CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

CALIFORNIA'S TITLE IV-B CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES PLAN

APSR: ANNUAL PROGRESS AND SERVICES REPORT

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744 P Street • MS 8-12-91• Sacramento, CA 95814

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INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

OVERVIEW

California's Child Welfare Services System (CWS) is the mechanism to assure the health, safety, and well-being of children at risk of abuse and/or neglect. To the extent possible, CWS agencies work to provide services to both children in out-of-home placements as well as those who are at risk of being removed from their homes in order to safely and permanently remain in the home with family members. The state's foster care population and the CWS system is the largest and most complicated system in the nation, representing approximately 15 percent of the national caseload and over double the caseload of three of the next largest states. California is also uniquely one of a small number of states that includes probation youth in its child welfare population. Through CWS, which receives a combination of federal, state, and county funding, children and families receive a wide range of programs, preventative services and support with the goal of ensuring that every child lives in a safe, stable, permanent home nurtured by healthy families and strong communities.

The development and implementation of the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) has been under an environment where the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and its partner agencies continue to struggle with an unprecedented and crippling fiscal crisis. The State Fiscal Year (FY) 2009-10 state budget included an $80 million reduction to local assistance for child welfare services, while 2011 began after the longest budget stalemate in the history of California and the current budget deficit of more than $25 billion. The Governor's currently proposed budget is likely to result in additional reductions, and counties continue to struggle to maintain current programs that are directly related to outcomes. The Governor and the state legislature are also currently considering a reorganization of state and local responsibilities for child welfare services.

More specifically, the 2011 budget calls for a vast and historic realignment of government services in California that includes a budget proposal for FY 2011-12 to realign the state general fund share and programmatic responsibility for many child welfare services from the state to the county level. This monumental task requires considerable planning to ensure the best outcomes for vulnerable children and their families. Because of the magnitude of these changes, the state is still in the process of assessing the impact that realignment will have on programs and services for children and families involved with CWS. Thus, this report is limited in providing specific information on the state's plans for 2012.

However, California's commitment to improving child welfare is unwavering, even in a time of uncertainty, when fiscal and human resources are strained, and despite the inability to fill the high rate of vacancies. It cannot be overstated that the fiscal crisis poses critical challenges to CWS and the various organizations commissioned to provide vital resources needed for our children, youth, and families who rely on CWS support.

As the most populous state in the country with nearly 9.5 million children, California is among the most linguistically diverse regions in the world, has the largest minority population in the country, and includes 106 federally recognized Indian tribes and an estimated 69 non-federally recognized tribes. The range of diversity within the state is immense and there are many

challenges inherent in the complexity of California's Child Welfare System; however, the strength of this system can be found within its 58 counties, each governed by a county board of supervisors. Each county is responsible for administering a vast array of child welfare services and programs to meet the needs of their local communities. The counties organize and operate their own program of child protection based on local needs while complying with state and federal regulations. Therefore, counties are the primary governmental entities that interact with children and families when addressing issues of child abuse and neglect.

This 2011 Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR) highlights progress made since the June 30, 2010 APSR, and is the second year of the 5-year CFSP for Federal Fiscal Years (FFYs) 2010 through 2014. California's Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) Program Improvement Plan (PIP) of June 30, 2011, marked the end of California's second PIP. Despite the dire fiscal environment, California continues to stand at the forefront of child welfare with the passage of Assembly Bill (AB) 12, landmark legislation that extends foster care benefits to age 21, the development of California Partners for Permanency Project (CAPP) to reduce long-term foster care, and the creation of initiatives to reform group homes.

AGENCY STRUCTURE

Under the umbrella of the state Health and Human Services Agency, CDSS, via its Children and Family Services Division (CFSD), is the agency authorized by statute to promulgate regulations, policies, and procedures necessary to implement the state's child welfare system and to ensure safety, permanence, and well-being for children and families. The CDSS is responsible for the supervision and coordination of programs in California funded under federal Title IV-B subparts 1 and 2 of the Social Security Act, Title IV-E, Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), and the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) and Education Training Vouchers (ETV) programs for older and/or former foster care youth. Furthermore, CDSS is responsible for developing the state's CFSP, California's blueprint for CWS[1]. Due to its complexity and this high degree of collaboration, California's child welfare system is ever-changing as it seeks to improve its ability to meet the needs of the state's children and families. The CFSD plays a vital role in the development of policies and programs that implement the goals of CDSS' mission. These efforts are all achieved within a framework of collaboration with child welfare stakeholders. In developing policies and programs, CFSD collaborates with other state and local agencies, tribal representatives, foster/kinship caregivers, foster youth, foster care service providers, community-based organizations, the Judicial Council, researchers, child advocates, the Legislature, higher education institutions and private foundations to maximize families' opportunities for success.

Five branches and one Ombudsman's office within CFSD have responsibility for overseeing components of California's CWS system:

- The *Child Protection and Family Support Branch* (CPFS) oversees emergency response, pre-placement and in-home services policy components, including safety and risk assessments, differential response, and Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) compliance; the Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration projects, statewide training and staff development activities

1 (http://www.childsworld.ca.gov/res/TitleIV-B/CFSP_2010-2014.pdf)

of public child welfare service workers; and community-based services, including the Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP), and intervention and treatment services funded under the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), Community Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP), Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention and Treatment (CAPIT) and the Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) Act.

- The *Children Services Operations and Evaluation Branch* (CSOE) implements the CWS system improvements; California's Child and Family Services Review (C-CFSR); adoption assistance program policy; coordinates child welfare and probation disaster plans; ensures interstate placements are in compliance with the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) and the Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICAMA); reviews of child fatalities/near fatalities which are reported via statements of findings and information submitted by counties; State Adoption District Offices and reviews, maintains, manages and ensures the confidentiality of all California adoption records and provides post-adoption services.
- The *Child and Youth Permanency Branch* (CYP) supervises delivery of services to children removed from their homes and placed into foster, kinship, adoptive or guardian families or reunified; develops regulations and policy directives related to placement, out-of-home care and permanency for children under court jurisdiction and the subject of domestic and inter-country agency adoptions; the Independent Living Program; Transitional Housing Program; and foster and adoptive parent training and recruitment.
- The *Case Management System Support Branch* (CMS Support) provides ongoing support, management and oversight of California's federally supported Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS) known as the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS). The CMS Support Branch facilitates the development and implementation of statewide child welfare program regulatory and/or business process changes within the CWS/CMS. The Branch also has a role in managing the CWS/CMS data collection processes, outcome measurement and reporting requirements. Additionally, the CMS Support Branch facilitates technological upgrades, statewide system training and business process improvements related to the CWS/CMS. These efforts are in collaboration with various, federal, state and county entities and are pursuant to state and federal funding requirements, policy rules and regulations. The CMS Support Branch aids in ensuring the ongoing maintenance and operation of a cost efficient, effective user friendly statewide automation system.
- The *Foster Care Audits and Rates Branch* (FCARB) establishes policies for foster care rates, funding and eligibility to ensure that children placed in group homes or by foster family agencies receive the services to which they are entitled; sets group home and foster family agency rates; develops, interprets and implements policies and regulations governing payments systems required to support out-of-home care resources and services; conducts on site group home and non-profit corporation rate audits and reviews Financial Audit Reports.

- The *Office of the California Foster Care Ombudsman* was established through legislation (SB933, 1998), as an autonomous entity within CDSS to provide foster children and youth with an objective place to express their complaint and resolve issues regarding placement, care and services without fear of retribution; provides foster children and youth with information on their personal rights; responds to complaints from anyone with concerns about the foster care system; makes appropriate referrals; maintains a toll-free number for any individual to voice their concerns or complaints; conducts trainings and presentations to child welfare professionals and community partners and partners with many public and private agencies to increase awareness of foster youth concerns and complaints.

Other organizations within CDSS that support CFSD's work for overseeing the CWS system include:

- The *Child Welfare Data Analysis Bureau (CWDAB),* within the Research Services Branch, supports the provision and improvement of Child Welfare Services in California by providing data for policy development, budget planning and measurement of program success against State and federally-mandated standards. The CWDAB uses data from the CWS/CMS, related surveys, and administrative sources. The CWDAB is also responsible for development and submission of federally-mandated data reports, e.g., National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS), Adoption Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS), National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD), and the Federal Monthly Caseworker Visits (FMCV).

STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION

To achieve its mission, CDSS collaborates with the state's 58 county child welfare agencies and juvenile probation departments, the County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA), the Chief Probation Officers of California (CPOC), federal, state and local government, the Legislature, the Judicial Branch, tribal representatives, philanthropic organizations and other stakeholders to provide supervision, fiscal and regulatory guidance, training and develop policies, procedures and programs in accordance with prescribed federal and state statutes governing child welfare.

Collaboration is the invaluable foundation to California's continuous progress to affect positive outcomes for vulnerable children, youth and families entrusted to our care. The CDSS' level of commitment to multi-level partnerships distinguishes California's approach to child welfare practice and reform. The CWDA and the counties are the state's primary partners with whom consistent collaboration occurs to discuss ever-changing mandates and processes governing child welfare services throughout the continuum of care.

Significant to the development of policies and programs to ensure the safety, permanency and well-being of every child involved in CWS is system-wide collaboration and stakeholder involvement with additional state and local agencies, community-based and philanthropic organizations, the courts, community service providers, tribal representatives, interagency teams, workgroups, commissions and other advocacy groups. Stakeholders and partners are involved in the implementation of AB 12, CAPP to reduce long-term foster care, initiative to reform group homes, the development of the CFSP, and the annual development and update of the APSR. For the 2011 APSR, counties, tribal nations, and stakeholders were provided with draft copies of the report for review and comment on May 3, 2011. The CDSS received

feedback on June 1, 2011; to the extent possible, revisions and comments from stakeholders are addressed and incorporated throughout this document.

Several of these collaborations are detailed below. Further details regarding California's collaboration with Native American tribes and tribal representatives are discussed, in detail, in the ICWA chapter of this document.

The **CALIFORNIA CHILD WELFARE COUNCIL (CWC)** was established through legislation known as the Child Welfare Leadership and Performance Accountability Act of 2006, signed by Governor Schwarzenegger. In 2010, the council was co-chaired by Kim Belshé, former Secretary of the California Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA), and Associate Justice Carlos Moreno of the California Supreme Court. In 2011, the council is co-chaired by the current Secretary of HHSA, Diana Dooley, and is pending a designee from the California Supreme Court. The CWC comprises a 53-member advisory body from the legislative, judicial and executive branches as well as stakeholders, youths and nonprofit agencies. In 2010, the four committees continued to focus in the areas of Prevention/Early Intervention, Permanency, Child Development and Successful Youth Transitions, and Data Linkage and Information Sharing, and presented recommendations to the full CWC for consideration in improving child and youth outcomes.

- *The Prevention/Early Intervention Committee* is primarily charged to address the structure and resources needed to maintain children safely in their homes, thus preventing the unnecessary removal into foster care. To further the Committee's Summer 2009 recommendations to bring Differential Response (DR), a demonstrated child abuse prevention approach, to scale on a statewide basis, the committee reviewed and provided comments on CDSS draft *The Child Welfare Improvement Activities: Differential Response Guidelines* (DR Guidelines). The Committee maintains that prevention and early intervention services be available for all families at risk, even prior to a referral to child welfare for allegations of abuse or neglect. Additionally, committee and full council conversations have debated the merits of prioritization for particular populations based on the individual and family needs and the limited resources available to provide the necessary services.
- *The Permanency Committee* focused on one priority recommendation: a statewide commitment to increase the number of children who have positive permanency outcomes through the implementation of Family Finding and Engagement (FFE) in all 58 California counties. FFE is a demonstrated model for identifying, engaging and sustaining permanent connections for children and youth in care and transitioning those youth to permanency.

  Positive permanency outcomes are defined as an increase in the number of children reunified with their parents, if possible. In cases where reunification is not possible, positive permanency outcomes refers to an alternative permanent plan with meaningful, enduring connections with family members and other significant adults who will support them throughout their lives.

  The Committee's current focus in collaboration with the state, local county child welfare, probation departments, and the court system, is to develop a FFE toolkit to facilitate statewide FFE implementation.

- *The Child Development and Successful Youth Transitions Committee* continued focus on its initial set of recommendations related to successful youth transitions and equal access to mental health services, additional information is also available in the Well-Being section starting on page 138. Action is most likely to occur within the next 12-18 months, on the following recommendations barring any administrative setbacks:
  - Authorize the California Department of Education (CDE) and the State Board of Education to promulgate a uniform partial credit transfer regulation.
  - Enable access by all foster youth pursuing higher education at a two-year or four-year public college or university to comprehensive campus support programs, or as soon as fiscally feasible.
  - In addition to addressing successful youth transitions, the Committee has actively moved forwarded to address the solutions for improving access to mental health services, especially for foster youth placed out-of-county and that there be accountability for the results. Three workgroups were formed Local Plans, Fiscal and Data. Members from the subcommittee were asked to select a committee. The goals for Local Plans were identified as follows:
    - ✓ To identify and analyze the criteria for opportunities to use the flexibility provided by the Title 9 regulations for delegation of the payment authorization and the provision of services to the county of placement.
    - ✓ To identify solutions to the increase Mental Health provider capacity statewide to facilitate access to specialty mental health services
    - ✓ Develop recommendation for improving collaboration
    - ✓ Revisit the requirements under SB 785 for developing informing materials

  The other committees were instructed to prioritize goals and develop a work plan.

  The Action Plan can be viewed at the Agency website at www.chhs.ca.gov.

- *The Data Linkage and Information Sharing Committee* recognizes the existence of a fragmented system of information, both manual and electronic. The committee continued its work toward resolving the fragmented landscape at the federal, state and local level and promoting the exchange of information through its previously established 2009 goals to: 1) Clarify state policy on the importance of data integration and information sharing; 2) Conduct an environmental scan across the different entities maintaining data on children and families assisted by the child welfare system; and 3) Create an inventory of the data integration and information sharing barriers existing between the different entities maintaining data on children and families assisted by the child welfare system and develop recommendations to overcome the barriers.
  - Incorporating broader stakeholder involvement, the Committee's work during the year included performing an analysis by the University of California at Davis (UCD), which identified relevant, shareable data across departments and agencies, legal barriers to sharing information, including confidentiality and privacy laws and the proposed solutions for enhancing data sharing.

The following recommendations were accepted by the CWC in 2010:

- Articulate a policy supporting sharing and linking data related to children in child welfare. The Committee plans to disseminate the statement on data sharing to executive branch agencies, the Family and Juvenile Law Advisory Committee of the Judicial Council, local Blue Ribbon Commissions, Statewide Improvement Program teams and other stakeholders. The CDSS will distribute the policy statement to county welfare directors through an All-County Information Notice (ACIN).
- Create and maintain an inventory of national, state, and local level practices on data sharing and information exchange to disseminate and promote information sharing statewide. The CDSS plans to create a website to post a Memorandum of Understanding template and other materials for information sharing. Also, the Committee, in conjunction with the Judicial Council of the California Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), plans to conduct a baseline survey of information sharing agreements at the local level, using recently established local Blue Ribbon Commissions as respondents. It is anticipated this survey will be updated on a yearly basis to track the progress of information sharing agreements statewide.
- Prepare a set of policy briefs on the laws relating to information sharing in the following areas: health, mental health, education, and substance abuse. The AOC is planning a series of regional focus groups with County Counsels to discuss known and/or perceived data integration and information sharing barriers between different local entities. This effort will assist the Committee with developing recommendations to overcome the barriers existing between the different local level entities maintaining data. The Committee will use the information identified to more fully develop the policy briefs and ultimately to develop additional recommendations to present to the CWC.

In FY 2009-10, staff of the Courts Center for Families, Children and the Courts (CFCC) worked on a project to implement the *Data Committee* recommendations by convening focus groups and publishing four briefs on information sharing in child welfare. Using the findings from these briefs, the Court Improvement Program (CIP) team and its consultant at the National Youth Law Center (YLC) met several times with the committee to create a set of comprehensive action steps to improve information sharing. One action step decided on by the committee was for CFCC staff to develop a court form to allow parents, foster parents, and other legal guardians to consent to information sharing.

CALIFORNIA'S COLLABORATION WITH THE COURTS is vital to achieving desired outcomes for CWS. The CDSS maintains many collaborative efforts with the AOC, the staff agency of the Judicial Council, which has policy-making authority over the state court system. Coordination with the Center for Families, Children and the Courts, a division of AOC and the Family and Juvenile Law Advisory Committee of the Judicial Council include several project and program areas:

- The *Blue Ribbon Commission* on Children in Foster Care (BRC) was convened by Chief Justice of California Ronald M. George, and in 2009-2010 was chaired by Associate Justice of the California Supreme Court Carlos R. Moreno. Christopher Wu, of the Administrative Office of

the Courts, Center for Families, Children & the Courts, is the Executive Director of the Commission.

The Commission's final report and action plan was released in May 2009, and in June 2009, the Chief Justice modified the charge to include implementation activities and reappointed most of the commissioners for a second three-year term. In August 2010, the commission released its first implementation report: *Building a Brighter Future for California's Children: Making Progress in Tough Economic Times.*

Legislation to implement the Commission's recommendations was a priority in 2009-2010. A working group appointed by California Supreme Court Associate Justice Marvin R. Baxter, chair of the council's Policy Coordination and Liaison Committee and Justice Moreno, chair of the BRC, appointed a working group to advise and assist the AOC Office of Governmental Affairs on developing and revising language during the development of the legislation. A number of BRC-supported bills successfully passed in the Legislature and were signed into law in the 2009-2010 legislative cycle. Most important was the passage of California AB 12, the California Fostering Connections to Success Act, signed into law by the governor in October 2010. AB 12 implements federal foster care reform legislation to provide federally subsidized relative guardianships, and extend foster care jurisdiction to age 21. Please see the Permanency section of this report for more information about AB 12 implementation activities.

In June 2010, the commission sponsored a second statewide summit for local Blue Ribbon Commissions in San Diego. Teams from 47 counties attended the summit and began discussing how best to accomplish the goals of local foster care commissions in their communities and to prioritize issues that the local commissions should address. More information is available in the section about local BRCs below.

Activities of the local commissions and other court improvement efforts are tracked in the commission's bi-monthly electronic newsletter, *Foster Care Reform Update: A Briefing for County and Statewide Collaborations,* further supported by extensive public speaking engagements by Justice Moreno and other commissioners. CIP Basic funds these efforts through staff to support the commission, in particular the public outreach and education functions.

CIP staff launched a web site and the electronic newsletter to disseminate the work of the commission and further its recommendations. During the grant year, the designers of the California Dependency Online Guide (CalDOG) website added county pages to provide each local commission a home page to post materials, and that allow all users to search local commission materials and activities by key word. Extensive training and dissemination of information about the website has been made available to dependency court personnel and stakeholders.

- *The Court Improvement Program* - The Juvenile Court Assistance Team (JCAT) Manager is the Judicial Branch representative to the PIP steering committee. Collaboration on the CFSR PIP was a major focus of the CIP Basic program during FY 2009-10. CIP collaboration with CDSS

and other stakeholders on planning and implementing the CFSR, the PIP, and the Title IV-E review was a primary focus during this fiscal year.

CIP entered into an interagency agreement with CDSS to use data resources at the UC Berkeley Center for Social Services Research to provide data on safety and permanency outcomes for children specifically to judicial officers to further their involvement in the state's Outcomes and Accountability project. The data sets have been made available to all local Blue Ribbon Commissions and are available on the CalDOG website. The CIP staff is also coordinating the input of CDSS and CWS/CMS designers into the upcoming California Court Management System (CCMS) to align data elements, reduce duplication, enhance information sharing and follow a common schema of performance measurement. A working group on data exchange composed of CFCC, DCSS, county and court members has been attending meetings in Santa Ana to further the development of data exchange via CCMS.

Chaired by CDSS, the **STATE INTERAGENCY TEAM (SIT)** brings together representatives from various departments within California's Health and Human Services Agency, along with representatives from the Employment Development Department (EDD), the California First 5 Commission, the California Workforce Investment Board, Department of Justice (DOJ), AOC, and Office of the Chancellor for California Community Colleges (OCCCC).

The SIT priority work plan objectives for years 2009-10, which involve collaboration with the AOC/Judicial Council, include: 1) Decreasing racial disproportionality and disparities in outcomes across systems with a focus on CWS; 2) Sharing data across systems; 3) Improving access to alcohol and other drugs (AOD) services by families in the child welfare system; and 4) Overcoming real and perceived legal barriers to sharing "confidential" client information in order to strengthen services. The SIT workgroups are described below:

- The *Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) Workgroup* was established in April 2009 after recommendations were made to improve screening, identification, and intervention regarding AOD risk in families and children and SIT's particular interest in FASD. FASD is an umbrella term used to describe the range of effects which may occur in an individual whose mother drank alcohol during pregnancy.

  The two items developed by the workgroup are in use by several departments:

  - A combined matrix, inclusive of all workgroup departments, of current resources for pregnant women and families impacted by FASD and for sexually active women.
  - FASD fact sheets with program specific information and personalized by each department to meet the needs of different audiences.

  Upon completion and distribution of these informational resources in 2010, this workgroup met its goals and has discontinued meeting.

- The *Workgroup to Eliminate Disparities (WGED)* continues to meet on a monthly basis to develop recommendations to the SIT for policy, practice and cross system changes to reduce the disproportionate representation of children of color in the CWS, as well as to improve outcomes for children and families of color across the state of California.

  Specific 2010 accomplishments and continuing work include:

Participation as a State Level Team (SLT) in the California Disproportionality Project (CDP) and the final CDP Project Report (pending release) will influence Workgroup recommendations to the SIT, which may include policy, practice and regulatory changes. Training materials developed by the CDP to provide guidance to counties in enhancing their efforts to address disproportionality and disparity (D&D) in child welfare will be made available to the Regional Training Academies (RTAs) for integration into existing and future curriculum for new and continuing education for social workers.

- Developed a D&D Training/Resource list that can be shared among state agencies and departments (distribution plan pending).
- Released the first Quarterly Newsletter in December 2010 to communicate SIT leadership commitment to address D&D, SIT department level D&D activities, training resources and promising practices.
- Continued cross-system sharing of information and training on data collection and upcoming projects related to D&D.
- Under development is the Interagency Collaboration Project to provide a forum for sharing department efforts to address D&D, identify common issues, seek solutions and strengthen individual department and interagency D&D activities.

- *Co-occurrence Domestic Violence and Child Maltreatment Workgroup* - The California Leadership Group on Domestic Violence and Child Well-being (Leadership Group), facilitated by the AOC, includes representation at the state and local level of child welfare, prevention and domestic violence (DV) service delivery providers.

  - ✓ In December 2010, the Leadership Group released final report, *Addressing Domestic Violence, Child Safety and Well-being: Collaborative Strategies for California Families, 2010- Recommendations from the California Leadership Group on Domestic Violence and Child Well-being,* on the survey and analysis of the collaboration between child welfare services and DV providers. Funded in part by a grant from Blue Shield, broad recommendations for collaboration were made to address the challenges in addressing DV and the impact of children exposed to DV.

  - The preliminary highlights and recommendations in the report were presented to the SIT in the fall of 2010.
  - The Leadership Group continues to meet to improve the relationship between the provider representatives and explore approaches to effect community collaboration.
  - State agencies provided updates to the survey of resources and efforts, first addressed in the self assessment workshop in April 2010. Nine California departments represented on the SIT continue to explore and develop a plan for next steps to take to deepen the agency's capacity to protect and support the safety and well-being of the adults and children in these families. Of note:
    - ✓ CalEMA (California Emergency Management Agency) presented the report's preliminary findings and recommendations to the Domestic Violence Advisory Council in August 2010.

- ✓ CDSS continues to include DV as part of core training for social workers in child welfare, with standardized competencies and learning objectives. In addition, the regional training academies also offer stand-alone DV training.
- ✓ The Workforce Investment Board (CWIB) requested a statewide listing of DV offices or places where field staff can refer One-Stop customers who might need DV services.

However, EDD reported that DV training was discontinued due to lack of demand.

THE CHILD WELFARE CO-INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP is a public-private partnership, which continues to focus on priority improvement areas to identify and support programs, policies and practice that improve and sustain the safety, permanency and well-being of California's children, youths and families. The Partnership includes five philanthropic organizations, the state's AOC, CWDA and CDSS. This collaboration sets annual priorities for strategic investment, in consultation with its Advisory Committee. In June 2010, CDSS management team introduced the discussion of the agency's plans to revise the way CDSS constructs the CFSP and APSR and to include more analysis of California's CWS programs with the goal of improved evidence based practices and improved evaluation methods. The Partnership responded with a commitment to assist in making the CFSP more visible and embraced by stakeholders throughout the state. The Partnership also pledged its intention to increase stakeholder participation in the future. The CDSS is in the process of planning how to incorporate these goals into practice within the Partnership. The Partnership established the following priority goals for 2010:

- *Permanency and Well-Being for Children and Youth:* Improve permanency and well-being outcomes for children and youth in foster care and those at risk of CWS involvement by promoting concepts and strategies throughout multiple systems that help to connect to, strengthen and preserve families.
- *Federal Finance Reform:* Expand California's access to and utilization of federal resources to improve the state's capacity to provide the necessary services to meet the needs of vulnerable children and families.
- *Fostering Connections to Success:* Increase the ability of the child welfare and education systems to ensure each foster child and youth has essential family connections and receives support needed to succeed in school and make successful transitions by informing and engaging leaders and stakeholders on targeted activities across both systems.
- *Program Evaluation:* Collect and disseminate information and create opportunities for key stakeholders and partners to guide the development of an informative evaluation process that supports CWS improvement efforts and future investments.

Summary of the Partnership major accomplishments for 2010:

- Facilitated investments in the Child Welfare Services Program Improvement Fund:

- In FY 2009-10, the Co-Investment Partnership effectively leveraged more than $1.8 million to achieve a total investment of more than $3 million in critical child welfare strategies and practices, including support of the following projects:
    - ✓ Early Learning/Safe Starts
    - ✓ Family to Family
    - ✓ California Connected by 25 Initiative (CC25)
    - ✓ Breakthrough Series Collaborative (BSC) on Independent Living Program (ILP) Transformation
    - ✓ Racial Disproportionality Project
    - ✓ California Permanency for Youth Project
- Convened ad hoc workgroups and conducted research in the Partnership's priority areas of permanency, education and mental health. Workgroup activities resulted in the development of comprehensive approaches and materials needed to increase the understanding of the child welfare system and promote system-wide improvements.
- *Fostering Connections Workgroup*: Provided support to coordinate public education efforts related to implementation of the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act in California, and coordinated a press conference featuring the release of a research study on outcomes of emancipated foster youth.
- *Permanency Sustainability Workgroup*: Worked collaboratively with Partnership organizations to facilitate resources and investments to promote improved permanency practices, initiated "Love and Belonging. For a Lifetime." statewide campaign for state and local child welfare and court professionals, and produced and disseminated 30,000 calendars featuring art by children and youth in foster care.
- *Foster Youth Education Workgroup*: Worked to increase agreement of the critical role early care has on school success, secured a commitment of key stakeholders to create a plan to improve the understanding of the unique social and emotional needs of young children, and supported a robust network of child welfare and education professionals focused on sharing key insights and program strategies aimed at improving successful transitions and support for emancipating youth.
- *Supported an Integration Team:* Efforts resulted in the coordination of multiple efforts throughout California that better ensure consistency in practice and prevent duplication of efforts. Specific efforts included support for the BSC on ILP Transformation and the piloting of the Families for Life Permanency Teaming model in five sites across the state.
- *Implemented Public Education and Outreach Program to Support Partnership Priorities:* Focused on increasing the understanding of the needs of children and families in the child welfare system and California's progress in improving foster care outcomes through the development and dissemination of public education materials and support of public awareness events.
    - ✓ *Insights into Policy*: Bi-annual publication that highlights California's performance in improving child welfare outcomes.

- ✓ *Child Welfare Services Information Kit*: Includes key facts about child welfare, outcomes and chronology of child welfare landmarks.
- ✓ *Child Welfare Co-Investment Annual Report*: Outlines year long priorities, goals, activities, and Partnership investments.
- ✓ Partnered with CDSS and four counties to win one of six federal five-year grants to reduce long-term foster care; the grant is almost $15 million.
- ✓ *Foster Care and Adoption Month Events*: Developed public education materials that provided an overview of key foster care and adoption issues and activities taking place during the two public awareness months of each May and November. Efforts resulted in statewide media coverage.
- ✓ Conducted Targeted Outreach to Policymakers: Worked to inform policymakers on the needs of vulnerable children and families and the impact of various policy and budget proposals and conducted briefings and outreach for key legislative staff on the needs of children and families in the CWS and efforts to improve outcomes.

CASEY FAMILY PROGRAMS supports the work of California's child welfare systems to help secure safe and permanent families for vulnerable children. It operates four offices in California and partners with California counties to help safely reduce the need for foster care. An office in Sacramento supports child welfare system and policy improvements statewide. Offices in the Bay Area (Oakland), Los Angeles County and San Diego County work with county child welfare departments and other partners to support improved outcomes for children. The Bay Area and San Diego offices also provide direct services to children in foster care and their families. Statewide efforts include:

- Providing *strategic consulting* to Alameda, Fresno, Los Angeles, Orange, Sacramento, San Diego and San Francisco counties to implement specific system improvements and support services that shorten lengths of stay in foster care; increase exits from foster care to safe and permanent homes in a timely manner; and reduce entries into foster care by working with families to mitigate the risk of abuse and neglect.
- Working with the child welfare and probation departments in Los Angeles and Alameda counties to assist in the successful implementation of the *Title IV-E waiver.*
- Partnering with CDSS, the California Alliance of Child and Family Services, and the counties of Los Angeles, Sacramento, San Bernardino and San Francisco to implement and evaluate the *Residentially Based Services reform*, and to coordinate and leverage that work in support of the statewide congregate care/rate reform effort.
- Working with counties, CDSS, the California Child Welfare Co-Investment Partnership and others to support *California Partners for Permanency*.
- Partnering with counties, consultants and the Training Academies to help implement and evaluate *Signs of Safety* in 13 northern counties, Sacramento County and San Diego County.
- Partnering with Los Angeles County to support and evaluate the *Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project*.

Casey Family Programs is also an active member of the California Child Welfare Co-Investment Partnership, has a partnership with the California Foster Youth Education Task Force and with the California Youth Connection, and is a member of the Foster Care and Adoption Month Coalition.

Casey Family Programs also works to ensure that funding and support for innovative and effective practices are coordinated and leveraged statewide in order to achieve the greatest impact. To promote best practices and improve outcomes within counties, we support increased cross-systems collaboration between child welfare, probation, the courts, mental health, education and employment.

As required by CAPTA, CDSS has established three **CITIZEN REVIEW PANELS (CRPS)** located in Calaveras County, San Mateo County and Ventura County. Historically, California also had a statewide panel charged with making recommendations annually to CDSS as well as reviewing and providing comment on the APSR. However, the statewide panel disbanded in December of 2010. The Eleventh Annual CRP Report is submitted as *Attachment B* detailing the activities of the three local county panels. The function of CRPs is to evaluate the effectiveness with which state and local child protection agencies are discharging their responsibilities. Evaluation involves examining child protection policies, practices, and procedures. Recommendations are then made to county and state governments for improvement. The membership of the panels draws from child advocates, parent leaders, tribal leaders, foundation officers, county mental health managers, county counsels, parents' and children's attorneys, foster parents, social workers, the AOC and other child welfare professionals. Membership is also geographically diverse with representatives from both metropolitan and rural counties in California.

COLLABORATION WITH TRIBES - CDSS' ICWA Workgroup, formed in July 2002, continues to expand its membership and now consists of 105 tribal ICWA workers/advocates, 60 county child welfare and probation representatives, 28 CDSS staff, 36 state/university representatives, and other interested parties.

Although CDSS currently utilizes the ICWA Workgroup as the primary means of consulting and collaborating with tribes on issues related to child welfare, California is committed to improving its process for engagement with all Indian nations who serve at risk and vulnerable children and their families within its borders. In this last year, the state has learned that utilizing this workgroup as the primary process for engaging and soliciting tribal feedback is not appropriate in all occasions. There have been instances when CDSS has sought feedback from Workgroup participants in an area beyond what their tribal leadership has approved or that are best addressed at the local levels between the county CWS and tribal agencies. The CDSS will engage tribal leaders to assist with establishing an improved dissemination process for broader outreach to all 106 federally recognized tribes. In the short term CDSS seeks to include Tribal organizations in the dissemination of programmatic letters and notices, engaging in more frequent dialogs with tribal representatives and continuing to support local tribal engagement. Below are California's current activities with the ICWA Workgroup:

- The ICWA Workgroup continues to meet bi-monthly to identify ICWA issues and develop recommendations and solutions for tribes, counties and the state coordination and

collaboration. The agenda for ICWA workgroup meetings is set in accordance with issues and topics which emerge from discussions in the workgroup, or in discussions that occur as CDSS staff consult with tribal and county representatives throughout the state.

- The CDSS continues the contractual agreement with the AOC to provide training and technical assistance on ICWA for juvenile courts, as well as to develop and maintain a clearinghouse of resources. As part of their Center for Families, Children and the Courts, the Tribal Projects Unit of the AOC serves as liaison to tribal communities in California and assists the judicial branch with the development of policies, positions and programs to ensure the highest quality of justice and service for California's Native American communities in all cases, with a focus on cases relating to the ICWA and domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking. Additionally, the Unit serves as liaison between the state and tribal courts to build professional relationships and to improve access by tribal courts to education, technical assistance, and other resources.

The AOC continues to collaborate with a number of groups to develop ICWA resources:

- As part of the American Indian Enhancement Team, and in collaboration with Successful Transitions for Adult Readiness (TribalSTAR), the AOC's Tribal Projects staff participated in the filming of the FACES documentary. This documentary, intended for social workers and others working on ICWA cases, features photos of Native children and families and various Native American service providers speaking on Native American history and self-identification as Native. This documentary explores why Native Americans may or may not identify themselves as Native. It discusses the importance of not stereotyping what a Native person may or may not look like, because such stereotyping can hinder proper inquiry and compliance with ICWA. You can link to the video here: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BIQG65KFKGs.
- As part of the American Indian Enhancement Team on the Casey Disproportionality Project, the AOC's Tribal Projects staff is developing an ICWA toolkit.
- As part of the partnership with the Bay Area Collaborative of American Indian Resources to provide educational and technical assistance on ICWA, the AOC's Tribal Projects staff has prepared ICWA informational packets for outreach workers to give to clients.
- Established in May 2010, the Tribal Court/State Court Forum (Forum) is a coalition of the various tribal courts of the Native American tribes situated in California and the courts of the State of California who come together as equal partners to address issues common to both relating to the recognition and enforcement of court orders that cross jurisdictional lines, the determination of jurisdiction for cases that might appear in either court system, and the sharing of services between jurisdictions. The Forum is convened for the express purpose of improving the working relationship between its members and enabling the courts of each tribe to issue and enforce their respective orders to the fullest extent allowed by law. To date, the Forum has looked at issues such as the enforcement and recognition of protective and other kinds of orders and judgments, jurisdictional issues, and how to ensure access to justice in Indian country in the areas of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and teen-

dating violence. With support from the AOC and Tribal Projects Unit, the Forum has continued to work on priority areas of mutual concern and shared interest.

- Through the Forum, the California Judicial Council's advisory committees, and working in collaboration with justice partners, the AOC has assisted with several projects related to recommended revisions to rules and forms and recommended legislative proposals:
  - *Tribal Customary Adoption*: Amendments to Judicial Council rules and forms to implement the provisions of AB 1325 regarding tribal customary adoption were approved by consent by the Judicial Council meeting on April 23, 2010. The amended rules and forms became effective on July 1, 2010.
  - *California Fostering Connections to Success Act*: AB 2418 implementation coordination with AB 12 implementation. The proposal implements legislation that allows for Indian children to remain dependents of the courts up to age 21.
  - *Juvenile Appellate Record*: This proposal would revise the rule governing sending the record in juvenile appeals to clarify that if an Indian tribe has intervened in a case, a copy of the record of that case must be sent to that tribe. This change is in response to a request by the Tribal Court/State Court Forum and is needed to ensure that a tribe that has become a party to a case through intervention receives a copy of the record, as do other parties to a juvenile court proceeding.
  - *Tribal Access to Juvenile Court Records:* This proposal would amend Welfare and Institutions Code 827 to give tribal court judges and court personnel access (inspect and copy) juvenile court records. This proposal is in response to concerns expressed by state court judges that they need legislative authority to share these documents with their tribal court colleagues, and concerns by both state and tribal courts, as well as tribal advocates that tribal court decisions are made without the benefit of this critically important information.
  - *Full Faith and Credit for Tribal Civil Judgments*: This proposal would clarify and simplify the process by which tribal civil judgments will be recognized by the state courts of California and enforced just as any state civil judgment would be.
  - *Enforcement of Tribal Protective* Orders: Draft rule and form proposal to establish an efficient and consistent statewide procedure for California state courts to register protective orders issued by tribal courts in California. Registration of tribal court protective orders will help ensure that law enforcement agencies enforce these orders uniformly and consistently.

Additionally, CDSS continues to support the Annual Statewide ICWA Conference hosted by a volunteer tribe or group of tribes. The venue alternates annually between northern, central, and southern California, and is sponsored and organized by a host tribe in the selected area. The conference is conducted over two and one-half days, and is attended by approximately 200 individuals consisting of state, tribal, and county representatives and professionals from various disciplines, such as child welfare, law enforcement, judiciary, and foster/adoption agencies, to discuss today's issues regarding the ICWA. The conference provides a platform

for education and training, developing collaborative partnerships, and networking. The CDSS has made a high-level commitment to improve relationships and partnerships with the tribal community. This conference experience has proven to be an essential part of that partnership development and education process for CDSS and the counties. Moreover, the goal is to continue to educate participants about the importance of ICWA compliance.

CALIFORNIA'S CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM

This section outlines the information necessary to provide a framework for the service descriptions and evaluations that follow. The remainder of the report is divided into the following sections:

1. California's Efforts for Improvement section describes the state's five PIPs including current activities, performance, and strategies.
2. The *Safety* section describes California's child abuse and neglect prevention, intervention, treatment services, and safety management efforts, as well as the state's goals and measures, factors affecting outcomes, and strategies.
3. The *Permanency* section describes the state's performance, factors affecting outcomes, and future plans around eleven areas of permanency from reunification to recruitment and retention of resource families.
4. The *Well-Being* section describes the state's performance on California's capacity to assess and provide for services, engage families in case planning, visiting children and their parents, and as well as assess and provide for services around education, and mental and physical health.

PRINCIPAL DATA SOURCES

- *Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS)* is California's version of the federal SACWIS. The CWS/CMS is a personal computer-based, Windows application that links all 58 counties and the state to a common database. The CWS/CMS is an automated, online client management database that tracks each case from initial contact through termination of services.

  The CWS/CMS is one of the largest Windows-based systems. The application allows caseworkers to open and track cases through the components of the CWS/CMS program. The system assists caseworkers in recording client demographics, contacts, services delivered, and placement information and assists case workers to record and update assessments, create and maintain case plans, and manage the placement of children in the appropriate foster homes or facilities. The system will generate and manage many forms associated with a client or case. The application also collects data for the purposes of state, county, and federal reporting.
- *Child Welfare Data Analysis Bureau (CWDAB*) within CDSS' Administration Division, in addition to the NCANDS, AFCARS, NYTD and FMCV federal reports, provides ad hoc reports using data from CWS/CMS, data support for program sampling and reviews, legal issues, and for other government and research entities, e.g., Department of Mental Health, Department of Education, Department of Public Heath, Department of Developmental Services, and the Legislature.
- *CFSR Data Profiles* are produced from California's AFCARS data files and provided to the state by the Children's Bureau after the semi-annual AFCARS submissions. These reports are

considered the official data for determining whether the state is in substantial conformity with the CFSR national standards on safety and permanency, as well as determining the state's performance on achieving the CFSR PIP target goals.

- *Center for Social Services Research (CSSR) at the University of California at Berkeley* - The California Child Welfare Performance Indicators Project is a collaborative venture between the University of California at Berkeley and CDSS/CWDAB. The project aggregates California's administrative child welfare and foster care data into customizable tables that are refreshed quarterly and made openly available on a public website. This comprehensive data source allows those working at the county and state level to examine performance measures over time. In addition to stratifications by year and county, data can also be filtered by age, ethnicity, gender, placement type, and other subcategories to craft "on the fly" ad hoc tabulations. This project provides policymakers, child welfare workers, and the public with direct access to information on California's entire child welfare system.[2] Data extracted from University of California at Berkeley are noted on the charts in this report as *CSSR.*
- *SafeMeasures®* is a web-based database maintained by the Children's Research Center (CRC) in Wisconsin that extracts data from CWS/CMS to report statewide and individual county data related to state and federal outcomes. Unlike data from the CSSR, data extracted from SafeMeasures® are real-time. This database also contains data for counties using Structured Decision Making (SDM) as their safety assessment tool.
- The *SOC 405A* annual report includes data regarding youths, ages 16 through 20, who receive services from the Independent Living Foster Care Program. It identifies the number of youths receiving ILP services, the program outcomes for those youths, and certain client characteristics. The SOC 405A.1 annual report includes statistical information on ILP Eligible Probation and Aftercare youth, age 16 through 20, who received services from the ILP. The SOC 405A report ends effective September 30, 2008 and the SOC 405A.1 report begins effective October 1, 2008.
- *SOC 405E - Exit Outcomes for Youth Aging Out of Foster Care Quarterly Statistical Report* collects information on county supervised foster youth (child welfare and probation) and non-dependent non-related legal guardian youth, regardless of county of placement, who in the report quarter exited supervised foster care placement due to attaining age 18 or 19, or those foster youth under age 18 who were legally emancipated from foster care pursuant to Family Code Section 7000.

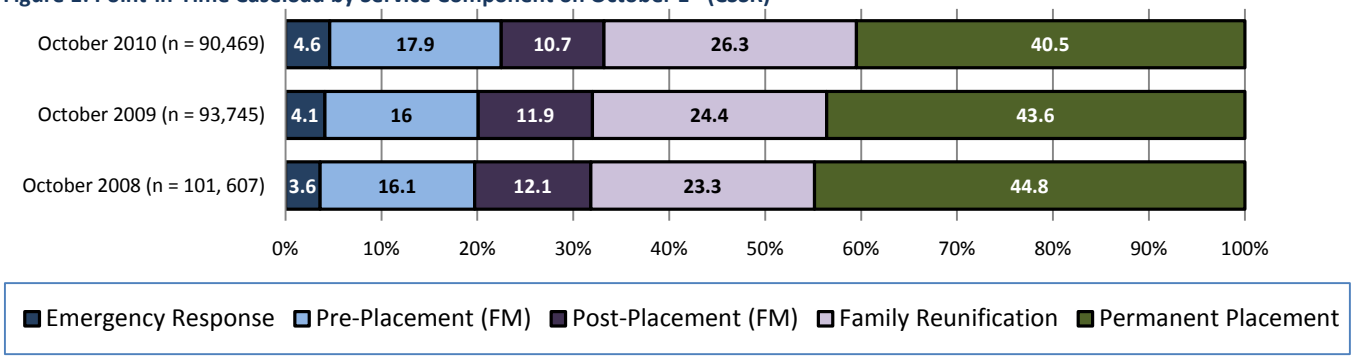
2 http://cssr.berkeley.edu/cwscmsreports/Performance_Indicators_Handout.pdf

SERVICE COMPONENTS

With nearly 60,000 children in foster care, California's foster care population and the CWS system is the largest in the nation. The state's protection, support, and service delivery for the children and families it serves is guided by the four major components of the CWS system. Each of these components is delivered, at the local level, by the CWS agency.

The figure below represents total caseload by service component:

Figure 1: Point-in-Time Caseload by Service Component on October 1st (CSSR)



- *Emergency Response (ER)* services are designed to provide in-person 24-hours-a-day response to reports of abuse, neglect, or exploitation for the purpose of investigation, and to determine the necessity for providing initial intake services and crisis intervention to maintain the child safely in his/her own home or to protect the safety of the child through emergency removal and foster care placement. Upon receipt of a hotline referral, social workers are required to immediately initiate and complete the ER Protocol process when it is necessary to determine whether an in-person investigation is required.
- *Family Maintenance (FM)* services consist of time-limited protective services provided to families in crisis to prevent or remedy abuse, or neglect with the intent of preserving families and keeping children safely in their own homes, when possible. Social workers develop a case plan that includes services appropriate to each family's unique needs.
- *Family Reunification (FR)* services consist of time-limited services to children in out-of-home care to prevent or remedy neglect, abuse or exploitation when the child cannot remain safely at home and needs temporary foster care while services are provided to reunite the family. These services are provided by the county welfare departments.
- *Permanent Placement (PP)* services offer alternative family structures for children who cannot remain safely at home. Permanent Placement includes pre-adoption, non-related legal guardianship (non court dependents) and independent living in addition to services for the recruitment of potential adoptive parents; establishing financial assistance to adoptive parents and guardians to aid in the support of special needs children; and adoption services.

CONTEXTUAL DATA

With a population of nearly 10 million children, the geographical and demographical variations within and across the 58 counties are a reflection of the complexity of California's CWS system. The population ranges from nearly 3 million children in metropolitan Los Angeles County to 228 children in rural Alpine County. The twelve counties listed below account for nearly 80 percent of the total out-of-home placements on October 1, 2010, while the twenty small counties account for less than 2 percent.

Figure 2: Distribution of Out-of-Home Placement by County (CSSR)

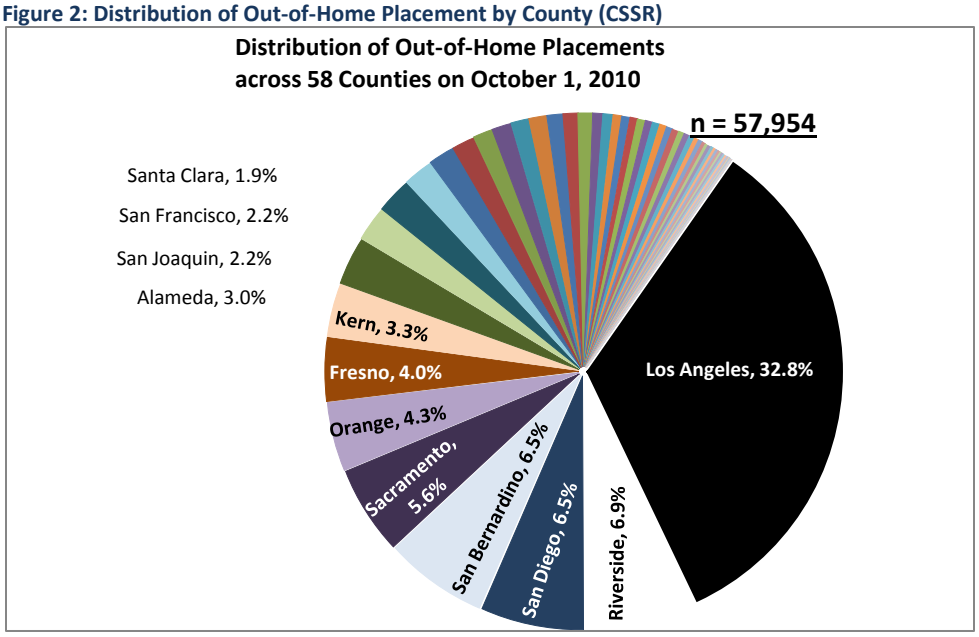
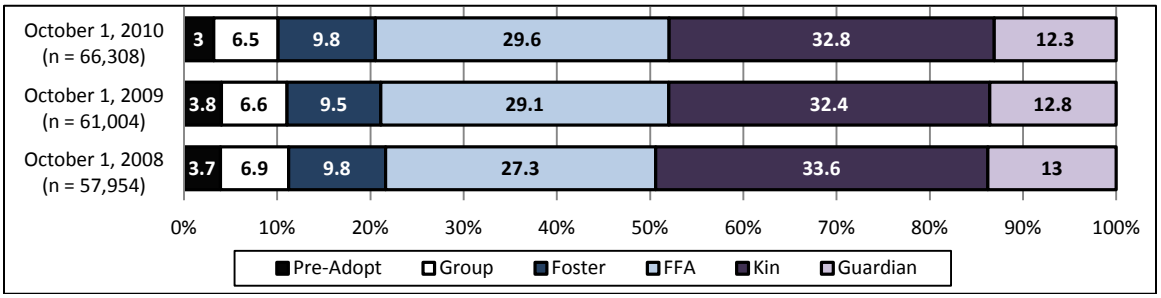


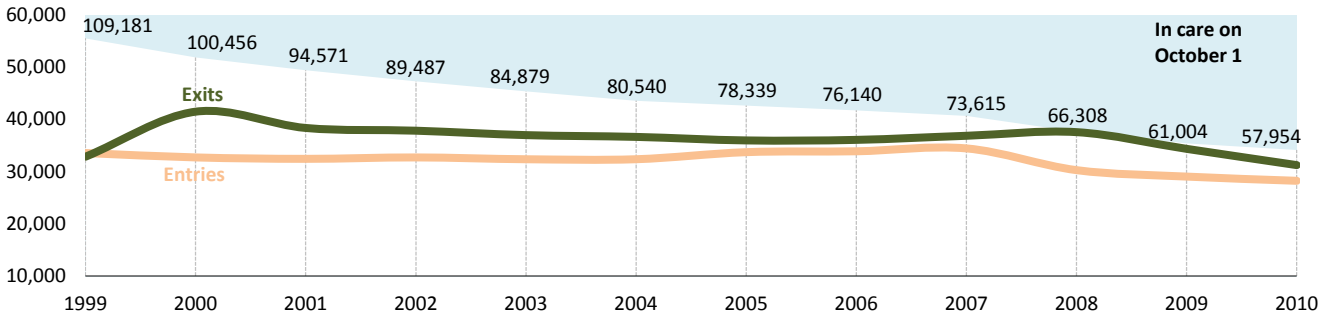
Figure 3: Point-in-Time Caseload by Placement Type



California's current CWS efforts must be examined in the context of progress over time. As a result of the state's commitment to permanency over the last decade, the number of children in foster care at any given time has decreased substantially. While much of this decline was achieved through increasing alternate permanency through adoption and relative guardianship, more recent efforts have been focused on preventing children from entering foster care in the first place.

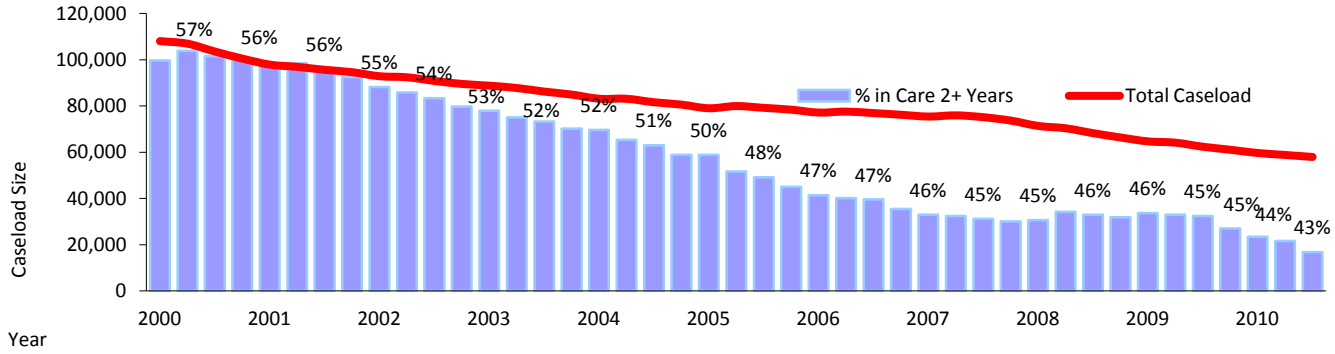
Data from the CWS/CMS and the figure below from CSSR show that since 1999, California's in-care caseload declined by nearly 47 percent from 109,181 in 1999 to 57,954 at the lowest point on October 1, 2010. The data also show a markedly increased rate of decline for entries into care in FFY 2007, while exits out of care increased in the same period. Exits out of care proceeded to decline in subsequent years and continued at approximately the same rates as entries in to care.

Figure 4: Caseload over Time by Federal Fiscal Year (CSSR)



California's focus on increasing permanency options is exemplified in the reduction of children in care for long periods of time. The figure below illustrates the proportion of children in-care for two years or more relative to the total in care case load at any given time. The figure shows steady and marked decreases in the proportion of children growing up in foster care. California's participation in the presidential initiative to reduce long-term foster care through California Partners for Permanency, described in further detail in the Permanency section, will further highlight the state's commitment to these efforts.

Figure 5: Total Caseload by Percent in Care for 2 Years or More (CSSR)



Based on the federal Child Welfare Outcomes Report Online Data[3] for 2009, California's entry rate was 3.6 per 1,000 children in the state; the rate is well below the national median as national entry rates ranged from 1.1 to 8.6 per 1,000 children.

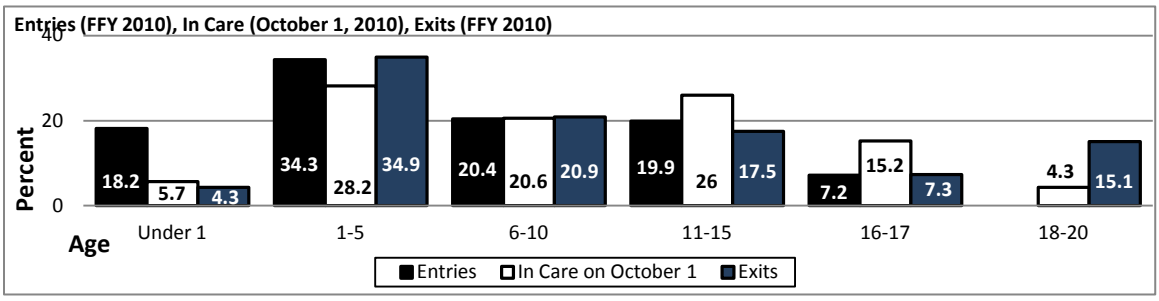
AGE CHARACTERISTICS

The figure below shows that the greatest proportion exiting, entering and in-care are children one- through five-year olds, with approximately similar proportions entering and exiting care.

[3] http://cwoutcomes.acf.hhs.gov/data/overview

Among infants, the greatest proportion are entering care, while among 11- through 17-year olds, the greatest proportion are in out-of-home placements, as compared to the proportion entering or exiting care.

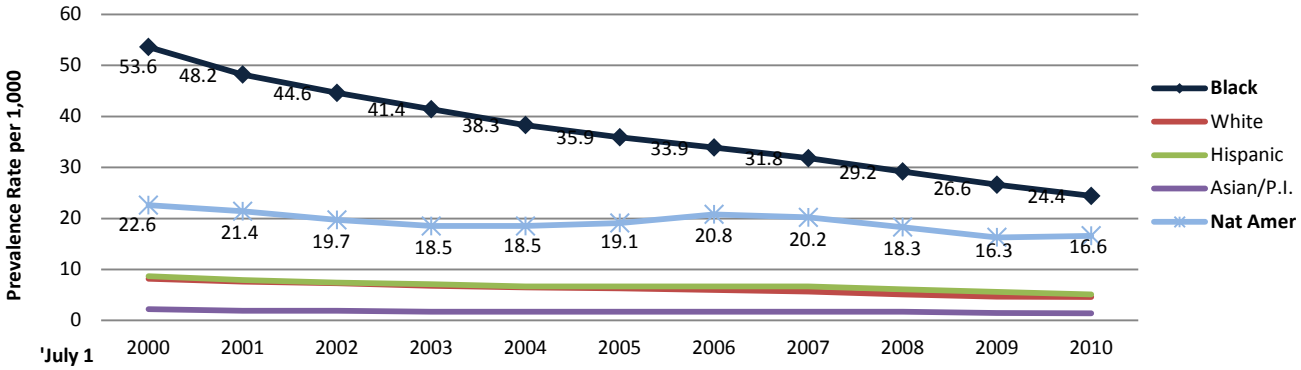
Figure 6: Age of Children in Foster Care in 2010 (CSSR)



RACE AND ETHNICITY CHARACTERISTICS

The disparity of African American children in care under the supervision of Child Welfare agencies has also been reduced, as evidenced in Figure 7 below.

Figure 7: In Care Prevalence Rates by Race/Ethnicity (CSSR)



CALIFORNIA'S EFFORTS TOWARD IMPROVEMENT

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

CDSS remains steadfast in its commitment to continuous quality improvement of child welfare services in spite of California's fiscal challenges. As such, this section integrates information from multiple sources which report on California's progress toward the goals and objectives designed to improve and address the outcomes and systemic factors identified in the CFSP; including specific details regarding CDSS' activities toward PIP goals, analyses of the relevant Outcome and Composite Measures identified in the CFSR and the PIP and narrative discussion of how current programs address efforts to improve California's overall system. The analyses of the Outcomes and Composite Measures provide a more accurate, data supported depiction of specific CWS program and services over the past year. In addition to the information submitted to ACF within the PIP, County Self Assessments and System Improvement Plans, this section provides a more substantial dialogue regarding California's progress and helps determine improved paths for future goals. As a further concerted effort towards a cycle of continuous improvement, CDSS provides descriptions of the various PIPs in which CDSS is engaged: 1) Title IV-E Foster Care, 2) AAP, 3) AFCARS, 4) Caseworker Visit, and 5) CFSR. Each plan is described below, with the CFSR PIP further detailed in the following section and included as an attachment to this report, and the details of Caseworker Visit PIP are described further in the Well-Being section of this document. This more inclusive approach marks California's first steps toward a broader perspective of evaluation and planning.

In addition, the state's quality assurance system, known as the California-Children and Family Services Review or C-CFSR, establishes an outcomes-based review system. The system is patterned after the federal CFSR, using Peer Quality Case Reviews (PQCRs), County Self-Assessments (CSAs) and System Improvement Plans (SIPs) to assess, monitor, and track county CWS performance and improvements. The Outcomes and Accountability (OA) Bureau works collaboratively with counties throughout the PQCR, CSA, and SIP processes. Additionally, the OA Bureau monitors county performance on outcome measures and status of the implementation of SIP strategies with calls or site visits scheduled quarterly. County SIPs and SIP updates are posted on CDSS website at: http://www.childsworld.ca.gov/PG1419.htm. Additionally, there are plans to post the PQCR reports and CSAs in the near future.

CALIFORNIA'S PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT PLANS

As reported in the 2010 APSR, California had five active PIPs; however, over the course of the year, the state successfully appealed the findings of the Title IV-E Foster Care Review PIP. As the state is no longer in non-compliance, this 2011 APSR will be the final reporting of the Title IV-E Foster Care Review PIP.

California will also complete two PIPs in 2011, the CFSR PIP and the Caseworker Visits PIP. For the CFSR PIP, the state successfully submitted reports to the Children's Bureau indicating that all of the required action steps were completed timely. The Caseworker Visits PIP is scheduled to be in completed when final regulations package is released, currently schedule for August 2011. In spite of the completion of these two PIPs, California continues to build upon the program and systemic changes that were developed in the course of the plans.

- California's *Title IV-E Foster Care Review* was conducted the week of September 14-18, 2009. The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) found that California's Title IV-E foster care

maintenance program was not in substantial compliance with federal child and provider eligibility requirements for the period of October 1, 2008 to March 31, 2009. Four error cases or less is considered substantial compliance. As a result, California was required to develop a PIP to correct areas found to be in non-compliance.

The CDSS pursued an appeal of the findings with the Department of Appeals Board (DAB) focusing on three of the six error cases. The DAB reversed the error finding in two of the three cases resulting in the state being found in compliance. However, all training related to the PIP was completed prior to the notification of the DAB decision to reverse the error findings on the two cases.

- *Title IV-E Adoption Assistance Program Review (AAP) PIP* - The ACF reviewed California's Title IV-E Plan and concluded that the AAP is inconsistent with Federal law. As a result of the Federal review, California submitted a request to amend its Title IV-E State Plan to the Administration on Child, Youth and Families (ACYF) in 2007. The request was in response to the following program instructions (PI): ACYF-CB-PI-06-06 regarding changes made to the Social Security Act (SSA) by the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 (DRA); ACYF-CB-PI-07-02 regarding changes made to the SSA by the Fair Access Foster Care Act of 2005; the Safe and Timely Interstate Placement of Foster Children Act of 2006, the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006; and ACYF-CB-PI-07-04 regarding the changes made by the Tax Relief and Health Care Act of 2006.

  In May 2008, ACF notified the state of the areas of non-compliance with AAP Federal requirements and requested the State to submit a PIP. As a result of inquiries and discussions among CDSS staff and Region IX staff, the AAP PIP was approved in June 2009 and was originally scheduled to be completed by December 2010. The AAP PIP includes amendments to AAP statutes, regulations, policies, and procedures to bring the state into compliance with federal requirements related to AAP Eligibility; AAP Agreements and Payment Amounts; AAP Reassessments; and Nonrecurring Adoption Expenses. Pending completion of the PIP, an All County Letter (ACL) was released September 29, 2009 that provided interim direction in the following areas: AAP Eligibility; AAP Agreements and Payment Amounts; AAP Reassessments; and Nonrecurring Adoption Expenses. All proposed statute language was achieved via AB X4 4 effective July 28, 2009 and SB 597 signed October 11, 2009 effective January 1, 2010. The outstanding item to be completed per the AAP PIP is the regulation revisions. As part of the revision procedures the regulations were presented at a public hearing in February 2011. The CDSS received comments back and will be reviewing those comments and making any needed changes. The estimated time for completion of the revised regulations is August 2011. Effective January 19, 2011, ACYF approved a request to extend the PIP completion date to September 30, 2011 to allow for the implementation of regulations based on legislative changes.

- *AFCARS Assessment Review Improvement Plan (IP*) - AFCARS collects case level information from SACWIS on all children in foster care for whom State child welfare agencies have responsibility for placement, care or supervision and on children who are adopted under the auspices of the State's public child welfare agency. The AFCARS also includes information on foster and adoptive parents. States are required to submit AFCARS data semi-annually to ACF.

  For California, the AFCARS deficiencies are identified through an AFCARS assessment review process which results in the development of an AFCARS Improvement Plan (IP). Those identified data collection and reporting deficiencies must be corrected in order for the State to meet the

requirements established in the AFCARS Federal regulation at 45 CFR 1355.40. The AFCARS database contains 66 foster care and 37 Adoption specific data elements. The elements/general requirements that receive a score of "3" or lower out of a possible "4" in the ongoing assessment review make up the action items to be addressed in the IP. The CDSS makes the changes to the information system and/or data in order to meet the applicable requirements and standards in as timely a manner as possible, providing, updates of its progress to the ACF Regional Office.

Currently, CDSS has ongoing communications with ACF regarding its identified deficiencies. As a result, several systems changes, policy development, methodologies and tests have been conducted or are in the process of being implementation in order to conform to AFCARS requirements.

- *Caseworker Visits Program Review PIP* - The FFY 2011 PIP for Caseworker Visits focused on bringing California into compliance with the monthly visit requirement by promulgating regulations eliminating visit exceptions and implementing reporting of probation and Foster Family Agency (FFA) monthly visits. Reporting forms for FFAs and instructions have been promulgated. A pilot in three counties to train Probation Officers (POs) on entering data into CWS/CMS was completed. As of March 2011, 43 county probation departments were trained on entering data into CWS/CMS and plans are underway to provide training to the remaining 15 smaller counties. The regulations package which will eliminate most of the monthly visit exceptions is in the final approval process and it is anticipated that it will be finalized by August of 2011. The only remaining exception applies to caseworkers who have children placed in an FFA; which, upon the caseworker's supervisor approval, and meeting criteria for longevity, stability, and well-being, allows for the monthly visits to be completed by the FFA social worker. The visits are to be documented by the FFA social worker and entered into CWS/CMS by the caseworker.

California's Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) PIP

In recent years, CDSS has increasingly utilized evidence-based practices to bring about change in the child welfare system. Evidence-based practices are those that have empirical research supporting their efficacy. As part of this effort, during the first PIP, CDSS sponsored and continues to sponsor the California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse (CEBC). The Clearinghouse is a critical tool for identifying, selecting, and implementing evidence-based child welfare practices that will improve child safety, increase permanency, increase family and community stability and promote child and family well-being. For more detailed information on CEBC, please refer to page 178 in the CAPTA chapter.

A number of evidence-based strategies designed to improve the child welfare system in California are discussed below in some detail. While each strategy is presented individually, it is important to note that several of these strategies work in concert to produce the desired change. Similarly, many of the outcomes measured during the CFSR and noted in the PIP are affected by multiple strategies.

I. *Expand use of participatory case planning strategies.*

Findings indicate a need to increase engagement of youth, families, caregivers, tribes, and service providers in the case planning and decision making processes. Several case planning engagement approaches are being used across the state; however, they do not exist in all areas.

A number of key concerns emerged from the recent CFSR that will be addressed by using this strategy. For example, it was noted that there was uneven practice in involvement of children and parents in decision-making processes. Similarly, engagement of tribes for case planning and service delivery were found deficient (for further details of the key concerns, please see the summary of concerns in the next section).

II. *Sustain and enhance permanency efforts across the life of the case.*

Our review indicated that some efforts and practices to achieve a permanent, stable family for children and youth are not applied throughout the life of a case. Specific concerns raised during the CFSR revolved around inconsistent practices in concurrent planning and reunification efforts. Moreover, these practices may not be uniform across the state. Difficulties with timely notification of court proceedings to interested parties (i.e., caregivers, youth, tribes, etc.) were noted. Finally, several issues surrounding permanency included insufficient efforts to identify extended family members and support existing relationships of children removed from the home.

Findings show that even though progress has been made, efforts to obtain a permanent family for a child do not always continue when reunification (returning youth to their family) is not successful or when adoption or guardianship is not readily available.

III. *Enhance and expand caregiver recruitment, training, and support efforts.*

Findings show there are not enough foster homes for children and youth in need of foster care (Redding, Fried, & Britner, 2000). There is a need to strengthen recruitment and retention efforts to ensure placements for foster children and youth are available and stable. There is also a need to find and support extended family and kin (Hartnett et al., 1999). These issues were echoed in the CFSR report. Similarly, training and support for foster families needs to be improved. It has been shown that children's outcomes are at least somewhat related to support of caregivers including financial compensation (Duncan & Argys, 2007). These concerns were raised by a number of stakeholders during the review. Moreover, it was noted that while there are a number of promising pilot programs in place, there is no strategy for statewide implementation.

IV. *Expand options and create flexibility for services and supports to meet the needs of children and families.*

There are not enough services that are within reach of children and families involved in the child welfare system. Limited access to high quality mental health services, inpatient substance abuse treatment, therapeutic foster care, and post-adoption and guardianship services were shown to be among the most needed. Practices such as Wraparound improved access through coordination of services. Not enough transportation services and gaps in foreign language interpreters and culturally trained providers were also identified as barriers to obtaining services.

V. *Sustain and expand staff/supervisor training.*

One improvement activity created during the first CFSR was the implementation of a standardized core set of courses to train new social workers and supervisors. The core training also provided for ongoing training and was put into place to create uniformity of training across the state. New rules were in place July 1, 2008 to make the core training mandatory. Despite this change, there are a number of issues raised in the latest CFSR that are amenable to change through various forms of training. Some areas identified as training priorities include social workers' use of concurrent planning and permanency issues. Also, there is a need to focus on

training related to high needs children and youth. Probation staff reported their need for increased child welfare training as well.

VI. *Strengthen implementation of the statewide safety, risk, and needs assessment system.*

Although there are indications that standardized safety assessment systems are effective in assessing risk and identifying the services needed to address risks, some concerns were identified in the CFSR. There is a body of evidence that suggests that increased visits with social workers are related to more positive outcomes in children (Bronson, 2005). In a few California cases, some services were provided, but did not adequately address safety issues in the family, and the children remained at risk in the home. In several cases, there was a general lack of adequate safety and risk assessments in the child's home during the period under review. In addition, there were few attempts to engage families in the process of determining risks. Again, engagement of family has been linked to more positive outcomes for children and families (Littell & Tajima, 2000; Loman & Siegel, 2004a). Finally, the CFSR reviewers noted a lack of quality social workers visits that included an evaluation of strengths and needs. The inclusion of DR, including the on-going review of family strengths and needs is related to a number of positive outcomes for children including increased family engagement (Loman & Siegel, 2004a, 2004b), community involvement (Siegel & Loman, 2000), and increases in services provided (Institute of Applied Research, 2005). Moreover, the use of DR comes at no cost to the safety of children (Loman & Siegel, 2004b).

Through six broad strategies, California will continue to build on existing relationships and programs to improve the child welfare system and subsequently, improve the lives of children and families. The PIP is attached to this report as Attachment A, and is available for review at the following website address:
http://www.childsworld.ca.gov/res/pdf/PIP_Reformat_04_18_2011.pdf.

COMPLETED CFSR PIP ACTION STEPS

The following action steps were completed during the first six quarters of the PIP (Q1-Q6: 07/01/2009 to 12/31/2010). The Sixth Quarterly Report and all PIP previous reports are available online at: http://www.childsworld.ca.gov/PG1520.htm. Since its implementation, the PIP has undergone two complete renegotiations. More information is available on CDSS' website regarding CDSS' planned and completed PIP action steps.

I. Strategy 1: Expand use of participatory case planning strategies.

Goal: Increase engagement of children/youth, families, and others in case planning and decision-making processes across the life of the case for safety, permanency, and well-being.

Activities:

- ✓ ACIN No. 1-67-09 on Measurement of Family Engagements Efforts (Q1): In September 2009, CDSS issued an ACIN about the Family Engagement Efforts measure. A baseline was established for this measure. Additionally, funds were allocated to counties to increase participatory case planning efforts.
- ✓ ACIN No. I-70-09 on family engagement and participatory case planning guidelines for the Linkages Project (Q2): In November 2009, CDSS issued an ACIN about how the Linkages program can help accomplish increased use of family engagement strategies in case planning.

- ✓ Reviewed, revised, and disseminated Permanency Protocols based on lessons learned through the Eleven-County Pilot Project (Q3): Permanency Protocols were reviewed based on the results of the Eleven-County Pilot Project final report. It was found that the existing Permanency Protocols were appropriate and therefore were reissued to the counties in ACIN No. 1-24-10 in March 2010. Permanency Protocols identified three strategies that would enhance the permanency of foster care children served by child welfare agencies within the state. These three strategies included TDM, Family Participation in Case Planning, and Youth Inclusion in Case Planning.
- ✓ Developed family engagement and participatory case planning guidelines for Linkages Project and incorporated guidelines into Linkages semi-annual meetings (Q3): In November 2009, CDSS in conjunction with the Child and Family Policy Institute of California (CFPIC) developed the "Guidelines for Enhancing Family Participation through Coordinated Case Planning" guide. The guide provided critical information and guidance to both Linkages and non-Linkages counties on how the Linkages program can help accomplish the increased use of family engagement strategies in case planning. The key approaches are:
  - TDMs, the process where family, community and the child welfare agency collaborate to make decisions about the child's safety and placement.
  - Family Participation in Case Planning which is a case planning process that actively engages families in defining their strengths and identifying resources that will address the problems which resulted in the disruption of their family.
- ✓ Reviewed and updated core curricula on various models of participatory case planning and decision-making practices to address children's safety, permanency, and well-being at all decision points and throughout the life of the case. Implemented core curriculum (Q5).
- ✓ Developed advanced training module on specific strategies for engagement of fathers and related materials to address organizational culture change. Implemented advanced training on engaging fathers (Q5).

II. Strategy 2: *Sustain and enhance permanency efforts across the life of the case.*

Goal: Enhance practices and strategies that result in more children/youth having permanent homes and connections to communities, culture, and important adults.

Activities:

- ✓ Residentially Based Services (RBS) County proposals submitted (Q1): RBS is a multi-year pilot demonstration project aimed at transforming the state's current system of long-term congregate care into a system of RBS programs which combine short-term residential stabilization and treatment which follow along community-based services to reconnect youth to their families, schools, and communities. Proposals were submitted from four counties: San Bernardino, Los Angeles, Sacramento and San Francisco. The four demonstration sites have selected their participating private non-profit agency partners and worked together collaboratively to develop their RBS program plan, which includes: the Voluntary Agreement, Alternative Funding Model, and Waiver Request. The Voluntary Agreement serves as the agreement between the county and private non-profit agency, and delineates the details of their program design. The Alternative Funding Model outlines the payment system for their program in lieu of the current Rate Classification Level (RCL) used for paying private nonprofit

child welfare group home providers in California. The Waiver Request, contingent on approval from the CDSS Director, will allow the counties to request to waive specific state child welfare regulations that may prohibit or impair the implementation of their RBS program. A ten percent reduction in payments to foster care providers was enacted by the state budget effective October 1, 2009. A lawsuit was filed against this provider rate cut by the California Alliance of Child and Family Services. The ensuing court actions and appeals resulted in tremendous uncertainty concerning the appropriate rate levels for the RBS program, and resulted in multiple revisions and resubmissions of Alternative Funding Models by the pilot counties. This delayed implementation for all demonstration sites. The CDSS worked with the counties to resolve these issues resulting in full implementation of each demonstration site by March 2011. In part because of the delays encountered, state legislation (Assembly Bill 2129, Chapter 594, Statutes of 2010) was enacted to extend pilot project authority to January 1, 2015, ensuring sufficient time to operate and evaluate the pilot project.

- ✓ Finalized methodology and tool for case reviews to determine quality of social worker visits with parents & children. Baseline established (Q2): The CDSS developed the methodology and tool utilized in assessing the quality of social worker visits between parents and children and participated in the case review process. Regulations are in process to reflect the primary components of what a quality visit would include between a parent and their child. This information will help social workers and others monitoring these visits to appropriately redirect and teach parents techniques that could help them reunify with their children during the Family Reunification process.
- ✓ Resource Family Approval Pilot (Q 1-3): The CDSS convened a workgroup to develop a proposal for a consolidated home study, which would replace existing separate processes and requirements for foster care licensing, relative and non-related extended family members' approval and adoption home studies all into a single process, using a single standard for approval. Anticipated program implementation date of July 2010 was contingent upon funding. Due to the state's continued fiscal constraints, in September 2009, the Administration proposed that the pilot program become suspended until an appropriation of funds become available to implement the program. Should the pilot program become operative in the future, the program shall operate, in up to five counties, through the end of the third full fiscal year following the implementation date.
- ✓ Met measurement on increasing practices for finding families. The measure determined the number of entry children whose placement was with a relative at 60 days (Q6).
- ✓ The California Child Welfare Evidence Based Clearinghouse identified and published evidence based practices related to post-permanency services (Q4).

III. Strategy 3: *Enhance and expand caregiver recruitment, retention, training, and support efforts.*

Goal: Improve caregiver support strategies and augment educational/training curriculum.

Activities:

- ✓ Request Technical Assistance for Recruitment and Retention of resource families (Q1): In April 2009, CDSS submitted a request for technical assistance from the National Resource Center (NRC) for the purpose of improving recruitment and retention of resource families.

The NRC in conjunction with CDSS provided a convening in September 2009 to solicit input from various stakeholders in California on improving recruitment and retention. The information was compiled into a report that included recommendations for statewide impact.

- ✓ Caregiver Resource Directory (Q1): The Office of the California Foster Care Ombudsman created a County Caregiver Resource Directory to provide caregivers with a list of county resources to obtain support services, education, and training information. The list was distributed to county child welfare agencies, caregiver advocacy groups, foster parent associations, and various stakeholders in California.
- ✓ Surveyed counties to identify promising practices at the local level around the statewide campaign to recruit/retain resources families. Summary report completed (Q2): The CDSS issued its annual survey to all 58 counties in order to gather information on county efforts toward recruitment, retention and training of resource families. Results of the survey are compiled into a report that contains information on the best practices in recruitment and the most utilized activities for retention.
- ✓ Initiated the sharing of information via the caregiver network (Q2): As of February 24, 2010, information is provided regularly to those on the caregiver list.
- ✓ Identified and published information on resource family recruitment, retention, and training via the CEBC. Also provided training on evidence based practices on resource families, recruitment, retention, training, and caregiver-social worker partnership (Q3): In January 2004, the OCAP awarded Children's Hospital San Diego a grant to develop, implement, and maintain an evidence-based clearinghouse for child welfare practices in the State of California. The CEBC serves as an online connection for child welfare professionals, staff of public and private organization, academic institutions, and others who are committed to serving children and families. It provides the most current research and rating of specific evidence-based practices as a method of achieving improved outcomes of safety, permanency, and well-being for children and families involved in the California public child welfare system. The CDSS has increasingly utilized evidence-based practices to bring about change in the child welfare system. Evidence-based practices are those that have empirical research supporting their efficacy. The CEBC is a critical tool for identifying, selecting, and implementing evidence-based child welfare practices that will improve child safety, increase permanency, increase family and community stability, and promote child and family well-being. One of the topics added recently was information on resource family recruitment and training. The site posts the results of a literature search and rates the efficacy of training and recruitment programs. The CEBC staff has conducted presentations statewide for public child welfare administrators and supervisors. For more information on OCAP's work with the CEBC, please refer to page 178 of the CAPTA chapter.
- ✓ Established a communication network for caregiver advocates. Convened annual meeting of key caregiver advocacy organizations to exchange information (Q4).

IV. Strategy 4: *Expand options and create flexibility for services and supports to meet the needs of children and families.*

Goal: Increase statewide access to varied existing services options for children/youth and families in foster care.

Activities:

- ✓ ACIN I-53-09 for CSA & SIP Guides (Q1): On August 13, 2009, CDSS disseminated ACIN I-53-09 announcing the release of the revised CSA and SIP user guides which now include the state and federal requirements of the CAPIT, CBCAP, and PSSF programs. In 2008, CDSS released an instructional letter informing counties an interim CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF plan must be maintained until such a time as an integrated CSA and SIP are approved by CDSS. The CDSS's integration of the C-CFSR, CSA, and SIP with the CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF three-year plan has allowed OCAP consultants to work closely with CWS and community partners during the development of the CSA and SIP. This provides OCAP consultants an opportunity to provide critical technical assistance to ensure CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF services are available statewide, specifically in counties where the CSA process identifies specific unmet or continued needs that can be linked to these services. By coordinating the CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF plan with the CSA and SIP, counties have maximized their resources, increased partnerships, and enhanced communication.
- ✓ Wraparound Technical Assistance and Expansion-Provided technical assistance to non-Wraparound counties to help assess their feasibility to implement Wraparound (Q1): The non-Wraparound counties of Mariposa, Sonoma, and Stanislaus received training/technical assistance (T/TA) in the development and implementation of a Wraparound Services Program.
- ✓ Wraparound Technical Assistance and Expansion-Provided training and technical assistance to enable current Wraparound counties to build capacity to serve more children (Q1): Existing Wraparound counties participated in four regional sessions covering a variety of topics including Wraparound counts (slots), disenrollment/closure reasons, CDSS site visits, special project code date entry, Parent Partner fidelity tool, outcome measures, cross county issues, Wraparound and adoptive families, Probation, fiscal strategies, T/TA RFP, and budget impacts.
- ✓ Utilization of SIT to strengthen service array options (Q1): SIT priority work plan objectives for FY 2009-10 include: 1) Decrease racial disproportionate and disparities in outcomes across systems with a focus on CWS; 2) Share data across systems, 3) Improve access to AOD services by families in the child welfare system; and 4) Overcome real and perceived legal barriers to sharing "confidential" client information in order to strengthen services.
- ✓ Utilization of CWC to expand substance abuse treatment services (Q1): The Prevention/Early Intervention Committee is exploring the implications of prioritization of eligibility and streamlined services access to all departments of the HHSA and other partners. Early indications point strongly to prioritizing families at-risk for maltreatment for supports and services that include housing, alcohol and drug treatment, mental health, and other services in order to create a robust DR program.
- ✓ TA application and acceptance from National Center for Substance Abuse & Child Welfare (Q1): In collaboration with the Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs and AOC, CDSS developed a two-year work plan with a comprehensive environmental scan as the first activity. In that effort, staff from the three agencies designed data and program survey protocols and made site visits with court observations of state or grant-funded dependency drug courts. Following site visits to state-funded courts, staff provided consultation and

technical assistance. For others, T/TA opportunities will be available in a later phase. The three agencies are on schedule to deliver a comprehensive implementation plan with practice, training, technical assistance, data models and funding components.

- ✓ Linkages Project was utilized to disseminate best practices on effective collaboration between California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) and Child Welfare regarding services and supports for families. Semi-annual project meetings were used to inform participants of best practices. Dissemination of screening tools and associated protocols were accomplished (Q4).
- ✓ Monitored and provided technical assistance for IV-E Waiver Demonstration Project (Los Angeles and Alameda Counties) to determine impact of waiver on service array. Supported funding flexibility efforts to expand/enhance services and supports to meet children/family needs (Q6).
- ✓ Established a workgroup to determine feasibility of statewide implementation of Differential Response (DR). Finalized DR model and parameters for model fidelity in rollout. Workgroup recommendations were submitted to Deputy Director (Q4).

V. Strategy 5: *Sustain and expand staff/supervisor training.*

Goal: Increase educational and training opportunities for staff and supervisors working in the child welfare system.

Activities:

- ✓ CPOC survey of counties to assess probation training needs (Q1): A needs assessment survey was conducted in 2007. Survey findings were included in the CPOC Training Plan 2008-09. A copy of the plan, including the list of 148 training topics resulting from the survey, was provided to ACF as evidence.
- ✓ Implementation of new social worker training regulations (Q1): Social worker training regulations are in effect. Counties were notified by the ACL 08-23 issued on May 19, 2008 and by the ACIN I-21-09 issued on March 12, 2009, which answered frequently asked questions pertaining to the training regulations.
- ✓ CPOC developed three new child welfare related curriculum for probation specific needs and delivered training. (Q4): Increased the availability of the nine-day probation officer core training via training announcements, and increased awareness of availability of two-day mandated training for probation officers on Termination of Parental Rights (TPR), concurrent planning and visitation via training announcements.
- ✓ Strengthened concurrent planning training by revising advanced concurrent planning curriculum for CWS staff, attorneys, care providers, and other community partners (Q4).

VI. Strategy 6: *Strengthen implementation of the statewide safety assessment system.*

Goal: Improve timeliness of investigations and enhance services to families to ensure safety of child.

Activities:

- ✓ Strengthened implementation of the safety, risks, strengths, and needs assessment by enhancing training for trainers' curriculum.

- ✓ On August 17, 2009, ACL 09-31 was released to emphasize the importance of thoroughly assessing the safety and risk factors that may be present in each child abuse and/or neglect referral investigated by a county CWS agency. It also provided clarification on the requirement for written assessments throughout the life of a child welfare case http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/lettersnotices/entres/getinfo/acl/2009/09-31.pdf.
- ✓ Enhanced training for trainers' curriculum by incorporating data reviews as a method for supervisors to monitor timely completion of safety, needs, and risk assessments (Q3): The training for trainer's curriculum has been enhanced with the incorporation of data reviews.
- ✓ Provided training to build supervisor capacity to monitor fidelity to the assessment tool (Q3): Training has been provided at the county level to build supervisor capacity to monitor fidelity of the use of the safely assessment tool.
- ✓ Developed and delivered advanced training on interviewing for strengths and needs and writing individualized case plans in conjunction with family members (Q4): An advanced training module has been developed and delivered via three webinars.

CFSR PIP MEASUREMENTS

The table on the following page includes baseline measurements for California CWS Agencies and CDSS' progress toward meeting each measurement. As of April 15, 2011, data for items 15, 19, and 20 are pending for Quarter 7; otherwise, California has met all the target improvement goals for all measures except Placement Stability.

Table 1 – CFSR PIP Measurement	Base-line	Target Improvement	Score	Target Status
Safety Measures				
Absence of Maltreatment of Children in Foster Care	99.71%			Target Met
Absence of Maltreatment Recurrence	92.6%	93.2%	93.2%	Target Met
Outcome: Safety 1, Item I: Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment	94.5%	94.7%	94.7%	Target Met
Outcome: Safety 2, Item 3: Services to family to protect child(ren) in home and prevent removal	61.8%	62.3%	66.7%	Target Met
Outcome Safety 2, Item 4: Risk of harm to child (Risk Assessments completed within 65 days prior to case closing)	60.1%	60.6%	63.5%	Target Met
Outcome: Safety 2, Item 4: Risk of harm to child(ren) (Safety Assessments completed within 65 days prior to case closing	22.8%	23.2%	23.5%	Target Met
Permanency Measure				
Timeliness of Adoptions	95.3	99.2	99.8	Target Met
Permanency for Children In Foster Care for Extended Time Periods	107.0	110	113.1	Target Met
Timeliness and Permanency of Reunification	107.1	110.2	110.6	Target Met
Placement Stability	92.5	95.3	92.9	**Not Met**
Outcome: Permanency 1, Item 7: Permanency goal established in a timely manner	72.5%	75.3%	75.6%	Target Met
Permanency Outcome 1, Item 10: Permanency goal of other planned permanent living arrangement	14.7%	14.4%	13.8%	Target Met
Outcome: Permanency 2: Measurement of Action Step 2.1 – Family Finding	31.32%	31.9%	31.3%	**Not Met**
Well-Being Measures				
Outcome: Well-Being 1, Item 17: Needs and services of child, parent and foster parent (Wraparound Services)	5.4%	5.6%	5.9%	Target Met
Outcome: Well-being, Item 18: Child and family involvement in case planning	56.70%	57.0%	57.0%	Target Met
Outcome: Well-being 1, Item 19: Caseworker Visits with Child	83.2%	85.0%		Due Q8
Outcome: Well-being 1, Item 20: Caseworker Visits with Parents	63.1%	65.5%		Due Q8

CALIFORNIA'S QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM: CALIFORNIA-CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES REVIEW

The Outcomes and Accountability System was formed as a result of the passage of the Child Welfare System Improvement and Accountability Act (AB 636) in 2001 and the federal CFSR. Assembly Bill 636 was designed to improve outcomes for children in the child welfare system while holding county and state agencies accountable for the outcomes achieved.

In California, the statewide accountability system is referred to as the California Children and Family Services Review or C-CFSR. It went into effect January 1, 2004, and is an enhanced version of the CFSR, the federal oversight system mandated by Congress and used to monitor states' performance.

The purpose of the C-CFSR is to significantly strengthen the accountability system used in California to monitor and assess the quality of services provided on behalf of maltreated children. As such, the C-CFSR operates on a philosophy of continuous quality improvement, interagency partnerships, community involvement and public reporting of program outcomes. The C-CFSR is comprised of county child welfare system reviews and maximizes compliance with federal regulations for the receipt of federal Title IV-E and Title IV-B funds.

The C-CFSR includes: 1) County Self-Assessments (CSA), 2) County Peer Quality Case Reviews (PQCR), 3) County System Improvement Plans (SIP), 4) Outcome and Accountability County Data Reports, and 5) State Technical Assistance and Monitoring.

- The *CSA* is a county's opportunity to explore how local program operations and other systemic factors affect measured outcomes. This review requires counties to prepare a document that addresses the CWS outcomes and indicators, local system characteristics, and any additional indicators and measures the county chooses to identify.
- The purpose of the *PQCR* is to learn, through intensive examination of county child welfare practices, how to improve child welfare services and practices in California, both in participating counties and in other jurisdictions as well. The PQCR is one mechanism for understanding social worker practice rather than validating quantitative data. The PQCR goes beyond the self-assessment by bringing in outside expertise, including county peers, to help shed light on the strengths and weaknesses of child welfare services. During the second CFSR PIP period, 38 counties completed PQCR processes. As outlined in Table 2 below, of those 38 counties, nearly 35 percent focused their topic area on Placement Stability, while 26 percent focused on Transitioning Youth into Adulthood and Providing Aftercare to those youth. The majority of other topics focused on Permanency-related issues such as Reunification, Reentry, and Adoption, while one county focused on Safety, and another focused on systemic issues and tribal relations.

Table 2: PQCR Topic Areas during FFY 2009 and 2010.

	Number of Counties		
Topics	Topic 1	Topic 2	Topic 3
Adoptions within 12 months	3		
Concurrent Planning		1	
Exits to Permanency	6		
Family Finding and Kinship Care		1	
Least Restrictive Placement		2	
Median Time to Adoption	1		
Permanency Youth in Care Three Years or Longer	2		
Placement Stability	13		
Recurrence of Maltreatment	1		
Reentry Following Reunification	5	1	
Relative Placements		1	
Reunification Composite	1		
Reunification within 12 months	3	1	
Stability in Relative Caregiver Homes	1		
Systemic Issues and Relationship with local Tribe	1		
Timely Adoptions	1		
Youth Transitioning to Adulthood - Aftercare		9	1
Total	**38**	**16**	**1**

- The *SIPs* are the operational agreements between the county and state outlining how the county will improve its system of care for children and youth and forms an important part of the system for reporting on progress toward meeting agreed upon improvement goals using the C-CFSR outcomes and indicators. Much of the information provided in this report are garnered from the counties' CSAs PQCR and SIP reports and are noted as such throughout the document.

Table 3: C-CFSR Progress

	FY 2009-10	FY 2010-11
CSAs	12	20
PQCRs	22	16
SIPs	16	23

SAFETY

01 - PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION 41
02 - MALTREATMENT RECURRENCE 53
03 - ABSENCE OF ABUSE/NEGLECT IN FOSTER CARE 58
04 - TIMELY RESPONSE 59
05 - SERVICES TO PREVENT REMOVAL 62
06 - MANAGING RISK & SAFETY 67

1 Prevention and Early Intervention: Ensure that the state is appropriately preventing and intervening early in the abuse and neglect of children

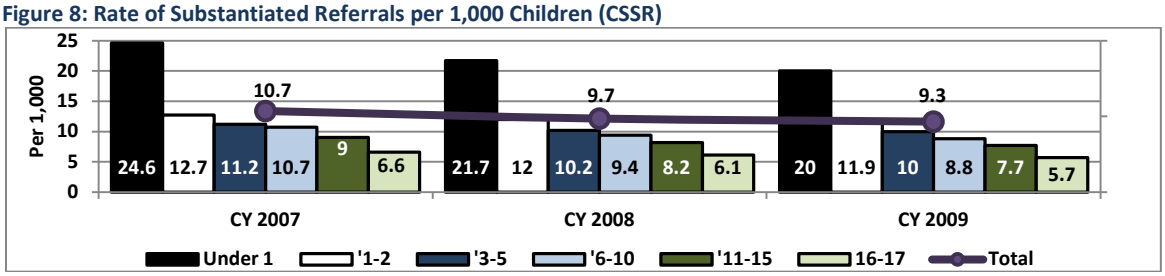
Child Welfare Services in California span the continuum of care from prevention and early intervention to treatment and aftercare, however a prevention and early intervention focused CWS system is crucial to achieving safety, permanency and well-being for California's children. As the CDSS lead in prevention and early intervention efforts across California, the OCAP engages in multiple efforts to prevent child abuse and neglect including the Strengthening Families Initiative, the Family Development Matrix Project, the Safe Kids California Project, the Linkages Project and Supporting Father Involvement. Through these efforts the OCAP provides training and technical assistance, and disseminates educational material on prevention and early intervention programs, activities and research.

In addition, CDSS/OCAP provides oversight of the state for CAPIT as well as the CBCAP and PSSF programs by requiring counties to prepare plans that address how prevention and early intervention activities are coordinated and how services will be provided during a three year period. Counties are highly encouraged to utilize prevention and early intervention funds to build the capacity of communities to strengthen families, keep children safe, and provide a continuum of quality family services, supports, and opportunities. The CAPTA chapter of this report provides additional information into California's child abuse prevention programs.

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

The substantiation rate for a given year is computed by dividing the unduplicated count of children with a substantiated allegation by the child population and multiplying by 1,000. Overall, the rate of referrals in California has **decreased by over 13 percent** from Calendar Year (CY) 2007 at 10.7 per 1,000 to 9.3 per 1,000 in CY 2009. The largest rate of decrease was among infants under one year old, decreasing by nearly 19 percent over the three year period at 24.6 per 1,000 in CY 2007 to 20 per 1,000 in CY 2009.

Figure 8: Rate of Substantiated Referrals per 1,000 Children (CSSR)



FACTORS AFFECTING PROGRESS

While the specific reason California has improved in the prevention and early intervention of child abuse and neglect cannot be determined, some factors that may have likely contributed:

- ✓ Increase in prevention focused service provision as a result of Child Welfare Redesign
- ✓ Integration of CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF three year plan into C-CFSR process
- ✓ Counties efforts to assess the effectiveness of prevention efforts
- ✓ Promoting Safe and Stable Families
- ✓ Family Preservation
- ✓ Family Support
- ✓ Differential Response

- California counties are shifting to *prevention focused service provision*, indicating progress in the statewide effort to prevent child abuse and neglect. The statewide shift to prevention focused service provision began in 2000 when CDSS launched an effort to develop a comprehensive plan for reform for the child welfare system. A Child Welfare Services Stakeholders' Group was appointed to examine the program and develop a plan for broad-based reform of California's child welfare system – referred to as the "Redesign". The Redesign was the first in the nation undertaken as a state initiative, rather than as a forced response to a court order. The Stakeholders group began its work in August 2000 and released recommendations and an implementation plan in June 2003.

  The Stakeholders Group was tasked with: 1) identifying and building on effective child welfare practices used in the state and elsewhere, and 2) recommending comprehensive, integrated system changes to improve outcomes for children and families. In seeking continuous improvement in the CWS, Stakeholders from the CWS and many fields including prevention, identified major shifts from the old system to the new. These shifts included accepting as a primary value the principle that preventing child abuse and neglect, intervening early, and supporting families are critical components within the CWS continuum of care. The practice of prevention, woven into all aspects of the Redesign, builds a proactive system that seeks to avert tragedy before it occurs. Some prevention strategies are to:

  1. Formalize the roles of Child Welfare Services and partner agencies at the state, local, and neighborhood levels in prevention across the continuum of services and supports.
  2. Establish a collaborative prevention model based on public-private partnerships at the state, local, and neighborhood levels with shared investment in outcomes and accountability.
  3. Engage community residents, especially parents and other caregivers, in all partnership and prevention activities.

- In 2009, CDSS *integration of the CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF three-year plan into the Outcome and Accountability System* provided the opportunity to align this integrated approach with the Redesign Workgroup recommended strategies. The CDSS integration of the CSA and SIP with the CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF three-year plan has improved CDSS' continuous quality improvement, interagency partnerships, community involvement, and public reporting of program outcomes. This is evident during the CSA and SIP planning process and development of the CSA and SIP as counties look more holistically at their CWS system from prevention and early intervention through permanency.

As part of the integrated approach, county child abuse prevention partners, including a representative from the local Child Abuse Prevention Councils (CAPCs) are active participants in both the CSA and SIP planning meetings. Prevention partners review the CSA and SIP to determine if the plan continues to meet local needs. Since each CAPC is designated by the County Board of Supervisors (BOS) and their primary purpose is to coordinate the community's efforts to prevent and respond to child abuse, their participation has been critical in ensuring local needs are being discussed and/or met. In addition to CAPC participation, representative from the following community groups and prevention partners have participated: County Children's Trust Fund Commission/Council, County Mental Health, County Health, County Alcohol and Drug, Probation, Native American tribes, parents/consumers, resource families, caregivers, youth, Court-Appointed Special Advocates, domestic violence providers, Early Childhood Education, faith-based community, Law Enforcement, Juvenile Court Bench Offices and private foundations. This integrated approach has allowed input from various partners which in turn impacts CWS program decisions and outcomes.

Furthermore, the development of the CSA requires each county to review the full scope of Child Welfare and Probation services, from prevention through the continuum of care. Additionally, counties conduct a thorough needs assessment providing an analysis on demographics, service provision, systemic factors, and unmet needs. Development of the SIP allows counties to specify their priority improvement goals and to establish a planned process for achieving improvement in those areas. The SIP also includes a coordinated plan for service provision for programs funded with CBCAP/CAPIT/PSSF, providing evidence that services are meeting an identified unmet need. California counties hold community meetings and focus groups in order to receive input from key stakeholders.

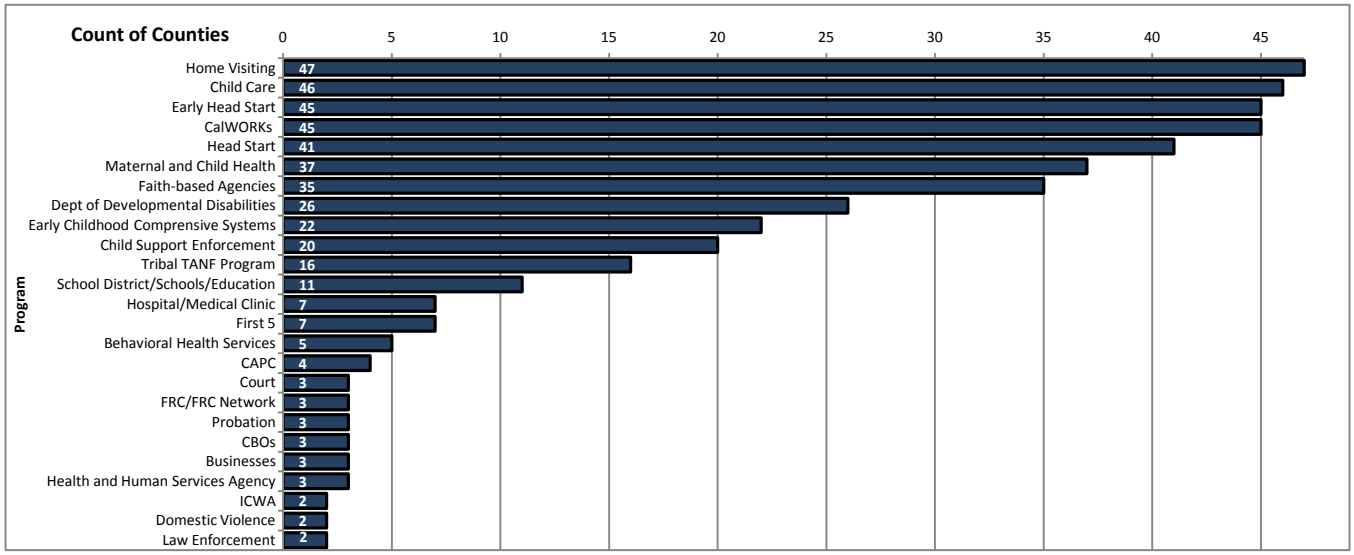
As of March 2011, *26 counties* have submitted CSAs and SIPs that have been approved by their BOS and another *18 counties* are currently participating in the integrated C-CFSR process. The OCAP consultants work closely with counties as they assess their service needs during the CSA process and develop a plan for service provision through the SIP. This process allows OCAP consultants an opportunity to provide critical training and technical assistance to county child welfare agencies as they coordinate with community partners. The OCAP consultants participate in the internal county preparation meetings and county stakeholder meetings to provide program expertise on prevention, early intervention and treatment services, encourage the development and implementation of evidence-based programs and practice, and assist counties in identifying programs and services allowable with CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF funding that will support outcome measures and strategies. The consultants also guide counties as they look at how interagency collaborations and leveraging funding can impact their ability to achieve positive outcomes for children and families, review and interpret state and federal code in order to provide technical assistance to counties, as well as review and provide feedback on CSA and SIP reports. With CAPCs and OCAP consultants as active participants in CSAs and SIPs, prevention is moving to the forefront of CWS assessment and planning efforts.

Each California County receiving CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF funding must report annually on their participation rates for prevention and early intervention program/activities; changes of service providers and/or programs; CAPC and Parent Engagement activities; braiding of funds; linking services; collaboration and coordination efforts, and on their quality assurance process.

Through these annual updates, the OCAP is able to assess the success of prevention and early intervention programs across California.

For instance, the OCAP asks counties to include in the Annual Report, the programs and initiatives where collaboration and coordination occur for the purpose of strengthening and supporting families for the prevention of child abuse and neglect. As seen in the table below, California Counties collaborate and coordinate their home visitation services, child care services, Early Head Start programs, and CalWORKs programs. This indicates that County CWS agencies understand the impact collaboration has on prevention and early intervention.

Figure 9: Collaboration and Coordination of Services in California FY 2009-10 (OCAP Annual Report)



**All 58 counties are represented in Figure 9 above.

- Challenges exist in measuring the effectiveness of prevention programs and services. California *counties engage in the following activities to help determine whether a prevention effort is successful or necessary*: conduct needs assessments, surveys and site visits, implement evidence-based programs, and analyze overall participation data for CWS. For example, San Francisco County reported that prevention efforts are focused on a network of neighborhood-based Family Resource Centers (FRC). Each FRC provides services tailored to the individual community's needs and include information and referral, community education and outreach, nutrition classes, food pantries, parent education, and support groups. San Francisco County conducted a needs assessment and held community focus groups in order to identify unmet community needs, thus informing the county's decision to provide prevention focused services through neighborhood FRCs.

  Measuring early intervention outcomes have been more successful. Sacramento County, for example, has been able to show that their DR program has positive outcomes for children and families. The Birth and Beyond (BB) program is a comprehensive primary prevention and early intervention program that provides in-home and neighborhood-based services for children and families. The BB program is provided through community FRCs with the highest concentrations of families at risk for child abuse and neglect. During 2009-10, *478 families* received home visitation services from an AmeriCorps home visitor through Sacramento County's BB program. Of the 242 families who had CWS history prior to enrolling in the BB home visiting program, 93

percent had no new referrals to CWS. All of the 236 families who had no CWS history prior to enrolling in the BB home visiting program had no referrals to child welfare[4].

Additionally, Solano County has begun to capture early intervention outcomes quantitatively. Solano County supports the Rio Vista FRC. This FRC provides a multitude of services including prevention and early intervention. Solano County utilizes the Family Development Matrix (FDM) in order to measure the FRC's outcomes. The FDM is an outcomes-based tool that provides information over time on whether families at the FRCs are meeting their long-term goals, quantifying how the families' lives are changing.

- The *PSSF Program* contributes to the overall vision of safety, permanency and well-being for California's children and families. The four components will be identified throughout this report as factors contributing to progress. Time-Limited Family Reunification will be discussed at length in Permanency Section 7, and Adoption Promotion and Support will be discussed at length in the Permanency Section 8.

California allocates 90 percent of the PSSF grant directly to counties for service provision. This allows each county the flexibility to meet the individual needs of their communities. All 58 California counties receive PSSF funding. In FY 2009-10, California was very close to achieving state compliance with the requirement to spend a minimum 20 percent per category on a statewide basis.

Table 4: Distribution of PSSF Categories	
Family Preservation	25.65%
Family Support	30.92%
Adoption Promotion and Support	23.80%
Time-Limited Family Reunification	19.63%

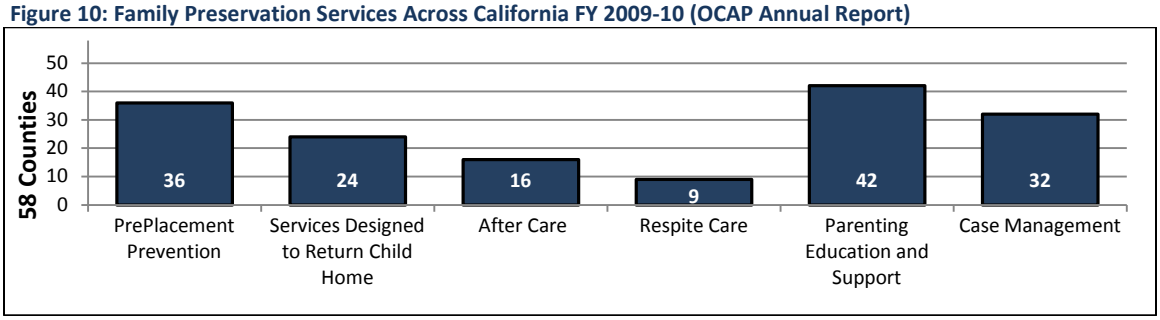
This mandate requires county service provision span the entire continuum of CWS. As discussed earlier, the CSA provides counties an opportunity to conduct a thorough, county-wide needs assessment. Through the needs assessment counties carefully consider unmet and continued needs across the entire continuum. Counties then prioritize programs and services for prevention, early intervention, treatment, and aftercare. The expenditure breakdown shown above indicates that California counties are expending PSSF funds to meet the needs of children and families across the continuum as required.

Family Preservation and Family Support are critical components of California's CWS system as safety is integral to the prevention and early intervention of child abuse and neglect. Many programs funded with PSSF promote prevention and early intervention within the child welfare continuum of services. Through the OCAP Annual Report, counties reported a total of 552,938 recipients of prevention and early intervention focused services during FY 2009-10. Total recipient count includes children, parents/caregivers, and families. For each service category, recipient is counted once as either child, parent/caregiver, or family.

- *Family Preservation* - As indicated in the table below, parent education and pre-placement prevention services were reported to be utilized most often across California during FY 2009-10. Statewide, a total of *55,264 recipients* engaged in parenting education and support services with Family Preservation dollars. Furthermore, a total of *111,327 recipients* engaged in pre-placement prevention services such as TDM meetings, substance abuse services, counseling, home visitation, domestic violence services, garbage removal, and other concrete assistance.

[4] LPC Consulting Associates, Incorporated. Birth and Beyond 3 Year Report, July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2010. Sacramento, CA, 2010

Figure 10: Family Preservation Services Across California FY 2009-10 (OCAP Annual Report)



**All 58 counties are represented in Figure 9 above.

Additional Family Preservation services provided across California in FY 2009-10 include mental health treatment, food, housing and basic needs assistance, self-sufficiency skills, transportation, information and referral and anger management. Below are county specific examples of Family Preservation services provided during FY 2009-10.

As in many communities across California, Placer County has seen an increase in the number of children impacted by substance abuse. In response, PSSF Family Preservation dollars support substance abuse treatment. Parents in Placer County struggling with substance abuse have access to a variety of treatment options. These include detoxification, in-patient transitional living, out-patient treatment and perinatal services.

Los Angeles County implements Linkages with Family Preservation dollars. This collaborative model involves the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Social Worker and the Linkages CalWORKs Services Worker, through CalWORKs. When families are referred to the DCFS Family Preservation Program, Social Workers determine if the family participates in CalWORKs/GAIN (Greater Avenues for Independence— employment services to CalWORKs participants). If so, a multidisciplinary case planning meeting is held to develop a service plan. The purpose of Family Preservation/GAIN service coordination is to integrate the resources of DCFS and GAIN to keep families intact. The Family Preservation Program provides core services and links to community providers. The "Linkage" service model enhances the availability of resources in that it taps into services that are available via the CDSS. While participating in acceptable Welfare to Work Family Preservation Program activities, a GAIN participant may be eligible to receive supportive services which include childcare, transportation, ancillary expenses, and specialized supportive services such as mental health, substance abuse, domestic violence assessment, and treatment services.

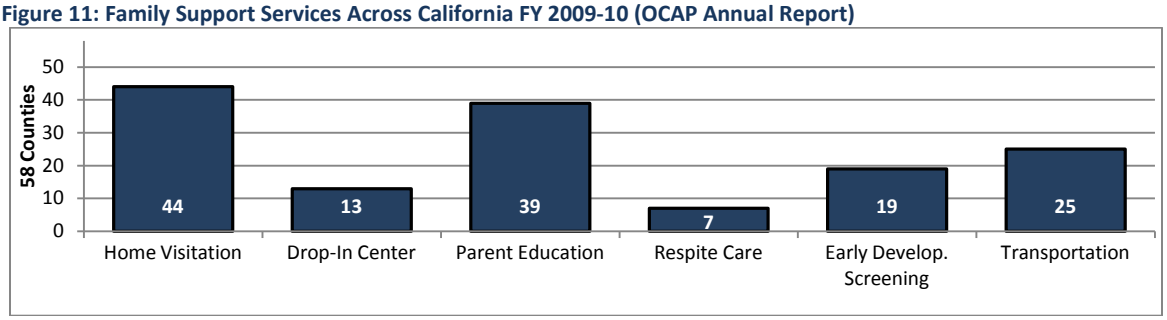
Monterey County utilizes Family Preservation dollars to provide a 24-hour Crisis Center for children at risk of entering foster care as well as to maintain Family to Family, a promising practice model which provides the information, support, and encouragement parents need during TDM meetings with child welfare.

Family Preservation Team members provide home visits to Nevada County families at risk of foster care placement. The team consists of a social worker, a nurse, and a licensed mental health professional. This multi-disciplinary approach provides families with a comprehensive assessment and linkage to services such as employment, housing, childcare, food, financial planning, medical and dental, parenting education, and mental health.

Families in crisis or at risk of entering the CWS system need additional supports and services. Participation in programs and services listed above are keeping children safe, preserving families, and contributing to California's prevention and early intervention efforts.

- *Family Support* - As depicted in the table below, home visitation and parent education services were reported to be utilized most often across California during FY 2009-10. Statewide, a total of *30,008 recipients* engaged in home visitation services with Family Support dollars. Most counties providing home visitation braid and leverage other federal, state, local, and private dollars for service provision. This allows counties flexibility, coordination of resources, collaboration within communities, and expansion of prevention and early intervention focused services. Across California, a total of *40,382 recipients* engaged in parent education services with Family Support dollars.

Figure 11: Family Support Services Across California FY 2009-10 (OCAP Annual Report)



**All 58 counties are represented in Figure 11 above.

Additional Family Support services provided across California in FY 2009-10 include housing, utility, food and basic needs assistance, counseling, case management, self-sufficiency skills, alcohol and substance abuse, domestic violence, health and child development education, information and referral, literacy, social support, health insurance assistance, job training, legal services, family, and TDM meetings. Below are county specific examples of Family Support services provided during FY 2009-10.

Napa County provides home visitation to families at high risk for abuse and/or homelessness. The family and home visitor create an individualized family service plan, building upon the family strengths and incorporating family goals. At a minimum of once per week, the home visitor provides resources, referrals, mentoring, and education in the following areas: child development, positive discipline, safety, finances, recovery support, child abuse prevention, employment, and basic needs such as food, shelter, and clothing. Napa County braids the Family Support funding with foundation and corporate grants, Master Tobacco Settlement funding, and other government funding.

In San Mateo County, Puente de la Costa Sur's Project is a community based program located on school campuses. This project serves Latina mothers, particularly immigrants, and provides opportunities for socialization and social support. While bridging families to the larger community, Puente de la Costa Sur serves as a single entry point for safety net services. Many families served struggle with alcohol and substance abuse, literacy, poverty, and linkage to resources. The 'Puente de la Costa Sur Project' addresses some of the Strengthening Families Protective Factors with its six goals:

1. Increased access to basic needs subsidies
2. Increased literacy development for children and Spanish/English fluency for parents

3. Increased enrollment and retention in health insurance programs
4. Parental support and health education for families with children ages zero to five
5. Reduced maternal depression
6. Counseling and peer support programs for children ages five to eighteen

As highlighted in the Napa and San Mateo County examples, California recognizes the critical importance of providing community based services which promote safety and well-being while increasing the strength and stability of families. These and other Family Support programs across California contribute to the prevention and early intervention of child abuse and neglect.

