

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

Semi-Annual Progress Report for 7/1/11 through 12/31/11

This semi-annual progress report covers the reporting period from July 1, 2011 through December 31, 2011, for the California Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project (CAP). This report fulfills the requirement in Section 5.4 of the federal Waiver Terms and Conditions and provides updates for project oversight and monitoring activities, county implementation of funded waiver strategies, and the CAP state evaluation efforts.

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 for the provision of direct services to children and their families and supports child welfare practice, program, and system improvements for early intervention, reunification efforts, and reduction in out-of-home placements. The target population is Title IV-E and non-Title IV-E eligible children ages zero through nineteen currently in out-of-home placement, or who are at risk of entering or re-entering foster care. Any foster care savings that occur as a result of the waiver demonstration must be reinvested by the participating counties in child welfare services program improvements. Alameda County and Los Angeles County are the two participating counties. The demonstration project was implemented on July 1, 2007.

The California Department of Social Services has contracted with San Jose State University Research Foundation to conduct an independent, third party evaluation for the Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project (CAP). The primary purpose of the CAP evaluation is to determine whether and how changes in the funding structure for foster care (i.e., 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 and during implementation of the CAP. The CAP evaluation consists of a process study, fiscal study, and an outcome study and uses an interrupted-time series design to assess for change over time.

This section describes activities for the first six months of CAP Year Five and covers the period between July 1, 2011 and December 31, 2011. The evaluation activities over this period were focused on the continuation of data collection and data analyses.

II. CDSS PROJECT ACTIVITIES

During the first six months of Project Year Five, the CDSS CAP Project Team has focused on reviewing preliminary outcomes of the CAP and looking forward to extend the project beyond the bridge period of July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013. To support this effort, the CDSS convened a meeting on October 20, 2011, with both CAP Counties as well as any additional counties who were interested in participating in an extension. At this meeting, the CDSS along with the two CAP counties presented preliminary findings to date and discussed potential changes to the project if an extension were granted by the Administration of Children and Families.

The Child Protection and Family Support Branch (CPFBSB) remains the lead in project management tasks, which include coordination of the CAP Project Team, monthly conference calls with the participating counties, federal progress reporting and provision of technical assistance. The CPFBSB continued to work with the participating CAP counties and the project team to craft a formal extension proposal for a multi-year extension of the current project. The CPFBSB facilitated several discussions in order to identify progress made, challenges with the existing project and possible future enhancements for an extension. The final proposal was submitted to Administration for Children and Families (ACF) on February 6, 2012.

The Financial Services Bureau (FSB) continued to perform tasks supporting the claiming and payment operations for the CAP. The FSB further provided additional technical assistance to the independent evaluator to support the completion of the Interim Fiscal Study.

The Estimates Branch has provided extensive technical assistance to the participating CAP counties, interested counties and the independent evaluator. The Estimates Branch developed a fiscal guideline for interested counties that requested support with identifying the feasibility of entering into the waiver extension. This information has been distributed to over a dozen interested counties, and requests continue to come in from new counties.

The Estimates Branch has also developed a preliminary outline for a supplemental State evaluation. This outline will be used to help facilitate a discussion with CDSS and the participating counties to capture additional case level data for the project. In addition to this evaluation, the Estimates Branch has worked closely with the independent evaluator to provide technical assistance around the fiscal allocations and claiming for the Interim Fiscal Study.

The Research Services Branch (RSB) has oversight and accountability with the third party independent evaluator for the project. The RBS has also worked with the evaluator to support the completion of the Interim Fiscal Study, while also working toward the final evaluation, which is due to ACF on December 30, 2012. The Interim Fiscal Study is scheduled to be completed by the end of February 2012. Once it has been reviewed and finalized, CDSS will submit to ACF.

As previously reported in the annual progress report, the State budget was passed for 2011-12 and included changes involving the realignment of State General Fund dollars to the local county level. This has posed some challenges to the State as to the allocations and claiming processes for the participating CAP counties. More information on the process changes is forthcoming by the State Department of Finance.

III. STATUS OF THE DEMONSTRATION – COUNTY SECTIONS

Alameda County

A. COUNTY IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES

Alameda Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)

For this report, each waiver strategy will be listed as a heading, and under each heading, the project status and implementation assessment sections will be included. Some strategies are being combined into one category, which is different from previous reports. Combined strategies will be identified as such.

The current Alameda DCFS waiver investments are described below as aligned by their CAP Five-Year Plan Goals; agency staffing and administrative investments; behavioral health investments; flexible funding pool; and additional investments including placement services and funding to expand the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Program.

Updated Activities for July 1, 2011 through December 31, 2011

Goal One: Increase number of children who can remain safely in their home thus reducing first entries into care.

Another Road to Safety (ARS)(Fiscal Year 2011-12 Budget Amount - \$1.6 million) and Children’s Hospital Contract (Fiscal Year 2011-12 Budget Amount - \$230,000)

The ARS Providers continue to receive Path II referrals from DCFS. Path II referrals are those referrals that an Emergency Response (ER) or Dependency Investigations (DI) Child Welfare Worker (CWW) investigate and determine that no further Child Protective Services (CPS) intervention is warranted. Instead, the family is diverted to an ARS Provider. This differential response after a formal investigation is a more coordinated diversion to community services. The ER and DI CWWs use this option to serve families as opposed to informal (voluntary) or formal (court-ordered) Family Maintenance services. Referring CWWs and family advocates from the ARS providers have increased their communication to better engage families in participating in services. The CWWs identify areas of concern and prioritize referrals for follow-up. This process ensures that completion with services is given more emphasis as both the ARS advocate and CWW can support the effort.

The DCFS staff in ER and DI is very familiar with the ARS program and therefore continue to refer families. As such, ARS providers continue to experience high rates of enrollments and have hired more staff to keep pace with program growth.

Some of the changes to the ARS Program include discontinuing the use of the Life Skills Progression tool. Alameda DCFS and ARS providers have determined that the tool does not meet the needs of the program. The tool is not family-focused, it is limited

for young children/parent dyad, it is biased in some domains and not user-friendly. Through a comprehensive search, the DCFS Research and Evaluation Team identified the North Carolina Family Assessment Scale (NCFAS) as a replacement to the Life Skills Program Tool. The tool was vetted with the providers and determined to be a more appropriate tool to help with clinical case management and informing advocates and clinicians on family progress in areas of family functioning and child well-being. In addition, this tool is inclusive of all ages of the children in the home. The tool will also be used for the purpose of evaluation. The DCFS is currently planning to train and implement utilization of the NCFAS in the first quarter of 2012.

Through continued support from DCFS management, ARS providers have begun to demonstrate more effective organizational leadership and capacity to operate/manage the ARS program within their agency. The ARS agency directors and clinical supervisors are proactively coaching, developing, and disciplining staff as appropriate. The DCFS is pleased in this update as the agencies are moving toward being more self-reliant in managing ARS operations while adhering to contractual obligations and meeting DCFS expectations and goals for the program.

ARS: 7/1/11 - 12/31/11									
Agency	New Families Referred this Reporting Period by Path			Number of Children/Youth by Age: New Families Referred this reporting period			Families Served During Reporting Period	Number of families closed this reporting period	Still actively enrolled
	Path 1	Path 2	Total	0 - 5	6 - 17	Total			
FSSBA	13	63	76	40	61	101	43	22	43
PJC	22	46	59	33	43	76	30	52	30
La Familia	25	34	68	37	57	94	26	24	26
Total	60	143	203	110	161	271	99	98	99

Voluntary Diversion Program (FY 2011-12 Budget Amount - \$30,000)

This strategy was established to serve a small number of cases in which a child is being cared for by a relative or fictive kin caregiver, and 1) the parents agree for the child to remain with the relative or fictive kin caregiver; and 2) the parents do not want reunification services. The goal of these cases is for the relative/fictive kin to obtain legal guardianship of the child through Probate Court.

The DCFS contracts with Legal Assistance for Seniors to help facilitate the process of establishing legal guardianship in Probate Court. Families are referred to Legal Assistance for Seniors by a Team Decision Making meeting (TDM). Since this program began in July 2007, twenty-nine families have been served. Of those twenty-nine families, nineteen families were able to obtain permanent legal guardianship of the child through Probate Court. Six families have cases that are still pending in the court process, and four families decided to not move forward with guardianship.

Goal Two: Increase number of children and youth in least restrictive settings.

Faith Initiative (FY 2011-12 Budget Amount - \$275,000) and Foster Parent Recruiter (FY 2011-12 Budget Amount - \$125,000)

The Faith Initiative continued its recruitment and retention efforts of county-licensed foster homes, ongoing support groups for foster parents and providing community outreach. During this reporting period, the Faith Initiative produced 192 prospective foster parent referrals from 21 events at places of worship and 17 other community events.

<i>Month, 2011</i>	<i>Church Events</i>	<i>Community Events</i>	<i>Referrals</i>
July	3	2	19
August	3	3	33
September	4	3	63
October	5	4	14
November	2	4	40
December	4	1	23*

*this number may increase as more information becomes available

In August 2011, DCFS hired a foster parent recruiter to coordinate a variety of recruitment and retention efforts with DCFS and the Faith Initiative. The recruiter now conducts four monthly support groups for foster parents and plans to start two additional groups in February 2012.

Support Groups

<i>Location</i>	<i>Number of Participants</i>	<i>Support Group Offered Beginning in:</i>
Newark	2 – 6	May 2011
Livermore	5 – 12	August 2011
Oakland	5 – 6	October 2011
Castro Valley	2 - 10	October 2011

On December 16, 2007, DCFS had 211 licensed foster homes. Due in part to the recruitment efforts of the Faith Initiative, that number has increased to 257 as of December 16, 2011.¹ That is a 22 percent increase in a four-year period. While not seemingly a significant increase, it is hoped that with the continued efforts of the Faith Initiative, the newly hired foster parent recruiter, and other supportive services available to foster parents, that number will continue to rise.

During this reporting period, the scope of the Faith Initiative narrowed to encompass staffing recruitment tables and booths at community events, as well as sending any referrals for persons interested in becoming a foster parent to DCFS. The Faith Initiative hired an additional three liaisons to staff the informational tables, bringing the total number of liaisons to six.

The Faith Initiative has encountered some challenges in this reporting period. Previous progress reports described a summer housing program for former foster youth who were in college, but due to a variety of issues, the program did not get fully operational.

¹ CWS/CMS extract, 12/20/11

One of the biggest challenges was evaluating the Faith Initiative’s impact on recruitment due to the absence of Faith Initiative referral tracking information within the County’s licensing data. The licensing process is composed of five steps (foster parent orientation, PRIDE training, licensing home evaluation, Livescan background check, and licensing application), none of which are linked to Faith Initiative referral data. To help address this issue, the DCFS is modifying its existing recruitment database to improve the tracking of Faith Initiative referrals and basic demographic characteristics of other prospective foster parents. These modifications will enhance understanding of prospective foster parents, including the characteristics of those who make it through the various stages of the licensing process.

In addition, DCFS plans to develop a foster parent survey in conjunction with the Foster Parent Association to better understand the ongoing needs of foster parents and inform the DCFS’ Faith Initiative-sponsored support and retention efforts. Focus groups and in-depth interviews with Faith Initiative community participants and foster parents are planned as part of a qualitative assessment of the Faith Initiative’s community impact.

Enhanced Kinship Support Services Program (KSSP) (FY 2011–12 Budget Amount – approximately \$1.1 million)

Provider	Time Period (Figures for December 1, 2011 to December 31, 2011 are not yet available)	Caregivers Served	Children Served
KSSP - Family Support Services of the Bay Area	July 1, 2011 – November 30, 2011	44	86
KSSP - Lincoln Child Center	July 1, 2011 – November 30, 2011	103	72

The addition of a case manager to each KSSP agency has enabled more clients to be served. For example, Family Support Services of the Bay Area has increased its capacity from 100 to 180 case management services per month. In addition, the availability of respite care has been increased. Previously, all respite care was funded through the County Department of Adult and Aging Services. Under that contract, respite care could be provided for 15 hours per month to caregivers aged 60 and over. With waiver funding, caregivers of any age can be provided up to 24 hours of respite care per month. Because the programs were already providing the same services, the expansion proceeded promptly and smoothly once additional funding became available.

The Program Evaluation and Research Department (PER) conducted two focus groups with program participants in October 2011. Of the services received, focus group participants reported making the most use of support groups and respite care, followed by referrals to other services and supports, and children’s activities. A theory of the program is that KSSP services maintain children in their extended families who might otherwise be in foster care and thus keep them outside the child welfare system. Information given in the focus groups suggested that many children benefiting from the KSSP program have other relatives who are willing to care for them should the current caregiver be unable to continue in that role.

In January 2012, PER will conduct a telephone survey of all KSSP caregivers that consists of a checklist of caregiver concerns, a stress questionnaire, and a well-being questionnaire. This will permit PER to better understand the needs and challenges of kin caregivers, and whether those who have been in the program longer have more positive scores than newer participants.

Subsidized Child Care (FY 2011–12 Budget Amount - \$750,000)

Subsidized child care is an available service to county-licensed foster homes, approved relatives, and approved fictive kin caregivers who are caring for a foster youth ages 0 to 12, and who are employed or have a documented medical disability that interferes with their ability to care for a child. The service is also available to dependent foster youth who have children.

Previous criteria required that the child had to be under the age of six to qualify for child care, but in September 2011, that age was increased to 13 (eligibility ends on the child's thirteenth birthday). Also, the criterion for the caregiver was expanded to include caregivers who have medical conditions that interfere with their ability to care for the child. This expansion allowed for more children and more caregivers to be able to use this supportive service.

Child care appears to support placement stability as noted in the last progress report. There have been 134 children referred for child care since this strategy was implemented in 2009 (this number does not include the dependent foster youth). The average number of placements for those 134 children from the time they began receiving child care services to reunification with a parent or dismissal of dependency by way of adoption or guardianship is still hovering around 1.1 placements.²

The DCFS continues to closely monitor the effects of this strategy on permanency, as some child welfare staff has reported an unintended consequence of the program: a delay in legal permanence in some cases for the purpose of maintaining the childcare subsidy. Child welfare staff meet regularly with those caregivers to explain the disadvantages of delaying permanency for a child while senior management continues to explore other options for supporting caregivers, most specifically, with the post-dependency services package.

During this reporting period 59 children were referred for subsidized childcare: 32 from relative/fictive kin caregivers, 23 from licensed county foster homes, and 4 from dependent teen parents (see Table 1).

² CWS/CMS extract, 12/22/11

Table 1

Time period 7/1/11 – 12/31/11	Childcare Referred	Percent of Referrals
Relative / Fictive Kin	32	54%
Licensed County Foster Homes	23	39%
Dependent Teen Parents	4	7%
Total:	59	100%

During this reporting period, PER staff analyzed childcare invoices to determine actual childcare utilization rates for the time period November 2009 (beginning of the program) to August 2011 (see Table 2). Those cases that actually utilized the childcare subsidy represent study cases in an analysis of placement stability and permanency outcomes. Future PER analysis will compare placement stability and permanency outcomes for the 0-6 age group using an earlier cohort of cases prior to the childcare subsidy.

