

**California Department of Social Services
Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project**

**Annual Progress Report
July 31, 2008**

This annual progress report covers the period from July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008, and provides an overview of implementation tasks, county project activities, and evaluation efforts for the California Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project (CAP) as required in Section 5.4 of the federal Waiver Terms and Conditions.

I. OVERVIEW

On March 31, 2006, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) received approval from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) for the CAP. The five-year demonstration project allows counties flexibility to use federal and state foster care maintenance and administrative funds, that were previously restricted to pay for board and care costs and child welfare administration, to provide direct services and supports. This flexible funding waiver demonstration supports child welfare practice, program, and system improvements for early intervention, reunification efforts, and reduction in out-of-home placements.

The intent of the CAP is to test a capped allocation strategy of federal Title IV-E and State General Fund Assistance and Administrative costs and supports to improve safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes for children and families. Foster care savings that occur as a result of the waiver demonstration will be reinvested by the counties in child welfare services program improvements. The CAP will target IV-E eligible and non IV-E eligible children ages zero through 19 currently in out-of-home placement, or who are at risk of entering or re-entering foster care.

Alameda County and Los Angeles County are the participating counties in the project. Together these two counties had approximately 27,000 children and youth in foster care at the start of implementation on July, 1, 2007 which represents 37 percent of the 75,327 foster care cases statewide in California.

The CDSS is required to conduct an independent, third party evaluation consisting of a process evaluation, outcome evaluation, and a cost analysis. The CDSS has contracted with the San Jose State University (SJSU) Research Foundation to conduct the evaluation with Dr. Charlie Ferguson as the principal investigator for the project.

The purpose of the evaluation is to determine whether and how changes in the funding structure for foster care will impact the functioning of county child welfare systems and relevant probation systems. Using an interrupted time series design, the evaluation will look at patterns in key child welfare outcomes and expenditures prior to the start of the demonstration and then will track changes during the course of implementation.

II. ACTIVITIES TO IMPLEMENT DEMONSTRATION

During the first year, the CDSS cross-divisional implementation team completed fiscal implementation activities and performed overall project monitoring and oversight. Significant state-level efforts for implementation of the CAP included developing new flexible funding mechanisms, new budget allocations, a two-county claiming system, and programmatic changes to support county project strategies and initiatives.

Implementation of the remaining fiscal system activities were completed during the first half of the year. Development of a new IV-E Waiver access database for combining administrative and assistance funding and producing output reports for the counties was completed for the claiming system. The IV-E Waiver database is a key administrative component to operate the CAP and required considerable staff and information technology (IT) resources to implement. A number of issues delayed the process including late approval of the 2007-08 state budget, hiring for new fiscal staff, the departmental IT services request process, year-end closeout workload, and the temporary redirection of the database programmer to other department IT priorities.

The CDSS Fiscal Workgroup provided assistance to staff in working through the details to split out a two county claiming system from the standard 58 county claiming system. Periodic conference calls with the counties were conducted to resolve any potential issues or problems. The database application has been tested; draft reports have been generated for review by the counties; and the system is operational with manual process backup. A training demonstrating the database was held in Sacramento for the counties on February 25, 2008. Database enhancements have been completed and on-going activities include modifying and maintaining the database claiming system.

The Federal Foster Care IV-E 1 Reports for the first three quarters of the project year have been submitted via electronic submission. Because the FC IV-E 1 Report Part 4 for Demonstration Projects was not sufficient to provide the specific information for the CAP, a new Addendum was created to provide pertinent information regarding the expenditures for the CAP. An Addendum for each County is submitted electronically as an attachment to the Foster Care IV-E 1 Report. The Addendum is similar to the regular IV-E 1 Report, which displays the expenditures by category. Reports were submitted on December 28, 2007, for the September 2007 quarter (July through September), on March 27, 2008, for the December 2007 quarter (October through December), and on July 1, 2008, for the March 2008 quarter (January through March). The first two quarters included actual total costs for the CAP. In addition, the CDSS County Fiscal Letter (CFL) No. 07/08-36 Waiver Allocation Letter was issued on January 18, 2008.

Program staff activities throughout the year included the CDSS waiver project management and coordination; participation in the CDSS Fiscal Workgroup; project meeting support; monthly monitoring with county waiver coordinators; resolving waiver related program issues, gathering and reviewing project data reports; federal reporting; policy development and technical assistance provision for county projects; and program/fiscal support for the Residentially-Based Services initiative implementation under the CAP.

The Research and Evaluation Bureau (REB) staff activities included monitoring and overseeing the evaluation contract and evaluator activities; review and approving invoices; researching outcome data source issues; participation in the CDSS Fiscal Workgroup and coordination of fiscal data sources for the evaluation; and support for the State/County Evaluation Workgroup meetings. This workgroup consists of CDSS staff, the evaluator, county representatives, and interested stakeholders.

The REB also participates in a joint conference call with program staff and the evaluator to discuss the status of ongoing project tasks and to resolve any issues. Specific areas identified for follow-up included the new federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) composite measures and probation outcomes data source issues. Probation data source resolution included assessing the validity and reliability of the Probation Placement Monthly Caseload Statistical Report (FC23) and confirming the methodology for new probation data available in the Child Welfare System/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) Dynamic Report System. Other REB activities were obtaining access and understanding the methodology for electronic CDSS fiscal reports (CEC and CA 800) and executing budget adjustments in the evaluation contract.

As a result of administrative changes at Sonoma State University, the initial evaluation contract was terminated on February 28, 2008. A new evaluation contract with the SJSU Research Foundation began on March 1, 2008. The termination and creation of these contracts created a workload for REB staff during the year. Dr. Charlie Ferguson remains the principal investigator and the scope of work and deliverables are the same as the initial evaluation contract. At SJSU the evaluation will be carried out under the School of Social Work and will increase the resources available to the evaluator to support the evaluation. As a result of the extended timeframe for changing over the contract, the evaluator scheduled completing certain activities until the new contract was fully executed and the move to the SJSU location was completed. The evaluator is in the process of personnel recruitment for his research staff position.

State and County Representatives, along with the evaluator, participated in the Twelfth Annual Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Projects Meeting in Washington, D.C. on June 16-17, 2008. California and Florida co-presented a session on "Strategies for Re-Orienting Funding".

The CDSS has identified fiscal challenges related to the current State of California budget crisis which may impact the CAP. The Governor's Fiscal Year 2008-09 May Revision estimated a \$17.2 billion gap in funding. Based on the pending proposed budget reductions, the two CAP counties may experience a reduction in their General Fund (GF) capped allocation. The loss of GF should not impact the state's ability to provide the required match for Title IV-E funding. The budget negotiations between the Governor and the Legislature have extended beyond the deadline for adopting the state budget. As of this time, the 2008-09 Budget has not been approved, so the final GF reduction has not been determined.

Both counties have expressed concern that the proposed reductions to their GF capped allocation will reduce the available reinvestment dollars and thereby impede the progress that can be achieved to improve the child welfare system under the CAP. At this time, neither of the participating counties has stated that the loss of GF would prohibit the county from continuing in the waiver demonstration.

Updated Waiver Demonstration Key Tasks and Timeline

A. General Project Implementation

Tasks/Activities	Deliverables	Timeframe
Establish a support structure and implementation team for the waiver demonstration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CDSS established IV-E Waiver Unit CDSS cross-divisional implementation team Develop specialized workgroups with areas of responsibilities/ tasks 	<p>Completed July 2004</p> <p>Completed January 2005</p> <p>Completed April 2006</p>
Provide information to the general public, counties, public/private community partners, and stakeholder groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CDSS documents (ACL, ACIN, CFL) CDSS - CFSD Webpage Email address established Conference calls and email communications Press releases and public presentations County Forums 	April 2006 and ongoing
Establish Operating Authority for the Waiver Demonstration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion of language in budget trailer bill 	Completed June 2006
Develop Cost Development Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish claiming codes for State and counties Submit Plan to DHHS 	<p>Completed May 2, 2006</p> <p>Completed June 30, 2006</p>
Initial Design and Implementation Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receive counties plan proposal summaries Submit IDI report to DHHS 	<p>Completed July 21, 2006</p> <p>Completed August 11, 2006</p>
State/County Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop provisions for State General Fund, opt-out, State waivers, and fiscal claiming Complete Draft MOU Issue MOU to counties Signed and executed MOU 	<p>Completed January 2007</p> <p>Completed January 2007</p> <p>Completed May 4, 2007</p> <p>Completed June 2007</p>
State Waiver Requests Under the State Demonstration Project Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify statutes/regulations to be waived from County Plans and any county waiver requests Complete the formal order of the director Publish legal notice Notification to State Legislature 	<p>Completed May 2007</p> <p>Completed June 26, 2007</p> <p>Completed June 30, 2007</p> <p>Completed July 2007</p>
Implement Waiver Demonstration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verify all pre-implementation activities are completed Confirm counties are fiscally and programmatically set-up to begin the county project implementation activities Implement by July 1, 2007 	<p>Completed June 2007</p> <p>Completed June 2007</p> <p>Completed July 1, 2007</p>

B. Allocation, Claiming, and Reporting Procedures

Tasks/Activities	Deliverables	Timeframe
Develop Federal and State Allocations for Participating Counties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreed upon federal allocation DHHS approval for federal allocation Agreed upon proposed State allocation subject to State budget Release county allocation letters 	<p>Completed February 2007</p> <p>Completed June 2007</p> <p>Completed December 2006</p> <p>Completed January 18, 2008</p>
State/County Claiming and Reporting Policy and Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop county claiming and reporting procedures Complete State reconciliation to allocations Quarterly federal reporting 	<p>Completed January 2008</p> <p>Completed August 2007</p> <p>Completed June 2007</p>
Cost Allocation Plan Amendment (As Required)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare amendment to State Cost Allocation Plan for any IV-E waiver demonstration Submit any amendments to DHHS for approval 	No amendment needed.