- *Differential Response* (discussed further in the following section) has been used as a prevention and early intervention program that allows social workers to link families in crisis with community services. In cases where a call into the child welfare services agency hotline might have been ordinarily screened out as child abuse or neglect, the social worker responding to the hotline call may refer to the family to community services (Path 1), or if the risk is low or moderate (Path 2), the social worker may partner with a community agency to prevent the situation from escalating into an unsafe environment for the child. The program is based on the premise that if services are offered earlier, families can reduce risks and subsequent referral to the child welfare system later. Below are county specific examples of differential response programs. As described on page 66, there are more than 42 counties use some form of DR.

  Orange County provides Path 2 DR, supported with Family Preservation dollars. This coordinated response between the county CWS agency and community based family resource center allows for families to be assessed for issues of child abuse and specific family needs. These Path 2 services are provided in four family resource centers throughout the county based on areas of highest child abuse reports. Participating families receive information and referrals, community based counseling, case management, and in-home parent education.

  Santa Barbara County provides Path 1 DR services through their Front Porch program, which is supported with Family Preservation dollars. Front Porch connects families early with resources and supports in the community. Families at high risk of child abuse and neglect receive prevention and early intervention focused services such as: basic needs support, parenting education, counseling or substance abuse treatment. Partnerships with the community, such as 'Front Porch', allow CWS to respond earlier and with a prevention focus instead of later as an intervention.

LIMITATIONS

As indicated earlier, the OCAP consultants work closely with counties through the CSA and SIP planning process. As a result, OCAP consultants have become better informed of the progress and limitations that exist with prevention and early intervention efforts across the CWS continuum of care. Counties, especially smaller counties, struggle with lack of resources and reduced funding and therefore must prioritize a long list of needed services. While California provides a broad array of services for county specific needs, there continue to be gaps in services. In the OCAP FY 2009-10 Annual Reports, counties identified the following service gaps:

- Alcohol and substance abuse treatment: residential, dual-diagnosis, transitional housing, treatment for minors and aftercare services

- Mental health services: culturally appropriate, low or no cost, family focused, adoption specific and county-wide
- Housing: affordable and transitional

Additionally, most counties have reduced their breadth of service provision, usually due to limited resources. For example, some prevention focused family resource centers have had to limit the availability of services to families with children under age five due to reductions in funding. During the CSA process, counties conduct a thorough needs assessment. CWS, Probation, CAPCs and other community partners identify all unmet and continued needs. Given the current economic climate, counties are forced to prioritize their services, ultimately limiting the program impact.

STRATEGIES AND PLANS FOR 2012

- ✓ Strengthening Families Framework
- ✓ SafeCare Home Visiting
- ✓ The Federal Affordable Care Maternal Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program Grant
- ✓ Family Development Matrix

The CDSS/OCAP has continued its statewide efforts to provide comprehensive prevention-focused services in California in the following capacities:

- *Strengthening Families Initiative* - In 2001, with funding from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) began studying the role that early care and education programs nationwide can play in strengthening families and preventing abuse and neglect. The CSSP linked research about preventing child abuse and neglect with similar knowledge about quality early care and education programs. This led to the development of a conceptual framework and approach to preventing child abuse and neglect, called Strengthening Families.

  The CDSS/OCAP has made great strides in its efforts to implement the Strengthening Families Initiative Statewide. The CDSS/OCAP recognizes that as a county administered state, decisions about implementing various initiatives/programs vary broadly amongst the 58 counties depending on specific local needs, priorities, and resources. Fortunately, the impetus for Strengthening Families in California has come from the grassroots and county levels. Stakeholders in a variety of sectors have embraced the framework because of its focus on optimal outcomes for children and opportunities for creative integration of funding professional development and program design. At the county level leaders are reporting that the language of the Five Protective Factors is flexible enough to integrate into a variety of current efforts while also accessible to multiple constituencies.

  The CDSS/OCAP recognized that in order to implement this framework statewide it was essential to work with our partners who were already utilizing this framework as a mechanism for their work. The CDSS/OCAP continued their partnership with Strategies (a collaboration of three non-profit agencies) to initiate a statewide coordination effort to promote the Strengthening Families model on a broader level.

  The OCAP and Strategies have been hosting meetings to discuss the Strengthening Families initiative across California, and to promote local implementation of the Strengthening Families framework. In September 2010, a first convening of leaders was held to explore statewide

implementation of the framework. Commissioner Bryan Samuels, ACF, and Judy Langford, of the Center for the Study of Social Policy, addressed the group and provided insight into lessons learned during the implementation of the framework in other states. Commissioner Samuels emphasized support for the framework at the federal level and encouraged California's efforts to move forward.

This meeting was attended by 63 key leaders from 37 organizations, including:

- California First Five Association
- California Community College Association
- Los Angeles County Mental Health
- The Stuart Foundation
- The S.H. Cowell Foundation
- California Department of Education
- Child Abuse Prevention Councils
- California Network of Family Strengthening Networks
- California Family Resource Association
- Casey Family Programs
- Los Angeles Department of Children Family and Youth Services
- California Child Welfare Directors Association
- Prevent Child Abuse California
- The California Child Welfare Council
- California Department of Social Services

In December 2010, a leadership team developed from the initial participants met again and formed itself as the *California Strengthening Families Roundtable*. The team had an open and positive discussion about the potential for implementation of the framework to improve the lives of children and families. The group agreed that the following elements were crucial to moving the work forward in California:

- Cross-sector collaboration and leadership that includes both traditional and non-traditional partners in the child abuse and neglect prevention and early childhood fields.
- Alignment with other important prevention and early intervention efforts across the state and leveraging of existing resources and expertise.
- An openness to putting a "California" stamp on the Strengthening Families framework by exploring its application beyond early childhood and incorporating a Family Support perspective right from the start, primarily through the involvement of FRCs at the table.
- Organized opportunities for peer learning and exchange.
- A commitment to embedding the Five Protective Factors into multiple systems that touch the lives of children and families on a daily basis, including FRCs, with a special focus on bringing schools to the table.
- Thoughtful application of the Strengthening Families three "levers for change."

In March 2011, the Department of Maternal, Adolescent and Children's Health, which is using the Strengthening Family framework as an organizing principle in their implementation of Evidence Based Home Visiting programs, agreed to participate in the Roundtable.

The California Strengthening Families Roundtable is at the beginning stages of assessing priorities. The group will look closely at each of the three levers of change; social policy, parent involvement, and professional development, as a key component in developing a statewide plan. The April Roundtable, which convened on April 28, 2011, focused on developing the goals and priorities in support of the elements listed above that were identified as crucial to moving the work forward in California. It is anticipated that these roundtable meetings will be held on a quarterly basis to continue the work.

In addition, networks of family strengthening organizations are currently providing significant value across at least 20 of California's 58 counties. Much like the individual agencies that make up these organizations, networks come in a variety of organizational structures, foci, and developmental stages— emerging, evolving, and established. Networks create opportunities for service providers to meet formally and informally, exchange information, make connections, and develop relationships. The trend suggests that these networking relationships often lead to formalized arrangements involving joint funding applications, memoranda of understanding (MOUs) governing service delivery, development of professional standards, co-location, and cross training agreements. In 2009, these collaborative agencies came together to form the *California Network of Family Strengthening Networks.*

With technical assistance from Strategies, in June 2010 the group set a goal of developing a set of shared standards for Family Strengthening practice in California. The S.H. Cowell Foundation has also been significantly supporting this effort. The purpose statement for the standards is: "The California Family Strengthening Standards are designed to be used by family support providers for planning, providing, and evaluating quality services and to be implemented with the support of networks, public departments, private foundations, families and communities." The standards will incorporate the nine Principles of Family Support, the Five Protective Factors and will build in the San Francisco Family Support Standards.

- *SafeCare® Home Visiting* - In 2008 the Chadwick Center for Children and Families, Rady Children's Hospital received a grant from ACF to implement the SafeCare® home visiting program. The Chadwick Center partnered with the OCAP, the Child and Adolescent Services Research Center (CASRC), and the National SafeCare® Training and Research Center to disseminate this evidence based home visiting model to California counties. This project has been named the Safe Kids California Project (SKCP). SafeCare® utilizes home visitors with bachelor degrees to target the prevention of child abuse and neglect of children ages zero through five years. In addition, a second grant from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to implement and evaluate SafeCare® was awarded to Rady Children's Hospital. This will allow for more counties to be able to implement SafeCare®.

  This reporting period was the beginning of the second year implementation phase for the SKCP. The Central Valley partnership for Cohort One consists of Fresno, Madera, and Tulare County. The Central Valley partners have been willing to engage with the SKCP staff and to communicate their unique needs extremely effectively. The Implementation Phase began with a Kick-Off meeting in Central Valley. By design, the meeting was filled with enthusiasm, collaboration, and an introduction of the strategic next steps. Following the Kick-Off Meeting an executive committee was formed in Central Valley. The Central Valley Executive Committee participated in monthly or bi-monthly tele-meetings during the year to address implementation issues.

In 2010, the first cohort of counties began receiving and implementing SafeCare® referrals. A total of 11 certified home visitors and four certified coaches were serving clients in the Central Valley region. Additionally, in January 2010, after translating the SafeCare® curriculum into Spanish, the first ever Spanish training for SafeCare® was held. Five Spanish speaking bilingual home visitors were provided materials in Spanish and began receiving weekly coaching in Spanish.

Shasta County was chosen as Cohort Two of SKCP in June 2010. The SKCP staff worked with Shasta County to conduct the preliminary community and organizational assessment and design a tailored plan to best support the successful implementation of SafeCare®. Initial planning meetings in Shasta took place in August 2010 and they have implemented the model. Applications for Cohort Three are currently being reviewed.

As indicated earlier, 44 California counties provide home visitation as part of their prevention efforts. To ensure fiscal responsibility and effective service provision, it is critical that programs and services have positive outcomes. SafeCare® is an evidence based program, therefore its dissemination across California will contribute to keeping children safe, preserving and strengthening families while improving California's prevention and early intervention efforts.

- *The Federal Affordable Care Maternal Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program Grant* - Home visiting can be an effective tool in prevention and early intervention since it provides direct support and coordination of services for families. Visits are conducted by a nurse, social worker, or trained paraprofessional. Programs vary, but components may include education in effective parenting and childcare techniques, child development, health, and safety. Home visiting programs tend to target at-risk families with children from birth to age five. Many county child welfare agencies in California have developed home visiting programs in collaboration with their county First Five Commissions. These programs provide services and support that strengthen families and promote child well-being with the aim that they will also prevent child neglect and abuse.

  California's application for the five-year federal grant for home visiting is under the purview of the California Department of Public Health/Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health (CDPH/MCAH) Division. The CDSS and CDPH/MCAH Division staff have met numerous times for this specific purpose, and have shared information and data that is necessary to complete all three phases of the application process, which included a Statewide Needs Assessment. In addition, CDSS has provided letters of support of each phase of the grant application submitted by the California Department of Public Health for the federal grant for home visiting; the Affordable Care Maternal Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program.

  A list of seven home visiting programs deemed as evidence-based programs for the purposes of this grant was released. It was disappointing to find that SafeCare® was not included as one of the programs selected. Although the creators of SafeCare® are appealing the decision, grant deadlines are an issue. States were required to advise the Health Resources and Services Administration of the programs that the state has selected for the grant by March 24, 2011. While a portion of the funding can be used on models that are deemed as promising practices, California has prudently chosen not to consider the implementation of any promising practices until the other models are well into the implementation phase.

Home visiting models that target both abuse and neglect, such as the SafeCare® model, are of interest to child welfare and others as over 60 percent of California reports for child maltreatment are for neglect. Most of the models selected as evidence-based programs for the purposes of this grant target women who are pregnant and/or are first time mothers, and home visiting services must be initiated either prenatally or within three months after the birth of the baby. This somewhat limits the population that may be served by these home visiting models. In order to meet the needs of California's families, several home visiting models must be available for counties to use. The funding of this home visiting grant is anxiously anticipated in order to bring more tools to address the needs of families, especially those with young children.

The two state agencies have a history of addressing the needs of the "at risk communities" as described in the federal Supplemental Information Request guidance. The state seeks to build a coordinated system of early childhood home visiting together utilizing high quality, evidence-based practice models throughout California.

- *Family Development Matrix* - In 2005, the OCAP funded the California State University Monterey Bay to develop a case assessment, planning and evaluation model for community based organizations. The goal was to build capacity within FRCs and Family Support programs to use an integrated family outcomes tool. The model developed was FDM, for increasing family engagement, as well as for program assessment and strategic planning for quality improvement and sustainability. The use of the FDM helps to support FRCs in partnering with local child welfare systems to develop shared target outcomes for families for which family support services have been indicated, and to facilitate usage of the outcome data to improve services to families.

  Currently, FDM brings case management and outcomes evaluation to 15 county-based service networks and various tribal communities in California. Family support staff in 90 agencies and tribal organizations have the ability to implement FDM, analyze the outcome data to assist the families in setting goals, then record agency intervention and family participation activities. This project uses evaluation data to guide the choice of interventions and to make any necessary modifications based on client progress. The model provides social workers with an easy to use tool to test the effectiveness of their interventions. Staff is trained to assess the current family condition identifying family strengths. These are then discussed with the family and used in the development of a case plan, by the worker and family. The model provides for consistency in analysis and a process for standardizing outcome indicators allowing for cross agency comparison and analysis of outcome data.

2 Maltreatment Recurrence: Ensure that the state is reducing recurrence of child abuse and/or neglect

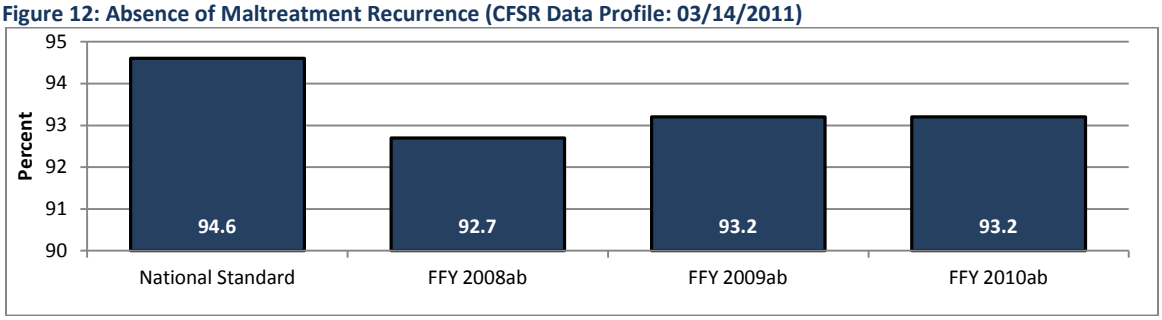
A primary objective of the state child welfare system is to ensure that children who have been found to be victims of abuse or neglect are protected from further abuse or neglect, whether they remain in their own homes or are placed by the child welfare agency in a foster care setting. The following safety-related national outcomes and measures were established to assess state performance with regard to protecting child victims from further abuse or neglect.

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Repeat Maltreatment was rated as an area needing improvement for 17 percent of the 24 applicable cases reviewed during the onsite CFSR review in 2008.

The following figure is the proportion of children that did not have another substantiated or indicated report within a six-month period and who were victims of substantiated or indicated child abuse and/or neglect during the first 6 months of the reporting period. The overall percentage for the state has remained in the 92-93 percent range since FFY 2008 as illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 12: Absence of Maltreatment Recurrence (CFSR Data Profile: 03/14/2011)



The percentage of children who did not have another substantiated child abuse or neglect referral within six months increased about .5 percent between FFY 2008 and FFY 2009, leveling off at the same rate in FFY 2010. Although California is 1.4 percent below the national standard, it is 1.7 percent above the 25th percentile.

Since FFY 1999 when 89.9 percent of children did not suffer subsequent maltreatment within a six-month period, the data shows a steady increase in this measure. Grouping the data by age ranges shows that there are only minute variances in the rate of recurrence of maltreatment for children in the various age ranges. Although the Federal standard of 94.6 percent or higher has not yet been met, the data show that California continues in a positive direction.

FACTORS AFFECTING PROGRESS

While there is no identifiable single factor responsible for avoiding repeat maltreatment, several efforts contribute maintaining strong progress. Some improvements that have likely contributed to the successful interventions with children and families are:

- ✓ Differential Response
- ✓ Standardized Safety Assessment System
- ✓ Comprehensive Assessment Tools
- ✓ Structure Decision Making tools

- *Differential Response* has contributed to a reduction in the recurrence of maltreatment by providing earlier and more comprehensive intervention services by both CWS and community based partners. Families and children are provided voluntary services to remediate issues before they become more serious. DR is a strategy that allows a California child welfare services (CWS) agency to respond in a more flexible manner to reports of child abuse or neglect. DR affords a customized approach based on an assessment of safety, risk, and protective capacity that recognizes each family's unique strengths and needs, and addresses these in an individualized manner rather than with a one-size-fits-all approach. The hallmark of DR is both its flexibility and family engagement, which act as an umbrella for the various responses and services. As DR provides earlier and more meaningful responses to emerging signs of family problems, child welfare agencies can utilize resources to help families before difficulties escalate and child removal is required. Under the DR approach, child safety is the highest priority as more children and families can receive the support they need to keep children safely in their

homes. DR has three referral paths, which are assigned by the social worker based on information taken from the initial call or report, intake or hotline:

- Path 1: Community Response - Selected when a family is referred to CWS for child maltreatment but as a result of the hotline/pre-contact assessment indicates the allegations do not meet statutory definitions of abuse or neglect. Indications are present that the family is experiencing problems. Families are linked to voluntary services such as counseling, parenting classes or other supportive options to strengthen the family.
- Path 2: Child Welfare Services and Agency Partners Response - Involves families in which the allegations meet statutory definitions of abuse and neglect at low to moderate risk. Assessments indicate that with targeted services a family is likely to make needed progress to improve child safety and mitigate risk. Emphasizes teamwork between CWS and interagency or community partners, providing a multidisciplinary approach in working with families.
- Path 3: Child Welfare Services Response - Most similar to the child welfare system's traditional response. Initial assessment indicates the child is not safe. With the family's agreement whenever possible, actions must be taken to protect the child. Court orders and law enforcement may be involved.

- San Luis Obispo (SLO) identified the Economic Opportunity Commission (EOC), as their county's community action agency who responds to Path One referrals. The county also states in their *2008 CSA*, that the agency provides other services to empower individuals and their families to achieve economic self-sufficiency and self-determination. SLO DSS has also co-located the EOC with partner agencies to provide families with easier access to services, and increase teaming between agencies.[5]
- *The Standardized Safety Assessment System*: In ACL 09-31, CDSS issued guidance to the 58 counties in California on the importance of using standardized safety assessments throughout the life of an open child welfare case. Both the Comprehensive Assessment Tool (CAT) and SDM assessment tools remain in use in California and provide a quantitative measure of safety, risk, and other factors critical in determining whether a child is safe in his or her home or needs to be placed until such time as those safety and risk issues are addressed.
- The *Comprehensive Assessment Tool*, currently used in four counties, ensures that the core safety, risk and protective factors serve as the criteria for the assessment decisions conducted at multiple points of the case. The system includes five assessment tools, factors for risk, and training and technical assistance over a secure website. These counties receive quarterly management and implementation reports to assess the utility and effects of the tools in practice in the counties. The five tools are:
    - Response Determination
    - Emergency Response
    - Placement Assessment
    - Continuing Services
    - Case Closure

Based on data from SafeMeasures® across the four counties currently using CAT, 97 percent Response Determination Assessments were completed for the 4,043 referrals received during

[5] 2008 CSA for San Luis Obispo, page 50.

the month of March 2011, approximately 78 percent of which were completed within the same day the referral was received.

During the same time period, data from SafeMeasures® reveals that of the 4,043 referrals received, approximately 55 percent Emergency Response Assessments were completed, while 27.5 percent of the referrals were evaluated out with no ER assessment completed.

The contract to fund CAT expired on December 31, 2010. Currently no state or federal funding is used for any activities associated with the CAT in California. Prior to the expiration of the contract, all counties using CAT for their assessments were given the option to transition to the use of the SDM system; four counties opted to a change and four counties opted to stay with CAT and provide ongoing support to the contractor directly.

- The *Structured Decision Making* model is an evidence-based system of assessments for decision making in social services, currently in use in 54 counties. The SDM model in child protective services is designed to enhance child safety, well-being, and permanency. The model's goals are to reduce subsequent harm to children (including re-referrals, re-substantiations, injuries, and foster placement) and, for children in out-of-home care, to reduce time to permanency. The SDM model introduces structure to the critical decision points in the life of a case. Use of the SDM system increases consistency and validity of caseworkers' decisions, helping agencies to target resources to families most at risk. Using the aggregated SDM data assists agency administrators in monitoring, planning, and budgeting. The SDM system has the following six tools:
  - The *screening and response priority tools* help workers decide which calls of suspected child abuse or neglect should be investigated, and if investigated, how quickly a response is warranted.
  - The *safety assessment* gauges the chances of immediate serious harm to a child. A completed safety assessment results in a decision to keep the child in his/her home, sometimes with the presence of safety interventions, or to protectively place the child.
  - The *risk assessment* informs a worker's evaluation of the longer-term risk of child maltreatment. The risk assessment is based on actuarial research and results in a valid determination of the likelihood of future harm. This enables workers to make informed and supported decisions about which families are most in need of ongoing service intervention.
  - The *family and child strengths and needs assessments* provide a guide to assessing areas of need for each child and for caregivers in the family. These needs help shape service plans for the family. Caregiver and child strengths are also evaluated, and can be used to assist in service plan development.
  - The *risk reassessment* is completed by the worker at regular intervals during a case to evaluate the family's current level of risk and informs the decision of whether to close the case or to continue services.
  - The *reunification* assessment is completed for children in out-of-home care who have a goal of reunification, and supports decision making about permanency planning. The reunification assessment provides a framework for workers to evaluate safety in the household, visitation between caregivers and children, and the current level of risk in the household. The reunification assessment informs decisions to return a child home, maintain a child in out-of-

home care, or create a new permanency goal. The reunification assessment is completed at regular intervals during the life of an out-of-home care case until the case is closed.

The table below, from CY 2010 SDM Annual Report prepared by the SDM vendor, CRC, is inclusive of all children for whom maltreatment was substantiated between January 1 and June 30, 2010. The data reflects all assessments completed on these cases; the recurrence rate represents the percentage of children who had another substantiated referral within six months of the January through June incident. Recurrence rates are displayed by risk level and case promotion decision so California SDM counties can compare recurrence rates for children at different risk levels who had a case opened following the first substantiation of maltreatment with children who did not have a case opened following the first substantiation.

Of the 29,181 children with a substantiated allegation between January 1 and June 30, 2010,[6] 6.8 percent were again victims of another substantiated allegation within six months of the first substantiation. Recurrence rates were higher for children in families at higher risk levels based on risk assessment results, particularly among cases in which the first substantiated referral between January and June 2010 was not opened for services[7].

Table 5: New Substantiated Allegation of Maltreatment by Risk Level and Case Promotion Decision for Children on Referrals With Substantiated Allegations Between January 1 and June 30, 2009 Six-month Follow-up

	January-June 2010 Case Promotion Decision								
	New Case Opened			No Case Opened			Total		
Risk Level	N	%	Recurrence Rate* (%)	N	%	Recurrence Rate* (%)	N	%	Recurrence Rate* (%)
Low	903	7	3.7	4,082	25	3.1	4,985	17.1	3.2
Moderate	4,383	34.2	6.2	7,395	45.2	5.3	11,778	40.4	5.6
High	4,934	38.5	8.4	3,034	18.6	9.1	7,968	27.3	8.7
Very High	2,173	16.9	8.8	927	5.7	16.5	3,100	10.6	11.1
Unknown	439	3.4	8.9	911	5.6	8.3	1,350	4.6	8.5
Total	12,832	100	7.4	16,349	100	6.3	29,181	100	6.8

STRATEGIES AND PLANS FOR 2012

CRC will create three additional advanced SDM curriculum modules: 1) Interviewing for risk assessment; 2) Using reunification assessment; 3) Using risk assessment. These are currently in development and should be completed in 2011-2012. SDM and risk assessment training will continue to be a primary focus in Module Three of the Core Social Worker training statewide for those who are newly hired. Additionally, CDSS is hoping to implement further risk assessment trainings for supervisors, contingent upon available resources.

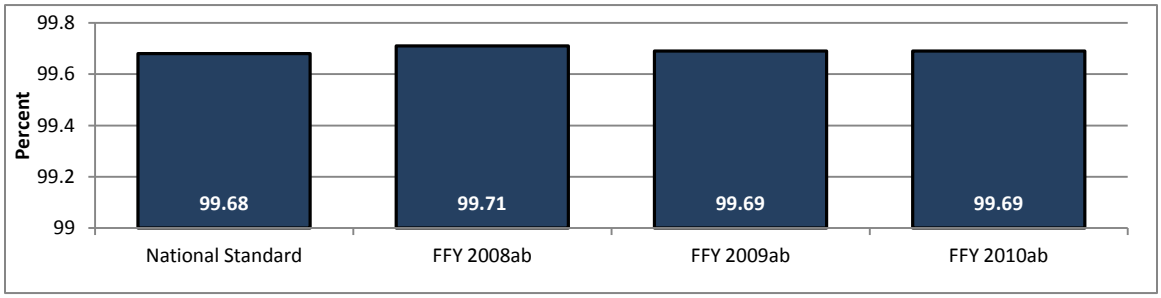
[6] The children in this cohort include those who were in the family home (i.e., not in placement) at the time of the initial referral. In order to select out children who were in placement, CRC removed those who were in placement at the time of the referral as well as those who were removed from the home within 10 days of the referral date and remained in placement for six months or more.
[7] CRC also removed from this analysis children who were already in an open case at the time of the January – June referral.
Note: Recurrence rate is new substantiation within six months. Children in existing open cases were removed from the analysis.

3 Absence of Abuse in Foster Care: Ensure that the state is reducing the incidence of child abuse and/or neglect in foster care

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

The measure below reflects the percentage of children who were not victims of a substantiated maltreatment report by a foster parent or facility staff while in out-of-home care. As illustrated in the figure below, over the last three FFYs, approximately 99.7 percent of children were not victims of a substantiated maltreatment report while in out-of-home care. California has remained above the national standard since FFY 2007.

Figure 13: Absence of Abuse or Neglect in Foster Care (CFSR Data Profile: 03/14/2011)



The population discussed in this narrative is limited to children who are dependents and are in out-of-home placements. California continues to remain above the national median of 99.5 and above the 25th percentile of 99.3.

FACTORS AFFECTING PROGRESS

Even though the federal standard has been met, California continues to seek improvement to this measure. Some of the factors to California's success in this measure may be attributed to:

- ✓ The Office of the California Foster Care Ombudsman
- ✓ Safety Assessment tools, Substitute Care Provider Tool

- Allegations of maltreatment in foster care are made for a variety of reasons. It is most important to identify those instances in which the child is in danger or at risk of harm. Responses to and investigations of these allegations should be conducted with skill and objectivity to ensure the child's safety, prevent unnecessary disruption to the child, foster family, and birthparents, and minimize trauma to all parties. Using sound administrative and casework practices, professionals learn how to prevent such incidents, whenever possible, and competently respond and investigate those situations in which allegations of abuse and neglect in foster families occur. One of the state's most valuable assets in assuring the safety of children and youth in foster care is the Office of the *California Foster Care Ombudsman* (Ombudsman).

  California Welfare and Institutions (W&I) code sections 16160-16167 designates the Ombudsman as the autonomous entity within CDSS for providing children who are placed in foster care with a means to resolve issues related to their care, placement, or services.

  The Ombudsman provides a direct toll free phone number and other contact venues to receive complaints and informational inquiries from foster youth, parents, family members, community members, attorneys, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs) and others; they have the statutory authority to investigate and refer when complaints are received.

The Office also has statutory responsibility through AB 899 to conduct public outreach functions such as requested presentations to groups, collateral informational materials and publications that inform foster youth and other members of the public of the rights of foster children and youth. Social workers are mandated by the bill to explain the rights to every child and youth in foster care, in age-appropriate language, at least every six months, and that licensed foster homes housing six or more foster children and youth are required to post the posters issued by the Ombudsman Office describing their rights within easy and regular access for the children and youth living there. During FY 2009-10, the Ombudsman received 1,896 initial contacts, of which, 1203 were calls, 465 were e-mails, 153 were letters, 61 were fax, eight were face-to-face and 6 were other types of contacts. Each contact is an opportunity for the Ombudsman to respond to the concerns impacting the foster care population and to gather information to identify recurring issues in California's foster care system. The Ombudsman serves as an additional resource to assure the safety of children and youth in the California foster care system.

STRATEGIES AND PLANS FOR 2012

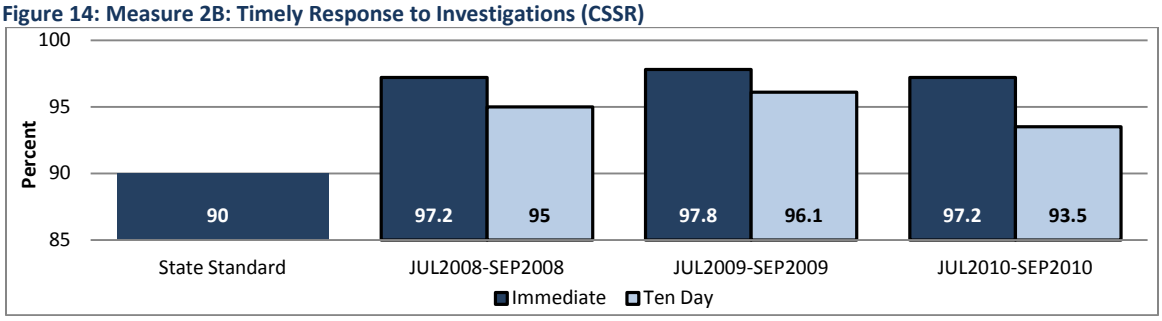
- Assessment tools to provide social workers a means of determining the level of support needed in a placement with substitute care providers is also being considered. Several California counties are testing the effectiveness of a *Substitute Care Provider Module* that is now available as part of the SDM safety and risk assessment system. This tool was designed for use when determining whether or not any safety threats exist in a potential placement in a Foster, Relative, Non-Related Extended Family Member, Foster Family Agency, or Small Family home. Currently in use in limited areas until a validation study is conducted, the tool provides a checklist of issues to consider when a social worker is placing a child with a particular substitute care provider (SCP), or when reassessing that placement. The tool was designed to consider the capacity of the SCP to provide the child with a safe, appropriate environment for a dependent child.

4 Timely Response: Ensure that investigations of maltreatment are initiated within state policy timeframes

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Timely investigations of maltreatment was rated as an area needing improvement for 14 percent of the 36 applicable cases during the 2008 CFSR onsite review.

Figure 14: Measure 2B: Timely Response to Investigations (CSSR)



These reports count both the number of child abuse and neglect referrals that require, and then receive, an in-person investigation within the time frame specified by the referral response type. California has performed well above the state goal of 90 percent for all counties, with immediate

responses hovering around 97 percent between 2008 through 2010. In the same time period, the ten-day responses maintained around 93.5-95 percent in 2008 and 2010, with a peak in 2009 at above 96 percent.

FACTORS AFFECTING PROGRESS

The W&I code mandate the requirements and timeframes for initiations of an investigation abuse or neglect while the ACIN 1-86-06 outlines timeframes for investigations per the MPP. If the referral is identified as requiring a ten-day response, the investigation must have been attempted or completed by the end of the tenth day after the referral is received (the day the referral is received is counted as day one). Additionally, if a referral is identified as requiring an immediate response, the response must be initiated or completed by midnight of the day following the receipt of the referral. Each county develops their own protocol insofar as it contains the required elements of state regulations. The consultants for the C-CFSR provide oversight to ensure each county is meeting the state standards.

Each county welfare agency operates and maintains a 24-hour response system to determine whether an in-person investigation is appropriate, and whether the risk is imminent and requires 24-hour immediate response, or whether the investigation can be initiated within ten days. The MPP mandates a risk assessment in order to determine the priority of initiating investigations of abuse or neglect as follows:

- Initiating investigations are prioritized by the level of risk assessed by initial emergency response social worker. Based upon the level of risk, the social worker determines whether an immediate response is necessary or if an investigation can occur within ten days from receiving the referral.
- Each county may develop their own protocol as long as it contains the required elements; only one county in the state has a more stringent policy than the ten-day timeframe. The county has a five-day policy for investigating referrals.
- All referrals from law enforcement agencies must be investigated.
- No response is required to a cross-report from a law enforcement agency if the law enforcement agency has investigated and determined that there is no indication of abuse or neglect by a member of the child's household.

Even though the counties have continued to exceed the state standard, California is committed to continuous quality improvement. Factors that may contribute to progress include:

- ✓ Statewide safety assessment tools
- ✓ SDM Hotline tool
- ✓ Differential Response
- ✓ SafeMeasures® data availability
- ✓ CAT completion rates

- California's high success rate can be attributed to the use of the *statewide safety assessment tools* across all 58 counties. Overall, these tools promote a uniform practice of intake assessments by increasing consistency and accuracy in emergency response among child welfare staff within and across counties in state. These tools guide the social worker in determining the appropriate response to the referral. Additionally, assessment protocols increase the efficiency

of child protection operation by making the best use of available resources by consistently addressing the most emergent needs.

- *SDM Hotline Screening Tools* are to be completed for all incoming referrals, including those that are evaluated out prior to screening. The screening is a three-step process that includes the following components:
  - A *screening decision* helps intake workers determine whether to evaluate a referral in for investigation or screen the referral out based on a set of criteria;
  - *Response priority* procedures determine how quickly an ER worker should contact the family once a referral is accepted for investigation; and
  - *Differential Response,* in most counties, guides worker decisions regarding response and primary case management for families under investigation as well as community service options for those who are screened out.

  Based on data from SafeMeasures®, for the 54 counties using SDM, in October 2010, the SDM hotline tool had a 95.5 percent completion rate for the 28,708 hotline calls received, of which approximately 20 percent were evaluated out and 71 percent were screened in.
- *CAT Response Determination Tool* - Based on data received from Social Policy and Health Economics Research and Evaluation (SPHERE) for five counties using CAT at that time, 28,740 Response Determination tools were received for Quarter 3 reporting period, of which approximately 23.9 percent were evaluated out and 75.1 percent were screened in.
- *Differential Response* assists families whose referrals were assessed as not meeting the legal definition of child abuse or neglect by providing services to them based on family strengths and needs. This focus on early intervention and community partnerships strengthens families and reduces the likelihood of future referrals, in turn, decreasing the number of referrals requiring social worker response, thus allowing for faster response times. Currently, 42 California counties have implemented DR to some degree. To address the effort for the consistent implementation of DR throughout the state, a workgroup collaborative that included the eleven pilot counties, CDSS and other stakeholders, drafted *The Child Welfare Improvement Activities: Differential Response Guidelines and Resources for Implementation* (DR guidelines). This guide was distributed to counties via ACIN I-49-10 on June 29, 2010, and is posted on the CFSD webpage.
- *SafeMeasures®* provides child welfare agency management with data to assist with program administration, planning, evaluation, and budgeting. Real time data is posted online for the 54 counties who are using SDM and is utilized by counties and state consultants for quality assurance. Managers in each county can view the status of each referral for individual staff members to ensure cases are being investigated within policy timeframes.

LIMITATIONS

The differences in data collection between SDM and CAT create some inconsistency in reporting, as does the absence of four counties in the SafeMeasures data.

STRATEGIES AND PLANS FOR 2012

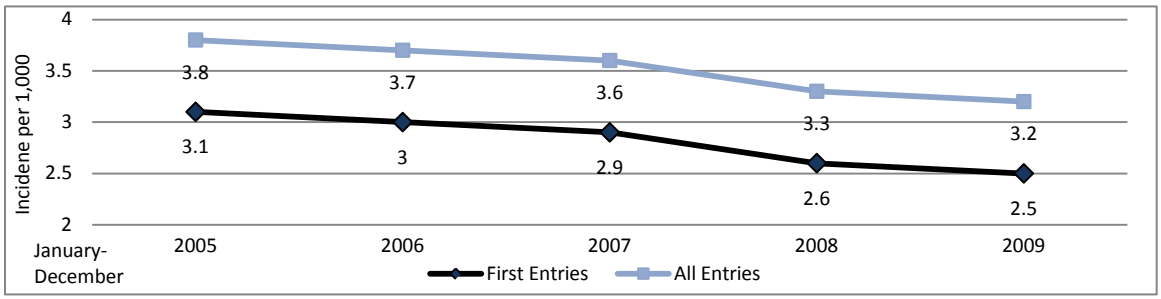
Continuous improvements in the design and content of the SDM assessment tools and the related training for county users provide for modifications to better address identified needs in case management. It is anticipated that the Substitute Care Provide assessment tool will gain broader use in FY 2011-12.

5 Services to Prevent Removal: Ensure that the agency is providing services to children and their families to prevent removal

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Services to prevent removal was rated as an area needing improvement for 21 percent of the 39 applicable cases reviewed during the 2008 onsite CFSR review.

Figure 15: Entry Rates (CSSR)



The entry rates above were computed by dividing the unduplicated state count of children, infants through 17 years, entering foster care by the state child population and then multiplying by 1,000 for each calendar year above. The entry rate for children with first entries was computed based on the count of unique children for whom this is the first ever entry to foster care, while the all entries rate was calculated based on an unduplicated child count of all children entering foster care during the time period. California's rate of entry into foster care, for both first and all entries, has declined steadily from calendar year 2005 through 2009, at an incidence rate of 0.1 between 2005 and 2007, representing 15 percent decline overall, then declining markedly at an eight percent rate between 2007 and 2008 and continuing at the same rate of 0.1 between 2008 and 2009. As well, the incidence rate for first and all entries declined at analogous rates.

FACTORS AFFECTING PROGRESS

CDSS has continued to collaborate with other department agencies, stakeholders, and community-based service providers and organizations to ensure that children and their families receive the appropriate in-home services to prevent removal when appropriate. The agency makes every effort to develop a coordinated and unified plan that addresses the needs of children and their families. Some strategies include:

- ✓ Stakeholder Collaboration
- ✓ Linkages
- ✓ Wraparound
- ✓ Team Decision Making
- ✓ Differential Response
- ✓ Participatory Case Planning
- ✓ Social Worker Visits

- *Stakeholder Collaboration under the Child Welfare Council's Prevention and Early Intervention Committee* discussed previously on page 8 is primarily charged to address the structure and resources needed to maintain children safely in their homes. As discussed previously, the committee maintains that services be available for all families at risk.
- The *Linkages Project (Linkages)* focuses on promoting collaboration between CWS and CalWORKs through the coordination of the case plan and service delivery, and engaging parents in the joint planning process. By coordinating programs that strengthen child abuse prevention efforts and assist families in achieving self-sufficiency, California's children and families gain better service and improved outcomes. There are currently 27 counties in California that participate in the Linkages initiative.

  In California, most counties have children and families involved in both the CalWORKs and CWS programs. Parents must navigate between two different systems, which often reflect conflicting requirements and timeframes in order to satisfy requirements in both programs. Linkages improves the services coordination through joint case planning and prevents duplication of efforts thus maximizing funding and resources to better serve clients accessing both systems. For example, Linkages helps to engage CalWORKs families faced with multiple barriers (substance abuse, mental health issues, and domestic violence) meet their work participation requirements. These same barriers are often also identified as barriers to keeping children safe in their homes. By developing joint case plans, both workers coordinate the resources and services to better serve the children and family, avoiding duplication of services, and potentially preventing the need for removal.

  Linkages was implemented in 2000 with Stuart Foundation funding to develop a coordinated services approach between CalWORKs and CWS agencies. In 2006, California was among five states awarded a five-year Federal grant to continue, further enhance, and evaluate the project in the existing counties as well as expand to additional counties.

  Obtaining outcome data has been one of the most challenging aspects of Linkages. The separate data systems for child welfare and CalWORKs have made it difficult to pull data from the multiple existing data systems on these families that are clients of both child welfare and CalWORKs. Data worksheets were developed to help counties pull data from the separate systems; however, it is a labor intensive effort and most counties do not have the resources to devote to this evaluation. The small amount of client data received from the counties make it difficult to draw firm conclusions about outcomes.

  A formal statewide evaluation of the project is underway by Harder+Company Community Research. As part of the evaluation component of the grant, Harder+Company developed Outcome Worksheet tools to assist counties in obtaining data for Linkages. The data collected will be used to assess the impact of the Linkages initiative on the well-being of children and families being served by California's Child Welfare and CalWORKs program offices. Linkages counties were asked to complete a data worksheet respective to nine client-level outcomes. Five of the outcomes related to the Child Welfare System and four were related to the CalWORKs system. The outcomes were selected to determine whether the delivery of coordinated services, such as Linkages, improves client outcomes in comparison to clients who have not received coordinated services. The outcomes for Child Welfare are: percent of children with a substantiated recurrence, percent of children not removed from home with substantiated

recurrence, percent of families that achieve reunification, time to reunification, and percent of children who do not re-enter foster care. The outcomes for CalWORKs are: percent of parents who have CalWORKs sanctions resolved, amount of monthly cash grant (without sanctions), amount of parents' monthly earnings and wages, and length of time parents receive cash aid.

In addition to the Outcome Worksheet tools Harder+Company developed survey instruments. These survey instruments include:

- ✓ Regular *Implementation Survey.* Linkages counties were surveyed using an online survey instrument to determine their levels of Linkages implementation and to understand different ways each county implements the program.
- ✓ The *Staff Survey* is a paper-based survey provided to line staff who works directly with Linkages families to solicit their input and experiences with their county's Linkages program.
- ✓ *Organizational Change Survey.* Linkages leadership in each county completed this survey to provide information about systemic and leadership changes related to Linkages implementation.

The results of the evaluation will be made available at the completion of the grant in September of 2011.

The project has continued to support the California counties' implementation of Linkages through semi-annual conferences. An annual statewide convening is held in Sacramento along with regional convenings to promote local peer sharing. Approximately 150 staff from Linkages counties throughout California attended the Statewide Convening. The regional gatherings each have about 40 people in attendance, providing a smaller peer sharing experience. Other supports to the county include: Monthly Topic of Interest calls, a Monthly Newsletter, a dedicated Linkages Intranet site, and the ability of the RTAs to provide county specific trainings throughout the year.

Building upon work that began last FFY, the project developed tools for training staff and for providing information to policy makers and community members. The centerpiece of this effort is the video called "Meeting the Linkages Challenge." It highlights two counties, Los Angeles and Stanislaus, showing the collaboration between the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and the Child Welfare program staff to better serve families. In both counties, families that received Linkages services are featured. In addition to the video, the communication packet includes tips for using the communication material, a key message document, Linkages overview, Linkages collaboration checklist, and a template for collecting success stories. The packet and video were shared with county Linkages Coordinators at the Fall Convening and is posted on the CFPIC public website www.cfpic.org.

State, county, and CFPIC staff comprise a Statewide Linkages Oversight Committee, which monitors the implementation process and outcome evaluation as well as addresses relevant policy and ongoing sustainability issues of Linkages. This committee meets approximately once per month.

Counties have developed their 2010-11 CSAs and Work Plans that will guide implementation at the local level. Many counties will be focusing on sustainability issues and strategies to deepen their Linkages practices.

- While the *Wraparound* program has been linked to many positive outcomes, the program is foremost intended to prevent the placement of children into group home care or support children with stepping down to a lower level of care. The program supports child welfare, mental health and probation agencies in partnership with families to provide intensive services to children and families with complex needs. Wraparound shifts focus from the traditional service-driven, deficit-based approach to a needs-driven, strengths-based approach.

  California Wraparound has grown and developed from the initial pilot phase to become a more systemic practice element of child welfare, probation and mental health services across the State. California Wraparound is widely recognized as a promising practice. Wraparound promotes the engagement of children and families in a team-driven process. This engagement with families is an essential factor in achieving positive outcomes. When families are actively engaged in services, they are more likely to follow through with these services and safety plans because they reflect their own input. This engagement may also improve the nature of the relationship between child welfare and probation staff and families, so that these formal support systems are viewed as a resource and not an adversary.

  In Los Angeles County, Wraparound was associated with a decrease in the number of substantiated allegations, measured in two parts, while in the program (target = 90 percent) and 12 months post-graduation (target = 94 percent); the county surpassed the targets by over four percent and three percent, respectively.

  The Child Protection and Family Support Branch has administrative authority for the California Wraparound Program pursuant to W&I code, section 18250-18258 (SB 163, Chapter 759, Statutes of 1997). As outlined in the CFSP, the CFSR PIP goal for Wraparound was to increase the available slots to children by 3,545. For the FY 2010-11, California continues to exceed this goal and currently has 4,273 available slots.

  The number of children being served with the Wraparound program is based on the county and/or providers capacity to serve the target population. Based on the legislation, the Wraparound program has a specific target population: 1) Wards or dependents who are at risk of placement in a group home with an RCL of ten or higher, 2) a child who would be voluntarily placed in out-of-home care pursuant to Section 26.5 of the Government Code, 3) a child who is currently placed in a group home with a RCL of ten or higher, and/or 4) a child who is receiving AAP and is currently or at risk of placement in out-of-home care in a group home with an RCL of 10 or higher. However, counties are not limited to providing Wraparound to other target populations if they have sufficient capacity and funding.

  Over the past years as Wraparound has grown, California has seen a steady decline in group home care rates. Based on data from the CSSR Quarter 3 2010 extract (October 2009-September 2010), 4,843 children were placed in a group home, a notable decrease of 1,572 children from the previous year. Many important initiatives have played an integral role in the decrease of GH placement, and based on anecdotal feedback from participating California counties, Wraparound has been among those initiatives.

  For FY 2010-11, Imperial and Yuba County have submitted formal Wraparound plans to CDSS for review, and Lake County received the mandatory Wraparound Implementation training and has begun to serve children and families. Amador, Sierra, and Tuolumne County continue to work on their Wraparound planning development process.

To support growth and sustainability of the California Wraparound Program, CDSS Wraparound Consultants provide technical assistance for all Wraparound counties and interested counties. Assistance provided includes fiscal and program technical assistance through site visits, quarterly monitoring, participation at regional meetings and on-going assistance as needed.

As previously reported, the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) funding through the Community Services and Supports component was instrumental in the rapid expansion of Wraparound. Counties will continue to receive this funding through the Department of Mental Health. The CDSS will continue to support the development and sustainability of Wraparound in California. A fiscal impact to the Wraparound Program includes the impact of the Alliance v. Allenby lawsuit, which increased RCL rates by 32 percent. The increase has presented some counties with challenges to meet their county share of cost match to draw down the increased RCL dollars. However in some counties the policy impact of the increase has resulted in the practice of promoting the use of more in-home, community based services such as Wraparound. The CDSS has been supporting these counties by identifying other appropriate funding structures within their county that will sustain their individual Wraparound programs.

- *Team Decision Making:* A unified plan often involves a team decision making meeting which requires that the family, community and the child welfare agency collaborate to make decisions about the child's safety and placement. TDMs include a facilitated process that assists in identifying the child and their families' strengths and needs.
- *Differential Response* at initial intake is utilized in more than 42 counties as a method to connect families with services to prevent situations of neglect and abuse that require removal. Path One cases are referred to voluntary family services to keep issues from escalating into a situation which may require child removal from the home. Path Two cases may also use the development of safety plans and agreements made in consultation with the family which are agreed to and implemented in order to prevent the child being removed from the home.
- *Family Participation in Case Planning* is a case planning process that actively engages families in defining their strengths and identifying resources that will address the problems which resulted in the disruption of their family. These processes are discussed further in the Well Being section of this document, starting on page 124. Within the 54 SDM counties, social workers often use the Strengths and Needs Assessment tool in SDM to engage families in creating safety plans which prevent child removal from the home. Strategies are discussed and agreed to when a safety plan is implemented using the metrics in the safety assessment tools. Another family engagement system known as Signs of Safety is being reviewed and tested in several California counties in conjunction with the use of the SDM tools. An update will be available later in 2011.
- *Social Worker Visits* will be discussed in more depth in the permanency section of this report, but is identified as a factor contributing to maintaining children in the home as social workers are required to visit each child with an approved case plan who remains in the home to assess the safety and risk level as well as the family's progress with services.

STRATEGIES AND PLANS FOR 2012

Contingent upon available resources, CDSS continues to encourage counties to implement Differential Response statewide and provides the assessment tools necessary to prevent child removal from their homes. The CDSS is currently training social workers and supervisors in the use

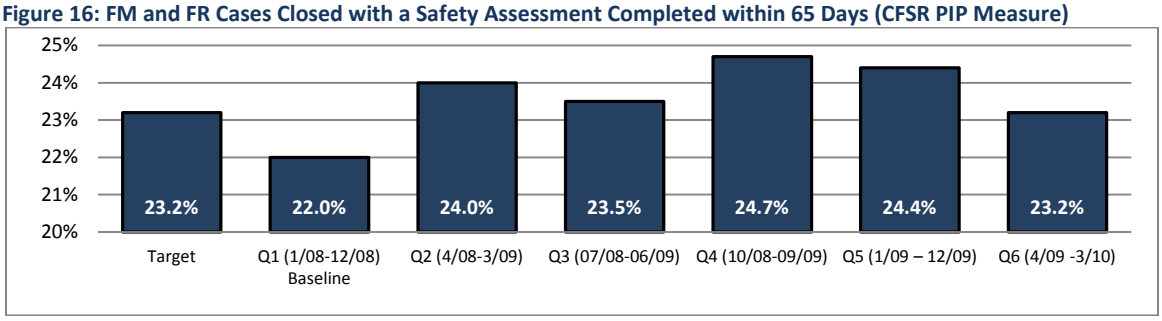
of family engagement techniques, and is watching the development and integration of new methods, such as Signs of Safety, to provide better outcomes in assessing safety and risk factors for children. Signs of Safety is a solutions-based approach to family engagement in the process of completing risk assessments with the family, focusing on family strengths and protective capacity.

6 Managing Risk and Safety: Ensure that the agency is managing risk and safety for children in-home and in foster care

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

In the 2008 CFSR on-site review, Managing Risk and Safety was rated as an area needing improvement for 22 percent of the 65 applicable cases reviewed. As part of the corresponding PIP, a measure, a data baseline, and a target were established in FFY 2008 which calculates the proportion of CWS family maintenance and family reunification cases closed in a given quarter where a safety assessment was completed within 65 days prior to case closing for 54 of the 58 counties using SDM. The target was achieved in PIP Quarter 2, shortly after the baseline was achieved.

Figure 16: FM and FR Cases Closed with a Safety Assessment Completed within 65 Days (CFSR PIP Measure)



FACTORS AFFECTING PROGRESS

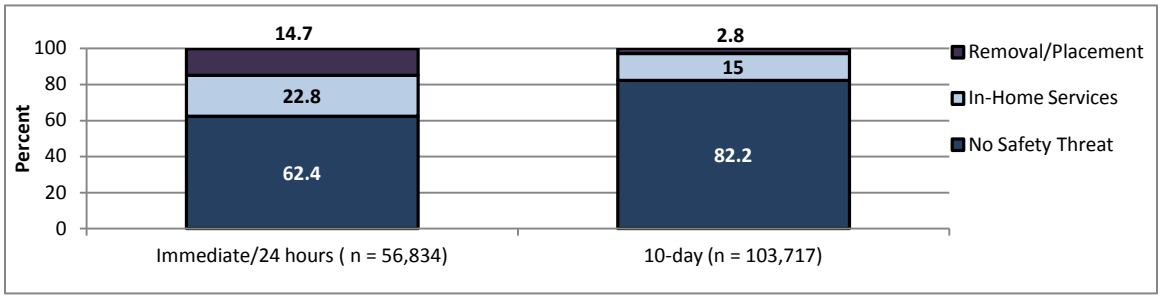
The CDSS continues to support the statewide safety assessment system and continuous quality improvements to the tools and the use of the tools throughout the life of a case. Other factors identified are:

- ✓ The evolution of SDM tools and the indicated risk level using the risk assessment tools
- ✓ Availability of real time data in SafeMeasures®
- ✓ Child fatalities and near fatalities monitoring
- ✓ Improvements to curriculum at the RTAs

- *The use of the SDM tools* has increased the reliability of keeping children in a safe environment. The safety assessment helps ensure a comprehensive evaluation of immediate danger and identifies steps to control threats to child safety. The combination of assessment tools in SDM (described previously) assists social workers throughout the life of a case to determine the most appropriate course of action. Data on SDM in CY 2010 showed a correlation between response priority level at referral intake, and safety assessment result, such that referrals that were assigned a higher priority tended to be those in which safety threats necessitating safety intervention or removal/placement were subsequently identified. Specifically, as illustrated in the figure below, of the 56,834 investigations assigned an immediate response; a corresponding

14.7 percent resulted in removal, as opposed to only 2.8 percent of ten-day response level cases that resulted in removal.[8]

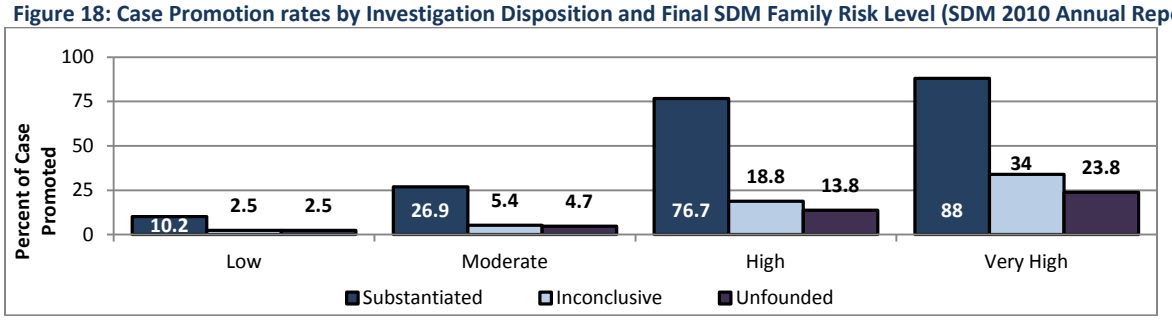
Figure 17: SDM Response Priority Level by SDM Safety Assessment Result (SDM 2010 Annual Report)



The Safety Assessment tool also assesses for child vulnerabilities, identified safety threats, protective capacities and safety interventions.

- The *availability of real time data on SDM (web-based assessment tools)* for participating counties allows managers at county child welfare agencies to prioritize resources into the high and very high risk cases. SDM counties are provided with case promotion recommendations based on the family's risk level which was assessed using the risk assessment tool. In substantiated and inconclusive allegations, SDM guidelines recommend promoting a case for all families rated as high and very high risk levels, while low and moderate risk referrals can be closed. Guidelines recommend that remaining unresolved safety threats at the end of an investigation be promoted from a referral to a case regardless of risk level. These risk levels are used to guide the frequency and intensity of investigations and provides evidence that risk is effectively managed. Data from the CRC on SDM in CY 2010 showed a higher proportion of cases promoted among cases determined to be very high or high risk levels and substantiated disposition. Cases for high and very high risk families were opened for services at a higher rate than low or moderate risk families, especially among families substantiated for child abuse or neglect.

Figure 18: Case Promotion rates by Investigation Disposition and Final SDM Family Risk Level (SDM 2010 Annual Report)



[8] SDM System: Case Management in Child Welfare Services; Combined California Counties, April 2011 Report for CY 2010, page 18.

- The *availability of data regarding fatalities and near fatalities* resulting from abuse or neglect continues to help inform CDSS and the counties of patterns and trends associated with these critical incidents. The information which follows regarding fatalities and near fatalities represents a compilation of aggregate data for those child fatalities and near fatalities resulting from abuse and/or neglect that occurred during CY 2009 and were reported by counties via the SOC 826 Statement of Findings and Information form. It is important to remember that the data compiled only represents those child fatalities and near fatalities for which all of the following occurred: 1) the CWS agency became aware of the fatality or near fatality, 2) the fatality or near fatality was determined to be the result of abuse or neglect, and 3) the fatality or near fatality was reported to CDSS via the SOC 826 form.

Table 6: Fatalities/Near Fatalities

	Count of Fatalities	Count of Near Fatalities
CY 2009	117	85
CY 2008	120	91
CY 2007[9]	62	49

Fatalities - In CY 2009, 117 child fatalities that were determined to be the result of abuse and/or neglect were reported to CDSS, of which 56 percent had no prior CWS history in the last five years. Of the 52 families that were previously known to a CWS agency, 36 were not current clients at the time of the fatality, six had an open ER Referral at the time of the fatality, five were in out-of-home placement at the time of the fatality, four were living in the home of the parent or guardian with an open child welfare case at the time of the fatality, and the remaining case was marked as other[10]. The demographic characteristics of the 117 fatalities are as follows: 52 percent were female; 81 percent were children four years old or younger; and 42 percent were Hispanic, 24 percent were Black, and 21 percent were White. Of the total fatality cases, 41 percent were neglect allegations. Additionally, the parent/guardian was identified as the perpetrator in 66 percent of cases and in 50 percent of the cases where the perpetrator was known, he/she was age 30 or under. Blunt force trauma was identified as the primary cause of death for 38 percent of the cases.

Near Fatalities - In CY 2009, 85 near fatalities that were determined to be the result of abuse and/or neglect were reported to the state, of which 59 percent had no prior CWS history in the last five years. Of the 35 families that were previously known to a CWS agency, 25 were not current clients at the time of the near fatality, five had an open ER referral at the time of the near fatality, and five were living in the home of the parent/guardian with an open child welfare case at the time of the near fatality. The demographic characteristics of the 85 near fatalities are as follows: 64 percent were male; 89 percent were children four years old or younger; and 41 percent were Hispanic and 31 percent were White. Of the total near fatality cases, 36 percent were neglect allegations. Additionally, the parent/guardian was identified as the perpetrator in 81 percent of cases, and in 78 percent of the cases where the perpetrator is known, he/she was age 30 or under. Blunt force trauma was identified as the primary cause of near fatality for 59 percent of the cases.

Conclusion - The data demonstrate that the most vulnerable population subject to child fatalities and near fatalities resulting from abuse and/or neglect remains (from the CY 2008 Annual

[9] The CY 2007 numbers reflect incidents reported to the state that were found to be the result of abuse/neglect, prior to Senate Bill 39 reporting requirements. As such, readers should be cautioned in making comparison of numbers among years as reporting requirements varied.

[10] Case marked as other if more than one category applied to the family.

Report) our youngest population, children four years old and younger. Additionally, the data show that allegations of neglect played a greater contributing factor to these fatalities and near fatalities than did allegations of abuse. With respect to the perpetrators of these incidents, the data shows that in a large percentage of these cases the perpetrator was known to the child as the child's parent/guardian or parent's significant other and was under the age of 30 at the time of the incident. Lastly, the data highlights that the number one cause of these fatalities and near fatalities was blunt force trauma.

Much of the data patterns for CY 2009 remain consistent with the data reported in the CY 2008 report. However, there are areas where there are some distinct differences. It is unknown at this time whether these differences are a true reflection of statistical increases/decreases, or merely fluctuations due to the differences in data reporting and collection between the two years as CDSS and the counties implemented Senate Bill 39. One area is in the age of the children reported for fatalities and near fatalities. While children less than five years old still encompass the majority of reported fatalities and near fatalities, there was a three percent increase in the five- to 17-year old age group for CY 2009. Another area was in the cause/finding of the reported incidents. Again, while blunt force trauma was the cause of a great percentage of the reported fatalities and near fatalities, there was a noticeable difference in the number of reported gunshots and stabbings as the cause of fatality from reported in the CY 2008 report. Additionally, near fatalities showed a 14 percent increase of blunt force trauma as the cause. Lastly, for both fatalities and near fatalities, there was a shift from a higher number of male perpetrators from the CY 2008 report to a higher number of female perpetrators in CY 2009. Further analysis of future years' data will hopefully shed light on whether these variances hold true over time.

For additional information, please visit the Child Fatality and Near Fatality Information website at http://www.childsworld.ca.gov/PG2370.htm.

- *Improvements to curriculum at the RTAs* - As annual refinements and improvements are made to the SDM safety assessment tools corresponding training updates are made to the core curriculum and advanced training modules; new social workers are trained in the RTA settings to use the SDM tools effectively throughout the life of the case; supervisor training is regularly updated to reflect new and improved tools, as well as for safety and policy overrides.

STRATEGIES AND PLANS FOR 2012

Training in using all of the SDM tools are part of the core social worker curriculum taught to new social workers in California. The CDSS is also expanding the SDM training in the regional training academies to supervisors and more senior staff statewide, contingent upon resources to do so.

PERMANENCY

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Ensuring permanency for California's foster children requires CWS statewide to ensure that foster children have permanence and stability in their living situations as well as continuity in their family relationships and connections. Permanency is best achieved when children can remain safely in their homes. When children cannot remain or return home safely, efforts to achieve adoption or guardianship are made. Additionally, foster children will experience greater permanency while in foster care if strong familial connections are maintained and fewer placement changes occur.

Federal outcome measures help to determine whether children in out-of-home care have permanency and stability in their living situations. Several factors contribute to outcome data, which also contribute to progress in achieving permanency for California's foster children.

PERMANENCY FOCUSED SERVICES IN PSSF

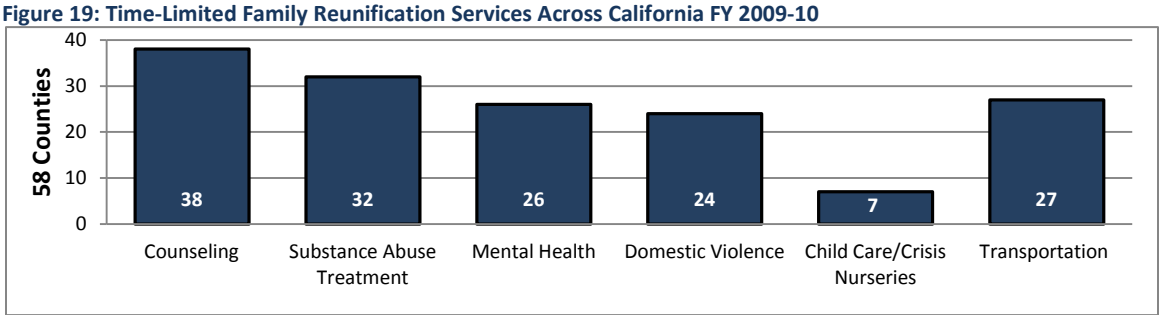
California engages in many efforts to support permanency outcomes for children including programs and services provided through the Time-Limited Family Reunification (TLFR) and Adoption Promotion and Support (APS) components of PSSF. The OCAP tracks these efforts through review of the county SIPs and OCAP Annual Reports. Through the SIPs and Annual Reports, California counties reported providing the following services to achieve permanency for foster children: family finding efforts at detention through long term placement, concurrent planning, adoptive parent outreach and recruitment, training, counseling, psychological evaluations and other mental health services, in-home crisis support, respite care, and support groups. Through the OCAP Annual Report, counties reported a total of *118,763 recipients* of permanency focused services during FY 2009-10. As noted in Safety 01 – Prevention and Early Intervention Section, total recipient count includes children, parents/caregivers, and families. For each service category, recipient is counted once as either child, parent/caregiver, or family.

While Family Preservation was discussed at length in the Safety 1 Section, it is important to note that these programs and services also impact permanency efforts across California. Just as improvement in one outcome measure can impact another outcome measure, services provided at the beginning of a family's involvement in the child welfare system can impact a foster child's length of time in foster care. In Tuolumne County, for example, Family

Preservation dollars fund the Family Search and Engagement Strategies (FSES) Program. The FSES provides families with pre-placement prevention services while also engaging in family search efforts. Identifying familial or other connections early on secures greater permanency for children later on.

Through the TLFR component of PSSF, California counties provide supportive services to families with the goal of reunifying children safely and permanently. Statewide, there were a total of 35,031 recipients of TLFR supported services during FY 2009-10. As indicated in the figure below, counseling and substance abuse treatment were reported to be utilized most often across California during FY 2009-10. A total of 9,611 recipients engaged in counseling services while 3,120 recipients engaged in substance abuse treatment with TLFR dollars. The overall number of participants receiving TLFR funded services is low comparative to Family Preservation and Family Support (as discussed in Safety 1 Section), however many California counties leverage their PSSF funding for greater program impact.

Figure 19: Time-Limited Family Reunification Services Across California FY 2009-10

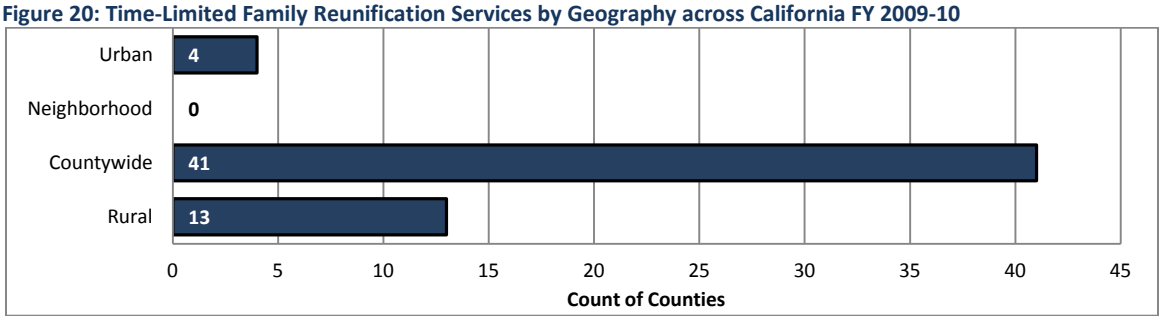


**All 58 counties are represented in Figure 9 above.

In an effort to support families in timely reunification, 27 counties utilized TLFR funding to provide transportation services. Statewide, there were 14,394 recipients of transportation services. Supporting the transportation needs of families is critical in California as many counties across the state are small, rural and lack access to mass transit systems. For example, due to the rural location and expansive area of **Humboldt County**, transportation is a large problem. Many families participating in CWS do not have the economic means to obtain reliable transportation. The county utilizes TLFR dollars to provide bus tickets as well as mileage reimbursement for licensed and insured vehicles for CWS and resource families.

Additionally, California counties understand the necessity for providing access to TLFR services county-wide. Critical services which aim to reunify children and families safely and timely are provided county-wide, often via Family Resource Centers. As indicated in the figure below, 41 counties provided TLFR services county-wide.

Figure 20: Time-Limited Family Reunification Services by Geography across California FY 2009-10



Below are county specific examples of TLFR services provided during FY 2009-10.

The Positive Indian Parenting Program serves Native American families in Alpine County. Families involved in CWS are referred to the Positive Indian Parenting Program, designed by the National Indian Child Welfare Association. The program utilizes traditional Indian child rearing approaches, combining traditional approaches with modern skills. Teaching methods include storytelling, cradleboards, harmony, lessons from nature, and use of praise.

Across San Bernardino County, families involved with CWS have access to a variety of counseling services. Services include individual, family, adult, child, group, short-term, and crisis intervention counseling. Specialized treatment areas include family, child, adolescent, teen, Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT), Parent Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT), Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Play Therapy, Sand Tray Therapy, Theraplay, domestic violence, sexual abuse, child abuse, Autism, ADHD, substance abuse, and conflict resolution.

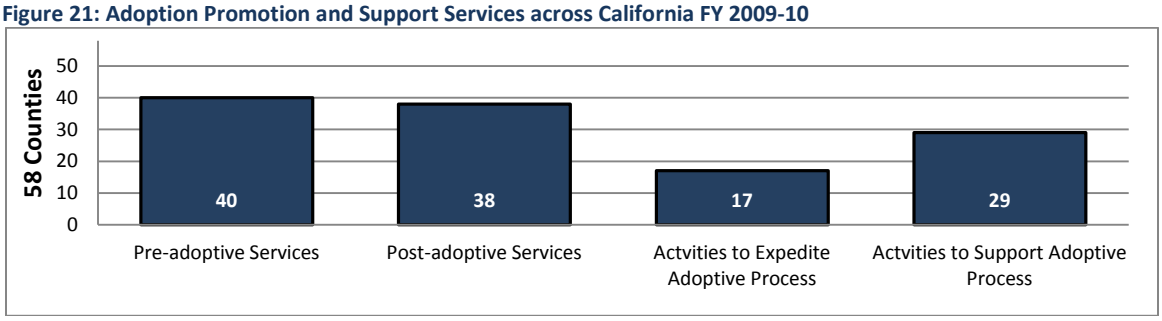
Shasta Women's Refuge provides an on-site DV Specialist for Shasta County Children's Services. The DV Specialist helps to identify, evaluate and address DV issues with clients and assist in developing their case plans. The DV Specialist provides crisis counseling, consultation and support, training classes, an ongoing support group as well as resource information.

The Alcohol and Drug Program, coordinated through Monterey County Behavioral Health, provides AOD treatment and services for Monterey County child welfare services clients. Parents with allegations of substance abuse are referred for AOD assessments. Services available include individual and group counseling, drug education and recovery support services in an outpatient drug free setting or in a residential treatment program.

When parents are unable to address the issues which lead to CWS intervention, and when the best interest of the child has been considered, counties provide adoption focused services. Permanency may be achieved through adoption or guardianship or through another planned, permanent living arrangement. California counties utilize APS services and programs to promote adoption as a form of permanency for foster children statewide.

Through APS, California counties provide services aimed at promoting adoption for foster children when appropriate while expediting the process and supporting the family. As indicated in the figure below, pre and post-adoptive services were reported to be utilized most often across California in FY 2009-10. Statewide, a total of 44,116 recipients engaged in pre-adoptive services while 27,369 recipients engaged in post-adoptive services with APS dollars.

Figure 21: Adoption Promotion and Support Services across California FY 2009-10



**All 58 counties are represented in Figure 21 above.

Statewide, there were a total of 83,732 recipients of APS services during FY 2009-10. The service categories, as indicated above, include the following: outreach and recruitment, contracts with private agencies for adoption home studies, counseling, psychological evaluations, in-home crisis support and behavioral modification, respite care, parent education and support, transportation, informational workshops and training. Below are county specific examples of services provided during FY 2009-10.

San Bernardino County provides PCIT for families in the process of adoption. PCIT is a positive, intensive, evidence based treatment model which focuses on the relational and behavioral interactions between parent (or caregiver) and child. PCIT works with parents and children together in order to improve the quality of the parent-child relationship while teaching parents the necessary skills for managing children's behavioral problems.

Pre- and post-adoption services in Ventura County include case management and therapeutic intervention. Kids and Families Together provides in-home pre and post planning and support services aimed at stabilizing placements and promoting permanency. Families receive individualized treatment plans which may include parent education, information and referral or counseling. Trainings on attachment, the effects on attachment formation, trauma, normative development stages, or loss and grief are available. An intensive 16-week, therapeutic, in-home counseling program is also available to preserve struggling families post adoption.

Adoption home finding is provided in San Francisco County. A contractor provides pre- and post-adoption services to include outreach, recruitment of appropriate adoptive applicants, provision of post-adoption services, and technical assistance to facilitate timely adoptions. Trainings, support groups, and community building activities are also provided to families.

7 Reunification: Ensure that the state is helping children in foster care reunify safely to their families when appropriate

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Reunification was rated as an area needing improvement in 42 percent of the 19 applicable cases reviewed during the 2008 CFSR onsite review.

The following composite score for Permanency Composite 1, Timeliness and Permanency of Reunification is comprised of four measures across two components: A) Timeliness of Reunification and B) Permanency of Reunification. The three measures below represent Component A, Timeliness of Reunification. Component B, Permanency of Reunification, accounts for 46 percent of the total composite score and will be discussed in the Re-Entry section of this document, beginning on page 101.

Figure 22: Permanency Composite 1: Component A: Timeliness of Reunification (CFSR Data Profile: 03/14/2011)

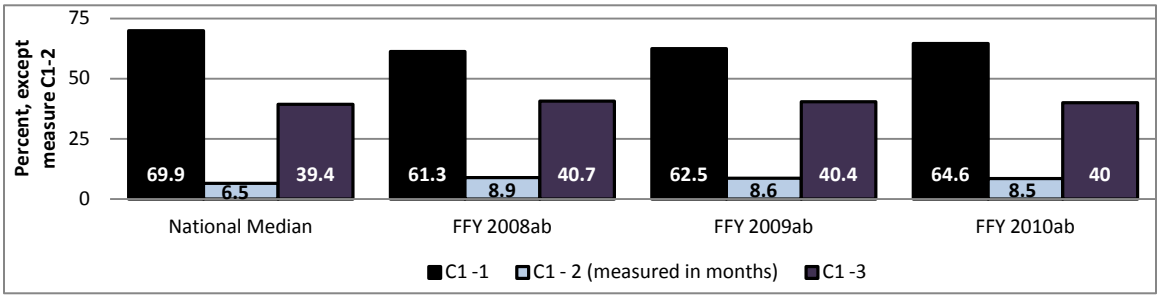
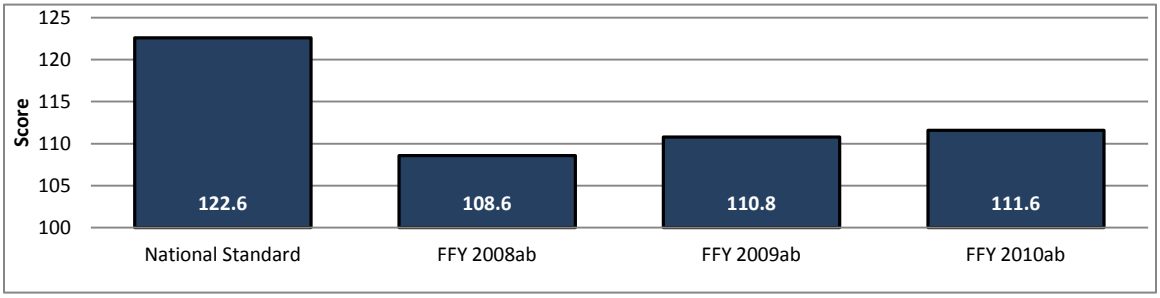


Figure 23: Permanency Composite 1 (CFSR Data Profile: 03/14/2011)



While California has yet to achieve the national standard on the composite score, the state has made steady and marked progress, increasing three points from 108.6 to 111.6 between FFY 2008 to FFY 2010. In comparison to other states, California also continues to improve in ranking from 32 of 47 states to a ranking of 26 of 47 states in FFY 2010.

Please note that the data also includes probation youth but these data are limited to foster care children in the juvenile justice system that are supervised by probation who are Title IV-E eligible and for whom Title IV-E payments are made. Discharge from care to reunification is defined in these measures as reunification with parent or primary caretaker or living with another relative.

Component A: Timeliness of Reunification

C1 -1: Of the children who exited to reunification, who had been in out-of-home care for 8 days or longer, the percentage who were in care for 12 months or less was **64.6 percent** for FFY 2010. Over the course of three years, California has made continuous improvement, increasing over 5 percent during the period. In FFY 2010, the state was 5.3 percent below the national median (69.9 percent) and slightly ten percent below the 75th percentile (75.2 percent).

Steady increases in the percentage of children exiting to reunification in less than 12 months can be seen beginning with data from FFY 1999 which shows that 49.4 percent of children in foster care reunified with their families in less than 12 months with the percentage of children increasing in subsequent years and finally peaking in FFY 2010 at 64.6 percent.

C1-2: Of the children who exited to reunification who had been in out-of-home care for eight days or longer, the median length of stay was **8.5 months** for FFY 2010 (lower score is preferable). The length of stay in California is two months longer than the national median (6.5 months) and almost three months longer than 25th percentile (5.4 months).

The median length of stay of children remaining in reunification has declined steadily from FFY 2000, from a median of 13.2 months until FFY 2008, with a median of 8.9 months, with steady decreases in the last two FFYs.

C1-3: Of children who entered care for the first time in the six months prior to FFY 2010, and remained in care for eight days or longer, 40 percent discharged to reunification within 12 months of removal. California has remained above the 39.4 percent national median, but below the percent 75th percentile at 48.4 percent. Performance on this measure has remained steadily around 40 percent between FFY 2008 and FFY 2010.

FACTORS AFFECTING PROGRESS

California law requires that reasonable efforts to return the child to his or family occur for at least 12 months and 6 months for children three years or younger, except in specified exceptional circumstances. Further, FR services may be extended to 18 months if, at the 12 month permanency hearing, the court finds that there is substantial probability of reunification if services are extended an additional six months. In addition, recent enacted state legislation allows an additional six months of FR services to be extended up to a total of 24 months by court order in the event that a parent who has been incarcerated, enrolled in an in-patient substance abuse program, or other institution can prove in court that their circumstance prevents them from accessing or being provided adequate FR services, and such parent can show that they will be able to provide the child with a safe, stable living environment if returned their care and custody by the end of the additional six month provision of services.

In practice, successful and timely reunification requires appropriately and accurately identifying the needs and problems of the parents, and effective delivery of services and interventions to address them. For 54 counties using SDM, social workers use the *FSNA tool* (discussed further in the Well Being section, starting on page 122) to guide them in identifying areas that present the greatest barriers to reunification and highlight areas where additional or more intensive service interventions may be required to improve case outcomes. Social workers exercise clinical judgment in collaboration with the family and age appropriate youth in identifying the issues that must be addressed in order for reunification to occur. These issues are generally focused around addressing the safety and risk concerns that prompted the initial removal. Many counties incorporate various strategies (TDMs, FGDMs, Permanency Teaming, Icebreakers, Cultural Brokers, parent mentors, etc.) to more effectively engage families and to identify extended family and community supports. Discussed further in the succeeding section, concurrent planning is established early in the process. Social workers have frequent contact with families, foster parents, and service providers to evaluate progress towards meeting reunification goals, and the court also reviews progress every six months and may order reunification with parents when safety concerns have been adequately addressed.

Additional practices that may have had an impact on this measure or may have an impact on this measure in future years include:

- ✓ Family to Family
- ✓ TDM conferences
- ✓ Dependency Drug Courts

- Child-level analysis from the Evaluation of the Anchor-Site Phase of the *Family to Family Initiative* (F2F) in 2010 revealed that the practice of F2F increased the likelihood of reunification within twelve months. This positive outcome may be attributed to the core strategies of F2F around the following: 1) Building community partnerships to ensure that families have community resources in place for successful and timely reunification; 2) TDM meetings increase the likelihood that parents and other family members are engaged and invested in developing and complying with case plans, as this will be the road map for reunification; and finally, 3) Self-evaluation as a strategy allowing parents to assess their readiness for reunification and identify services to improve the likelihood of reunification.
- Improvements made to *social worker and probation officer core curriculum* training on concurrent planning, permanency, and kinship guardianship/adoption.
- Increased focus on *TDM conferences* especially at the beginning of the child welfare case. TDM conferencing is a core practice in the F2F Initiative. The 11-County Pilot Project Evaluation Report noted that although the practice was implemented in all of the 11 counties, they differed on the point at which TDM was used during the life of case. However, results of the analysis revealed that TDMs are most cost effective when used at a time when a placement was at imminent risk of disruption or when an emergency placement had to be determined. Results also revealed that holding TDMs at the beginning of the child welfare case mitigated safety risks and helped prevent children from entering the system; it also supplied resources and information to families, thereby providing them with a better foundation to succeed in their reunification efforts. Additional efforts are being made to implement training on TDM practices in counties that have not been previously trained. However, these efforts are at the beginning stages and will not be fully realized until December 2011.

  During the annualized data periods described on page 124, approximately 25 participating TDM counties held an average of 26,000 meetings.
- Dependency Drug Courts - The AOC, CDSS, and the Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs (ADP) worked together to establish and implement the California FIRST (Families in Recovery Staying Together) Initiative. The project was designed to define the threshold combination and timing of interventions, supervision, and supports necessary in each of California's 58 counties to achieve the following outcomes for families that have substance abuse disorders as a primary barrier to reunification:

  1. Earlier access to quality treatment;
  2. Increased treatment completion rates;
  3. Higher reunification rates; and
  4. Reduced re-entry rates.

  The project launched in 2009 with the environmental scan and culminates with a presentation of a cost analysis and budget proposal to the California Legislature for the 2012 session.

  In the environmental scan, all respondent counties identified three common program goals: to "increase reunification rates"; "increase successful treatment completion rates"; and

"increase child safety." In addition, 95 percent of the counties reported additional program goals of "achieving early access to treatment" and "decreasing recidivism/recurrence of child abuse/neglect incidents." Lastly, 90 percent of the counties reported "timely permanency for children" and "increase family recovery" as program goals. While all programs identified outcome-oriented program goals, very few of those programs indicated an ability to capture the data needed to determine whether or not those goals are in fact being met.

Based on a county survey conducted by the AOC in 2009, approximately 29 counties are impacted by Drug Dependency Courts.

LIMITATIONS

Some limitations of these data include a lack of consideration for the special circumstances of some parents involved in the reunification process. California legislation (AB 2070) passed in 2008 increased the family reunification time frame for incarcerated parents, parents in drug rehabilitation, and mental health institutions. The intent of the legislation is to ensure that birth parents in these targeted populations receive the court mandated services in order to complete their family reunification case plans, have enough time to do so, and can show that they can provide a safe and healthy environment for their children once they are released from such facilities. Many times, court mandated family reunification services are difficult to obtain while parents are in these types of institutions. It is too soon to say how the newly implemented legislation will impact California's performance on Timeliness to Reunification in the future.

STRATEGIES AND PLANS FOR 2012

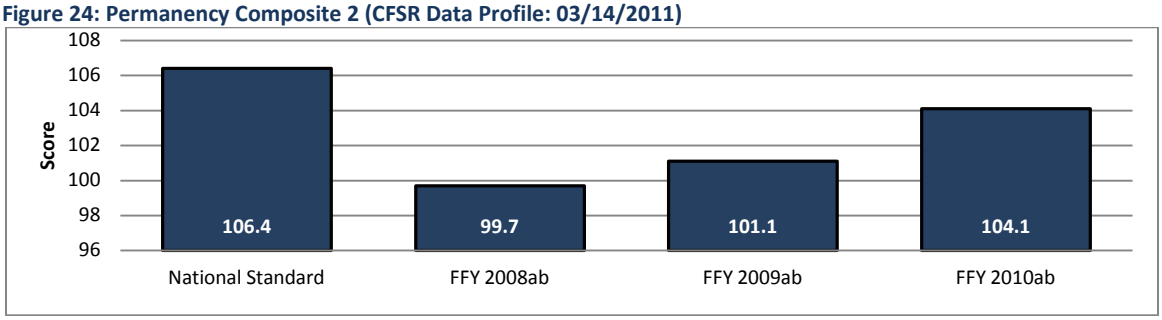
- *Quality of Social Worker Visits* – Aspects of the quality of the social worker visits have been determined, and new regulations are in process which may influence future outcomes on this measure. In addition, specialized training will be developed in this area to social workers and probation officers.
- *Improvements to core curriculum training* to social workers and probation officers on case planning to improve timeliness of reunification.

8 Adoption: Ensure that the state is reducing time in foster care to adoption

INDICATOR OF PROGRESS

In the CFSR onsite review in 2008, Timeliness of Adoption was assigned as an area needing improvement for six of twelve of the applicable foster care cases reviewed. The following composite score for Permanency Composite 2, Timeliness of Adoption addresses the national Child Welfare Outcome 5, Reduce Time in Foster Care to Adoption and is comprised of five measures across three components: A) Timeliness of Adoptions of Children Discharged from Foster Care, B) Progress Toward Adoption for Children in Foster Care for 17 Months or Longer, and C) Progress toward Adoption of Children who are Legally Free for Adoption.

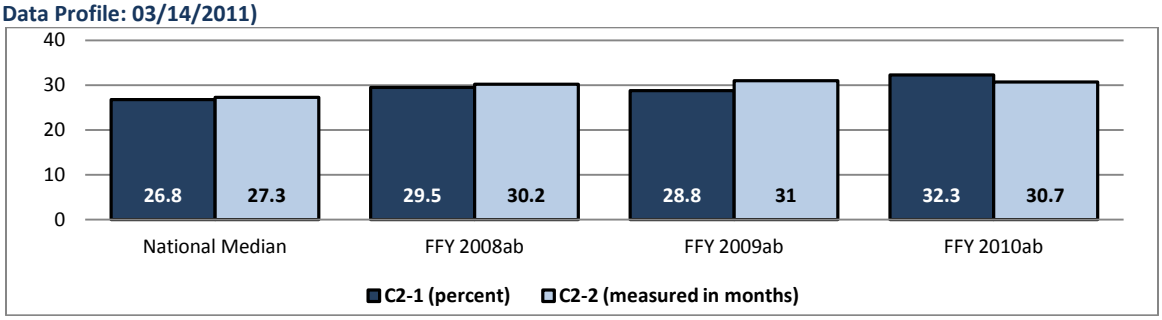
Figure 24: Permanency Composite 2 (CFSR Data Profile: 03/14/2011)



Overall, California is improving on Timeliness to Adoption; increasing sharply at nearly five points from FFY 2008 to FFY 2010, representing a 4.5 percent change difference. Although the state is still below the national average, California has improved in the ranks among 47 applicable states, from 21 in FFY 2008 to 17 in FFY 2010. Please note that the population discussed in this narrative is limited to children in the dependency system.

The following two measures address *Component A: Exits to Adoption of Children Discharged from Foster Care.*

Figure 25: Permanency Composite 2: Component A: Timeliness of Adoptions of Children Discharged from Foster Care (CFSR Data Profile: 03/14/2011)

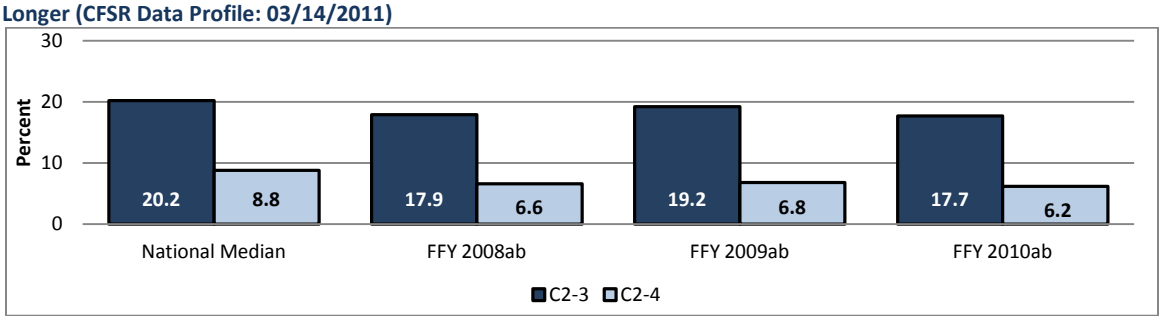


C2-1: Of all children who were discharged from foster care to a finalized adoption during FFY 2010, **32.3 percent** were discharged in less than 24 months from the date of the latest removal. California has shown steady improvement on this measure, representing a 9.5 percent change difference between FFY 2008 to FFY 2010. The state is 5.5 percent above the national median and 4.3 percent below the 75th percentile for all states.

C2-2: Of all the children who were discharged into finalized adoptions from foster care, their median length of stay while in care in FFY 2010 was 30.7 months. California is 3.4 months less than the national median, and nearly 2.5 months longer than the 75th percentile. The median length of stay of foster children exiting to adoption has declined 20 percent since peaking at 39 months in FFY 2001.

The following two measures address *Component B: Progress toward Adoption for Children in Foster Care for 17 Months or Longer.*

Figure 26: Permanency Composite 2: Component B: Progress Toward Adoption for Children in Foster Care for 17 Months or Longer (CFSR Data Profile: 03/14/2011)

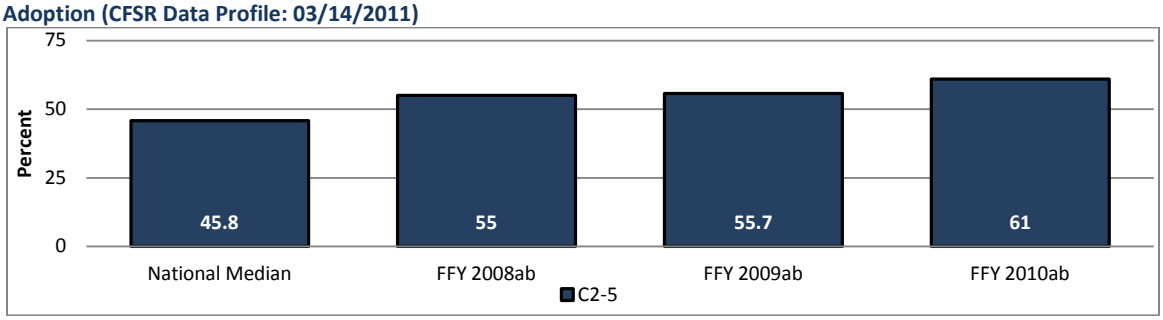


C2-3: Of all children in long-term foster care (defined as in care on the first day of FFY 2010 who were in foster care for 17 continuous months or longer), 17.7 percent were adopted within the year. Over the last decade, California has shown remarkable improvement, improving by over ten percent since FFY 1999 when the proportion of children counted in this category was 6.8 percent. A more prominent improvement can be seen when these data are grouped by age. In FFY 1999, 12.7 percent of foster care children between the ages of zero to eight in this category grew to 44.5 percent in FFY 2010. In contrast, in FFY 1999, data show that there were two percent of foster care children between the ages of nine to 17 in this category which slowly grew to 7.2 percent in FFY 2010. A higher percentage of children placed with kin appear in this category in comparison to children placed in foster homes and FFA homes.

C2-4: Of all children in long-term foster care on the first day of FFY 2010, and who were not legally free for adoption on the day prior, 6.2 percent became legally free for adoption during the first six months of the year; defined as TPR reported to AFCARS for both mother and father. This calculation excludes children who, by the end of the first six months of the year had a discharge from foster care to reunification, living with a relative, or guardianship. California is 2.6 percent below the national median and 4.7 percent below the 75th percentile for 47 states.

The following measure addresses Component C: Progress toward Adoption of Children Who Are Legally Free for Adoption

Figure 27: Permanency Composite 2: Component C: Progress toward Adoption of Children Who Are Legally Free for Adoption (CFSR Data Profile: 03/14/2011)



C2-5: Of all children who became legally free for adoption in the 12 month period prior to FFY 2010, **61 percent** were discharged from foster care to a finalized adoption in less than 12 months of becoming legally free, defined as TPR reported to AFCARS for both mother and father. California has been performing well above the national median of 45.8 percent. Since

FFY 2008, the state is nearly ten percent above the national median and has been increasing consistently through the succeeding three FFYs; furthermore, California is exceeding the 75th percentile by 7.3 percent.

FACTORS AFFECTING PROGRESS

While it is not possible to determine the reasons for the steady improvements on these measures, California has made improvements that may have likely had an effect for specific groups of children in foster care.

California statutes mandate that a permanency hearing be held within twelve months after the child entered foster care, or immediately if reunification services are not ordered. Adoption must be considered at each review hearing following the termination of reunification services. At which point, TPR is initiated unless evidence suggests that such action would not be in the best interest of the child including maintaining or identifying a permanent placement with a relative or tribe. Consistent with federal law, TPR is also initiated when a child has been in care for 15 of the most recent 22 months, again unless this was found to be incompatible with the child's best interest including maintaining or identifying a permanent placement with a relative or tribe. When TPR has occurred and adoption is the goal, court hearings are regularly held to evaluate progress toward indentifying an adoptive family, and legally finalizing the adoption after the family is identified. Other factors include:

- ✓ Concurrent Planning
- ✓ Older Youth Adoptions Program
- ✓ Adoption Assistance Program
- ✓ Private Adoptions Agency Reinvestment Program
- ✓ Kinship Support Services Program

- *Concurrent planning* - Social workers/probation placement officers are required to develop simultaneous plans for children during reunification that include an alternate permanent plan in the event that reunification does not occur. Agencies are performing early searches for potential adoptive families, with priority placed on kinship adoption and guardianship. Through this practice, the likelihood of children being placed with a caregiver who may provide permanence through adoption or guardianship is increased. The model has been integrated to core training for social workers and to probation placement officers through the Resource Center for Family-Focused Practice and curriculum for social workers developed by the California Social Work Center (CalSWEC) and provided by the RTAs. In addition, training for juvenile court officers on concurrent planning and the importance of working with other child welfare professionals in the development of concurrent planning case plans for foster care youth is provided in approximately half of the state's counties through the AOC.
- *Older Youth Adoptions Pilot Project (OYA)* was authorized by AB 1808 (statutes of 2006). The purpose of the pilot project was to provide pre-adoption and post-adoption services to ensure the successful adoption of children and youth who were in foster care 18 months or more, were at least nine years of age, and were placed in an unrelated foster home or in a group home. AB 1808 specified that Los Angeles and San Francisco Counties and CDSS

District Office (DO) in Sacramento would be included in the OYA Pilot Project. Two additional counties, Alameda and Kern counties, were added to the OYA Pilot project through an application process. The end date for the pilot project was June 30, 2010. A summary of the outcomes and effective interventions is provided below:

OYA outcomes:

- ✓ 944 youth received services through the pilot;
- ✓ 77 youth were adopted and 20 adoptions are pending;
- ✓ 86 youth were placed in legal guardianships;
- ✓ 49 youth reunified with their birth parents and 6 reunifications are pending (these reunification occurred after the original reunifications had been terminated;
- ✓ 78 youth were placed with a relative;
- ✓ 460 lifelong connections were made for youth who did not achieve one of permanent outcomes listed above.

The OYA pilots reported that the most effective interventions were:

- ✓ Focusing on a culture shift so that agency staff understand and prioritize permanency work for older youth;
- ✓ Family Finding and Engagement;
- ✓ Dedicated social workers who had a "whatever it takes" attitude to engage youth, assist with healing and recovery for the OYA youth, siblings, and biological families, and coordinate comprehensive services and recruitment;
- ✓ Specialized recruitment like media outreach, child specific recruitment, and community outreach through community events;
- ✓ Dedicated staff with lower caseloads providing specialized and intensive services addressing the specialized needs of this population; and
- ✓ Public-Private partnerships to leverage services and resources to support permanency work.

A synthesized report of the outcomes and effective strategies will be submitted to the Legislature and posted on CDSS website.

- *Adoption Assistance Program* aims to remove the financial disincentives for families to adopt and encourage the adoption of special needs children. Recognizing that adoptive parents often experience financial difficulty meeting the special needs of children who formerly were placed in California's foster care system, the Legislature implemented the program with the intention that it would benefit children in foster care by providing the security and stability of a permanent home through adoption. Children may receive a federally funded subsidy under Title IV-E or a state-funded subsidy per state guidelines. In FY 2009-10, 96 percent received AAP subsidies.

  Additionally, in FY 2009-10, 85.8 percent of all finalized adoptions accepted AAP.

- The *Private Adoptions Agency Reinvestment Program* (PAARP) program provides funds to compensate private adoption agencies for costs of placing for adoption and for completing the adoptions of children who are eligible for AAP Program benefits because of age,

membership in a sibling group, medical or psychological problems, adverse parental background, or other circumstances that make placement especially difficult. Individual counties do not have the adequate funding and resources to support the placement of all foster children who could benefit from adoptions, a majority in need of special care. Through PAARP, private adoption agencies can supplement public agency efforts to recruit study and train adoptive parents for foster youth who would otherwise remain in the foster care system. Effective February 1, 2008, the maximum amount of reimbursement increased to $10,000 and is only applicable to those placement cases that were opened on or after July 1, 2007. Currently, children from all 58 counties are able to benefit from the program and 71 private adoption agencies signed up as eligible to claim PAARP. In FY 2009-10, 3512 PAARP claims were processed.

- The *Kinship Support Services Program*, discussed further in the Relative Placement section, provided permanency related services such as adoption and guardianship assistance and permanency planning to about eight percent of the participants in the program in FY 2009-10.

LIMITATIONS

One limitation in this particular measurement is that it focuses only on one permanency option, adoption. However, the past several years has shown a shift toward the focus of other permanency options for foster care children, particularly older youth, including, but not limited to, adoption. These older youth may not want to be adopted but would prefer another permanent placement or plan that does not involve TPR. Many of these youth have either maintained connections to their birth families or have been reunited with their birth families and want to maintain their identity and connection to these individuals and are old enough to make that choice. Others in this population have already identified an individual or family that they can maintain a permanent connection throughout the rest of their stay in foster care and into adulthood. Other permanency options for youth include guardianship with non-relatives or with non-related extended family members (NRFEMS), kinship guardianship, making a permanency connection with another adult, and in some cases, reunification with a birth parent after parental rights have been terminated or after a prolonged stay in foster care. The low percentage of older foster children or youth being adopted that were in care for 17 continuous months (or longer on the first day of the year, who were then adopted within 12 months) is not a reflection of how many of these children exited out of the child welfare system through other permanency options.

STRATEGIES AND PLANS FOR 2012

- ✓ Tribal Customary Adoptions
- ✓ Inter-Country Adoptions
- ✓ Extension of AAP

- The CDSS, working with California tribes, continues to provide technical assistance to county child welfare adoption agencies, private adoption agencies and CDSS Adoption District Offices on the implementation of AB 1325, which passed in 2009 and became effective on July 1, 2010. AB 1325 provides an additional permanency option in the form of *Tribal*

Customary Adoption (TCA) for ICWA eligible dependent children in the State. TPR has been a process contrary to cultural tradition of many tribes. As such, TCA allows for an ICWA-eligible child to be adopted with the permission of the child's tribe by a relative of the child or a member of the child's tribe without TPR, while still being eligible to receive adoption assistance payments. A report provided by the AOC will be provided prior to the sunset provision date of this bill in the year 2014. On March 24, 2010, CDSS issued ACIN I-10-17 to counties, private adoption agencies, CDSS Adoption District Offices and Tribal Title IV-E eligible tribes on TCA. Additional instructions were provided to counties in ACL 10-47 issues on October 27, 2010. Regulations will be forthcoming.

- The $1.5 million in federal *Adoption Incentive funds* allocated in FFY 2008-09 was appropriated to 42 counties and seven CDSS Adoption DOs in FY 2010-11 through the issuance of County Fiscal Letter (CFL) 10-11-19. The DOs provide adoption services to the remaining 16 counties. The counties and DOs used the Incentive Adoption funds for:
    - Post adoption services to avert adoption disruptions.
    - Preparing youth for permanency by resolving barriers to adoption.
    - Intensive family finding to locate relatives willing to make lifelong commitments to youth, including adoption and guardianship.
    - Support to ensure successful permanency options for older foster youth.
    - Many other services and support to ensure successful permanency options for older foster youth.
    - Recruitment of adoptive parents who are committed to keeping sibling groups together.
    - Reunification with family members whose services were previously terminated.

  The allocation was based on caseload growth from 2008 to 2009. The caseload growth included: adoptions, Kinship Guardianship Assistance Payment Program (KinGAP), other guardianship, and second chance reunification.

  Since 2009, California has not met the requirement to receive Adoption Incentive funds; therefore, there will not be an allocation to the counties and DOs in the next state fiscal year and counties must expend these funds before FFY 2012.

  The Legislature passed AB 665, Torrico (Chapter 250, filed with Secretary of State on October 11, 2009) to ensure that the state will reinvest federal adoption incentive payments received through the implementation of the Fostering Connections Act into California's child welfare system. This was to provide legal permanency outcomes for older children nine years and above, including, but not limited to adoption, guardianship, and reunification of children whose reunification services were previously terminated. AB 665 is aimed to encourage counties to place emphasis on permanency for older children such as adoption, guardianship and a second chance reunification for youth who previously had reunification services terminated.

- *Inter-Country Adoptions* - Instructions related to implementation of the Hague Convention was issued to all California inter-country adoption agencies in ACL 09-10.

Historically, due to limitations of the statewide CWS/CMS application California has been unable to obtain data on children who were adopted from other countries who enter State custody as a result of the disruption or dissolution of such an adoption. However, CDSS submitted a request that the CWS/CMS application be changed to capture these data. These changes are currently scheduled to be released in February 2012 in version 6.5. The system change will allow the system user to enter into the application whether a child welfare case is a result of a disrupted or dissolved inter-country adoption. It is hopeful that the additional information requested, such as the agencies who handled the placement or the adoption, the plans for the child, and the reasons for the disruption or dissolution, can be obtained by reviewing the cases that have been identified. The CDSS will issue instructions concurrently to counties on the program and policy aspects of the change in the application so that data will be entered in a consistent and appropriate manner. The ability to use these data for reporting purposes will not be fully realized until the 2013 APSR, at the earliest.

In April 2011, through an informal survey, DOs reported that in the last year, there were approximately four known adoptions which fell under the auspices of Family Code 8903 (failed international adoptions).

- *Extended AAP Assistance* - With the implementation of AB 12 on January 1, 2012, California will take advantage of several components of the Fostering Connections and Increasing Adoptions Act (P.L. 10-351). One provision of AB 12, phased-in over three years, allows California to extend AAP benefits beyond the age of 18 for eligible youth. Youth who entered adoption at age 16 and meet one of the five participation criteria may receive extended benefits up to age 19, effective January 1, 2012, up to age 20, effective January 1, 2013 and up to age 21, effective January 1, 2014. For further details regarding AB 12, please see page 91.

  The three years of extended support through AAP assistance will provide adoptive parents additional aid in caring for their non-minor children as they prepare to become independent adults.

9 Guardianship: Strengthen and provide for additional permanency options through federal participation in KinGAP

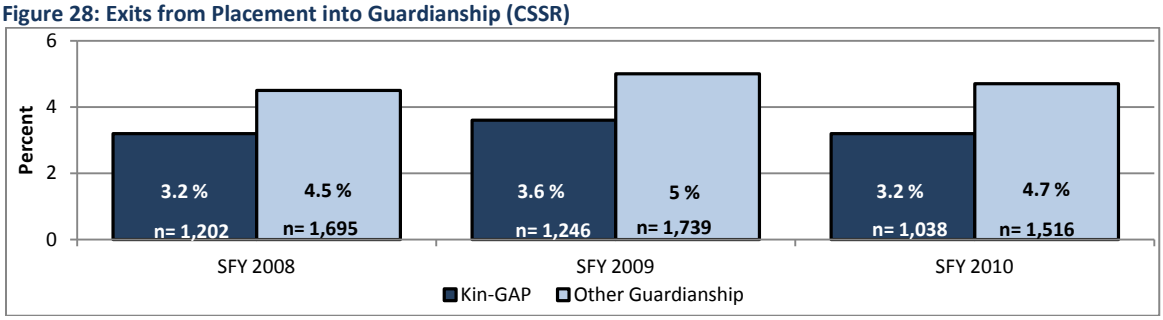
Subsidized relative guardianship is an important permanency option that provides children with a permanent home, while providing caregivers the resources and legal authority to keep children in a stable and safe home. Subsidized relative guardianship is nearly as secure as adoption, without necessarily terminating parental rights, and serves as a viable alternative to prevent children from growing up in foster care. Prior to guardianship, children in care had two permanency options, reunification and adoption, with long-term care as a third and least desirable option.

As such, to address those barriers to permanency, California implemented the KinGAP Program in January 2000. California has chosen to opt into the federal Title IV-E subsidized guardianship program through the enactment of AB 12, effective January 1, 2011. Based on CDSS' county

reporting form CA 237 KG, **nearly 13,000 cases receive KinGAP** at the end of June 2011 (data updated on August 10, 2011).[11]

The data below illustrate that annual exits from out-of-home placement into KinGAP or other guardianship has remained fairly stable at nine percent between FYs 2007-08 and 2009-10. As the capacity to accurately capture the Kin-GAP cases is a somewhat recent addition to CWS/CMS, an unknown proportion of these exits are reported in the analysis as "Other Guardianship."

Figure 28: Exits from Placement into Guardianship (CSSR)



CDSS cautions that a simple examination of participation rates in California's decade-long KinGAP Program does not fully appreciate the success of the program. Webster, et al at UC Berkeley CSSR[12], compared exits to permanency prior to KinGAP, with exits on and after program implementation in 2000. The data showed a net permanency gain after program enactment. The same analysis also showed a reduced proportion of re-entries into care and fewer subsequent maltreatment allegations. Similar analysis from Illinois also illustrated positive net permanency gains for children with subsidized guardianship as a permanency option.

Through federal participation, California can realize significant savings in grant amounts, incorporate aspects of the federal program that will streamline and simplify eligibility determinations and provide fiscal incentives to transition a court-dependent child from foster care to permanency with a relative caregiver via the new federally funded program. California's new program allows guardians to renegotiate a new rate if the child's needs or circumstances change. Additionally, children placed out of state with relatives may now receive KinGAP benefits as well as allow existing guardians to move out of state without losing benefits. Through the more effective program that now exists with addition of the federal options, California can focus efforts in strengthening and building upon its existing permanency options.

In addition, a parallel state funded KinGAP Program has been created by the Legislature to ensure that dependent children and wards of the juvenile court who are not otherwise eligible for Title IV-E payments, but are in long-term, stable placements with relatives, are equally eligible for the benefits through the state funded KinGAP Program. The state can maximize improvements in the federal permanency outcomes by exiting non-federally eligible foster children to the new state funded Kin-GAP Program.

[11] http://www.cdss.ca.gov/research/res/pdf/Ca237kg/2011/CA237KGJun11.pdf
[12] http://www.cssr.berkeley.edu/cwscmsreports/ppts/kingap_nawrs2006.ppt ·

In summary, the new KinGAP Program has two components – a federally funded component when the child is eligible for Title IV-E foster care and a new state funded component when the child is not eligible for Title IV-E foster care.

The resulting improvements to the program became effective January 1, 2011, and include the following:

- Receiving Federal Financial Participation (FFP) through Title IV-E for foster children placed with an approved relative guardian who are Title IV-E eligible, and providing for a parallel state funded KinGAP Program for foster children placed with an approved relative who are not Title IV-E eligible;
- Reducing the length of time that a court-dependent child must reside in the approved home of the prospective relative guardian while under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court or a voluntary placement agreement from 12 consecutive months to six consecutive months;
- Providing for continued eligibility for KinGAP regardless of the state of residence of the relative guardian and child;
- Requiring the county child welfare agency, probation department, or Title IV-E agreement tribe to enter into a binding written agreement with the relative guardian;
- Allowing the county child welfare agency, probation department, or Title IV-E agreement tribe and the relative guardian to renegotiate the payment amount based on the changing needs of the child and the circumstances of the relative;
- Allowing entry into the KinGAP Program under a voluntary placement agreement with an approved relative that resulted in a guardianship being established in juvenile court under W&IC section 360, and
- Extending Kin-GAP benefits to age 21 for a youth who has a physical or mental disability that warrants the continuation of assistance.

The CDSS issued an ACL 11-15 on January 31st, 2011 instructing counties about the new provisions of the program. Following the issuance of the ACL, CDSS is currently engaged in the following activities:

- ✓ Providing TA to counties on the recently issued ACL
- ✓ Developing a FAQ form for counties
- ✓ Clean-up legislation to ensure conformity
- ✓ Developing regulations.

The state submitted a Title IV-E Plan to the Children's Bureau Regional Office to receive approval for operating the federal Title IV-E subsidized guardianship program; the plan is currently pending approval.

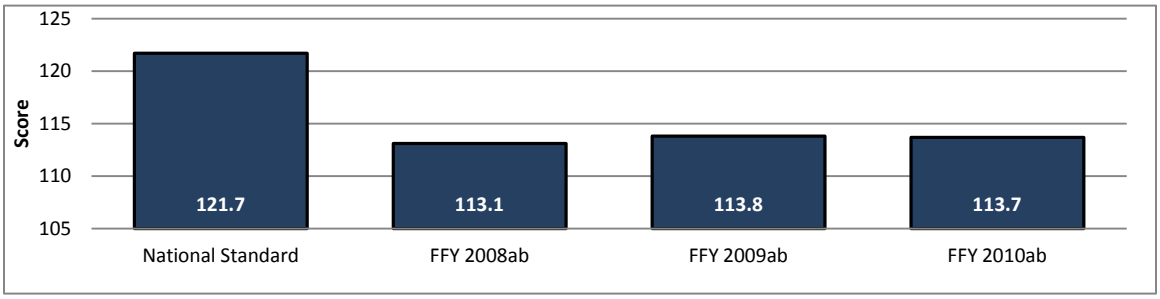
10 Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement: Ensure that the state is establishing planned permanent living arrangements for children in foster care who do not have the goal of reunification, adoption, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives, and that the state is providing services consistent with this goal.

Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement rated as an area needing improvement for 55 percent of the 11 applicable cases reviewed during the 2008 CFSR onsite review.

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Permanency Composite 3, Permanency for Children and Youth in Foster Care for Long Periods of Time, is comprised of three measures across two components: A) Achieving Permanency for Children in Foster Care for Long Periods of Time, and B) Growing up in Foster Care. The Composite score is intended to measure how well the state is achieving permanency for children in foster care for extended time periods.

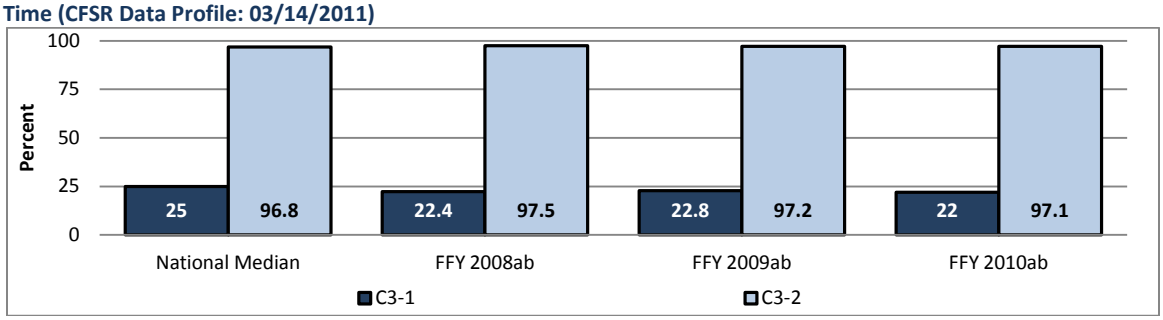
Figure 29: Permanency Composite 3: Permanency for Children and Youth in Foster Care for Long Periods of Time (CFSR Data Profile: 03/14/2011)



Although California is still below the national standard of 121.7, overall the state has made significant improvements for children in care for long periods of time. The composite score increased significantly between 2007 at 107.1 to 113.1 in 2008, and continuing steadily to 2010 at **113.7**, representing a six percent improvement overall. An examination of the individual components suggests that the area of greatest improvement has been in the area of exits to permanency prior to 18th birthday (C3-1). Between FFY 2008 and 2010, California improved in its national ranking from 31 of 51 states, to 30 of 51.