Table 2

Time period 11/01/09 – 8/01/11	Childcare Referred	Childcare Utilized	Overall Utilization Rate
Licensed County Foster Homes	59	52	55%
Relative / Fictive Kin	47	40	43%
Dependent Teen Parents	6	2	2%
Total:	112	94	100%

Note: Represents unduplicated childcare referrals from November 2009 to August 2011. Two utilized childcare utilized referrals are missing as they could not be found in CWS/CMS.

***Family Finding and Engagement (FFE) (Includes search clerks and FFE training)
(FY 2011-12 - Budget Amount - \$375,000)***

Table 1 details activity of the seven search clerks who search for absent parents and relatives using the web-based subscription internet search tool Accurint; all four FFE units rely on Accurint searches completed by FFE clerks.

Table 1

Search Clerk Activity 7/1/11 – 12/31/11	
CWW requested - searches for absent parent and/or relative search ¹	198
CWW requested - relative search only	151
Registration requested - searches for absent parent and/or relative search ¹	261
Total Searches²	610

Note: Searches as of 12/20/11, estimate to be about 650 total for the last 6 months. (1) Totals may include either search type, or both, counted as one request. (2) Provides the number of searches requested; the number of searches completed within the period may be slightly different.

During this reporting period the test pilot units served a combined total of 211 cases; secondary FFE units served 227 cases.

Table 2

FFE Cases 7/1/11 – 12/31/11	FR* FFE Pilot Unit	PYC* FFE Pilot Unit	Secondary FFE (2 units)
New Cases	21	21	99
Active Cases	39	80	37
Closed Cases	33	20	106
Total Cases Served during reporting period**	91	120	227

Note: *Cases in the FR and PYC columns include some cases in which youth were already placed with relatives at the time of case assignment to these units. ** Columns do not add down to Total Cases Served as some new cases were also closed cases. This is true for 2 cases in PYC, 1 case in FR, and 15 cases in secondary. Secondary cases open for less than 18 days are also excluded.

Several challenges postponed the practice of FFE in the test pilot units for several months. Due to a delay in FFE training for the pilot units, the more experienced secondary FFE workers performed most of the FFE functions on the initial FFE eligible cases in the pilot units. In addition, the pilot units initially accepted cases that were not eligible for FFE (i.e. cases in which youth were already placed with relatives). DCFS responded by initiating a year-long FFE training series that started August 2011. The pilot units now accept only cases that are eligible for FFE, although the process of identifying and directing eligible FFE cases to the test pilot units through case assignment remains a challenge. DCFS started an FFE steering committee in September 2011 that meets regularly to standardize FFE practice between the four units, and help define common definitions of terms such as lifelong connection. In November 2011, the committee developed and trained workers in all four units on a standardized data entry protocol for documenting found relatives and fictive kin, search efforts, and permanent connection outcomes. One outstanding area the steering committee plans to address is the development of a means to more precisely track the placement outcomes related to FFE service.

In December 2011, PER began a year-long time study for what will be a total of 52 FFE cases across all four FFE units. When complete, the study will offer detailed descriptive data on the amount and kind of FFE services that test pilot and secondary cases receive. The goal is to understand which FFE practices are associated with the outcomes of relative placement and lifelong connections, as well as how FFE is practiced in the secondary vs. primary units. Within the next year, PER also plans to conduct an outcome analysis that compares the placement and permanency outcomes from the current practice of FFE with DCFS' previous family finding programs, Step-Down Family Preservation and Dumisha Jamaa.

Goal Three: Increase number of children who safely and permanently reunify with their families within 12 months.

Paths to Success (P2S) (FY 2011–12 Budget Amount - \$1.7 million) and Children's Hospital Contract

The DCFS has implemented some changes to the P2S Program. The P2S will also be ending the use of the Life Skills Progression tool for the same reasons as stated for the ARS Program. The P2S Program will also adopt the use of the NCFAS tool. Training on this tool will be available for P2S provider in the first quarter of 2012. The DCFS is also expected to expand the geographic areas served by P2S providers as there is capacity given existing caseloads.

During the previous reporting period, DCFS in collaboration with Casey Family Programs, completed a comprehensive program evaluation that described characteristics of and services received by families who were referred to the program during the first 18 months, from January 2009 to June 2010. This evaluation provided an initial analysis of outcomes experienced by families who completed services within that time frame. A subsequent update to this initial analysis will be completed by DCFS PER for all families referred from program inception through December 2011. Although DCFS initially planned to end the study period for this second round of evaluation in June 2011, they decided to extend the study period to December 2011 in order to increase the sample size for analysis. This outcome evaluation will focus on subsequent child welfare referrals and foster care entry within six months of the conclusion of P2S services as compared to families receiving Family Maintenance services who did not receive P2S services.

Finally, DCFS is working closely with the Information Systems Department (ISD) to develop a web-based case management system to better support documentation, reporting requirements, centralize screening/assessments, and enhance evaluation of the program.

P2S: 7/1/11 - 12/31/11											
Agency	New Families Referred this Reporting Period	Number of Children/Youth by Age: Families Referred this reporting period			Families Served During Reporting Period	Number of Children/Youth by Age: Families Served This Reporting Period			Number of families closed this reporting period		Still actively enrolled
		0 - 5	6 - 17	Total		0 - 5	6 - 17	Total	Successfully Completed: Engaged at Closure	Other closure reason	
FSSBA	17	11	19	30	32	20	47	67	11	10	11
PJC	9	6	10	16	15	11	22	33	5	0	10
La Familia	20	16	28	44	33	28	40	68	18	6	9
Total	46	33	57	90	80	59	109	168	34	16	30

The Gathering Place (TGP) (Formerly known as The Visitation Center) (FY 2011–12 Budget Amount - \$1.1 million)

The TGP began operations in April 2011. By July 2011, TGP had already reached capacity. To date, 133 children have received services at TGP. The TGP creates a visit plan that outlines a course of services and aligns with the child welfare case plan for each child/family group. From April 1, 2011 to November 30, 2011, a total of 63 visit plans were created. The average length of services for families was 5.1 months, and families visited an average of 32.2 hours during the course of their services at TGP.

Many families visited more hours per week than the typical one hour per week available when families must be supervised by their child welfare worker. Figures including December 1, 2011 to December 31, 2011 are not yet available.

The roll-out of services at TGP proceeded very smoothly. The center reached service capacity within three months of opening. As a consequence, Alameda designated additional CAP funding to expand the current location to add two visitation rooms and additional office space for clinical staff, and to open a second location in southern Alameda County. The additional space should be in service by the time of the next progress report.

The goal of TGP is to increase visitation frequency and reduce the amount of therapeutic intervention and structure as quickly and safely as possible with the intent of being able to improve the timeliness of reunification and reduce recidivism. The contracted provider is currently collecting extensive data, and PER is constructing a retroactive comparison group. The evaluation will focus on the relationship between expanded visitation services and reunification outcomes.

Project Permanence (Wraparound) (FY 2010–11 Budget Amount - \$356,000)

The California Wraparound Program is a definable planning process that results in community-based intervention services that emphasize the strengths of the child and family and includes the delivery of coordinated highly individualized unconditional services to address needs and achieve positive outcomes in their lives.

During State fiscal year 2010-11, the most recent reporting period for which data is available, Project Permanence served 66 youth and their families.

The length of time it took Project Permanence to open a case increased significantly over time beginning in 2009 and continuing into 2010. Several reasons for this increase have been cited and variously addressed:

- 1) Project Permanence experienced some staff turnover, and it did not always have the capacity to meet referral demand. Project Permanence hired replacement staff to correct this problem.
- 2) Medi-Cal eligibility issues and client engagement challenges (e.g. slow caregiver response to initial phone calls) also contributed to the length of time it took to open a case. A liaison within the department now helps troubleshoot MediCal eligibility problems.
- 3) The time it took child welfare workers to give initial consent was also identified as an issue that delayed the start of services. This issue has recently been addressed by removing the child welfare worker from the initial consent to treatment process.

During this reporting period, Project Permanence also implemented a new discharge survey, a pre-test/post-test survey to measure growth in natural supports families

receiving Project Permanence services, and a fidelity index to measure adherence to the Project Permanence wraparound model. An analysis conducted for 174 Project Permanence clients served between 2008-2010 showed that 61percent (n=106) of youth served remained in their permanent placements twelve months post-discharge from the program.

The PER is currently conducting a group home study of Project Permanence clients using a quasi-experimental design to determine the program's efficacy in assisting group home clients' transition into less restrictive settings. The study explores potential cost savings generated from less restrictive placements. A report is expected in February 2012.

Goal Four: Increase percent of timely guardianships and adoptions.

Services to Enhance Early Development (SEED), Public Health Nurse (PHN) Expansion (FY 2011 –12 Budget Amount - \$360,000)

Between the start of the expansion on August 1, 2008 and December 1, 2011, 308 children have been served in SEED). Figures including December 2011 are not yet available.

Although the initial plan for the CAP was to fund two Full-time equivalent (FTE) Public Health Nurses and one .5 FTE Public Health Nurse Supervisor, at this time, there is only one PHN. A PHN Supervisor position was offered and accepted, but the applicant had a family emergency and never reported. The second PHN worked for the county for a few months after a much delayed start and but they later resigned. The Public Health Department has not been able to hire nor maintain the nurses, which is why the positions remain vacant.

Currently, PER is constructing the evaluation to use Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) data to analyze outcome data in two ways:

- (1) Comparing children entering SEED in annual cohorts from 2006 on to determine their similarities and differences, and trends in their child welfare outcomes, and
- (2) Comparing children entering SEED after the expansion in August 2008 with similar children who did not receive SEED services.

In addition, the study will utilize data collected by program partner Center for the Vulnerable Child on the type and quantity of services received by program children.

Bay Area Collaborative of American Indian Resources (BACAIR) in TDMs (FY 2011–12 Budget Amount - \$37,500)

Alameda DCFS has identified BACAIR as a new strategy to be supported by the CAP. In September 2011, DCFS contracted with the American Indian Child Resource Center,

who is the lead agency for BACAIR, to provide a representative at TDMs for families who identify as American Indian/Alaskan Native (AI/AN) or having AI/AN heritage.

The BACAIR is a collaborative of community-based organizations that work to promote culturally appropriate resources and a permanent connection for AI/AN families in the child welfare system while providing wellness, cultural support, and restoration to families at risk through collaboration, advocacy, and education. The goals of this waiver strategy are: 1) increase the number of culturally appropriate placements for AI/AN children; 2) increase placement stability for these children; 3) increase families' involvement in culturally appropriate services; and 4) decrease the disproportionate number of AI/AN children in foster care.

Since this contract began, a BACAIR representative has attended 22 TDMs. Evaluation plans for this strategy include how the inclusion of a BACAIR representative at a TDM impacts the measure of the least restrictive placement of a child.

Goal Five: Increase and develop supports for all foster care exits.

Parent Advocate Expansion (FY 2010–11 Budget Amount - \$1.5 million)

Under the CAP-funded contract with A Better Way, DCFS expanded the number of Parent Advocates from four to eight in August 2011 and increased supervision, training, and supportive resources to promote Parent Advocate retention and support their effectiveness in working with parents. One Parent Advocate was terminated in October 2011, bringing the current total to seven. The county's plan is to have a total of 12 Parent Advocates in place by May 2012. Some retention barriers involving benefits to Parents Advocates are being addressed by DCFS to increase retention efforts. Current recruitment efforts focus on increasing the diversity of Parent Advocates, and re-designing the parent leadership team to make it more conducive to fathers for the purpose of enhancing father engagement.

During this reporting period the Parent Advocate program enrolled 32 new families and closed cases for 27 families. At least five of the cases closed due to reunification; however, this figure should be contextualized by the fact that Parent Advocates primarily serve cases at the beginning of the child welfare system for a maximum of six months. This means that most cases reunify after termination of Parent Advocate services. From July 2011 to November 2011, Parent Advocates served parents in 45 Parent Orientation meetings, 63 TDMs, six CHAT meetings, and ten Parent Leadership Team meetings.

The Department continues to develop strategies to increase parent engagement at the front end of the Child Welfare System, including Parent Advocate participation in front-end TDMs, and efforts to engage families immediately after their children are removed. The program is also developing a partnership with the SEED program.

Several new data collection instruments have recently been implemented in partnership with the DCFS' PER Department:

- 1) A new discharge survey measures facets of each client's program experience theoretically related to successful peer support and engagement, such as credibility based on shared similar experience with Parent Advocates, cultural sensitivity, decision-making, self-efficacy, and overall satisfaction.
- 2) A revamped case note instrument captures the kind and amount of service that Parent Advocates offer each client within 18 case plan categories. This descriptive data will be used in an analysis of child welfare reunification outcomes for the sample of clients who received Parent Advocate services.

Within the next year PER plans to conduct a reunification and re-entry analysis using existing service data and a comparison group of equivalent cases that did not receive Parent Advocate services.

Post-Dependency Services Package (FY 2011– 12 Budget Amount - \$104,000)

The Request For Proposal (RFP) process for Post-Dependency Services was recently completed and a scope of work is currently in process for the identified contractor. It is anticipated that the contractor will start receiving cases after 2/1/12. Initially, post-dependency services will be offered on a pilot basis to families served by the piloted vertical case management unit, which was implemented to provide continuity of family maintenance services to reunifying families.

The PER is currently in the process of reviewing process data for children served from the pilot vertical case management unit's inception in October 2009 and June 2011, and early reunification data for children who began family reunification services between October 2009 and June 2010. In addition, descriptive data based on supervisor assessment and case reading for cases ending family reunification services through June 2011 will also be analyzed. Although preliminary analysis will include early reunification data, a full analysis of the program that compares successful reunification outcomes of children served under this vertical case management model as compared to children who were served by Alameda County's other Family Reunification units will not be completed for another year until it is also possible to assess reentry.

As post-dependency services will initially be provided only to families served by the Vertical Case Management Unit, evaluation of these additional services will be incorporated into subsequent evaluations of the Vertical Case Management unit, and to assess whether provision of post-dependency support services reduces the time to dismissal of the family maintenance case after the family has reunified.

Goal Six: Enhance the Safety Net for transitional age and emancipating youth.

Services for Independent Living Services Program (ILSP) Youth (includes Education Specialist, Education Mentors, and ILSP contract)

ILSP Curriculum Redesign

The contract for the provision of ILSP classes to eligible youth was increased to allow for a curriculum redesign aimed at updating the types of information to be taught and restructuring the material to better prepare transition-age youth for adulthood.

The contractor has hired a curriculum specialist who is proceeding with the redesign. PER and the contractor are collaborating on evaluating the redesign, including a survey of program youth and focus groups.

Transitional Living Conferences (TLC), formerly Emancipation Conferences)

During this reporting period a total of 82 youth received a TLC. The TLC process continues to receive positive feedback from staff and youth.

With the imminent introduction of Assembly Bill (AB) 12, the State law implementing Public Law (PL) 110-351, program planned TLC modifications that explain the option and benefits of remaining in care until age 21. The TLC program staff consulted with Youth Fellows to develop a special script for this purpose; Youth Fellows plan to attend TLCs to explain these benefits. One challenge has been a decrease in TLC facilitators (from five to three) during this reporting period, which interfered with TLC scheduling.

