

State of California

Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project (CAP)

Final Evaluation Report

Submitted to:

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Executive Summary

Background and Context

On July 1, 2007, California and two of its counties—Alameda County and Los Angeles County—began implementing the Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Project, referred to as the Capped Allocation Project (CAP). The child welfare system and a component of the probation system in each of the counties participated in the project. Under the waiver, the CAP implemented and assessed the use of capped Title IV-E allocations combined with related state and local capped allocations. The secretary of the federal Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) granted the waiver of Title IV-E requirements for foster care and child welfare services under the auspices of the Children’s Bureau. In the demonstration projects, the DHHS allowed flexibility in the use of federal funds with the intent of promoting the development and understanding of effective innovations in child welfare systems.

The purpose of the CAP was to assist the child welfare and probation systems in Alameda County and Los Angeles County in developing and implementing alternative services to foster care to bring about better outcomes for children and families. These ends were to be accomplished by providing counties, through a capped allocation strategy, the impetus for and flexible use of Title IV-E dollars necessary to create a more responsive and comprehensive array of services and supports for children and their families, regardless of federal eligibility or placement in out-of-home care.

The child welfare system in the State of California functions under a shared governance structure. The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) supervises the system and is responsible for providing oversight and support related to funding, program and policy development, regulatory compliance, licensing, and evaluation. County departments of children and family services in each of California’s 58 counties are responsible for the day-to-day administration of the child welfare system, working in conjunction with the Juvenile Dependency Court, a division of the Superior Court in each county.

Similarly, each of California’s 58 counties operates a probation department that serves adults and juveniles. A proportion of the juvenile probation population receives services in out-of-home placements and probation departments seek Title IV-E reimbursement for eligible youth. The county juvenile probation component works in conjunction with the Juvenile Delinquency Court, a division of the Superior Court in each county.

The primary purpose of the CAP Evaluation was to determine whether and how changes in the funding structure for foster care (i.e., suspending the Title IV-E funding entitlement during the term of the CAP, eliminating eligibility restrictions, and capping the dollar amount in exchange for spending flexibility) affects the functioning of county child welfare systems and relevant probation systems. The secondary purpose of the evaluation was to assess outcomes for dependent and delinquent children and their families before the CAP began and then during its implementation. The evaluation used an interrupted time-series design to guide data collection activities. The time-series design is a quasi-experimental method that accounts for a number of threats to internal validity. However, it does not allow for statements of causality. As such,

changes observed in the participating counties and in outcomes for children and families cannot be directly attributed to the CAP. Using a time-series design, the evaluation was able to observe trends before and during the implementation of the CAP. The CAP Evaluation had three components: the Process Study, the Fiscal Study, and the Outcome Study. Process Study data were collected through interviews and focus groups with participating department staff. Multiple data sources are used for the fiscal study, including allocation and expenditure information from the CDSS and from the individual counties. The data source for the outcome study was the California Child Welfare Performance Indicators Project (http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb_childwelfare/), located at the Child Welfare Research Center, the Center for Social Services Research, at the University of California at Berkeley (UCB).

Process Study

What is the impact of a capped, flexible Title IV-E funding strategy on the implementation and operations of the child welfare services system and relevant juvenile probation system in participating counties?

Possibly the most important factors influencing whether or not a county in California chose to participate in the CAP were the methodology and the data used for determining the federal base allocation for the project. The cost look-back model, combined with the years of expenditure data used for the calculation, meant that the two participating counties would receive more money under the CAP than they would have if they chose not to participate in the project. If different years of expenditure data had been used (e.g., years when caseload expenditures were lower), then the CAP would have been a less attractive opportunity.

To remain fiscally sound within a capped allocation environment, a service organization needs to alter its operations to reduce the number of individuals entering the system, reduce the length of time individuals have contact with the system, and reduce the per-case cost of operating the system. Early in the evaluation it became evident that the departments of children and family services were already oriented to those ends. The systemic changes to policies and practices that took place in the years preceding the CAP were not driven by fiscal concerns but were consistent with the goals necessary for remaining fiscally sound in a capped allocation environment.