The following two measures address *Component A: Achieving Permanency for Children in Long Periods of Time*

Figure 30: Permanency Composite 3: Component A: Achieving Permanency for Children in Foster Care for Long Periods of Time (CFSR Data Profile: 03/14/2011)

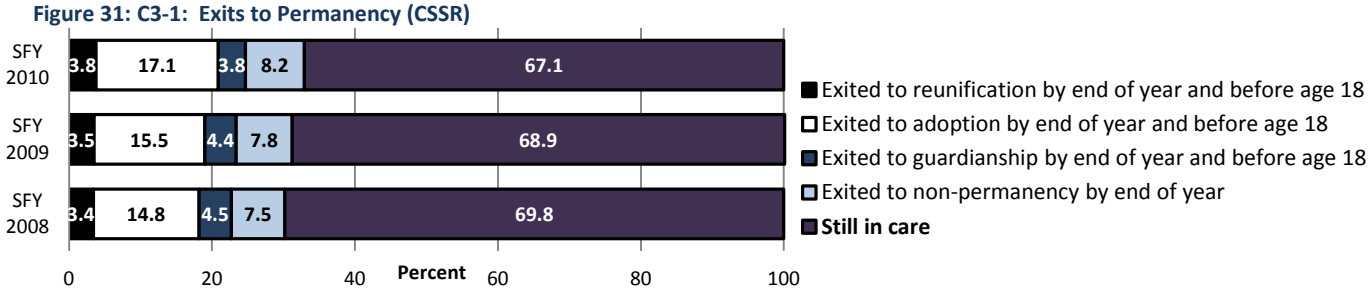


C3-1: Of all the children in foster care for 24 months or longer on the first day of the year, **22 percent** were discharged to a permanent home by the end of FFY 2010, and before they turned

18 years old. A permanent home is defined as having a discharge reason of adoption, guardianship, or reunification (including living with a relative). The measure peaked in FFY 2009 at 22.8 percent. Children who were in care for 24 months at the beginning of the year who exited and reentered during the same were excluded from this measure. California is 3 percent below the national median and 6.9 percent below the 75th percentile.

The figure below is a distribution on the types of exits for children in long-term care. Most notable from this figure are the steady decreases in the percent of children still in care from nearly 70 percent in 2008 to just above 67 percent in 2010. There have also been steady and marked increases in children exiting to adoption from about 15 percent in 2008 to 17 percent in 2010, presenting a 15.5 percent improvement over three FFYs.

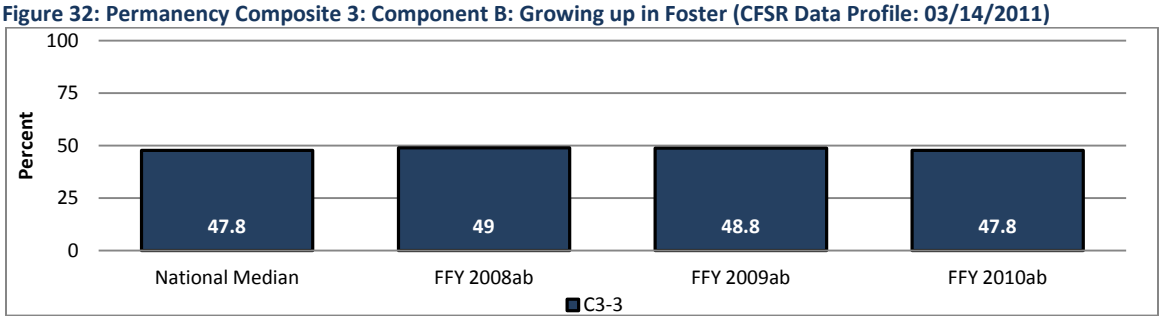
Figure 31: C3-1: Exits to Permanency (CSSR)



C3-2: Of all the children discharged from foster care during 2010 who were legally free for adoption at the time of discharge, 97.1 percent were discharged prior to their 18th birthday and were discharged to reunification with a parent or primary caretaker, or discharged to adoption or guardianship. This figure has remained relatively unchanged over the previous three years. California is 0.3 percent above the national median, and 0.9 percent below the 75th percentile.

The following measure addresses Component B: Growing up in Foster Care.

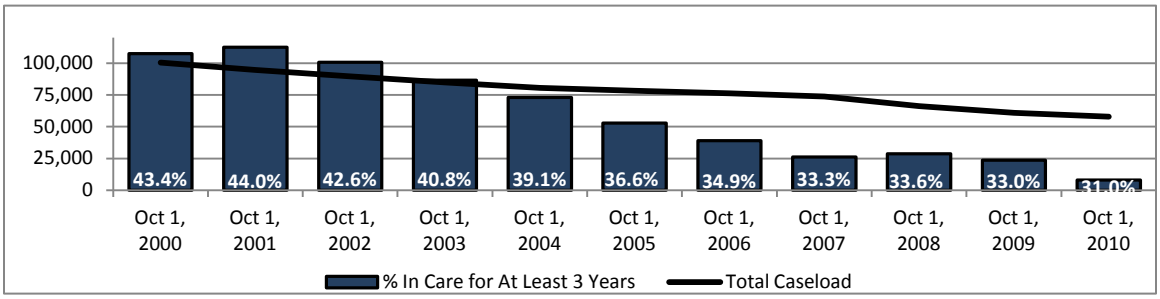
Figure 32: Permanency Composite 3: Component B: Growing up in Foster (CFSR Data Profile: 03/14/2011)



C3-3: Of all the children who were discharged to emancipation or turned 18 while in care, 47.8 percent were in foster care for three years or longer in FFY 2010. Performance for children who emancipated and who were in foster care for three years or more peaked in FFY 2002 at 67.4 percent, and has declined steadily through FFY 2010 at 59.6 percent. In this measure fewer children who emancipate after having been in care for more than three years is preferable. Therefore, California has improved performance by nearly 12 percent during that period. The state's improved efforts in finding younger children permanent homes when in foster care for two years or more, appears to have made an impact in reducing the number of children who are foster care for three years or more and emancipate from care.

The figure below illustrates the proportion of children in care for at least three years relative to the total in-care case load for each year on October 1. While caseloads are decreasing overtime, there have also been steady decreases in the proportion of children growing up in foster care. California's focus on increasing permanency options is exemplified in the reduction of children in care for long periods of time.

Figure 33: Proportion of Children in Care at Least Three Years Relative to Total Caseload (CSSR)



FACTORS AFFECTING PROGRESS

After the court terminates reunification services, the court orders a selection and implementation hearing to determine a permanent plan; the hearing can be bypassed only if there exists compelling reasons that neither adoption or guardianship are suitable plans. Permanency options are reconsidered at each status review hearing for children in long-term foster care.

While it is not possible to attribute improvements to any single effort, improving permanence for all children has been a focus in California for some time. Some of the activities California has been working on to improve in the area include:

- ✓ Los Angeles County Permanency Units
- ✓ Family to Family
- ✓ Older Youth Adoptions
- ✓ Kinship Support Services Program
- ✓ Additional funding for adoption and family engagement activities

- For the longest waiting and least connected youth in *Los Angeles County*, Los Angeles Department of Children and Family Services assigns specially trained permanency workers from their P3 program to reconnect them to extended family members and help them identify a family they can choose to join.[13]
- *Family to Family* principles stress permanence for all children and is based on the principle that families their communities are involved in placement decisions.
- *Older Youth Adoptions* was discussed in detail in the adoption section, focused on providing services to children who were in care for at least 18 months and at least nine years old.

[13] LA DCFS Child Welfare Outcomes: Service Delivery System Reform and Title IV-E Waiver Capped Allocation Demonstration Project. Presentation on 03/03/2011

- The state's *Independent Living Program (ILP) and the Education Training Vouchers (ETV)* programs, discussed in detail in the Chafee chapter, provide services and address the needs of youth transitioning out of the system by offering supportive services and financial help to assist older youth in maintaining stable living arrangements.
- The *additional funding in adoption* (discussed in the adoption section) is intended to encourage potential families in adopting former foster children, including older youth. Additional funding in conjunction to the CFSR PIP was made available to counties to increase family finding and engagement efforts.

STRATEGIES AND PLANS FOR 2012

- ✓ Federal KinGAP Implementation
- ✓ Extension of Foster Care to Age 20
- ✓ California Partners for Permanency
- ✓ Congregate Care Reform
- ✓ RBS Pilot

- *The KinGAP program* was established to enhance family preservation and stability by placing foster children in long–term placements with relative caregivers. The implementation of the federal program will further strengthen permanency options for youth. Data from the CSSR presented in 2006 on the characteristics of children in KinGAP showed that the median age of recipients was ten years old, and the median time in care was four years[14].
- *Extension of Foster Care to Age 20* - CDSS is in the process of implementing AB 12, Chapter 559, Statutes of 2010. AB 12 is California's legislation that implements the provision of The Fostering Connections and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 which gives states the option to extend foster care beyond the age of 18. Beginning on January 1, 2012, AB 12 will allow foster youth over the age of 18 to remain in foster care up to the age of 20 provided they meet one of the five criteria outlined in the Fostering Connections Act. On January 1, 2014, the age extension for foster care may be increased to age 21 contingent upon budget appropriations.

  The legislation recognizes the importance of family and permanency for youth by also extending payment benefits and transitional support services for AAP, KinGAP, and Foster Care up to age 20.

  The CDSS has convened multiple workgroups to develop implementation processes for extended foster care. A Steering Committee comprised of sponsors of the bill and a variety of other stakeholders, including youth representatives, has been developed to ensure the vision of AB 12 is achieved in the full implementation of the extension of foster care. A Coordinating Leadership Team comprised of CWDA, CDSS, and representatives from AOC and the Chief Probation Officers of California is charged with vetting any policy issues that arise in the development of the program and ensure that the policies are aligned with the vision of AB 12.

[14] www.cssr.berkeley.edu/cwscmsreports/ppts/kingap_nawrs2006.ppt

In addition to the Steering Committee and Coordinating Leadership Team, four main implementation workgroups were created: 1) Program Criteria/Development, 2) Eligibility/Rates, 3) Fiscal/Administration, and 4) Youth Engagement/ Outreach and Training. The groups meet at least monthly and are in the process of operationalizing the five program eligibility criteria, the re-entry process, developing the mutual agreement, placement agreement and other forms, case plan processes, policies for maintaining eligibility, and defining the Supervised Independent Living Placement.

AB 12 also establishes Transitional Housing Program Plus-Foster Care (THP+FC) as a Title IV-E eligible placement for non-minor dependents. The program will be similar to the existing THP-Plus for emancipated foster youth and the rate structure is being developed through the work group processes.

Once tasks of the workgroups are accomplished, ACLs will be released prior to January 1, 2012 to instruct counties on the processes for allowing foster youth to remain in foster care beyond age 18. After implementation, CDSS will continue to work with counties to refine the policy for the regulations based on questions and feedback counties provide on any barriers or issues experienced during implementation. The CDSS will continue to use the SOC 405E Exit Outcomes form to measure outcomes for youth emancipating at age 18 and above.

- *California Partners for Permanency* (CAPP) is a new federally funded project to reduce the number of children in long-term foster care. It is one of six projects in the country funded through a $100 million Presidential initiative.

  The goal of CAPP in its five years of federal funding is to improve permanency outcomes for African-American and American Indian children in or entering foster care or remaining in long-term foster care by implementing a Child and Family Practice Model that includes culturally-sensitive engagement; empowerment of family, Tribal and community networks; and use of culturally-based healing practices and practice adaptations. Inherent in the definition of a "practice model" is the recognition that systemic and organizational change will be critical in supporting the practice transformation that will lead to desired outcomes. Our recognition of the important interplay between practice and system change for our target population is the reason why CAPP chose a practice model as its intervention.

  Through analysis of existing literature, findings from primary research conducted during the planning process, and discussions with a diverse group of stakeholders throughout the state, the CAPP Child and Family Practice Model is being designed to focus on resolution of the following key barriers to permanency for the target population:

  Current child welfare system[15] practice and policy:

  - Does not adequately understand, engage, or value the strengths and resources of African American and American Indian families, communities, and Tribes due to mutual mistrust (at both the individual and system levels) and a lack of understanding of the differences in the lived experience of each population; and

[15] CAPP's definition of the child welfare system includes the child welfare agency and the partners with which that system currently works to serve its clients, including the courts, mental health, probation, education, private providers, etc.

- Has not consistently partnered with communities and Tribes to address the underlying grief, trauma, and loss African-American and American Indian children are more likely to experience in their lives and to identify, develop, fund and make available culturally-based and trauma-informed support services.

To address these barriers, core practice with African-American and American Indian families involved with the child welfare agency and its partners needs to change to include culturally-sensitive engagement; empowerment of family, Tribal and community networks; and use of culturally-based healing practices and practice adaptations. Because the theoretical underpinnings of these practice changes are markedly different from current practice approaches, CAPP believes that systemic and organizational change will be critical in supporting the practice transformation that will lead to desired outcomes.

The CAPP chose to develop a Child and Family Practice Model as its intervention. The CAPP believes a practice model is the right intervention to address the permanency barriers for African-American and American Indian children and youth because it includes all of the necessary components for change: 1) Defines a consistent theoretical framework and a set of values and principles to guide the work of the child welfare agency and its partners; 2) Articulates and operationalizes specific skills and practices that child welfare workers and staff in partner organizations use to engage families, youth, the community and Tribes in developing and delivering services that meet the unique needs of those served; and 3) Is capable of being fully integrated into and supported by the child welfare agency and its partners.[16] The following elements are consistently cited in the literature as essential to a practice model: 1) A theoretical framework; 2) Guiding values and principles; 3) Essential front-line practices; and 4) Organizational and system capacity.[17]

The CAPP will be submitting its implementation plan for the project to the federal Children's Bureau by July 30, 2011. The intervention will be implemented initially in Fresno, Humboldt, Los Angeles and Santa Clara counties, then later in additional counties. Additional information is available at: www.reducefostercarenow.org.

- *Congregate Care Reform* - Group home (GH) placements are considered institutional placements, or "congregate care," serving foster children who require higher levels of care and supervision. The children are placed in congregate care by local child welfare agencies, probation agencies, and mental health agencies. Unfortunately and too often, children remain in congregate care placements for extended lengths of time, sometimes emancipating directly from congregate care to independent living with poor outcomes (unemployment, homelessness, incarceration). Given the high cost of these placements (GH rates were increased by 32 percent last year), there is interest in re-examining the role of congregate care for foster children. Several short-term and long-term strategies have been developed by a workgroup of CDSS staff and county staff (through the CWDA) and the Alliance for Child and Family Services that are intended to reduce placements and/or length

[16] *Practice Model Guidance*, Positioning Public Child Welfare Guidance, Strengthening Families in the 21st Century, American Public Human Services Association (2010) and *Successful Adoption and Implementation of a Comprehensive Casework Practice Model in a Public Child Welfare Agency: Application of the Getting to Outcomes Model*, Anita P. Barbee, et al. (2010).
[17] Ibid.

of stays in congregate care settings, and increase opportunities for foster children to receive timely and appropriate services within community settings. The division is exploring options to move forward to further develop these strategies within the current environment of severely reduced resources and budget constraints.

- The *Residentially-Based Services Reform Project* was established by AB 1453 (Soto, Chapter 466, Statutes of 2007) in response to growing frustration with the shortcomings of the existing foster care group home system. This law authorized a pilot demonstration project aimed at eventually transforming California's current system of long-term, congregate, group home care into a system of RBS programs. These programs would reduce the length of time in group care and improve permanency outcomes for youth by combining short-term, intensive, residential treatment interventions with community-based services aimed at reconnecting foster children to their families and communities.

  The RBS Reform Project is operational in all four demonstration counties (Los Angeles, Sacramento, San Francisco, and San Bernardino) with the following supports and activities occurring in the next year:

  - County foster care claims validated; fiscal audits of RBS providers reviewed
  - Ongoing collection of evaluation data
  - County annual reports from each demonstration site submitted and analyzed
  - Mid-project progress report produced by evaluation contractor
  - Cost containment reviews conducted to determine potential impact on Aid to Families with Dependent Children-Foster Care expenditures
  - Site monitoring conducted and technical assistance provided as appropriate

11 Placement Stability: Ensure that the state is minimizing placement changes for children in foster care.

Placement stability was rated as an area needing improvement for 23 percent of the 39 applicable cases reviewed during the 2008 CFSR 2 on-site review. Permanency Composite 4 is the only measure that California has not achieved as part of the CSFR PIP and will have 12-months of non-overlapping data period beginning on July 1, 2011 to show that the state's efforts during the two-year PIP implementation period are improving. Over the course of the non-overlapping data period, the state is committed to demonstrating continued improvement in placement stability through alternative forms of measurement, and expending resources available at the state and counties to ensure that the state is minimizing placement changes for children in care.

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

The following three measures comprise the composite score for Permanency Composite 4, Placement Stability.

Figure 34: Permanency Composite 4 Measures 1-3 (CFSR Data Profile: 03/14/2011)

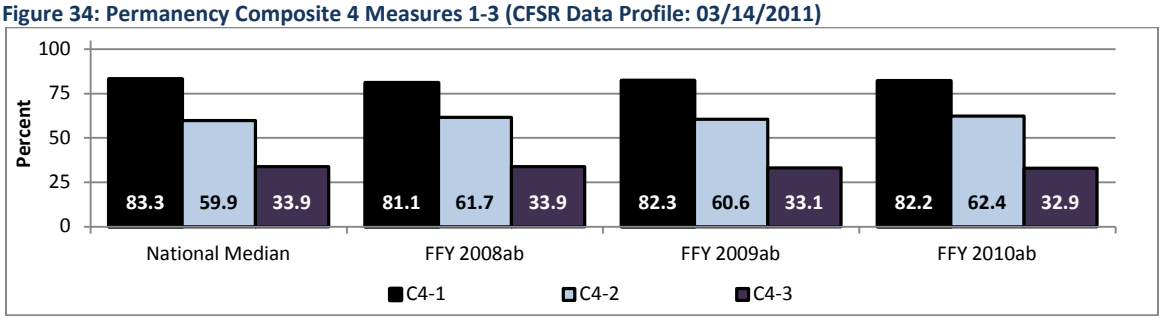
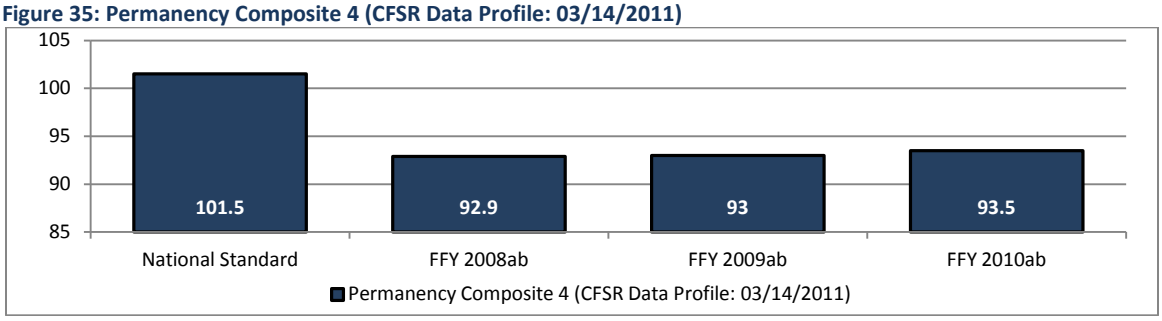


Figure 35: Permanency Composite 4 (CFSR Data Profile: 03/14/2011)



Although California remains below the national standard of 101.5, the state's performance in minimizing placement changes continues to improve, albeit slightly from a score of 92.9 in FFY 2008 to 93.5 in FFY 2010. However, an examination of the data using UC Berkeley's Center for Social Services Research (CSSR) will show that California is making progress for children more recently entering care.

The federal measure on placement stability has garnered national attention from researchers and agency administrators alike who have discovered flaws in the methodology. The Child Welfare Outcomes 2004-2007 report states that the majority of states had difficulty on this measure and California is within the national pattern that agencies are generally more successful in minimizing the number of placement settings for children in care for less than 12 months, but there is an ongoing need for improvement for children in care for longer periods of time. The methodological issues include: 1) The federal measure does not distinguish between varying amounts of time in care, especially for children in foster care for 24 months or longer; 2) It does not account for the changing child welfare population for children in care for longer periods of time; 3) It does not distinguish between children who entered for the first time versus children with prior placement episodes; and 4) It does not account for children who are no longer in care.

Another challenge in measuring placement stability is that, some moves can be considered negative, while others may be more positive. For example, positive moves might be to further the case plan goal, to move to a lower level of care or to a placement with siblings or relatives. Some children may move because their caregivers needed more support, or the child's needs exceeded the caregivers' capacity to meet them. Others move because they are moving to family-based care from a group home. The current measures simply do not allow for such considerations.

Alternatively, the CSSR developed a measure that calculates the percentage of children with fewer than two placements for all children who were in care for some length of time at a given moment in time, and differentiates between children entering for the first time (First Entry) versus children with prior placement episodes (Other Entry). These calculations examine the percent of children in one or two placements who entered foster care during January through June each year, and who are still in foster care after 12, 18, 24, 30, 36, 48, or 60 months. The number of available elapsed time periods for follow-up varies according to how long ago a child entered care. As a result, data for children who entered between January through June 2009 only have data available for 12 months, while children between January through June 2005 have data available for up to 60 months.

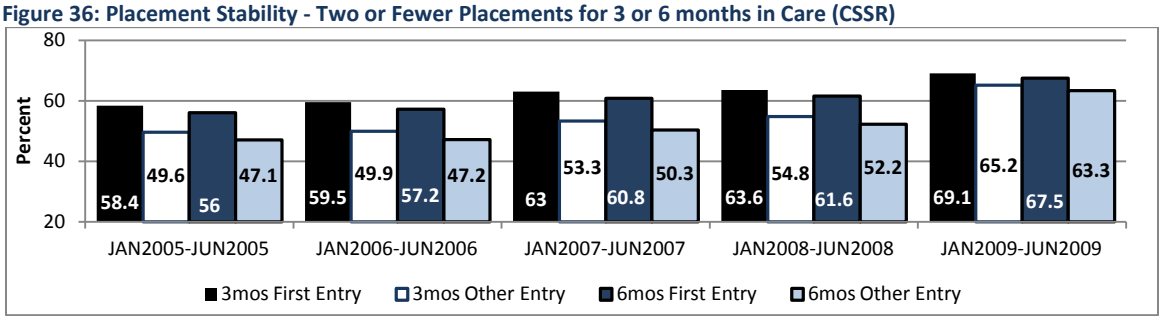
Across all the figures presented below, the general patterns appear to be that there are fewer children who remain in their first or second placement the longer they are in care, but that the overall proportions across all lengths of stay improve over time. Notably, there are significantly greater proportions of children who entered for the first time and who remain in their first or second placement for varying lengths of stay versus children with prior placement episodes.

Children in Care for eight days to 12 months

C4 -1: Of all children who were served in foster care FFY 2010, and who were in foster care for at least eight days but less than 12 months, 82.2 percent had two or fewer placement settings. The state is 1.1 percent below the national median of 83.3 percent, and nearly four percent below the 75th percentile of all states and Puerto Rico. California has been fairly successful and consistent in achieving placement stability for children in foster care for less than 12 months; however, the percentage of children who have placement stability declines considerably the longer the children are in foster care.

CSSR calculations: Figure 36 below illustrates that over time, the state is improving over time for children who were in care sometime in January through June of a given year, and who remained in care three or six months thereafter. For children in the entry cohort after three months in care, 58.4 percent had two or fewer placement changes in 2005, while that figure increased to 69.1 percent in 2009, representing a 18.3 percent improvement overall. On average, there are three percent fewer children with fewer than two placements with previous entry episodes and who have been in care for either three or six months.

Figure 36: Placement Stability - Two or Fewer Placements for 3 or 6 months in Care (CSSR)

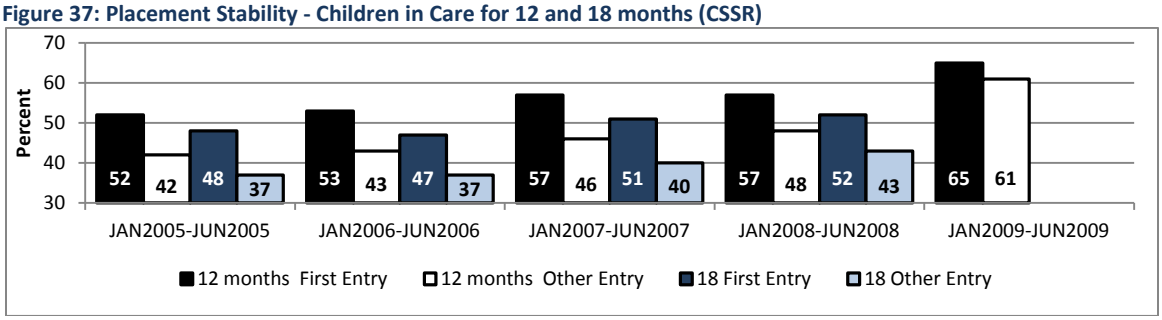


C4.2: Of all children who were served in foster care during FFY 2010, and who were in foster care for at least 12 months but less than 24 months, 62.4 percent had two or fewer placement settings. The data has remains stable between 2008 and 2009 from 61.7 percent to 61.5

percent, respectively. California is 2.5 percent above the national median (59.9 percent), and three percent below the 75th percentile of all states (65.4 percent).

CSSR calculations: The proportion of children who remained in care for 12 or 18 months with two or fewer placements changes improved over time from 52 percent to 65 percent for children in care for 12 months between 2005 and 2009, respectively. The 13 percent point difference represents a **25 percentage point improvement** above children with prior entry episodes. On average, there is a nine to ten percent difference between the entry cohort and other entries between 2005 and 2008, representing a **15 – 17 percentage point improvement**; the difference between the two groups diminished to four percent in 2009 from 65 percent to 61 percent (12 months in care).

Figure 37: Placement Stability - Children in Care for 12 and 18 months (CSSR)

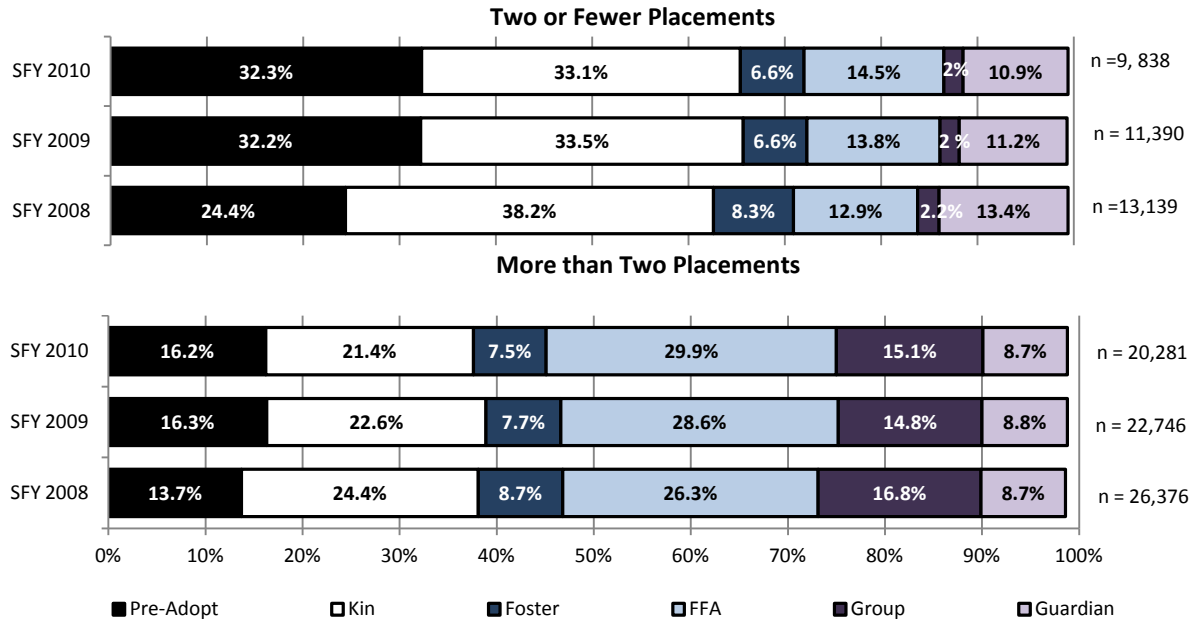


Placement Stability for Children in Care for Long Periods of Time

C4.3: Of all children who were served in foster care during FFY 2010, and who were in foster care for at least 24 months, 32.9 percent had two or fewer placement settings. Again, California remains seemingly unchanged on this measure, with 33.9 percent in 2008 to 33.1 percent in 2009. The state is one percent below the national median (33.9 percent), and is nearly nine percent below the 75th percentile (41.8 percent).

Figure 38 below details the population of children in care for at least 24 months between 2008 through 2010 by first placement type between children with two or fewer placement and those with three or more placements. Discussed in detail in the Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement section (measure C3.1), California is improving markedly in exiting youth to permanency who have been in care for 24 months or longer. The population of children who stay in long term care also continues to decrease significantly, reducing the proportion of this population in three years (2008-2010) by more than three percent. This suggests children with more challenging placement histories are exiting care, not just those who may more quickly achieve permanency. Notably, over this period, the percentage of children in this population in pre-adoptive placements increased by three percent. This suggests that California has been moving more children, with more difficult placement histories to permanency. Similarly, there has been a reduction in the proportion of children placed in group homes from 17 to 15 percent between 2008 and 2010. The data indicates that most children in this population are placed in FFA homes, and the proportion is increasing over time.

Figure 38: *Children in Care for at least 24 Months by Placement Type for Measure C4.3* (CSSR)



CSSR calculations:

In comparing children who entered foster care in 2003 with those who entered in 2008, and were in care 12 months later, it is clear that California is making improvement. There was a 35.2 percent increase (from 46.4 percent in 2003 to 63.2 percent in 2008) in the percentage of children with only one or two placements. This suggests that strategies to improve children's stability are having an impact for children, particularly for children recently entering care.

Figure 39: Placement Stability - Two or Fewer Placements - 24 or 30 months in Care (CSSR)

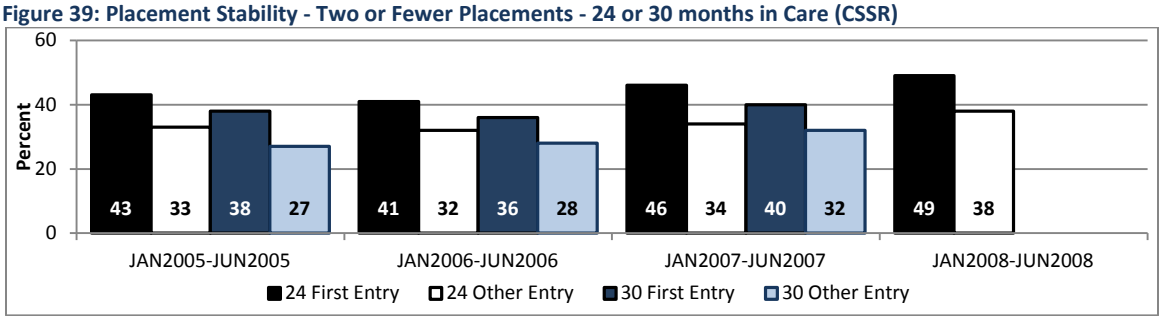
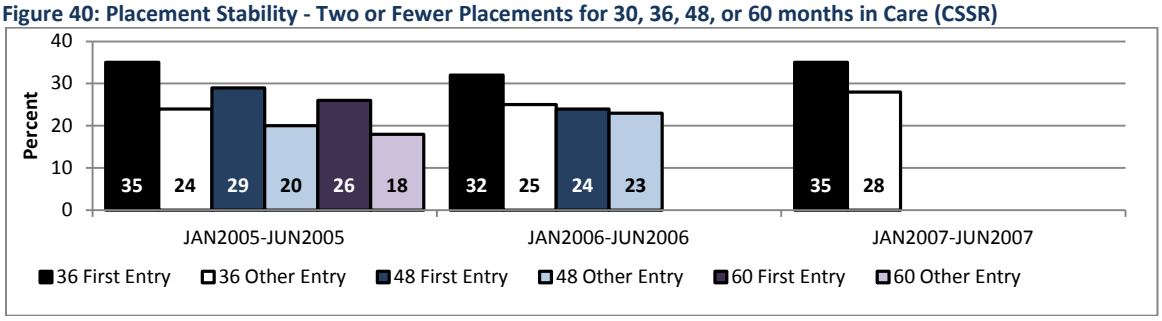


Figure 40: Placement Stability - Two or Fewer Placements for 30, 36, 48, or 60 months in Care (CSSR)



FACTORS AFFECTING PROGRESS

While it is not possible to determine with certainty the reasons for the improvement, California has been working steadily to improve practice in a number of ways that are likely to affect stability:

- ✓ Los Angeles County Permanency Units
- ✓ Substance Abuse and Infant Program county activities
- ✓ Relative Placements
- ✓ Kinship Support Services Program

Many of these efforts are discussed in detail throughout the document; as with many of the child welfare outcomes, placement stability, perhaps more than any other outcome, is not independent and does not operate in isolation of other the outcomes.

- *Los Angeles County* utilizes specialized *permanency units* in three offices that focus on high need youth who have limited or no family connections, multiple or recent placements, heavy substance abuse, recent psychiatric hospitalization, or are repeat runaways. The specialized units have a limited caseload of 15 youth and receive intensive training and use intensive family finding and engagement strategies. Through these specialized units, 473 youth were served in the county from July 2007 to December 2010, of whom 343 found increased connectedness through contact, visit, or placement with parents, siblings or NFREM, 45 were returned home to a parent, nine were adopted, 11 were appointed legal guardian.[18]
- *Los Angeles County* also applies *TDM* through multidisciplinary teams that meet and partner with parents and families at critical times to make placement decisions affecting their children, when imminent risk is present, at removals and before reunifications.
- *Contra Costa County 2009 CSA* - Contra Costa is performing above the national standard on the placement stability composite score at 106.11 based on data extracted from SafeMeasures for CY 2010. Contra Costa reported that they have done especially well with keeping the number of placements to two or less for children who have been in care for less than two years. However, much like the rest of the nation, performance suffers for children who have been in care two years or more. In the county's 2009 self-assessment, they identified the following factors as contributing to their improved performance:
    - Greater attention in making placement changes that place siblings together;
    - Adoption resources are more available for sibling sets;
    - Stepping-down placements (higher to lower levels);
    - Staff recognize families needs supersede federal outcomes/timelines;
    - The county is identifying populations they are not serving well;
    - Placement TDMs (previously limited to specific zip codes);
    - Identify issues that may prevent placement disruptions.
    - Utilized as prevention supports caregivers FR (permanence);
    - Increased attention to fathers;

[18] LA DCFS Child Welfare Outcomes: Service Delivery System Reform and Title IV-E Waiver Capped Allocation Demonstration Project. Presentation on 03/03/2011, page 24.

  - The county makes the effort to involve birth parents in the emancipation process/long term care;
  - The county utilizes the Parent Partner Model.

- *San Francisco County 2010 CSA* - In the first quarter of FFY 2009, the San Francisco Human Services Agency (SF-HSA) met five out of the 17 federal performance goals. San Francisco notes that a key strength for them would be the stabilization of its placements. The County continues to score above the federal goal and state averages on all three of the measures for placement stability. San Francisco does not have children in shelters, and they note emphasizing placements with relatives. In fact, 54 percent of San Francisco's placements are with relatives or non-relative extended family members, compared to a statewide rate of 37 percent.

  San Francisco has adopted best practices to include youth and families in case planning. The county reports implementing TDM meetings for removals and placement moves and utilizing promising practices such as family group decision-making. The SF-HSA has also formed a parent advisory council and has hired parent peer advocates to help families navigate the child welfare system. The agency also notes having a robust array of partners to provide family support services, including a culturally and linguistically responsive network of family resource centers that is implementing research-based parent education. The SF-HSA has pooled resources with two other city departments to support the family resource centers and evaluate outcomes. It partners frequently with the San Francisco Department of Public Health, including to provide mental health assessments for all children coming into foster care and to provide evidence-based mental health services. These two agencies partnered with the Seneca Center to implement Wraparound. The SF-HSA's child welfare program invests almost $15 million in contracts with community based organizations, but as a whole the agency invests over $168 million, including many other contracts that support families, including child care, CalWORKs, and homeless programs.

- In *Butte/Glenn counties*, the SA/HIV coordinator works closely with Children's Services Placement workers to identify the best possible placement for the child based on the child's needs. The nurse and coordinator provide in-home education and support in an effort to reduce the possibility of burn out among SA/HIV foster parents. *Other counties* report availability of respite care and parent partner/mentorship programs for SA/HIV foster parents. These programs connect foster parents with experienced SA/HIV foster parents who are available 24/7 for advice, support and guidance. *Monterey County* reported that their mentorship program increased placement stability by over 30 percent.

- *Relative Placement* - California has long had policies that prioritize placing children with relatives and social workers must consider for placement a relative who steps forward, discussed in detail in the Relative Placement section of Permanency

- *Kinship Support Services Program (KSSP)* - Placing children with and providing supports to relatives or non-related extended family members has always been a priority for California. California has also provided KSSP for relatives that care for their relative foster care children

- California *Wraparound* philosophy focuses on partnering with families to address complex needs. Wraparound connects families with the services and the support needed to achieve stability and permanency and avoid more intensive institutionalized forms of care, thus decreasing the number of foster care and/or group home placements. Plans are tailored to the child and family's unique strengths, and are updated regularly in response to changes and growth experienced by the family. Throughout the process, decisions reflect the voices of the child and family. The CEBC reviewed California Wraparound [19] and rated the program as having "Promising Research Evidence" in the area of Placement Stabilization. Children will have fewer placements if they are supported in their homes or in other family-like settings. In Los Angeles County, data for calendar year 2009 shows that more than 90 percent of children who graduated from Wraparound remain with their families and continue to utilize community-based services.

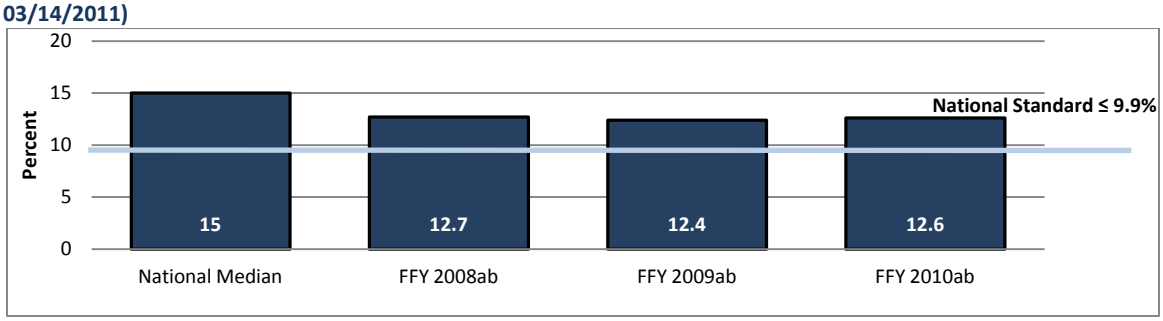
  In the Wraparound Program, a frequently used strategy to increase family engagement is the Parent Partner Program. A Parent Partner has had a child complete the Wraparound Program and is familiar with the process. A Parent Partner helps those parents (and their children) that are new to the Wraparound Program by attending Child and Family Team meetings with them, answering their questions/concerns, and offering them encouragement and support. In a July 2009 report from the University of California at Berkeley, School of Social Welfare, entitled *Partnering with Parents Promising Approaches to Improve Reunification Outcomes for Children in Foster Care*[20], Contra Costa County analyzed data from two groups of children to assess the impact of their Parent Partner program which focused on family engagement. Contra Costa County found that 60 percent of children, whose parents worked directly with a Parent Partner reunified within 12 months of removal, compared to 26 percent of children whose parents did not receive a Parent Partner.

12 Re-Entry: Ensure that the state is preventing multiple entries of children in foster care.

INDICATOR OF PROGRESS

Reentry following reunification was rated a strength in all applicable cases reviewed (n = 11) during the 2008 CFSR on-site review.

Figure 41: Measure C1-4: Re-entries to Foster Care in Less Than 12 Months Following Reunification (CFSR Data Profile: 03/14/2011)

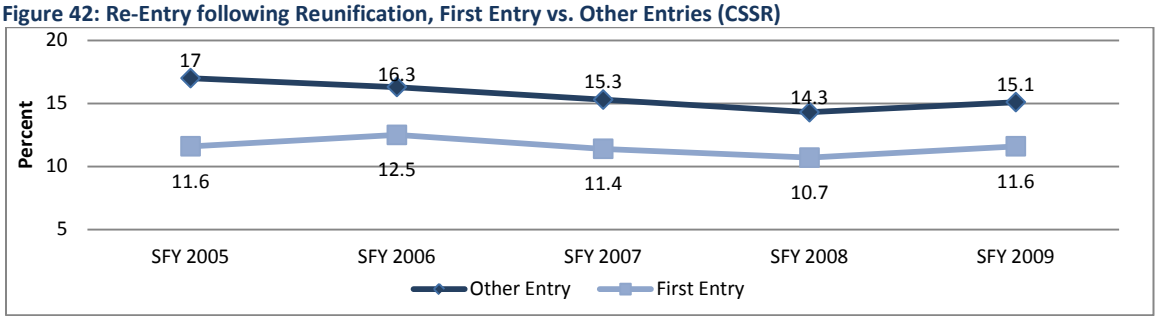


[19] http://www.cebc4cw.org/program/68
[20] http://www.parentadvocacy.org/padocs/Final_Report_UC_Berkeley_2009_Evaluation_of_Contra_Costa_Parent_Parners.pdf

Reentry measure C1.4 in the above table computes the percentage of children reentering foster care within 12 months of a reunification discharge for children with placement episodes lasting eight days or more. The denominator is the total number of children who exited foster care to reunification in a 12 month period; the numerator is the count of these reunified children who then reentered care within 365 days of the reunification discharge date. Discharge to reunification is defined as a discharge to parents or primary caretaker(s). If a child is discharged to reunification more than once during the specified year, the first discharge to reunification is considered. These data exclude probation cases. The data show that although California has not met the national standard, the state is performing well above the national median (15 percent). The proportion of reentries over the course of three years has remained fairly steady at around 12.5 percent.

The data over time, illustrated in the figure below, show that while California has not met the national standard of less 9.9 percent of children exiting care reenter foster care within 12 months, children who are more recently entering care (First Entry) reenter at lower proportions than those with prior entries (Other Entry).

Figure 42: Re-Entry following Reunification, First Entry vs. Other Entries (CSSR)



A further review of these data by age and placement types for FY 2008-09 show that children under one-year-old reenter at the greatest proportion (16.8 percent), while children in relative placements enter at the lowest rate at 8.8 percent, and children in group home placements reenter at over double the rate of kin placements at 17.8 percent. These data further underscore California's focus on prioritizing kin placements above other placements.

FACTORS AFFECTING PROGRESS

Following family maintenance, family reunification is second on the list if case plan priorities for child welfare, and is balanced against the safety needs of the children and parents' capacity to meet those needs. At the status review hearing, held six months after the dispositional hearing and the permanency hearing, the court is required to order the child returned to the physical custody of the parent unless the court finds significant evidence that a return would pose a "substantial risk or detriment to the safety, protection, or physical or emotional well being of the child." Once a child returns home, families are provided in home support services to ensure that the child is stabilized at home.

Some of California's practices that may contribute to progress towards reentry following reunification may be attributed to the following:

- ✓ Trial Home Visits
- ✓ Reassessment Tool and Reunification Reassessment Tool

- ✓ Visitation Evaluation Tool in SDM
- ✓ TDMs
- ✓ Voluntary Family Maintenance (VFM)
- ✓ Dependency Drug Courts
- ✓ Los Angeles County Re-Entry Study
- ✓ Wraparound

- California law does not authorize the use of *trial home visits* to transition children to the custody of their parents following removal based on the argument that it is inconsistent to grant a visitation order for a trial home visit if the court already found the presence of substantial risk of physical harm to the child under the parent's care. Trial home visits were disallowed by the appellate courts in 2000, 1998, and 1997. Instead, and as part of the family reunification process, a county agency must provide visitation between the parent and the child, increasing the number of contacts with parents children, and service providers to help assure successful reunification and prevent reentry. These visitations may be as frequent as possible and may be supervised or not, over the weekend or night, or through the course of the day. Social workers evaluate a parent's compliance with the visitation plan as a part of the reunification assessment tool described below.

- Prior to returning a child home, social workers are required to perform a safety and risk assessment. For 54 counties in California using SDM, social workers use the *Reassessment Tool* for In-Home Cases, or the *Reunification Reassessment Tool* prior to case closure. At a minimum, each ongoing case is reviewed in conjunction with each judicial review (discussed previously and in the Permanency Goal section), to assess progress toward objectives and long-term goals, which should include reduction of risk and needs. These tools determine whether the case should remain open (the child is not reunified) or closed (reunification may be possible). For those cases that remain open, the reassessment includes updating the treatment plan based on current needs and strengths.

  For in-home cases, the tool accounts for factors that research has shown pose risk for future maltreatment such as, prior history with child welfare, the caregivers own prior history, the child's physical and mental characteristics, current and previous history of drug and alcohol abuse, the caregiver's adult relationships, the caregiver's physical and mental health, and an assessment of the caregivers progress and commitment to the case plan. For voluntary cases, the tool should be completed no more than 30 days prior to completing a case plan, and prior to recommending case closure. For involuntary cases, the tools should be completed within 65 days for both circumstances. If, however, new circumstances or new information arise that would affect risk, social workers are instructed to complete the tool sooner than 30 days.

  CY 2010[21] data from the CRC on the use of the Risk Reassessment Tool illustrates the evidence of movement through the system for the 15,242 families for whom initial assessment and most recent risk reassessment data were available. As shown in Table 7 below , 2,532 (30.2 percent) of 8,399 families had effectively reduced risk from high to low

[21] Children's Research Center, SDM Combined California Counties Annual Report, April 2011, for data in CY 2010, page 45.

and 4,491 (53.5 percent) high risk families reduced risk to moderate. Of 4,344 families initially assessed as very high risk, 1,027 (23.6 percent) reduced risk to low; 2,333 (53.7 percent) moved to moderate risk; and 828 (19.1 percent) lowered their classification to high risk.

Table 7: Risk assessment Tool – Movement of Open/Ongoing Cases

Initial Risk Level	Initial Risk Level by Most Recent Family Risk Level									
	Low		Moderate		High		Very High		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Low	**217**	**63.8**	102	30	15	4.4	6	1.8	340	100
Moderate	**1,031**	**47.8**	**913**	**42.3**	188	8.7	27	1.3	2,159	100
High	**2,535**	**30.2**	**4,491**	**53.5**	**1,223**	**14.6**	150	1.8	8,399	100
Very High	**1,027**	**23.6**	**2,333**	**53.7**	**828**	**19.1**	**156**	**3.6**	4,344	100
Total	4,810	31.6	7,839	51.4	2,254	14.8	339	2.2	15,242	100

Bolded cells indicate stable or declining or risk levels.

In making recommendations for reunification, social workers complete a reunification reassessment tool that assesses risk level based on the presence of safety threats, an assessment of the caregivers' protective capacities, a documentation of the resolution to previous threats if threats are no longer present, and an assessment of possible safety interventions if threats are present. The decision guidelines within the tool only recommend reunification when all three components of the tool meet standards, in other words, risk levels at reunification are low or moderate, visitation compliance was acceptable, and foremost that the child is safe. Successful use of the tool should help worker improve reunification decisions and thus ultimately reduce reentry into care.

Although risk is family-based, reunification efforts are conducted for each child. Based on the most recent reunification risk reassessment for CY 2010, 43.1 percent of the children were at a risk level considered appropriate for reunification (e.g., low [6.1 percent] or moderate [37.0 percent] risk)[22].

- In conjunction with the reunification reassessment tool, social workers also assess parents' compliance with visitation requirements using the *Visitation Evaluation Tool in SDM*. Tool guidelines direct that both visitation frequency and quality should be used to determine if a family has met visitation requirements at an acceptable level. Acceptable frequency is defined as a parent visiting totally (regularly or reschedules prior to date) or routinely (occasional visit missed but makes rescheduled visits). Acceptable quality must be judged "strong" or "adequate." Strong face-to-face visits include consistent assumption of parental role, demonstrated knowledge of the child's development, and appropriate reaction to the child's verbal/nonverbal behaviors. Adequate face-to-face visits include the parent undertaking the roles above on a routine basis.

  Table 8 from CY 2010 from CRC illustrates initial visitation evaluation results for visits occurring between a parent and child for 21,546 children for whom reunification reassessments were conducted during the period. Parents of 14,144 (65.6 percent) children initially met visitation requirements at an acceptable level (i.e., totally or routinely complied

[22] Children's Research Center, SDM Combined California Counties Annual Report, April 2011, for data in CY 2010, page 47.

with the plan and had strong or adequate face-to-face visits). After overrides, parents of 14,337 (66.5 percent) children met visitation requirements at an acceptable level (not shown).

Table 8: Most Recent SDM® Reunification Reassessment Initial Visitation Plan Evaluation Results for Visits between Parent and Child

Visitation Frequency	Quality of Face-to-face Visits between Parent and Child											
	Strong		Adequate		Limited		Destructive		No Visitation		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Totally	**4,068**	**50.7**	**3.611**	**45**	270	3.4	36	0.4	32	0.4	8,017	100
Routinely	**754**	**10.2**	**5.711**	**77**	880	11.9	48	0.6	24	0.3	7,417	100
Sporadically	88	2.9	1,471	49	1,304	43.4	96	3.2	45	1.5	3,004	100
Rarely or Never	19	0.6	247	7.9	658	21.2	167	5.4	2,017	64.9	3,108	100
Total	4,929	22.9	11,040	51.2	3112	14.4	347	1.6	2,118	9.8	21,546	100

Bolded cells indicate acceptable visitation.

- As a principal of *TDMs and FDMs*, families are engaged and aware of the processes that may lead to reunification, and as there are multiple participants in this process, it ensures that families have sufficient resources in their communities to support them.
- *Voluntary Family Maintenance* (VFM) program is designed to provide services for those families who have been identified as being at risk for out-of-home placement. The participants are families whose level of safe functioning and willingness to voluntarily receive services enables counties to delay and/or forgo the filing of a petition to the court for protective custody. Existing petitions can also be dismissed if the family is a strong candidate for VFM. Providing families with resources that focus on dependency prevention increase the opportunity to prevent multiple entries of children in foster care.
- *Some counties report in the their System Improvement Plans* that they have partnered with research centers at UC Berkeley and UC Davis to examine the factors that may be contributing to reentry following reunification.
- Los Angeles County completed foster care reentry study in February 2009 that examined the county's high re-entry rate; in FY 2008-09, the county had a 12.4 percent rate of reentry after 12 months following reunification (measure C1.4). The county identified three areas of improvement: 1) Improve the continuity of care; 2) Increase engagement of family, youth, service providers, and community representatives; and 3) Improve the accessibility, matching and coordination of services. Their 2008 SIP identified seven strategies to address the challenges towards permanent reunification: 1) Expansion of Wraparound; 2) Restructuring CAPIT and PSSF to support after-care services and Prevention Initiative; 3) Provision of Intensive Home-Based Mental Health Services; 4) Expansion of up-front assessments; 5) Development of coordinated action teams; 6) Reduction of caseloads; and 7) Expansion of Linkages. At the close of the study, Los Angeles County was working with the Children's Research Center on a complementary Re-Entry study.[23]

[23] LA DCFS Foster Care Re-entry Study, February, 2009

STRATEGIES AND PLANS FOR 2012

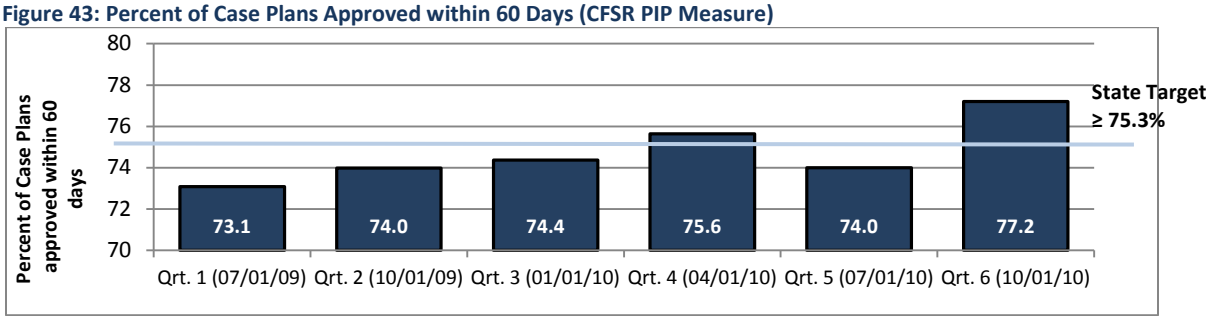
- California's *Residentially-based Services Reform* initiative (discussed previously on page 94) seeks to transform the state's group homes, currently providing long term congregate care and treatment, to programs combining short-term residential stabilization and treatment with follow along community-based services to reconnect youth to their families, schools, and communities. The goal of RBS is to reduce lengths of stay in high-cost group care and increase permanency for children. A successful outcome would reduce the high reentry rate in group homes. The four counties of Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Francisco, and Los Angeles are participating in the project. The RBS pilot tests are set to end on or before January 1, 2015.
- *The Linkages Project* (detailed on page 63) improves the services coordination and case planning, prevents duplication of efforts, and maximizes funding and resources to better serve clients accessing both systems. For example, the Linkages collaborative helps to engage CalWORKs families faced with multiple barriers to meeting their work participation requirements. It assists child welfare families with their case plans to keep children safely at home, thereby preventing the need for removal of children from the home as well as re-entry of children into foster care.

13 Permanency Goal: Ensure that the state is determining the appropriate permanency goals for children on a timely basis when they enter foster care.

INDICATOR OF PROGRESS

Determining permanency goals for children was rated as an area needing improvement in the 2008 CFSR on-site review for 41 percent of the reviewed cases. As part of the initial PIP in 2002, California law was amended to allow an additional 30 days (for a maximum of 60 days) to develop a case plan. The additional time was intended to allow for better youth and parent engagement in the development of the plan and thereby improving the likelihood of achieving reunification. As a result of the 2008 federal on-site review and the corresponding PIP, CDSS developed the measure illustrated in the graph below. The measure is defined as the percent of children with a case plan goal within 60 days of entry into foster care, over the number of first time entries in care for 60 days or more during the time period. Within two years, California has made substantial strides towards improving this outcome by meeting the CFSR PIP in Quarter Four (April 1, 2010 – June 30, 2010), and further exceeding the target by nearly two percent in PIP Quarter Six.

Figure 43: Percent of Case Plans Approved within 60 Days (CFSR PIP Measure)



FACTORS AFFECTING PROGRESS

The appropriate specific goal will depend upon the circumstances of the child's situation. For example, for a child in an identified group home placement, the goal could be placement with a foster family or placement with a relative. Children who are unable to exit care may remain in planned permanent living arrangement with relatives or non relatives or in a higher level of care (e.g., group homes) should they have such needs. Regardless, for children who remain in long term foster care, statute requires that the court reconsider adoption, guardianship, and reunification at status review hearings. Children who remain in care also receive services to assist in their transitioning to adulthood through the Independent Living Program.

Unless the court finds that certain, specified exceptional circumstances exist, reunification is the initial permanency goal for all children removed from their homes. If family reunification is not ordered because exceptional circumstances exist or because efforts have failed, then the court establishes one of the other permanency options as the primary case plan goal.

With the implementation of *concurrent planning* over the past decade, any case with a primary case plan goal of family reunification must also specify a permanency alternative (e.g., adoption or guardianship) and the services necessary to achieve it if reunification is unsuccessful. County System Improvement Plans indicate that counties are continuing to implement practices and system changes that support concurrent planning.

Other factors that may affect progress towards this outcome include:

- ✓ Family to Family
- ✓ Family Engagement
- ✓ Court Involvement
- ✓ Judicial Review and Technical Assistance Program
- ✓ Administrative Office of the Courts Training of Legal Counsel, Social Workers and CASA Workers

- Although *Family to Family* has an evolving presence in California, the principles of F2F help guide families in identifying appropriate permanency goals. These efforts require parents to actively engage in the child welfare process with the goals of achieving more effective case plans and placements while increasing the likelihood of reunification. Some examples include Team Decision Making meetings, Family Group Decision Making meetings, Family Team Conferencing as a part of Wraparound principles, parent partners/mentors, and ice-break meetings. Such meetings bring together as many participants as possible in order to create an atmosphere that encourages parental involvement and parental support.
- As a principle in California, *social workers discuss progress* towards reunification with parents throughout the life of the case. This information on parents' progress is provided to the court at the six-month review hearings; if reunification is not achieved within 12 months, and a permanency hearing is held. The court determines whether there is substantial likelihood the child can be reunified if parents are provided another six months of services. If the court finds that not possible, services are terminated and the plan established through concurrent planning is ordered.

- *The Judicial Review and Technical Assistance (JRTA) program* (detailed on page 234) provides ongoing training to courts, child welfare agencies, and probation about the requirement of establishing a timely permanency goal for each child. To address the judicial coordination of concurrent planning activities, the Administrative Office of the Courts provides ongoing training and technical assistance to dependency courts and stakeholders regarding reunification, tribal engagement, concurrent planning, and participatory case planning.

LIMITATIONS

Research has shown that effective concurrent planning takes time, and to give this time, caseworkers need manageable caseloads. California is currently facing an unprecedented state budget crisis. This may potentially impact the state funded caseloads at the level workers need in order to successfully practice concurrent planning.

STRATEGIES AND PLANS FOR 2012

- *Training for Probation Officers* is a critical step in assuring that permanency goals are appropriately established in a timely manner because like social workers, Probation Officers also perform many of the same functions with the children on their caseloads. The continued training of Probation Officers in Family Finding establishes another possibility for permanency or a close contact for wards after their probation is terminated.
- California continues to administer the *core curriculum training* for newly hired social workers on the importance of establishing permanency goals. Social workers are instructed to work with the family to set the least intrusive case plan goal possible and prioritized in the following order:
  1. Family Maintenance services;
  2. Family Reunification services following two tracks—
     a) Reunification with birth parents, and
     b) The concurrent planning track, which identifies alternative permanency placements and services necessary to achieve legal permanence should family reunification fail;
  3. Permanent placement services as the only goal when there are no feasible means of maintaining or reuniting the child with his/her parent(s) or guardian(s), with the following order of priority: adoption, guardianship, and as a last resort, other planned permanent living arrangement. Parents must be offered an opportunity to participate in the permanency plans of their children if they fail to reunify with their children. This includes working with viable relatives that are willing to accept legal permanency of their children in the form of adoption and guardianship and the option of voluntarily relinquishing their children for adoption purposes. In addition, prior to TPR, the practice of counties of providing mediation services to determine post adoption contact between birth parents and adoptive parents can also eliminate the need for protracted court hearings related to TPR . Permanency Planning Mediation services are provided by the state through contract with the Consortium for Children and some counties also

provide their own mediation services through the provision of their own mediators or family court mediators.

14 Proximity of Placement: Ensure that the state is placing foster children close to their birth parents or their own communities or counties

INDICATOR OF PROGRESS

Proximity of placement was rated a strength in 96 percent of the cases reviewed during the 2008 CFSR on-site review. Reviewers determined that the agency made concerted efforts to ensure that children were placed in foster care placements that were in close proximity to their parents or relatives, or that were necessary to meet special needs.

Figure 44: Distance from Removal Address to Placement Address at 12 months (CSSR)

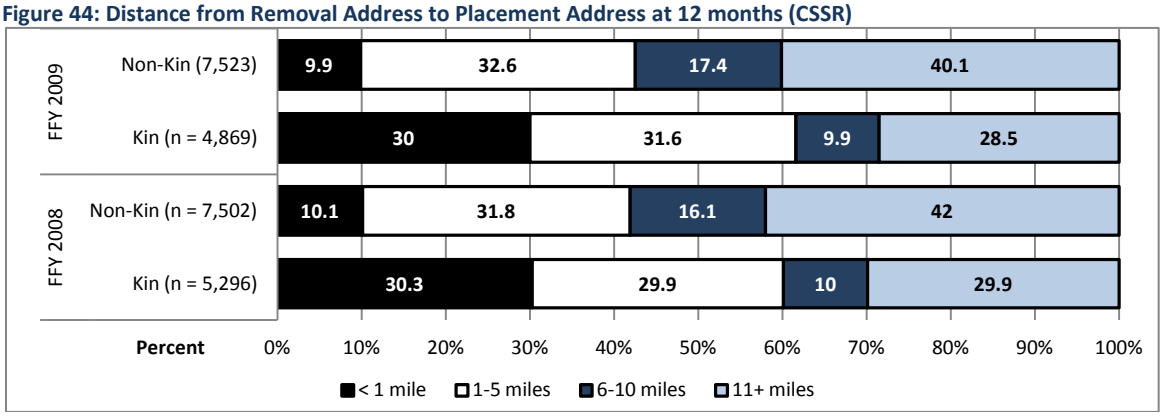


Figure 44 above is a distribution of the distance, in miles, between a child's removal address and placement address at 12 months between kin and non-kin placements for 2008 and 2009. The analysis is limited to children who are in a first foster care placement episode and who are still in care one year after entry. This measure, in concert with the other measures of sibling placement, relative placement, and parental involvement is a positive demonstration of the state's commitment to ensuring that children in care preserve their connections with their communities.

Based on these data, the most notable difference for placement between kin and non-kin seem to be the ends of the distribution, closest (less than one mile) and furthest (greater than 11 miles) distances. Placements within one through five miles generally remain unchanged between placement types over time. Kin placements across the two fiscal years ensured that that the majority of placements (59.3 percent in 2008, and 61.4 percent in 2009) occurred within five miles of the removal address.

FACTORS AFFECTING PROGRESS

The CDSS recognizes the importance of preserving connections for children in care, and that this measure is closely correlated with, among others, relative placement, sibling placement, and parental involvement. As such, while the specific factors that affect this outcome cannot be determined, the state has several procedures and programs in place to ensure that children maintain their relationships with their communities. Other factors include:

- ✓ Kin and Sibling Placement

- ✓ Least Restrictive Placement
- ✓ School of Origin
- ✓ Core Training
- ✓ Family to Family
- ✓ Educational Placement Stability

- As will be discussed in the Relative and Sibling Placement sections of this report, much of the efforts have focused on *placement of children with kin, and siblings, and their own communities*. These types of placements provide the best assurance that children remain in the same schools, communities, and reduce the extent to which removal may disrupt these connections.
- The W&I code, Section 16501.1(c) states that a children must be placed in a safe and appropriate *placement that is least restrictive*, most family like, in close proximity to the parental home whenever possible and best suited to the child's needs, and that placement must consider proximity to the child's school.
- In addition to the W&I code, AB 490 (detailed on page 136) also provides that if the child's placement changes, the child has the right to remain in his or her *school of origin* for the duration of the school year, provided it is in the child's best interest to do so. Further, if placement within the original school district is not available, the social worker makes every effort with caregivers to transport children to the school they were attending prior to removal.
- As a focus of *core training*, social workers receive instructions on the importance of placing children in close proximity to the community from which they were removed, and on prioritizing kin placements above other placement options. In training, social workers are instructed to list the reasons why a placement may be a substantial distance from the home of the parent or guardian.
- *Family to Family*, although evolving in California, continues to focuses on family centered practice principles, which include placement in the community, and/or with relatives, and mentoring relationships between parents and resource families.
- ACL 10-12 notified counties of the requirements of Public Law (PL) 110-351 to require that case plans for children and youth in foster care include specified assurances for *educational placement stabilit*y. These assurances include a provision for the cost of reasonable travel for the child to remain in the school in which the child is enrolled at the time of placement as an allowable foster care maintenance cost.

LIMITATIONS AND CHALLENGES

- Children with special needs often require placement in treatment facilities that are not in close proximity to the communities from which they were removed.
- An insufficient number of available foster care placement resources in a certain county or area where the child is removed or resides: Foster care placements with multiple children of different ages and school levels that need to be transported to different school of origins.

STRATEGIES AND PLANS FOR 2012

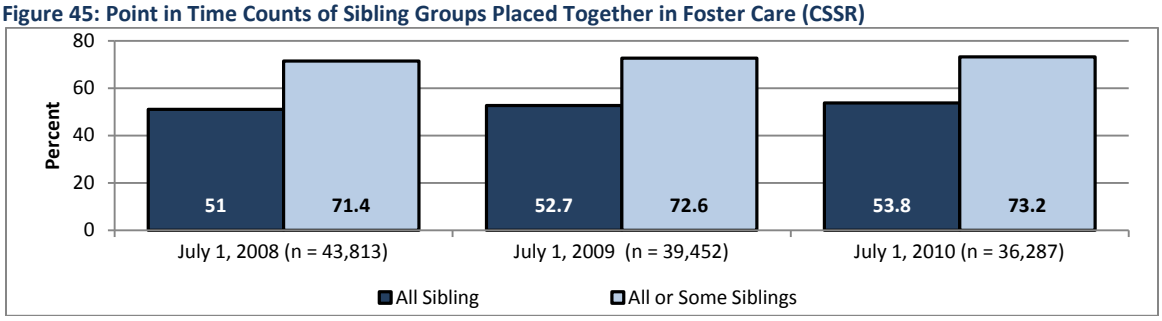
The *Quality Parenting Initiative*, discussed in Retention and Recruitment section, will focus on engaging resource families throughout the child welfare process and provide a framework of support to foster parents for ensuring that children maintain connections to their communities, including maintaining contact with biological parents, and nurturing children's cultural and ethnic identity. The potential for increased recruitment as a result of the initiative may allow for a greater number of children to be placed in their own communities when they cannot be placed with relatives.

15 Sibling Placement: Ensure that siblings are kept together in foster care.

INDICATOR OF PROGRESS

Below are point in time counts of sibling groups placed in Child Welfare supervised foster care. The data illustrate that California is continuing to move in a positive direction in placing sibling groups together. While the CFSR 2 rated this area as needing improvement, the state has continued to make marked and steady improvements in ensuring that sibling groups remain intact. In 2007, 47.2 percent of all children with siblings were placed with all of their siblings and 68.9 percent were placed with all or some of their siblings. Within a year, California placed 51 percent of all children with siblings with all their siblings, and 71.4 percent were placed with all or some of their siblings; in 2010, those figures rose to 53.8 and 73.2 percent, respectively representing a 14 percent improvement overall.

Figure 45: Point in Time Counts of Sibling Groups Placed Together in Foster Care (CSSR)



FACTORS AFFECTING PROGRESS

California has longstanding policies regarding sibling placement. Maintaining sibling relationships is a high priority and social workers must make every possible effort to place children together in the same foster care placement unless it is detrimental to the best interests of the children. Social workers must exhaust all options before separating siblings living in foster care placements together unless it is found to be contrary to the well-being of the siblings. California statute mirrors and in some areas has a higher standard than federal law in the provision of keeping siblings placed together in foster care. In addition, recent state legislation requires social workers to notice the attorneys (if different) of siblings that are being separated in their foster care placements. The efforts made to keep siblings together must be reported to the court. Otherwise, the social worker must explain to the court why placement of the siblings together is not possible and must either outline the efforts s/he is making to

remedy the situation or explain why the efforts are inappropriate. In situations when siblings are separated, social workers must arrange for visitation between them. Furthermore, California's core curriculum for all newly hired social workers includes training on the importance of sibling placement.

Other factors that may affect sibling placement include:

- ✓ Family to Family
- ✓ Family Finding Efforts

- *Family to Family's* core strategy of developing resource families in communities will result in creating more opportunities for sibling placements. It may increase the likelihood that families will be available to take sibling groups together.
- As the state proceeds with the *Family Finding* Initiative, local child welfare agencies will be expanding the search for relatives. Having a larger pool of applicants will presumably may improve their ability to find kin families who may be more willing to have siblings placed with them.

LIMITATIONS

Some limitations and challenges that face California's ability to place all sibling groups together include:

- Differing placement times - When one sibling is placed in foster care before one or others, there may not be room in the home for subsequent siblings, and placement stability is weighed against placing siblings together.
- Different fathers - In situations when siblings have different fathers, relatives may be reluctant to accept children for placement who may not be blood related.
- Special needs - A child with special needs in a sibling group may need to be temporarily placed in a specialized treatment facility, requiring siblings to be momentarily separated.
- An insufficient amount of foster care homes in the vicinity where siblings are removed could prohibit siblings being placed together in the same home.
- An insufficient amount of foster care homes that have enough space available in their homes to keep large sibling groups together.

STRATEGIES AND PLANS FOR 2012

California's commitment and acknowledgement of the importance keeping sibling groups intact can be exemplified in the state's future plans.

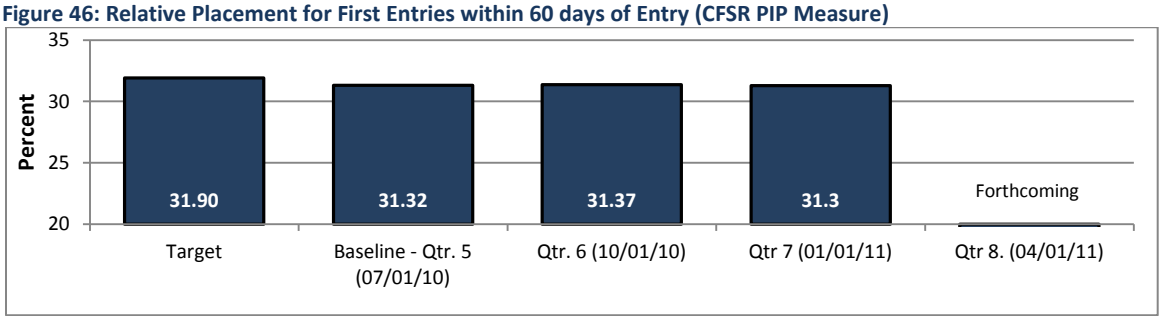
- As a result of AB 743 (2010), *children's attorneys must be notified when siblings are separated*. The agency is in the process of developing an ACL to instruct counties of the new requirements.
- The *Quality Parenting Initiative* (discussed in further detail in the Recruitment and Retention section of this report, beginning on page 115) aims to evolve county's practices towards systemically supporting and engaging foster parents throughout the child welfare process. The goal is to enhance the quality of foster parenting and improve the likelihood that foster parents will be willing and available to take sibling groups.

16 Relative Placement: Ensure that the agency is identifying relatives who can care for children in foster care, and using them as placement resources when appropriate.

INDICATOR OF PROGRESS

Relative Placement was rated as an area needing improvement for 24 percent of the 34 applicable cases reviewed in the Round 2 of the CFSR onsite. The data on Figure 46 below are from California's CFSR PIP to address action step 2.1 – Family Finding, and is defined as the percent of children whose first entries during a given quarter (dates in parentheses on the x-axis represent start dates) are with a relative within 60 days of entry. Using the Children's Bureau methodology for establishing the target, California's improvement goal during the PIP period was 31.9 percent; the baseline was established in Quarter Five. As of the Quarter Seven PIP report, the state has yet to achieve the target.

Figure 46: Relative Placement for First Entries within 60 days of Entry (CFSR PIP Measure)



FACTORS AFFECTING PROGRESS

In California, placement options are considered in the following order of priority: non-custodial parent, relatives, Tribal members (if applicable), foster family, and finally group home placement. Other policies that prioritize placing children with relatives include:

1. Requiring the court to determine if there is a relative who is able and willing to care for the child when s/he is unable to return home;
2. Parents are required to disclose to the social worker the names, addresses and any known identifying information of any maternal or paternal relatives of the child;
3. Caseworkers are required to search for relatives to notify them of the child's removal and approve relative home placements;
4. The state's law [W&I 309(d)] provides for emergency placement with relatives to strengthen the opportunity for children to remain with family while in out of home care;
5. Further, the Kinship/Foster Care Emergency Fund is available to provide for one-time financial assistance to purchase items to help the caregiver meet approval requirements or to maintain the child's placement.

Other factors that may be affecting progress are:

- ✓ Stakeholder Collaboration
- ✓ Kinship Support Services Program
- ✓ AB 938 – Relative Notification when a child is placed in foster care
- ✓ AB 12 – Extending KinGAP

- *Stakeholder Collaboration under the Child Welfare Council's Permanency Committee* focused on a statewide commitment to increase the number of children with positive permanency outcomes through Family Finding and Engagement, details were discussed previously on page 8. The committee focused on collaboration with state and county child welfare agencies and probation departments, and the courts in developing a Family Finding and Engagement Toolkit, (further detailed on the following page).
- The *Kinship Support Services Program* provides community-based family support services to relative caregivers and the dependent children placed in their homes. Services provided by these programs can include: support groups, respite, information and referral, recreation, mentoring/tutoring, provision of furniture, clothing, and food, transportation, legal assistance, and many other support services needed by kin families. Between July 1, 2009 and June 30, 2010, 8,846 clients were served by KSSP programs across the twenty participating counties. Specifically, eight percent received permanency related services such as adoption and guardianship assistance and permanency planning, while nearly 25 percent received mental health counseling, support groups, and health care related services.
- *Assembly Bill 938*, which became effective in January 2010, further underscores the agency's commitment to the importance of relative participation and support in all aspects of a child's life. AB 938 amends W&I code sections 309 and 628 to implement PL 110-351 requiring social workers and probation officers to exercise due diligence to identify and engage relatives and to provide notice to those relatives when a child is removed from their home. Provisions in AB 938 reinforce the requirement in the state's family code that diligent efforts must be exercised in locating relatives when a child is in need of out-of-home placement.

  These changes require that within 30 days of a child's removal from the home, the county must exercise due diligence to conduct an investigation to identify and locate all grandparents, adult siblings and other adult relatives, including those suggested by the parents. Due diligence efforts include asking the child in an age-appropriate manner about relatives important to the child and obtaining information regarding the location of the child's adult relatives. The social worker or probation officer then provides written and oral notification to all adult relatives who are located, except when that relative's history of family or domestic violence makes notification inappropriate.
- *Assembly Bill 12, Extending KinGAP,* discussed previously in the Guardianship section beginning on page 85, further stresses the state's commitment to placing children foremost with relatives above other placement options. While relatives report that that they are devoted to caring for their relative children, placement can place significant financial hardship on families, especially given the dire economic environment and reductions to support services, such as TANF.

LIMITATIONS

Some limitations in the data include:

- Relative foster parents certified through an FFA may not be counted as kin in the data;

- Voluntary placements of children prior to court mandated removal may contribute to an underestimation of kin placements;
- Uncooperative parents, undocumented immigrant parents' fear of deportation, therefore unwillingness to disclose information on relatives; or
- If fathers are unidentified, relatives are limited to maternal kin.

STRATEGIES AND PLANS FOR 2012

The AOC issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) to develop a *Family Finding and Engagement Toolkit* that will support the courts' and local agencies' FFE efforts. RFPs were submitted to the AOC on December 8, 2010. In collaboration with a steering committee and California's CWC Permanency Subcommittee, the contractor will develop a toolkit that will include an implementation and planning protocol, a training curriculum and assessment tools[24].

17 Foster and Adoptive Parent Recruitment

The 2008 CFSR identified recruitment, retention and support of resource families as an area needing improvement. California seeks to improve the state's diligent recruitment and retention of resource families. The state's overall goal is to attract quality resource families that reflect the diversity within California, and of the children in foster care, and to provide services that support resource families as they work to improve the lives of children in their care. The CFSR PIP identifies specific activities associated with improving the recruitment and retention of resource families. The CDSS will meet the goals of the PIP through collaborative partnerships and various engagement strategies. To that end, CDSS engaged the NRC in September 2009 for Recruitment and Retention of Foster and Adoptive Parents at AdoptUSKids to assist in pulling together stakeholders to identify possible strategies for improvement. Although California's fiscal crisis has hampered major efforts, the state has taken steps toward improvements. These steps include consolidating and better coordinating existing efforts, improving customer service and initiating, with philanthropy and counties, a pilot program aimed at enhancing the state's recruitment and retention efforts of quality foster parents. California's efforts are exemplified in the following activities:

- ✓ Quality Parenting Initiative
- ✓ Los Angeles County Grant from ACF for Diligent Recruitment of Resource Families
- ✓ California Kids Connection Website
- ✓ Foster Parent and Relative Caregiver Education Program
- ✓ Foster Care Month
- ✓ Recruitment, Training, and Resource Survey

- *The Quality Parenting Initiative* - In early 2009, CDSS, the Youth Law Center and the CWDA joined in a collaborative effort with philanthropic support (Stuart Foundation, Taproot Foundation, Walter S. Johnson Foundation, Annie E. Casey Foundation, and David P Gold

[24] http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/reference/rfp/familyfunding-toolkit-rfp.htm

Foundation, and the California Endowment) to create the Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI). The main goal of the project is to develop a statewide approach to recruiting and retaining high quality caregivers who provide excellent care to children in California's child welfare system. An advisory committee was formed to inform the project and includes state staff, county, caregivers, biological parents, community partners, private agencies, and former foster youth.

In early 2010, the QPI selected nine counties to test best practices related to recruitment and retention. The pilot counties were divided into separate trainings and were each responsible for:

- ✓ Designating a staff person to coordinate efforts and to connect with other sites.
- ✓ Maintaining data to measure the effectiveness of recruitment and retention efforts.
- ✓ Designating a core workgroup that included representatives of key stakeholder groups: caregivers, biological parents, former foster youth, agency staff, line workers, licensing, recruitment, and training staff, mental health, the courts, and others.
- ✓ Engaging in a process to develop a "brand" for recruiting high quality foster parents and to develop an action plan for changing internal policies and procedures to ensure they were consistent with the new brand.
- ✓ Participating in a series of on-site and statewide training meetings.

The first training group consisted of Kern and Fresno (paired), San Luis Obispo and Ventura (paired), and Santa Clara. The second consisted of Sonoma and Humboldt (paired), Santa Barbara and Nevada. Plan development for the first phase was from March 2010 through July 2010, and the second phase from July 2010 through November 2010. Each county's action plan was developed in coordination with YLC and forwarded to CDSS for review. After the plans were finalized, counties began their implementation phase using various benchmarks built into the action plan to check for progress. Implementation of the action plans would be an ongoing process reviewed initially by CDSS.

In 2011, CDSS will conduct site visits to discuss the impact, if any, that process and procedural changes outlined in the action plans may have had on the recruitment and retention of quality foster parents. Staff will conduct interviews with five counties: Fresno, Nevada, Santa Clara, San Luis Obispo, and Ventura. The counties will receive questions prior to the interview so that they can be prepared to discuss their implementation processes and strategies and to provide any available data that represents the outcome of each pilot project. Once the review is completed in three of the five counties selected, a preliminary report will be presented to CDSS' Caregiver Advisory Group for questions and comments. The meeting's outcome could suggest further contact and questions with the counties. After the review process is completed, a draft of the final report will be presented to CDSS and a copy will be forwarded to the ACF, Region IX as part of the CFSR PIP.

The YLC and CDSS will present two convenings in May and June of 2011 for both Northern and Southern California counties about the QPI and the steps each county can take to

develop and implement their own QPI for recruiting foster parents. The ACF, Region IX will be invited to attend a convening.

In 2011, CDSS is developing a Recruitment and Retention website that will provide links for potential foster/adoptive parents, counties, and others interested in foster and adoptive resource families. It will also contain information for current resource families on where they can go for training, both online and at local training sites. Local, state, and federal agency websites will also be linked for easy access.

- On September 23, 2010, *Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services* was awarded one of seven five-year grants from ACF totaling approximately $1.82 million towards improving *collaborative strategies for diligent recruitment* of a range of resource families including kinship, foster care, concurrent planning and adoptive parents, with an emphasis on engagement with community partners. The grant period is from October 1, 2010 through September 30, 2015. The strategies in the proposal include increasing the number of: 1) Resource parents for deaf children, 2) Adoptive families and permanent adult connections for older African-American and Latino youth in foster care and probation systems, and 3) Older youth placed with relatives. Other strategies include increasing cultural competency of staff around Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ) issues, increasing retention of resource parents involved in concurrent planning, engaging the faith-based community in increasing the number of older youth that reach timely permanence, with an emphasis on African-American, Latino and LGBTQ youth, and hiring a child welfare evaluator to analyze the programs to meet the requirements of the grant.[25]

- *California Kids Connection (CKC)* website, an online adoption exchange registry of children whose placement plan is adoption, is provided through a contract with Family Builders. The CDSS expanded this contract to include and interface with the following services with the intent of this is to increase consistency of the quality of the response to inquiries and the level of customer service in linking interested families to agencies with available children:
  - ✓ Adoption Navigator Services
  - ✓ AdoptUSKids
  - ✓ 1-800-KIDS-4-US

  The CKC website has both a secure section and a public section; the public section of the website is accessible to any Internet user. In addition to the online registry, CKC services include exchange meetings, matching events, and training and education for caseworkers. CKC leads 5 regional adoption exchange meetings in California. Each meeting is held monthly or bi-monthly in the San Francisco Bay Area, Sacramento, the Central Valley, Southern California, and Northern California. From July 1, 2010 through April 1, 2011, CKC staff organized and participated in two adoption matching picnics and two adoption matching family fairs. During this time period, CKC has also led trainings about recruitment and online photolisting in Kern County, Los Angeles County, and San Francisco County; and for the Southern California adoption exchange.

[25] Collaborative Strategies for Diligent Recruitment, Summary Information

Presently, 82 percent of all public agencies and 66 percent of private agencies participate in exchange meetings and list children and families on the exchange site (these rates remained unchanged from 2010). As a result, the CKC has been very successful in finding permanent homes for foster children and youth. Table 9 below outlines the activities on the website.

	Total Children Listed	Publicly Listed	Privately Listed	Children of Color	Over age 12	Monthly Average of Inquiries by Qualified and Approved families (7/1/2010 – 4/1/2011)	Children Matched
March 1, 2011	449	49%	51%	81%	41%	439	61
March 1, 2010	452	59%	41%	81%	51%	550	91

Table 9: California Kids Connection (CKC) Activities

In order to improve diligent recruitment for families of Indian children, California is also in discussion with tribes regarding inclusion of Indian children who have been freed for adoption and who are not registered on the online adoption exchange registry. Some tribes are requesting this service in order to ensure these children have the best possibility of being placed in a permanent home.

- CKC also has partnerships with 11 (ten in 2010) counties or CDSS District Offices to provide *Adoption Navigator services* for the children listed on the CKC website. The navigators provide critical support and guidance to interested families as they navigate through the adoption process. Their goal is to help the families save time, energy and invariably, money, through emotional, social, and strategic support. Table 10 outlines the number of children served and matched with adoptive families due to the California Kids Connection website and the work of the Adoption Navigators in 2010 and 2011. The number of children matched through these services has nearly doubled over the course of the year. These are children who may have otherwise remained in care. Thus, these services assist the state with meeting the well being and permanency goals for children in foster care.

	Children Served	Children Matched
2011	325	56
2010	300	27

Table 10: CKC: Adoption Navigator

- *AdoptUSKids CKC* also interfaces with AdoptUSKids. The CKC Recruitment Response Team is funded by CDSS and responds to inquiries about adoption generated by AdoptUSKids' national recruitment campaign. Since July 1, 2010 through April 1, 2011, the Recruitment Response Team has answered the inquiries of 662 (991 in 2010) families; 110 of the inquiries were from those whose primary language is Spanish. Of these inquiries, **seven families** with whom *AdoptUSKids* worked were eventually licensed.
- In October 2009, CKC began answering the statewide, toll-free, CDSS information line, *1-800-KIDS-4-US*. The line is answered by a bilingual staff member who provides information in English or Spanish. Callers are given information on the foster care and adoption process and are provided with non-directive referrals to licensed public and private adoption agencies and county social services offices. CKC staff answers an average of 69 (71 in 2010) calls regarding foster care, 14 (11 in 2010) calls about foster/adoption, and 29 (27 in 2010) calls about other topics each month.

- *Foster Parent and Relative Caregiver Education Program* – The CDSS collaborates with the Chancellor's Office of California's Community Colleges to provide the education and training of foster parents and relative care providers through a contract with the Foster Care and

Kinship Care Education Training Program (FKCE). The CDSS also sits on the Chancellor's Office FKCE State Advisory Committee that also has representatives from care providers and counties.

As special recognition for achievements in foster care, CDSS and over 20 statewide organizations, including the Legislature and the AOC, come together in the month of May to celebrate foster care month in California. The 2010 State Capitol Foster Care Month Kickoff Event was held on May 9, 2011, featuring the theme, "Change a Lifetime: Foster Connections to Success." This year's event marked the seventh year anniversary of the event at the Capitol. Related events during the month included a kick-off celebration, an ice cream social, a Joint Assembly Hearing on Foster Care, and a "Take a Foster Youth to the Capitol" - Job Shadow Day on May 11, 2011. Additional activities included a display on the Governor's Wall at the Capitol by the California Youth Connection, and an exhibit on the History of Child Welfare in California. This event allows counties and their partners to speak one to one with potential foster parents and to provide information to the public about becoming foster parents.

Foster Care Month is an effective opportunity to inform the public about the number of youth in California who are currently in foster care and plays an important role in the recruitment of new foster parents by increasing public awareness and the positive impact foster parents may have in the life of a child. In FY 2009-10, Crossroads Foster Family Agency, Sierra Forever Families, and Triad Family Services participated at the Foster Month event at the Capitol and provided information to event participants about becoming foster parents.

- California conducted the *Recruitment, Training and Resource Survey* for FY 2008-09 concerning California county efforts to recruit and retain resource families for foster youth. A synopsis of the survey results was submitted via California's CFSR PIP in early 2010. At the request of the DHHS and ACF, additional information was provided on county-specific recruitment and retention efforts. However, due to state and county budget difficulties, the survey will be conducted bi-annually beginning in FY 2011-12. The results from the 2009 survey are described below.

  The activities outlined below are a few examples of California's efforts towards ensuring that the foster and adoptive families reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in California for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed. Of the nearly 60,000 children in care, of whom an estimated 46 percent are Latino, and 25 percent are Black, the activities described below focus on targeting those populations, as highlighted by the use of Latino media, bilingual staffing for resource families, and through focused recruitment in communities with high child welfare entry rates.

  - ✓ Kern, Los Angeles, Sacramento, Santa Clara, Yolo, Yuba, and Fresno counties reported that the single most effective method identified for resource family recruitment was through word-of-mouth to other resource families and friends.

- ✓ To highlight that effort, staff contacted Los Angeles and received the following examples of resource family recruitment. Success was gauged by the increase in inquiries and completed applications after events. Some successful events included:
  - Open your Heart Sunday is a collaboration with local faith based groups to promote foster care. The participating house of worship displayed Heart Galleries, a pictorial list of children available for foster care or adoption in the county. The pastor encouraged attendees to meet with social workers at the close of service to discuss the galleries. Los Angeles County reported that this recruitment effort was very successful.
  - Latino Radio Outreach – The Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services worked with local Latino radio stations to sponsor events. The stations provided radio spots and information to foster parents attached to their monthly aid warrant. Foster parents were invited to events and encouraged to bring other potential resource families. The county reported that this type of event has been somewhat successful.
  - Lesbian Bisexual Gay Transgender Queer/Questioning (LBGTQ) Community – The Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services collaborated with partners in the LBGTQ community to promote becoming a resource family at a community restaurant. This strengthened the relationship between CDSS and the community. Post cards were also distributed at the annual Los Angeles County Gay Pride parade.
  - Hospital Days – The Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services worked with medical staff specializing in children with medical needs to recruit resource families at local hospitals. Flyers were distributed and staff promoted children available for foster care or adoption. The county reports that this approach was somewhat successful.
- ✓ Kern County conducted two "Taking Care of Business Days" in communities that have high child welfare services entry rates. This allowed potential resource families the ability to complete most licensing requirements in one day.
- ✓ San Bernardino County's "Taking Care of Business Day" was a good tool in recruiting resource parents.
- ✓ Yuba, Inyo, Butte, San Bernardino, Ventura, San Mateo, San Diego, Monterey, and Humboldt reported that they used demographic data of the children and youth served to target resource families and maintained a history of data to identify changing trends in age, race, ethnicity, and other information regarding children and youth served for recruitment purposes.
- ✓ Bilingual staffing for resource families was available in all but seven counties, Del Norte, Trinity, Butte, Nevada, Placer, Amador, and Solano.
- ✓ San Bernardino, Orange, Sacramento, Shasta, Mendocino, and Marin counties conducted specialized recruitment for resource families with special emphasis on:

  Language and cultural identity.

Pregnant youth.
Deaf or hearing impaired youth
Infants/adolescents/youth with physical, learning, and mental disabilities
Sibling Groups

- ✓ Monterey County utilized the local Latino television station to run public service announcements to recruit resource families.

18 Juvenile Justice Transfers

Table 11 below outlines the number of children under the care of California's child welfare system who were transferred into the custody of the state's juvenile justice system for each of the indicated years. Data from CWS/CMS are used to identify CWS/CMS cases that closed each federal fiscal year with one of the 600/Incarceration closure reasons noted below.

All 600/Incarceration case closure reason types are included:

Table 11: Juvenile Justice Transfers

	Federal Fiscal Year		
600/Incarceration Case Closure Reason Types	2010	2009	2008
Incarcerated – Adjudicated 601/602	480	536	517
Not Incarcerated – Adjudicate 601/602	117	158	146
Incarcerated – Adjudicated Non 601/602	72	123	89
Child Receiving Services From Probation, Case Suspended	102	131	126
Total	**771**	**948**	**878**

WELL-BEING

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20 - FAMILY ENGAGEMENT 124
21 - CASEWORKER VISITS WITH CHILDREN 126
22 - CASEWORKER VISITS WITH PARENTS 134
23 - EDUCATIONAL SERVICES 135
24 - PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES 138

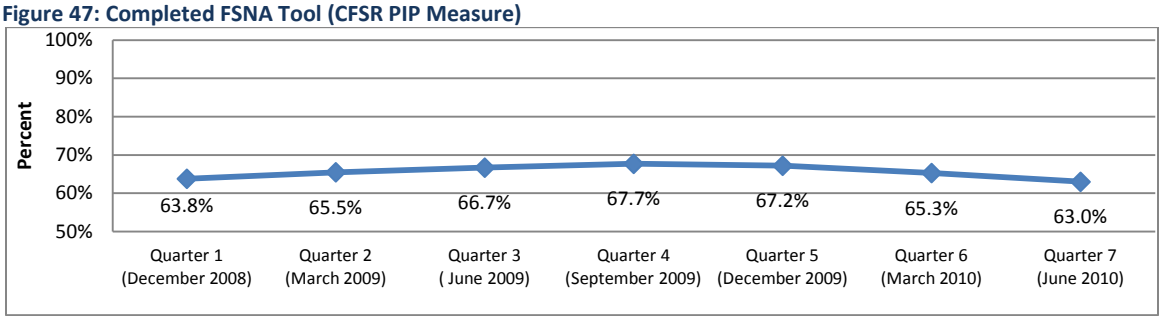
19 Needs and Services: Ensure the state is assessing the needs and providing services to children, parents, and foster parents

Assessing the needs and services of children, parents, and foster parents was rated as an area needing improvement in the 2008 CFSR on-site review for 37 percent of the cases reviewed (n = 65). Success in assessment and providing services to families are correlated with other items in safety and permanency, such that improving the quality and quantity of social worker visits, in-home services, risk and safety management, and recruitment and retention of resource families are some of the division's strategies for ensuring that families have the enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

For 54 counties using SDM as their safety assessment tool, the following figure is the proportion of case referrals that were promoted to open cases during the CFSR PIP quarter with a completed Family Strengths and Needs Assessment (FSNA) tool. California exceeded the negotiated improvement goal of 61.3 percent in the quarter following the baseline.

Figure 47: Completed FSNA Tool (CFSR PIP Measure)



FACTORS AFFECTING PROGRESS

California's MPP specifies that an assessment must be completed for each child who receives child welfare services. Further, the W&I code states that family maintenance services are activities designed to provide in-home protective services to prevent or remedy neglect, abuse, or exploitation with the goal of preventing separation of children from their families. During the assessment, the social worker must include:

1. The relevant social, cultural, and physical factors relating to the child, parent(s), guardians, and other significant persons, including children and siblings who are known to reside in the home;
2. The apparent problems, and possible causes of those problems, which require intervention and the family strengths which could aid in problem resolution;

3. A summary of the health and education records, a mental health status, and other needs of the child.

In California SDM counties, social workers complete an initial case plan within 30 days of the first contact with each family for whom a case is opened. Within this timeframe, workers assess the strengths and needs of families; these assessments are used to guide service provisions, targeting the specific needs of the family.

The FSNA is used to systematically identify the strengths and needs of adult caregivers in eight different domains: 1) Parenting skills, 2) Substance use/abuse, 3) Mental health, 4) Relationships, 5) Social support system, 6) Resource management/basic needs, 7) Physical health, 8) Cultural identity, as well as other needs as identified by the family. Upon completion, and in collaboration with the family, social workers identify three priority needs to be addressed in the case plan and specific service intervention to address them. On the other hand, priority strengths are used to identify the resources that families may draw upon to achieve case plan goals.

Other factors include:

- ✓ Stakeholder Collaboration
- ✓ Differential Response
- ✓ Family Development Matrix
- ✓ Social Worker Visits
- ✓ Services to Prevent Removal

- *Stakeholder Collaboration through the State Interagency Team's Co-Occurrence Domestic Violence and Maltreatment Workgroup* (previously discussed in detail on page 13), among other priorities, focused on understanding the challenges in addressing domestic violence, the impact on children exposed to domestic violence, and improving access to services to address domestic violence.
- *Stakeholder Collaboration through the Child Welfare Co-Investment Partnership,* previously discussed in detail on page 14, established as one its goals in 2010 the ability to expand California's access to and utilization of federal resources to improve the state's capacity to provide the necessary services to meet the needs of children and families.
- *Differential Response* as discussed in the Safety 05 services to prevent removal (page 54), which include decision making meetings involving the family and other concerned community members, such as a Path Two team in DR. These meetings can develop a safety plan and contingencies sufficient to keep the child in the home and prevent an out of home placement. Depending upon the services available in the specific county, other organizations can provide strategies which keep children from entering out of home care.
- The *Family Development Matrix*, discussed previously in the Safety – Prevention/Early Intervention section beginning on page 41, is a family assessment tool that helps agencies identify which services families need**.** The FDM brings case management and outcomes evaluation into 15 county-based service networks and various tribal communities in California; while family support staffs in 90 agencies and tribal organizations have the ability

to implement FDM, analyze the outcome data in order to assess families in setting goals, and record agency intervention and family participation activities. The trained staff in these agencies can assess the family's current situation and identify family strengths, which are then used in developing the case plan. The tool has been used to assess more than 3,500 families, and has been used by a number of agencies in providing services as part of the county Differential Response systems described above.

- *Social Worker Visits* is highly correlated with assessing and providing for services such that if social workers are not visiting families sufficiently, it is highly probable that the division is not providing for continuing assessments.
- Likewise, if the agency is failing to provide for *services to prevent removal* under Safety 05, improvement in this area is highly improbable.

STRATEGIES AND PLANS FOR 2012

- Core curriculum training for newly hired social workers includes a multiday training on the case planning process as well as training on the use of SDM, and SafeMeasures® for the relevant counties.
- As part of the PIP strategy, the division remains committed to increasing the percentage of children in foster care and in-home receiving Wraparound services to 5.9 percent.

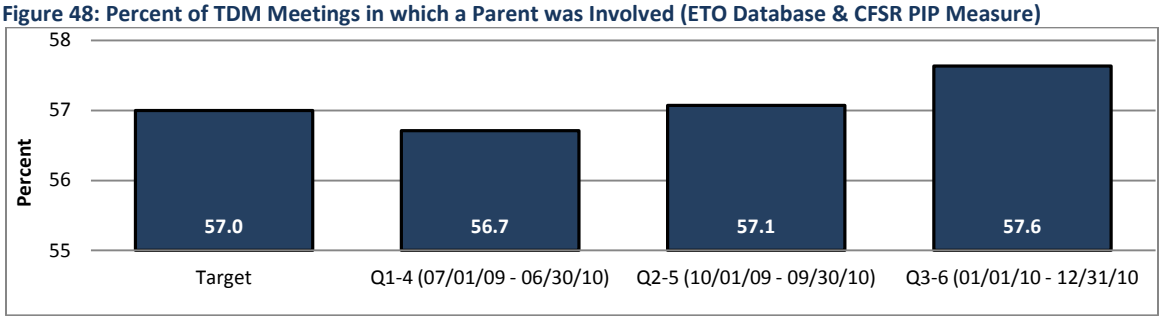
20 Family Engagement: Ensure that parents and children are involved in the case planning process

Involvement in case planning was rated as an area needing improvement in the 2008 CFSR on-site review for 45 percent of the 58 applicable cases reviewed.

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

The figure below was developed for the CFSR PIP to address CFSR Item 18: Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning and represents the proportion of Team Decision Meetings that occurred during the year in which a parent (defined as birth parent, adoptive parent, or guardian) was involved. The data periods are parenthesized on the x-axis and are annualized using the rolling quarter method. These data are extracted from the Efforts to Outcomes (ETO™) software managed by an independent contractor at UC Berkeley.

Figure 48: Percent of TDM Meetings in which a Parent was Involved (ETO Database & CFSR PIP Measure)



During these data periods, the participating TDM counties held an average of approximately 26,000 TDMs. California met the PIP target during the Q2-Q5 data period and the state has continued to make steady and marked improvement, increasing nearly one percent over two

annualized rolling quarters from 56.7 percent to 57.6 percent between July 1, 2009 and December 31, 2010.

FACTORS AFFECTING PROGRESS

As part of the initial CFSR PIP, legislation was enacted to increase time allowed to complete a case plan from 30 to 60 days with the goal of increasing child and family involvement. Additionally, AB 1412 was signed into law in 2005 to ensure that age and developmentally appropriate children and youth are actively involved in their case plan and permanency planning process.

In *Family Maintenance* cases, social workers are required to complete initial case plans within 30-60 days and are required to update them every six months. They engage children and parents in the case planning process through the use of Family Group Decision Making and family group conferencing and TDMs. These practices bring children, family and their support network together to discuss and determine the processes for the family's success in developing and reaching their case plan goals. Data from SafeMeasures® reveals that for the month of September, 2010, 82 percent of FM cases have an approved case plan in place.

In *Family Reunification* cases, social workers are required to complete the initial case plan within 30-60 days of removal and are required to update them every six months. Family and child engagement is accomplished through TDMs, in which these meetings address visitation with parents, siblings, and ILP for youth. TDMs involve participation from parents, age and developmentally appropriate children, community partners, such as mental health staff, alcohol and drug staff, and foster parents and relatives. Data from SafeMeasures® reveals that for the month of September, 2010, 76.4 percent of FR cases have an approved case plan in place.

The FSNA tool for SDM counties also must involve parents and children in the development of the case plan. The tool involves separate assessments for children and families. Families are assessed in eight domains, including substance abuse, mental health, and parenting skills. After the assessment, workers, in consultation with the family, identify up to three priority needs that must be addressed in the case plan.[26] In collaboration with the family, workers plan specific intervention to address these issues, while family's priority strengths are used to identify resources that may be used to assist in achieve case plan goals. The Child Strengths and Needs assessment tool assesses children in nine domains of functioning. Age-inappropriate domains are not rated (e.g., assessing an infant for education). The tool is critical in identifying needs that may require services.

STRATEGIES AND PLANS FOR 2012

The Core Training for newly hired social workers includes a module on engaging children and their families in the case planning process. It identifies the importance of engagement, potential barriers to engagement, as well as strategies to establishing relationships with families, as well as specific information on engaging fathers. California has recently begun to work with Signs of Safety, an innovative approach to family engagement and is conducting training and facilitating the implementation in conjunction with the SDM safety assessment

[26] The Structured Decision Making System, Case Management in Child Welfare (2010), NRC.

tools used in 54 of the 58 counties. Workshops have been held at the Regional Training Academy at U.C. Davis and several counties have begun to implement the family engagement practice with the SDM assessment tools. Most notably involved at this stage are San Diego County and Sacramento County. This work is ongoing and plans are in place to move ahead with it in 2011 and beyond.

21 Caseworker Visits with Children: Ensure that social workers are visiting children in home and in-foster care.

Caseworker visits are a vital factor of the child welfare system. Caseworkers meet with children and families to monitor children's safety and well-being; assess the ongoing service needs of children, families and foster parents; engage biological and foster parents in developing case plans; assess permanency options for the child; monitor family progress toward established case plan goals; and ensure that children and parents are receiving necessary services. At each stage of the intervention, caseworkers, with the support of their supervisors, determine the type of supports that children and their families need to ensure that the children are safe, are in or moving toward permanent homes, and have stable living arrangements that promote their well-being.

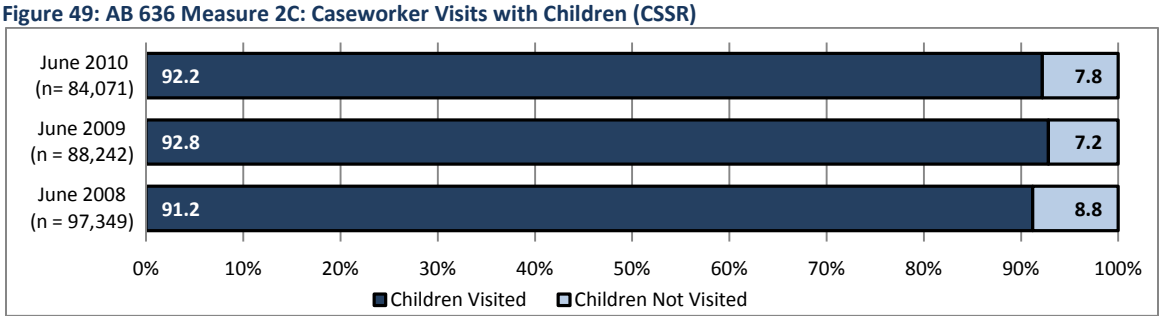
Caseworker visits with children was rated as an area needing improvement for 17 percent of the 65 cases reviewed during the 2008 CFSR onsite review. In this report, social worker visits with children is discussed in three parts: 1) The state measure of timely contacts, 2) CFSR PIP for improving the quality of visits with children, and 3) The caseworker visits PIP, resulting from federal reporting requirements based on PL 109-288 and is focused on increasing frequency of caseworker visits, improving the quality of visits, and improving data collection.

1. STATE MEASURE 2C

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

As part of the state's quality assurance system, the Outcomes and Accountability county consultants monitor counties' performance on Measure 2C (illustrated below), the percentage of children requiring a caseworker contact who received the contact in a timely manner within a single month. The measure was developed in accordance with AB 636 and is substantially different from the federal measure described later, such that the state reporting period is a single month and is a client level analysis, while the federal measure is an annual calculation of monthly visits at the case level. Measure 2C also excludes partial months, KinGAP or Probation clients, children placed via ICPC, and children with runaway status and includes youth up to 20 years old.

Figure 49: AB 636 Measure 2C: Caseworker Visits with Children (CSSR)



The data show that counties are performing above the state standard of 90 percent. The measure includes Child Welfare Department supervised children with an open case during the month who were visited in accordance with the required frequencies outlined in regulations.

FACTORS AFFECTING PROGRESS

The frequency of social worker visits with children is established in the case plan, and the standard frequency for face-to-face visits is monthly unless the child's needs require more frequent visitation. For in-home cases, social workers are required to visit each child with an approved case plan who remains in the home at least once a calendar month. For each child with an approved case plan placed in out-of-home care with a relative, foster family home, or a legal guardian, the social worker must visit the child at least one each calendar month and a portion of the visit must be spent alone with the child and outside the presence of a caregiver.

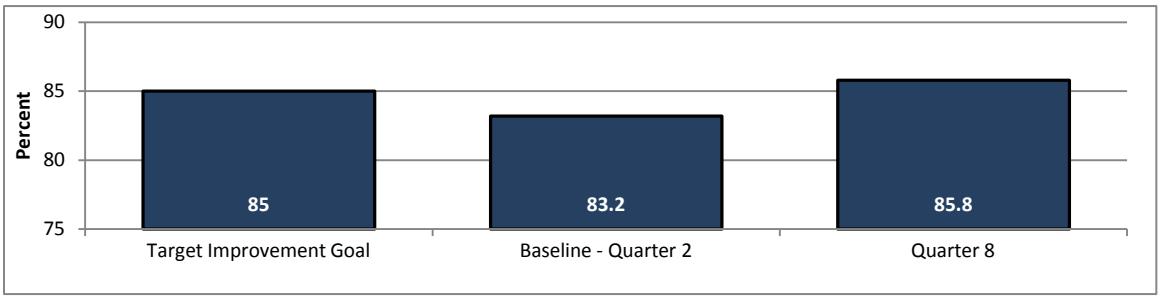
As part of the PIP to conform to Public Law 109-288, a regulations package is currently being developed to eliminate and clarify monthly visit exceptions.

2. CFSR PIP – QUALITY OF SOCIAL WORKER VISITS

INDICATOR OF PROGRESS

Caseworker visits with children was rated as an area needing improvement for 17 percent of the 65 cases reviewed during the 2008 CFSR onsite review. As one of the assessments developed for the corresponding PIP, CDSS created a measure to determine whether the state and its counties improved their practice of ensuring that the quality of visits between caseworkers and children was adequate to monitor the child's safety and well-being. In CFSR PIP Quarter Two (baseline) and Eight, CDSS performed online case reviews of 381 cases from the 12 largest counties. The reviews were performed by CDSS staff to determine whether caseworker visits with children met the definition of a quality visit consistent with the federal CFSR onsite reviews of 2008. Reviewers determined whether visits focused on: 1) issues pertinent to service delivery, goal attainment, and case planning; 2) whether the location of the visit was conducive to open conversation; and 3) whether the caseworker interacted alone with the child during some portion of the visit. The results of the assessment are presented in Figure 50 below.

Figure 50: Quality Caseworker Visits with Children



During PIP Quarter Two, the state established a baseline whereby 83.2 percent of cases were rated as a strength in the quality of visits with children. In PIP Quarter Eight, California surpassed its negotiated target improvement goal of 85 percent. Please note the data are not considered final until the submission of the PIP Quarterly Report on July 30, 2011.

3. California's Program Improvement Plan to Conform with PL 109-288

States are required to increase the percentage of foster children that are visited monthly to 90 percent by October 1, 2011, and to implement measurements for what constitutes a quality visit with a foster child.

California has made the following progress in the 2010 PIP goals for Caseworker Visits with Children:

A. Eliminate existing exceptions to the monthly visit requirements that are currently allowed by California regulations as necessary to comply with federal requirements. Those exceptions are found in MPP, sections 31.320.31, .411, .412, and .6.

Notice of Anticipated Regulatory Activity ..... September 2008

Draft Regulations Completed ..... January 2010

Draft Regulations, Statement of Reasons and Informative Digest and Request for Regulation Activity Submitted ..... February 2010

Incorporated internal and external feedback into the draft Regulations ..... June 2010

Public Hearing Scheduled ..... November 2010

Amended regulations based on testimony ..... February 2011

15 Day re-notice of regulation changes ..... March 2011

Begin Executive Sign Off ..... April 2011

Estimated Completion of Regulation Process ..... August 31, 2011

B. Implement data reporting of caseworker visits by FFA caseworkers for county agency data entry.

- ✓ Increased funding for caseworker visit activities including additional data entry for visits made by FFA caseworkers
- ✓ Development of new forms for implementation of this goal, SOC 154A and SOC 160
- ✓ A workaround was developed to capture this data within CWS/CMS with the goal of updating CWS/CMS data entry for caseworker visits. However, the counties and CDSS determined the workaround more efficiently captured the data than the proposed update.
- ✓ An instruction letter, ACL 10-19, was published listing the new forms and detailing the data entry procedures to support successful completion of this goal.

C. Implement data collection for juvenile justice foster children receiving AFDC-FC.

- Access to CWS/CMS has been provided to all probation departments
- Training for probation officers has been completed in 43 counties and plans are being made to complete the training in the remaining 15 small counties. To date, the training provided to the 43 counties representing 98 percent of all probation

cases. Training for remaining smaller county probation departments is estimated to be complete by June of 2011.

- An instructional letter to probation departments, ACL 11-18, was published reinforcing the caseworker visit mandates and included instructions on CWS/CMS data entry.
- Ongoing technical assistance is being provided by CDSS to probation departments to support the overall implementation of this mandate.
- CDSS has initiated the data migration and validation process for data entry by probation departments into CWS/CMS.

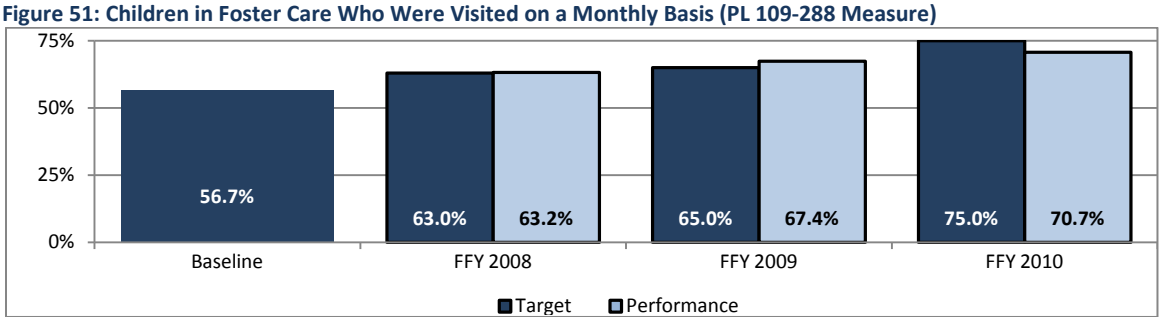
D. Implement changes to departmental regulations which align the purpose, frequency, and location of caseworker visits and FFA social worker visits with the child with federal requirements, to eliminate monthly visit exceptions, and to reflect monthly visit data reporting requirements regarding FFA, probation, and out-of-county/out-of-state courtesy supervision placements. California will revise its regulation to require that all foster children placed out-of-state are visited monthly.

- Please see the detailed response in A. outlining the state's progress implementing the regulations for caseworker visits with children.

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

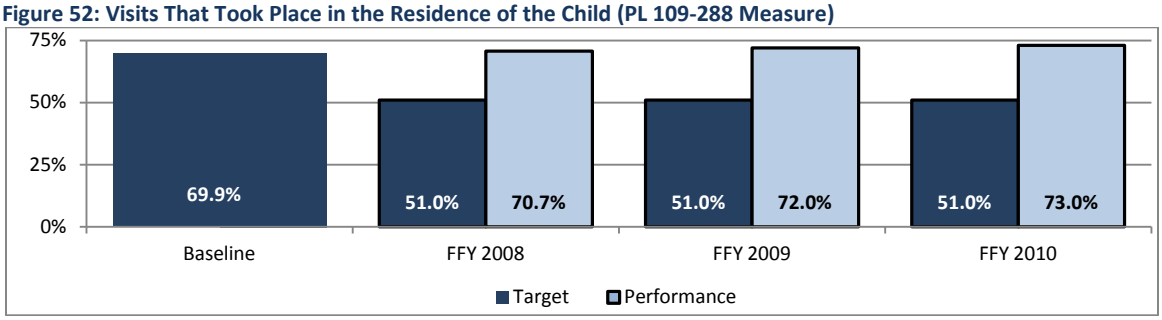
As demonstrated in the figures below, California met the 2010 performance target for the percentage of visits in the residence of the child (Figure 52), but California did not meet the 2010 performance target for the percentage of children visited each and every month (Figure 51). It is important to note that California's 2009 performance on visiting children each and every month is 4 percent above the national median, based on available national data for 2009 from the Federal Child Welfare Outcomes Online Report[27]. Please note that the data below are not inclusive of the probation population. Refer to Goal Three for greater detail on the state's progress in collecting data for the probation youth.

