



Department of Social Services

3433 S. Higuera, PO Box 8119, San Luis Obispo
California 93403-8119

(805) 781-1825 www.slocounty.ca.gov/dss

Leland W. Collins, Director

07/30/2013

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Children and Family Services Division
Outcomes and Accountability Bureau
California Department of Social Services
744 P Street, MS 8-12-91
Sacramento, CA 95814

To: Outcomes and Accountability Bureau
From: Belinda Benassi, CWS Program Manager, San Luis Obispo County DSS
RE: 2013 Annual SIP Progress Report

Enclosed please find the signed original 2013 Annual SIP Progress Report for San Luis Obispo County.

San Luis Obispo County Child Welfare Services and Probation would like to thank our state analysts, David Brownstein, for his guidance and input as we completed our Annual SIP Progress Report.

Thank you.

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California – Child and Family Services Review Signature Sheet

For submittal of: SIP Progress Report

| | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| County | San Luis Obispo |
| CSA Period Dates | 6/30/2007 – 6/30/2010 |
| SIP Period Dates | December 2010 |
| Outcome Data Period | 11/1/2011 – 12/31/12 |

County Child Welfare Agency Director

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Name | Lee Collins |
| Signature* |  |
| Phone Number | 805-781-1825 |
| Mailing Address | P O Box 8119 San Luis Obispo, CA 93403-8119 |

County Chief Probation Officer

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Name | Jim Salio |
| Signature* |  CHIEF PROBATION OFFICER |
| Phone Number | 805-781-5300 |
| Mailing Address | 1730 Bishop Street San Luis Obispo, CA 93401 |

Contact Information

| | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|--|
| Child Welfare Agency | Name | Belinda Benassi |
| | Agency | Department of Social Services |
| | Phone & E-mail | 805-781-1841 bbenassi@co.slo.ca.us |
| | Mailing Address | P O Box 8119 San Luis Obispo, CA 93403-8119 |
| Probation Agency | Name | Thomas Milder |
| | Agency | Probation Department |
| | Phone & E-mail | 805-788-2116 tmilder@co.slo.ca.us |
| | Mailing Address | 1730 Bishop Street San Luis Obispo, CA 93401 |

*Signatures must be in blue ink

Mail the original Signature Sheet to:

Children and Family Services Division
Outcomes and Accountability Bureau
California Department of Social Services
744 P Street, MS 8-12-91
Sacramento, CA 95814

Annual SIP Progress Report
San Luis Obispo County
NOVEMBER 2011 – DECEMBER 2012



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PURPOSE OF THE SIP PROGRESS REPORT

INTRODUCTION

As mandated by the *Child Welfare System Improvement and Accountability Act* (AB 636, 2001) and the California Outcomes and Accountability System (COAS) San Luis Obispo County developed an integrated System Improvement Plan in 2011. The SIP incorporated results from the Needs Assessment and the Peer Quality Case Review, reflecting a systems-wide planning and feedback process that maximizes continuous community involvement.

This SIP Progress Report is being submitted to CDSS by San Luis Obispo County to provide the current status of the SIP implementation strategies during the reporting period November 1, 2011 through December 31, 2012.

Summary California Child and Family Services Review Process

Child Welfare Services and Juvenile Probation Services began the California Child and Family Services Review in October 2010 with a joint Peer Quality Case Review. Child Welfare Services and Juvenile Probation chose different focus areas for the Peer Quality Case Review; Child Welfare Services focused on Timely Adoption, while Juvenile Probation selected Placement Stability as its area of focus. While the Peer Quality Case Review provided positive feedback on the strengths and dedication of Child Welfare Services and Juvenile Probation staff, it also provided valuable information on areas needing improvement in order to achieve both timely adoption and placement stability.

Many of the findings from San Luis Obispo County's Peer Quality Case Review are reflective of information cited in literature reviews. For Child Welfare Services, the literature review on Timely Adoption identified the need to educate parents on Child Welfare Services and adoption processes and timelines, as well as the need for post-adoption services. Both of these needs were mentioned often in both the peer interviews and focus groups.

For Juvenile Probation, the Placement Stability literature review stressed the value of well trained placement staff and foster parents. It also focused on the importance of youth and family input in the placement process. Peer interviews and focus groups often mentioned the need for the staff at group homes to be well trained and receptive to the needs of youth. Additionally, the interviews and focus groups placed a high importance on the need for youth and family involvement in placement decisions.

After reviewing all of the information gathered during the course of the Peer Quality Case Review, Child Welfare Services identified three issues that were frequently repeated:

- Child Welfare Services gives parents too much time to reunify.
- Child Welfare Services should explore training parents and relatives on concurrent planning and relinquishments/waiving services.
- Child Welfare Services should manage their own adoption finalization calendar.

For Probation, three recurring themes were:

- The need for greater youth and family input and involvement in placement decisions.
- The need to develop more local placement options for probation youth.
- The need for additional training for placement officers in such areas as family finding, family engagement, case planning and concurrent planning.

Following the Peer Quality Case Review, the Child Welfare Services Adoption unit met to discuss the findings and is implementing many of the proposed ideas. Likewise, Juvenile Probation has also taken steps to address needs brought up during the Peer Quality Case Review, such as increased family engagement and training on concurrent planning.

STAKEHOLDERS PARTICIPATION

San Luis Obispo County began its County Self-Assessment process in November 2010. A County Self-Assessment Advisory Group was formed comprising of representatives from Child Welfare Services, Juvenile Probation Services, Children's Services Network, San Luis Obispo Child Abuse Prevention Council (SLO-CAP), Mental Health, Family Care Network, California Youth Connection and parent representatives. The Children's Services Program Manager and SLO-CAP Director served as the representatives for Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention, and Treatment (CAPIT), Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF), and Community Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP). The County Self-Assessment Advisory Group oversaw both the planning of the public comment process and the writing of the County Self-Assessment report.

The Advisory Group reviewed the County's performance on all data measures and chose the following three outcomes as those in greatest need of improvement:

- S1.1 No Recurrence of Maltreatment
- C1.1 Reunification within 12 Months
- C4.3 Placement Stability

The community initially provided input on these outcomes through four community forums held regionally throughout the county. Participants were provided with an overview of the County Self-Assessment process, as well as background information on each focus area. Participants were then given a series of questions relating to each focus area and asked to brainstorm responses in small groups. Additionally, the questions were available in both English and Spanish on the Department of Social Services website. The survey link was emailed to community and staff to gather further input.

Communication and collaboration with community stakeholders have taken place on a regular basis over the past year. Community stakeholders have participated in CWS staff meetings and provided training and feedback.

Family Support Services Workgroups with Community Action Partnership of San Luis Obispo have strengthened the ability of DSS to choose appropriate differential response paths and effectively utilize assessment tools as a method of improving data measures.

Interagency meetings have been held on a quarterly basis with a wide variety of community partners to ensure that DSS and community partners are openly communicating and collaborating on the provision of services and improving data measures.

Further communication and collaboration with community stakeholders is enhanced by DSS's regular participation in the Partnership for Excellence in Family Support meetings. Stakeholders assist in the ongoing analysis of success and barriers to completing strategies and meeting goals through collaborative meetings.

Case-specific analysis is performed by community stakeholders, family members and youth, during Team Decision Meetings (TDM's).

CWS participates in quarterly Domestic Violence Task Force meetings to address ongoing trends and training needs. CWS hosts an annual conference on domestic violence.

Behavioral Health and CWS meet weekly to evaluate current practices supplement process with "Pathway to Mental Health Services (Katie A.)" legislative requirements.

Through regular collaboration and meetings between CWS, hospital staff, Public Health, Drug and Alcohol Services, and Parent Partners, protocols have been developed to engage new mothers in Voluntary Service Plans and track their involvement in the recommended activities.

SIP PROGRESS NARRATIVE

CURRENT PERFORMANCE TOWARDS SIP IMPROVEMENT GOALS

In the 2011 SIP Report, San Luis Obispo County identified the following SIP outcomes as being those in greatest need of improvement of child welfare services as led by the Department of Social Services – Child Welfare Services and the Probation Department:

Improvement was not achieved in the 3 SIP outcomes. In fact, there was a slight decline in service quality in these three targeted outcomes in spite of significant progress in completing strategies for each targeted outcome.

CWS not only saw a significant increase in the number of referrals during the reporting period, but it should also be noted that the referrals were increasingly complex. Families are struggling with the high stressors caused by the economic downturn of the past few years; they require more than typical services. In addition, San Luis Obispo County has seen an increase in the abuse of methamphetamines over the past few years; the majority of CWS referrals have the presence of substance abuse. While substance abuse has increased in the county, there is a lack of substance abuse treatment centers.

The outcomes do serve to validate San Luis Obispo County's decision to focus on the three areas. As of 12/31/2012:

- S1.1 No Recurrence of Maltreatment : 86.9% children in San Luis Obispo County did not have a recurrence of maltreatment, below the National Standard of 94.6%
 - Future improvement on this measure is expected based on the following:

- Ongoing training of DSS staff on Structured Decision Making (SDM) assessment tools to increase utilization and compliance, along with continuous monitoring to assess for additional training needs
 - Continued case quality reviews to examine timely and accurate completion of the SDM
 - Continued funding of core services (Parenting Education, Anger Management, Domestic Violence and Counseling) that are based on evidence-based models
 - Continued collaboration with community partners to jointly design and deliver services to prevent re-occurrence of abuse/neglect caused by parental substance abuse

- C1.1 Reunification within 12 Months: 68.5% children in San Luis Obispo County were reunified with their families within 12 months, below the National Standard of 75.2%
 - Future improvement on this measure is expected based on the following:
 - Training and implementation of Safety Organized Practice (SOP) which focuses on family self-identified behavioral changes necessary for the child to be returned to the home
 - The Parent Guide to Dependency given to the family at the time the child is put in protective custody has been found to be written at a higher grade level than appropriate. The guide will be rewritten at the 6th grade level to ensure the family's comprehension of processes and proceedings.
 - Improvement in communications with other divisions in DSS to ensure timely provision of all services to families needing support
 - Continued collaboration will be made with community partners to design and deliver services that support the reunification of families.

