San Mateo County

Citizen Review Panel

CRP's mission is to assess the child welfare system in the county and make data-driven recommendations for continuous improvement that will help to ensure the safety and well-being of San Mateo County children and their families.

Annual Report & Recommendations
(2013-14 Program Year)
(November-October)

County: San Mateo County

Contact Person for this Report:

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Date Submitted to Office of Child Abuse Prevention: November 17, 2014

Date & Persons Submitted to at the local County Agency:
- Iliana Rodriguez, Director, Human Services Agency
- Dr. Loc Nguyen, Director, Children and Family Services (Child Welfare Services), a division of the Human Services Agency
- John Keene, Chief Probation Officer
- Christine Villanis, Deputy Chief Probation Officer

1. County Profile (OCAP will provide current data from current annual report)
General Demographics
Ethnic make-up of county
Household income

2. Panel Activities

Panel structure and development

I. Membership (**<u>Workplan Goal #1</u>**)

Have there been any changes in membership or Panel composition during the reporting period?
During the reporting period, SMCRP added two new members:
- Rev. Davidson Bidwell-Waite, Transfiguration Episcopal Church, San Mateo. Peninsula Clergy Network Representative

- Shanthi Karamcheti, Differential Response Manager, StarVista

Within the past year and a half, the Panel has added a total of six new members, bringing additional expertise and diversity to the table.

All prospective members receive a copy of the SMCRP Operational Guidelines and they are referred to the CRP website (www.smcrp.org) for more background information. Before they are asked to submit an application for membership, potential Panel members are invited to attend a regular CRP meeting to observe the work of the Panel and meet current members. Visitors sign a Confidentiality Agreement at the beginning of the meeting. Following the visit, if there is continuing interest, the potential member completes an application form and submits it, along with a relevant resume, to the Panel. New members are elected by majority vote of the existing membership.

Baumel, Jan	Retired Special Educator, Licensed Educational Psychologist
Bidwell-Waite, Rev. Davidson	Deacon, Transfiguration Episcopal Church
Chang, Paul	Executive Director, Pyramid Alternatives
Cherniss, David	Director, Juvenile Mediation Program
DeMarco, Toni	Clinical Services Manager Behavioral Health and Recovery Services, San Mateo County
Karamcheti, Shanthi	Manager, Differential Response and Pre-3 Program, Star Vista
Loewy, Ben	Administrator, San Mateo County Office of Education
Manthorne, Cori	Director of Programs, Community Overcoming Relationship Abuse (CORA)
McCallum, Jamila	Director of Operations, San Mateo Region, Edgewood Center
Miller, Bonnie	Attorney, Private Defender's Office
Monaghan, Ryan	Lieutenant, Field Operations, San Mateo Police Department
Plotnikoff, Bernie	Community Member, Retired Child Abuse Prevention professional
Ragosta, John (Chair)	Program Manager, CASA of San Mateo County
Stewart. Ginny	Licensed Clinical Social Worker
Szyper, Lauren	Program Manager, Daly City Peninsula Partnership Collaborative
Total	15 members

II. Panel Training

Please elaborate on the on-going orientation / training of new CRP members.

Individuals who are interested in joining the Citizen Review Panel are provided with basic information about the role of the Panel in written form and referred to the Panel's website: www.SMCRP.org. The website was updated this year.

CRP's orientation process calls for incoming members of the Panel to talk with the Chair for an orientation session at the beginning of their term. One key responsibility of the CRP facilitator is to ensure an inclusive process in CRP meetings so that all members of the Panel and guests are able to participate comfortably and effectively. This includes making sure that acronyms are defined, there are frequent checks for understanding and new members are provided with the opportunity to ask for clarification of any topic under discussion.

Once new members join the Panel, they are encouraged to participate actively and to raise questions as needed. This past year the positive influence of new members has been observed. New CRP members add distinct expertise and perspective to the Panel's conversations. In addition, the regular presence of a liaison from the Probation Department has been very helpful, since a number of the issues addressed by CRP impact youth in probation or in dual status.

In addition, please describe any training activities the CRP has engaged in this past year as a means of ongoing panel development.

SMCRP members receive information and updates about the child welfare system from the Children and Family Services (CFS) Director at each regular meeting, In addition, Panel members have a regular agenda item, "Panel Member Updates" to encourage individuals to share information with other members about the child welfare related work they are doing. This year new Panel members Cori Manthorne and Ryan Monaghan made presentations to the Panel about domestic violence protocols used by CORA (Community Overcoming Relationship Abuse) and San Mateo Police Department.

In addition, at the Panel's August meeting, Deputy County Manager Mike Callagy talked with the Panel about child/youth trafficking issues and activities in San Mateo County. Mike is chairing a coordinating committee with the charge of making sure that local efforts to address trafficking are organized and integrated.

Articles and reports are provided to members regularly and, when appropriate, the articles are discussed as part of the meeting agenda.

On a monthly basis, CRP receives and discusses the Children and Family Services Dashboard. This is an internal CFS document that provides a quick overview of data in key interest areas related to children and family services. These monthly reviews of data have provided the Panel with an understanding of the indicators used by CFS to monitor its own programs and services. Panel members are encouraged to direct questions about the Dashboard data to the CFS Director, who attends CRP meetings. This year the Panel has asked to receive the new AB 636 reports published by CFS to track progress on System Improvement Goals (SIP) which were established during the last program year.

Report on SMCRP WORKPLAN

Workplan Goal #1: Please discuss any activities the Panel has engaged in specific to the recruitment of panel members to reflect community demographics and support creating or maintaining a diverse panel.

On an annual basis, SMCRP reviews its membership and the national criteria for CRP representation. The goal is for CRP members to represent a broad array of backgrounds and perspectives. Currently, CRP members represent a broad array of backgrounds and expertise. As needs for specific perspectives are identified, current SMCRP members brainstorm ways to reach out to representatives in those areas.

Parents and youth who have been part of the child welfare system continue to be priority areas, but many other gaps have been filled (mental health professional, law enforcement, clergy). Currently, Panel membership stands at 15 members, at the top of the membership range established in the CRP Operational Guidelines.

Last year, SMCRP reviewed and modified its Operational Guidelines to allow the Panel more discretion in situations in which long-term members are interested in continuing their service.

Workplan Goal #2

Develop a work plan that will guide the panel's review activities of the state and local Child Welfare System. Each year in its annual report and recommendations, SMCRP identifies areas of focus within the child welfare system. At the same time, the Panel outlines specific activities/evaluation methods to be utilized in order to track progress and evaluate outcomes for its recommendations for change at both the state and local levels.

Description of the review activities and any technical assistance provided (example = case review, focus group, data review).

SMCRP meets monthly for two hours during the program year. At each of these meetings informational reports and monitoring activities are on the agenda. These activities include review of written materials and reports, presentations by CWS representatives and sharing of information by CRP members. This past year, CFS has made staff members available to report to the Panel on specific recommendation areas such as Team Decision Making.

SMCRP has not received technical assistance from sources outside of San Mateo County during the past year.

Findings regarding 2013-14 SMCRP Recommendations

Recommendation	Findings
1. CRP recommends that CWS use qualitative and quantitative measures to evaluate the effectiveness of the Team	Children and Family Services (CFS), with John Fong's leadership, has initiated efforts to make the program more consistent with quality guidelines, track its use, promote

Decision Making (TDM) model currently in use in relation to the primary objectives of the program. In addition, CWS should assess whether TDM is the most appropriate process for the variety of situations in which it is being used.	participation and provide quarterly updates on progress to CRP. The Efforts to Outcomes Program is now being used to manage data. CFS is developing a contract with an outside evaluator from UCLA who will design a system to assess TDM outcomes relative to family reunification. As this system is developed, CRP will be consulted as a TDM "stakeholder" group.
2. CRP recommends that CFS and Juvenile Probation work together to establish a protocol to ensure that dependents and wards of the Juvenile Court who may be eligible for AB 12 when they turn 18, and those youth who are non-minor dependents under AB 12 in both agencies, are getting the same level of preparation, supports and services. In addition, the two agencies should take steps to ensure that all staff case managing AB 12 youth are getting the training they need to diligently support this population.	CRP received information from the Probation Department about the challenges of ensuring access to AB 12 services for youth who do not have a general placement order (youth returned to parental custody who are living with "kin"). CFS has formed an AB 12 Workgroup, under the leadership of Gary Beasley. This group is talking with the Probation Department about how best to serve AB 12 eligible youth with social work services. The Director of CFS and Deputy Chief of Probation have been meeting to talk about approaches to ensuring equitable access for Probation youth.
3. CRP recommends that CFS assess the effectiveness of current mental health and visitation programs in helping families to reunify successfully.	CFS is using different approaches to assessing the effectiveness of visitation and mental health programs relative to family reunification: • A new visitation model was rolled out this year. To assess outcomes for this model, CFS will contract with the same external evaluator who is working on Team Decision Making. • CFS has been implementing the Katie A. Settlement and developing data in partnership with Behavioral Health and Recovery Services and other partners. At this time, no outcome evaluation has been implemented.

Progress in CRP's Areas of Interest (2013-14)

In addition to tracking progress in the three formal recommendation areas identified above, SMCRP looked into the following issue areas:

A. Progress toward strengthening the screening process for contractors and those working directly with children and youth in the child welfare system.