In early 2012, the TLCs will shift into the TDM program; thus called TLC -TDM. TLC-TDMs will focus on AB12 placement options along with the choice to transition out of foster care with aftercare services. The challenge will be to prevent model drift once TLCs migrate into the TDM program to keep TLCs youth-driven regarding voice, choice, and preference.

In July 2011, PER entered participation data for three years worth of TLCs (2009-2011) into the Beyond Emancipation (BE, the main contractor for ILSP services) database system. PER is currently involved in a time-intensive matching process to relate BE data with CWS/CMS data and corresponding emancipation outcome data. The goal is to compare the emancipation outcomes of those who received a TLC with those who did not to assess the program's effect on preparing youth for more successful emancipations.

Young Parent Opportunities (YPO) (FY 2011–12 Budget Amount - \$672,000)

The DCFS currently contracts with Brighter Beginnings and Tiburcio Vasquez Health Center (TVHC) using CAP funds to provide case management services to teenagers who are pregnant or are already a parent. The YPO has three goals: 1) to move pregnant and parenting teens receiving CalWORKs toward attainment of a high school diploma or Equivalency Diploma (GED), (2) to improve the parenting skills, nutrition,

and financial management knowledge of teen parents, and (3) to prevent child abuse and neglect. The program provides case management services, including home visits, referrals to and incentives for attending parenting, nutrition, and financial management classes, and monitoring of school progress and school completion for participants to receive bonuses from Cal-Teen Welfare to Work. From July 1, 2011 to December 1, 2011, Brighter Beginnings served 167 youth and Tiburcio Vasquez served 91 youth.

The two contractors had previously been operating the Cal-Learn program, which is very similar to YPO; however, YPO brought significant changes in Employment Counselor staffing at the County, the orientation and outreach process, the volume of case management services to be provided, and the logistics of operating the program. As a consequence, during the early months of the program, considerable effort was expended on transitioning clients and educating them about the new program, building relationships with the new Employment Counselors, revising program materials, and training staff. County and program staff meet at scheduled roundtable meetings during which a variety of challenges are addressed. Another challenge was working out the orientation protocols when a TVHC client attends an orientation in Brighter Beginnings' service area and vice versa. A protocol was discussed and worked out between TVHC, Brighter Beginnings, and the county to make sure that clients are able to attend orientations that are convenient for them and still have the orientation paperwork given to the correct case management agency.

An evaluation will consider the following areas as compared to the previous, similar Cal-Learn program:

- YPO participants' attendance and progress in school activities.
- YPO participants' attainment of a high school diploma or GED.
- Sanctions to YPO participants due to non-participation in school.
- YPO participants' completion of parenting, nutrition, and financial management classes.
- Number of referrals for child maltreatment for children of YPO participants.

The PER will use the data already being collected by Brighter Beginnings and TVHC.

Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)(FY 2011–12 Budget Amount - \$2.7 million)

The DCFS contracted with Youth Employment Partnership (YEP) and Youth Uprising (YU) to provide employment services to foster and probation youth beginning in July 2011. Employment experience better prepares such youth for independent adult lives. Services include providing work readiness workshops, locating and arranging employment opportunities, and paying youths' wages. In addition to being paid minimum wage for all hours worked in the program, youth were also paid bonuses for attending workshops. During summer 2011, 148 foster youth and 248 probation youth worked and/or attended at least one workshop.

A very short lead-time between the finalization of contracts and the beginning date for services led to significant difficulties in recruiting youth to the program once eligible lists had been provided to the contractors. Of the total of 1,466 probation and foster youth referred to the program, only 396 participated. As a result, significant funds designated for the program remained unspent at the end of the summer. As a result, the County authorized a part-time after school employment program.

The Summer Youth Employment Program emphasized soft skills attainment, as measured by initial and final worksite evaluations. The PER performed an initial analysis of the summer data and found that age, probation or foster care status, ethnicity, and the number of employment workshops attended were not significant predictors of increased worksite evaluation scores. More information is needed to identify factors that may have led to some youth performing better in their work placements.

Beyond Emancipation Education Specialist

There are no updates on this strategy for this reporting period.

The PER will focus on examining the efforts to secure pre and post education services (i.e. transcript analysis, Free Application for Federal student Aid (FAFSA) application, money for books and other post-secondary education supplies). Data should be available in the third quarter of 2012.

Alameda County Office of Education (ACOE) Mentors (FY 2011–12 Budget Amount - \$310,000)

As of this update, there are 45 foster youth receiving education services from the waiver-funded ACOE Foster Youth mentors. The average age of the foster youth at the onset of serves is 16 years, seven months. Twenty-eight of the 45 foster youth have completed a pretest assessment. The distribution of youth by county is listed below.

County	Total
Alameda	23
Contra Costa	11
San Joaquin	10
Solano	1
Grand Total	45

The three funded mentors provided the following:

- Assisted ILSP and Beyond Emancipation with providing transcript analyses for ILSP participants.
- Transported youth to financial aid workshop at Laney College and attended GED orientation at the East Oakland Youth Development Center.
- Assisted youth with completing literacy assessment at the West Oakland Adult Literacy Center.

- Participated in Children’s Hospital team meeting/training for youth with diabetes.
- Completed job search including career options related to shoe design and entrepreneurial options.

The PER will focus on evaluating the education outcomes of foster youths who have received services from the ACOE mentors. Preliminary data will likely be available in third quarter of 2012 after data of emancipated youth is made available. ILSP Services have a budgeted amount of \$1.3 million.

Project 1959 and Project Absence Without Official Leave (AWOL)-WestCoast Children’s Clinic

Project 1959 is an existing program that provides placement stabilization services to high-risk youth. Waiver dollars are used to fund the work of locating youth, efforts to engage in therapy, and stabilization in placement. Once they are engaged with a clinician, the county is able to bill EPSDT for their therapy. All Project 1959 face-to-face therapy services are billed to EPSDT, while the waiver pays for no-shows. Project AWOL is a waiver-funded enhancement to Project 1959 that will be provided by contractor WestCoast Children’s Center. Project AWOL will provide outreach and counseling to locate and connect with youth who have run away from placement and are not available for face-to-face contact with WestCoast clinicians. Once youth are located and persuaded to enter a placement, their services will be transferred to Project 1959.

Project AWOL has been delayed by contract and data-sharing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) issues. With these now resolved, WestCoast is now in the process of hiring staff for Project AWOL and anticipates a start date in mid- to late January.

Due to the late start of this project, the evaluation will be descriptive, covering the experiences with and insights about the work of program and a process study of the administrative aspects of the program.

Youth Fellow Board (formerly known as Youth Advocate Panel-YAP) (FY 2011-12 - Budget Amount - \$1.1 million)

A total of seven new Youth Fellows began their two-year terms during this time period. Six were hired in September 2011, and a seventh Youth Fellow started in October 2011. As of this writing, the total number of Youth Fellows is eleven, and there are plans to hire a twelfth Youth Fellow by February 2012.

During this reporting period, Youth Fellows participated in 101 TDMs serving 106 youth. They participated in 38 DCFS projects, conducted four trainings, and participated in 13 workgroups/subcommittee meetings.

The recent expansion of the program allowed Youth Fellows to engage in more TDMs, more subcommittee groups, and help plan for AB12 implementation in Alameda County. Because Youth Fellow assignments are 100 percent County directed and assigned, it can be challenging to collaborate with WestCoast Children’s Clinic, the contractor for the Youth Fellow Board. In response, DCFS started a monthly management implementation meeting between WestCoast and DCFS to clarify and resolve issues and concerns and to provide direction for the program.

To evaluate this strategy, a series of focus groups and in-depth interviews with Youth Fellows and DCFS managers are planned as part of a qualitative assessment of the Youth Fellows’ impact on DCFS policy and practices. The PER conducted the first focus group with Youth Fellows in May 2011, and an in-depth interview with a DCFS division director is planned for January 2012.

WestCoast developed an Individual Development Plan and Assessment Measure that defines competency skills for Youth Fellows, and has been administering this tool every six months to assess professional skills development throughout each Youth Fellow’s two-year tenure. In addition, a leadership skill pre-test and post-test is administered to Youth Fellows prior to starting and at the end of their tenure to measure growth in leadership competencies gained during their tenure.

Agency Staffing and Administrative Investments

Child Welfare Staff (FY 2011–12 Budget Amount - \$4.2 million)

The original idea behind this strategy was to increase staffing levels to bring caseloads more in line with the recommended caseload levels in the SB 2030 caseload study that was completed in 2000.

The following table lists staffing levels before the Waiver and as of November 2011.

	Pre-Waiver	As of Nov 2011	Difference
Child Welfare Workers	275	281	6
Child Welfare Supervisors	57	69	12
Search clerks	0	4	4
Totals	332	354	22

The Alameda County Board of Supervisors has approved new investment in staffing five times since the start of the waiver as shown in the table below.

Child Welfare Workers hired with Waiver funding, December 2011 status						
<i>Start Date</i>	<i>CWWs hired</i>	<i>Retained</i>	<i>Attrition</i>	<i>Retention %</i>	<i>Attrition %</i>	
6/14/2009	18	9	9	50%	50%	
10/19/2009	5	1	4	20%	80%	
2/22/2010	9	7	2	78%	22%	
9/20/2010	18	18	0	100%	0%	
3/21/2011	13	13	0	100%	0%	
	63	48	15	76%	24%	

Of those workers hired since the beginning of the waiver, 76 percent are still county child welfare workers. This represents an attrition rate of 24 percent. The class of workers hired in October 2009 had the highest attrition rate. These were workers hired as a result of layoffs in the county Probation Department and some were subsequently re-hired.

DCFS has yet to reach the goal of hiring 55 new workers as outlined in the Waiver plan. Due to significant declines in the numbers of children entering and accelerated numbers of children exiting; caseloads have decreased substantially in all program areas. Worker turnover has continued at fairly high levels although the attrition rate before the Waiver-funded expansion was at 30 percent. Nevertheless, the staffing increases have had positive effects in reducing worker caseloads, allowing more time for thoughtful casework and family engagement activities, and increasing worker morale.

Evaluation efforts will focus on documenting the impacts of lower caseloads on outcomes for children, expanding family engagement and worker morale. The PER has been reauthorized to conduct a workload study in summer 2012 which will provide valuable new data on casework and caseloads for inclusion in the overall analysis of waiver effectiveness.

Research and Evaluation Consultants (Budget Amount - \$364,000)

Three FTE Management Analysts continue in their assignments in the Social Services Agency (SSA) Finance Department Program Evaluation and Research Unit. The purpose of this strategy is to enable descriptive and/or outcome evaluations to be conducted for all implemented waiver strategies and to provide DCFS with the data needed to make evaluation-informed decisions on which waiver investments to maintain, increase, reduce, or eliminate.

Medi-Cal Consultant (Budget Amount - \$98,000)

In early November of 2011, the Medi-Cal (CA Federal Medicaid Program) Consultant completed and submitted a white paper detailing the concerns and issues for Alameda County foster youth Medi-Cal coverage. The purpose of the white paper was to identify

the barriers and challenges to foster children having Medi-Cal and to work toward solutions that would assure foster children receive timely and needed health care services. The white paper addressed 1) a summary of identified barriers, 2) barriers that have been solved by the State, 3) a summary of outstanding barriers, and 4) recommendation of solutions.

Barriers addressed include:

- Foster children role in establishing and maintaining Medi-Cal coverage.
- The uniqueness of Alameda County's challenges and the intervention required to address these issues.
- The immediacy of an initial assessment of foster children upon entry into care and during change of placements.

Recommendations included:

- Improved communication between State departments; communication from State to County Foster Care Eligibility.
- Separate out the issue of those children that enter the system without Medi-Cal and those that enter with Medi-Cal.
- Create a County-organized health system that manages the emergency disenrollment of foster care clients.

The PER will focus on how the determination of eligibility will be improved with the assistance of the Medi-Cal consultant. Potential quantitative analysis will entail a review of administrative records including Medi-Cal applications and rates of eligibility determination.

Eligibility Program Specialist (Budget Amount - \$190,000)

A program specialist was hired in order to create and maintain a standardized training manual for the DCFS eligibility workers of Alameda County. There are five areas eligibility workers must navigate in order to determine and receive funds for eligible children of Alameda County. The areas are: Foster Care, Medi-Cal, Kin-Gap, Adoption Assistance Program (AAP), and Emergency Assistance. (Most of or all of these funding streams are drawn down from state funds). The Eligibility Technicians (ET) maintain the responsibility to ensure that funding and medical coverage for children in placement is not interrupted. This manual was created to help establish monitoring of information submitted by Child Welfare Workers (CWW), Juvenile Probation Officer (JPO), Care Providers (FFA, Group Homes (GH), Foster Family Homes (FFH) Relatives, Legal Guardians), and Court Orders.

The PER will focus on how the determination of eligibility will improve with the assistance of the program specialist and the creation implementation of the policy and procedures for the Eligibility Technicians. Potential quantitative analysis will entail a

review of administrative records including foster care applications and rates of eligibility determination.

MISSEY Advocates (FY 2011–12 Budget Amount - \$70,000)

MISSEY stands for Motivating, Inspiring, Supporting, and Serving Sexually Exploited Youth. It is a local non-profit organization based in Oakland, CA, and it receives the majority of its funding from Measure Y, which was passed by Oakland voters in 2004. Measure Y provides approximately \$19 million every year for ten years to fund violence prevention programs, additional police officers, and fire services. MISSEY works with commercially sexually exploited children (CSEC) by providing comprehensive case management services in a safe environment. MISSEY also provides information and training to the community and government agencies on CSEC.

During this reporting period, waiver funding was used to hire two full-time MISSEY advocates. As of this writing, those advocates are undergoing a comprehensive training program. MISSEY advocates are former CSEC who have been able to overcome their challenges and want to give back to others what they have learned. These advocates will be positioned in the 23-hour Assessment Center, a safe place for youth to be while they are awaiting a foster placement. By being stationed at the Assessment Center, the advocates will have the opportunity to be one of the first contacts that CSEC will have when either entering the child welfare system or moving between foster care placements. The MISSEY advocate is also able to make referrals to other agencies that specialize in working with the CSEC population.

The DCFS has had the services of one MISSEY advocate that has not been funded by the waiver, and the position has proven to be highly successful at reaching CSEC when other efforts have been unsuccessful. Because of the success, DCFS wanted to be able to provide financial support to MISSEY to be able to have more advocates on board.

Child Welfare Case Study (FY 2011–12 Budget Amount - \$73,000)

During summer 2011, PER hired six recent Title IV-E Master of Social Work (MSW) graduates as Summer Research Associates with the intention of completing the workload study mentioned as described for the child welfare staffing strategy above. Unfortunately, given the short lead time to get the study up and running, delays in labor discussions prevented the study from being implemented. Instead, PER utilized the Summer Research Associates to conduct an extensive case reading study of two cohorts of first entries to Family Reunification services to better understand Alameda County's recent reunification trends. The report and analysis will be forthcoming.

Employment Counselors in Linkages Program (FY 2010–11 Budget Amount - \$640,000)

In August 2011, four Linkages Employment Counselors came to DCFS from the Employment Services Department of the Social Services Agency. Their responsibilities

are to screen all scheduled TDMs and identify cases that are potentially eligible for Linkages in efforts to create coordinated case plans that are more family-friendly. It is also the goal of the program to enhance reunification. Linkages staff attend TDMs and provide information to families. During the next reporting period, screening efforts and services to families will be expanded.

