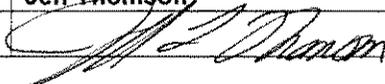


SIP Cover Sheet

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

County:	INYO
Responsible County Child Welfare Agency:	Inyo County Department of Health and Human Services Adult and Children's Services Division
Period of Plan:	October 1, 2008 through September 30, 2011 (2009 update)
Period of Outcomes Data:	(1) Quarter ending Dec. 31, 2008
Date Submitted:	(2) September 30, 2009
County Contact Person for County System Improvement Plan	
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Submitted by each agency for the children under its care	
Submitted by:	County Child Welfare Agency Director (Lead Agency)
Name:	Jean Turner
Signature:	
Submitted by:	County Chief Probation Officer
Name:	Jeff Thomson
Signature:	

System Improvement Plan

<p>Outcome/Systemic Factor: C3.1 Exits To Permanency 24 Months</p>	
<p>County's Current Performance: 2008: The County's current performance is at 0% with the national standard or goal at 29.1% or higher. While Inyo County has experienced periods during which permanency was achieved within the target timeframe, the statistics remain below the national standard/goal. Inyo County's small numbers of youth represented in this statistical outcome does influence the County's ability to reach the targeted goal, as only one child may be tracked during a given timeframe and the permanency outcome for this one minor can influence whether the County meets or fails to meet the identified goal. However, significantly increasing the number of quarters during which the County is able to meet or come near meeting the national standard/goal is the desired outcome for focus during this SIP.</p> <p>2009 Update: Based on the Q4 2008 CWS data, the County's current performance is 50%, which is 171.8% above the national standard or goal (29.1%). The outcome has been above the goal for the past four quarters. However, as stated above, the small number of Inyo County youth represented in this outcome significantly impacts performance from one quarter to the next. We will continue to strive for a significantly increase in the number of quarters during which the County is able to meet or come near meeting the national standard/goal during this SIP.</p>	
<p>Improvement Goal 1.0 Increase the number of guardianships/adoptions established for youth, who remain in out of home care following failed reunification.</p>	
<p>Strategy 1. 1 Increase knowledge and skills of social workers and probation officers in the early identification of permanency placement resources and concurrent planning.</p>	<p>Strategy Rationale¹ Increasing the knowledge and skill base in regards to identifying the most appropriate placement that could potentially provide a child a permanent home at the earliest stage is an important part of the concurrent planning process. Making the best match early on and then supporting that match through direct services and community resources is imperative. Including the child and his/her family in the process as early as possible is also key to making the best possible placement.</p>

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

System Improvement Plan

Milestone		Timeframe	Assigned to
	<p>1.1.1 Explore the Family to Family Team Decision Making (TDM) approach for the appropriateness of implementation in Inyo County.</p> <p>2009 Update: Children's Social Services staff has reviewed Some basic information about TDM, but training has been delayed. Primary focus is on Wraparound recruitment, training and implementation.</p> <p><i>Note: 1.1.2 through 1.1.5 dependent upon findings of 1.1.1.</i></p>	<p>October 1, 2008 through November 15, 2008</p> <p>2009 Update: In Progress September 1, 2009 through November 15, 2009</p> <p>2009 Update: Milestone 1.1.2 to 1.1.5 delayed until 1.1.1 complete</p>	<p>Marilyn Mann, Children's Social Services Director; Jeff Thomson, Chief Deputy Probation Officer; Anna Scott, HHS Management Analyst</p>
	<p>1.1.2 Identify costs associated with implementation of TDM and resources needed to implement TDM if appropriate for Inyo County.</p>	<p>October 1, 2008 through November 15, 2008</p> <p>2009 Update: November 15, 2009 through November 30, 2009</p>	<p>Marilyn Mann, Children's Social Services Director; Jeff Thomson, Chief Deputy Probation Officer; Anna Scott, HHS Management Analyst</p>
	<p>1.1.3 Develop training plan for the implementation of TDM.</p>	<p>November 16, 2008 through December 15, 2008</p> <p>2009 Update: December 1, 2009 through January 1, 2010</p>	<p>Marilyn Mann, Children's Social Services Director; Jeff Thomson, Chief Deputy Probation Officer; Anna Scott, HHS Management Analyst</p> <p>Northern Regional Training Academy or other identified training resource</p>
	<p>1.1.4 Train staff in the use of TDM and begin using process.</p>	<p>By March 31, 2009</p> <p>2009 Update: January 1, 2010 through June 1, 2010</p>	<p>Marilyn Mann, Children's Social Services Director; Jeff Thomson, Chief Deputy Probation Officer</p>
	<p>1.1.5 Monitor effectiveness and identify any additional training needs.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>2009 Update: Ongoing</p>	