Result
SMCRP raised concern about the process used to contract with organizations and individuals to directly serve children and youth in the Child Welfare System. One result of the Panel's discussion with Dr. Loc Nguyen, Director of Children and Family Services, was his conversation with San Mateo County Counsel to review and make more rigorous the background checks of individuals and organizations that contract with San Mateo County. New language was included in the contract (used by all County departments) to require a regular audit of personnel files to determine that background checks on employees and consultants meet the new requirements.

B. Progress toward achieving stated Child Welfare and Probation SIP priority outcomes:

Result
San Mateo County Children and Family Services identified the following System Improvement Plan outcomes to focus on:

Reunification within 12 months - C1.3
In the most recent Annual SIP Progress Report submitted to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), the following targets were identified:

- National standard: 48.4%
- SIP Year 1 Goal: Increase by 2% from 37.5% to 39.3%

CFS achieved a result of 39.3% in the last reporting quarter.

Placement Stability Outcome: Placement Stability (8 days to 12 months) - C4.1
In the most recent Annual SIP Progress Report submitted to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), the following targets were identified:

- National standard: 86.0%
- SIP Year 1 Goal: Increase by 1% (2 children) from 81.4% to 82.6% (142 children)

CFS achieved a 85% rate of placement stability during the last reporting quarter.

C. Actions by CFS to maintain current foster homes and increase the number of foster homes in San Mateo County to reduce the number of youth in out-of-county placements.

Result
The CFS strategy focuses on foster parent recruitment, and the implementation of a foster parent recruitment/retention plan to increase the number of Resource Families available to

meet the needs of children and youth in care. Families will be neighborhood-based, be culturally sensitive, and located primarily in the communities where the children live.

CFS continues to emphasize that the Agency's first and foremost job is to license foster homes for children in temporary need and the adoption component is secondary as family reunification is the first goal for almost all children.

Progress towards this SIP step will consist of tracking the number of resource family inquiries as well as new resource families by source. Data will be captured in the Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) database and CWS/CMS. The Receiving Home Social Worker Supervisor, Recruitment Social Worker, Placement Social Worker and Office Clerk will meet regularly to monitor progress.

D. SMCRP, in partnership with CFS, will continue to monitor the impact of the Katie A. Settlement.

Result
The Katie A. Settlement Agreement requires counties to partner in a number of ways in order to ensure the screening, referral, assessment and treatment of mental health conditions for youth in the child welfare system. Since February 2013, CFS and Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS) have been working in collaboration to continue improving services for child welfare involved children and families. A SMCRP member who serves on the Katie A. Implementation Committee provided the following information to the Panel:

- Full day cross-training sessions were held for supervisors, managers, and staff.
- The Mental Health Screening Tool (MHST) was adopted by CFS beginning September 2013 and can be uploaded from the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) and completed electronically.
- BHRS has adopted an Eligibility Determination form for the identification and tracking of the subclass and began implementing this form in September 2013.
- CFS and BHRS created a collaborative work group to monitor, facilitate and track all foster care referrals as well as referrals/services for subclass members.
- The Katie A. Training Committee and Steering Committee will continue to address ongoing training and support needs for all staff, and to strategize on how to more effectively engage our youth and families.

Follow-up on prior years' annual report recommendations, including any County and State responses to the recommendations

1. Use qualitative and quantitative measures to evaluate the effectiveness of the Team Decision Making (TDM) model currently in use in relation to the primary objectives of the program. (2012-13 Annual Report)

   Status
   CFS appointed a Manager of Team Decision Making. He reports quarterly to SMCRP on the progress being made to ensure that this model is being implemented effectively and regularly assessed.

2. CWS should select two to three programs being offered to reunifying families and implement efforts to assess how effective they are in helping families successfully reunify. (2012-13 Annual Report)

   Status
   CFS selected two program areas (Mental Health and Family Visitation) for focus, but no evaluation system in these two program areas was implemented last year. There has been progress this year.

3. Institute Team Decision Making: *accepted and implemented*.

   Status
   SMCRP continues to be interested in this program and during the past year (13-14) significant progress has been made.

4. Address factors that contribute to re-entry rates: *accepted and in process of implementation.*

   Status
   This is an area of ongoing interest for CRP. Since 2010, the focus has moved from preventing re-entry to promoting family reunification, though the concern relating to re-entry rates following unsuccessful reunification remains a priority.

5. Implement an effective parent education program: *accepted and being implemented.*

   Status
   CWS implemented an evidence-based parent education program and CRP monitored its implementation for at least two years. The Panel continues to believe that parents who are involved with the child welfare system benefit from training and coaching in the best parenting practices.

6. Improve strategies to help families understand the child welfare system: *accepted and implemented.*

   Status
   CRP recognizes this is a complex undertaking because of the multiple factors that impact a family's ability to understand and participate effectively in the child welfare system. In the past few years, materials were updated and made accessible to families from diverse backgrounds. The maintenance of updated materials and information remains a challenge.

CRP recommendations for 2014-15

Panel members discussed the current year recommendations and areas of interest and considered additional possibilities for future recommendations and study. There was agreement that the Annual Report Recommendation Section will have the three following categories:

1. *Recommendations for 2014-15*
2. *Follow-up on 2013-14 recommendations*
3. *Areas of interest for further exploration*

Recommendations for 2014-15

1. CRP recommends that Children and Family Services (CFS) and other divisions of the child welfare system that are participating in the Katie A. Implementation, (Behavioral Health and Recovery Services -BHRS), assess the effectiveness of the current mental health programs offered to children and families, from the following perspectives:
    - Effectiveness in identifying those in need
    - Effectiveness in delivering services to those in need
    - Effectiveness in assessing the impact (mental health outcomes) of services on re-entry rates and permanence.

2. CRP recommends that CFS assess the effectiveness of efforts to recruit and maintain in-county foster homes, and provide a summary of their current efforts to CRP. The information provided to CRP-should address the following:
    - The current number of homes and duration of service
    - The number of foster children in out-of-county placements, reasons for the placement, and where they were placed.
    - Specific efforts to recruit new foster homes and the results of that recruiting
    - Challenges to recruiting and maintaining foster homes in San Mateo County
    - Services to support foster parents
    - Future plans to address any deficiencies

3. CRP recommends that the State of California take steps to ensure the various agencies that make up the child welfare system have adequate training and other resources for meeting mandated expectations. If and when additional resources are not available, the State of California should assist agencies to develop strategies to accomplish the state mandates.

Follow up on 2013-14 Recommendations and Areas of Interest

1. CRP will monitor efforts by the external evaluator retained by CFS to evaluate the outcomes of the Team Decision Making Program and determine whether this model is the most appropriate model for the various situations in which it is being used.

2. CRP will monitor the efforts of the external evaluator retained by CFS to evaluate the Family Visitation Program.

3. CRP will monitor CFS and Juvenile Probation's efforts to work together to ensure that dependents and wards of the Juvenile Court who may be eligible for AB 12 when they turn 18 years, and those youth who are non-minor dependents under AB 12 in both agencies, are receiving equivalent preparation, supports and services. CRP will follow up on the results of current interagency conversations about strategies to accomplish this goal through regular updates.

4. CRP will monitor the implementation of the recently strengthened screening process for contractors and those working directly with children and youth in the Child Welfare System.

5. CRP will monitor the progress of CFS and Probation in achieving their System Improvement Plan priority outcomes (reunification within 12 months and placement stability) through regular updates that include a review of written reports submitted to the state and federal government.

Areas of interest, for further exploration

1. CRP will support the efforts of the Domestic Violence Council (DV Council), CORA, and law enforcement organizations with implementing the recommendations of the report recently developed by CORA, as well as help identify any additional recommendations for the DV Council's consideration.

2. CRP will examine the possibility of assuming an advocacy role in regard to the welfare of children and families in general, and specifically for its own annual report recommendations.

3. CRP will discuss approaches to providing positive feedback and validation for child welfare programs and initiatives that are successful.

4. CRP will continue to gather information actions being taken in San Mateo County to address the issue of commercially sexually exploited children.

Discuss how the CRP recommendations will be disseminated to county and state officials as well as the public and how the CRP will handle any comments made.

SMCRP will provide the Director of the San Mateo County Human Services Agency (HSA), the Director of Children and Family Services (CFS) and the Chief Probation Officer with a complete copy of the Annual Report and Recommendations at the time the report is submitted to the State Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP) in November. The report will also be posted on the SMCRP website (www.smcrp.org) and presented to the local Child Abuse Prevention Council, known as the Children's Collaborative Action Team (CCAT). In addition, excerpts from the report will be used in outreach presentations to staff of Child Welfare System agencies, the Foster Parents Association and other groups in San Mateo County. Any comments that result from this process will be presented to SMCRP for consideration.

Future Directions

SMCRP will continue to meet monthly to monitor its recommendations and the delivery of child welfare services in San Mateo County. Time in each meeting will be allocated to reports and presentations relevant to the Panel's stated interests. In addition, there will be an opportunity for new issues/ concerns to be identified and explored. While local funding for child welfare services has improved, SMCRP recognizes the continuing fiscal constraints that child welfare organizations are experiencing. The Panel will continue to look for ways to promote and support productive collaboration that leverages resources to achieve shared goals.