C. County Selection and County Implementation

Tasks/Activities	Deliverables	Timeframe
Solicit County Interest in Waiver Demonstration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue initial ACIN to solicit interested counties Receive Letters of Interest Hold interested counties forum and conference calls 	Completed April 2006
Solicit Letter of Intent from Counties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issue ACIN providing information and intent submission requirements Receive Letters by due date 	<p>Completed June 30, 2006</p> <p>Completed July 21, 2006</p>
County Five Year Implementation Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide instructions and technical assistance to intent counties for developing County Five Year Plan Due date for final plan submissions to CDSS Review and approve plans 	<p>Completed August 2006 through March 2007</p> <p>March - April 2007</p> <p>Completed May 2007</p>
County Training and Technical Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conference Calls Fiscal training as needed Individual county technical assistance consultation Field site visits as requested 	<p>August 2006 and ongoing</p> <p>June 2007 and ongoing</p> <p>April 2007 and ongoing</p> <p>April 2007 and ongoing</p>
Implementation Start Date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> County-level project implementation begins State project monitoring begins 	<p>July 1, 2007</p> <p>July 1, 2007 and ongoing</p>

D. Evaluation

Tasks/Activities	Deliverables	Timeframe
Initial Evaluation Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan submitted to DHHS 	Completed February 3, 2006
Evaluation Contractor Specifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit specification for contractor agreement to DHHS for approval 	Completed May 30, 2006
Evaluator Contract	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executed Evaluator Contract New Executed Evaluation Contract with SJSU Research Foundation 	Completed October 23, 2006 Completed March 1, 2008
Final Evaluation Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluator consultation with participating counties Evaluator to finalize the evaluation plan incorporating the County Five Year Plans Submit final evaluation plan to DHHS for approval DHHS plan approval 	December 2006 and ongoing Completed April 20, 2007 Completed June 18, 2007 Completed June 29, 2007
Initiate County Evaluation Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site Visits to Counties County TA and Training to initiate evaluation activities Baseline Data Collection Complete Institutional Review Board Submissions (CHHSA and Sonoma State University-SSU) Bi-monthly State/County Evaluation meetings 	December 2006 and ongoing Completed April - June 2007 January - June 2007 CHHSA exemption request approved April 2007. SSU request approved June 2007. December 2006 and ongoing
Observation Data Collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data Collection Begins Initial Baseline Site Visit Follow-up Site Visit 	July 1, 2007 and ongoing Completed July through September 2007 Completed April through June 2008
Interim Evaluation Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit interim evaluation report 60 days after the 10th quarter 	February 28, 2010
Final Evaluation Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit final evaluation report six months after project ends 	December 31, 2012

E. DHHS Submissions

Tasks/Activities	Deliverables	Timeframe
<u>Quarterly Report Submissions</u>		
IDI Report – 1 st Quarterly Progress Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit IDI Report within 120 days 	Completed August 2006
2 nd Quarter Progress Report (Period 8/06 – 9/06)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit quarterly report 	Completed October 30, 2006
3 rd Quarterly Progress Report (Period 10/06 – 12/06)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit quarterly report 	Completed January 30, 2007
4 th Quarterly Progress Report (Period 1/07 – 3/07)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit quarterly report 	Completed April 30, 2007
5 th Quarterly Progress Report (Period 4/07 – 6/07)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit quarterly report 	Completed July 30, 2007

Semi-annual Progress Report Submissions Beginning July 1, 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upon implementation submit reports twice a year 1 st Annual Progress Report	Completed January 31, 2008 (Period 7/1/07 -12/31/07) Completed July 31, 2008 (Period 7/1/07 – 6/30/08)
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III. STATUS OF THE DEMONSTRATION

Alameda County

A. OVERVIEW

Alameda County Social Services Agency, Department of Children and Families Services (Alameda DCFS) and the Probation Department will use the spending flexibility under the CAP for a series of reinvestment strategies to better direct resources to prevention, early intervention, and long-term family-based support strategies that serve youth and their caretakers with localized, familial, and neighborhood-based support services. Strategies and activities identified for implementation parallel the continuation and expansion of current county initiatives and projects.

Reform initiatives already in place in Alameda County include: the Assessment Center, the Alternative Response System, Team Decision Making (TDM), Kinship Centers, Family Finding, and Transitional Age and Emancipation Youth Services. In addition, Alameda County is one of five designated Family to Family (F2F) anchor sites that receive technical assistance and grant resources within California.

The Alameda DCFS five-year improvement outcomes are to:

- Reduce new entries to foster care by 25 percent.
- Increase percentage of children whose first placement is in a relative/non-relative extended family member (NREFM) home by 50 percent.
- Increase the percentage of children in relative/NREFM placements at any given point in time by 25 percent.
- Decrease the percentage of children in group home placements at any given point in time by 50 percent.
- Increase percent of children who reunify with their family within 12 months of first entry to 60 percent.
- Decrease children who re-enter foster care after reunification by 20 percent.
- Increase the percent of children adopted within 24 months by 20 percent.
- Increase the percent of children exiting to guardianship within 24 months by 20 percent.

In the county five-year plan Alameda DCFS identified the phase one strategies that would be implemented based on outcome improvement and cost effectiveness:

- One Child, One Placement - Child Welfare Workers (CWW) Relative Approvals;
- Enhanced Family Finding;
- Expand Reunification TDMs;
- Expand CalWORKS - Child Welfare Services Linkages Pilot Project; and,
- Implement Permanency Concurrent Planning TDMs.

During the first year, additional strategies in the county plan were also implemented. Alameda DCFS moved forward with expanding the Alternative Road to Safety (ARS) Program all ages and countywide and creating a voluntary diversion program.

B. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES

Alameda DCFS established two core workgroups that meet monthly to discuss, plan and oversee waiver implementation strategies:

- The Implementation Team plans and implements waiver activities in the Department and Division and consists of the Department's senior managers and representatives from finance, data and research, and probation.
- The Executive Team monitors the implementation process, the budget, and addresses barriers to implementation and consists of the Department Head, Agency Director, Finance Director, Probation Chief, Assistant Chief and Department Division Directors.

The Implementation Team has been working with the Casey Family Programs to determine the level of support needed to develop a data warehouse as well as staff liaison positions within Alameda DCFS and the Probation Department.

A Title IV-E Waiver Community Forum was held in Alameda County on July 15, 2008. This forum provided a progress update on the waiver and highlighted the strategies implemented during the first year and included presentations by both DCFS and Probation. The event was co-sponsored by Alameda DCFS and the Interagency Children's Policy Council of Alameda County. Participants included CDSS Director John A. Wagner and Dr. Charlie Ferguson, the state evaluator. Attendees included community providers, stakeholders, county staff members, and CDSS representatives.

Local Evaluation and Data Tracking

For internal tracking the county has put together a series of data dashboards to assist in monitoring the effectiveness of the planned activities and monitoring overall caseload and placement numbers. County data dashboard reports are contained in Appendix A. Refinements to the dashboard continue to be made and include adding Probation data and outcomes. In addition, the county is working closely with Casey Family Programs to build a data warehouse that would be implemented by 2010.

C. IMPLEMENTED STRATEGIES AND EXPENDITURES

DCFS

During the first year, Alameda DCFS used the enhanced fiscal flexibility to fund a number of new programs including:

- ARS prevention program to reduce probability of children entering care.

- Voluntary diversion to non-child welfare relative guardianships.
- Front-end family finding to support initial placements with relatives.
- Expanded Kinship Support to better support relative placements.
- Enhanced County Counsel activities to reduce time children are in care.
- New ARS-Family Maintenance program targeted at reducing re-entry rates.
- Creation of a waiver coordinator position at the Division Director level.

These strategies and implementation activities for the first year are described below.

EXPAND ANOTHER ROAD TO SAFETY

Another Road to Safety (ARS) is the differential response system for Alameda County. ARS diverts low to moderate risk families who have been referred to the Child Abuse Hotline (but do not legally warrant an emergency response investigation) to community-based, intensive family support services. ARS is an existing prevention program using community-based organizations (CBOs) to provide direct services to youth and families. The goal is to reduce the number of families that enter the child welfare system.

With a focus on early intervention and community partnerships, this program better addresses the concentrated pockets of poverty and the associated lack of resources in communities that are the higher-volume areas for Alameda DCFS. Data has identified that a significant number of referrals and removals are in areas of East Oakland, West Oakland, and South Hayward. At such, families in these areas require complex and coordinated services for problems related to poverty and educational gaps. There are insufficient services and resources for mental health, child-care, substance abuse, housing, employment training, and education to address these issues. Alameda DCFS seeks to concentrate service programs in these areas to achieve better outcomes.

The ARS program targets families at-risk of entering foster care in the focus zip-code communities. Families served by this program are considered low to high risk for child abuse on the Structured Decision Making tool and are provided with up to nine months of intensive in home support. This includes initial assessments, developmental assessments for children, case management. Family plans and referrals to appropriate resources are developed based on the outcome of these assessments. Additionally, families are visited weekly by a Family Advocate to address areas of need identified in the family plan. Entry into the program is limited by referral from Alameda DCFS. Clients are referred from the Child Abuse Hotline, the Emergency Response Unit, and TDM meetings. Client to staff ratio is 13:1 to allow staff to work intensely with families.