System Improvement Plan

	<p>1.1.6 Child Welfare and Probation to utilize their placement matching resources, including Probation's adoption of Positive Achievement Change Tool (PACT), which has a placement matching component, to assist in the identification of non-related placement resources</p> <p>2009 update: The Children's Social Services staff begins to look for NREFM placement options in the early stages of every case, often before removal is even considered. An early start improves the chances of finding a suitable placement, but is not always successful. As part of a current Probation Department reorganization plan, one PO has been assigned to handle all probation placements (similar to the Children's Social Services placement workers). Having a designated placement officer will increase placement knowledge and expertise in that department.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>2009 Update: Ongoing</p>	<p>Marilyn Mann, Children's Social Services Director; Jeff Thomson, Chief Deputy Probation Officer</p>
	<p>1.1.7 Identify training opportunities that address issues of concurrent planning and placement matches/support.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>2009 Update: Ongoing</p>	<p>Marilyn Mann, Children's Social Services Director; Jeff Thomson, Chief Deputy Probation Officer</p>
<p>Strategy 1. 2 Provide increased support and training to foster parents and/or relative caregivers.</p>		<p>Strategy Rationale¹ Providing ongoing training and support to caregivers helps to ensure that caregivers not only have the tools they need to provide care to foster youth, but also ensures that when problem behaviors occur that they feel able to handle the issues or know that they will have support in addressing the behaviors. During our recent PQCR, both former and current caregivers identified the need for ongoing training and support as an area of growth for our County.</p>	

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Milestone	<p>1.2.1. Develop a caregiver support group that includes foster parents, relative caregivers and non-related extended family member caregivers that meets monthly with Child Welfare and Probation staff as appropriate, to discuss problem issues, both general and specific, and identify interventions.</p> <p>2009 Update: A caregiver support group was established in March 2009 and meets monthly. Social Workers and Probation officers host potlucks, foster parents have time to meet with SW, PO and other foster parents for support, and then a half hour training is presented.</p>	Timeframe	<p>October 1, 2008 through December 31, 2008</p> <p>2009 Update: Complete/Ongoing</p>	Assigned to	<p>Krista Cooper, CPS Social Worker Supervisor; CPS Placement Worker(s)</p>
	<p>1.2.2 Survey caregivers to identify current training needs.</p> <p>2009 Update: Social Workers and POs survey foster parents regarding training needs at monthly caregiver support group.</p>		<p>October 1, 2008 through November 30, 2008</p> <p>2009 Update: Complete/Ongoing</p>		<p>Kathy Rose, Systems Support Analyst; Yvonne Freeman, Placement Social Worker</p>
	<p>1.2.3 Develop and implement a training plan to address the identified training needs using staff and/or other appropriate training resources.</p> <p>2009 Update: The Child Welfare and Probation staff conducts ½ hr. training sessions at monthly caregiver support group meetings. Training topics have included "Why Children Cut", "Keeping Children Safe on the Internet", "How to tell if a Child is Drinking or on Drugs" and "Smoking Cessation". However, a formal training plan has not been developed.</p>		<p>December 1, 2008 through January 15, 2009</p> <p>2009 Update: Ongoing with a target date for completion of the training plan of January 31, 2010</p>		<p>Kathy Rose, Systems Support Analyst; Yvonne Freeman, Placement Social Worker</p>

