

Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project

Semi-Annual Progress Report Reporting Period July 1, 2013 to December 31, 2013

This annual progress report provides updated information for the Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project covering the period from July 1, 2013 to December 31, 2013. This report fulfills the requirement in Section 5.4 of the federal Waiver Terms and Conditions and highlights state departmental support and oversight activities, county level implementation, and evaluation efforts.

I. OVERVIEW

On March 31, 2006, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) received approval from the United States Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) for the Project. The five-year waiver demonstration allows participating counties flexible use of foster care funds for the provision of direct services to children and their families and to expand and strengthen child welfare practice, programs, and system improvements. The target population is Title IV-E and non-Title IV-E eligible children ages zero through 19 currently in out-of-home placement, or who are at risk of entering or re-entering foster care. 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 and Los Angeles counties are the two participating counties. The original five-year project began on July 1, 2007 and ended on June 30, 2012. Point in time outcome data covering the Project's five-year project period is in Appendix D-IV.

The CDSS is operating the Project in both counties under an approved bridge extension through June 30, 2014, or until a five-year waiver extension is approved by DHHS. A five-year extension proposal was submitted to the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) on March 28, 2013, that detailed modifications to the existing project, a proposed fiscal model, programmatic focus for the counties and third-party evaluation, and inclusion of up to 18 new counties beyond the two current participating counties. The proposed project period for the extension is July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2019.

California's waiver demonstration, which has been called the "Capped Allocation Project" or CAP, will be re-named the "Title IV-E California Well-Being Project" for the waiver extension. Under the Project, the state proposes to implement and expand child welfare and probation practices in up to 20 counties statewide, impacting key outcomes and promoting child and family well-being. The Project implementation will focus on prevention, family engagement and family centered practice, after care services, and evidence-based interventions. The specific goals of the Project are to:

- Improve the array of services for children and families and engage families through a more individualized approach that emphasizes family involvement;
- Increase child safety without an over-reliance on out-of-home care.
- Improve permanency outcomes and timelines; and

- Improve child and family well-being.

II. CDSS PROJECT ACTIVITIES

During the period of July 1, 2013 to December 31, 2013, the CDSS cross-division project implementation team has continued to perform project management, county oversight monitoring and CDSS fiscal system activities.. These activities included ongoing claiming and payment operations as well as federal reporting. In addition, the CDSS cross-division team has been preparing a plan for the proposed extension of the Project as well as a projected Cohort 2, which has been coordinated with both the current and intent counties.

The Integrated Services Unit (ISU) of the Child Protection and Family Support Branch continued as lead providing program support for implementing and monitoring the Project. Activities for the ISU staff included monthly project team meetings, monthly calls with the participating counties, correspondence and negotiations with ACF, the review of county progress reporting and outcome performance data, addressing waiver related program/policy issues within CDSS, and provision of county technical assistance.

The Fiscal Systems and Accounting Branch (FSAB) continued to perform ongoing procedures and tasks to support the claiming and payment operations for the Project. These included monthly advances/offsets and quarterly payment/offsets to the participating counties; collection and reporting of monthly and quarterly claim/payment data to the counties and other CDSS units; response to county payment inquiries; analysis of actual expenditures versus budgeted allocations to determine advance methodology and advance amounts to the counties; and review of actual expenditures reported to ensure proper waiver/non-waiver ratios and overmatch are applied to each payment. The FSAB staff attends the monthly project team meetings, provides fiscal and expenditure updates and completes required federal reporting.

The FSAB submitted the Foster Care CB-496 Addendum Reports for Waiver counties as follows: The June 2013 quarter was submitted September 2013; the September quarter was submitted December 30, 2013.

The Financial Analysis Bureau issued County Fiscal Letter (CFL) with allocation information for the participating counties as follows:

The CFL 13/14-26 Fiscal Year 2013/14 Federal Planning Allocation for Child Welfare Services and Foster Care Assistance Programs was issued on October 18, 2013.
http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/lettersnotices/EntRes/getinfo/cfl/2013-14/13-14_26.pdf

The Children and Adult Programs Estimates Bureau (CAPEB), started development of an internal fiscal template to track Title IV-E Project expenditures reported by counties, which will be used by the CDSS to claim expenditures on the federal CB 496 report. The template was provided to the current and intent waiver counties for feedback to ensure all relevant data is captured. The CAPEB also reviewed and

provided comments to the evaluation report for the final year of the project. The Fiscal Forecasting and Policy Branch (FPPB) worked on position justifications that will be used to request resources to support the Title IV-E Waiver Project during the extension period. The FPPB accompanied Program staff to on-site visits for the current waiver counties to provide fiscal support for the project. The FPPB also provided ongoing technical assistance and support as needed.

III. STATUS OF THE DEMONSTRATION – COUNTY SECTIONS

Alameda County

A. Administrative and Implementation Activities

One major success in Alameda County has been the nearly 46 percent reduction in the number of youth placed in a foster care setting. During this reporting period, Alameda County DCFS has focused on evaluating existing strategies and planning for the extension of the current Project.