As part of the CAP, Alameda DCFS has taken on the funding of the existing ARS program, at an annual cost of \$1.5 million. Early in the year, Alameda DCFS began the process of determining how to expand this preventive program to all ages, countywide. As part of this process, Alameda DCFS considered ways to extend the ARS model to allow better support for reunified families, and thereby reduce the number of re-entries into the system. As part of this redesign effort Alameda DCFS consolidated all the programs for family support and maintenance services to foster care youth under one

comprehensive program and added the ARS-Family Maintenance (FM) pilot program. Alameda DCFS developed a plan and has completed the cost analysis and feasibility study for this new FM component that will expand the current ARS model into formal Family Maintenance cases.

Prior to July 2008, Alameda DCFS completed the Request for Proposal process, selected the CBO provider awards, and received approval for provider contracts for the redesigned consolidated program that includes the expanded ARS program, Kinship Support Services program, and new ARS-FM program. The ARS expansion includes an increase in the service age range, services to families who have reunified, and potentially an expansion in service areas beyond the current zip codes. The annual cost of the ARS-FM program is \$1.9 million and the pilot is expected to implement in September 2008. The annual cost for expanded kinship support services is \$200,000.

VOLUNTARY DIVERSION PROGRAM

A new prevention program has been developed to divert families from formal court dependency to voluntary/informal relative placements. Under this program, Alameda DCFS has entered into an agreement to support voluntary diversion of children to non-child welfare relative guardianships. The costs associated with this are fees paid to Legal Assistance for Seniors (LAS), a community based organization. In December 2007, Alameda DCFS finalized a Memorandum of Understanding with LAS to support family members in obtaining legal guardianship without being involved in formal court dependency. The legal guardianship gives the caregiver the ability to apply for (non-needy) Temporary Assistance to Needy Families benefits and Medi-Cal for the child. Annual costs for this program are up to \$100,000.

ONE CHILD, ONE PLACEMENT – RELATIVE APPROVAL PROCESS

Under the CAP, Alameda DCFS is implementing the *One Child, One Placement* philosophy with the relative approval process at their Assessment Center, which will allow for the ability to more immediately approve relative caregivers. DCFS's plan to have the staff who work in the placement services section take responsibility for all placement activity in the department was implemented in October 2007. This practice change ensures that once placement is sought for a child it is with the understanding and expectation that the first placement should be the last placement, that relatives should be considered first, and that the least restrictive setting should be sought if there is no relative coming forward.

Alameda DCFS continues to re-evaluate the effectiveness of this change in practice through weekly/monthly data reports on placement types and numbers of children in placement. Under this strategy Alameda DCFS has reduced dependence on and higher use of emergency foster homes. Additionally, DCFS completed a forum in February 2008 with the county licensed foster parents. The forum was to inform the county licensed foster homes of the practice changes under the CAP and to begin the formal process of eliminating the emergency versus long term placement distinction.

The *One Child, One Placement* strategy is part of placement redesign efforts currently underway in Alameda County to ensure children are at the appropriate level of out-of-home placement care. Other initiatives supporting this goal include: Group Home (GH) Family Preservation Unit, an effort to reduce the number of youth in congregate care; Dumisha Jamaa, a collaborative effort with local CBO's to provide permanence for foster youth; and work with faith based partners on foster parent recruitment efforts.

Placement policy changes occurring under the redesign included: all placement activity is conducted in the placement services section; a TDM is always held before any placement occurs; a Program Manger approval is required for all group home placements; a Program Manager approval is required for all Foster Family Agency (FFA) placements for children zero to five years old; and a Child Welfare Supervisor approval is required for all FFA placements for children six to eighteen years old.

During the year, Alameda DCFS has been working on the structure and protocol for meeting to review children currently placed in group home placements. Future efforts to occur over year two include developing and implementing a group home screening tool to ensure youth are placed in group homes only when appropriate.

ENHANCED FAMILY FINDING

Alameda DCFS is establishing Family Finding efforts as soon as a child enters foster care to increase the number of known potential relative caregivers at intake. Under this program, Alameda DCFS has assigned five new staff members to support more intensive efforts to locate kin when children are still in the assessment center (first 23 hours after removal), and thereby better supporting the goals of making fewer placements per child per year and making a higher percentage of our placements with extended family members. In addition, Alameda DCFS has purchased Accurint search software to aid in Family Finding efforts. In December 2007, Alameda DCFS hired the additional clerical staff to begin front end Family Finding efforts as soon as a child enters foster care. Ongoing activities include staff training and procedures for the Family Finding efforts. Alameda DCFS has continued their Family Finding efforts for children placed in congregate care with the same model used for the front end Family Finding. Future development includes a proposal for creation of a Family Finding Unit in the Intake Services Program. Annual costs for expanded Family Finding are \$400,000.

INCREASED REUNIFICATIONS, PERMANENCY, AND AFTER CARE SUPPORTS

Under the CAP, Alameda DCFS is working to increase successful reunifications, increased timely adoptions and guardianships, and to develop supports for all foster care exits. These efforts include expanding TDM's, implementing ice breaker meetings, expanding foster care eligibility, and developing community based after care services for reunified and adoptive families. Progress to date includes the following activities.

Beginning in July 2007, Alameda DCFS began funding \$300,000 annually for expansion of County Counsel activities, with the goal of reducing the time children are in care by assuring DCFS is able to engage in court processes at the earliest appropriate moment.

In July 2007, strength based posters for TDM rooms were created highlighting the SDM concepts to serve as visual reminders for staff and as information for families highlighting what is the focus when determining removal or return of a child to a family.

F2F icebreaker meetings are being implemented to increase reunifications. Icebreakers support frequent visits between foster parents and birth parents in foster homes, parent homes, churches, and other familiar settings that can lead to increased chance of reunification. Alameda DCFS has developed the ice breaker protocol and are training staff and facilitators, which they have renamed CHAT (communication history and transition). The first phase was implemented in February 2008 and Alameda DCFS is now receiving technical assistance from their Annie E. Casey Foundation F2F grant to work on cooperation from county licensed foster parents in the CHAT efforts. The first CHAT is scheduled to occur no later than September 2008.

In August 2007, Alameda DCFS determined the number of TDM facilitators needed to expand reunification TDM's and to implement permanency TDM's and is currently exploring costs and positions needed to complete the expansion and implementation. Emancipation conferences were implemented in July 2007 and DCFS is now looking into whether they can fold emancipation conferences in with Permanency TDM's.

Efforts during this first year for transitional youth included increased outreach to eligible youth not currently engaged in Independent Living Program (ILP) services. In addition, as noted above, Alameda DCFS has completed the contract process for the ARS expansion that includes expansion of the current program to all age groups, but also implementation of after care services to help sustain permanent placements with parents, guardians, and adoptive parents.

WAIVER COORDINATION

Alameda DCFS is funding a waiver coordinator position at \$200,000 annually to take the lead on waiver planning and system redesign efforts. Alameda County seeks to build on the benefits from the CAP by strengthening families, community and agency capacity building, increasing staff morale with the opportunity to create lasting improvement with families, and operating with predictable revenues and expenditures.

An MOU amendment was finalized in June 2008 with Casey Family Programs to provide the support needed to develop a data warehouse as well as to hire staff liaisons within Alameda DCFS and Probation. An increased partnership between Alameda DCFS and Probation occurred over the first year of project implementation. In addition, Alameda DCFS has engaged in increased collaboration with community providers and faith based organizations and continues to seek feedback on current programs and future planning from their partnership with the Youth Advisory Board.

Probation

Under the CAP, Alameda County Probation is implementing strategies to reduce unnecessary out-of-home placement recommendations/referrals and to reduce the average monthly rate of out-of-home placements for probation youth. Initial Probation implementation has focused on increased support to supervision areas that make the placement recommendations, including Family Preservation Unit, General Formal Supervision, and Community Probation. This change will assist in transitioning opportunities for early return to a primary caregiver and family as well as providing a continuum of services for children and youth returned to caregivers and their family.

As part of CAP implementation Probation has begun restructuring their Placement Services and is working on data, program/policy, and education efforts including:

- Collecting data on primary sources and the number of out of home placement recommendations.
- Develop criteria/guidelines to determine a minor's removal from home.
- Develop review and approval process for home removal recommendations including a checklist of prior intervention efforts and contacts with the supervisor prior to the court report recommendation.
- Re-deploy and increase placement Deputy Probation Officers (DPOs) to improve caseload ratio thus allowing enhanced scrutiny of DPO's actions to broker services.
- Increase utilization of Family Preservation and Community Probation Units.
- Expand awareness of alternate dispositions including Camp Sweeney, Family Preservation, Community Probation, and related enhanced CBO involvement.
- Educate Bench Officers on efforts to treat minors in least restrictive environment while providing improved wrap around services to primary caregivers and family.
- Re-educate vendor's service delivery time frames with improvement monitored by field DPO.

During this first year, reorganization of the Placement Unit resulted in more DPOs monitoring youth in placement. Placement DPOs report average time in placement has decreased from nine and a half months to seven and a half months in behavioral modification programs due to increased DPO contact and monitoring of the case.