System Improvement Plan

<p>1.2.4 Develop a foster parent steering committee comprised of at least one foster parent, one relative or NREFM caregiver, and staff from Child Welfare and Probation to meet quarterly for the purpose of identifying emerging training and support needs.</p> <p>2009 Update: A steering committee has not been established for the purpose of identifying training and support needs, but staff has identified both during monthly caregiver support meetings. Staff will reassess the need for quarterly steering committee after completing six months of caregiver support meetings.</p>		<p>October 1, 2008 through December 31, 2008</p> <p>2009 Update: Will reassess need by November 1, 2009</p>	<p>Marilyn Mann, Children's Social Services Director; Kathy Rose, Licensing Analyst</p>
<p>Strategy 1.3 Implement Wraparound Service Delivery Model to support maintaining children in their placement home.</p>		<p>Strategy Rationale¹ The implementation of the Wraparound model of service delivery will provide Child Welfare and Probation children and their placement families a higher level of support in an effort to maintain the placement and address any behavioral problems that could be a barrier to guardianship or adoption.</p> <p>Wraparound will provide a planning process that engages the child and his/her placement family in a manner that builds on the strengths of each individual and allows for the family to identify their own needs, as well as help create a plan for meeting those needs. Intensive supportive services provided by designated Probation, Child Welfare and Behavioral Health staff are intended to provide a level of oversight and support to ensure that the behavioral issues that place the child at risk of a higher level of placement are addressed in a manner that also supports the long term commitment of the placement home to the child, while the family builds it's own community-based network of support that will remain in place once the family makes a permanent commitment to the child.</p> <p>Inyo County submitted a Wraparound Plan to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) in January 2008 and received approval on or about July 21, 2008 contingent upon clarification of the target population and criteria for referral, as well as submitting additional information on</p>	

System Improvement Plan

		evaluation and instruments to be used to measure functioning.			
Milestone	<p>1.3.1. Provide clarification to CDSS regarding targeted population, criteria for referral and identified evaluation and tools to measure functioning.</p> <p>2009 Update: The County provided the required information to complete the final plan on 9/19/08.</p>	Timeframe	<p>August 30, 2008</p> <p>2009 Update: Complete</p>	Assigned to	<p>Anna Scott, HHS Management Analyst</p>
	<p>1.3.2 Develop Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) between the partner agencies and CDSS.</p> <p>2009 Update: An MOU between Inyo County Health and Human Services and CDSS was ratified on January 20, 2009 for the period October 1, 2008 through September 30, 2011.</p>		<p>October 1, 2008 through November 15, 2008</p> <p>2009 Update: Complete</p>		<p>Marilyn Mann, Children's Social Services Director and Jeff Thomson, Chief Deputy Probation Officer in coordination with Wraparound Steering Committee</p>