Figure 51: Children in Foster Care Who Were Visited on a Monthly Basis (PL 109-288 Measure)



[27] http://cwoutcomes.acf.hhs.gov/data/tables/caseworker_visits?

Figure 52: Visits That Took Place in the Residence of the Child (PL 109-288 Measure)



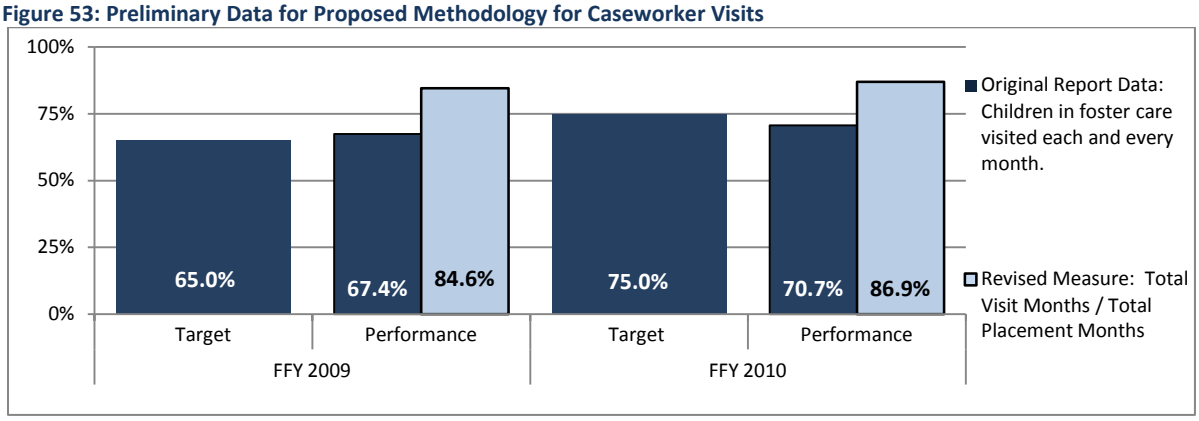
FACTORS AFFECTING PROGRESS

Although California did not meet its benchmark for FFY 2010, many improvement changes have been made to ensure that all children are visited each and every month. The activities completed in California's Program Improvement Plan to conform with PL 109-288, including regulatory changes, instructional letters to counties, and improved data collection methods have all contributed to the states increase from a baseline of 56.7 percent to 70.7 percent (see Figure 51) of children being visited each and every month. When considering the vast numbers of children in out-of-home care in California, and the ongoing budget cuts and lack of resources due to county lay-offs, California believes it has made significant progress towards meeting the caseworker visit mandate. In addition, California's progress is notably salient when comparing the funding being provided to the state of California versus other states with much lower numbers of children in out-of-home care. For instance, California's 2011 allotment for monthly caseworker visits was $2,005,524 for approximately 57,000 children in care, while Texas' allotment for 2011 was $2,094,943 for approximately 17,000 children in care.

California also believes that the federal methodology for caseworker visits with children has flaws that are contributing factors in the state's failure to meet the 2010 performance target for visiting a child monthly. California outlined the concerns with the methodology in a letter of response to the ACF's request for comment. Of specific concern is the guideline that no credit is given for visits to a child for an entire year if one month is reported missing. Visits may be missed at times for reasons such as children on run-away status, care-provider cancellations and extreme weather conditions, just to name a few. If visits have occurred in 11 out of 12 months, yet those 12 months cannot be counted, this does not portray an accurate account of the state standards and overall quality of service delivery.

The CDSS has proposed that the methodology be redesigned to a month by month view that reflects a 90 percent average of the visits made to children in- and out-of-home foster care placement per month, rather than a complex child specific measure that tracks that same child over a 12 month period. Preliminary data reports (see Figure 53 below) have shown that by implementing this single change in the current methodology, California's performance would have been at 84.6 percent for FFY 2009 and 86.9 percent as of FFY 2010.

Figure 53: Preliminary Data for Proposed Methodology for Caseworker Visits



2009 PROGRESS

Goal One for 2009: Eliminate existing exceptions to the monthly visit requirements that are currently allowed by California regulations as necessary to comply with federal requirements.

Update:

- ✓ CDSS is currently working on changes to the MPP Division 31 which would provide for monthly visitation of children placed out of state and would eliminate and clarify monthly visit exceptions as required by federal law. The public hearing process for regulations is complete, and the regulations are currently in the final stages of approval.
- ✓ In November of 2010, CDSS renegotiated this PIP item due to delays caused by budget cuts and resulting furloughs. The new deadline established is August 31, 2011, and CDSS expects to meet this deadline.

Goal Two for 2009: Implement data reporting of caseworker visits by FFA caseworkers for county agency data entry.

Updates:

This goal was completed in 2010 through:

- ✓ Increased funding for caseworker visit activities including additional data entry for visits made by FFA caseworkers
- ✓ Development of new forms for implementation of this goal, SOC 154A and SOC 160
- ✓ A workaround was developed to capture this data within CWS/CMS with the goal of updating CWS/CMS data entry for caseworker visits. However, the counties and CDSS determined the workaround more efficiently captured the data than the proposed update.
- ✓ An instruction letter, ACL 10-19, was published listing the new forms and detailing the data entry procedures to support successful completion of this goal.

Goal Three for 2009: Implement data collection for juvenile justice foster children receiving AFDC-FC.

Update:

- ✓ It is important to note that the probation population is not included in the data above, because the AFCARS application for probation was developed specifically to collect AFCARS data required at the time of development. Therefore, it does not have the capacity to collect the more recent mandates associated with the caseworker visit information. To remedy the absence of disaggregate data for the probation population, CDSS has completed the following:
- ✓ Access to CWS/CMS has been provided to all probation departments
- ✓ Training for probation officers has been completed in 43 counties and plans are being made to complete the training in the remaining 15 small counties. To date, the training provided to the 43 counties representing 98 percent of all probation cases. Training for remaining smaller county probation departments is estimated to be complete by June of 2011.
- ✓ An instructional letter to probation departments, ACL 11-18, was published reinforcing the caseworker visit mandates and included instructions on CWS/CMS data entry.
- ✓ Ongoing technical assistance is being provided by CDSS to probation departments to support the overall implementation of this mandate.

The CDSS has initiated the data migration and validation process for data entry by probation departments into CWS/CMS.

Goal Four for 2009: Implement changes to departmental regulations which align the purpose, frequency, and location of caseworker visits and FFA social worker visits with the child with federal requirements, to eliminate monthly visit exceptions, and to reflect monthly visit data reporting requirements regarding FFA, probation, and out-of-county/out-of-state courtesy supervision placements.

Update:

- ✓ CDSS is currently working on changes to the MPP Division 31 which would provide for monthly visitation of children placed out of state and eliminate and clarify monthly visit exceptions as required by federal law. The public hearing process for these regulations is complete, and these regulations are currently in the final stages of approval.
- ✓ In November of 2010, CDSS renegotiated this PIP item due to delays caused by budget cuts and resulting furloughs. The new deadline established is August 31, 2011, and CDSS expects to meet this deadline.

2010 PROGRESS

Description of Goal	Target Percentage End of FFY 2010
Children in foster care who were visited on a monthly basis	75%
Visits that took place in the residence of the foster child	51%

California's goals for 2010 are twofold:

- ✓ Improve data collection for those foster children who are placed out-of-county under courtesy supervision of out-of-state.
- ✓ Identify barriers to caseworker recruitment and retention and develop a plan for removing those barriers.

Strategy One

To meet this goal, CDSS will develop procedures for reporting of visit information where the child is placed out-of-county or out-of-state.

- ✓ Out-of-county: This strategy was completed through the creating of mutually agreed upon guidelines for the placement and courtesy supervision of children placed out-of-county. For more details, please see: http://www.cwda.org/tools/cws.php.
- ✓ Out-of-state: This strategy was completed by issuing an instructional letter, ACL 10-19, to reinforce that counties must request monthly caseworker visits for children placed out of state and provided data entry instructions for CWS/CMS.

Strategy Two

The CDSS will work with the workgroup and other interested parties to develop a plan to identify and address barriers to caseworker recruitment and retention.

This strategy was completed during FY 2010-11. Given the current fiscal crisis, it was determined that the best plan was to provide additional funds to the counties for retention and recruitment of caseworkers. The CDSS subsequently augmented the federal caseworker visits with children funds to all 58 counties to perform activities designed to support increased monthly caseworker visits to children in foster care; to create positive outcomes for children; and to improve caseworker retention, recruitment, training, and ability to access the benefits of technology.

2011 GOALS

Continued improvement in the state's overall performance in visiting children in care on a monthly basis. Below are the two strategies to meet this goal.

Strategy One – Improve the quality of caseworker visits through improved training

- ✓ CDSS will partner with CalSWEC to begin the process of updating the social work curriculum by incorporating the new caseworker visits with children regulations. Full implementation of the revised curriculum may take up to three years.
- ✓ CDSS will partner with the Resource Center for Family Focused Practice (RCFFP) to develop training for county caseworkers and probation officers on quality caseworker visits, including creation of a tool for supervisors which will support supervisors in mentoring and assisting social workers with the learning process.

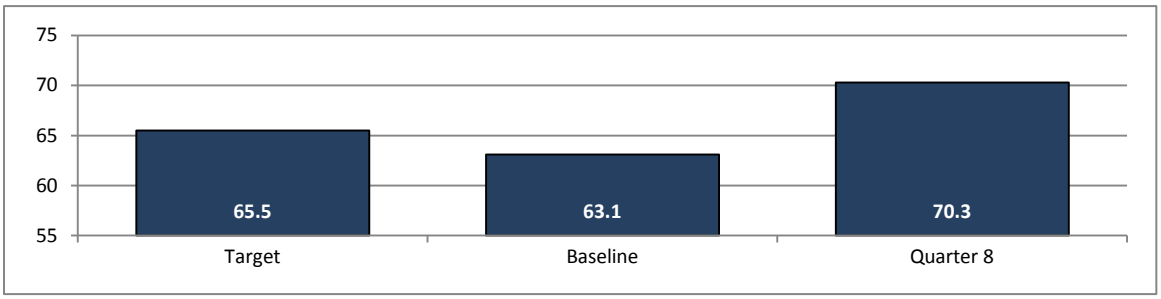
Strategy Two - CDSS will examine the caseworker visits with children data to identify characteristics that may be associated with missed visits.

- ✓ Extract and analyze data to determine what characteristics may be associated missed visits;
- ✓ Collaborate internally and externally on the implications of the data on visits with children;
- ✓ Based on the data and collaboration, develop instructional tool or letter to enhance caseworker visits with children statewide;
- ✓ CDSS will provide on-going technical assistance to counties.

22 Caseworker Visits with Parents: Ensure that the state is appropriately visiting parents of children in child welfare.

Caseworker visits with parents was rated as an area needing improvement for 43 percent of the 49 cases reviewed during the 2008 onsite CFSR review. Similar to the measure previously described for determining quality of social worker visits with children, CDSS created a measure to determine whether the state and its counties improved their practice of ensuring that the quality of visits with mothers and fathers was adequate in promoting attainment of case plan goals and/or ensuring the children's safety and well-being. Online case reviews were performed by CDSS staff in Quarter Two (baseline) and Quarter Eight to determine whether caseworker visits with mothers and fathers met the definition of a quality visit consistent with the federal CFSR onsite reviews of 2008. Reviewers determined whether visits were conducive to open conversations and focused on issues pertinent to service delivery, goal attainment, and case planning. The results of the assessments are presented in Figure 54 below.

Figure 54: Quality Caseworker Visits with Parents



California surpassed its target improvement goal of 65.5 percent by over a seven percentage point difference in Quarter Eight; however, please note that the data are not considered final until the submission of the PIP Quarterly Report on July 30, 2011.

Improving the quality of caseworker visits with parents is an important factor in promoting the well-being of families by including and actively engaging birth parents in case planning activities that builds on their existing strengths and resources. The data show that California's efforts since the implementation of the PIP has made an impact in social work practice of conducting quality visits with parents. The CDSS' commitment is underscored in CFSR-PIP Strategy 1 (page 31), which among its goals include increasing the engagement of families and others in case planning and decision-making processes across the life of the case.

- Related activities towards these efforts include encouraging family engagement strategies in case planning by issuing an ACIN; reviewed, revised, and disseminated Permanency Protocols as discussed in the following paragraph; and lastly, developed family engagement and participatory case planning guidelines for the Linkages Program.
- According to the Permanency Protocols developed by the 11 counties involved in the 11-County Evaluation Pilot Project, various strategies to engage parents in case planning activities were identified. These included facilitating regular in person meetings with parents, their children, and caregivers to develop a visitation plan that supports the parent/child relationship. Social workers are also trained on utilizing best practice interviewing guidelines that promote family engagement and educating parents on the court process and empowering them in understanding their rights and responsibilities can also be a vital factor in a family succeeding with their family reunification efforts.
- TDMs and other Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) meetings or conferences held throughout the life of a case involve parents and other extended family members in identifying the safety and placement issues and needs of their children on an ongoing basis.
- Ice Breaker Meetings also help the parent and caregiver develop a mutually supportive relationship in order to share information to address the best interests of the child. Parent
- Partners and other Family Mentoring Programs are trained to support parents who are currently working towards reunifying with their children. Mentors that participate in this program are parents whose children were removed from their homes and have subsequently been reunified.

23 Educational Services: Ensure children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs

In the CFSR 2 onsite review in 2008, Educational Services was assigned as an area needing improvement for 12 percent of the 50 applicable cases reviewed.

INDICATOR OF PROGRESS

Data from the Exit Outcomes for Youth Survey, Measure 8A, reveals that approximately 56.2 percent (n = 1590) of youth during FFY 2010 completed high school or high school equivalency. These data includes youth in child welfare who exited foster care placement due to attaining

age 18 or 19, or those foster youth under 18 who were legally emancipated from foster care, the data are derived from the SOC 405E, Exit Outcomes for Youth Aging Out of Foster Care Quarterly Statistical Report, which is submitted by the counties to CDSS.

FACTORS AFFECTING PROGRESS

California's MPP requires that each dependent child's case plan include educational factors such as the names and addresses of the children's educational providers, their grade level performance, school record, and assurances that the child's placement in foster care takes into account proximity to the school in which the child is enrolled at the time of placement. Some of this information is included in the Health and Education Passport. If any of the required health and education information is not contained in the case plan, the case plan should document where the information is located. Further, the case social worker is also required to ensure that arrangements are made to monitor the educational progress of each child. Other factors that may contribute to progress in assessing and providing educational needs are further described in the ***Chafee chapter*** of this report.

The enactment of **AB 490** in 2004 included several provisions that ensured the rights of children in child welfare. The intent of the landmark legislation was to guarantee that foster youth were granted to access to same opportunities to meet academic achievement standards as all students, maintain stable school placements, be placed in the least restrictive educational placement, and have access to the same academic resources, services and extracurricular and enrichment activities as all other children. The legislation makes clear that education and school placement decisions are to be dictated by the best interest of the child. Some of the provisions of AB 490 include:

- ✓ School of Origin
- ✓ Educational stability in placement decisions
- ✓ Timely transfer of students and their records
- ✓ Credit for School Work and Removal of School Penalties
- ✓ Educational Liaisons through Foster Youth Services Program

Other factors that may contribute to educational outcomes for youth may be:

- ✓ Stakeholder Collaboration
- ✓ Wraparound

- *School of Origin* - the provision in the law allows children to remain in their school of origin for the duration of the school year when their placement changes and remaining in the same school is in the best interest of the child. If placement within the original school district is not available, the social worker must make the every effort with caregivers to transport children to the school they were attending prior to removal.
- Local education agencies and county social workers are jointly responsible for ensuring the *timely transfers* of students and their relevant records when a change in the school occurs, further requiring the local education agency to deliver the education information and records to the next educational placement within two days of receiving a transfer request from a county placing agency. For compliance with W&I code 16010, it authorizes the release of educational records of foster youth to the county placing agency for the case plan.

The bill also provides that the foster youth be immediately enrolled in the school even if all typically required school records, immunizations, or school uniforms are unavailable.

- AB 490 also requires school district to calculate and *accept credit for full or partial coursework* satisfactorily completed by the student and earned while attending a public school, juvenile court school or nonpublic, nonsectarian school. It further ensures that foster youth will not be penalized for absences due to placement changes, court appearances, or other related court ordered activities. [28]
- It further requires all districts to appoint an educational liaison with prescribed duties to ensure appropriate and timely educational placement and equal opportunities for foster youth. These educational liaisons are supported by the *Foster Youth Services Program (FYS).*

  Administered by the CDE, the FYS Program: 1) Identifies the educational, physical, social and emotional needs of foster youth; 2) Determines gaps in the provision of educational and social support services and provide those services, either directly or through referral to collaborative partners; 3) Identifies inadequacies in the completion and timely transfer of health and education records to facilitate appropriate and stable care and educational placement; 4) Improves student academic achievement and reduce student truancy, dropout rates and delinquent behavior, and 5) Provides advocacy to promote the best interests of foster youth throughout California. While this program is administered by the CDE, CDSS recognizes the benefit to California's foster youth and collaborates as needed.

  Based the FYS yearend report for 2009-10 (produced biannually), the most recent data available for the Foster Youth Services Core District Program (comprised of the following school districts: Sacramento City, San Juan, Elk Grove, Mt. Diablo and Paramount school districts and also Placer and Nevada Counties) shows that 74 percent of foster youth served in school year 2008-09 gained more than one month of academic growth per month of tutoring received. Therefore, the target population objective of 60 percent was surpassed by 23 percent. The collection of high school completion data indicates that 71 percent of eligible twelfth graders received a high school diploma, passed the GED, the California High School Proficiency Exam, or received a certificate of completion. In addition, only .69 percent of foster youth served through Foster Youth Services Core District Programs were expelled, surpassing the target rate of 5 percent. The foster youth student attendance rate reached 96 percent, exceeding the target attendance rate of 90 percent.
- *Stakeholder Collaboration through the Child Welfare Co-Investment Partnership's Foster Youth Education Workgroup* that worked to increase agreement on the critical role of early care on school success. The workgroup also supported a network of child welfare and educational professionals who are focused on sharing insights and strategies to improve success transitions and support for emancipating youth, discussed previously on page 15.
- *Stakeholder Collaboration through the Child Welfare Council's Child Development and Successful Transitions Committee,* (previously discussed in detail on page 9) focused on successful youth transitions related to educational well-being. The committee is focused on

[28] http://apps.americanbar.org/child/rclji/education/ab490summary.pdf

following recommendations to move forward: 1) On authorizing the California Department of Education and the State Board of Education to promulgate a uniform partial credit transfer regulation, and 2) Enabling access by all foster youth pursuing higher education at a two-year or four-year public college or university to comprehensive campus support programs.

- *Wraparound Services* provide children and families with a comprehensive and coordinated approach to meeting service needs, including education, health, and mental health. Several county Wraparound programs track educational outcomes as part of their program evaluation efforts. In FY 2009-10 in Los Angeles County, 75 percent of children enrolled in Wraparound were found to function at grade level or to have improved grade-level functioning from the previous year. This level exceeded the county's goal of 50 percent. Further, 80 percent of children maintained at least an 80 percent school attendance rate or improved their attendance rate from the previous year.

  In Riverside County, the Wraparound Services Educational Outcomes Measure (EOM) tracks progress at school, including educational setting, attendance level, and number of suspensions. Preliminary results suggest Wraparound Services may be improving children's school attendance and number of suspensions. Riverside County is cautiously optimistic about improvements in children's progress toward graduation, as well. However, the data reflects a small sample size (n = 30) and a single data set.

STRATEGIES AND PLANS FOR 2012

In the next year the CDE plans to:

- Continue the existing Foster Youth Services Program and provide adequate funding for continued support.
- Continue development of a statewide database for collecting and sharing health and education information and Outcomes data on foster youth.
- Expand the Countywide Programs to provide services to all foster youth with additional funding.

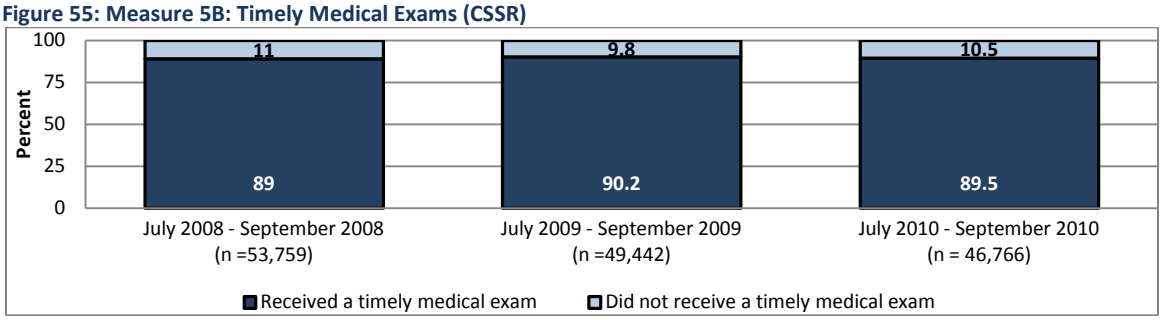
24 Physical and Mental Health: Ensure that the children's physical and mental health needs are identified in assessments and case planning activities and that the needs are addressed through services.

Physical health was rated as a strength for 81 percent of the 58 cases reviewed during 2008 CFSR onsite review.

INDICATOR OF PROGRESS

The figure below is C-CFSR measure 5B: Timely Medical Examinations and is the percent of children who meet the schedule for Child Health and Disability Prevention (CHDP) and Division 31 medical and dental exams.

Figure 55: Measure 5B: Timely Medical Exams (CSSR)



Minors must have an exam by the end of their age period, based on the schedule outlined in Table 12: Medical Exam Periodicity . Division 31 counts a child as out of compliance when the child leaves an age period without an exam. These data include out-of-home child welfare supervised children in placement for 31 days or more, but excludes children in probation and those without placement (including runaways), non foster care placement, non-dependant legal guardians, and incoming ICPC cases.

Table 12: Medical Exam Periodicity

Age of Child	Interval Until Next Exam
Under 1 month old	1 month
1 – 6 months	2 months
7 – 15 months	3 months
16 – 23 months	6 months
2 – 3 years	1 year
4 – 5 years	2 years
6 – 8 years	3 years
9 – 19 years	4 years

FACTORS AFFECTING PROGRESS

As California's policy, each child in placement is required to receive a medical and dental exam, preferably prior to, but no later than, 30 days after placement. While specific factors that may be contributing to improvement on this measure cannot be determined, California has made improvements that may likely affect outcomes:

- ✓ Health Care Oversight Plan
- ✓ Court Authorization Requirements for Psychotropic Medications
- ✓ Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Program (SA/HIV)
- ✓ Stakeholder Collaboration on Access to Mental Health Treatment for Foster Youth Placed Out of County
- ✓ Katie A. Los Angeles County Strategic Plan

- *Health Care Oversight Plan* - This section is included as an update to the Health Care Services Plan included in the CFSP (located on pages 47-51). The updated plan (a) supports current efforts to determine and meet the health care needs of children and youth in foster care, (b) represents a coordinated strategy to identify and respond to their health, mental health and dental health needs, and (c) supports oversight and coordination of health related services.

  The Health Care Program for Children in Foster Care (HCPCFC) is at the center of California's Health Oversight and Coordination Plan. The CHDP program implements the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment standards of care for Medicaid-eligible children and youth, which includes those in foster care.

  Through an interagency agreement, CDSS provides an annual State General Fund (SGF) appropriation to the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), which allocates those funds to county CHDP programs in proportion to their foster care populations. With these funds, county CHDP programs employ public health nurses stationed in county child welfare agency

offices to provide intensive administrative medical case management services to ensure that children and youth in foster care receive the full array of CHDP services.

Nurses employed by this program are also responsible for evaluation and updating of health records, the determination of adherence to reasonable standards of medical practice, linkages, and referrals for services. This program is also the central vehicle for ensuring that the mental health and developmental health needs of children in foster care are identified and addressed.

Legislation in the 2008-09 session (AB 597) provided a statutory framework for interdisciplinary collaboration on the Health Oversight and Coordination Plan required by PL 110-351. County participation in the HCPCFC was mandated.

PL 110-351 also required that CDSS consult with pediatricians, public health nurses and other health care experts in plan development and it required the participation of experts in and recipients of child welfare services, including parents. This requirement corresponds with CDSS's current efforts to continuously and actively involve and consult with physicians and other appropriate medical or non-medical professionals in assessing the health and well-being of children in foster care and in determining appropriate medical treatment for children.

Effective January 1, 2010, the California budget appropriated additional funds to CDSS for the HCPCFC, and the proposed 2010-11 budget provides for further augmentation. These budget actions permit counties to hire additional public health nurses and to reduce their caseload sizes. All activities supported by these funds are directly related to the services and outcomes required by PL 110-351.

The following provides an update on the planned activities of Health Care Coordination and Oversight Plan established in the 2009-2014 CFSP:

- By the end of the second quarter of 2010, renegotiate an existing interagency agreement with the DHCS for the Health Care Program for Children in Foster Care to ensure that county CHDP programs support the services and outcomes in PL 110-351.
  - ✓ Update: Renegotiated an existing interagency agreement, for Fiscal Years 2010-2013. The interagency agreement provides provisions that ensure county HCPCFC funds to work with Child Welfare caseworkers and/or probation officers, to ensure children in foster care, or probation departments, receive all needed health care services. The PHNs funded under this agreement provide health care oversight of the physical, behavioral, dental, and developmental needs of children in foster care, including those in out-of-county and out-of-state placements.
- By the end of the second quarter of 2010, provide technical assistance to DHCS and to county CHDP programs to ensure that memoranda of understanding between the two agencies support PL 110-351; please see Appendix C.
  - ✓ Update: Technical assistance has been provided to county CHDP/HCPCFC in the development of the MOU, to ensure that the CHDP/HCPCFC supports PL 110-351, specifically CDSS:

- ✓ Participated in quarterly statewide and regional meetings of county CHDP executives and public health nurses.
- ✓ Collaborated with PHNs in the development of policies, to ensure all children in foster care are referred to health and mental health services appropriate to age and health status on a timely basis.
- ✓ Collaborated with PHNs to ensure that children placed out-of-county have access to health services appropriate to age and health status.

- By the end of the third quarter of 2010, provide technical assistance to county CHDP programs, child welfare agencies, and juvenile probation agencies to ensure that active memoranda of understanding are in place that support PL 110-351.
- By the end of the fourth quarter of 2010, establish with the DHCS a schedule for initial and follow-up health screenings that meet reasonable standards of medical practice.
- By the end of the second quarter of 2011, establish with the DHCS processes to ensure (a) health needs identified through initial and follow-up screenings are monitored and treated; (b) medical information will be updated by public health nurses and other health care professionals and appropriately shared; (c) continuity of health care services is ensured and; (d) a process of oversight of prescription medications is established. The process of oversight of prescription medication has been identified in the following format:
  - ✓ Within seven court days from receipt by the court of a completed request, the juvenile court judicial officer shall either approve or deny in writing a request for authorization for the administration of psychotropic medication to the child.
  - ✓ Only a juvenile court judicial officer shall have authority to make orders regarding the administration of psychotropic medications for a child in Foster Care.
  - ✓ Court authorization for the administration of psychotropic medication shall be based on a request from a physician, indicating the reasons for the request, a description of the child's diagnosis and behavior, the expected results of the medication, and a description of any side effects of the medication.
  - ✓ All medication information (including prescription and psychotropic) is required as part of the scope of work for all PHNs and entered into the Health Education Passport (HEP) for each child. There is variation across counties in where HEP information is recorded into CWS/CMS, but information on medication data come from health contact forms, health history forms, and information from the social workers, health care providers and substitute care providers.
  - ✓ W& I codes 16010 also outlines the health, mental health, and education information that is collected when a child is placed in foster care. The health information that is collected includes current prescribed medication, and health and mental health condition and medications. Other information collected includes the child's health, dental, and education providers, a record immunizations and allergies, known medical problems, past health problems and hospitalizations, a record of relevant health, mental health and education history, and any other relevant health, dental, mental health, information

concerning the child. Additionally, any court report or assessment must include a copy of the current health summary no later than 30 days after initial placement. The child protective agency must also provide the caretaker with the child's current health and education summary when a child enters into foster care.

- By the end of the first quarter of 2011, CDSS will submit legislative proposals to amend W&I code sections 16501.1 and 391. Section 16501.1 will be amended to include the requirement that, as part of the 90-day Transition Planning Process, the social worker or probation officer will provide the foster youth with information explaining his or her option to obtain a power of attorney for health care. Section 391 currently details the requirement that youth be provided with important documents upon reaching the age of majority while in foster care, such as a social security card and a birth certificate. The section will be amended to add the requirement that youth are provided the Advanced Health Directive form, which provides youth with the option to execute a power of attorney for healthcare.

  ✓ To implement the requirements of PL 111-148, CDSS issued an ACL in October 2010 advising counties of the new requirements effective October 1, 2010, provided counties with an updated 90-day Transition Plan form and a sample of an advanced health care directive.

  Appendix C contains a table that outlines the specific areas of PL 110-351 that are addressed by the state's Health Care Oversight and Coordination Plan.

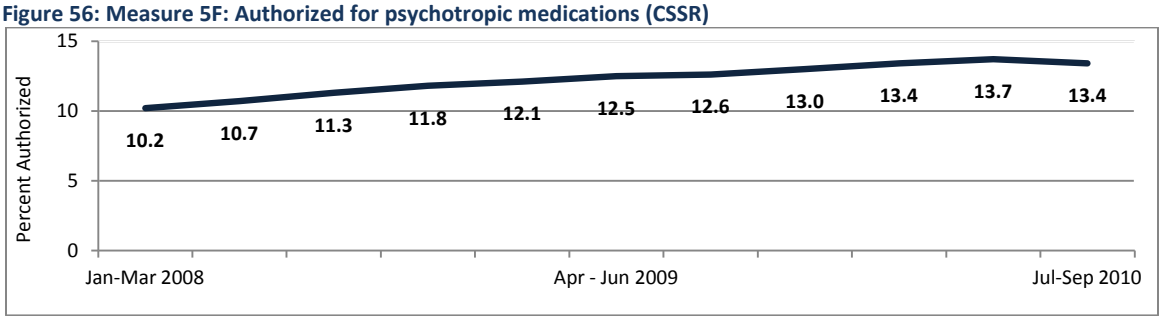
- Judicial approval is mandated by California law prior to the administration of *psychotropic medications* to children and youth in foster care. Existing California law established processes and protections in regards to the administration of psychotropic medications for dependents of the court. The Psychotropic Medication Protocol, also referred to as the JV220 process, initiates the court authorization of psychotropic medications for dependents of the court. Without agreement between the youth, the court and the physician, no child in foster care will be administered any psychotropic medication. Welfare Institutions Code 369.5 states that only a juvenile court judicial officer may make orders regarding administration, unless the court finds that the parent is capable of making the order. The authorization is based on a request from the child's doctor indicating the reasons for the request, a description of the child's diagnosis and behavior, and the expected results and side effects of the medication. County child welfare agencies must complete a request for authorization form within three business days of the receipt of the request from the physician, and the court must deny or approve the request within seven business days of receipt of the form.

  ✓ CDSS collaborates with the AOC and child psychiatrists to ensure that the necessary processes and protections are in place and current. California has also included a measure on psychotropic medication in its Outcomes and Accountability System.

  ✓ The following are the most recent statewide data on children and youth in foster care for whom judicial approval has been issued for administration of a psychotropic medication. Base on the data from CSSR, there has been a thirty percent increase in the authorization

of psychotropic medications over twelve quarters between 2008 and 2010 from 10.2 percent in Quarter One of 2008 to 13.4 percent in Quarter Four of 2010.

Figure 56: Measure 5F: Authorized for psychotropic medications (CSSR)



- *Substance Abuse/HIV Infant Programs:* The services and resources help ensure that early identification of issues/concern related to substance abuse and HIV are detected through extensive core curriculum training by professionals such as pediatricians, nutritionists, early childhood development specialists, drug and alcohol Recovery specialists, county health departments, and medical and social workers. Resource families gain knowledge, skills and support to better address the specialized care and needs of drug exposed, HIV positive and medically fragile children and their families. There are varied services and resources available in each county, such as infant screenings in Monterey; the use of standardized assessment in San Francisco; "Martha's Place," – a collaborative that ensures children's medical needs are identified quickly and resources identified— is available in San Luis Obispo. Shasta County has Parent Partners to address any issues and to work on building relationships with the foster parents and relative caregivers in their initial training and after placements are made. In Butte/Glenn Counties, an occupational therapist assesses and identifies special needs of children during the monthly playgroup, and communicates to the child's social worker for follow-up.

- *Katie A. Los Angeles County Strategic Plan* – The Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and Department of Mental Health are implementing their Strategic Plan to provide a single comprehensive system for the current and planned delivery of mental health services to children under the supervision and care of child welfare, as well as for those at-risk of entering the child welfare system. The Strategic Plan provides a detailed road map for the implementation/delivery of mental health services Countywide, in fulfillment of the objectives identified in the Katie A. Settlement Agreement, over a five-year period, and acts as the central reference for incorporating several planning efforts in this regard.

  Per the December 2010 quarterly report, the Los Angeles Katie A. Advisory Panel has been discussing the benefits of having a Core Practice Model (CPM), intensive mental health services for children in Foster Family Agencies and D-Rate homes, Quality Services Review, Treatment Foster Care, Wraparound Case Rate, and overall Strategic Plan implementation issues. Additional work completed includes redesigning the referral tracking system, developing procedures for consent and release of information of mental health services, technical assistance for mental health service delivery and training.

As directed by leadership, and consistent with the Los Angeles County's Katie A. Strategic Plan, the DCFS Coordinated Services Action Team (CSAT) mental health screening and referral policy was revised to reflect CSAT redesign process training targeted to address the specific needs of each of the 18 regional offices. In February of 2011, DMH sponsored a one-day Countywide CPM training focusing on key mental health interventions, including Trauma Informed Practice, Engagement, and Strengths/Needs-Based mental health assessments. In addition, the California Institute of Mental Health will provide four half-day training sessions and ongoing phone consultation in each SPA for DMH co-located staff and community providers supported by coaching and case consultation. Additional information on the Los Angeles Katie A. settlement agreement and strategic plan, county monthly and quarterly reports can be viewed at http://dcfs.co.la.ca.us/katieA/index.html.

- *Access to Mental Health Treatment Services for Foster Youth Placed Out-of-County* - In spite of progress made through SB 785, barriers remain to ensuring appropriate mental health services for children placed out-of-county.

  SB 785 modified the authorization for payment and service delivery process for accessing out- of-county mental health services for adopted children and children placed with relatives. Prior to SB 785, families, social workers, counties and providers faced challenges with getting mental health services authorized timely for these placement types and the authorization remained with the jurisdiction county. With SB 785, the transfer of authorization, payment, and delivery of services were moved to the county of residence, and thereby reducing vulnerability to placement instability. The Child Welfare Council's charge is to expand SB 785 to all foster youth placed out of county and improve upon the SB 785 administrative processes, i.e., the completion of various forms, when to contact the DHCS, the preparation of informing materials, that were not fully implemented for SB 785.

  Prior to the Agency Secretary Kim Belshé's departure in December 2010, she grounded the direction of the CWC by instructing the workgroups to proceed with a sense that "time is of the essence." Three subcommittees have been working diligently to move to action various aspects of the proposals presented to the CWC. The three subcommittees are Local Plans, Fiscal and Data/ Quality Assurance. The Action Plan can be viewed on the CWC website www.chhs.ca.gov. Each subcommittee has a State Department Lead and is comprised of participants from mental health, social services and health care services, representatives from the various associations, parents, youth, providers, and child welfare council members. At the Child Welfare Council meeting held December 9, 2010 several key factors were articulated for the subcommittees to consider as the work progressed on this issue as follows:

  - The issue of presumptive transfer of the authorization for payment, service delivery, etc should be determined.
  - Screening, assessment and case management is implicit but should be closely aligned within both systems (DMH and DSS).
  - Mental Health and Social Services at the State and local level should continue to increase the collaborative relationships which will greatly benefit children.

- Consider how provider capacity impacts the ability to meet the needs and how that capacity is resourced.
- Determine a method to track the access to services and be able to have accountability for the results.

There has been significant progress on this very important issue which is moving in the right direction as a result of the leadership and strong demonstrated commitment from the CWC, key State participants and county stakeholders. The CWC is key stakeholder collaborative vehicle that is largely responsible for the advancement of several initiatives related to foster children.

STRATEGIES AND PLANS FOR 2012

- *Katie A* - Currently CDSS, the California Department of Mental Health and the Department of Health Care Services has advanced a *Katie A*., settlement agreement which is awaiting the resolution of one final item before April 25, 2011 when the final details must be presented to the court. This settlement will benchmark the beginning of improved mental health services for foster children since the Katie A. lawsuit began in 2001-2002. Once the settlement is approved, beginning FY 2011-12, the departments begin the planning implementation pursuant to the terms of the settlement barring no setbacks.
- *The multidimensional/intensive treatment foster care (MTFC/ITFC)* is an intensive treatment program for youth with severe emotional and behavioral disorders. The goals of both MTFC and ITFC are to: 1) Create opportunities for youth to successfully live in families rather than group or institutional settings, and 2) Simultaneously prepare their parents (or other caregivers, prospective adoptive parents or guardians) to provide youth with effective parenting. Participation in the program is most appropriate when in-home family preservation programs have been tried, children have had multiple placement disruptions, or when youth are returning from highly restrictive institutional group care placements.

  MTFC/ITFC foster parents receive intensive training and on-going support, and are provided with all information known so that they are fully informed about the child's history and can make an informed decision about accepting the child into their home. The program supervisor and foster parent develop the child's individualized daily program.

  MTFC has been examined for effectiveness on many outcomes including: behavioral and mental health problems (e.g., CFSR item 17, well-being outcome two), placement disruptions (e.g., CFSR item six), and foster parent retention and satisfaction.

  Effective January 1, 2009, SB 1380 (Chapter 486, Statutes of 2008) updated and expanded the ITFC Program to allow funding for MTFC in lieu of ITFC.

  Currently, 23 sites in California are MTFC certified or receiving implementation services.

  The first ITFC/MTFC workgroup meeting was held on November 10, 2010. The workgroup consists of CDSS Rates Policy, Rates, Audits, Estimates, Fiscal Policy, Youth Permanency, and Eligibility staff. Externally, the workgroup consists of CWDA representatives, several

Executive Directors of FFAs, multiple county representatives and representatives from the California Alliance of Child and Family Services.

The workgroup has met monthly for approximately three hours each meeting. The workgroup collaboratively developed a survey tool to identify ITFC/MTFC staff, activities, responsibilities, and the time allocated to each. The survey has gone through several developmental stages at each meeting to ensure the correct information has been captured and correctly identifies the ITFC/MTFC programs and program requirements.

The workgroup has also listed and discussed barriers to implementing ITFC/MTFC programs; and, has discussed reviewing current reporting forms and determining what changes, if any need to be made.

The primary objective of the workgroup is to identify the appropriate program information to determine the correct federal financial participation to maximize federal participation for both the ITFC and the MTFC programs.

INDIAN CHILD WELFARE ACT

Native American Children in Child Welfare through FY 2009-10

In an environment where fiscal and human resources are severely strained, California remains committed to ensuring continued progress in improving child welfare work with Native American populations, including continuing efforts toward increased ICWA compliance. This chapter describes the levels of tribal consultation, the structure in place to ensure ICWA complaint child welfare practices and the current activities and future plans within the state that impact child welfare work with Native American youth and families.

The disparity of Native American children in care under the supervision of Child Welfare agencies is a continuing problem. Current data from CWS/CMS indicate a prevalence rate of 16.6 per 1,000 children, as compared to 5.5 for the total Child Welfare population. In FY 2007-08, 1.2 percent of entries into care were American Indian children (n = 379); while the number of American Indian children has decreased over time, from 379 in 2008 to 340 in 2010, the proportion has remained stable at 1.2 percent of the total child welfare population over the three-year period.

Figure 57: Percent of Entries within Indian/NA Children (CSSR)

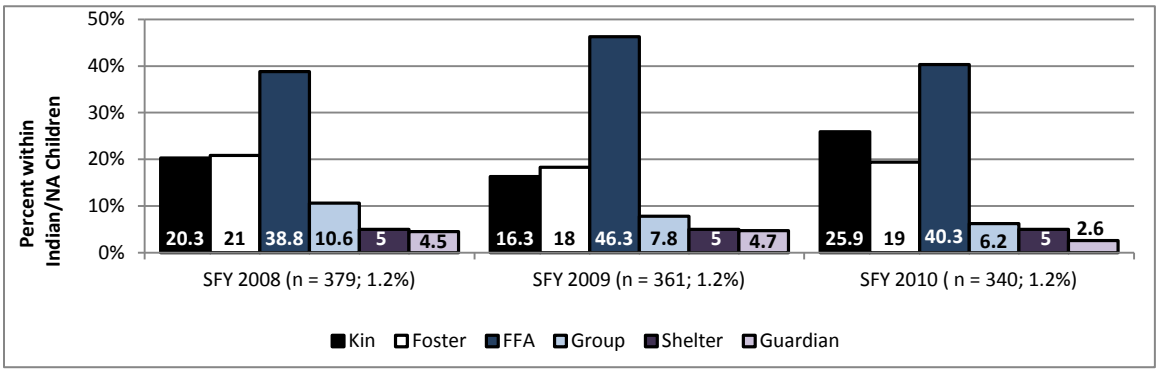
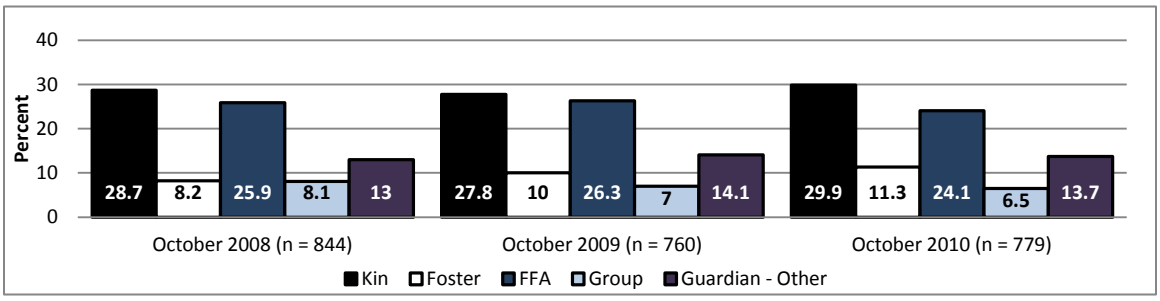


Figure 58: Point in Time Placements of Native American Children (CSSR)



The figure above includes all children who have an open placement episode in the CWS/CMS on October 1 for 2008 through 2010. Consistent with the general population of children in child welfare, the greatest proportion of Native American children are in kin placements, with the second greatest proportion in FFA placements, with the proportion of kin placements increasing over time, from 28.7 percent in 2008 to 29.9 percent in 2010. On the other hand, FFA placements have decreased overall from 25.9 percent to 24.1 percent in the same period.

These data illustrate that the state is appropriately prioritizing kin placements above all other placements options.

Obtaining accurate data for Indian children continues to be a challenge, as children who are identified in CWS/CMS as having multiple ethnicities may not necessarily be identified by the CWS/CMS system as being Native American. This data reporting situation becomes more evident when the status of Native American is not reported for ethnicity when the youth is reported as ICWA-eligible or when tribal affiliation may be indicated. Data improvements such as the issue of distinction and possible incongruence between Native American ethnicity, tribal membership status, and ICWA eligibility status will be among the many areas for future plans for improvement. Specifically, the data issue is currently being further explored through efforts related to California Partners for Permanency, the federal grant to reduce long-term foster care.

Consultation process with American Indian Tribes

In California, the consultation process with American Indian Tribes involves engagement at the state and at the county level. The following information provides a description of consultation built into the county review process as well as consultation through a state workgroup and, more broadly, through an interagency agreement with the AOC.

CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION WITH TRIBES AT THE COUNTY LEVEL

Statewide structure regarding county efforts for consultation and coordination with tribes is provided through the county guides for the C-CFSR processes as well as ACINs and ACLs issued by CDSS. Additionally, CDSS is in-process of updating the Division 31 Regulations to include the elements of ICWA more prominently throughout the regulations. The CSA guide (found at http://www.childsworld.ca.gov/res/pdf/CSAGuide.pdf) provides specific directions for considering the county's policies, procedures, and/or systems soliciting tribal input and for incorporating their input into decisions or recommendations. The CSA guide further structures responses regarding the extent to which the county consults and coordinates with local tribes in child welfare planning efforts including shared expectations, responsibilities, the exchange of information, aligning of activities, sharing of resources, and enhancing the capacity of all involved. Additionally, the CSA process requires counties to provide analysis regarding lessons learned during the CSA focus groups, interviews, and/or consultations with county partners and others about the county's effectiveness in involving local tribes in county planning efforts and service provision.

The CDSS is in the process of collecting information regarding the existence and status of MOUs between county child welfare agencies and tribes regarding the coordination of responses and services. Such information will be provided in future reporting.

CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION WITH TRIBES THROUGH THE ICWA WORKGROUP

The CDSS continues to collaborate with self-identified representatives of the 106 currently federally recognized tribes in California, as well as the approximately 69 tribes that are not currently recognized. As described in this section, the state-level collaboration around the

identification and resolution of ICWA-related issues is primarily accomplished through work of the ICWA Workgroup and its various subcommittees.

For example, through the Workgroup and the various subcommittees, input has been provided to CDSS on the development of policy for the implementation of Assembly Bill 1325 regarding tribal customary adoptions, on the drafting of guidelines to counties regarding the use of expert witnesses, on the development of training for social workers, in implementing AB 12 regarding extending the age of eligibility for foster care and Assembly Bill 2418 regarding broadening the definition of Indian child as it relates to the application of ICWA, and on the drafting of regulations and ongoing curriculum improvements.

The CDSS continues to strive for improving and increasing tribal community consultation and collaboration. As part of this effort, CDSS plans to broaden participation in the existing ICWA Workgroup and, obtain assistance for further structuring and defining the ICWA Workgroup. A request for federal technical assistance in this endeavor is underway.

COORDINATION WITH TRIBES THROUGH THE AOC TRIBAL COURT/STATE COURT FORUM

Another ongoing collaboration exists with the interagency agreement between CDSS and the AOC. Consultation with tribes occurs through partnership with the AOC through the Tribal Court/State Court Forum (Forum). The forum consists of a coalition of various state and tribal courts in California who partner in order to address common issues relating to recognition and enforcement of court orders that cross jurisdictional lines, the determination of jurisdiction for cases that might appear in either court system, and the sharing of services between jurisdictions. The forum is convened for the express purpose of improving the working relationship between its members and enabling the courts of each to issue and enforce their respective orders to the fullest extent allowed by law. Details of the ICWA-related work accomplished by this forum are further described in the Current Activities section (page 154) of this document.

CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION WITH TRIBES THAT HAVE TITLE IV-B PLANS

Coordination with tribes specifically regarding their Title IV-B plans currently is accomplished by electronic exchange of the APSR. The current report was sent in June 2011 to representatives of the five tribes who submitted an approved Title IV-B plan for FFY 2010, including Karuk Tribe of California, Smith River Tribe, Tule River Tribal Council, Yurok Tribe, and Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California. The CDSS conducted additional consultation and coordination efforts by notifying the broader ICWA Workgroup in early 2011 that the APSR would be updated and requested feedback for the reporting period, including any feedback from the 2010 APSR. Copies of the 2010 APSR and the 2010-2014 CFSP were provided via e-mail to the group on February 10, 2011. The working draft documents and requests for feedback were again explained at an ICWA Workgroup meeting on March 8, 2011, and May 10, 2011, and a draft of the 2011 APSR was e-mailed to the ICWA Workgroup participants on May 3 and 25, 2011. Feedback was encouraged and incorporated throughout the process of developing the current report. The CDSS received feedback on June 1, 2011 and to the extent possible, revisions and comments are addressed and incorporated throughout this document. Specifically, as a result of tribal engagement with the APSR process, CDSS has learned that utilizing the ICWA

workgroup as the process for engaging and soliciting tribal feedback is not appropriate in all occasions. As such, California is committed to establishing an improved process for broader outreach to all 106 federally recognized tribes; please refer to page 17 for further details.

CALIFORNIA'S EFFORTS TO COMPLY WITH COMPONENTS OF ICWA

The narrative that follows describes California's efforts to comply with specific components of ICWA:

- ✓ **Notification** of Indian parents and Tribes of Notification of Indian parents and Tribes of State proceedings involving Indian children and their right to intervene;
- ✓ **Placement preferences** of Indian children in foster care, pre-adoptive, and adoptive homes;
- ✓ **Active efforts** to prevent the breakup of the Indian family when parties seek to place a child in foster care or for adoption; and
- ✓ **Tribal right to intervene** in State proceedings, or transfer proceedings to the jurisdiction of the Tribe.

Notification of Indian parents and Tribes of State proceedings involving Indian children and their right to intervene

Statewide structure for ICWA-compliant child welfare practices, specifically regarding compliance with notification of Indian parents and tribes of state proceedings involving Indian children and the right to intervene, can be found through the county guides for the C-CFSR processes as well as ACINs and ACLs issued by CDSS. Additionally, CDSS is in-process of updating the Division 31 Regulations to include the elements of ICWA more prominently throughout. The CSA guide (found at http://www.childsworld.ca.gov/res/pdf/CSAGuide.pdf) provides specific directions for considering the county's policies, procedures, and/or systems for notifying caregivers/tribes of hearings and soliciting caregiver/tribal input and for incorporating their input into decisions or recommendations.

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

While data, and therefore progress, regarding noticing to parents and tribes involving ICWA-eligible children and the right to intervene is difficult to capture in the current CWS/CMS system, the data collected on ICWA-related dependency appeals indicates a decrease for 2010. In order to have data to measure performance in ICWA compliance, a request was made to AOC to review cases for the past several years as a starting point to determine how many child welfare cases were contested and how many of those cases had ICWA issues. It is hoped that these data can be used to help measure the effectiveness of the training and technical assistance on ICWA that have been provided to the courts

Based on the information gathered by the AOC, statewide ICWA-related dependency appeals accounted for **22.2 percent** of all dependency appeals for 2008, **15.2 percent** of dependency appeals for 2009 and **13.3 percent** of dependency appeals for 2010, representing a **40 percent decline** over three years.

FACTORS AFFECTING PROGRESS

Factors affecting this progress likely include the resources dedicated to training child welfare program staff and court staff on ICWA, and specifically ICWA noticing requirements. This training aims to increase knowledge and compliance regarding ICWA requirements, including noticing. The decline in appeals is aligned with the time-frame in which AOC began providing training on the subject and may have positively impacted the appeals numbers.

The CDSS has worked to improve ICWA compliance through the provision of training, technical assistance, the issuance of policy directives on such topics as noticing and the right to intervene in juvenile court proceedings. In 2010, CDSS funded 19 in-person trainings, for a total of 557 attendees, on ICWA through a contract with the AOC. In addition, online self-paced trainings on both fundamental and advanced level ICWA issues have been made available since 2008. The CDSS provides other standard and advanced ICWA-related trainings specifically for child welfare social workers through the Core Curriculum training for newly hired social workers.

FUTURE PLANS

Future plans include continuing tracking of ICWA-related dependency appeals and continuing the availability of trainings through the contract with AOC. Additionally, the release of a new standardized statewide ICWA curriculum for basic, advanced, and culturally-focused trainings along with a toolkit option for counties to use as a guide in improving child welfare work with Native American populations will assist with efforts to increase ICWA compliance. Future plans will also include a tool for improving ICWA-related data entry at the county level and minor improvements to the data fields in CWS/CMS in order to increase accuracy of ICWA-related data. The CDSS will continue collaborative efforts to identify and implement strategies for improving ICWA compliance, such as the collaborative efforts made with the development of these curricula and the toolkit with the state ICWA workgroup, participating counties, Tribal STAR, the American Indian Enhancement efforts and broader philanthropy as well as continual data analysis and discussions and strategies to improve the accuracy of CWS/CMS data.

Placement Preferences of Indian Children in foster care, pre-adoptive, and adoptive homes

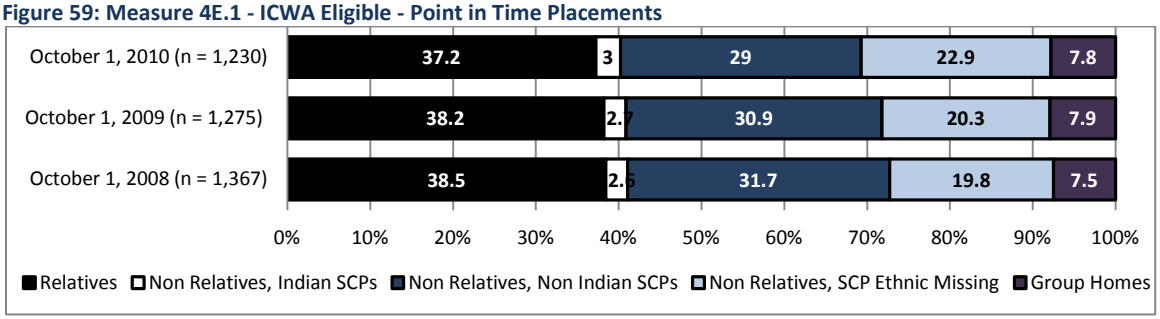
INDICATORS OF PROGRESS/FACTORS AFFECTING PROGRESS

Current CWS/CMS data indicates that, overall, the largest percentage, 40 percent, of placements for ICWA eligible youth in foster care have been made with relatives. This is consistent with the first order of placement preference priority, as required by ICWA. However, the next most common placement indicated by the data shown in the figure below is approximately 30 percent placed with non-relative, non-Indian substitute care providers. The ICWA provides for a foster home licensed or approved or specified by the Indian child's tribe as the second placement preference. The current available data does not distinguish if these placements are licensed, approved, or specified by the child's tribe.

As mentioned in prior reports, anecdotal information from the local level suggests that some of the reason for such a significant percentage of youth placed in non-Indian, non-related homes is due to the lack of Indian foster homes, although some ICWA workers/advocates note they have experienced difficulties in having county social workers place in tribally approved homes.

Although CDSS has previously issued ACLs to provide policy direction of this issue, it continues to be a topic for discussion.

Figure 59: Measure 4E.1 - ICWA Eligible - Point in Time Placements



** Beginning Quarter 1, 2009, a point in time (PIT) count is a count of children in care at the end of the quarter. In the past, all children served during the quarter were counted. This change results in a smaller number of children in the count, and some shift in proportions.

The figure above illustrates the point in time placement status of ICWA eligible youth in the years 2008 through 2010. Placement status takes placement type, child relationship to substitute care provider, and substitute care provider ethnicity into account. The resulting placement status categories are placements with relatives; with non-relative, Indian substitute care providers; with non-relative, non-Indian substitute care providers; with non-relative substitute care providers with ethnicity missing in CWS/CMS; in group homes (ethnicity cannot be determined); and in other placements.

The data are limited in the ability to distinguish placements in a manner consistent with the precise breakdown of preferences required under the ICWA. Additionally, the data does not provide any indication for situations when a tribe may agree with a placement that is other than the first preference, which would still be ICWA-compliant. The CDSS continues to address issues concerning ICWA-related data. Some minor changes are in process for improving ICWA data within the CWS/CMS system; while other issues will be addressed in future years with the web-based SACWIS system design.

Another factor that may impact future placement data for ICWA-eligible youth in foster care is Assembly Bill 1325. This recent law passed in 2009 to allow for Tribal Customary Adoptions and AAP eligibility. Under this law, youth can be adopted and qualify for adoption assistance funding and services without termination of parental rights. This new permanency option is an effort to meet the permanency needs of dependent Indian children in a manner consistent with tribal culture. The CDSS issued ACL 10-17 in March 2010 and ACL 10-47 in October 2010 as direction on Tribal Customary Adoption as a new permanency option for child welfare cases. Additionally, CDSS provided three technical assistance workshops on Tribal Customary Adoptions throughout the state on August 11, 2010, August 23, 2010, and September 9, 2010.

As training and technical assistance on Tribal Customary Adoption continues, it is anticipated that this may be utilized as a permanency and concurrent planning option for relatives in situations that might otherwise not be supported or viable options. As such, the placement preference data for ICWA-eligible youth will be tracked for future analysis and reporting.

FUTURE PLANS

Future plans regarding increasing ICWA compliance in placement preference, include revisions to the MPP Division 31 for ICWA and continuing the training, technical assistance and creation of desk aids for ICWA placement preferences, and the issuance of data entry instructions. The ICWA Unit typically responds to multiple technical assistance inquiries regarding placement preference each month. With plans for the creation and use of a new database in the next year, the ICWA Unit will have additional data for use in analysis.

Active efforts to prevent the breakup of the Indian family when parties seek to place a child in foster care or for adoption

INDICATORS OF PROGRESS/LIMITATIONS

Analysis regarding compliance with Active Efforts requirements in the ICWA is limited by the fact that such information is documented in case files and court orders and not captured in CWS/CMS data. Analysis of ICWA-related appeals issues in dependency appeals cases provides some information since appeals can be filed regarding the failure to comply with the Active Efforts requirements. Based on the decline in ICWA-related dependency appeals issues since 2008 (13.3 percent in 2010, down from 15.2 percent in 2009 and 22.2 percent in 2008), it appears that the increased training, technical assistance and resources regarding Active Efforts raised awareness and compliance.

FACTORS AFFECTING PROGRESS

Factors impacting progress may include many of the variety of continuing efforts previously explained, such as the training and technical assistance provided through CDSS, the statewide training for social workers, and through the AOC. Additionally, the clearinghouse of resources, desk aids/tools for ICWA topics provided through the AOC Tribal Unit have been useful for translating the training into improved practice.

The CDSS continues involvement and support of the Family Development Matrix, which provides a structure for documenting prevention and early intervention services, tracking progress and outcomes for such services. Some tribes and tribal services providers have begun using this tool, which can be used to assist in providing Active Efforts for Native American families. This project has been presented to the tribal community through the ICWA Workgroup and is in the process of adapting the program according to tribal community needs and preferences. As the cultural adaptations are made to this tool, additional service providers may implement use.

FUTURE PLANS

The CDSS will continue work to improve ICWA compliance on Active Efforts through the provision of training and technical assistance for both child welfare and court staff, the issuance of policy directives, improving standardized curriculum, creation of desk aids. The CDSS will continue involvement in the Family Development Matrix work, with plans to support use for tribes and tribal service providers. In addition, CDSS plans to work closely with tribal communities on the federal grant to reduce long-term foster care, CAPP, which will relate to

improving Active Efforts within a practice model for child welfare. Additional plans for tribal collaboration were previously discussed on page 17 under Stakeholder Collaboration.

Current Activities

CDSS in involved in an array of ICWA- and tribal-related efforts on levels ranging from local to state and federal. These activities are described through the report. In addition, CDSS ICWA Unit is involved in the following list of activities and collaborations:

TITLE IV-E AGREEMENTS- KARUK & YUROK

CDSS is continuing to facilitate the negotiations of tribal/state Title IV-E agreements which will allow for the pass-through of Title IV-E funds to California tribes. These funds will provide tribes with foster care funding for Indian children. Further, CDSS will continue to assist tribes as necessary and as requested, to access direct funding through the PL 110-351, the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions bill.

Tribes determine what programs they want to offer under a tribal/state Title IV-E agreement. These include programs such as Chafee, educational vouchers, etc. Once the tribe has an idea of what services they are interested in offering, then the planning of an agreement begins.

On March 14, 2007, CDSS and the Karuk Tribe of California signed the first ever tribal-state agreement in California. The CDSS staff continues to provide training and technical assistance to staff of the Karuk Tribe for the implementation of the agreement. The CDSS and the Karuk Tribe secured technical assistance through ACF and the National Resource Center for Organizational Improvement to provide assistance to the Karuk tribe in the development of the tribe's CWS Plan. The Tribe's CWS Plan was approved by ACF on November 6, 2009, and was effective July 1, 2009. The CDSS has provided the Karuk Tribe with ongoing training on fiscal claiming procedures, Title IV-E eligibility screening and data reporting requirements. The CDSS continues to provide training and technical assistance regarding child welfare practice to ensure Title IV-E compliance.

The Yurok Tribe initiated negotiations of a Tribal/State Title IV-E Agreement in August 2007. The agreement was signed effective May 28, 2010. The tribe continues efforts to now develop its child welfare services plan and when completed, it will be submitted to ACF for approval. As they move closer to implementing the agreement, CDSS will be providing the Yurok Tribe with training on fiscal claiming procedures, Title IV-E eligibility screening and data reporting requirements among other topics.

With the passage of PL 110-351, tribes, the consortium of tribes and other tribal organizations seek to operate their own Title IV-E foster care and adoption program directly with the federal government. Tribal entities generally are awaiting more detailed information on the federal agreements, as they consider whether to pursue a Title IV-E agreement with the state or with the federal government. The Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California and the Yurok Tribe and California were both awarded a federal planning grant to prepare to negotiate a federal/Tribal agreement and the Tribe has been offered technical assistance from CDSS as they move towards an agreement.

ICWA INITIATIVE WITH AOC TRIBAL PROJECTS UNIT

Effective December 2005, CDSS entered into an interagency agreement with the AOC to create the ICWA Initiative. The successful partnership between CDSS and the AOC, through the ICWA Initiative, was effective from 2007 through 2010, and was renewed for another three years beginning in 2010/2011.

The AOC has established, as part of the Center for Families Children & the Courts, a Tribal Projects Unit. The purpose of this unit is to serve as liaison and to assist the judicial branch with the development of policies, positions, and programs to ensure the highest quality of justice and service for California's Native American communities in all cases, with a focus on cases relating to the and domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking. These projects are supported with funds from the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice that are administered through the California Emergency Management Agency (CalEMA), the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Court Improvement Program, and CDSS.

The Tribal Projects' activities include maintaining a clearinghouse of resources, staffing the Tribal Court / State Court Forum, providing Indian Child Welfare Act services, and curriculum development.

CLEARINGHOUSE OF RESOURCES

The AOC continues to maintain a clearinghouse of resources that includes: 1) AOC educational events for tribal and state court; 2) Services to support tribal justice development, including a listing of tribal justice grant opportunities; 3) a directory of Native American family resources in California; 4) Information on California tribal courts and California tribal communities; and 5) Resources relating to compliance with ICWA in juvenile, family, and probate cases. Please visit our new Tribal Projects Unit website link at: http://www.courts.ca.gov/programs-tribal.htm.

Tribal court judges can access legal, education and other resources available to state court judges through the "Serranus" website maintained by the AOC. In addition, tribal advocates, tribal attorneys, and other tribal personnel whose work is related to child welfare matters have access to all of the legal, educational, and other resources available on the California Dependency Online Guide at http://168.75.202.29/.

To support tribal justice system development in California, the AOC maintains a list of grants, provides letters of support to tribes, assists with tribal grant applications for the Consolidated Tribal Assistance Solicitation, and has assisted a number of tribal courts in adapting the California Judicial Council's court forms for use in their tribal courts.

TRIBAL COURT / STATE COURT FORUM (FORUM)

The Forum is a coalition of the various Tribal Courts of the Native American Tribes situated in California and the Courts of the State of California who come together as equal partners to address issues common to both relating to the recognition and enforcement of court orders that cross jurisdictional lines, the determination of jurisdiction for cases that might appear in either court system, and the sharing of services between jurisdictions. The forum is convened for the express purpose of improving the working relationship between its members and

enabling the courts of each to issue and enforce their respective orders to the fullest extent allowed by law.

The members of the forum include 11 tribal court judges, representing 13 of the 20 tribal courts currently operating in California, as well as 13 state court judges and a representative from the California Attorney General's Office of Native American Affairs. To date, the forum has looked at issues such as the enforcement and recognition of protective and other kinds of orders and judgments, jurisdictional issues, and how to ensure access to justice in Indian country in the areas of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and teen-dating violence.

Since its establishment in May 2010, the Forum has met three times in person (June 13, 2010, January 13, 2011, and June 17, 2011) and regularly by conference call. Please visit the following website to view the forum's roster, charge and scope of work, values and principles, communication plan, and meeting notes http://www.courts.ca.gov/3065.htm. Through the Forum, the California Judicial Council's advisory committees and working in collaboration with justice partners, the AOC has assisted with several projects related to recommended revisions to rules and forms and recommended legislative proposals. These projects are further described in the Stakeholder Collaboration Section of this report.

Indian Child Welfare Act services

The AOC continues to work with courts and agencies to comply with ICWA by providing education, technical assistance, and resources statewide. Educational offerings include regional trainings and local collaborative workshops addressing the following topics:

- ✓ When ICWA applies
- ✓ Exclusive versus concurrent jurisdiction
- ✓ Determination of tribal membership or eligibility for membership
- ✓ Notice to tribes
- ✓ Tribal participation and intervention
- ✓ Active efforts, including culturally appropriate services
- ✓ Cultural case planning
- ✓ Placement preferences
- ✓ Qualified expert witnesses

During the reporting period, the AOC provided local and regional trainings as follows:

- On August 23, 2010 and September 9, 2010, participated in the Tribal Customary Adoption technical assistance workshops that were hosted by CDSS;
- On August 31, 2010, conducted an ICWA training with a tribal customary adoption component for Marin County;
- On September 1, 2010, conducted an ICWA training for probation officers for Mendocino County probation officers;
- On September 14, 2010, conducted training on ICWA including discussion of tribal customary adoption in Tehama County (Red Bluff) for social services, court staff and attorneys;

- On September 28, 2010, conducted training on ICWA including discussion of tribal customary adoption in Siskiyou County (Yreka) for social services, court staff, judicial officers, attorneys and tribal representatives;
- On September 30, 2010, provided a webinar training on Public Law 280 and jurisdiction in Indian Country for judicial officer members of the tribal court / state court forum; and
- On November 3, 2010, conducted training on ICWA including tribal customary adoption in San Benito County for court staff, social services, and probation.
- On December 1, 2010, conducted training in Plumas County on ICWA with a focus on active efforts and tribal customary adoption;
- On November 23, 2010 and December 7, 2010, participated in two events/trainings organized by the Bay Area Collaborative of American Indian Resources in San Francisco and Oakland and provided information on ICWA and tribal customary adoption;
- On January 31, 2011, conducted training at Friendship House in San Francisco;
- On February 16, 2011, conducted training at the Indian Health Services in Oakland;
- On April 5, 2011, conducted training in Mendocino County on tribal customary adoption;
- On April 11, 2011, conducted training for law enforcement officers in Glenn County;
- On April 14, 2011, conducted training for dependency mediators at the 2011 Family Dispute Resolution (FDR) Statewide Educational Institute in Los Angeles;
- On April 17 – 20, 2011, conducted two workshops at the National Indian Child Welfare Association conference in Anchorage Alaska;
- On June 8 – 10, 2011, conducted one workshop at the annual statewide self-represented litigants conference in San Francisco; and
- On June 27-29, 2011, conducted one workshop at the annual Statewide ICWA Conference hosted this year by the Santa Rosa Rancheria in Lemoore California.

During the reporting period, the AOC continues to provide the ongoing technical assistance to judges, social workers, probation officers, attorneys, and others seeking information on ICWA, and tribal customary adoption or assistance drafting or reviewing local protocols or advice on obtaining qualified expert witnesses.

During the reporting period, the AOC continues to maintain and update it comprehensive ICWA resources.

- *Resources* can be found at: http://www.courts.ca.gov/3067.htm where the following are available: 1) Expert Witness List; 2) ICWA laws, rules, regulations; 3) Statewide Directory of Services for Native American Families (continually updated); and 4) ICWA job aids.
- The California Dependency Online Guide can be accessed at the court information website at courtinfo.ca.gov/dependencyonlineguide or at the following link: http://168.75.202.29/.

- The new *Tribal Customary Adoption* web page is available at http://www.courts.ca.gov/12569.htm. The page links to existing resources on CDSS and Tribal STAR websites. It also contains the legislation itself, the Judicial Council rules and forms, and frequently asked questions addressing legal issues and court processes. The AOC is also working with CDSS and the Statewide ICWA workgroup to develop a plan for collecting case-specific information to assist with the drafting of the legislative report on tribal customary adoption due to the Legislature in 2013.

Curriculum development

The AOC has developed the following curricula and updated our ICWA curriculum contained in the California Dependency Quick guide:

- Civil and criminal jurisdiction in a Public Law 280 State for state court judges. This curriculum has been used to teach workshops at Beyond the Bench, the Cow County Rural Judges Institute, and a Forum webinar.
- Advanced ICWA for state court judges, attorneys, social workers, probation officers on: 1) Active efforts; 2) Jurisdiction and procedural issues; 3) Evidentiary issues; and 4) Preserving issues on appeal.
- Tribal Advocacy curriculum: in collaboration with the Kene Me-Wu Family Healing Center, Inc., developed curriculum for tribal advocates on the subject of family violence and how to navigate the state court system. The curriculum will be piloted at the Statewide ICWA Conference in June 2011.
- The AOC has provided updates to the California Dependency Quick guide – a resource for dependency attorneys – to put more emphasis on the obligations of parent's and minor's attorneys to ensure ICWA compliance.

Training & Curriculum Development & Toolkit

Training, curriculum development and development of the ICWA Toolkit were described in previous sections of this report.

CDSS Technical Assistance

Along with the technical assistance provided through the interagency agreement with the AOC, CDSS ICWA Unit provides ongoing technical assistance. The unit staff respond to daily inquiries relating to various ICWA topics. The unit responds to and/or directs the inquiries to the appropriate contacts and resources as needed. Technical assistance is provided on a broad range of ICWA-related topics, including but not limited to the following:

- ICWA forms and processes
- Tribal Resources
- Tribal advocate resources
- American Indian Heritage searches
- Adoption records/Adult Adoptee Questions
- Background check issues
- Tribally approved placements
- Placement Preferences
- Disagreements with county recommendations/social worker practices
- Referrals to the State Ombudsman's Office
- Tribes' access to court documents in child welfare proceedings

- Pre-adoption birth certificates (for proving tribal heritage)/Right to Records
- Tribal Customary Adoption
- Voluntary Placement
- Relinquishment
- Paternity
- Non-Federally Recognized Tribes
- Trainings
- Foster and Adoptive Placement Resources
- Requests for assistance/education re: ICWA and guardianships/adoptions
- Out of State Placements
- Canadian and Mexican Tribes
- Noticing Issues
- Probation Issues

ANNUAL STATE ICWA CONFERENCE

The CDSS continues to support the Annual State ICWA Conference hosted by a volunteer tribe or group of tribes. The venue alternates between northern, central and southern California, and is sponsored and organized by a host tribe in the selected area. The conference is conducted over two and one-half days and is attended by approximately 200 individuals consisting of state, tribal and county representatives and professionals from child welfare and child maltreatment prevention programs and agencies, law enforcement, judiciary, and foster/adoption agencies.

The 18th annual conference is scheduled for June 27-29, 2011 in Lemoore, California and is hosted by the Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi-Yokut Tribe. Further information regarding the Annual State ICWA Conference is available in the Stakeholder Collaboration section of this report.

DIVISION 31 REGULATION CHANGES TO INCORPORATE SB 678 INTO REGULATIONS

A subcommittee was established to review draft regulations to implement the provisions of SB 678 (statutes of 2006, chapter 838), effective January 1, 2007. The bill codified federal ICWA (25 U.S.C. § 1901 et seq.) by adding amendments to the Family Code, Probate Code, and Welfare and Institutions Code. CDSS is working to draft regulations to implement the provisions of Senate Bill 678 into the MPP Division 31. A number of meetings were held to review the proposed regulations and input was received from tribal representatives and CDSS staff. The revised regulation package continues to be refined as it is processed through the review process. The regulations process includes a public review period as well as a public hearing so that there is ample opportunity for input before the regulations are adopted.

FAMILY DEVELOPMENT MATRIX

The Family Development Matrix (FDM) provides an integrated family assessment tool for case management and outcomes evaluation in family service networks and ICWA tribal programs in California. Its primary purpose is to provide family support staff in tribal and non-profit agencies with the capacity to use the assessment and analysis of family outcome measurement data to set goals with families, record agency interventions, track worker case management, and family participation activities that contribute to improving family outcomes.

The FDM has been implemented in tribal organizations in three counties: Lake, Mendocino, and Sonoma Counties. In Lake County, five tribes have been trained on the use of FDM: Robinson Rancheria, the Scotts Valley Band of Pomo Indians, the Habematolel Pomo of Upper

Lake, Big Valley Rancheria, the Elem Pomo Colony Tribe, and Middletown Rancheria. Three of the tribes are currently using the program. Lake County included the tribes in implementing their DR system in 2007 and it was a natural progression to invite the tribes to be trained and use the FDM. The tribes and the family resource agencies (Lake Family Resource Center and Healthy Start) meet monthly to discuss the implementation of DR and FDM, integration of services, and strategies for working with families.

The FDM has also been implemented in the Indian Child and Family Preservation Program, which serves families in Mendocino and Sonoma Counties. The Indian Child and Family Preservation Program serves children and families from the Dry Creek Rancheria, Coyote Valley Tribe, and Stewarts Point Rancheria. The FDM is currently being adopted for Native American cultural considerations.

Future Plans

In addition to the future plans aforementioned in relation to efforts to improve specific elements in ICWA compliance, CDSS, generally, plans to continue partnerships and collaborations currently in place, improve accuracy and availability of ICWA-related data, and increase development and spread of ICWA tools for practice level use. Additionally, CDSS will continue efforts toward making the CWS/CMS changes previously mentioned in this report that increase ability to capture ICWA data. The CDSS anticipates the release of improved standardized ICWA curriculum for county social workers as well as tools for tribal workers/ICWA advocates. Along with the curriculum, a toolkit will be released to support county efforts to increase CIWA compliance and cultural competence in practice with Native American youth and families. Future plans also involve creation and use of a database for tracking ICWA TA in the unit and submission of a National Resource Center technical assistance request in partnership with the ICWA Workgroup co-chairs in order to obtain assistance in structuring the State ICWA Workgroup.

California Department of Social Services

INDIAN CHILD WELFARE ACT WORKGROUP

TRIBAL REPRESENTATIVES AND/OR ICWA ADVOCATES

Susan Alvarez
Pit River Tribe

Lisa Ames, Manager
Social Services Department
Tuolumne Band of Me Wuk Indians

Penny Arciniaga, Tribal Office Manager
Buena Vista Rancheria

Angelina Arroyo, Council Secretary/ICWA Rep.
Habematolel Pomo of Upper Lake

April Attebury, Tribal Court Administrator
Karuk Tribal Court

Dorothy Barton, ICWA Social Svc Coordinator
Big Sandy Rancheria

Glenn Basconcillo, TANF Director
Owens Valley Career Development Center

Marce Becerra, ICWA Advocate
Cloverdale Rancheria of Pomo Indians

Robert Bohrer
Yurok Tribal Attorney's Office

Ann Louise Bonnitto, J.D.
California Rural Indian Health Board (CRIHB)

Paulie Boynton
Community and Family Services Social Worker
Smith River Rancheria

Silvia Burley, Chairperson
California Valley Miwok Tribe

Karen Cahill, Social Services Director
Bear River Band of Rohnerville Rancheria

Cynthia Card, ICWA Director
Round Valley Indian Tribes

Roman Carrillo, Jr., Tribal Chair
Hopland Band of Pomo Indians

N. Scott Castillo, Esq., Attorney at Law
Law Office of N. Scott Castillo

Shonta Chaloux, Executive Director
Soboba Tribal TANF

Annette Chihuahua, ICWA Coordinator
Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians

Alex Cleghorn, Acting Directing Attorney
California Indian Legal Services

Kimberly Cluff, Attorney at Law
Forman & Associates

Amanda Coronado, MSW, Administrator
Tribal Economic and Social Solutions Agency

Geni Cowan, PhD., Senior Associate
Eagle Blue Associates, Inc.

Cole Cross, ICWA Advocate
Yurok Tribe
Social Services Department

Nancy Currie, MA, LMFT
Director of Social Services
Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians

Patricia Davis, Tribal Council Delegate
Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi-Yokut Tribe

Cindy Dawson, Case Manager
Morongo Band of Mission Indians
Child and Family Services

Laila DeRouen, ICWA Representative
Indian Child and Family Preservation Program

Liz Elgin DeRouen, ICWA Representative
Indian Child and Family Preservation Program

Stephanie Dolan, Attorney at Law
Law Office of Stephanie Dolan

Cheryl Douglas, ICWA Liaison
Washoe Tribe Native TANF Program

Joni Drake (North Fork Mono/Choinumni)
San Joaquin Site Manager
California Tribal TANF Partnership

Christine Dukatz, ICWA Representative
Manchester Point Arena Tribe

Sara Dutschke, Attorney at Law
Karshmer & Associates (for Morongo)

Tara Edmiston, Legal Secretary/Billing Manager
California Indian Legal Services

Mike Edwards
Karuk Tribe of California

Renee Galicia, Regional Manager
California Tribal TANF Partnership

Maria Garcia, Social Worker
Pala Band of Mission Indians

Suzanne Garcia, Assistant General Counsel
Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California

Loleta Garfield, MSW, ICWA Director
Family & Social Services Department
Tule River Tribal Council

Maureen Geary, Attorney at Law
Maier, Pfeffer, Kim and Geary, LLP

Shari Ghalayini, Tribal Administrator
Enterprise Rancheria

Nanette L. Gledhill, MSW
Gledhill Expert Witness & Consulting Svs/Cal ICWA

Rachelle Goldenberg, MSW
ICWA Expert Witness/Human Svcs Consultant
Seawolf Consulting

Millie Grant, Director
Hoopa Valley Indian Tribe
Division of Human Services

Rhoda Hunter
Tule River Tribe

Vevila Hussey, MSW
Social Worker/Community Services
United Auburn Indian Community

Michael Jack, ICWA Specialist
Quechan Tribe - Fort Yuma Indian Reservation

Elaine Jeff, Tribal Council Delegate
Santa Rosa Rancheria Tachi-Yokut Tribe

Cynthia Jefferson, ICWA Coordinator
Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians/ICWA Dept

Karan Kolb, ICWA Manager
Indian Health Council, Inc.

Monique La Chappa
Campo Kumeyaay Nation

Lorraine Laiwa, Director
Indian Child and Family Preservation Program

Tammy Lapthorne
Susanville Indian Rancheria

Marsha Lee
ICWA/Human Services Coordinator
Robinson Rancheria Pomo Indians of California

Rovianne Leigh, Attorney at Law
Alexander, Berkey, Williams & Weathers, LLP

Jessica Hope LePak, MSW
Legislative Fellow
National Congress of American Indians

Louis Madrigal, Executive Director
Indian Child and Family Services

Francine McKinley, ICWA Social Svcs Director
Mooretown Rancheria

Angela Medrano, Staff Attorney
California Indian Legal Services

Brandon Meyer
Social Worker III/ICWA Representative
Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuk Indians

Sonia Montero, Advocate
California Indian Legal Services

Kelly Myers, Staff Attorney
National Indian Justice Center

Anno Nakai, Native Community Liaison
Placer County

Mary Nevarez, ICWA Coordinator
Redwood Valley Reservation

Linda Noel, Social Services Director
Pinoleville Band of Pomo Indians

Barbara Lee Norman, Attorney at Law
Karuk Tribe of California

Clayton One Star
Data Management & Communications Specialist
Inter-Tribal Council of California

Yvonne Page
Colusa Rancheria

Delia Parr, Directing Attorney
California Indian Legal Services

Wah-lia Pearce
Family Resource Coordinator
Elem Indian Colony

Erika Peasley
Tribal Economic and Social Solutions Agency

Jim Pelk, Clinical Services Manager
Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians
Tribal Family Services

Dorothy L. Perry, Acting Social Services Director
Smith River Rancheria

Michele Porter, MSW
Social Services Coordinator/ICWA Representative
Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria

Daniel Pratt, Social Worker III
Karuk Tribe of California

Mark Radoff, Directing Attorney
California Indian Legal Services

Connie Reitman-Solas, Executive Director
Inter-Tribal Council of California

Ida M. Riggins, Tribal Chairperson
Pit River Tribe

Beverly Rodriguez, ICWA Coordinator
Redwood Valley Rancheria

Elvira M. Rodriguez
Morning Star Care Consultant Services

Margaret Romero, ICWA Specialist
Bishop Paiute Reservation

Dolli Rose
Indian Child and Family Preservation Program

Melissa Schlichting, Attorney at Law
Karshmer & Associates (for Morongo)

Ursula Simon, ICWA Director
Middletown Rancheria

Jolene Smith
Foster Care Program
Administrator/Supervisor
American Indian Child Resource Center

Elaine Sparks
Sherwood Valley Rancheria – ICW

Myron Standing Bear

Terilynn Steele, ICWA Program Director
Tyme Maidu Tribe - Berry Creek Rancheria

James St. Martin, Director
Yurok Tribe - Social Services Department

Angela Sundberg, ICWA Representative
Yurok Tribe

Florrine Super, Council Secretary
Karuk Tribe of California

Laura Svoboda
Legal Secretary/Intake Worker
California Indian Legal Services

Marilyn Swafford, Social Services Director
Quechan Tribe - Fort Yuma Indian Reservation

Theresa Sam, ICWA Representative
North Fork Rancheria/Tribal ICWA Office

Linda Ruis, Director
Santa Ysabel Indian Reservation
Tribal Social Services

Theressa Villa, Delegate
Pala Band of Mission Indians
Indian Child and Family Services

Orianna Walker
ICWA/Social Services Coordinator
Picayune Rancheria of the Chukchansi Indians

Charity White
Director of Family Services
Southern Indian Health Council

Heather Zenone, Esq.
Cal-ICWA Director of Policy Reform
Indian Dispute Resolution Services

Karen Tatum, Social Worker
Morongo Band of Mission Indians
Child and Family Services

Brandie Taylor, Vice Spokesperson
Santa Ysabel Indian Reservation

Percy Tejada, ICWA Director
Dry Creek Rancheria of Pomo Indians

Leon Wakefield, Ph.D., Behavioral Health Director
Sonoma County Indian Health Project

SUPPORTING INFORMATION REGARDING COORDINATION WITH TRIBES

The CDSS utilizes the ICWA Workgroup as a means of consulting with tribes. The representatives listed here may be a member of a tribe, employed by a tribe or tribal organization, or otherwise work as an ICWA advocate. Most are tribal social workers, ICWA workers, ICWA advocates, and some may also be tribal council members. However, please be aware that these participants are not necessarily appointed by their tribes to represent them.

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT ACT (CAPTA)

State of California
Department of Social Services

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT ACT

APPLICATION FOR Federal Fiscal Year 2011 FUNDING
PLAN FOR FFY 2011

APPLICANT AGENCY:
State of California, Department of Social Services

Organizational Unit:
Office of Child Abuse Prevention
744 P Street, M.S. 8-11-82
Sacramento, California 95814

Designated Child Abuse and Neglect State Liaison Officer with the National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect:
Lee Ann Kelly, Acting Chief
Office of Child Abuse Prevention
(916) 651-6960

Application Information Contact:
Lee Ann Kelly, Acting Chief
Office of Child Abuse Prevention
(916) 651-6960

Applicant Agency's Employer Identification Number:
94-6001347

Program Improvement Area 8: Programs, Activities, Services and Training

MANDATED REPORTER TRAINING

In response to the increasing numbers of mandated reporters requiring training, CDSS continues to focus on the availability and accessibility of mandated reporter training. The CDSS has funded online mandated reporter training since FFY 2003. Free online training is offered for all mandated reporters. The mandated reporter training is currently offered through a grant with the Rady Children's Hospital, Chadwick Center for Children in San Diego, since October 2009.

Objective

To provide online mandated reporter training in a user-friendly format, training of trainers, development of new content, and updating of existing educational materials.

Activities/Results

Rady Children's Hospital, Chadwick Center offers the basic online training program and is redesigning the website to develop a user friendly web site flow, develop website message boards, video presentations, webcasts, listservs, and search features. The Center has been updating existing material to video/presentation format, developing consistent training curriculum and updating the specific occupation modules. PDF versions of the training are available to also ensure Macintosh users the ability to access training materials. Goals include identifying focus groups and an advisory committee to beta test new curriculum for in-person trainings and to video and audio record for posting on the website. New legislation affecting mandated reporters is being tracked and training is updated for any changes in the law.

Training modules are currently online and include a version for general audiences, as well as additional modules designed specifically for nurses, clergy, and educators. Continuing education units are offered. The number of completed trainings is expected to continue to rise as the revisions of profession-specific modules are completed. From February, 2010 through March, 2011, 4,220 trainings were completed with scores ranging in the 90th percentile. The general training modules represent the highest number of modules taken. The Center will now focus on incorporating modules for child care providers, Marriage and Family Therapists (both pre and post licensure), Licensed Clinical Social Workers, probation officers, and social workers. Spanish versions of both the general training and the module for child care providers will also be added. These additional modules are anticipated to be completed and available by the end of 2011. In May 2011, an e-mail was sent to each California school district superintendent advising them of the free online training available for their staff. An ACIN will also be sent to all county welfare directors to remind them about the online training during the following summer. Further, as specific modules—such as for child care providers and others—are updated, OCAP will be taking steps to ensure they are aware of the training by sending the information to the CDSS' Community Care Licensing Division who will be able to pass the information along to their licensees.

Program Improvement Area 9: Programs, Activities, Services and Training

SPECIAL START TRAINING PROGRAM (SSTP)

The CDSS continues to utilize CAPTA funds for the SSTP, which provides training to medical professionals, social workers, professionals from other disciplines, and foster and adoptive parents on assessment and developmental interventions for high-risk newborns that are discharged from intensive care nurseries. The program transitioned from Mills College to the University of California Children's Hospital at San Francisco in January 2009. The primary objective of this program is to facilitate enhanced parent/infant interactions and promote the development and recovery of medically fragile infants during and after discharge from the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). In learning to differentiate between what is stable behavior from what is stressful for the infant, parents are able to help their infant work towards organized behavioral patterns that support their medical recovery and development. The training is strength-based. Each training day is taught by a professional trainer, and a parent trainer who gave birth to an infant needing NICU care. The CORE training program is called Family Infant Relationship Support Training (FIRST). The program has added a seven-hour training revolving around the hospitals with NICUs and is offered to medical and support personnel. The trainings' objectives include increasing knowledge of developmental care principles and raising awareness of the opportunities for personnel in the NICU for supporting parent/infant bonding in a high tech medical environment. All participants receive the DVD "*No Matter How Small, A Parent's Guide to Preterm Infant Development*," produced by VIDA Health Communications, Inc. These new trainings have been held at regional NICUs; the first three had 483 attendees in the second part of 2010.

Objectives

- ✓ To provide CORE training for community professional such as foster parents, relative caregivers, social workers, psychologists, physical, speech and occupational therapists, public health nurses, early childhood educators, marriage and family therapists and home visitors in the assessment and planning of appropriate developmental interventions to meet the needs of medically fragile infants.
- ✓ To ensure the curriculum meets the certification standards for FIRST (Browne, et al, 1995) based on the methodology of the Newborn Individualized Development Care and Assessment Program (NIDCAP, Als, 1985).
- ✓ To increase and broaden the audience of professionals requesting training statewide in California by using the webinar as a training medium in addition to face-to-face trainings.
- ✓ To increase knowledge of developmental care principles for medical and social service professionals interacting with parents in the NICU.

Activities/Results

In FFY **2009**, 470 people throughout California attended five webinars produced by the SSTP. These webinars included:

- ✓ Behavioral Issues of High Risk Newborns after Discharge from the NICU.

- ✓ Evaluation of Neonatal Sucking: Normal, Disorganized, and Dysfunction.
- ✓ Treatment and Intervention Strategies for the Poor Feeder: Disorganized and Dysfunctional.
- ✓ Behavioral Interventions for Support of High Risk Newborns from the NICU.
- ✓ Transitioning Home.

These webinars are available on the SSTP website for download.

In **2010**, 285 trainees attended the following webinars:

- ✓ Transitioning from NICU to Home: three parents tell their stories with 170 attendees.
- ✓ Fetal and Sensory Development with 105 attendees.

The following webinars are planned for **2011**:

- ✓ The Development of Self-Regulation in the High Risk Infant
- ✓ Medical conditions of NICU Graduates
- ✓ Home Visiting: Enhancing Family Awareness

The SSTP sponsored Pediatric Grand Rounds in April 2010 at UCSF by Dr. Heidelise Als, the founder of NIDCAP, who is on the faculty of the Boston Children's Hospital at Harvard Medical School. The Grand Rounds Lecture was titled "*Brain Development Behavior, EEG and MRI"* and Dr. Als presented a lecture titled, "*Early Brain Development and Experience: Implications for NICU care.*"

FIRST training including days 2 and 3 for more intensive study was attended by 356 trainees.

The SSTP has received approval from the UCSF for a survey to prior trainees of the FIRST series to investigate the impact upon professional practices with parent/infant work in the home. The survey is expected to be completed and tabulated by June 2011.

The SSTP provides training for foster parents and has worked with foster parents in Santa Clara County on developing a foster parent curriculum. Three foster parent classes have been held and in 2011, Dr. VandenBerg will speak at the Annual Foster Parent Conference. In addition to the developmental care principles, the training instructs foster parents on engagement techniques with biological parents to promote individualized caregiver interactions and support foster infant care during and after the transition period.

The SSTP materials are developed, revised, and updated as required. These materials include digital video training tapes of premature infant behavior, SSTP brochures, and other hard copy material. Project staff utilizes the website to provide current resources/links regarding the condition/care of medically fragile infants on an on-going basis. Staff developed the booklet, *Getting to Know Your Baby* for caregivers and parents. It is available on the SSTP website to review and download. The companion book for caregivers/parents, *Supporting Your Infant after the Neonatal Intensive Care Nursery Experience* has been written. It focuses on developmental information for parents after the infant has been in the NICU.

The SSTP website contains the webinars and downloadable training materials. The Parents and Caregivers component has been completed with sections on Behavior and Development, Resources and Parent Stories.

Program Improvement Area 11: Programs, Activities, Services and Training

CALIFORNIA PARENT ENGAGEMENT CENTER

The website for the Project can be found online at: http://panetwork.parentsanonymous.org /aspx5/Default.aspx. In July 2007, CDSS and Parents Anonymous® Inc. began collaborating on a joint project to develop and maintain a California Center on Parent Involvement. The purpose of the Center is to assist the state in moving toward the use of evidence-based/evidence informed efforts that include meaningful involvement of parents and caregivers in direct services, trainings, public awareness, education, policy and systems change for California children and families. The Center developed a statewide database with various resources on parent involvement programs and practices (e.g. research articles, publications and web-based tools) for use by California communities to improve outcomes for children and families. As a part of this effort, the following has been established:

A State Advisory Committee:

This 17 member committee provides overall guidance on the work of the center. Members include state, county, and regional representatives from Child Welfare, Mental Health, Child Abuse Prevention, Tribal Communities, Family Resource Centers, Parent Leaders, Community Based Organizations (CBOs), funders and other key stakeholders. The committee developed a logic model with activities and timelines.

California State Parent Team (CSPT)

The CSPT web address is: http://parentsanonymous.org/pahtml/cspt/cspt.html. Given the commitment to ensure that the "parent voice" is heard in shaping the direction of family support programs, services, and policies throughout California, the CSPT was The CSPT is composed of eight parents, who work collaboratively with professionals to help shape and strengthen family support programs, services, and policies in California.

Some of the recent CSPT activities include:

- ✓ **Recruitment and Selection of CSPT Members**: During this reporting period, four parents were selected to join the Team: two new members and two to replace those who left the Team. Two of the new members are fathers.
- ✓ **California State Parent Team Handbook**: Each Team member received an orientation handbook and training regarding their responsibilities in the role as a CSPT member.
- ✓ **CSPT Meetings/Teleconferences**: Throughout the year, meetings and teleconferences were held to focus on: 1) The development and implementation of the annual California Parent Leadership Conference; 2) Enhancing the California Parent Engagement Center; 3) Strengthening collaborations with Regional and local Child Abuse Prevention Coalitions/Councils; 4) Developing and providing webinar training on Parent Partner Role

Description and Fidelity Tool for California Wraparound providers; 5) Providing input on policy and system changes to strengthen California families and communities.

- ✓ **Linkage to Committees/Task Forces/Special Projects Team Members** served on various councils/committees/task forces including: 1) Child Welfare Council; 2) California Social Work Education Center Statewide Training and Education Committee; 3) California Indian Tribal Welfare Work Group; 4) State Program Improvement Plan Steering Committee; 5) State Team Decision Making Steering Committee; 6) California Parent Engagement Center State Advisory Committee; 7) State Wraparound Parent Partner Outcomes Work Group; 8) Planning Committee for the February 2011 annual statewide Parent Leadership Conference, and 9) Regional Child Abuse Prevention Coalitions.
- ✓ **Participation in National Level Webinar Training and National Training**: At the request of the federal Children's Bureau, Office of Child Abuse and Neglect, a CSPT member co-presented a webinar training with Parents Anonymous® Inc. on successful Parent Leadership strategies for CBCAP grantees nationwide. In addition, a CSPT member co-presented a workshop on building collaborations between Tribal parents and Child Welfare System staff with Parents Anonymous® Inc. at the 28th Annual Protecting Our Children National American Indian Child Welfare Act Conference.
- ✓ **Participation in State/Regional level Events/Conferences**: Team members have been presenters and/or participants in numerous events and conferences including: The Sixth Annual California Wraparound Institute, California Mental Health Advocates for Children and Youth Conference, Children's Network Statewide Conference, California Indian Tribal Welfare Conference, and the Symposium on Fairness and Equity Issues in Child Welfare Training and Education. Team members participated in the Beyond the Bench Conference and the California Youth Connection Conference.
- ✓ **Training:** All Team members participated in training on shared leadership, effective communication strategies, conceptual models of prevention, and effective CSPT participation on state and regional committees/task forces.

COALITION OF CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION COUNCILS (CAPCS)

The CDSS is committed to maintaining and supporting strong and effective local CAPCs. This has been done via the support of the statewide Regional Child Abuse Prevention Coalition (RCAPC) Grant. The OCAP revised a previously supported statewide network (Prevention Network Development Grant) through a Request for Application process for the new two-year Regional Child Abuse Prevention Coalition Grant cycle beginning in FY 2009-10 and ending June 30, 2011.

The grant maintains a network of CAPCs network through eight regional coordinators assigned to geographically grouped counties throughout the state. The regional coordinators and coalitions of CAPCs assist OCAP in the responsibility to direct, lead, and evaluate the network of public-private partnerships and the continuum of preventative services for children and families in all regions of the state. The regional coordinators and CAPCs are intended to provide a vehicle for networking, coordination, and improvement of services and increasing public awareness and commitment to the prevention of child abuse. The RCAPC grant priorities

include efforts to foster a continuum of prevention services in each region of the state, build public and private partnerships, including coordination with local child welfare agencies and family strengthening efforts under other systems such as early childhood education, substance abuse prevention and intervention, mental health services, and domestic violence intervention and prevention.

The OCAP consultants provided technical assistance to each regional coordinator and their respective coalitions during the reporting period.

FAMILY DEVELOPMENT MATRIX PROJECT

The FDM is a collaborative effort of the Institute for Community Collaborative Studies, California State University, Monterey Bay, CDSS, Strategies, and The Pathways Mapping Initiative. The FDM developed the FDM outcomes model and assists the participating counties in integrating The Pathway to the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (Pathway) goals and interventions. The FDM Pathway is an outcomes model which provides an integrated family assessment tool for case management and outcomes evaluation within county-based family service networks and tribal programs in California. Its primary purpose is to provide family support staff with the capacity to use the assessment and analysis of family outcome measurement data to set goals with families, record agency interventions, track worker case management, and family participation activities that contribute toward improving family outcomes. The project utilizes the Pathway from Harvard University and the Family Strengthening Protective Factors (http://strengtheningfamilies.net) to assist agencies in developing an intervention strategy that is integrated with the FDM case management system.

Objectives

- ✓ Support, broaden, and extend existing public/private partnerships in fourteen participating California counties focusing on prevention and neglect.
- ✓ Strengthen the validity of the FDM model by establishing a panel of experts.

Activities/Results

- ✓ Completed the organization of fourteen collaboratives to use the FDM. Trained the agency coordinators and staff's capacity to use the FDM Pathway in the following counties, which represents ninety agencies serving at-risk families: Butte, Del Norte, Fresno, Lake, Madera, Orange, San Francisco, San Joaquin, Santa Barbara, Tehama, Ventura, Yolo, San Luis Obispo, and Siskiyou counties. Also, 11 tribal communities served by tribal programs in Humboldt, Lake, Mendocino, and Sonoma counties are now participating in the FDM project. FDM tribal activities is also detailed in the ICWA chapter on page 159 of this report.
- ✓ Integrated the Pathway into the matrix database. Each family worker has full access to the panel approved twenty core indicators and interventions. Agencies are able to add their custom indicators and interventions to the core.
- ✓ Created the Agency Showcase which enables FDM agencies to exhibit their programs and successful work with clients. The project is located online on the FDM website. It is available for other agencies, community partners, and funders to access expertise from

each other and potentially showcase agency data results. As part of the design process, each of the FDM collaboratives developed prevention plans that are also showcased to demonstrate their collaborative plan to use the FDM.

- ✓ The case management forms are now available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Hmong languages. Family workers are able to use these languages to conduct the assessment and case management activities and enter data using the family's primary language ; eighty percent of the client base is non-native English speaking.
- ✓ Two evaluation strategies have been employed: 1) Testing a theory of change with family outcome measures, interventions, worker, and family activities; and 2) Validity of the FDM as an information system tool for family resource agencies.
- ✓ The FDM interventions have been organized by an indicator to facilitate the worker's planning with families. Probing questions were added to the Family Empowerment Plan to make it easier for the family worker to inquire about goal setting with the family. A compact disc of all assessment and case management forms in all five languages was distributed to all agency coordinators enabling them to upload the documents on workers' computers.
- ✓ Partners comprising a National Expert Panel provide guidance for the core measures, evaluation and research, and dissemination of the FDM across California.

STRATEGIES: FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER AND FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

CDSS funds a consortium of three regional non-profit agencies, Strategies, created to enhance the capacity of California FRCs and FSPs that provide services that strengthen families. The three organizations comprising Strategies are Youth for Change in Butte County (Region 1); Interface Children and Family Services in Ventura County (Region 2); and the Children's Bureau, with offices in Los Angeles and Orange Counties (Region 3).

Strategies provides training and technical assistance in numerous areas, such as home visiting, comprehensive case management, family economic success, child abuse prevention, the Strengthening Families Five Protective Factors, nonprofit management, community development, supervision and management, kinship care, father involvement, sustainability, children with special needs, adolescent development, family resource center development, impact of depression, etc. Teleconferences, online communications, lending libraries, face-to-face group training, meeting facilitation, coaching, technical assistance, and consultation in a broad variety of topics are also offered. Additionally, Strategies fosters communication among FRCs and FSPs through its comprehensive website, including father involvement and prevention websites, and a tri-annual publication, *Working Strategies*.

Activities/Results

By delivering 130 training days, the objective for conducting 45 days of family strengthening training was exceeded.

Various forms of evaluation data are collected to monitor the impact and effectiveness of projects and activities. A description of the types of evaluation data gathered and evaluation activities are as follows:
Effectiveness and Impact of Training:

- ✓ **Participants' knowledge after training** is measured by a pre- and post-test assessment that is customized for each training. This tool uses a five-point Likert-type scale to evaluate the change in a participant's knowledge about the trainings content.
- ✓ **Impact of Transfer of Learning:** Training redesigns now include a transfer of learning protocol to facilitate the use of strategies and training content in the field. The impact of the transfer of learning activities is gathered via action plans that training participants complete and share with Strategies staff. These action plans are collected and analyzed to determine the types of training strategies participants select to use. In addition, data from individual emails and phone calls to follow up on trainee action plans are used to evaluate trainings with a transfer of learning component.
- ✓ **Transfer of learning online tool:** During the report period, trainers developed and used a new web-based transfer of learning tool. The tool, provided as an online community forum for each training, provided participants a framework to comment on achievements of their action plans and ask questions of trainers and other participants.

The FRC Core Training covers key elements of FRC development and operation. Strategies completed a significant curriculum revision during the report period, incorporating current field research and expanding adult learning training methods.

Family Economic Success and Stability (FES)

Children who live in poverty are at a high risk of abuse and neglect, yet FRC and FSP staff often has little training in addressing related economic issues. This FES training provides staff with tools and approaches to help families move towards economic success and lessen the possibilities of engagement in abusive behaviors. The training includes an orientation to Strategies' California FES resource directory of local, state, and federal programs available to serve families. The FES training was revised, and the statewide FES resource directory was updated. Strategies also began to expand the FES work from a simple training to more extended technical assistance support. This effort was piloted in Ventura County in a unique partnership with First Five, United Way, and Community Action, a community-based agency that addresses family economic issues. The Central Region provided technical assistance, using the family economic success resources tools, to organizations enrolled in this collaborative project.

Case Management

Case Management continues to meet a critical need in the family strengthening field by introducing participants to the fundamental concepts of case planning, assessment, and evaluation. During the reporting period, a comprehensive rewrite of the case management curriculum began, integrating over one year of research into best practices and the emerging

topic of community-related case management. During the next year, Strategies will offer a case management research to practice paper, as well as two regional case management convenings.

Home Visiting

During the period, Strategies' staff revised and updated the home visiting curriculum as a three-day training, with two days of training followed by a third day after a four to six week break. The revised curriculum continues to be based on a case study format to engage participants. The new format further supports transfer of learning with trainer follow-up to determine which aspects of action plans have been integrated and how job approach is developing because of training.

Peer Review

The Peer Review acts as a self-reflective and networking process to nurture participant trust and self-disclosure within working partnerships established between different FRCs to evaluate and strengthen the approaches and services offered by the participating FRCs. Participants develop an enhanced awareness of statewide issues affecting their agencies; gain feedback regarding the effectiveness of their agency's services; identify personal, agency and staff strengths and challenges, and develop greater connections with other FRCs. Strategies also provides peer review participants with individual coaching to assist with goal attainment. During this period, strategies conducted the Peer Review Process with ten community-based family support organizations using the full two-and-a-half day (including exchanging site visits) Peer Review Process and Assessment Tool. Also during this period, the Peer Review Assessment Tool was revised and updated to reflect more current family support language and practice.

New Training/Training Curricula Revisions

During this reporting period, two new trainings were developed and delivered across the state: 1) Self-Care - Caring for the Caregiver; and 2) Agency Staff Training for Increased Father Involvement. Six training curricula were revised and updated to reflect current practice and research; Protective Factors, Home Visiting, Cultural Proficiency, Family Economic Success, Family Resource Core Training, and Case Management.

Teleconference Series

Through web-conferencing technology, the teleconference series brought together participants and subject matter experts from across California to enhance personal, professional, and organizational development. Twelve teleconference calls were conducted, consisting of four series of three calls. Nearly 200 individuals participated in the teleconferences with waiting lists for each teleconference. Topics included:

CULTURALLY PROFICIENT LEARNING COMMUNITIES

- Collaborative Curiosity
- Confronting Inequities
- Confronting Inequities through Collaborative Curiosity

FAMILY ECONOMIC SUCCESS

- FES Introduction and Overview

- Building Relationships and Income Supports
- Workforce Development and Financial Assets

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Developing a High Performance Team
- Transformative Leadership
- Harassment -- Not Guilty!

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES, COMMUNITIES, AND ORGANIZATIONS

- Strengthening Families
- Family Resource Centers: Building Strong Communities
- Lobbying and Advocacy Rules for Nonprofits

Capacity-Building Events

The diverse (rural and urban) statewide training and technical assistance venues demonstrate the challenge of serving a state with 58 counties, as well as Strategies' commitment to meeting that challenge.

During the report period, 2,853 individuals attended training and Strategies provided 1,176 hours of technical assistance to networks, agencies, and organizations throughout the state. These services enable organizations to develop in areas of nonprofit management, sustainability, program development and implementation, facility management, and family support principles.

Educational sessions were also presented at more than ten conferences and workshops across California.

Network Development Objectives:

- ✓ Support and promote the existing and emerging abilities of regional family support networks, Children's Services Networks and Interagency Coordinating Councils to promote child safety, permanency and well-being by coordinating training and technical assistance opportunities for 12 networks per year.
- ✓ The Northern and Central Regions each annually award subcontracts to a maximum of four networks in order to build capacity for provision of training and technical support to other agencies.

Network development was provided through: 1) Capacity Building Grants; and 2) Technical assistance for the newly formed Statewide Network of Family Strengthening Networks. Family Strengthening networks are currently in at least 20 of California's 58 counties.

Resources continue to be leveraged to provide capacity building grants to 15 networks (seven northern region networks and eight central region networks) for a variety of purposes, including the development of a community needs and strengths assessment, the training of network members as trainers of a nationally recognized, FES community change model and to devote time to work on an in-depth plan for network sustainability. These grants were provided to networks in the counties of San Francisco, San Luis Obispo, Ventura, Sacramento, Santa Barbara, Monterey, Santa Cruz, Kings, El Dorado, Solano, Yuba, Sacramento, Siskiyou,

Alameda, Contra Costa, and Santa Clara. Additionally, each network received at least 15 hours of technical assistance.

Future Directions

There are plans to continue to utilize the networking approach to further FDM and the High Performing Partnerships initiatives.

In partnership with the Institute for Community Collaborative, training and technical assistance is provided in implementing FDM which is used in 14 counties by 88 family strengthening organizations to identify a family's strengths and areas of risk. During this reporting period, three trainings were conducted for newly recruited collaborative, and 83 hours of technical assistance were provided.

Technical assistance was also provided to California's three Citizen Review Panels located in San Mateo, Calaveras, and Ventura counties.

The OCAP, Strategies, and the Center for the Study of Social Policy planned the gathering of cross-sector leaders to support the implementation of Strengthening Families in California. As a result, two (morning and evening) convenings were conducted on September 27, 2010 in Sacramento. The sessions were attended by 63 leaders representing 37 public and private organizations.

Outreach Objectives

Strategies' main outreach objectives are to produce and distribute the tri-annual publication, *Working Strategies*, as well as to coordinate and maintain the statewide data collection system, the training website, and the newly developed Forums website.

An extensive listserv is maintained to disseminate information about conferences, father involvement, current research, job announcements, convenings, training, environmental scans, surveys, etc. The contact database grew more than 23 percent during the period, to over 25,000 individuals and 25 new organizations.

Strategies monograph describing promising practices and current issues of concern, *Reflections from the Field: An Appreciative Inquiry,* was completed during this reporting period and distributed at convenings throughout California. It was used as a key resource to an advisory committee of the S.H. Cowell Foundation. In response to demand from the field, a second printing of the document was completed in June.

Activities/Results

During the report period, Strategies' website generated more than 110,000 hits from California and around the world. The website was an "authority link" on Google for *Family Strengthening Organizations*.

Working Strategies:

During the report period, three issues of *Working Strategies* were developed and distributed, including topic focus areas of violence prevention, working with youth, and supporting father involvement. Each publication issue was distributed to over 13,000 readers. Applications were submitted to the three top online educational/research databases: ERIC, EBSCO and ProQuest.

Contracts have been signed with EBSCO and ProQuest, and are in the active review process with ERIC. These databases are utilized in California, the United States, and worldwide by students and researchers of all professions to find current information within their field.

Future Directions

The outreach approach will continue to be utilized to build relationships through network development, conference, meeting attendance and facilitation, publications, and through providing training and technical assistance.

Outreach to Underserved Populations

- ✓ Identify potential service users among isolated and underserved populations, such as tribes, rural and frontier communities, small counties, various ethnic communities, and families engaged in agricultural work, etc.
- ✓ Identify and implement the most effective ways to outreach to and engage identified isolated and underserved populations.

Activities/Results:

Outreach is developed and conducted to underserved populations based on a number of indicators including:

- **Geographic coverage** - during the report period, training and technical assistance was provided to family strengthening professionals in 56 of 58 California counties: rural desert communities, urban centers, agricultural centers, isolated mountain communities, the coast and central valleys, sparsely populated areas of the Sierra, and frontier counties, geographic areas hard hit by economic recession, counties with limited resources and, in some cases, overlooked by funders and policy makers.
- **Isolated racial and ethnic enclaves** - throughout the report period, culturally proficient training and technical assistance was provided to organizations working with underserved populations, including Vietnamese, Cambodian, Hmong, Japanese, Korean, Central American, Mexican, South American, African American, Native American, East Indian, and Russian. In addition, there is outreach to Native American tribes in the Central Valley by participating as part of the planning group and as a co-sponsor of a conference coordinated by Central Valley leaders involved with implementing ICWA. Strategies is also participating in an engagement process with a small community outside of Fresno, California to help a local collaborative strategize how family and community strengthening approaches might be used as a vehicle for addressing the tremendous disparity between outcomes for Native American school children (who comprise 15 percent of children in the school) and other Non-Indian children.
- **Training and technical assistance** was also provided to agencies working with homeless families, fathers, families with children with special needs, extremely isolated rural residents, and military families.
- The Statewide Network developed and updated a **Diversity and Cultural Competency (D&CC) work plan** during this report period: creating a Cultural Proficiency training

curriculum, which was delivered throughout the state, conducted regional and statewide Cultural Proficiency learning discussions. Staff attended a culturally proficient task force of the Oxnard Police Department, made Cultural Proficiency presentations at various conferences, presented at the cultural Proficiency Institute in Los Angeles, and attended and participated in roundtable discussions of the Cultural Proficiency Symposium in Orange County, Office of Education. Working groups continued to integrate the cultural proficiency framework into all existing curricula, statewide staff conference calls, and learning groups.

The Central Region is leading statewide Supporting Father Involvement (SFI) dissemination efforts to build the capacity of organizations, to implement the evidence-based SFI approach and increase the social service sector's ability to effectively engage and support positive father involvement in the lives of children.

The SFI dissemination is a collaboration between the California Department of Social Services Office of Child Abuse Prevention, the statewide Strategies team and the current SFI Research and Evaluation team. Details of the dissemination efforts are presented in the SFI section of this report.

Program Improvement Area 13: Programs, Activities, Services and Training

THE EVIDENCED-BASED CLEARINGHOUSE FOR CHILD WELFARE SERVICES IN CALIFORNIA (CEBC)

The CEBC is one of CDSS' targeted efforts to improve the lives of children and families served within CWS. OCAP contracted with Rady Children's Hospital, Chadwick Center for Children and Families to create the CEBC. The grant was initially awarded on June 1, 2004.