In the upcoming year, SMCRP plans to reassess its role with the child welfare system and explore the possibility of taking a more active advocacy role in relation to improving system outcomes for all children and families.

Panel self-evaluation activities (**Workplan Goal #4**)

For many years, SMCRP has conducted an annual self-review, using a locally developed evaluation form. This process takes place in August and September as the annual report is being developed. Panel members review the compiled results of the evaluation and discuss any concerns. The compiled results of this year's self-assessment (and results from prior years) are below:

San Mateo County Citizen Review Panel
Compiled Results: Annual Panel Self-Evaluation
August 2014
(14 responses)

Scale = 1 (disagree) to 5 (agree)

	1	2	3	4	5
1. CRP members take their role seriously and conscientiously prepare for each meeting.				5	9
2. CRP members place a high priority on regular meeting attendance.			1	11	2
3. CRP is working to address priority issues relating to the safety and welfare of children involved with the child welfare system in San Mateo County.				4	10
4. CRP members feel informed enough to participate in the discussion of agenda items.			1	6	7
5. CRP receives the technical assistance it needs to do its job well.			4	6	4

	1	2	3	4	5	NA
6. CRP receives the information it needs from Children and Family Services in an understandable format and in a timely manner.		2	7	5		
7. CRP receives the facilitation support it needs to do its work in an efficient and inclusive manner.			2	12		
8. New CRP members feel their orientation prepares them to participate in the work of CRP.		4	2	1		7
9. CRP members feel satisfied with the contribution they are making to improving the safety and well-being of children in this community		5	6	3		

Comments

- *I have been extremely enthused about the additional members on the panel and the new probation liaison. I've appreciated the addition of the closed sessions on the agendas.*

- *The addition of new community members has been meaningful.*

- *One respondent:*

  #2. I feel that most do most of the time. I'm sad that my travel has caused me to be away for 2 meetings.
  #6. The monthly charts are a bit confusing and required quite a bit of effort to evaluate, but I'm glad we have this information. Perhaps when I have a little more experience I can offer some constructive suggestions.
  #8 I don't recall a formal orientation. I have been learning as I go along about the various agencies represented and the part they play.
  #9 This (score of 4) is just a reflection of my newness.

- *I cannot speak for new CRP members, so I didn't answer #8.*

- *This panel as currently constituted is the most representative of stakeholders and the community in general. I believe this has resulted in a little bit more*

energy and diversity of perspective. That coupled with the substantive engagement of DCFS has led to a particularly productive period for the panel.

- ***I have been extremely enthused about the additional members on the panel and the new probation liaison. I've appreciated the addition of the closed sessions on the agendas.***

- ***Presentations and discussions have consistently been really strong and Pat serves as an excellent facilitator. Meeting minutes are thorough.***

- ***It appears that members are not taking attendance to meeting as seriously as in previous years. More often members are arriving late to meetings and/or missing meetings entirely without notice.***

- ***I feel we receive adequate information from CFS every month. I would focus more time on discussion for recommendations from the committee throughout the year so we can ensure we are all on the same page when it comes to make our annual recommendations.***

- ***I did not answer #8 because I am not new anymore. Also, I feel that I have tried my best to participate as a member of CRP this year. However, I feel that I could have done better. CRP is very important to me, but sometimes work get in the way. I love the work that is being done at the CRP level and I always look forward to the opportunity to work on CRP topic areas.***

4. Public input (Workplan Goal # 4)

SMCRP received very little direct public input during this reporting period. There were a few website queries, but the content was case-specific and the messages were referred to Children and Family Services for follow-up.

The Panel continues to take the following approach to seeking public input after this annual report is developed and published:

- Children's Collaborative Action Team (CCAT) – John Ragosta, SMCRP Chair, will present the Annual Report and Recommendations to CCAT early in 2015.

- Provide interested groups within the child welfare system and in the community with presentations about CRP's work.

5. Attachments

- ❖ Updated roster of Citizen Review Panel Members, including their affiliations (Attachment A)

- ❖ San Mateo County Children and Family Services Response to CRP Recommendations 2012-13 (Attachment B)

- Notes from SMCRP meetings: August, September, October, November 2014 (Attachment C)
- Updated Scope of Work for the Panel activities 2014-2015 (Accompanying Document)

Attachment A

Roster and Terms as of October 2014

The following table reflects the status of current CRP members.

Name	Affiliation	Term
Baumel, Jan	Retired Special Educator, Licensed Educational Psychologist	First term – 9/06-9/09 Second – 9/09-9/12 Third – 9/12-9/15
Chang, Paul	Executive Director, Pyramid Alternatives	First term – 9/10-9/13 Second term – 9/13-9/16
Bidwell-Waite, Davidson	Deacon, Transfiguration Episcopal Church, San Mateo	First term – 3/14-9/16
Cherniss, David	Director, Juvenile Mediation Program	Second term –9/11-9/14 Third term – 9/14-9/17
DeMarco, Toni	Manager, Behavioral Health and Recovery Services, San Mateo County Health System	First term 9/13-9/16
Karamacheti, Shanthi	Manager, Differential Response and Pre-Three Initiative, Star Vista	First term – 4/14-9/17
Loewy, Ben	Administrator, San Mateo County Office of Education	First term – 9/06-9/09 Second – 9/09-9/12 Third – 9/12-9/15
Manthorne, Cori	Director of Programs, Community Overcoming Relationship Abuse (CORA)	First term 9/13-9/16
Miller, Bonnie	Attorney, Private Defenders Office	First term – 9/07-9/10 Second term – 9/10-9/13 Third term – 9/13-9/16
Monaghan, Ryan	Lieutenant, Field Operations, San Mateo Police Department	First term 9/13-9/16
Plotnikoff, Bernie	Community member, Retired Child Abuse Prevention professional	First term – 9/06-9/09 Second – 9/09-9/12 Third – 9/12-9/15
McCallum, Jamila	Director of Operations, San Mateo Region, Edgewood Center	First term – 9/06-9/09 Second – 9/09-9/12 Third – 9/12-9/15
Ragosta, John	Administrator, Advocates for Children	First term – 8/09-9/12 Second term – 9/12-9/15
Stewart. Ginny	Licensed Clinical Social Worker	First Term – 9/08-9/11 Second Term – 9/11-9/14 Third Term – 9/14-9/17
Szyper, Lauren	Manager, Differential Response, Daly City Partnership	First term – 6/13-9/16

Children and Family Services Director, Dr. Loc Nguyen, serves as the liaison to SMCRP. He has confirmed that he will continue to participate regularly with CRP for the upcoming year. Christine Villanis, Deputy Chief Probation Officer also attends CRP meetings. In the upcoming year, Christine will be asked by CRP to provide a monthly report on issues related to CRP's areas of interest. Patricia Brown facilitates CRP meetings through a contract between CFS and the Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center.

Attachment B

San Mateo County Human Services Agency
CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES (CFS)

Response to
Citizens Review Panel (CRP)
Recommendations for 2013-2014

Recommendation #1

CRP recommends that Children and Family Services use qualitative and quantitative measures to evaluate the effectiveness of the current Team Decision Making model, in relation to the primary objectives of the program. CFS should assess whether Team Decision Making is the most appropriate process for the variety of situations in which it is being used.

Training

CFS provided advanced TDM facilitation training to all TDM staff members as well as ongoing coaching and support to TDM facilitators and the TDM social work supervisor. CFS provided training to all case carrying Social Workers and Social Work Supervisors (with the exception of the Adoption Unit). Training was focused on TDM model fidelity, roles and responsibilities of the participants, stages of the TDM, new facilitation strategies, changes to TDM format, and program specific issues pertaining to Intake versus FM/FR/PP.

Data Management

CFS completed CWS/CMS data clean up back to July 1st, 2013. CFS provided data entry training to all TDM staff members as well as implemented use of Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) for TDM data tracking purposes. It also developed a marketing and messaging plan in order to re-brand what was previously known as the TDM Unit. This is in light of the fact that the unit provides facilitation services for a multitude of purposes, including those outside of the scope of the traditional TDM model.

Next Steps

CFS recommended the following next steps: First, provide training to community partners, Public Defender's Office (PDO) and San Mateo County Juvenile Court bench officers. Second, further develop reporting opportunities to include outcome based measures for TDM. Third, the implementation of a marketing plan to ensure ongoing messaging regarding the TDM service. Fourth, further track performance on SIP outcome measures related to the TDM program.

Recommendation #2

CRP recommends that CFS and Juvenile Probation work together to establish a protocol to ensure that the dependents and wards of the Juvenile Court who may be eligible for AB 12 when they turn 18, and those youth who are non-minor dependents under AB 12 in both agencies, are getting the same level of preparation, supports and services.

In addition, the two agencies should take steps to ensure that all staff case managing AB 12 youth are getting the training they need to diligently support this population.

California Fostering Connections to Success Act (AB 12)

San Mateo County is fully participating in AB12 extended foster care, and to date we are serving more than 69 non-minor dependents. We fully anticipate our numbers to increase and have already increased our dedicated direct services staff from one full-time AB12 Social Worker to two and identified an AB12 Court Officer who is able to meet the specific needs of our young adults in extended foster care. In addition, San Mateo County has formed stakeholder groups to ensure that our Program's goals and progress toward assisting our youth to become successful adults well prepared to exit the system.