Behavioral Health Services

Screening, Stabilization, and Transition Services (STAT) Provided to Non-Medi-Cal Eligible Clients (FY 2010–11 Budget Amount - \$150,000)

There has been no change in this waiver strategy during this reporting period. The data table below shows two sets of numbers for STAT ineligible clients; those clients preliminarily identified before additional processing by the Medi-Cal Consultant et al.; and the finalized numbers as deemed ineligible. It typically takes 1-1.5 months to provide the consultant the preliminary ineligible list to process due to the timing of the invoicing process to Behavioral Health Care Services (BHCS).

Month	Initial Number Ineligible Clients	Final Number Ineligible Clients	Ineligible Medi-Cal Costs
July 2011	23	5	\$6,989
August 2011	32	6	\$9,247
September 2011	45	26	\$10,032
October 2011	51	*	\$36,187*
November 2011	44	*	\$27,282*

*preliminary amounts, additional processing in progress

Mobile Response Team (MRT) (Budget Amount - \$85,000)

During this reporting period, MRT had 124 total enrollments and served 92 clients and their families (32 were duplicate enrollments as families were served multiple times during this period). The MRT continues to provide same-day (or within 24 hours of the initial referral) crisis assessment and intervention across the county with the goal of diverting police involvement, unnecessary placement changes, and WIC (Welfare and Institutions Code) 5150s.

In addition to providing crisis assessment and safety planning, MRT staff are able to offer short term follow up for the youth and families in order to collaborate with Child Welfare, treatment teams, or link them to longer term services (individual therapy, family therapy, TBS, etc). The MRT works closely with the Welfare & Institution Codes (W&IC) 5150 ports in Alameda County including Willow Rock and Children’s Hospital with the goal of intervening early, offering preventative safety planning, and avoiding unnecessary hospitalizations. Additionally, MRT offers support to youth and families being discharged from hospitals to continue the development of coping skills, addressing triggers, and reviewing existing safety plans.

Although MRT employs two full-time Spanish-speaking staff, there remain significant limits to being able to serve Spanish-speaking families in crisis, as well as other

non-English speaking families. The MRT also struggles with being able to cover a large service area and maintain a quick response time. Although MRT constantly triages the crisis calls that come in, it is sometimes difficult to respond to every single one within the same day while also maintaining an adequate number of staff for busy and slow periods.

Currently, MRT serves youth with full-scope MediCal who have been referred by Child Welfare or a 5150 port. The MRT plans to continue working with Alameda County Behavioral Health to identify other populations of youth/families who may benefit from Crisis Services from MRT.

CASA Program (FY 2010–11 Budget Amount - \$404,000)

Since July 2010 to present, CASA of Alameda County has served approximately 180 foster youth. Some of the current program successes include hiring a full time recruiter, a full time trainer, increasing the number and quality of training for volunteers, and increasing the number of men and races recruited to volunteer.

Some of challenges in the current reporting period include the short amount of time the recruiter has been on board, and the number of foster youth who live outside Alameda County. Both of these challenges have impacted the county's ability to increase the volunteer pool.

The PER will focus on evaluating the recruitment efforts of CASA volunteers. An initial assessment of the program's current strategy has been completed by a Masters of Public Health (MPH) candidate working with the CASA program. Results and key findings will be reviewed and reassessed in the latter half of 2012.

Additions to County Counsel (FY 2011–12 Budget Amount - \$1.5 million)

During this reporting period, County Counsel participated in the creation of a County-wide protocol with Behavioral Health Care, East Bay Children's Law Offices (the agency that normally represents minors in dependency cases), and the Department's Executive Team regarding access to information needed to provide mental health services to dependents and information crucial for the court. Additionally, they are participating in advocacy on behalf of DCFS regarding pending legislation and/or promulgation of rules regarding implementation of legislation, such as AB 12, Extended Foster Care. County Counsel is also developing a protocol with DCFS, Probate Court, and Family Court on information sharing of emergency response investigation information.

Since the last update in August 2011, the significant change in the Child Welfare Division was going to a vertical staffing assignment system. The deputies were reassigned to cover all types of hearings from detention through status review reports for a particular dependency case. Each deputy covers every type of hearing for the particular case assigned. Vertical staffing improves the ability to serve the client by

having consistent representation on the case. Vertical staffing reduces the variance in advice between deputies who covered the same case at different hearings, and also improves efficiency by eliminating redundant preparation by multiple deputies on the same case at different hearings. Vertical staffing improves the representation by eliminating the disadvantage of not having a long-term memory of a case when there were multiple deputies handling the same case at different hearings. It was implemented on November 21, 2011.

The evaluation of additional staff attorneys will focus on qualitative assessment and process measures. Qualitative evaluation may include structured interviews and/or focus groups with county counsel staff, DCFS child welfare workers, and court officers. Examples of process measures would be the trends in court hearings with county counsel representation, the number of continuances, and the number of hearings where court decisions match DCFS recommendations.

Discretionary Fund (FY 2011–12 Budget Amount - \$1.5 million)

In this current fiscal year, DCFS has thus far spent about \$300,000 supporting families and children with the discretionary fund. The top five categories of items purchased are 1) furniture; 2) housing move-in costs; 3) clothing; 4) other; and 5) baby furniture and supplies. Some examples of “other” items include Disc Jockey (DJ) equipment for a transition age youth, tutoring expenses, computer for a transition age youth, Zipcar fees for a relative found by Family Finding and Engagement to visit a foster youth, and U visa fees for an undocumented mother who was abused by her boyfriend.

The discretionary fund is one of the most concrete waiver strategy in terms of providing *direct* goods and services to families. This fund helps DCFS achieve each of its five waiver goals:

- To increase the number of children who can remain safely in their own homes.
- To increase the number of children and youth placed in least restrictive settings.
- To increase the number of children who safely and permanently reunify with their families within 12 months.
- To increase the percentage of timely adoptions and guardianships.
- To improve self-sufficiency and well-being for transition age youth emancipating from foster care.

Alameda Probation

Strategies to reduce the number of out-of-home placements remain in effect and are being expanded. Staffing levels have been restored and new programs established. A reorganization of staff is being implemented which has been beneficial in energizing many units within the department, including placement and family preservation.

Title IVE Waiver dollars are being used to expand services and not solely for the maintenance of staff.

The three major goals, strategies, and progress updates are presented below.

Screening for Out-of-Home Services (SOS) – (Budget Amount - 3.6 million)

The goal to use a review and approval process to reduce the number of out-of-home placement recommendations is targeted by the strategy of utilizing a Screening Committee (SOS). The SOS is a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) comprised of medical, mental health, education, social services and probation experts who meet twice weekly (Tuesday and Thursday) to screen all youth considered for an out-of-home placement recommendation. The SOS determine the best recommendation for the youth after discussing the needs, strengths, services previously provided, resources currently available and the availability of these support areas within the local community. The number of out-of-home placement recommendations made by probation has consistently decreased. In the current reporting period, 75 out-of-home placement recommendations were requested by staff with 61 approved/recommended post SOS.

Collaborative Court

The Collaborative Court has continued to focus on alternative dispositions to out-of-home placement for youth with mental health concerns. Two Deputy Probation Officers serve a caseload of 25-50 youth. Close monitoring of specialized service participation and managing of input by clinicians are some of the intensive supervision services provided by this unit. Collaborative Court remains to be effective in treating youth in the least restrictive environment and renders services to a very difficult population that would otherwise be removed from the home and placed in foster care.

Family Preservation Unit (FPU) – (Budget Amount - 1.4 million)

The goal to reduce out-of-home placements is targeted by the strategy to increase youth served by the Family Preservation Unit (FPU). FPU has continued to provide services to maintain the youth in the home by providing Multi-Systemic-Therapy Services (MST). A total of 36 have received services. The county has been successful with blending funding for FPU through the use of waiver dollars, Medi-Cal and State Mental Health Services Act dollars. The MST continues to be successful in interventions with high-needs youth and their families. Of the total juvenile population, 85 percent of juveniles have been served by FPU and received referrals to community-based organizations funded by the Probation Department. As of this writing, all have avoided placement in residential facilities.

Eight Deputy Probation Officers and one Unit Supervisor comprise the Family Preservation Unit and are funded by Waiver dollars. Each Deputy carries a caseload of 20-25 juveniles and refers youth and their families to services provided by community-based organizations. In addition, Justice Works provides support for FPU in the way of case management. Their Violation Initiative Program (VIP) utilizes Short-term

Therapeutic Outreach to prevent removal from the home. In conjunction with the SOS committee, 32 FPU requests were made pre-SOS. Post SOS, 46 recommendations were made for family maintenance services via FPU.

Transition Center

The Transition Center is located at the Juvenile Justice Center with a Transition Team that develops a supportive Individual Academic Achievement Plan (IAAP) to stabilize the youth upon re-entering into their community. A full time Unit Supervisor, in partnership with the point of contact school administrator, is assigned as a member of the Transition Team. Initially the IAAP supports the youth by securing an appropriate Educational Setting environment matching the risk level of the minor post release from the Juvenile Justice Center. Case managers from five community based organizations work with these youth on their case plans. The Transition Center within the Juvenile Justice Center has been expanded and is staffed by a Multi-disciplinary Team (MDT) partially funded by the City of Oakland's "Measure Y" and partially funded by the Title IV-E waiver. Also available in the Transition Center are medical staff, Juvenile Hall school educators, mental health professionals, and case managers. In addition to these services, the Unit Supervisor and one Deputy Probation Officer coordinate the services of the Evening Reporting Centers which are an alternative to detention.

Additional Aligned Non-Funded Activities

- a. Collection of data on out-of-home placement recommendations is ongoing with the Placement database and SOS database.
- b. Communication between the bench officers and probation regarding treatment in the least restrictive environments and other alternatives to detention continues. Wraparound services continue and the county is planning for expansion.
- c. A needs assessment tool and a graduated sanction grid are being developed with plans to expand the Evening Reporting Center network. The increased development and use of evidence-based intervention services, in conjunction with improved interviewing, cognitive behavioral interventions, family focused treatment, substance abuse/mental health counseling, and team decision making approaches continue to be successful. These strategies are due to the Waiver.

During July 1, 2011-December 31, 2011, Probation data reveals the following statistic:

A total of 88 youth referred to the Family Preservation Unit.

Probation data for the SOS effort demonstrated successful results with 177 youth screened with the following results.

Placement	Pre SOS – Initial Recommendation by Probation Officer	Post SOS – Actual Recommendation by Deputy Probation Officer
Out-of Home	75	61
In-County Camp Program	40	28
Field Supervision in the Community	6	23
Family Preservation*	32	46
State Division of Juvenile Justice	3	1
Undecided	21	6 Probation w/o wardship; 12 Out-of-County transfer, transfer to Out-of-State family member

*Ten additional youth were direct court referrals to FPU with no SOS oversight.

Probation continued to be successful in maintaining Waiver goals, despite reduction in staff last year by implementing MDTs at critical decision points, utilizing a validated risk/needs assessment tool Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI), working with community-based organizations and improving community-based services; developing alternatives to detention, and strengthening non-custody supervision. Collaborative Court, SOS (Screening for out of Home Placement), and FPU continue to be viable means to avoid removing youth from their homes. Case Managers funded through “Measure Y” and Oakland School staff has added additional referral options for probation staff and the expansion to the Delinquency Prevention Network.

B. IMPACTS, OUTCOMES AND TRENDS

Alameda DCFS

As detailed above in planned evaluations for individual strategies, the county has made significant efforts during this reporting period to understand the impacts and efficacy of strategies implemented by DCFS under the CAP. As many strategies were implemented in Project Years two and three, the county is just now approaching the

time when it will become possible to pull early data for a first cohort year of clients with a full twelve months to track outcomes of interest.

In addition to evaluations of individual waiver strategies, PER continues to provide the monthly Waiver Dashboard reports (Appendix A:iii) and quarterly Progress Reports to DCFS management on aggregate data trends that detail Alameda County's performance on their project outcome goals (Appendix A:v):

- Increase number of children who can remain safely in their home; thus, reducing first entries into care.
- Increase number of children and youth in least restrictive settings.
- Increase number of children who safely and permanently reunify with their families within 12 months.
- Increase percent of timely guardianships and adoptions.
- Increase and develop supports for all foster care exits.
- Enhance the safety net for transitional age and emancipating youth.

During this reporting period, PER staff provided DCFS management with two additional analysis reports relevant to understanding Alameda County performance on key outcome measures:

- 1) A report to compare Alameda County to other large California counties on CFSR and waiver goals;
- 2) A report on the Family Reunification study conducted during the summer of 2011. The Family Reunification study was an extensive case reading study of first entry Family Reunification cases in FY 06/07 compared to 2009 to understand recent shifts in reunification trends.

The following data trends are based on the CWS/CMS Dynamic Report System – Key Outcomes Presentation Tool, based on the CWS/CMS 2011 Q3 Extract³ for 2007 - 2011, except as noted.

Youth placed in out-of-home care:

DCFS has been successful in its efforts to reduce the total population of youth in out-of-home placement and the number of youth in group home placement.

- Between the baseline period (10/1/07) and the most recent reporting period (10/1/2011), there was a 35.5 percent reduction in the number of children in child welfare supervised foster care in Alameda County, from 2,422 to 1,561 children.

³ Needell, B., Webster, D., Armijo, M., Lee, S., Dawson, W., Magruder, J., Exel, M., Cuccaro-Alamin, S., Putnam-Hornstein, E., Williams, D., Simon, V., Hamilton, D., Lou, C., Peng, C., Moore, M., King, B., Henry, C., & Nuttbrock, A. (2012). *Child Welfare Services Reports for California*. Retrieved 1/8/2012, from University of California at Berkeley Center for Social Services Research website. URL: <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb_childwelfare>

Placement in least restrictive settings

DCFS has been successful in its efforts to increase the percentage of children/youth placed in least restrictive settings. Between the baseline period (10/1/07) and the most recent reporting period (10/1/2011):

- There was a 4.8 percent increase in the percentage of youth placed with relatives, from 35.1 percent to 36.8 percent.
- There was a 39.4 percent decrease in the percentage of youth placed in congregate care, from 13.7 percent to 8.3 percent.

CASELOAD AND SERVICE COMPONENT

Between the baseline period (October 1, 2007) and the most recent reporting period (10/1/2011) (Appendix A:ii).

Caseload and Service Component	Decrease	Increase	Represents
Number of youth with Family Maintenance services	17.4%		
Number of children served in Pre-placement Family Maintenance		17.1%	Increase from 15.1% to 17.6%
Children being served in Family Maintenance overall		20.4%	Increase from 23.1% to 27.8%

ENTRIES

(Appendix A:v)

Entries	Decrease	Dates	Represents
Number of children who entered foster care for the first time for 8 or more days	39.2% (from 878 to 534 youth)	Between baseline period (10/1/06 – 9/30/07) and the most recent reporting period (10/1/2010 – 9/30/2011)	Reduction in the number of youth entering out-of home care
Number of youth entering foster care for the first time for 8 or more days	37.0% (from 627 to 395 youth)	Between baseline period (7/1/06 – 6/30/07) and the most recent reporting period (using the 12-month period of 10/1/2010 – 9/30/2011)	

FIRST PLACEMENT TYPE

Between the baseline period (7/1/06-6/30/07) and the current reporting period (using the 2-month period of 11/1/2010-10/30/2011) (Appendix A:iii).

