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California's Child and Family Services Review
System Improvement Plan

County:	Stanislaus County
Responsible County Child Welfare Agency:	Adult Child and Family Division - CSA
Period of Plan:	January 2010 - January 2014
Period of Outcomes Data:	Quarter ending: October 2012
Date Submitted:	

County Contact Person for County System Improvement Plan

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Submitted by each agency for the children under its care

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Board of Supervisors (BOS) Approval

BOS Approval Date:	N/A
Name:	N/A
Signature:	N/A

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Stanislaus County
SIP Progress Report
9-20-13

I. Stakeholder Participation

Stanislaus County partners closely with all of its stakeholders to ensure a collaborative approach to system improvement. Outcomes and progress are communicated via the Child Abuse Prevention Counsel and Self Evaluation meetings. Due to the significant budget cuts and staffing reductions the Self Evaluation team had been suspended in 2010. During this past fiscal year, the Self Evaluation team began to reform and participation will continue to be sought from partners and stakeholders.

II. Outcome Measures, Goals, Strategies, Action Steps

For *each* Outcome Measure and/or Systemic Factor included in the SIP, please discuss the following:

CHILD WELFARE:
NO RECURRENCE OF MALTREATMENT

A. County's current performance

Stanislaus County's performance on No Recurrence of Maltreatment at the time the System Improvement Plan (SIP) was created in 2010 was 94.2 percent (Quarter 4 2009, 1/1/09 – 12/31/09). During the intervening time, between April 2011 and July 2012, Stanislaus' performance has remained at or near the National Standard of 94.6%; however, our most recent outcome report indicated that our performance has dropped to 92.5% (October 2012, data extract Q2 2012, 7/1/2011 – 12/31/2011). Of the 912 children during that six month interval, only 844 did not have a further substantiated allegation of abuse or neglect in the subsequent 6 months. Our SIP specifically targeted children between 1 – 2 years of age because fewer children in this age group (90.2%) did not experience a recurrence of abuse or neglect. During the most recent time period (7/1/2011 – 12/31/2011), 94.0% of 1 - 2 year olds did not have a further substantiated allegation in the following six months. The age group with the lowest rate of no recurrence was for youth 16 – 17 years of age, with only 86.9% not having a new substantiated allegation.

A contributing factor to our county's performance on all of our outcomes has to do with budget and staffing reductions. Due to a county budget deficit, our division was required to reduce our budget by approximately one-third in the 2008/2009 and 2009/2010 fiscal years. We experienced reductions in force as well as the elimination of non-mandated services such as Families in Partnership (intensive family maintenance), clean and sober living, as well as non-case-carrying positions such as permanency specialists, Team Decision Making (TDM) facilitators and foster parent recruiter trainer.

While our budget situation in child welfare has improved significantly due to state realignment of child welfare funding, we have struggled to reach the prior staffing levels. Although we have many applicants to screen and interview, a large number of them decline the offer and/or resign shortly after starting in order to accept a child welfare position in a county nearer their home. Competition with our peer counties for

Title IVE and other trained social workers has resulted in significant attrition and a struggle to recruit qualified candidates. Our county continues to experience a 5% pay reduction which renders us less competitive with our peer counties who do not either have reductions and/or offer a more competitive wage.

Specific to recurrence of maltreatment, the elimination of Families in Partnership and sober living impacted our ability to serve children and families safely at home. Prior to these reductions, we were serving an average 461 children and their families with family maintenance services (FY 2009/2010). The number of children served per month declined to an average of 350 over the following 2 fiscal years (FY 2010/2011 & 2011/2012). Voluntary maintenance services are not a legal mandate and we were on a "mandates only" service level throughout the county. The budget issues have diminished the availability of substance abuse services available throughout the county, rendering us unable to effectively serve parents with drug addiction while ensure the safe care of their children. Sober living programs which previously thrived in our community were closed or at risk of closure due to our agency's ability to fund these services. Private funding donations have reinstated these services; however, the impact on observed outcomes is still recovering.

B. Strategies and action steps:

1. Review of repeat Maltreatment cases:

A review of repeat maltreatment cases occurs regularly with supervisors and managers to identify any new trends and/or issues for training. At present, we are working on the challenge of serving parents who have repeatedly come to the attention of our agency, who are unwilling or unsuccessful at ameliorating the risks to their children, such as substance abuse, but whom do not put their children in immediate danger such that we can obtain a protective custody warrant for removal. Some are closed unsuccessful after voluntary services and very few ends up in a court action.

As is policy of SDM and our local protocol, high and very high risk substantiated and inconclusive referrals should be open for services. For referrals closed between August and October 2012 (Safe Measures extract 11/14/2012), 50% of high risk substantiated and 64.2% of very high risk substantiated referrals were promoted to a case. During that same time period only 3 high or very high risk inconclusive referrals were promoted, only 13%. Recent review of high and very high risk substantiated referrals not opened for services, indicated that 4 of 5 instances were closed due to the intervention of a family member who obtained temporary guardianship of the children. Although the parent's household remained at high or very high risk, the provision of services was not offered as the children were no longer in the parents care. In other instances, we have been observing a struggle with determining how to serve high and very high risk families with substantiated abuse/neglect, but who are unwilling to participate in voluntary services. Additionally, those families with prior family maintenance and/or family reunification histories, who have come back to the agency's attention but who do not present safety threats that would support a protective custody warrant, pose a particular dilemma to our county. Although we have several court ordered family maintenance families, those almost always follow an initial removal. We very rarely file "not in custody" petitions for court ordered services. In order to address this challenge, our county is in the process of developing guidelines for determining which cases would be appropriate for court ordered family maintenance.