AB12 Workgroup

The AB12 Workgroup is the agency's strategy to implementing Assembly Bill 12 in San Mateo County. The AB12 Workgroup is comprised of leadership staff from several of the various Human Services Agency's divisions, such as Probation, Economic Self-Sufficiency, Fiscal Services; and Policy, Planning, and Quality Management, as well as external participants from community agencies and the non-minor dependent population. The make-up of the AB12 Workgroup allows for expert knowledge to be gained from program experts who can assist with making informed decisions in each of the AB12 service areas; housing, education, employment, mentoring, etc. The focus of the AB12 Workgroup is the resolution of issues that arise due to the philosophical shift of staff and the systematic changes that need to occur when working with adults in extended foster care.

AB 12 Adoption Work Group

Implementation of AB 1712, a supplementation to AB 12, requires county child welfare agencies to develop policies and procedures to facilitate the adoption of Non Minor Dependent (NMD) youth. To comply with the requirements of the amended statute and new ACL, the CFS Adoptions Unit spearheaded the development of an AB12 Adoptions Work Group to outline policy and procedure that address the specific needs and concerns to San Mateo County. The group is also responsible to fully integrate AB 1712 into existing Department policy by February 24, 2014.

Recommendation #3

CRP recommends that CFS assess the effectiveness of current mental health and visitation programs in helping families to reunify successfully.

Area of Interest to CRP A

Progress toward strengthening the screening process for the contractors and those working directly with children and youth in the child welfare system

Fingerprint Audit

The Fingerprint Audit has contacted 36 vendors that hold 43 contacts collectively. In April the Audit sent a certified letter to every vendor followed with a courtesy email sent in May. All but one vendor responded to either the email or to the certified letter. The one vendor who did not respond to the request made contact with the auditors. 28 vendors have provided either all or most of the required information, 5 vendors have indicated the intent to comply, while 3 would like more clarification before compliance. The auditors are working on further communication with the remaining 8 vendors.

The auditors have conducted 2 site visits, while 9 more visits have been scheduled. The rest of the site visits will be scheduled in the near future.

Area of Interest to CRP B

Progress toward achieving stated Child Welfare and Probation SIP priority outcomes:

- Reunification within 12 months.
- Placement stability.

SIP Outcomes

In the System Improvement Plan, San Mateo County Children and Family Services identified the following outcomes to focus on:

- C1.3 – Reunification within 12 months (6 month entry cohort) (both CFS and Probation)
- C4.1 – Placement Stability Outcome: Placement Stability (8 days to 12 months) (CFS only)

Measure C1.3 – Reunification within 12 months (Entry Cohort) – Child Welfare

In the most recent Annual SIP Progress Report submitted to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), the following targets were identified:

- National standard: 48.4%
- SIP Year 1 Goal: Increase by 2% from 37.5% to 39.3%

According to the Quarter 4 – 2011 Quarterly Extract (July 2010 to December 2010), of 56 children who remained in care at 12 months, 21 were reunified. This is a 37.5% rate of timely reunification.

In the latest report of performance, according to the Quarter 2 – 2013

Quarterly Extract (January 2012 to June 2012), of 75 children who remained in care at 12 months, 31 were reunified. This is a 41.35% rate of timely reunification.

Since the baseline extract, CFS' performance in this area has improved, and has exceeded their one-year goal to reach a 39.3% rate of timely reunification. In the last four quarters, CFS has seen a fluctuation below the National standard, with a high of 47.7% (Quarter 3 – 2012 Quarterly Extract) and the most recent rate of 41.35% (Quarter 2 – 2013 Quarterly Extract).

To improve the outcomes of this measure, one of the SIP Strategies developed was to develop a Parent Leadership/Partner Program that employs former birth parents to become mentors for parents who are currently involved in the reunification process. These parent mentors will serve as mentors, advocates, and peer support to families who are currently involved with the child welfare system.

In the most recent Annual SIP Progress Report, the following progress was made on the action steps for this strategy:

- From February 2013 to June 2014, steps were taken to develop goals, the target population and the core workgroup for developing the Parent Leadership/Partner Program. This step has been completed; however, further development of the goals of the program will need to be identified through the newly identified workgroup. The use of PSSF funds will start in FY 2014-2015 (year 2 of the SIP).
- From January 2014 to June 2014, steps were taken to identify and hire former birth parents as mentors for parents. The process of identifying funds to support this program took longer than expected; this had an impact on the timeframes for action steps that follow as a result.
- In August and September 2014, steps will be taken to introduce the Parent Mentor Program to staff and educate them about the referral process, as well as the target population to be served. The timeframe of this step was extended to allow for recruitment and training of community partners.
- In July and August 2014, steps will be taken to train parent mentors regarding child welfare, confidentiality and boundaries. The timeframe of this step was extended to allow for recruitment and training of community partners.
- In November and December 2014, the Parent Mentor Program will be launched, and tracking of the program will be implemented via an internal tracking system and CWS/CMS special project codes. The timeframe of this step was extended to allow for training of partners and development of the tracking system, as well as identifying variables in the workgroup.
- In January 2015 and thereafter on an annual basis, families served by the Parent Mentor Program will be surveyed, and measurement of

satisfaction with the mentor relationship will take place.

Measure C4.1 – Placement Stability Outcome: Placement Stability (8 days to 12 months) – Child Welfare

In the most recent Annual SIP Progress Report submitted to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), the following targets were identified:

- National standard: 86.0%
- SIP Year 1 Goal: Increase by 1% (2 children) from 81.4% to 82.6% (142 children)

According to the Quarter 4 – 2011 Quarterly Extract (January 2011 to December 2011), of the 166 children in placement 8 days to 12 months, 133 had two or fewer placements. This is an 81.4% rate of placement stability.

In the latest report of performance, according to the Quarter 2 – 2013 Quarterly Extract (January 2012 to June 2013), of the 193 children in placement 8 days to 12 months, 164 had two or fewer placements. This is an 85% rate of placement stability.

Since the baseline extract, CFS' performance in this area has improved, and has exceeded their one-year goal to reach a 82.6% rate of placement stability. In Quarters 3 and 4 of 2012, and in Quarter 1 of 2013, CFS met or exceeded the National Standard, ranging from 86.8% to 89.2%.

To improve the outcomes of this measure, along with Measure C1.3, one of the SIP Strategies developed was to develop visitation centers and implement them throughout San Mateo County to improve the quality and quantity of visits between parents and children. Visitation centers will be family friendly and engaging to families who utilize its services in order to improve the rates of reunification and improve child- parent relationships.

In the most recent Annual SIP Progress Report, the following progress was made on the action steps for this strategy:

- In March 2013, steps were taken to select contractors and community-based organizations (CBOs) to run visitation centers and determine the target populations to be served. By this time, the Request for Proposals (RFP) process has been completed, and the Agency is working with contractors.
- From March 2013 to August 2013, steps are being taken to educate staff about visitation centers, as well as the referral process and the target populations being served.
- From March 2013 to February 2018, steps are being taken to launch the visitation centers.
- Since January 2014 and on a quarterly basis, steps are being taken to monitor the usage of visitation centers, tracking the number of families served by the centers and assessing the impact on rates of reunification.

In addition, to further improve the outcomes of Measure C4.1, along with C1.3, another SIP Strategy that was developed included the strengthening of the use of Team Decision Making (TDM) Meetings, and assessing the most effective family engagement model for engaging families throughout the life of a case, from the entry into foster care, during placement changes, and through transition to permanency. This strategy also encompasses the need to utilize the most effective teaming process to engage families in making decisions for their children and families to prevent out of home care, encourage timely reunification and/or find early permanency.

In the most recent Annual SIP Progress Report, the following progress was made on the action steps for this strategy:

- From February 2013 to September 2013, steps were taken to identify barriers to full utilization of TDM meetings and develop strategies for overcoming those barriers.
- From October 2013 to December 2013, steps were taken to retrain staff to the use of TDM meetings. In addition, steps were taken to facilitate the training and strengthening the use of community partners in the TDM process.
- From September 2013 to December 2013, steps were taken to develop a tracking and accountability process to ensure full utilization of TDM processes.
- On January 2014, June 2014, and planned semi-annually thereafter, steps will be taken to compile reports regarding compliance with utilization of TDMs and reporting to the CFS Management Team.
- On January 2013, and in an ongoing process, steps are being taken to research and pilot other teaming models to ensure the most appropriate engagement strategies for the unique culture of San Mateo County clients.
- On July 2013, and in an ongoing process, steps are being taken to make changes recommended in teaming methods to engage families.

Measure C1.3 – Reunification within 12 months (Entry Cohort) – Juvenile Probation

In the most recent Annual SIP Progress Report submitted to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), the following targets were identified:

- National standard: 48.4%
- SIP Years 1 and 2 Goal: Increase by 20%, from 20 % to 40%

According to the Quarter 4 - 2011 Quarterly Extract, of the 10 children, only 2 reunified within 12 months. This is a 20% rate of reunification.

In the latest report of performance, according to the Quarter 2 – 2013 Quarterly extract, (January 2012 to June 2012), of the 3 children who remained in care at 12 months, 1 reunified. This is a 33.3% rate of timely reunification.