The Alameda County Department of Children and Family Services (ACDCFS) and the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (LACDCFS) chose to enhance their services instead of choosing to dramatically change their systems. A number of reasons emerged for why a project like the CAP does not work as a systems change effort. First, the degree of financial risk would be too great for an organization not already defined by a set of goals and a philosophy to attain them. Factored into this was the notion of momentum. There was the sense that, with a set of goals and a policy and practice philosophy already adopted by a critical mass of the organization, early successes (e.g., improvement in outcomes) could build important momentum and allow the organization to assume a greater degree of financial risk with a greater sense of confidence. Finally, there was an expressed concern that an organization should be defined by its vision and goals and not by how it is funded; instead, funding should play a supportive role and not drive the agenda of the organization.

The Alameda County Probation Department (ACPD) and the Los Angeles County Probation Department (LACPD) stand in contrast to the two departments of children and family services. The CAP affects only the juvenile section of each probation department and each department was late to the planning process. The Chief Probation Officers of both departments viewed the CAP as an opportunity, but also agreed to participate in the project in the spirit of collaboration with their counterparts at the department of children and family services. The ACPD was initially pleased that they would be able to stabilize an important funding source and, over time, they proposed new strategies to improve operations. However, senior staff changes and the state's budget crisis seemed to stall the department's progress under the CAP. The LACPD embraced the CAP as an opportunity to help change the way they work with youth and families. The CAP could be used to help further the philosophical shift in the department by focusing on improving outcomes for youth, and providing the funding for the development of evidence-based practices.

The four departments took an incremental approach to their plans building upon, for the most part, initiatives and investments that were already underway at the start of the CAP. In addition, they were realistic in the amount of resources they were willing to commit as they adjusted to the new fiscal environment. Each department's internal processes determined the additions to the current set of initiatives and investments. The timing of successive sets of initiatives and investments was influenced by the state's economic downturn. With a stable five-year allocation, the departments were able to mitigate some of the budget reductions that other county departments had to undergo. However, the budget crises, the rate increases for group homes and foster homes, and the uncertainties regarding Realignment seemed to infuse the CAP plan approval process conducted by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors (ACBOS) and the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (LACBOS) with a greater degree of deliberation, resulting in a slower implementation process than what was intended.

The service array, service intensity, and the integration of services were influenced by the CAP, but case management was not. The departments took advantage of the CAP to implement a small number of new initiatives and investments, notably in the latter years of the project. The departments mainly used the CAP to increase the intensity of existing services by expanding their operations and the numbers of children and families that could be served. Service integration was enhanced through the development of new contracts and the expansion of existing contracts with community-based organizations and other public departments such as mental health. The availability of resources under the CAP encouraged a discussion of services and service integration between the departments and counterparts in the broader service community.

The four departments reported being pleased with their participation in the CAP. The perception of the CAP appeared to shift over time from the notion that the CAP was a project to be implemented, to the notion that the CAP was a different kind of environment for funding staff and services. The departments appreciated the fiscal stability provided by the CAP along with the expansion of initiatives and investments that took place during the years of the CAP. Both the fiscal stability and the opportunity for service expansion seemed to have a positive influence on staff morale as did the departments' ability to retain staff during a period of constricting budgets.

Fiscal Study

What is the impact of a capped, flexible Title IV-E funding strategy on child welfare services and relevant juvenile probation expenditures in participating counties?

The ACDCFS and the LACDCFS reduced their foster care assistance expenditures and increased their administration expenditures during the years of the CAP compared to the pre-CAP years. Both departments had fewer paid placement days in general and fewer paid placement days of group home placements. In the ACDCFS, the average daily cost of assistance decreased. In the LACDCFS, the average daily cost of assistance shifted minimally. As expected, the average daily cost of administration expenditures increased for both departments. The departments also shifted expenditures from assistance to administration during the years of the CAP as they invested the reinvestments savings they generated on administration related costs. The largest percentage of CAP initiatives and investment expenditures were on service provider contracts for the ACDCFS; for the LACDCFS there was an almost equal split between service provider contracts and salaries and benefits for the staff necessary to implement the initiatives and investments.

Foster care assistance expenditures increased in the ACPD as did administration expenditures when comparing the years of the CAP to the pre-CAP years. Foster care assistance expenditures in the LACPD were stable across both time periods while administration expenditures increased. The number of paid placement days declined between the pre-CAP years and the years of the CAP in the ACPD but the trend was not clear for the LACPD. Both the average daily cost of assistance and the average daily cost of administration increased in the departments. The expected shift from assistance expenditures to administration expenditures occurred in the LACPD though it was a mixed result for ACPD. The majority of administration expenditures for CAP initiatives and investments in both departments were on salaries and benefits for the staff necessary to implement the initiatives and investments.