Program and policy changes that were initiated over the year included: developing written criteria/guideline to determine a minor's removal from home, including training for all Unit Supervisors and Directors; revising the approval process for Placement to include first-line Supervisor and Director approval; obtained acceptance for a Youthful Offender Block Grant program design to include providing increased supervision for youth that are struggling with reunification following placement; and, began a new service to notify youth how to clear a bench warrant without returning to custody, to avoid possible escalation of a court order.

In addition, staff were provided with information on community supports for the minor/family, including Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) providers, Delinquency Prevention Network providers, County Alcohol and Drug Network providers, and other Community-based services to utilize in stabilizing a minor within his family/community. Future Probation efforts will include implementing multi-disciplinary teams to assess failing youth; expanding field units engaged in providing front end, preventative services; and continued planning and development of PRISM, the new case management system.

Los Angeles County

A. OVERVIEW

Under the CAP, Los Angeles County will use the financial flexibility to make strategic investments in structural and programmatic reforms needed to better serve children and families. These reform efforts build on significant systems improvement efforts already underway among county departments and their community partners in Los Angeles County. The five reform efforts implemented by Los Angeles Department of Children and Family Services (LA DCFS) to achieve improved safety, permanence, and reduced reliance on out-of-home care are: Points of Engagement (POE), Structured Decision Making (SDM), Team Decision Making (TDM), Concurrent Planning, and Permanency Partners Program. In addition, Los Angeles County is also one of the F2F anchor sites.

The county identified universal and specific service needs and requirements for dependent and delinquent youth. Efforts to improve outcomes have targeted specific foster care populations under the project. Since the implementation of the CAP on July 1, 2007, the out-of-home caseload for LA DCFS has decreased by 10 percent (from 23,561 to 21,194). County fact sheets with caseload data covering the year one are contained in Appendix B. In addition, the average monthly population for probation youth residing in group homes decreased over 15 percent from the previous fiscal year.

Both county departments are operating under a sequenced implementation of service delivery enhancement based on feasibility, speed of implementation, target population, and breadth of estimated impact.

LA DCFS identified three first sequence priorities:

- Expansion of Family Team Decision Making (FTDM) Conferences;
- Focused Family Finding and Engagement through Pilot Specialized Permanency Units at Three Regional Offices; and,
- Up-front Assessments on High-Risk Cases for Domestic Violence, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Issues.

Over the first year, LA DCFS has provided direct services to children and families under its three first sequence priority initiatives. FTDM has been expanded to provide Permanency Planning Conferences (PPC) to youth in group home care in an effort to

expedite permanency for these youth. Under this expansion, over 200 FTDM PPCs have been conducted for identified group home youth. Youth Permanency Units have been staffed, and social workers in these units are carrying reduced caseloads of high-need youth with no identified permanency resources, in an effort to locate and connect these youth with permanency resources. Approximately 400 up-front assessments have been conducted in the LA DCFS Compton Office, and since May 2008, up-front assessments have begun in two additional regional offices, Metro North and Wateridge.

In the county's June 2007, implementation plan submitted to the Board of Supervisors, the Probation Department identified two first sequence implementation priorities:

- Enhanced Cross-Systems Case Assessment and Case Planning
- Expansion of Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST) and Functional Family Therapy (FFT)

Two additional efforts identified in Probation's five-year plan are also underway:

- Restructure of Placement Services
- Utilization of Aftercare Support Services

Probation has provided direct services under the priority initiatives implemented over the first year. Probation identified two evidence-based practices, FFT and MST, as a program priority and has already expanded their population to include placement youth. To date, these programs have been working with 132 placement youth and their families. Placement Aftercare Community Transition Services (PACTS) has been implemented and is serving these same youth and families to further support reunification efforts. In addition, Probation has entered into a contract with the California Institute for Mental Health (CiMH) for formal FFT training and certification for Deputy Probation Officers (DPOs) and includes additional training for DPOs in the promising practice of Functional Family Probation/Parole (FFPP).

B. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES

Both LA DCFS and Probation have established Title IV-E Waiver Teams led by Waiver Coordinators. The teams work in concert with one another and participate in bi-weekly Waiver Management Team meetings to provide project coordination and updates and to discuss next steps. Both Departments attend monthly implementation meetings with Casey Family Programs and monthly County Steering Committee meetings with the Chief Executive Office (CEO) and have made numerous presentations to the Board of Supervisors, Board of Supervisors Justice and Children's Deputies, and to the Children's Commission and CEO. During the first year, the Departments jointly sponsored two Waiver Learning Organization Group (LOG) community stakeholder meetings. These meetings provided LA DCFS, Probation, community partners, and other stakeholders with a CAP update, progress during year one, and feedback for future planning efforts. The first kick-off meeting was on July 27, 2007, and the second meeting was recently held on July 14, 2008. LA DCFS Waiver newsletters with information about the LOGs and waiver outcomes are in Appendix B. The appendix also includes a reference map with county office location and service planning areas.

DCFS

In addition to these joint efforts, LA DCFS is involved in the following planning/oversight efforts specific to their project priorities:

Monthly Waiver Coordinator Call with CDSS

The DCFS Waiver Coordinator participates in monthly conference calls with Alameda County's Waiver Coordinator and the CDSS Waiver Project Manager.

DCFS Executive Team

The team is led by the Director and meets on a weekly basis; the Waiver Coordinator provides an update, and upper level administration discusses CAP activities, status and challenges.

DCFS Waiver Team

The team meets on a regular basis to discuss progress of the CAP initiatives and day-to-day operations.

State/County IV-E Fiscal Workgroup

Periodic conference calls led by CDSS with Los Angeles and Alameda Counties are held to discuss fiscal issues related to CAP implementation.

State/County IV-E Evaluation Workgroup

Periodic conference calls led by CDSS with Los Angeles and Alameda Counties are held to discuss evaluation issues related to CAP implementation.

Family Team Decision Making Roundtable

The TDM Manager meets on a monthly basis with TDM facilitators countywide to address policy, practice and operational issues and may use the process as a vehicle to address the implementation of permanency planning conferences.

PPC/TDM Facilitators

Meets bi-weekly to address implementation of PPC/TDMs and outcomes related to PPCs held for youth in group homes.

Youth Permanency Implementation Workgroup

Meets bi-weekly to address policy and practice issues and to expedite implementation of the Youth Permanency Units. A subcommittee, addressing Data Outcomes specific to the Permanency Units, also meets on a regular basis.

Up-front Assessment

Meetings take place with the Compton Office and Shields for Families to address the implementation of up-front assessments, data collection and outcomes evaluation. Similar meetings have taken place with the addition of the Metro North and Wateridge Offices and their contracted up-front assessment providers.

Residentially-Based Services (RBS) Workgroup

Meets monthly to discuss reform of residential care, including efforts to reduce the length of stay, for LA DCFS and Probation youth. A subgroup, the RBS Collaborative, meets semi-monthly to create a redesign proposal for residential care for LA DCFS and Probation youth. These efforts provide an opportunity to update RBS providers and receive feedback on barriers, successes and opportunities.

Other meetings are ongoing with the Children's Commissioners, Board Offices, and CEO budget analysts specific to LA DCFS project components.

In planning for year two, LA DCFS will determine if the first sequence priorities are proving to be successful and should be continued and/or expanded, and if one of the other previously identified initiatives in the county five-year plan should be implemented. This assessment will include input generated from the convening of LA DCFS, Probation and its community partners and stakeholders at the July 14, 2008 LOG.

Probation

Probation has facilitated the following project planning/oversight meetings specific to their project priorities:

Weekly Probation Title IV-E Management Meetings

Meetings to help guide implementation of the CAP Plan and ensure fidelity to the Plan.

Quarterly Group Home Provider Meetings

Meetings are held to address communication needs under the Waiver environment, facilitate communication of the CAP Plan to Probation's group home providers and provide feedback on barriers, successes and opportunities.

Quarterly Group Homes Administrators Meetings

Meetings are held to increase communication during the Waiver project period.

Bench Officers Meetings

Meetings are convened to inform Delinquency Bench Officers of the progress of Probation CAP efforts and to receive feedback from the bench that could be included in ongoing efforts to improve services and move system improvements forward.

Early in year, these meetings informed Delinquency Bench Officers about the CAP Transition Services Unit and solicited their help in transitioning minors from group homes to the evidence based programs (EBP) implementing MST and FFT. EBP providers gave a presentation on the specific components of each program and how the EBP teams will work with Probation youth and families under the waiver.

CAP Stakeholder's Steering Committee (Probation-Specific)

Committee consists of representatives from group home providers, Children's Commission, bench officers, school districts, Public Defender's Office, Department of Mental Health and Probation, and has been charged with assisting Probation's efforts to

align its foster care Placement Operation with the CAP plan and planning and implementation of CAP programs and services.

Other meetings are ongoing with the Children's and Probation Commissioners, Board Offices, and CEO budget analysts specific to the Probation project components.

In planning for year two, Probation, in partnership with CiMH, will implement FFPP training to approximately forty DPOs during the next twelve months. The Probation Steering Committee, Probation managers and various stakeholder groups will be developing and implementing a communication plan that best addresses the needs of the CAP. This body will conduct and review an analysis on the outcome data for Probation's second initiative to determine the level of its success and whether there is a need to further expand this initiative in the second year.

Additionally, the Steering Committee will be reviewing other identified initiatives and possible supervision models in an effort to determine which initiatives and supervision modifications will be implemented next. It has been agreed that implementation will occur as resources are available to support system improvements and administrative infrastructure needs, and in a manner that will build on supporting current programs while providing enhanced services.