Since the baseline extract, Juvenile Probation is on track of accomplishing its

goal of achieving a 40% rate of reunification, though the rate is still under the National Standard of 48.4%. It is worth noting, however, that Juvenile Probation detains youth at Juvenile Hall, pending placement in an appropriate program that will meet the rehabilitative needs of the youth. This affects the calculation of the C1.3 outcome measure, as youth are entered into CWS/CMS following a placement order being imposed.

To further improve the Probation measure, one strategy that is being implemented as part of the SIP is to enhance Family Finding efforts and permanency planning by engaging extended families while the youth is in care, and/or participating in Family Preservation and Wraparound programs.

In the most recent Annual SIP Progress Report, the following progress was made on the action steps for this strategy:

- In April 2014, steps were taken to develop a Memorandum of Understanding with Child Welfare regarding the process for requesting family finding searches. However, this step may be deleted because an HAS representative will confirm if this step is still needed or if a license can be provided to Probation staff without a Memorandum.
- From May 2014 to July 2014, steps were taken to develop Probation policies and procedures for conducting family finding and engagement. Those steps are currently in progress.
- From June 2014 to July 2014, steps were taken to coordinate training for probation staff in family finding and engagement. In the future, HSA will schedule training for placement staff on using their Family Finding system.
- From June 2014 to July 2014, steps were taken to begin family finding searches. Those searches will be conducted on an “as needed” basis, if and when the youth does not get placed in a group home.
- From August 2014 and annually thereafter, steps will be taken to track number of family members found and link to the family reunification outcome.

To further improve the Probation measure, another strategy that is being implemented as part of the SIP is to establish a Parent Partner program that will provide support to parents involved with the Juvenile Probation department for youth pending placement. This program will provide support to parents and help them navigate the Probation system and engage in timely reunification with their youth.

In the most recent Annual SIP Progress Report, the following progress was made on the action steps for this strategy:

- From January 2014 to February 2014, steps were taken to explore the Parent Partner program that has been implemented by child welfare to determine opportunities to partner on the program, especially in

regard to an orientation for parents to the System. Those steps are still in progress.

- From February to April 2014, steps were taken to develop policies and procedures for the Parent Partner program, to include goals and a target population for the program.
- In May 2014, steps were taken to introduce the Parent Mentor Program to staff and educate them about the referral process and target population to be served.
- In May 2014, steps were taken to coordinate training for probation staff in the Parent Mentor Program.
- In June 2014, steps were taken to launch the Parent Mentor Program. Steps were also taken to track families served in the program through an internal tracking system and explore the use of CWS/CMS special project codes.
- From January 2015 and annually thereafter, steps will be taken to identify outcomes for families served by the Parent Mentor program and survey families served, as well as measure their satisfaction with the mentorship relationship.

Area of Interest to CRP C

Actions by CFS to maintain current foster homes and increase the number of foster homes in San Mateo County to reduce the number of youth in out-of-county placements.

As part of the System Improvement Plan (SIP) submitted to the State of California Department of Social Services, a strategy was developed to directly address foster homes and families.
The SIP strategy focuses on foster parent recruitment, and the implementation of a foster parent recruitment/retention plan to increase the number of Resource Families available to meet the needs of children and youth in care. Families will be neighborhood-based, be culturally sensitive, and located primarily in the communities where the children live.

In the System Improvement Plan, the action steps for the SIP strategy and their progress are as follows:

- From September 2014 and annually thereafter, steps will be taken to work with high schools, Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) and clergy networks to increase the number of resource families each year that can provide homes and support to teenagers and non-minor dependents.

- In September 2014, steps will be taken to create a resource family support program that will provide high-level agency support to resource families who will care for adolescent children with challenges.

- From December 2014 and thereafter, steps will be taken to implement awareness building and outreach activities to inform San Mateo County residents and targeted communities of the continuous need for foster homes for children, including homes for medically fragile infants (MFIs).

The action steps will be implemented in Year 2 of the SIP Cycle.
Of the individuals and families in San Mateo who attend CFS information meetings and become a placement home, 70% are interested in adoption. Currently, we have 100 licensed foster homes in the county. On average over the past 3 years, 35% of dependents were placed out of the county. Of those youth, placements with guardians and/or relative/NREFM homes ranged between 28% and 40%, which means there were a number of youth living out-of-county in foster homes, group homes and other placement types.
In January 2014, the recruitment social worker was assigned to the Receiving Home, where there are more staff to assist in planning as well as carrying out recruitment efforts. CFS will focus on community outreach and place more emphasis on their most effective strategies. CFS continues to emphasize that the Agency's first and foremost job is to license foster homes for children in temporary need and adoption component is secondary as family reunification is the first goal for almost all children.
Progress towards this SIP step will consist of tracking the number of resource family inquiries as well as new resource families by source. Data will be captured in the Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) database and CWS/CMS. The Receiving Home Social Worker Supervisor, Recruitment Social Worker, Placement Social Worker and Office Clerk will meet regularly to monitor progress.

Area of Interest to CRP D

SMCRP, in partnership with CFS, will continue to monitor the impact of the Katie A. Settlement.

Katie A. v Bonta Lawsuit
The Katie A. Settlement Agreement requires counties to partner in a number of ways in order to ensure the screening, referral, assessment and treatment of mental health conditions for youth in the child welfare system. Since February 2013, CFS and Behavioral Health and Recover Services (BHRS) have been working in collaboration are in an excellent position to continue improving services for child welfare involved children and families.

To date, implementation accomplishments include:

Full day cross-training sessions were held for supervisors, managers, and staff. To date, 309 staff have been trained on the Core Practice Model Guide (CPM),

198 BHRS staff were trained on the Documentation Manual (DM) and 159 CFS staff were trained on the Mental Health Screening Tool (MHST) (0-5) and (6-20).

The MHST was adopted by CFS beginning September 2013 and can be uploaded from the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) and completed electronically.
The BHRS program for transitional aged youth has now been folded into the referral triage management.

BHRS has adopted an Eligibility Determination form for the identification and tracking of the subclass and began implementing this form in September 2013.
CFS and BHRS created a collaborative work group to monitor, facilitate and track all foster care referrals as well as referrals/services for subclass members.
San Mateo County's Measure-A funding combined with CFS funding has made it possible for BHRS and CFS to hire additional staff to assist with staffing capacity. This will help alleviate the specific need for services for the 0-5 population and support ability to identify and serve subclass members.
Edgewood Kinship Care convened 6 focus groups beginning August 2013. The intent of the focus groups was to engage caregivers, communicate regarding the CPM, and to gain initial feedback from Kinship parents regarding their experience with CFS and BHRS services. Similarly, BHRS convened 5 parent focus groups, and CFS facilitated a focus group with the Foster Family Agency caregivers. This information will be integrated into quality improvement strategies.

Two day-long trainings on collaboration for Supervisors and Managers, facilitated by Center for Right Relations Global, were held in December, and will frame the subsequent staff trainings to be held in January of 2014.

As we implement the CPM, the Katie A Training Committee and Steering Committee will continue to address ongoing training and support needs for all staff, and to strategize on how to more effectively engage our youth and families.

Attachment C

San Mateo County

Citizen Review Panel

CRP's mission is to assess the child welfare system in the county and make data-driven recommendations for continuous improvement that will help to ensure the safety and well-being of San Mateo County children and their families.

Notes from Meeting
August 18, 2014
Human Services Agency Offices
1 Davis Drive, Montara Room, Belmont CA 94002

Panel Members Present: Baumel, Bidwell-Waite, Cherniss, Karamcheti, Loewy, Manthorne, McCallum, Miller, Monaghan, Plotnikoff, Ragosta, Stewart, Szyper
Others: Callagy, Nguyen, Thompson, Villanis, Brown

Presentation on Human Trafficking
Ryan introduced Mike Callagy, former Deputy Chief of Police in San Mateo and current Deputy San Mateo County Manager. Mike has had a longstanding interest in and experience with human trafficking issues and he provided CRP with an overview of the current situation. Mike told the Panel about a case in which he worked undercover for about a year to identify and arrest those involved with pimping and pandering, a serious criminal act. In that experience, he gained insight into how victimized the involved women were. They were moved frequently, denied access to their passports, threatened and faced a moving target in terms of the amount they owed to their "sponsors".

Mike recommended a book on the topic, Runaway Girl, by Clarissa Phelps. Ms. Phelps was at one time a victim in trafficking circumstances, but she managed to get away from that situation, get an education and become a powerful advocate for other victims. She has been part of two past conferences in San Mateo County and a third conference is planned.

He noted that there is a lot going on in SMC, but the gap is lack of coordination between/among different agencies and a general lack of awareness by the public about the extent of this problem. Working with Supervisor Tissier, Mike is pulling together a group of stakeholders to address how groups can better coordinate and collaborate.

Mike shared the information poster that is posted in local bars and provides a toll free number (1-888-373-7888) for the National Human Trafficking Resource Center. The Center is available to help people who are being forced to engage in any activity (commercial sex, housework, farm work, construction, factory, retail, restaurant). Other resources include the CA Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST) at 1-888-KEY-2-Fre(edom) and 1-888-539-2373 to access help and services. For more information www.BAHC2Freedom.org

Panel members had a number of questions and comments about this information and the scope of this issue in San Mateo County. Loc mentioned that HSA has partly completed a protocol for assessing for sexually exploited children at intake and a grant is being sought to complete the work. The Blue Ribbon Committee also has a subcommittee addressing the issue of sexually exploited children.