The current Waiver Executive Team (WET) is comprised of representatives from Alameda County DCFS, Probation Department, Alameda County Social Services Agency Finance Department, Alameda County Social Services Agency Program Evaluation and Research Unit (PERU), Behavioral Health Care Services, and Casey Family Programs (Appendix A-I). The WET meets monthly to discuss new and existing CAP strategies, strategy evaluations and outcomes, progress of CAP goals and objectives, and planning for the Waiver extension. During the reporting period, the Social Services Agency (SSA) Finance Director and Deputy Finance Director, both members of the WET, left the Agency. A new Finance Director has been hired and started in January 2014.

The WET has continued to examine current CAP strategies, and is deciding which strategies to sustain, modify, or eliminate, based on the following criteria:

- Impact on Project goals/objectives;
- Synergy with future priorities;
- Concrete benefits to families;
- Impact on practice improvement;
- Blending funding being used or available to pay for program; and
- Cost of services and numbers served.

The PERU has continued to evaluate current waiver strategies and present the findings at the monthly WET meeting. Results of these evaluations assist the WET in determining which strategies to sustain, modify, or eliminate.

During the reporting period, the following changes to Waiver Strategies occurred:

- Modifications to the Subsidized Child Care program, discussed in the previous Waiver report, were implemented beginning July 1, 2013, allowing more families to access child care services.
- Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) is considering how to better allocate resources currently dedicated to the Family Finding and Engagement (FFE) Unit, while still accomplishing the goals of FFE.
- A new contract for paternity testing has been executed, and supports the waiver goal of increasing the number of children who are reunified safely, permanently, and timely.
- DCFS is developing a request for proposal (RFP) for the Another Road to Safety contract. It is anticipated this RFP will be released in early 2014, with a new contract in place by July 1, 2014.

PROBATION

Alameda County Probation Department (ACPD) has been committed to expanding and building support services aimed to improve system changes that impact youth who are at risk of removal, and their families while achieving the identified Title IV-E goals:

- Reduce the number of youth in out-of-home placements;
- Provide the least restrictive level of placement, when out-of-home placement is necessary; and
- Promote family preservation and family reunification.

Group Home Placement

This report reflects an approach that discloses the number of unique youth in group home placements during the reporting period of July 1, 2013 through December 31, 2013. The ACPD placement data reflects 318 unique youth who were in group home placements. There were a total of 155 youth with a new group home placement order while 140 youth exited group home care. The average length of stay was 195 days for youth who exited placement. At the end of the reporting period, there were a total of 178 youth in group home placements. When compared to the same period in 2012, there was a 4.5 percent decrease in the total number of youth in group home placements and a 14 percent decrease in the average length of stay. (See Table 1).

Table 1: Probation Placement Data for Alameda County

Table 1	Probation Placement Data for Alameda County	
July 1-December 31	2012	2013
Average Length of Stay	227	195
Youth Who Entered Group Home	173	155
Youth Exited Group Home	161	140
Youth Who Remained in Group Home	172	178
Total Youth in Group Home	333	318

Data Source: ACPD Placement Data

The CAP funding is applied to programs and services throughout the services continuum within the Probation Department to support the Project goals. To address the above identified goals, ACPD has implemented several programs and processes which are funded with Title IV-E funds. Those include ACPD's Transition Center that engages youth and their families early on to create community linkages for youth exiting detention back to their communities in need of follow up medical care or re-connection to education. The ACPD employs a process aimed to reduce the number of out-of-home placements recommended by Probation through the Screening for Out-of-Home Services (SOS) committee. Other efforts aimed at reducing out-of-home placement and providing the Courts with alternative services are collaborative in nature. The ACPD funds several contracts with community providers that support our identified goals and strategies by providing various services to youth and their families. Title IV-E Waiver dollars are utilized to enhance services through staffing, collaborative partnerships and operational development.

The ACPD Transition Center is located at the Juvenile Justice Center and aims to provide critical community linkages for youth being released from detention. The Transition Center is a collaborative effort with Oakland Unified School District, Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services, Public Health, and Probation. The Center engages youth and families with community supports to meet their identified needs. Those linkages may include connections to education, medical appointments, employment related activities or counseling services in their communities. The Transition Center served a total of 801 youth during the reporting period, connecting 371 youth to schools in the Oakland Unified School District. The Transition Center also began piloting a Re-Entry Pilot program in Unit 1, Juvenile Hall in September 2013. This pilot includes additional providers such as the Butler academy, various community based organizations, medical and guidance clinics and public health. Among its innovations, the Transition Center has created a document system to acquire information between contracted community based providers, and the ability to obtain grades and attendance information from Oakland Unified School District.

The Collaborative Court focuses on providing an alternative disposition for youth with high mental health needs and emphasizes family engagement. Collaborative Court is a team approach involving key stakeholders that include probation officers and intensive case management services delivered by a community provider. Probation officers and clinicians are dedicated to providing community support and services for youth and provide critical input to the Court on a weekly basis. This weekly, dedicated Court docket exists for youth involved in the program. During the reporting period, 39 youth participated in this program with intensive case management services.

The **SOS**, utilizes a review and approval process aimed to reduce the number of out-of-home placement recommendations by probation officers. The SOS is a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) comprised of medical, mental health, social services and probation experts who meet twice weekly to review and discuss all youth considered for an out-of-home placement by a probation officer. The SOS discusses the youth's circumstances including his/her needs, strengths, services previously provided and resources available in the identified areas of support within the local community and approves a recommendation for the Court. The Court ultimately decides and makes its orders.