Local Evaluation and Data Tracking

During the first year, in addition to the state level evaluation, LA DCFS and Probation began discussions with Casey Family Programs to develop more local evaluation opportunities of the first sequence of CAP initiatives. The Los Angeles Inter-University Consortium Children and Families Research Consortium (CFRC) were part of these discussions. As a result of this process, LA DCFS is now working closely with Casey Family Programs and Dr. Jacquelyn McCroskey of the University of Southern California to implement another local evaluation study of the POE strategy, and will build on the design of Dr. McCroskey's initial POE evaluation from 2006.

The findings from this previous POE evaluation suggest a set of key measures for further process evaluations of service delivery systems that will be utilized in the new local evaluation design. The local evaluation will be closely aligned with another key effort already underway in Los Angeles County, the Los Angeles Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project (PIDP).

The PIDP is a 12-month child abuse and neglect prevention demonstration project intended to create a comprehensive, strength-based, prevention system extending beyond County government and beyond the jurisdiction of any one County department by enhancing existing community based networking systems. The goal of the PIDP is to keep children safe from harm and prevent families from entering, re-entering, and/or experiencing extended stays in the County's health and human services system.

The evaluations of POE and the PIDP are similar enough that many data collection tasks can be merged, especially since prevention evaluation planning built on the original POE evaluation. Because "prevention" has been defined as including families

not known to the child welfare system as well as families referred to the Child Protection Hotline and families with open LA DCFS cases, the broad view of the PIDP also encompasses CAP related activities.

LA DCFS began to track baseline data for the new indicators for California Child Welfare Outcomes and Accountability System (C-CFSR). The Child Welfare Services outcome data is tied to the federal Child and Family Service Review process and the federal outcomes and indicators. The department is also developing a Data Dashboard that will allow for real time tracking of CAP data. The Dashboard is being developed by prioritizing and aligning the Dashboard with the CAP indicators.

LA DCFS also began to analyze foster care caseload movement and expenditures, monitoring caseloads and average cost per case for each placement type. This will allow LA DCFS to better track the reduction in placement expenditures and the effectiveness of the CAP initiatives in meeting CAP goals such as reduced caseloads and length of stay in congregate care.

During the first year, Probation has been working with its internal information technology experts and Casey Family Programs to identify and/or develop technological systems to address the needs of the project. As a result of Probation's inability to access CWS/CMS and because juvenile justice systems have not historically warehoused needed project evaluation data, technological system enhancements are necessary and will promote the ability to draw down baseline and outcome data.

Probation has incorporated many of the CAP data needs into the automated system that will be implemented in FY 2008/2009. Additionally, Probation has continued to work with LA DCFS and the state evaluator in identifying data that is currently available and needed data enhancements. Probation worked with the state evaluator in conducting both internal focus groups and survey to identify baseline data for the evaluation.

C. IMPLEMENTED STRATEGIES AND EXPENDITURES

DCFS

In the first year, LA DCFS expanded the initial strategies/initiatives of FTDM, up-front assessments, and Family Finding and engagement utilizing available flexible funds under the CAP. As of June 30, 2008, the total amount of expenditures incurred for these strategies/initiatives is \$1,439,562. This amount includes salaries and employee benefits in the amount of \$1,027,737, indirect costs in the amount of \$298,044, and services and supplies in the amount of \$113,781.

EXPANSION OF FAMILY TEAM DECISION MAKING CONFERENCES

Under this strategy, LA DCFS is increasing the number of FTDM facilitators available to hold biannual multidisciplinary team conferences for children placed in group homes

and children in foster care for two years or longer with no identified permanency resource. Holding mandatory Permanency Planning Conferences (PPCs) every six months for these priority target populations will ensure that the multi-disciplinary team of professionals, family members and caregivers meets regularly to focus on the urgent need of the child for permanency. Priority will be given to PPCs with youth in lower level group home placements in an effort to carefully assess their needs and move them out of congregate care to the most appropriate, least restrictive setting.

FTDM facilitators were selected for all fourteen specialized positions and became operational in LA DCFS regional offices between January and April 2008. Five LA DCFS offices were delayed in selecting their facilitators due to a shortage of qualified candidates in their area or the need for Spanish-speaking facilitators. The addition of the fourteen facilitators allows for regular PPCs modeled on team decision-making meetings (TDMs) to ensure that a multi-disciplinary team of professionals, family members and caregivers meets regularly to focus on the urgent permanency needs of these youth. Selecting, hiring and training these facilitators constituted an extensive process. In January 2008, specialized facilitators received an intensive five day training provided by the LA DCFS Training Section in collaboration with California State University, Long Beach. Additional training on facilitation is ongoing for all the FTDM facilitators, and LA DCFS receives technical assistance on this from the Annie E. Casey Foundation's California Family-to-Family consultants.

By June 30, 2008, 222 youth in group home placements had a PPC held to focus on their permanency plan. These conferences have resulted in identified plans for 120 children to move to the home of a parent or relative (61 children) or to a reduced level of placement, including foster family agencies, licensed foster homes, or specialized foster homes (59 children). These outcomes are encouraging, and the specialized facilitators will continue to convene PPCs quarterly for these youth to ensure all appropriate actions are taken. There are approximately 1,200 LA DCFS youth in group home placements in Los Angeles, and the goal is to hold a PPC with all of them.

FOCUSED FAMILY FINDING AND ENGAGEMENT THROUGH PILOT SPECIALIZED PERMANENCY UNITS AT THREE REGIONAL OFFICES

Specialized Youth Permanency (YP) units have been established to target the most challenging youth in each office, categorized as high-need, who have no permanency resources and may have the following characteristics: no or limited family connections, multiple recent replacements, heavy substance abuse, recent psychiatric hospitalization and repeat runaways. Workers in these units will have reduced caseloads and extensive training and will utilize family finding and engagement strategies, to best serve the permanency needs of these high-need youth.

YP units carry reduced caseloads of 15:1 and utilize family finding and engagement strategies, including case mining and internet search technologies, to identify and connect youth with extended family members. They receive additional training and support on youth permanence, as well as expert case consultation and high-level

support. Expert consultants continue to train all the staff in these offices to provide a framework of tools on reconciling loss, rebuilding relationships, and supporting belonging. All staff in these offices is being trained on permanency for older youth so the focus of the YP units does not exist in a silo, and so everyone in the office understands and can support the work of the YP units.

The Youth Permanency Implementation Workgroup meets bi-monthly to discuss case criteria, policy issues, protocols, training, and data collection for the Permanency Units. The Workgroup has created formal written policy and protocols for the YP Units. As of April 2008, two regional offices, Metro North and Pomona, have been operational and fully staffed with Children's Social Workers (CSWs) and Supervising Children's Social Workers (SCSWs) at the reduced caseload of fifteen (which is flexible up to 24:1 including siblings and cases close to achieving permanency). The Santa Clarita Office, identified as the third regional office for this pilot, recently identified a SCSW and five CSWs to staff their YP unit, which is currently planned to be operational in August 2008.

Surveys have been conducted in all three offices to identify those youth who meet YP criteria. Survey results indicate that 221 youth met YP criteria in the two operational offices and 129 are currently being served by their YP Units. These 129 youth represent approximately eight percent of the offices' permanency planning caseload. Office-wide surveys will be conducted at least every six months to continue to assess youth who may benefit from the specialization of an YP unit.

UP-FRONT ASSESSMENTS ON HIGH RISK CASES FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

This priority initiative seeks to prevent unnecessary foster care placements through more thorough investigation and assessment of Child Protection Hotline (Hotline) referrals of alleged child abuse and neglect that require special expertise involving substance abuse, domestic violence and/or mental health issues. These assessments are conducted on the target population of families with high-risk Hotline referrals in the Compton Office service area. Experts in substance abuse, domestic violence and mental health services provide immediate, comprehensive assessments, and connect families to treatment and ancillary services in the community. These services allow Emergency Response social workers to make more informed case decisions, and in many cases, allow children to remain safely in their homes.

Since October 1, 2007, LA DCFS has contracted with Shields for Families to provide up-front assessments for the Compton Office. Preliminary data indicate that 400 such assessments have been completed as of June 30, 2008. The outcomes of these assessments are still being evaluated. Since many removals, approximately 35 percent, occur after hours, 24/7 assessment availability for domestic violence, substance abuse and mental health issues is paramount. LA DCFS had planned to use waiver reinvestment funds to expand up-front assessments for the department's Emergency Response Command Post, there were a number of logistical problems which have prevented this from happening to date. Instead, two additional regional

offices, Metro North and Wateridge, have been implementing and utilizing up-front assessments as of May 2008. Due to recent implementation, data from these offices will be available in the next progress report.

Probation

ENHANCED CROSS-SYSTEMS CASE ASSESSMENT AND CASE PLANNING

Probation is working to enhance its placement case assessment and case planning process. This will aid in connecting Probation youth with the most appropriate setting at the onset of their foster care experience, taking into consideration their mental health, educational, medical and behavioral issues. Cross-systems case assessments, case planning, and appropriate placement recommendations will be provided by Probation in conjunction with the Department of Mental Health (DMH) contracted Education Specialists. This initiative will promote appropriate placement decisions and collaboration; enhance case planning efforts; increase placement stability and decrease delays in critical treatment during the transition from detention to out-of-home care.