2. Structured Decision Making (SDM):

Stanislaus County began implementing SDM in April 2011. During the fall of 2011, we provided advanced training to our on-going social workers. Simultaneously, we began the process hiring new staffs, which are being trained in SDM via the academy. Many of these staff has yet to receive advanced SDM training as a result. Our goal for SDM was to use the tools to guide our safety and risk decision-making 90% of the time by September 2013. We monitor progress via Safe Measures and periodically discuss our current performance in Supervisor meetings. Our current usage (Safe Measures, average of August, September and October 2012) is:

The use of the required use of SDM tools are as follows:

The Hotline tool (extract 11/14/2012) which is used by the Social Workers receiving telephone calls on child abuse and neglect are being completed at a rate of 98.9%.

The Safety Assessment (July – Sept 2012) which is used by the assigned Emergency Response worker to help determine the safety of the child (ren) in the home at the time of first contact was completed at the rate of 96.7%*. October 2012 data, extracted on 11/14/12 shows a 99.3% Safety Assessment Completion rate. As further data showed, 49.2% of those Safety Assessments were completed on-time, that is, within 48 hours of the first child contact.

The Risk Assessment (July – Sept 2012 data, extract 11/14/2012) which used to help the Social Worker assess the level of risk the child (ren) are in was completed at the rate of 75.9%* (Extract on 11/13/2012). Of Risk Assessment for referrals closed in October 2012 with a finding of substantiated or inconclusive, shows that 80.2% of risk assessments were completed.

The Initial Family Strengths and Needs Assessment (FSNA) (August – September 2012) which is used by the Social Worker to help identify the highest needs for intervention in ongoing services were completed at a rate of 74.4%*. Some of the Initial Family Strengths and Needs Assessments that were not completed were pending or because the case ended. Of those not completed, 10 case plans were created without a FSNA.

The Risk Reassessment (extract 11/13/2012) which is used to help guide the Social Worker in assessing the risk at case plan review and/or reunification was completed at a rate of 61.4%*. When only Reunification Assessments were reviewed, completion rates dropped to 50.3%.

The Family Strengths and Needs Assessment (prior to case plan update, extract 11/13/2012) which assists the Social Worker to identify service objectives that the family can work on to mitigate the risks to the child (ren) in the home was completed at a rate of 51.9%.

The Child Strengths and Needs Assessment (Permanent Placement, extract 11/14/2012) which is the children's version of the FSNA was completed at a rate of 61.6%. The Risk Assessment is expected to be completed within 30 – 60 days before Case Closure (extract 11/13/2012); 84.4% of these Risk Assessments were completed at the appropriate time. The Safety Assessment is expected to be completed within 30 – 60 days before Case Closure (extract 11/13/2012); 76.6% were completed at the appropriate time.

3. Partner with Faith Community:

The faith community continues to collaborate to provide sober living services via a non-profit community agency, Valley Recovery Resources. They are one of a couple of sober living providers in Stanislaus County. The Assistant Director continues to be the key contact with the faith community.

4. Directory of Faith and Community Resources:

Social workers have a number of resource directories available to them on the agency intranet, including the United Way 211. These resources are updated regularly and are available for distribution to the community.

5. Differential Response:

Social workers are completing joint visits with Family Resource Centers for Path 2 Differential Response referrals for 0 – 5 year olds approximately 20.2 % (Business Objects extract 7/1/12 – 9/30/12). At the time of the SIP the focus was on 0 – 5 year olds because DR had been eliminated for older children/youth. Since our local funding was restored for Differential Response in July 2011, Stanislaus has resumed full implementation for all age groups countywide. Joint visits occur for older populations as well, but that impacts the percentage ER workers have time for specific to this younger population. We are in the process of developing a joint Request for Proposal (RFP) with the Children and Families Commission (Prop 10) for an additional 3 years of Family Resource Centers / Differential Response beginning in the 2013/2014 fiscal year.

C. Obstacles and barriers to *future* implementation of a strategy and action step not currently under implementation. Include a brief explanation of any modifications that will be made to address these obstacles and barriers.

1. Motivational Interviewing:

Motivational Interviewing training has been targeted for Stanislaus County Child Welfare, Public Health Nurses, Children's System of Care, and our Community Family Resource Centers staff the 2013/2014 fiscal year to train staff to use this technique to assist in strengthening a parent's motivation and commitment to change.

2. Community Outreach:

The Child Abuse Prevention Committee (CAPC) has prioritized to provide a community awareness campaign known as "The Lisa Project." They are in the process of contracting and raising funds to provide this awareness to Stanislaus County during the month of April 2013. A significant amount of funds will be needed and volunteers to ensure the successful implementation of this effort.

TIMELY REUNIFICATION:

A. County's current performance

In 2010, when our System Improvement Plan was developed, 69.2% of children who exited to reunification did so within 12 months. In the most recent data extract (October 2012, data extract Q2 2012, 7/1/2011 – 6/30/2012), our performance on the federal measure was 57.1%. Analysis of the data by age showed that reunification is best for children under 1 year of age who reunify within 12 months 100%. Our performance is above the National Standard (75.2%) for children 1 – 2 years of age with a performance of 78.3%. We are near the national standard for children 11 – 15 years of age, in that 70.0% of those that exited to reunification did so within 12 months. Our greatest area of challenge to timely reunification on this measure are children 3 – 5 years of age (37.5%), 6-10 years of age (36.4%), and 16 – 17 years of age (42.9%).

Review of the entry cohort which measures reunification within 12 months for children who entered foster care for the first time (October 2012, data extract Q2 2012, 01/01/2011 – 06/30/2011), shows that only 17.2% of these children reunify within 12 months. This is significantly short of the Goal of 48.4%.