System Improvement Plan

<p>1.3.3 Recruit and Hire a designated Social Worker, Deputy Probation Officer and Mental Health staff person.</p> <p>2009 Update: Conducted successful recruitments for all positions listed above. However, due to a countywide hiring freeze, no final job offers have been extended. The freeze was lifted for the Wraparound positions on August 18, 2009 but additional recruitments may be necessary, as most viable candidates have found other jobs.</p> <p><i>Note: Milestones 1.3.4 through 1.3.6 are contingent upon successful recruitments.</i></p> <p>1.3.4 Train staff within the parameters of their respective disciplines, as well as training them on the Wraparound Service Delivery Model.</p> <p>1.3.5 Implement Wraparound program.</p> <p>1.3.6 Monitor effectiveness and impact of Wraparound on service delivery.</p>	<p>In process at time of SIP- Ongoing with a target date of December 1, 2008</p> <p>2009 Update: Ongoing with a target date of December 1, 2009</p> <p>2009 Update: Milestone 1.3.4 to 1.3.6 delayed until 1.3.3 complete</p> <p>Approximately 6 month training period following date of hire</p> <p>Upon completion of training and all identified CDSS requirements</p> <p>Ongoing following implementation</p>	<p>Marilyn Mann, Children's Social Services Director; Jeff Thomson, Chief Deputy Probation Officer; Gail Zwier, PhD., Behavioral Health Director</p> <p>Marilyn Mann, Children's Social Services Director; Jeff Thomson, Chief Deputy Probation Officer; Gail Zwier, PhD., Behavioral Health Director</p> <p>Marilyn Mann, Children's Social Services Director; Jeff Thomson, Chief Deputy Probation Officer; Gail Zwier, PhD., Behavioral Health Director</p> <p>Anna Scott, HHS Management Analyst; Marilyn Mann, Children's Social Services Director; Jeff Thomson, Chief Deputy Probation Officer; Gail Zwier, PhD., Behavioral Health Director</p>
<p>Notes: Child Welfare System Improvement Plan activities will require additional staff and resources to implement.</p>		

System Improvement Plan

Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal. N/A
Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals. Training on PACT, Wraparound, TDM, Concurrent Planning and related training, and training requirements specific to Child Welfare, Probation and Behavioral Health will need to occur at not only the line worker level, but also at the Supervisory and Management level.
Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals. Health and Human Services will work in partnership with Probation, Behavioral Health, the Schools, Caregivers and Tribal resources, as well as with other partners who are identified during collaborative planning processes. Specific roles will be identified as needed.
Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals. Moving towards permanency is a significant commitment by a caregiver and the child. Issues related to maintaining Medi-Cal after a child, who is in guardianship, turns eighteen and access to ILP services for those children who enter guardianship prior to the age of 16 are sometimes barriers to caregivers committing to a permanent plan, as they want the child to have full access to all support resources, especially those that are available after the age of 18 years. In addition, guardianships established with non-relatives do not have the same ability to fully exit the system, as they are required to maintain voluntary services with Child Welfare in order to obtain financial assistance to support the child in their care. Changing the regulations to allow minors and their caregivers access to financial support while completely closing the Child Welfare case would foster a greater sense of permanency for youth.

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

System Improvement Plan

Outcome/Systemic Factor: C1.4 Reentry Following Reunification			
County's Current Performance: The County's current performance is at 33.3% with the national standard or goal at 9.9%. These statistics are based primarily on the tracking of Child Welfare out of home placements and do not accurately reflect the larger picture, which includes Probation. While the latest Outcome Report indicates that Inyo County's statistics are directionally moving towards the national standard/goal, the County remains above the target percentile. In addition, the statistics do not reflect those youth who are reunified through Probation, either formally or through a voluntary agreement with the parent, and have a re-offense that results in either the minor being placed out of the home or detained at the Juvenile Center, as they are near the age of majority and unable to be placed.			
2009 Update: The County's current performance, based on the Q4 2008 CWS data, is at 0% with the national standard or goal being 9.9% or lower. Inyo County has met or exceeded the national standard/goal for the past 2 quarters, though the statistic still does not reflect reentry for children in Probation placements. Also, because of the small number of Inyo County youth reflected in this statistic (3 to 5 children over the past four quarters reported), the outcome can vary widely from quarter to quarter. We will continue to strive for a significantly increase in the number of quarters during which the County is able to meet or come near meeting the national standard/goal during this SIP.			
Improvement Goal 1.0 Reduce the rate of reentry into foster care following reunification with the family.			
Strategy 1. 1 Adopt and implement an evidenced-based assessment and tracking tool to assist juvenile probation officers with assessment and case planning.		Strategy Rationale¹ By implementation of an evidenced-based assessment tool, Inyo County Probation can better assess the risk factors for detention, as well as better identify those factors that need to be prioritized in a case plan. In addition, the tool will assist the Probation Officers in their efforts to track case plan goals and assess progress for both minors and their parents as it relates to the readiness for reunification.	
Milestone	1.1.1 Purchase the Positive Achievement Change Tool (PACT) available through Assessments.com. 2009 Update: Purchase was delayed due to contract negotiation and then a County purchasing freeze. The Inyo County Board of Supervisors will be asked to approve the contract in October 2009 and the tool will be implemented immediately following purchase.	Timeframe	October 1, 2008 through November 15, 2008 2009 Update: by October 31, 2009
		Assigned to	Jeff Thomson, Chief Deputy Probation Officer