Early in the first year, Probation experienced delays implementing enhanced cross-systems due to DMH's need to extend the timeline to hire three DMH staff and contracting issues related to the educational component. Probation and Casey Family Programs worked together in developing an approach to address the educational component until the issues were resolved.

Probation and DMH have implemented the first phase of this initiative by identifying and developing the tools to be used in the Cross-Systems Case Assessment. During the initial phase of implementation, one DMH staff was identified and co-located with Probation staff to lift the operational components of this initiative. Within the next 90 days, both Probation and DMH will have the necessary staff in place, trained and conducting assessments.

EXPANSION OF MULTI-SYSTEMIC THERAPY AND FUNCTIONAL FAMILY THERAPY

Probation has adopted MST and FFT as first line treatment approaches to serve youth at risk of removal from home and youth returning from congregate care. These services are delivered in the home rather than in a clinic or residential treatment setting. Probation has leveraged existing MST and FFT resources and is utilizing a blended funding stream strategy (grant funds, IV-E reinvestment dollars, and Medi-Cal) to provide the expansion of MST and FFT services to Probation placement youth.

Since the implementation of the CAP, Probation has provided MST and FFT services to approximately 132 youth and families. Youth identified for program participation were Probation Placement youth previously residing in congregate care who were released to the care and custody of their parents with MST or FFT services. The average length of stay in care for these youth was approximately five months. It has been projected that the average length of stay in congregate care for Probation Placement youth prior to the

CAP was twelve months. It is premature to provide baseline projections as the program is in an early stage.

In June 2008, Probation entered into a contract with the California Institute of Mental Health (CiMH) to obtain certification for three in-house Probation FFT Teams. Sixteen Deputy Probation Officers (DPOs) were trained and certified in FFT to serve foster care youth transitioning from group home care back to their homes, support relative/non-relative placements, and support youth transitioning from camp who are identified as high-risk for group home placement. Additionally, CiMH is scheduled to train approximately forty DPOs in Functional Family Probation/Parole (FFPP) within the next twelve months to support the transition from congregate care to the home and community. In community settings, youth are monitored under FFPP. The treatment and intervention focus shifts to creating a more functional environment within the family with whom the youth resides. Research on maintaining and supporting behavior change for troubled adolescents indicates intervention is most effective if promoted within a family context.

Using the FFPP model, DPOs work with families to address the role each member has in generating, and ultimately resolving, problem behavior. Functional Family DPOs work to engage and motivate all family members by creating a balanced alliance with each, and creating a family focus for treatment. Early interventions reduce blame and negativity among family members and instill hope for change. Families are also referred to needed services in the community that match family interaction styles and provide continued support for the family once the youth is no longer on probation.

RESTRUCTURE OF PLACEMENT SERVICES

Probation has begun to restructure its Placement Services Operation and has developed a Steering Committee comprised of relevant County Departments and various community stakeholders. The Steering Committee has established three workgroups, corresponding to the first sequence initiatives and efforts under the CAP: the Cross-Systems Case Assessment Planning Workgroup; the Residentially-Based Services (RBS) Workgroup; and the Transition and Aftercare Workgroup.

The Cross-Systems Case Assessment and Planning Workgroup have drafted a protocol and process for assessing youth coming into group home care. The assessment process will include and emphasize parental input and involvement. In addition, Probation and DMH staff will be cross-trained in the assessment protocol and process as well as the multidisciplinary assessment tools. Similarly, the RBS Workgroup has completed a draft report on standardizing RBS, enhancing family engagement and involvement, and standardizing intake and assessment for group home providers. The Transition and Aftercare Workgroup has drafted a standardized protocol for youth transitioning from group homes that will include a TDM-like process. Closely related, youth leaving group homes will have an aftercare plan and services.

UTILIZATION OF AFTERCARE SUPPORT SERVICES

To improve the quality of aftercare supervision provided to Probation youth, provide critical overall support to the youth and families that are enrolled in FFT and MST, and ensure that youth have a seamless transition from the group home to the home and community, the Placement Services Bureau has established the Placement Aftercare Community Transition Services (PACTS) operation. PACTS DPOs carry reduced caseloads and work in concert with MST and FFT providers. As of June, 2008, sixteen Aftercare DPOs have been trained in FFT and will begin taking cases in July, 2008. In addition, a Group Home Liaison position was developed to assure a seamless feedback mechanism with Residentially-Based (Placement) DPOs, treatment service providers, group home providers and DCFS specifically in the areas of transition and transition/discharge planning.

Implementation Barriers Encountered

Over the first year, both counties identified barriers related to full implementation of the fiscal systems for the waiver. Specifically, an increased workload has been generated by having to use manual systems to capture and track data and funding sources pending completion and full implementation of the CDSS payments database system. Additional challenges were identified by Los Angeles County in the areas of staffing and probation data.

Los Angeles County highlighted the following barriers in implementing the CAP:

DCFS

- Difficulty in the timely hiring and reporting of allocated staff for expanded FTDM and permanency units due to county budgeting and hiring requirements.
- Shortage of staff required to monitor up-front assessment implementation.
- Lack of automated system to track expenditures; therefore, LA DCFS must create separate spreadsheets to accurately identify and manually track data and different funding sources.
- Revenue tracking difficulties as the state does not have a system designed to capture both CAP and non-CAP program costs, it becomes labor intensive to capture both revenue manually.

Probation

- Inability to timely reconcile Probation records and CWS/CMS data due to Probation's inability to access CWS/CMS and electronically access Delinquency Court minute orders. As a result, Probation's Placement Administrative Services Division employed strategies that would address timely reconciliation of Probation records and CWS/CMS data. This was a large undertaking that required researching hundreds of cases and developing needed packets that would initiate the opening and/or closing of placement cases to maintain accurate records. These efforts will

require a significant ongoing workforce effort due to Probation's inability to access CWS/CMS and electronically access Delinquency Court minute orders.

- Inability to warehouse and access foster care data for the mandatory state evaluation. Probation cannot readily access foster care data with its current technology.
- Lack of an automated system to track Probation Placement expenditures. Probation must create separate spreadsheets to accurately identify and manually track data for each Placement case and all case activity to identify projected assistance payment costs and/or reductions as well as numerous trend data.

State Initiatives and Pilot Programs

The spending flexibility under the CAP provides counties the opportunity to test alternate funding models, provide innovative services, and to implement best practices and evidenced based programs. Current state-level efforts being implemented are:

RESIDENTIALLY-BASED SERVICES REFORM

On October 11, 2007, Assembly Bill (AB) 1453 (Chapter 466, Statutes of 2007) was signed into law as the first step in statewide group home reform. This bill directs the CDSS to convene a workgroup of specified public and private stakeholders to develop an operational plan to transform California's current system of group care for foster children or youth, and for children with serious emotional disorders, into a system of RBS. This new legislative initiative allows both CAP counties, at their option, and two other counties or consortium of counties to enter into voluntary agreements with private nonprofit agencies to transform all or part of an existing group home into an RBS program and test RBS models to be implemented concurrently with the plan.

RBS are defined as behavioral or therapeutic interventions delivered in non-detention group care settings. It further specifies that RBS are most effective when used as intensive, short-term interventions when children have unmet needs that create conditions that render them or those around them unsafe, or that prevent the effective delivery of needed services and supports provided in the children's own homes or in other family settings, such as with a relative, guardian, foster family, or adoptive family. RBS interventions includes environmental; intensive treatment; parallel, pre-discharge, and community-based interventions; and follow-up post discharge support and services.

Additionally, under AB 1453, CDSS may approve up to five models of alternative funding for participating counties; requires that the alternative funding model be cost neutral on an annual basis; and limits voluntary agreements to a maximum of five years starting January 1, 2008. The bill also requires CDSS to report during its legislative budget hearings regarding the status of county agreements and the development of the statewide RBS program. The plan is due to the Legislature by January 1, 2011, must be based on previous RBS reform legislative reports, and use the experience of the RBS models that will be tested by participating counties. Further information about RBS reform underway in California can be found at www.rbsreform.org.

Los Angeles County is the only CAP county participating in RBS reform at this time. Under the framework of the CAP, LA DCFS and Probation began working on RBS demonstration project designs to pilot alternative program designs and funding models. LA DCFS submitted a letter of intent proposal to CDSS on April 4, 2008, and was subsequently selected to be a participant county. While Probation has elected not to participate in the initial Los Angeles RBS reform pilot, a placeholder was inserted into the letter of intent to allow Probation's subsequent participation during the pilot period. The model proposed is designed to provide concurrent wraparound services to youth and their families while youth are placed in selected RCL 12 and 14 care group homes for reduced lengths of stay, and ongoing wraparound and community-based care after the youth exit residential care. Funding for concurrent wraparound services will come from savings realized from reduced lengths of stay, and a risk pool will set aside funding for youth with extended stays and unanticipated costs. The Los Angeles County RBS proposal is contained in Appendix B.

CDSS has met with participant counties, including Los Angeles, to address the state's required process and timelines and to provide technical support. LA DCFS will be submitting its program design, including system description and alternative funding model, voluntary agreements and waiver requests, to CDSS by October 17, 2008. County selection, development of RBS plans, and authorized agreements including regulatory and fiscal waivers for the plans is scheduled to be completed by October 2008. Program implementation in the selected counties will start by January 1, 2009.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY INTENSIVE TREATMENT FOSTER CARE PILOT PROGRAM

Under the CAP, Los Angeles County DCFS received approval from CDSS for a State Waiver request to allow foster family agency (FFA) rate flexibility to provide innovative services through a pilot ITFC program. The pilot will develop Intensive Treatment Foster Care (ITFC) beds for 72 children and Multi-dimensional Treatment Foster Care (MTFC) beds for 60 children, as alternatives to group homes. The ITFC FFA's will implement specific trauma-focused evidence based treatment models and MTFC, a highly structured model of treatment foster care, to be funded at the ITFC payment rate.