Some ancillary information provided by staff has been shared that indicates some tertiary factors that can affect timely reunification including contested hearings, continued hearings, the courts reluctant to terminate reunification, and preference to provide additional services beyond twelve months to ensure reasonable services for parents. A recent meeting with the agency's attorneys indicates that some of the social workers struggle to make the recommendation to terminate services when the parent is visiting and/or has made some measures of effort on their case plan objectives, even if they do not meet the legal standard of significant progress. Additionally, social workers measure significant effort as attending at least some of their case plan services, and without regard to all components and/or actual progress and change in behavior. How widespread or isolated this practice is amongst agency staff is unknown, but given the limited use of SDM tools in reunification reassessments (50.3%), further evaluation of this area, court training, and case reading has commenced.

B. Strategies and action steps

1. Enhance Visitation:

   Stanislaus County has continued a contract with the Children's Crisis Center to coordinate and monitor visitation between children and their families. Visitation is conducted in accordance with the court ordered case plan and typically is schedule for a minimum of 2 hours per week. The leadership of the Children's Crisis Center changed in the past months, so the development of the parent satisfaction survey is still in progress at this time.

2. Partner with Faith Community:
   As indicated previously, the current faith community focus is on the provision of sober living services in Stanislaus County.

C. Obstacles and barriers to future implementation:

1. Motivational Interviewing:

Stanislaus County Adult, Child, and Family Services Division (ACFSD) Management Team has suspended original plan for Safety Oriented Practice (SOP) training and implementation. This was due to the agency being involved in many other system improvement efforts and initiatives; concurrently i.e. Katie A. implementation which will involve some additional training on the Core Practice Model and Trauma Informed Practice and Quality Parent Initiative. This, coupled with a declining human resource to fully implement SOP, influenced the Management Teams decision to hold until such a time that the agency ACFSD's human resources became more stable. The Motivational Interviewing training for Stanislaus County Child Welfare, Public Health Nurses, Children's System of Care, and our Community Family Resource Centers staff in fiscal year 2013/2014 is still planned as it is an important component of Safety Organized Practice.

2. Icebreaker Meetings:

Stanislaus County has more than a dozen Foster Family Agencies (FFA) operating in the county. Stanislaus County continues to work with the various FFAs on consistency and implementation of strategies to improve the quality of care for children. Stanislaus Continues to encourage the county licensed foster parents to communicate with the birth parents. To address the issues related to foster care placement, Stanislaus County will be implementing the Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI) with the assistance of the Youth Law Center, in 2013. It is expected that this will be an important aspect of improving our foster care system.

PLACEMENT STABILITY:

A. County's current performance

Stanislaus County has shown improvement on measures of placement stability since our System Improvement Plan was developed in 2010. According to Quarter 4 2009 Extract, the percentage of children with 2 or fewer placements throughout their entire time in foster care was 85.9% for those in care 8 days to 12 months, 67.7% for those in care 12 to 24 months, and 25.4% for those in care 24 months or more. Our current performance (October 2012, Q2 extract, 07/01/2011 – 06/30/2012) is 87.0% for children in care 8 days to 12 months, 66.9% for those in care 12 to 24 months, and 30.8% for those in care 24 months or more. We are meeting the National Standard for 8 days to 12 months of 86.0%. While our performance on 12- 24 months declined slightly, we had observed a significant decline as of the 2011 update to 63.9%, and our present performance is again better than the National Standard of 65.4%. For children in care 24 months or more, despite our improvement, we continue to fall short of the National Standard of 41.8%. An examination of this measure by age, shows that we are not meeting the measure with respect to children 11 – 15 years of age (15.6% having 2 or fewer placements) or 16 – 17 years of age (9.3% having 2 or fewer placements). In 2009, our data indicated that only 11.5% of children 11-15 years of age had 2 or fewer placements, thus we have improved on this targeted subgroup.

Stanislaus County's performance has continued to improve over the past two years and may be due in part to services such as wraparound. When staffing has stabilized, Stanislaus County intends to reinstate Team Decision Making (TDM) meetings to make removal and placement decisions.

Performance for those children/youth that have been in care for 24 months are more continues to present challenges to the agency. These youth typically suffer the most with emotional and mental health issues, behavioral problems and are difficult to find permanency for. Our

continued effort with our "3015" program, that pairs mental health clinicians with social workers to stabilize children in or at risk of group home placement, is a tremendous asset to our county.

B. Strategies and action steps

1. Wraparound Services:

Wraparound was implemented in January 2011 for child welfare and probation youth. Services are on-going and the effectiveness of the strategy is under analysis. Children/youth placed in a group home are served in a less restrictive setting with wraparound services intended to stabilize their behavior. A number of the adolescent youth have been able to reunify with a parent as a result.

2. Grief and Loss Training:

All children in foster care have experienced tremendous loss. Even when the plan is reunification, and there is a good possibility that they will be returned home, children experience profound loss while they are separated from their parent (s). Research shows that the child's developmental level, the significance of the people separated from, whether the separation is temporary or permanent , and the degree of familiarity of the new surroundings deeply affect the child's understanding of the situation. This understanding will influence how he or she behaves in foster care. Feedback from our community partners and social workers during our self review was that Social Workers needed to be trained on the effects of grief and loss on children in the Child Welfare System. This training and understanding will help social workers work with foster youth and foster parents address the youth's needs as they arise in regards to grief and loss issues. If Social Workers know how to recognize and address these issues, the social worker can be pro-active and support the placement stability with direct intervention or apply services to maintain the placement, therefore, preventing further trauma of multiple placements.

A new series of Grief and Loss training for FFA social workers has been postponed while we hire and train new staff. Our regional training academy works closely with our agency to provide relevant training, such as that included in the SIP; however, prioritization of various topics and the timing of delivery factors into the decision of when to provide the identified sessions. Until this latest round of hiring, all of our internal staff had participated in grief and loss training, so the goal for the SIP was to expand to external partners. Because CWS is hiring so many new workers, that training has been postponed until we have a more stable workforce.

3. Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI):

Stanislaus County has been selected as the next cohort group to implement the Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI). We have completed our preliminary evaluation, have formed the beginnings of our action team, have completed our first site visit to a peer QPI county, and will be

embarking on our first training sessions in January 2013. As we improve the recruitment, training and support of quality foster parents, we hope that our placement stability will continue to improve.

C. Obstacles and Barriers

1. Youth Orientation to Foster Care

During the time since our SIP was created, much time and energy has been spent on the implementation of AB 12 / Extended Foster Care / After 18. The development and implementation of this action plan will depend in the coming year(s) on the status of current efforts and the vision of the youth permanency team.

2. Training on Culture and Placement

This training remains on the list but is on hold at present while other initiatives and training are implemented, such as Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI).

3. Pre-placement Visits for youth in FFA placements

County social workers have made strides in arranging pre-placement visits at every opportunity, including with FFA placements. As staffing stabilizes and social workers carry smaller caseloads, it will be more reasonable to address with the more than a dozen Foster Family Agencies in operation in Stanislaus County.

PERMANENCY THROUGH ADOPTION, GUARDIANSHIP OR LIFE LONG CONNECTION:

A. County's current performance

Per the Quarter 4 2009 data extract, between 1/1/2009 and 12/31/2009 only 18.2% of children in foster care for 24 months or more exited to some form of permanency, less than the National Standard of 29.1%. Presently, 22.5% of children in care 24 months or more exit to permanency (October 2012, Data Extract Q2 2012, 07/01/2011 – 06/30/2011). Though we continue to fall short of the National Standard, our performance has improved since our SIP was created in 2010. For those children/youth in foster care 3 years or more, our current performance indicates that only 41.3% of those emancipating had been in care this long, as compared to our performance of 48.8% when our SIP was established. That is significant progress toward the National Standard of 37.5% on this measure. Finally, our relative placement rates continue to be low with only .3 percent of children's first placement is with a relative, while our point in time outcome shows that on July 1, 2012, 13.5% of children were with a relative placement (October 2012, Data Extract Q2 , July 2012).

Our county is very consistent in identifying concurrent planning alternatives for children when they first enter foster care. It has become part of our culture to talk to our families and caregivers about permanency and to train all of our county licensed foster parents to become concurrent homes as well. Despite our efforts, it can still be a challenge to find families who are willing to make the commitment, especially amongst some of our Foster Family Agency foster homes were sibling groups and older youth are placed.

B. Strategies and action steps

1. Monthly FACT team:

A representative from adoptions attends the F.A.C.T. which is comprised of all of the adoption agencies working in Stanislaus County. A coordinated effort is made to identify a home from within all agencies that would be best match for our difficult to place children.

2. Survey social workers about permanency:

The survey is presently under development, although staffs meeting reports indicate that all forms of permanency are sought.

3. Relative Placement Review:

Presently our relative placement rates are low, with only 4.3 percent of children's first placement is with a relative, while our point in time outcome shows that on July 1, 2012, 13.5% of children were with a relative placement.

In order to address the continuing decline in performance on this measure, management met with staffs to discuss those barriers and factors that contribute to relative placement. There were some concerns about the criminal history of relatives and this was perceived as a potential barrier. Our policy for exemptions was deemed to be unclear and updates are being completed at present. The greatest barrier to relative placement, as reported by staff, was the lack of Team Decision Making (TDM) meetings. TDM was eliminated in the 2010-2011 budget year at the time of reductions in force. Staff reported that the court was more supportive of separating sibling groups when they were with relatives and the plan to do so was developed in a TDM by the family. At present, the social workers have to place large sibling groups with FFAs in order to keep the children together. With the growing caseloads, reinstating TDM has not been a priority until caseloads can be stabilized. Management has designated a position to be the TDM facilitator, but our inability to fully staff has prevented us from moving forward with this position over the past several months.

Other efforts that have been in place to improve placement with relatives has been in regards to our youth permanency database. Our Peer Quality Case Review (PQCR) indicated that staff were not universally entering data into the permanency database, nor consulting it when the status of relatives is unknown. There was an assumption that the prior social worker would have found any available relatives and further research at placement disruption over the life of the case did not occur. We have made significant upgrades to the database to make it more user-friendly, have trained all of our staff again on the database and have co-located our Family Finding worker in the Family Reunification units.

C. Obstacles and Barriers to future goals:
None are pending.

PROBATION
PLACEMENT STABILITY:

A. County's current performance

The Probation Department collaborated with Child Welfare Services (CWS) community stake holders, and internal staff to conduct the Self Improvement Plan. (SIP) This included participation in outcomes meetings with CWS staff and focus groups with staff and community stakeholders. This process started in the fall of 2009 when the Probation Department participated in the Peer Quality Case Review (PQCR) and then the County Self Assessment (CSA) in the spring of 2010. Placement stability has been identified as the Probation Department's focus area due to the number of placement changes experienced by children placed through the Probation Department. A review of the research literature indicates that placement's stability is greatly affected by the type of placement. (i.e. matching the minors needs) and the number of placement settings experienced. Based on the findings of the PQCR and CSA, there is a need to improve upon the methods in which minor's are being properly, initially and when applicable, subsequently placed. During the PQCR and CSA, it was evident that the probation cases indicated a theme of utilizing case management and documentation of monthly visits, contact with minor's and follow up with mental health and behavioral health professionals. Probation Officers continue to regularly review case plans with youth and receive their feedback. Additionally, low caseloads allowed officers to maintain contact with group homes and provide them with updated health and education information. However, it was also found in the areas of youth assessment and placement matching that a validated assessment tool was not utilized in making initial or subsequent placement decisions. Furthermore, even though case documentation may be up to date, the anecdotal information or experiences probation officers have with minors is sometimes lost when cases are transferred between officers unless they are clearly noted in the file.