- C4.3 Placement Stability: 36.4% of children in San Luis Obispo County experienced placement stability, below the National Standard of 41.8%
 - Future improvement on this measure is expected based on the following:
 - Continued training and promotion of treating each placement as a potential permanent placement
 - Elimination of the practice of using foster homes as “emergency shelter” or temporary receiving homes
 - Continued focus on efforts to place children with siblings, family members and others important to the child (NREFM)
 - Continued efforts to place children in their communities of origin and/or near their schools of origin

A full summary of all SIP Outcome Summaries can be found below.

| SIP Outcomes Summary Comparison | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|----------------------------|---------------|------------------|----------------------------|---------------|------------------|---------------------------|------------|
| | | SIP Report - December 2010 | | | SIP Update - December 2012 | | | | |
| Measure | | Baseline end date | # of children | 2010 performance | Comparison end date | # of children | 2012 performance | National Standard or Goal | Direction? |
| 2B | Timely Response (Imm. Response Compliance) | 12/31/2010 | 89/91 | 97.8 | 12/31/2012 | 86/87 | 98.9 | | Yes |
| 2B | Timely Response (10-Day Response Compliance) | 12/31/2010 | 262/273 | 96 | 12/31/2012 | 373/380 | 98.2 | | Yes |
| 2C | Timely Social Worker Visits with Child | 12/31/2010 | 397/424 | 93.6 | 12/31/2012 | 409/437 | 93.6 | | Yes |
| S1.1 | No Recurrence Of Maltreatment | 6/30/2010 | 229/252 | 90.9 | 6/30/2012 | 312/359 | 86.9 | 94.6 | No |
| S2.1 | No Maltreatment In Foster Care | 12/31/2010 | 509/510 | 99.8 | 12/31/2012 | 515/515 | 100 | 99.68 | Yes |
| C1.1 | Reunification Within 12 Months (Exit Cohort) | 12/31/2010 | 65/94 | 69.1 | 12/31/2012 | 61/89 | 68.5 | 75.2 | No |
| C1.4 | Reentry Following Reunification (Exit Cohort) | 12/31/2009 | 10/86 | 11.6 | 12/31/2011 | 18/128 | 14.1 | 9.9 | No |
| C2 | Adoption Composite | 12/31/2010 | | | 12/31/2012 | | 133.8 | 106.4 | No |
| C2.1 | Adoption Within 24 Months (Exit Cohort) | 12/31/2010 | 30/55 | 54.5 | 12/31/2012 | 25/50 | 50 | 36.6 | No |
| C2.2 | Median Time To Adoption (Exit Cohort) | 12/31/2010 | 22.9 months | | 12/31/2012 | | 23.7 | 27.3 | No |
| C2.3 | Adoption Within 12 Months (17 Months In Care) | 12/31/2010 | 27/97 | 27.8 | 12/31/2012 | 28/90 | 31.1 | 22.7 | Yes |
| C2.4 | Legally Free Within 6 Months (17 Months In Care) | 6/30/2010 | 10/52 | 19.2 | 6/30/2012 | 1/49 | 2 | 10.9 | No |
| C 2.5 | Adoption Within 12 Months (Legally Free) | 12/31/2009 | 26/38 | 68.4 | 12/31/2011 | 28/43 | 65.1 | 53.7 | No |
| C3.1 | Exits To Permanency (24 Months In Care) | 12/31/2010 | 27/77 | 35.1 | 12/31/2012 | 16/57 | 28.1 | 29.1 | Yes |
| C4 | Placement Stability Composite | 12/31/2010 | | | 12/31/2012 | | 98.4 | 101.5 | No |
| C4.1 | Placement Stability (8 Days To 12 Months In Care) | 12/31/2010 | 199/237 | 96.6 | 12/31/2012 | 187/234 | 79.9 | 86 | No |
| C4.2 | Placement Stability (12 To 24 Months In Care) | 12/31/2010 | 105/137 | 76.6 | 12/31/2012 | 102/139 | 73.4 | 65.4 | Yes |
| C4.3 | Placement Stability (At Least 24 Months In Care) | 12/31/2010 | 48/118 | 40.7 | 12/31/2012 | 43/118 | 36.4 | 41.8 | No |

*Note: The current data in Safe Measures indicates that the correct percentage for C4.1 Placement Stability (8 Days to 12 months in Care) as of 12/31/10 should be 85.2, not 96.6 as indicated in the chart above and in the original SIP report of 2009.

The matrixes on the following pages provide a detailed report on each of focus outcome areas. Areas highlighted in lavender reflect progress, challenges and modifications that occurred in during the reporting period of 11/1/2011 through 12/31/2012.

S1.1 No Recurrence of Maltreatment

| | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|---------------------|---|
| <p>INTRODUCTION: This matrix serves as the System Improvement Plan (SIP) Progress Report for the period of 11/1/2011 through 12/31/12. Please see Progress Narratives and revised Timeframes as highlighted within each of the Strategies.</p> | | | |
| <p>Outcome/Systemic Factor: S1.1 No Recurrence of Maltreatment This measure reflects the percent of children who were victims of child abuse/neglect with a subsequent substantiated report of abuse/neglect within 6 months.</p> | | | |
| <p>County's Current Performance: Child Welfare Services' rate of no recurrence of maltreatment has continued to decrease from 90.9% in December 2010 to 86.9% (312 of 359 children) in December 2012, below the federal standard of 94.6%. Substance abuse continues to be a prevalent issue in San Luis Obispo County and a major cause of referrals, both initial and subsequent. Domestic Violence is also becoming another prevalent issue in San Luis Obispo County.</p> | | | |
| <p>Improvement Goal 1.0 By May 2014, Child Welfare Services will increase the rate of No Recurrence of Maltreatment by 3.7% in order to meet the federal standard of 94.6%. In an effort to reduce the recurrence of maltreatment, Child Welfare Services will continue to focus on prevention, early intervention and aftercare efforts with community partners and family advocates.</p> | | | |
| <p>Strategy 1. 1 Continue to use Safe Measures to monitor performance and develop recommendations for improvement.</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <p>CAPIT</p> | <p>Strategy Rationale Ongoing monitoring and communication at all levels will provide staff with the needed support, thereby improving Child Welfare Services' rate of no recurrence of maltreatment.</p> |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | <p>CBCAP</p> | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | <p>PSSF</p> | |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <p>N/A</p> | |
| <p>PROGRESS NARRATIVE STRATEGY 1.1: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complete</p> <p>Child Welfare Services has been completing in-depth research of the children that experience recurrence of maltreatment to identify trends among data-entry, timely contacts, engagement efforts, and the completion of the Structured Decision Making (SDM) Safety and Risk Assessments. As a result of the research, staff are being offered individual coaching sessions to understand SDM and Safe Measures. Staff Development has also developed a new tool, which guides the SWs in the timely completion of the SDM assessments. Staff Development and Regional Managers have begun to meet quarterly to address Monthly Measures, recent trends, and to jointly strategize on efforts to reduce recurrence of maltreatment.</p> | | | |

| | | | | | |
|------------------|--|------------------|------------------------|--------------------|---|
| Milestone | 1.1.1 Enhance the use of Safe Measures and CWS/CMS to generate monthly reports that include recurrence of maltreatment, collateral contacts, and community referrals by region, unit, and Social Worker. | Timeframe | June 2013- May 2014 | Assigned to | Staff Development |
| | 1.1.2 Continue to utilize monthly Intake/Emergency Response Workgroup meetings with Intake and Emergency Response Social Workers, Supervisors, and Regional Managers to share community resources and trends, and to identify needs. | | June 2013- May 2014 | | Staff Development Intake and Emergency Response Social Workers, Supervisors, and Regional Managers |
| | 1.1.3 Continue quarterly Monthly Measures meetings to share progress and discuss strategies to improve no recurrence of maltreatment performance. | | June 2013- May 2014 | | Staff Development Regional Managers |

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| Strategy 1. 2 Sustain ongoing collaboration between Child Welfare Services and community partners. | <input type="checkbox"/> | CAPIT | Strategy Rationale Collaboration amongst community providers expands the resources and services available to families, streamlines prevention and self-sufficiency efforts, and enhances Differential Response. An increase in collaboration and Coordinated Case Plans will also reduce the recurrence of child abuse and neglect. |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | CBCAP | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | PSSF | |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | N/A | |

PROGRESS NARRATIVE STRATEGY 1.2: Complete
CWS continues to meet monthly with Community Action Partnership of SLO to monitor current trends and issues related to Differential Response Community Response referrals.
CWS agreed to participate in regional Family Resource Center Peer Quality Reviews to gain additional knowledge of these community resources and means to improve collaboration efforts. The Children Family Services Review project and the Office of Child Abuse Prevention Liaison role have been assigned to one program manager to streamline prevention and collaborative efforts.

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| Milestone | 1.2.1 The Interagency and Partnership for Excellence in Family Support quarterly meetings continue to build collaborative relationships, share information, and offer cross-training opportunities. | Timeframe | June 2013- May 2014 | Assigned to | Staff Development Community partners |
| | 1.2.2 Current policies and procedures for Coordinated Case Plans and Family Team Meetings will be revised to occur initially in developing the CWS plan and to ensure the inclusion of community partners. | | July 2012- December 2013 | | Staff Development Community partners |
| | 1.2.3 Continue to utilize CWS/CMS, Business Objects reports, and the Family Development Matrix to monitor CWS outcomes and accountability. | | June 2013- May 2014 | | Staff Development Information Technology Team Community partners |
| Strategy 1.3 Enhance Structured Decision Making assessments with the integration of the Signs of Safety engagement approach. | | <input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT <input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP <input type="checkbox"/> PSSF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A | Strategy Rationale The integration of the Signs of Safety model with Structured Decision Making will assist Social Workers with assessing the child's perspective in a creative and friendly manner, thereby furthering engagement efforts with the family. | | |
| PROGRESS NARRATIVE: STRATEGY 1.3: <input type="checkbox"/> Complete | | | | | |
| In September 2012, San Luis Obispo began the Safety Organized Practice Training Series. This training is intended to enhance interviewing for safety and danger, engagement skills to keep the children at the center of the work, developing behavioral specific case plans, and identifying a network of support for the family. CWS Supervisors and Social Workers are joining Staff Development to develop a plan of sustaining SOP after the training series is completed in August 2013. | | | | | |
| Milestone | 1.3.1 Develop a Signs of Safety/Structured Decision Making integration model. Update: Safety Organized Practice Training began September 2012. | Timeframe | Completed | Assigned to | Staff Development |
| | 1.3.2 Update Structured Decision Making desk guides and tools to integrate Safety Organized Practice engagement efforts. | | March 2014 | | Staff Development |