The Los Angeles Board of Supervisors approved contracts for three ITFC providers for twenty-four beds each and two other providers for sixty beds for MTFC. All five providers signed their contracts in early January 2008. These five contracts are for a total of 132 beds for the two program types. The training requirements for staff and for treatment foster parents have been one factor that has slowed down implementation. DCFS worked very closely with Los Angeles Department of Mental Health (DMH) to provide training opportunities for staff on treatment models. At this point eight of eleven available beds have had children placed in them. Sixteen more beds are in the process of being certified.

IV. EVALUATION STATUS

Evaluation Overview

The primary purpose of the CAP evaluation is to determine whether and how changes in the funding structure for foster care (i.e., ending the entitlement, eliminating eligibility restrictions, and capping the dollar amount in exchange for spending flexibility) will impact the functioning of county child welfare systems and relevant probation systems. The secondary purpose of the evaluation is to assess outcomes for dependent and delinquent children and their families before the implementation of the CAP and after.

The central question to be assessed in the evaluation of the CAP is the following:

What is the impact of a capped, flexible Title IV-E funding strategy on the implementation of the Child Welfare Services System and relevant Probation System, and on federal and State outcomes for children and their families served by those two systems in participating counties?

From this central question flow three sub-questions that guide the three components of the evaluation.

First, the Process Study addresses the question:

What is the impact of a capped, flexible Title IV-E funding strategy on the implementation and operations of the Child Welfare Services System and relevant Probation System in participating counties?

Second, the Fiscal Study addresses the question:

What is the impact of a capped, flexible Title IV-E funding strategy on Child Welfare Services and relevant Probation expenditures in participating counties?

Third, the Outcome Study addresses the question:

What is the impact of a capped, flexible Title IV-E funding strategy on outcomes for children and families in the Child Welfare Services System and relevant Probation System in participating counties?

The evaluation uses an interrupted time series design to guide data collection activities. The time-series design is a quasi-experimental method that accounts for a number of threats to internal validity. However, the design does not allow for statements of causality. Briefly, observations (i.e., data collection) were made prior to the onset of the CAP to establish a pattern of findings within each participating county. Observations are being made over the term of the CAP in participating counties to establish a second pattern of findings. The patterns of findings over the term of the CAP will be compared to the pre-CAP patterns.

Counties are the units of analysis for this evaluation given the broad, systems-wide scope of the CAP. While counties will be implementing discrete interventions as part of their CAP, those individual programs are not the focus of the evaluation. Alameda County and Los Angeles County have self-selected into the CAP based on analyses (policy, fiscal, and programmatic) conducted internally to determine the potential benefits and costs of participation.

Process Study

The process study is divided into two components, the Implementation Component and the County Services Component. The Implementation Component is itself divided into two sections. The first section examines the planning process undertaken by the county departments and CDSS. The second section is focused on the implementation phase of the CAP. The County Services Component is focused on the strategies undertaken by the child welfare and probation departments in each county to improve outcomes for children and families.

The majority of data is being collected during biannual site visits to each of the counties. The initial site visits occurred in the participating counties in July and September 2007. Follow-up site visits began in April 2008 and will be conducted twice a year (between February and May and again between August and November of each year). The last site visits will occur in February 2012. Site visits in Los Angeles County are scheduled to occur over a contiguous number of days to reduce travel costs. Given the evaluation team's proximity to Alameda County, site visits there are arranged over a period of two to three weeks to increase the scheduling flexibility available to the participating departments.

Interviews and focus groups conducted during the site visits explore both the Implementation Component (Planning and Implementation Phases) and the County Services Component of the process study. Due to scheduling constraints, some interviews will be conducted via the telephone. Focus group and interview participants include individuals from participating county departments and CDSS, along with individuals from other entities such as the county juvenile court and community-based service providers. Interviews and focus groups are audio taped and audio tapes are transcribed for use in analysis.

Additional process study data for both components will include relevant reports and documents prepared internally by the participating departments and by external entities such as evaluators. The Implementation Component will also include information collected through a survey administered to frontline/supervisor child welfare and probation professionals to assess their knowledge and perspectives of the CAP. The initial worker-supervisor survey was conducted in the spring of 2008 and will be administered annually over the term of the CAP. The County Services Component will include information from a survey administered to request information on current services provided by the county child welfare and probation departments. The first

survey, to establish baseline, was administered in the fall of 2007 and will be administered annually over the term of the CAP.

Fiscal Study

The fiscal study is focused on determining whether participating counties are able to:

- (a) Reduce their foster care assistance payments from levels preceding the implementation of the CAP;
- (b) Reduce their foster care administration costs from levels preceding the implementation of the CAP; and
- (c) Shift their expenditures from foster care services to non-foster care services after the start of the CAP.

Multiple data sources are being used for the fiscal study. CDSS is providing data from the County Expense Claim (CEC), the CA 800, and the IV-E Waiver database. Relevant county-level data sources are also being utilized. Quantitative fiscal data are being augmented by interviews with key informants such as finance directors and budget analysts. Those discussions will also assist in the interpretation of the state and county information.

Outcome Study

The specific evaluation question of the outcome study asks: What is the impact of a capped, flexible Title IV-E funding strategy on outcomes for children and families in the Child Welfare Services System and relevant Probation System in participating counties, as compared to outcomes prior to the implementation of the CAP? In particular, the outcome evaluation will measure longitudinal changes in the following outcomes: child safety, reunification, adoption, long-term care, and placement stability. In addition, county participation rates will also be tracked. The evaluation will also attempt to include outcomes related to investigation and substantiation pathways that are subsequent to a referral, as well as, additional outcomes related to exits from foster care. Specific outcomes, data sources, and data collection procedures are still being developed.

The primary data source for the outcome study is the Child Welfare Dynamic Report System (<http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/Ccfsr.asp>). The publicly available reports are created by the Performance Indicators Project located at the Child Welfare Research Center, the Center for Social Services Research, at the University of California at Berkeley, and by CDSS. The report preparation conducted by the Performance Indicators Project and CDSS is wholly separate from the CAP evaluation. The case-level source data are drawn from the State's automated Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) and aggregated to the county level.

Activities Completed

Evaluation activities over the first year have been primarily in support of the data collection for the process study component. Activities addressing data sources and data collection issues for the fiscal and outcome studies have also been underway. During year one, the initial site visit and one follow-up site visit including focus groups and interviews have been completed in both counties.

Process Study

In this progress report, a summary of the year's general process study activities are reported first, followed by a description of activities specific to the component or phase.

Two sets of site visits were conducted in Alameda County during this annual reporting period. Focus groups were held during site visits in July and September 2007 with the DCFS and Probation, respectively. Key informant interviews with administrators from both departments were conducted between July and October 2007. The second site visit was conducted in May 2008. Key informant interviews with administrators were conducted between May and June 2008.

Two sets of site visits were also conducted in Los Angeles County during this annual reporting period. The first Los Angeles County site visit was conducted over four days in July 2007. During the site visit, the evaluator conducted key informant interviews and focus groups with administrators and staff from the DCFS and Probation. Several key informant interviews were conducted via the telephone between July 2007 and October 2007. The second site visit was conducted over four days in late April and early May 2008. Key informant interviews with administrators were conducted between May and June 2008.

Key informant interviews were also conducted with relevant staff from CDSS. The interviews took place between September 2007 and November 2007 and were conducted in-person and via telephone.

Focus groups were conducted with frontline staff (child welfare workers and deputy probation officers), supervisors (child welfare supervisors and supervising probation officers), and managers (child welfare program managers and probation managers/directors). Key staff from both departments in participating counties served as evaluation liaisons, working with the evaluator to organize the site visits. The evaluation liaisons were responsible for scheduling the focus groups as well as recruiting participants, seeking to enlist up to ten individuals per focus group. In addition, the liaisons sought to ensure that the various areas of practice (e.g., emergency response, family maintenance, family reunification, etc.) and geographic regions were represented in the focus groups. Focus groups were approximately two hours in length. Table 1 displays the number of focus group participants by county and department for each site visit.

Table 1: Number of Focus Group Participants by Organization

County	Department	Site Visit 1 Number of Participants	Site Visit 2 Number of Participants
Alameda	Child Welfare Workers (2 groups)	21	10
	Child Welfare Supervisors (2 groups)	16	16
	Child Welfare Managers (1 group)	8	3
	Deputy Probation Officers (1 group)	9	8
	Supervising Probation Officers (1 group)	4	3
Los Angeles	Child Welfare Workers (2 groups)	21	17
	Child Welfare Supervisors (2 groups)	20	18
	Child Welfare Managers (1 group)	10	11
	Deputy Probation Officers (1 group)	10	11
	Supervising Probation Officers (1 group)	10	6
	Managers (1 group)	10	9

County key informant interviews were conducted with executive-level county department administrators (program and fiscal) and with individuals who had played key roles in the CAP planning process in a county. The CDSS key informant interviews were conducted with staff responsible for the program and fiscal oversight of the planning and implementation of the CAP. Key informant interviews took approximately sixty minutes to complete. Table 2 displays the number of interview participants by county and department for each site visit.