From the 2010-2011 FY to the 2011-2012 FY we experienced a 45.83% increase in the number of minors ordered into out-of-home placement. Our average caseload size went from an average of 24 minors per case load to 35 minors per caseload at the end of FY 2012. Although the average case load size has increased, the department has maintained the same number of staffing from FY 2010-2011 to FY 2011-2012, of three placement officers assigned. The increase of minors ordered into out-of-home placement has been identified as being due to a combination of a change in juvenile judges in the Probation Department from one judge to two and their increasing use of out of state placements. The department currently utilizes five out of state placement facilities and has 18 minors placed in these respective facilities. Additionally, the lack of other variable supervision options at a lower level, coupled with the limited ability to utilize the Department of Juvenile Justice for a number of high risk supervision cases has resulted in an increase of minors being sent into out-of-state placements.

The increase of numbers of placement minors has had an impact on the placement officer's ability to match minors with available placements and the ability to increase family engagement for reunification. Officers continue their due diligence in attempting to match minors to proper placements; however, as the placement numbers continue to increase this goal can sometimes be at odds with the increasing custody numbers. Officers continue to meet their required monthly contacts and update their health and education information as required which is documented in the Probation Departments web based Integrated Criminal Justice System (ICJIS-PB) program.

In 2011 the new requirement to enter data into the CWS/CMS system took place requiring placement officers to adjust their workloads and schedules for this increasing demand on their time. This increasing data entry coupled with increased numbers of placement minors and yet same number of placement officers has prevented their ability to maintain an up to date CWS/CMS system. Additionally, for FY 2011-2012, the placement unit has continued to experience staffing changes. While there are still only three placement officers, two officers are new to the unit, one with eight months experience and the other with one month in unit. The unit supervisor is also new to the assignment, having only been in the assignment for four months. The two staff members as well as the unit supervisor are scheduled to attend Placement Officer Core training in early 2013. Due to staff the staffing change over, additional CWS/CMS training was provided in July 2012; however, subsequent training will need to be conducted to train incoming staff.

Continued research throughout the 2011-2012 FY again yielded no validated placement assessment/matching tool that existed to assist in helping officers match minor's with appropriate placements. The website www.cacfs.org was identified as an online matching system allowing the user to select characteristics of a minor (i.e. age, gender, 602/300 WIC, etc.) and type of placement (i.e. RCL, sex offender, arson, drug treatment, etc.) which then generated a list of potential placements for the minor. Officers were then required to follow up with contacting the agency and making the required referral if appropriate.

This site continues to be user driven and the results are based on those placement facilities utilizing their respective vacancies. While this site matches the needs of the minors to the appropriate treatment facility it appears further evaluation of this sites usefulness needs to be conducted.

In July 2011, the Probation Department received training and began implementing the use of the Juvenile Assessment and Intervention System (JAIS). JAIS is a comprehensive risk-and-needs assessment and intervention planning system designed to improve outcomes for juvenile offenders in both institutional and community programs. The JAIS has three components: a risk instrument, a needs assessment and a supervision classification system. JAIS is used to gain insight into each youth's involvement with the juvenile justice system, family history, and interpersonal relationships, outside educational experiences, attitudes, and perceptions through their own voices. Assessment responses are automated into the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) system, which produces a profile of a juvenile's needs, risk of re-offending, and intervention priorities. For each individual, the system identifies the most appropriate treatment interventions. JAIS has been validated for use in probation and juvenile justice facilities and is currently used in several other jurisdictions as an assessment and planning tool. The Probation Officer is able to utilize the assessment reports when developing the minor's case plan and establishing services and the officer can address the identified needs incorporating the strengths when possible. Initially this assessment has been completed on a minor when booked into Juvenile Hall by the department's Intake and Investigations unit comprised of approximately five Probation Officers. The department has recently participated in a JAIS train the trainer program and will be training the entire Juvenile Division Probation Officers on conducting the JAIS assessment.

Upon the completion of training the Probation Officers assigned to the Placement and Special Services Unit will use the JAIS output reports as a guide to identify the minor's basic criminogenic strengths and needs and determine which specific placement program can address those needs. The officer will be able to track successes and unsuccessful placements, evaluate the results and report out.

Additionally, the Probation Officer will be able to utilize the output reports from the JAIS assessment tool, plug in the appropriate needs to the currently identified placement matching website, www.cacfs.org which may provide additional potential placement options.

From FY 2011-2012 caseloads in the placement unit have increased by 45.83%. This continues to impact officer's ability to increase family engagement while meeting the required monthly contacts and data entry into state and local database systems. Last fiscal year we were able to begin utilizing the video conference hardware/software with families to increase family contacts with minors in placements; however, because of placement caseload sizes their ability to fully engage the families with the video conferencing is limited. It is believed continued use and monitoring of this engagement process needs to be conducted to evaluate its impact on placement stability. Additionally in order to determine the benefits to this technology the department will develop a survey on the benefits of the video conferencing ability and provide the survey to families engaging in the service. Families will be encouraged to fill out the survey upon the completion of their video conference. Throughout the fiscal year data from the survey will be gathered, evaluated and reported out.

III. Other Successes/Promising Practices

Please describe any other successes or promising practices encountered during the system improvement process. Describe what's working well within CWS/Probation and briefly discuss any promising practices that have led to consistently positive performance within specific outcome measures.

Child Welfare:

There are many things which are working well in Stanislaus County. We continue to have strong partnerships between public and private agencies, a strong county culture of community responsibility as evidenced by our successful Differential Response program, and a wealth of services for children and families.

Stanislaus County Child Welfare will be implementing Quality Parenting Initiative this year it is anticipated that this work will improve our recruitment, training and retention of quality foster parents which will lead to improved placement stability and permanency for youth in foster care.

IV. Other Outcome Measures Not Meeting State and/or National Standards

None.

V. Link to the Program Improvement Plan

Stanislaus County is performing well on 2 of 3 placement stability measures which improve the overall statewide performance on the Performance Improvement Plan.