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| | 1.3.3 Train staff on utilizing Safety Organized Practice tools to strengthen family engagement efforts. | | Completed June 2013 | | Staff Development |
| | 1.3.4 Utilize CWS/CMS, Safe Measures, and Business Objects reports to monitor the use of Safety Organized Practice engagement tools and Structured Decision Making assessments. | | January 2013 – May 2014 | | Staff Development Information Technology Team Social Worker Supervisors |
| Strategy 1.4 Strengthen Differential Response. | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CAPIT | Strategy Rationale Improved collaborative efforts will expand the type and amount of services to families for prevention and early intervention efforts and after-care services. | | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP | | | |
| | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PSSF | | | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A | | | |
| PROGRESS NARRATIVE: STRATEGY 1.4: <input type="checkbox"/> Complete The Differential Response Policy & Procedure Manual has been updated to reflect current practice. CWS continues to meet monthly with Community Action Partnership of SLO to monitor current trends and issues related to Differential Response Community Response referrals. CWS has increased its number of outreach presentation to inform the community of what happens when a referral is made to CWS. A Community Collaborative approach is highlighted throughout the presentation. | | | | | |
| Milestone | 1.4.1 The Differential Response policy and procedure manual has been updated to reflect a Community Response; Collaborative Response; and CWS Response approach to initially engaging a family for Child Welfare Services. | Timeframe | Completed | Assigned to | Staff Development Community Action Partnership of SLO |
| | 1.4.2 Continue conversations and training to increase collaborative responses among CWS staff and community partners | | June 2013 – May 2014 | | Staff Development Community Action Partnership |
| | 1.4.3 Continue strategies to increase the acceptance rate of Community Response (Path1) services rate by 15%. | | June 2013– May 2014 | | Staff Development Community Action Partnership |

| | | | |
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| <p>1.4.4 To improve family engagement efforts, Emergency Response Social Workers will partner with Community Partners on low to moderate risk referrals of child abuse/neglect (Collaborative Response Path 2).</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>Staff Development Emergency Response Social Workers Community partners</p> | |
| <p>1.4.5 Monitor child abuse trends, collaboration efforts, and services provided utilizing CWS/CMS, Business Objects reports, and the Family Development Matrix.</p> | | <p>June 2013- May 2014</p> | <p>Staff Development Information Technology Team Community Action Partnership Community partners</p> |
| <p>Strategy 1.5 Continue efforts to sustain Linkages.</p> | <p><input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT <input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP <input type="checkbox"/> PSSF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> | <p>Strategy Rationale Collaboration between Child Welfare Services and Participant Services better serves families by reducing duplication of services and providing families with a team effort to promote self-sufficiency and the safety of children.</p> | |
| <p>PROGRESS NARRATIVE STRATEGY 1.5: <input type="checkbox"/> Complete As a result of the Linkages trainings offered in 2012, a group of CWS and CalWORKs staff form a work group to test a case with our current Linkages policy. As a result of this test case, the Linkages Workgroup has agreed to revisit the timeliness of a Family Team Meeting and the development of a Coordinated Case Plan.</p> | | | |
| <p>Milestone</p> | <p>1.5.1 Linkages trainings were held in each region. CWS and CalWORKs staff were trained jointly, which produced a rich discussion on suggestions to improvement practice.</p> | <p>Timeframe Completed July 2012</p> | <p>Assigned to Staff Development Community partners</p> |
| | <p>1.5.2 Continue to use Linkages Database and Co-Case Management Tool to measure outcomes related to self-sufficiency and child safety, and especially, in tracking Coordinated Case Plans for the families.</p> | <p>June 2013- May 2014</p> | <p>Staff Development Community partners</p> |

| | | | | |
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| | 1.5.3 Utilize the Linkages Referral Email Notice to monitor documentation related to collaboration efforts between CaWORKs and Child Welfare Services staff. | | June 2013 - May 2014 | Staff Development Community partners |
| Strategy 1.6 Improve the availability of father friendly resources and services. | <input type="checkbox"/> | CAPIT | Strategy Rationale Father friendly resources and services increase the engagement and participation of fathers in Child Welfare Services case plans, thereby increasing the likelihood of family success and decreasing the chances of recurrence of maltreatment. | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | CBCAP | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | PSSF | | |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | N/A | | |
| PROGRESS NARRATIVE STRATEGY 1.6: <input type="checkbox"/> Complete In 2012, a father friendly focused Interagency Meeting was held to highlight Father Friendly resources in SLO County. CWS has been able to utilize local male parent partners to support fathers with parenting education. | | | | |
| Milestone | 1.6.1 Continue to revise policy and procedure manuals, practice tools, and list of local resources to increase efforts to engage fathers. | Timeframe | October 2011 - May 2014 | Staff Development |
| | 1.6.2 Continue to collaborate with community partners to identify local father friendly resources. | | June 2013 - May 2014 | Staff Development Community partners |
| | 1.6.3 Expand current resource list to include father friendly resources available in San Luis Obispo County. | | Completed 2012 | Staff Development Community partners |
| | 1.6.4 Conduct a survey to gather feedback from fathers regarding their experience with Child Welfare Services. | | June 2013 - May 2014 | Staff Development Community partners |
| Strategy 1.7 Expand collaboration efforts with local providers of services for substance abuse, mental health, and domestic violence. | <input type="checkbox"/> | CAPIT | Strategy Rationale Ensuring a family's access to needed resources provides more support and increases both self-sufficiency and the safety of children. | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | CBCAP | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | PSSF | | |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | N/A | | |

PROGRESS NARRATIVE STRATEGY 1.7:

Complete

CWS continues to collaborate with the local Women Shelters to provide community outreach on the impact of Family Violence on children. CWS has partnered with Behavioral Health Services to implement practice in support of Pathway to Mental Health Services (Katie A.) legislation. CWS has also partnered with local hospitals, Public Health, and Drug and Alcohol Services to engage mothers who have delivered a newborn expose to drugs.

| | | | | | |
|------------------|--|------------------|------------------------|--------------------|---|
| Milestone | 1.7.1 Continue monitoring current policies and procedures to facilitate and increase referrals for substance abuse, mental health, and domestic violence. | Timeframe | June 2013- May 2014 | Assigned to | Staff Development Community partners |
| | 1.7.2 Utilize cross-training opportunities for Child Welfare Services staff and providers of substance abuse, mental health, and domestic violence services to support collaboration. | | June 2013- May 2014 | | Staff Development Community partners |
| | 1.7.3 Assign substance abuse, mental health, and domestic violence liaisons to streamline collaboration. Update: Employment Resource Specialist IVs have been identified and trained to serve as Domestic Violence liaisons. | | June 2013- May 2014 | | Staff Development Community partners |
| | 1.7.4 Monitor the rate of substance abuse, mental health, and domestic violence as contributing factors for child abuse and neglect. | | June 2013- May 2014 | | Staff Development Community partners |

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

None identified.

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

Training needs include Father Engagement, Differential Response, Developing Coordinated Case Plans, Team Building, and Motivational Interviewing.
Technical assistance is requested in developing a Parent Partners program.

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

Partnership in providing prevention, early intervention, and after-care services.
Collaborate in acquiring funding to expand on preventive and after-care services.

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

Child Welfare Services will be reviewing current policy for Voluntary Family Maintenance cases.

C1.1 Reunification within 12 Months – exit cohort

INTRODUCTION: This matrix serves as the System Improvement Plan (SIP) Progress Report for the period of July 2010 through June 2011. Please see Progress Narratives and revised Timeframes as highlighted within each of the Strategies.

Outcome/Systemic Factor:

C1.1 Reunification within 12 Months – exit cohort

This measure indicates the percentage of children reunified within 12 months of removal.

County's Current Performance:

As of December 2010, of 11 Probation youth leaving foster care to reunification during the year that had been in foster care for 8 days or longer, 4 were reunified in less than 12 months from the date of the latest removal from home. Probation's rate for this measure was 36.4%, compared to the federal standard of 75.2%.

Because Probation has relatively small numbers of children in foster care, one or two long term foster care cases significantly affects the rate for this measure. For example, as of 7/21/2011, 4 out of the 26 Probation foster youth in San Luis Obispo County had previously been removed from the home by Child Welfare Services at the time they entered the delinquency system. Thus they had already been in foster care for some period of time before Probation's reunification efforts commenced.

Additionally, the literature identifies children with severe behavioral issues as being delayed or failed in reunification. Probation foster youth often have severe behavioral issues that can lead to longer foster placement. For example, a child with sexual offending issues often receives specialized treatment in group home care for 18 to 24 months, which exceeds the federal benchmark for reunification. Of the aforementioned 26 youth, 7 have identified sexual offending issues.

Furthermore, the literature on reunification identifies older youth as taking longer to reunify. Of the aforementioned 26 youth, 22 are within the ages of 16-17 years old.

While these external factors are significant, Probation recognizes that improvement is needed in measure C1.1 as the most recent data report is even further below the federal standard than the previous data report.

Improvement Goal 1.0

San Luis Obispo County will increase the percentage of Probation youth leaving foster care to reunification within 12 months of removal from 36.4% to 54.5% or greater (this would be an increase from 4 out of 11 to 6 out of 11 youth when reviewing the most recent data report).