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

System Improvement Plan

<p>1.1.2 Probation staff to complete two-day initial training on implementation of PACT tool.</p> <p>2009 Update: Probation Officers completed the initial two-day training in August. All three POs are also using the online PACT demo to become familiar with the tool.</p>	<p>November 15, 2008 through December 15, 2008</p> <p>2009 Update: Complete</p>	<p>Jeff Thomson, Chief Deputy Probation Officer</p>
<p>1.1.3 Implementation of PACT begins.</p> <p>2009 Update: Since POs have already received training, the tool will be implemented as soon as the contract is approved.</p> <p>1.1.4 Probation staff to receive follow-up training on PACT tool.</p> <p>2009 Update: Must be complete 60-120 days from implementation</p> <p>1.1.5 Probation to monitor effectiveness of tool and identify problems or other training needs.</p>	<p>December 15, 2008 through January 1, 2009</p> <p>2009 Update: by November 15, 2009</p> <p>By February 28, 2009</p> <p>2009 Update: by March 15, 2010</p> <p>Ongoing 2009 Update: Ongoing</p>	<p>Jeff Thomson, Chief Deputy Probation Officer</p> <p>Jeff Thomson, Chief Deputy Probation Officer</p> <p>Jeff Thomson, Chief Deputy Probation Officer</p>
<p>Strategy 1. 2 Implement Wraparound Service Delivery Model to support maintaining children in their own home.</p>	<p>Strategy Rationale ¹ The implementation of the Wraparound model of service delivery will provide Child Welfare and Probation youth, who are transitioning home from a high level group home facility or who are at risk of reentry, and their families a higher level of support in an effort to maintain the youth in their home.</p> <p>Wraparound will provide a planning process that engages the youth and his/her family in a manner that builds on the strengths of each individual and allows for the family to identify their own needs, as well as help create a plan for meeting those needs. Intensive supportive services provided by designated Probation, Child Welfare and Behavioral Health staff are intended to provide a level of oversight and support to ensure that the youth are able to be safely maintained in their own home, while</p>	

System Improvement Plan

		<p>the family builds it's own community-based network of support that will remain in place once the family exits the Child Welfare or Probation systems.</p> <p>Inyo County developed a Wraparound steering committee in 2007 and submitted a Wraparound Plan to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) in January 2008 and received approval on or about July 21, 2008 contingent upon clarification of the target population and criteria for referral, as well as submitting additional information on evaluation and instruments to be used to measure functioning.</p>			
Milestone	<p>1.2.1. Provide clarification to CDSS regarding targeted population, criteria for referral and identified evaluation and tools to measure functioning.</p> <p>2009 Update: The County provided the required information to complete the final plan on 9/19/08.</p>	Timeframe	<p>August 30, 2008</p> <p>2009 Update: Complete</p>	Assigned to	<p>Anna Scott, HHS Management Analyst</p>
	<p>1.2.2 Develop Memorandums of Understanding between the partner agencies and CDSS.</p> <p>2009 Update: An MOU between Inyo County Health and Human Services and CDSS was ratified on January 20, 2009 for the period October 1, 2008 through September 30, 2011.</p>		<p>October 1, 2008 through November 15, 2008</p> <p>2009 Update: Complete</p>		<p>Marilyn Mann, Children's Social Service Director and Jeff Thomson, Chief Deputy Probation Officer in coordination with the Wraparound Steering Committee.</p>