VI. SIP Chart

Please attach a copy of the SIP Chart. If additional goals and/or strategies and action steps have been added, please include them in revised SIP Chart.

2010 – 2015 SIP Chart

Priority Outcome Measure or Systemic Factor: No Recurrence of Maltreatment – CWS
National Standard: 94.6%
Current Performance: According to the October 2012 Quarterly Data Report (Quarter 2 of 2012), of the 912 children who were victims of abuse or neglect between 07/01/2011 and 12/31/2011, 844 were not victims of another substantiated allegation of abuse or neglect within the following 6 months. That is a 92.5% rate of no recurrence.
Target Improvement Goal: The county will improve its performance on this measure from 92.5% to 94.6%, resulting in 28 more children who are not victims of additional abuse or neglect.

Priority Outcome Measure or Systemic Factor:
Placement Stability (C4.3 At least 24 months in Care) – CWS
National Standard: 41.8%
Current Performance: According to the October 2012 Quarterly Data Report (Quarter 2 of 2012), of the 172 children who were in foster care 24 or more months between 07/01/2011 and 06/30/2012, 53 experience two or fewer placements during the entire time in care. That is a 30.8% rate of placement stability.
Target Improvement Goal: The county will improve its performance on this measure from 30.8% to 33.8%, resulting in 5 more children who experience placement stability.

Priority Outcome Measure or Systemic Factor: Timely Reunification – CWS
National Standard: 75.2%
Current Performance: According to the October 2012 Quarterly Data Report (Quarter 2 of 2012), of the 84 children who exited foster care to reunification between 07/01/2011 and 06/30/2012, 48 reunified within 12 months of entering foster care. That is a 57.1% rate of timely reunification.
Target Improvement Goal: The county will improve its performance on this measure from 57.1% to 63.1%, resulting in 3 more children who exit to reunification within 12 months of entering foster care.

Priority Outcome Measure or Systemic Factor: Permanency through Adoption, Guardianship or Life Long Connection – Exits to Permanency (24 months in care) CWS
National Standard: 29.1%
Current Performance: According to the October 2012 Quarterly Data Report (Quarter 2 of 2012), of the 102 children who were in foster care 24 months or more between 07/01/2011 and 06031/2012, 23 exited to some form of permanency. That is a 22.5% rate of permanency.
Target Improvement Goal: The county will improve its performance on this measure from 22.5% to 29.5%, resulting in 7 more children exited to some form of permanency of those who have been in foster care 24 months or more.

Priority Outcome Measure or Systemic Factor:
Placement Stability - PROBATION
National Standard: 41.8%
Current Performance: According to UC Berkeley CWS/CMS 2012 Quarter 2 Extract, 44.4% of youth in foster care 24 months or more have two or fewer placements, which exceed the National Standard.
Target Improvement Goal: Continue at or above National Standard.

Strategy 1 Management review of repeat maltreatment cases for children 1 – 2 years of age. - CWS	☐ CAPIT ☐ CBCAP ☐ PSSF ☒ N/A	**Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s):** No Recurrence of Maltreatment
Action Steps:	**Timeframe:**	**Person Responsible:**
A. Complete case analysis of specific cases (children 1 – 2 years of age) that are victims of repeat maltreatment.	**COMPLETED**	Management Team
B. Make recommendations regarding training, policies or service gaps that might have prevented these recurrences of maltreatment.	**COMPLETED**	Management Team
C. Update policies and procedures & schedule recommended training.	**COMPLETED**	Management Team
D. Monitor Outcomes of repeat maltreatment quarterly, including case reading of instances of repeat maltreatment, and high/very high risk SDM cases that are not opened for services.	Quarterly Dec 2011 - 2014	Management & Supervisor Teams
E. Update Policies & Procedures, schedule training and implement other changes as recommended according to the on-going analysis.	Quarterly Dec 2012 - 2014	Management & Supervisors

Strategy 2 Motivational Interviewing	☐ CAPIT ☐ CBCAP ☐ PSSF ☒ N/A	**Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s):** Recurrence of Maltreatment Timely Reunification
Action Steps:	**Timeframe:**	**Person Responsible:**
A. Schedule Motivational Interviewing Training for Staff	~~**February 2013**~~ **February 2014**	Management
B. Train Social Workers, Public Health Nurses, and Family Resource Center outreach workers in Motivational Interviewing.	**February 2014**	Management
C. Update/create agency policies that reflect the value and practice if motivational interviewing.	**March 2014**	Management/Staff Developer
D. Monitor Outcomes of repeat maltreatment quarterly, including case reading of instances of repeat maltreatment.	**Quarterly December 2014**	Management and Supervisor Teams
E. Monitor Outcome of timeliness to reunification bi-annually with the use of the CMS Safe Measures and the CA child welfare indicators project.	**Biannually through December 2014**	Systems Improvement Manager

Strategy 3 Structured Decision Making (SDM) tools to make risk and safety decisions at 90% (by Sept 2013). - CWS	☐ CAPIT ☐ CBCAP ☐ PSSF ☒ N/A	**Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s):** Recurrence of Maltreatment Timely Reunification Exits to Permanency
Action Steps:	**Timeframe:**	**Person Responsible:**
A. Ensure that all staff is trained in SDM, via the training academy and periodic advanced SDM sessions.	**On-going 2012 – 2014**	Training Academy Management
B. Monitor implementation of SDM via case reading and Safe Measures reports to ensure that safety and risk are driving decision making.	**Monthly through January 2015**	Supervisors and Management