During the reporting period, a total of 114 youth were reviewed through the SOS process with 77 requests for some level of removal from the home by the probation officer prior to the SOS committee commencing. This includes requests for the youth to enter Placement, Camp Sweeney, or the Department of Juvenile Justice. The SOS ultimately recommended 56 youth to be removed from their homes. Overall, the SOS committee continues to make fewer recommendations for youth to be removed to out-of-home care and the Court continues to make fewer orders for out-of-home care when compared to the probation officers' original recommendations.

The number of out-of-home placement recommendations made by Alameda County Probation has again consistently decreased. During this reporting period, a decrease is reflected in the following three recommendation areas: Out-of-Home Placement by 27.3 percent; Camp Sweeney Program by 30 percent; and State Division of Juvenile Justice by 67 percent (See Table 2).

Table 2
Alameda County Probation

	Pre SOS Initial Recommendation by Probation Officer	Post SOS Actual Recommendation by SOS Committee	Outcome
<i>Goal: To Reduce Out-of-Home Placement whenever possible as well as placement in the least restrictive environment when possible.</i>			
Out-of-Home Placement	44	32	Decrease (27.3%)
In-County Camp Program	30	21	Decrease (30%)
State Division of Juvenile Justice	3	1	Decrease (67%)
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Family Preservation	29	34	
Field Supervision in the Community	7	17	
Probation without Wardship	0	3	
Undecided/Data Unavailable	1	6	
Other	N/A	N/A	
Total	114	114	

Family Preservation Services:

The Family Preservation Unit (FPU) served a total of 676 youth during the reporting period with monthly average caseloads of 113 youth among eight probation officers. The overarching goal of FPU is to provide alternative services to out-of-home placement and an effort to keep youth at home and in their community. Participating youth receive Multi-Systemic Therapy (a Seneca Center partnership with Alameda County Probation and Behavioral Health Care Services) for an average of 3-5 months. Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST) is a service delivery model and successful intervention for youth and their families. This model involves dedicated probation officers teamed with a clinician who provide services and interventions that include family therapy, empowering caregivers to institute structure, family skill building, case management services, and linkages to school and vocational support to each MST clinician maintaining a caseload of approximately 20 to 25 youth. In addition to MST, FPU probation officers provide linkages to outpatient drug treatment, parenting classes and gang prevention services.

Project Permanence utilizes the Wraparound service delivery model to provide intensive youth-centered, family driven services. The ACPD began utilizing this service delivery model in late 2012 providing up to 40 slots dedicated to probation youth. During the last reporting period, ACPD, Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services (BHCS) and Lincoln Child Center (LCC) met to collaborate and define the target population, Probation's referral process and identify outcome data indicators. ACPD shall intentionally utilize the Wraparound model as an alternative to out-of-home placement and as a model for aftercare when appropriate. Leadership from Probation, BHCS and LCC continue to work on identifying indicators and a methodology for quality assurance for program fidelity and to monitor program outcomes. During the reporting period, Project Permanence served a total of 58 youth; 19 of whom completed the program while 39 youth remained active participants. Demographics of youth participating in the program yield the majority of youth are males, at 68 percent; 12

percent were females; 53 percent of youth were African American; and 34 percent identified as Hispanic, Latino or Mexican American. Of the youth who completed the program during the reporting period, youth remained active in the services for an average 152 days and 47 percent of youth completed their goals.

Aftercare Transitional Services: The ACPD previously had a contract with a local provider to provide placement stabilization and aftercare transitional services. That contract ended in June 2013 and was revised to include more robust and focused services that include family reunification and transitional services for youth in out-of-home care and returning home from out-of-home care. Services will be outcome-driven, aiming to reduce a youth's overall length of stay in placement, improve timely family reunification, reduce recidivistic behaviors, reduce returns to placement, and enhance re-entry services for youth returning home and to their communities or seeking independent living. Additionally, connections with family shall be made to help facilitate and improve youth and family relationships. During the last reporting period, the RFP was revised and the County accepted submittals. The RFP's are currently being rated with an expectation that a contract will be executed within the next reporting period

B. Outcomes and Evaluation Activities

ALAMEDA DCFS

DCFS

Significant efforts have continued in this reporting period to understand the impacts and efficacy of strategies implemented by DCFS under the Project. Many strategies were implemented late in Project Year two and into Project Year three and four; this fiscal year, evaluation efforts continue for strategies for which it is possible to analyze one to two year cohorts of clients with 12 – 24 follow up data to track outcomes of interest.

The Program Evaluation and Research Unit (PERU) continues to provide the monthly Waiver Dashboard reports (Appendix A-II) and Progress Reports to DCFS management on aggregate data trends that detail Alameda County's performance on its five year outcome goals (Appendix A-VII):

- 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.