The CEBC helps to identify and disseminate information regarding evidence-based practices (EBPs) relevant to child welfare, statewide agencies, counties, public and private organizations, and individuals. One county reports they use the CEBC website whenever they are making decisions around implementing new programming, developing training plans for child welfare staff, and working with private providers to develop contracts for services. It has highly influenced the ability to bring EBPs into that county's child welfare services. Specific examples cited by the county include reviewing family engagement strategies to guide the creation of the training plan for the year; examining the information on trauma on the CEBC to develop a training plan around trauma issues of children involved in child welfare; and reviewing evaluation information on family home visiting in preparation for working with the health agency about the new federal funding for home visiting.

Another example includes one county's use of the CEBC in making policy decisions. The county reports they use the CEBC website to review programs when starting new initiatives or contracts. The ratings are used to help weigh the costs and benefits and examine the efficacy of programs. The county also uses the CEBC website in developing their county SIP. Over the past few years, the United Way in that county has also used the CEBC website to review the research evidence for programs and make decisions about which new programs to fund.

Front line workers have also shared that they use the CEBC when looking at services and case plan development for cases. A front line worker from Yolo County shared that it helps her select programs based more on her clients' needs than just referring them to a generic service.

"It helps me decide on what provider I may refer to and what type of program may be a best fit for a family. It also helps support recommendations with the Court."

At the University of Southern California, as well as in the California State Universities, the CEBC website has been used for teaching purposes to help students learn more about EBPs as they prepare to enter the workforce. It has also been used by the RTAs in California to help educate the child welfare workforce about EBPs. In addition, at the California Institute for Mental Health (CiMH), the CEBC website has been referenced in reports and presentations, as well as various projects that call for the use of EBPs with child welfare populations. The CiMH also receives two or three requests a month from individuals or agencies asking about EBPs for child welfare and refers them to the CEBC website.

The CEBC has also had numerous requests from community-based agencies about programs that are not on the CEBC website. The agencies were seeking help to evaluate whether a program is evidence-based as they consider whether to implement it. For instance, last month an agency in San Francisco contacted the CEBC to ask about Active Parenting Now. As a result, the CEBC is in the process of reviewing and rating this program to add to the website since it does have published peer-reviewed research.

Several Requests for Proposals that have been introduced over the past few years have included references to the CEBC website. One recent example is the Administration on Children, Youth, & Families, Initiative to Reduce Long-Term Foster Care, HHS-2010-ACF-ACYF-CT-0022. This RFP directed applicants to the CEBC website as a resource to find programs that were evidence-based.

Finally, the CEBC website is used internationally. It was used as a model clearinghouse for the development of Sweden's national board of health and welfare for their website, Metodguiden. The CEBC website was also used as a model for the development of the Chinese Clearinghouse for Evidence-Based Practice and Policy (CCE) in collaboration with CEBC and the Chinese Cochrane center. This site was due to launch in September 2010. The CDSS has received a good deal of positive feedback from professionals in California and across the nation in terms of the usefulness of the CEBC in assisting in planning program implementation.

The CEBC is guided by an advisory committee (AC) and the Scientific Panel. The AC includes researchers, child welfare services practitioners, as well as representatives from CWDA, CDSS, community agencies and foundations. The Scientific Panel is comprised of five core members who are nationally recognized as leaders in child welfare research and practice, and who are knowledgeable about what constitutes best practice and evidence-based practice.

Objectives

Develop formal criteria for selection of practices as evidence-based and review a wide variety of sources to identify practices meeting the criteria.

To design a conceptual framework for an interactive web-based application of the CEBC that supports access to and implementation of evidence-based practices in the field of social work.

Activities/Results

The CEBC uses a standardized process to identify and review child welfare programs and practices for inclusion on the website. The statewide AC selects an average of five topic areas per year. The Clearinghouse staff works closely with the Scientific Panel to identify a leading child welfare authority with expertise for each selected topic area (topic experts). Working with the Scientific Panel and the Topic Experts, the CEBC staff selects programs for inclusion on the website. These generally involve between five and fifteen programs selected within a topic area that fit one of the following criteria:

- ✓ Have strong empirical support for their efficacy.
- ✓ Is in common use in California.
- ✓ Are being used or marketed in California.

The CEBC staff work with the topic expert and with the developer of the program or model to identify all relevant program/model related literature. The CEBC staff examines all peer-reviewed research literature on the program/model along with a sample of proprietary and other relevant peer-reviewed clinical literature. The information from the reviews and the developers are synthesized to create the topic outline contained on the website. The Clearinghouse staff and topic experts review the research and science supporting the model and "rate" the model based on the strength of the evidence supporting it using a scientific rating scale. They determine the research and particular program's and/or model's relevance to child welfare outcomes based on the three fundamental goals; safety, permanency, and well-being. As of March 2011, the CEBC website has 27 topic areas with 173 discrete programs and 16 screening and assessment tools.

The website, http://www.cebc4cw.org, became operational in the spring of 2006. Changes continue to be made to improve the look and function of the site. A website rebuild is in process to help the site be more user-friendly. Among the changes will be: a search box with keyword search capability that searches the programs' brief descriptions, and a customized keyword field when using the keyword search.

Implementation information for programs rated a "1" or a "2" will be listed with the program. New components featured to clarify the program's target audience-child component, parent component, and adult component. In addition, the CEBC is upgrading the back end of the website to increase functionality and improve the search process.

The CEBC website is designed to:

- Serve as an online connection for child welfare professionals, staff of public and private organizations, academic institutions, and others who are committed to serving children and families.
- Provide up-to-date information on evidence-based child welfare practices.
- Facilitate the utilization of evidence-based practices as a method of achieving improved outcomes of safety, permanency, and well-being for children and families involved in the California public CWS.

Objective

Develop a formal process for the implementation and maintenance of the CEBC.

Activities

New topic areas have been added: Infant and Toddler Mental Health (ages zero through three), Depression Treatment (Adults), Substance Abuse Treatment (Adolescent), and Parent Partner Programs for Families Involved in the Child Welfare System.

The implementation resource section of the website was expanded to include implementation approaches. A brief description of approaches to implementation that were developed in health care, mental health, and social services, including child welfare, is now available.

A new section with information on cultural resources has been added to the website. The Cultural Resource Reference List provides citations and abstracts from articles that have been published in peer-reviewed, published literature about culture as it relates to evidence-based practices.

Two mini-conferences entitled: "Roadmap to Evidence-Based Practice in Child Welfare" were held in Oakland and Sacramento. These mini-conferences included breakout sessions on SafeCare© home visiting, Integrating Multiple EBPs, Making Policy Decisions Using CEBC, Supporting Father Involvement, Trauma Focused-Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Motivational Interviewing, and a panel discussion - "EBP in Times of Fiscal Uncertainty." Multiple workshops were also given at conferences within and outside of California throughout the year.

Future Direction

Additional topic areas will be added to the website. They include: Father Involvement Interventions, Anger Management (Adults), Treating Sexual Behavior Problems in Children, and Treating Juveniles Who Have Sexually Offended. The CEBC Advisory Committee met on March 10, 2011, and had a discussion regarding topics to be included for the next fiscal year.

At this time, the CEBC is in the early stages of conducting an evaluation of the website. This will be a study of Child Welfare administrators and supervisors throughout the state of California to determine how the CEBC is currently being utilized and how it can be more effectively structured to guide the development of county service delivery continuums and actual practice. The evaluation will be done in a three-fold approach by reviewing extant data sources, conducting surveys with Child Welfare administrators and staff and by conducting focus groups with Child Welfare administrators and staff.

SAFE KIDS CALIFORNIA PROJECT (SKCP)

In the fall of 2008, the Chadwick Center for Children and Families, Rady Children's Hospital received an award letter from the ACF informing them that their home visiting proposal was being funded for five years. The Chadwick Center, in cooperation with CDSS and others, are disseminating the SafeCare© model for home visitation to multiple California counties for young children at risk for child neglect and/or abuse. The model uses bachelor level home visitors, and in addition to English, also includes staff support and coaching in Spanish for Spanish-speaking SafeCare© trainees.

SafeCare© is a structured evidence-based home visitation program that provides direct skill training to high-risk parents. SafeCare© providers teach families specific skills on how to manage child behavior, keep their home free of safety hazards, and take care of a child's basic health care needs. It is also designed to improve parent/child (or infant) interaction. SafeCare© typically takes 18-20 sessions to complete, which takes approximately four to six months, and may run longer if other services are also needed. SafeCare© is typically delivered in the home by trained staff carrying caseloads of eight to ten families at a time.

Activities

The SKCP has made significant progress in providing training and support to implement SafeCare©. An advisory committee has been established and meets monthly. Training and mini conferences have been held throughout California.

October 1, 2009 was the beginning of Year Two which was the implementation phase for the SKCP project. The Central Valley Partnership was selected for Cohort One. Cohort One consists of Fresno, Madera, and Tulare County. The Implementation Phase began with a Kick-Off meeting. By design, the meeting was filled with enthusiasm, collaboration, and an introduction of the strategic next steps. A project coordinator, three staff supervisors, and 12 home visitors were trained. Training was also conducted for CWS workers in Central Valley to assist with determining what characterized an appropriate referral to SafeCare© and to streamline the referral process. After translating the SafeCare© curriculum into Spanish, the first ever Spanish training was provided for five bilingual home visitors.

Shasta County was chosen as Cohort Two of SKCP in June 2010. SKCP worked with Shasta County to conduct preliminary community and organizational assessments to design a tailored plan to best support the successful implementation of SafeCare©.

In December 2009, the SKCP project received some challenging news. Unfortunately, the funding for the third year of the grant was inadvertently deleted from the federal budget. The ACF was only able to offer about 20 percent of the original amount awarded for the FFY to continue the project. In addition, a second grant was awarded to Rady Children's Hospital by the CDC and it was planned that the two SafeCare® projects would combine portions of the evaluation in order to maximize funding and increase the sample size. Thus the elimination of funding for the ACF project also impacted the CDC project. In the meantime, the OCAP provided funding to cover the costs of the third year of the project in order to maintain the implementation of SafeCare® and to avoid a stoppage of both projects. After a period of uncertainty, funding is now coming from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to continue the project.

During FY 2009-10, 41 out of the 58 California counties indicated they were using prevention funding to support some type of home visiting program. Many of these home visiting programs are funded in collaboration with other partners. With the new federal home visiting grants available, California plans to apply for the funds in order to expand home visiting in the State, including the SafeCare® model, among other evidence-based programs.

Future Activities

The SKCP staff will continue to train and certify staff in the SafeCare© model. Applications were received from additional counties wishing to be in the third SafeCare© cohort. The next steps include the selection process, review of applications, and preparation for interviews.

SUPPORTING FATHER INVOLVEMENT (SFI) INTERVENTION AND EVALUATION

During the FY 2003, CDSS funded an intervention and evaluation designed to improve the quality and level of positive father involvement in at-risk families. Contractors were public child welfare services agencies in five counties. Currently, programs operate in the counties of Santa Cruz, Yuba, San Luis Obispo, Contra Costa, and Tulare. Each agency was required to partner with a local family resource center that would implement the intervention.

CDSS contracted with the University of California, Berkeley to provide principle investigators for the study, coordinate the data component (develop assessment tools, curriculums, forms, and conduct data analysis), and to subcontract for on-going clinical staff consultation and training. The objectives of the SFI research study intervention are to:

- ✓ Determine the effectiveness of a particular intervention to increase positive father involvement.
- ✓ Measure organizational culture change to determine the extent to which the family resource centers implementing the intervention become more father friendly; successfully engage fathers in other programs and services offered and reflect father inclusion in workers' attitudes/practices, agency policies and procedures and within the agency's physical environment.

The initial target population was comprised of parents who were unknown to child welfare services, and who were co-parenting couples with children age seven and younger. With the new three year funding cycle, beginning in FY 2009-10, families with child welfare involvement become the focus of the study. These families are to comprise at least 50 percent of those being served. The remaining families will be those who are not known to the child welfare system. It is projected that the SFI program will be just as effective with the child welfare services families as it has been with community families.

Families are randomly assigned to one of three of the following groups:

- ✓ A one-time educational presentation about how positive father involvement improves outcomes for children.
- ✓ A 16-week (two hours per week) group meeting for fathers, based upon an established curriculum.
- ✓ A 16-week group for couples (two hours per week) based upon an established curriculum. All project participants receive case management services.

Data are collected through a battery of assessments administered three times during each family's participation in the study. Funding for this intervention and evaluation will continue through June 30, 2012.

Objective

To expand the SFI intervention to recruit and serve families who are known to child welfare services. Child welfare families will comprise at least 50 percent of the families served.

Activities/Results

In preparation for referring parents/families to the SFI program, the Director of CWS in each of the five counties housing the Program approved assigning a supervisor to serve as their SFI County Liaison. County Liaisons were invaluable to establishing a referral process and creating/maintaining relationships with staff who would be making the referrals.

Objective

To make on-going training and technical assistance available to staff to enhance knowledge and skills needed to provide meaningful services to individuals and families known to child welfare services.

Activities

Consultants with expertise in addressing domestic violence and child abuse issues with culturally diverse individuals/families known to public child welfare services were subcontracted to provide clinical consultation and training to SFI staff. Consultation is primarily provided via monthly teleconferencing and through bi-annual in person All Project Staff Meetings.

A project listserv created in 2004 continues to be used as the primary communication vehicle for staff, researchers, etc. Additionally, twice monthly, separate teleconferences are held for group leaders, case managers, data coordinators, and the Response Team, which consists of the, principal investigators, clinical consultants and staff from CDSS.

Objective

Individual parents/families known to child welfare services are to comprise a minimum of 50 percent of target group served.

Activities

The SFI curriculums and all programmatic/data collection forms were revised to accommodate the inclusion of the new group of participants. From mid-October 2009, when services began with the new group of families, through September 30, 2010, 345 individuals were found eligible to participate in the Study. Of those, 182 individuals are known to child welfare services either through referrals of suspected abuse or neglect, and/or through having an open child welfare case.

Objective

To continue to disseminate SFI results throughout the five counties hosting the current SFI programs and throughout the remainder of the state and to complete Phase III by June 30, 2009.

Activities/Results

The results from Phase I and Phase II are continuously disseminated statewide and through peer-reviewed publications. As planned, Phase III ended June 30, 2009. Phase IV, working with families known to child welfare services, began July 1, 2009.

Objective

Refine the plan for disseminating the SFI results from Phase I and Phase II. Increase dissemination efforts. Continue to deliver an effective training and technical assistance program to the five implementing sites to enable them to better meet the needs of participating families.

Activities

Dissemination Activities of the five evaluation sites: In addition to being engaged with "start-up" activities for working with child welfare services families, the five sites (Santa Cruz, San Luis Obispo, Contra Costa, Yuba and Tulare) made a total of 52 presentations that attracted 1,579 participants.

Strategies Dissemination Activities (statewide): Strategies Region 2, which coordinates statewide dissemination efforts, conducted a total of 28 presentations, which attracted 919 participants. A media campaign was also created and trainings and web based resources developed. The resources are designed to increase the social service sector's ability to effectively engage and support positive father involvement. There were three primary focal points:

- Increase the awareness of service providers, fathers and mothers of the role of fathers in the development of their children.
- Affect practice and policy changes that support increased positive engagement of fathers with their children.
- Promote organizational change within public agencies and private organizations that reflect the recognition of fathers as caretakers of their children, and provide services to help men with their parenting skills and their communication with their partners.

Technical assistance was provided to enable a family support network to organize and present its first Fatherhood Summit, which was attended by 85 people in January 2010. By September 30, 2010, eight agencies will have completed the first phase of the extensive organizational self assessment with each having received 20 hours of technical assistance. Dissemination activities include providing technical assistance, workshops, trainings, conference presentations, and enhancing the website as a resource and outreach tool.

Objective

Promote an evidence-based practice for child abuse prevention by leading and coordinating the statewide dissemination and implementation of the Supporting Father Involvement project.

Activities

In order to transition toward modeling best practice, the Strategies three regional host agencies—Interface Children Family Services (central region), Youth for Change (northern

region), Children's Bureau (southern region)—agreed to take the self administered Organizational Self Assessment (OSA).

Results

The OSA is a tool that assesses an agency's current level of functioning in relationship to father involvement. The five areas of agency function include: 1) Agency physical environment; 2) Staff development reflects father inclusion; 3) Agency support for working with fathers, 4) Agency's community reputation for father involvement; 5) agency policies, procedures, and operations.

The three host agencies completed the OSA during this current federal fiscal year.

Activities

Regional host agencies will retake assessment in order to measure organizational progress on father friendliness.

Results

In order to measure organizational progress, all three host agencies will continue work towards implementing their set objectives and the goal of increasing their father friendliness. All sites are scheduled to conduct a post OSA May 2011.

Activities

Host and provide event coordination for a training of trainers for Strategies statewide fatherhood workgroup on the SFI intervention model and curriculum.

Results

In partnership with the five county sites, Strategies conducted three Group Leader Trainings (GLT) for community based organizations. Trainings were held in Ventura, Humboldt-Shasta, and San Diego. An additional three Group Leader trainings are scheduled for Butte, Los Angeles, and again in San Diego counties during FFY 2011.

Activities

Complete a total of nine orientation sessions over the three years to recruit new sites for participation at level one, two or three of the SFI training and TA options developed in the SFI application during FY 2007-08.

Results

The Strategies SFI team conducted a total of 17 SFI Trainings, workshops, and outreach events with a total of 600 participants, representing 31 counties across the state. In addition, the Strategies SFI team works closely with 13 Family Strengthening Networks. Multiple presentations and mini orientations have also been conducted at the network meetings.

Activities

In coordination with the SFI California Team, a training and technical assistance approach and curriculum were developed, along with enhancing on-line web resources to support dissemination efforts.

Results

The website attracted 1747 visitors; the web page was viewed 4,300 times and served as an entry point for 54 agencies requesting additional information.

Activities

Provide consultation to a total of 12 agencies to implement the Supporting Father Involvement intervention at level two or three.

Results

The Strategies SFI team provided 128 hours of consultation, technical assistance, and support to 16 agencies.

Activities

Document facility and/or policy changes at the 12 participating agencies that are implementing the SFI curriculum.

Results

Strategies is providing ongoing consultation, technical assistance and support to 16 agencies participating in the SFI project with the development of agency specific "father friendly" action plans.

Activities

Meet with top level CDSS managers to highlight SFI model and discuss father-friendly approaches.

Results

Strategies maintains regular communication with the OCAP managers to discuss project updates and directions. In addition, Strategies was invited by CalSWEC to present at their social work conference on April 21, 2010, and at their "Engaging and Working Effectively with Fathers in Child Welfare" webinar on August 25, 2010.

Activities

Provide a minimum of 50 hours of TA/training support to the five original SFI sites on their local dissemination plans.

Results

The goal of providing 50 hours of TA/training support was surpassed and is continuing on an as needed basis.

Activities

Support the implementation of one 32 hour SFI intervention group.

Results

Two (post research) SFI groups were conducted during FFY 2010, respectively at Interface Children Family Services in Ventura County and Redwood Community Action Center in Humboldt County.

An additional six sites are scheduled for February 2011: Santa Paula FRC in Ventura County, Magnolia Place FRC, Oakwood FRC and Hope Street Family Center all in Los Angeles County, Paradise Ridge FRC in Butte County, and Family and Youth Roundtable Center in San Diego County. These eight new sites have implemented the SFI intervention. Another eight counties have indicated interest in implementing the Intervention as well.

Activities/Results

During the first quarter of the new funding cycle, training and technical assistance to the five sites implementing the SFI study centered upon:

- Identifying challenges of working with public child welfare services families.
- Challenges related to successfully combining community families with child welfare services families.
- Data requirements: needs for and issues related to revising screening tools, assessment instruments, intake forms, etc. Issues related to domestic violence and its effects upon children.
- Curriculum assessment and revision needs.
- Cultural specific issues of domestic violence.
- Staff care techniques.

CITIZEN REVIEW PANELS (CRPS)

Established by federal statute in the CAPTA as a requirement for a state grant, the function of CRPs is to examine the extent to which state and local child protection agencies are discharging their child protection obligations. Evaluation involves examining child protection policies, practices, and procedures. Recommendations are then made to county and state governments for improvement.

The CRPs bring together citizens, former consumers of services, foster parents, child welfare services professionals, CASAs, children's attorneys, educators, representatives of tribal governments, representatives of county public health and mental health agencies, law enforcement officials, and others to review these policies, practices, and procedures.

Objective

Assure that there is a minimum of three CRPs operating in the state each year.

Activities /Results

Currently, there are three local panels located in Calaveras County, San Mateo County, and Ventura County. These panels are midway through the 2009-2012 funding cycle. Previously, California also had a statewide panel; however it disbanded and CDSS was notified in December 2010.

Objective

Maintain compliance with all federal CAPTA requirements regarding CRPs.

Activities/Results

All county panels are required to submit an annual report including recommendations to the state and/or local government and to CDSS. The CDSS responds in writing to the recommendations no later than six months after the date the reports are submitted.

The CRPs are engaging in on-going recruitment of members to create a diverse panel of private and public stakeholders. The CRPs are also developing and implementing the means by which recommendations will be disseminated to county and state officials and the public.

The state is in the process of developing regulations to help guide the work of the California CRPs. The goal is to clarify expectations and formalize procedures.

Objective

The enhancement of training and technical assistance provided to the CRPs.

Activities/Results

To facilitate understanding of the changing focus of the child welfare system in California, CDSS engaged a consultant who had background in child welfare service system improvement. The consultant provides technical assistance to panels through site visits, conference calls, and e-mails. During the last reporting period, the following technical assistance was provided:

- Site visits to the county CRPs with follow-up reports to CDSS.
- Program orientation and development of policies and procedures. Training to new the CRP and to CDSS staff regarding all aspects of the CRPs.
- As requested by CRPs, provide support documents, information about other state CRP practices, current trends and data to support chosen objectives.
- Telephone conference calls to obtain updates, provide guidance and answer questions.
- Review, provide input for and make revisions of reports prior to their submission to CDSS.
- Review work plans; assist in formalization of objectives and corresponding review activities.
- Provide on-going guidance to CRP counties and CDSS as requested.

Annual CRP Meeting

An annual meeting for all CRPs was held on June 15, 2010. Members from Calaveras, San Mateo, Ventura, and the state CRPs were invited to attend. The focus of this meeting was to acquaint all of the CRPs with one another and to share successes and challenges. It also served as an opportunity to review CRP requirements. A national expert on CRPs joined us for the meeting to share his considerable research knowledge and experiences as a CRP program coordinator. In addition, he offered ongoing technical assistance to the state to better meet the goals and objectives of CAPTA and California's CRPs.

As noted previously, CDSS was notified in December 2010 that the statewide CRP had disbanded and no meetings were held since they attended the June 2010 meeting of all CRPs. The Eleventh Annual Report, included as Attachment B, details the activities of the three local county panels.

SAFELY SURRENDERED BABIES (SSB)

This effort provides public awareness of the state law regarding abandonment of newborn babies and a statewide toll-free hotline as a resource for locating safe surrender sites throughout the state. The SSB law allows a responsible party to confidentially surrender a baby to a hospital, or fire station~~s~~ designated by the fire agency as a safe surrender site. A parent who is unable or unwilling to care for a newborn infant can legally and confidentially surrender their baby within 72 hours of birth, so long as there is no evidence of abuse or neglect. The goal of the SSB hotline and outreach program is to prevent injury or death to newborns that may be abandoned under unsafe conditions.

Objectives

- ✓ To provide a statewide, toll-free hotline telephone number for all safe surrender baby sites within California.
- ✓ To provide public awareness through education and outreach by providing and disseminating materials that educates the general public about the state law.

Activities/Results

The CDSS has awarded a grant to The Information and Referral Federation of Los Angeles County (DBA 211 Los Angeles County) to expand its existing information line from 20 counties to all 58 counties with listings and operator referrals of statewide safe surrender infant locations. A press release and ACIN I-19-10 provided notice to all the counties advising them to post the new toll free number (1-877-BABYSAF) on their web sites and to publicize it. A state law passed in 2010 that allows fire stations to become safe surrender sites by their fire agency approval rather than the approval solely by the county board of supervisors.

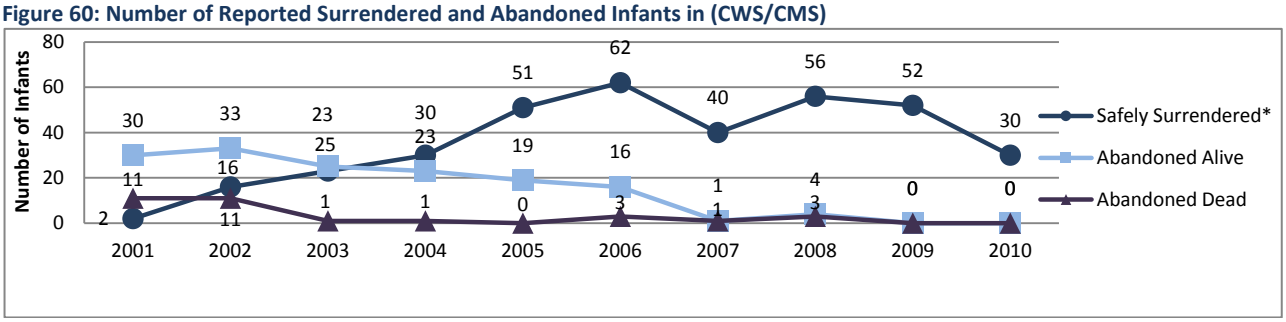
In the goal of increasing public awareness, CDSS continues to provide public outreach materials. The public education materials include posters and brochures that are available in both English and Spanish at no cost. These brochures and posters have been updated to incorporate the new toll-free telephone number. For 20 counties, the materials include a community information and referral telephone number at which operators also provide locations of safe surrender sites in those counties. From February 2010 to January 2011, 150 calls were answered by operators of the toll-free hotline number.

The SSB public education materials are available upon request. The types of agencies that request SSB materials are:

- ✓ Local health departments, hospitals, and other health care organizations (i.e., the California Health Care Association).
- ✓ Community-based service organizations (i.e., FRCs).
- ✓ Law enforcement (i.e., district attorneys, police departments, sheriff's departments, and probation offices).
- ✓ Public agencies, private organizations, and policy/decision makers from local government.
- ✓ State Departments (i.e., Education and Health Services).

- ✓ Community Institutions (i.e., schools, colleges and universities).
- ✓ As illustrated in Figure 60, the number of babies illegally abandoned decreased steadily since the implementation of the Safely Surrendered Baby Law in 2001, further leveling off between 2007 and June 30th 2010, while the number of safely surrendered babies increased during the early stages of implementation. The data are limited to reported cases in CWS/CMS and do not reflect information collected from other sources.

Figure 60: Number of Reported Surrendered and Abandoned Infants in (CWS/CMS)



**Safely Surrendered totals include infants who were also reclaimed. Data are limited to reported cases in CWS/CMS.*

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES FRAMEWORK

The CDSS is continuing to incorporate the Strengthening Families' framework. The CDSS is promoting the use of Protective Factors based on research, which has found that the most successful child abuse and neglect prevention interventions include strategies that both reduce risk factors and promote Protective Factors to ensure the well-being of children and families. The CDSS has been consulting with other states who have already implemented this framework and with the Center for the Study of Social Policy to further develop its strategy and implementation plan. In addition, CDSS has been looking at ways existing projects already contain the Protective Factors. While many other states have implemented Strengthening Families primarily via the Early Childhood Education area, California's approach has revolved around the Family Resource Centers, First Five, and other prevention and early intervention partners, and is led at the state level by OCAP. Currently, a statewide assessment of child abuse and neglect prevention activities, including the extent of the integration of the Five Protective Factors, is underway.

Objective

To strengthen the child abuse and neglect prevention network statewide.

Activities/Results

As mentioned previously, the OCAP has contracted with Strategies to serve as the coordinator for the statewide implementation of the Strengthening Families framework in partnership with the Center for Social Policy (CSSP). In September 2010, a first convening of leaders was held to explore statewide implementation of the framework. Commissioner Bryan Samuels of ACF, and Judy Langford of the CSSP, addressed the group of interested state leaders from both public and private agencies and provided insight into lessons learned from implementation in other states. The leadership team, now known as California Family Strengthening Roundtable, meets quarterly, and is developing a set of shared goals. In addition, the Roundtable is assessing priorities by examining three levers of change: social policy, parent involvement, and

professional development as part of the process in developing a statewide plan. The OCAP is incorporating the Five Protective Factors into grants and contracts. This includes projects such as the Family Development Matrix, a family assessment tool which has incorporated into its indicators the Five Protective Factors. Strategies have also provided 24 trainings statewide for front-line professionals in family strengthening organizations on the framework and the Five Protective Factors. The OCAP is planning a statewide Child Abuse Prevention Summit for September 2011, and a primary focus will be the Strengthening Families framework.

The California Department of Public Health's Maternal, Adolescent, and Children's Health Division, who is using the Strengthening Family framework as an organizing principle in their implementation of Evidence-Based Home Visiting Programs, has also agreed to participate in the Roundtable.

Objective

Conduct a Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention and Early Intervention Assessment

Activities

All of the assessment questions were designed to align with county SIP goals, the Strengthening Families' Five Protective Factors and the Pathways to the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect. The on-line child abuse prevention and early intervention survey was released in February 2011 to public and private prevention leaders, including representatives from child welfare, mental health department, probation, children's inter-agency collaborative councils, CAPCs, domestic violence organizations, FRC networks, county substance treatment and intervention programs, and other community based organizations. The survey contact list was developed from a combination of prevention partners identified in county SIPs, from CAPCs and Network of Network connections. All 58 counties have submitted responses to the survey. The survey provided information on the extent to which evidence-based frameworks are understood by staff and integrated throughout the planning and practice of county child welfare agencies and their community partners.

Beginning in April 2011, Strategies held focus groups in 20 counties. The purpose of the focus groups is to supplement the data garnered from the document review and survey, resolve unanswered questions, and elicit promising practices. The data collected from the focus groups is being analyzed to identify trends, consistencies, and variations. The 20 counties are a representative of the diverse geography, demographics and systems throughout California. Key informant interviews began in April 2011 with leaders and policy makers at the state level to determine their vision, understanding, beliefs, and assumptions about the current state and future direction of child abuse and neglect prevention in California. Key informants were also asked how they envision future supports such as training, technical assistance, and expectations as funders. The analysis from the information gathered will be included as a part of a final report due this summer.

The assessment will be helpful to the State to better identify activities designed to encourage the strengthening of public-private partnerships, identify opportunities for capacity building at the county level that will lead to greater local implementation of family strengthening strategies, and identify policy issues that may impact prevention and early intervention efforts.

Results of the assessment will be the focus of an afternoon Pre-Institute at a statewide Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention and Early Intervention Summit.

Objective

The development of a set of shared statewide standards for Family Resource Centers that incorporates the Strengthening Families' Five Protective Factors.

Activities

The California Network of Family Strengthening Networks (CNFSN) is currently developing the shared standards for Family Strengthening practice in California which are anticipated to be completed by December 2011. Meetings will be held on a quarterly basis. These standards will align with both the Strengthening Families' Five Protective Factors and with Family Support Principles.

CHAFEE FOSTER CARE INDEPENDENCE PROGRAM AND EDUCATION AND TRAINING VOUCHER PROGRAM

Program Contact Person:
Name: Theresa Thurmond, Manager,
Independent Living Program Policy Unit

Address: California Department of Social Services
744 P Street, M.S. 8-13-78
Sacramento, California 95814

Telephone No.: (916) 651-9974

The following document is arranged in accordance with the provisions of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Children, Youth and Families Program Instruction ACYF-CB-PI-11-06 requirements.

Part 1: Program Plan Narrative

The CDSS administers and monitors a statewide-, county-implemented ILP which includes the Transitional Housing Placement Program (THPP) and the Transitional Housing Program-Plus (THP-Plus). The CDSS will encourage the development and implementation of proven best practices and provide technical assistance to counties in the provision of core ILP services.

The CDSS requires all counties to offer core Chafee Foster Care Independence Program services to all eligible foster or former foster youth in California and provide documentation of outcomes. Throughout the state, counties are focusing more on providing services to this population of young adults in order to best serve their needs and ensure positive outcomes.

On October 1, 2010, **13,851** foster youth ages 16-18 were eligible for ILP services and over 23,000 services provided in FFY 2010, (see page 197 for details and methodology). Although CDSS does not currently collect data on the proportion of eligible youth who use ILP services, the state is working diligently to improve its data collection processes through the implementation of NYTD, improvements in SACWIS, and amendments to ad hoc reports.

The CDSS, in collaboration with county and state representatives, foster youth, and advocates, developed and implemented regulations to ensure that ILP services provided will improve outcomes for youth who emancipate from foster care.

The Exit Outcomes for Youth Aging out of Foster Care Quarterly Statistical Report (SOC 405E) quantitatively describes the status of youth at the time they age-out of foster care. Counties must submit this report each quarter. The report collects data on youth who aged-out of foster care during that quarter and includes information on outcomes, such as high school completion, enrollment in college, employment, housing, health care, permanent connections and financial information.

The data presented below are percentages of youth who aged out of foster care statewide for FFYs 2010 and 2009. Based on the Exit Outcomes data, 3,758 youth exited foster care during FFY 2010.

Table 13: Exit Outcomes Data for Youth who Aged Out of Foster Care (SOC 405E)

Outcome	Percent of Youth FFY 2009 n = 3,760	FFY 2010 n = 3,758
Permanent connection with at least one adult they can go to for support, advice and guidance	88%	98%
Received High School Diploma	47%	47%
Arranged to live free of rent with someone	38%	43%
Enrolled in a program to complete High School education	27%	30%
Enrolled in College	28%	30%
Receiving or applied for additional government financial resources	21%	27%
Plan to Enroll in College	21%	25%
Arranged to rent alone or with others	24%	25%
Employed Part-Time	27%	23%
Applied for Food Stamps	9%	23%
Arranged to live in supportive transitional housing	19%	16%
Dropped out of High School	13%	14%
Employed Full-Time	7%	6%
Received GED	5%	4%
Enrolled in Vocational Education	5%	4%
Arranged to live in subsidized housing	3%	2%
No medical insurance	2%	2%
No housing arranged	1%	1%

For FY 2009-10, CDSS received a federal grant of $19,155,835 and provided $13,221,000 in state dollars for a total allocation of $32,376,835.

In California's county administered state oversight system, CDSS provides the regulations, policies, and procedures necessary to implement the ILP program. Within the statutory and regulatory framework, counties are charged with offering core ILP services to youth throughout the state. The ILP unit at CDSS is the oversight mechanism to ensure that counties are using ILP funds for which they are intended.

1. HELP YOUTH MAKE THE TRANSITION TO SELF-SUFFICIENCY:

In accordance with MPP Division 31-525.8, the ILP is designed to offer core services that will enable foster youth 16-years-of-age and older, to develop the core living skills which assist the youth in the successful transition to adult living.

Core services are provided based on identified individual needs and goals as documented in the Transitional Independent Living Plan (TILP) including, but not limited to:

- ✓ Education.
- ✓ Career development.
- ✓ Assistance and referral to promote health (including mental health) and safety. Referral to available mentors and mentoring programs.

- ✓ Daily living skills.
- ✓ Financial resources, such as CalWORKs, Food Stamps, and Medi-Cal.
- ✓ Housing information including: federal, state, and local housing programs.
- ✓ Developing permanent connections to a supportive adult.

Services are available to youth in foster care between the ages of 16-18 and to eligible former foster youth between the ages of 18-20. Counties have the option to provide ILP services to youth as young as 14, however using county only funds.

The CDSS required counties to start reporting ILP services provided to youth in the CWS/CMS. Data collection began on April 1, 2009 in preparation for NYTD reporting. As expected, response rates for preliminary data reports for FFY 2009 were very low. Data are extracted from CWS/CMS by CWDAB in six month periods to coincide with data reporting for NYTD which began on October 1, 2010.

- ✓ The ILP delivered services report for FFY 2010 only includes youth who are currently in foster placement between the ages of 16 through 18. This data is still preliminary as not all counties were trained on data entry until September 2010. In spite of this, there has been significant improvement in reporting for FFY 2010 over 2009.

The table below is counts of services provided for current foster youth age 16-18 during FFY 2010. As reported in NYTD, the counts are unduplicated for each youth in foster care in each six month period. However as the table below reflects two report periods, there may be duplicate counts over time.

Table 14: Number of Services Provided during FFY 2010

Data are from NYTD, as reported in SACWIS for current foster youth age 16-18.

ILP Service Type	Number of Services Provided
Academic Support	3,430
Home Management	2,960
Career Guidance	2,871
Needs Assessment	2,476
Post-Secondary Education	1,987
Transportation/Other Financial Assistance	1,788
Employment/Vocational Training	1,515
Interpersonal/Social Skills/Parenting Skills	1,482
Health Care	1,432
Financial Management	1,165
Education Financial Assistance	995
Mentoring	644
Supervised Independent Living/Transitional Housing*	408
Room & Board Financial Assistance	34
Total Services Provided	**23,187**

*note: transitional housing does not refer to THPP or THP-Plus

Table 14 shows that academic support is the service provided most (n = 3,430), while home management services (i.e., skills around locating housing, understanding leases, deposits, rent,

utilities, maintaining a household, laundry, grocery shopping) were provided over 2,900 times. It is difficult at this point to assess how effective the counties are at providing ILP services because CDSS presumes that not all counties are correctly documenting in the SACWIS the services that youth receive. Even though there has been overall improvement in data reporting, it is still believed that services are being under reported. For example, the data from the ILP delivered services report shows that Los Angeles County served only *four percent* of eligible youth during the first six month report period compared to *17 percent of 5,409 eligible* youth during the next six month report period. It is evident that data entry is improving, but it will take time. As Los Angeles County has the highest number of youth in foster care, it is expected that it will take longer for the county to report more accurately compared to other counties which each have less than 1,000 ILP eligible youth in placed in foster care. There was a ten percent improvement statewide in the percentage of eligible clients served, suggesting that all counties are slowly improving in data entry. It is also important to note that ILP services are voluntary. Foster youth do not have to participate in ILP programs or activities. Therefore, although CDSS expects counties to significantly improve in the percentage of youth that receive ILP services, counties are not expected to serve 100 percent of ILP eligible youth.

With the implementation of NYTD on October 1, 2010, CDSS anticipates the database will provide a more accurate picture by capturing the services for both current and former youth up to 21 years of age. Prior to October 1, 2010 services could not be documented on youth aged 19-21. Please see the NYTD section of this chapter for further information.

Another opportunity to prepare foster youth for self sufficiency is through placement in THPP. THPP provides youth, aged 16-18, with the opportunity to experience semi-supervised apartment living while receiving supportive services. For FY 2009-10, *29 counties* participated in the Transitional Housing Program, a decrease of three counties from the previous fiscal year. A total of $583,000 combined federal and state funds were allocated for THPP in FY 2009-10.

Compliance with PL 110-351 and PL 111-148

In an effort to ensure that youth will successfully transition to self-sufficiency, two federal laws were recently chaptered, PL 110-351 and PL 111-148.

- State law implementing PL 110-351, became effective on January 1, 2010, requires counties to develop a transition plan within the 90-day period prior to the foster youth's 18th birthday, and emancipation from foster care. The CDSS has revised the 90-day transition plan for foster youth to meet the requirements of PL 110-351. Counties began using the new 90-day Transition plan in February 2010. In addition, W&IC Section 16501.1 (f) (16) (B) identifies the core life skills (including, but not limited to housing, health insurance, education, local opportunities for mentors and continuing support services, and workforce supports and employment services) that the social worker or probation officer must address in developing the 90-day Transition Plan with the foster youth.
- Additionally, PL 111-148, signed into law on March 23, 2010, requires the 90-day transition planning process to include the requirement to provide foster youth with information about health insurance options, a power of attorney for health care and the opportunity to execute the option of designating a health care power of attorney. The 90-day Transition Plan was

revised to include the requirement to inform foster youth of their option to designate a health care power of attorney

- Revision to current California statute was necessary to ensure this federal requirement is met. As foster care programs in California are implemented through the counties, it is necessary for the state to legislatively mandate new requirements that social workers and probation officers are expected to complete in order to ensure that counties are allocated the appropriate amount of funds to pay for social workers and probation officers time. The CDSS put forth language to amend W&I code section 16501.1 to add the requirements of PL 111-148. The amendment to W&I code section 16501.1 will include the requirement that the social worker or probation officer provide youth with information explaining a power of attorney during the 90-day transition planning process; the amendment is currently proposed in AB 212, which was introduced in the 2011-12 legislative session on January 31, 2011 by Assembly Member Beall. AB 212 makes changes to the current statute that was enacted through AB 12, chaptered in 2010.
- In California, only adults are legally able to execute an Advanced Health Directive designating a power of attorney, CDSS also put forth language to amend W&I code Section 391 to add the Advanced Health Directive form to the list of documents provided to youth upon reaching the age of majority while in foster care. This amendment is currently proposed in AB 212.

2. HELP YOUTH RECEIVE THE EDUCATION, TRAINING AND SERVICES NECESSARY TO OBTAIN EMPLOYMENT:

The ILP delivered services data (Table 14) shows that over *4,385 employment-related services* (career guidance and employment/vocational training) were provided to current foster youth during FFY 2010. The ILP regulations state that all ILP foster youth are to be enrolled in the county's career center for employment assistance.

Exit Outcomes data (Table 13) shows a four percent increase from FFY 2009 to FFY 2010 in the proportion of youth who left care during the period who were enrolled in either: 1) A program to earn their high school diploma or GE; 2) Enrolled in a vocational training program; or 3) Enrolled in college, from 60 percent to 64 percent, respectively. The slight increase may be likely due to improved data reporting from counties.

Upon leaving foster care, eligible foster youth can continue to receive the education and employment training needed to assist them in obtaining a vocational certificate and/or stable employment via the ILP aftercare services. These services are available to eligible former foster youth until the day before their 21st birthday.

Additionally, the SOC 405A, which reports data on emancipated youth who are receiving ILP services, shows that emancipated foster youth continue to seek assistance for education and employment needs. *Over 19,500 emancipated foster youth received ILP services in FFY 2010***.** Of these youth 27 percent were enrolled in a program to complete their high school education, 18 percent were enrolled in college and 22 percent obtained employment.

3. HELP YOUTH PREPARE FOR AND ENTER POSTSECONDARY TRAINING AND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS:

The Chafee Education and Training Voucher Program provides financial support to foster youth seeking postsecondary education or training. Chafee grants are used for education-related purposes such as tuition, tutoring, books, supplies, transportation, rent and child care. More detailed information is at the end of this section.

Table 14 shows that over *3,400 educational services* were provided to current foster youth during FFY 2010. Additionally, nearly *2,000 post-secondary educational services* (i.e., assistance in completing college applications, financial aid packets or touring a college campus) were provided to current foster youth during the same time period.

During FFY 2010, Exit Outcomes data (Table 13) reveals that *51 percent* of youth emancipated from care with a high school diploma or GED. An additional *30 percent* were enrolled in a program to earn their high school diploma or GED. Foster youth are allowed to remain in care, until they turn 19, to complete their high school diploma. It is likely that some of the *30 percent* who were enrolled in a program to complete high school requirements already turned 19 years old and emancipated due to their age. Thus explaining why the percentage of youth leaving foster care with a high school diploma is low. With the implementation of AB 12 effective January 2012, foster youth will be provided with a longer period of time to complete their high school diploma.

4. PROVIDE PERSONAL AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT TO YOUTH THROUGH MENTORS AND THE PROMOTION OF INTERACTIONS WITH DEDICATED ADULTS:

Providing personal and emotional support to youth through mentors and the promotion of interactions with dedicated adults is a crucial element in assisting foster youth 16 years and older to successfully transition to adult living. The CDSS collaborates and partners with numerous state agencies, advocacy organizations, and community based organizations and encourages the design of mentoring programs that utilize the following resources to provide this personal and emotional support to youth.

For FFY 2010, Table 14 shows that *644 mentoring services* were provided to current foster youth. The CDSS and Counties have made strong efforts to ensure that foster youth who age out of care have at least one permanent connection to an adult who will support them.

Exit Outcomes data (Table 13) shows that *98 percent* of the youth who aged-out of foster care report a permanent connection with at least one adult that they could go to for emotional support, advice and guidance, as compared to FFY 2009, with 88 percent of youth. The increase is may likely be attributed to improved reporting from counties, as CDSS has focused on permanent connections for youth for several years.

5. PROVIDE FINANCIAL, HOUSING, COUNSELING, EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION, AND OTHER APPROPRIATE SUPPORT AND SERVICES TO FORMER FOSTER CARE RECIPIENTS BETWEEN 18 AND 21 YEARS OF AGE TO COMPLEMENT THEIR OWN EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE SELF-SUFFICIENCY AND TO ASSURE THAT PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS RECOGNIZE AND ACCEPT THEIR PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR PREPARING AND THEN MAKING THE TRANSITION INTO ADULTHOOD

Youth who were in KinGAP at any age or in foster care between the ages of 16-18 are eligible for continued ILP (aftercare) services between the age of 18 and up to the day before their 21st birthday to help support them in achieving self-sufficiency. According to the SOC 405A, over *56, 000 youth were eligible* for aftercare services. Nearly *20,000 former foster youth received* aftercare services in FFY 2010, such as:

Employment skills.
Educational Support.
Health, safety, and hygiene.
Banking, money management, and budgeting.
Consumer purchasing, loans, and contracts.
Obtaining housing and home maintenance.
Interpersonal skills.
Knowledge of community resources.

Currently, CDSS does not collect data on the specific aftercare services provided to former foster youth. Changes have been made to our SACWIS system to allow for data to be captured for former foster youth and probation youth who receive ILP services through the ILP aftercare programs; data collection will begin in FFY 2011 with the implementation of NYTD.

Housing

Transitional Housing Program-Plus (THP-Plus)

The THP-Plus is a transitional housing placement opportunity for emancipated foster youth, aged 18-24, who emancipated from the child welfare system. The goal of the program is to provide a safe living environment while helping youth achieve self-sufficiency so that they can learn life skills upon leaving the foster care support system. Counties electing to participate in the program provide supervised independent living and support services.

In FY 2010-11, a total of *52 counties* are participating in THP-Plus. The amount of funding allocated for the program totaled $35.4 million and could fund a total of 1,198 beds. Youth are placed in an apartment-like setting and receive services. The program lasts for two years. At the end of the program, the youth, if they are able and want to stay in that apartment, can take over the apartment lease.

Assistance for chronically homeless youth

In 2004, California voters passed Proposition 63 (Mental Health Services Act) which provides increased funding, personnel and other resources to support county mental health programs and monitor progress toward statewide goals for children, transition age youth, adults, older adults and families. The Act addresses a broad continuum of prevention, early intervention and service needs and the necessary infrastructure, technology and training elements that

will effectively support this system. In 2006, Executive Order S-07-06 created, in part, a new supportive housing program jointly administered by the Department of Mental Health and the California Housing Finance Agency. In 2007, $400 million in MHSA funds were made available to finance the capital costs associated with development, acquisition, construction, and/or rehabilitation of permanent supportive housing for homeless individuals with mental illness and their families.

As of April 2011, nine counties are in the process of constructing or have completed 186 units specifically designated for Transitional Age Youth (TAY) only. Statewide, 609 units have been designated for adults which can include TAY who are homeless and have serious mental illness.

The Chafee Allocation for Room and Board

In accordance with the federal John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Act of 1999, a county may spend up to 30 percent of their ILP allocation for the room and board needs of eligible emancipated youth. The age of eligibility is from 18 years of age up to the day of their 21st birthday. Allowable expenditures for the 30 percent housing allocation may include the following variety of costs emancipated youth incur:

Food purchases.
Payment of rental deposits and/or utility deposits.
Payment of rent and/or utility bills.
Emergency assistance - the determination of which is a county's interpretation.
Moving expenses.
Furniture and/or household items.
Costs incurred through roommate network agencies.

The most recent available data from the ILP Annual Narrative and Statistical Report shows that counties *provided services to 1,088* emancipated foster youth under the Room and Board allowance.

Financial Support

Emancipated Youth Stipends (EYS)

EYS funds are 100 percent State General Funded and are a separate source of funds from a county's ILP allocation. The EYS funds are used to address the special and emergency needs of emancipated foster youth.

Counties have found this funding to be a vital means of providing a wide variety of services to youth. The EYS funds can be used to help recently emancipated youth with costs including, but not limited to: transportation, employment, housing and education. Counties use these funds to support emancipated youth in a variety of ways. Los Angeles County relies heavily on EYS funds to assist emancipated foster youth with education related expenses whereas Alameda County spends the majority of EYS funds on employment related expenses for emancipated youth.

For the FY 2009-10, the Emancipated Youth Stipend was suspended due to California's budget deficit. For the current FY 2010-11, funding was partially restored at $1,581,000,

approximately two million less than the funding provided to counties FY 2008-09. Counties expressed serious concern when the EYS fund was suspended and described the extra funding as critical in assisting transitioning and emancipated youth in continuing their education and assisting them with other financial needs as described above.

Employment

Workforce Investment Act and One-Stop Centers

All current and former foster youth between the age of 18 and up to the day before their 21st birthday are eligible to receive services through the provisions of The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and One-Stop Centers. According to the Workforce Services Division of the California Employment Development Department (EDD), statewide a total of 3,331 current and former foster youth enrolled in the WIA and One-Stop Centers in FFY 2010. During this period, a total of 1,935 foster youth exited from WIA and One-Stop Centers for various reasons, i.e., completed the training program, found employment, and no longer active, etc. Enrolled means any youth ages 14-21 served with WIA formula monies that identified and demonstrated they were eligible current or former (low income) foster youth were enrolled into intensive and training services. Exited means the number of youth who completed or left their program – some foster youth might stay on for more than one fiscal year and these exits would be reflected in subsequent year data. The WIA Title I system could have served more foster youth who were not formally enrolled, but instead served with universal or core services which are mainly self or group services in career development, job search, referral and other related services.

Table 15: EDD Data on WIA and One-Stop Centers

Current and Former Foster Youth	FFY 2009	FFY 2010
Enrolled in WIA and One-Stop Centers	4,335	3,331
Exited from WIA and One-Stop Centers	2,945	1,935

Based on data from EDD, of the 1,935 youth in FFY 2010 who exited from WIA and One-Stop Centers, 179 exited as a result of gaining employment; 177 in FFY 2009. The CDSS cautions that these data are limited individuals who self-report as foster youth; older youth ages 18-21 are less likely to report. Also, while exiting from these programs into employment is an important outcome, it is one of several focus areas of WIA services and tends to concentrated among adults and older youth. WIA also focuses on basic skills improvement (literacy and numeracy gains), enrollment into post- secondary-education, and attainment of a degree or certificate.

Counties provide additional employment related services through partnerships with community businesses, agencies such as Ameri-Corps, and direct services to the youth; these services are not usually reflected in the official EDD data.

Exit Outcomes Data

Exit Outcomes data (Table 13) reveals that *29 percent* of foster youth were employed, part or full time, when they aged-out of foster care. The *five percent decrease* from last FFY may likely be due to the high unemployment rates in California. According to statistics on the EDD website, California's unemployment rate was about three percent higher than the

national average. Additionally, SOC 405A data shows that *22 percent* of emancipated foster youth who received ILP services also obtained employment during FFY 2010.

6. MAKE VOUCHERS AVAILABLE FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING, INCLUDING POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION TO YOUTH WHO HAVE AGED OUT OF FOSTER CARE.

California Chafee Education and Training Vouchers Program (ETV) provides resources specifically to meet the educational and training needs of youth who are transitioning out of foster care. Please see page 213, Part 5, for further information regarding ETV.

7. PROVIDE SERVICES TO YOUTH WHO, AFTER ATTAINING 16 YEARS OF AGE, HAVE LEFT FOSTER CARE FOR KINSHIP GUARDIANSHIP OR ADOPTION

California youth who have left foster care after age 16 for adoption, guardianship or reunification are eligible for the same ILP services as youth who are currently in care between the ages of 16-18 or have aged out of care. Youth who are in California's KinGAP program are eligible for ILP services once the youth turns 16 regardless of the youth's age when exiting foster care for KinGAP. These services are funded through the state/federal Independent Living Program Allocation. Information about services for KinGAP youth is contained in heading number five. Further information regarding California's KinGAP program was previously described in the Guardianship section of this document, beginning on page 85.

Part 2: Coordinating Services with other Federal and State Programs and Indian Tribes

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (CDE)

The CDE funds and administers the FYS program; a program mandated through the Education Code sections 42920–25. The primary purpose of FYS is to provide advocacy and direct services to support the educational success of foster youth statewide. The FYS functions as a liaison between the foster youth and their educators to: 1) Improve pupil academic achievement; 2) Reduce the incidence of pupil discipline problems or juvenile delinquency; and 3) Reduce the rates of pupil truancy and dropout. The FYS provides foster youth with a wide range of academic support from tutoring to school based behavioral support, as well as, vocational education and emancipation services. The FYS outcomes and information was previously discussed in the Well-Being – Education Section of this document, beginning on page 135.

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES (DHCS)

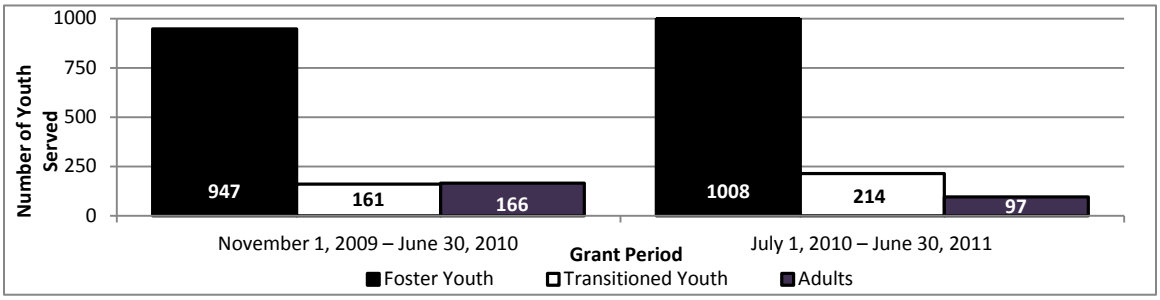
CDSS has expanded Medicaid to provide services to youth that have aged out of foster care and are at least 18 years of age and have not yet attained their 21st birthday. The program allows foster youth that are receiving foster care funds on their 18th birthday to remain eligible for Medi-Cal with no share of cost or monthly income evaluations. Re-determination will be left to each county per DCHS specifications. The CDSS continues to work with counties and the DHCS to ensure all eligible youth receive extended Medi-Cal benefits.

THE FOUNDATION FOR CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES (FCCC)

The collaboration between CDSS and the FCCC is to promote statewide educational training on life skills and college and career preparation to current and transitioning foster and probation youth aged 16 to 21 years. In addition, adult care providers including foster parents, kinship

caregivers, group home staff, and foster family agencies receive educational training in conjunction with these youth. Figure 61 below illustrates the number of youth served by the program, as provided by the FCCC:

Figure 61: Number of Youth Served by the FCCC (Data provided by the FCCC)



Youth driven services provided by the FCCC include:

- Increasing youth access to community college based vocational training and work experience.
- Offering either high school and/or college credit for participation in FCCC ILP program.
- Engaging youth in real-life, experiential independent living skills activities.
- Facilitating youth focus groups and roundtables, integrating youth feedback into program improvement strategies.
- Introducing and assisting youth to access campus and community based services.

The collaboration between CDSS, the FCCC, and FCCC's partnerships promotes:

- Collaborative needs assessments, multi-disciplinary, youth-driven needs assessments.
- The use of college and county resources.
- Program planning, implementation and continuous program improvement strategies to ensure optimal provision of service to all youth.
- Linkages through which foster youth receive individualized, age-appropriate and culturally-sensitive services.
- Implementation and evaluation of various ILP services.
- Integration with statewide initiative (California College Pathways project) to streamline transfer process from community colleges to four year institutions.

JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION ACT OF 1974

At this time, CDSS does not have data in this regard. There are no identified Projects jointly funded with CDSS under part B of title III of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 to address the immediate needs of runaway and homeless foster youth. However, CDSS is aware that counties work with homeless shelters in their areas to provide homeless former foster youth with a safe place to stay until the youth can secure housing. To view the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act Annual Report to Legislature 2010, please visit the following website: http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/CSA/CPP/Grants/JJCPA/Docs/Reg_Book-with_corrections.pdf

CURRENT AND FORMER FOSTER YOUTH INVOLVEMENT

The CDSS has made an ongoing effort since 1992 to include the input of current and former foster youth. The CDSS has, in every possible instance, made certain that foster youth participate in Departmental initiatives such as the BSC redesign of ILP, conferences or trainings, the development of the ILP/THPP/THP-Plus Regulations and the TILP. The CDSS provides funding and in kind support to and regularly meets with the California Youth Connection (CYC) and The Foster Care Ombudsman's Office (FCO) to seek input and insight of former foster youth. The department is currently working with the CYC and FCO on the implementation of AB 12. Current and former foster youth are also participating in the AB 12 kick-off meeting held at CDSS.

More specifically, CDSS has engaged and solicited involvement from foster youth in the following ways:

- CDSS, CWDA and the Co-Investment Partnership are partnering with California Connected by 25 Initiative and CYC to create a State Youth Council, where youth Ambassadors will be trained in the process of policy implementation, public speaking and other leadership skills. Youth Council Ambassadors will act as technical assistants, providing valuable insights about policies and practices that engage youth, build youth-adult partnerships and improve the foster care system. The State Youth Council were or are currently recruiting former foster youth 14-24 years old from each of the following 13 counties: Fresno, Glenn, Humboldt, Monterey, Napa, Los Angeles, Orange, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Francisco, Santa Clara, Solano and Ventura. Currently, the Ambassadors are reviewing current state policies, participating in a variety of state workgroups, and provide technical assistance in a wide range of topics covering the continuum of care.
- Executive staff from the department meets quarterly with CYC to hear concerns and solicit feedback on a variety of issues.
- Foster youth advocacy and network groups such as the Youth Law Center, Foster Youth Alliance, and Alliance for Children's Rights are closely involved in several CDSS initiatives, including the implementation of AB 12.
- The 2011 National Foster Care Month on May 3rd at the State Capitol honored foster youth, including their involvement and advocacy in state initiatives.
- Ombudsman's office regularly campaigns to encourage youth to be involved in the office, either as paid or volunteer staff. Their website has a page that provides information on opportunities for involvement, http://www.fosteryouthhelp.ca.gov/Involved.html. The office also regularly engages in outreach activities throughout the state.
- The NYTD project has foster youth involved as staff or volunteers to assist with outreach and recruitment.
- Two foster youth alumni, with the help of CDSS created a rap song called U-NYTD to encourage participation and improve outreach for NYTD. The song is currently being distributed across several states.

- Twice yearly, CDSS distributes a newsletter to approximately 18,000 current and former foster youth outlining Chafee programs and benefits, as well as information and opportunities for involvement.

CALIFORNIA INDIAN TRIBES

The CDSS requires each of the counties to submit an ILP Annual Report and Plan to report the methods used to ensure that all youth have equitable access to services. The state is ensuring that services are being made available to tribal youth by requiring counties to report on the way youth are made aware of ILP services/programs offered in their county; the number of tribal youth who are eligible for services; the number of tribal youth who are participating in ILP services; and the methods the counties are using to collaborate with tribal representatives to ensure that tribal youth receive culturally appropriate services. These responses are reviewed by CDSS, which provides oversight to the county administered ILP programs.

According to the ILP Annual Report and Plan for FFY 2010, 427 tribal youth were eligible for ILP; over 56 percent of whom participated in ILP services.

Consultation

As a state with 106 federally and 69 non-federally recognized tribes, CDSS utilizes its ICWA Workgroup (described further in the ICWA chapter) as the primary means of consultation with tribes. However, counties work with the tribes in their individual jurisdictions to consult and obtain input about their ILP programs, to coordinate the programs, and to ensure that youth are referred to culturally appropriate services and resources. Some counties with a large representation of tribes within their jurisdictions report having tribal round tables, alliances, or consortiums that are comprised of tribal representatives, county and tribal social workers, probation officers, and court personnel who meet regularly to discuss ICWA, tribal needs and services, including ILP, and improved collaboration and communication. Other counties report having specialized units or liaisons that consult directly with tribes.

Some tribes that counties work with include: Washoe Tribe, Cachil Dehe Wintum Tribe, Smith River Rancheria, Elk Valley Rancheria, Resignhini Rancheria, Yurok Tribes, Hoopa Tribes, Quechan Tribe, Susanville Rancheria, MiWuk Tribe, Toiyabe Tribe, San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, Karuk Tribe, Quartz Valley Indian Reservation, and Tule River Tribal Council.

Coordination

County-specific examples of tribal coordination of programs include San Bernardino County's collaboration with the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians to ensure that ILP services are culturally appropriate. Some counties attend monthly meetings with ICWA Workgroups to discuss case specific issues, including culturally appropriate services. Humboldt County has eight federally recognized tribes. The county ILP has developed strong connections with service providers on local reservations and utilizes these providers (e.g. tribal social services, tribal health services, and employment services) to ensure needed service delivery. These connections allow ILP to offer support and referrals to services already available in tribal communities. Some of the services utilized are: Two Feathers Native American Family Services,

United Indian Health Services, Step Up! For Youth Jobs Program on the Hoopa Reservation, and California Indian Manpower.

Equal access to and availability benefits and services for Indian youth

Tribal youth are made aware of ILP services/programs in the same ways as other youth are in the counties. Some of the ways include: social worker and probation discussions of ILP activities, notices, newsletters, monthly calendars of workshops/activities, ILP pamphlets that provide an overview of services, website information, ILP orientations, annual events, and collaborations with community members. Counties work with local tribal communities to ensure that all tribal youth have been identified and inform tribal representatives of ILP activities and events. ILP benefits and services include: daily living skills, money management, decision making skills, safety skills, career development, building self-esteem, medical services, financial assistance with college or vocational schools, educational resources, housing, and employment.

As well, the statewide Standards for the ILP is a mechanism that provides guidance to the counties on fair and equitable provision of services to current and former foster youth, including Tribal youth. Counties use a variety of methods to ensure that services are available to all youth, such as: providing transportation or bus passes, regionalizing activities, assessing local compliance with the American with Disabilities Act, mailing information on a monthly basis to all eligible youth and their caregivers, having direct contact with the youth, and providing bilingual interpreters for hearing impaired youth. Some smaller counties are able to provide one-on-one services to youth to ensure that all of their needs are being met.

The CDSS works collaboratively with community partners in receipt of a federal grant to develop the Tribal Successful Transitions for Adult Readiness (STAR) Project to ensure that Native American youth are offered the full range of ILP services in culturally sensitive manner. The Project is designed to enhance and improve outcomes for tribal youth exiting the foster care system with an emphasis on training and providing assistance to public child welfare workers, American Indian youth, and American Indian Child Welfare workers. Orange, San Diego, Riverside and San Bernardino counties collaborated with Tribal STAR for ICWA specific training. Imperial County ILP staff participate in Tribal STAR gatherings and summits. The Southern Indian Health Council and San Diego County's Health and Human Services Agency are members of the advisory group for the STAR project. Some counties have local tribal representatives to their monthly meetings. In turn, some tribes publicize ILP activities in their tribal newsletters.

All ILP eligible youth receive the same opportunity to participate in ILP activities/services to develop the skills needed to become self-sufficient. For example, in San Diego County, ILP contractors work together to develop curriculum/workshops and are monitored by county staff to ensure that all youth receive similar services throughout the county's six regions. There are also Indian Specialty Unit social workers who provide culturally appropriate case management services including Independent Living Skills in conjunction with tribal services, to all children of American Indian heritage. In Los Angeles, County, ICWA Social Workers train ILP staff on culturally sensitive information about youth in foster care.

Counties collaborate with local tribes as well as other organizations such as: AmeriCorps, Job Corps, TribalSTAR Gathering Interdisciplinary Trainings, US Armed Forces, Regional Occupational Programs, Public Transportation Agencies, Employment Development, Family Service agencies, tribal social services and health services, local community colleges and universities, financial institutions, and California Youth Connection to meet the needs of tribal youth. San Bernardino County has a contract with one transportation company to provide transportation services to youth in the outlying regions who cannot attend workshops due to lack of transportation. Shasta County has established mentors from various tribes who are willing to mentor tribal foster care youth. Riverside County collaborates with Tribal STAR, which matches youth with adult mentors.

Tribal Negotiation

During this FFY, no tribes have requested either to develop an agreement to administer or supervise the CFCIP or an ETV program with respect to eligible Indian children or to receive an appropriate portion of the State's allotment for such administration or supervision.

In the next two years, additional efforts will be made on a state level to engage Tribal participation and input. These include: re-invite ICWA participants to the CWDA ILP Subcommittee Meetings; contact ILP Coordinator Regional Meeting members to invite Native American participants to Regional Meetings; and increase CDSS presence at ICWA Meetings.

Part 3: Training

THE BREAKTHROUGH SERIES COLLABORATIVE

The BSC methodology was identified as an effective approach that would assist counties with the goal of redefining and reshaping programs and services promoting permanency and preparation of foster youth for adulthood. The emphasis is on ensuring that each transitioning foster youth's individualized case plan will support all of their transition goals in the areas of permanence, education and employment.

The goals of the BSC/ILP Transformation are:

- ✓ Increase foster children's and youth's access to permanent homes and connections to communities, culture and important adults.
- ✓ Increase exits to permanency (reunification, adoption, legal guardianship) for youth ages 14 to 18 who are in care for 24 months or longer.
- ✓ Permanency and Lifelong Connections: Increase in foster youth and youth transitioning from foster care reporting that they have at least one family member or supportive adult with whom they feel they have a lifelong connection.
- ✓ Increase engagement of youth as true partners.
- ✓ Increase youth transitioning from foster care reporting that they are receiving community-based and experiential services and activities in preparation for their transition from foster care.
- ✓ Increase in foster youth transitioning from care making progress towards graduation from high school and post secondary readiness.

- ✓ Increase in foster youth transitioning from care receiving work experience, consistent with their self-identified career goals prior to leaving the foster care system.

The project began on October of 2008 and went through May of 2010, with work since that time involving outreach to participating county teams and synthesis of their information and integration of the lessons learned for county work moving forward. Over the course of the past two years, nine California County teams (Fresno, Los Angeles, Monterey, Napa, Orange, Sacramento, San Francisco, Santa Clara, and Solano) came together to plan and test transformational ILP practices and strategies to more effectively support foster youth to succeed in school, work and life.

Although the Collaborative has formally ended, all BSC counties were encouraged to integrate numerous other BSC and system improvement efforts they were engaged in with their work. Participating county teams have successfully completed the final BSC action period and are engaged in implementation, spread, and sustainability of their new practices for:

- *Facilitating Relationships and Permanency:* Staff and content trainers guided teams in testing practices that find and connect youth to family relationships and support permanency. Teams were helped to identify and test informal, youth-centered and relationship-based inquiry skills that highlight the people involved in the youth's life and the impact of supporting youths' relationships with family that will endure over time. Content trainers helped teams and organizations understand the key role they play in creating and communicating permanency as a priority for youth. The Five Youth Challenge was a concrete strategy developed and used with teams to help them explore existing permanency resources and practices and apply them to five youth from their BSC target population. Teams worked intensively during the final Action Period towards developing "love and belonging – permanency for a lifetime" for each of these youth, while integrating education and employment planning and support. This work then became a key component of team sustainability plans.
- *Facilitating Partnerships with Youth and Other Adults:* Staff and content trainers kept a consistent focus on youth-adult partnerships in their training and technical assistance. Adults in youth's lives are in a position to facilitate family and other partners coming together in planning, decision-making processes, and team meetings with youth. Content trainers encouraged teams to understand the value of having the adults in a youth's life encourage, facilitate, and support these partnerships and processes and participate in decision-making and activities. Former foster youth content trainers were very active in developing agendas and learning session curriculum to facilitate team learning about youth-adult partnerships.
- *Integrating permanency, education and employment goals:* Staff and content trainers provided technical assistance to teams in identifying and trying out integrative practices in the areas of permanency, education and employment in their work with foster youth. This included strategies for working with caregivers to provide the setting, opportunity, coaching, and support for children and youth in their care to learn and integrate specific developmental skills at home and in the community, helping teams to realize the potential to start learning and skill-building much earlier than is currently the norm for children and

youth in foster care. County teams were encouraged to prioritize permanency while actively integrating work on education and employment goals.

The key transformational characteristics that also informed this last action period helped counties to better understand what transformation looks like. Those transformational characteristics include: individualized attention; integration of permanency, education and employment; real world connections; and normalizing experiences that provide connection to home, school and community-based resources and services. The nine County Teams worked intensively on integration, spread, and sustainability of their practices. Emerging practices include:

- A school-based support and partnership model structured within existing school advisory classes and a school club that focuses on partnering with youth, caregivers, and community to reach educational goals of graduation, higher education, and careers;
- Teaming through "My Time" or "Life" conferences that partner with youth, their families and caregivers early and regularly to plan for their futures and provide transition supports;
- Providers engaging in partnerships with youth and caregivers in a "Circle of Support" model that engages youth in planning for their futures and provides what they individually need;
- Leveraging and integrating planning processes that address the whole youth such as integrated Transitional Independent Living and Mental Health Treatment Plans, caregiver outreach, and engagement.

CALIFORNIA CONNECTED BY 25 INITIATIVE (CC25)

The CC25, which began in 2005, is an F2F initiative designed to assist public welfare agencies and their communities in building comprehensive supports and services to address the needs of transition age foster youth. The goal of the initiative is that "through positive youth development and integrated systems of support and services, transitioning foster youth are connected by age 25 to the opportunities, experiences and support that will enable them to succeed throughout adulthood." The initiative is part of a national CC25 work of the Youth Transition Funders Group. Currently, eight counties continue to participate in CC25: Fresno, Glen, Humboldt, Orange, San Francisco, Santa Clara, Solano, and Stanislaus.

The goal of the initiative has been that "through positive youth development and integrated systems of support and services, transitioning foster youth are connected by age 25 to the opportunities, experiences and support that will enable them to succeed throughout adulthood." The initiative is part of a national CC25 work of the Youth Transition Funders Group.

The CC25 counties are assisting in the development of CC25 values, tools and practices that have been used for building a comprehensive continuum which will improve outcomes for transitioning foster youth. TheCC25 counties are implementing strategies that can be replicated statewide to improve the adult transition experiences of all California's foster care youth. The initiative is being developed to assist county child welfare agencies and their

communities to build a comprehensive continuum of supports and services across seven key focus areas:

- ✓ K-12 Education.
- ✓ Employment/Job Training/Postsecondary Education.
- ✓ Housing.
- ✓ Independent Living Skills Program.
- ✓ Financial Competency, Savings and Assets.
- ✓ Personal/Social Asset Development.
- ✓ Permanency.

Challenges for the multiple sites during 2010 included sustaining high impact and promising practices in light of significant budgets shortfalls across all eight sites, and understanding how to support a Youth Empowerment Culture including recruitment of youth leaders, sustainability and retention of youth leaders, and ensuring youth are true partners on boards and in initiative work.

Outcomes for sites included implementation of the CC25 Efforts to Outcome database. In order to address workload and duplication efforts for the sites, the Efforts to Outcome data elements are the same as the state's Exit Outcomes for Youth Aging out of Foster Care Statistical Report. The CDSS recently implemented this new data collection tool whereby counties must submit this report each quarter. The report collects data on youth who have aged out of foster care in that quarter and includes information on outcome related domains such as: high school completion, enrollment in college, employment, housing, and financial information.

Additional CC25 outcomes during this reporting period included close alignment with other statewide initiatives including the BSC on ILP Transformation, the Ready to Succeed Educational Initiative, and the emerging statewide AB12 planning and implementation activities.

Over the past five years, the eight CC25I counties have transformed the way they work with youth preparing to exit from the foster care system and we have learned that with the right combination of supports foster youth are able to successfully transition to adulthood, often exceeding the outcomes of their peers in the general population.

With the passage of AB12, California will springboard ahead of most other states in the implementation of the Federal Fostering Connections Act, a key opportunity for future support and investment.

Given this, CC25I will conclude at the end of 2011 and transition to a more focused strategy associated with the implementation of AB 12. While no new CC25 Initiative investments will be made, participating counties will continue to receive technical assistance to support their benchmarks throughout 2011 and the CC25 Initiative leadership team will remain in place during the year as a support for the eight participating counties.

THE CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

For FFY 2010, through the Chancellor's Office, training was provided to over 5,000 kinship caregivers and 10,000 foster parents statewide. Training areas included but not limited to:

helping caregivers prepare foster youth for independent living, diversity, accessing education and health services, adolescent pregnancy prevention, and the importance of self-esteem.

Part 4: The National Youth in Transition Database

In mid-summer 2008, the CDSS NYTD workgroup which consists of state, county and probation personnel, as well as former foster youth, CWDA and other concerned stakeholders developed and launched the NYTD implementation plan. The NYTD workgroup now meets on a monthly basis to oversee and advise on the ongoing tasks to be accomplished for NYTD compliance. The CDSS's NYTD workgroup established the requirements and training for accessing and entering necessary changes to the CWS/CMS. System changes were implemented and took effect on August 28, 2010 for both County Child Welfare and Probation agencies.

The CDSS entered into an interagency agreement with UC Davis Center for Public Policy and Research (CPPR) for collecting baseline population survey data from 17-year-olds on January 1, 2010 through December 31, 2011. The CPPR was charged with developing the methodology for administering baseline surveys *within 45 days of the youth's birthday*; repeated data collection periods will occur when these same youth (follow-up population) are ages 19 and 21. The ground work necessary for conducting the follow-up studies for surveying these same youth when they turn 19 and 21 is now in the early planning stages. The task of surveying youth turning 17 is currently ongoing in all of California's 58 counties, and will continue through September 30, 2011, and 45 days after (November 15, 2011).

The CDSS holds almost daily consultations by e-mail and telephone and weekly meetings with CDSS and CPPR to identify solutions to the challenges of increasing survey participation by garnering local county contacts to reach out to each youth who is survey eligible. Please see Table 16 a summary of the NYTD report for the period of October 1, 2010 through March 31, 2011.

Table 16: NYTD Survey and Delivered Services Summary* for the period of October 1, 2010 - March 31, 2011

	Count	Percent
Total number of youth who received an ILP service	12,232	
Number of Survey Eligible Youth	2,632	
Youth with no survey information	1057	40.16
Youth Declined	158	06.00
Youth Incapacitated	12	00.46
Youth Incarcerated	73	02.77
Runaway	375	14.25
Unable to Locate (formal exit from foster care)	41	01.56
Youth Participated in Survey	916	34.80
Late surveys (federal standard 10%)	213	23.25

***Source NYTD 2011A**

As contracted, UCD CPPR sent the survey data to CDSS for the first of the two reporting periods, on April 15, 2011, and will again send the next six months worth of data by Oct 15, 2011. The CDSS monitors survey progress by meeting weekly with CPPR staff.

The first report outlined in the table above represents the surveys conducted from October 1, 2010 through March 31, 2011.

During the reporting period, 916 youth (34.8 percent of those eligible) were surveyed, of which 703 (76.7 percent) were surveyed within the required 45 days and 213 (23.3 percent) were surveyed late.

The CDSS is currently examining the challenges in contacting the 1057 youth (40.16 percent of survey eligible youth) who CPPR could not reach and therefore could not make a determination nor offer the survey within the NYTD time period. The NYTD Workgroup is focusing efforts on improving survey participation by: 1) Informing counties of the need for timely data entry to improve contact with youth; 2) Providing tools to easily identify eligible youth for caseworkers who can encourage survey participation; and 3) Public service announcements.

A second segment of the NYTD federal mandate involves accurate and timely documentation of delivered ILP services to eligible youth in the CWS/CMS System on the part of county probation and child welfare/ ILP personnel. The inaugural delivery of semi-annual reports on the ILP delivered services data and survey data began in perpetuity on October 1, 2010. The data gleaned for this report indicated that 12,232 youth received ILP services in the six-month period from October 1, 2010 - March 31, 2011.

Part 5: Education and Training Voucher Program

The CDSS, in its continuing efforts to assist foster youth in making a successful transition to self-sufficiency and receive the education, training and services necessary to obtain employment, provides oversight to the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) which administers the California Chafee ETV. The ETV provides resources specifically to meet the educational and training needs of youth who are transitioning out of foster care. Eligible youth can be awarded a grant up to $5,000 per school year and the grant does not need to be paid back. The awards are intended to supplement, not supplant, any grant funds that the student may otherwise be entitled to receive. The total grant funding may not exceed the student's cost of attendance.

To qualify, the youth must have been in foster care between the ages of 16-18 and have not reached their 22nd birthday as of July 1 of the award year. The student must be enrolled in an eligible career, technical school, or college course of study for one year or at least half- time and must maintain satisfactory academic progress to continue receiving the grants.

The ETV program will provide eligible youth access to educational and vocational resources through reimbursable costs for:

- ✓ Tuition at an institution of higher education, not to exceed the lesser of $5000 or the total cost of attendance.
- ✓ The purchase of technical equipment, to include, but not limited to, computers, calculators, and supplies associated with course work.
- ✓ Transportation.
- ✓ Childcare.
- ✓ Rent.

For the 2009-10 academic year (beginning July 1 through June 30 of each year), 3,023 youth were awarded ETV grants. Any unused/unclaimed grant money is returned and redistributed to other eligible youth. The CDSS distributes Chafee information to eligible youth semi-annually.

CSAC reports the total Chafee ETV awards as follows:

Table 17: Chafee ETV Awards

Academic Year 2010/11, as of April 4, 2011

	Number of Awards	Average Award Amount
New Awards:	1,199	$4,480
Renewal Awards:	1,674	$4,622
Total of All Awards:	2,873	$4,569

TITLE IV-E CHILD WELFARE WAIVER DEMONSTRATION CAPPED ALLOCATION PROJECT

The Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project (CAP) is in the fourth year of implementing the waiver demonstration. Alameda and Los Angeles counties are the two participating counties. Under the CAP, the waiver counties have the opportunity to reinvest their foster care savings to create a more responsive array of services and supports for families typically funded using Title IV-B funds. The specific goals of the CAP are to:

- ✓ Improve the array of services for children and families and engage families through a more individualized approach that emphasizes family involvement.
- ✓ Increase child safety without an over-reliance on out-of-home care.
- ✓ Improve permanency outcomes and timelines.
- ✓ Improve child and family well-being.

The five-year project began on July 1, 2007 and will end on June 30, 2012. California received federal approval on August 6, 2010, for an initial short-term 10-month waiver extension. The CDSS requested an additional two months from ACF and on February 28, 2011, received short-term extension approval through June 30, 2013. The CDSS has begun the process of planning and developing a five-year waiver extension proposal to be submitted to ACF in January 2012.

The California Federal Terms and Conditions were amended on November 19, 2010, by ACF to reflect the funding adjustment for the extension of the temporary increase in the Federal Medical Assistance Percentages authorized under Public Law 111-226.

Casey Family Programs (CFP) has continued working into year four with Alameda and Los Angeles counties to implement and evaluate system improvements that safely reduce the number of children in foster care and support child and family stability under the CAP. For Los Angeles County, CFP is currently funding contracted consultation services for DCFS, three Probation management positions, and assisting with local evaluation efforts. In Alameda County, CFP has supported their permanency and evaluation efforts and the design and implementation for the Alameda County Social Services Agency data warehouse.

Highlighted implementation to date in the two CAP counties is provided below:

Over the first three years of the CAP, the Alameda County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) has implemented waiver strategies that are expansions of pre-waiver activities, strategies that are part of other existing reform initiatives, or newly created innovative programs and services. One program that the county has expanded to enhance safety and reduce first entries into care is the Alternative Road to Safety (ARS) Prevention Program, an alternative response program providing intensive home-based family support services.

In expanding this model to the FM Program, Alameda DCFS has focused on increasing the number of children who safely and permanently reunify with their families and reducing the number of children reentering foster care. The Paths to Success (P2S) serving FM families is being evaluated with support from CFP.

Additional investments include an increase in child welfare workers and supervisors, county counsel positions, and family finding support staff; funding for behavioral health services and group home placement services; and an expansion of the Independent Living Skills Program.

The Alameda County Probation Department has focused on strategies to reduce the need for out-of-home placement that included the development of the Screening for Out-of-Home Service Committee. This strategy established a review and approval process for preventing unnecessary out-of-home placement and increased utilization of alternative dispositions for Family Preservation, community probation, and enhanced community-based programs for probation youth and families. In addition, the CAP has funded nine positions to enhance and retain staffing in the Family Preservation Unit.

Under the CAP, Los Angeles County has been able to implemented upfront assessments (UFAs) countywide for high risk families to reduce entries and reentries into foster care and to increase services supporting timely reunification. To date, 1,992 families with 5,896 children have received UFAs during referral investigations. Los Angeles County has also continued to fund the Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project (PIDP), which is a comprehensive, strengths-based child abuse and neglect prevention system that operates in all eight county Service Planning Areas. This countywide initiative is a collaborative effort between the County's public child welfare system and community-based organizations.

The Los Angeles Probation Department has focused on reducing the number of youth and length of stay in congregate care under the waiver. The CAP has supported increased staffing and expanding the use of two evidence-based practices to treat youth and families. These two practices, Functional Family Therapy, and Multi-Systemic Therapy are empirically researched practices that have demonstrated effectiveness in reducing the rates of out-of-home placements and increasing improved parent/caregiver interactions, thus supporting permanency for probation youth.

Both counties have identified the following reinvestment strategies for the upcoming Project Year Five:

Alameda County DCFS will continue their current array of waiver investments with the addition of a Post Dependency Services Package to be implemented in year five. Alameda Probation identified they will continue to fund the current positions supporting the CAP.

Los Angeles County DCFS identified it will continue to fund the existing waiver strategies of expanded Team Decision Making, countywide upfront assessments, Youth Permanency Units, funding the PIDP at a reduced rate, and funding educational and vocational needs of transitioning youth. In addition, dependent on available county reinvestment funds they will enhance support for reunified families, expand the parent partners program, develop additional visitation centers, and expand YP Units to other regional offices. The Los Angeles Probation Department will continue to implement their three existing strategies.

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Training and Staff Development

California's state-supervised, county-administered child welfare services system presents unique challenges and opportunities for developing and delivering training to various professional and paraprofessional child welfare staff and providers throughout the State. In FY 2009-10, the child welfare budget was reduced by $80 million, and the impact to the training budget was a 33 percent reduction totaling almost $2.9 million. As a result, social workers, supervisors, and other leadership staff in counties did not receive the anticipated training in a variety of areas. Among other reductions, the Wraparound Technical Assistance Contract that was reported in the 2010 APSR was removed as a direct result of the 33 percent reduction in the training budget and is therefore not included in the 2011 report. The Title IV-E Web-Based Training for County Eligibility Workers is an addition to the training plan.

The CDSS, with assistance from the CalSWEC and with the concurrence of the CWDA, established the Statewide Training and Education Committee (STEC), which is comprised of representatives from CDSS, CWDA, RTAs, CalSWEC, Inter-University Consortium/Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services' Training Unit, county staff development, Title IV-E Stipend Program, representatives from tribes/tribal organizations and unions. The STEC has continued to be utilized as a key communication venue in achieving the state's new strategies and goals. Meetings have continued quarterly with this group.

Principles and expected outcomes identified by the ACF guided much of the planning for the second round of the PIP, which was developed in response to the federal CFSR, and in the development of California's CFSR. The specific strategies, goals, action steps are included in this report as part of the Completed PIP Action Steps (pages 31-36). Changes have been made to Primary Strategies I, IV, V and VI during the FY 2009-10. The following section includes updated details of activities that occurred over FFY 2010 and FFY 2011 for training programs, services and activities identified in the five-year staff development and training plan.

COST ALLOCATION METHODOLOGY

Unless otherwise noted, the allocation of costs to benefitting programs for each training described herein is based on an analysis of the training topics and the target audience. The training vendor receives a Title IV-E determination checklist that is then submitted to the State Program Manager. This form identifies Title IV-E eligible training activities at the enhanced rate, the administrative rate, and the transitional rate based on analyses of the target audience. The non-Title IV-E activities are also described and the vendor provides the percentage of time for each activity at each rate.

PL 110-351 allows for the training of a broader audience. The target audience is necessary to identify those who are and are not necessary for the administration of the Title IV-E programs; for example, service providers, hotline and emergency response workers would not be necessary for the operation of the Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance Programs. Some programs have additional requirements which must also be considered. For instance, Foster Care eligible training costs are allocated to benefiting programs determined by course curriculum and participants, and the costs must be discounted by the State Foster Care caseload ratio. The activities in all IV-E eligible training contracts must meet the applicable

requirements established in 45 CFR 1356.60 and 235.60-66 (a). Identification of training topics and participants is used to determine whether the activity is eligible for FFP, and if so, at what rate. The FFP training rate varies effective October 7, 2008, from 55 to 75 percent, and 50 percent FFP rate for administrative activities.

All training contracts reflect the appropriate allocation of Title IV-E dollars for the application of the 75 percent enhanced training rate, the 50 percent administrative rate, and the appropriate phased in training rate per Public Law 110-351, discussed below and further outlined in ACL 09-80.

The "Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008" (PL 110-351) provides for additional categories of trainees eligible to receive Title IV-E short-term training. Training can be provided to relative guardians, State-licensed or State-approved child welfare agencies providing services, members of staff of abuse and neglect courts, agency attorneys, attorneys representing children or parents, guardians ad litem, and court-appointed special advocates representing children in proceedings of such courts.

The Federal Financial Participation rate for the expanded audience will phase in over five FFYs as follows:

	Percent
FFY 2009	55
FFY 2010	60
FFY 2011	65
FFY 2012	70
FFY 2013	75

1 Regional Training Academies

Each RTA has continued to deliver a comprehensive, competency-based program that addresses the training needs of new and experienced social workers, supervisors, and management staff. New social workers and new supervisors receive statewide standardized training. The RTAs have experienced a decline in the number of common core training classes requested by the counties as a result of California's budget crisis. Fewer new social workers and supervisors have been hired this year throughout California. Some counties, due to fiscal challenges and layoffs, have moved staff from Adult Protective Services and In Home Support Services into roles as social workers in the child welfare system. As a result, common core training has been delivered to this staff that is new to child welfare, and RTAs have provided advanced and specialized classes to the counties to meet the required ongoing training requirements for the other staff within the counties.

The RTAs and Inter-University Consortium/Los Angeles Department of Children and Family Services (IUC/LA DCFS), in support of the CFSR/PIP, have provided additional advanced supervision training including SDM modules, SafeMeasures®, and How to Effectively Use Data to the counties. Also, in support of the CFSR/PIP, the RTAs, the IUC/LA DCFS, and CalSWEC have been revising the common core to include effective implementation of participatory case planning and decision-making practices throughout the life of each case. Also, an advanced

training module has been developed pertaining to strategies for engaging fathers, Linkages training has been provided, and training has been enhanced, developed, and delivered to strengthen implementation of the statewide safety assessment system.

Due to the counties' diminished travel funds, counties are asking the RTAs to train locally. In some regions, slightly more than half of the training has been (and will continue to be) delivered in the counties where the staff work.

Counties have also expressed an interest in e-learning. In the Southern Region, an e-learning committee has been developed, and meetings have occurred with the counties to work on technology and the accessibility of e-learning for each county. Eight classes will be completed by June 30, 2010, and will be accessible by the counties in southern California. The Northern Regional Academy and IUC/LA DCFS have been delivering e-learning modules in their counties for some time, and they continue to develop modules, as needed to supplement the common core curriculum.

The RTAs anticipate continuing to deliver services in a variety of modalities. Training modalities include classroom-based training, training events for a multidisciplinary audience of child welfare community professionals, field training, and e-learning. The RTAs address issues of staff retention and collaborate with counties to strategize on how training can be used as a strategy in the retention of staff.

2 CalSWEC Coordination Project

There are no substantive changes to the CalSWEC Coordination Project.

DESCRIPTION OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

The CalSWEC coordinates with the RTAs and IUC/DCFS as noted in the CFSP and is involved with the development, enhancement, and hosting (on their website) of the common core curriculum.

The CalSWEC, IUC/LA, and the RTAs are addressing and updating the common core social worker and supervisor training to address the PIP strategies. Upon completion and piloting of the new revision, they will provide training based on the new curriculum.

Foundational courses are provided for new child welfare workers and supervisors. Advanced courses for experienced child welfare workers and supervisors are also available. Specialty training is provided that is focused on specific topics and worker needs such as, but not limited to: use of the CWS/CMS; child welfare practice integration; the role of paraprofessionals, and public health nurses in child welfare.

The following applies to the RTAs, the Inter-University consortium, and CalSWEC Coordination Project:

ALLOWABLE TITLE IV-E ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS

This training activity falls under the following categories necessary for the administration of the foster care program: referral to services; preparation for and participation in judicial determinations; placement of the child; development of case plans; case reviews; and case management and supervision.

SETTING/VENUE

The RTAs and IUC provide training to all 58 counties at specified locations within their regions.

TRAINING DURATION

Training activities are short-term. The duration of specific training programs varies according to type of training offered and the audience to be served.

TRAINING ACTIVITY PROVIDER

The RTAs and IUC/LA DCFS, with coordination activities provided by CalSWEC.

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF DAYS/HOURS OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

The number of days and hours of training provided varies according to the regionalized need. Approximately 30,000 workers will be trained.

TRAINING AUDIENCE

The RTAs provide training to new and experienced child welfare line staff, supervisors, managers, and others working with children and families receiving child welfare services.

TRANSITIONAL OR REGULAR FFP RATE

The federal Title IV-E rate funding is matched by SGF and university contributions. Title IV-E is drawn down at variable levels dependent upon the activity; 75 percent may be drawn down for training and 50 percent for administration. Title IV-E will also be matched at the transitional rate for the additional audience, per PL 110-351.

TOTAL COST ESTIMATE

$12,704,686 RTA/CalSWEC (total funds), including university in-kind contributions. IUC funding is approximately $10,573,667 (total funds), including university in-kind contributions.

3 CalSWEC Title IV-E Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) & Master of Social Work (MSW) Stipend Program

For those students who have not been able to find jobs in California upon completion of their academic programs due to the decrease in county hiring as a result of the California state budget, Stipend Program graduates have begun working within nonprofit organizations as part or all of their payback responsibilities.

In partnership with the Stipend Program, some Universities are developing Distance Learning opportunities for students.

Other than an increase to the amount of funding increased to support students as tuition prices increase throughout California and to support a distance learning staff position at CalSWEC, there are no substantive changes to the CalSWEC Title IV-E BSW & MSW Stipend Program.

DESCRIPTION OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

This training emphasizes that case plans are developed jointly with parents and children/youth. The training also focuses on such topics as family engagement, case planning, concurrent planning, visitation requirements, and the termination of the parental rights process.

ALLOWABLE TITLE IV-E ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS

This training activity falls under the following categories necessary for the administration of the Title IV-E foster care program: referral to services; preparation for and participation in judicial determinations; placement of the child; development of case plans; case reviews; and case management and supervision.

SETTING/VENUE

Twenty university departments of Social Work/Welfare throughout the state.

TRAINING DURATION

Duration of training varies according to the type of training offered. For example, a full-time student would take two academic years, and a part-time student would take three academic years to complete stipend program.

TRAINING ACTIVITY PROVIDER

The CalSWEC, a coalition of the twenty graduate deans of social work, the 58 county welfare directors; representatives of Mental Health, the National Association of Social Workers, and private foundations manage this project.

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF DAYS/HOURS OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

The number of days and hours vary depending upon the duration of the program.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Current CWS employees and members of underrepresented ethnic minority groups.

TRANSITIONAL OR REGULAR FFP RATE

This training is allocated to Title IV-E at the enhanced regular FFP rate of 75 percent and local match is contributed by participating public institutions of higher learning.

TOTAL COST ESTIMATE

$30,977,572

4 Resource Center for Family-Focused Practice

Advanced training has been designed and delivered in the following areas to support the CFSP: Family Engagement, Family Finding, and Permanency (including TPR), concurrent planning, and case planning).

Economic conditions at all levels of government in California have impacted the ability of county probation departments to travel and/or attend training. Of concern are probation departments' challenges of fully implementing family finding and bringing family (kin and fictive

kin) together. An increasing number of county specific trainings have been provided in numerous counties to compensate for the inability of county employees to travel.

DESCRIPTION OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

As a result of the implementation of the National Youth in Transition Database, CDSS, via the RCFFP, began to train Probation Placement Officers on the CWS/CMS system on October 1, 2010. Training workshops and associated supports are based on the standardized statewide curriculum and web based tools, and training delivery is tailored for use by probation placement officers. The training has included, at minimum, a three day CWS/CMS New User workshop. As counties experience the need for additional training, service offerings may expand to offer Intermediate User training and state access to data via the Business Objects software. Business Objects is the name of the data manipulation and reporting software provided by the State for designated users. The trainers deliver the CWS/CMS training through classroom instruction which is made available at various locations throughout the State. Additionally, various web based training guides, tools, workgroups, and other opportunities to learn and collaborate are provided in order to make certain that needs in the areas of developing CWS/CMS user skills and knowledge are adequately addressed and maintained.

In support of the CFSP goals and objectives, this training also emphasizes that case plans are developed jointly with parents and children/youth. The training also focuses on such topics as family engagement, case planning, concurrent planning, visitation requirements, and the TPR process.

ALLOWABLE TITLE IV-E ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS

This training activity falls under the following categories necessary for the administration of the Title IV-E foster care program: referral to services; placement of the child; development of the case plan; case reviews; case management and supervision; and recruitment and licensing of foster homes and institutions.

SETTING/VENUE

Training is provided at the RCFFP, which is operated out of the Center for Human Services Training and Development at University California, Davis, and various locations throughout the state.

TRAINING DURATION

This training activity is short-term. The duration of specific training programs varies according to type of training offered and the audience to be served.

TRAINING ACTIVITY PROVIDER

University California, Davis.

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF DAYS/HOURS OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

Length of training varies according to training topic and audience needs.

TRAINING AUDIENCE

The RCFFP provides training to county child welfare workers, probation officers, and private and public providers that are licensed by the state and serve Title IV-E eligible children.

TRANSITIONAL OR REGULAR FFP RATE

This training is allocated to Title IV- enhanced regular FFP rate of 75 percent, administrative rate, transitional rate.

TOTAL COST ESTIMATE

$1,600,000

5 Wraparound Integrated Services

As noted in Strategy IV, in support of the CFSR/PIP, in 2010, two additional counties (Imperial and Lake) have adopted the Wraparound Planning Model, and four counties are in planning stages with CDSS Wraparound consultants.

The CDSS provides ongoing Wraparound trainings for county staff and eligible child care agencies through the Resource Center for Family Focused Practice. Trainings provided include fiscal training, setting rates and the use of AAP. Additional trainings may consist of how to engage the families and system partners including Education, Mental Health, etc. Trainings for counties and child care agencies are based on how to develop child and family team plans to support the families with accessing community resources and mitigating circumstances to reduce dependency on out-of-home care. The Integrated Services and Wraparound Planning process will ensure that children are placed in the lowest level placement with family or a non-related extended family member, which will help achieve permanency and well-being.

The bi-annual Wraparound Institute (three-days) to provide learning opportunities to county and provider staff occurred on June 7-9, 2010 in Anaheim. Planning is underway for the 7th Wraparound Institute to be convened June 2012.

ALLOWABLE TITLE IV-E ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS

These training are allowable under Title IV-E as they are part of case management.

SETTING/VENUE

These trainings are provided at various county sites throughout the state.

TRAINING DURATION

These trainings are short term in duration. The majority of the trainings are one to three days.

TRAINING ACTIVITY PROVIDER

The Resource Center for Family-Focused Practice.

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF DAYS/HOURS OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

70 days.

TRAINING AUDIENCE

County staff, eligible child care providers, Parent Partners, and community-based organizations.

TRANSITIONAL OR REGULAR FFP RATE

This training is allocated to Title IV-E at the enhanced regular FFP rate of 75 percent and transitional rate.

TOTAL ESTIMATE COST

$368,000

7 County Staff Development and Training

DESCRIPTION OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

As noted previously, most counties have experienced a decline in hiring, but the counties do continue with their ongoing and CFSR/PIP-related training. Counties are reporting to the state through the Annual County Training Plan any additional training needs they are interested in having the RTAs provide to their staff.

This training supports CDSS's vision that every child in California lives in a safe, stable, permanent home, nurtured by healthy families and strong communities. Child welfare training provided directly by county agencies enhances the ability of social workers to receive comprehensive training.

ALLOWABLE TITLE IV-E ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS

This training activity falls under the following categories necessary for the administration of the Title IV-E foster care program: referral to services; placement of the child; development of the case plan; case reviews; case management and supervision; and recruitment and licensing of foster homes and institutions.

SETTING/VENUE

County settings statewide.

TRAINING DURATION

This training is on-going and short-term.

TRAINING ACTIVITY PROVIDER

County staff development organizations and/or contract providers.

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF DAYS/HOURS OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

Length of training varies according to training topic and audience needs.

TRAINING AUDIENCE

County child welfare workers.

TRANSITIONAL OR REGULAR FFP RATE

Costs are allocated to Title IV-E at the enhanced regular rate of 75 percent, administrative rate, transitional rate.

TOTAL COST ESTIMATE

$45,000,000

8 National Council on Crime and Delinquency/Children's Research Center (NCCD/CRC)

To successfully meet federal and state child welfare outcomes, CDSS staff use data to guide decision making, provide effective consultation to counties, and determine effective practices at the services delivery level. The CRC has designed SafeMeasures® to support the C-CFSR continuous quality improvement program which will aid CDSS staff and all counties to meet targeted improvements.

DESCRIPTION OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

The focus of the CRC training contract is on data collection and analysis, reporting techniques aimed at ensuring compliance with all state and federal requirements, and CFSR PIP implementation. The contract provides:

Support for PIP implementation and goal attainment: designing and implementing procedures and software that will assist in the extraction, review, and analysis of quantitative data as well as aggregate reporting techniques. The CRC will provide training for state staff to analyze progress in meeting statewide goals and assist in identification of issues, strengths, and progress of the PIP implementation.

Support CDSS County Consultants: to monitor performance by county on federal and state outcome measures the CRC will provide an updated release of SafeMeasures® which will allow for multi-county dashboards and mapping and related technical assistance.

Intervention with Counties: CRC provides targeted support related to the use of SafeMeasures® to counties, both on-site and web technical assistance is provided. Training includes report development at the case/caseload level, use of SafeMeasures® as a management tool, an orientation/training refresher in system capabilities, and use of SafeMeasures® to achieve outcome goals.

This training activity supports the objectives and goals of the CFSP through ensuring safety, promoting permanency and improving the statewide quality assurance system. Counties and CDSS staff will be able to better track county and statewide data to monitor outcomes.

ALLOWABLE TITLE IV-E ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS

This activity falls under the following categories necessary for administration of the foster care program: placement of the child; development of the case plan; case management and supervision; costs related to data collection, reporting, and monitoring; and conducting periodic evaluations.

SETTING/VENUE

Statewide

TRAINING DURATION:

Short-term (0.5 to 16.0 hours)

TRAINING ACTIVITY PROVIDER

Children's Research Center (CRC)

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF DAYS/HOURS OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

Number of days/hours vary according to the topic/technical assistance offered and the location of training.

TRAINING AUDIENCE

Child Welfare Workers at the county Level and state Staff

TRANSITIONAL OR REGULAR FFP RATE

This training is allocated to Title IV-E enhanced regular FFP rate of 75 percent and SGF.

TOTAL COST ESTIMATE

$75,000

9 Foster Parent and Relative Caregiver Education Program

Training of Resource Families (foster parents and relative caregivers) continues to be provided through an interagency agreement between CDSS and the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO). The community college Foster & Kinship Care Education (FKCE) program is offered through the CCCCO and 62 local colleges and serves foster parents; relative/kinship caregivers; and non-related extended family members care providers. Other than the decrease in the total cost estimate, there are no substantive changes to this program.

A new training contract with the CCCCO for FKCE was signed November 2010 and will be effective for the next three years.

DESCRIPTION OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

Currently, the existing pre-service training is designed around the mandated topics of training according to Health and Safety Code section 1529.2. Many FKCE programs offer these pre-service training topics through PRIDE, PS-MAPP or other similar curriculum which all extend well beyond the state minimum requirements of: Overview of the child protective system, positive discipline and the importance of self-esteem, health issues in foster care, accessing education and health services available to foster children, and the rights of a foster child to have fair and equal access to all available services.

Both pre-service and ongoing training is designed to develop and support caregivers to enhance their ability to promote the health and safety of children and youth placed in foster care.

Among the thousands of ongoing workshops and classes offered each year by the FKCE programs statewide, core topics include, but are not limited to: Trauma Informed Child Development; Permanency; Kinship; Children with Special Needs; Diversity; Education & Health Care Rights of Children in the Foster Care System; Supporting Successful Emancipation for Foster Youth; Whole Family Foster Home; Child Abuse and Neglect; Adolescent Issues; Grief and Loss; Juvenile Court Process; Mental Health Issues; Positive Discipline; Working with Birth Families; and Complaints and Allegations.

ALLOWABLE TITLE IV-E ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS

This training activity falls under the recruitment and licensing of foster homes and institutions category necessary for the administration of the foster care program.

SETTING/VENUE

The training is held at community colleges and other community-based venues located statewide. These are offered at times convenient for the caregivers during the evening, day and weekends.

TRANSITIONAL OR REGULAR FFP RATE

This training is allocated to Title IV-E at the enhanced regular FFP rate of 75 percent and community college Proposition 98 funds.

TRAINING DURATION

The duration of specific training programs varies according to type of training offered and the audience to be served.

TRAINING ACTIVITY PROVIDER

Chancellor's Office of the California Community Colleges.

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF DAYS/HOURS OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

Over 8,000 classes/35,000 hours of training are provided by the FKCE program each year statewide to meet the needs of foster parents and relative care providers. Although state law requires a minimum of twelve hours of pre-service training before the placement of a child in the licensed foster home, and 8 hours of in-service training annually, most counties require many more hours.

TOTAL COST ESTIMATE

The total Title IV-E funds budgeted for this training program over the next three years is $15,245,721.

10 Substance Abuse (SA) Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) Infant Program (Previously Options for Recovery)

Other than the decrease in the total cost estimate, there are no substantive changes to this program.

DESCRIPTION OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

The SA/HIV Infant program is funded to provide specialized recruitment, training, and respite care services to counties for foster parents and federally-eligible relative providers who care for infants and children aged newborn to 60 months who are born substance-exposed and/or HIV positive and who are court-dependent children. Currently, ten counties receive funding for participation in the SA/HIV Infant program.

Training topics include: SA/HIV infant orientation, infant development, special medical needs and special disabilities, alcohol and other drugs, HIV/AIDS, program related optional courses, such as parenting and behavioral techniques, nutrition for the substance-exposed, and self-care and stress reduction.

ALLOWABLE TITLE IV-E ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS

This program falls under the categories of training, recruitment, and licensing of foster homes necessary for the administration of the Title IV-E program.

SETTING/ VENUE

Various.

TRAINING DURATION

Various, 33 hours annually.

TRANSITIONAL OR REGULAR FFP RATE

This training is allocated to SFG and Title IV-E at the enhanced regular FFP rate of 75 percent.

TRAINING ACTIVITY PROVIDER

Counties participating in the SA/HIV Infant Program administer training activities independently.

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF DAYS/HOURS OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

Thirty three hours of core training curriculum is required from foster families upon initial participation in the program.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Prospective foster families with a special emphasis on caring for infants, who are born substance-exposed and/or HIV positive.

TOTAL COST ESTIMATE

A total of $4,394,266 is made available for the administration of this program. Training is one component.

11 Kinship Support Services Program

The KSSP continues to function with ongoing collaboration among county, community-based organizations, and private, non-profit organizations in order to provide services to kinship caregivers and the children in their care. General training is presented at regional conferences.

DESCRIPTION OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

Trainings may include workshops about how to assist caregivers in obtaining legal guardianship, how to write grants to generate additional funds, or how to establish support groups for care providers. The KSSP contractor also provides county-specific training tailored to the needs of the particular KSSP site based on a work plan established by the contractor and the county. These trainings focus on various subjects ranging from instruction about using the Kin database to learning how to reach those in need of services.

The training supports the goals and objectives of the CFSP by promoting the well-being of children and families by providing funds for county kinship support services programs. These programs provide community-based family support services to relative caregivers and the court-dependent children placed in their homes, and to children who are at risk of dependency or delinquency and their relative caregivers. Training and technical assistance is provided to county and non-profit personnel operating KSSP sites so that they can provide the most effective and efficient services to children and their relative caregivers. Support services provided via this program contribute to improved outcomes related to safety, stability, permanency, and the well-being of both dependent and non-dependent, at-risk children. The program also improves the potential for a child to experience additional connections with other family members through supportive services to the relative caregiver which strengthen stability of the placement.

Training and technical assistance to the counties contributed to local KSSPs' ability to provide services to over 8,849 clients in FY 2009-10.

ALLOWABLE TITLE IV-B

$225,000

SETTING/VENUE

Twenty counties currently operate a KSSP. The training provider conducts training and technical assistance at the KSSP sites within each of the 20 counties. The training provider also conducts three regional conferences per fiscal year: one for the Bay Area counties/sites, one for the northern California counties/sites, and one for the counties/sites in southern California.

TRAINING DURATION

Short-Term or Long-Term.

TRAINING ACTIVITY PROVIDER

Edgewood Center for Children and Families.

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF DAYS/HOURS OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

Each county with an existing KSSP may have county and site personnel attend a two-day regional training for their area. The Bay Area and Southern California trainings were in October 2009, and the Northern California training was held in February 2010; a total of 120 participants attended these trainings. In addition to the training provided at the regional conferences, training and technical assistance are provided by telephone, e-mail, other written means and

via onsite visits on an ongoing, as-needed basis throughout the term of the training period. Training and technical assistance are also provided related to data collection and reporting activities. The number of days/hours varies per county and per site as the T/TA is specific to the county's program and needs.

TARGET AUDIENCE

County and private nonprofit personnel who administer and/or operate the KSSP sites and relative caregivers/volunteers who help staff the KSSP sites.

TRANSITIONAL OR REGULAR FFP RATE

Not applicable. Allocated to Title IV-B

TOTAL COST ESTIMATE

$225,000 per year (100 percent PSSF funds).

12 University of California, Davis (UCD): Adoptions Training

During FY 2009-10, CDSS entered into contract with the UCD to develop a training program that will increase District Office staff competencies.

DESCRIPTION OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

Each training section will be evaluated and covers topics such as detecting home study red flags, evidenced-based therapy: effective interventions for children with challenging behaviors; answers regarding father status; preparing for contested/contentious Juvenile Court Hearings or Investigative Hearings; Ask the Experts about Testifying and Preparing for Hearings; and Making Tough Decisions and Testifying Successfully: A Mock Trial/Hearing Involving a Foster Adopt Parent with an Allegation of Physical Abuse.

Training providers are the UCD psychologists such as the mental health director of the child abuse treatment center; private mental health trainers, and a Superior Court Judge. Adoption specialists, supervisors, and managers are expected to be trained during a two day (16 hours) training offered twice, once in May, 2011, and again in June, 2011, at the UCD Medical School Campus in Sacramento. Continuing Education Units will be offered as well for licensed staff.

The following table outlines the measureable objectives and methods of evaluating goals:

Measurable Objective	Activities to Accomplish Measureable Objectives	Staff	Time Line	Methods for Evaluating Goals
Conduct a mid-year evaluation of training activities and a needs assessment to develop and implement a training plan for the final quarter of FY 2010/11.	Review training evaluations and solicit input from ASB and District Office managers and staff regarding expansion and modification of existing training components.	UC Program Director and Program Assistant	12/09 to 6/11	The mid-year Training Plan for ASB staff will reflect findings and recommendations for changes/additions from ASB and District Office managers and staff.
In cooperation with ASB managers and	Coordinate and host four days of staff development and training on four	UC Program	7/09 to	80 percent of identified ASB staff will register and attend sessions.

Measurable Objective	Activities to Accomplish Measureable Objectives	Staff	Time Line	Methods for Evaluating Goals
staff, identify and implement relevant training and staff development activities.	occasions by 6/30/10 to accommodate 75-100 staff at each training. Training will consist of four, two-day conferences. Prioritize and select training topics based on needs assessment findings and evaluations of prior training. Prepare training outlines and agendas. Identify and contract for facilities. Identify and contract with speakers. Coordinate logistics for each training. Develop and implement registration process. Send out notification to District Offices and ASB. Prepare materials, handouts, and arrange for equipment. Arrange for continuing education units. Collect and compile evaluation and CEU data from participants. Provide follow up consultation as requested.	Director and Program Assistant	6/10	Qualitative and quantitative data will indicate 80 percent of participants rated presentations as organized, useful and applicable to job responsibilities. Training evaluation, pre and post tests, and follow up survey in two to six months consisting of questions with Likert scales will indicate integration of material into practice, expanded knowledge, and improved skills of 80 percent of the participants. 100 percent of applicants who register for CEUs will receive requisite documentation within 90 days of attendance.
Conduct a mid-year evaluation of training activities and a needs assessment to develop and implement a training plan for the final quarter of FY 2009-10.	Review training evaluations and solicit input from ASB and DO managers and staff regarding expansion and modification of existing training components.	UC Program Director and Program Assistant	12/09 to 6/11	The mid-year Training Plan for ASB staff will reflect findings and recommendations for changes/additions from ASB and DO managers and staff.
In cooperation with ASB managers and staff, identify and implement relevant training and staff development activities.	Coordinate and host four days of staff development and training on four occasions by 6/30/10 to accommodate 75-100 staff at each training. Training will consist of four, two-day conferences. Prioritize and select training topics based on needs assessment findings and evaluations of prior training. Prepare training outlines and agendas. Identify and contract for facilities. Identify and contract with speakers. Coordinate logistics for each training. Develop and implement registration process. Send out notification to DOs and ASB. Prepare materials, handouts, and arrange for equipment.	UC Program Director and Program Assistant	7/09 to 6/10	80 percent of identified ASB staff will register and attend sessions. Qualitative and quantitative data will indicate 80 percent of participants rated presentations as organized, useful and applicable to job responsibilities. Training evaluation, pre and post tests, and follow up survey in two to six months consisting of questions with Likert scales will indicate integration of material into practice, expanded knowledge, and improved skills of 80 percent of the participants. 100 percent of applicants who register for CEUs will receive

Measurable Objective	Activities to Accomplish Measureable Objectives	Staff	Time Line	Methods for Evaluating Goals
	Arrange for continuing education units. Collect and compile evaluation and CEU data from participants. Provide follow up consultation as requested.			requisite documentation within 90 days of attendance.

ALLOWABLE TITLE IV-E ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS

Our program is necessary for the administration of the child welfare programs which includes referral to services, preparation and participation in judicial determinations, placement of the child, development of case plans, case reviews, case management and supervision.

SETTING/VENUE

UCD is organizing the setting of the trainings. The trainings will likely take place in Sacramento.

TRAINING DURATION

The trainings are scheduled as two-day trainings over a four-day period to accommodate staff from seven district offices.

TRAINING ACTIVITY PROVIDER

UCD psychologists, private mental health trainers, Superior Court Judge.

NUMBER OF DAYS/HOURS OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

Two days per training (16 hours).

