008.		Adoptions staff and CWS social worker

Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal. None

Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals. Training in permanency planning for new CWS staff, as offered by the Central California Training Academy.

Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals. CDSS Adoptions Unit has the biggest role regarding finalization of adoptions within 24 months; foster parents and Department licensing staff are also integral to increased availability of adoptive placements.

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

Permanency

Outcome/Systemic Factor: C4.1 – Placement Stability (Formerly 3B - Multiple Foster Care Placements)

County's Current Performance: For the quarter ending June 30, 2008 Mariposa County had a 83.3% compliance rate for children in foster care who were in two or less place settings in the previous 12 months.

Improvement Goal 2.0: Increase awareness of foster parents regarding difficult/hard to place children and how to successfully work with them to stabilize placement.



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Strategy 2.1: Increase likelihood of stable placements and collaborate with county licensed foster parents and FFAs to educate and counsel.		Strategy Rationale: Stabilization of placements for minors with special needs will reduce number of placements.			
Milestones	2.1.1 Refine search for appropriate placements utilizing the CAT placement tool.	Timeframes	Whenever a placement/placement change occurs	Assigned To	CWS social workers
	2.1.2 Invite CDSS Adoptions staff to Administrative Reviews at CWS.		CDSS Adoptions Specialist attended Administrative Review on 06/27/2008		Legal Secretary issues invitations and notices.
	2.1.3 Mariposa County CWS has recently concluded that the CAT placement tool is of little utility in ensuring placement stability; hence, the CWS Supervisor requested of the State on 7/31/08 that the County be afforded the opportunity to change from CAT to SDM.		The Department awaits an update from Debbie Wender, Child Welfare Policy and Program Development Bureau (CDSS) in late August, 2008. Training and Implementation regarding SDM estimated for Fall 2008.		CDSS Child Welfare Policy and Program Development Bureau contact Debbie Wender and CWS Supervisor and Social Services Deputy Director
Strategy 2.2: Provide specialized training to members of the Foster Parent Association.		Strategy Rationale: Education on dealing with special needs minors will increase stable placement resources.			



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Milestones	2.2.1 Recruit speakers for monthly foster parent association meetings.	Timeframes	Monthly	Assigned To	Department licensing staff; Columbia College Foster Care Program
	2.2.2 Invite dialogue between CWS staff and foster parents		Ongoing		Foster parents; CWS staff
Strategy 2.3 Review and evaluate process for placing children with relatives and non-related extended family members (NREFM).		Strategy Rationale: Early placement with relatives may provide increased stability for children needing placement.			
Milestones	2.3.1 Review and evaluate process for placing children with relatives or non-related extended family members (NREFM).	Timeframes	Within 3 months	Assigned To	Deputy, supervisor and CWS social workers
	2.3.2 Develop written policy and protocol.		Within 6 months		Department consultant, deputy and supervisor
Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal. None needed.					
Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals. Adequate training of CWS staff on the soon to be implemented SDM tool (replacing the CAT placement tool); enlisting special speakers for foster parent association meetings.					
Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals: Foster parents and FFAs to provide safe, supportive, and stable placements; Department licensing staff to recruit, retain, and provide support for foster parents.					
Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals. None					



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Safety	Outcome/Systemic Factor: S1.1 No Recurrence Of Maltreatment			
	County's Current Performance: Of children with a substantiated allegation of abuse or neglect from 01/01/07 to 12/31/07 82.5% had no subsequent substantiated allegation of abuse or neglect within six months.			
	Improvement Goal 3.0: By June 2009, 94.6% of all children with substantiated allegations during the first six months of the reporting period will have no subsequent substantiated allegations in the following six months.			
	Strategy 3.1: Use caution and vigilance in returning children home post-reunification to mitigate recurrence of abuse/neglect.		Strategy Rationale: Premature return might conduce to recurrence of maltreatment	
	Milestones	3.1.1 Utilize case staffings/MDT meetings and SDM tools to amass critical information to determine safety and risk factors present or absent in the home.	Timeframes	Assigned To
	3.1.2 Commence trial visits before return home.	Case staffings occur after weekly CWS unit meetings. MDT staffings occur on a case-by-case basis. 30-60 days in duration	CWS social workers; mental health; probation department	
	3.1.3 Refer clients to comprehensive services, including parenting education.	Ongoing	CWS social workers; parents CWS social worker; Behavioral Health and Recovery Services; parents	
Strategy 3.2: Reduce chronic neglect through education and counseling.		Strategy Rationale: Neglectful parents need information to ameliorate poor living circumstances.		