System Improvement Plan

<p>1.2.3 Recruit and Hire a designated Social Worker, Deputy Probation Officer and Mental Health staff person.</p> <p>2009 Update: Conducted successful recruitments for all positions listed above. However, due to a Countywide hiring freeze, no final job offers have been extended. The freeze was lifted for the Wraparound positions on August 18, 2009 but additional recruitments may be necessary, as most viable candidates have found other jobs.</p> <p><i>Note: Milestones 1.2.4 through 1.2.6 are contingent upon successful recruitments.</i></p> <p>1.2.4 Train staff within the parameters of their respective disciplines, as well as training them on the Wraparound Service Delivery Model.</p> <p>1.2.5 Implement Wraparound program.</p> <p>1.2.6 Monitor effectiveness and impact of Wraparound on service delivery.</p>	<p>In process at time of SIP - Ongoing with a target date of December 1, 2008</p> <p>2009 Update: Ongoing with a target date of December 1, 2009</p> <p>2009 Update: Milestone 1.2.4 to 1.2.6 delayed until 1.2.3 complete</p> <p>Approximately 6 month training period following date of hire</p> <p>Upon completion of training and all identified CDSS requirements</p> <p>Ongoing following implementation</p>	<p>Marilyn Mann, Children's Social Services Director; Jeff Thomson, Chief Deputy Probation Officer; Gail Zwier, PhD., Behavioral Health Director</p> <p>Marilyn Mann, Children's Social Services Director; Jeff Thomson, Chief Deputy Probation Officer; Gail Zwier, PhD., Behavioral Health Director</p> <p>Marilyn Mann, Children's Social Services Director; Jeff Thomson, Chief Deputy Probation Officer; Gail Zwier, PhD., Behavioral Health Director</p> <p>Anna Scott, HHS Management Analyst; Marilyn Mann, Children's Social Services Director; Jeff Thomson, Chief Deputy Probation Officer; Gail Zwier, PhD., Behavioral Health Director</p>
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System Improvement Plan

<p>Strategy 1.3 Adopt and implement a procedure for more effective transitional case planning.</p>		<p>Strategy Rationale ¹ Inyo County has an Interagency Placement Team that meets twice a month in regards to children at risk of placement and children returning from placement. These meetings provide a forum for Child Welfare, Probation, Behavioral Health, the Schools and Tribal Community to meet in regards to ensuring that all efforts have been made to maintain a child in his/her own home and also to identify transitioning needs of children returning home from out of home placement. Building upon these meetings to develop a more formalized procedure for developing an effective transitional case plan will help ensure that each child's return home occurs with a minimal disruption in identified needed services and that the support necessary to maintain the child in his/her own home is in place immediately.</p>			
<p>Milestone</p>	<p>1.3.1 Schedule a procedural planning meeting of the Inyo County Interagency Placement Team (ICIPT).</p>	<p>Timeframe</p>	<p>October 1, 2008 through November 15, 2008 2009 Update: Complete</p>	<p>Assigned to</p>	<p>Linda Benson, HHS Assistant Director</p>
	<p>1.3.2 ICIPT to develop a protocol for activities to occur prior to transitioning a youth home. 2009 Update: ICIPT developed a protocol for transitional case planning.</p>		<p>November 15, 2008 through December 15, 2008 2009 Update: Complete</p>		<p>Marilyn Mann, Children's Social Services Director and Jeff Thomson, Chief Deputy Probation Officer in coordination with ICIPT Members</p>
	<p>1.3.3 Implement agreed upon protocol for each child returning home from out of home placement. 2009 Update: Protocol has been implemented. Two months prior to the child's return home, ICIPT reviews the case to determine specific family needs. Once Wraparound is implemented, the family will be considered for that process if appropriate.</p>		<p>December 15, 2008 2009 Update: Complete/Ongoing</p>		<p>Marilyn Mann, Children's Social Services Director and Jeff Thomson, Chief Deputy Probation Officer in coordination with ICIPT Members</p>
<p>Notes: Child Welfare System Improvement Plan activities will require additional staff and resources to implement.</p>					
<p>Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal. NA</p>					
<p>Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.</p>					