Strategy 4 Collaborate with faith and non-profit community to provide supportive services. Maintain directory of services available for families. - CWS	☐ **CAPIT** ☐ **CBCAP** ☐ **PSSF** ☒ **N/A**	**Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s):** Recurrence of Maltreatment Timely Reunification
Action Steps:	**Timeframe:**	**Person Responsible:**
A. Create a directory of Faith and other Community Partners and the resources/supports that they can provide.	September 2012 **COMPLETED**	Management Team
B. Outreach to Family Resource Centers, Health Services Agency and other community partners to gather resource information.	**Monthly through January 2015**	Management Team
C. Train all new staff on resource & referral information as well as United Ways 211 site.	**On-going through January 2015**	Supervisors
D. Survey Staff Annually about resource availability and awareness.	**2013 & 2014**	Data Analyst Researcher

Strategy 5 For children 0 – 5, whose SDM intake assessment indicates that a 10 day referral is appropriate, increase the percentage that are referred for a Path 2 joint response with Family Resource Centers from 20.2% to 40%. - CWS	☐ **CAPIT** ☐ **CBCAP** ☐ **PSSF** ☒ **N/A**	**Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s):** Recurrence of Maltreatment
Action Steps:	**Timeframe:**	**Person Responsible:**
A. Supervisors will monitor for joint visit appropriateness and compliance while reviewing referrals.	**Ongoing through January 2015**	Emergency Response Supervisors
B. Business Objects reports quarterly to Supervisors and Manager of ER to monitor continued partnership with FRCs via joint visits. Quarterly Safe Measures reports of recurrence of maltreatment results with a subset by age.	**Quarterly through January 2015**	Data Analyst/Researcher System Improvement Manager

Strategy 6 Child Abuse Prevention Committee (CAPC) will outreach to community regarding abuse and neglect prevention, including Differential Response for 6 – 17 year olds and homeless teens. - CWS	☐ **CAPIT** ☐ **CBCAP** ☐ **PSSF** ☒ **N/A**	**Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s):** Recurrence of Maltreatment
Action Steps:	**Timeframe:**	**Person Responsible:**
A. Child Abuse Prevention Committee (CAPC) will identify areas of need to target outreach efforts, **eg. "The Lisa Project"**	COMPLETED 2012	Assistant Director CAPC Coordinator CAPC chair
B. Organize the community awareness effort, the Lisa Project for April 2013.	**April 2013**	CAPC Coordinator

Strategy 7 Implement Icebreaker meetings between birth and foster parents. - CWS	☐ **CAPIT** ☐ **CBCAP** ☐ **PSSF** ☒ **N/A**	**Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s):** Placement Stability Timely Reunification
Action Steps:	**Timeframe:**	**Person Responsible:**
A. Update current Icebreaker Policy	~~March 2013~~ July 2013	Court / Reunification Managers & Supervisors
B. Train social workers and FFAs on Icebreaker philosophy and procedure.	~~April 2013~~ August 2013	Managers & Supervisors
C. Social workers from CSA and FFAs will implement Icebreaker meetings between birth parents and substitute caregivers.	~~June 2013~~ September 2013	Agency & FFA Social Workers
D. Monitor the effectiveness of Icebreaker meetings with surveys of parents, caregivers and social workers.	~~September 2013~~ December 2013	System Improvement Manager

Strategy 8 Enhanced parent/child visitation - CWS	☐ CAPIT ☐ CBCAP ☐ PSSF ☒ N/A	**Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s):** Timely Reunification

Action Steps:	**Timeframe:**	**Person Responsible:**
A. Survey parents at least annually regarding their satisfaction with visitation. Review surveys and recommendations for modification.	**January 2013, 2014**	Children's Crisis Center Management (court / FR)

Strategy 9 Wraparound Services – CWS & PROBATION	☐ CAPIT ☐ CBCAP ☐ PSSF ☐ N/A	**Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s):** Placement Stability

Action Steps:	**Timeframe:**	**Person Responsible:**
A. The Wraparound Committee will monitor the effectiveness of the services at the regular meetings and recommend changes to policies and procedures as needed.	**Ongoing through January 2015**	Wraparound Committee

Strategy 10 Grief and Loss Training for New Staff and FFAs - CWS	☐ CAPIT ☐ CBCAP ☐ PSSF ☒ N/A	**Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s):** Placement Stability
Action Steps:	**Timeframe:**	**Person Responsible:**
A. Provide Training to New County Social Workers & Include FFA social workers in training opportunities	**December 2013**	Training Academy Management Team

Strategy 11 Explore models of orientation/training for youth entering foster care to facilitate their adjustment / transition to care. - CWS **ON HOLD: Due to Extended Foster Care (AB12) implementation and the elimination of ILP Interviewer positions (youth mentors) this has not moved forward. Will be reviewed with Youth Advisory Council for next steps and an appropriate timeline for implementation.**	☐ **CAPIT** ☐ **CBCAP** ☐ **PSSF** ☒ **N/A**	**Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s):** Placement Stability

Action Steps:	**Timeframe:**	**Person Responsible:**
A. Research models of youth orientation to foster care	~~March 2013~~ **June 2014**	Youth Advisory Council
B. Review models and makes recommendations for implementation including resourcing the effort.	**June 2014**	Manager Supervisor Youth Advisory Council
C. Test recommended model contingent upon approval and resource availability.	**September 2014**	Youth Advisory Council

Strategy 12 Training on the impact of culture on placement - CWS	☐ CAPIT ☐ CBCAP ☐ PSSF ☒ N/A	**Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s):** Placement Stability
Action Steps:	**Timeframe:**	**Person Responsible:**
A. Provide training on culture and the impact on placement.	**January 2014**	Regional Training Academy
B. Make needed changes to policies & procedures as indicated by this training.	**June 2014**	Management Team