Strategy 1. 1

Increase the frequency and quality of parent youth contact and enhance the parent youth

CAPIT

CBCAP

PSSF

Strategy Rationale

Research shows that reunification is more likely when parents

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| <p>relationship.</p> <p>This will be evaluated and monitored by the placement probation officers overseeing a youth's case as well as by the probation placement unit supervisor in case reviews with the officers. It will also be documented in the youth's status review reports to the court.</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <p>N/A</p> | <p>maintain consistent and frequent visits with the child and when services are directed at enhancing or improving the parent child relationship.</p> |
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PROGRESS NARRATIVE STRATEGY 1.1: Complete

Of the probation youth exiting foster care to reunification during the period between 11/1/2011 and 12/31/2012, 57.1% were reunified within 12 months. This is slightly above the improvement goal but still well below the national goal of 75.2%. San Luis Obispo County's total numbers in this category were very low, which means that one case can have a large impact on the overall percentages. For example, there were only 7 cases that reunified during this timeframe. 4 reunified within 12 months and 3 did not. If one more had reunified, the percentage would have been raised from 57.1% to 75.2%, meeting the national goal. Probation met two of the three milestones identified in 1.1.1 through 1.1.3. The Family Resource Centers (FRC) in San Luis Obispo County do not currently have video conferencing capability; however, Probation had a recent meeting with one of the FRC coordinators to address this issue and we are continuing to work towards establishing this capability at regional sites in the county.

| | | | | |
|------------------|--|------------------|--------------------|--|
| Milestone | <p>1.1.1</p> <p>Collaborate with Family Resource Centers to set up video conferencing access for parents of foster youth in all three regions of the county (North County, South County and San Luis Obispo/Coast).</p> | Timeframe | Assigned to | <p>June 2013 –Dec 2013</p> <p>Probation Placement Supervisor Family Resource Centers</p> |
| | <p>1.1.2</p> <p>Develop a formalized procedure for assisting families in overcoming barriers to visitation such as cost of transportation or lodging.</p> | | | <p>Completed</p> <p>Probation Placement Supervisor</p> |
| | <p>1.1.3</p> <p>Work with local service providers to develop and implement an evidence-based parenting class specifically for parents of probation youth.</p> | | | <p>Completed</p> <p>Probation Juvenile Division Chief Deputy</p> |

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| <p>Strategy 1. 2</p> <p>Improve engagement with families and youth in the placement and reunification process by</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <p>CAPIT</p> | <p>Strategy Rationale</p> <p>Improving engagement with youth and family in the placement and</p> |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | <p>CBCAP</p> | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | <p>PSSF</p> | |

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| <p>utilizing Team Decision-Making Meetings and providing additional training to placement probation officers.</p> <p>This will be evaluated and monitored by the probation placement unit supervisor in case reviews with the placement probation officers.</p> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | N/A | <p>reunification process will better identify placement alternatives, better match a youth to an appropriate placement, and develop more buy-in from the youth and family in reunification services. Research shows that a positive working relationship between the case worker and the family is related to successful reunification. Providing additional training to staff will aid in the development of these positive working relationships. These strategies will in turn increase the likelihood that a youth can be reunified in twelve months.</p> |
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PROGRESS NARRATIVE STRATEGY 1.2:

Complete

Probation has made progress in the area of family engagement in the initial placement process and reunification services, however, due to budgetary constraints as well as additional workloads and priorities in the placement unit, such as extended foster care under AB 12, we have been unable to implement Team Decision Making Meetings as a standard practice in the Placement Unit. We do continue to have this as a goal and new target dates have been established as identified below. Some of the improvements that have been made include conducting placement orientation meetings with each youth/family as immediately after the placement order is made as possible. This practice has improved communication with the family, input from the family in placement matching, concurrent planning and overall family engagement. All of the officers have had further training in Case Planning, which included family engagement, continue to have Motivational Interviewing refresher trainings and had training on the Stages of Change, which also covers elements of engagement. Placement officers additionally have continued to attend placement specific trainings through the Resource Center for Family Focused Practice and all of the current officers in the placement unit have attended placement core. In lieu of Team Decision Making Meetings, Probation is working with the Family Resource Centers to establish a practice of holding Multi-Disciplinary Team Meetings prior to a youth reunifying in order to improve reunification services and strengthen aftercare planning.

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| Milestone | <p>1.2.1 Train one probation officer from the placement unit as well as the unit supervisor in facilitation of Team Decision-Making Meetings.</p> | Timeframe | <p>June 2013 – July 2014</p> | Assigned to | <p>Probation Placement Supervisor</p> |
| | <p>1.2.2 Develop a written procedure for use of Team Decision-Making Meetings and begin using Team Decision-Making Meetings in the Probation Juvenile Division.</p> | | <p>June 2013 – July 2014</p> | | <p>Probation Placement Supervisor</p> |

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| <p>1.2.3 Train placement probation officers in Family Engagement, Case Planning, and Motivational Interviewing (MI). Note: all current officers received initial Case Planning and MI training from the Resource Center for Family-Focused Practice on 3/24/2011. MI refresher training is included as bi-annual requirement in the Probation Department Training Plan.</p> | Completed | <p>Probation Placement Supervisor</p> <p>Probation Training Officer</p> |
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| <p>Strategy 1.3 Reduce the number of out of county group home placements by increasing local group home and foster home placements, especially relative and Non-Related Extended Family Member homes. This will be evaluated and monitored by the probation placement unit supervisor reviewing the percentage of cases in out of county group home placements at least every six months by using the Probation Department Case Management System (Monitor) or CWS/CMS.</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> | CAPIT | <p>Strategy Rationale Probation Department records indicate 80% of current probation foster youth are placed in out of county group homes. Research shows youth placed in "congregate care" (group home and residential treatment centers) have a greater likelihood of exiting foster care without a permanent placement. Out of county homes create more barriers to meaningful parent youth contact and lead to less focus on working with the family and improving the parent youth relationship. Reducing out of county group home placements will reduce some of these barriers to timely and effective reunification.</p> |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | CBCAP | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | PSSF | |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | N/A | |

PROGRESS NARRATIVE STRATEGY 1.3: Complete

Probation has made significant progress in this target area. As of 12-31-12, 45.7% of current probation foster youth were placed in out of county group homes and 54.3% were placed in relative foster care, Non-Related Extended Family Member (NREFM) foster care, Transitional housing, Supervised Independent Living Placement or in-county group homes. While specific procedures are still being developed, officers are doing a better job identifying less restrictive placement options and finding family resources for youth. Probation is meeting quarterly with local group home administrators to better plan for potential openings for local youth. Probation is also currently participating in a joint workgroup with Child Welfare Services (CWS) to improve Family Finding practices in the county, which is expected to have a positive impact on this target area as well. One probation officer now handles most relative approvals and it is hoped she will be attending Family Finding training in the coming year following conclusion of the Family Finding workgroup. Furthermore, Probation is now referring relative and NREFM foster parents to foster parent training and education provided by CWS.

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| Milestone | 1.3.1 Develop and implement a procedure for identifying relative and Non-Related Extended Family Member resources for probation youth at initial intake and/or the investigations phase of case. | Timeframe | June 2013 – Jan 2014 | Assigned to | Probation Placement Supervisor |
| | 1.3.2 Conduct quarterly meetings with the two local group homes in order to better coordinate anticipated openings and better utilize these placements for local youth. | | Completed | | Probation Court and Investigations Supervisor |
| | 1.3.3 Train one of the placement probation officers in family finding and foster home approval and have these activities as part of this officer's regular duties in assisting the placement unit. | | June 2013 – July 2014 | | Probation Placement Supervisor |
| | 1.3.4 Collaborate with Child Welfare Services to develop a specialized recruitment for placement resources for teens. | | June 2013 – July 2014 | | Probation Training Officer Probation Placement Supervisor |

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

Financial resources as well as personnel staffing levels.

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

The following training needs have been identified: Family Engagement, Family Finding, and Team Decision-Making Meetings. Family Engagement, Family Finding and Team Decision-Making Meetings training is available through Central California Training Academy and UC Davis Center for Family Focused Practice.

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

Probation will continue to partner with Child Welfare Services on foster parent education, recruitment and family finding. Probation will also partner with Family Resource Centers throughout San Luis Obispo County to establish a practice of having MDT meetings prior to reunification and to continue to work on video conferencing for Probation families during reunification services. Probation will also continue to partner with the UC Davis Center for Family Focused Practice and other training providers to meet training and educational goals.

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

None identified.

C4.3 No More than Two Placements within 24 Months

INTRODUCTION: This matrix serves as the System Improvement Plan (SIP) Progress Report for the period of July 2011 through June 2013. Please see Progress Narratives and revised Timeframes as highlighted within each of the Strategies.

Outcome/Systemic Factor:

C4.3 No More than Two Placements within 24 Months

This measure computes the percentage of children with two or fewer placements who have been in foster care for 24 months or more. Time in care is based on the latest date of removal from the home. The denominator is the total number of children who have been in care for 24 months or more; the numerator is the count of these children with two or fewer placements.

County's Current Performance:

As of December 2012, of the 118 children served in foster care during the year that were in foster care for at least 24 months, 43 children (36.4%) had two or fewer placement settings. Child Welfare Services is still striving to meet the federal standard, and our current rate is slightly above the State average.

Improvement Goal 1.0

Child Welfare Services will expand recruitment efforts to augment the number of Foster Homes in targeted communities in order to increase the number of children with two or fewer placements from 36.4% to 38% over the next year.

Strategy 1.1

Refine and expand the Atascadero School Placement Empowerment Network (ASPEN).

| | |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> | CAPIT |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | CBCAP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | PSSF |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | N/A |

Strategy Rationale

The ASPEN program develops and maintains a network of pre-approved foster homes within school communities so that placements familiar to youth are available should the need for foster placement arise.

PROGRESS NARRATIVE STRATEGY 1.1:

Complete

The strategy and time frames have been expanded based on the ASPEN model to incorporate additional school partners. A presentation was made at the San Luis Obispo County Office of Education (SLOCOE) on the key principles of the ASPEN concepts. The presentation was well-received and the Senior Coordinator, Homeless/Foster Youth of SLOCOE is currently working with DSS to identify schools that can be recruited into the program. Further, CWS staff members have been identified and are being trained to make presentations at appropriate schools. DSS remains

committed to this Strategy. It should be noted that Atascadero School Placement Empowerment Network (ASPEN) ceased participation in the Strategy 1.1.

Although not included in the original SIP, DSS has made additional efforts to recruit and retain foster parents. Targeted television spots for foster parent recruitment were developed and local television stations started airing these foster parent recruitment spots beginning in January 2013. In addition, telephone orientation materials were developed along with orientation materials for faith-based organizations, and general recruitment flyers prepared for other targeted groups.

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| Milestone | 1.1.1 Collaborate with the San Luis Obispo County Office Education to identify schools that can be recruited to participate in strategy and make presentation to each. | Timeframe | June 2013 – July 2014 | Assigned to | Staff Development |
| | 1.1.2 Develop emergency placement contact list for SLOCOE. | | June 2013 – July 2014 | | Staff Development |
| | 1.1.3 Monitor progress of potential foster homes and emergency placement list through the Department of Social Services' Foster Home Administration database. | | June 2013 – July 2014 | | Staff Development |
| | 1.1.4 Develop standardized process to utilize in other school districts. | | Sept 2013 – Feb 2014 | | Staff Development |
| | 1.1.5 Collaborate with other school districts to create a list of potential foster homes. | | Mar 2013 – Feb 2014 | | Staff Development |
| | 1.1.6 Develop emergency placement contact list for participating school districts | | Mar 2014 – Sept 2014 | | Staff Development |
| | 1.1.7 Monitor progress of all potential school foster homes and emergency placement list through the Department of Social Services' Foster Home Administration database. | | Sept 2013 – Dec 2014 | | Staff Development |

Improvement Goal 2.0

San Luis Obispo County will provide education, resource, and mentoring support to all placement homes to prevent disruption, thereby increasing the number of children with two or fewer placements from 36.4% to 38% over the next year.