First Placement Type	Decrease	Increase	Represents
Number of children placed with a relative (placement episodes of 8 or more days)		39.0% (from 123 to 171 youth)	Reduction in number of youth entering out-of-home care
Proportion of all new entries, first placements with a relative		113.2% (from 15.2% of all first placements to 32.4% of all first placements)	

SUCCESSFUL REUNIFICATION

Between the baseline period (10/1/06 – 9/30-07) and the most recent reporting period (10/1/2009 – 9/30/2010)

Successful Reunification	Decrease	Increase
Youth reentering foster care within 12 months of reunification following a placement episode of 8 or more days	32.7% (from 19.6% to 13.2%)	

The DCFS has been successful in its efforts to decrease the percentage of children who reenter foster care within 12 months of reunification.

TIMELINESS OF PERMANENCE THROUGH ADOPTION OR GUARDIANSHIP

Between the baseline period (7/1/06 – 6/30/07) and the current reporting period (using the 2-month period of 11/1/2010 – 10/30/2011) (Appendix A:iii).

Timeliness of Permanence through Adoption or Guardianship	Decrease	Increase
Percentage of youth in the exit cohort exiting to adoption within 24 months		4.4% (from 33.9% to 35.4%)
Percentage of youth in the exit cohort exiting to guardianship (all types) within 24 months		7.1% (from 48.2% to 51.6%)

Timely Reunification

The waiver goal adopted for timely reunification was revised on June 28, 2011 at the County's Monthly Waiver Executive Team meeting. The new reunification goal is patterned after the federal entry cohort reunification measure (C1.3); however, while the federal measure reports on a 6-month entry cohort, we have opted to track based on a 12-month cohort to: 1) reduce some of the variation that is seen between 6-month periods, 2) to be consistent with how we track successful reunification (12-month cohorts), and 3) to enable us to track performance for each of the remaining years of the waiver. The new goal was based upon data available on the Dynamic Report System website, using the December 2010 Quarter 4 extract.

After reviewing the data trend since the baseline year prior to the implementation of the waiver, which shows a decline in reunifications within 12 months for youth entering care for the first time (from 45.1% to 33.2%), the most recent 12-month cohort was selected as the baseline in order to determine a meaningful and feasible goal for the remainder of the Waiver period.

- 2009 Baseline: Of youth who entered Alameda County foster care for the first time in 2009, 33.2% exited to reunification within 12 months.
- New goal: The revised reunification goal based on this 2009 entry cohort is 38%.

Between the new baseline period (2009) and the most current reporting period for this measure (7/1/2009-6/30/2010), there was a 3% decline in the percentage of children exiting foster care to reunification within 12 months of first entry (See Appendix A.v).

Alameda County Probation

Local Evaluation Efforts

Strides have been made in this area and Alameda Probation has established a Data Collection Unit (DARK) to monitor the effectiveness of the interventions. In October 2010, PRISM was implemented to replace the old Juvenile Information System (JUVIS) system, and currently CWS/CMS is being populated by probation staff along with the PRISM Placement Database designed by probation. The Screening for Out-of-Home Services (SOS) database now tracks the court ordered decision for additional comparison. The county is pursuing interfaces between the various databases to decrease dual entry issues.

C. CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS

For this reporting period, Alameda County has not reported any challenges or barriers to the project.

D. PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR THE NEXT REPORTING PERIOD

For the last six months of the project, Alameda DCFS plans to continue the evaluation efforts of the waiver strategies. These plans include expanding services for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender & Questioning (LGBTQ) foster youth, rapid housing programs to families who are close to reunification and extend the summer youth employment program to a year-round program. Additionally, DCFS plans to fund a school resource officer in partnership with the Alameda County Sheriff's Office and fund a foster youth mentoring program.

Alameda Probation is exploring the expansion of the SOS process to include family prior to any out-of-home placements and possibly prior to a placement recommendation. Interfaces between the SOS database, Placement database, Transportation database, and PRISM are being reviewed to gain more statistical

information. Additional alternatives to detention are being planned including more Evening Reporting Centers. Justice Works is working on shortening placement times, assisting FPU in preventing removal, and developing aftercare for youth exiting foster care. The Collaborative Court has expanded and more staff will be needed for the additional court dates.

Los Angeles County

A. COUNTY IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES

Los Angeles Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)

During the first six months of CAP Year Five (July 1, 2011 through December 31, 2011), Los Angeles DCFS continued its focus on multiple core strategies, including the Point of Engagement (POE) approach to strength-based practice and community partnering, Structured Decision Making, Team Decision Making (TDM), Concurrent Planning and the Permanency Partners Program (P3). Information on specific Waiver funded strategies utilized during this period is as follows:

Updated Activities for July 1, 2011 through December 31, 2011

Expansion of Family Team Decision Making (TDM) Conferences (Budget Amount - \$2,874,000)

As previously reported, DCFS expanded the use of TDM conferences to meet the needs of youth at high risk of aging out of care without permanency through the use of Permanency Planning Conferences (PPC). The PPCs continue to be held for youth ages

12 and older in group home care or in foster care two years or longer with no identified permanency resources. In addition, when the population of youth zero–12 years of age in group homes began to increase, PPCs were also scheduled for this target population of younger youth. On December 1, 2011, the County Director implemented policy that a PPC must take place once every four months for children ages zero-12 years. Between July 1, 2011 and November 30, 2011, 125 youth received a PPC. Recommended plans for these 125 youth include:

Placement Plan Recommendations	Number of Youth
Transition to a family-based setting, including home of parent, relative placement, placement with a non-relative extended family member, legal guardianship or adoption	41 (33%)
Transition to a lower level of care, including lower Rate Classification Level (RCL) group home setting, Foster Family Home, Foster Family Agency (FFA), Intensive Treatment Foster Care (ITFC) or D-Rate Foster Home	39 (31%)
Maintenance in current level of care	9 (7%)
Termination of jurisdiction or emancipation	19 (15%)
Transition to a Regional Center placement	4 (3%)
Transition to a higher level of care	0 (0%)
Facilitator did not report recommendation	6 (5%)

Of the 125 PPCs held from July 1, 2011 to November 30, 2011, the following outcomes were achieved for youth in congregate care or foster care without identified permanency resources:

Placement Outcomes	Number of Youth
Family Based Setting	
Home of Parent	1
Relative Placement	9
Foster Family Home	9
MTFC/ITFC Placement	1
Residentially Based Services (RBS)	1
Group Home Setting	
Lower Level of Care	2
Medical Facility	1
No Change in Status	105

Focused Family Finding and Engagement through Specialized Permanency Units at Three Regional Offices (Budget Amount - 2,274,000)

Youth Permanency (YP) Units established during the first two years of the CAP continue to operate in three DCFS regional offices. These units serve the most challenging youth identified as high-need, who may have the following characteristics: no or limited family connections, multiple recent replacements, heavy substance abuse, recent psychiatric hospitalization, and repeat runaways. The YP Unit social workers continue to receive training and support that assist in connecting or reconnecting youth to siblings, parents, extended family members and adult mentors. Focused efforts also foster stability and permanency for these youth. Between July 1, 2011 and November 30, 2011, the three YP Units served 217 youth.

It should be noted that, as designed, Child Social Workers (CSW) in the YP Units carry reduced caseloads of 15 youth; however, as reported in our January 2011 and July 2011 progress reports, due to reassignments throughout the Department, YP caseloads rose to 24 cases last year. The YP Unit supervisors report that caseloads have decreased to between 15–19 cases per worker. However, two of the three YP units have fewer CSWs than originally designed due to CSW reassignment and units not being able to fill behind these vacancies. With fewer staff and increased caseloads, YP Unit social workers are unable to optimally meet the permanency needs of these youth and test the effectiveness of this CAP strategy.

YP Unit Outcomes between July 1, 2011 and November 30, 2011	Number of Youth (217 Total)
Home of Parent	9 (4.1%)
Moving towards Adoption	14 (6.5%)
Adoption	3 (1.4%)
Legal Guardianship	12 (5.5%)
Moving towards Legal Guardianship	7 (3.2%)
Replacement from high-level residential group home care to a reduced level of care	11 (5.1%)
Emancipation with connections	35 (16.1%)
Increased connectedness with new or increased contact with extended family members, siblings or other committed adults	31 (14.3%)
No change in status and continue to receive specialized services in an YP Unit	95 (43.8%)

In reviewing the outcomes achieved by the YP Units, it is important to understand that youth served in these units are those identified as having the highest needs and those for whom finding connections and permanency is the most challenging. Although achieving connections without legal permanency is not the ideal, YP Unit CWSs report seeing vast improvements in the emotional and behavioral health of these youth after they become connected to family or other important others.

Up-Front Assessments (UFA) on High-Risk Cases for Domestic Violence, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Issues (Budget Amount - \$383,000)

To reduce unnecessary entries and reentries into foster care and assist parents in accessing services necessary for timelier reunification, DCFS, via contracted community-based Family Preservation (FP) providers, continued to provide up-front assessments (UFA) of high risk referrals involving mental health, substance abuse and/or domestic violence. Providers participate in TDM conferences and provide quicker linkage to Alternative Response Services (ARS) and FP Services, allowing an increased number of children to remain safely with their families.

Between July 1, 2011 and November 30, 2011, 2,080 families with 4,253 children received UFAs during referral investigations:

- Of the 2,080 families, 5 percent were referred for ARS and 11.9 percent were referred for FP services.
- Of the 4,253 children whose families were served, 1,544 (36.3%) children were promoted to a case and received the following services:

Case Services	Number	Percent
Voluntary Family Maintenance	865	56.0
Family Maintenance	375	24.3
Voluntary Family Reunification	52	3.4
Family Reunification	252	16.3

Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project (PIDP) (Budget Amount - \$2,500,000)

The PIDP began its fourth year in Fiscal Year (FY) 2011-2012, continuing to provide preventative services to primary, secondary, and tertiary populations through innovative and diverse strategies. PIDP is operated through a lead contracted agency that develops its own array of services, but is expected to meet contract deliverables by addressing three over-arching goal areas: increasing economic opportunities, decreasing social isolation, and increasing access to community-based resources.

While PIDP was initially a 12-month project in FY 2008-2009, DCFS subsequently obtained an additional four months of local funds for the lead agencies and DCFS regional partners to fully develop and implement their prevention strategies. In FYs 2009-2010 and 2010-2011, CAP funding continued to be utilized to support the program. While the third year of PIDP saw a deepening of the PIDP strategies into the respective communities and increased engagement with the regional DCFS offices, there was a planned reduction in budget from \$5 million to \$2.5 million. This resulted in PIDP agency staffing reductions; however, some of the agencies were able to leverage other funding and in-kind sources to address loss of funding. In the fourth year plan for FY 2011-2012, the budget for PIDP was originally reduced from \$2.5 million to \$1.25 million. On December 13, 2011, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors approved the Department's request to increase funding for FY 2011-2012 by an additional \$1.25 million (\$2.5 million total) and extended the term of the eight PIDP contracts for the bridge period starting July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013. In addition, the Interim Director was provided delegated authority, if necessary, to execute an optional six-month period from July 1, 2013 through December 31, 2013.

During the first 6 months of CAP Year Five, 3,930 clients were served by the PIDP network agencies; 711 were referred by DCFS, and 3,219 were non-DCFS community residents.

Youth Development Services (Budget Amount - \$1,454,000)

During the first six months of the CAP Year Five, the DCFS Youth Development Services (YDS) Division continued to provide cash assistance to Independent Living Program (ILP)-eligible youth. Waiver funds were utilized for this purpose due to the suspension of the Emancipated Foster Youth Stipend (EYS). This assistance is designed to aid transition age youth with educational and vocational expenses, including: tuition, books and supplies, exam fees, high school graduation expenses, high school graduation diplomas, GED incentives, travel and miscellaneous expenses (e.g., bus passes, airline tickets, parking).

Additional Strategies

In addition to these specific CAP initiatives, DCFS has continued to utilize additional strategies to improve outcomes for children and families during CAP Year Five. These include:

- *Child Safety Enhancements (Budget Amount - \$1,919,000)*

As detailed in our three previous progress reports, DCFS furthered its efforts to enhance and strengthen its focus on child safety through several widespread efforts. These efforts, originally overseen by the Emergency Response (ER) Redesign Workgroup, included updating computer systems, improving computerized management oversight, and enhancing ER training. Efforts also included working with the State for authority to extend the closure of referrals from 30 to 60 days and reallocating staff resources, safely reducing ER referrals open past this period between July 2010 and June 2011. Staff reallocation involved redeployment of non-case carrying staff and temporary reassignment of program staff to ER line operations, and hiring temporary ER social workers.

In addition, to strengthen the Department's social work practice and as part of the County's Katie A. Settlement Agreement, the Department implemented the Quality Service Review (QSR) Process in June 2010. To date, QSRs have been held in 11 regional offices and participating offices report that feedback provided through the QSR process is very valuable. A Quality Improvement Steering Committee meets regularly and participating offices share practices they have implemented to improve areas of need identified in their QSR.

The DCFS is currently developing a QSR for the Child Protection Hotline (CPH) and ER to inform DCFS on needed service improvements in both programs. The final ER protocols and reporting tool is scheduled to be completed on March 30, 2012. Once the Hotline and ER tool is completed, a formal QSR review will be conducted and DCFS will integrate the recommendations from the QSR into policy, procedure and practice.

To evaluate the effectiveness of child safety enhancements, DCFS monitors the following key ER activities and benchmarks: timely disposition of allegations and conclusion of referrals, and timely use of Structured Decision Making (SDM) for safety and risk assessments. In addition, DCFS continues to monitor timely response and timely social work. Per the University of California at Berkeley (UCB) Center for Social Services Research as of December 19, 2011, the rate of timely social work visits increased by 4.6 percent from 89.8 percent to 94.0 percent between the Baseline Period (July 1, 2006 – June 30, 2007) and Q2 2011. In addition, between Q2 2007 and Q2 2011, the timely response for Immediate Response Investigations increased 1 percent from 97.3 percent to 98.3 percent.

- *Intensive Treatment Foster Care (ITFC)*

The DCFS continues to achieve success with its ITFC Program, which provides intensive in-home services for children and youth ages six–17 with serious emotional and behavioral problems. The ITFC calls for one youth only to be placed in specially trained foster homes with 24/7 access to crisis intervention and support under the supervision of a Foster Family Agency (FFA) team that includes a program administrator, in-home support, case managing social worker and therapist. The ITFC is a trauma-informed program using Trauma Focused-Cognitive Behavioral Therapy as the preferred treatment intervention overseen by the County Department of Mental Health (DMH) and California Institute for Mental Health (CIMH). A second option offered under the ITFC Program is Multi-Dimensional Treatment Foster Care (MTFC), an evidence-based program also overseen by DMH and CIMH. MTFC is available for DCFS youth ages 12-17 who are in a group home, or children ages 6-11 who meet the eligibility requirements for an RCL 9 facility or higher, and who have an identified caregiver who would provide a permanent home were it not for the child's severe problem behaviors.

The ITFC continues to experience steady growth. The DCFS has executed ITFC contracts with 12 FFAs, four of which also offer the MTFC model.