The four departments have been able to take advantage of the fiscal opportunity afforded them by the CAP. The process study showed that the departments, to varying degrees of robustness, have expanded strategies and services they felt were already successful and implemented new strategies and services. Interviews and focus groups indicated that the fiscal flexibility provided by the CAP has allowed the departments to implement strategies and services they would otherwise not be able to put into practice.

Outcome Study

What is the impact of a capped, flexible Title IV-E funding strategy on outcomes for children and families in the child welfare services system and relevant juvenile probation system in participating counties?

Participation rates for the ACDCFS all decreased during the years of the CAP. For the LACDCFS, in-care rates were decreasing and entry rates stayed relatively stable during the years of the CAP while referral and substantiation rates increased. In both departments, the case services indicator showed that during the CAP there was an increase in the percentage of

children receiving pre-placement services and a decrease in the percentage of children receiving services in permanent placement. The findings for the safety, permanency, and stability indicators were mixed for both the ACDCFS and the LACDCFS. For the ACDCFS, family foster home and kin placements increased their share of the percentage of first placements during the CAP while group homes accounted for a smaller percentage. Kin placements were the largest percentage of point-in-time placements during both time periods while group homes again declined in share. For the LACDCFS, the pattern was the same as the ACDCFS for point-in-time placements highlighting the emphasis in both departments on least-restrictive placements.

For the ACPD, caseload information remained relatively unchanged between the two time periods. The percentage of exits to reunification had become the majority by the end of the CAP period for the department. Caseload indicators were positive for the LACPD with entries and in-care numbers lower in the years of the CAP. In addition, the percentage of exits to reunification increased. The safety indicator for both departments was difficult to interpret and likely the result of an underreporting of maltreatment information. The results for the remaining indicators (exits to permanency and placement stability) for the ACPD were mixed although a greater percentage of trend-lines were trending in the desired direction during the CAP years. The results for the exits to permanency and placement stability indicators were both positive for the LACPD, as was the fact that a greater percentage of trend lines was trending in the desired direction during the CAP. The LACPD continued to rely primarily on group homes as first placements and during the point-in-time assessment. The ACPD decreased the percentage of point-in-time placements attributed to group homes during the years of the CAP.

Lessons Learned

Important lessons that emerged from the evaluation analysis or that were highlighted by respondents addressed leadership, collaboration, fiscal, data, and planning and implementation aspects of the CAP and are summarized below.

Leadership

- Leadership in a capped allocation environment requires individuals who are proactive, visionary, who are adept both programmatically and fiscally, and who have a clear understanding of the fiscal model.
- There are many competing values in child welfare, even when a department of children and family services has adopted a particular philosophical orientation. There is a risk that a capped allocation project can expose rifts within the organization because staff may view policy and practice decisions as being driven solely by money and not outcomes or best practices.
- The departments need to stay focused on their message about outcomes and their philosophy to achieve those outcomes. There will always be issues and politics to contend with, but a focus on outcomes and philosophy will assist in working through those concerns. These messages need to be instilled throughout the organization.

Collaboration

- In order for PDs to take advantage of the opportunities under a child welfare waiver demonstration project, they must be made equal partners in the process. Relationships with the state and local social service agencies should be fostered and developed prior to the start of the CAP, and PDs should take part in planning in the very earliest stages. Because PDs are separate from the state's child welfare infrastructure, they will likely require increased technical assistance.
- Participating in the CAP required greater interaction between the program and fiscal sides of the department. This interaction has made clear the importance of developing internal structures to encourage information sharing and opportunities for learning about other operations. Understanding the connections between programs and funding sources has also increased due to the CAP and the state's budget crisis.
- The juvenile court and the service provider community, particularly group home providers, are important partners with the departments. Open and continued communication between the departments and their partners is necessary.
- The flexibility under a CAP provides departments with the opportunity (i.e., available funds and fiscal flexibility) to develop ways to serve children and families without placing them in foster care. The approach depends in large part on community resources to support and serve children and families. In austere economic times, traditional resources can be limited, and service providers will likely need to be flexible and adapt to the changes in the funding environment. At the same time, the department will need to assist the providers to the extent possible with the transition to this new environment.