Strategy 2.1

Promote stabilization of placements by

CAPIT

Strategy Rationale

CBCAP

The goal of the Quality Parenting

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| strengthening the Quality Parenting Project. | <input type="checkbox"/> | PSSF | Project is to establish a collaborative team of foster parents, social workers, birth parents, and Child Welfare Services staff to create strong foundations for every placement. |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | N/A | |

PROGRESS NARRATIVE STRATEGY 2.1:

Complete

The Quality Parenting Project has been very active and productive. Since our last progress report, peer mentoring has been implemented, About Your Child is being used fairly consistently by staff, and we are in the process of establishing a written process and template for transition planning. Last, but not least, we implemented a process where a staff member calls caregivers the day after a child has been placed with them, to ensure their needs are being met and thank them for taking a child into their care.

| Milestone | Timeframe | Assigned to |
|---|----------------------------------|---|
| 2.1.1 Build strong relationships between caregivers, youth, birth parents, and Child Welfare Services staff utilizing the Placement Transition Plan and About Your Child Process. | Ongoing | Child Welfare Services staff Staff Development |
| 2.1.2 Monitor the use of the About Your Child process through the Child Location database on a monthly basis. | Ongoing | Staff Development |
| 2.1.3 Monitor Placement Transition Plan by reviewing court reports to ensure the process is included in each report. This will be accomplished by reviewing 100% of court reports for first month, 50% for the second month, and 25% the third and fourth months to determine trends. | Ongoing | Staff Development |
| 2.1.4 Create a peer mentoring program with current Foster Parents to provide support to all placement homes. | Completed Mar 2012 | Staff Development |
| 2.1.5 Train caregivers, mentors, and Child Welfare Services staff on peer mentoring program. | Completed Mar 2012 Ongoing | Staff Development |
| 2.1.6 Implement the peer mentoring program. | Completed Mar 2012 | Staff Development |
| 2.1.7 Evaluate the peer mentoring program by utilizing a survey that will be sent at 6 months and 12 months | First evaluation occurred in | Staff Development |

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| after implementation. | | November 2012 | | | |
| Strategy 2. 2 Better support relative and Non-Relative Extended Family Member placements with training and resources. | <input type="checkbox"/> | CAPIT | Strategy Rationale Offering resources to caregivers will build on the caregivers' knowledge and skills that are necessary to provide better care for the youth in their home. | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | CBCAP | | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | PSSF | | | |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | N/A | | | |
| PROGRESS NARRATIVE STRATEGY 2.2: | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Complete | | |
| Since the last SIP update the Department has developed and implemented a revised orientation booklet, created a Relative/NREFM specific orientation & training, and created a resource list for Relative/NREFMs. DSS staff has been training on the new orientation & training, and will soon be trained on the resource list. DSS will then work on developing a 3-month assessment process. | | | | | |
| Milestone | 2.2.1 Update and distribute the orientation booklet for caregivers to reflect revised regulations and include in the Relative/Non-Relative Extended Family Member placement packet. | Timeframe | Completed Dec 2011 | Assigned to | Staff Development Child Welfare Services staff |
| | 2.2.2 Collaborate with community partners to develop an orientation to offer to relatives and Non-Relative Extended Family Members. | | Completed Dec 2012 | | Staff Development Community partners |
| | 2.2.3 Collaborate with community partners to develop a caregiver training specific to the needs of relatives and Non-Relative Extended Family Members. | | Jan 2013 – Mar 2013 | | Staff Development Community partners |
| | 2.2.4 Train staff on new orientation booklet, caregiver training, and orientations that will be offered to relatives and non-related extended family members. | | Jan 2013 – Mar 2013 | | Staff Development |
| | 2.2.5 Implement orientations and caregiver trainings offered to relatives and non-related extended family members. | | April 2013 – June 2013 | | Staff Development and Community partners |
| | 2.2.6 Create a resource list to offer to relative and non-related extended family members. | | June 2013 – July 2014 | | Staff Development |
| | 2.2.7 Train staff on providing resource list to caregivers. | | June 2013- Dec 2013 | | Staff Development |

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| <p>2.2.8 Develop an assessment to be used 3 months after placement to identify any needed support and resources caregivers may need specific to the child in their care.</p> | <p>Sept 2013- Feb 2014</p> | <p>Staff Development Child Welfare Services staff</p> |
| <p>2.2.9 Train staff on 3 month assessment tool.</p> | <p>Mar 2014- May 2014</p> | <p>Staff Development</p> |
| <p>2.2.10 Evaluate effectiveness of training, 3 month assessment tool, and resources utilizing input from caregivers via surveys and training feedback questionnaires.</p> | <p>May 2013- Dec 2014</p> | <p>Staff Development</p> |
| <p>Describe any additional systemic factors needing to be addressed that support the improvement plan goals. Need Children’s Research Center to allow Child Welfare Services to alter the Structured Decision Making for Substitute Care Providers assessment schedule from home approval to 3 months post placement for Relative and Non-Relative Extended Family Member homes.</p> | | |
| <p>Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals. Staff training will be provided to support the Placement Transition Plan, the 3 month assessment tool and the resource list.</p> | | |
| <p>Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals. Child Welfare Services will collaborate with community partners to develop a set schedule of orientation and caregiver training times and locations to support to relative and Non-Relative Extended Family Members. Child Welfare Services will work with identified Foster Parent mentors to participate peer mentoring program.</p> | | |
| <p>Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals. None identified.</p> | | |

BARRIERS TO IMPLEMENTATION

| <u>BARRIER</u> | <u>MODIFICATION</u> |
|--|---|
| <p>Vacant positions and caseloads</p> | <p>Hiring additional staff Development of databases and tools</p> |
| <p>Inexperienced Social workers</p> | <p>Ongoing Core and Safety Organized Practice training/reviews</p> |
| <p>Lack of Substance Abuse Programs</p> | <p>Continued collaboration with Drug and Alcohol Services</p> |
| <p>Funding challenges</p> | <p>Continued Community</p> |

Discontinuance of ASPEN Participation

**Collaboration
Collaborate with SLOCOE**

In analyzing the SIP outcomes, it was noted that there were significant increases in referrals and total numbers of children being served without a reciprocal increase in CWS social worker staffing.

| Total Number of Children Served | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|--------------------|
| Outcome | 2010 | 2012 | Change |
| S1.1 No Recurrence of Maltreatment | 252 | 359 | Increase of 138.6% |
| C1.1 Reunification within 12 Months | 94 | 89 | Decrease of 0.9% |
| C4.3 Placement Stability | 118 | 118 | No Change |
| Number of FT CWS Social Workers | | | |
| Total Number of FTEs | 29.8 | 33.7 | Increase of 13% |
| Total Number of Referrals | 452 | 471 | Increase of 4% |

Note: Data on # of FT CWS SWs comes from:
<http://apollo/AdministrativeResources/Statistical Reports>

- Vacant Positions and Caseloads:** During a year of increasing referrals, San Luis Obispo County also experienced a larger than usual number of vacancies and caseload size. To offset that barrier, CWS has hired additional staff. Databases and new tools have been developed to allow social workers to work more effectively.
- Inexperienced Social workers:** Due to the County's prior hiring practice of hiring only for Social Worker I and Social Worker II, a large number of social workers had limited work experience. Several newly hired social workers left CWS within the first year for higher pay at another community agency. The hiring practice has been changed to allow the County to fill Social Worker III and Social Worker IV positions with new hires who have Master's level degrees and work experience. In addition, San Luis Obispo County has made arrangements for all new hires to complete core training through the Central California Training Academy. New hires are given the opportunity to job-shadow and observe more experienced social workers. Induction classes for new hires have been revised to better support social workers early on in the process. All social workers, regardless of their years' of experience, are also provided with Safety Organized Practice. Staff development personnel have also been included in core training and Safety Organized Practice training to give them a better perspective and an ability to develop more effective Policies and Procedures. CAPSLO
- Lack of Substance Abuse and Mental Health Programs:** Currently San Luis Obispo County has limited substance abuse and mental health services. These limitations are primarily affecting our efforts to improve on the following outcomes: No Recurrence of Maltreatment; Reunification within 12 months; and Reentry following Reunification. CWS is meeting weekly with Mental Health to prepare for the implementation of the Affordable Care Act and in preparation for services required by "Pathway to Mental Health Services

(Katie A.)” legislation. Ongoing discussions are being held to evaluate current practices and identify gaps in service.

- **Engaging Fathers:** CAPSLO’s Positive Opportunity for Parenting Success (POPS) program focused on enhancing fathers’ abilities to successfully parent their children. Unfortunately, the POPS program was eliminated and no new programs to support fathers have yet be developed. At this time, San Luis Obispo County is exploring ways to encourage father-friendly processes and services.

OTHER SUCCESSES/PROMISING PRACTICES

Central California Core Training for All CWS Staff: To ensure that consistent, high quality services are provided, all newly hired CWS Social Workers complete the Core Training Series as provided by the Central California Training Academy. The series delivers competency-based curricula to new staff in public child welfare services. Activities ensure that new workers receive the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for their jobs, and ensure that managers and supervisors reinforce, monitor, and promote what is learned. The training consists of 23.5 days of training for the new worker and one day of Transfer of Learning training for his/her supervisor. This training meets the statewide requirements for the California Common Core for social workers.

Implementation of Safety Organized Practice: All CWS social workers, including those with much experience, are being trained in Safety Organized Practice. Safety-organized practices are child welfare approaches focused on the safety of the child within the family system. The SOP methodology is informed by a variety of best- and evidence-informed practices, including group supervision, Signs of Safety, Motivational Interviewing, and solution-focused treatment. Safety-organized practice brings a common language and framework for enhanced critical thinking and judgment on the part of all involved with a family in the pursuit of a balanced, complete picture of child welfare issues. San Luis Obispo County has made arrangements for the SOP classes to be taught by a working Social Worker Supervisor from San Diego County. Her practical work experience has been invaluable to the training environment. In addition, SLO County partnered with Children’s Research Center, a division of the National Council on Crime and Delinquency, to trained our social workers, supervisors, and managers on “How to Include Child Safety on Case Plans” by using the Case Plan Field Tool.