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Milestones	3.2.1 Provide information to families regarding improvement of living conditions and proper care and supervision of children. Social worker (or Aide) will coach family in improving life circumstances that do not meet the minimum sufficient level of care. Referrals to Health Department for hazardous living situations or other health concerns.	Timeframes	Ongoing	Assigned To	CWS social workers; health department staff
	3.2.2 Work in collaboration with Mariposa Safe Families on the development of a family enrichment center in Mariposa County.		First center is slated for North County by 01/01/2009.		CWS staff; Mariposa Safe Families staff
	3.2.3 Presented a Critical Thinking workshop, focused specifically on CWS and APS, in Mariposa County		July 23, 2008		CWS Supervisor; Central California Training Academy Trainer; All CWS social workers attended.
Strategy 3.3: Note: The above strategies regard State Outcome Measures only, as Federal Outcome Measures are already met, in fact exceeded.		Strategy Rationale:			
Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal. Parents' completion of case plan objectives and demonstrable, observable parenting skills.					
Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals. Parent training for parents and Central California Training Academy training for new staff regarding child maltreatment identification and critical thinking in CWS assessment regarding safety, risk, and protective capacity.					
Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals. Department of Probation, Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (for both mental health and substance abuse issues), county child abuse prevention council, Shared Leadership regarding parenting mentors and support.					



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

Safety	Outcome/Systemic Factor: S1.1 Recurrence of Maltreatment (Formerly 2A – Recurrence of Maltreatment Where Child Not Removed)		
	County's Current Performance: For Quarter ending June 30, 2008, Mariposa County had 7.7% recurrence of maltreatment in situations where the child was not removed from the home within the previous 12 months.		
	Improvement Goal 4.0: Ensure children's safety in the home		
	Strategy 4.1: Transition to Structured Decision Making (SDM) tools to be utilized to assist worker in making decisions about safety and risk levels.		Strategy Rationale: No recurrence of abuse in the home will ensure child safety.
	Milestones	Timeframes	Assigned To
4.1.1 Train staff and implement SDM to be used consistently.	Within 3 months	CWS supervisor and social workers Train staff and implement SDM to be used consistently..	
4.1.2 Presented a Critical Thinking workshop, focused specifically on CWS and APS, in Mariposa County	July 23, 2008	CWS Supervisor; California Central Training Academy Trainer; All CWS social workers attended.	
Strategy 4.2: Provide comprehensive services to families.		Strategy Rationale: Ensure long term safety, strengthen families.	



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Milestones	4.2.1 Refer parents to appropriate and supportive resources and follow up to ensure timely delivery of services.	Timeframes	Ongoing	Assigned To	CWS social worker
	Explore necessity of contracted collaboration.		Within 6 months		Deputy and consultant
Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal. Parents' successful completion of case plan objectives and demonstrable and observable parenting skills.					
Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals. Parent training for parents; for new staff, completion of Central California Training Academy modules on child maltreatment identification and critical thinking in child welfare assessment regarding safety, risk, and protective capacity.					
Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals. Department of Probation, Behavioral Health and Recovery Services, Shared Leadership, county child abuse prevention council.					
Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals. None					

Safety	Outcome/Systemic Factor: S1.1 Recurrence of Maltreatment (Formerly C1.4 Reentry Following Reunification (Exit Cohort)	
	County's Current Performance: For the most recent quarterly report for which results are available, ending 06/30/2008, 50% of children reunified with their parents and then reentered foster care within 12 months.	
	Improvement Goal 5.0: Reduce the rate of admissions that are reentries to less than 8.6%.	
	Strategy 5.1: Transition to Structured Decision Making (SDM) tools to be utilized to assist worker in making decisions about safety and risk levels.	Strategy Rationale: No recurrence of abuse in the home will ensure child safety.