- By November 30, 2011, DCFS had 77 certified homes with an additional 22 pending certification.
- Since ITFC was instituted in May 2008, 157 youths have entered and received intensive services with 29 youth entering in the last six months.
- The majority of youth entering ITFC have had an average of seven prior failed placements and come to ITFC from group home settings.
- Of the youth exiting ITFC, 52 (55%) have transitioned to a lower level of care. Of those transferring to a lower level of care, over half (60%) were reunified with parents or legal guardians.
- At the end of November 2011, 63 youth were stably placed in an ITFC home.

As many foster youth qualify for this program, referrals to the program remain robust over this reporting period. However, the recruitment, certification and maintenance of committed foster families willing to work with this target population remain a significant challenge in Los Angeles as it does nationwide. One identified barrier is the adoption fees involved in the DCFS mandate that all foster parents be dually certified as foster and adoptive homes. On November 29, 2011, the Board of Supervisors approved the Department's request that the requirement that ITFC foster parents be dually certified as foster and adoptive parents be waived. However, they are still required to obtain both the foster care and adoption criminal clearances. The DCFS will request that the Board of Supervisors waive the adoption clearance because the additional fees may be a barrier to ITFC foster parent recruitment. It is hoped that removing this potential

barrier to ITFC foster parent recruitment will increase the number of ITFC foster homes for high-need children.

Other recruitment efforts continue. DCFS and DMH ITFC staff are working with the providers on the first ITFC Foster Parent Recognition and Training Event set for February 17, 2012. Foster parents will be asked to bring others interested in becoming a foster parent to that training event. The ITFC program will also use community outreach tools, such as public service announcements, to publicize the need for foster homes dedicated to working with high needs youth.

In addition to the challenges of ITFC foster family recruitment, the development of ITFC treatment teams at each of the provider agencies is a time-consuming process. DCFS and DMH ITFC staff has been working closely to provide technical assistance to support this process. There is a particular need for advanced training specific to the care of emotionally and behaviorally challenged youth beyond the traditional FFA services. To this end, DCFS and DMH ITFC staff is reviewing nationally recognized curricula for therapeutic foster care programs that can be used to supplement the training of therapeutic foster Care (TFC) providers and foster parents.

The recently approved State Katie A. Settlement that underlined the need for counties to utilize ITFC programs and other intensive services speaks to the need to expand ITFC throughout California. The DCFS and Department of Mental Health (DMH) ITFC program staff are participating in two state work groups: (1) the CDSS ITFC/MTFC Work Group and (2) the State Katie A Negotiations Work Group. The CDSS Work Group defines the Title IV-E ITFC activities, distinguishing them from Medi-Cal billable mental health services, and reviewing the ITFC rate scale. The Katie A. Implementation Work Group prepares policy directives for intensive services across the state.

- *Residentially Based Services (RBS) Demonstration Project*

Assembly Bill (AB) 1453 (Soto, Statutes of 2007) provided a multi-year pilot demonstration project to transform the State's long-term congregate group home care into a system of Residentially Based Services (RBS) programs seeking to reduce the length of placement time in group care and improve permanency outcomes. Currently, San Bernardino, Sacramento, San Francisco and Los Angeles Counties participate in the RBS reform initiative.

As of November 30, 2011,

- Eighty-three (83) children were actively receiving RBS residential and community services in Los Angeles County.
- Fifty-two (52) of the 83 children received RBS residential services and the remaining 31 children received services in the community.

- Between July 1, 2011 and November 30, 2011, 34 new children who were either placed in a group home or were at risk of such placement were enrolled in RBS and
- Twenty-eight (28) children receiving RBS residential services were transitioned back to the community.

Monitoring and oversight activities are integrated into RBS early on to address unanticipated implementation related challenges and ensure conformity to RBS tenets. On November 2, 2011, DCFS RBS staff, RBS provider agencies and CDSS conducted an onsite review of San Bernardino County's RBS program. The Site Review included a tour of one of the Treatment Centers, RBS Care Plan reviews, and various interviews with San Bernardino County's RBS staff, RBS provider agency staff, youth and families. On November 7, 2011, San Bernardino County's RBS program representatives and San Bernardino RBS service providers along with CDSS and Hays Consulting conducted a site review in Los Angeles County. This site review included a tour of Hillside, one of the three non-profit RBS program provider agencies in Los Angeles County (the other two being Five Acres and Hathaway-Sycamores). Participants in the Los Angeles County site visit also reviewed the Care Plans of selected RBS cases from all three service providers, interviewed County RBS staff, RBS provider agency staff, RBS participant families and a number of youth enrolled in the RBS program. RBS Site Reviews monitor the implementation of RBS, assess the fidelity to the approved RBS MOU and its evolving program tenets, and identify local technical assistance needed to begin assessing quality of services.

On October 18, 2011, an RBS focus group was held in Los Angeles County. The RBS focus group was intended to help collect information about the early lessons learned from the reform initiative. Casey Family Programs conducted the focus group, which included interviews with RBS line staff and supervisors, provider agency staff, relatives, foster/adoptive families and birth parents. The focus group outcome will be uploaded and available for review on the RBS Reform website (<http://www.rbsreform.org/index.html>), as soon as finalized.

The DCFS RBS staff works closely with CDSS and the three RBS provider agencies. In the spirit of working cooperatively with all participants, RBS Evaluation Meetings are held on a regular basis as data collection forums. RBS staff also meet twice monthly with the three RBS provider agencies, at RBS Open Doors Roundtable. The Open Doors Roundtable was created to function as the utilization review and management body for RBS. The Roundtable is responsible for gathering lessons learned, communicating those to the Open Doors Advisory Group and troubleshooting solutions. As such, participant agencies share with participants lessons learned, success stories and challenges.

Los Angeles County Probation

Waiver Funded Strategies/Initiatives – Probation Department

Enhanced Cross-Systems Case Assessment and Case Planning (CSA) (Budget Amount 105,000)

Los Angeles Probation created CSA in conjunction with the county Department of Mental Health (DMH) and input from the group home provider community to ensure that youth's risks and needs are identified through a joint assessment using standardized assessment documents prior to placement. The CSA was developed to provide a comprehensive method of assessing all youth with a new suitable placement order, with the goal of providing sufficient information for the case manager and group home provider to develop an individualized case plan for each youth. The CSAs ensure that youth and families receive appropriate and targeted treatment while the youth is in congregate care to ensure successful family reunification, which will reduce re-entries into replacements. For this reporting period, Probation's CSA unit, comprised of two Deputy Probation Officers and one Mental Health Clinician has completed 14 percent (119) assessments of the 868 youth that received a new Suitable Placement order. The original design, which included three Deputy Probation Officers (DPO) and three Mental Health Clinicians revised Departmental policy to reduce the Juvenile Hall population. The need to shift staffing resources to mandated functions, combined with the revision, mitigated the CSAs ability to retain youth to complete the CSA process and led to the creation and implementation of the Probation Assessment Center (PAC) model.

Changes to the CSA Initiative began to take effect as Probation submitted a Request for Information (RFI) to all group home providers in an effort to expand PACs to add more beds. Unfortunately, the RFI process did not coincide with the loss of some key members of the CSA unit due to other priority assignments within the Department. However, with the decrease in the CSA unit staffing, Probation has re-allocated the funding for the reduction of two Department of Mental Health clinicians into expanding contracts for Functional Family Therapy (FFT) and Multi-systemic Therapy (MST) which are leveraged with Early Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) funding.

Newly placed youth assigned to one of the two PACs located at Rancho San Antonio and Boy's Republic group homes spend 30-45 days receiving extensive educational, psycho-social, substance abuse and criminogenic risk assessments facilitated by Licensed Clinical Social Workers. The increased time allows the provider to establish trust with the youth and engage the family to participate in the assessment and case planning process that was not possible with the original CSA model, because of the logistics and time for a CSA process. Both group home providers and Residential-based Supervision Case Managers/DPOs have related that they receive more comprehensive information from the PAC assessment which allows them to develop a meaningful and individualized case plan.

As such, Probation decreased the number of CSAs in favor of expanding PACs and ensured that newly placed youth receive the benefits of the PAC assessment process. For this review period, the PACs have assessed 33% (287) of the 868 youth that received a new Suitable Placement Order.

Youth who are not accepted to one of the PACs due to exclusion criteria, females, sex offenders or arsonists, continue to receive an assessment through the CSA when applicable. Youth that are recommended by the judge for a specific placement and/or released from a Residential Treatment Placement (camp) or Juvenile Hall prior to transfer to the CSA unit do not receive a CSA. This accounts for the 53% (462) of the 868 youth that received a new Suitable Placement Order and did not receive a PAC or CSA.

Expansion of Functional Family Therapy (FFT), Functional Family Probation (FFP) and Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST) (Budget Amount - \$4,482,952)

Under the CAP, Probation implemented FFT and MST, two evidence-based programs designed to treat youth and families. Initially, 15 DPOs were trained in FFT and 14 DPOs were trained in FFP. As a direct result of the reduction in out-of-home placements and based on the growing need to expand services to youth transitioning home as well as prevent youth from entering foster care, the Department was able to convert nine additional DPOs from Residential-based Supervision to FFP Supervision during this reporting period. This strategic expansion of the FFP supervision model has ensured that more youth leaving congregate care will be provided with strength-based, intensive supervision occurring in the home. Prior to the start of the CAP, youth ordered Home on Probation visited their DPO once a month in a Probation area office. These DPOs typically carry upwards of 100 cases as opposed to the 20 cases that are carried by FFP DPOs who provide supervision in the home. During this reporting period a new contract was required to reestablish the FFP and FFT training and consulting contract with the California Institute of Mental Health (CIMH). At the request of the Board of Supervisors, the Department was required to provide a preliminary outcome analysis of all youth and families referred to FFT since its implementation in January 2008 (see Appendix B:i.) to support the need to continue contracting for such services. A summary of results is documented in the local evaluation efforts section of this report.

During this reporting period, Probation and contract providers have served 270 youth and families in FFT. Two hundred and fifty five (255) youth and families have received FFP supervision and 19 youth and families have received MST services.

Prospective Authorization and Utilization Review (PAUR) Unit (Budget Amount – \$423,000)

Probation has established the PAUR unit to assist in matching youth and families with appropriate services. This unit improves consistency in service utilization, as referrals to services are pre-approved based on whether a youth and family meet the specified

focus of service. The PAUR unit handles referrals for Family Preservation, FFT, FFP and MST and processes referrals for youth who are considered at-risk of entering out-of-home care. The PAUR unit also oversees referrals for those youth transitioning from Placement back to the community and ensures that these programs are operating at full capacity. Each case is systematically reviewed to determine if the service provided addresses the youth's risks and needs as identified through assessments, the Probation Case Management System (PCMS), Court orders and Conditions of Probation. The PAUR unit has processed 958 referrals during this reporting period.

Expenditure Listing

Appendix B.ii., Listing of County Waiver Investments for Project Year 5, provides the budgeted amounts for FY 2010-2011 strategies/initiatives as well as actual expenditures for the first quarters of FY 2011-2012 for DCFS and Probation.

B. IMPACTS, OUTCOMES, AND TRENDS

Los Angeles County

Both departments continue to report their demonstrated success under the CAP. The DCFS staff who conduct PPCs and manage YP Unit caseloads relate success in connecting and reconnecting youth with family and finding permanency for youth who have lived in group home care or congregate care for extended periods of time. All three YP units report their YP population's interaction with Emergency Response Command Post (ERCP) has decreased since the implementation of the YP units. YP Units have developed excellent relationships with caregivers and group home social workers who care for their high-risk youth. These relationships have reduced the number of youth with after-hours emergency needs and have been placement resources for YP youth.

Los Angeles County DCFS

Staff managing the UFA program confirms the ability to more quickly and accurately identify and obtain services for families with substance abuse, domestic violence and mental health issues. It is believed that this expedited assessment and connection to services has allowed an increased number of parents to reunify more quickly with their children.

As described above and in previous progress reports, the Year Two PIDP evaluation found that prevention strategies for DCFS families were highly effective and families involved with PIDP expressed "significant improvement in quality of life indicators."

Los Angeles County Probation

Probation has seen a steady reduction in the number of youth and length of stay in congregate since CAP implementation. Although this downward trend began prior to

the CAP, Probation has continued this trend during the fifth year of the CAP. Probation's CAP initiatives have been instrumental in realizing caseload reductions. The total number of youth placed out-of-home has dropped significantly from 1,684 in July 2007 to 969 as reported through September 2011. During the reporting period the number dropped from 975 to 969. The average length of stay in congregate care has decreased from approximately 12 months at the beginning of the CAP to approximately 10 months (see Appendix B:iii.).

Probation has targeted youth transitioning home from congregate care or at risk of entering out-of-home care. While it is not possible to determine direct causation between the CAP initiatives and the rapid rate of decline in the total number of youth in congregate care or the decline in average length of stay, Probation has made great strides in these areas. Youth who exit Placement with FFT, stay an average of six months while those youth who do not receive services stay in out-of-home care an average of ten months. Also the PAUR unit is diverting youth from placement in lieu of remaining in the community with intensive services, such as FFT, FFP, MST, Wraparound or Family Preservation.

This continuum of care did not exist for Probation youth prior to the CAP. The CSA and PACs allow Probation to assess youth prior to placement and to assist the DPOs in gathering information on the youth and family for case planning purposes. Once the youth is prepared to transition back to the community, he/she is referred for services through the PAUR unit and matched with the most appropriate community-based service. Research clearly shows that youth have better outcomes at home. Probation has targeted community-based, in-home services in attempt to improve outcomes for youth and families. Due to the increased availability of interventions created under the CAP for at-risk youth, Probation has started to experience an organizational shift by becoming more treatment focused in the way that they intervene in the lives of the youth and families that are served.

C. CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS

Although Los Angeles DCFS and Probation have seen success through the CAP, there have been challenges as well, including those around fiscal claiming and reporting mandates. The departments have also grappled with the methodology for the apportionment of reinvestment funds. The DCFS and Probation continue to meet on a monthly basis with the County's Chief Executive Office (CEO) and will continue addressing fiscal issues. In addition, DCFS re-hired on a consultant basis the retired Senior Deputy Director who previously oversaw CAP fiscal issues for the first three years of the CAP and has considerable County fiscal expertise to assist in this process. This retiree met with Probation fiscal staff on July 13, 2011, and the departments have moved forward to fully resolve any remaining allocation issues.

During CAP Year Five, a substantial challenge for the departments remained in planning for the use of additional reinvestment funds. It was a challenge to plan the enhanced and expanded initiatives and move forward with additional innovative

strategies due to the uncertain fiscal environment. As indicated in the previous most recent progress reports, the departments had planned to make investments into new or expanded initiatives during CAP Years Three and Four. However, State budget uncertainties and the impact of the 32 percent group home rate increase retroactive to December 14, 2009 impeded this effort. The departments were forced to utilize reinvestment funds to cover this unexpected and significant increase in group home costs. The Court decision to increase the rate paid to licensed foster parents, effective May 1, 2011, added to the fiscal planning challenges.