In addition, PERU is in the process of completing evaluations of individual waiver strategies and continues to provide DCFS management with Project Status updates

(Appendix A-IV) and has presented findings for several evaluations to provide timely information to DCFS management for decision-making, including Vertical Case Management and Family Finding and Engagement, though those reports are still being finalized and will be attached in a future progress report to the State. Further, during this reporting period, Program Evaluation and Research staff provided DCFS management final reports on the following strategies (Appendix A-V and A-VI):

- Parent Advocate Program
- Paths 2 Success

The following data trends are based on data extracted from the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) Dynamic Report System – Key Outcomes Presentation Tool, based on the CWS/CMS 2013 Extract¹ for 2007 – 2013 (October 1, 2007 to October 1, 2013 for point-in-time data), except as noted. As the current Key Outcomes Presentation Tool now provides data for youth ages zero to 20 to include non-minor dependents, additional data is provided based upon the same measures reported in the Key Outcomes Presentation Tool as reported CWS/CMS Dynamic Report System CWS/CMS 2013 Q3 Extract for youth zero to 17 in the tab Alameda County Key Outcomes zero to 17.

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 (10/1/2007) and the most recent reporting period (10/1/2013), there was a 32.2 percent reduction in the number of youth ages zero to 20 in child welfare supervised foster care in Alameda County, from 2,413 to 1,638 children.
 - Between the baseline period (10/1/2007) and the most recent reporting period (10/1/2013), there was a 45.9 percent reduction in the number of youth ages zero to 17 in child welfare supervised foster care in Alameda County, from 2,307 to 1,248 children.

Placement in least restrictive settings

The 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 (10/1/2013):

- There was a 44.2 percent decrease in the percentage of youth ages zero to 20 placed in congregate care, from 13.8 percent to 7.7 percent.
 - There was a 36.2 percent decrease of youth ages zero to 17 placed in congregated care, from 13.4 percent to 8.6 percent.

¹ Needell, B., Webster, D., Armijo, M., Lee, S., Dawson, W., Magruder, J., Exel, M., Cuccaro-Alamin, S., Putnam-Hornstein, E., Williams, D., Yee, H., Hightower, L., Mason, F., Lou, C., Peng, C., King, B., & Lawson, J. (2014). CCWIP reports. Retrieved 1/10/2014, from University of California at Berkeley California Child Welfare Indicators Project website. URL: <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb_childwelfare>

- Including all child welfare supervised youth, including non-minor dependents, the percentage of youth in relative placements decreased, from 35.2 percent to 31.6 percent. However, the age range for this measure changed to include child welfare supervised youth ages zero to 20 in the most recent reporting period, the decline in the proportion of youth in relative placements is likely due to shifts in placement type for non-minor dependent youth.
 - Among youth ages zero to 17, there was a 7.5 percent increase in the percentage of youth placed with relatives, from 35.8 percent to 38.5 percent. (See Alameda County Key Outcomes zero to 17)

Caseload and Service Component

DCFS has been successful in its efforts to increase the percentage of youth served in-home between the baseline period (10/1/07) and the most recent reporting period (10/1/13) (Alameda County Key Outcomes zero to 17)

- While there has been an overall 30.4 percent decline in the number of children served in-home via Family Maintenance services, as a percentage of the total number of children served in-home and in child welfare supervised foster care, excluding non-minor dependent youth, there has been a 20.4 percent increase in the percentage of children being served in Family Maintenance overall between 10/1/2007 and 10/1/2013 (23.8 percent to 28.6 percent).

Entries

DCFS has been successful in its efforts to reduce the number of youth entering out-of-care overall:

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

- Between the baseline period (10/1/06-9/30/07) and the most recent reporting period (10/1/12-9/30/13), there was a 33.7 percent decline in the number of children who entered foster care for eight or more days, from 878 to 582 youth.

In addition, DCFS has been successful in its efforts to reduce the number of youth entering out-of-care for the first time:

- Between the baseline period (7/1/06-6/30/07) and Fiscal Year (FY) 12/13, there was a 36.8 percent decline in the number of children who entered foster care for the first time for 8 or more days, from 627 to 396 youth (See Alameda County Year 6 Progress Report).

First Placement Type

The DCFS has been successful in its efforts to increase the number of children placed in relative homes as a first placement (placement episodes of eight or more days).

Between the baseline period (7/1/06-6/30/07) and FY 12/13:

- The number of children placed with a relative as a first placement increased by 52.8 percent, from 123 youth to 188 youth. (See Alameda County Year six Progress Report):

Further, between the baseline period (7/1/06-6/30/07) and the 12-month period ending August 2013, the percentage of first placements with a relative increased by 125.6 percent, from 15.2 percent of all first placements to 34.3 percent of all first placements. (See Alameda County Waiver Dashboard, 10/22/13)

Timely Reunification

The waiver goal adopted for timely reunification was revised on June 28, 2011 at the 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 six-month periods, 2) to be consistent with how we track successful reunification (12-month cohorts), and 3) to enable the county to track performance for each of the remaining years of the waiver.

The new goal was based on data available on the UCB website, using the June 2012 2012 Quarter 1 extract, with data available through 2009, which was thus selected as baseline period for the revised goal.

- Between the 12-month baseline period ending 12/31/2009 and FY 2011/2012 the percentage of children exiting foster care to reunification within 12 months of first entry increased by 2.1percent from 33.2percent to 33.9 percent.

Successful Reunification

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

- Between the baseline period (4/1/06-3/31/07) and FY 2011/2012 the percentage of youth reentering foster care within 12 months of reunification following a placement episode of eight or more days decreased by 11.4 percent from 18.4 percent to 16.3 percent.