Two trainings needed to accommodate 120 Adoptions Specialists.

TRAINING AUDIENCE

Approximately 120 Adoptions Specialists from the seven District Offices.

TRANSITIONAL OR REGULAR FFP RATE

Training is allocated to Title IV-E at the enhanced regular FFP rate of 75 percent and SGF for those costs allocated to Title IV-E.

TOTAL COST ESTIMATE

$48,396

13 Judicial Review & Technical Assistance (JRTA)

CDSS contracts with the Judicial Council of California, the AOC, to provide specialized training through the JRTA project.

DESCRIPTION OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

This project provides statewide training and technical assistance on court findings required for Title IV-E eligibility. Trainings and technical assistance include comprehensive case file reviews conducted during multi-day JRTA-team site visits.

During the 2010 FY, Title IV-E site visits were made to the juvenile courts in 29. These site visits comprised approximately 160 training days. During each site visit, the assigned attorney conducted a comprehensive review of a random sample of juvenile court foster care or placement files, observed courtroom proceedings, and met with judicial officers, court staff, attorneys, juvenile probation staff and child welfare staff to discuss the data collected and observations made during the site visit. The assigned attorney also provided educational material and information related to a variety of topics including Title IV-E finding requirements, well-being and permanency related issues, such as, meeting the child's educational needs, finding life-long connections for youth, engaging youth in permanency planning, and using the ILP to help the youth plan for the future. Following each site visit, each jurisdiction's judicial officers, child welfare and probation agencies receive a detailed report outlining site visit findings and needed areas of improvement with respect to Title IV-E findings.

The JRTA attorneys also conducted supplemental trainings tailored to meet the individual needs of judicial officers, clerks, attorneys, social workers, and probation officers. These trainings focused on several of the key Title IV-E court findings that are federally required, with an emphasis on ensuring that judicial officers are taking the appropriate steps to finalize permanent plans for each child in foster care, and that children and their families are involved in the case planning process. Supplemental trainings were conducted in Alameda, Amador, Butte, Contra Costa, Glenn, Los Angeles, Marin, Mariposa, Mendocino, Plumas, Sacramento, San Benito, San Diego, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Siskiyou, Solano, Tehama, and Yuba.

The JRTA attorneys also responded to telephone and e-mail enquiries regarding Title IV-E and related issues such as timeline compliance, case planning, and report requirements from judicial officers, court staff, attorneys, juvenile probation staff, and child welfare staff on a regular basis.

The JRTA attorneys also participated in the September 2009 Title IV-E Review. Upon completed of the on-site Review, CDSS was not in substantial compliance with federal foster care eligibility requirements. Upon appeal of three cases determined initially to be in error, DHHS reversed two of the error cases and subsequently determined that California was is in substantial compliance for the period October 1, 2008 through March 31, 2009. The JRTA technical assistance during the 2009 Title IV-E Review assisted CDSS to pass its Title IV-E Review.

During FY 2010-11, JRTA, jointly with CDSS, monitors and provides technical assistance for the counties on the identified error cases in the 2009 Title IV-E audit. JRTA also provided site visits and technical assistance efforts to counties that performed poorly in their previous reviews. JRTA distributes an Information Sheet and during site visits addresses with the court and county agencies strategies to prevent judicial finding errors that was identified during the 2009 IV-E Review.

The JRTA project supports CDSS' goals of ensuring the safety, permanency and well-being of children. The JRTA staff train on several of the key Title IV-E court findings that are federally required. Training also enhances the ability of judges to ensure that the county is taking appropriate steps toward finalizing a permanency plan for each child in foster care, and that children and their families are involved in case planning.

ALLOWABLE TITLE IV-E ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS

This project is funded at the 75 percent enhanced federal financial participation rate for CWS Title IV-E Training.

SETTING/VENUE

Training is provided in close proximity to courthouse facilities to facilitate judicial staff participation statewide.

TRAINING DURATION

Duration of trainings is dependent on the initial review of court files to determine the level of current compliance with Title IV-E. The training is ongoing and long-term and will continue throughout the period covered in this five-year plan.

TRAINING ACTIVITY PROVIDER

The Judicial Council of California, Administration of the Courts.

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF DAYS/HOURS OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

255 days per year.

TRAINING AUDIENCE

The Judicial Council (the contractor) provides technical assistance to judges, court staff, county welfare, and probation department staff, attorneys involved in dependency and delinquency proceedings, and CASAs. Numbers of staff vary from county to county.

TRANSITIONAL OR REGULAR FFP RATE

This training is allocated to Title IV-E at the enhanced regular FFP rate of 75 percent, transitional rate, and SFG.

TOTAL COST ESTIMATE

$2,755,623.00

14 Independent Living Program Transformation Breakthrough Series Collaborative

The California Independent Living Program Transformation Breakthrough Series Collaborative (ILP/BSC) utilized and adapted the breakthrough series methodology to transform the California Independent Living Program.

DESCRIPTION OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

The ILP/BSC engaged nine counties and one state-level team which focused on tracking practices, protocols and policies for foster youth before they exit the foster care system. The emphasis is on ensuring each youth receives an individualized transition plan which will support all of their goals in achieving permanence, education, and employment.

ALLOWABLE TITLE IV-E ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS

The purpose of the implementation of the California Independent Living Program Transformation Breakthrough Series Collaborative is to expand participants' practice knowledge around permanency, education and employment and to guide county team development in action planning to move local ILP transformation forward. Use of Title IV-E funds as required under 45 CFR 1356.60(b).

SETTING/VENUE

Various

TRAINING DURATION

The ILP/BSC contract is from October 1, 2008 to June 30, 2011. Participating counties receive ongoing trainings and technical assistance through the duration of the contract. The ILP/BSC series hosted four Learning Sessions (convenings) with participating counties to build on their understanding and practice skills, give opportunity for shared learning across county sites, and develop action plans for their continuing ILP Transformation work in their individual counties.

TRAINING ACTIVITY PROVIDER

Training was provided by the contractor, CFPIC, subcontracted with New Ways to Work for some of the implementation of training and technical assistance to participating counties.

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF DAYS/HOURS OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

Training and technical assistance is provided at the county level on a regular basis. Four larger Learning Sessions are planned in which the county teams collaborate to build on their understanding and practice skills in learning environments that facilitate shared learning across county sites, and development of action plans for individual ILP transformation work in their county. Following Learning Session Four, these teams spread this work through training with over 400 participating teams from 48 counties in the California ILP Institute.

TRAINING AUDIENCE

Audience will be county child welfare workers and other county staff who are identified in the implementation or support of ILP/BSC.

TRANSITIONAL OR REGULAR FFP RATE

The ILP/BSC is allocated to the Title IV-E enhanced regular FFP rate of 75 percent (direct training and activities), and administrative rate, and philanthropic funds.

TOTAL COST ESTIMATE

$1,796,778

15 Fiscal Academy

DESCRIPTION OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

The purpose of the UCD Fiscal Academy contract is to provide program and fiscal academy training for county agencies that serve and/or support children and families by providing

participants with the fundamentals of child welfare services funding, allocations, claiming, and budgeting. The training also introduces new changes in federal and or state law that impact both programmatic and fiscal management policymaking at the state and local level.

In 2010, the UCD Fiscal Academy accomplished these goals. Participating counties gained the knowledge and skills to better use their combined resources to achieve better outcomes for children and to provide ongoing funding to evidence-based programs that support these outcomes.

Evidence of UCD Fiscal Academy progress and relevance can be found in the course evaluations which are completed by the Fiscal Academy participants at the close of training. Participants are asked to rate the training, the materials and topics covered and the instructors on a five point scale. In January 2010, at the Riverside County training, 73 percent of participants ranked the training at the highest level and 27 percent ranked the training at the second highest level. In March 2010, at the Butte County training, 100 percent of the participants ranked the training at the highest level. In September 2010, at the San Diego County training, 88 percent of participants ranked the training at the highest level and eight percent ranked the training at the second highest level. Overall, participants believe the course was valuable and of great benefit to their everyday work environments.

Although some participants commented on a need for a longer training or a deletion of some topics and more emphasis on others, most participants thought the training was the suitable length of time and was pitched at the appropriate level. Representative comments include: "covered a wide range of topics that are practical within this economic environment; practical application of concepts and reference materials; topics covered were the most important topics that we need to learn; funding information was enlightening." Recommendations from evaluations include lengthening the training, providing a glossary of new vocabulary, more concrete exercises that use the principles and information presented; and mixing the seating of fiscal and program people.

The excellent reviews demonstrate the continued importance of the UCD Fiscal Academy to provide training, guidance and clarification to county agencies. Future presentations could consider adding an additional course that dealt with more complex topics or an hour-long module of more advanced topics.

The training meets the goals and objectives of the CFSP through an acquisition the knowledge and skills to better use their combined resources to achieve better outcomes for children and to provide ongoing funding to evidence-based programs that support these outcomes. Participants in the academies shall leave with a solid foundation as to how the child welfare and foster care funding stream works, its limitations and opportunities.

ALLOWABLE TITLE IV-E ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS

Some of the Title IV-E Administrative training addresses items related to the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 such as: administrative cost for a child placed with a relative for the lesser of 12 months or the average length of time it takes for a state to license or approve a foster home, administrative cost when a child moves from an unallowable facility to a licensed or approved foster family home, and or Title IV-E administrative cost for children who meet the foster care

candidacy. In addition, the training focuses on the federal Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 and California's implementation of this federal law under AB 12.

SETTING/VENUE

The training occurs at the UCD campus and in other locations throughout the state.

TRAINING DURATION

Short-term.

TRAINING ACTIVITY/PROVIDER TRAINING ACTIVITY

A two day training course and a one day workshop forum provided by The Center for Human Services, UCD Extension University of California.

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF DAYS/HOURS OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

Four (two-day) sessions; session times are 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily. Total number of training days is eight days and 56 hours for this contract. There are approximately 120 participants for all four sessions (60 participants per two-day session).

TRAINING AUDIENCE

Provide continuing information and training to deputy directors, program managers and fiscal officers of child welfare services, and directors, program administrators and fiscal officers of other county departments such as mental health and probation. The CDSS Fiscal and Program staff also participates in this training.

TRANSITIONAL OR REGULAR FFP RATE

Training is allocated to Title IV-E at the administrative rate and SFG.

TOTAL COST ESTIMATE

$255,957

16 Structured Decision Making

The CDSS continues to contract with the CRC, a non-profit branch of NCCD to implement SDM systems that provide social workers with simple, objective, and reliable tools with which to make the best possible decisions for individual cases, and to provide managers with information for improved planning, evaluation, and resource allocation.

DESCRIPTION OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

The SDM tool includes six research-based assessments that assist child welfare workers in assessing risk, aids in targeting services to children who are at greatest risk of maltreatment, and improves outcomes for children and families such as reducing the recurrence of child maltreatment. The services provided by CRC include training county staff regarding the use of the SDM tools. Individual tools are designed for the hotline, safety assessment, risk assessment, family strengths and needs assessment, in-home risk reassessment, and reunification reassessment. CRC collaborated with CDSS and eight California counties to

develop a structured tool to assess the support needs of substitute care providers. CRC continues to provide training for trainers, web-training sessions on topics specified by the counties and CDSS, and in person Core Team and trainer meetings. SDM tools are currently in use in 54 of California's 58 counties.

Additional services include: monitoring and evaluating the SDM model in participating counties, providing ongoing technical assistance, and processing data and management reports. These reports assist counties in proper implementation and in the continued use of SDM tools by assessing operations through the review of safety assessment results, response priority results, risk levels, and an assessment of the utility of the instruments in California.

This training activity supports the objectives of ensuring safety, and promoting permanency and well-being. The training assists county child welfare staff in improving their assessment and decision making skills by providing risk, safety and needs assessment tools, and training on the tools. There is now training for child welfare supervisors to support the use of the assessment tools throughout the life of a child welfare case. The CDSS will continue to expand training in SDM as the tools are updated and improved. These trainings will be for both social workers and supervisors, contingent upon available resources.

ALLOWABLE TITLE IV-E ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS

This training activity falls under the following categories necessary for the administration of the Title IV-E foster care program: referral to services; development of the case plan; case reviews; costs related to data collection, and reporting and monitoring.

SETTING/VENUE

Training offered statewide.

TRAINING DURATION

Training length may vary depending on type of training, audience, and location. This training is short-term and on-going and will continue throughout the period covered in this five-year plan.

TRAINING ACTIVITY PROVIDER

Children's Research Center/National Council on Crime and Delinquency.

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF DAYS/HOURS OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

Up to 100 offsite training days per fiscal year; up to six onsite visits of up to three days each per fiscal year.

TRAINING AUDIENCE

Child welfare workers and child welfare supervisors statewide.

TRANSITIONAL OR REGULAR FFP RATE

This training is allocated to the IV-E enhanced regular FFP rate of 75 percent and administrative rates and SGF. For those costs that are not allocable to Title IV-E (such as hotline), the costs are allocated to SGF.

TOTAL COST ESTIMATE

$150,674 at 75 percent reimbursement (Title IV-E) rate for training activities

$6,740 at 75 percent reimbursement (Title IV-E) rate for Management reports

$38,195 at 50 percent reimbursement (Title IV-E) rate for Management reports

$295,760 in SGF

Total costs per fiscal year is $491,369.

17 Comprehensive Assessment Tool

For the past three years, CDSS has contracted with the SPHERE Institute to develop a safety and risk assessment system for use in County Child Welfare agencies.

Due to budgetary constraints, CDSS discontinued funding of two separate tools after FY 2009-10. The FY 2009-10 CAT contract, originally scheduled to end June 30, 2010, was amended to provide a no-cost extension ending the contract on December 31, 2010, so that counties had time to transition to SDM. As of June 30, 2010, only four counties have chosen to continue to use CAT, which will be funded by county-only dollars. As of December 30, 2010, no state or federal funding is used for any activities associated with CAT in California.

ALLOWABLE TITLE IV-E ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS

Assesses field application of assessment tools and data entry protocols, collects feedback, and revises curriculum, evaluates evidence-based best practices identifies through the development, implementation, and analysis of county risk assessment and risk management system, and updates curriculum, updates training curricula based on CWS/CMS data analyses.

SETTING/VENUE

In local county child welfare offices.

TRAINING DURATION

Small group trainings; short-term.

TRAINING ACTIVITY PROVIDER

Staff from the SPHERE Institute.

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF DAYS/HOURS OF THE TRAINING ACTIVITY:

None are provided by use of federal or state funds.

TRAINING AUDIENCE

The audience will be child welfare social workers and supervisors in the four remaining CAT counties.

TRANSITIONAL OR REGULAR FFP RATE

Not applicable. Neither the State nor federal funding is used in any of these activities.

TOTAL COST ESTIMATE

$0

18 Safe and Thriving Futures – Previously, The Family to Family Initiative

The F2F Initiative has transitioned into the Safe and Thriving Futures contract which continues to support California counties on best practices and policies that support the permanency and well being of children who are in and transitioning from foster care. The Safe and Thriving Futures contract is comprised of a partnership between CDSS, the Stuart Foundation, the Casey Family Program, and the Walter S. Johnson Foundation.

DESCRIPTION OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

The purpose of this contract is to continue training and technical assistance to participating counties for the implementation and sustainability of the five core strategies and emerging strategies that were begun under the F2F Initiative. The contract also incorporates other practices which include: Early Learning/Safe Starts, Quality Foster Parenting, California Permanency for Youth Project, Independent Living Program Transformation, California Disproportionality, and the Family to Family Connected by 25 Initiative.

Continuation of this T/TA to county staff ensures the principles and practices related to the Safe and Thriving Futures practices are applied to provide optimal opportunity for achieving permanence and stability for foster children. T/TA is provided to increase reunification (when possible), sibling visitation, and placement in the child's own community. T/TA is provided to increase recruitment of resource families when out-of-home placement is necessary, to increase supports to resource families, and to decrease foster youth in congregate care. T/TA increases well-being for foster youth transitioning from foster care.

ALLOWABLE TITLE IV-E ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS

All of the initiatives/practices help to assist counties in making improvements in their foster care program which promote effective, out-come based, community-supported, family-centered services. The Title IV-E funds are matched with donation funds. The authority for utilizing Title IV-E funds is under 45 CFR 1356.60(b).

SETTING/VENUE

On-site, in-person training sessions or meetings; offsite by telephone, email or video conferencing; peer-to-peer learning on-site or via e-mail.

TRAINING DURATION

Training and technical assistance is provided on a regular basis throughout the State of California to all of the participating counties through the duration of the contract, November 23, 2010 to September 30, 2011.

TRAINING ACTIVITY PROVIDER

Training and technical assistance is provided by CFPIC which is contracted to coordinate services. The scope of work focuses on the facilitation of the training and technical assistance services to county social workers and other identified staff in regards to continuing

implementation of the F2F five core strategies, the six emerging strategies as well as the other practices identified above.

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF DAYS/HOURS OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

Various.

TRAINING AUDIENCE

The training audience is composed of county welfare workers and other county staff who are identified with the continued implementation and support of the Safe and Thriving Futures practices.

TRANSITIONAL OR REGULAR FFP RATE

Training is allocated to Title IV-E enhanced regular FFP rate of 75 percent (direct training and activities) and administrative rate, and philanthropic funds.

TOTAL COST ESTIMATE

$574,297

19 Specialized Training for Adoptive Parents (STAP) Program

DESCRIPTION OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

California's STAP Program was established through the provisions of AB 2188 (Statutes of 1998) to provide special training and services to pre-adoptive/adoptive parents of children born HIV positive and/or substance exposed.

This training activity promotes the assessment of the child and family's needs, and assists in improving adoption rates for HIV/substance exposed children.

In the past year, this program continued with the same nine county partners. No additional counties have submitted requests for STAP funding.

ALLOWABLE TITLE IV-E ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS

This training activity falls under the placement of the child category necessary for the administration of the foster care program in order to facilitate the adoption of children who are HIV positive or born substance exposed to alcohol and/or drugs.

SETTING

Varies, usually off-site.

TRAINING DURATION

Varies, depending upon the type of training offered.

TRAINING ACTIVITY/PROVIDER

Counties participating in the STAP Program administer training activities independently.

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF DAYS/HOURS OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

Varies.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Pre-adoptive/adoptive parents.

TRANSITIONAL OR REGULAR FFP RATE

This training is allocated to the Title IV-E enhanced regular FFP rate of 75 percent and SGF.

TOTAL COST ESTIMATE

$1 million in SGF is made available for the administration of this program, a portion of which is dedicated to training.

20 Family Resource and Support Training and Technical Assistance ("Strategies")

DESCRIPTION OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

Strategies, a network of three regional non-profit agencies, was developed to help build capacity and to enhance the quality of programs and services provided for families and children by family support programs and family resource centers (FRCs) throughout California. Please refer to the CAPTA section for additional information.

Training and technical assistance will assist staff in enhancing their knowledge and skills base to better deliver services to ensure the safety of children, promote the accurate assessment of child and family needs, support the participation of the child and family in case planning, and improve the quality and availability of relevant services. These services also help to build capacity and improve sustainability.

ALLOWABLE TITLE IV-E ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS

Not Applicable.

SETTING/VENUE

Training is conducted in various settings statewide.

TRAINING DURATION

Duration of training varies depending on the type of training offered. This training project is short-term and is funded to operate through June 30, 2011.

TRAINING ACTIVITY PROVIDER

Strategies: a network of three regional non-profit agencies.

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF DAYS/HOURS OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

Length of training varies depending on training topic.

TRAINING AUDIENCE

The target audience includes staff from family resource centers/family support programs, community organizations, and public/private agencies. Many of these agencies provide services to families as part of counties' Differential Response systems.

TOTAL COST ESTIMATE

$2,748,805 for this reporting period

TRANSITIONAL OR REGULAR FFP RATE

Not applicable. Funding is allocated to CBCAP, SCTF, CAPIT, and CAPTA.

21 Special Start Training Program (SSTP)

DESCRIPTION OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

The SSTP is a training program through webcast and in-person formats, for community professionals, parents, and foster parents focusing on the developmental and behavioral needs of medically high-risk newborns who are graduates of the newborn intensive care nursery. Please refer to the CAPTA section within this document for updates.

ALLOWABLE TITLE IV-E ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS

Not applicable.

SETTING/VENUE

Training provided statewide.

TRAINING DURATION

Duration of training varies according to training offered and audience (professionals) to be served.

TRAINING ACTIVITY PROVIDER

University of California at San Francisco (UCSF).

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF DAYS/HOURS OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

For FYs 2009-10 and 2010-11 a total of 20 on-site seven-hour sessions and 12 webcasts with corresponding web site support material as a new seven-hour class were added to the training repertoire.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Foster parents, caregivers, and multidisciplinary professionals.

TRANSITIONAL OR REGULAR FFP RATE

Not applicable. Funding is allocated to CAPTA.

TOTAL COST ESTIMATE

$1,230,517 for grant term January 1, 2009 – June 30, 2011 with projection of $1,387,167 funded by CAPTA for the next three-year funding period July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2014.

22 Training for Group Home Staff

Under the general supervision of the CCL Division, contracted vendors provide training on specified topics to group home staff.

DESCRIPTION OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

The California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division Six, Chapter Five requires group home staff be trained regarding the children served in the group home. Section 84064 requires the group home administrator to develop a training and orientation plan for group home staff. Section 84065 requires the plan have an overview of the client population served by the group home and training on the group home regulations. The training plan also includes training on the needs and services plan that is required for each child in care. Section 84068.2 requires the group home social work staff to develop the needs and services plan based on the needs of the child as outlined in the case plan with the child and the placement social worker.

- New group home staff must complete a minimum of 24 hours of training; child care staff must complete a minimum of 20 hours of annual training and at least four hours of the annual training must consist of course work from an entity other than the group home such as an accredited educational institution, workshops, seminars, or other direct training provided by a qualified individual.
- The facility manager is also required to complete a minimum of 1 hour training, developed by the licensee, in addition to the 24-hour initial training and 20 annual training.
- Prospective group home administrators must obtain an administrator certificate by completing a department approved initial 40-hour certification training program. Training topics and time requirements for the initial certification training program are listed in the table below.

40-Hour Core of Knowledge Training Topics and Hour Requirements
Group Home Initial Certification Training Program

Training Subject/Core Components	Training Hours
Law and Regulations	6
Business Operations	4
Management/Supervision of Staff	4
Psycho/Social Needs	4
Community and Support Services	4
Physical Needs	2
Medication	6
Admission/Retention and Assessment	5
Non Violent & Emergency Intervention, Reporting Requirements	4
Foster Children Safety, California Student Safety and Violence Act Prevention Act of 2000	1

COST ALLOCATION METHODOLOGY

The RCL rate system utilizes a point structure that employs a combination of hours for Child Care and Supervision with extra weightings for experience and education; hours for social work staffing with extra weightings for education; hours for mental health with extra weightings for education (this is for RCL points only, not a IV-E allowable cost); and a weighting for staff training which is a standard weighting for all staff to determine the RCL point range and therefore the rate. For purposes of staff training, providers must prove they have provided for and paid staff to attend these trainings through written class descriptions, staff participation log sheets, and identification of paid training on the employee's time sheet. Additionally, the trainer must be someone with the credentials to provide the training, such as a social worker. A provider does not have to "count" or identify staff training to increase the RCL points as it is not required; however, if a provider elects to include training in the calculation of total RCL points, they must identify sufficient hours, 40 hours per Full Time Employee (FTE) and provide proof that the training has been provided through the process identified above. Because providers who elect to include training points must provide 40 hours per FTE, this is an "all or nothing" method. In other words, if a provider does not have sufficient proof of providing 40 hours per FTE, none of the training will count towards the RCL points.

23 CWS/CMS Training

The CWS/CMS staff development and training allocation is $8.294 million. The State divides and distributes the allocation to three training sources to provide consistent statewide training.

DESCRIPTION OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

Approximately $2 million is allocated for the provision of classroom training to state and county CWS/CMS users of which $400,000 was given to the Regional Training Academies as new vendors of training delivery. These systems trainings and associated supports utilize a standardized statewide curriculum and web based tools. The training includes CWS/CMS referral, case management, and placement and resource management including: CWS/CMS new and intermediate user, CWS/CMS beginning, intermediate and customized county, and state access to data via the Business Objects programs. Business Objects is the data manipulation and reporting software provided by the state for designated users. The training delivers the CWS/CMS training through classroom instruction which is made available at various locations throughout the State. Additionally provided are various web based training guides, tools, workgroups, and other venues to ensure user skills and knowledge are adequately addressed and maintained.

In addition to the provision of a standardized curriculum, there are state staff dedicated to providing management, facilitation, and oversight of the statewide training and associated support efforts for the various systems use needs. Highlights of needs include developing, updating, and maintaining training tools including the curriculum, the Statewide Training Application Resource (STAR), Online Release Notes, Quick Reference Guides and Business Objects. In addition the allocation supports a county consultant. The consultant provides a

county systems business process perspective and input on training and support necessary to meet the needs of county users.

The state allocates $5,294 million of the CWS/CMS training allocation directly to the counties to provide CWS/CMS users with training. Counties use the allocated funds to provide local CWS/CMS training to new staff, staff whose functions within the program are changing, or special training to meet county or individual staff member specific needs. These funds assist counties in providing training locally and to ensure compliance with statewide training, systems case management, and data recording. Additionally, the statewide training tools are available on the CWS/CMS website.

ALLOWABLE TITLE IV-E ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS

CWS/CMS training falls under the following categories necessary for the administration of the foster care program: development of the case plan, monitor and conduct evaluations, and case reviews.

SETTING/VENUE

All county and state staff requiring CWS/CMS training attends classes at various sites and/or utilizes the web based tools. The training venues are strategically located throughout the state to allow easy access to as many staff as possible. Training can be delivered at an individual staff's desk as necessitated by business needs.

TRAINING DURATION

Each training session can vary according to the venue, subjects, skill set, and type of training provided. The county has the ability to provide in-house training whenever it is deemed necessary.

TRAINING AUDIENCE

The training audience includes all county and state staff using the CWS/CMS system. The number of students trained to use the system varies frequently because it is based on fluctuating state and county needs.

TRANSITIONAL OR REGULAR FFP RATE

This training is allocated to the Title IV-E enhanced regular FFP rate of 75 percent, and SGF.

TOTAL COST ESTIMATE

$8.294 million

24 Indian Child Welfare Act Initiative

DESCRIPTION OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

The AOC continues to support CDSS' commitment to full implementation of ICWA by providing educational offerings; curriculum development; technical assistance; statewide resources; and tribal engagement on domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and teen dating violence through the ICWA Initiative.

Details regarding these other activities are further explained in the general ICWA section of this document.

ALLOWABLE TITLE IV-E ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS

Eligibility determination, referral to services, preparation for and participation in judicial determinations, placement of the child, development of the case plan, case reviews, and case management and supervision.

SETTING/VENUES

Various.

TRAINING DURATION

This training is ongoing over a three-year period.

TRAINING ACTIVITIES PROVIDER

Administrative Office of the Courts

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF DAYS/HOURS OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

Eight six-hour regional training sessions will be provided.

TARGET AUDIENCE

County child welfare and probation staff, family and juvenile court representatives, and tribal representatives.

TRANSITIONAL OR REGULAR FFP RATE

This training is allocated to Title IV-E at the enhanced regular FFP rate of 75 percent, transitional rate, and SFG.

TOTAL COST ESTIMATE

$351,673

25 Annual California Indian Child Welfare Act Conference

The CDSS continues to support the annual statewide ICWA Conference hosted by a volunteer tribe or group of tribes. Please refer to the ICWA section within this document for updates.

ALLOWABLE TITLE IV-E ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS

Not Applicable.

TRANSITIONAL OR REGULAR FFP RATE

Not Applicable. All SGF.

SETTING/VENUE

This training alternates annually between northern, central and southern California, and is sponsored and organized by a host tribe in the selected area.

TRAINING DURATION

This training is a short-term annual event.

TRAINING ACTIVITY PROVIDER

Contractor is determined annually. The California tribe selected to host and organize the training becomes the contractor.

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF DAYS/HOURS OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

The training is conducted over two and one-half days. Approximately 200 individuals will receive training.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Indian child welfare workers; tribal advocates, council members and community leaders, law enforcement; child welfare and probation staff, judges, attorneys, foster/adoption agencies, social services agency personnel, college students, and other interested parties.

TOTAL COST ESTIMATE

$25,000

26 Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICAMA) Training for California County ICAMA Liaisons

DESCRIPTION OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

The CDSS and various county ICAMA liaison staff participated in teleconference trainings offered by the Association of Administrators of the Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (AAICAMA) on February 23, 2010, and March 10, 2011. In addition, California's Co-Compact administrators from the California Department of Health Care Services also participated in the training. The trainings covered the basics of the ICAMA Compact and Medicaid/Title IV-E and Title XIX law, and state and federal funding. In addition, the training addressed the key roles and responsibilities of the compact administrator and ICAMA professionals, the forms and procedures that must be used under the compact for interstate cases, and Medicaid eligibility for children under the Fostering Connections Title IV-E Guardianship Assistance Program. The training provided an opportunity for local ICAMA liaison staff to discuss ICAMA related questions/issues and to explore best practices in administering the compact. The CDSS will continue to arrange for similar additional training in the future on an as- needed basis. Additionally, CDSS has and will continue to provide on-going technical assistance to county child welfare, county and state adoption, and county probation staff on ICAMA program rules, procedures, etc. The CDSS will also continue to seek ways to incorporate additional ICAMA related training into the RTA Curriculums or other training-related venues.

This training addresses the goals and objectives of the CFSP by assisting child welfare and adoptions staff in engaging families with individualized responses to help them preserve and strengthen their capacities to provide safety and stability for their children.

ALLOWABLE TITLE IV-E ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS

This training activity falls under the category of determining eligibility and case management.

SETTING/VENUE

Training will be available statewide.

TRAINING DURATION

Duration of training is expected to be no more than a day for any individual training.

TRAINING ACTIVITY PROVIDER

The ICAMA training will be conducted by an organization that has experience in providing statewide training and ICAMA subject matter such as AAICAMA or the Training Academies.

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF DAYS/HOURS OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

To be determined based on the type of training offered, topics and the audience to receive training.

TRAINING AUDIENCE

Statewide ICAMA county liaisons, including CDSS District Offices and California tribes and eligibility workers. Training may also include judges, commissioners, referees, court personnel and attorneys involved with the adoption of AAP-eligible children.

TRANSITIONAL OR REGULAR FFP RATE

This training is allocated to Title IV-E enhanced regular FFP rate of 75 percent and SGF.

TOTAL COST ESTIMATE

$50,000

27 Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) Training

DESCRIPTION OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

During CY 2010, CDSS worked with the UC Berkeley School of Social Welfare, California Social Work Education Center to develop a new resource guide on the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC). The ICPC Practice Guide is intended as a handout which will accompany the Permanency and Placement curriculum and will be available to counties as part of this training curriculum. Additionally, CDSS continued to conduct quarterly regional meetings with Northern and Southern California ICPC liaisons. These meetings provide an ongoing opportunity for CDSS to consult with county ICPC staff, clarify existing ICPC requirements, and review proposed program changes in the ICPC program area. In addition, they provide an opportunity to discuss county best practice information for the processing and tracking of ICPC information. Lastly, CDSS has continued to provide on-going technical assistance to county child welfare, mental health and probation staff on ICPC program rules, practices, etc.

Given the current efforts of the Association of Administrators of the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (AAICPC) to refine and/or modify the existing ICPC regulations, CDSS will be reassessing over the next several months the need for more formalized training which may be needed by counties in the future to address changes in the AAICPC regulations including both the type of training needed as well as the timing/methods of such training. Any such training, however, likely to meet the following specifications.

This training addresses the goals and objectives of the CFSP by promoting appropriate placement, placement stability, and a better understanding about the protection of children who are placed out of state while remaining under court jurisdiction. Without this training, there is potential for statewide inconsistencies in ICPC compliance especially with respect to new regulation requirements, including placements that have not been approved through the ICPC process. Noncompliance with the ICPC process could jeopardize a child's placement, as well as benefits and services.

ALLOWABLE TITLE IV-E ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS

The ICPC training would cover new ICPC requirements, procedures, and regulations including by whom and when it must be used, types of placements covered, case planning and financial and medical support responsibility by the sending entity until closure with concurrence of both agencies, referrals to services, supervisory reports and visitation, and case reviews. Additionally, training will include information on federal ICPC home study timeline requirements and applicable data reporting requirements.

SETTING/VENUE

Regional training sites and/or on-line format.

TRAINING DURATION

Short-term: The training will consist of two to three, one- to two-day, regional (northern and southern) training sessions, or a self-paced on-line training format.

TRAINING ACTIVITY PROVIDER

Training provider has not yet been determined. This will be a new training contract with an organization that has knowledge of ICPC and experience in organizing statewide training sessions and/or providing on-line training.

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF DAYS/HOURS OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

Approximately two to three, one- to two-day regional training sessions, that would consist of approximately eight to 16 hours per session or comparable hours of on-line training.

TARGET AUDIENCE

The state's ICPC liaisons in each county, placement supervisors (child welfare services, probation, and tribes) that place out of state, and CDSS Adoption District Office staff (75-125).

TRANSITIONAL OR REGULAR FFP RATE

This training is allocated to the Title IV-E enhanced regular FFP rate of 75 percent rate, and SGF.

TOTAL COST ESTIMATE

$50,000

28 Title IV-E Web-based Training

UC Davis is developing a Foster Care Eligibility Web-based training to train staff of the 58 County Welfare Departments (CWDs) and Probation Departments.

DESCRIPTION OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

The training will allow Eligibility workers to improve their knowledge, skills, and accuracy when determining foster care eligibility. In addition, Probation staff will improve their knowledge and accuracy in the completion of all applicable forms related to Title IV-E determinations. This training is an online computer-based format that includes text, audio components and interactive contents with visual case scenarios.

The training addresses the goals and objectives of the CFSP by assisting counties and the state to be in compliance with federal Title IV-E eligibility requirements during federal audits. The training objective will also focus on reducing case error rates and the likelihood of federal disallowances for the state. This is an on-going training to ensure that CWDs comply with Title IV-E eligibility.

ALLOWABLE TITLE IV-E ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS

The training will address the following: Eligibility determination, redetermination, and preparation for and participation in judicial determination.

SETTING/VENUES

Online

TRAINING DURATION

On-going through FY 2013-14

TRAINING ACTIVITIES PROVIDER

The training course will be developed and maintained by The Center for Human Services, UC Davis Extension University of California.

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF DAYS/HOURS OF TRAINING ACTIVITY

Each training module will take approximately 16 hours to complete.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Child Welfare Eligibility Workers and Probation Departments.

TOTAL COST ESTIMATE

$113,000.00

TRANSITIONAL OR REGULAR FFP RATE

This training is allocated to the IV-E enhanced regular FFP rate of 75 percent and the transitional rate.

Evaluation and Technical Assistance

TRAINING EVALUATION FOR RTAS

There have been no substantive changes in the strategic plan that was finalized in FY 2008-09 to help guide child welfare training evaluation efforts for the next three years in California. The strategic plan includes development activities in the following areas, subject to availability of resources. The work over the next three years will include implementation of the activities outlined in the strategic plan, including:

- Complete a more in-depth analysis of data that indicates concerns with a particular test or curriculum, and identify ways to troubleshoot and resolve issues.
- Link evaluation data to trainers to ensure fidelity to, and identify gaps in, coverage of common core curricula.

Within the next year, and based upon availability of funding and staffing, discussion has occurred around intentions to:

- Develop formative evaluation materials for a new statewide venture: e-learning.
- Revise the embedded evaluation for Casework Supervision module.
- Pilot a neglect scenario as part of an embedded evaluation.
- Conduct a feasibility study of Transfer of Learning (TOL) evaluations as applied at a statewide level, based on findings and lessons learned from initial TOL evaluations.
- Conduct a feasibility study linking training to outcomes evaluation as applied at a statewide level.

ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICES

Policy Guidance and Information Provided to Counties can be found on the following website:

http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/lettersnotices/PG1011.htm

ALL COUNTY LETTERS

http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/lettersnotices/PG931.htm

COUNTY FISCAL LETTERS

http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/lettersnotices/PG959.htm

Request for Training and Technical Assistance

As history demonstrates, there are instances when California counties and CDSS benefit from the training and technical assistance (T/TA) offered through ACF. The T/TA for California can be provided by the ACF staff, through the NRC, or through the Western and Pacific Child Welfare Implementation Center (WPIC).

The CDSS continues to monitor counties' progress on their SIPs related to a number of areas, such as permanency, safety, and well-being. Counties that are in the process of updating their SIPs or that undergo a peer quality case review may identify issues where T/TA would be of benefit to the children and families in these communities. In the coming year, some counties will request T/TA from the NRC through CDSS on a variety of issues. The CDSS issued an ACIN outlining the process by which counties should request T/TA, and CDSS continues to encourage counties to use the services offered by the NRCs and the WPIC.

A copy of the California plan for T/TA used prior to June 2011 is included below.

TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Also included in this section is a list of entities, in addition to CDSS, that provide T/TA to counties through contracts and other means.

T/TA is provided to California counties through contracts and is also provided directly by CDSS. There have no changes in the groups providing T/TA. They are as follows:

California's National Resource Center and Western and Pacific Implementation Center
Training/Technical Assistance Plan FFY 2011

Describe the T/TA Request	Branch	Estimated Timeframe	Related T/TA Need	Additional Information	NRC/Regional Office Contact
Develop and implement a one-day training for social workers, probation officers, and their supervisors/managers about how to engage with the 17-21 year old youth who are thinking about or have decided to remain in foster care beyond the age of 18.	CYPB (Karen Gunderson/ Sonya St. Mary) CPFSB (Linné Stout/Cheryl Treadwell)	Sept. 2011 – Dec. 2011	☐ Data Issues (SACWIS/AFCARS) ☐ Other needs (specify) ☒ Federal Requirements		NRC for Youth Development
Assessment of the Statewide Training System, including an evaluation of the communication structure and provision of training services and technical assistance within regions and counties. Exploring e-learning development and most effective learning management systems/platforms.	CPFSB (Linné Stout/ Cheryl Treadwell)	TBD	☐ Data Issues (SACWIS/AFCARS) ☐ Other needs (specify) ☐ Federal Requirements ☒ PIP ☐ CIP ☐ CFSP ☒ CFSR		CPFS is consulting with the NRC for Organizational Improvement.
Support in implementing streamlined communication practices around development of the APSR—specifically being supported in learning how to best utilize currently available data to inform decision making around practice and training needs.	CSOE (Ellie Jones / Dave McDowell)	TBD	☐ Data Issues (SACWIS/AFCARS) ☐ Other needs (specify) ☐ Federal Requirements ☒ PIP ☐ CIP ☒ CFSP ☒ CFSR	An outcome will be learning to incorporate more effective evaluation of CDSS programs. The T/TA will respond to how CDSS can improve use of and understanding of data in program areas in a most cost effective and useful way.	CSOE is in the process of assessing needs for the request with the NRC.

EMERGENCY AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS PLAN

BACKGROUND

The Children's Services Operations and Evaluation Branch Annex is to be used in conjunction with CDSS Mass Care and Shelter (MCS) Plan in large-scale, multi-county, interregional emergencies and disasters. The basic MCS Plan and the CSOE Annex will provide the structure, policies, procedures, and forms for CDSS Disaster Operation Center (DOC) activation.

The CSOE serves a population that includes dependent and probationary children under the care or supervision of the state. Since many of these children reside in multiple jurisdictional areas which are supervised by local child welfare agencies and CDSS, specific planning for this population is necessary. The CSOE Annex details necessary response information for declared national disasters and national security emergencies.

In September 2006, Congress passed the Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006, PL 109-288. PL 109-288 amended Part B of Title IV-B of the Social Security Act to reauthorize the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program. Among other changes, PL 109-288 established requirements for states on disaster planning in child welfare under Section 6 (a) (16).

Under the new federal guidelines:

"(16) provide that, not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this paragraph, the State shall have in place procedures providing for how the State programs assisted under this subpart, subpart two of this part, or Part E would respond to a disaster, in accordance with criteria established by the Secretary which should include how a State would;

A. Identify, locate, and continue availability of services for children under State care or supervision who are displaced or adversely affected by a disaster;
B. Respond, as appropriate, to new child welfare cases in areas adversely affected by a disaster, and provide services in those areas;
C. Remain in communication with caseworkers and other essential child welfare personnel who are displaced because of a disaster;
D. Preserve essential program records; and
E. Coordinate services and share information with other states."

POPULATION STATISTICS

The Center for Social Services Research Child Welfare Dynamic Report System, a CDSS/University of California, Berkeley, collaboration, complied statistics on the number of dependent and probationary children under the care or supervision of the State. They include the following:

Total California Population in Foster Care on October 1, 2010:

(Ages Under 1 – 10) 31,571 of which none have probationary status.
(Ages 11 – 20) 30,677 of which 4,264 have probationary status.[29]

[29] *The above data was extracted from the Child Welfare Services Case Management System (CWS/CMS) 2008 Quarter 3.*

PLAN MAINTENANCE

The CSOEB Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Plan will be maintained by CDSS CSOEB designated employee. The overall plan will be reviewed and revised as necessary, but no less than every 5 years. The plan may also be revised after new learning occurs during actual events, table top exercises, etc. Selected elements of the plan will be updated as needed. Plan updates and revisions will include:

- Request and review annual updates from all 58 county child welfare services agencies and the seven Adoption Services Bureau's District Offices.
- Update of names, phone numbers, pager numbers, addresses, and other contact information.
- Changes in operating procedures and organizational structures.
- Policy changes.
- Legislative changes.

Planning Assumptions

- County child welfare agencies have emergency plans and procedures for identifying and locating children under state care or supervision that have been adversely affected by a disaster.
- County child welfare agencies have agreements with adjacent jurisdictions that allow for cooperative assistance consistent with the Emergency Services Act and the Master Mutual Aid Agreement.
- County child welfare agencies have responded to the needs of dependent and probationary children by activating its emergency response plan.
- County child welfare agencies have taken actions to locate and identify dependent and probationary children prior to requesting assistance through the normal Standardized Emergency Management System Structure.
- County child welfare agencies will respond to new child welfare cases in areas adversely affected by a disaster, and provide services.
- County child welfare agencies will remain in communication with caseworkers and other essential child welfare personnel who are displaced because of a disaster.
- County child welfare agencies will preserve essential program records.
- County child welfare agencies will coordinate services for their respective county and share information with other counties, state, and federal entities.

CSOEB Emergency Management Objectives and Goals

- Identify, locate, and continue availability of services for children under state care or supervision who are displaced or adversely affected by a disaster.
- Respond, as appropriate, to new child welfare cases in areas adversely affected by a disaster, and provide services in those areas.
- Remain in communication with caseworkers and other essential child welfare personnel who are displaced because of a disaster.
- Preserve essential program records.
- Coordinate services and share information with other states.

ANNEX

This plan is composed of the following sections:

BASIC ANNEX

Primary information relating to plan assumptions, plan goals, training and exercises, maintenance of the plan, elements for preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation phases of emergency management for dependent and probationary children under the care or supervision of the state.

Introduction

Purpose

The purpose of this Annex is to establish an effective process for activating and operating an emergency and disaster preparedness plan, in cooperation with state and local government for dependent and probationary children under the care or supervision of the state. It describes the responsibilities and actions required for the effective operation of locating and monitoring dependent and probationary children under the care or supervision of the State of California, Department of Social Services.

AUTHORITIES AND REFERENCES

The elements for preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation phases of emergency management for dependent and probationary children will be conducted as outlined in this document and in accordance with State law, the State Emergency Plan, the California Services Act, CDSS Administrative Order, and the State Mass Care and Shelter Plan.

PREPAREDNESS ELEMENTS

Emphasis on preparedness for dependent and probationary children:

- Define dependent and probationary children.
- Establish local emergency preparedness guidelines.
- Ensure local emergency preparedness guidelines are followed.
- Define the state agencies and their role in providing support to local agencies for dependent and probationary children.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PHASES

Emergency management activities during peacetime and national security emergencies are often associated with the four emergency management phases as indicated; however, not every disaster necessarily includes all indicated phases.

This section describes the appropriate emergency management phase response for identifying and locating dependent and probationary children under the care or supervision of the state.

- Preparedness Phase (including increased readiness)
- Response (including Pre-emergency, Emergency Response, and Sustained Emergency)
- Recovery
- Mitigation

Phase 1 – Preparedness

The preparedness phase involves activities taken in advance of an emergency. These activities develop operational capabilities and effective response to a disaster. These actions include mitigation, emergency/disaster planning, training, exercises, and public education. Those entities identified in this plan as having either a primary or support mission relative to response and recovery should prepare

operating procedures and checklists detailing personal assignments, policies, notification rosters, and resource lists.

During this phase, the CSOEB of CDSS will:

- Request and review Child Welfare Disaster Response Plans from all 58 county child welfare services agencies and the seven Adoption Services Bureau's District Offices; updating as necessary, the name, telephone numbers, pager numbers, addresses, and other contact information.
- CDSS will place all Child Welfare Disaster Response Plans from all 58 county child welfare services agencies on the Department website (www.childsworld.ca.gov).
- Encourage local county agencies responsible for the care or supervision of dependent and probationary children to continue development of plans and exercise readiness procedures for identifying and locating dependent children under their supervision.
- Develop resource lists and contacts with supporting agencies and organizations in other jurisdictions.
- Develop, implement, and participate in readiness training programs and exercises with affected agencies and organizations.

Increased Readiness

The warning or observation that an emergency is likely or has the potential to require activation of the CSOEB Annex will initiate increased readiness actions. Appropriate actions include, but are not limited to the following:

- Review and update procedures for the activation, operation, and deactivation of the CSOEB Annex.
- Review the current status of all resource lists.
- Request information from local Child Welfare Agencies regarding the number of people trained in emergency management functions necessary for the care or supervision of dependent and probationary children under the care or supervision of the state.
- Request information from local Child Welfare Agencies regarding the number of trained people available for deployment to assist in identifying and locating dependent and probationary children under the care or supervision of the state.
- Develop preliminary staffing plans for deploying trained personnel to assist in the identifying and locating of dependent and probationary children under the care or supervision of the state.
- Initiate contact, coordinate services, and share information with supporting agencies, organizations, and other states involved with assisting in identifying and locating dependent and probationary children (County Child Welfare Agencies, CWDA, and Adoptions Services Bureau's District Offices).
- Contact International Business Machines (IBM), the controller and preservationist of the essential program records for a mock report of dependent and probationary children.

Phase 2 – Response

Pre-Emergency

When a large-scale disaster is inevitable, actions are precautionary and emphasize protection of life.

Typical response actions may include:

- Alert and notify CSOEB staff for possible deployment.
- Notify other personnel regarding possible deployment.
- Retrieve essential program records from IBM.
- Send essential program records/report which contains the identifying information of dependent and probationary children to the county disaster representative of affected county. In the event the receiving county is not able to receive the report, it will be sent to the disaster representative of the adjoining county.
- Remain in communication with caseworkers, and other essential child welfare personnel potentially affected by the disaster.
- Coordinate services and share information with local government agencies, District Offices, and other states.

Emergency Response

During this phase, emphasis is placed on saving lives and property, control of the situation, and minimizing effects of the disaster. Immediate response is accomplished within the affected area by local government agencies and segments of the public and private non-governmental sector. The CDSS will coordinate with supporting agencies the activation of personnel for availability to respond to the needs of dependent and probationary children under the care or supervision of the state.

Response may include:

- Alert and notify CSOEB staff for deployment.
- Notify other personnel regarding deployment.
- Coordinate services and share information with local government and other states.
- Maintain a log of trained personnel assignments, personal information (i.e. name, organization, personal emergency information, site location, shift hours, future schedules, staffing changes that may have occurred, etc).
- Identify, locate, and continue availability of services for children under State care or supervision who are displaced or adversely affected by a disaster.
- Respond, as appropriate, to new child welfare cases in areas adversely affected by a disaster, and provide services in those areas.
- Remain in communication with caseworkers and other essential child welfare personnel who are displaced because of a disaster (i.e. telephone, cellular, e-mail, etc).

Phase 3 – Recovery

During the recovery phase, procedures for the CSOEB will include:

- Continue to communicate with caseworkers and other essential child welfare personnel who have been displaced because of the disaster and provide services in those areas.
- Continue to respond to new child welfare cases in areas adversely affected by the disaster, and provide services in those areas.
- Review and update the county Child Welfare Disaster Response Plans.
- Compilation and summarization of information from supporting agencies.

Phase 4 – Mitigation

Mitigation efforts occur both before and following disaster events. Post-disaster mitigation is part of the recovery process. Eliminating or reducing the impact of hazards which exist with the State and are

a threat to life and property are part of the mitigation efforts. Mitigating these hazards, both before and after a disaster is particularly important when evaluating the impact on dependent and probationary children under the care or supervision of the State. Mitigation tools include:

- Maintain cooperative community relations between state, local, public, and private organizations.
- Identify, locate, and continue availability of services for children under state care or supervision who are displaced or adversely affected by a disaster.
- Respond, as appropriate, to new child welfare cases in areas adversely affected by a disaster, and provide services in those areas.
- Remain in communication with caseworkers and other essential child welfare personnel who are displaced because of a disaster.

RESPONSE ORGANIZATION/STRUCTURE IN A CATASTROPHIC EVENT

LEVEL	SOURCE	AGENCY/TITLE
Local	County Coordinator	Local Government, public and private organizations
Operational Area	County Coordinator	County Government
Regional Operations	CDSS District Offices	CDSS
State Operations	CDSS Agency Liaison	CDSS

Operational Area (OA) Level

As the onset of a disaster is at the local level, it is imperative that the locating and identifying plan at the local level include procedures and protocols for meeting the needs of dependent and probationary children before, during, and after a disaster. This is assumed to be an OA responsibility.

Regional Level

Because of its size and geography, the State has been divided into six mutual aid regions. The purpose of a mutual aid region is to provide for the more effective application and coordination of mutual aid and other emergency related activities.

Three Regional Emergency Operation Centers (REOC) have been established; one is Southern California (Los Alamitos), one in Coastal California (Oakland), and the third in Northern California (Sacramento). Once the REOC is activated, CalEMA may request that CDSS activate coordination efforts to identify and locate dependent and probationary children.

State Agency Level

California State Departments will coordinate with other state agencies, county, and non-governmental agencies to provide assistance in identifying and locating dependent and probationary children under the care or supervision of the state for CSOEB. The DOC manager will designate an Agency representative to be assigned to the State Operations Center (SOC).

California Department of Social Services (CDSS)

CDSS serves as the coordinator and communication link between State and Federal disaster care and shelter response system for CSOEB. During an emergency CDSS will:

- Activate CDSS DOC for response operations.
- The DOC manager will be responsible for appointing staff necessary to activate this CSOEB Annex.

- The DOC manager will appoint a CDSS Liaison to respond to requests for CSOE resources from the Office of Emergency Services.

Emergency Medical Services Authority

The Department of Homeland Security/Federal Emergency Management Agency (DHS/FEMA) serves as the main Federal government contact during emergencies, major disasters and national-security emergencies. When the State has exhausted all resources in a catastrophic event, CALEMA will request assistance from DHA/FEMA.

Federal Level

Department of Homeland Security/Federal Emergency Management Agency

The DHS/FEMA serves as the main Federal government contact during emergencies, major disasters and national-security emergencies. When the State has exhausted all resources needed for care and shelter in a catastrophic event, CALEMA will request assistance from Department of homeland Security/Federal Emergency Management Agency (DHA/FEMA).

American Red Cross (ARC)

The ARC provides emergency mass care in coordination with government, public and private agencies. It receives its authority from a congressional charter. In a catastrophic event, the ARC may coordinate disaster relief activities with:

- Private organizations, such as The Salvation Army (TSA)
- National and local Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster and CBOs
- Members of the Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs)

Attachments

- All County Letter Number 09-81
- All County Letter Number 08-52
- All County Letter Number 07-30
- Child Welfare Services Disaster Response Plan Template AD 525

http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/lettersnotices/entres/getinfo/acl/2010/10-63.pdf
http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/lettersnotices/entres/getinfo/acl/2009/09-81.pdf
http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/lettersnotices/entres/getinfo/acl08/08-52.pdf
http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/lettersnotices/entres/getinfo/acl07/pdf/07-30.pdf
http://www.dss.cahwet.gov/FORMS/English/TEMPAD525.doc

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Maintenance of Effort (MOE)

PAYMENT LIMITATIONS – TITLE IV-B, SUBPART 1:

California did not expend any part of federal or non-federal Title IV-B subpart 1 funds for foster care maintenance, adoption assistance, nor childcare related to foster day care, and on administrative functions in FFY 2005. This will also be true for FFY 2012.

PAYMENT LIMITATIONS – TITLE IV-B, SUBPART 2:

California's Promoting Safe and Stable Families program is currently funded using $33,089,747.00 of Non-Federal Funds for 2009, while the MOE baseline in 1992 was $13,200,000. Below are the funding calculations for this program:

		APSR 2010	APSR 2011
Total Grant	$	34,249,545.00	33,895,325.00
Total Non-Federal Funds (2008 & 2009, respectively)	$	**26,174,748.58**	**33,089,747.00**
(MOE baseline per 1992)	$	-13,200,000.00	-13,200,000.00
Non-Federal Match after MOE	$	**12,974,748.58**	**19,889,747.00**
25 percent Match	$	-11,416,515.00	- 12,785,654.78.00
Unused Non-Federal Match	$	**1,558,233.58**	**7,104,092.22**

The CFS 101 is outlined in the following section. The proportions for subpart 2 were previously described on page 45 of this report.

ANNUAL BUDGET REQUEST AND SUMMARY (CFS-101)

The CFS 101, Parts I, II, and III are included with this report as Attachment C.

APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY

The following descriptions are for illustration purposes only and not necessarily official or vetted terminology.

ACTIVE EFFORTS

Prior to the Court making a dispositional finding removing a child from a parent (or terminating parental rights), CDSS has the burden to demonstrate that "active efforts have been made to provide remedial services and rehabilitative programs designed to prevent the breakup of the Indian family and that these efforts have been unsuccessful." (25 U.S.C. §1912(d).) Actions to provide "active effort" shall include attempts to utilize resources of extended family members, the tribe, Indian social service agencies, traditional Indian services, and individual Indian care givers. (Cal. Rules of Court, Rule 1439(i)(4)(B).)

CALIFORNIA'S SAFETY, RISK AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

The California Statewide Safety, Risk and Needs Assessment System includes standardized assessment tools to ensure that these elements are assessed for each child for whom child welfare services are to be provided, including gathering and evaluating information relevant to the case situation and appraising case service needs. Each of the 58 California counties have implemented the use of a standardized assessment tool; either SDM or CAT to collect written documentation as well as to assist social workers and their supervisors in determining the appropriate level of response, assessing safety and risk factors in the home, and gauging the family's strengths and needs. The tools are designed to assist in the decision making process when used throughout the life of a child welfare case.

DIFFERENTIAL RESPONSE (DR)

Differential Response is a strategy that creates a new intake and service delivery structure that allows a CWS agency to respond in a more flexible manner to reports of child abuse or neglect. The CWS response is a customized approach based on an assessment of safety, risk, and protective capacity as well as the ascertainment of facts to determine the strengths and needs of the child and his or her family. This approach includes innovative partnerships with community based organizations and other county agencies which can help support families in need before further crises develop. This focus is not intended to supplant the charge of CWS to investigate and assess allegations when necessary.

FAIRNESS AND EQUITY IN THE CHILD WELFARE SERVICES SYSTEM

Policies, procedures, and practices, as well as the availability of community resources and supports to ensure that all children and families, including those of diverse backgrounds and those with special needs, will obtain similar benefits from child welfare interventions and equally positive outcomes regardless of the community that they live in.

THE FAMILY TO FAMILY (F2F) INITIATIVE

The California F2F Initiative has been comprised of a partnership between CDSS, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Stuart Foundation, and the Walter S. Johnson Foundation. F2F was designed in 1992 and has now been field tested in sixty communities nationwide. F2F is in a total of seventeen states, including Arizona, Alaska, Michigan, Ohio, Illinois, Colorado, North Carolina, Georgia, New York (New York City), Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, New Mexico, Oregon, Tennessee, Washington and California.

F2F is comprised of five core strategies: 1) Recruitment, development, and support of resource families, 2) Building community partnerships, 3) Team Decision-making, 4) Self-evaluation, and 5) the CC25. There are also several emerging strategies that address additional areas needing improvement that are closely linked to the five core strategies. They are: 1) Eliminating Racial Disparity and Disproportionality, 2) Immigration and child welfare, 3) Improving Youth Engagement, 4) Improving Parent Engagement, 5) Domestic violence and child welfare, and 6) children with incarcerated parents.

MANUAL OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES (MPP) DIVISION 31

The MPP are the regulations that govern the operation of county child welfare services.

PEER QUALITY CASE REVIEWS (PQCR)

The PQCR is an extension of the county's self assessment process and is guided by questions raised by the analysis of outcome data and systemic factors. The goal of the PQCR is to analyze specific practice areas and to identify key patterns of agency strengths and concerns for the host county. The PQCR process uses peers from other counties to promote the exchange of best practice ideas within the host county and to peer reviewers. The peer reviewers provide objectivity to the process and serve as an immediate onsite training resource to the host county.

PILOT COUNTIES

The 11 pilot counties are counties that volunteered to implement the child welfare system improvements (Standardized Safety Assessment System, Differential Response and Permanency and Youth Transitions). These counties are Contra Costa, Glenn, Humboldt, Los Angeles, Placer, Sacramento, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Stanislaus, Tehama and Trinity.

QUARTERLY REPORTS

Each quarter, the state provides county child welfare agencies with county-specific data on outcome measures related to safety, permanency and well-being. These quarterly reports provide counties with quantitative data and serve as a management tool to track performance over time. The quarters are defined as:

1st Quarter: January – March
2nd Quarter: April - June
3rd Quarter: July - September
4th Quarter: October - December

TEAM DECISION-MAKING (TDM)

A meeting of key stakeholders in the child's case specifically used to determine placement decisions. The meetings are always conducted by a trained facilitator.

APPENDIX B: ACRONYM INDEX

Acronym Index	
AAICAMA	Association of Administrators of the Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance
AAICPC	Association of Administrators of the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children
AB	Assembly Bill
AC	Advisory Committee (Evidenced-based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare Services in California)
ACF	Administration for Children and Families
ACIN	All County Information Notice
ACL	All County Letter
ACYF	Administration on Children, Youth and Families
AFCARS	Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System
AOC	Administrative Office of the Courts/Judicial Council
AOD	Alcohol and Other Drugs
APS	Adoption Promotion Services
APSR	Annual Progress and Services Report
ARC	American Red Cross
BSC	Breakthrough Series Collaborative
BSW	Bachelor of Social Work
CALEMA	California Emergency Management Agency
CalSWEC	California Social Work Education Center
CalWORKs	California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids
CAP	Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project
CAPC	Child Abuse Prevention Councils
CAPIT	Child Abuse Prevention Intervention and Treatment
CAPP	California Partners for Permanency
CAPTA	Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act
CASA	Court Appointed Special Advocate
CAT	Comprehensive Assessment Tool
CBCAP	Community Based Child Abuse Prevention
CBO	Community Based Organizations
CC25	California Connected by 25 Initiative
C-CFSR	California Child and Family Services Review
CCMS	California Court Case Management System
CDC	Center for Disease Control
CDE	California Department of Education

Acronym Index	
CDSS	California Department of Social Services
CFCC	Center for Families, Children and the Courts
CFCIP	Chafee Foster Care Independence Program
CFPIC	Child and Family Policy Institute of California
CFSD	Child and Family Services Division
CFSP	Child and Family Services Plan
CFSR	Child and Family Services Review
CHDP	Child Health and Disability Prevention
CIP	Court Improvement Program
CKC	California Kids Connection
CPFSB	Child Protection and Family Support Branch
CPOC	Chief Probation Officers of California
CRC	Children's Research Center
CRP	Citizen Review Panels
CSA	County Self-Assessment
CSAC	California Student Aid Commission
CSAT	Coordinated Services Action Teams
CSOE	Children Services Operations and Evaluation Branch
CSPT	California State Parent Team
CWC	Child Welfare Council
CWDA	County Welfare Directors Association
CWDAB	Child Welfare Data Analysis Bureau
CWIP	Child Welfare Improvement Project
CWS	Child Welfare Services
CWS/CMS	Child Welfare Services/Case Management System
CY	Calendar Year
DCFS	Department of Children and Family Services
DHCS	Department of Health Care Services
DHS/FEMA	The Department of Homeland Security/Federal Emergency Management Agency
DMH	Department of Mental Health
DO	CDSS Adoptions District Office
DOC	Disaster Operation Center
DOJ	Department of Justice
DR	Differential Response
DRA	Deficit Reduction Act
DV	Domestic Violence
EDD	Employment Development Department

Acronym Index	
EMQ	Eastfield Ming Quong
ER	Emergency Response
ETV	Education and Training Vouchers
EYS	Emancipated Youth Stipend
FASD	Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders
FBO	Faith Based Organizations
FCCC	Foundation for California Community Colleges
FDM	Family Development Matrix
FES	Family Economic Success and Stability
FFA	Foster Family Agency
FFE	Family Finding and Engagement
F2F	Family to Family
FFP	Federal Financial Participation
FFY	Federal Fiscal Year
FIRST	Family Infant Relationship Support Training
FM	Family Maintenance
FR	Family Reunification
FRC	Family Resource Centers
FSP	Family Support Program
FYS	Foster Youth Services
HCPCFC	Health Care Program for Children in Foster Care
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IBM	International Business Machines
ICAMA	Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance
ICPC	Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children
ICWA	Indian Child Welfare Act
ILP	Independent Living Program
ITFC	Intensive Treatment Foster Care
IUC	Inter University Council
JRTA	Judicial Review and Technical Assistance
KinGAP	Kinship Guardianship Assistance Payment Program
KSSP	Kinship Support Services Program
MCS	Mass Care and Shelter Plan
MPP	Manual of Policies and Procedures
MHSA	Mental Health Services Act
MSW	Master of Social Work
MTFC	Multi-Dimensional Treatment Foster Care

Acronym Index	
NCANDS	National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System
NCCD	National Council on Crime and Delinquency
NICU	Neonatal Intensive Care Unit
NIDCAP	Newborn Individualized Development Care and Assessment Project
NRC	National Resource Center
NYTD	National Youth in Transition Database
OA	Outcomes and Accountability Bureau (in CFSD)
OES	Office of Emergency Services
OCAP	Office of Child Abuse Prevention Bureau (in CFSD)
OYA	Older Youth Adoptions Pilot Program
PIP	Program Improvement Plan
PL	Public Law
PP	Permanent Placement
PQCR	Peer Quality Case Reviews
PSSF	Promoting Safe and Stable Families Act
RBS	Residentially Based Services
RCAPC	Regional Child Abuse Coalition
RCL	Rate Classification Level
RCFFP	Resource Center for Family-Focused Practice
REOC	Regional Emergency Operation Centers
RFA	Request for Application
RFP	Request for Proposal
RTAs	Regional Training Academies
SA/HIV	Substance Abuse /Human Immunodeficiency Virus
SACWIS	Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System
SB	Senate Bill
SCP	Substitute Care Provider
SDM	Structured Decision Making
SFI	Supporting Father Involvement
FY	State Fiscal Year
SGF	State General Fund
SIP	System Improvement Plan
SIT	State Interagency Team
SKCP	Safe Kids California Project
SPHERE	Social Policy Health Economics Research and Evaluation Institute
SSB	Safely Surrendered Babies
SSTP	Special Start Training Program

Acronym Index	
STAP	Specialized Training for Adoptive Parents
STAR	Successful Transitions to Adult Readiness
STEC	Statewide Training and Education Committee
T/TA	Training and Technical Assistance
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
TAY	Transitional Age Youth
TCA	Tribal Customary Adoptions
TDM	Team Decision Making
THPP	Transitional Housing Placement Program (ages 16-18)
THP-Plus	Transitional Housing Placement Plus Program (ages 18-24)
TILP	Transitional Independent Living Program
TLFR	Time-Limited Family Reunification
TOL	Transfer of Learning
TPR	Termination of Parental Rights
TSA	The Salvation Army
UCD	University of California, Davis
WIA	Workforce Investment Act
WPIC	Western Pacific Welfare Implementation Center
YLC	Youth Law Center

Appendix C

MOU–Between Local CHDP and Local Social Services		Public Health Nursing Program	Fostering Connections ACT
PHN will be located in the CWS agency with accessibility to all team members	PHN will be located in the CWS agency with accessibility to all team members servicing children in foster care, including any PHNs currently working in CWS.	**Establishment of programs; plan requirements; standards for procedures; record system** The governing body of each county or counties shall establish a community child health and disability prevention program for the purpose of providing early and periodic assessments of the health status of children in the county or counties by July 1, 1974. However, this shall be the responsibility of the department for all counties that contract with the state for health services. Contract counties, at the option of the board of supervisors, may provide services pursuant to this article in the same manner as other county programs, provided the option is exercised prior to the beginning of each fiscal year. Each plan shall include, but is not limited to, the following requirements:	To ensure consistent, high quality medical care, the Fostering Connections Act requires states to develop a plan for the ongoing oversight and coordination of health care services for children in foster care. The state agency must develop the plan in coordination with the state Medicaid agency, pediatricians and other experts. The Fostering Connections Act seeks to provide resources and extend federal foster care protections to more Indian children. In particular, the law allows states and tribes to continue to operate or create tribal/state agreements to administer the IV-E program. It also gives tribes and tribal consortia the option to directly access and administer federal IV-E funds.
PHN will be supervised by supervising PHN in the local CHDP program with input from CWS agency staff.	CWS agency/Supervising Probation Officer will provide input to the supervising PHN.	Agreements with public and private facilities and practitioners to carry out the programs.	The State must actively consult physicians and other appropriate medical or nonmedical professionals in assessing the health and well-being of children in foster care

Appendix C

MOU–Between Local CHDP and Local Social Services		Public Health Nursing Program	Fostering Connections ACT
PHN will identify health care providers in the community.	CWS agency Social Worker/Probation Officer will work with PHN to ensure that all children in foster care are referred for health services appropriate to age and health status on a timely basis.	Referral for diagnosis or treatment for all children eligible for Medi-Cal, referral for treatment by a provider participating in the Medi-Cal program of conditions detected, and methods for assuring referral is carried out.	States must work through the state child welfare agency and the state agency's that administers Medicaid
PHN will evaluate the adequacy, accessibility and availability of the referral network for health care services and collaborate with CHDP staff to identify and recruit additional qualified providers.	CWS agency Social Worker/Probation Officer will work with the substitute care provider (Foster Parent) and the PHN to identify an appropriate health care provider for the child.	Health screening, evaluation, and diagnostic procedures for child health and disability prevention programs.	FCA requires State Department of Social Services to exercise diligence to identify and provide notice to all adult grandparents and close relatives of the child; requiring the Department, in consultation with pediatricians, health care experts, and experts in and recipients of child welfare services to develop a plan for the ongoing oversight and coordination of health care services for a child in a foster care placement
PHN will serve as a resource to facilitate (e.g., assist in scheduling appointments, arranging transportation, etc.) referrals to early intervention providers, specialty providers, dentists, mental health providers, CCS and other community programs.	CWS agency Social Worker/Probation Officer will work with the PHN to ensure that children placed out of county have access to health services appropriate to age and health status	For all children eligible for Medi-Cal, necessary assistance with scheduling appointments for services and with transportation.	The State must determine the appropriate medical treatment for children in foster care.

Appendix C

MOU–Between Local CHDP and Local Social Services		Public Health Nursing Program	Fostering Connections ACT
PHN will assist PHNs in the child's county of residence to identify and access resources to address the health care needs of children placed out of county.	Child's Social Worker/Probation Officer will collaborate with PHN to develop a health plan which identifies the health care needs and service priorities for each child expected to remain in foster care for 6 months or longer.	The health screening and evaluation part of each community child health and disability prevention program has a defined health plan for both mental and physical needs.	Section 205: Health Oversight and Coordination Plan Require each state (working through the state child welfare agency and the state agency that administers Medicaid) to ensure coordination of health care services
PHN will interpret health care reports for social worker/probation officers and others as needed.	Social Worker/Probation Officer or designee will incorporate health plan into child's case record.	Each community child health and disability prevention program shall, pursuant to standards set by the director, establish a record system that contains a health case history for each child so that costly and unnecessary repetition of screening, immunization and referral will not occur and appropriate health treatment will be facilitated as specified in Section 124085.	The plan may include the development of an electronic health record to ensure continuity of health care services. (**Optional to the State)**
PHN will develop a health plan for each child expected to remain in foster care.	Social Worker/Probation Officer will assemble and provide health care documentation to the court when necessary to support the request for health care services.	Health screening, evaluation, and diagnostic procedures for child health and disability prevention programs.	State Department of Social Services to exercise diligence to identify and provide notice to all adult grand-parents and close relatives of the child; requiring the Department, in consultation with pediatricians, health care experts, and experts in and recipients of child welfare services to develop a plan for the ongoing oversight and coordination of health care services for a child in a foster care placement

Appendix C

MOU–Between Local CHDP and Local Social Services		Public Health Nursing Program	Fostering Connections ACT
PHN will work with substitute care provider to ensure that the child's Health and Education Passport or its equivalent is updated.	Social Worker/Probation Officer will collaborate to complete and keep current the child's Health and Education Passport or its equivalent and provide a copy of the HEP to the substitute care provider.	Record keeping and program evaluations.	States must work through the state child welfare agency and the state agency's that administers Medicaid
PHN will assist substitute care provider s in obtaining timely comprehensive assessments.	Social Worker/Probation Officer will consult with the PHN to assess the suitability of the foster care placement in light of the health care needs of the child.	Health screening and evaluation services for all children including a physical examination, immunizations appropriate for the child's age and health history, and laboratory procedures appropriate for the child's age and population group performed by, or under the supervision or responsibility of, a physician licensed to practice medicine in California or by a certified family nurse practitioner or a certified pediatric nurse practitioner.	Plan Requires each state to schedule for initial and follow-up medical information for children in care be updated and appropriately shared

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Our mission is to serve, aid, and protect needy and vulnerable children and adults in ways that strengthen and preserve families, encourage personal responsibility, and foster independence.

CDSS

Children's Bureau
Child and Family Services Reviews
Program Improvement Plan

I. PIP General Information

CB Region:	I		II		III		IV		V		VI		VII		VIII		IX	✓	X	

State: California

Lead Children's Bureau Regional Office Contact Person: ~~Pat Pianko, MSW~~ Debra Samples Region IX, Administration for Children and Families	Telephone Number: 415.437.8~~462~~626 E-mail Address: ~~patricia.pianko@acf.hhs.gov~~ debra.samples@acf.hhs.gov
State Agency: California Department of Social Services	Address: 744 P Street, MS 8-12-91 Sacramento, CA 95814 Telephone Number: 916.657.2614
Lead State Agency Contact Person for the CFSR: Greg Rose, Deputy Director Children & Family Services Division California Department of Social Services	Telephone Number: 916.657.2614 E-mail Address: Greg.Rose@dss.ca.gov
Lead State Agency PIP Contact Person: ~~Glenn A. Freitas,~~ ~~Richard Smith, Acting~~ Ellie Jones Branch Chief, Children's Services Operations & Evaluation Branch	Telephone Number: 916.651.8100 E-mail Address: ~~Glenn.Freitas@dss.ca.gov~~ ~~Richard.Smith@dss.ca.gov~~ Ellie.Jones@dss.ca.gov
Lead State Agency Data Contact Person: ~~Linda Hockman~~ Dave McDowell, ~~Acting~~ Chief, Outcomes & Accountability Bureau	Telephone Number: 916.651.8100 E-mail Address: ~~Linda.Hockman@dss.ca.gov~~ Dave.McDowell@dss.ca.gov

State PIP Team Members	
1.	Peggy Bean, Women's Treatment Center, Office of Women's & Perinatal Services, Alcohol and Other Drugs Program
2.	Nory Behana, Regional Coordinator, Foster & Kinship Care Education, California Community Colleges
3.	Lucy Berger, Coordinator, Foster & Kinship Care Education/Child Development Programs, California Community Colleges
4.	Diana Boyer, Senior Policy Analyst, County Welfare Director's Association
5.	Don Breager, Manager, Alcohol and Other Drugs Program
6.	Constance Burgess-Moffett, Consultant, C. Burgess Consulting & Associates
7.	Tom Burke, Acting Chief, Case Management Systems Support, CDSS
8.	Tammy Cherry, Youth Advocate, United Advocates for Children and Families
9.	Kate Cleary, Chair, Statewide Citizen Review Panel
10.	Teresa Contreras, Chief, Office of Child Abuse Prevention, CDSS
11.	Regina Deihl, Executive Director, Legal Advocates for Permanent Parenting
12.	Barbara Eaton, Chief, Foster Care Audits and Rates Branch, CDSS
13.	Glenn Freitas, Chief, Children's Services Operations & Evaluations Branch, CDSS
14.	Karen Grace-Kaho, Chief, Foster Care Ombudsman, CDSS
15.	Karen Gunderson, Chief, Child and Youth Permanency Branch, CDSS
16.	Howard Himes, Deputy Director, Children & Family Services, Fresno County
17.	Linda Hockman, Chief, Outcomes and Accountability Bureau, CDSS
18.	Cathi Huerta, Director, Dept. Children and Families Services, Fresno County
19.	Barrett Johnson, Director, Child Welfare In-Service Training, CalSWEC
20.	Lee Ann Kelly, Assistant Chief, Office of Child Abuse Prevention, CDSS
21.	Wendy Kinnear-Rausch, Program Manager II, Dept. of Family & Children's Services, Santa Clara County
22.	Crystal Luffberry, Integration Director of Partnership, California Child Welfare Co-Investment Partnership
23.	Mitch Mason, Division Chief, Governmental Relations, Los Angeles County
24.	Christine Mathias, Director, CalSWEC
25.	Dave McDowell, Research Program Specialist II, CDSS
26.	Lori Medina, Social Services Program Manager III, Dept. of Family & Children's Services, Santa Clara County
27.	Velma Moore, Vice-President, California State Foster Parents Association
28.	Barbara Needell, Director, Center for Social Services Research, U.C. Berkeley
29.	Stuart Oppenheim, Executive Director, Child and Family Policy Institute of California
30.	Karen Pank, Executive Director, Chief Probation Officers of California
31.	Rachel Pena, Program Manager, Health Human Services Agency, Nevada County
32.	Jane Pfeifer, Policy Director, Chief Probation Officers of California
33.	Joni Pitcl, Project Director, California Child Welfare Co-Investment Partnership
34.	Alba Quiroz-Garcia, Research Program Specialist II, CDSS
35.	Charlene Reid, Director, Marin County Social Services; Co-Chair CFSR Steering Committee
36.	Connie Reitman-Solas, Executive Director, Inter-Tribal Council of California

37.	Carol Ritchie, Retired Director of Los Angeles Country Probation, LA County Probation
38.	Greg Rose, Deputy Director, Children & Family Services Division, CDSS; Co-Chair CFSR Steering Committee
39.	Will Sanson, Senior Consultant, CDSS
40.	Linne Stout, Acting Branch Chief, Child Protection and Family Support Branch, CDSS
41.	Percy Tejada, Indian Child Welfare Act Director, Dry Creek Rancheria
42.	Zoey Todd, Chief, Child and Family Programs, Department of Mental Health
43.	Jennifer Walter, Supervising Attorney, Judicial Council of California, Administrative Office of the Courts
44.	Kathy Watkins, Legislative Program Manager, San Bernardino County
45.	Elizabeth Watson, Program Manager, Child Welfare Services, Tehama County
46.	Deborah Williams, Chief, Child Welfare Data Analysis Bureau, CDSS
47.	Jackie Wong, School Health Education Consultant, California Department of Education

State of California
California Department of Social Services

Our mission is to serve, aid, and protect needy and vulnerable children and adults in ways that strengthen and preserve families, encourage personal responsibility, and foster independence.

Program Improvement Plan for the Child Welfare Services Program

California's state-supervised child welfare system is administered at the local level by 58 counties, each governed by a county board of supervisors. Funding for child welfare services is a combination of federal, state, and county resources. The range of diversity among the counties is immense and there are many challenges inherent in the complexity of this system. However, its major strength is the flexibility afforded to each county in determining how to best meet the needs of its own children and families. California's rich culture and ethnic diversity includes 224 languages, 109 federally recognized Indian tribes, and an estimated 40-50 non-federally recognized tribes. The state's counties differ widely by population, economic base, and are a wide mixture of urban, rural and suburban settings.

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) is the agency authorized by statute to promulgate regulations, policies and procedures necessary to implement the state's child welfare system and ensure safety, permanence and well-being for children and families. Within the statutory and regulatory framework, counties are charged with providing the full array of services necessary to meet the needs of at-risk children and families.

The CDSS is committed to improving outcomes for children and families involved with the child welfare system in California. This Program Improvement Plan (PIP) is aligned with that commitment. However, there must be a recognition that it will be implemented at a time when the state is grappling with a fiscal crisis. California faces a $26 billion budget deficit and as the PIP is being written there is no state budget and implications for the state's child welfare system remain unknown. Nonetheless, the strategies and action steps contained herein are rooted in evidence-based practices, build upon the current strengths of the California system and will continue to evolve practices that will, over time, result in system change.

The department's vision is to ensure that **"every child in California lives in a safe, stable, permanent home, nurtured by healthy families and strong communities."**

In our view, setting a vision for those in the child welfare system is synonymous with a comprehensive view of child and family well-being for all of California's children. To this end, CDSS and its partners statewide have achieved significant reforms of the child

welfare system over the last several years. A greater emphasis has been placed on prevention and early intervention to support families before it becomes necessary for child welfare services to intervene. The bedrock of today's system is positive outcomes and accountability for all activities with a focus on results. This requires coordinating services and supports for families in a way that enhances family strengths. Finally, achieving this vision involves significantly increasing the amount of community-level collaboration among service providers to support children and families where they live.

The Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) is the federal government's program for assessing the performance of state child welfare agencies with regard to achieving positive outcomes for children and families. It is authorized by the Social Security Amendments of 1994 under titles IV-B and IV-E that requires the Department of Health and Human Services to disseminate regulations for reviews of state child and family services programs. The CFSR is implemented by the Children's Bureau of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The ACF review process includes a statewide assessment, onsite review of 65 cases, and stakeholder interviews at the state and county level, and the state's data profile. Based on the review findings, ACF makes a determination of substantial conformity or improvement needed for each of seven outcomes and seven systemic factors. The state is required to develop a Program Improvement Plan (PIP) to address areas not conforming to federal standards. The state is not required to meet the national standards at the end of the PIP implementation; however, it must achieve a specified amount of improvement for each outcome deemed not in substantial conformity as well as improve systemic factors that impact outcomes. California underwent a CFSR in 2002 (Round I) and implemented a two-year program improvement plan. The State completed another CFSR (Round II) in February 2008 which is the basis for this PIP.

Building Momentum

Between the development of the 2002 PIP and the 2008 CFSR, ACF revised their national standards to be more complex. It should also be noted that a direct comparison between the 2002 and 2008 CFSR is not appropriate due to methodological differences.
This new PIP reflects our vision and incorporates significant actions to ensure that California continues to improve child welfare outcomes for children and families. This PIP builds on initiatives taken in the intervening years between development of the original plan and the most recent CFSR to achieve our vision. A list of definitions relating to specific programs can be found at the end of this document. Some of the significant actions taken by the state include:

- The implementation of the Child Welfare Services Outcome and Accountability System Pursuant to State Law (AB 636), effective January 2004. The new system, referred to as the California-Child and Family Services Review (C-CFSR), focuses primarily on measuring outcomes in Safety, Permanence, and Child and Family Well-Being. The new system replaces the former Child Welfare Services Oversight System which focused exclusively on regulatory

compliance and brings California's oversight into alignment with the Federal Child and Family Service Review oversight system of the states.

- California invested $32.5 million in the 11-county pilot over the period of State Fiscal Years 2005-06 through 2007-08. This program focused on three areas: developing a standardized safety, risks, strengths, and needs assessment; models for differential response; and protocols for permanency and youth transition. During 2004-05, pilot counties participated in state-county workgroups to develop protocols to implement strategies to improve stability and permanency for children and youth in foster care including Differential Response and standardized safety assessments. These pilot counties, relative to non-pilot counties, demonstrated a number of improvements:

    - Increased reunification rates
    - Improved adoption rates within 24 months
    - Increased relative placement and fewer long-term foster care placements
    - Increased collaboration with community partners and engagement of families.

  During this time, the first of the three content areas has been implemented statewide, all counties use a standardized assessment. The second area, differential response, has been increased to include additional counties. Finally, expansion of the permanency protocols is addressed in this PIP.

- Implementation of the Kinship Guardianship Assistance Payment Program (KinGAP), a permanency option for children in long-term foster care placement with relative caregivers. The program became effective on January 1, 2000 and was significantly expanded in state FY 2005-06.

- Increases in both funding and participation in the California's Kinship Support Services Program (KSSP). In 2006, the 40% relative placement criteria were eliminated to allow statewide expansion of the program, and an additional $2.5 million was appropriated for the program (for a total of $4 million).

- The establishment of the California Child Welfare Council, an advisory body responsible for improving the collaboration and process of the multiple agencies and courts that serve children and youth in the child welfare system.

- Expansion of Wraparound, a collaborative team planning process that addresses the barriers to effective treatment and support for a family with a child that has complex and enduring needs, from pilot to part of individual counties' service array effective January 1, 2005. In California, Wraparound has grown from one county in 1997 to thirty-nine counties.

The improvement processes in place are operational and demonstrating effectiveness. While there is good reason to be pleased with our progress, there remains a need for continued improvement. With the new federal composite measures, and the state's data profile of August 29, 2007, California acknowledges that although the performance bar has been raised, the state recognizes it must sustain the momentum and build on what is in place that advances the quality of services and systems. Based on the level of engagement and commitment to excellence exhibited by the various stakeholders involved in the CFSR process, the CDSS expects to experience many positive trends in the next several years.

Outcomes and Accountability

The Children and Family Services Division (CFSD) of the California Department of Social Services plays a vital role in the development of policies and programs that support its vision of "every child will live in a safe, stable, permanent home, nurtured by healthy families and strong communities." The goals of CFSD are to prevent child abuse; provide services early to prevent foster care placement; assure foster care placements are short-term and children reside in safe, permanent families; and prepare and support transitioning youth to be self-sufficient, and independent with a permanent adult connection.

California's outcomes and accountability system is built on an open and continuously recurring three-year cycle of self-assessment, planning, implementation and review. The triennial cycle began in June 2004 and as of June 2007, all 58 counties have completed one entire cycle. With the aid of the initial CFSR and subsequent PIP processes, coupled with the implementation of the C-CFSR, the state is better able to analyze program areas and develop specific policies and improvement strategies to promote positive outcomes for children and families. While successfully shifting program focus toward improved outcomes, the C-CFSR process is still considered to be in its infancy. This PIP builds on these early successes by expanding and enhancing the quality assurance process that is already in place.

The state remains steadfast in its commitment to continuous quality improvement of child welfare services. Like most states, California is challenged to meet the newly established federal outcome measures. The C-CFSR reflects that the state is performing below the national standard in all Safety Measures and Permanency and Well-being areas. The construction of the new federal standards requires the state to re-evaluate its progress in light of the recent State Data Profile, particularly alongside the Permanency Composites, underlying components, and weighted measures.

With the revised CFSR measures, comes the need to transition the outcome system to incorporate the new composites into current data collecting and reporting processes. CDSS and its University of California at Berkeley (UCB) partners have updated data systems to permit the state, counties, and interested parties to access more user-friendly web-based information to validate progress by county and in the aggregate statewide. Part of this update will include modifications to the new federal standards. Particularly useful is the enhanced CDSS/UCB website which has been modified as a "dynamic" website (http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb_childwelfare/default.aspx). This feature

will permit user-friendly and interactive manipulation of data fields that will improve our collective ability to better assess progress and analyze strengths and needs in performance areas.

Collaboration

Throughout the assessment process, PIP development and ongoing improvement efforts, California has benefited from collaborative efforts with several agencies and groups who contribute their expertise and valuable insight. Among many, the state engages caregivers, tribes, probation, youth, courts and child welfare agencies to provide higher quality services to families and improve outcomes for children.

For example, CDSS has a long-standing commitment to making improvements on Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) compliance. The ICWA workgroup consists of over 70 tribal ICWA workers/advocates, 30 county child welfare and probation representatives and 17 CDSS staff. The agenda for ICWA workgroup bi-monthly meetings is set in accordance to issues and topics that have emerged from discussions in the workgroup or in discussions as CDSS staff consults with tribal and county representatives throughout the state.

The state has also engaged in collaboration with philanthropic entities. The California Child Welfare Co-Investment Partnership is a public-private partnership whose purpose is improving the lives of children and families who are in or are at-risk of entering the state's child welfare system. Formed in 2006, the Partnership includes organizations committed to investing in the practices and supportive infrastructure that will improve the child welfare outcomes of safety, permanency and well-being. Members of the partnership include CDSS, the County Welfare Directors Association of California (CWDA), the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) and private philanthropic foundations including the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Casey Family Programs, the Stuart Foundation, the Walter S. Johnson Foundation and the Zellerbach Family Foundation. Staff support is provided by the Child and Family Policy Institute of California.

Building on our strength of collaboration across systems, the State Interagency Team (SIT), will continue to be key to interdepartmental strategies that support systemic change. This team is chaired by CDSS and is comprised of representatives from Department of Public Health, Department of Mental Health, Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs and the Department of Developmental Services. In addition to those agencies, the Department of Education, Employment Development Department, First 5 Commission, Workforce Investment Board, Judicial Council/Administrative Office of the Courts, and the Office of the Chancellor for Community Colleges participate. The purpose of the SIT is to provide leadership and guidance to facilitate implementation of improved systems benefiting the common population of children, youth and families served by SIT agencies. The SIT promotes shared responsibility and accountability for the welfare of children, youth and families by promoting the alignment of planning, funding and policy across state departments.

In addition, the AOC and CDSS share a common goal of improving the child welfare system. These two agencies are working in concert to improve both outcomes and systemic factors for children and families. In 2003 through 2005, the Court Improvement Plan (CIP) Reassessment found progress in key areas, including the representation of children, the experience of judicial officers, and the numerous support and technical assistance programs now available to the courts. The CIP team is actively working with CDSS to help implement the Reassessment recommendations. Specifically, Rule of Court 5.505 will be put into place to establish performance measures in the areas of child safety, permanency, and child/family well-being.

An important mechanism for the collaboration between CDSS and its stakeholders is the Child Welfare Council (CWC) created by legislation in 2006. The CWC is a state advisory body that considers recommendations to improve child and youth outcomes through increased collaboration and coordination among the programs, services and processes administered by the multiple agencies and courts that serve children and youth in California's child welfare system. The CWC mission is to provide an effective, collaborative forum for the three branches of government, foster youth and their families, and key stakeholders to advocate for effective and promising strategies and adequate resources to improve outcomes for children, youth and families involved with or at risk of involvement in the child welfare system. This body is comprised of several subcommittees including:

1. Early Intervention and Prevention Committee - to prevent children, youth and families from entering the foster care system.

2. Permanency Committee - to reunify children and youth with their families whenever possible. When reunification is not possible, to identify and support another path to permanency through adoption, legal guardianship, or a lifelong, permanent connection.

3. Child Development and Successful Youth Transitions Committee - to ensure that the health, mental health, educational and social development needs of children and youth in the child welfare system are met and that youth are prepared for successful transitions to adulthood through collaborative partnerships at the State and local levels.

4. Data Linkage and Information Sharing Committee - to ensure that data is linked across major child serving agencies, including child welfare, education, health, mental health, and alcohol and drugs and to promote the sharing of information and data across systems that enables caregivers, social workers, multidisciplinary teams and the courts to ensure continuity of care and services for children, youth and families.

The CWC has developed a set of goals consistent with strategies presented in this program improvement plan. These goals include reducing the number of children in out-of-home care through the development of prevention and early intervention strategies designed to serve families already referred to the child welfare system and vulnerable families not yet referred; initiating family finding engagement and tribal

affiliation connections from the first and subsequent contact with the child welfare system; and providing more comprehensive supports to families and individuals caring for children and youth through interagency collaboration to obtain additional resources.

CDSS works closely with the County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA) in developing strategies toward establishing programs and initiatives aimed at improving the lives of children and families. That relationship has evolved over the years to become an effective partnership between the state and counties. Development of child welfare policies includes significant interaction between CDSS and CWDA. For example, CWDA co-chairs a number of committees with CDSS including the CFSR Steering Committee and the Outcomes and Accountability Data Committee. Through participation in these processes the CWDA acts as a partner in developing policy for the child welfare system in California. The CWDA Executive Committee also provides opportunity for exchange of ideas by both state and county leadership. This and other specialized subcommittees demonstrate the importance of structured state and local processes for achieving positive outcomes.

Evidence-based PIP Strategies

In recent years, the CDSS has increasingly utilized evidence-based practices to bring about change in the child welfare system. Evidence-based practices are those that have empirical research supporting their efficacy. As part of this effort, during the first PIP, CDSS sponsored and continues to sponsor the California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse which is a critical tool for identifying, selecting, and implementing evidence-based child welfare practices that will improve child safety, increase permanency, increase family and community stability, and promote child and family well-being.

A number of evidence-based strategies designed to improve the child welfare system in California are discussed below in some detail. While each strategy is presented individually, it is important to note that several of these strategies work in concert to produce the desired change. Similarly, many of the outcomes measured during the CFSR and noted in the PIP are affected by multiple strategies.

I. Expand use of participatory case planning strategies.

Findings indicate a need to increase engagement of youth, families, caregivers, tribes and service providers in the case planning and decision making processes. Several case planning engagement approaches are being used across the state; however, they do not exist in all areas.

A number of key concerns emerged from the most recent CFSR that will be addressed by using this strategy. For example, it was noted that there was uneven practice in the involvement of children and parents in the decision-making process. Similarly, engagement of tribes for case planning and service delivery were found deficient (for

further details of the key concerns, please see the summary of concerns in the next section).

Research indicates that increased levels of family and community involvement are related to lower foster care re-entry rates (Littell & Tajima, 2000; The Results Group [11-county pilot evaluation], 2008). Participatory case planning encompasses several formal models and informal philosophies. These programs engage youth and families in case planning and decision making. Several ways that participatory case planning may be conceived include:

- Team Decision Making (TDM) – a process based on the belief that a child's well being is best served when the family, community and child welfare agency collaborate to make decisions about the child's placement.
- Family Participation in Case Planning – a case planning process that actively engages families in defining their strengths and identifying resources that will address the problems which resulted in the disruption of their family.
- Youth Inclusion in Case Planning – a case planning approach where social workers involve youth in addressing issues related to permanency and transition to adulthood at each interaction with them, focusing on establishing reunification, adoption, guardianship or other permanent life-long connection with a trusted, caring adult.

Other forms of participatory case planning include Family Group Conferencing, Family to Family (F2F), and Wraparound. Beyond these more formal approaches the state will encourage the use of social worker visits and other contacts to engage families, youth and community partners in case planning and subsequent services throughout the life of the case.

This strategy will be implemented through increased training for child welfare and probation staff, identifying best and promising social worker practices, and expanding effective model case planning approaches statewide.

II. Sustain and enhance permanency efforts across the life of the case.

Our review indicated that some efforts and practices to achieve a permanent, stable family for children and youth are not applied throughout the life of a case. Specific concerns raised during the CFSR revolved around inconsistent practices in concurrent planning and reunification efforts. Moreover, these practices may not be uniform across the state. Difficulties with timely notification of court proceedings to interested parties (i.e., caregivers, youth, tribes, etc.) were noted. Finally, several issues surrounding permanency included insufficient efforts to identify extended family members and support existing relationships of children removed from the home.

Findings show that even though progress has been made, efforts to obtain a permanent family for a child do not always continue when reunification (returning youth to their family) is not successful or when adoption or guardianship is not readily available.

Research shows that children's outcomes are improved for those placed into relative care (Hartnett et al., 1999). Data shows that the state must strengthen efforts towards finding a permanent family for a child in a timely manner. This will help prevent children and youth staying in foster care longer than needed. Additional research found that children who are in foster care longer are at-risk for re-entry to the foster care system (Wattenberg, et al., 2003). Caregivers, courts and tribes must become more involved. Such practices may include concurrent planning which consists of working to reunite the youth with their family while at the same time planning for other possible options. This is done in case it is not possible to reunite the youth with their family. Other practices may include helping children and youth keep or make connections with extended family members or others who may be important in a way that supports a safe and stable family.

Application of this strategy will strengthen permanency planning and follow-through by activities such as nurturing supportive relationships and working closely with courts and tribes. Additionally, including the youth, family members, caregivers and other involved people in placement decisions will be part of this strategy. This strategy will include efforts to improve the detection of and contact with both maternal and paternal family members. Barriers that prevent a child from keeping a permanent family will be better identified and removed, particularly barriers for relative caregivers.

III. Enhance and expand caregiver recruitment, training, and support efforts.

Findings show there are not enough foster homes for children and youth in need of foster care (Redding, Fried, & Britner, 2000). There is a need to strengthen recruitment and retention efforts to ensure placements for foster children and youth are available and stable. There is also a need to find and support extended family and kin (Hartnett et al., 1999). These issues were echoed in the CFSR report. Similarly, training and support for foster families needs to be improved. It has been shown that children's outcomes are at least somewhat related to support of caregivers including financial compensation (Duncan & Argys, 2007). These concerns were raised by a number of stakeholders during the review. Moreover, it was noted that while there are a number of promising pilot programs in place, there is no strategy for statewide implementation.

The strategy is designed to recruit and retain a range of caregivers by increasing community outreach, improving finding of family and relatives, increasing ongoing support for caregivers, and improving training for caregivers. In addition, the state will work toward implementing a number of effective programs to serve a larger portion of the families in California. A caregiver advisory committee will be convened to provide insight from caregivers and recommendations to CDSS.

IV. Expand options and create flexibility for services and supports to meet the needs of children and families.

There are not enough services that are within the reach of children and families involved in the child welfare system. Limited access to high quality mental health services,

inpatient substance abuse treatment, therapeutic foster care, and post adoption and guardianship services were shown to be among the most needed. Practices such as Wraparound improved access through coordination of services. Not enough transportation services and gaps in foreign language interpreters and culturally trained providers were also identified as barriers to obtaining services.

This strategy is intended to address these concerns by building on approaches that are currently in place in California. It will be carried out through activities aimed at improving ways of obtaining services and better coordinating services through interdepartmental coordination and collaborations with community-based groups and programs designed to ensure comprehensive support services. The SIT will develop state-level interdepartmental strategies that reduce barriers and increase interagency collaboration with an initial focus on mental health, substance abuse treatments and educational services. In addition, the Linkages Project will be used to build an effective collaboration between CalWORKS and Child Welfare regarding services and supports for families. Finally, the state will expand the Wraparound program to increase the number of families receiving wraparound services. CDSS will also incorporate the Office of Child Abuse Prevention's (OCAP) 3-year plan into the state Outcomes and Accountability system as an additional avenue for collaboration with community service providers.

V. Sustain and expand staff/supervisor training.

One of the improvement activities created during the first CFSR was the implementation of a standardized core set of courses to train new social workers and supervisors. It also provided for ongoing training. It was put into place to have uniform training across the state. New rules are in place as of July 1, 2008, to make the core training a mandatory requirement. Despite this change, there are a number of issues raised in the latest CFSR that are amenable to change through various forms of training. Some of the areas identified as training priorities include social workers' use of concurrent planning and permanency issues. Also, there is a need to focus on training related to high needs children and youth. Probation staff reported their need for increased child welfare training as well.

This strategy will be carried out through activities such as putting the training requirements into practice, modifying the core curriculum to emphasize key issues, and enhancing the ongoing training for child welfare and probation staff and supervisors. More specifically, curricula will be developed and implemented in the area of child welfare for probation workers and concurrent planning. In addition, the state will work with county partners to better track the participation and effectiveness of ongoing training for staff.

VI. Strengthen implementation of the statewide safety, risk and needs assessment system.

Although there are indications that the standardized safety assessment system is effective in assessing risk and identifying the services needed to address risks, some concerns were identified in the CFSR. There is a body of evidence that suggests that increased visits with social workers are related to more positive outcomes in children (Bronson, 2005). In a few California cases, some services were provided, but they did not adequately address the safety issues in the family, and the children remained at risk in the home. In several cases, there was a general lack of adequate safety and risk assessments in the child's home during the period under review. In addition, there were few attempts to engage families in the process of determining risks. Again, engagement of the family has been linked to more positive outcomes for children and families (Littell & Tajima, 2000; Loman & Siegel, 2004a). Finally, the CFSR reviewers noted a lack of quality social workers visits that included an evaluation of strengths and needs. The inclusion of Differential Response, including the on-going review of family strengths and needs is related to a number of positive outcomes for children including increased family engagement (Loman & Siegel, 2004a, 2004b), community involvement (Siegel & Loman, 2000) and increases in services provided (Institute of Applied Research, 2005). Moreover, the use of Differential Response comes at no cost to the safety of children (Loman & Siegel, 2004b).

Implementation of the standardized safety assessment process ensures that families are systematically assessed for safety, risks and needs throughout the life of the case. As cases move forward to comprehensive assessment and service planning, services and resources are evaluated for effectiveness in reducing risk and potential for addressing necessary changes in family functioning.

A number of specific actions related to this strategy are available to increase safety such as completing assessment prior to initial contact and recording within 48 hours, and assessing family strength and needs on all open cases. To that end, the state will review timeliness of investigation data with counties. In particular, those counties that fall below the median level for the state will be provided with additional technical assistance. In addition, efforts will be made to strengthen implementation of the Safety, Risk, and Needs Assessment process including advanced training on Interviewing for Strengths and Needs and Writing Individualized Case Plans in conjunction with family members. Finally, the state will engage county partners to enhance focus on Safe-Measures (or other reporting methods) as a tool for supervisors to monitor timely completion of these assessments.

Through these six broad strategies, California will continue to build on existing relationships and programs to improve the child welfare system and subsequently, improve the lives of children and families. However, it is important to note that during the period covered by the previous PIP, California committed state general fund dollars to increase total program funding by $473.3 million, resulting in an overall 25 percent increase, for several child welfare service special projects. Over this same period, county child welfare agencies contributed millions of dollars of their own discretionary funds. These, along with several million dollars in support from philanthropy, have enhanced statewide efforts to promote the safety of children, promote the right to a stable permanent home, and secure child well-being. This investment of state and local

funding produced meaningful changes in the child welfare system, but the ability to enhance resource intensive programs is in jeopardy. At this time, the impact for State Fiscal Year budget shortfalls is in excess of $26 billion. This has serious implications for social service and other state programs that are financed by significant State General Fund support. It cannot be overstated that the creation of this PIP and more importantly, the specific actions contained within the plan, are heavily dependent on budgetary constraints and were developed during a fiscally uncertain time.

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II. PIP Strategy Summary and TA Plan

State: California

Primary Strategies	Key Concerns	TA Resource Needs
Expand use of participatory case planning strategies.	• Uneven practice in involving children/youth and parents (both mother and father) in assessing and addressing needs and risk issues, case planning, and decision making. • Uneven practice in engaging caregivers and others in assessing and meeting their needs to care for the child as part of case planning. • Insufficient engagement of tribes in case planning and service delivery. • Frequency and quality of caseworker/probation officer visits was not sufficient to meet the needs of children/youth, mother, or father. • Lack of assessing and addressing educational needs of children, keeping educational passport current and providing educational information to foster parents and helping them advocate for educational services.	• Engaging Substance Abusing Families. • Engaging fathers in case planning and decision-making processes.

Primary Strategies	Key Concerns	TA Resource Needs
Sustain and enhance permanency efforts across the life of the case.	• Child/youth's placement was not stable. • Uneven practice in assuring that children in care achieve permanency in a timely manner due to the following: ➢ Late social worker reports/lack of proper ICWA noticing were noted for continuances and delays in completion of 6 month periodic reviews and 12 month permanency hearings; ➢ Delays in completing home studies and finalizing adoptions and lack of proper ICWA notification; and ➢ Not thoroughly considering all options before establishing a permanency goal of OPPLA, particularly for children under 10. • Not enough effort made to place siblings together. • Insufficient efforts to promote visitation with mother/father/siblings. • Not enough effort dedicated to recruiting adoptive home for children. • Inconsistent practice in concurrent planning and reunification efforts. • Limited supports to youth/ family after connections are made. • Inconsistent practice in providing timely notification of court proceedings for caregivers, youth, and tribes and encouraging them to provide input into court proceedings. • Guardianship cases not closed because of concerns relating to loss of necessary children services. • Inadequate search for maternal and paternal relatives. • Insufficient efforts to support child's relationship with parents.	• Concurrent planning practices. • Finding and engaging maternal and paternal family members.
Primary Strategies	**Key Concerns**	**TA Resource Needs**
Enhance and expand caregiver recruitment, retention, training, and support efforts.	• Inadequate number of foster care homes. • Caregivers lack sufficient knowledge of child's needs and specialized training and support to meet the needs of children/youth in their care.	• Statewide campaign (recruitment and retention of resource families).

	• Insufficient caregiver training in the following areas: ➢ How to meet diverse need of children in their homes; ➢ How to advocate for services for children in their care; ➢ Resources that are available and how to access them; ➢ How to navigate the court system and the caregiver's role in the court process; ➢ How to ensure children's educational needs are met, especially with regard to Individual Education Plans; ➢ Dealing with trauma; ➢ Dealing with older children and behavioral issues; and ➢ Meeting the cultural and Tribal-specific needs of Native American children. • Foster parents did not receive the Caregiver Information Form and summary of agency recommendations; for those receiving form, did not receive instructions or assistance on how to complete. • The standards for foster family homes were not being applied equally since some local licensing agencies continued to treat training completion as a condition for licensure while training completion was not treated as a condition for approval. • Not enough State leadership on overall recruitment efforts. • Unsatisfactory payment rates for foster parents. • Not enough Tribally-approved foster homes.	
Primary Strategies	**Key Concerns**	**TA Resource Needs**
Expand options and create flexibility for services and supports to meet the needs of children and families.	• Inadequate availability of services to meet needs of children and families (services such as mental health, inpatient substance abuse treatment, therapeutic foster care, and education). • Not enough services for parents of children who are probation wards. • Children remained at risk in-home because services were either not	• Collaborative approach to service array (local level collaboration between child welfare agency and community partners).

	provided or did not adequately address safety issues in the family. • Resource capacity, including culturally-competent services and qualified therapeutic providers, varied from community to community and was insufficient in many areas. • Independent living services are either offered too late or youth are not given information about what services are available to them. • Not enough post-adoption and other post-permanency services. • Extensive variations in service accessibility not only across counties, but also within counties. • Difficulties in obtaining services when child is placed outside the county of jurisdiction. • Programs designed to individualize service delivery such as wraparound, differential response, and team-decision making are not implemented countywide and statewide. • Services and service plans, particularly among education, mental health, and housing, are not coordinated and are confusing for families.	
Primary Strategies	**Key Concerns**	**TA Resource Needs**
Sustain and expand staff/supervisor training.	• The State regulation requiring initial and ongoing training will not be in effect until July 2008 and therefore was not in place during the onsite CFSR. • Limited child welfare related training for probation staff, including a core curriculum that does not adequately prepare them to carry out the same functions as child welfare caseworkers.	• None
Strengthen implementation of the statewide safety	• Investigations not initiated within the required timeframes.	• None

needs assessment system.	• Need to improve the rate at which children do not experience repeat maltreatment. • Inadequately assessing and addressing safety and risk factors for children that remain at home and those in care.	

III. PIP Agreement and Amendments

The following Federal and State officials agree to the content and terms of the attached Program Improvement Plan:

John Wagner, Director, Department of Social Services — Date 10/30/09

Joseph J. Beck, Acting Associate Commissioner, Children's Bureau — Date 10/16/09

This section should be completed only in the event of renegotiations regarding the content of the PIP, pursuant to 45 CFR 1355.35(e)(4). The specific renegotiated content should be inserted in the PIP Matrix under the appropriate section being replaced or modified. A summary by the action step, benchmark or improvement goal can be listed below. Copies of approved, renegotiated PIPs should be retained and distributed as noted above immediately upon completion of the renegotiation process.

Renegotiated Action Steps, Benchmarks, or Improvement Goals	***Date Renegotiated***	***Approval of State Executive Officer for Child Welfare Services*** *Approved via Transmittal Letter*
1.1.1 ***2.7.1, 2.7.2, 2.8.2*** ***3.3, 3.3.1, 3.3.2, 3.3.3***	***01/29/2010***	***Approval Children's Bureau*** *Approved via Transmittal Letter*
2.4, 2.4.1, 2.7, 2.7.2, 2.8.4 ***3.2, 3.2.3, 3.2.4, 3.2.5, 3.2.6, 3.2.7, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6.4*** ***4.5*** ***Item 18***	***03/15/2011***	***Approval of State Executive Officer for Child Welfare Services*** ***Approval Children's Bureau***

The renegotiated content of the attached PIP, as summarized below, has been approved by State personnel and the Children's Bureau Regional Office with authority to negotiate such content and is approved by Federal and State officials:

Part A: Strategy Measurement Plan and Quarterly Status Report

Primary Strategy: 1. Expand use of participatory case planning strategies.	**Applicable CFSR Outcomes or Systemic Factors:** Permanency Outcome 2, Well-Being Outcomes 1 and 2, Case Review System, and Service Array.
Goal: Increase engagement of children/youth, families and others in case planning and decision-making processes across the life of the case for safety, permanency, and well-being.	**Applicable CFSR Items:** Items 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 25, 37

Action Steps and Benchmarks	**Person Responsible**	**Evidence of Completion (EOC)**	**Qtr Due**	**Status of EOC**	**Quarterly Update**
1.1 Determine baseline and assess utilization of participatory case planning practices.	CDSS (Richard Smith and Karen Gunderson)	Evidence of completion of step 1.1 (1.1.1 through 1.1.4).	Q4		
1.1.1 Review and revise Permanency Protocols based on lessons learned through 11-county pilot; disseminate revised protocols.		Issued All County Letter with revised protocols.	~~Q2~~ Q3		Approved 3/2010
1.1.2 Develop procedures for county data entry of participatory case planning activities; and release ACIN with data entry instructions to counties.	CDSS (Richard Smith and Lindsay Farris)	Issued All County Information Notice with data entry instructions.	Q1		
1.1.3 Methodology for measuring family engagement efforts finalized		Methodology instruction manual.	Q1		
1.1.4 Baseline calculated.		Revised PIP with baseline.	Q4		

1.2 Review and update core curricula on various models of participatory case planning and decision-making practices to address children's safety, permanency and well-being at all decision points and throughout the life of the case.	CDSS (Linne Stout) CalSWEC (Barry Johnson)	Revised curriculum sections.	Q4		
1.2.1 Implement updated core curriculum.		One training agenda in which the revised curriculum was provided.	Q5		
1.3 Develop advanced training module on specific strategies for engagement of fathers and related materials to address organizational culture change.	CDSS (Linne Stout) CalSWEC (Barry Johnson)	Copy of Engaging Fathers Curriculum	Q4		
1.3.1 Implement advanced training on engaging fathers.		One training agenda in which the curriculum was provided.	Q5		
1.4 Develop family engagement and participatory case planning guidelines for Linkages Project.	CDSS-OCAP (Linne Stout) CFPIC (Danna Fabella)	Copy of developed guidelines and list of counties receiving guidelines.	Q2		
1.4.1 Incorporate guidelines into Linkages semi-annual meetings.		One meeting agenda in which the guidelines were provided.	Q3		
1.4.2 Survey counties for implementation of practice.		Survey results summary and list of who received the results.	Q4		

1.5 Examine fiscal implications of participatory practices.	CDSS (Barbara Eaton)	Copy of fiscal implications report addressed to CDSS Deputy Director.	Q6		
Renegotiated Action Steps and Benchmarks– Submitted <u>1/29/2010</u>					
1.1.1 Review and revise Permanency Protocols based on lessons learned through 11-county pilot; disseminate revised protocols.		Issued All County Letter with revised protocols.	~~Q2~~ Q3		Quarter was changed from Q2 to reflect additional time needed to complete Permanency Protocols revisions.

Primary Strategy: 2. Sustain and enhance permanency efforts across the life of the case.		**Applicable CFSR Outcomes or Systemic Factors:** Permanency Outcome 1 and 2, Well-Being Outcome 1, and Case Review System.			
Goal: Enhance practices and strategies that result in more children/youth having permanent homes and connections to communities, culture and important adults.		**Applicable CFSR Items:** Items 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 26, 27, 28			
Action Steps and Benchmarks	**Person Responsible**	**Evidence of Completion**	**Qtr Due**	**Status of EOC**	**Quarterly Update**
2.1 Increase efforts to locate mothers, fathers, and maternal/paternal family members at case onset and strengthen connections across life of the case	CDSS (Karen Gunderson and Richard Smith)	Evidence of completion of step 2.1 (2.1.1 through 2.1.2).	Q6		
2.1.1 Develop and disseminate protocols.		Issued All County Information Notice	Q5		
2.1.2 Measure increase of finding families practices by determining the number of entry children whose placement is with a relative at 60 days.		Revised PIP with quarterly data.	Q6		
2.2 Improve potential for reunification.		Evidence of completion of step 2.2 (2.2.1 through 2.2.2).	Q4		
2.2.1 Development of legislative proposal for trial home visits.	CDSS (Karen Gunderson), AOC (Jennifer Walter)	Copy of submitted legislative proposal.	Q4		
2.2.2 Promote “cultural brokers” and family advocate/mentor models through dissemination of promising/evidence based practices.	Walter; Leah Wilson) CDSS-OCAP (Linne Stout)	Issued All County Information Notice	Q3		

2.3 Assess quality of social worker visits with parents and children.	CDSS (Richard Smith)	Evidence of completion of step 2.3 (2.3.1 through 2.3.2).	Q8		
2.3.1 Finalize methodology and tool for case reviews		Copy of methodology and tool.	Q2		
2.3.2 Establish baseline level of quality of visits		PIP quarterly report.	Q2		
2.4 Utilize ~~Caregiver Advisory Group~~ the Quality Parenting Initiative (a collaborative project by Youth Law Center, California Department of Social Services and the California Welfare Director's Association) to identify and make recommendations related to reducing/removing barriers to permanence.	CDSS (Karen Gunderson/ Karen Grace-Kaho)	Evidence of completion of step 2.4 (2.4.1).	~~Q5~~ Q8		See request below 2/2011
2.4.1 Submit recommendation to CDSS management for consideration of implementation.		Copy of meeting agenda in which the ~~Caregivers Advisory Group~~ Quality Parenting Initiative's recommendations were discussed.	~~Q5~~ Q8		See request below 2/2011
2.5 CA Child Welfare Evidence Based Clearinghouse will identify and publish evidence based practices related to post-permanency services.	CDSS/OCAP (Linne Stout)	Copy of website where the evidence based practices are posted and URL.	Q4		
2.6 AOC will provide ongoing training and TA to dependency courts and stakeholders regarding	AOC (Jennifer Walter)	Two court training agendas in which one or more of the	Q6		

reunification, tribal engagement, concurrent planning and participatory case planning.		topic items in 2.6 were provided.			
2.7 Implement Resource Family Approval Pilot in 5 counties.	CDSS (Karen Gunderson)	Evidence of completion of step 2.7 (2.7.1 through 2.7.3) and letters to five counties notifying them of inclusion in the pilot.	~~Q5~~ Q8		See request below 2/2011
2.7.1 Select counties.		List of counties selected.	~~Q2~~ Q3		Approved 3/2010
2.7.2 Convene workgroup to develop implementation requirements.		~~One meeting agenda which indicates the implementation requirements were discussed.~~ CDSS will notify the five counties that were chosen to participate in the pilot by letter. CDSS will submit an outline for the guidelines, plus a draft of one of the sections in the guidelines.	~~Q3~~ ~~Q4~~ Q8		Approved 3/2010 See request below 2/2011
2.8 Implement Residentially Based Services Reform project in selected counties (Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Sacramento, and Bay Area Consortium).	CDSS (Karen Gunderson) and selected county partners and stakeholders.	Evidence of completion of step 2.8 (2.8.1 through 2.8.4).	Q8		
2.8.1 County proposals submitted to CDSS.		Copies of two county proposals.	Q1		

2.8.2 County proposals approved by CDSS.		Copies of two approval letters.	~~Q2~~ Q3		Approved 3/2010
2.8.3 Project implementation.		Copy of evaluation report.	Q8		
2.8.4 Workgroup convened to develop plan for transforming group home system.		One meeting agenda in which the transformation of the group homes system was discussed.	Q8		
Renegotiated Action Steps and Benchmarks – Submitted 1/29/2010					
2.7.1 Select counties.		List of counties selected.	~~Q2~~ Q3		Quarter changed from Q2 to reflect additional time needed to complete selection of counties.
2.7.2 Convene workgroup to develop implementation requirements.		One meeting agenda which indicates the implementation requirements were discussed.	~~Q3~~ Q4		Quarter changed from Q3 to reflect additional time needed as documented in 2.7.1 above.
2.8.2 County proposals approved by CDSS.		Copies of two approval letters.	~~Q2~~ Q3		Quarter was changed from Q2 to reflect additional time needed to complete proposal approvals.
Renegotiation Action Steps and Benchmarks – Submitted 2/11/2011					
2.4 Utilize ~~Caregiver~~ the Quality Parenting Initiative (a collaborative project by Youth Law Center, California Department of Social Services and the California Welfare	CDSS (Karen Gunderson and Karen Grace-Kaho)	Evidence of completion of step 2.4 (2.4.1).	~~Q5~~ Q8		CDSS determined that convening the Caregivers Advisory Group was redundant because the Ombudsman's Advisory Group has the same functions and already exists.