Receipt of the State planning augmentation on June 24, 2011 in the amount of \$14.2 million provided vital funding and allowed the planning and utilizing of reinvestment funds to move forward. On December 13, 2011, the departments received approval from the County Board of Supervisors to implement enhanced and expanded Waiver strategies (see Appendix B:iv.). However, it should be noted that challenges to reinvest funds into these strategies continued to be of ongoing concerns with the countywide budget as well as existing contracting and hiring requirements.

An additional continuing challenge for DCFS over CAP Year Five has involved departmental leadership changes; four individuals oversaw the Child Welfare Department as Director, Interim Director and Acting Director between December 2010 and December 2011. While transitions related to the CAP have been relatively smooth, by their nature, transitions require educating and updating new participants and integrating their perspectives into planning.

The DCFS continued to experience the impact of Senate legislation and subsequent media coverage related to child fatalities in Los Angeles County. While entries into care continued to decrease in CAP Year Five in comparison to the previous rating period, staff continued to express heightened anxiety and risk aversion with regard to leaving children in homes during child abuse investigations.

Operational Issues – Any DCFS expenditures lower than the budgeted amounts have been primarily attributable to delays in hiring and contract negotiations. All unexpended funds were rolled over to the following fiscal years and have become part of the county's available reinvestment funds.

Los Angeles County Probation

New California Legislation has caused Probation to account for changes to policies and practices. Assembly Bill (AB) 109 and the release of parolees to the jurisdiction of county Probation departments will require shifting resources to address growing public safety concerns. Due to county wide budget constraints, Probation has not been allowed to hire new staff to supervise these parolees and they have been asked to use existing staff from other operations. As a result, some of the staff working on the CAP initiatives have been re-assigned to fulfill the obligations of the AB 109 that has significantly impacted operations.

Additionally, California's Fostering Connections to Success Act (AB 12/212) has affected future CAP planning as Probation strategizes to implement this extension of Foster Care benefits to 19 and 20 year olds. Probation has identified staff to carry out the new duties outlined in AB 12/212. Due to ongoing budgetary constraints and lack of fiscal policy regarding claiming, Probation will not immediately be able to hire new staff for this effort. Probation reports that they will use existing staff to carry out the new requirements for those youth who opt into extended Foster Care. However, Probation is working with DCFS, Board Deputies and the Chief Executive Office to identify potential Administration funds to hire new staff to meet the needs of the Probation Department.

Another challenge reported by Los Angeles Probation is the dual entry issues related to Probation's use of the State's Child Welfare Services/Cases Management System (CWS/CMS) and Probation's Case Management System (PCMS). In October 1, 2010, Probation began entering data elements into CWS/CMS for National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD), National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect (NCANDS) and Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS). Probation's policy requires staff to also use PCMS to document mandated requirements for delinquency. While CWS/CMS allows Probation more access to records and reports for foster youth, it requires dual entry by Probation Officers, which minimizes time available for case management activities provided to youth and families. .

Although the State has provided CWS/CMS training for all Probation Departments statewide, Probation has received no additional funding for this mandate. As a result, Probation has been forced to roll out implementation, additional training and technical support using existing resources. Due to this strain on resources, full utilization of CWS/CMS as a case management system for Probation has been slowed.

Local Evaluation Efforts

The departments evaluate CAP implementation through comparison of baseline and current data related to exits, entries, placements, etc. as well as data provided through the UCB Center for Social Services Research. In order to evaluate the impact of specific CAP activities on targeted outcomes, DCFS monitors activities in relation to the overall goals of the CAP. For example, decreasing the number of youth in out-of-home care and congregate care reduces DCFS assistance costs, allowing DCFS to utilize these funds to reinvest in more program improvements.

A significant portion of DCFS reinvestment dollars have been budgeted and expended on UFAs through contracted Family Preservation (FP) agencies. The DCFS, in conjunction with Casey Family Programs, is evaluating DCFS FP services, including UFAs. Currently, the FP evaluation Executive Summary and tables are being reviewed by the research team and are expected to be finalized by the end of January 2012. The evaluation team initially examined FP Family Maintenance (placement prevention) and FP Reunification Services. Subsequently, UFA and Alternative Response Services (ARS) will be examined. The evaluation asked five overarching questions: (1) Who is being served by different kinds of FP Services?; (2) What kinds of services are being

provided by which agencies and in which DCFS offices?; (3) What does it cost to provide these services?; (4) What kinds of family outcomes are being achieved?; and, (5) What refinements need to be made in services and performance measurement?

As part of a larger effort to integrate the ongoing use of outcome data into child welfare practice, DCFS has developed a Data Partnership effort with staff throughout the Department, Casey Family Programs, consultants from the Western Pacific Implementation Center (WPIC) and the National Resource Center on Data and Technology. This Data Decision-Making Process, implemented in November 2011, allows staff and managers in each of the Department's offices, as well as centralized program staff, to assess key departmental measures by providing root cause analyses, exploring key underlying factors, and defining strengths and needs on a regular basis.

As previously stated, Probation recently completed an evaluation of Functional Family Therapy for the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and is working with Casey Family Programs to complete a more comprehensive baseline analysis of FFT, FFP and MST. This evaluation analyzes demographic information and recidivism rates for all youth served by Probation Placement to Community Transition Services since the beginning of the CAP (see Appendix B:ii.). For purposes of the analysis, recidivism was measured as any new arrest or violation petition that was sustained and resulted in a disposition for removal to an out-of-home placement such as group home, camp, or Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ). Additionally, the two groups of FFT presented in the study were presented by aftercare and prevention. The aftercare population consisted of youth that reunified in the community upon release from group home care. The prevention population consisted of youth at imminent risk of removal to out-of-home care absent effective preventative services.

The following tables summarize the Demographic variables and results of outcomes by population and a comparison of those youth that successfully completed the program vs. those that were disenrolled (non-completers).

Table 1. Summary of Youth Characteristics by Group

	Aftercare (N=504)		Prevention (N=123)	
	n	%	n	%
Gender				
Male	404	80%	93	76%
Female	100	20%	30	24%
Race				
African-American	144	29%	35	28%
Latino	292	58%	78	63%
Caucasian	54	11%	7	6%
Asian-American	6	1%	1	1%
Other	8	1%	2	2%
Area				
SPA 1	57	11%	6	5%
SPA 2	112	22%	23	19%
SPA 3	141	28%	37	30%
SPA 4	22	5%	2	2%
SPA 5	9	2%	1	1%
SPA 6	61	12%	16	13%
SPA 7	55	11%	30	24%
SPA 8	47	9%	8	6%
Program Status				
Disenrolled	184	37%	49	40%
Graduated	289	57%	51	41%
Active	31	6%	23	19%

Table 2. Summary of youth who received FFT for aftercare services upon exit from group home care

	Disenrolled Aftercare ^a (N=184)		Graduated Aftercare (N=289)	
	n	%	n	%
Recidivism overall	75	41%	47	16%
New Arrests or Violations-Group Home	29	16%	12	4%
New Arrests or Violations-Camp	42	23%	34	12%
New Arrests or Violations-DJJ	4	2%	1	0%

^aYouth who moved out of county were excluded from this analysis as there was no guarantee they could be located in time for this analysis.

Table 3. Summary of youth referred to FFT for prevention of out-of-home removal

	Disenrolled Prevention ^a (N=49)		Graduated Prevention (N=51)	
	n	%	n	%
Recidivism	19	39%	5	10%
New Arrests or Violations-Group Home	13	27%	2	4%
New Arrests or Violations-Camp	6	12%	3	6%
New Arrests or Violations-DJJ	0	0%	0	0%

^aYouth who moved out of county were excluded from this analysis as there was no guarantee they could be located in time for this analysis.

Fiscal Management and Reinvestment Planning

Attached are the listings of actual services and expenditure amounts that have been claimed to Program Codes 701 (DCFS) and 702 (Probation) during the rating period (see Appendix B:ii.). Also attached are the allocation expenditures for Probation (Appendix VII) and DCFS (Appendix VIII). The use of reinvestment savings for both Departments during the current project year is provided in Appendix II previously referenced in the Project Status Section. As indicated in the Challenges Section above, the County was prevented from expending additional CAP reinvestment dollars beyond the funding of second sequence activities during his rating period due to fiscal uncertainty.

DCFS

It is important to note that the costs claimed to Program Code 701 reflect only a small fraction of the use of waiver funds. The activities claimed to Program Code 701 reflect specific activities that were separately approved by the Board of Supervisors after the approval of the initial CAP Plan Budget. The initial CAP Plan Budget included a total shift of \$106 million in assistance funds included in the CAP capped allocation to the administrative budget over the five years of the CAP. These funds were shifted based on projected reductions in assistance costs that have materialized. An additional \$10.2 million in FY 2009-2010 and an additional \$7.2 million in FY 2010-2011 were shifted from the assistance budget to the administrative budget based on further actual assistance cost reductions. This makes a total of \$123.4 million in CAP funds that have been redirected from assistance costs to child welfare services costs. This has enabled DCFS to maintain and enhance pre-CAP services consistent with the goals of the CAP.

Probation

In June 2011, Probation hired a Financial Specialist dedicated to oversee the Title IV-E Waiver Administrative claims for Probation. Based on technical assistance and guidance provided by CDSS and DCFS, Probation revised applicable claims and claiming practices to reflect appropriate program pin codes. As existing staff, eligible and claiming Administrative activities were converted to FFT and FFP, the Administrative claims continued to reflect existing claim codes rather than converting to Waiver pin code 702 (Probation) to demonstrate expenditures utilizing flexible funding. Additionally, as Child Welfare Services Outcome Improve Project (CWSOIP) funding is included in the State Allocation for the CAP, and the Department's existing claims exceed the Administrative CAP, the CWSOIP was expended for the Administrative claim and upon receipt of the revenue was separated into a trust account to be utilized for CWSOIP activities. Again, based on technical assistance, the claiming of CWSOIP is now coded to pin code 703 and subject to the Federal, State and County allocation percentages upon entry into County Expense Claim.

Planned Activities for the January 1, 2012 – June 30, 2012 Reporting Period

DCFS

On December 13, 2011, DCFS and Probation received approval of enhanced and expanded CAP strategies by the Board of Supervisors. DCFS will continue to utilize strategies designed to enhance child safety, reduce timelines to permanency, reduce reliance on out-of-home care, and enhance child well-being. In addition, the Department will use strategies to enhance self-sufficiency.

Due to concerns with safety outcome rates and increased rate of reentry, the Department targeted the majority of its reinvestment funds to improve safety. In addition to continuing its second sequence strategies, YP Units, PPCs for youth in

extended care and group home care, and UFAs across the County, DCFS will enhance or expand the following strategies:

Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project

Utilize CAP funding to increase the PIDP FY 2011-2012 budget from \$1,250,000 to \$2,500,000 and extend PIDP for a fifth year from July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013 for \$2,500,000. An additional six-month extension through December 31, 2013 was also approved, should time be needed to complete the pending Promoting Safe and Stable Families(PSSF)/Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention and Treatment (CAPIT) programs solicitation, which will incorporate the most effective PIDP services.

Time Limited Family Reunification (TILF)

Increase the current Departmental Services Order (DSO) with the Department of Public Health (DPH) by 32 percent for Time Limited Family Reunification (TLFR). DCFS currently has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with DPH to enhance, through funding, the availability of alcohol and drug assessment and treatment services for DCFS families who are eligible for TLFR services. The intent of these services is to connect DCFS families with children placed in out of home care for 15 months or less and a family reunification service component with timely, intensive and responsive substance services in order to facilitate reunification.

Adoption Promotion and Support Services (APSS)

Restore funding cuts by 10 percent to APSS. The overall goal of the APSS is to increase and sustain permanency through adoption for DCFS dependent children.

Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention, Intervention and Treatment Program (CAPIT)

Increase funding to CAPIT by 10 percent. This increase in funding will increase at-risk families' access to community-based mental health and prevention-based services.

Hubs

Hire temporary out-stationed CSWs and temporary Public Health Nurses (PHNs) to be located at the seven medical Hubs located through the County. The countywide Medical Hub Program is a partnership with DCFS, DMH and the Department of Health Services (DHS) to create better outcomes for children and families by providing expert medical examinations, forensic evaluations and mental health screenings.

Expanded Public Health Nurses

Hire 20 temporary PHNs and appoint five Acting Public Health Nurse Supervisors (PHNS) to be co-located in DCFS regional offices to provide PHN services to children

across the continuum of care as a twelve month pilot project. The mission of the PHN Program within DCFS is to promote health, safety, and well-being; prevent disease, and facilitate the provision of health care services for children and families served by DCFS.

Parents in Partnership (PIP)

Extend the current contract with parent partners to expand PIP services to all regional offices. The PIP is a collaborative effort initiated in 2006 between DCFS and contracted parents who were formerly involved with DCFS and successfully reunified with their children. PIP was implemented to bring about system change to help facilitate timely reunification and permanency through education, support, positive role modeling, and mentoring of DCFS involved parents by contract Parent Partners. The program has been funded since commencement by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Due to a shifting in the Foundation's priorities, it will no longer fund PIP after December 31, 2011.

Emergency Response (ER) Caseload

Extend the services of 57 temporary CSWs currently assisting with the closure of ER referrals that have remained open over 60 days to one year each. This expansion will end on April 30, 2012.

In-House Legal Services

Expand the current DSO with County Counsel to provide an additional 12 attorneys to the six existing attorneys co-located in regional offices to provide legal consultation. The 18 attorneys will be allocated to each of the 18 DCFS regional offices. The attorneys will provide support to Departmental staff by providing consultation for following matters: processing warrant requests and use of warrants; case specific issues; preparing CSWs to testify in Dependency Court; preparing trial documents; processing adoption documents; and training DCFS staff in all areas of dependency law, including new legislation.

Coaching and Mentoring

Augment coaching and mentoring deliverables provided to CSWs, Supervising Children's Social Workers (SCSW) and agency partners based on the DCFS Core Practice Model to enhance skill development in strengths needs practice, engagement and teaming.

Project (Screening and Assessment for Family Engagement) SAFE

Develop an MOU with DPH's Substance Abuse Prevention and Control (SAPC) program to cover the cost of Community Assessment Services Center (CASC) assessments, along with drug and alcohol testing for all clients who participate in the assessment process. Project SAFE collaboration seeks to strengthen the screening

and assessment process for better identification of the needs of clients' substance use disorders and provide timely access to treatment.

Enhanced Specialized Foster Care with DMH

Expand the MOU with DMH to hire five temporary Psychiatric Social Workers II (PSWs) placed in the offices aligned with the 11 delinquency courts, allowing for better alignment with the DCFS Core Practice model. The Enhanced Specialized Foster Care project includes youth who are dependents and who have a new W&IC 602 petition filed in delinquency court. These cases are referred to a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) made up of staff from DCFS (W&IC 241.1 Unit), Probation, DMH, and education consultants. The MDT is responsible for preparing joint assessments and making recommendations to the Court regarding the appropriate legal status for the youth and for creating an appropriate case/service plan for the youth.

Upfront Permanency Partners Program (P3)

Expand the P3 programs to provide upfront family finding and engagement in all DCFS regional offices by hiring 15 additional retirees P3 workers (CSW III) and two retirees as SCSWs. In February 2010, the P3 program began a small Upfront P3 pilot in the Compton office to study the impact of family finding and engagement to identify family connections as early as possible. In September 2010, Health and Human Services awarded the Department a five-year federal demonstration grant focused on strategies that help children achieve timely permanence. Building on the work of the P3 Upfront pilot, the Department was able to expand Upfront P3 to three offices.