Timeliness of Permanence through Adoption or Guardianship

Between the baseline period (7/1/06/-6/30/07) and the current reporting period (using the 12-month period of 1/1/12-12/31/12)

- The percentage of youth in the exit cohort exiting to adoption within 24 months increased by 3.8 percent, from 33.9 percent to 35.2 percent

- The percentage of youth in the exit cohort exiting to guardianship (all types) within 24 months increased by 1.5 percent, from 48.2 percent to 48.9 percent

ALAMEDA PROBATION

Alameda County Probation Officers will be receiving additional data entry training on the CWS/CMS system for improved data integrity. This training is scheduled to occur in early 2014. The ACPD will be providing all Juvenile Probation Officers training on the completion of pre-placement case plans in January 2014. Additionally, revisions are being made to the case plan to consolidate sections specific to pre-placement and placement activities.

<i>Table 1 Alameda Probation</i>	Pre SOS (Initial) Recommendation by Probation Officer	Post SOS(Actual) Recommendation by SOS Committee	Outcome
Goal: To Reduce Out-of-Home Placement whenever possible as well as placement in the least restrictive environment when possible.			
<i>Out-of-Home Placement</i>	129	109	<i>Decrease (15.5%)</i>
<i>In-County Camp Program</i>	58	43	<i>Decrease (25.9%)</i>
<i>State Division of Juvenile Justice</i>	14	12	<i>Decrease (14.3%)</i>
Family Preservation			
<i>Family Preservation</i>	91	61	
<i>Field Supervision in the Community</i>	15	55	
<i>Probation without Wardship</i>	3	5	
<i>Undecided/Data Unavailable</i>	23	50	
<i>Other</i>	2	0	
Total:	335	335	

C. Fiscal Reporting and Funded Waiver Initiatives

Included in Appendix A-VIII and A-IX are project allocation expenditure summary sheets for Alameda DCFS and Alameda Probation with project-to-date yearly data and project listings for both departments containing detailed information for each waiver initiative covering the Bridge Year Two reporting period July 1, 2013 through December 31, 2013.

In the expenditure summary worksheets the county provided explanatory notes for the Probation allocation. The FY 2013-14 base allocation was budgeted at the same FY 2012-13 amount. Alameda Probation continued to have access to an additional amount of \$9.9 million beyond the base for waiver investments and is projecting to spend the full amount.

D. Waiver Extension Planning

DCFS

The DCFS is continuing to plan for the next waiver extension. In addition to the evaluation of current waiver strategies, DCFS and the WET are assessing what evidence based practices to implement during the next waiver phase. One of the target populations DCFS and Probation would like to focus on during the next waiver is cross-over youth, youth who have been touched by both child welfare and probation systems. During the reporting period, DCFS continues to work with Probation on developing a cross-over youth model, which includes attending workshops hosted by the Georgetown University Center for Juvenile Justice Reform.

Alameda County DCFS and Probation attended the County Convening, to plan for the waiver extension, hosted by CDSS and Casey Family Programs in October 2013.

The DCFS has undertaken a strategic planning process, and is uniting goals and strategies under the department's strategic plan to the next waiver. Strategies under consideration for inclusion in the next waiver include:

- Improved identification and engagement of fathers and their families;
- Improving timely achievement of permanency for children who have lingered in care; and
- Implement trauma-informed practice.

PROBATION

In October 2013, the Waiver Executive Team, consisting of Children and Family Services, Probation leadership, and fiscal members met to begin discussing its planning steps with CDSS and CDSS Fiscal with the assistance of Casey Family Programs. The Planning Phase begins in January, 2014, with a structure outlined by the Waiver Executive Team. Through these monthly planning sessions, there will be a continued focus on waiver goals, including joint goals amongst Children and Family Services and the Probation Department.

Some of the joint agency/department strategies include implementation of the Crossover Youth Practice Model within the Juvenile Justice System. This model seeks to improve the system's response to dually involved youth and will address system improvements for a pilot target population defined as youth with active probation supervision (non-wardship) and an active dependency case. Additional efforts will be focused on improving youth and family engagement at key decision points within the Juvenile Justice System.

The Probation Department plans to implement practices relative to trauma informed care and positive youth development as part of a juvenile justice initiative, for whom cross system youth are the target population. Other system improvement efforts are being discussed to include in the next year's waiver project.

Los Angeles County

A. Administrative and Implementation Activities

Cost Allocation Plan (CAP) Management Teams

The DCFS and the Probation Department (Departments) Project Management Teams are responsible for ensuring that all initiatives and programs implemented with reinvestment funds are aligned toward improving outcomes for Youth and their families that they serve and the monitoring of these outcomes. In addition, the Management Teams provide progress reports to their respective Departments, the Board of Supervisors, and the CDSS and works with its community partners. The CDFS Project Management Team consists of the Title IV-E Waiver Program Manager, Fiscal Manager and Claiming Manager.

The Probation Project Team is responsible for the budgeting of reinvestment funds and ensuring that all expenditures align with the goals outlined in the Project. Probation's Project Team is also responsible for ensuring that contracts with community-based service providers meet County requirements, and that all parties are operating within the scope of work outlined in the contract. Probation's Management Project Team consists of a Probation Director and a Probation Program Analyst.