Ryan noted that law enforcement in San Mateo County has a protocol to guide assessment and help build cases in these situations. Probation has a protocol that was shared with CRP recently. Mike noted that the keys to success overall will be to build public awareness about this issue, address the root causes (poverty, immigration) and train those who might come into contact with exploited persons how to be helpful.

The topic of trafficking will be on the next agenda to determine any follow-up steps that CRP wants to take.

Follow-up from last meeting

- Review notes from last meeting – There were several corrections to the notes.

Updates from Panel Members

- David reported that there are now two monitors set up at the Juvenile Court to orient families to Juvenile Dependency and Delinquency procedures.
  It may be possible in the future to add related information in the form of PSAs to these existing loops.
- Ben told the group he has been asked to prepare a formal request for the Police Chiefs / Sheriff's Association to share with schools information related to youth who have been involved in violent or traumatic situation. Apparently, the law enforcement group recognizes the value of transmitting this information so that children and youth receive the support and services they need. Work with County Counsel is underway to develop a protocol to guide this information sharing.

Probation Department's support for community-based organizations

- Orientation visit to John Keene, Chief of Probation – John Ragosta and Pat Brown met with Chief Keene and Deputy Chief Christine Villanis to introduce the Chief to the mission, goals and specific work of the Citizen Review Panel. Chief Keene was very supportive of the efforts to engage parents and focus on prevention and early intervention activities. He offered to come and address the Panel in the near future, to describe his priorities for Probation.

- During the meeting with Chief Keene, Christine mentioned the funding for local community partners that is administered by the Probation Department. In many counties, this funding is used for Probation staffing, but in San Mateo County, the funding is distributed through RFPs to community-based organizations. Funding comes from the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act (JJCPA), the Youthful Offender Block Grant (YOBG), Juvenile Accountability Block Grant (JABG) and Juvenile Probation and Camps Funding (JPCF).

  Christine distributed a list of the funded agencies (26) for FY 2013-14 and the programs/services that were supported. The total funding distributed is close to $3 Million.

CFS Director's Report – Loc Nguyen

- CFS Response to SMCRP Recommendations for 2014

Jenell Thompson, who wrote the CFS Response, was present to address questions. Panel members noted that the CFS response does not directly answer the question of what CFS has done to implement evaluation efforts for visitation programs and mental health programs. Instead, the response is basically a list of action steps related to a number of areas of interest expressed by CRP during the past year (screening for contractors, SIP outcomes, identifying more foster homes in the county and monitoring implementation of the Katie A settlement).

- Child Welfare Internal Dashboard
  There were no specific questions about the July Dashboard.
- CFS progress in addressing SIP Goals: AB 636 report
  CRP has not received a copy of the AB 636 report as requested, but information related to SIP outcomes was included in the CFS Response.
- Simulation Lab training for new social workers – a new resource is available through a partnership with Santa Clara County. It will be very useful in training the 25 new social workers who will be on board by early September.

San Mateo County

Citizen Review Panel

CRP's mission is to assess the child welfare system in the county and make data-driven recommendations for continuous improvement that will help to ensure the safety and well-being of San Mateo County children and their families.

Notes from Meeting
September 15, 2014
Human Services Agency Offices
1 Davis Drive, Montara Room, Belmont CA 94002

Panel members present: Chang, Cherniss, Karamcheti, Loewy, Manthorne, McCallum, Miller, Plotnikoff, Ragosta, Szyper
Others: Loc Nguyen, Christine Villanis, Pat Brown

Follow-up from last meeting
The notes from the August meeting were accepted with no changes.

Updates from CRP Members

- Cori – Announced Domestic Violence Month and upcoming CORA fundraiser on October 16.
- Shanthi – Announced Oct. 4 Si Se Puede event – aimed at providing Lationo women with information about resources available to them.
- David – Reported there are now two new juvenile court judges: Judge Cretan and Judge Diaz.
- Jamila – Reported on the CA Alliance Conference she attended – will share information about child welfare outcomes with CRP.
- John – Told the Panel that the Foster Parents Association has expressed interest in having a member serve on the Panel.
- Christine – Reported on her attendance, with SMPD representatives at a conference aimed at preventing youth from entering the Juvenile Justice system.
- Bernie – Raised the issue of over-medication of children in the child welfare system and asked the Panel if there was interest in looking into the scope of this problem in San Mateo County. Loc reported that a subcommittee of the Blue Ribbon Commission is already examining the problem and suggested that CRP might want a member to serve on that subcommittee.

Election of Panel members for continuing service

- David Cherniss
  On a motion by Ben, seconded by Jamila, David was unanimously re-elected for a three-year term, Dec. 2014-Dec. 2017.

- Ginny Stewart
  On a motion by Paul, seconded by Bonnie, Ginny was unanimously re-elected for a three- year term, Dec. 2014-Dec. 2017.

Selection of Panel Chair for 2014-15
John told the Panel he was willing to serve another term, but if anyone else wished to stand for election that would be fine. On a motion by Bernie, John was re-elected by acclamation to the role of Chair for a one-year term (Dec. 2014-Dec. 2015).

TDM Update
John Fong provided the Panel with information about the TDM program during the period of April 1 to June 20, 2014. There were 42 children/youth involved with TDM sessions. The following are the categories of cases: emergency placement; imminent risk; placement move; exit from placement

The TDM stats are being managed using the Efforts to Outcomes database. To date, the focus has been on quantitative measures of the program. CRP members noted that while they appreciate these measures, they are also very interested in assessing whether TDMs as an intervention are effective in helping to reunify families.

Loc told the group that CFS has the same interest in outcome evaluation and he is negotiating a contract with a consultant from UCLA who will be doing an evaluation of TDMs relative to their intended outcomes. This evaluation will take place during the upcoming year and Loc will encourage the consultant to connect with CRP, as a key stakeholder group, as he develops the evaluation design.

The next report from John Fong will be scheduled in December or January.

Initial discussion of findings re. CRP recommendations for 2013-14
The following findings and results were discussed by the Panel and appear below in “draft” form.

Panel members will be asked to provide feedback to Pat on the language and meaning of the findings before the October CRP meeting.

Recommendation	Findings
1. CRP recommends that CWS use qualitative and quantitative measures to evaluate the effectiveness of the Team Decision Making (TDM) model currently in use in relation to the primary objectives of the program. In addition, CWS should assess whether TDM is the most appropriate process for the variety of situations in which it is being used.	Children and Family Services (CFS), with John Fong’s leadership, has initiated efforts to make the program more consistent with quality guidelines, track its use, promote participation and provide quarterly updates on progress to CRP. The Efforts to Outcomes Program is now being used to manage data. CFS is developing a contract with an outside evaluator from UCLA who will design a system to assess TDM outcomes relative to family reunification.

	As this system is developed, CRP will be consulted as a TDM "stakeholder" group.
2. CRP recommends that CFS and Juvenile Probation work together to establish a protocol to ensure that dependents and wards of the Juvenile Court who may be eligible for AB 12 when they turn 18, and those youth who are non-minor dependents under AB 12 in both agencies, are getting the same level of preparation, supports and services. In addition, the two agencies should take steps to ensure that all staff case managing AB 12 youth are getting the training they need to diligently support this population.	CRP received information from the Probation Department about the challenges of ensuring access to AB 12 services for youth who do not have a general placement order (youth returned to parental custody who are living with "kin"). CFS has formed an AB 12 Workgroup, under the leadership of Gary Beasley. This group is talking with Probation about how best to serve AB 12 eligible youth with social work services. The Director of CFS and Deputy Chief of Probation have met to talk about approaches to ensuring equitable access for Probation youth.
3. CRP recommends that CFS assess the effectiveness of current mental health and visitation programs in helping families to reunify successfully.	CFS is using different approaches to assessing the effectiveness of visitation and mental health programs relative to family reunification: • A new visitation model was rolled out this year. To assess outcomes for this model, CFS will contract with the same external evaluator who is working on Team Decision Making. • CFS has been implementing the Katie A. Settlement and developing data in partnership with Behavioral Health and Recovery Services and other partners. At this time, no outcome evaluation has been implemented.

Progress in Areas of Interest for 2013-14 – Draft

In addition to tracking progress in the three formal recommendation areas identified above, SMCRP looked into the following issue areas:

A. Progress toward strengthening the screening process for contractors and those working directly with children and youth in the child welfare system.

Result
SMCRP raised concern about the process used to contract with organizations and individuals to directly serve children and youth in the Child Welfare System. One result of the Panel's discussion with Dr. Loc Nguyen, Director of Children and Family Services, was his conversation with County Counsel to review and make more rigorous the background checks of individuals and organizations that contract with San Mateo County. New language was included in the contract (used by all County departments) to require a regular audit of personnel files to determine that background checks on employees and consultants meet the new requirements.

B. Progress toward achieving stated Child Welfare and Probation SIP priority outcomes:

Result
San Mateo County Children and Family Services identified the following System Improvement Plan outcomes to focus on:

Reunification within 12 months - C1.3
In the most recent Annual SIP Progress Report submitted to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), the following targets were identified:

- National standard: 48.4%
- SIP Year 1 Goal: Increase by 2% from 37.5% to 39.3%

CFS achieved a result of 39.3% in the last reporting quarter.