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Milestones	5.1.1 Train staff and implement SDM to be used consistently..	Timeframes	Within 3 months	Assigned To	CWS supervisor and social workers
	Strategy 5.2: Provide comprehensive services to families.		Strategy Rationale: Ensure long term safety, strengthen families.		
Milestones	5.2.1 Refer parents to appropriate and supportive resources and follow up to ensure timely delivery of services.	Timeframes	Ongoing	Assigned To	CWS social workers
Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal. Parents' successful completion of case plan objectives and demonstrable and observable parenting skills.					
Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals. Parent training for parents; for new staff, completion of Central California Training Academy modules on child maltreatment identification and critical thinking in child welfare assessment regarding safety, risk, and protective capacity.					
Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals. Department of Probation, Behavioral Health and Recovery Services, Shared Leadership, county child abuse prevention council.					
Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals. None					

Safety	Outcome/Systemic Factor: Timely Probation Officer Contacts with Parent
	County's Current Performance: The Mariposa County Probation Department's current performance of Foster Care Placement Monthly Caseload Statistical Report indicates that Probation workers currently make 70% of their monthly



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contacts with parents of children under their care.

Improvement Goal 6.0: Maintain compliance of probation officer contact with parents at 90% or above.

Strategy 6.1:

Using the numbers from the Probation Foster Care Placement Monthly Caseload Statistical Report, the department will obtain and monitor county data for monthly probation officer contact with parent/guardian compliance to analyze trends and performance.

Strategy Rationale:

The monthly reports allow supervisors to monitor the placement officer's performance on specific process and outcome indicators.

Milestones	Timeframes	Assigned To
6.1.1 Issue memo to placement officers to ensure understanding of expectations regarding monthly probation officer contacts; communicate that monthly parent contact will be tracked as part of the SIP.	Annually	Chief Probation Officer
6.1.2 Supervisor to review placement officers' compliance with monthly contacts with parents by reviewing the Probation Foster Care Placement Monthly Caseload Statistical Reports.	Monthly	Probation Supervisor
6.1.3 Placement officers will schedule monthly contact appointments with parents and document efforts to comply with statistical report.	Monthly	Placement Officer

Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal. Develop department policy which states that the placement officer will contact parents monthly. Extend work hours of probation officer to accommodate working parents. Probation officer will make home visits with parents who cannot make office appointments. Probation officer will expand services to parents to include parenting education specific to the needs of children in out-of-home placement. Probation Department will purchase parenting education materials that will help parents with children placed out of the home understand the importance of their continued involvement in the child's life. Probation Department will provide



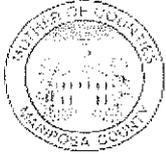
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probation officer with a lap top which will allow the probation officer to provide parenting education information and training to the parent in their home. Probation Department will assist with the transportation when necessary to maintain visitation between parents and minor in out-of-home placement.

Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals. All probation officers will attend training regarding all contacts, but emphasis will be on the monthly contact with parents. The current placement officer has completed Placement Core training. Future placement officers will be required to complete Placement Core training.

Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals. None.

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



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CWSOIP Funds

<u>Department</u>	<u>Function</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Staff Cost (State & Federal)</u>	<u>Miscellaneous</u>
Social Services	Subscription to SafeMeasures*			\$5,500
Social Services	Attendance at Quarterly Community Partners Meetings	2 hrs	\$482 Includes overhead	
Social Services	Attendance at monthly Child Abuse Prevention Council Meetings	2 hrs	\$482 Includes overhead	
			TOTAL EXPENDED 2007/08	\$6,464

Total allocation for Social Services was \$50,554

Total allocation for Probation was \$10,000

Description

Funds last fiscal year were spent on a subscription to Safe Measures (\$5,500) and Social Services staff time attending meetings. Probation was unable to use their funds last fiscal year. We will be looking at alternative ways to use our funds to improve outcomes for FY 2008-09.