Administrative Impacts during Bridge Year

During the Project's current reporting period (July 1, 2013 through December 31, 2013), the Departments continued to utilize the funding flexibility for implementation and expansion of a wide array of programs and services to provide individualized services and strategies that are strength-based, family centered, child focused and community-based.

During the current reporting period, the DCFS underwent a Training and Policy Manual Redesign. The Training Academy redesign focuses more on experiential learning and less on theory. The DCFS worked with local law enforcement to provide simulation labs for new and existing staff. The five simulation labs are situation specific and are linked to cases that were identified as "lessons learned." The length of the Academy increased from eight weeks to 52 weeks and new hires' field days increased from 10 to at least 100, allowing for earlier assignment of a caseload on a gradual basis.

The Policy Manual Redesign allows for 325 policies to be revised and condensed into 270 and will have an operational website in January 2014 that is designed to be user friendly; through the use of headings, color, hovering technology, a search trail and a robust search engine. The DCFS also intends to develop a smart phone app for the policy manual for easy access in the field.

The DCFS is seeing a negative impact from the implementation of California Fostering Connections to Success Act, Assembly Bill (AB) 12, on the number of youth in out-of-home care; it has significantly increased the number of children 18-20 years old who continue to receive DCFS services. In comparing the data from October 1, 2012 to

September 30, 2013 to the same time frame for the previous year's data, October 1, 2011 to September 30, 2012 (data interval), the number of children in out-of-home care increased 10.3 percent (from 18,694 to 20,613) of which 2,035 (an increase of 31.3 percent) were ages 18-20 years old (see Appendix B-I). Although placement funding for these youth is outside of the Project, Monitoring AB12 youth directly impacts workload and services for the zero-17 year old population. To address this, CDFS is implementing specialized caseloads in the new fiscal year to monitor and provide services to the AB12 population.

Probation continues to experience challenges in filling vacancies in the Placement Services Bureau due to the critical need to fully staff the Adult Services Bureau AB 109 Program. Probation has used reinvestment dollars to staff several strategies: Functional Family Therapy (FFT); Functional Family Probation (FFP); Expand the Group Home Monitoring Unit; and the Dual Supervision Unit, Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) 241.1. These strategies are also experiencing challenges related to staffing and are not yet operating at full capacity.

Probation is in the process of implementing several continuous quality improvement strategies in order to adequately track each Waiver Initiative, including improving data management efforts and increasing monitoring of community-based agencies to ensure optimal program performance. With the recent addition of a Program Analyst to the Waiver management Team, Probation hopes to further its efforts in the improved evaluation of its strategies.

B. Outcomes and Evaluation Activities

Due to the number and complexity of individual strategies utilized by the Departments, neither DCFS nor Probation can assign direct causality to individual strategies. Rather, the Departments view their outcomes as the result of combined systemic efforts that interweave strategies undertaken under the Project with previous ongoing efforts.

The Project has allowed DCFS the flexibility to provide a broader array of services to increase safety for children. As mentioned above, the implementation of AB12 not only has impacted the number of youth in out-of-home care; it has impacted CDFS' ability to increase the innovative initiatives that allowed children to remain safely in their own homes while receiving preventative services. During this data interval, the number of children ages zero-17 years who were able to remain safely in their own homes decreased 3.6 percent (from 14,728 to 14,184). Of this decrease, there was a 1.9 percent decrease in children who received pre-placement Family Maintenance (FM) Services and an 8.6 percent decrease (from 3790 to 3464) in the number of children who received FM services after receiving out-of-home care services. In addition, during this data interval, entries to foster care increased 8.5 percent (from 9,080 to 9,849).

Efforts to reduce the out-of-home care population have focused on strategies that safely reduce entries into care and increase timely exits from care to permanency. The DCFS has experienced a 10.3 percent (from 18,694 to 20,216) increase in the number of

children/youth in out-of-home care during this data interval. Of this 10.3 percent increase, the zero-17 year old population increased 8.4 percent (17,144 to 18,578); while the 18-20 year olds increased 31.3 percent (1,550 to 2,035).

The implementation of AB12 has also affected the number of exits from foster care; the number of overall youth exiting foster care decreased 8.5 percent (8,866 to 8,115) while the zero-17 year old rate of exit decreased 6.9 percent (7,974 to 7,426). In addition, the number of emancipations decreased 23.4 percent (from 911 to 698) (see Appendix B-I). In addition, DCFS increased the number of youth in congregate care. From this data interval, the number of youth age zero-17 years in congregate care increased 2.5 percent (from 874 to 896), while the number of youth age 18-20 increased 29.2 percent (96 to 124).

From April 1, 2009 to September 30, 2010, there were 3,793 children in out-of-home care for the first time. Of these 3,793 children, 44.1 percent reunified with their parents within 12 months, 57.1 percent reunified within 18 months, 62.1 percent reunified within 24 months and 63.7 percent within 36 months. Since DCFS has removed fewer children from the home of their parents and more children are being provided in-home service, parents of the children who are detained often have greater issues and for the safety of the child, out-of-home care is still needed. In addition, reentries into care within 12 months of reunification have increased 2.4 percent (from 12.6 percent to 12.9 percent) during this data interval (see Appendix B-I). However, this is a decrease from the previous quarter's data by 3.7 percent (13.4 percent to 12.9 percent). DCFS continues to assess these trends.