System Improvement Plan

Training on PACT, Wraparound, and training requirements specific to Child Welfare, Probation and Behavioral Health will need to occur at not only the line worker level, but also at the Supervisory and Management level.
Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals. Health and Human Services will work in partnership with Probation, Behavioral Health, the Schools, and Tribal resources, as well as with other partners who are identified during collaborative planning processes.
Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals. Incorporate a mechanism to track outcomes so that Child Welfare and Probation are not tracked in isolation, which would allow the County to better identify the areas requiring improvement.

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

System Improvement Plan

Outcome/Systemic Factor: C4.2 Placement Stability (12-24 Months in Care)			
County's Current Performance: The County's current performance is at 60% with the national standard or goal at 65.4%. Although Inyo County has shown improvement in this targeted goal since the last SIP, there continue to be periodic statistical declines. Although this can be the result of a very small number of children experiencing placement instability, the County has identified this outcome as one that requires focused strategies. The County wishes to attain and maintain a higher rate of placement stability for all children not only because it is in the children's best interest, but also because it has an impact on the ability of the County to foster permanency in a more timely manner when reunification fails.			
<u>2009 Update:</u> Based on the Q4 2008 CWS Outcomes report, the County's current performance in this measure is 66.7% with the national standard or goal being 65.4% or higher. The County has met or exceeded the national standard or goal twice in the past four quarters and is still focused on maintaining a higher rate of placement stability for local children.			
Improvement Goal 1.0 Decrease the number of placement changes made and promote placement stability within the first twelve months a child is placed out of home.			
Strategy 1. 1 Increase the number of licensed foster homes who are willing to provide long-term care to foster youth.		Strategy Rationale¹ Recruitment and retention of local licensed foster home resources was identified in our previous SIP as a systemic factor that needed to be addressed in order to increase our capacity to meet the placement stability needs of our children. Inyo County continues to identify this as an area that needs to be actively addressed, especially given that our local foster care resources are used by a neighboring county. While our past recruitment efforts have focused on recruiting on a more general level, including short-term and emergency caregiving options, the need to develop our long-term resources is significant to placement stability.	
Milestone	1.1.1 Develop a foster parent recruitment committee comprised of at least one foster parent, a Tribal representative and staff from Child Welfare and Probation. 2009 Update: A recruitment committee has been established, though a tribal representative has not been identified. Ongoing contact with tribe in an effort to recruit tribal rep.	Timeframe	October 1, 2008 through December 31, 2008 2009 Update: Complete/Ongoing
		Assigned to	Marilyn Mann, Children's Social Services Director; Kathy Rose, Licensing Analyst

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

System Improvement Plan

	<p>1.1.2 Develop and implement a recruitment plan that includes the use of various media outlets, as well as direct one to one recruitment.</p> <p>2009 Update: Inyo and Mono Counties are interested in partnering for a concerted recruitment effort region-wide. However, development of a formal recruitment plan is delayed until parties from both counties meet.</p>		<p>January 1, 2009 through March 31, 2009</p> <p>2009 Update: Incomplete with a target date of March 31, 2010</p>		<p>Marilyn Mann, Children's Social Services Director; Kathy Rose, Licensing Analyst and Foster Parent Recruitment Committee</p>
	<p>1.1.3 Monitor the effectiveness of the recruitment plan and provide regulatory support as needed to address any questions or issues identified as barriers.</p>		<p>Ongoing</p> <p>2009 Update: Ongoing once recruitment plan implemented by March 31, 2010</p>		<p>Foster Parent Recruitment Committee; Kathy Rose, Licensing Analyst; Marilyn Mann, Children's Social Services Director</p>
<p>Strategy 1. 2 Develop and support the practice of early Identification of relative and Non-Related Extended Family Members (NREFM) placement resources.</p>			<p>Strategy Rationale ¹ Relatives and those adults who have an existing relationship with a child are often the caregivers who have the greatest "buy in" to a child placed in their care. Their willingness to work through problem behaviors and to commit to the long term care of a child is enhanced by their relationship. Identifying these individuals at the earliest stage of involvement in a child's life will help to promote early placement and will support stability for the child.</p>		
Milestone	<p>1.2.1. Identify barriers to accessing information regarding relative and NREFM placement resources.</p> <p>2009 Update: Assessment complete: Major barrier identified in that families are unwilling to provide additional information about NREFM resources.</p>	Timeframe	<p>October 1, 2008 through December 31, 2008</p> <p>2009 Update: Complete</p>	Assigned to	<p>Marilyn Mann, Children's Social Services Director; Jeff Thomson, Chief Deputy Probation Officer</p>