Director's Association) to identify and make recommendations related to reducing/removing barriers to permanence.					
2.4.1 Submit recommendation to CDSS management for consideration of implementation.		Copy of meeting agenda in which the Quality Parenting Initiative's recommendations were discussed.	~~Q5~~ Q8		See Above.
2.7 Implement Resource Family Approval Pilot in 5 counties.	CDSS (Karen Gunderson)	Evidence of completion of step 2.7 (2.7.1 through 2.7.3) and letters to five counties notifying them of inclusion in the pilot.	~~Q5~~ Q8		
2.7.2 Convene workgroup to develop implementation requirements	CDSS (Karen Gunderson)	CDSS will notify the five counties that were chosen to participate in the pilot by letter. CDSS will submit an outline for the guidelines, plus a draft of one of the sections in the guidelines.	~~Q3~~ Q8		The Administration had postponed the Resource Family Approval Pilot because there was no funding. However, in recent months funding has been approved through the Legislature, but the Executive Order for a hiring freeze prevents this position from being filled. Therefore, with existing resources CDSS will begin some of the work on program guidelines.

Primary Strategy: 3. Enhance and expand caregiver recruitment, retention, training, and support efforts.		**Applicable CFSR Outcomes or Systemic Factors:** Well-Being Outcome 1, Case Review System, Training, Licensing, and Recruitment and Retention.			
Goal: Improve caregiver support strategies and augment educational/training curriculum.		**Applicable CFSR Items:** Items 17, 18, 29, 34, 42, 44			
Action Steps and Benchmarks	**Person Responsible**	**Evidence of Completion**	**Qtr Due**	**Status of EOC**	**Quarterly Update**
3.1 CA Child Welfare Evidence Based Clearinghouse will:	CDSS-OCAP (Linne Stout)	Evidence of completion of step 3.1 (3.1.1 through 3.1.2).	Q3		
3.1.1 Identify and publish information on resource family recruitment, retention, and training.		Copy of Clearinghouse web page with URL.	Q3		
3.1.2 CA Evidence Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare will provide training on evidence based practices on resource families, recruitment, retention, training, and caregiver-social worker partnership.		Two training agendas from the Chadwick Center which indicate one or more of the evidence based practices were discussed.	Q3		
3.2. ~~Develop/initiate statewide campaign to recruit/retain resource families.~~ Develop and pilot to test strategies to recruit/retain resource families in conjunction with the Quality Parenting Initiative (a collaborative project by Youth Law Center, California Department of Social Services and the California Welfare Director's Association).	CDSS (Karen Gunderson)	Evidence of completion of step 3.2 (3.2.1 through 3.2.~~7~~4) and Copies of the 5 counties' action plans.	~~Q6~~ Q8		See request below 2/2011

3.2.1	Seek federal TA.		Copy of application for Federal TA.	Q1		
3.2.2	Survey counties to identify promising practices at local level.		Copy of survey summary.	Q2		
3.2.3	~~Develop campaigns with county partners.~~ Develop pilot counties' action plans through the Quality Parenting Initiative.		~~Copies of two county campaign plans.~~ Copy of action plans for each of the five counties.	~~Q4~~ Q7		See request below 2/2011
3.2.4	~~Launch campaign.~~ Conduct site visits to selected counties to assess effective implementation of plans.		~~Examples of campaign materials produced.~~ Copy of Assessment tool used to assess effective implementation.	Q7		See request below 2/2011
3.2.5	Regional convening's to showcase best practices from pilot counties. Utilize the Quality Parenting Initiative to assist in program evaluation, review best practices and develop county convening's.		Copy of "Save the Date" announcement to guest counties and minutes from one Quality Parenting Initiative meeting.	~~Q6~~ Q8		See request below 2/2011
3.2.6	Develop department recruitment and retention external webpage to link counties to pilot counties' action plans, as well as other related activities and reports associated with this		Copy of URL.	Q8		See request below 2/2011

pilot.					
3.2.7 Draft Outcomes Summary of lessons learned/best practices from the pilot.		Copy of initial draft Outcomes Summary Report.	Q8		See request below 2/2011
3.3 ~~Form state level Caregiver Advisory Group including youth, to develop statewide agenda for recruitment, training, support and retention.~~	CDSS (Karen Gunderson)	Evidence of completion of step 3.3 (3.3.1 through 3.3.3).	~~Q6~~ Q7		See request below 2/2011.
~~3.3.1 Announce formation of advisory group and application for membership process; select members.~~		~~Copy of advisory group announcement.~~	~~Q2~~		Approved 3/2010
3.3.2 Convene group.		Copies of two Quality Parenting Initiative meeting agendas indicating recruitment and retention were discussed.	~~Q4~~ Q7		See request below 2/2011 on 3.3
3.3.3 CDSS considers recommendations for implementation.		Copy of Youth Law Center (QPI) group's recommendation summary to Deputy Director.	~~Q6~~ Q7		Approved 3/2010
3.4 Develop program ~~outcomes~~, rate structure, and ~~oversight~~ policies and procedures for MTFC.	CDSS (Barbara Eaton)	Evidence of completion of step 3.4 (3.4.1 through 3.4.2).	Q8		See request below 2/2011

3.4.1 ~~Support implementation and use of MTFC.~~ The state will form a workgroup to address rate structure, policies, and procedures for MTFC.		~~Copies of materials developed for 3.4 and implementation plan.~~ The evidence of completion will be a copy of an agenda that demonstrates that a meeting was held for this purpose.	Q8		See request below 2/2011
~~3.4.2 Increase number of MTFC programs~~		~~PIP quarterly report with total number of new MTFC programs.~~	~~Q8~~		See request below 2/2011
~~3.5 Test "Better Together" model to facilitate collaboration between caregivers and social workers in five counties.~~	~~CDSS (Karen Gunderson and Linne Stout)~~	~~Evidence of completion of step 3.5 (3.5.1 through 3.5.2).~~	~~Q8~~		See request below 2/2011
~~3.5.1 Workshops initiated.~~		~~Copies of two workshop agendas.~~	~~Q5~~		See request below 2/2011
~~3.5.2 Use lessons learned to determine feasibility of expanding utilization of model.~~		~~Feasibility summary to caregiver advisory group.~~	~~Q8~~		See request below 2/2011
3.6 Establish a communication network for caregiver advocates.	CDSS-FCO (Karen Grace-Kaho)	Evidence of completion of step 3.6 (3.6.1 through 3.6.3).	Q4		
3.6.1 Identify advocacy organizations for caregivers and create directory by county.		Copy of advocacy directory.	Q1		

3.6.2 Convene annual meeting of key caregiver advocacy organizations to exchange information.		Copy of meeting agenda.	Q4		
3.6.3 Share information via caregiver network email list to disseminate information.		Copy of caregiver dissemination list.	Q2		
3.6.4 Explore funding streams to support caregiver advocacy and implement depending on availability of funds.		Copy of funding summary and draft implementation plan.	~~Q5~~ Q7		
Renegotiated Action Steps and Benchmarks – Submitted <u>1/29/2010</u>					
3.1.2 CA Evidence Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare will provide training on evidence based practices on resource families, recruitment, retention, training, and caregiver-social worker partnership.		Two training agendas from the Chadwick Center which indicate one or more of the evidence based practices were discussed.	Q3		3.1.2 Updated to indicate the training agendas are from the Chadwick Center, who run the Evidence Based Clearinghouse.
3.3 Was changed to read as follows: Utilize the State level Foster Care Recruitment and Retention Project comprised of caregivers, youth and various stakeholders to address caregiver recruitment, retention, support and training.					
~~3.3.1 Announce formation of advisory group and application for membership process; select members.~~		~~Copy of advisory group announcement.~~	~~Q2~~		3.3.1 Eliminated to reflect that the Foster Care Recruitment and Retention Project has existing members that include caregivers,

					youth, and various stakeholders and therefore no application and selection of members will occur.
3.3.2 Was changed to reflect that the Foster Care Recruitment and Retention…would provide the evidence of completion.		Copies of two agendas from the foster Care Recruitment and Retention Project			
3.3.3 Was changed to reflect that the Foster Care Recruitment and Retention…would provide the evidence of completion.		Copy of foster care recruitment and Retention Project recommendation summary to the Deputy Director	~~Q6~~ Q7		
Renegotiation Action Steps and Benchmarks – Submitted 2/11/2011					
3.2 ~~Develop/initiate statewide campaign to recruit/retain resource families.~~ Develop a pilot to test strategies to recruit/retain resource families in conjunction with the Quality Parenting Initiative (a collaborative project by Youth Law Center, California Department of Social Services and the California Welfare Director's Association).	CDSS (Karen Gunderson)	Evidence of completion of step 3.2 (3.2.1 through 3.2.7). Copies of the 5 counties action plans.	~~Q6~~ Q8		CDSS is proposing to modify all of 3.2 because it has determined that by first conducting a pilot, strategies can be tested and refined before they are shared statewide. The results from the pilot will allow CDSS to be better informed about successful recruitment and retention strategies of resource families. Elements of this revision will include providing ACF with: 5 counties action plans; CDSS's will also develop a procedure to evaluate the lessons learned, i.e., what worked, what didn't

					work and write a review summary that it will share with all counties via URL and provide a draft lessons learned summary of its review of the pilot (summary will be a compilation of all 5 counties findings).
3.2.3 Develop ~~campaigns with county partners~~ pilot counties' action plans through the Quality Parenting Initiative.		~~Copies of two county campaign plans~~. Copy of actions plans for each of the five counties.	~~Q4~~ Q7		See 3.2.
3.2.4 ~~Launch campaign.~~ Conduct site visits to selected counties to assess effective implementation of plans.		Copy of Assessment tool used to assess effective implementation.	Q7		See 3.2
3.2.5 Regional convening's to showcase best practices from pilot counties that could be utilized in other counties. Utilize the Quality Parenting Initiative to assist in program evaluation, review best practices and develop county convening's.		~~Examples of campaign materials produced.~~ Copy of "Save the Date" announcement to guest counties and minutes from one Quality Parenting Initiative meeting.	~~Q6~~ Q8		See 3.2
3.2.6 Develop department recruitment and retention external webpage to link counties to pilot counties		Copy of URL.	Q8		This action step was added to reflect ongoing progress towards impacting recruitment and retention.

	action plans, as well as other related activities and reports associated with this pilot.					
3.2.7	Draft outcomes summary of lessons learned/best practices from the pilot.		Copy of initial draft outcomes summary.	Q8		This is a new action step added to reflect ongoing progress towards impacting recruitment and retention.
3.3	Utilize the ~~State level Foster Care Recruitment and Retention Project~~ Quality Parenting Initiative comprised of caregivers, youth and various stakeholders to address caregiver recruitment, retention, support and training.	CDSS (Karen Gunderson and Karen Grace-Kaho)		~~Q6~~ Q7		
3.4	Develop program ~~outcomes,~~ rate structure, and ~~oversight~~ policies and procedures for MTFC.	CDSS (Barbara Eaton)	Evidence of completion of step 3.4 (3.4.1 through 3.4.2).	Q8		CDSS is requesting to renegotiate this step to remove the outcomes and oversight portions because there was a one year delay in starting this project largely due to redirection of resources. The ITFC/MTFC workgroup meets monthly. Due to the high level of stakeholder interest and involvement and the need to collect cost data not previously available, the new rate will not be finalized until 12/11 or later.
	3.4.1 ~~Support implementation and use of MTFC.~~ The state will form a		~~Copies of materials developed for 3.4 and implementation~~	Q8		CDSS will continue to report out on this in the APSR (see explanation for change in 3.4

workgroup to address rate structure, policies, and procedures for MTFC.		~~plan.~~ The evidence of completion will be a copy of an agenda that demonstrates that a meeting was held for this purpose.			above).
~~3.4.2 Increase number of MTFC programs~~		~~PIP quarterly report with total number of new MTFC programs.~~	~~Q8~~		CDSS requests this item be eliminated because it was predicated on a new rate being available for MTFC which would support the growth of MTFC programs. This rate will not be available until at least 12/11.
3.5 ~~Test "Better Together" model to facilitate collaboration between caregivers and social workers in five counties.~~	~~CDSS (Karen Gunderson and Linne Stout)~~	~~Evidence of completion of step 3.5 (3.5.1 through 3.5.2).~~ ~~List of elements to be captured in 3.2~~	~~Q8~~		CDSS has determined that this step is better aligned with the Youth Law Center Recruitment and Retention Pilot in 3.2. A list of elements of this model will be included as evidence of completion. Elements of Better Together captured in 3.2 below… A). Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI) facilitates/develops partnerships that are beneficial to Child Welfare Services involved individuals (social workers, staff, foster parents, bio-parents, and foster youth). B). CDSS/counties work as a team to develop modifications to processes that will benefit recruitment, training and retention of caregiver

					parents. C). CDSS and QPI continue partnership with counties by holding regularly scheduled meetings to discuss issues that are important to foster parents, bio-parents and foster youth.
3.6.4 Explore funding streams to support caregiver advocacy and implement depending on availability of funds.		~~Copy of funding summary and draft implementation plan~~. Copy of philanthropic organizations explored for funding.	~~Q5~~ Q7		No funding available, therefore implementation plan not developed.

Primary Strategy: 4. Expand options and create flexibility for services and supports to meet the needs of children and families.		**Applicable CFSR Outcomes or Systemic Factors:** Safety Outcome 2, Well-Being Outcomes 1, 2 and 3, and Service Array.			
Goal: Increase statewide access to varied existing services options for children/youth, and families in foster care.		**Applicable CFSR Items:** Items 3, 4, 17, 21, 23, 35, 36, 37, 40			
Action Steps and Benchmarks	**Person Responsible**	**Evidence of Completion**	**Qtr Due**	**Status of EOC**	**Quarterly Update**
4.1 Linkages Project utilized to disseminate best practices on effective collaboration between CalWORKS and Child Welfare regarding services and supports for families.	CDSS-OCAP (Linne Stout) CFPIC (Danna Fabella)	Evidence of completion of step 4.1 (4.1.1 through 4.1.3).	Q8		
4.1.1 Utilize semi-annual project meetings to inform participants of best practices.		Copy of two meeting agendas.	Q6		
4.1.2 Disseminate screening tools and associated protocols.		Screening tools and associated protocols.	Q4		
4.1.3 Analyze annual reports to determine level of county implementation.		Annual Report	Q8		
4.2 Implement integration of OCAP's 3-year plan into Outcomes and Accountability System to strengthen service continuum through collaboration with community based service providers including informal supports.	CDSS (Linne Stout and Richard Smith)	Evidence of completion of step 4.2 (4.2.1 through 4.2.2).	Q8		
4.2.1 Finalize CSA and SIP guidelines to provide guidance to counties.		Copy of issued All County Information Notice releasing CSA	Q1		

		and SIP guidelines.			
4.2.2 Implement integration with 25 counties.		County SIPs posted online.	Q8		
4.3 Expand the Wraparound program and consequently increase the number of families receiving wraparound services.	CDSS (Linne Stout)	Evidence of completion of step 4.3 (4.3.1 through 4.3.4).	Q8		
4.3.1 Provide technical assistance (TA) to non-wraparound counties to help assess their feasibility to implement wraparound.		Site visit reports including # of TA days.	Q1		
4.3.2 Provide training and technical assistance to enable current wraparound counties to build capacity to serve more children.		Site visit reports including # of T/TA days delivered to one wrap county.	Q1		
4.3.3 Establish baseline measure of number of wraparound “slots”.		Revised PIP with baseline.	Q1		
4.3.4 Increase number of capacity for wraparound services.		Quarterly report with data on capacity increase.	Q8		
4.4 Utilize the State Interagency Team (SIT) to strengthen service array options by developing State level interdepartmental strategies that reduce barriers and increase interagency collaboration. Priority areas include mental health, substance abuse, and	CDSS (Dave McDowell)	Two copies of SIT meeting agendas and current work plan.	Q1, Q7 and Q8		

	education. Coordinate with the SIT to expand substance abuse treatment services.		Minutes of meeting indicating CDSS' participation on SIT for Q7			
4.5	Coordinate with Child Welfare Council (CWC) and SIT to expand substance abuse treatment services.	CDSS(Dave McDowell)	Minutes of meeting indicating CDSS' participation on CWC and CWC committees Q1 and Minutes of meeting with SIT for Q7	Q1 and ~~Q6~~ Q7		See request below 2/2011
4.6	Monitor and provide technical assistance for IV-E Waiver Demonstration Project (L.A. and Alameda Counties) to determine impact of waiver on service array.	CDSS (Linne Stout)	Evidence of completion of step 4.6 (4.6.1).	Q4		
	4.6.1 Support funding flexibility efforts to expand/enhance services and supports to meet children/family needs.		Two county summaries of IV-E Waiver TA provided.	Q4		
4.7	Establish workgroup to determine feasibility of statewide implementation of Differential Response (DR).	CDSS (Linne Stout)	Evidence of completion of step 4.7 (4.7.1 through 4.7.3).	Q6		
	4.7.1 Finalize DR model and parameters for model fidelity in rollout.		Workgroup recommendations to Deputy Director.	Q4		
	4.7.2 Research and identify state and federal options that support DR.		Summary of options to Deputy Director.	Q6		
	4.7.3 Develop a plan for statewide implementation.		Copy of implementation plan.	Q6		
4.8	Collaborative proposal	ADP (Peggy	Copy of submitted	Q1		

submitted for in-depth TA from the National Center for Substance Abuse and Child Welfare.	Bean), CDSS (Karen Gunderson), AOC (Jennifer Walter)	proposal.			
4.9 Disseminate information to counties about utilizing the AOC's clearinghouse of culturally appropriate services for Indian children/families as a resource.	AOC (Jennifer Walter)	Two announcements to all counties indicating availability of AOC resource for culturally appropriate services.	Q6		
Renegotiation Action Steps and Benchmarks – Submitted 2/11/2011					
4.4 Utilize the State Interagency Team (SIT) to strengthen service array options by developing State level interdepartmental strategies that reduce barriers and increase interagency collaboration. Priority areas include mental health, substance abuse, and education. Coordinate with the SIT to expand substance abuse treatment services.	CDSS (Dave McDowell)	Two copies of SIT meeting agendas and current work plan. Minutes of meeting indicating CDSS' participation on SIT for Q7	Q1, Q7 and Q8		See explanation for change below in 4.5.
4.5 Coordinate with Child Welfare Council (CWC) and Systems Improvement Team (SIT) to expand substance abuse treatment services.	CDSS (Dave McDowell)	Minutes of meeting indicating CDSS' participation on CWC and, CWC Q1 and Minutes of meeting with SIT for Q7	*Q1 and ~~Q6~~ Q7*		The CWC has undergone a focus change to "Out of County Mental Health" as a result of legislative attention, therefore, the SIT committee will be working on the issue to expand substance abuse services for the Q7 submission.

Primary Strategy: **5.** Sustain and expand staff/supervisor training.		**Applicable CFSR Outcomes or Systemic Factors:** Training			
Goal: Increase educational and training opportunities for staff and supervisors working in the child welfare system.		**Applicable CFSR Items:** Items 32, 33			
Action Steps and Benchmarks	**Person Responsible**	**Evidence of Completion**	**Qtr Due**	**Status of EOC**	**Quarterly Update**
5.1 Enhance training for probation staff.	CDSS (Linne Stout)	Evidence of completion of step 5.1 (5.1.1 through 5.1.4).	Q4		
5.1.1 Collaborate with CPOC to survey county probation departments to assess training needs.	CPOC (Karen Pank)	Survey Results	Q1		
5.1.2 Develop three new child welfare related curriculum for probation specific needs; deliver training.		Table of contents of new curriculum or one training agenda.	Q3		
5.1.3 Increase awareness of the availability of nine day probation officer core training.		One copy of training announcement.	Q4		
5.1.4 Increase awareness of availability of two-day mandated training for probation officers on TPR, concurrent planning and visitation.		One copy of training announcement.	Q4		
5.2 Implement new social worker training regulations:	CDSS (Linne Stout) and CalSWEC (Barry Johnson)	Evidence of completion of step 5.2 (5.2.1 through 5.2.2).	Q5		

5.2.1 Develop and distribute Frequently Asked Questions ACIN in response to ACIN (released 7/08) on implementation of new training regulations.		Issued ACINs for new implementation of training regulations and FAQs to counties.	Q1		
5.2.2 Modify county training plans to incorporate annual tracking report of core training participation by social workers.		Modified plans on file and annual tracking report.	Q5		
5.3 Strengthen concurrent planning training.	CDSS (Linne Stout),	Evidence of completion of step 5.3 (5.3.1 through 5.3.3).	Q8		
5.3.1 Revise common core social worker training to enhance concurrent planning content.	CalSWEC (Barry Johnson)	Excerpts of revised sections of curriculum.	Q7		
5.3.2 Revise advanced concurrent planning curriculum for CWS staff, attorneys, care providers and other community partners.		Excerpts of revised sections of curriculum.	Q4		
5.3.3 Provide training based on the new curriculum.		Two training agendas.	Q8		
5.4 Develop curriculum on mental health, domestic violence, substance abuse, and education for juvenile court system and implement distance learning on these topics.	AOC (Jennifer Walter; Leah Wilson)	Online training available on domestic violence and mental health (web link provided).	Q5		

Primary Strategy: 6. Strengthen implementation of the statewide safety assessment system.		**Applicable CFSR Outcomes or Systemic Factors:** Safety Outcomes 1 and 2			
Goal: To improve timeliness of investigations and enhance services to families to ensure safety of child.		**Applicable CFSR Items:** Items 1, 2, 3, 4			
Action Steps and Benchmarks	**Person Responsible**	**Evidence of Completion**	**Qtr Due**	**Status of EOC**	**Quarterly Update**
6.1 Review timeliness to investigation quarterly data with counties that are not in line with the State's median performance level; provide technical assistance as indicted.	CDSS (Richard Smith)	Contact with counties and technical assistance provided.	Q8		
6.2 Strengthen implementation of the safety, risks, strengths, and needs assessment.	CDSS (Linne Stout)	Evidence of completion of step 6.2 (6.2.1 through 6.2.5).	Q8		
6.2.1 Enhance training of trainers' curriculum by incorporating data reviews as a method for supervisors to monitor timely completion of safety, needs and risk assessments.		Excerpts of enhanced training curriculum.	Q3		
6.2.2 Provide training at the county level to build supervisor capacity to monitor fidelity to the safety assessment tool.	RTA trainers	Two RTA training agendas.	Q3		

6.2.3 Develop and deliver advanced training module on Interviewing for Strengths and Needs and “Writing Individualized Case Plans” in conjunction with family members.	CDSS (Linne Stout)	Advanced training module and one training agenda.	Q4		
6.2.4 CDSS to conduct quarterly review of safety and risk assessment data to ensure increases in the use of safety/risk assessments in a timely manner prior to case closing.	CDSS (Richard Smith)	PIP quarterly report with data on increase in use of safety/risk assessments as indicated in 6.2.4.	Q1 through Q8		
6.2.5 CDSS to conduct quarterly review of FSNA data to ensure increases in the use of strengths and needs assessments.	CDSS (Richard Smith)	Quarterly report of administrative data PIP quarterly report with data on increase of FSNA as indicated in 6.2.5.	Q1 through Q8		

V: National Standards Measurement Plan and Quarterly Status Report

Safety Outcome 1: Absence of Maltreatment Recurrence												
National Standard	94.6%											
Performance as Measured in Final Report/Source Data Period	92.6%/2006b2007a											
Performance as Measured at Baseline/Source Data Period	~~92.7/FFY 2008~~ 92.6%/2006b2007a											
Negotiated Improvement Goal	93.3%											
Renegotiated Improvement Goal	93.2%											
Status (Enter the current quarter measurement for the reported quarter.)	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12

State: California

Type of Report: ☒ PIP ☐ Quarterly Report: Quarter: ____ Date Submitted: _____

Safety Outcome 1: Absence of Maltreatment of Children in Foster Care												
National Standard	99.68%											
Performance as Measured in Final Report/Source Data Period	99.49%/2006b2007a											
Performance as Measured at Baseline/Source Data Period	99.71%/FFY 2008											
Negotiated Improvement Goal	State met standard.											
Renegotiated Improvement Goal												
Status (Enter the current quarter measurement for the reported quarter.)	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12

State: California

Type of Report: ☒ PIP ☐ Quarterly Report: Quarter: ____ Date Submitted: _____

Permanency Outcome 1: Timeliness and Permanency of Reunification												
National Standard	122.6 (scaled score)											
Performance as Measured in Final Report/Source Data Period	107.2 (scaled score)/2006b2007a											
Performance as Measured at Baseline/Source Data Period	~~108.6 (scaled score)/FFY 2008~~ 107.1 (scaled score)/2006b2007a											
Negotiated Improvement Goal	111.7											
Renegotiated Improvement Goal	110.2											
Status (Enter the current quarter measurement for the reported quarter.)	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12

State: California

Type of Report: ☒ PIP ☐ Quarterly Report: Quarter: ____ Date Submitted: _____

Permanency Outcome 1: Timeliness of Adoptions (Permanency Composite 2)												
National Standard	106.4 (scaled score)											
Performance as Measured in Final Report/Source Data Period	94.6 (scaled score)/2006b2007a											
Performance as Measured at Baseline/Source Data Period	~~99.7 (scaled score)/FFY 2008~~ 95.3 (scaled score)/2006b2007a											
Negotiated Improvement Goal	103.8											
Renegotiated Improvement Goal	99.2											
Status (Enter the current quarter measurement for the reported quarter.)	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12

State: California

Type of Report: ☒ PIP ☐ Quarterly Report: Quarter: ____ Date Submitted: _____

Permanency Outcome 3: Permanency for Children in Foster Care for Extended Time Periods (Permanency Composite 3)												
National Standard	121.7 (scaled score)											
Performance as Measured in Final Report/Source Data Period	106.2 (scaled score)/2006b2007a											
Performance as Measured at Baseline/Source Data Period	~~113.1 (scaled score)/FFY 2008~~ 107.0/2006b2007a											
Negotiated Improvement Goal	116.3											
Renegotiated Improvement Goal	110.0											
Status (Enter the current quarter measurement for the reported quarter.)	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12

State: California

Type of Report: ☒ PIP ☐ Quarterly Report: Quarter: ____ Date Submitted: _____

Permanency Outcome 1: Placement Stability (Permanency Composite 4)												
National Standard	101.5 (scaled score)											
Performance as Measured in Final Report/Source Data Period	93.2 (scaled score)/2006b2007a											
Performance as Measured at Baseline/Source Data Period	~~92.9 (scaled score)/FFY 2008~~ 92.5 (scaled score)/2008b2009a											
Negotiated Improvement Goal	95.7											
Renegotiated Improvement Goal	95.3											
Status (Enter the current quarter measurement for the reported quarter.)	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12

State: California

Type of Report: ☒ PIP ☐ Quarterly Report: Quarter: ____ Date Submitted: _____

B. Item-Specific and Quantitative Measurement Plan and Quarterly Status Report

Outcome: Safety 1	**Item: 1 Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment**											
National Standard	95.0%											
Performance as Measured in Final Report	In 86.0% of cases reviewed, the agency responded in a timely manner.											
Performance as Measured at Baseline/Source Data Period	94.5% of investigations responded to in a timely manner FFY 2008.											
Negotiated Improvement Goal	94.7% of CWS and Probation cases using the Children's Bureau method for establishing targets. [Baseline+Std. Error; .945+.0018; 61875 applicable cases]											
Method of Measuring Improvement	Of all referrals open for investigation during the quarter (baseline annualized for FFY 2008) the % that are investigated in a timely manner (CWS/CMS-quarterly data; state measure 2B retrieved from CDSS/UCB website, http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb_childwelfare). Denominator will be all required immediate and ten-day investigations summed. Numerator will be the number of immediate and ten-day investigations completed as required summed. On a rolling quarterly basis, this proportion is annualized using the sum of the quarterly numerators and dividing by the sum of the quarterly denominators.											
Renegotiated Improvement Goal												
Status (Enter the current quarter measurement for the reported quarter.)	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12

State: California

Type of Report: ☒ PIP ☐ Quarterly Report: Quarter: ____ Date Submitted: _____

Outcome: Permanency 1	**Item: 7 Permanency goal established in timely manner**											
Performance as Measured in Final Report	In 59% of cases reviewed, the permanency goal was established in a timely manner.											
Performance as Measured at Baseline/Source Data Period	In 72.5% of out-of-home cases, permanency goal was established within 60 days of entry into foster care/FFY 2008.											
Negotiated Improvement Goal	75.3% of CWS out of home cases using the Children's Bureau method for establishing targets. [Baseline+Std. Error; .746+.0074; 13276 applicable cases]											
Method of Measuring Improvement	The denominator is the number of first time entries in care for 60 days or more during the quarter. The numerator is the number of those cases with a case plan goal established within 60 days of entry into foster care. On a rolling quarterly basis, this proportion is annualized using the sum of the quarterly numerators and dividing by the sum of the quarterly denominators.											
Renegotiated Improvement Goal												
Status (Enter the current quarter measurement for the reported quarter.)	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12

State: California

Type of Report: ☒ PIP ☐ Quarterly Report: Quarter: ____ Date Submitted: _____

Outcome: Permanency 1	**Item: 10 Permanency goal of other planned permanent living arrangement**											
Performance as Measured in Final Report	In 28% of cases reviewed, the permanency goal was other planned permanent living arrangement.											
Performance as Measured at Baseline/Source Data Period	In 14.7% of out-of-home cases, permanency goal was other planned permanent living arrangement/FFY 2008											
Negotiated Improvement Goal	14.4% of CWS cases using the Children's Bureau method for establishing targets. [Baseline+Std. Error; .147-.0027; 66413 applicable cases]											
Method of Measuring Improvement	AFCARS Data Profile Section III, Permanency Goals for Children in Care. Numerator is the number of children for whom permanency goal is "Long Term Foster Care". The denominator is the number of children in care of the last day of the reporting period.											
Renegotiated Improvement Goal												
Status (Enter the current quarter measurement for the reported quarter.)	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12

State: California

Type of Report: ☒ PIP ☐ Quarterly Report: Quarter: ____ Date Submitted: _____

Outcome: Well-Being	**Item: 18 Child and family involvement in case planning**											
Definition/Methodology	~~The percentage of cases, open on the last day of the quarter that have had a Family Engagement Effort (FEE) contact with a Parent/Child/Caregiver within the report period.~~ The total number of TDMs that occurred in the (#) TDM counties (denominator) and the number of TDMs that indicate a parent (birth parent, adoptive or guardian) was involved (numerator), quarterly. One year's data utilizing the rolling quarter method.											
Data Source	~~CWS/CMS administrative data~~ Quarterly TDM data via UC Berkeley to CDSS (annualized).											
Baseline and Baseline Period	~~Baseline to be determined PIP Q4 (Q4 data to be reported in Q7 due to revise in methodology).~~ In 56.7 percent of cases, a parent was involved in the TDM process.											
Negotiated Improvement Goal	~~To be determined PIP Q4 (Q4 data to be reported in Q7 due to revise in methodology) using the Children's Bureau method for establishing targets.~~ 57.0% of TDMs will have a parent involved [Baseline+Std. Error; .567-.0059; 26,740 applicable cases]											
Method of Measuring Improvement	~~Quarterly state data from CWS/CMS (annualized); Items include Case Planning with Family, Outreach with Family, Mediation with Family, Family Meeting/TDM/Family Case Conferencing, Meeting w/ Community Partners and Family, Meeting w/ Foster Parents and Family, Meeting w/ Parent Partners and Family, Meeting w/ CalWorks Staff and Family.~~ The denominator is the total number of TDMs that occurred and the numerator is the total number of TDMs that indicate a parent was involved (Parent is defined as birth parent, adoptive parent or guardian). On a rolling quarterly basis, this proportion is annualized using the sum of the quarterly numerators and dividing by the sum of the quarterly denominators.											
Renegotiated Improvement Goal												
Status (Enter the current quarter measurement for the reported quarter.)	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12

State: California

Type of Report: ☒ PIP ☐ Quarterly Report: Quarter: ____ Date Submitted: _____

Outcome: Permanency 2	**Measurement of Action Step 2.1- Family Finding**											
Definition/Methodology	The percentage of CWS entry cases at 60 days who indicate placement with a relative on the last day of the quarter.											
Data Source	CWS/CMS administrative data.											
Baseline and Baseline Period	Baseline to be determined PIP Q5.											
Negotiated Improvement Goal	To be determined PIP Q5 using the Children's Bureau method for establishing targets.											
Method of Measuring Improvement	The denominator is the number of first time entries during the quarter. The numerator is the number of first time entry cases where placement was with a relative within 60 days of entry. On a rolling quarterly basis, this proportion is annualized using the sum of the quarterly numerators and dividing by the sum of the quarterly denominators.											
Renegotiated Improvement Goal												
Status (Enter the current quarter measurement for the reported quarter.)	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12

State: California

Type of Report: ☒ PIP ☐ Quarterly Report: Quarter: ____ Date Submitted: _____

Outcome: Well-Being 1	**Item: 17 Needs and services of child, parent and foster parent.**											
Definition/Methodology	Percentage of foster care and in-home children as of the last day of the quarter who are receiving Wraparound services.											
Data Source	Quarterly reports from county to CDSS.											
Baseline and Baseline Period	5.4% of open cases were receiving Wraparound services/Calendar Yr. 2008											
Negotiated Improvement Goal	5.6% of CWS cases using the Children's Bureau method for establishing targets. [Baseline+Std. Error; .054+.0017; 64838 applicable cases]											
Method of Measuring Improvement	The denominator is the total number of children in foster care as of the last day of the quarter, extracted from the automated case management system (CWS/CMS). The numerator is the total number of county-reported wraparound slots as of the last day of the quarter. On a rolling quarterly basis, this proportion is annualized using the sum of the quarterly numerators and dividing by the sum of the quarterly denominators.											
Renegotiated Improvement Goal												
Status (Enter the current quarter measurement for the reported quarter.)	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12

State: California

Type of Report: ☒ PIP ☐ Quarterly Report: Quarter: ____ Date Submitted: _____

Outcome: Safety 2	**Item: 3 Services to family to protect child(ren) in home and prevent removal**											
Definition/Methodology	The percentage of CWS cases opened during the quarter where a family strengths and needs assessment was completed.											
Data Source	CWS/CMS administrative data extracted via SafeMeasures®											
Baseline and Baseline Period	61.8% of cases/FFY 2008											
Negotiated Improvement Goal	62.3% of cases using the Children's Bureau method for establishing targets. [Baseline+Std. Error; .618+.0046; 41733 applicable cases]											
Method of Measuring Improvement	The denominator is the total number of case referrals that were promoted to open cases during the quarters. The numerator is the total number of those promoted cases where a completed family strengths and needs assessment (FSNA) was completed. On a rolling quarterly basis, this proportion is annualized using the sum of the quarterly numerators and dividing by the sum of the quarterly denominators.											
Renegotiated Improvement Goal												
Status (Enter the current quarter measurement for the reported quarter.)	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12

State: California

Type of Report: ☒ PIP ☐ Quarterly Report: Quarter: ____ Date Submitted: _____

Outcome: Safety 2	**Item: 4 Risk of harm to child**											
Definition/Methodology	The percentage of CWS family maintenance (FM) and family reunification (FR) cases closed during the quarter where a safety assessment was completed within 65 days prior to case closing.[1]											
Data Source	CWS/CMS administrative data extracted via SafeMeasures®											
Baseline and Baseline Period	22.8% of cases/FFY 2008											
Negotiated Improvement Goal	23.2% of cases using the Children's Bureau method for establishing targets. [Baseline+Std. Error; .228+.0041; 40003 applicable cases]											
Method of Measuring Improvement	The denominator is the total number of CWS family maintenance and family reunification cases closed during a quarter. The numerator is the number of those closed cases that had a safety assessment completed within 65 days prior to closing. On a rolling quarterly basis, this proportion is annualized using the sum of the quarterly numerators and dividing by the sum of the quarterly denominators.											
Renegotiated Improvement Goal												
Status (Enter the current quarter measurement for the reported quarter.)	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12

[1] Sixty-five (65) days is the indication in the SDM Procedure Manual. These measures are only for SDM counties and do not include CAT counties.

State: California

Type of Report: ☒ PIP ☐ Quarterly Report: Quarter: ____ Date Submitted: _____

Outcome: Safety 2	**Item: 4 Risk of harm to child**											
Definition/Methodology	The percentage of CWS family maintenance (FM) and family reunification (FR) cases closed during the quarter where a risk assessment was completed within 65 days prior to case closing.											
Data Source	CWS/CMS administrative data extracted via SafeMeasures®											
Baseline and Baseline Period	60.1%/FFY 2008											
Negotiated Improvement Goal	60.6% of cases using the Children's Bureau method for establishing targets. [Baseline+Std. Error; .601+.0048; 40003 applicable cases]											
Method of Measuring Improvement	The denominator is the total number of CWS family maintenance and family reunification cases closed during a quarter. The numerator is the number of those closed cases that had a risk assessment completed within 65 days prior to closing. On a rolling quarterly basis, this proportion is annualized using the sum of the quarterly numerators and dividing by the sum of the quarterly denominators.											
Renegotiated Improvement Goal												
Status (Enter the current quarter measurement for the reported quarter.)	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12

State: California

Type of Report: ☒ PIP ☐ Quarterly Report: Quarter: ____ Date Submitted: _____

Outcome: Well-Being 1	**Item: 19 Caseworker Visits with Child**											
Definition/Methodology	The percentage of cases rated as a "strength" in quality of visits.											
Data Source	Online case review.											
Baseline and Baseline Period	Baseline to be determined PIP Q2; Baseline = 83.2% quality visits.											
Negotiated Improvement Goal	To be determined PIP Q2 using the Children's Bureau method for establishing targets.											
Method of Measuring Improvement	Online reviews from CWS/CMS of 381 cases from ~~Los Angeles, Fresno and Santa Clara~~ the 12 largest counties[2] regarding quality of visits. Definition of quality of visit will be consistent with federal CFSR. Data will be reported annually.											
Renegotiated Improvement Goal	Using the Children's Bureau method for establishing targets, improvement goal = ~~83.4%~~ 85.0%. [Baseline+Std. Error; .832+.0.0245168 ~~0023~~; ~~97393~~ 381 applicable cases]											
Status (Enter the current quarter measurement for the reported quarter.)	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12

[2] Twelve Counties: Alameda, Contra Costa, Fresno, Kern, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco, and Santa Clara.

State: California

Type of Report: ☒ PIP ☐ Quarterly Report: Quarter: ____ Date Submitted: _____

Outcome: Well-Being 1	**Item: 20 Caseworker Visits with Parents**											
Definition/Methodology	The percentage of cases rated as a "strength" in quality of visits.											
Data Source	Online case review.											
Baseline and Baseline Period	Baseline to be determined PIP Q2; Baseline = 63.1% quality visits.											
Negotiated Improvement Goal	To be determined PIP Q2 using the Children's Bureau method for establishing targets.											
Method of Measuring Improvement	Online reviews from CWS/CMS of 381 cases from ~~Los Angeles, Fresno and Santa Clara~~ the 12 largest counties[3] regarding quality of visits. Definition of quality of visit will be consistent with federal CFSR. Data will be reported annually.											
Renegotiated Improvement Goal	Using the Children's Bureau method for establishing targets, improvement goal = ~~63.4%~~ 65.5%. [Baseline+Std. Error; .631+0.0316428 ~~0030~~; ~~97393~~ 381 applicable cases]											
Status (Enter the current quarter measurement for the reported quarter.)	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12

[3] Twelve Counties: Alameda, Contra Costa, Fresno, Kern, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco, and Santa Clara.

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DEFINITIONS

Cultural Brokers: Cultural brokering has been defined as "...bridging, linking or mediating between groups or persons of different cultural backgrounds to effect change" (Jezewski, 1990).

Dependency Representation, Administration, Funding and Training (DRAFT): is a voluntary pilot program involving 20 courts, in which the responsibility for dependency counsel contract administration is shifted from the local courts to the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC).

Differential Response (DR): is an intake system which allows the child welfare agency to respond in an individualized manner to referrals based on the unique needs, resources and circumstances of the family. Services are provided based on the family's needs, resources and circumstances.

Family Group Decision Making (FGDM): is a family focused and culturally sensitive approach to developing permanency plans for children who are in foster care or who are at risk of entering foster care due to parental abuse/neglect. Focusing on encouraging the family, supported by professionals and resources, to craft a plan to meet both child and family needs.

Family to Family (F2F): The Annie E. Casey Foundation Family to Family (F2F) Initiative is a nationwide child welfare and foster care reform initiative based on four basic principles providing goals, strategies and tools to assist states and local child welfare agencies achieve better outcomes for children and families. Program components include: Building Community Partnerships; Team Decision Making; Resource Family Recruitment, Development and Support; and Self-Evaluation. For more information log onto: http://www.aecf.org/Home/MajorInitiatives/Family%20to%20Family.aspx.

Finding Families: is an approach to identifying, locating and engaging relatives of children in out of home care. The goal is to establish relationships and explore a permanent family placement and/or relationship with adults for the child. The purpose is to expand options that build healthy relationships and meaningful connections for children in care.

Intensive Treatment Foster Care (ITFC): is a family-based treatment alternative to group care for children with emotional and behavioral difficulties.

Kinship Support Services Program (KSSP): supports the well-being of children in formal kinship placements and prevents the entry of children in informal kinship care into the child welfare system. California established the KSSP as a unique grants-in-aid program allowing various counties to develop and fund specialized, community-based kinship support services. This program provides services to caregivers who provide for

their relative children within their familiar family settings to ensure safe, stable and permanent placements for dependent children or children who are at risk of dependency.

Linkages: is a collaborative resource that establishes connections between Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Child Welfare programs to streamline and improve serves for shared customers.

Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care (MTFC): is an evidence based model of treatment foster care for children with severe emotional and behavioral disorders and/or severe delinquency. This model creates opportunities for youth to live successful lives in families rather than in group or intuitional settings.

Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (OPPLA): This term refers to long term foster care as a goal. This goal should be utilized with extreme caution, particularly when set for younger children and should only be selected after other permanency options have been exhausted.

Parent Partners: is a term used to describe experienced parents in child welfare helping parents new to the child welfare system by:

- Sharing their own experiences and modeling appropriate and empowering behavior;
- Connecting parents with appropriate resources, often providing a personal contact;
- Serving as contacts at court hearings and team decision-making meetings;
- Serving as a link between parents and the child welfare system; and
- Expanding the parents' social networks by peer-to-peer mentoring with a focus on existing families involved in the child welfare system to provide support for new families involved in the child welfare system.

Residentially Based Service Reform Project (RBS): is established by Assembly Bill 1453 (Soto) to transform the current system of group care for foster children or youth, and for children with serious emotional disorders into a system of residential based services by 2011. Up to four counties will participate in the pilot.

Resource Family Approval Pilot: Established by Assembly Bill 340 to develop a pilot project in up to five counties to implement a streamlined, family-friendly process for approving relatives, foster parents and adoptive parents to care for foster children.

Standardized Safety Needs Assessment System: is a system that aids social workers in assessing safety, risk level, strengths, and current and future potential harm to a child. Risk and safety instruments include:

- **Structured Decision Making (SDM®):** 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 safety concerns, and assessing the risk of future abuse and neglect.

Children and family needs and strengths are identified and considered in developing and monitoring progress toward a case plan.

- **Comprehensive Assessment Tool (CAT®):** The CAT's primary objective is to ensure that core safety, risk and protective factors serve as the criteria for assessment decisions, and that assessments are conducted at multiple decision points in the life of a child welfare case. There are two defining and unique features of the CAT: it is designed by social workers; and it integrates an evidence base, built from historical case data, into the tools to provide critical decision-making support for social work practice. The components of the system include; five assessment tools, reports that explain what places children and families at risk, and training and technical assistance over a secure website.

Team Decision Making (TDM): is a process for bringing together youth, birth families, relatives, foster families, community members, service providers, social workers, and others to empower the youth, share information and collaborate on all placement decisions.

Wraparound: is an intensive, individualized care management process that allows for youth with serious emotional and behavioral disorders to be served in their home and community.

Permanency Protocols: A conceptual framework that supports permanency outcomes. The three areas of emphasis of the framework are Team Decision Making meetings, Family Participation In Case Planning, and Youth Inclusion In Case Planning.

CALIFORNIA CITIZEN REVIEW PANELS
October 1, 2010 – September 30, 2011

Background and Purpose:

The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) was originally enacted in 1974 to provide annual grants to states. The purpose of the grant was to improve the state's child protective services system and was based on the population of children under 18. Since 1974, there have been additional amendments to CAPTA. In 1996, an amendment added a new eligibility requirement for states to establish Citizen Review Panels (CRPs) as oversight to the states' child protective services system. Under the legislation, each state is required to establish no less than three CRPs, with the exception of states that receive the minimum allotment under the statute. The panel members are to be volunteers broadly representative of the community at large including concerned citizens, experts in child protection and prevention, advocacy, foster care, education, mental health, the court system, law enforcement, and children services. The mandate of the CRPs is to "evaluate the extent to which the agencies (state and local) are effectively discharging their child protection responsibilities." The panels are required to examine policies, procedures, and where appropriate, specific cases handled by the state and local agencies providing child protective services.

The federal statute broadly defines the function of CRPs. The panel must meet not less than once every three months and must produce an annual public report containing a summary of their activities. In June 2003, CAPTA was amended when the "Keeping Children and Families Safe Act" was signed by the President. This revised the CRP duties to include: 1) requiring panels to examine the practices (in addition to policies and procedures) of the state and local child welfare agencies, 2) providing for public outreach and comment in order to assess the impact of current procedures and practices upon children and families in the community, and 3) requiring panels to make recommendations to the state and public on improving the child protective services system. In addition, the appropriate state agency is required to respond in writing no later than six months after the panel recommendations are submitted. The state agency's response must include a description of whether or how the state will incorporate the recommendation of the panel (where appropriate) to make measurable progress in improving the state child protective services system.

Program Structure:

The California Department of Social Services' (CDSS) Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP) administers California's CRPs. Currently there are panels in Calaveras, San Mateo, and Ventura counties. These panels are reflective of the demographic, economic, social, and political climate found in different areas

throughout the state depicting the varied conditions of child protective services in California. Technical assistance, guidance and coordination are available through OCAP.

Overview of Current Activities at the State Oversight Level:

The OCAP staff, in conjunction with the CRPs, is focusing on building strong panels that are reflective of their communities and are able to partner with local and statewide child protective service systems, as well as each other, to enhance the safety and well-being of children.

The following are OCAP's activities/goals:

- Hold a convening of representatives from each panel at one site to provide information sharing, technical assistance, and networking opportunities. The next convening will take place late summer or in early fall of 2011. The date has yet to be determined.
- Promote information sharing and networking within the three California panels as well as with panels in other states. Panels are encouraged to visit the national CRP website www.uky.edu/SocialWork/crp.
- Encourage panels to review the Program Improvement Plan (PIP) developed in response to California's Children and Family Services Review (CFSR). Promote involvement in implementation and monitoring components of the plan impacting their communities.
- Continue to provide support and technical assistance through the OCAP CRP consultant. The consultant attends (when possible) the CRP meetings and is a conduit for collaboration between the panels. In June of 2010 the CRPs met with the national expert and now have another resource for technical assistance, networking and educational opportunities.

The CAPTA requirements are broadly defined. The OCAP is reviewing current state established guidelines and considering their value to the structure of California CRPs.

- Some modifications and deletions to these guidelines have been made.
- OCAP has begun the process of developing regulations statutory to formalize the CRP processes.

The current funding cycle for the existing CRPs is July 1, 2009, through June 30, 2012.

- The selection process for the funding cycle began with the issuance of an All County Information Notice (ACIN) requesting applications from counties to operate a CRP. Existing participants were invited to continue with the possibility of having three to five panels in California. All three of the existing panels (Calaveras, San Mateo, and the statewide panel) submitted letters of intent to continue. All three were extended through the funding cycle ending June 30, 2012. However, in December of 2010, the statewide panel disbanded.

- The panels chosen have funding available to assist in covering the cost associated with conducting a panel. Ventura County was selected and became the fourth CRP in California.
- With the dissolution of the statewide panel, California currently maintains three local panels. OCAP plans to look at existing groups that may fulfill the requirements of a CRP.

PANEL INFORMATION

Calaveras County

County Profile:

Calaveras County is located in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains – 133 miles east of San Francisco and 135 miles west of Lake Tahoe, midway along state Highway 49, which links the towns of the Gold Country.

The population for Calaveras County is approximately 46,731 residents of which 8,014 are children 18 years and younger. The breakdown of the county racially is as follows: 92.5 percent Caucasian, 10.4 percent Latino/Hispanic, 1.7 percent Native American Indian, 1.6 percent Asian, 1.3 percent Black, and 2.8 percent reporting two or more races. The county child protection agency received 913 child abuse referrals of which 120 were substantiated cases. There are 57 children in placement. [1]

Activities:

- All members have signed a statement of confidentiality regarding the security and privacy of information obtained. Each member received a binder with the reference manual for California CRPs and CRP Guidelines and Protocols. Members understand that the scope of work defines the goals to be achieved for the year and reviewed it for clarification.
- Membership continues to be made up of the Prevent Child Abuse Council with additional members (representing probation and the community). Members represent child welfare, public health, behavioral health-substance abuse, early education, public schools and foster parents.
- The CRP developed a form for interested members so Prevent Child Abuse Council Members could recruit personally. Press releases were printed twice during the year in the local newspapers, on-line community news, and shared with county agencies, schools, faith-based centers and foster family agencies. Members changed the meeting time to evenings to accommodate more working citizens who may not be available for day meetings.

[1] Information provided by the Census Bureau and the Center for Social Research, University of California at Berkeley Needell, B., Webster, D., Armijo, M., Lee, S., Dawson, W., Magruder, J., Exel, M., Glasser, T., Williams, D., Zimmerman, K., Simon, V., Putnam-Hornstein, E., Frerer, K., Cuccaro-Alamin, S., Lou, C.

Recommendations:

CRP's recommendations made to the Calaveras County Human Services Agency, consisting of:

- Calaveras County Children's Services could define the goals of the Independent Living Program (ILP) and make those goals clear to Children's Services staff, youth, foster parents, Oakendell Group Home staff, and Rite of Passage Group Home staff.

- Children's Services can review the budget and time study of the ILP Coordinator to determine staffing needs so enough time is available to manage a caseload and coordinate a sustainable ILP. Consider hiring and training an ILP graduate to help with clerical duties.

- Recruit a collaborative of individuals interested in the development of a sustainable program to assist youth to prepare to live on their own. This group could develop a strategic plan and assist with coordination of hands-on training sessions. It should include representation from youth, the business community and agencies who serve current and former foster youth in out-of-home placement.

- Begin a conversation about partnership and coordination with the group homes and agencies, such as Calaveras County Office of Education, who serve youth, are involved at the high school education level, and operate an existing collaborative to educate teens.

- Children's Services (or a collaborative) can review the content of classes being offered to ensure they meet the needs of youth and provide experiential "hands-on" learning and connection to resources. Youth report they would like information about the following:
    - Goal setting and decision making
    - More resources for education and employment
    - Identifying career paths and interests
    - Networking skills to enhance college and job seeking opportunities
    - Social skills and practice interviews
    - Learn the triggers and long term effects of substance abuse. Learn how to choose friends and surroundings
    - Health related classes that include how to identify illnesses through symptoms, how to choose health insurance, and personal safety

- The CRP recommends each class be two hours to provide more time for learning/engagement with consistent times and locations, advertised in a timely manner to youth, caregivers, and group homes/schools.

- The CRP recommends youth eligible for ILP are given a voice and a role in the program. The process starts with the youth's perspective about opportunities, resources, relationships, skills and plans for their future. Class structure could include actions outside the classroom, pre and post assessments for each class, and an evaluation after each class to assess learning and gain feedback. Youth could be encouraged to participate in defining the program goals.

- Youth without at least one caring adult in their life face loneliness and isolation. Statistically, they have a higher risk of poor outcomes. Children's Services can consider implementing a program component that helps connect youth to supportive adults. It would aim to include, empower, and get the support of foster parents and group home/school staff to assist the youth. Possibilities include:
    - A Junior-Senior partnership through the Senior Center where seniors could serve as a mentor or provide specific information (life skills, career, vocation).
    - Match students with a person in the community who is experienced or working in a job or field of interest to the student. The student could "job shadow" or interview them.
    - Determine the possibility of a unique mentoring component.
    - Seek feedback from caregivers.

- The Transitional Independent Living Plan (TILP) should be youth led with a focus on education, employment, health, housing, and supportive adult connections. Start the process when youth enter ILP.
    - Assist in developing a team to attend the TILP meeting
    - The team includes supportive persons identified by the youth: caregiver, relatives, therapist, and the social worker or probation officer
    - All in attendance at the transition plan meeting agree to help the youth complete the plan.

Future Direction:

The Calaveras ILP will be contracted out in September. The CRP agreed to let this transition happen without immediate further assessment of the program. From the last review, the CRP discovered through foster parent members, that placement stability is affected by crisis and often a lack of information. There is room for improved communication or services to foster families to create better placements for children. The CRP decided to explore the needs of foster parents and determine if available services are working.

Submitted to Calaveras Works and Human Services Agency: 11/1/10
Submitted to CDSS/OCAP: 11/1/10

Calaveras Works and Human Services Agency
Response to the Citizen's Review Panel's
Annual & Recommendations Report
(2009/2010 Program Year)

The Calaveras Works and Human Services Agency's (CWHSA) Children's Services staff sincerely appreciates the members of the Calaveras County Citizen's Review Panel (CRP) for their willingness to assist us in improving our Child Welfare Services. We were pleased that you chose to focus your efforts on strategizing ways to improve our Independent Living Program (ILP). While the tragic statistics that you listed regarding children aging out of the foster care system were reflective of California as a whole and not strictly Calaveras County youth, we still agree that this is an important population to devote attention to, and we welcomed your suggestions for improvement in this area.

We are providing the following responses to the findings and/or recommendations from the Annual & Recommendations Report (2009/2010 Program Year):

- *Calaveras County Children's Services could define the goals of the ILP program and make those goals clear to Children's Services staff, youth, foster parents, Oakendell staff, and Rite of Passage staff.*

The goals of the ILP program are heavily regulated by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS). While these regulations have been shared with the Children's Services staff as well as with the group home staff (through their own licensing/employment processes), we agree that defining the goals into "plain" language is a solid suggestion. We will develop a pamphlet that can be provided to, and discussed with, at least minimally those listed above. The youth will receive the pamphlet when they reach the ILP-eligible age (15.5 years), when they enter out-of-home care (if they are already ILP-eligible) and during their first ILP class. The foster parents and group home staff will receive the pamphlet whenever they accept placement of an ILP-eligible youth. A draft of the pamphlet will be provided during an ILP class to solicit feedback, comments and suggestions for improvement directly from the ILP youth. Additionally, we will consider the feasibility of having current or graduate ILP youth compile a video that explains the ILP program. The target for completion of this project will be September 2011, prior to the first ILP class of the 2011/2012 year.

- *Children's Services can review the budget and time study of the ILP Coordinator to determine staffing needs so enough time is available to manage a caseload and coordinate a sustainable ILP. Consider hiring and training an ILP graduate to help with clerical duties.*

As noted in the CRP Annual & Recommendations Report, we have reviewed the budget and time study of the ILP Coordinator, who had previously been assigned to a reduced number of cases in an effort to help off-set some of the time that we know is needed to

coordinate the ILP. Simply stated, we do not receive sufficient funds to staff a full-time or even half-time ILP Coordinator position. The high staff to ILP-eligible youth ratio is primarily because of the two large group homes that are in Calaveras County and primarily house youth from other counties, yet we are funded based upon Calaveras County ILP-eligible youth only. This is because the sending counties' ILP Coordinators share the responsibility in ensuring that their ILP-eligible youth are either referred for services to be provided by the Calaveras County ILP, the group home staff, or by their own counties' ILP.

We appreciate that the CRP included our recommendation to the CDSS that *"consideration needs to be given for allocating funds for youth in need of the service rather than for youth under the county court jurisdiction or to allow the county to limit services to county only youth in need of ILP services".* Our Director sent a letter to each California County Welfare Director to advise them that beginning in February 2011; we will invoice them for the ILP services that we provide to their ILP-eligible youth.

- *Recruit a collaborative of individuals interested in the development of a sustainable program to assist youth to prepare to live on their own. This group could develop a strategic plan and assist with coordination of hands-on training sessions. It should include representation from youth, the business community and agencies who serve current and former foster youth in out-of-home placement.*

We issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) soliciting an individual, agency or collaborative to provide ILP Coordination and services. In addition to a general Press Release regarding this funding opportunity, the RFP was also sent directly to several local entities, including the Calaveras County Office of Education (as suggested above). We expect to have a contract in place beginning in March 2011. The contract is expected to be in place through June 2012.

- *Begin a conversation about partnership and coordination with the group homes and agencies, such as Calaveras County Office of Education, who serve youth, are involved at the high school education level, and operate an existing collaborative to educate teens.*

In an effort to streamline the process, reduce our budget, as well as reduce duplication of services, the ILP Coordinator and the Children's Services Supervisor met with both group homes in Calaveras County to determine which ILP-related classes, trainings and support that they already offer. If a class or training is already being provided by the group home staff, we agreed that we will not be providing the same or similar class or training to their residents (and we will therefore not be invoicing the other counties for these services).

- *Children's Services (or a collaborative) can review the content of classes being offered to ensure they meet the needs of youth and provide experiential "hands-*

on" learning and connection to resources. Youth report they would like information about the following:

- *Goal setting and decision making*
- *More resources for education and employment*
- *Identifying career paths and interests*
- *Networking skills to enhance college and job seeking opportunities*
- *Social skills and practice interviews*
- *Learn the triggers and long term effects of substance abuse. Learn how to choose friends and surroundings*
- *Health related classes that include how to identify illnesses through symptoms, how to choose health insurance, and personal safety*

As noted above, the ILP regulations require certain topics, and funding is determined based upon these minimum requirements only. Most of the topics that are listed here can seemingly fall into the required categories of employment and health and will be relayed to the contracted ILP Coordinator entity as priorities of the current ILP youth. Our target for completion of these requested classes will be before June 2012.

- *The CRP recommends each class be two hours to provide more time for learning/engagement with consistent times and locations, advertised in a timely manner to youth, caregivers, and group homes/schools.*

We will be holding a bidder's conference on January 10, 2011, for all parties that are interested in providing ILP Coordination and Services. During this Bidder's Conference, we will clarify our expectation of two hour classes, consistent times and locations, and timely advertisement/notice to youth, caregivers and group homes.

- *The CRP recommends youth eligible for ILP are given a voice and a role in the program. The process starts with the youth's perspective about opportunities, resources, relationships, skills and plans for their future. Class structure could include actions outside the classroom, pre and post assessments for each class, and an evaluation after each class to assess learning and gain feedback. Youth could be encouraged to participate in defining the program goals.*

We have historically presented some topics outside of the classroom setting, and we will let the awarded contractor know that the youth prefer this method when/if it is possible for them to provide it. The target implementation time for pre and post assessments for each class, as well as evaluations after each class, is September 2011. Recruiting some ILP youth to assist in the development of the assessment and evaluation may be done by Children's Services, the awarded contractor, and/or the CRP (should you choose to focus attention on ILP again for the 2011/2012 year).

- *Youth without at least one caring adult in their life face loneliness and isolation. Statistically, they have a higher risk of poor outcomes. Children's Services can consider implementing a program component that helps connect youth to supportive adults. It would aim to include, empower, and get the support of*

foster parents and group home/school staff to assist the youth. Possibilities include:

- *A Junior-Senior partnership through the Senior Center where seniors could serve as a mentor or provide specific information (life skills, career, vocation).*
- *Match students with a person in the community who is experienced or working in a job or field they have an interest. They could "job shadow" or interview them.*
- *Determine the possibility of a unique mentoring component.*
- *Seek feedback from caregivers.*

Helping youth who are getting ready to exit out-of-home care due to emancipation identify at least one caring adult to whom they can turn to for help is required of the primary case-carrying social workers and probation officers. The ILP Coordinator's role is to ensure that the efforts have been made and to provide additional assistance if needed. The suggested possibilities listed above are interesting and most will need considerable time to analyze and implement. We will relay the suggestions to the awarded ILP Coordinator for their consideration, especially when developing the employment requirements of the ILP. Because of the considerable amount of youth placed in Calaveras County by other counties, we would expect priority to be given to Calaveras County dependents and wards for such programs.

Additionally, we are in the initial stages of discussion with the Calaveras Youth Mentoring Program (through the Calaveras County Office of Education) to develop and implement a peer foster youth mentoring component. The vision is that older Calaveras County foster youth who have spent at least one year in out-of-home care will be trained to be peer mentors for school-aged Calaveras County foster children who are newly placed into an out-of-home care setting. It is unclear what, if any, role the ILP Coordinator will have in this process, but the Children's Services will continue to pursue it as time and staffing allow.

- *The Transitional Independent Living Plan (TILP) should be youth led with a focus on education, employment, health, housing, and supportive adult connections. Start the process when youth enter ILP.*
    - *Assist in developing a team to attend the TILP meeting.*
    - *The team includes: supportive persons identified by the youth, caregiver, relatives, therapist, and the social worker or probation officer.*
    - *All in attendance at the transition plan meeting agree to help the youth complete the plan.*

Similar to the above, the primary case-carrying social workers and probation officers are required to develop ILPs with their own ILP eligible youth. The ILP Coordinator's role is to ensure that the TILP is completed. Since assisting the youth in developing, implementing and monitoring the TILP is the responsibility of the case carrying social workers and probation officers, we do not anticipate allocating our ILP budget to this process. Instead, we will analyze the fiscal and workload impact of incorporating TILP

planning meetings into our Team Decision Making (TDM) component. Should TDMs be conducted for TILP planning, we will ensure that the list of suggested individuals are inviting to the meetings.

To summarize, here are the commitments we have made in this Response report:

1. Develop a pamphlet that explains the goals of the ILP, and solicit feedback from ILP youth regarding the pamphlet by September 2011.
2. Consider the feasibility of having current or former ILP youth develop a video that explains the goals of the ILP by September 2011.
3. Contract with an individual, agency or collaboration to provide ILP coordination and services, beginning in March 2011.
4. Invoice other counties for providing ILP coordination and services to their youth, beginning in February 2011.
5. Refrain from providing ILP classes to group home youth for whom the group home staff is already providing classes/training on duplicative topics.
6. Ensure the awarded ILP provider is aware that the classes must be two hours in length, with consistent locations and times, and that adequate notice of the classes is provided, by September 2011.
7. Assist with creating pre- and post-class assessments, and post class evaluations, to be implemented by September 2011.
8. Relay suggestions for connecting Calaveras County Dependents and Wards with caring adults to the ILP coordinator, for consideration to include them in the employment component.
9. Continue to explore the feasibility of creating a Calaveras County foster youth peer mentoring program with the Calaveras Youth Mentoring Program.
10. Analyze the impact of facilitating TDM-like TILP planning meetings for Calaveras County foster youth.

Again, thank you for your thoughtful review and recommendations. We appreciate your hard work and dedication in helping us improve the Independent Living Program in Calaveras County, and in improving Calaveras County's Children's Services in general.

Submitted to CRP: 1/14/11
Submitted to OCAP: 1/14/11

San Mateo County

County Profile:

San Mateo County is located in the western portion of the San Francisco Bay Area, directly below the city and county of San Francisco. It is one of California's most affluent counties and part of the "Silicon Valley," home of many high-tech firms.

The population for San Mateo County is approximately 718,989 residents of which 162,870 are children 18 years and younger. The breakdown of the county racially is as

follows: 66.5 percent Caucasian, 23.7 percent Latino/Hispanic, 24.9 percent Asian, 3.2 percent Black, 1.4 percent Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders, less than 1 percent Native American Indians, and 3.4 percent report two or more races. The county child protection agency received 3,781 child abuse referrals of which 394 were substantiated cases. There are 136 children in placement.[2]

Activities:

- The San Mateo Citizen Review Panel (SMCRP) will continue to meet monthly to monitor its recommendations and the delivery of child welfare services in San Mateo County. Time in each meeting will be allocated to (1) reports and presentations relevant to the panel's stated interests and (2) an opportunity for new issues/concerns to be identified and explored. SMCRP, recognizing the continuing fiscal constraints that child welfare organizations are experiencing, will continue to look for ways to promote and support productive collaboration that leverages resources to achieve shared goals.

- On an annual basis, SMCRP reviews membership and the criteria for CRP representation. The goal is for CRP members to represent a broad array of backgrounds and perspectives. As the need for a person with a particular background is identified, members brainstorm ways to reach out to those people. Parents, youth and mental health professionals continue to be priority areas.

- Potential members receive a copy of the Operational Guidelines of SMCRP and are referred to the CRP website (www.smcrp.org). Before submitting an application for membership, potential panel members are invited to attend a regular CRP meeting. They sign a confidentiality agreement at the beginning of that meeting. Following the visit, if there is continuing interest, the potential member completes an application form and submits it, along with a relevant resume. New members are elected by majority vote of the existing membership.

- Incoming members of the San Mateo Citizen Review Panel are provided with an orientation binder when they meet with the chair of the panel in an orientation session. New members are encouraged to ask for clarification or additional information if they do not understand a specific point. One key role of the facilitator is to ensure that all members of the panel are able to participate effectively.

- SMCRP members receive information and updates about the child welfare system from the Child Welfare Services Director at each regular meeting. Articles and

[2] Information provided by the Census Bureau and the Center for Social Research, University of California at Berkeley Needell, B., Webster, D., Armijo, M., Lee, S., Dawson, W., Magruder, J., Exel, M., Glasser, T., Williams, D., Zimmerman, K., Simon, V., Putnam-Hornstein, E., Frerer, K., Cuccaro-Alamin, S., Lou, C.

reports are provided to members as appropriate and discussed as part of the meeting agenda.

Recommendations:

1. Child Welfare Services (CWS) should make sure that the written information about the child welfare system made available to family members is updated regularly as to content and accessibility (language, format, reading level and terminology) and is widely disseminated.

Monitoring:

- CRP will talk with CWS staff member designated to receive updated information from the Administrative Office of the Courts, Department of Social Services and other sources to identify the process currently in place to keep materials current.
- CRP will examine current approaches to disseminating educational/informational materials to families.
- CRP will explore the possibility of using an intern to inventory existing materials and places where they are made available to families.
- CRP will talk with emergency response and intake social workers about how they provide information/educational material to families.

2. CWS should monitor how families are accessing and using support services and should analyze the impact of the programs on family reunification rates.

Monitoring

- CRP will request information from CWS about how support programs and services are being evaluated for utilization and effectiveness, through the AB 636 report or other processes.
- CRP will identify specific services and invite providers to present information to SMCRP about how those services are being assessed for impact.
- CRP will use a consistent approach to gathering this information so a final report can be compiled.

3. CWS should continue to support the Team Decision Making (TDM) Advisory Committee and ensure that it monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of team decision making in relation to the stated outcomes of the program.

Monitoring

- CRP will schedule regular updates from SMCRP members who serve on TDM Advisory Committee.
- CRP will request copies of any written reports provided by the TDM Advisory Committee to CWS.

Future Direction:

SMCRP will continue to meet monthly to monitor its recommendations and the delivery of child welfare services in San Mateo County. Time in each meeting will be allocated to (1) reports and presentations relevant to the Panel's stated interests and (2) an opportunity for new issues/concerns to be identified and explored. SMCRP, recognizing the continuing fiscal constraints that child welfare organizations are experiencing, will continue to look for ways to promote and support productive collaboration that leverages resources to achieve shared goals.

Submitted to CDSS/OCAP: 11/10/10
Submitted to Beverly Beasley Johnson, Director San Mateo County Human Services Agency and Deborah Torres, Director, Children Welfare Services: 11/10/10

Ventura County

County Profile:

The County of Ventura is located approximately 50 miles northwest of Los Angeles. Ventura has a diverse economic base from tourism to technology. Early Spanish settlers described the area as the "land of everlasting summers" and named the region "San Buenaventura", which means "good fortune".

The population for Ventura County is approximately 802,983 residents of which 214,841 are children 18 years and younger. The breakdown of the county racial demographics are as follows: 87.1 percent Caucasian, 38.5 percent Latino/Hispanic, 6. 7percent Asian, 2.2 percent Black, 0.3 percent Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders, 1.3 percent Native American Indians, and 2.4 percent report two or more races. The county child protection agency received 9,551child abuse referrals of which 794 were substantiated cases. There are 363 children in placement.[3]

Activities:

- The Ventura County CRP has engaged and successfully completed the development of an infrastructure that will support ongoing recruitment and orientation activities as well as support the ongoing workings/ subcommittees of the CRP. Guiding principles were established and approved by the CRP. An orientation manual is currently in the last stages of revision.

- The Committee has recognized the need for membership expansion. Current recruitment activities have included inviting the local California Youth Connection (CYC) Youth representative to the CRP/Children's System of Care (CSOC) meetings. Discussing the inclusion of parent consumers and

[3] Information provided by the Census Bureau and the Center for Social Research, University of California at Berkeley Needell, B., Webster, D., Armijo, M., Lee, S., Dawson, W., Magruder, J., Exel, M., Glasser, T., Williams, D., Zimmerman, K., Simon, V., Putnam-Hornstein, E., Frerer, K., Cuccaro-Alamin, S., Lou, C.

reaching out to parent advocate groups. Currently CYC Leadership is determining the feasibility of a youth member joining the CRP.

- As a means of on-going trainings, the CRP had numerous presentations from community based organizations providing services to youth placed out of home in Ventura County. These presentations allowed the committee to understand the various services provided, map potential overlaps in services and streamline a process for understanding private provider service provisions including referral criteria.

- The Panel Chair participated in the all CRP meeting held in Sacramento June of 2010. A presentation was made to the CRP after this meeting on the National CRP Initiative.

- Several members of the CRP participated in a California Youth Connection presentation, including the screening of the local CYC efforts to develop a video to present to group home providers, focusing on living in out of home care from the consumer perspective.

- The committee has developed a 3 year strategic plan which supports the local SIP. There are a total of 3 workgroups that are responsible for completing the review activities, reporting back to the general membership, and making recommendations back to the Department of Children and Family Services.

Recommendations:

Currently the focus of the strategic plan is to review components of the local Child Welfare Systems, within Children and Family Services, Probation Agency, Department of Behavioral Health and local providers, targeting re-entry, recurrence and length of time in care. The CRP workgroup activities are focusing on the length of stay aspect and the in county placement system for children who are at risk of, or have been victimized by abuse or neglect, or have other special needs that require out of home care in a residential or group home placement

The committee has developed a 3 year strategic plan which supports the local SIP. There are a total of 3 workgroups that are responsible for completing the review activities outlined in the current work plan, reporting back to the general membership and making recommendations back to the Department of Children and Family Services.

These activities directly correlate with the Ventura County SIP target to decrease the percent of children who emancipate or turn age 18 during a 12-month period who had been in care 3 years or more at emancipation or reaching age of majority (child welfare only).

Data illustrating Ventura County's functioning in this area reported in Safe Measures show that 62.5% of children who emancipate or turn age 18 had been in care 3 years or

longer in the 12-month period between July 1, 2009 and June 30, 2010. Ventura County's current performance remains above the national standard for this measure (37.5%) and above statewide performance (59.4%)."

Workgroup One:

Permanency for children encompasses all children that have reunified with maternal and/or paternal family members, taken into guardianship by maternal and/or paternal family, kin or foster parents or any other caretaker that has a relationship with the child and adoption by any of the above. Long term foster care is not considered permanency. This workgroup is interested in researching barriers to permanency that may exist due to a child being placed with their siblings.

Review activities included research in understanding how permanency is defined in the child welfare system as well as reviewing current C-CFSR data. In addition, the committee developed data mining questions. Consultant Erika Felix, University California Santa Barbara, is currently involved in facilitating a prospective study, at the early recommendation of this committee and will be reporting her findings to this committee as part of the second year work plan. Currently, no recommendation has been made from this workgroup.

Workgroup Two:

Focus of this workgroup was to determine/assess outcome measures currently in use by all programs that reflect permanency, safety and well being.

Across Ventura County there are a variety of entities providing services to foster youth. Some are government agencies, some are community based organizations, some are individuals (foster parents, kinship parents), and some are private business people (group home owners). Toward that goal, our committee realized that we need some basic baseline information (i.e., how are we doing so far for foster youth – how many who enter the system exit in to a permanent type arrangement?). We also realized that it would be helpful, ultimately, to ensure that all providers are collecting the same information (and possibly in the same manner.) Therefore, we launched our initial foray into ascertaining outcomes across the county.

The review activities included:

- Developing the survey outcome measure survey tool.
- Creating a list of constituents from whom to collect data.
- Contacting each group (created a list of contact people from each group.
- Co-facilitating a focus group process for group homes to collect information/surveys

Findings: Initial results suggest very little (if any) standardization across out of home care providers; including who is measuring, what is being measured, what Instruments are being used, and how things are being counted.

We need to provide more information to various groups about why we value data and what outcomes we are particularly interested in (safety, permanence, well being).

Formal Recommendations based on findings

Given that the local Department of Children and Family Services, Probation Agency and the Department of Behavioral Health provide oversight of the local out of home care providers, the CRP recommends the following to these agencies, with the goal of reducing the length of stay in out of home care and increasing the permanency of placement for Ventura County youth.

1) Develop a mechanism to continue to collect base line information from all providers in Ventura County on data measurement they are keeping.
2) Use Interagency Placement Expansion and Review Committee (IPERC) and other government structure components to get "buy in" from out of home care providers regarding the need to measure outcomes and collect data.
3) Reach out to people who do not know what they are collecting and help them to figure out what they are already doing.
4) Conduct focus groups to ascertain what is manageable for various types of providers (group homes, government agencies, private nonprofit CBOs, etc.).
5) Establish 2-4 shared outcomes that will be collected across all agencies in the county.
6) Use Agency 101 or Wrap Summit for year 2012 to launch standardization in data collection.

Work Group Three

The focus of this workgroup was to review local group homes in order to assess their role in a continuum of care that promotes community- based, family- involved and best-practice services addressing the specific needs of Ventura County youth. These review activities align with the goals of reducing the length of stay and maintaining “placement” youth within the county outline in the current SIP.

In April 2010, a focus group was facilitated with group homes/residential treatment center administrators. The report was reviewed by agency staff from the respective placing agencies.

Findings and Recommendations

<u>Costs associated with Enrichment Activities for Youth</u>

Findings: Hardship for provider in paying for activities.

Recommended Action:
1. Invite Children's Auxiliary Liaison to an IPERC provider meeting to review procedure for obtaining reimbursement for approved costs.

2. Send mail out to caregivers caring for youth age 16-18 to inform them of support resources for ILP.
3. Post information on ILP website for direct access to providers and others involved with youth
4. Encourage group home providers to contact local youth ministries & youth programs that are willing to pick up, supervise and drop off youth.
5. Survey providers already providing outside services. Discover how they are providing enrichment activities currently.

Dedicated Time for Networking with County Group Home Providers

Findings: Providers could benefit from time to share with each other program components or new community resources
Information: Quarterly meeting held for Group Home Providers is an existing forum to share information.

Recommended Action:
1. Dedicate time on IPERC provider agenda for information sharing.
2. Providers can gain support from IPERC administration for copying and other support as needed.

Barriers to Obtaining Employment for Youth

Findings: Obtaining employment for youth utilizing Work Force Investment (WIA) Act programs is difficult.

Information: A review of these provider contracts was completed to indicate (WIA) contracts are performance based programs with multiple outcome areas. Contracts are in the process of being awarded for FY 2010-2011.

Recommended Action:
1. Make contact with new providers for FY 2010-2011 to understand referral, eligibility process and required commitment in order to properly prepare providers and staff to refer and secure the enrollment/acceptance of youth in WIA employment and training programs.
2. Refer employment issues to California Youth Connection, adult supporters group and other board serving youth for networking purposes.
3. Ensure all youth have a foster youth identification card.
4. Explore youth organizations that might be willing to provide internships to youth to help build work ethic and experience.

Behavior Management in Group Home Placement

Findings: There appears to be some gaps between group home staff and respective placement staff regarding individual group home's points and level/behavioral system (note: not all facilities use points and level/behavioral systems).

Recommended Action:
1. Obtain official operating procedures from group home providers for information sharing.
2. Include points and level/behavioral system in placement assessment/information tool guide to be used when conducting group homes placement program planned reviews.
3. Remind providers that staff needs to model appropriate behaviors. Talking about sex and drugs in front of youth is not appropriate, nor is certain media (TV, movies, games). Youth often bond with staff, so their influence on behavior cannot be underestimated.

Mental Health Services in Group Home Placement (in Ventura County)

Findings: There appears to be frustration among providers in obtaining mental health services for Medi-cal eligible youth.

Information: Not all group home providers utilize the Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH) child welfare subsystem for mental health services. The providers who make efforts to access options clinics have expressed frustration with the process, specifically the assessment and assignment period (note: some facilities utilize contracted clinical staff to provide mental health services).

Recommended Action:
1. Obtain a process and referral map to providers to access mental health services for VCBH child welfare subsystem

Discharge Planning from Group Homes to Less Restrictive Placements

Findings: Criteria to "step down" a youth from a group home is not known or agreed upon. Group home providers have received various time frames and conditions. For example, "youth need to be out in 3 months" yet there is not a matching behavioral criterion to facilitate the discharge.

Recommended Action:
1. Develop behaviorally based discharge criteria
2. Identify the resources current and needed to discharge Group Homes
3. Develop training for staff and Group Home Providers to use criteria
4. Train staff and group home providers in discharge criteria.
5. Encourage family members to visit the group home regularly to participate, prepare, observe and develop positive family interactions. If a youth does not have family, include an adult the youth has connected with.

Future Direction:
The Committee has developed a 3 year strategic plan which supports the local SIP. There are a total of 3 workgroups that are responsible for completing the review activities outlined in the current work plan, reporting back to the general membership and making recommendations back to the Department of Children and Family Services.

Submitted to CDSS/OCAP: November 12, 2010
Submitted to Judy Webber, Deputy Director Children and Family Services, November 12, 2010

Ventura County Human Services Agency
Department of Children and Family Services
Response to the Citizen's Review Panel's
Annual & Recommendations Report
(2009/2010 Program Year)

The Ventura County Department of Children and Family Services staff sincerely appreciates the members of the Ventura County Citizen's Review Panel (CRP) for their willingness to assist us in improving our Child Welfare Services. We are pleased that you have chosen to focus your efforts on re-entry, recurrence and the length of time in care, with an emphasis on the length of stay aspect for the in county placement system for children who are at risk of, or have been victimized by abuse or neglect, or have other special needs that require out of home care in a residential or group home placement.

These activities directly correlate with the Ventura County Systems Improvement Plan Target Three stated below:

Decrease the percent of children who emancipate or turn age 18 during a 12-month period who had been in care 3 years or more at emancipation or reaching age of majority (Child Welfare Only).

Here are our responses to the findings and/or recommendations from the Annual & Recommendations Report (2009/2010 Program Year):

1. **Workgroup One**: No recommendations made. The group is currently working on the development of a prospective study focused on sibling placements.

Ventura County CFS Response:

We look forward to the outcomes and information from the prospective study this workgroup is currently engaged in regarding barriers to permanency that may exist due to a child being placed with their siblings.

Our Recruitment and Adoptions Workgroup focuses on the development of strategies regarding child specific targeted recruitment. To date, all Foster Parent recruitment materials have been revised to include Adoption topics and information. The workgroup will be utilizing adoption data to determine recruitment target areas. Once the prospective study has been accomplished and reviewed by the Citizen Review Panel, the information will be given to the Recruitment and Adoptions Workgroup to utilize in their on-going activities.

2. **Workgroup Two:** CRP recommendations

- Develop a mechanism to continue to collect base line information from all providers in Ventura County on data measurement they are keeping.
- Use IPERC and other government structure components to get "buy in" from out of home care providers regarding the need to measure outcomes and collect data.
- Reach out to people who do not know what they are collecting (i.e., group homes) and help them to figure out what they are already doing.
- Conduct focus groups to ascertain what is manageable for various types of providers (group homes, government agencies, private nonprofit CBOs, etc.)
- Establish 2-4 shared outcomes that will be collected across all agencies in the County
- Use Agency 101 (or Wrap Summit) for year 2012 to launch standardization in data collection

Ventura County CFS Response:
The local Ventura County Shelter, Casa Pacifica is engaging in the Building Bridges Initiative. Building Bridges is a national initiative working to identify and promote practice and policy that will create strong and closely coordinated partnerships and collaborations between families, youth, community - and residentially - based treatment and service providers, advocates and policy makers to ensure that comprehensive mental health services and supports are available to improve the lives of young people and their families. The first task of this workgroup focused on the mapping of outcome measures utilized in contracted services.

Currently, CFS has engaged in the coordination and mapping of all outcomes outlined in CFS contracted services. This mapping has been provided to the Building Bridges Initiative workgroup and will be utilized toward the goals of developing standardized outcome measures.

The Interagency Placement Expansion Review Committee of Ventura County is comprised of representatives from the Human Services Agency/Department of Children and Family Services, Behavioral Health, Probation Agency and Ventura County Schools. The IPERC team provides ongoing oversight of Ventura County's out of home group care programs that provide services to Ventura County youth by developing communication strategies between placing agencies and providers, and assuring quality of placement programs by providing ongoing assessment and feedback.

IPERC continues to work with local Group Home providers on program quality and will continue to discuss standardizing outcome measures taking into consideration licensing regulations, and rate setting regulations that govern Group Home operations. The utilization of a focus group to gather information regarding the ability to manage and collect standardized outcomes will be reviewed and considered as a strategy by IPERC as they continue to develop supports and resources that will assist in enhancing the

quality of local Group Home Programs as well as their ability to collect and process data that supports CFS SIP goals.

Information will continue to be shared with the Group Home providers through the IPERC quarterly meetings and Ventura County Human Services Agency website, as well as the annual individual provider meetings.

3. Workgroup Three: CRP Recommendations

I. Costs associated with Enrichment Activities for Youth
Findings: Hardship for provider in paying for activities
Recommended Action:
1. Invite Children's Auxiliary Liaison to an IPERC provider meeting to review procedure for obtaining reimbursement for approved costs.
2. Send mail out to caregivers caring for youth age 16-18 to inform them of support resources for ILP.
3. Post information on ILP website for direct access to providers and others involved with youth
4. Encourage group home providers to contact local youth ministries & youth programs that are willing to pick up, supervise and drop off youth.
5. Survey providers already providing outside services how they are providing enrichment activities currently.

Ventura County CFS Response:

The Interagency Placement Expansion Review Committee is comprised of representatives from the Human Services Agency/Department of Children and Family Services, Behavioral Health, Probation Agency and Ventura County Schools. The IPERC team provides ongoing oversight of Ventura County's out of home group care programs that provide services to Ventura County youth by developing communication strategies between placing agencies and providers, and assuring quality of placement programs by providing ongoing assessment and feedback.

The Interagency Placement Expansion Review Committee (IPERC) includes three subcommittees, which meet on a quarterly basis.

- **IPERC Business Committee**
- **Placement Agency Collaborative**
- **Group Home Collaborative**

This year, 2009/2010, the Interagency Planning and Expansion and Review Committee (IPERC) has undergone an extensive realignment of business practices within all three of its subcommittees. The focus on this realignment process was to develop stronger communication and feedback processes between the placing agencies and providers

and develop oversight systems that focus on consistency and accountability while supporting permanency of youth placed in out of home care. The IPERC Committee continues to be committed toward increasing collaboration and problem solving with the providers in Ventura County in order to strengthen programs and services to our youth in out of home care, with the goal of preparing youth for transition into the community or adulthood.

The Group Home Collaborative provides a forum for placing agencies and service providers to promote collaboration, communication, problem solving and education regarding the needs of clients, agencies and providers responsibilities, changes in regulatory or legislative standards, resource utilization and partnering opportunities.

The following goals have been outline in the Group Home Collaborative Charter:

- Improve communication between placing agencies and providers
- Support and develop programs that focuses on strength based components, meeting needs and trends of Ventura County youth placed out of home.
- Ensure utilization of a continuous quality improvement process utilizing feedback from clients, families, placing agency staff and service providers
- Identify and utilize additional resources for clients
- Provide education and information that supports treatment goals

The Department of Children and Family Services will utilize this meeting to address the issues and challenges brought forth from the CRP findings, ensuring there is continued problem solving and communication between the caregivers and the Youth Services Division Social Work Staff.

The Department of Children and Family Services Youth Services Division has completed the ILP website, and will continue to utilize this mechanism to inform and connect Group Home Providers with resources and information.

II. Dedicated Time for Networking with County Group Home Providers

Findings: Providers could benefit from time to share with each other program components or new community resources.

Recommended Action:

1. Dedicate time on IPERC provider agenda for information sharing.
2. Providers can gain support from IPERC administration for copying and other support as needed.

Ventura County CFS Response:

Currently, the Group Home Providers meet with representatives from the Ventura County Placing Agencies on a quarterly basis (Group Home Collaborative). This meeting's agenda focuses on presentations from programs providing support and

resource services, sharing of information from Placing Agencies and training/review and discussion of new legislative standards. It is clear and important that the Group Home Providers can learn from each other, sharing successful program components and resources. The agenda for this meeting will be reviewed and additions will be made to include a "peer presenter" and/or information section.

III. Barriers to Obtaining Employment for Youth

Findings: Obtaining employment for youth utilizing Work Force Investment (WIA) Act programs is difficult.

Recommended Action:

1. Make contact with new providers for FY 2010-2011 to understand referral, eligibility process and required commitment in order to properly prepare providers and staff to refer and secure the enrollment/acceptance of youth in WIA employment and training programs.
2. Refer employment issues to California Youth Connection, adult supporters group and other board serving youth for networking purposes
3. Ensure all youth have Foster Youth identification
4. Explore SSI Ticket to Work, ARC, or youth organizations that might be willing to provide “internships” to youth to help build work ethic and experience.

Ventura County CFS Response:

It is important to note that WIA contracts are performance based and include multiple outcome areas and multiple contracts. Ultimately there is greater need than capacity which will continue to affect the number of CFS and Probation youth able to be involved in the WIA programs.

Ventura County CFS will initiate contact with employment providers in year 2011/2012 to establish working relationship and understand referral process in order to prepare providers to refer. Once this has taken place, the Interagency Placement Expansion Review Committee (IPERC) will facilitate a presentation from WIA contractors regarding referral processes and services offered to the Group Home Collaborative.

Ventura County CFS supports the efforts of the local California Youth Connection (CYC) chapter and will bring this issue to the CYC President and Board members for continued discussion and problem solving. CYC and CFS continue to engage in activities that support community education on the needs of this transitioning population including community presentations, targeted conferences, etc. The local CYC Chapter President is a member of the Children's Services Oversight Committee and Citizen Review Panel, and has been involved in ongoing discussions regarding the needs of this population to effectively transition to adulthood.

IV. Behavior Management in Group Home Placement

Findings: There appears to be some gaps between Group Home Staff and respective placement staff regarding individual Group Home's points and level/behavioral system. Note: Not all facilities use points and level/behavioral systems.

Recommended Action:
1. Obtain official operating procedures from Group Home Providers for information sharing
2. Include points and level/behavioral system in placement assessment/information tool guide to be used when conducting Group Home placement program reviews.
3. Remind providers that staff needs to model appropriate behaviors. Talking about sex and drugs in front of youth is not appropriate, nor is certain media (TV, movies, games). Youth often bond with staff, so their influence on behavior cannot be underestimated.

Ventura County CFS Response:

IPERC has recently developed an oversight monitoring system for all out of home care placements that emphasizes the importance of behavioral programs that focus on individual client needs as well as utilizing client and family strengths, in preparing youth for transition to the community or adulthood. CFS has authorized an in-house consultant to research and report on various program components included in specific drug and alcohol treatment programs, as this has been an identified area of need for those providers who are providing services to this specific population.

In addition, processes have been put into place to obtain operating procedures which can then be shared at quarterly IPERC Provider Collaborative Meetings as well as be instrumental in guiding new annual provider program reviews.

In upcoming IPERC Provider Collaborative Meetings, the topic of Staff influence on client behavior and outcomes will be presented and discussed.

We will encourage our local chapter of the California Youth Connection (CYC) to have representation on the Group Home Collaborative. Ventura CYC developed a video that is currently be utilized to engage Group Home Provider staff in discussions of staff influence, role modeling and supportive interactions. This video has been included in the "new staff orientation trainings" in several of Ventura County's larger Group Home placements.

V. Mental Health Services in Group Home Placement (in Ventura County)
Findings: There appears to be frustration among providers in obtaining mental health services for Medi-cal eligible youth.
Information: Not all Group Home providers utilize the VCBH Child Welfare subsystem for mental health services. The providers to make efforts to access Options Clinics have indicated frustration with the process for access specifically the assessment and assignment period. Note: Some facilities utilize contracted clinical staff to provide mental health services.

Recommended Action:
1. Obtain a process and referral map to providers to access mental health services for VCBH Child Welfare Subsystem

Ventura County CFS Response:

The Department of Children and Family Services will refer these findings to the Behavioral Health Department as well and the IPERC Business meeting for continued review.

VI. Discharge Planning from Group Homes to Less Restrictive Placements
Findings: Criteria to "step down" a youth from a Group Home is not known or agreed upon or known. Group Home providers have received various time frames and conditions. Example has been "youth need to be out in 3 months" yet there is not a matching behavioral criterion to facilitate the discharge.

Recommended Action:
1. Develop behaviorally based discharge criteria
2. Identify the resources current and needed to discharge Group Homes
3. Develop Training for staff and Group Home Providers to use criteria
4. Train staff and Group Home Providers in discharge criteria.
5. Encourage family members to visit the group home regularly to participate, prepare, observe and develop positive family interactions. (Develop family friendly criteria.) If a youth does not have family, include an adult the youth has connected with.

Ventura County CFS Response:

It is the responsibility of the Interagency Planning and Expansion and Review Committee (IPERC), working through all three of the sub-committees to pursue and investigate best practices in behavioral programs. While Ventura County does not contract with the local Group Home Providers, the IPERC forum is the vehicle where conversations, presentations and coordination of programming designs and focuses can take place and begin to formulate. Ventura County CFS will continue to take the lead in these endeavors, as they directly impact permanency and placement stability.

In closing, we once again thank you for your time and efforts making these recommendations. We look forward to another year of working together.

Judy Webber
Ventura County Human Services Agency
Department of Children and Family Services
Deputy Director

Submitted to OCAP: 5/26/11
Submitted to Ventura County CRP Membership: 5/26/11

California Citizen Review Panel
Reporting Requirements

Citizen Review Panel Quarterly Reports:
All completed reports shall be submitted to OCAP prior to or on the assigned date ***via*** the CRP consultant. The CRP consultant will review the reports and submit to OCAP.

Quarter	Date of Submission to Consultant (optional)	Date of Submission to OCAP
January 1-March 31	April 20	April 30th
April 1-June 30	July 16	July 31st
July 1- September 30	October 15	October 31
October 1-December 31	January 15	January 31st

Citizen Review Panel Annual Report
All completed reports shall be submitted to OCAP prior to or on the assigned date ***via*** the CRP consultant. The CRP consultant will review the reports and submit to OCAP.

Annual Report Time Periods covered	Date of Submission to Consultant	Date of Submission to OCAP
July 1-Sept 30 Broken down into the following: **July 1-June 30** **CRP Activity Report with Recommendations** **July 1-Sept 30** **Projected CRP activities**	**October 25-30**	**November 15th**

Citizen Review Panel Recommendation Response timeframe:
- Once an annual report has been submitted to OCAP both the local counties and State CRP has 6 months within which to respond to any or all recommendations.

Budget Reporting:
Quarterly reports include a line item budget report that shows expenditures for the quarter reporting period.
Annual reports will include a line item budget report for the year's expenditures.

CRP Work plans: Will be updated yearly and due with the annual report. Any modifications made to the work plan during the course of the year will be submitted in writing to the CRP Consultant.

Citizen Review Panel
Annual & Recommendations Report
(2009/2010 Program Year)

County: Calaveras
Contact Person for this Report:
Name: Robin Davis
Phone: 209-754-6917
Email: rdavis@co.calaveras.ca.us

Date Submitted to OCAP: Nov. 1, 2010
Date & Person Submitted to at the local County Agency: Nov. 1, 2010, Mikey Habbestad

Please report on the Citizen Review Panel's activities per the items below and submit your response to CDSS, Office of Child Abuse Prevention via the Strategies Consultant no later than November 15, 2010.

1**. County Profile** (OCAP will provide current data from current annual report)
General Demographics
Ethnic make-up of county
Household income

2. Panel Activities

A. Panel structure and development

I. Membership (**Work plan Goal #1**)

Have there been any changes in membership or panel composition during the reporting period?
The CRP members consist of the Prevent Child Abuse Council Calaveras members and community volunteers. The CRP initially gained 13 new members from recruitment efforts. Nine of those members worked on committees during the year. They represent diverse interest and expertise in child protection, early intervention, law enforcement, education, psychotherapy, substance abuse prevention, and public health. We lost 3 of the committee members. Another recruitment effort engaged 8 new members to the September quarterly meeting including foster parents, community volunteers, and representatives from the Food Bank, WIC (Women Infant Children) program and Behavioral Health.

Please discuss any activities the panel has engaged in specific to the recruitment of panel members to reflect community demographics and support creating or maintaining a diverse panel.
The CRP developed a form for interested members so Prevent Child Abuse Council Members could recruit personally. Press releases were printed twice during the year in local newspapers, on-line community news, and shared with county agencies, schools,

faith-based centers and foster family agencies. The CRP Coordinator spoke to county agencies and community partners to recruit interested members. Panel meetings are posted for the public to see. Members decided to change the meeting time to evenings to accommodate more working citizens who may not be available during the day.

II. Panel Training (**Work plan goal #2**)

Please elaborate on the on-going orientation trainings of new CRP members.
In addition, please describe any training activities the CRP has engaged in this past year as a means of on-going panel development.
All members signed a statement of confidentiality regarding the privacy of information obtained. Each member present at meetings reviewed and updated the Scope of Work, defining the goals for the year and the annual budget. Members were provided with information about the purpose of a Citizen Review Panel, local child abuse statistics and articles relevant to Independent Living Programs for foster youth. Guest speakers provided information on services for foster youth and their families including the local Victim's Witness Program and Workforce Investment Programs.

III. Panel self evaluation activities – (**Work plan Goal #6**)

Has the panel undertaken any activities to help it assess its own performance during the reporting period? If so briefly describe these activities and the findings. If not, please describe when and how the panel will assess its performance.
Three committees have continually assessed their performance in evaluating different aspects of the Independent Living Program. Members who participated in the Ropes training evaluated how effective the day was in building trust and rapport with the youth in preparation for focus groups. After each focus group, members assessed the usefulness of the questions and the process. Each committee debriefed after the activity in preparation for sharing with the larger group and compiling recommendations. Each activity was found to be very effective in achieving the desired purpose.

3. CRP objectives (Work plan Goals #3 & 5)

For **each objective identified** in your work plan please report on the following:

♦Any demographics related to the CRP objective(s)
Foster care studies in California have shown that within four years of leaving foster care, 25% of "aged-out" youth have been homeless; 42% have become parents; less than 20% are able to support themselves; and only 46% have graduated from high school. Most report a lack of a support system or caring adult and are at a higher risk for substance abuse, domestic violence and poverty.

Given the challenges youth face, the CRP chose to conduct an assessment of the Independent Living Program (ILP). There are up to 130 youth (age 15.5-21) in out-of-home placements in Calaveras County eligible for the Independent Living Program. Approximately 15% are in foster care from Calaveras County, while the rest are youth

on probation from various counties residing at Oakendell Community School and Rite of Passage Sierra Ridge Academy (ROP).

Calaveras County ILP classes are held once a month with 10-40 students in each class. They are held separately for three different populations: 1) Youth in foster care. 2) Youth on probation at ROP. 3) Youth on probation at Oakendell Community School.

There is one ILP coordinator who is also a case-carrying Social Worker.

♦Description of the review activities and any technical assistance provided (example = case review, focus group, data review, State (Strategies) RP consultant) to support your review work.

To assess and make recommendations of the Independent Living Program (ILP) in Calaveras County, the CRP members formed three committees who conducted the following activities.

- The panel agreed it was important to get feedback from the youth attending the courses. Youth in the ILP may have difficulties trusting adults. The panel asked for guidance from the State Consultant, Louanne Shahandeh, about funding an activity that supports gaining knowledge of the Child Welfare system and leads the recommendations of the CRP. She advised to move forward as the activity impacted the population in the Child Welfare System.

  A CRP committee coordinated the participation of 13 youth and 6 adults in a Ropes Challenge/Team Building course which consisted of exercises to get acquainted, build trust, work as a team, and face mental challenges. It was an educational day for CRP members to understand youth in an environment that will gain youth's trust of the CRP and Child Welfare system representatives.

  In the following weeks, CRP members who attended the course facilitated five focus groups with the youth participants, as well as youth in Oakendell Community School.

  CRP interviewed 27 youth in the ILP:
  - 6 reside in foster homes
  - 9 reside at Rite of Passage Sierra Ridge Academy
  - 12 reside at Oakendell Community School

- The "Best Practices" committee interviewed Teresa Dominguez, Social Worker, Calaveras County ILP Coordinator.
- CRP Coordinator interviewed staff members at Oakendell Community School.
- The "Best Practices" committee members sat in on three ILP training sessions to see the content and process of delivery to youth.
- CRP Coordinator attended the "California ILP Institute" in May 2010. It focused on best practices of California Independent Living Programs.

- CRP Coordinator and a CRP member participated in the webinar, “Prevention: A Key to Permanency for Youth in Foster Care” in July 2010. (www.ca-cpi.org).
- CRP Coordinator participated quarterly in the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Collaborative, Calaveras County.

♦Findings based on review activities

Youth Focus Groups

- Youth would like a better understanding of the goals of the Independent Living Program (ILP).
- The most valuable classes for youth were:
  - *Financial Aid Information for College* because they could complete the Financial Aid Application.
  - *Check Writing & Budgeting* because they could practice writing checks for household purchases.
  - *Nutrition & Personal Well Being* was informative and useful.
- Youth report they lack information about decision making, goal setting, community resources, realistic expectations of how to live on their own, how to apply for college, information about vocational training, and knowing what to wear and how to present themselves in an interview. Overwhelmingly, they said they would like more “hands on” experiences in the training sessions and more information about resources for employment.
- As they approach leaving foster care or their group home, most of the youth reported having no reliable adults to advise them or provide emotional support. Helping youth acquire an adult connection or circle of support is not perceived as a key element of the ILP.
- Youth in foster care said their primary motivation to attend is to receive payment.
- Youth said it is sometimes hard to attend all the classes because of other outside activities.
- Youth recognize that the program has a tremendous lack of staff, with one staff member to manage a caseload, coordinate, organize and implement the program.
- Class start and end times can be inconsistent causing some youth to wait for a ride, which can also cause frustration for foster parents.
- Youth do not feel they have a voice in the program. They are not aware of a way to provide feedback or evaluate the success of the ILP.
- Large classes at ROP are not conducive to learning. Youth report there is no “one-on-one” interaction and they have trouble hearing.

Interview with ILP Coordinator

- There is currently one Social Worker assigned to ILP. She coordinates all the youth trainings and carries a child welfare caseload. The Social Worker to youth ratio is 1:130.
- The ILP coordinator indicates difficulty in retaining competent and willing volunteers to facilitate trainings.

- It is difficult to track progress and provide follow up assistance to teens once they emancipate. They rarely request or use services to age 21 after they leave the system.
- The connection to foster parents is not a key element of the ILP. Foster parents are not very involved and do not always support transporting youth to class.
- Reduced bus routes and far distances create challenging transportation issues in Calaveras County. Transportation is sometimes a reason youth miss an appointment or training session.
- The Transitional Independent Living Plan (TILP) is done every 6 months, but youth will often miss their appointment.

Interview with Administration Staff Members at Oakendell Community School

- Information about the classes does not always arrive in a timely manner. Times/locations are not consistent. They would prefer that all classes be at Oakendell but would not mind going to town for a specific hands-on experience.
- When classes have been combined in town with youth in foster care, the foster youth are dropped off by foster parents and wait to be picked up. They have displayed inappropriate behaviors if not supervised which negatively affects Oakendell students who have unique circumstances and emotional disturbances.
- Oakendell youth are not always engaged. Money is a large incentive to attend. Youth would like facilitators to do less talking and engage them with hands-on experiences in the community or a more entertaining presentation.
- There is currently no forum for Oakendell staff to provide feedback about the program through survey or discussion.
- Staff members are not familiar with the 90 Day Transitional Independent Living Plan (TILP). This is a relatively new form for Children's Services.

♦Formal Recommendations based on findings (for County and State)

SUSTAINABLE PROGRAM

- Calaveras County Children Services could define the goals of The Independent Living Program and make those goals clear to Children's Services staff, youth, foster parents, Oakendell staff, and Rite of Passage staff.

- Recruit a collaborative of individuals interested in the development of a sustainable program to assist youth to prepare to live on their own. This group could develop a strategic plan and assist with coordination of hands-on training sessions. It should include representation from youth, the business community and agencies who serve current and former youth in out-of-home placement.

- Children's Services (or a collaborative) can review the content of classes being offered to ensure they meet the needs of youth and provide experiential "hands-

on" learning and connection to resources. Youth report they would like information about the following:

- Goal setting and decision making
- More resources for education and employment
- Identifying career paths and interests
- Networking skills to enhance college and job seeking opportunities
- Social skills and practice interviews
- Learn the triggers and long term effects of substance abuse. Learn how to choose friends and surroundings
- Health related classes that include how to identify illnesses through symptoms, how to choose health insurance, and personal safety

- The CRP recommends each class be two hours to provide more time for learning/engagement with consistent times and locations, advertised in a timely manner to youth, caregivers, and group home/schools.

YOUTH SUPPORT, ROLE, and VOICE

The ILP best practices philosophy states that "the youth has a central voice while the family/caregiver's role is to provide guidance and support". The developmental task for the youth is "**inter**-dependence not **in**-dependence".

- The CRP recommends youth eligible for ILP are given a voice and a role in the program. The process starts with the youth's perspective about opportunities, resources, relationships, skills and plans for their future. Class structure could include actions outside the classroom, pre and post assessments for each class, and an evaluation after each class to assess learning and gain feedback. Youth could be encouraged to participate in defining the program goals.

- Youth without at least one caring adult in their life face loneliness and isolation. Statistically, they have a higher risk of poor outcomes. Children's Services can consider implementing a program component that helps connect youth to supportive adults. It would aim to include, empower, and get the support of foster parents and group home/school staff to assist the youth. Possibilities include:
    - A Junior-Senior partnership through the Senior Center where seniors could serve as a mentor or provide specific information (life skills, career, vocation)
    - Match students with a person in the community who is experienced or working in a job or field they have an interest. They could "job shadow" or interview them
    - Determine the possibility of a unique mentoring component
    - Seek feedback from caregivers

- The Transitional Independent Living Plan (TILP) should be youth led with a focus on education, employment, health, housing, and supportive adult connections. Start the process when youth enter ILP.

- Assist in developing a team to attend the TILP meeting
- The team includes: supportive persons identified by the youth, caregiver, relatives, therapist, and the Social Worker or Probation Officer
- All in attendance at the transition plan meeting agree to help the youth complete the plan

STAFFING

- Children's Services can review the budget and time study of the ILP Coordinator to determine staffing needs so enough time is available to manage a caseload and coordinate a sustainable Independent Living Program. Consider hiring and training an ILP graduate to help with clerical duties.

- Begin a conversation about partnership and coordination with the group homes and agencies, such as Calaveras County Office of Education, who serve youth, are involved at the high school education level, and operate an existing collaborative to educate teens.

- Transitional age foster youth in California have been identified as a population with unique mental health needs. Begin a conversation with Calaveras County Behavioral Health Department to review the Proposition 63/Mental Health Services Act needs assessment and consider a partnership that addresses the needs of youth in out-of-home placements.

An interview with Cal Works & Human Services Agency staff gave this context to their funding and service realities:

The allocation for ILP services $46,824 funds 28% of one fully loaded costs of a Social Worker III. The funding does not take into account any additional service costs for youth stipends, teachers, or travel costs. It does not take into account the ILP costs of two group homes within Calaveras County borders in which 30 counties presently have probation youth residing in the facilities. Additionally due to youth transition, the ratio of youth within Calaveras County at these facilities ranges from 130 to 150 in any given month, of which only 15 are Calaveras County residents. Consideration needs to be given for allocating funds for youth in need of the service rather than for youth under the county court jurisdiction or to allow the county to limit services to county only youth in need of ILP services.

♦Follow-up on the prior years annual report recommendations, including any County and State responses to the recommendations

This was the first year of the 3 year grant. The panel chose to evaluate the Independent Living Program.

♦Discuss how the CRP recommendations will be disseminated to county, state officials as well as the public and how the CRP will handle any comments made.

The annual report will be shared via web page and formal presentation with community partners and the Board of Supervisors.

♦Future Directions –Briefly discuss the activities that the panel expects to undertake during the 2010/2011 program year- with an emphasis on July-Sept 2010 activities. (Please attach an updated work plan for next year)
Panel members have discussed possible activities for the next year, including:

- Assess the inclusion and collaboration of youth and foster parents in the youth's transitional plan and ILP activities.
- Examine processes to connect youth to mentors and permanent adult connections.

The CRP will review the response of Children's Services at a meeting on January 27, 2011 and decide which activities to pursue.

4. Public in-put (Work plan Goal # 4)

Briefly describe any public input that the panel obtained during the reporting period and how this input was taken into consideration when making your final recommendations for this annual report.

If you will be obtaining public input after this annual reports recommendations are developed and published briefly describe your public input process and outline the time frames for this process.

The annual report will be provided by the CRP Coordinator at a regular meeting of the PCACC (Prevent Child Abuse Council Calaveras), which is advertised to the public. It will be given to Children's Services before it is more widely distributed to the Board of Supervisors and community agencies.

5. Attachments
Please attach the following documents to this report:

❖ Updated roster of Citizen Review Panel Members, including their affiliations
❖ Minutes of the panel's meetings for the July 1, 2010 to September 30, 2010 quarter. If the panel utilizes committees, please attach the minutes, if any, of these committees
❖Updated Scope of Work for the coming years panel activities 2010/2011
❖ Please submit a statement of the panel's expenditures for the 2009/2010 program year.

All of the above documents are attached.

Please email this report to **OCAP by November 15, 2010**, including the name, email address and phone number of the person who can be contacted should there be questions regarding this report.

Calaveras Works and Human Services Agency
Response to the Citizen's Review Panel's
Annual & Recommendations Report
(2009/2010 Program Year)

The Calaveras Works and Human Services Agency's (CWHSA) Children's Services staff sincerely appreciates the members of the Calaveras County Citizen's Review Panel (CRP) for their willingness to assist us in improving our Child Welfare Services. We were pleased that you chose to focus your efforts on strategizing ways to improve our Independent Living Program (ILP). While the tragic statistics that you listed regarding children aging out of the foster care system were reflective of California as a whole and not strictly Calaveras County youth, we still agree that this is an important population to devote attention to, and we welcomed your suggestions for improvement in this area.

We are providing the following responses to the findings and/or recommendations from the Annual & Recommendations Report (2009/2010 Program Year):

- *Calaveras County Children's Services could define the goals of the ILP program and make those goals clear to Children's Services staff, youth, foster parents, Oakendell staff, and Rite of Passage staff.*

The goals of the ILP program are heavily regulated by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS). While these regulations have been shared with the Children's Services staff as well as with the group home staff (through their own licensing/employment processes), we agree that defining the goals into "plain" language is a solid suggestion. We will develop a pamphlet that can be provided to, and discussed with, at least minimally those listed above. The youth will receive the pamphlet when they reach the ILP-eligible age (15.5 years), when they enter out-of-home care (if they are already ILP-eligible) and during their first ILP class. The foster parents and group home staff will receive the pamphlet whenever they accept placement of an ILP-eligible youth. A draft of the pamphlet will be provided during an ILP class to solicit feedback, comments and suggestions for improvement directly from the ILP youth. Additionally, we will consider the feasibility of having current or graduate ILP youth compile a video that explains the ILP program. The target for completion of this project will be September 2011, prior to the first ILP class of the 2011/2012 year.