Placement Stability Outcome: Placement Stability (8 days to 12 months) - C4.1
In the most recent Annual SIP Progress Report submitted to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), the following targets were identified:

- National standard: 86.0%
- SIP Year 1 Goal: Increase by 1% (2 children) from 81.4% to 82.6% (142 children)

CFS achieved a 85% rate of placement stability during the last reporting quarter.

C. Actions by CFS to maintain current foster homes and increase the number of foster homes in San Mateo County to reduce the number of youth in out-of-county placements.

Result
The CFS strategy focuses on foster parent recruitment, and the implementation of a foster parent recruitment/retention plan to increase the number of Resource Families available to meet the needs of children and youth in care. Families will be neighborhood-based, be culturally sensitive, and located primarily in the communities where the children live.

CFS continues to emphasize that the Agency's first and foremost job is to license foster homes for children in temporary need and adoption component is secondary as family reunification is the first goal for almost all children.

Progress towards this SIP step will consist of tracking the number of resource family inquiries as well as new resource families by source. Data will be captured in the Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) database and CWS/CMS. The Receiving Home Social Worker Supervisor, Recruitment Social Worker, Placement Social Worker and Office Clerk will meet regularly to monitor progress.

D. SMCRP, in partnership with CFS, will continue to monitor the impact of the Katie A. Settlement.

Result
The Katie A. Settlement Agreement requires counties to partner in a number of ways in order to ensure the screening, referral, assessment and treatment of mental health conditions for youth in the child welfare system. Since February 2013, CFS and Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS) have been working in collaboration to continue improving services for child welfare involved children and families. A SMCRP member who serves on the Katie A. Implementation Committee provided the following information to the Panel:

- Full day cross-training sessions were held for supervisors, managers, and staff.
- The Mental Health Screening Tool (MHST) was adopted by CFS beginning September 2013 and can be uploaded from the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) and completed electronically.
- BHRS has adopted an Eligibility Determination form for the identification and tracking of the subclass and began implementing this form in September 2013.
- CFS and BHRS created a collaborative work group to monitor, facilitate and track all foster care referrals as well as referrals/services for subclass members.
- The Katie A. Training Committee and Steering Committee will continue to address ongoing training and support needs for all staff, and to strategize on how to more effectively engage our youth and families.

CFS Director's Report
Loc Nguyen pointed out that the Dashboard for the last few months shows a rather significant decrease in the number of new cases. The cause of this decrease is not clear at the moment.

He also reported that 25 new staff members have joined CFS as of September. These workers will be trained using the new simulation model.

The Panel adjourned to its closed session at 1:10 PM.

Follow up from this meeting:
- Request for ADA assistance for SMCRP Member
- Presentation on the mission and structure of the San Mateo County Blue Ribbon Commission.

San Mateo County

Citizen Review Panel

CRP's mission is to assess the child welfare system in the county and make data-driven recommendations for continuous improvement that will help to ensure the safety and well-being of San Mateo County children and their families.

Notes from Meeting
October 20, 2014

Human Services Agency Offices
1 Davis Drive, Montara Room, Belmont CA 94002

Panelists present: Baumel, Bidwell-Waite, Chang, Cherniss, DeMarco, Karamcheti, Loewy, Manthorne, McCallum, Miller, Monaghan, Ragosta
Others: Nguyen, Villanis, Brown

Follow-up from last meeting
The notes were approved as submitted.

Confirm Statement of Findings re. CRP recommendations for 2013-14
The Panel confirmed the statement of findings re. last year's recommendations. See below:

Recommendation	Findings
4. CRP recommends that CWS use qualitative and quantitative measures to evaluate the effectiveness of the Team Decision Making (TDM) model currently in use in relation to the primary objectives of the program. In addition, CWS should assess whether TDM is the most appropriate process for the variety of situations in which it is being used.	Children and Family Services (CFS), with John Fong's leadership, has initiated efforts to make the program more consistent with quality guidelines, track its use, promote participation and provide quarterly updates on progress to CRP. The Efforts to Outcomes Program is now being used to manage data. CFS is developing a contract with an outside evaluator from UCLA who will design a system to assess TDM outcomes relative to family reunification. As this system is developed, CRP will be consulted as a TDM "stakeholder" group.
5. CRP recommends that CFS and	CRP received information from the

Juvenile Probation work together to establish a protocol to ensure that dependents and wards of the Juvenile Court who may be eligible for AB 12 when they turn 18, and those youth who are non-minor dependents under AB 12 in both agencies, are getting the same level of preparation, supports and services. In addition, the two agencies should take steps to ensure that all staff case managing AB 12 youth are getting the training they need to diligently support this population.	Probation Department about the challenges of ensuring access to AB 12 services for youth who do not have a general placement order (youth returned to parental custody who are living with "kin"). CFS has formed an AB 12 Workgroup, under the leadership of Gary Beasley. This group is talking with Probation about how best to serve AB 12 eligible youth with social work services. The Director of CFS and Deputy Chief of Probation have met to talk about approaches to ensuring equitable access for Probation youth.
6. CRP recommends that CFS assess the effectiveness of current mental health and visitation programs in helping families to reunify successfully.	CFS is using different approaches to assessing the effectiveness of visitation and mental health programs relative to family reunification: • A new visitation model was rolled out this year. To assess outcomes for this model, CFS will contract with the same external evaluator who is working on Team Decision Making. • CFS has been implementing the Katie A. Settlement and developing data in partnership with Behavioral Health and Recovery Services and other partners. At this time, no outcome evaluation has been implemented.

Progress in Areas of Interest for 2013-14

In addition to tracking progress in the three formal recommendation areas identified above, SMCRP looked into the following issue areas:

B. Progress toward strengthening the screening process for contractors and those working directly with children and youth in the child welfare system.

Result

SMCRP raised concern about the process used to contract with organizations and individuals to directly serve children and youth in the Child Welfare System. One result of the Panel's discussion with Dr. Loc Nguyen, Director of Children and Family Services, was his conversation with County Counsel to review and make more rigorous

the background checks of individuals and organizations that contract with San Mateo County. New language was included in the contract (used by all County departments) to require a regular audit of personnel files to determine that background checks on employees and consultants meet the new requirements.

B. Progress toward achieving stated Child Welfare and Probation SIP priority outcomes:

Result
San Mateo County Children and Family Services identified the following System Improvement Plan outcomes to focus on:

Reunification within 12 months - C1.3
In the most recent Annual SIP Progress Report submitted to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), the following targets were identified:

- National standard: 48.4%
- SIP Year 1 Goal: Increase by 2% from 37.5% to 39.3%

CFS achieved a result of 39.3% in the last reporting quarter.

Placement Stability Outcome: Placement Stability (8 days to 12 months) - C4.1
In the most recent Annual SIP Progress Report submitted to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), the following targets were identified:

- National standard: 86.0%
- SIP Year 1 Goal: Increase by 1% (2 children) from 81.4% to 82.6% (142 children)

CFS achieved a 85% rate of placement stability during the last reporting quarter.

E. Actions by CFS to maintain current foster homes and increase the number of foster homes in San Mateo County to reduce the number of youth in out-of-county placements.

Result
The CFS strategy focuses on foster parent recruitment, and the implementation of a foster parent recruitment/retention plan to increase the number of Resource Families available to meet the needs of children and youth in care. Families will be neighborhood-based, be culturally sensitive, and located primarily in the communities where the children live.

CFS continues to emphasize that the Agency's first and foremost job is to license foster homes for children in temporary need and adoption component is secondary as family reunification is the first goal for almost all children.

Progress towards this SIP step will consist of tracking the number of resource family inquiries as well as new resource families by source. Data will be captured in the Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) database and CWS/CMS. The Receiving Home Social Worker Supervisor, Recruitment Social Worker, Placement Social Worker and Office Clerk will meet regularly to monitor progress.

F. SMCRP, in partnership with CFS, will continue to monitor the impact of the Katie A. Settlement.

Result

The Katie A. Settlement Agreement requires counties to partner in a number of ways in order to ensure the screening, referral, assessment and treatment of mental health conditions for youth in the child welfare system. Since February 2013, CFS and Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS) have been working in collaboration to continue improving services for child welfare involved children and families. A SMCRP member who serves on the Katie A. Implementation Committee provided the following information to the Panel:

- Full day cross-training sessions were held for supervisors, managers, and staff.
- The Mental Health Screening Tool (MHST) was adopted by CFS beginning September 2013 and can be uploaded from the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) and completed electronically.
- BHRS has adopted an Eligibility Determination form for the identification and tracking of the subclass and began implementing this form in September 2013.
- CFS and BHRS created a collaborative work group to monitor, facilitate and track all foster care referrals as well as referrals/services for subclass members.
- The Katie A. Training Committee and Steering Committee will continue to address ongoing training and support needs for all staff, and to strategize on how to more effectively engage our youth and families.

Updates from CRP Members

- Shanthi announced that she has been named the Star Vista director for the Pre-Three home visiting program, in addition to her current responsibilities.
- Ryan thanked members for their good wishes as he and his wife welcomed their daughter.
  All is going well.