System Improvement Plan

	<p>1.2.2 Develop and implement a protocol for identification of potential caregivers at the earliest possible stage of involvement with either Child Welfare or Probation.</p> <p>2009 Update: Informal procedure in place to identify NREFM resources, but protocol implementation delayed due to family's unwillingness to provide information. Children cannot provide enough info for Social Worker to pursue NREFM without parent involvement.</p>		<p>January 1, 2009 through March 31, 2009</p> <p>2009 Update: Ongoing</p>	<p>Marilyn Mann, Children's Social Services Director; Jeff Thomson, Chief Deputy Probation Officer</p>
	<p>1.2.3 Monitor the effectiveness of the protocol, identify any additional barriers and/or resources, and adjust the protocol as needed.</p>		<p>Ongoing</p> <p>2009 Update: Ongoing</p>	<p>Marilyn Mann, Children's Social Services Director; Jeff Thomson, Chief Deputy Probation Officer</p>
<p>Strategy 1.3 Provide increased support and training to foster parents and/or relative caregivers to help maintain placements.</p>		<p>Strategy Rationale¹ Providing ongoing training and support to caregivers helps to ensure that caregivers not only have the tools they need to provide care to foster youth, but also ensures that when problem behaviors occur that they feel able to handle the issues or know that they will have support in addressing the behaviors. During our recent PQCR, the need for ongoing training and support was identified by both former and current caregivers as an area of growth for our County.</p>		
Milestone	<p>1.3.1. Develop a caregiver support group that includes foster parents, relative caregivers and non-related extended family member caregivers that meets monthly with Child Welfare and Probation staff as appropriate, to discuss problem issues, both general and specific, and identify interventions.</p> <p>2009 Update: A caregiver support group was established in March 2009 and meets monthly. Social Workers and Probation officers host potlucks, foster parents have time to meet with SW, PO and other foster parents for support, and then a half hour training is presented.</p>	Timeframe	<p>October 1, 2008 through December 31, 2008</p> <p>2009 Update: Complete/Ongoing</p>	Assigned to
<p>Krista Cooper, CPS Social Worker Supervisor; CPS Placement Worker(s)</p>				

System Improvement Plan

Child Welfare System Improvement Plan activities will require additional staff and resources to implement.

Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal. N/A
Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals. Training on caregiver support, conflict resolution and mediation, recruitment strategies, and other training related to recruiting and retaining caregivers as identified.
Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals. Health and Human Services will work in partnership with Probation, Behavioral Health, the Schools, Caregivers and Tribal resources, as well as with other partners who are identified during collaborative planning processes. Specific roles will be identified as needed
Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals. Modify the current regulations governing the approval of relative and non-related extended family homes to allow children to be placed in their homes on an emergency basis even when there is a "hit" through the child abuse index or the California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (CLETS), if the identified issue is one that an exemption could be authorized. In rural communities, child welfare staff often knows these potential caregivers and oversight is more easily provided to ensure the safety of children while the full approval process is completed. This would promote permanency and stability for children removed from their home by allowing for more immediate placement in the home of someone the child knows and is comfortable with, which helps to reduce the number of placement changes experienced by children.

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