Participation in Partnership for Excellence in Family Support: DSS is an active member of the Partnership for Excellence in Family Support (PEFS). PEFS is an organized governance for Family Strengthening Organizations throughout San Luis Obispo County. Its purpose is to leverage resources, funding support and to integrate services for families and communities. By regularly participating in PEFS, members share current information about resources and community issues, and are able to network and make case decisions more quickly when needed. Services to families and children are enhanced by this collaborative effort therefore family maintenance and reunification are more likely and recurrence of maltreatment less likely.

As a member of PEFS, DSS is an active participant in local peer review committees. Child Welfare Services Outcome and Accountability System, also known as the California Child and Family Services Review (C-CFSR), requires that San Luis Obispo County Child Welfare Services (CWS) and Juvenile Probation Departments participate in a review process every 5 years, which includes a Peer Quality Case Review (PQCR). San Luis Obispo's processes were reviewed in 2010 with a focus on placement stability and timely adoption. While the 2010 PQCR provided positive feedback on the strengths and dedication of CWS and Probation staff, it also provided valuable information on areas needing improvement in order to achieve both placement stability and timely adoption. The findings and recommendations are reflected in the SIP improvement goals. Although there was no PQCR focused on DSS and Probation during 2012, San Luis Obispo County has provided input in PQCRs performed by other family and child service agencies. This practice enhances the services being provided by outside agencies to families and children who are also being served by CWS and Probation. Better community services support the goal of timely adoptions, family maintenance, reunification and a decrease in recurring maltreatment.

Ongoing Training in Use of Structured Decision Making (SDM) Assessment tools: Structured decision-making is an approach to child protective services that uses clearly defined and consistently applied decision-making criteria for screening for investigation, determining response priority, identifying immediate threatened harm, and estimating the risk of future abuse and neglect. Child and family needs and strengths are identified and considered in developing and monitoring progress toward a case plan. All CWS social workers and supervisors are providing with ongoing training and support in using the SDM timely and effectively. Advanced SDM training for CWS social workers was provided in 2012. In addition, Employment Services Supervisors and Employment Resource Specialists at DSS have been trained in the use of the tool. This allows evaluation of the needs of families receiving CalWORKs benefits with a focus on reducing child maltreatment and increasing families' self sufficiency. Families with children at risk of neglect or maltreatment are given support before there is a need for CWS involvement.

OUTCOME MEASURES NOT MEETING STATE/NATIONAL STANDARDS

The following measures did not meet State/National Standards. The relatively small number of CWS cases in San Luis Obispo County means that the percentages are greatly influenced by even small changes and can appear to be erratic. For example, if there are more than usual siblings in a particular family, that single family's outcome will unduly affect the county's overall percentage in either a positive or negative way.

C1.1 & C1.2 Reunification Within 12 Months (Exit Cohort) – The national standard is 75.2%. San Luis Obispo County scored at 65.4 % (70/107) as of 12/31/10 and has increased to 68% (66/97) as of 12/31/12.

C1.3 Reunification Within 12 Months (Entry Cohort) – The national standard is 48.4%. San Luis Obispo County scored at 50 % (46/92) as of 6/30/10 and has decreased to 45% (36/80) as of 12/31/12.

San Luis Obispo County CWS has implemented Safety Organized Practice and just recently received a specialized training by a Children's Research Center trainer on "How to Include Child Safety on Case Plans". Staff received a Case Plan Field Tool that is designed to help social workers create quality case plans, with families, to increase the likelihood of safe and timely reunification.

C1.4 Reentry following Reunification (Exit Cohort) – The state/national standard is 9.9%. San Luis Obispo County was over the standard at 11.6% as of 12/31/10 (10 out of 86 children) and increased to 14.1% as of 12/31/12 (18 of 128 Children). The state/national standard was met in four of the 13 report months. It is noted that making strong efforts to meet the standard of reunification within 12 months can result in subsequent reentry if the child is returned to the home prematurely.

San Luis Obispo County CWS has implemented Safety-Organized Practices which includes helping families develop strong networks of support so that the possibilities of reentry or recurrent maltreatment are minimized.

C2.4 Legally Free Within 6 Months (17 Months in Care) – The state/national standard is 10.9%. San Luis Obispo County scored at 19.2% (10/52) in December 2010, and at 2% (1/49) as of December 31, 2012. Again, the small number of cases in San Luis Obispo County means that there will appear to be big changes in overall percentages. San Luis Obispo County met the state/national standard in 6 of the 13 reporting months.

C4.1 Placement Stability (8 Days to 12 Months in Care) – The state/national standard is 86%. The original SIP report showed that San Luis Obispo County CWS was over the standard at 96.6% as of 12/31/10, but under goal at 79.9% as of 12/31/12. This apparent precipitous drop of 16.7% was cause for grave concern. However, investigation of the data showed that Safe Measures currently shows that the correct percentage as of 12/31/10 was 85.2%. Thus there has been a decrease of only 5.3%. The relatively small number of cases in San Luis Obispo County means that a single family's outcome will unduly affect the county's overall percentage in either a positive or negative way.

San Luis Obispo County has taken significant steps to increase placement stability. Involvement in the Quality Parent Initiative has resulted in a new practice of having a social worker follow up with foster parents the day after the child is placed with them. In addition, Resource Family Approvals must be obtained for permanent placement. All foster parents must complete PRIDE training to ensure they are well prepared. Licensing of foster homes must be obtained within 90 days, except in special circumstances.

OUTCOME MEASURES EXCEEDING STATE/NATIONAL STANDARDS

C2.1 Adoption Within 24 Months (Exit Cohort) – San Luis Obispo County exceeded the state/national standard. The state/national standard is 36.6%. San Luis Obispo County was at 54.5% as of December 2010 and at 50% as of December 2012. It is noted that there was a slight decline in this outcome, however CWS San Luis Obispo remains well over the state/national standard and is successful in this outcome.

C2.2 Median Time to Adoption (Exit Cohort) – San Luis Obispo County exceeded the state/national standard of 27.3 months. In December 2010, the median time to adoption in San Luis Obispo was 22.9 months; as of December 2012 the median time to adoption was 23.7 months. It is noted that there was a slight increase in the median time to adoption during this reporting period, however CWS San Luis Obispo remains well ahead of the state/national standard and is successful in this outcome.

C2.3 Adoptions Within 12 Months (17 Months in Care) – The state/national standard is 22.7%. San Luis Obispo County scored at 27.8% (27/97) as of December 2010, and at 30.8% (28/91) as of December 2012. San Luis Obispo County has consistently exceeded the state/national standard during the last 12 reporting months.

C2.5 Adoption within 12 Months (Legally Free) – San Luis Obispo County exceeded the state/national standard of 53.7%. It is noted that there was movement from 68.4% in December 2010 to 65.1% as of December 21, 2012.

C4.2 Placement Stability (12 Months to 24 Months In Care) – The state/national standard is 65.4%. San Luis Obispo County scored at 76.5% (104/136) as of December 2010, and at 73.2% (104/142) as of December 2012. San Luis Obispo County has consistently exceeded the national standard in 8 of the 10 reporting months. Again, the relatively small number of cases in San Luis Obispo County means that a single family's outcome will unduly affect the county's overall percentage in either a positive or negative way.

State and Federally Mandated Child Welfare/Probation Initiatives

San Luis Obispo County has actively participated in current applicable lawsuits and settlement agreements as outlined below:

AB12 Non-Minor Dependents. The passage of AB12 required that San Luis Obispo County prepare new policies and procedures that could be used to train CWS and Participant Services staff and would provide an ongoing point of reference. This required research and interpretation of many All County Letters, All County Informing Notices, and information found on the CDSS website in preparation for implementation. In addition, San Luis Obispo County worked with partner agencies to ensure that the needs of Non-Minor Dependents were met in compliance with AB12 requirements.

Pathways to Mental Health Services (Katie A.) CWS meets with Mental Health on a weekly basis to discuss and plan for Katie A. implementation. Current practices are being carefully evaluated and gaps in service are being identified.

Quality Parent Initiative. CWS modified practices to enhance foster parent partnerships. A CWS social worker will contact the foster parent the day after placement to provide support and resource referrals and to answer questions.

Realignment. The 2011 Budget Act of California included a major change in the fiscal environment for CWS and Foster Care (FC).

5 Year SIP Chart

Child Welfare Services/Probation System Improvement Plan Matrix

| | | | | |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|--------------|--|
| Outcome/Systemic Factor: | | | | |
| S1.1 No Recurrence of Maltreatment | | | | |
| This measure reflects the percent of children who were victims of child abuse/neglect with a subsequent substantiated report of abuse/neglect within 6 months. | | | | |
| County's Current Performance: | | | | |
| Child Welfare Services' rate of no recurrence of maltreatment decreased from 96.1% in March 2010 to 90.2% (193 of 214 children) in June 2010, below the federal standard of 94.6%. As of December 2010, performance continued to be below the federal standard with a rate of 90.9% (229 of 252 children). Substance abuse continues to be a prevalent issue in San Luis Obispo County and a major cause of referrals, both initial and subsequent. Domestic Violence is also becoming another prevalent issue in San Luis Obispo County. | | | | |
| Improvement Goal 1.0 | | | | |
| By October 2012, Child Welfare Services will increase the rate of No Recurrence of Maltreatment by 3.7% in order to meet the federal standard of 94.6%. In an effort to reduce the recurrence of maltreatment, Child Welfare Services will focus on prevention, early intervention and aftercare efforts with community partners and family advocates. | | | | |
| Strategy 1. 1 | | <input type="checkbox"/> | CAPIT | Strategy Rationale Ongoing monitoring and communication at all levels will provide staff with the needed support, thereby improving Child Welfare Services' rate of no recurrence of maltreatment. |
| Continue to use Safe Measures to monitor performance and develop recommendations for improvement. | | <input type="checkbox"/> | CBCAP | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> | PSSF | |
| | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | N/A | |
| Milestone | 1.1.1 Enhance the use of Safe Measures and CWS/CMS to generate monthly reports that include recurrence of maltreatment, collateral contacts, and community referrals by region, unit, and Social Worker. | Timeframe | Ongoing | Assigned to Staff Development |
| | 1.1.2 Utilize monthly Intake/Emergency Response Workgroup meetings with Intake and Emergency Response Social Workers, Supervisors, and Regional Managers to share community resources and trends, and to identify needs. | | Ongoing | |