The DCFS evaluates CAP implementation through comparison of baseline and current data related to exits, entries and placements, as well as data provided through the University of California, Berkeley (USB) Center for Social Service 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 CDFS assistance costs, allowing CDFS to utilize these funds to reinvest in program improvements and prevention services.

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. The DCFS Stat, 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. A case review was added to DCFS Stat in April 2013 and "Data Champions" have been identified in each Regional Office.

A significant portion of DCFS' reinvestment dollars have been budgeted and expended on Up-front Assessments (UFA) through contracted Family Preservation (FP) agencies. CDFS, in conjunction with Casey Family Programs, has completed its evaluation of DCFS FP services, including UFA (see Appendix B-II).

During this reporting period, Probation decreased the number of youth in out-of-home care by 2.2 percent (1,014 to 992) and the number of youth in groups 4.4 percent (884-845). From July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013, the average length of stay for a youth in Probation foster care increased 10.7 percent (261 days-289 days) (see Appendix B-III).

In collaboration with Casey Family Programs, Probation recently completed an internal evaluation of FFT and FFP, encompassing youth that received services from 2007 to 2011. Overall, there were favorable outcomes related to the FFT intervention; however, the absence of a consistent pattern of findings across the intervention spectrum prevented Probation from drawing strong conclusions regarding the effectiveness of FFT and FFP. The absence of consistent findings underscored the need for the continued implementation of rigorous and systematic data collection processes such as monitoring for completeness to ensure the accuracy of the data. Casey Family Programs continued to provide technical assistance to ensure that Probation is gathering and properly managing data with an enhanced focus on implementation quality and fidelity.

Probation implemented FFT fidelity standards that are updated annually. These standards hold staff accountable for maintaining regular contact with the youth and families that they are serving and documenting these contacts timely and appropriately. Any gaps in service or missing notes are discussed at weekly staffing meetings. The FFT Interventionists must document their sessions with the youth and family in the Clinical Service System (CSS), as well as the Probation Case Management System (PCMS). Probation has recently implemented a process in which CSS and PCMS are audited to ensure that the services are accurately documented in both systems, and that all discrepancies are addressed.

As previously mentioned, Casey Family Programs has provided technical assistance in the area of data management and program fidelity. While no timeline has been established to re-evaluate FFT and FFP, Probation will apply these improvements in data management to other Waiver initiatives where appropriate. Probation is hopeful that the technical assistance received will lead to more consistent evaluations of other Waiver strategies.

C. Fiscal Reporting and Funded Waiver Initiatives

Attached are the allocation expenditures for Los Angeles County (Appendix B-IV), DCFS (Appendix B-V) and Probation (Appendix B-VI). In addition, the Project listings for DCFS and Probation are attached (Appendix B-VII and B-VIII).

DCFS – It is important to note that the costs claimed to Program Code 701 reflect only a small fraction of the use of reinvestment 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 Project Plan Budget. DCFS provided \$12,722,000 in Project reinvestments funds to the Wraparound Program.

D. Waiver Extension Planning

While noteworthy progress has been made, the benefit of the Waiver for Los Angeles County cannot be completely achieved in five years. By extending California's Waiver, Los Angeles County will be in a position to apply lessons learned during the initial Waiver period to the extension, and focus future flexible funding benefits on increasing the capacity, utilization, and effectiveness of family engagement, family-centered practice and interventions, improving social-emotional well-being and expanding child welfare practice, program and systems improvement.

The DCFS has begun planning for the Project extension, which is in conjunction with our Strategic Planning efforts, through the use of Objective Teams. The Objective Teams, which include external partners, are responsible for developing implementation plans for our Strategic Plan initiatives and are aligned with possible new Project initiatives. The DCFS Executive Team will select probable Project initiatives based on available resources and initiatives. Two hurdles that greatly impact both Departments' implementation readiness are that since the extension is still in the review process and has not been approved; the baseline and growth factor are unknown. The Departments are unable to present any plan to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors without an accurate Project allocation. In addition, the Departments had to absorb the additional cost for the increase in group home costs and have analyzed Project fiscal and outcome data to determine the efficacy of the current Project initiatives. No matter how positive the fiscal and the outcome data for the individual initiatives are, DCFS is unable to fund all strategies and is exploring alternative funding sources for some of our Project initiatives and other ways to maximize Project funding, while creating linkage to align to new departmental strategies and Strategic Plan objectives.

Two examples of DCFS securing alternative funding sources for current Project initiatives are locating other funding sources, such as Metropolitan Transit Authority funds, to supplement the budgeted amount that was previously allocated to enhance the Youth Development Services contracts. The UFA is another current Project initiative that will not be funded as a Project initiative. DCFS is undergoing a Promoting Safe and Stable Family/Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention and Treatment Redesign (PSSF/CAPIT) and funding for UFA will be included in this redesign.

The DCFS is looking at the possibility of amending its contracting process for new Project initiatives, so that implementations of new Project contracts are timely. The DCFS is exploring the use of the Request for Information (RFI) process to begin the contracting process prior to the Project extension approval so that if the Project

extension is approved, the contracts can be submitted to the Board of Supervisors along with the implementation plan for approval.