- *Children's Services can review the budget and time study of the ILP Coordinator to determine staffing needs so enough time is available to manage a caseload and coordinate a sustainable ILP. Consider hiring and training an ILP graduate to help with clerical duties.*

As noted in the CRP Annual & Recommendations Report, we have reviewed the budget and time study of the ILP Coordinator, who had previously been assigned to a reduced number of cases in an effort to help off-set some of the time that we know is needed to coordinate the ILP. Simply stated, we do not receive sufficient funds to staff a full-time

or even half-time ILP Coordinator position. The high staff to ILP-eligible youth ratio is primarily because of the two large group homes that are in Calaveras County and primarily house youth from other counties, yet we are funded based upon Calaveras County ILP-eligible youth only. This is because the sending counties' ILP Coordinators share the responsibility in ensuring that their ILP-eligible youth are either referred for services to be provided by the Calaveras County ILP, the group home staff, or by their own counties' ILP.

We appreciate that the CRP included our recommendation to the CDSS that *"consideration needs to be given for allocating funds for youth in need of the service rather than for youth under the county court jurisdiction or to allow the county to limit services to county only youth in need of ILP services".* Our Director sent a letter to each California County Welfare Director to advise them that beginning in February 2011; we will invoice them for the ILP services that we provide to their ILP-eligible youth.

- *Recruit a collaborative of individuals interested in the development of a sustainable program to assist youth to prepare to live on their own. This group could develop a strategic plan and assist with coordination of hands-on training sessions. It should include representation from youth, the business community and agencies who serve current and former foster youth in out-of-home placement.*

We issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) soliciting an individual, agency or collaborative to provide ILP Coordination and services. In addition to a general Press Release regarding this funding opportunity, the RFP was also sent directly to several local entities, including the Calaveras County Office of Education (as suggested above). We expect to have a contract in place beginning in March 2011. The contract is expected to be in place through June 2012.

- *Begin a conversation about partnership and coordination with the group homes and agencies, such as Calaveras County Office of Education, who serve youth, are involved at the high school education level, and operate an existing collaborative to educate teens.*

In an effort to streamline the process, reduce our budget, as well as reduce duplication of services, the ILP Coordinator and the Children's Services Supervisor met with both group homes in Calaveras County to determine which ILP-related classes, trainings and support that they already offer. If a class or training is already being provided by the group home staff, we agreed that we will not be providing the same or similar class or training to their residents (and we will therefore not be invoicing the other counties for these services).

- *Children's Services (or a collaborative) can review the content of classes being offered to ensure they meet the needs of youth and provide experiential "hands-on" learning and connection to resources. Youth report they would like information about the following:*

- *Goal setting and decision making*
- *More resources for education and employment*
- *Identifying career paths and interests*
- *Networking skills to enhance college and job seeking opportunities*
- *Social skills and practice interviews*
- *Learn the triggers and long term effects of substance abuse. Learn how to choose friends and surroundings*
- *Health related classes that include how to identify illnesses through symptoms, how to choose health insurance, and personal safety*

As noted above, the ILP regulations require certain topics, and funding is determined based upon these minimum requirements only. Most of the topics that are listed here can seemingly fall into the required categories of employment and health and will be relayed to the contracted ILP Coordinator entity as priorities of the current ILP youth. Our target for completion of these requested classes will be before June 2012.

- *The CRP recommends each class be two hours to provide more time for learning/engagement with consistent times and locations, advertised in a timely manner to youth, caregivers, and group homes/schools.*

We will be holding a Bidder's Conference on January 10, 2011 for all parties that are interested in providing ILP Coordination and Services. During this Bidder's Conference, we will clarify our expectation of two hour classes, consistent times and locations, and timely advertisement/notice to youth, caregivers and group homes.

- *The CRP recommends youth eligible for ILP are given a voice and a role in the program. The process starts with the youth's perspective about opportunities, resources, relationships, skills and plans for their future. Class structure could include actions outside the classroom, pre and post assessments for each class, and an evaluation after each class to assess learning and gain feedback. Youth could be encouraged to participate in defining the program goals.*

We have historically presented some topics outside of the classroom setting, and we will let the awarded contractor know that the youth prefer this method when/if it is possible for them to provide it. The target implementation time for pre- and post-assessments for each class, as well as evaluations after each class, is September 2011. Recruiting some ILP youth to assist in the development of the assessment and evaluation may be done by Children's Services, the awarded contractor, and/or the CRP (should you choose to focus attention on ILP again for the 2011/2012 year).

- *Youth without at least one caring adult in their life face loneliness and isolation. Statistically, they have a higher risk of poor outcomes. Children's Services can consider implementing a program component that helps connect youth to supportive adults. It would aim to include, empower and get the support of foster parents and group home/school staff to assist the youth. Possibilities include:*

- *A Junior-Senior partnership through the Senior Center where seniors could serve as a mentor or provide specific information (life skills, career, vocation)*
- *Match students with a person in the community who is experienced or working in a job or field they have an interest. They could "job shadow" or interview them*
- *Determine the possibility of a unique mentoring component*
- *Seek feedback from caregivers*

Helping youth who are getting ready to exit out-of-home care due to emancipation identify at least one caring adult to whom they can turn to for help is required of the primary case-carrying Social Workers and Probation Officers. The ILP Coordinator's role is to ensure that the efforts have been made and to provide additional assistance if needed. The suggested possibilities listed above are interesting and most will need considerable time to analyze and implement. We will relay the suggestions to the awarded ILP Coordinator for their consideration, especially when developing the employment requirements of the ILP. Because of the considerable amount of youth placed in Calaveras County by other counties, we would expect priority to be given to Calaveras County Dependents and Wards for such programs.

Additionally, we are in the initial stages of discussion with the Calaveras Youth Mentoring Program (through the Calaveras County Office of Education) to develop and implement a peer foster youth mentoring component. The vision is that older Calaveras County foster youth who have spent at least one year in out-of-home care will be trained to be peer mentors for school-aged Calaveras County foster children who are newly placed into an out-of-home care setting. It is unclear what, if any, role the ILP Coordinator will have in this process, but the Children's Services will continue to pursue it as time and staffing allow.

- *The Transitional Independent Living Plan (TILP) should be youth led with a focus on education, employment, health, housing, and supportive adult connections. Start the process when youth enter ILP.*
  - *Assist in developing a team to attend the TILP meeting*
  - *The team includes: supportive persons identified by the youth, caregiver, relatives, therapist, and the Social Worker or Probation Officer*
  - *All in attendance at the transition plan meeting agree to help the youth complete the plan.*

Similar to the above, the primary case-carrying Social Workers and Probation Officers are required to develop ILPs with their own ILP-eligible youth. The ILP Coordinator's role is to ensure that the TILP is completed. Since assisting the youth in developing, implementing and monitoring the TILP is the responsibility of the case carrying Social Workers and Probation Officers, we do not anticipate allocating our ILP budget to this process. Instead, we will analyze the fiscal and workload impact of incorporating TILP planning meetings into our Team Decision Making (TDM) component. Should TDMs be

conducted for TILP planning, we will ensure that the list of suggested individuals are inviting to the meetings.

To summarize, here are the commitments we have made in this Response report:

11. Develop a pamphlet that explains the goals of the ILP, and solicit feedback from ILP youth regarding the pamphlet by September 2011;
12. Consider the feasibility of having current or former ILP youth develop a video that explains the goals of the ILP by September 2011;
13. Contract with an individual, agency or collaboration to provide ILP coordination and services, beginning in March 2011;
14. Invoice other counties for providing ILP coordination and services to their youth, beginning in February 2011;
15. Refrain from providing ILP classes to group home youth for whom the group home staff is already providing classes/training on duplicative topics;
16. Ensure the awarded ILP provider is aware that the classes must be two hours in length, with consistent locations and times, and that adequate notice of the classes is provided, by September 2011;
17. Assist with creating pre- and post-class assessments, and post class evaluations, to be implemented by September 2011;
18. Relay suggestions for connecting Calaveras County Dependents and Wards with caring adults to the ILP coordinator, for consideration to include them in the employment component;
19. Continue to explore the feasibility of creating a Calaveras County foster youth peer mentoring program with the Calaveras Youth Mentoring Program;
20. Analyze the impact of facilitating TDM-like TILP planning meetings for Calaveras County foster youth.

Again, thank you for your thoughtful review and recommendations. We appreciate your hard work and dedication in helping us improve the Independent Living Program in Calaveras County, and in improving Calaveras County's Children's Service

PREVENT CHILD ABUSE COUNCIL CALAVERAS

PCACC and CRP MEETING

Thursday, September 17, 2009 11:00am-1:00pm
Calaveras Works, Black Oak Room, 509 E. Charles St, San Andreas, CA

MINUTES	
Item 1	Call to Order & Introductions. Robin Bunch called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m. Roll Call: (✓) Indicates Present

✓	Robin Bunch, PHN, Council Chairperson, Calaveras County Public Health
✓	Tina Marler, Council Vice Chairperson, Bikers Against Child Abuse
✓	Kathryn Eustis, Council Member, Calaveras Youth Mentoring
✓	Jennifer Goerlitz, Council Member, Calaveras 4H Program
✓	Mikey Habbestad, Council Member, Calaveras Works & Human Services
✓	Lisa Steffes, Council Member, Parent
✓	Tracy Young, Council Member, Parent, The Resource Connection
	Vacant, Alternate
	Vacant , Alternate
	Karen Pekarcik, Executive Director, First 5 Calaveras
✓	Robin Davis, Children's Services Coord. First 5 Calaveras/PCACC
Others Present	Nancy Tiffany, Karen Karam- CWHSA

Item 2	**Public Comments/Announcements** R. Davis shared information about the Chairs for Charity fundraiser and asked if PCAC would like to decorate a chair. The chair must be done 1/15/10 with a garden theme. J. Goerlitz shared information about a fundraiser for 4H- Concourse de Elegance at Ironstone Sept. 26.

	R. Bunch informed the group that seasonal flu clinics will be starting soon.
Item 3	**Motion to Approve PCAC/CRP Agenda** T. Young, second:K. Eustis Ayes: 7; Noes: 0; Abstain: 0; Recused : 0; Absent: 0
Item 4	**Approval of PCACC Minutes: August 20, 2009** M. Habbestad, second: T. Young Ayes 7; Noes: 0; Abstain: 0; Recused : 0; Absent: 0
Item 5	**Citizen Review Panel Planning** M. Habbestad reviewed statistics showing Calaveras County, state, and federal government targets related to the recurrence of maltreatment in foster care, reunification, adoption, and placement stability. In April, Children's Services will conduct a Peer Quality Case Review. They will examine exits to permanency after a child is placed in foster care, an area noted for needing the most improvement and proposed as a possible focus of CRP. A few possibilities were discussed. Assessing the ILP (Independent Living Program) which serves adolescent foster youth nearing transition age received the most interest. R. Davis will schedule a meeting with Teresa Dominguez, the ILP Coordinator to discuss. Council members will be invited and a review will be shared at the next meeting.
Item 6	**Coordinator Report** R. Davis provided a copy and briefed members on completed and upcoming activities. She asked members to share relevant links for the redesign of the web site. The Annual Report will be presented to the BOS on October 20.
Item 7	**First 5 Advisory Committee** **- Home Visiting Program** R. Davis provided copies of the proposed modifications to the existing Home Visiting Grant with the Resource Connection to expand services from six families to a minimum of fifty five. A motion was made to designate Child Abuse Prevention funds previously put out to the community in an RFP for this purpose. L. Steffes, second: M. Habbestad Ayes: 7; Noes: 0; Abstain: 0; Recused : 0; Absent: 0 - **2009-10 Calaveras County Final Budget Attestation** R. Davis shared the budget that was approved in the 7/16/09 meeting. Reviewed and passed motion to submit the attestation to the County's budget. T. Young, second: Lisa Steffes

	Ayes: 7; Noes: 0; Abstain: 0; Recused: 0; Absent: 0
Item 8	ADJOURNMENT Motion to adjourn - R. Bunch, second: T. Marler The meeting was adjourned at 12:55pm

The next meeting will be October 15, 2009 at 11:00am – 1:00 pm. Black Oak Room at Cal Works, 509 E. St. Charles St, San Andreas, CA.

PREVENT CHILD ABUSE COUNCIL CALAVERAS

Prevent Child Abuse Council Calaveras and Citizen Review Panel Meeting

Thursday, February 18, 2010 3:00am-5:00pm
San Andreas Library, San Andreas, CA

MINUTES

Item 1

Call to Order & Introductions. Tina Marler called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Roll Call: (✓) Indicates Present

✓	Tina Marler, Council Chairperson, Calaveras County Behavioral Health
✓	Mikey Habbestad, Council Vice Chair, Calaveras Works & Human Services
✓	Robin Bunch, PHN, Council Chairperson, Calaveras County Public Health
✓	Jennifer Goerlitz, Council Member, Calaveras 4H Program
	Tracy Young, Council Member, Parent Rep/The Resource Connection
✓	Teri Hall , Council Member, Calaveras County Probation Department
	Nancy Tiffany, Council Member, Community/Civic Organizations
✓	Pat Ross, Alternate, Calaveras County Sheriff's Department
	Vacant , Alternate, Representative of Public & Private

		Schools
		Karen Pekarcik, Executive Director, First 5 Calaveras
	✓	Robin Davis, Children's Services Coordinator. First 5 Calaveras/PCACC
	Others Present	Marcie Caywood, Tracy Urban, Susan Sheehan, Barbara Elben, Linda Jackson, Paulette Stelte, Teresa Dominguez, Phyllis Egan, Amy Hasselwander, Daniel McGee, Kate Storm

Item 2	**Public Comments/Announcements** M. Habbestad shared information of a Parent Ed Night at the high schools focused on dangers of prescription medications. CHS 3/3/10, 6-7pm and BHHS 3/11/10, 6:30-7:30 pm.
Item 3	**Motion to Approve PCAC/CRP Agenda** M. Habbestad, second: R. Bunch Ayes: 6; Noes: 0; Abstain: 0; Recused : 0; Absent: 2
Item 4	**Approval of PCACC Minutes: Jan. 21, 2010** J. Goerlitz, second: M. Habbestad Ayes 6; Noes: 0; Abstain: 0; Recused : 0; Absent: 2
Item 5	**Advisory Committee Updates** **a. Events –** R. Davis provided an update of the children's activities booth being prepared for **Sierra Green Days** at Ironstone March 20th from 10:00-2:00. Activities include nature collage, sensory tables, veggie starts and worm compost with partners- First 5, Master Gardeners, UC Extension, and The Resource Connection. T. Hall provided an update of the **Children's Fair** booth plans – April 24th 10:00 – 2:00pm. Sierra Pacific Industries will donate 200 Douglas Fir tree starts. T. Marler shared that she will be getting a worm composting bin. Both events have a focus of connecting children to nature and offer a chance to talk to parents about resources including flyers for Parent Education workshops. b. R. Davis provided a handout of the ideas generated by the committee to plan **Child Abuse Prevention Month** which includes distributing blue

	ribbon pins and bookmarks via grocery stores, agencies, and businesses. Small blue ribbon trees will be placed in agencies & businesses with an explanation of CAP month. Promotion of parent workshops, partners, and purpose will be on the PCACC website, ad in Lodestar, and press release. M. Habbestad will join R. Davis, R. Bunch and T, Marler on this committee. The council agreed to request to be on the BOS consent agenda for April 6th with a resolution to declare April as Child Abuse Prevention Month.
Item 6	**Barbara Elben – Calaveras County Victim's Witness Program** B. Elben from the District Attorney's office provided handouts and shared information regarding services to victims and witnesses of violent crime (including any type of crime). They can also help victims apply for victim's compensation, give guidance and resources, and stay with parents during a child's forensic interview.
Item 7	**Adjourn PCACC Meeting** Meeting adjourned at 3:40 pm. M. Habbestad, second: R. Bunch
Item 8	**CITIZEN REVIEW PANEL MEETING** **Introductions**
Item 9	**Overview of Project/Confidentiality/Member Roster** M. Habbestad provided an overview of the focus of the panel – to assess and make recommendations for services available for youth ages 15.5-21 that will age out of foster care in the county. R. Davis provided a member roster for everyone. Confidentiality forms were signed by new members.
Item 10	**Teresa Dominguez – Calaveras Works and Humans Services Agency Independent Living Program (ILP)** T. Dominguez, ILP Coordinator, provided handouts and an overview of the program services, curriculum, statistics, and Child Welfare Services regulations for ILP. The course enhances camaraderie for the teens while providing services and activities to prepare them to live independently. Topics include employment, STD prevention, budgeting, financial aid for college, nutrition, housing, car maintenance, and etiquette. T. Dominguez answered questions about the THP Plus program that provides 3 apartments in the county for foster teens, rent free. Due to State regulations, those who have graduated from high school but are not yet 18 are ineligible for the THP Plus. The panel discussed that recommendations can also be made to the state in the final report.
Item 11	**Committees for Activities** R. Bunch asked if there were any volunteers for the chair of the CRP. No one responded and she volunteered. M. Habbestad made a motion to

	nominate R. Bunch as chair and the group agreed. R. Davis provided a proposal of an assessment activity previously discussed with the PCACC and T. Dominguez. It would involve a day trip for approximately 15 teens and 5 adults for a Trust Building/Ropes course (www.oncourse.com) in Grass Valley. The goal of the activity is to build a trusting rapport amongst ILP foster teens, CRP members and Social Workers in preparation for intensive assessment activities such as group and/or individual interviews, surveys, etc. The group discussed the benefits and how the teens would be selected. Several felt giving seniors priority could be the best option (as opposed to behavior based only). Many were concerned about serving those who may need intervention the most. A suggestion was made to have a closer to home activity for those who can't go. A committee was formed to conduct further planning (A. Hasselwander (chair), D. McGee, L. Jackson, T. Dominguez, and R. Davis). R. Davis will coordinate the first meeting. The group felt another committee should visit the ILP classroom and develop questions for group and/or individual interviews or surveys. Volunteers for this committee were M. Caywood (chair), P. Ross, L. Jackson, and R. Davis. M. Caywood will schedule the first meeting. Other suggestions for activities included talking to teens that are not in foster care (as a control group).
Item 12	The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 pm The next PCACC meeting will be **April 15, 2010 at 3:00-5:00 pm**. Black Oak Room at Cal Works, 509 E. St. Charles St, San Andreas, CA. The next PCACC and CRP meeting will be **June 17, 2010 at 3:30 – 5:00 pm**. Sequoia Rm, Cal Works, 509 E. St. Charles St, San Andreas, CA.

Calaveras County Citizen Review Panel
Ropes Activity Committee Meeting Minutes
March 11, 2010

Attendance: Robin Davis, Teresa Dominguez, Amy Hasselwander, Linda Jackson

1. Reviewed On Course, Inc. - group rules, 9:00am- 3:00pm, workshop description, releases, prices for teens and adults. Discussed potential dates in June after graduation.
Teresa will check with the facilities regarding participation and dates. Robin will then confirm available dates.
(Update: Date Confirmed: Tues June 15)

2. The group discussed how to select youth for the activity. The larger CRP group felt seniors should be selected and the adults attending would interview the teens attending,

since the rapport and trust would be developed. Teresa provided numbers from each of the facilities- up to 17 teens and 9 adults (5 CRP) to be confirmed. Robin shared the budget.

3. Logistics – Teresa shared that she would see if there were social workers or staff who could also drive & attend. We would probably need to provide a light breakfast, lunch, water.

4. The group discussed the vision for the day and if the surveys would be given out or small groups formed on this day. It was agreed to do these the week after since there is a debriefing after each element in the course. The group felt we should have an evaluation of the day. This could be a 15 minute discussion and/or a written evaluation. To be confirmed at next meeting.

(Update- a new committee is developing questions for interviews).

Still needed an evaluation survey and/or discussion.

Next Meeting: June 14, 2010, 4:15 pm- 5:00pm, First 5 Calaveras, San Andreas

Meeting date: 3/25/2010
Time: 2-4
Attending:
Marcie Caywood-Chair,
Pat Ross,
Carol Campbell,
Linda Jackson,
Robin Davis,
Teresa Dominguez

Role of our CRP ILP program and training review focus group Discussion regarding our role and ILP now and in	-What type of framework to use for evaluation of training sessions conducted for ILP youth. -Review mandates and our CWS P&P surrounding requirements and actual practice. -Compare ILP training topics with requirements (see document with title ILP "Schedule of Classes" regs on page 126 of that doc). -Carol's suggestion approach as audit. -Pat's suggestion review class topics for relevance to life skill acquisition. -Robin; would need to know what the youth think in terms of useful	Approach from audit perspective, review mandates etc and sit in on class in order to evaluate. One question that would need to be answered was what classes would be perceived as beneficial from the youth's and different SW's perspective?

the future	Classes, also would want the perspective of SW's, others?? Good discussion regarding CRP and long-term goals; including developing plan for involving community, collaboration, resource familiarity, marketing-ensuring the community knows what CRP is and the importance of its role and outcomes. Also possible means of evaluating actions in the future and the ILP program itself. Research other community programs.	Robin stated this grant cycle was three years so there is no pressure to get through our review within a few months, we have time to formulate a good plan in order to deliver accurate information and develop practical and important outcomes and suggestions.
Observe ILP classes	Discussion regarding ways in which to evaluate ILP services and interventions. There is no process in place to really follow-up and evaluate the program once youth age out at 18. Pat suggested withholding youth's final payment in order to evaluate whether or not the 90-Day Transition Plan was effective, where gaps exist, etc.	Marcie will try to find information on other counties' best ILP practices. Will continue to discuss the issue of evaluating the program process and principles further into the CRP process.
Observe ILP classes con't		
Next meeting	Who is going where on Monday, the 29th of March and is it possible to attend others. Attendance at future classes. Group agreed on April 7, 3-5 at the Frog Hollow room or Public Health conference room	So far: Confirmed for Robin and Pat attending Oakendell the 29th at 3:30 tentative Marcie attends. Confirmed Marcie and Carol at ROP the 29th at 9:00 am. Confirmed Linda will attend CWS class at 6:00 pm on the 29th. Marcie e-mailed Teresa requesting group attendance at other classes.

		Pat will check that the meeting room at the county admin building is available, if not will let Marcie know and will schedule Public Health conference room. Meeting adjourned at 4:00

Meeting date: 4/7/2010
Time: 3-5
Carole Campbell,
Linda Jackson,
Marcie Caywood-Chair,
Pat Ross,
Robin Davis,
Teresa Dominguez

Topic	Discussion	Outcome
Define Objectives and Purpose of our Focus Group	Group: Discussion regarding purpose, what questions are we attempting to answer relative to ILP trainings, etc. Discussed the importance of the distinction between mandated services and non-mandated services (extras). Is there a need to review day-to-day activities or focus on a broader picture of the program. Need to know the day-to-day efforts to identify areas of concern, such as staffing concerns, budgeting concerns, and clerical support. Pat Ross: Need to focus on Resources, funding. Carole: Transportation needs Linda: Suggested need to know state expectations. Robin D: Recommendations that are somewhat realistic Group discussed reviewing state expectations vs. County resources Round Table support group for ILP youth, discussion ensued regarding	**CRP Purpose:** Evaluate the system in Calaveras County through which foster youth, former foster youth, probation youth, and former probation youth between the ages of 15 ½ - 21 years transition to independent living. **Objective for our focus group:** Evaluate the ILP program processes related to delivery of services, youth needs, mandates, available resources, and staff to youth ratios. BY: 1. Observing ILP trainings

Group interviewed Teresa (SW, ILP coordinator) Next Steps Next meeting:	process, mandates, place etc. Group was able to identify Goals and Objectives. Teresa: Resources are scarce, funding is limited, and staff to caseload ratio is 1:130 Does the state only pay stipend for Calaveras County youth? What about all the out of county youth being served? Will decide who is going to each of the trainings on the 26th. Teresa may need assistance for the morning session. If no one else can attend Marcie will go. Group needs to submit interview questions they want asked of Mary Sawicki.	2. Targeted Interviewing: ILP Coordinator, A sample of ILP youth, DSS Director (Mary Sawicki), Other CPS social workers 3. Compare Calaveras ILP staff to youth caseloads with other county programs. 4. Research funding processes. Need for clerical support in the program. Teresa's and the group will review her time study to see where staff support could assist (ie: data entry, filing, assist at trainings) Outcome pending further discussion, possible action: Include in questions to Mary Sawicki (DSS Director) Group Plans to attend next ILP training held on April 26th, Monday. Marcie will interview Mary Sawicki group must submit their questions by

		Thursday April 29. Next meeting: May 10, 2010 3-5

Respectfully submitted by Marcie Jo Caywood,
Contributor: Robin Davis
Citizen's Review Panel
Focus Group Planning Committee

Meeting Minutes
April 9, 2010

1. Attendees: Linda Jackson, Susan Sheehan, Tracy Young, Daniel McGee, Robin Bunch

2. Defining a Focus Group: handouts provided on what makes up a focus group

3. Facilitators: group discussed needing the adult participants from Ropes Course activity as well as members of this group to help facilitate the groups. Also discussed having each facilitator participate on at least two groups. **Linda** to discuss with Ropes Committee about participating on interviews. **Robin B**. to meet with Robin D. to discuss a combined meeting to coordinate facilitators.

4. Participants
    a. How many groups: 4
    b. Population of each group: 6-8 participants in each group: one group from ROP, one group from Oaken dell, one group of other ILP participants, one group non-foster high school seniors for a total of 24-32 youth.
    c. Recruitment: will need to work with Teresa to set up interviews with the ILP youth. **Daniel** to follow up with Zach at BHHS for non-foster youth.

5. Locations for group interviews: discussed doing them at the two group homes, at the S. A. library (**Susan to reserve conference room)** for the other ILP participants, and at the high school for the non-foster youth

6. Possible dates and times: the ILP groups would be after the Ropes Course activity on June 15th. The non-foster youth would need to be interviewed before the end of the school year – around the 3rd or 4th week in May.

7. Refreshments: **Robin** to find out budget amount and send to Tracy. **Tracy** to bring ideas to next meeting.

8. Thank you gift: **Robin** to find out budget and sent to Tracy. **Tracy** to bring ideas to next meeting.

9. Next meeting: April 26th at 3:30pm at the Public Health Annex.

Calaveras County Citizen Review Panel
Ropes Activity Committee Meeting Minutes
April 14, 2010

Attendance: Robin Davis, Linda Jackson, Amy Hassel wander, Teresa Dominguez

1. A date for the On Course Ropes was confirmed- Tues June 15. Teresa has confirmed that we will have 17 youth from the ILP and possibly 9 adults. Linda will attend the ILP Etiquette dinner on 6/27.

2. Interviews following the trip (surveys, group, individual)
The group decided it would be best to conduct the focus groups with the ILP youth outside of the BBQ, where they will want to relax. They should be done just after the Ropes course.

Teresa will discuss potential dates with ROP and Oaken dell. It was agreed to do these groups first and focus on the control youth group after June.

3. Logistics
R. Davis can drive CRP members. ROP will probably have 2 vans. Cal Works will have 1 or 2 vans. Robin will check on lunches at Subway or Togos.

4. Budget

$3116 total available this fiscal year (to June 30, 10)
- Course Fees
- Food for the course day
- Food for focus groups (not BBQ)
- Food June Meeting ($75)
- Mileage

6. Robin will email the group with dates for the next meeting.

San Mateo County
Citizen Review Panel

CRP's mission is to assess the child welfare system in the county and make data-driven recommendations for continuous improvement that will help to ensure the safety and well-being of San Mateo County children and their families.
Annual Report & Recommendations
(2009/2010 Program Year)

County: San Mateo County

Contact Person for this Report:

Name: Patricia Brown
Phone: 650-367-0963
Email: brownpcrc@gmail.com

Date Submitted to OCAP: November 10, 2010

Date & Person Submitted to at the local County Agency:
Beverly Beasley Johnson, Director, Human Services Agency
Deborah Torres, Director, Children Welfare Services

Please report on the Citizen Review Panel's activities per the items below and submit your response to CDSS, Office of Child Abuse Prevention via the Strategies Consultant no later than November 15, 2010.

1**. County Profile** (OCAP will provide current data from current annual report)
General Demographics
Ethnic make-up of county
Household income

2. Panel Activities

A. Panel structure and development

I. Membership (**Work plan Goal #1**)

Have there been any changes in membership or panel composition during the reporting period?

Please see table below which reflects membership changes during 2009-10.

Membership as of 7/09	**Affiliation**	**Membership as of 10/10**	**Affiliation**
Jan Baumel	Licensed Education	Jan Baumel	Licensed Education

	Psychologist, Retired educator		Psychologist, Retired Educator
		Paul Chang	Program Manager, Daly City Partnership
David Cherniss	SM County Superior Court Juvenile Mediation Program	David Cherniss	SM County Court – Juvenile Mediation Program
Eddie Estrada	Manager, Differential Response, Youth and Family Enrichment Services	Eddie Estrada	Manager, Differential Response, Youth and Family Enrichment Services
		Ruth Laya	Probation Services Manager, San Mateo County Probation
Ben Loewy	Administrator, SM County Office of Education	Ben Loewy	Administrator, SM County Office of Education
Bonnie Miller	Private Defender's Panel	Bonnie Miller	Private Defender's Panel
Bernie Plotnikoff	Retired Child Abuse Prevention Professional	Bernie Plotnikoff	Retired Child Abuse Prevention Professional
Caitie O'Shea	Retired Special Education Administrator		
Jamila Pounds	Edgewood Kinship Center	Jamila Pounds	Edgewood Kinship Center
John Ragosta	Manager, Court Appointed Special Advocates	John Ragosta	Manager, Court Appointed Special Advocates
Ginny Stewart	Licensed Clinical Social Worker	Ginny Stewart	Licensed Clinical Social Worker
Linda Symons	San Mateo County Juvenile Probation		
Gary Beasley	CWS Liaison, Interim Director, Child Welfare Services	Deborah Torres	Director, Child Welfare Services, CWS Liaison
Total Members: 11		**Total Members: 11**	

Please discuss any activities the panel has engaged in specific to the recruitment of panel members to reflect community demographics and support creating or maintaining a diverse panel.

On an annual basis, SMCRP reviews membership and the criteria for CRP representation. The goal is for CRP members to represent a broad array of backgrounds and perspectives. As a need for particular background is identified, members brainstorm ways to reach out to those areas. Parents, youth and mental health professionals continue to be priority areas.

Potential members receive a copy of the Operational Guidelines of SMCRP and are referred to the CRP website (www.smcrp.org). Before submitting an application for membership, potential Panel members are invited to attend a regular CRP meeting. They sign a Confidentiality Agreement at the beginning of that meeting. Following the visit, if there is continuing interest, the potential member completes an application form and submits it, along with a relevant resume. New members are elected by majority vote of the existing membership.

II. Panel Training (**Work plan goal #2**)

Please elaborate on the on-going orientation trainings of new CRP members.

Incoming members of the San Mateo Citizen Review Panel are provided with an orientation binder when they meet with the Chair of the Panel in an orientation session. New members are encouraged to ask for clarification or additional information if they do not understand a specific point. One key role of the facilitator is to ensure that all members of the Panel are able to participate effectively.

In addition, please describe any training activities the CRP has engaged in this past year as a means of on-going panel development.

SMCRP members receive information and updates about the child welfare system from the Child Welfare Services Director at each regular meeting. Articles and reports are provided to members as appropriate and discussed as part of the meeting agenda. SMCRP typically requests technical assistance from Louanne Shahandeh each year.

In December 2009, Panel member Eddie Estrada, who is the Manager of the Differential Response Contract for all parts of the county served by the Youth and Family Enrichment contract with CWS, provided the Panel with information about the program. (The Daly City Collaborative serves parts of north San Mateo County.)

- SM County is one of 11 pilot counties for Differential Response as a component of its System Improvement Plan.
- It is implemented through a partnership between Human Services Agency, Youth and Family Enrichment Services, Edgewood Center for Children and Families and the Daly City Collaborative.
- These agencies partner with community based agencies to provide services and referrals for “lower risk” hotline calls.
- Implementation started in 2005 with pilot projects – other refinements have led to regional contracts for service, focus on children 0-5 and substantiated cases

for Path II and service for all ages for Path I referrals. Path III is a traditional child welfare response.

- Referrals to DR come only from CWS.
- YFES and Daly City Collaborative, through their contracts with Child Welfare Services, are required to use evidence-based practices in working with families.
- Families served by DR are assessed using the FAST tool that assesses 8 domains.

Currently, 97% of hotline referrals are referred to DR, either Path I or Path II.
In December, there were 220 open DR cases.

CRP members talked with Louanne Shahandeh about TA needs for 2010 at the November 2009 CRP meeting. Louanne and CRP members talked about possible technical assistance needs and agreed on the following requests:

1. CRP asked for information about how TDM Advisory Committees may have been used to oversee implementation, evaluation and quality control (instead of focusing on the design and implementation of new programs.)

2. Louanne was also asked to provide CRP with information about the Ventura program, "Parents with Purpose", with particular interest relating to the impetus for the formation of this program and how it has been set up.

SMCRP also receives and discusses quarterly AB 636 Reports on the implementation of the System Improvement Program.

III. Panel self-evaluation activities (**Work plan Goal #6**)

Has the panel undertaken any activities to help it assess its own performance during the reporting period? If so briefly describe these activities and the findings. If not, please describe when and how the panel will assess its performance.

For a number of years, SMCRP has conducted an annual self-review, using a locally developed evaluation form. This process takes place in August and September as the annual report is being developed. The results of this year's self assessment follow:

San Mateo County Citizen Review Panel
Annual Panel Self-Evaluation – Compiled Responses
(9 of 11 members responded)
September 2010

	Scale = 1 (disagree) - 5 (agree)
1. CRP members take their role seriously and conscientiously prepare for each meeting.	Averaged responses**: 4.56** 2009 average: 4.2

2. CRP members place a high priority on regular meeting attendance.	Averaged responses: **4.44** 2009 average: 4.1
3. CRP is working hard to address priority issues relating to the safety and welfare of children involved with the child welfare system in San Mateo County.	Averaged responses: **4.67** 2009 average: 4.7
4. CRP members feel informed enough to participate in discussion of agenda items.	Averaged responses: **4.11** 2009 average: 4.8
5. CRP receives the technical assistance support it needs to do its job well.	Averaged responses: **4.33** 2009 average: 3.9
6. CRP receives the information it needs from the Human Services Agency in an understandable format.	Averaged responses: **4.00** 2009 average: 3.4
7. CRP receives the facilitation support it needs to do its work in an efficient and inclusive manner.	Averaged responses: **4.89** 2009 average: 4.8
8. New CRP members feel their orientation prepares them to participate in the work of CRP.	Averaged responses: **4.00** (4 responses – not asked in 2009)
9. CRP members are satisfied with the contribution they are making to improving the safety and well-being of children in this community.	Averaged responses: **3.89** 2009 average: 3.0

Comments

I am unable to tell if we actually made an impact on direct service. Paper work is only paper work.

#5 and #7 – Pat Brown's support is tops. CWS has improved (about 3.5 on scale of 5). Liaison is a 4. CWS participation has improved considerably and is now engaged in requesting CRP support with advocacy.

It seems with every year there is an improvement on the timeliness of responses from CWS, clearer understanding of the impact of CRP's recommendations, and clarity of our role as advisors and partners with CWS. This year has been no different. In addition, having only two recommendations to monitor throughout the year seemed to help CRP focus and get more in depth with the work that it was doing. As always, Pat's work as the facilitator, both during the meetings and in between, is crucial to our functioning.

Pat, thank you for all your energy and support of the panel and for facilitating the work. I learned a great deal by being on the panel and thank you for your gentle guidance. I

appreciated getting to know some of the members and have a greater understanding of the work they do.

When appropriate, the Panel takes steps to address areas of performance identified as needing improvement.

3. CRP objectives (Work plan Goals #3 & 5)

For **each objective identified** in your work plan please report on the following:
Any demographics related to the CRP objective(s).

Description of the review activities and any technical assistance provided (example = case review, focus group, data review, State (Strategies) CRP consultant) to support your review work.

SMCRP Recommendations for 2009-10

1. Children and Family Services should develop a Team Decision Making (TDM) Advisory Committee to assess whether the current model is working as intended, to review and analyze evaluation data for both the "process" and the "outcomes" of TDM meetings and to make recommendations for improvements based on that data.

Monitoring process: CRP received 2 reports from the TDM Advisory Committee as it was being established and held its first meeting. Three members of CRP sit on the TDM Advisory Committee.

Demographics: During the period between October 2009-September 2010, 343 TDMs were held and 56 Transitional Conferences were convened. (Transitional Conferences are facilitated meetings to prepare transition plans for youth who will be aging out of the child welfare or probation system.) An average of 5 transitional conferences were held every month during this period. Note: At the beginning and the end of the school, the number of transitional conferences increases significantly as CWS conducts initial and final conferences for high school seniors.

In regard to participants, the numbers average between 5 and 10 at any given TDM; with the larger number related to the number of issues facing the family.

The majority of TDMs:

- were for imminent risk of removal
- resulted in voluntary family maintenance services to families
- were requested from Emergency Response Units, with the greatest percentage from the Northern region of the County, followed by the Southern region

- resulted in children returning or remaining with the parent(s), with significantly smaller numbers placed with either relatives or non-relatives/friends *or* in foster homes or group homes
- were held in Agency offices

2. Children and Family Services should support families in the child welfare system by providing the following:
(a) information and education about how the system works,
(b) peer support from other parents who have experience with the system
(c) relevant resources to enable families to be full and successful participants in the reunification process.

Monitoring process: CRP Reviewed information and educational materials and processes, asked for and received updates on the development of a "parent as partner" program, reviewed written resources available to families and input from families re. understanding of and ability to participate in the child welfare system

Demographics: Six parenting sessions were provided in the reporting period: Two sessions from September 1, 2009 to December 1; 2009, two sessions from January 19, 2010 to April 27, 2010; and two sessions that started August 17, 2010 and end November 23, 2010.

Three sessions were offered in Spanish and three in English.

Participation and completion rates:
September 1, 2009 to December 1, 2009: 18 adult participants and 16 children completed the session.

January 19, 2010 to April 27, 2010: 51 adult participants registered, 38 completed the session; 52 children registered and 38 completed the session.

August 17, 2010 to November 23, 2010: 52 adult participants registered, 29 due to complete session; 47 children registered with 26 due to complete session.

San Mateo County Human Services Agency
CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES (CWS)
July 2010
Response to
Citizens Review Panel (CRP)
Recommendations for 2009-2010

Recommendation #1 *CWS should develop a Team Decision Making (TDM) Advisory Committee to assess whether the current model is working as intended, to review and analyze evaluation data for both the 'process' and 'outcomes' of TDM meetings and to make recommendations for improvemer based on that data.*

In response to the recommendation of the Citizens Review Panel to develop a TDM advisory committee, CWS (Children & Family Services) invited individuals from community based organizations, the legal and faith-based communities, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs), and Probation as well as service providers, social workers, social work supervisors, foster parents and former foster children to attend an initial planning meeting to create the TDM Advisory Board. In attendance were nineteen individuals representing the Puente Resource Center, Fair Oaks and Daly City Community Centers, Coastside Hope, Edgewood Center for Children and Families, Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS), CASAs, Private Defenders Program, Juvenile Mediation and Court Investigations, Children and Family Services and Probation.

The purpose of the TDM Advisory Board is to acknowledge successes, identify and examine challenges, and generate ideas to address challenges. At the planning meeting, the history of TDMs was reviewed, as were current TDM activities. Approximately 20 people will participate in quarterly meetings, with subsequent meetings scheduled on July 29, 2010 and October 28, 2010, to continue to formalize the Board's structure and to begin its work.

CWS will continue to recruit for the currently unrepresented groups of: foster parents, parents, former foster youth, and additional community based organizations.

TDM Data Collection Efforts

CWS has also responded to CRP's recommendation to develop data reports in order to analyze TDM processes and outcomes, with the goal of ensuring data driven decision making regarding the Agency's TDM program.

CWS has made progress in the area of data collection. At one point *Efforts to Outcome* (ETO) was the official State of California data collection tool before the decision was made to update CWS/CMS with TDM information as well. Maintaining two databases posed a challenge, especially when the data between the two did not match, which often occurred. Currently, TDM staff keeps CWS/CMS up-to-date and it is now considered the main data source. CWS currently uses two reports developed by the Agency's Business Systems Group (BSG) to monitor how many TDMS were conducted and when. The first report shows when TDMs occur, and the second report shows the list of placement moves and if a TDM was held or not. CWS and BSG staff continue to refine the two reports to ensure accuracy and provide the information needed to monitor the TDM process and outcomes.

A TDM log, in the form of an Excel spreadsheet, has also been developed and is being used with some success to measure outcomes. The log is maintained by a program staff person, who enters information on TDM referrals received, the reason for the TDM, the end result of the referral (TDM occurs, TDM is scheduled but is subsequently canceled, etc.), the placement recommendation, and the referring social worker and social work supervisor. The log is a record of all TDM referrals and documents the efforts made when a TDM referral does not result in a TDM occurrence. The drawback of the log is that, although it contains data related to all TDM referrals, it does not give information on referrals that should have been, but were not, made. The log also includes information on TDMs for Probation youth and emancipation conferences. If a Family Group Decision Making model is implemented, the log can be expanded to track those meetings as well.

The number of TDMs conducted appears on a monthly CWS dashboard report which is reviewed by the Management Team. Currently, two of the TDM facilitators have been temporarily reassigned to assist with a recent upsurge in hot line referral, which has resulted in fewer resources and less time to collect and analyze data.

Recommendation #2A *CWS should support families in the child welfare system by providing information and education about how the system works.*

Parent Orientation: Program Overview

San Mateo County's newly developed parent orientation, Engaging Birth Families as Authentic Partners, will provide birth families with information and access to resources that they need to help them become successful parents and strong self advocates. The parent orientation, based on a Santa Clara County model, facilitates conversations between birth families, youth, resource families, tribal members, community members, service providers, and staff and partners from other agencies and organizations that serve children, youth and families. The program orients parents to the Dependency Court process, familiarizes participants with the Dependency Court's terminology and procedures, and fosters open dialogue between parents and CWS social workers in a safe environment. In so doing, the program empowers parents to be more participative and aware during their dependency proceedings, and has the additional benefit of mitigating the often unrecognized impact of disproportionality at a key decision point in a family's case.

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  In this session, parents will be provided with an overview of CWS, contact information, and descriptions of the agency structure and the dependency process, with time set aside for parents to debrief about their child welfare-related experiences.

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- Parents' levels of engagement in the process will be increased.
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Recommendation #2B *CWS should support families in the child welfare system by providing peer support from other parents who have had experience with the system.*

Because funding has increasingly become an issue, CWS was required to identify creative ways to provide peer support to families as they navigate thorough the child welfare and Dependency Court systems. As a result, CWS has requested peer positions, to be funded with economic stimulus dollars through the SMCWORKS (San Mateo County WORKs) program.

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Even in the current climate of economic uncertainty, CWS is fully committed to providing the widest possible array of services to families to help them achieve successful reunification. The services a family receives are determined by the family's issues and barriers, and whenever possible families are carefully matched with community based, accessible, and culturally appropriate services. Multiple contracts exist to fill the gap between service needs and service availability.

Examples of Services

- *Parenting classes* – CWS' traditional model of parenting classes has been replaced with an evidence-based curriculum.
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- *Structured Decision Making* – CWS has moved to this evidence-based assessment tool to assist social workers in making good decisions for families, and to provide direction in service planning and provision.
- *Fatherhood Collaborative* – This collaborative came under the HSA umbrella in December 2009. The Collaborative's supportive services help strengthen the bond between fathers and their children.
- *Housing Vouchers* – HSA and San Mateo County Children & Family Services has housing vouchers that were awarded to the agency from HUD to assist homeless and un-housed families with Section 8 certificates who are in the process of family reunification.

The following table contains the "Findings" of San Mateo CRP in relation to the status of the 09-10 recommendations to Child Welfare Services.

Recommendation	**CRP Findings**
1. Children and Family Services should develop a Team Decision Making (TDM) Advisory Committee to assess whether the current model is working as intended, to review and analyze evaluation data for both the "process" and the "outcomes" of TDM meetings and to make recommendations for improvements based on that data.	Approach to monitoring: • reports from the TDM Advisory Committee • reports from TDM Supervisor • reports from CRP members serving on the TDM Advisory Committee <u>Findings:</u> *The TDM Advisory Committee has been appointed and has begun to address its work of assessing the current TDM model. Three CRP members serve on the Advisory Committee and provide a direct link between the two groups. The membership of the TDM Advisory Committee is the result of broad outreach and recruiting by CWS. The process of assessing TDM implementation will be ongoing.*
2. Children and Family Services should support families in the child welfare	Approach to monitoring: Review of information and education materials and processes, updates on development of a "parent as

system by providing the following: (a) information and education about how the system works, (b) peer support from other parents who have experience with the system (c) relevant resources to enable families to be full and successful participants in the reunification process.	partner" program, review of resources available to families, input from families re. their understanding of and ability to participate in the child welfare system Findings: *(a) CWS has made efforts to update and improve informational materials. However, outdated information and educational materials are still being used with families, even though newer material is available from other sources and websites, such as the Administrative Office of the Courts website. On the same website, old material is still posted - www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp/family/juv/depcourt/htm* *(b) CWS implemented a small Parent Peer Support Program using federal stimulus funds – however, the program did not have enough time to have much impact and it ends September 30, 2010. CWS is supportive of the family peer support concept and may explore the development of a volunteer-staffed program using parents who have completed the Strengthening Families Parent Education series.* *(c) CWS currently provides an array of family support services listed in the written response to CRP's recommendations. CRP has not reviewed information relating to the use and effectiveness of these services.*

- **Formal Recommendations for 2010-11, based on findings (for County and State)**

1. CWS should make sure that the written information about the child welfare system made available to family members is updated regularly as to content and accessibility (language, format, reading level and terminology) and is widely disseminated.

Monitoring:

- CRP will talk with CWS staff member designated to receive updated information from the Administrative Office of the Courts, Department of Social Services and other sources to identify the process currently in place to keep materials current.
- CRP will examine current approaches to disseminating educational/informational materials to families.

- CRP will explore the possibility of using an intern to inventory existing materials and places where they are made available to families.
- CRP will talk with Emergency Response and Intake Social Workers about how they provide information/educational material to families.

2. CWS should monitor how families are accessing and using support services and should analyze the impact of the programs on family reunification rates.

Monitoring

- CRP will request information from CWS about how support programs and services are being evaluated for utilization and effectiveness, through the AB 636 report or other processes.
- CRP will identify specific services and invite providers to present information to SMCRP about how those services are being assessed for impact.
- CRP will use a consistent approach to gathering this information so a final report can be compiled.

3. CWS should continue to support the Team Decision Making (TDM) Advisory Committee and ensure that it monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of team decision making in relation to the stated outcomes of the program.

Monitoring

- CRP will schedule regular updates from SMCRP members who serve on TDM Advisory Committee.
- CRP will request copies of any written reports provided by the TDM Advisory Committee to CWS.

- **Follow-up on the prior years annual report recommendations, including any County and State responses to the recommendations**

Summary of status of past SMCRP recommendations:

1. Institute **Team Decision Making**: accepted and implemented

2. Address factors that contribute to **re-entry** rates: accepted and in process of implementation

3. Implement effective **parent education** program: accepted and in process of implementation

4. Improve efforts to **help families understand the child welfare system**: in progress

- **Discuss how the CRP recommendations will be disseminated to county, state officials as well as the public and how the CRP will handle any comments made.**

SMCRP will provide the Director of the San Mateo County Human Services Agency (HSA) and the Director of Child Welfare Services (CWS), a division within HSA, with a complete copy of the Annual Report and Recommendations at the time the report is submitted to the State Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP). The report will also be posted on the SMCRP website and presented to the local Child Abuse Prevention Committee that is known as the Children's Collaborative Action Team (CCAT). In addition, excerpts from the report will be used in outreach presentation to CWS staff, the Foster Parents Association and other groups in San Mateo County.

- **Future Directions –Briefly discuss the activities that the panel expects to undertake during the 2010/2011 program year- with an emphasis on July-Sept 2010 activities. (Please attach an updated work plan for next year)**

SMCRP will continue to meet monthly to monitor its recommendations and the delivery of child welfare services in San Mateo County. Time in each meeting will be allocated to (1) reports and presentations relevant to the Panel's stated interests and (2) an opportunity for new issues/concerns to be identified and explored. SMCRP, recognizing the continuing fiscal constraints that child welfare organizations are experiencing, will continue to look for ways to promote and support productive collaboration that leverages resources to achieve shared goals.

4. Public in-put (Work plan Goal # 4)

Briefly describe any public input that the panel obtained during the reporting period and how this input was taken into consideration when making your final recommendations for this annual report.

SMCRP did not receive direct public input during this reporting period.

The panel plans to take the following approach to seeking public input after this annual report's recommendations are developed and published:

- Presentation to Children's Collaborative Action Team – Jamila Pounds, SMCRP Chair, will present the Annual Report and Recommendations early in 2011.
- SMCRP members will conduct outreach presentations during 2011 to familiarize San Mateo County Social Workers with the work of the panel and its current recommendations. A PowerPoint presentation has been developed.

5. Attachments

Please attach the following documents to this report:

- Updated roster of Citizen Review Panel Members, including their affiliations
- Minutes of the panel's meetings for the July 1, 2010 to September 30, 2010 quarter. If the panel utilizes committees, please attach the minutes, if any, of these committees
- Updated Scope of Work for the coming year's panel activities 2010/2011

❖ Please submit a statement of the panel's expenditures for the 2009/2010 program year.

Please email this report to **OCAP by November 15, 2010**, including the name, email address and phone number of the person who can be contacted should there be questions regarding this report.

SMCRP Roster and Terms as of October 2010

In September 2006, SMCRP adopted new guidelines that specified a two-term (3 years each term) limit on membership. At the end of the first term, members are eligible for re-election to a second term before they must rotate off of the panel.

The following table reflects the status of current CRP members.

Name	Affiliation	Term
Baumel, Jan	Licensed Educational Psychologist and Retired Special Educator	First term – 9/06-9/09 Second – 9/09-9/12
Chang, Paul	Program Manager, Daly City Partnership	First term – 8/10-9/13
Cherniss, David	Juvenile Mediation Program	First term – 9/08-9/11
Estrada, Eddie	Manager, Differential Response	First term – 2/09-9/12
Laya, Ruth	Probation Services Manager	First term – 8/10-9/13
Loewy, Ben	Administrator, SM County Office of Education	First term – 9/06-9/09 Second – 9/09-9/12
Miller, Bonnie	Private Defenders Office	First term – 9/07-9/10
Plotnikoff, Bernie	Community member	First term – 9/06-9/09 Second – 9/09-9/12
Pounds, Jamila	Edgewood Center	First term – 9/06-9/09 Second – 9/09-9/12
Ragosta, John	Administrator, Advocates for Children	First term – 8/09-9/12
Stewart, Ginny	Licensed Clinical Social Worker	First Term – 9/08-9/11

San Mateo County

Citizen Review Panel

CRP's mission is to assess the child welfare system in the county and make data-driven recommendations for continuous improvement that will help to ensure the safety and well-being of San Mateo County children and their families.

Notes from Meeting
July 19, 2010
400 Harbor Boulevard, Bldg. B, Belmont CA 94002
11:30 -1:30 PM
Present: Baumel, Cherninss, Estrada, Loewy, O'Shea, Plotnikoff, Pounds, Ragosta, Stewart, Symons
Potential members: Paul Chang, Daly City Partnership; Melissa Viscarra, emancipated Foster Child; Ruth Laya, Probation
Others: Pat Brown (facilitator) DeborahTorres, Amabell Baxley (Children and Family Services)

The meeting started at 11:35 with introductions and welcome to visiting community members. The following items were added to the agenda:

- Outreach announcement – Jamila
- Call to Action – Debbie
- Schedule for internal case review July 30 - Debbie

Follow-up from last meeting

a) Review notes from last meeting – changes/corrections – three Panel members had spelling and grammar corrections to the minutes
b) Jamila has contacted Shauna Mullins of the Foster Parents Association to arrange an
Outreach presentation in September or October. Jamila will confirm the date with CRP. One additional slide has been added to the presentation. A panel member suggested the PowerPoint might be uploaded to the SMCRP website. Pat thanked David for working through a problem with website access. The problem has been resolved.

Update Confidentiality agreements
Pat explained that it was time for members to renew their Confidentiality Agreements. She briefly described the purpose of the agreements and noted there had been no change since the agreement was revised in February 2008. Guests also submitted their signed copies of the agreements.

Update from Children and Family Services – Deborah Torres, Director of Child Welfare

- Response to current CRP Recommendations
  A complete copy of the Responses is attached. Debbie went over the responses with the Panel and answered a number of questions:
  - The TDM Advisory Committee is being assembled and has two meetings scheduled: July 29 and October 28. She will provide CRP with an update on the Advisory Committee membership as spaces are filled.
  - The question of evaluation of the impact of TDM is still to be addressed and is of interest.
  - CWS may be looking at family conferencing, as suggested by CRP, as an extension of collaborative planning not necessarily associated with placement.
  - Probation noted that TDMs have been used in situations where there is a risk of loss of placement for probation and dual issue youth (dependency and delinquency) courtesy of CWS. TDMs have also been helpful assisting senior youth to plan for independence.
  - After hearing about the stimulus funded positions for Parents as Partners, CRP members asked about the possibility of using community based organizations (such as Parents Anonymous) to provide ongoing parent support. This option has been explored in the past, but there is no local chapter of PA. Debbie offered to check with other child welfare directors about this resource.
  - There was a lot of interest in the 40 additional Section 8 housing vouchers that have been made available to child welfare families, 20 for emancipated youth and 20 for families. The question of whether one emancipated youth with a voucher could share quarters with other youth was asked. Debbie will look into the response.

Debbie noted that the CWS Dashboard may provide regular, specific information to CRP and is prepared monthly by CWS.

Panel members thanked Debbie for the thorough response and listing of support services available to families.

A copy of the complete County Response is attached to these notes.

- CWS Org Chart
  Debbie distributed a current “org chart” for CWS with the disclaimer that the structure may be modified further if needed.

- Call to Action
  The Child Welfare Directors Association is sponsoring a postcard writing campaign directed at the governor and asking that child welfare and foster care services be fully funded in the budget. Debbie will forward an electronic version

of the postcard and she asked that CRP members complete the cards and send them to CWS by July 26 and urge family and friends to participate in the campaign. Key points to be cited are the need for maintaining Cal Works benefits, especially help with child care costs and funding for kinship, child welfare staffing and support programs for families.

- Internal Case Review – July 30
  Debbie asked for clarification about the CRP representative to participate in the Internal Case Review Process. Ginny Stewart is currently identified as an interested CRP member and she will attend the July 30th session. In the future, Jamila and John expressed interest in participating. Debbie will check with her staff to see if more than one representative can be accommodated at each session.

Recommendation monitoring: Update on parent education program and materials
Annabelle Baxley presented an update on the Strengthening Families Parent Education program offered by CWS to Child Welfare Families and other interested families. Court ordered participation is given top priority. Annabelle has managed one full 15 week session of classes, one set in English and one in Spanish. The average size of these classes is 25-30, with 10-12 children/youth in attendance at each class. Efforts have been made to link more closely with workers and support staff involved with these families, so what they learn in the classes can be supported and reinforced. There is an arrangement for adult family members who complete the course to receive college credit from Cañada College as an incentive for continuing educational efforts. Annabelle provided a summary of the content of each of the classes.
CRP members had the following comments:

- Panel members were pleased with the information provided and they also expressed interest in the materials used by CWS to educate families about the child welfare system
- It would be good to have classes held in North County – Paul is willing to help find a location
- Transportation is always a concern – even though help is offered to families that are ordered to participate by the Court, more help may be needed.
- More coordination of all of the parent education programs available in the County would be beneficial. Even though CWS program serves many families, they might be able to refer families to specialized or event advanced parenting and parent support groups.
- There is a need to evaluate the impact of these classes – Annabelle has started to check on internal data, but an outcome evaluation design has not yet been developed. CWS has gotten feedback from families that the current program evaluation materials are difficult to complete because of their length.

Discussion of CRP Membership – looking at 2010-11
Bonnie Miller is up for re-election to a second term and would like to continue.
Caitie O'Shea declines to stand for re-election because of scheduling challenges.

Linda Symons has had a change in assignment in Probation and feels she will not be able to continue to serve on CRP.

Three potential candidates attended the meeting as guests:

- Paul Chang – Daly City Partnership
- Melissa Viscarra – Emancipated foster youth
- Ruth Laya – Probation

In addition, Jan has spoken with a retired special educator who also expressed interest in serving on the Panel. All guests provided a brief explanation of their interest. If they would like to be considered for election to the Panel, they will be asked to submit their application and a bio for consideration at the August meeting. If elected, their three year terms would commence in September.

Schedule for preparation of Annual Report and Recommendations

Pat presented the following proposal for preparation of the annual report for 2009-10:

- August: review of monitoring information and development of findings for inclusion in the Annual report

- September: confirm findings and develop draft recommendations for 2010-11

- October: review the draft annual report, recommendations and scope of work prior to Submission

Closed Session for CRP – issues of interest/concern

The Panel held a brief closed session for discussion of issues of interest and concern.

The following items are scheduled for the August Agenda

- Social Worker presentation re. Structured Decision Making and how it is being implemented, with focus on Intake and Emergency Response
- Update on TDM Advisory Committee
- Findings re. 2009-10 Recommendations
- Distribute CRP Self Evaluation
- Dashboard for CWS

The meeting adjourned at 1:40 PM.

San Mateo County Human Services Agency
CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES (CWS)

Response to
Citizens Review Panel (CRP)
2008-2009 Annual Report and
Recommendations for 2009-2010

Recommendation #1

CWS should develop a Team Decision Making (TDM) Advisory Committee to assess whether the current model is working as intended, to review and analyze evaluation data for both the 'process' and 'outcomes' of TDM meetings and to make recommendations for improvement based on that data.

TDM Advisory Committee

In response to the recommendation of the Citizens Review Panel to develop a TDM advisory committee, CWS (Children & Family Services) invited individuals from community based organizations, the legal and faith-based communities, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs), and Probation as well as service providers, social workers, social work supervisors, foster parents and former foster children to attend an initial planning meeting to create the TDM Advisory Board. In attendance were nineteen individuals representing the Puente Resource Center, Fair Oaks and Daly City Community Centers, Coastside Hope, Edgewood Center for Children and Families, Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS), CASAs, Private Defenders Program, Juvenile Mediation and Court Investigations, Children and Family Services and Probation.

The purpose of the TDM Advisory Board is to acknowledge successes, identify and examine challenges, and generate ideas to address challenges. At the planning meeting, the history of TDMs was reviewed, as were current TDM activities. Approximately 20 people will participate in quarterly meetings, with subsequent meetings scheduled on July 29, 2010 and October 28, 2010, to continue to formalize the Board's structure and to begin its work.

CWS will continue to recruit for the currently unrepresented groups of: foster parents, parents, former foster youth, and additional community based organizations.

TDM Data Collection Efforts

CWS has also responded to CRP's recommendation to develop data reports in order to analyze TDM processes and outcomes, with the goal of ensuring data driven decision-making regarding the Agency's TDM program.

CWS has made progress in the area of data collection. At one point *Efforts to Outcome* (ETO) was the official State of California data collection tool before the decision was made to update CWS/CMS with TDM information as well. Maintaining two databases posed a challenge, especially when the data between the two did not match, which often occurred. Currently, TDM staff keeps CWS/CMS up-to-date and it is now considered the main data source. CWS currently uses two reports developed by the Agency's Business Systems Group (BSG) to monitor how many TDMS were conducted and when. The first report shows when TDMs occur, and the second report shows the list of placement moves and if a TDM was held or not. CWS and BSG staff continue to refine the two reports to ensure accuracy and provide the information needed to monitor the TDM process and outcomes.

A TDM log, in the form of an Excel spreadsheet, has also been developed and is being used with some success to measure outcomes. The log is maintained by a program staff person, who enters information on TDM referrals received, the reason for the TDM, the end result of the referral (TDM occurs, TDM is scheduled but is subsequently canceled, etc.), the placement recommendation, and the referring social worker and social work supervisor. The log is a record of all TDM referrals and documents the efforts made when a TDM referral does not result in a TDM occurrence. The drawback of the log is that, although it contains data related to all TDM referrals, it does not give information on referrals that should have been, but were not, made. The log also includes information on TDMs for Probation youth and emancipation conferences. If a Family Group Decision Making model is implemented, the log can be expanded to track those meetings as well.

The number of TDMs conducted appears on a monthly CWS dashboard report which is reviewed by the Management Team. Currently, two of the TDM facilitators have been temporarily reassigned to assist with a recent upsurge in hot line referral, which has resulted in fewer resources and less time to collect and analyze data.

Recommendation #2A *CWS should support families in the child welfare system by providing information and education about how the system works.*

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services help strengthen the bond between fathers and their children.

- *Housing Vouchers* – HSA and San Mateo County Children & Family Services has housing vouchers that were awarded to the agency from HUD to assist homeless and un-housed families with Section 8 certificates who are in the process of family reunification.

San Mateo County

Citizen Review Panel

CRP's mission is to assess the child welfare system in the county and make data-driven recommendations for continuous improvement that will help to ensure the safety and well-being of San Mateo County children and their families.

Notes from Meeting
August 16, 2010
400 Harbor Boulevard, Bldg. B, Belmont CA 94002
11:30 -1:30 PM

Panel members Present: Baumel, Cherniss, Loewy, O'Shea, Plotnikoff, Pounds, Ragosta, Stewart, Symons
Others: Deborah Torres, Ruth Laya, Paul Chang, Diana Hall

The meeting opened with self-introductions and a welcome to Diana Hall, prospective member.

<u>Follow-up from last meeting</u>

a) Review notes from last meeting – changes/corrections
   - Correct spelling for Amabel Baxley
   - Correct lettering for Follow-up items
   - Under Director's report, correct "look a family conferencing" to "look at"
   - Make sure that CWS response to CRP recommendations is attached.
b) Bonnie Miller was unanimously elected to her second 3-year term on CRP on a motion by Jan Baumel and second by Bernie Plotnikoff.
c) Caitie O'Shea is completing her term on CRP and members thanked her for her contributions.
d) The Panel accepted the resignation of Linda Symons, Probation Manager, because of her assignment to a different unit.

e) Paul Chang, Program Manager for the Daly City Partnership and Ruth Laya, Probation Services Manager, were unanimously elected to three year terms on a motion by David Cherniss and a second by Linda Symons.

Recommendation monitoring:

- Social worker presentation re. implementation of Structured Decision Making – focus on Intake and Emergency Response

Sarah Gregg, Social Work Supervisor of the Screening Unit and Casey Calivo, hotline social worker, were present to provide information on the implementation of Structured Decision Making as a call is being handled. Panel members were given a copy of a publication entitled: The Structured Decision Making Model: An Evidence-based Approach to Human Services, published by the Children's Research Center. A copy of the Hotline Screening Form was also distributed.

Sarah told the Panel that SDM was implemented in SM Co. in 2009 with the goal of promoting consistency in practice using common definitions of child abuse and neglect and associated risk factors. She told the group that this presentation would focus on Intake and Emergency Response and the use of the Hotline Screening Tool. She describes three possible responses to a hotline call:

- a finding of *possible neglect*
- a finding of *possible emotional, physical or sexual abuse*
- the call does not meet criteria for neglect or abuse and is *evaluated out*

Following ER, if the finding is that the allegation is unfounded, that means that the risk to safety does not meet the criteria for action by child welfare.

There are two levels of response to a and b: Immediate (emergency) or 10-day
Since September 2009, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of emergency responses (from 10% of calls to 50% of calls). This increase has been observed in other counties just implementing SDM. CWS is being conservative (err on the side of safety) in handling cases and feels the increase relates to more specific definition of needs that are research based.

SDM has influenced the approach to emotional abuse situations – requires that child's response must be directly tied to a parent's behavior.

When there is an emergency response, an assessment is completed. There was a question about whether the increased # of calls to the hotline and higher number of emergency responses is correlated with increased removals. Here and around the state, even though the number of ERs is up, the number of children coming into and staying in the system is down. About 75% of calls to the hotline come from mandated reporters. The Panel asked if mandated reporters have received training in the SDM approach and was told that to this date there has been no special training provided.

There were questions about how calls were tracked. This led to defining terms:

- Call = telephone call to the hotline – tracked by a log in system
- Referral = call is entered into the computer system

When a call about an "open" case comes in, it is handled by the screening unit and counted as a new referral.

Panel members expressed some concern about calls regarding youth in the Probation setting. There is some possibility that a young person will recant allegations of neglect or abuse to get out of the incarcerated setting. In addition, if the child is not currently in the home, is the degree of concern downgraded because his/her safety is not an immediate issue? There was agreement that a **system of communication between the Hotline and ER with Probation** would be helpful.

The Panel was very interested in the presentation and there was agreement that the next step will be to invite a SDM presentation from the Emergency Response and Intake levels.

Related questions:

- What is the current % of overrides to the SDM system – in Hotline and ER there is a high override rate – because of a conscientious response.
- How many hotline referrals go to Differential Response?
- How might we ensure that referrers understand the SDM system?

<u>Update from TDM Advisory Committee Meeting</u>

John Ragosta and David Cherniss (along with Bonnie Miller) sit on the TDM Advisory Committee and reported that the committee met at the end of July. The group spent discussion time on clarifying the meaning of confidentiality in a setting like the TDM. This issue needs clarity so confidentiality can be better explained to families. Oct. 28th (9-10:30 AM) is the next scheduled meeting. It is likely that a number of subcommittees will be formed to look a protocols associated with TDMs.

<u>Report from Peer Quality Case Review session</u>

Ginny Stewart participated in the last Peer Quality Case Review (PQR) session for CWS social workers. This process is part of the System Improvement Plan. Ginny provided Panel members with copies of a number of documents related to the PQR process including: Hotline tool; Copy of the Case Checklist; Qualitative Review; Quantitative Review; Safety Assessment; Know Your Rights. She said that about 20 social workers were involved in reviewing case files in order to ensure complete and quality documentation practices. The idea is to reinforce best practices in case management in CWS. This process is managed by the Quality Assurance Committee which notifies social workers of issues related to files and copies supervisors on the notices.

San Mateo County also participates in a case review process in which social workers from other counties review case files and provide feedback re. quality and completeness.

Develop findings for current recommendations

The Panel then reviewed the Recommendations Findings Worksheet developed to assist with making findings related to the 09-10 recommendations.

Panel members agreed on the following findings:

1. **Children and Family Services should develop a Team Decision Making (TDM) Advisory Committee to assess whether the current model is working as intended, to review and analyze evaluation data for both the "process" and the "outcomes" of TDM meetings and to make recommendations for improvements based on that data.**

   The TDM Advisory Committee has been appointed and has begun to address its work of assessing the current TDM model. Three CRP members serve on the Advisory Committee and provide a direct link between the two groups. The membership of the TDM Advisory Committee is the result of broad outreach and recruiting by CWS. The process of assessing TDM implementation will be ongoing.

2. **Children and Family Services should support families in the child welfare system by providing the following:**
   (a) information and education about how the system works,
   (b) peer support from other parents who have experience with the system
   (c) relevant resources to enable families to be full and successful participants in the reunification process.

   (a) CWS has made some efforts to update and improve informational materials. However, outdated information/ educational materials are still being used with families, though newer material is available on the Administrative Office of the Courts website. On the same website, old material is still posted (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp/family/juv/depcourt/htm).

   (b) CWS implemented a small Parent Peer Support Program using Stimulus funds – however, the program did not have enough time to have impact and it ends September 17,' 2010. CWS is supportive the parent peer support concept and may explore the development of a volunteer-staffed program using parents who have completed the Strengthening Families Parent Education series.

   (c) CWS currently provides an array of parent support services, but it is unclear whether families are accessing and using them effectively:
   - *Parenting classes – CWS' traditional model of parenting classes has been replaced with an evidence based curriculum.*
   - *Counseling services – Individual and family counseling, and mental health assessment and treatment are provided for family members experiencing mental health issues.*

- *Transportation – A Central Support unit provides transportation to appointments, parenting classes, court hearings, etc.*
- *Treatment services – In addition to mental health treatment services, substance abuse testing and treatment and Domestic Violence treatment programs are provided.*
- *Translation – Translation services are provided in multiple languages.*
- *Child Watch – Child watch is provided to enable parents to attend meetings and appointments, and provides respite for birth and foster parents.*
- *Family Finding – Efforts will soon be underway to intensify the notification process to relatives in order to garner their support for reunifying families, as will as to provide kin placement arrangements if needed.*
- *Parent Partners – These positions were created to provide parents with emotional support and the supportive services of former CWS birth parents who have experienced successful reunification.*
- *Social Security assistance – This service is intended to help children apply for and receive income to which they are entitled.*
- *Educational assistance – Educational Liaisons perform a myriad of education-related tasks to assist children and families.*
- *Supervised visitation – Because of funding cuts, a supervised visitation contract will be replaced by Family Care Workers who are being newly trained to provide these services, using evidence-based, best practice models.*
- *Structured Decision Making – CWS has moved to this evidence-based assessment tool to assist social workers in making good decisions for families, and to provide direction in service planning and provision.*
- *Fatherhood Collaborative – This collaborative came under the HSA umbrella in December 2009. The Collaborative's supportive services help strengthen the bond between fathers and their children.*
- *Housing Vouchers – HSA and San Mateo County Children & Family Services has housing vouchers that were awarded to the agency from HUD to assist homeless and un-housed families with Section 8 certificates who are in the process of family reunification.*

<u>Next steps in preparation of Annual Report and Recommendations</u>

- Complete CRP Self Evaluation
- Confirm findings
- Review status of former Recommendations
- Develop Recommendations for 2010-11
- Finalize Annual Report by October 18, 2010

<u>Items for next agenda:</u>

- Review CWS Dashboard for June 2010
- Presentation of SDM use in Intake
- Discuss CRP self evaluation – please return completed survey to Pat by 9/10/10
- Confirm Findings
- Discuss status of past recommendations and possible recommendations for 10-11

Closed Session for CRP – issues of interest/concern

The meeting was adjourned at 1:40 PM.

San Mateo County

Citizen Review Panel

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Notes from Meeting
September 20, 2010
400 Harbor Boulevard, Bldg. B, Belmont CA 94002
11:30 -1:30 PM
Panelists present: Baumel, Chang, Cherniss, Estrada, Loewy, Pounds, Stewart
Others: Pat Brown, Gina Jett, Pravin Patel, Cynthia Noragaran, Nicole Hayes

The meeting opened with self introductions. Gina (Regina) Jett was welcomed as a guest and potential member of CRP.

Follow-up from last meeting

a) Review notes from last meeting – there were a number of changes/corrections to the notes from the last meeting
b) Discussion of CWS Dashboard- Pravin Patel, representing Deborah Torres, presented the Children and Family Services Dashboard for August 2010. Highlights included:
    - 237 referrals during from Aug. 1 – Aug. 31.
    - 17 TDMs were held during the month.
    - 477 active cases (including foster care)
    - 289 children were in out of home care (27% in relative care and 16% in the care of a guardian)
    - Though there is still a disproportionate number of African American children in out of home placements (24% out of 2.9% AA population), the percentage has come down from a high of 36%.

    Panel members expressed interest in receiving the link to the monthly dashboards posted on the Human Services Agency website.

Recommendation monitoring: Social worker presentation re. implementation of Structured Decision Making – focus on Emergency Response – Nicole Hayes Supervisor, RWC and Cynthia Noragaran, ER worker

Nicole and Cynthia distributed and explained two Structured Decision Making forms: the CA Safety Assessment and the CA Family Risk Assessment.

These assessments are completed by social workers following the Hotline screening and subsequent visit (immediate, 2 hour, 3-day or 10-day). The Safety Assessment is used with both inconclusive and substantiated referrals. It is a guide for the social worker, helping to make the decision about whether it is safe to leave the child in the custody of the family or to remove the child. As the result of SDM, more families are getting a visit within 2 hours, but there does not seem to be an increase in removals. If there is a positive response to one or more of the 10 threat criteria, a safety plan must be completed. All safety plans are monitored. Nicole explained that risk may still be present, though a worker can define a child as "safe". Safety assessments cannot be overridden, but risk assessment can be overridden if at the worker's discretion.

One key issue emerged. Emergency response workers find it useful to follow up with a child in the school setting, but districts differ in their interpretation of the rights of workers to access children on the school site. Ben offered to follow up with this issue, as a representative of the County Office of Education, to see if a more consistent approach can be implemented.

Confirm findings for current recommendations
CRP members discussed the draft "findings" developed at the August CRP meeting and made a few changes.

Recommendations and revised findings:

1. Children and Family Services should develop a Team Decision Making (TDM) Advisory Committee to assess whether the current model is working as intended, to review and analyze evaluation data for both the "process" and the "outcomes" of TDM meetings and to make recommendations for improvements based on that data.

The TDM Advisory Committee has been appointed and has begun to address its work of assessing the current TDM model. Three CRP members serve on the Advisory Committee and provide a direct link between the two groups. The membership of the TDM Advisory Committee is the result of broad outreach and recruiting by CWS. The process of assessing TDM implementation will be ongoing.

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(a) CWS has made efforts to update and improve informational materials. However, outdated information and educational materials are still being used with families, even though newer material is available on the Administrative Office of the Courts website. (On the same website, old material is still posted - www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp/family/juv/depcourt/htm).

(b) CWS implemented a small Parent Peer Support Program using federal stimulus funds – however, the program did not have enough time to have much impact and it ends September 30, 2010. CWS is supportive of the family peer support concept and may explore the development of a volunteer-staffed program using parents who have completed the Strengthening Families Parent Education series.

(c) CWS currently provides an array of family support services listed below. CRP has not reviewed information relating to the use and effectiveness of these services.

- *Parenting classes – CWS' traditional model of parenting classes has been replaced with an evidence-based curriculum.*
- *Counseling services – Individual and family counseling, and mental health assessment and treatment are provided for family members experiencing mental health issues.*
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- *Structured Decision Making – CWS has moved to this evidence-based*

assessment tool to assist social workers in making good decisions for families, and to provide direction in service planning and provision.

- *Fatherhood Collaborative – This group came under the HSA umbrella in December 2009. The Collaborative's supportive services help strengthen the bond between fathers and their children.*
- *Housing Vouchers – HSA and San Mateo County Children & Family Services has housing vouchers that were awarded to the agency from HUD to assist homeless and un-housed families with Section 8 certificates who are in the process of family reunification.*

Status of Past Recommendations

Next, the Panel discussed the review of the status of past recommendations. There was agreement that SMCRP has made a practice of building on past year's recommendations to ensure follow through and desired improvements. The Panel agreed that it should look at the current status of recommendations from the past two years. Pat will prepare a summary for the Panel's review between now and the next meeting.

Discuss results of CRP self-evaluation

Nine CRP members (of 11) returned completed evaluations. The compiled/averaged scores were presented and discussed.

Scale = 1 (disagree) - 5 (agree)

1. CRP members take their role seriously and conscientiously prepare for each meeting.	Averaged responses**: 4.56**
2. CRP members place a high priority on regular meeting attendance.	Averaged responses: **4.44**
3. CRP is working hard to address priority issues relating to the safety and welfare of children involved with the child welfare system in San Mateo County.	Averaged responses: **4.67**
4. CRP members feel informed enough to participate in discussion of agenda items.	Averaged responses: **4.11**
5. CRP receives the technical assistance support it needs to do its job well.	Averaged responses: **4.33**
6. CRP receives the information it needs from the	Averaged responses: **4.00**
7. Human Services Agency in an understandable format.	
8. CRP receives the facilitation support it needs to do its work in an efficient and inclusive manner.	Averaged responses: 4.89

9. New CRP members feel their orientation prepares them to participate in the work of CRP.	Averaged responses: **4.0** (4 responses)
10. CRP members are satisfied with the contribution they are making to improving the safety and well-being of children in this community.	Averaged responses: **3.89**

Written Comments
I am unable to tell if we actually made an impact on direct service. Paper work is only paper work.

#5 and #7 – Pat Brown's support is tops. CPS has improved (about 3.5 on scale of 5). Liaison is a 4. CPA participation has improved considerably and is now engaged in requesting CRP support with advocacy.

It seems with every year there is an improvement on the timeliness of responses from CWS, clearer understanding of the impact of CRP's recommendations, and clarity of our role as advisors and partners with CWS. This year has been no different. In addition, having only two recommendations to monitor throughout the year seemed to help CRP focus and get more in depth with the work that it was doing. As always, Pat's work as the facilitator, both during the meetings and in between, is crucial to our functioning.

Pat, thank you for all your energy and support of the panel and for facilitating the work. I learned a great deal by being on the panel and thank you for your gentle guidance. I appreciated getting to know some of the members and have a greater understanding of the work they do.

Panel members felt the compiled results were reflective of their experience this year. They feel that communication and support from Children and Family Services has improved greatly and there is a growing sense of trust. CRP asked Pat to include a comparison of current year and past year evaluation results in the annual report.

<u>First draft of recommendations for 2009 -10 annual report</u>
CRP members developed the following list of draft recommendations. Pat will send them out within the next couple of days for feedback and modification.

1. CWS should make sure that the information about the child welfare system that is available to family members is regularly updated as to content, accessible (language, format, reading level and terminology) and readily available.

2. CWS should monitor how families are accessing and using support services and should analyze the impact of the programs on family reunification rates.

3. CWS should continue to support the TDM Advisory Committee and ensure that it monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of team decision making in relation to

the stated outcomes of the program.

Report on Parent orientation at parenting workshop series
Jamila reported that her colleagues have told her that the recent orientation for the Strengthening Families workshops was very well-received by participants.

There was no Closed Session.

Agenda for October

- AB 636 report
- Confirm Recommendations for 2010-11
- Finalize Annual Report and Work plan for submission by end of October

Citizen Review Panel
Annual & Recommendations Report
(2009/2010 Program Year)

County: Ventura County

Contact Person for this Report:

Name: Judy Webber- Deputy Director Children & Family Services
Phone: 805 477-5311
Email: Judy.Webber@ventura.org

Date Submitted to OCAP: _____

Date & Person Submitted to at the local County Agency:
_____

Please report on the Citizen Review Panel's activities per the items below and submit your response to CDSS, Office of Child Abuse Prevention via the Strategies Consultant no later than November 15, 2010.

1**. County Profile** (OCAP will provide current data from current annual report)
General Demographics
Ethnic make-up of county
Household income

2. Panel Activities
A. Panel structure and development

I. Membership (**Work plan Goal #1**)

Have there been any changes in membership or panel composition during the reporting period?

Please discuss any activities the panel has engaged in specific to the recruitment of panel members to reflect community demographics and support creating or maintaining a diverse panel.

During this start up year as a CRP, the Committee recognized the need for membership expansion to include: expansion

Faith Based Membership
Caregiver Community including Foster and Relative Care
Parent Partners

Current recruitment activities have included inviting the local CYC Youth representative to the CRP/CSOC meetings. Discussing the inclusion of parent consumers and reaching out to parent advocate groups. Currently CYC Leadership is determining the feasibility of a youth member joining the CRP.

The current panel is comprised of both public and private partners who bring a variety of expertise in the child welfare system, either in service provision, monitoring or design. Members currently include former client/ Parent Advocate, Ventura County School District, Behavioral Health, Public Health, Juvenile Court Judge, Probation Agency, local service providers, Human Services Agency, representative from the Child Abuse Prevention Council.

II. Panel Training (**Work plan goal #2**)

Please elaborate on the on-going orientation trainings of new CRP members.
In addition, please describe any training activities the CRP has engaged in this past year as a means of on-going panel development.

The Ventura County CRP has engaged and successfully completed the development of an infrastructure that will support ongoing recruitment and orientation activities as well as support the ongoing workings/ subcommittees of the CRP. Guiding Principles were established and approved by the CRP. An orientation manual is currently in the last stages of revision and is expected to be approved and utilized July 2010.

As a means of on-going trainings, the CRP had numerous presentations from Community Based Organizations providing services to youth placed out of home in Ventura County. These presentations allowed the committee to understand the various services provided, map potential overlaps in services and streamline a process for understanding private provider service provisions including referral criteria.

The Panel Chair participated in the All CRP meeting held in Sacramento June of 2010. A presentation was made to the CRP after this meeting on the National CRP initiative.

Several members of the CRP participated in a California Youth Connection presentation, including the screening of the local CYC efforts to develop a video to present to Group Home providers that focuses on living in out of home care from the consumer perspective.

III. Panel self evaluation activities – (**Work plan Goal #6**)

Has the panel undertaken any activities to help it assess its own performance during the reporting period? If so briefly describe these activities and the findings. If not, please describe when and how the panel will assess its performance.

To date, the Panel has not engaged in a self evaluation process, due in part to the newness of the panel. Plans to use the Panel Evaluation instrument have been discussed and tentatively set for December 2010.

3. CRP objectives (Work plan Goals #3 & 5)

For **each objective identified** in your work plan please report on the following:

- Any demographics related to the CRP objective(s).
- Description of the review activities and any technical assistance provided (example = case review, focus group, data review, State (Strategies) CRP consultant) to support your review work.
- Findings based on review activities.
- Formal Recommendations based on findings (for County and State).
- Follow-up on the prior years annual report recommendations including any County and State responses to the recommendations.
- Discuss how the CRP recommendations will be disseminated to county, state officials as well as the public and how the CRP will handle any comments made.
- Future Directions –Briefly discuss the activities that the panel expects to undertake during the 2010/2011 program year- with an emphasis on July-Sept 2010 activities. (Please attach an updated work plan for next year)

The Committee has developed a 3 year strategic plan which supports the local SIP. There are a total of 3 workgroups that are responsible for completing the review activities outlined in their current work plan, reporting back to the general membership and make recommendations back to the Department of Children and Family Services.

Currently the focus of the strategic plan is to review components of the local Child Welfare Systems, within Children and Family Services, Probation Agency, Department of Behavioral Health and local providers, targeting re-entry, recurrence and length of time in care. The focus of the CRP workgroup activities has been targeted toward the length of stay aspect and the in county placement system for children who are at risk of, or have been victimized by abuse or neglect, or have other special needs that require out of home care in a residential or group home placement

These activities directly correlate with the Ventura County Systems Improvement Plan Target Three stated below:

Decrease the percent of children who emancipate or turn age 18 during a 12-month period who had been in care 3 years or more at emancipation or reaching age of majority (Child Welfare Only).

Data illustrating Ventura County's functioning in this area reported in Safe Measures show that 62.5% of children who emancipate or turn age 18 had been in care 3 years or longer in the 12-month period between July 1, 2009 and June 30, 2010. Ventura County's current performance remains above the National Standard for this measure (37.5%) and above statewide performance (59.4%)."

Workgroup One:

Permanency for children encompasses all children that have reunified with maternal and/or paternal family members, taken into guardianship by maternal and/or paternal family, kin or foster parents or any other caretaker that has a relationship with the child and adoption by any of the above. Long term foster care is not considered permanency. This workgroup is interested in researching barriers to permanency that may exist due to a child being placed with their siblings.

Review activities included research in understanding how permanency is defined in the child welfare system as well as reviewing current C-CFSR data. In addition, the committee developed the following data mining questions. Consultant Erika Felix, UCSB, is currently involved in facilitating a prospective study, at the early recommendation of this committee and will be reporting her findings to this committee as part of the second year work plan. No recommendation made at this time from this workgroup.

A. Of the children identified in item C1.3 how many had a concurrent plan from the beginning of their case?
B. Of the children identified in item C2.4:
    1. who were not yet legally free, what percent were placed as a sibling set?
    2. who were not yet legally free, what percent had siblings who were legally freed during the same time period?

3. who were not yet legally free, for what percent was guardianship/adoption being considered?
4. what percent would have had a plan for guardianship/adoption had they not been part of a sibling set?

C. Of the children identified in item C.3:
1. not discharged to a permanent home, what percent were placed as a sibling set?
2. not discharged, what percent had siblings who were discharged to a permanent home?
3. not discharged, for what percent was guardianship/adoption still being considered?

D. Of all children in foster care since Jan 1, 2008, during the selected 12 month period who were in care for at least eight days but less than 12 months, what percent had more than 2 placements due to being placed with sibling sets?

E. Of all children in foster care since Jan 1, 2008 during a selected 12 month period who were in care for at least 12 months but less than 24 months:
1. and having more than 2 placements, what percent had a concurrent plan leading to permanency?
2. and having more than 2 placements, what percent remained in long term foster care?

F. Of the children identified in item C4.3:
1. what percent had a permanency plan?
2. what percent went into long term foster care instead of a permanent home?
3. due to the stability of the current placement?

Workgroup Two-

Focus of this workgroup was to determine/assess outcome measures currently in use by all programs that reflect permanency, safety and well being.

Across Ventura County there are a variety of entities providing services to foster youth. Some are government agencies, some are community based organizations, some are individuals (foster parents, kinship parents), and some are private business people (group home owners). Toward that goal, our committee realized that we need some basic baseline information (i.e., how are we doing so far for foster youth – how many who enter the system exit in to a permanent type arrangement?). We also realized that it would be helpful, ultimately, to ensure that all providers are collecting the same information (and possibly in the same manner.) Therefore, we launched our initial foray in to ascertaining outcomes across the county.

The review activities included:

- Developed the survey outcome measure survey tool
- Created a list of constituents from whom to collect data
- Contacted each group (created a list of contact people from each group

- Co-facilitated a Focus Group process for Group Homes to collect information/surveys

Findings: Initial results suggest very little (if any) standardization across out of home care providers.- including who is measuring what AND regarding what Instruments are being used or how things are being counted.

We need to provide more information to various groups (such as Group Homes) about why we value data and regarding what outcomes we are particularly interested in (i.e., safety, permanence, well being).

Formal Recommendations based on findings

Given that the local Department of Children and Family Services, Probation Agency and the Department of Behavioral Health provide oversight of the local out of home care providers, the CRP recommends the following to these agencies, with the goal of reducing the length of stay in out of home care and increasing the permanency of placement for Ventura County youth.

7) Develop a mechanism to continue to collect base line information from all providers in Ventura County on data measurement they are keeping.
8) Use IPERC and other government structure components to get "buy in" from out of home care providers regarding the need to measure outcomes and collect data.
9) Reach out to people who do not know what they are collecting (i.e., group homes) and help them to figure out what they are already doing.
10) Conduct focus groups to ascertain what is manageable for various types of providers (group homes, government agencies, private nonprofit CBOs, etc.)
11) Establish 2-4 shared outcomes that will be collected across all agencies in the County
12) Use Agency 101 (or Wrap Summit) for year 2012 to launch standardization in data collection

<u>Work Group Three</u>

The focus of this workgroup was to review, local group homes in order to assess their role in a ‘continuum of care’ that promotes community- based, family- involved , best-practice services that address the specific needs of Ventura County youth. These review activities align with the goal s of reducing the length of stays **and** maintaining “placement” youth within county outline in the current SIP.

In April 2010, a focus group was facilitated with Group Homes/Residential Treatment Centers administrators the report was reviewed by agency staff from the respective placing agencies. (***Report is attached***.)

Findings and Recommendations

I. Costs associated with Enrichment Activities for Youth

Findings: Hardship for provider in paying for activities

Recommended Action:

1. Invite Children's Auxiliary Liaison to an IPERC provider meeting to review procedure for obtaining reimbursement for approved costs.
2. Send mail out to caregivers caring for youth age 16-18 to inform them of support resources for ILP.
3. Post information on ILP website for direct access to providers and others involved with youth
4. Encourage group home providers to contact local youth ministries & youth programs that are willing to pick up, supervise and drop off youth.
5. Survey providers already providing outside services how they are providing enrichment activities currently.

II. Dedicated Time for Networking with County Group Home Providers

Findings: Providers could benefit from time to share with each other program components or new community resources

Information: Quarterly meeting held for Group Home Providers is an existing forum to share information.

Recommended Action:

1. Dedicate time on IPERC provider agenda for information sharing.
2. Providers can gain support from IPERC administration for copying and other support as needed.

III. Barriers to Obtaining Employment for Youth

Findings: Obtaining employment for youth utilizing Work Force Investment (WIA) Act programs is difficult.

Information: A review of these provider contracts was completed to indicate (WIA) contracts are performance based programs with multiple outcome areas. Contracts are in the process of being awarded for FY 2010-2011.

Recommended Action:

1. Make contact with new providers for FY 2010-2011 to understand referral, eligibility process and required commitment in order to properly prepare providers and staff to refer and secure the enrollment/acceptance of youth in WIA employment and training programs.
2. Refer employment issues to California Youth Connection, adult supporters group and other board serving youth for networking purposes
3. Ensure all youth have a Foster Youth identification Card.
4. Explore SSI Ticket to Work, ARC, or youth organizations that might be willing to provide “internships” to youth to help build work ethic and experience.

IV. Behavior Management in Group Home Placement

Findings: There appears to be some gaps between Group Home Staff and respective placement staff regarding individual Group Home's points and level/behavioral system. Note: Not all facilities use points and level/behavioral systems.

Recommended Action:

1. Obtain official operating procedures from Group Home Providers for information sharing
2. Include points and level/behavioral system in placement assessment/information tool guide to be used when conducting group homes placement program reviews. (Planned)
3. Remind providers that staff needs to model appropriate behaviors. Talking about sex and drugs in front of youth is not appropriate, nor is certain media (TV, movies, games). Youth often bond with staff, so their influence on behavior cannot be underestimated.

V. Mental Health Services in Group Home Placement (in Ventura County)

Findings: There appears to be frustration among providers in obtaining mental health services for Medi-cal eligible youth.
Information: Not all Group Home providers utilize the VCBH Child Welfare subsystem for mental health services. The providers to make efforts to access Options Clinics have indicated frustration with the process for access specifically the assessment and assignment period. Note: Some facilities utilize contracted clinical staff to provide mental health services.

Recommended Action:

1. Obtain a process and referral map to providers to access mental health services for VCBH Child Welfare Subsystem

VI. Discharge Planning from Group Homes to Less Restrictive Placements

Findings: Criteria to "step down" a youth from a Group Home is not known or agreed upon or known. Group Home providers have received various time frames and conditions. Example has been "youth need to be out in 3 months" yet there is not a matching behavioral criterion to facilitate the discharge.

Recommended Action:

1. Develop behaviorally based discharge criteria
2. Identify the resources current and needed to discharge Group Homes
3. Develop Training for staff and Group Home Providers to use criteria
4. Train staff and Group Home Providers in discharge criteria.
5. Encourage family members to visit the group home regularly to participate, prepare, observe and develop positive family interactions. (Develop family friendly criteria.) If a youth does not have family, include an adult the youth has connected with.

4. Public in-put (Work plan Goal # 4)

Briefly describe any public input that the panel obtained during the reporting period and how this input was taken into consideration when making your final recommendations for this annual report.

If you will be obtaining public input after this annual reports recommendations are developed and published briefly describe your public input process and outline the time frames for this process.

The Ventura County CRP-CSOC Annual report will be disseminated to Parent Consumers including both Biological and Foster Parents, coordinated by Parents United. The local chapter of the California Youth Connection will be provided the report for review and comment. In addition, the report will be posted on the Ventura County Partnership for Safe Families and Communities, which also serves as the regional CAPC website. An email address has been set up to collect all comments issued regarding the report. All comments will be reviewed by the CRP and will be taken into consideration when determining future activities and recommendations.

5. Attachments
Please attach the following documents to this report:

- ❖ Updated roster of Citizen Review Panel Members, including their affiliation
- ❖ Quarterly Budget update for July 1, 2010 to September 30, 2010
- ❖ Minutes of the panel's meetings for the July 1, 2010 to September 30, 2010 quarter. If the panel utilizes committees, please attach the minutes, if any, of these committees
- ❖Updated Scope of Work for the coming years panel activities 2010/2011
- ❖ Please submit a statement of the panel's expenditures for the 2009/2010 program year.

Please email this report to **OCAP by November 15, 2010**, including the name, email address and phone number of the person who can be contacted should there be questions regarding this report.

	MEMBER NAME & AGENCY	AGENCY ADDRESS	E-MAIL ADDRESS
	AGUAYO-SALDANA, DIANA HSA	855 Partridge Drive Ventura, CA 93003	Diana.Aguayo-Saldana@ventura.org

	MEMBER NAME & AGENCY	AGENCY ADDRESS	E-MAIL ADDRESS
	BENNETT, KRIS Aspira Foster Family Agency	1838 Eastman Avenue #100 Ventura, CA 93003	kbennett@aspiranet.org
	COLLINS, MARYELLEN United Parents	391 South Dawson Drive, Suite 1A, Camarillo CA 93012	mecollins@www.unitedparents.org
	DAVIS, LEAH United Parents	391 South Dawson Drive, Suite 1A, Camarillo CA 93012	leahdavis@verizon.net
	DOBROSKY, SELETA Public Health	2125 Knoll Drive #200 Ventura, CA 93003	Seleta.Dobrosky@ventura.org
	FRIEDLANDER, DAVID Kids & Families Together	856 E. Thompson Blvd. Ventura, CA 93001	TheDavid@aol.com
	GRILL, DIANA VC Public Health	2125 Knoll Drive #200 Ventura, CA 93003	Diana.Grill@ventura.org
	GONZALEZ-SEITZ, NICHOLLE Interface Children Family Services	1305 Del Norte Road #130 Camarillo, CA 93010	ngonzalez@icfs.org
	JOHNSON, GINA Probation		Gina.Johnson@ventura.org
	KUSSIN, JODY ***Casa Pacifica***	975 Flynn Road Camarillo, CA 93012	jkussin@casapacifica.org

	MEMBER NAME & AGENCY	AGENCY ADDRESS	E-MAIL ADDRESS
	LACHBERG, LETICIA CFS	855 Partridge Drive Ventura, CA 93003	Leticia.Lachberg@ventura.org
	MARTINEZ, ELAINE CFS	4245 Market Street, #204 Ventura, CA 93003	Elaine.Martinez@ventura.org
	MARTINEZ-CURRY, ELAINE The Partnership	P.O. Box 7306 Ventura, CA 93003	emcurry@aspiranet.org
	MIRANDA, CRISTINA California Youth Connection	Casa Pacifica 1722 S. Lewis Road Camarillo, CA 93012	cmiranda@casapacifica.org
	PRINGLE, PETER - Chair Behavioral Health	72 Moody Court Thousand Oaks, CA 91362	Pete.PringleAventura.org
	SHAHANDEH, LOUANNE CFS Consultant	2928 Woodflower Street Thousand Oaks, CA 91362	l.shahandeh@att.net
	SHERRY, STEVEN VCBH	1911 Williams Drive # 200 Oxnard, Ca 93036	Steven.Sherry@ventura.org
	SINGER, LESLIE Casa Pacifica	1722 S. Lewis Road Camarillo, CA	lsinger@casapacifica.org
	WELBOURN, LAURA **Ventura County Schools**	VCOE Spec. Pop. 550 Airport Way Camarillo, CA 93010	Lwelbourn@vcoe.org
	WEBBER, JUDY – Co-Chair Children and Family Services	855 Partridge Drive Ventura, CA 93003	Judy.Webber@ventura.org

	MEMBER NAME & AGENCY	AGENCY ADDRESS	E-MAIL ADDRESS
	WEST, LYNNE Big Brothers, Big Sisters	445 Rosewood Suite Q Camarillo, CA 93010-5931	lwest@bbsvc.org

VENTURA COUNTY CITIZEN'S REVIEW PANEL / CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING
July 20, 2010 – Minutes

Members Present:
Diana Aguayo-Saldana, Human Services Agency
Jody Kussin, Casa Pacifica
Pete Pringle, Ventura County Behavioral Health
Maryellen Collins, United Parents
Gina Johnson, Probation Agency
David Friedlander, Kids and Families Together
Nicholle Gonzalez-Seitz, Interface
Elaine Martinez, Children and Family Services
Diana Grill, Ventura County Public Health
Steven Sherry, Ventura County Behavioral Health
Laura Welbourn, Ventura County Schools
Judy Webber, Children and Family Services

Guests: **Donna Kuonen, Children and Family Services**
Leticia Lachberg, Human Services Agency
Leslie Singer, Casa Pacifica

Meeting Facilitator: Pete Pringle

1. Meeting Called to Order at 8:05 a.m. Introductions took place around the table.

2. Approval of the Minutes from previous meeting. The minutes from May 18, 2010 were unanimously approved.

3. CFS Staffing Update – Judy

Judy announced that she would be assuming the role of co-chair of CSOC due to the recent resignation of RayNelle Williams. Everyone wished RayNelle well on her new professional endeavors.

Leticia Lachberg added that she would be attending the CSOC meetings in place of Cheryl Binkley during Cheryl's six week leave of absence.

Gina Johnson also added that Terri Hart would be coming back as Probation's representative as she will be switching to a different role.

4. Governance Structure – Judy

Wraparound Subcommittee – MaryEllen expressed her concern regarding WIT not having any type of oversight and that it was important that the community be able to partake and have a voice at this forum. As a result of this discussion it was determined that WIT would be re-established as a workgroup that reported out to CSOC/CRP.

WIT Membership was identified as follows:

Probation
SELPA
CFS
BHD
Providers – Wraparound, CMFRT
HSA – Contracts & Program
Parent/Family Voice
CYC

MaryEllen will contact Fran Arner Costello from SELPA to ask if she would like to be responsible for taking the necessary steps to reactivate the WIT Committee. Mary Ellen will provide a progress update at the next CSOC meeting.

Discussion ensued regarding the identification of additional workgroups or committees that were or needed to be included as subcommittees to CSOC. They were identified as follows:

1. IPERC
2. WIT – Operational Issues

   WRC – Program Implementation
   - Identify Operational Issues

   } Wraparound
3. Agency Program Report Outs – Agency 101 = Yearly Product

a. Casa Collaborative – Pete explained that the Casa Collaborative meets to discuss new services, challenges, barriers, etc regarding Casa Pacifica Operations. BHD and Casa Pacifica managers are in attendance.

After a brief discussion, it was unanimously decided that the Casa Collaborative group did not have to report to CSOC.

A rolling calendar will be created that will identify when each subcommittee is scheduled to report to CSOC and will be provided to each CSOC member and workgroup chair for their information.

5. IPERC Report – Elaine

Elaine reported that minutes to IPERC, PAC and Group Home Provider sub-committee meetings are available to anyone who may want to see them and they are to let her know if they would like them forwarded to them.

She briefly reported that IPERC is currently working on their charter. Discussions also took place regarding not all group home providers submitting their quarterly reports so they decided to create a standardized report template that could easily be filled out by the providers.

6. CWDA Postcard Campaign – Judy

Judy handed out postcards from Protect Our Children Our Future Coalition and asked that they participate by filing them out as every one of them will be delivered to the Governor's office by July 31, 2010. The postcards will be used to advocate funding to child welfare and foster care services in the budget.

7. National Mental Health Awareness Day Resource Materials - Louanne

Louanne informed everyone that CFS had received resource materials to support the National Mental Health Awareness Day. Everyone was asked to take as many as the materials back with them to their offices to encourage their staff to use art to help children to communicate their feelings. Items included activity booklets, pamphlets, brochures and crayons.

8. Workgroup Report Outs - All

Item tabled to the August meeting.

9. OCAP CRP June Meeting Report – Louanne

Louanne reported that RayNelle attended the OCAP meeting in June where a Citizen Review Panel 101 presentation was provided. Louanne stated that all counties in California are ahead of the game. Louanne asked CRP/CSOC members if they wanted their contact information to be sent to the National Citizen Review group based out of Kentucky. Due to the amount of emails sent out by this group, the CRP members decided that Louanne should screen the materials recieved and forward those identified by her as necessary information.

10. Workgroup Breakouts – All

Members went into their workgroups to continue to work on their assigned goals, strategies and milestones.

11. Miscellaneous – All

Donna Kuonen announced that there are currently (8) Wraparound openings.

Next Meeting – August 17, 2010, 8 a.m. at Casa Pacifica Community Based Services, 975 Flynn Road, Camarillo, CA 93012, Training Room 3

VENTURA COUNTY CITIZEN'S REVIEW PANEL / CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING
August 17, 2010 – Minutes

Members Present:
Diana Aguayo-Saldana, Human Services Agency
Kris Bennett, AspiraNet
Jody Kussin, Casa Pacifica
Pete Pringle, Ventura County Behavioral Health
Maryellen Collins, United Parents
Gina Johnson, Probation Agency
David Friedlander, Kids and Families Together
Nicholle Gonzalez-Seitz, Interface
Elaine Martinez, Children and Family Services
Diana Grill, Ventura County Public Health
Steven Sherry, Ventura County Behavioral Health
Laura Welbourn, Ventura County Schools
Judy Webber, Children and Family Services
Elaine Martinez-Curry, The Partnership

Guests: **Donna Kuonen, Children and Family Services**
Leticia Lachberg, Human Services Agency
Joelle Vessels, Interface Children Family Services
Louanne Shahandeh, CFS Consultant
Cristina Miranda, CYC

Meeting Facilitator: Pete Pringle

Meeting Called to Order at 8:05 a.m. Introductions took place around the table.

Approval of the Minutes from previous meeting. The minutes from July 20, 2010 were unanimously approved.

Subcommittee Updates - All

Louanne stated that this item should have been taken off the agenda but none the less she handed out a copy of SIP Target 3 – CRP Objectives (Work plan goals 3 & 5) and explained that this information was taken from the annual report. She asked members to please provide any demographics related to the CRP objective(s), description of the review activities, findings based on review activities, formal recommendations based on findings (for County and State), follow-up on prior years annual report recommendations, discuss how the CRP recommendations will be disseminated to county, state officials as well as the public, and future directions.

Louanne informed everyone that the annual report to OCAP is due to the state on October 15, 2010 and therefore will be reaching out to subcommittees for their recommendations by early September. Any questions regarding subcommittee work plans should be forwarded to Louanne.

CYC Update - Judy

Judy introduced Cristina Miranda, President of Ventura County Chapter of California Youth Connection (CYC), and expressed her enthusiasm about Cristina participating as a member of CSOC. Cristina will be attending CSOC meetings on a regular basis and will work on gathering the knowledge of CSOC's work and how CYC can benefit from this collaboration.

Currently, a nationwide movement exists on increasing the voice of youth and families at various types of state, county and public forums. Judy explained that she saw Cristina's attendance at CSOC as a perfect opportunity for CYC to promote the participation of foster youth in policy development and legislative change to improve the foster care system, and strive to improve social work practice and child welfare policy.

Judy informed everyone that CYC recently had a viewing of a video that they produced regarding sensitivity and trust with the target audience being group home providers. Cristina was asked to bring the video to next month's meeting so that the group could have the opportunity to view it as well.

CWDA Update/Info - Judy

Judy reported that at the recent CWDA meeting she attended in Sacramento, a memo was passed out regarding an Overview of the CMHDA and CWDA Proposed Action Plan, Rev. July 26, 2010. The memo was issued by the County Mental Health Directors Association in collaboration with the County Welfare Directors Association of California. The Action Plan focuses on this primary goal: *Every child*

in the foster care system, and children formerly in care, will receive timely specialty mental health services when needed, regardless of their county of placement.

Judy also handed out an SB 785 flow chart that was given out a previous CSOC meeting which illustrated the authorization for Out-of-Plan Services for Children in Foster Care, Kin Gap, and Adoption Services process. The group was asked to review the document against the proposed action plan. After reviewing the document, it was agreed that the process flow chart needs to include additional information regarding proper notification for placing and receiving agencies when making referrals. The document will be considered a work in progress until the missing pieces are filled.

A discussion ensued regarding which county agency needs to report to the receiving county of those clients requiring specialty mental health services. Everyone agreed that specific protocols need to be established regarding who needs to be contacted and by whom. Pete added that Candace Jacobsen also known as the Authorization Unit is currently the contact person at the Behavioral Health Department for mental health referrals.

Judy suggested that a small workgroup be formed in order to begin the work on establishing proper protocol and/or policies /if and when the proposed action plan by CMHDA and CWDA is implemented. Pam Fisher volunteered to chair the workgroup; however, she stated that it would behoove them to first be able to understand the issue(s). Next step would be to determine who would partake in the workgroup and establish a meeting schedule.

Group Home Patches was another item of discussion at the CWDA meeting. Apparently there have been some concerns with certain group homes requesting supplemental funding in additional to regular board and care funds. Judy asked that Probation, BHD, and CFS adopt an agreement of saying no to “Patches”. The three agencies were in agreement.

There is also a proposed budget trailer bill containing language on reworking RCL rates and a proposed moratorium on New Group Home Licenses. More information to come as it is received.

Pete stated that 26.5 mental health services need to be monitored more closely to ensure appropriateness of serve, improve outcomes and prevent excessive length of service. Therefore, it is extremely important for agencies to work closely with the school districts on the IEP process. He informed everyone that VCBH and SELPA will be providing training to staff in the fall regarding this issue. Also, the status of VCBH's responsibility in the IEP process remains uncertain at this time as there is a chance that the responsibility can be handed back to the schools next year.

-Chief Probation Officers of California (CPOC) Update – Gina Johnson

Gina provided information that more than likely youth committed to Department of Juvenile Justice will be paroled to Sentencing County. Parolees will include more serious offenders committed for 707(b) WIC (murder, assault with a deadly weapon, etc).

SAAG Report Update - Leticia

Leticia provided a copy of the Children's Services Oversight Committee Summary Report for June 2010. She went through and explained the various data graphs stating that the data was for CFS only. Data included: Total Youth in Group Home Placement, Total Youth in Wraparound, and Group Home Location by Type, Group Home Admit and Discharges, Group Home Length of Stay, Exits to Permanency, In Care 3 Years or Longer – Emancipated or Turned 18, and Placed Together with all Siblings in Care.

Judy added the importance of focusing on trends rather than on point in time data.

Leticia will continue to work with Kris Bennett offline to modify the last three graphs illustrating permanency, long term placement, and number of siblings placed. Pete also asked Leticia to work with him on graph changes pertaining to his workgroup.

SB 785 Process Check - Louanne

See CWDA Update/Info Above.

Annual Report Recommendations - Louanne

See Subcommittee Updates Above.

Governance Structure - Judy

Judy passed around copies of the governance structure that represents the various county committees and who partakes in them. She reached out to Cristina Miranda and asked her to think about where her organization would best fit into the structure and then asked her to bring back the information to a future meeting.

Included in the structure are: Community Commission for Ventura County, IPC, ICMC, Blue Ribbon Commission, and CSOC. The Operations Review System consists of IPERC, WRC, WIT Review Committee and Agency Partner Reports.

Louanne will work with Jody Kussin on a new governance structure schematic that would capture the continuous working connectivity of all the groups involved.

WIT Reinstatement - Judy

MaryEllen informed Judy that Fran Arner-Costello from SELPA would like a personal invitation from Judy to take the lead on reinstating the WIT committee. Judy, Pam Fisher, and Louanne will work on the WIT Committee Charter once the committee is reinstated.

Miscellaneous- Pete

It was unanimously decided that the time of the CSOC meeting would be changed to 9:00 a.m. commencing in September 2010.

Workgroup Breakouts - All

Members went into their workgroups to continue to work on their assigned goals, strategies and milestones.

Next Meeting – September 21, 2010, 9 a.m. at Casa Pacifica Community Based Services, 975 Flynn Road, Camarillo, CA 93012, Training Room 2

VENTURA COUNTY CITIZEN'S REVIEW PANEL / CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING
September 21, 2010 – Minutes

Members Present:

Diana Aguayo-Saldana, Human Services Agency
Kris Bennett, AspiraNet
Jody Kussin, Casa Pacifica
Pete Pringle, Ventura County Behavioral Health
Maryellen Collins, United Parents
Gina Johnson, Probation Agency
David Friedlander, Kids and Families Together
Elaine Martinez, Children and Family Services
Diana Grill, Ventura County Public Health
Steven Sherry, Ventura County Behavioral Health
Laura Welbourn, Ventura County Schools
Elaine Martinez-Curry, The Partnership
Lynne West, Big Brothers Big Sisters
Steve Elson, Casa Pacifica
Pam Fisher, Ventura County Behavioral Health

Guests:

Donna Kuonen, Children and Family Services
Louanne Shahandeh, CFS Consultant
Cristina Miranda, California Youth Connection (CYC)
Anitta Talley, Parents with Purpose
Ramila Sloane, Parents with Purpose

Meeting Facilitator: Pete Pringle

Meeting Called to Order at 9:05 a.m. Introductions took place around the table.

Approval of the Minutes from previous meeting. The minutes from August 17, 2010 were unanimously approved.

CRP State Annual Report - Louanne

Louanne passed out the draft Citizen Review Panel Annual & Recommendations Report (2009-2010). She stated that the report is not complete as of yet as she still needs a report from Workgroup 1 and also needs recommendations from Pete Workgroup Three.

The Annual Report is due to the state by November 15, 2010 and therefore the draft needs to be completed by October 15, 2010. The draft will be brought to the next CSOC meeting on October 19, 2010 for final review.

OCAP will be using portions Ventura County's report to incorporate into the state report.

Family Finding – Jody Kussin

Jody expressed her enthusiasm for their Family Finding Program at Casa Pacifica which is coordinated by Jill Borgeson. She stated that the program began on July 1, 2010 and that they have had several success stories.

Jody shared with the group the story of a child who has been able to be re-connected with the biological father. The father is currently interacting with his child via Skype and is very much interested in having the child be a permanent part of his life. Currently, they are working on placing the child in Missouri so he can be closer to his father.

Jody explained the importance of the three placing agencies continuing to referrals to Family Finding as they have been very successful with connecting children with relatives. She stated that Jill and her team work very diligently on searching for biological parents, relatives, etc. in order to begin to build relationships between the child and relatives.

Jody expressed her enthusiasm for the Family Finding Program and is very hopeful that they can reunite many other children with relatives that are willing to partake in their lives, and encouraged the three placing agencies to continue to make referrals. To date, during the first quarter 18 children have been in the program.

Family Finding brochures are available in English and Spanish and are available to anyone who might want them.

Miscellaneous – All

The next WIT Meeting will take place on Monday, October 18, 2010 at 11:00 a.m. at Behavioral Health.

MaryEllen provided a brief update on Parents with Purpose. She began by introducing Anitta Talley and Ramila Sloane who are parent partners who will be attending future CSOC meetings.

MaryEllen shared several resource workbooks that are made available to families that cover several areas such as anger management, resolving family conflict, etc.

Pete reported that the AB 3632 training that BHD had was very successful and well attended. SELPA members, teachers, etc. were in attendance and there will be one more training session next week.

Louanne reported that the September PAC meeting focused on realigning their business structure and a follow up meeting is scheduled for October 14, 2010.

Elaine Martinez-Curry distributed flyers that contained information on the Community Summit for Violence Prevention taking place on Saturday, November 13, 2010 at the Oxnard Performing Arts Center. The summit will cover violence prevention efforts in Ventura County and will feature Dr. Roberto Vargas, author of Family Activism. She encouraged everyone to participate and to cascade information to any other person that may be interested.

Workgroup Breakouts - All

Members went into their workgroups to continue to work on their assigned goals, strategies and milestones.

Next Meeting – October 19, 2010, 9 a.m. at Casa Pacifica Community Based Services, 975 Flynn Road, Camarillo, CA 93012, Training Room 2