Table 2: Number of Interview Participants by Organization

County	Department	Site Visit 1 Number of Participants	Site Visit 2 Number of Participants
Alameda	Child Welfare	5	5
	Probation	4	3
Los Angeles	Child Welfare	7	6
	Probation	3	3
CDSS		8	0

The transcription of the focus group conversations and the key informant interviews from the audiotapes for the first round of site visits was completed during this annual reporting period. The process of coding the transcripts for analysis, performing the analysis, and summary report preparation from the first site visits began during this annual reporting period.

The process study activities during this reporting period have gone well. Liaisons from the county departments were crucial in organizing the site visits and making staff available for the focus groups and key informant interviews. Participants in the county focus groups and the county and state department interviews were enthusiastic and provided well-considered responses to questions.

A. Implementation Component

Planning Phase

The purpose of the key informant interviews conducted during the first round of site visits was to collect information regarding the planning for the CAP at the counties as well as at CDSS. Table 2 shows the number of interview participants. The main categories of questions were (a) planning process, (b) implementation requirements, (c) expected impacts, and (d) contextual factors. Interviews were semi-structured; in other words, each respondent was not asked every question. However, the evaluator sought to include as many specific questions as warranted across all the interviews conducted in a particular department. The protocol used to guide the interviews can be found in Appendix C, pages 1-4. Relevant planning documents were also collected during this reporting period. These include meeting minutes/notes, county CAP plans, and county publications.

Implementation Phase

The purpose of the key informant interviews conducted during the second round of site visits was to collect information regarding the implementation of the CAP. Table 2 shows the number of interview participants. The main categories of questions were (a) the CAP and its relationship to other county programs, (b) monitoring the implementation, (c) management information system, (d) decision-making, (e) implementing the project plan, (f) fiscal implementation, (g) implementation inputs, (h) implementation barriers and facilitators, (i) leadership, and (j) contextual factors. Again, interviews were semi-structured. The protocol used to guide the interviews can be found in Appendix C (pages 5-7 for child welfare and pages 8-10 for probation).

The evaluator worked with county staff to implement a survey to collect information regarding frontline/supervisor staff perspectives on the CAP in both child welfare (child welfare workers and child welfare supervisors) and probation (deputy probation officers and supervising deputy probation officers). The survey (one for child welfare and one for probation) focuses on staff's understanding of the CAP, their attitudes toward the CAP, and the impact the CAP has on their work with children and families (Appendix C, pages 11-12 and pages 13-14). In three of the four participating departments, an invitation letter and survey was emailed to frontline/supervisor staff. Upon completion, the survey was returned to a contact person within the department in-person, via email, or via fax. Surveys were then bundled and mailed to the evaluator. In the fourth department, survey recipients were emailed an invitation letter and a link to the survey where it was completed online using Survey Monkey. A data file containing the completed surveys was then downloaded by the evaluator. The surveys were administered in May 2008 in Alameda County DCFS and Probation, and Los Angeles County DCFS, and administered in June 2008 in Los Angeles County Probation. The response rates were high in both departments of probation (Alameda County with 86 percent [n=64]; Los Angeles County with 95 percent [n=514]) and low in both departments of children and family services (Alameda County with 44 percent [n=142]; Los Angeles County with 9 percent [n=314]). The data will be analyzed during the next reporting period. The survey will be administered annually in the spring of each year.

The evaluator participated in a number of implementation workgroup meetings, primarily those related to the evaluation and to the fiscal component of the CAP, during the first year reporting period. Information gathered at those meetings, as well as other related documents, will be used to inform the implementation phase of the process study.

B. County Services Component

The purpose of the focus groups conducted at the site visits during this annual reporting period was to gain an understanding of county services and service delivery in child welfare and probation. The liaisons in both departments in both counties were usually able to provide at least one worker from the range of programmatic activities in that department (for example in child welfare: emergency response, family maintenance, family reunification, adoptions) to ensure representation of county activities. In addition, the liaisons were able to ensure geographic representation of their department's activities.

The focus groups conducted at the first site visits were designed to describe the participating departments' service operations at the time of the onset of the CAP. This understanding effectively serves as the county services component "baseline." The protocols used to guide the child welfare and probation focus groups are contained in Appendix C, pages 15-22. The questions were organized by the following topic areas:

Child Welfare

Internal case management
Court involvement
Service array
Targeting
External case management
Provider competition
Finance methods
Utilization review
Quality assurance
Expenditures
Revenue
Morale
Leadership
Interagency collaboration
Community well-being

Probation

Children in the system
Caseflow
Case management
Services
Caseload
Staffing
Court
Contracting
Collaboration

The focus groups conducted at the second site visits were designed to be the first point of observation after the onset of the CAP, to understand the participating departments' service operations after ten to eleven months of implementation. The protocols used to guide the second site visit focus groups are contained in Appendix C, pages 23-40. The questions are organized by the preceding topic areas, with two exceptions: the

probation categories were the same as the child welfare categories and both included an additional category entitled “Waiver Comprehension and Impact.”

Not all questions were discussed in each focus group. In some instances, questions were organized to cover subjects not previously discussed in an earlier focus group. For example, if certain categories were not covered in the first focus group with child welfare workers, then an attempt was made to cover those categories with the second focus group with child welfare workers. This process only applied in the case of child welfare where there were two focus groups per category of staff. In Alameda County, a single probation manager was interviewed as there was not enough relevant management staff to form a focus group.

Documents related to county services were also collected during this reporting period. These include descriptions of services as well as evaluation reports.

An additional data collection process was added during this reporting period. In an attempt to align the current Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Project evaluations where possible, the evaluator adapted a survey developed by the evaluators of Florida’s waiver demonstration project. The Baseline Services Survey contains questions about baseline services offered in the areas of prevention/diversion, reducing length of stay, and engaging families in service planning (See Appendix C, page 41). It also contains an inventory of existing services (Appendix C, pages 42-43). By the end of the first year, all four departments had completed the questionnaire the inventory of existing services. Information from the surveys will be analyzed during the next reporting period. The survey will be administered annually in the fall of each year as a supplemental way to capture information on available services.

Additional Process Study Activities

In November 2007, the CAP evaluator participated in a panel discussion with evaluators from Ohio’s Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Project evaluation at the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM) conference in Washington, D.C. Based on his experience with both of California’s Waiver Demonstration Project evaluations, the evaluator presented a paper entitled: “Planning for the Implementation and Evaluation of a Federal Child Welfare Demonstration Project: Experiences in California.” The interviews necessary for the completion of the “planning for the implementation” portion of the paper were not transcribed, coded, and analyzed by the time of the conference so that section was not included in the paper. The paper focused on describing the first Waiver Demonstration Project implementing Intensive Services, the planning for the CAP evaluation, and the challenges encountered in evaluating Waiver Demonstration Projects in California. The three major areas of challenge faced in California are (a) the shared governance structure that exists in child welfare between the State and the counties, (b) the inclusion of probation in waiver demonstration projects, and (c) contextual factors in California such as its geographic and demographic diversity, the role of advocacy organizations, and the role of new legislation.

Fiscal Study

The primary activity in the fiscal study portion of the evaluation during this annual reporting period has been to determine the best sources of fiscal data and begin the process for obtaining the necessary data. Determining data sources has been a challenge given the complexity of the fiscal process in California and the use of multiple sources to fund child welfare and probation activities. Through a process of meetings and discussions between the evaluator, county fiscal staff, and staff from CDSS, it has been determined that the main data source for the fiscal study will be the County Expense Claim (CEC), the CA 800, and the IV-E Waiver Database developed by CDSS for the CAP. The CEC is the means used by CDSS to authorize, and the counties to obtain, federal and state reimbursement for cost incurred administering mandated programs. County time studies are the primary means of allocating the majority of costs within the CEC. The CA 800 is the parallel process for the counties to claim assistance costs incurred in providing services. The IV-E Waiver Database is designed to provide the structure for claiming and payment authorization for the two participating CAP counties. Data provided by the counties from existing fiscal tracking processes will augment the data available from the state as well as data from any new tracking processes developed by the counties in response to the CAP.

Outcome Study

The activities conducted for the outcome study during this annual reporting period focused on tracking the changes in the California Child Welfare Outcomes and Accountability System (C-CFSR) and determining the availability of probation data in the system. The changes in the California measures used were the result of changes made at the federal level for the second round of Child and Family Service Reviews. On-going consultations took place with the CAP evaluator and Principal Investigator and Project Director of the California Child Welfare Performance Indicators Project at the University of California at Berkeley (UCB) to understand the changes and ensure data consistency and availability over time.

Work also continued toward securing the necessary outcome data from the probation system in both counties. Probation data became available through the UCB, California Child Welfare Performance Indicators Project, CWS/CMS Dynamic Report System Website during this reporting period despite probation's lack of direct access to CWS/CMS. Consultation between the evaluator and CDSS determined that the relevant CDSS department had increased the amount of information extracted from the single source of information provided by county probation departments to CDSS regarding children served using Title IV-E funds. Given the historical challenge of obtaining probation data through the CWS/CMS system, both probation departments in the participating CAP counties began a data validation process during this annual reporting period to ensure the accuracy of the data available in the CWS/CMS reports.

Interim Findings

There are no interim findings available for inclusion in this progress report.

APPENDICES

- Appendix A: Alameda County Documents
- Appendix B: Los Angeles County Documents
- Appendix C: Evaluation Data Collection Protocols