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| | <p>1.1.3 Reestablish quarterly Monthly Measures meetings to share progress and discuss strategies to improve no recurrence of maltreatment performance.</p> | | Ongoing | | Staff Development Regional Managers |
| <p>Strategy 1. 2 Strengthen collaboration between Child Welfare Services and community partners.</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> | CAPIT | <p>Strategy Rationale Collaboration amongst community providers expands the resources and services available to families, streamlines prevention and self-sufficiency efforts, and enhances Differential Response. An increase in collaboration and Coordinated Case Plans will also reduce the recurrence of child abuse and neglect.</p> | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | CBCAP | | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | PSSF | | | |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | N/A | | | |
| Milestone | <p>1.2.1 Utilize the Interagency and Partnership for Excellence in Family Support quarterly meetings to build collaborative relationships, share information, and offer cross-training opportunities.</p> | Timeframe | Ongoing | Assigned to | Staff Development Community partners |
| | <p>1.2.2 Review current policies and procedures for Coordinated Case Plans and Family Team Meetings to ensure the inclusion of community partners.</p> | | 02/2012-02/2013 | | Staff Development Community partners |
| | <p>1.2.3 Monitor progress utilizing CWS/CMS, Business Objects reports, and the Family Development Matrix</p> | | 03/2012 and ongoing | | Staff Development Information Technology Team Community partners |
| <p>Strategy 1. 3 Enhance Structured Decision Making assessments with the integration of the Signs of Safety engagement approach.</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> | CAPIT | <p>Strategy Rationale The integration of the Signs of Safety model with Structured Decision Making will assist Social Workers with assessing the child's perspective in a creative and friendly manner, thereby furthering engagement efforts with the family.</p> | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | CBCAP | | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | PSSF | | | |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | N/A | | | |

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| Milestone | 1.3.1 Develop a Signs of Safety/Structured Decision Making integration model. | Timeframe | 06/2012 | Assigned to | Staff Development |
| | 1.3.2 Update Structured Decision Making desk guides and tools to integrate Signs of Safety engagement efforts. | | 12/2012 | | Staff Development |
| | 1.3.3 Train staff on utilizing Signs of Safety tools to strengthen family engagement efforts. | | 06/2013 | | Staff Development |
| | 1.3.4 Utilize CWS/CMS, Safe Measures, and Business Objects reports to monitor the use of Signs of Safety engagement tools and Structured Decision Making assessments. | | 06/2013 and ongoing | | Staff Development Information Technology Team Social Worker Supervisors |
| Strategy 1.4 Strengthen Differential Response. | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CAPIT | Strategy Rationale Improved collaborative efforts will expand the type and amount of services to families for prevention and early intervention efforts and after-care services. | | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP | | | |
| | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PSSF | | | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> N/A | | | |
| Milestone | 1.4.1 Update Differential Response policy and desk guides with current Differential Response practice. | Timeframe | 06/2012 | Assigned to | Staff Development |
| | 1.4.2 Train staff and community partners on Differential Response, with an emphasis on Collaborative Response. | | 12/2012 | | Staff Development Community Action Partnership |
| | 1.4.3 Develop strategies to increase the acceptance rate of Community Response (Path1) services rate by 15%. | | 12/2013 | | Staff Development Community Action Partnership |
| | 1.4.4 To improve family engagement efforts, Emergency Response Social Workers will partner with Community Partners on low to moderate risk referrals of child abuse/neglect (Collaborative Response Path 2). | | 12/2013 | | Staff Development Emergency Response Social Workers |

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| 1.4.4 Continued | | | | Community partners | |
| 1.4.5 Monitor child abuse trends, collaboration efforts, and services provided utilizing CWS/CMS, Business Objects reports, and the Family Development Matrix. | | | 12/2013 and ongoing | Staff Development Information Technology Team Community Action Partnership Community partners | |
| Strategy 1.5 Continue efforts to sustain Linkages. | | <input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT <input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP <input type="checkbox"/> PSSF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A | Strategy Rationale Collaboration between Child Welfare Services and Participant Services better serves families by reducing duplication of services and providing families with a team effort to promote self-sufficiency and the safety of children. | | |
| Milestone | 1.5.1 Provide Linkages trainings in each region. | Timeframe | 01/2012 | Assigned to | Staff Development Community partners |
| | 1.5.2 Monitor Linkages Database and Co-Case Management Tool will ensure an increase in Linkages activities and documentation. | | 01/2012 and ongoing | | Staff Development Community partners |
| | 1.5.3 Monitor use of the Linkages Referral Email Notice to ensure it is sent consistently in support of the collaboration efforts between CalWORKs and Child Welfare Services staff. | | 01/2012 and ongoing | | Staff Development Community partners |
| Strategy 1.6 Improve the availability of father friendly resources and services. | | <input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT <input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP <input type="checkbox"/> PSSF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A | Strategy Rationale Father friendly resources and services increases the engagement and participation of fathers in Child Welfare Services | | |

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| Strategy 1.6 Continued | | | | case plans, thereby increasing the likelihood of family success and decreasing the chances of recurrence of maltreatment. | |
| Milestone | 1.6.1 Assess desk guides, practices, and local resources to increase efforts to engage fathers. | Timeframe | 12/2011 | Assigned to | Staff Development |
| | 1.6.2 Continue to collaborate with community partners to identify local father friendly resources. | | 12/2011 and ongoing | | Staff Development Community partners |
| | 1.6.3 Develop a list of father friendly resources available in San Luis Obispo County. | | 06/2012 | | Staff Development Community partners |
| | 1.6.4 Conduct a survey to gather feedback from fathers regarding their experience with Child Welfare Services. | | 06/2013 | | Staff Development Community partners |
| Strategy 1.7 Expand collaboration efforts with local providers of services for substance abuse, mental health, and domestic violence. | | <input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT | Strategy Rationale Ensuring a family's access to needed resources provides more support and increases both self-sufficiency and the safety of children. | | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP | | | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> PSSF | | | |
| | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A | | | |
| Milestone | 1.7.1 Review current policies and procedures to facilitate and increase referrals for substance abuse, mental health, and domestic violence. | Timeframe | 03/2013 | Assigned to | Staff Development Community partners |
| | 1.7.2 Provide cross-training for Child Welfare Services staff and providers of substance abuse, mental health, and domestic violence services to support collaboration. | | 09/2013 | | Staff Development Community partners |
| | 1.7.3 Assign substance abuse, mental health, and domestic violence liaisons to streamline collaboration. | | 03/2014 | | Staff Development Community partners |
| | 1.7.4 Monitor the rate of substance abuse, mental health, and domestic violence as contributing factors for child abuse and neglect. | | 03/2014 and ongoing | | Staff Development Community partners |

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

None identified.

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

Training needs include Father Engagement, Differential Response, Linkages, Coordinated Case Plans, Signs of Safety, Team Building, and Motivational Interviewing.

Technical assistance is requested in developing a Parent Partners program.

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

Partnership in providing prevention, early intervention, and after-care services.

Collaborate in acquiring funding to expand on preventive and after-care services.

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

Child Welfare Services will need to review current policy for Voluntary Family Maintenance cases.

Outcome/Systemic Factor:

C1.1 Reunification within 12 Months – exit cohort

This measure indicates the percentage of children reunified within 12 months of removal.

County's Current Performance:

As of December 2010, of 11 Probation youth leaving foster care to reunification during the year that had been in foster care for 8 days or longer, 4 were reunified in less than 12 months from the date of the latest removal from home. Probation's rate for this measure was 36.4%, compared to the federal standard of 75.2%.

Because Probation has relatively small numbers of children in foster care, one or two long term foster care cases significantly affects the rate for this measure. For example, as of 7/21/2011, 4 out of the 26 Probation foster youth in San Luis Obispo County had previously been removed from the home by Child Welfare Services at the time they entered the delinquency system. Thus they had already been in foster care for some period of time before Probation's reunification efforts commenced.

Additionally, the literature identifies children with severe behavioral issues as being delayed or failed in reunification. Probation foster youth often have severe behavioral issues that can lead to longer foster placement. For example, a child with sexual offending issues often receives specialized treatment in group home care for 18 to 24 months, which exceeds the federal benchmark for reunification. Of the aforementioned 26 youth, 7 have identified sexual offending issues.

Furthermore, the literature on reunification identifies older youth as taking longer to reunify. Of the aforementioned 26 youth, 22 are within the ages of 16-17 years old.

While these external factors are significant, Probation recognizes that improvement is needed in measure C1.1 as the most recent data report is even further below the federal standard than the previous data report.

Improvement Goal 1.0

San Luis Obispo County will increase the percentage of Probation youth leaving foster care to reunification within 12 months of removal from 36.4% to 54.5% or greater (this would be an increase from 4 out of 11 to 6 out of 11 youth when reviewing the most recent data report).

Strategy 1. 1

Increase the frequency and quality of parent youth contact and enhance the parent youth relationship.

This will be evaluated and monitored by the placement probation officers overseeing a youth's case as well as by the probation placement unit supervisor in case reviews with the officers. It will also be documented in the youth's status review reports to the court.

CAPIT

CBCAP

PSSF

N/A

Strategy Rationale

Research shows that reunification is more likely when parents maintain consistent and frequent visits with the child and when services are directed at enhancing or improving the parent child relationship.