Youth Development Services

Allocate Waiver funds to redirect an equal amount of Chafee funds for the YDS Individualized Transition Skills Program contract to support each eligible youth's self-sufficient plans by providing direct funds for housing assistance, employment, job training, clothes, transportation and education assistance.

Countywide Foster Youth Education Project

Expand the First Supervisorial District Education Pilot Program by 20 CSW IIIs and add 35 contracted Academic Remediation Counselors (four CSWs and seven Academic Remediation Counselors per supervisorial district) to be co-located in schools in each Supervisorial District. Increasing the number of contracted Academic Remediation Counselors, designated Children's Social Workers (CSW) and clerical support will allow DCFS to collaborate with additional schools throughout the County in implementing this program. With this funding, an estimated 700 additional youth and families will be provided with intensive education services and support.

Probation

Probation will continue to expand and enhance the existing strategies to target youth transitioning from out-of-home care and those at-risk of entering out-of-home care while implementing several new initiatives.

Expansion of Placement Assessment Centers

Prior to the start of the CAP, Probation entered into an agreement with two Group Home Providers, Rancho San Antonio and Boy's Republic, to open Placement Assessment Centers (PACs). These PACs have a limited number of beds, but provide a 30-day comprehensive assessment with Psychosocial, Psychiatric, Educational, Substance Abuse and Gang/Antisocial Identification components.

Probation aims to expand the PACs to ensure that between 75-80 percent of all Placement youth, new and replacement, receive this quality assessment. Probation will also ensure that beds become available for female Placement youth. Probation believes that more time to conduct a comprehensive assessment will result in better outcomes for Placement youth. While the PACs were not created as a Waiver initiative, the expansion of the PACs will further assist Probation in realizing the goals of increased child safety, increased and timelier exits to permanency and increased placement stability.

The funding that was dedicated to paying for three DMH staff as part of the CSA will be re-allocated to expanding existing Mental Health contracts and expand FFT, FFP and MST.

241.1 W&IC Dual Supervision Countywide Expansion

Probation, in collaboration with Superior Court (Juvenile Presiding Judge), DCFS, DMH and other stakeholders is implementing the enhanced Dual Status Project as part of the Crossover Youth Initiative. This initiative is currently expanding countywide. This project includes pre and post adjudication Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) meetings, involving partner agencies, education, parent/guardian, youth and community-based organizations, enhanced assessment and enhanced cross systems case management.

This initiative would expand the current operational unit by ten DPOs and one Supervising Deputy Probation Officer (SDPO) to address the requirements of the enhanced Dual Status model and related protocols. Additional staffing is required in order to accomplish fidelity to the Dual Status model, to continue the project's MDT approach, support collaborative efforts to prevent youth from crossing over from dependency to delinquency and best serve the interest of the youth.

Expansion of Functional Family Therapy (FFT) and Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST)

Probation has adopted FFT and MST as the first line evidence-based, family focused treatment approach to serve Probation youth at-risk of removal from home and youth returning home from congregate care. Additional FFT and MST services resulting from amended contracts will allow Probation to serve a greater number of youth, thereby continuing to decrease entry and re-entry into congregate care. Probation will not be adding any additional staff to this effort, but will instead be amending existing contracts with our community-based partners, Shields for Families and Starview, to increase capacity.

Expansion of Functional Family Probation (FFP) Supervision

Probation utilized Waiver funding to create an aftercare unit for youth transitioning into the community from out-of-home care. Placement Aftercare DPOs support both in-house and contracted FFT and MST service providers by providing intensive supervision using the evidence-based Functional Family Probation supervision model. Probation is seeking to add four additional FFP DPOs to increase capacity and to ensure successful transition and linkages to appropriate treatments for Probation youth.

Countywide Foster Youth Project

Implement the First Supervisorial District Education Program, which was established in September 2008, by Los Angeles County Supervisor Gloria Molina. The goal of the Countywide Foster Youth Project is to increase graduation rates by identifying an educational advocate for each foster youth, improving academic performance through the use of educational case plans and data gathering, and encouraging student retention in the K-12 school system. Probation will utilize Waiver funds to pilot this program for Probation youth in all Supervisorial Districts (countywide) by contracting with community partners to hire Remediation Counselors.

Expansion of Mental Health Aftercare Service

Group Home providers have contracts with DMH to provide coordinated case management aftercare services to youth returning home from care. These services assist in providing a continuum of care and ensure linkages are made once the youth transitions home. This strategy will improve permanency resulting in a decrease of reentries into out-of-home care. Probation will develop an MOU with DMH to increase contracted allocations to Group Home providers that provide youth transitioning from, or at risk of reentering congregate care with aftercare services in the community.

Expansion of Placement Permanency & Quality Assurance Group Home Monitoring Unit

The Placement Permanency Quality Assurance Unit currently has four Group Home Monitors who are required to conduct compliance reviews on 24 agencies in 59 sites.

The Group Home Monitors also investigate any allegation of non-compliance to the County contract as well as any allegation of maltreatment or child endangerment occurring at any of the Group Homes. Given the volume of high-priority responsibilities, Probation will seek to expand this unit by hiring two DPOs and four Program Analysts. This will ensure that allegations of maltreatment are investigated in a timelier manner and that youth are placed in safe and stable care.

Probation Case Management System (PCMS) Enhancements and Data Interface

The following PCMS enhancements and Data Interface initiatives are not directly tied to one or more of the Waiver outcomes, but funding would assist in meeting the goals of multiple outcomes as less time will be spent on dual-entry and more accurate information will allow Probation officers to spend more time on case management activities.

PCMS Interface with CWS/CMS

Probation will use Waiver funds to hire an Information Technology Support Services Master Agreement (ITSSMA) contractor to build an interface between CWS/CMS and PCMS. Valuable case management information and data are currently being manually entered by Placement DPOs into both PCMS and CWS/CMS, as mandated by the State. In an effort to avoid this dual entry, Probation is seeking to build an electronic interface that will pull information from CWS/CMS and enter it into PCMS.

PCMS Interface with Department of Social Services LEADER

Probation will use Waiver funds to hire an ITSSMA contractor who can support the building of a PCMS interface with the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) Data Sharing for Medi-Cal Pre-Release (required by the State of California) and DPSS Data Sharing for Grand Jury Reporting regarding minors in Probation custody for over 30 days. This will also support information sharing with DCFS. An ITSSMA contractor is critical to help identify interface requirements from source systems; create, extract, transfer, and load solutions; communicate effectively with internal and vendor developers and other technical resources to create interface programs; and test and troubleshoot interface issues. The Data Interface will assist all departments in ensuring compliance. Additionally, the interface will support the Department by notifying DPSS when youth are returned home from Placement triggering reinstatement of Medi-Cal benefits which will prevent a lapse in aftercare services.

PCMS Enhancements for the Placement Module

Probation will use Waiver funds to offset the cost of PCMS enhancements, support and maintenance related to Placement Services. The PCMS is a large and complex system that provides intensive juvenile field case management

functionality, including investigation, supervision, placement, and various special units. With additional funding, modifications to the system can be made to better support the case management needs of Placement minors.

Expansion of Substance Abuse Services

Probation will be developing a MOU with DPH to use existing contracted agencies to provide community-based services to youth identified with substance abuse risk factors. The availability and utilization of these services will provide judicial officers with community-based alternatives for substance abuse violations resulting in less detentions and out-of-home removals.

Youth Development Services (YDS)

Chafee/Foster Care Independence Act funds (federal and state dollars) are used to fund YDS transition age youth between ages 16 and 21. Probation will use Waiver funds to redirect an equal amount of Chafee funds for the YDS Individualized Transition Skills Program contract. This will afford funds to provide Independent Living Program (ILP) supportive services to the age 16-21 eligible Transition Age Youth (TAY) population and support each youth's self-sufficiency plans by providing direct funds for housing assistance, employment, job training, clothes, transportation and education assistance. Probation will also pursue a MOU and a DSO with Community Senior Services (CSS) to provide full-time employment opportunities for at least 100-125 Probation TAY youths. This will assist youth with successful transition back into the community by obtaining employment.

Multi-Disciplinary Team Decision-Making

Beginning in January 2010, Probation began a Multi-Disciplinary Team Decision-Making (MDT) pilot at Rancho San Antonio Group Home focused on youth leaving Placement. The purpose of the MDT meeting is to assess the progress that the youth has made while in Placement and to match the youth and family with the most appropriate service to aid in the transition back to the community. The MDT brings Probation staff, Group Home staff, Educational Liaisons, Service providers, the youth and family together to discuss the risks and needs of the youth and family. This inter-disciplinary team also determines the most appropriate treatment and education plan for the youth moving forward.

Probation is in the midst of expanding this pilot program to all Group Homes where Probation youth are placed. The expansion will consist of initial MDT meeting to determine a course of treatment for the youth during his/her placement stay as well as a transition MDT meeting to assist when the youth transitions back to the community.

EVALUATION STATUS

OVERVIEW

The CDSS has contracted with San Jose State University Research Foundation to conduct an independent, third party evaluation for the Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project (CAP). The primary purpose of the CAP evaluation is to determine whether and how changes in the funding structure for foster care (i.e., 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 and during implementation of the CAP. The evaluation consists of a process study, a fiscal study, and an outcome study and uses an interrupted-time-series design to assess for change over time.

This section describes activities for the first six months of CAP Year Five and covers the period between July 1, 2011 and December 31, 2011. The evaluation activities over this period were focused on the continuation of data collection and data analyses.

Activities Completed

PROCESS STUDY

The evaluators conducted site visits in Alameda County with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and with the Probation Department during this reporting period. The primary purpose of the site visits was to collect information for the sub-studies being conducted as part of the Process Study. The function of the sub-studies is to provide a more in-depth description of a single intervention in each of the four departments. The interventions that are the focus of the sub-studies were identified by Finding and Engagement (FFE), Alameda County Probation Department – Family Preservation Unit (FPU), Los Angeles County DCFS – Up Front Assessments (UFA), and Los Angeles County Probation Department – Functional Family Therapy (FFT). The county departments have identified their respective intervention as a key service component being implemented under the CAP.

The evaluators visited the Alameda County DCFS and the Alameda County Probation Department in July 2011. Table 1 displays the types of focus groups and number of participants for each department. Table 2 displays the number of interview participants by department for each site visit. The protocol developed by the evaluation staff and used to guide the data collection during the focus groups and interviews is shown in Appendix C.

Table 1: Number of Sub-Study Focus Group Participants by Department

Department	Intervention	Site Visit Date	Focus Group	Number of Participants
Alameda County DCFS	Family Finding and Engagement	July 2011	Search Clerks	7
			Child Welfare Workers	6
			Child Welfare Supervisors	4
			Program Managers	3
Alameda County Probation Department	Family Preservation Unit	July 2011	Deputy Probation Officers	6

Table 2: Number of Sub-Study Interview Participants by Department

Department	Intervention	Site Visit Date	Interviews
Alameda County Probation Department	Family Preservation Unit	July 2011	2

Data collected from the sub-study visits conducted during this reporting period, as well as data collected from the sub-study site visits conducted in Los Angeles County during the previous reporting period, were analyzed during this reporting period. The description of the interventions will be included in the Final Evaluation Report.

Key informant interviews with executive-level administrators were also conducted during each of the site visits. These interviews are part of the on-going Process Study data collection activities. The protocol used to guide the key informant interviews is contained in Appendix C. Table 3 displays the number of interview participants by department for each site visit.

Table 3: Number of Interview Participants by Department

Department	Site Visit Date	Key Informant Interviews
Alameda County DCFS	September 2011	3
Alameda County Probation Department	July 2011	3

In addition to data collection, data analysis activities were also conducted during this reporting period. Coding and analysis of data collected during the various site visits was ongoing throughout the reporting period. Cross-walks of the information provided by the county departments in the annual progress reports were also conducted.

FISCAL STUDY

Data preparation and data analysis has continued throughout the current reporting period. The data summary for the Alameda County DCFS and the Alameda County Probation Department was completed early in July 2011. The summary of the

Los Angeles County DCFS and the Los Angeles County Probation Department fiscal data was completed during the previous reporting period. Data analysis of the Alameda County Probation Department and the Los Angeles County Probation Department will be completed early in the next reporting period. The evaluators and the CDSS staff addressed questions and issues with the data as they arose during the analysis process. There remained the major questions, at the end of the reporting period, of the methodology or agreement that determined the distribution of the capped allocation between the DCFS and the Probation Department in Los Angeles County. The evaluators expect that the information will be provided by the Los Angeles County representatives early in the next reporting period. The evaluators also expect that the interim fiscal study will be completed by the mid-point of the next reporting period.

OUTCOME STUDY

At the end of the current reporting period, the evaluators began accessing the relevant outcome data from the Child Welfare Dynamic Report System at the University of California, Berkeley, Center for Social Services Research. The necessary data, for both child welfare and probation, will continue to be downloaded during the first part of the next reporting period. The Child Welfare Dynamic Report System is the most viable source of probation outcome data. Data analysis will also be conducted during the next reporting period.

Additional Evaluation Activities

As part of the implementation of the CAP evaluation, evaluation staff has participated in meetings and conference calls with CDSS representatives and representatives from the county departments to discuss various aspects of the evaluation and CAP at large. Meetings have been ongoing or scheduled as needed to address specific issues and have resulted in monthly contact between evaluation staff and CDSS representatives over the course of the reporting period.

EVALUATION CHALLENGES

The implementation of the evaluation continued during this reporting period without major issues or disruptions in data collection. However, there were several challenges worth noting. As was previously reported, evaluation staff anticipated completing an interim fiscal report in the fall of 2011. Receiving the necessary data from the various sources took longer than was anticipated, delaying the extraction and analysis. Data issues continued to arise during the analysis and the resolution of those issues caused further delay.

Interim Findings

As referenced in the last progress report, the CAP Interim Evaluation Report was submitted on April 12, 2010. No further findings are available at this time.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Alameda County Documents

- i. County Welfare Charges to Waiver Code 701 for Project Year 5
Total County Waiver Investments for Project Year 5 – Probation
Probation Charges to Waiver code 702 for Project Year 5
Title IV-E Waiver Capped Allocation Expenditures
Title IV-e Waiver Capped Allocation Expenditures - Probation
- ii. Additional Measures Based on CWS/CMS Dynamic Reporting System
- iii. Title IV-E Waiver Dashboard
- iv. FR Study SDM Conference Presentation
- v. Title IV-E Waiver Progress Report on Outcome Goals: Year 5, Quarter 1
- vi. Key Outcomes Presentation Tool

Appendix B: Los Angeles County Documents

- i. Total County Waiver Investments for Project Year 5;
County Welfare Charges to Waiver Code 701 for Project Year 5;
Probation Charges to Waiver Code 702 for Project Year 5;
Title IV-E Waiver Probation Capped Allocation Expenditures;
Title IV-E Waiver Capped Allocation Expenditures
- ii. Probation Functional Family Therapy Case Review
- iii. Probation Placement Data
- iv. Board of Supervisors Letter, dated 12/13/11
- v. Key Outcomes Presentation Tool

Appendix C: CAP Evaluation Data Collection Protocols