Strategy 13 Partner with FFAs to coordinate and facilitate pre-placement visits for children/youth prior to a placement change. - CWS	☐ **CAPIT** ☐ **CBCAP** ☐ **PSSF** ☒ **N/A**	**Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s):** Placement Stability
Action Steps:	**Timeframe:**	**Person Responsible:**
A. Using the Plan.Do.Study.Act (PDSA) methodology, test out possible strategies of pre-placement visits with FFAs.	June 2013	FFA & County Social Workers Supervisors
B. Develop policies & procedures or suggested practice guides to inform staff of successful strategies for pre-placement visits.	2013	Manager Supervisors FFAs
C. Train social workers on procedures.	**January 2014**	Manager Supervisors FFAs
D. Survey Social workers on the effectiveness of training as it relates to social work practice.	**March 2014**	System Improvement Manager

Strategy 14 Permanent homes will be identified for difficult to place children in care through partnership with FFAs through the monthly FACT team meeting. - CWS	☐ **CAPIT** ☐ **CBCAP** ☐ **PSSF** ☒ **N/A**	**Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s):** Permanency
Action Steps:	**Timeframe:**	**Person Responsible:**
A. Monitor permanency data at least quarterly, using Berkeley, Safe Measures & Business Objects to ensure that permanent homes are identified for children in foster care.	Quarterly through **January 2015**	Data Analyst Researcher System Improvement Manager

Strategy 1S ~~Guardianship as a permanent plan.~~ **CHANGE: Ensure social workers are educated about permanency options for children of all ages, including adoption, guardianship & life long connections.** - CWS	☐ CAPIT ☐ CBCAP ☐ PSSF ☒ N/A	**Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s):** Exits to Permanency
Action Steps:	**Timeframe:**	**Person Responsible:**
A. Survey social workers annually about practices and values related to permanency.	**August 2013 & 2014**	Data Analyst / Researcher System Improvement Manager
B. Provide training and education about permanency as indicated from survey information.	**Ongoing through January 2015**	Management Team

Strategy 16 Relative Placement workgroup - CWS	☐ **CAPIT** ☐ **CBCAP** ☐ **PSSF** ☒ **N/A**	**Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s):** Relative Placement Rates
Action Steps:	**Timeframe:**	**Person Responsible:**
A. Review relative placement data & strategies for improvement quarterly in Supervisor and staff meetings.	**Quarterly through January 2015**	System Improvement Manager Supervisors
B. Brainstorm barriers and provide needed policy modifications/clarifications and/or training.	**Quarterly through January 2015**	Managers Supervisors

Strategy 17 Quality Parenting Initiative – CWS NEW	☐ CAPIT ☐ CBCAP ☐ PSSF ☒ N/A	Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s): Placement Stability Exits to Permanency Foster Home Licensing

Action Steps:	Timeframe:	Person Responsible:
A. Complete Self Assessment and request participation in QPI Initiative.	**COMPLETED** August 2012	Management Team
B. Form a QPI Implementation team and convene monthly	**January 2013**	System Improvement Manager Licensing Supervisor Foster Parent Recruiter
C. Participate in QPI Training & Consultations Sessions with Youth Law Center and QPI experts.	Commencing January 2013 Ongoing through **January 2015**	System Improvement Manager Licensing Supervisor Foster Parent Recruiter
D. Update policies & procedures, training or agency practices per the recommendations of the QPI implementation team.	**Ongoing through January 2015**	System Improvement Manager Licensing Supervisor Foster Parent Recruiter
E. Monitor of effectiveness of QPI efforts via data (eg. number of licensed homes) and survey information from foster parents and social workers.	**Annually through January 2015**	System Improvement Manager Licensing Supervisor Foster Parent Recruiter

Strategy 18 Placement Matching tool - PROBATION	☐ CAPIT ☐ CBCAP ☐ PSSF ☒ N/A	**Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s):** Placement Stability

Action Steps:	**Timeframe:**	**Person Responsible:**
A. Key Participants Convene	October 2010-Completed	Juvenile Division Director Placement Supervisor
B. Research and identify tools currently utilized to match minors with placements. Research will continue through remainder of SIP period.	January 2011-Completed ~~Extend to September 2013~~ Extend to August 2014	Placement Supervisor Placement Unit Deputy Probation Officers
C. ~~Train staff on matching tool and implement.~~ Train staff on JAIS assessment tool and implement.	~~February 2011-Completed~~ March 2013	Placement Supervisor Placement
D. Utilize JAIS assessment tool output reports with matching minors needs and appropriate placements	June 2013	Placement Supervisor Placement Unit Deputy Probation Officers
E. Compare/track placements in order to gather data and evaluate success/stability of placement	March 2014 June 2014-evaluate data from previous 15 months. August 2014-report back on trends, findings for the 15 months of data collected	Placement Supervisor

Strategy 8.1 Group Home/FFA home evaluation tool – PROBATION **UPDATE: Modified to be combined into Strategy 17**	☐ **CAPIT** ☐ **CBCAP** ☐ **PSSF** ☒ **N/A**	**Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s):** Placement Stability	
Action Steps:	**Timeframe:**		**Person Responsible:**

Strategy 19 Video case conferencing for improved family contact - PROBATION	☐ CAPIT ☐ CBCAP ☐ PSSF ☒ N/A	**Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s):** Placement Stability Timely Reunification

Action Steps:	**Timeframe:**	**Person Responsible:**
A. Key Participants Convene	October 2010-Completed	Juvenile Division Director Placement
B. Identify ways to increase family participation in the development of case plans and/or in developing a concurrent plan.	November 2010-Completed	Placement Supervisor Unit Deputy
C. Identify baseline engagement data. Implement family engagement plan. We have sent staff to concurrent plan development courses and have created a family video conference room to be used for families to video conference with minors in placement if the family is unable to go to the minor's placement.	Extend to January 2012-Completed	Placement Supervisor Unit Deputy Probation Officers
D. Develop a survey to provide to parents utilizing the video case conferencing technology to determine the needs to increase parental engagement.	March 2013	Placement Supervisor
E. Gather/evaluate responses from survey	March 2014	Placement Supervisor
F. Report findings from the survey	June 2014	Placement Supervisor