Update on Katie A. Implementation (Loc and Toni)

Collaboration among agencies implementing the Katie A. Decision has focused on the following:

- Developing approaches to screening, assessing and then providing services to eligible children in the child welfare system (those in the class and sub-class).
- The team has produced trainings for social workers and behavioral health workers to better help them understand each other's programs and goals as the basis for collaboration.
- Gaps in current program operations have been identified.
- Some of the future elements of the work are dependent on the judicial decision about whether to continue the Katie A. implementation past December 2014.
- Currently, reports are being submitted to the Special Master on a quarterly basis. These reports deal primarily with service outputs rather than assessing the quality of services.

CRP recommendations for 2014-15

Panel members discussed the current year recommendations and areas of interest and considered additional possibilities for future recommendations and study. There was

agreement that the Annual Report Recommendation Section will have the three following categories:

- *Recommendations for 2014-15*
- *Follow-up on 2013-14 recommendations*
- *Areas of interest for further exploration*

Recommendations for 2014-15

1. CRP recommends that Children and Family Services (CFS) - and other divisions of the child welfare system such as Behavioral Health and Recovery Services that are participating in the Katie A. Implementation - assess the effectiveness of the current mental health programs offered to children and families, from the following perspectives:
    - effectiveness in identifying those in need
    - effectiveness in actually delivering services to those in need
    - effectiveness in assessing the impact (mental health outcomes) of services delivered to those in need

2. CRP recommends that CFS provide a summary of efforts to recruit and maintain in-county foster care homes. The overview should address the following:
    - the current # of homes and duration of service
    - the number of foster children placed out-of-county and reasons for the placement
    - efforts to recruit new foster homes and the results of that recruiting
    - challenges to recruiting and maintaining foster homes in San Mateo County
    - services to support foster parents

3. CRP recommends that the State of California take steps to ensure that it is imposing *reasonable expectations* on the various agencies that make up the child welfare system and providing adequate resources for achieving success in accomplishing those expectations.

Follow up on 2013-14 Recommendations and Areas of Interest

1. CRP will monitor efforts by the external evaluator retained by CFS to evaluate the outcomes of the Team Decision Making Program and determine whether this model is the most appropriate model for the variety of situations in which it is being used.

2. CRP will monitor the efforts of the external evaluator retained by CFS to evaluate the Family Visitation Program.

3. CRP will monitor CFS and Juvenile Probation's efforts to work together to ensure that dependents and wards of the Juvenile Court who may be eligible for AB 12 when they turn 18, and those youth who are non-minor dependents under AB 12 in both agencies, are receiving equivalent preparation, supports and services. CRP will follow up on the results of current interagency conversations about strategies to accomplish this goal through regular updates.

4. CRP will monitor the implementation of the recently strengthened screening process for

contractors and those working directly with children and youth in the Child Welfare System.

5. CRP will monitor the progress of CFS and Probation in achieving their System Improvement Plan priority outcomes (reunification within 12 months and placement stability) through regular updates and review of written reports submitted to the state and federal government.

Areas of interest, for further exploration

1. CRP will continue to explore possible approaches to integrating the efforts of law enforcement, child welfare, behavioral health, education and community-based organizations in order to support children involved in domestic violence situations. The first step will be to review recommendations in the report developed by Communities Overcoming Relationship Abuse (CORA) and law enforcement organizations.

2. CRP will take time to examine the possibility of assuming an advocacy role in regard to the welfare of children and families in general, and specifically for its own annual report recommendations.

3. CRP will discuss approaches to providing positive feedback and validation for child welfare programs and initiatives that are successful.

CFS Director's Report – Loc Nguyen

- Within the last month CFS has received cases with complex and serious elements.
- In addition, Family Resource Centers are receiving an increasing number of 5150 mental health cases (where children as young as 8 years, not in the child welfare system, are deemed to be a danger to themselves or others and are committed for up to 72 hours for a psych evaluation. This is an alarming trend that CFS will be watching.

Items for next agenda

- Information about the Blue Ribbon Commission
- TDM Update
- ADA hearing assistance for CRP
- Report from Chief of Probation

San Mateo County

Citizen Review Panel

CRP's mission is to assess the child welfare system in the county and make data-driven recommendations for continuous improvement that will help to ensure the safety and well-being of San Mateo County children and their families.

Notes from Meeting

November 17, 2014
Human Services Agency Offices
1 Davis Drive, Montara Room, Belmont CA 94002

Panelists present: Cherniss, DeMarco, Manthorne, Plotnikoff, Ragosta, Stewart
Others: Rodriguez (at beginning of meeting), Nguyen, Villanis, Brown

Information re. current allegations of child abuse against a SMC social worker
Iliana Rodriguez, Director of the Human Services Agency, was present to provide CRP with a brief update on the status of the San Mateo County social worker recently arrested on charges of child abuse. She noted that the Agency has been working with this situation since July, when concerns surfaced. The worker was put on administrative leave on July 15, 2014 and an investigation by an out of county agency (since SMC did not have law enforcement jurisdiction on the charge) took place. Though this external investigation yielded insufficient cause for removal, a second charge in SMC, with the Sheriff's Office investigating, did lead to the arrest of the worker. CFS had already launched an internal investigation, but it had to be put on hold twice while the law enforcement agencies were investigating. When the internal investigation was able to proceed, it found sufficient cause to terminate the worker.

Iliana and Loc reported that they were using this situation to conduct a thorough review of their policies and practices to determine if improvements could be made to reduce the risk of similar incidents in the future. The County is working with the Keller Center during this process.

CRP members had questions about how the cases handled by the worker were being handled and whether the involved youth and family members were getting the support they needed. There were suggestions about how CFS might invite feedback from clients about social workers performance and utilize more rigorous screening tools as workers were being hired.

The Panel will follow up with CFS in the next 4-6 months to determine if any procedural or practice changes have been implemented.

Follow-up from last meeting
There were two corrections to the notes from the October 2014 CRP meeting.

Updates from CRP Members
Lauren announced an upcoming Community Forum on December 4th at 6:00 PM at 455 County Center in Redwood City, Room 101. The Forum will address the topic of how to improve the lives of LGBTQ communities in San Mateo County. All are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Approve Annual Report and CRP Workplan for 2015 for Submission to OCAP, HSA and Probation
Panel members took one last look at the Annual Report and Recommendations document and deemed it ready for submission – no changes were required. Pat will submit the report and send copies to HSA and Probation.

Discussion: An advocacy role for CRP – what would that look like?
The Panel talked about the pros and cons of expanding its current scope of work to include active advocacy for child welfare related issues. In general, panelists were open to the concept, as long as the time needed to determine an action on an issue does not negatively impact the other work of the Panel. The group decided to let CFS and Probation know that it is willing to consider advocating for particular issues upon request. When a request is received, the Panel will consider it as a pilot and will take note of the time and effort needed to perform the advocacy and debrief the experience when it is over.

Background information about the SMC Blue Ribbon Commission
As CRP was discussing areas of interest during the preparation of the annual report, the work of the Blue Ribbon Commission in San Mateo County came up several times. The Panel asked Loc, who is currently the Chair of the Blue Ribbon Commission to provide more information about the structure of the Commission and topics it is working on.

Loc told the group that the Commission was established at the request of the State Blue Ribbon Commission that suggested all counties implement local models. The Commission is under the auspices of the Juvenile Court and Child Welfare. At this time, there are two new judges appointed to Juvenile Court and the future direction of the Commission has yet to be established.

In the past, the Commission worked through a number of topical sub-committees led by Commission members: Education, Human Trafficking, Data, Family Reunification, Health and Wellness. One outcome of the work of the Education Sub-committee was the development of a shared data-base that allows educators and social workers to access information about children in the child welfare system.

Since the Commission is currently in transition, CRP will check back in 3-4 months to get an update on the direction the new judicial officers will be setting. In the meantime, Loc is the contact person for the Commission.

CFS Director's Report
Loc commented on the Data dashboard that shows a relatively stable case intake in October, compared to last year. The difference CFS is noting is that the cases that are coming in are much more complex than in the past (young children with 5150s). The causes of this increasing complexity are not clear, but he believes that the high cost of living in San Mateo County that contributes to family instability and the fact that many of the involved children were born during the severe recession just concluded probably have contributed to the stress on children and families.

Future regular reports from Probation
Christine reported that Probation is using a new assessment tool that will be helpful. It provides information about potential for re-offending as well as "criminal mindedness" of the youth. These characteristics determine the level of care/supervision that is needed for the youth.

CRP has much to learn about the Probation system and it is interested in receiving monthly reports from Christine. Christine agreed to give regular reports on issues of interest. She noted that Probation does not have the capacity to deliver dashboard data at this time, but a new data system should enable that level of reporting in the future.

CRP will invite John Keene, Chief Probation Officer, to one of its next meetings to have him report on his goals for the department.

December CRP Meeting
Since there is not pressing business slated for the December meeting, the Panel agreed to cancel it and meet again on January 26, the 4th Monday of January (since the 3rd Monday is a holiday.)

At 1:10 PM the Panel adjourned to closed session.

CRP meeting dates: 3rd Monday of the month, Montara Room

December 15, 2014 - cancelled
January 26, 2015 (4th Monday)
February 23, 2015 (4th Monday)