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| Milestone | 1.1.1 Collaborate with Family Resource Centers to set up video conferencing access for parents of foster youth in all three regions of the county (North County, South County and San Luis Obispo/Coast). | Timeframe | By 10/2012 | Assigned to | Probation Placement Supervisor Family Resource Centers |
| | 1.1.2 Develop a formalized procedure for assisting families in overcoming barriers to visitation such as cost of transportation or lodging. | | By 07/2012 | | Probation Placement Supervisor |
| | 1.1.3 Work with local service providers to develop and implement an evidence-based parenting class specifically for parents of probation youth. | | By 07/2012 | | Probation Juvenile Division Chief Deputy |
| Strategy 1. 2 Improve engagement with families and youth in the placement and reunification process by utilizing Team Decision-Making Meetings and providing additional training to placement probation officers. This will be evaluated and monitored by the probation placement unit supervisor in case reviews with the placement probation officers. | | <input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT <input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP <input type="checkbox"/> PSSF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A | Strategy Rationale Improving engagement with youth and family in the placement and reunification process will better identify placement alternatives, better match a youth to an appropriate placement, and develop more buy-in from the youth and family in reunification services. Research shows that a positive working relationship between the case worker and the family is related to successful reunification. Providing additional training to staff will aid in the development of these positive working relationships. These strategies will in turn increase the likelihood that a youth can be reunified in twelve months. | | |
| Milestone | 1.2.1 Train one probation officer from the placement unit as well as the unit supervisor in facilitation of Team Decision-Making Meetings. | Timeframe | By 01/2013 | Assigned to | Probation Placement Supervisor |
| | 1.2.2 Develop a written procedure for the implementation of Team Decision-Making Meetings in the Probation Juvenile Division. | | By 07/2013 | | Probation Placement Supervisor |

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| | <p>1.2.3 Train placement probation officers in Family Engagement, Case Planning, and Motivational Interviewing (MI). Note: all current officers received initial Case Planning and MI training from the Research Center for Family-Focused Practice on 3/24/2011. MI refresher training is included as bi-annual requirement in the Probation Department Training Plan.</p> | | By 07/2012 | | Probation Placement Supervisor Probation Training Officer |
| <p>Strategy 1.3 Reduce the number of out of county group home placements by increasing local group home and foster home placements, especially relative and Non-Related Extended Family Member homes. This will be evaluated and monitored by the probation placement unit supervisor reviewing the percentage of cases in out of county group home placements at least every six months by using the Probation Department Case Management System (Monitor) or CWS/CMS.</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT <input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP <input type="checkbox"/> PSSF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A | | <p>Strategy Rationale Probation Department records indicate 80% of current probation foster youth are placed in out of county group homes. Research shows youth placed in "congregate care" (group home and residential treatment centers) have a greater likelihood of exiting foster care without a permanent placement. Out of county homes create more barriers to meaningful parent youth contact and lead to less focus on working with the family and improving the parent youth relationship. Reducing out of county group home placements will reduce some of these barriers to timely and effective reunification.</p> | | |
| Milestone | <p>1.3.1 Develop and implement a procedure for identifying relative and Non-Related Extended Family Member resources for probation youth at initial intake and/or the investigations phase of case.</p> | Timeframe | By 07/2012 | Assigned to | Probation Placement Supervisor Probation Court and Investigations Supervisor |
| | <p>1.3.2 Conduct quarterly meetings with the two local group homes in order to better coordinate anticipated openings and better utilize these placements for local youth.</p> | | By 04/2012 | | Probation Placement Supervisor |

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| <p>1.3.3 Train one of the placement probation officers in family finding and foster home certification and have these activities as part of this officer's regular duties in assisting the placement unit.</p> | <p>By 07/2012</p> | <p>Probation Placement Supervisor Probation Training Officer</p> |
| <p>1.3.4 Collaborate with Child Welfare Services to develop a specialized recruitment for placement resources for teens.</p> | <p>By 07/2012</p> | <p>Probation Placement Supervisor</p> |

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

None identified.

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

The following training needs have been identified: Family Engagement, Case Planning, Family Finding, and Team Decision-Making Meetings. Team Decision-Making Meetings training is available through Central California Training Academy and UC Davis Center for Family Focused Practice.

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

Probation will partner with Child Welfare Services on the development of a specialized recruitment for placement resources for teens. Probation will work with Parent Connection to develop parenting classes specific to the needs of Probation families. Probation will partner with Family Resource Centers throughout San Luis Obispo County to offer access to video conferencing for Probation families.

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

None identified.

Outcome/Systemic Factor:

C4.3 No More than Two Placements within 24 Months

This measure computes the percentage of children with two or fewer placements who have been in foster care for 24 months or more. Time in care is based on the latest date of removal from the home. The denominator is the total number of children who have been in care for 24 months or more; the numerator is the count of these children with two or fewer placements.

County's Current Performance:

As of December 2010, of the 118 children served in foster care during the year that were in foster care for at least 24 months, 48 children (40.7%) had two or fewer placement settings. While Child Welfare Services is still striving to meet the federal standard, there has been ongoing improvement since December 2007, when 30.8% of children had two or fewer placement settings. As of June 2011, Child Welfare Services current performance was 40.6%.

Improvement Goal 1.0

Child Welfare Services will expand recruitment efforts to augment the number of Foster Homes in targeted communities in order to increase the number of children with two or fewer placements from 40.6% to 42% over the next 3 years.

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| Strategy 1. 1 Refine and expand the Atascadero School Placement Empowerment Network (ASPEN). | <input type="checkbox"/> | CAPIT | Strategy Rationale The ASPEN program develops and maintains a network of pre-approved foster homes within school communities so that placements familiar to youth are available should the need for foster placement arise. |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | CBCAP | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | PSSF | |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | N/A | |

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| Milestone | 1.1.1 Collaborate with the Atascadero School District to create a list of potential foster homes. | Timeframe | 11/2011-05/2012 | Assigned to | Staff Development |
| | 1.1.2 Develop emergency placement contact list for each school in the Atascadero School District. | | 06/2012-01/2013 | | Staff Development |
| | 1.1.3 Monitor progress of potential foster homes and emergency placement list through the Department of Social Services' Foster Home Administration database. | | 12/2011-02/2013 | | Staff Development |
| | 1.1.4 Develop standardized ASPEN process to utilize in other school districts. | | 09/2012-02/2013 | | Staff Development |

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| 1.1.5 Collaborate with the Paso Robles School District to create a list of potential foster homes. | 03/2013-02/2014 | Staff Development |
| 1.1.6 Develop emergency placement contact list for each school in Paso Robles School District. | 03/2014-09/2014 | Staff Development |
| 1.1.7 Monitor progress of potential Paso Robles foster homes and emergency placement list through the Department of Social Services' Foster Home Administration database. | 09/2013-12/2014 | Staff Development |

Improvement Goal 2.0

San Luis Obispo County will provide education, resource, and mentoring support to all placement homes to prevent disruption, thereby increasing the number of children with two or fewer placements from 40.7% to 42% over the next 3 years.

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| Strategy 2. 1 Promote stabilization of placements by strengthening the Quality Parenting Project. | <input type="checkbox"/> | CAPIT | Strategy Rationale The goal of the Quality Parenting Project is to establish a collaborative team of foster parents, social workers, birth parents, and Child Welfare Services staff to create strong foundations for every placement. |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | CBCAP | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | PSSF | |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | N/A | |

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| Milestone | 2.1.1 Build strong relationships between caregivers, youth, birth parents, and Child Welfare Services staff utilizing the Placement Transition Plan and About Your Child Process. | Timeframe | 11/2011-10/2012 | Assigned to | Child Welfare Services staff Staff Development |
| | 2.1.2 Monitor the use of the About Your Child process through the Child Location database on a monthly basis. | | Ongoing | | Staff Development |
| | 2.1.3 Monitor Placement Transition Plan by reviewing court reports to ensure the process is included in each report. This will be accomplished by reviewing 100% of court reports for first month, 50% for the second month, and 25% the third and fourth months to determine trends. | | Ongoing | | Staff Development |

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| | <p>2.1.4 Create a peer mentoring program with current Foster Parents to provide support to all placement homes.</p> <p>2.1.5 Train caregivers, mentors, and Child Welfare Services staff on peer mentoring program.</p> <p>2.1.6 Implement the peer mentoring program.</p> <p>2.1.7 Evaluate the peer mentoring program by utilizing a survey that will be sent at 6 months and 12 months after implementation.</p> | | <p>11/2012-05/2013</p> <p>06/2013-08/2013</p> <p>09/2013-12/2013</p> <p>01/2014-12/2014</p> | | <p>Staff Development</p> <p>Staff Development</p> <p>Staff Development</p> <p>Staff Development</p> | |
| <p>Strategy 2. 2 Better support relative and Non-Relative Extended Family Member placements with training and resources.</p> | | <input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT <input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP <input type="checkbox"/> PSSF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A | <p>Strategy Rationale Offering resources to caregivers will build on the caregivers' knowledge and skills that are necessary to provide better care for the youth in their home.</p> | | | |
| Milestone | <p>2.2.1 Update and distribute the orientation booklet for caregivers to reflect revised regulations and include in the Relative/Non-Relative Extended Family Member placement packet.</p> | Timeframe | <p>11/2011-03/2012</p> | Assigned to | <p>Staff Development Child Welfare Services staff</p> | |
| | <p>2.2.2 Collaborate with community partners to develop an orientation to offer to relatives and Non-Relative Extended Family Members.</p> | | <p>04/2012-12/2012</p> | | <p>Staff Development Community partners</p> | |
| | <p>2.2.3 Collaborate with community partners to develop a caregiver training specific to the needs of relatives and Non-Relative Extended Family Members.</p> | | <p>04/2012-12/2012</p> | | <p>Staff Development Community partners</p> | |
| | <p>2.2.4 Train staff on new orientation booklet, caregiver training, and orientations that will be offered to relatives and non-related extended family members.</p> | | <p>01/2013-03/2013</p> | | <p>Staff Development</p> | |
| | <p>2.2.5 Implement orientations and caregiver trainings offered to relatives and non-related extended family members.</p> | | <p>04/2013-06/2013</p> | | <p>Child Welfare Services staff Community partners</p> | |

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| <p>2.2.6 Create a resource list to offer to relative and non-related extended family members.</p> | <p>11/2012-05/2013</p> | <p>Staff Development Child Welfare Services staff</p> |
| <p>2.2.7 Train staff on providing resource list to caregivers.</p> | <p>06/2013-08/2013</p> | <p>Staff Development</p> |
| <p>2.2.8 Develop an assessment to be used 3 months after placement to identify any needed support and resources caregivers may need specific to the child in their care.</p> | <p>09/2013-02/2014</p> | <p>Staff Development Child Welfare Services staff</p> |
| <p>2.2.9 Train staff on 3 month assessment tool.</p> | <p>03/2014-05/2014</p> | <p>Staff Development</p> |
| <p>2.2.10 Evaluate effectiveness of training, 3 month assessment tool, and resources utilizing input from caregivers via surveys and training feedback questionnaires.</p> | <p>05/2013-12/2014</p> | <p>Staff Development</p> |

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

Need Children's Research Center to allow Child Welfare Services to alter the Structured Decision Making for Substitute Care Providers assessment schedule from home approval to 3 months post placement for Relative and Non-Relative Extended Family Member homes.

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

Staff training will be needed to support the Placement Transition Plan and About Your Child process. Staff training will be provided on new orientation booklet, caregiver training, 3 month assessment tool and resource list.

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

Child Welfare Services will collaborate with community partners to develop a set schedule of orientation and caregiver training times and locations to support to relative and Non-Relative Extended Family Members. Child Welfare Services will work with the Atascadero and Paso Robles school districts to expand the Atascadero School Placement Empowerment Network (ASPEN) program. Child Welfare Services will work with identified Foster Parent mentors to participate peer mentoring program.

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

None identified.