Probation is in the beginning stages of planning for the Waiver Extension. While it is difficult to plan without conclusive knowledge regarding the specific terms and conditions of the proposed extension, Probation has developed a list of initiatives and strategies that will serve as a catalyst toward maintaining and building upon the improved outcomes achieved during the first project period.

Probation has focused its resources on youth transitioning back to the community from out-of-home placement during the first five years of the Project. As a result, the population of youth in out-of-home placement and their average length of stay have decreased significantly. Probation plans to move some of these interventions to the front-end to enhance preventative services as a means of further reducing out-of-home placement. Probation will seek to expand community-based services such as MST and FFT, and move a portion of these services to the front-end. Probation will also continue the Foster Youth Education Program to serve youth in the community who are at risk of entering out-of-home placement.

Probation will more rigorously evaluate existing strategies to ensure that accurate and appropriate data is being gathered. This data will be utilized to measure the efficacy of Project strategies and will require Probation to become more data-oriented in its decision-making processes. Probation will also include fewer strategies in the Project.

Currently, Probation is utilizing reinvestment dollars to fund approximately 15 initiatives. Assessing outcomes for fifteen initiatives is extremely difficult. Probation will continue to fund the majority of these initiatives with reinvestment funds, but will not include all of them in the Waiver project outcome discussions. Probation is in the process of compiling a final list of strategies that may be included in the Waiver project.

Probation will terminate Substance Abuse and Prevention Control (SAPC) in the Waiver extension. The SAPC contracts with various agencies that provide youth with substance abuse intervention, treatment and recovery services throughout the County. Implementation began April 1, 2012 and provided 33 slots for Probation youth as part of this pilot program. Since the cost of these services is very high in contrast to the number of youth served, Probation will end this collaboration and seek more cost-effective substance abuse services for youth exiting out-of-home care.

Probation used Project funds to increase the allocation for Independent Living Plan (ILP) Services. The ILP funds were reduced by the Federal Government in 2011. Probation allocated \$500,000 to this initiative, but projections indicate that only half of these funds will be encumbered by the end of the fiscal year. As a result of the low demand for these services, Probation will decrease the future allocation amount for this initiative.

During the first five-year project period, Probation used the Children and Family Services Review (CFSR) outcome measures of child safety, permanency and well-being to evaluate the efficacy of the Project strategies. These measures were created specifically for youth involved with the Child Welfare system. While several of these measures have been used to determine outcomes for Probation youth in out-of-home placement, the Department is seeking to make changes to the outcome measures to ensure that some delinquency risk and needs measures are included. Probation is currently finalizing additional outcome measures to add to the project in order to better measure the impact of the Waiver strategies on recidivism and well-being.

The DCFS and Probation operated without a clear fiscal agreement during the first five-year project period. The DCFS, Probation, and the Chief Executive Office of Los Angeles County have initiated the steps necessary to develop an agreement which will clearly outline any and all fiscal provisions that impact both Probation and DCFS. Finalization of a Fiscal Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) is contingent upon the terms and conditions of the Waiver extension. Accordingly, the Departments will await the final terms and conditions from the Federal government before completing the Fiscal agreement.

IV. EVALUATION STATUS

Final Findings

The CAP Final Evaluation Report was submitted to the CDSS on December 12, 2012, and then by the CDSS to the Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau on December 28, 2012. The Addendum to the CAP Final Evaluation Report was submitted to the CDSS on June 26, 2013 and then to the Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau December 27, 2013.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Alameda County Documents - DCFS

- A-I Alameda Waiver Executive Team Listing
- A-II Alameda Waiver Dashboard Report, October 2013
- A-III Alameda Waiver Progress Report, Year Six
- A-IV Alameda Evaluation Progress Status Report
- A-V Alameda Parent Advocate Evaluation Report
- A-VI Alameda Paths 2 Success Evaluation Report
- A-VII Alameda County Key Outcomes Presentation Tool, 2013 Quarter 3
- A-VIII Alameda County Fiscal Workbook
- A-IX Alameda County Project Listing

Appendix B: Los Angeles County Documents

- B-I Family Preservation Services in Los Angeles Report
- B-II Los Angeles Probation Placement Data
- B-III Los Angeles County Fiscal Workbook
- B-IV Los Angeles CWS Fiscal Workbook
- B-V Los Angeles Probation Fiscal Workbook
- B-VI Los Angeles CWS Project Listings
- B-VII Los Angeles Probation Project Listings

Appendix C: CWS/CMS Outcome Data

- C-I CWS/CMS Dynamic Report System Key Outcomes Presentation Tool for Point in Time 2007-2013 for Bridge Year Reporting Period FY 2012-13
- C-II Alameda DCFS Zero-17 Data for Measures Reported in CWS/CMS Dynamic Report System Key Outcomes Presentation Tool, 2013 Q 3
- C-III Los Angeles CWS Dynamic Report System-Key Outcomes Presentation Tool for Point in Time October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2013

C-IV CWS/CMS Dynamic Report System Key Outcomes Presentation Tool for Point in Time 2007-2013 for Five-Year CAP Project Period July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2012