Fiscal

- Typically, the department of children and family services (DCFS) (or social service agency) serves as a pass-through entity to the probation department (PD) for Title IV-E related allocations. A memorandum of understanding between the DCFS and PD regarding the methodology used to determine the PD's allocation should be negotiated and agreed upon prior the start of the CAP, and preferably prior to the start of the county planning process.
- The CAP posed significant challenges for the fiscal areas—budgeting, allocations, and accounting—at the state and county level. There was a general need for an increase in the level of sophistication in the areas of budgeting, revenue enhancement, and cost benefit/cost effectiveness analysis of proposed initiatives. The need for increased fiscal sophistication was most acute in the probation departments. At the CDSS, there was the need to develop and implement two systems for allocations and claiming, one for CAP counties and another for non-CAP counties. As the CAP was implemented, there were many details to be worked through (e.g., finalizing the general fund methodology, establishing claiming codes, developing new sharing ratios, and creating a new waiver payment system) and issues were dealt with as they arose.
- The CAP meant that departments were now operating with a five-year budget as opposed to an annual budget. New thinking and new mechanisms were needed to support operating in this new environment.

- In California, a department of children and family services usually exists within a larger social services agency. Because of the way dollars are budgeted and allocated in the state, the fiscal impact of a budget reduction (e.g., due to a state budget crisis) on a separate social services agency department can have a detrimental effect on the department of children and family services. This occurs because a greater share of social service agency overhead/administration responsibility is shifted from the program undergoing the reduction to other departments, such as children and family services, possibly reducing the amount of reinvestment savings.
- Under the CAP, the use of reinvestment savings was limited to funding child welfare services and services for the probation out-of-home placement population. Having clearly articulated memorandums of understanding and terms and conditions has been crucial in challenging economic times where there might be attempts to expand the definition of “child welfare.” If conditions were not clear, it would have been harder to defend reinvestment savings from encroachment. In addition, a clear vision and priorities has served to maintain focus and define the uses for the reinvestment savings.

Data

- Data and data management structures are crucial to operating in a capped allocation environment and are necessary from the outset. Fiscal data, services data, and outcome data should be linked.
- The departments planned to employ a model of implementing various programs, use real-time information to assess performance, and then terminate any program that was not having the intended impact. However, the departments determined that there was not sufficient time in a five-year project to allow a program to mature; to be evaluated; and to be ended, if necessary, and then replaced. Despite the challenges, efforts should be made to assess programs as rigorously as possible within the given constraints.

Planning and Implementation

- Efforts to move programs from development to implementation in a capped allocation environment may benefit from the creation of a dedicated infrastructure for such a process rather than the use of an existing infrastructure that simply includes the new allocation efforts in the activities of department staff responsible for current program operations.
- Flexible funding requires flexibility in the operations of the departments in order to take full advantage of the opportunity.
- The departments were not independent actors. Long-term plans and expenditures fall under the oversight and approval processes of other entities—primarily the county’s board of supervisors—and the departments were subject to the timelines and the political climate of those entities. This influenced operational flexibility.

Conclusion

A capped allocation presents opportunities in the forms of fiscal flexibility and the ability to generate, retain, and redirect savings. It also presents risk in the form of a limited amount of revenue with which to pay for services. To generate reinvestment savings within this capped allocation environment, participating departments needed to alter their operations in three ways: (a) lower the number of children entering their systems, (b) reduce the length of time children had contact with the system, and (c) reduce the per-case cost of operating the system. The departments of children and family services enjoyed the advantage of already having institutionalized a policy and practice philosophy that corresponded with these three necessary capped allocation conditions. Additionally, all four departments were buffered to some extent by receiving an allocation larger than they would have received had they not participated in the CAP. The departments operated within their capped allocations. They were most adept at reducing the number of children entering foster care. The results were mixed, however, across the departments in reducing length of time in the system, as shown in the permanency indicators, and in reducing per case cost.

There is work to be done not just in the aforementioned areas but in child safety, placement stability, and well-being. Some of that work has already begun under the CAP and continues during the CAP extension. Methodological limitations notwithstanding, the evaluation suggests that the departments' use of flexible funding facilitated their pursuit of expanded programs and improved outcomes for children and families.

Chapter 1: Introduction and Overview

On July 1, 2007, California and two of its counties—Alameda County and Los Angeles County—began implementing the Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Project, referred to as the Capped Allocation Project (CAP). The child welfare system and a component of the probation system in each of the counties participated in the project. Under the waiver, the CAP implemented and assessed the use of capped Title IV-E allocations combined with related state and local capped allocations. The secretary of the federal Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) granted the waiver of Title IV-E requirements for foster care and child welfare services under the auspices of the Children’s Bureau. In the demonstration projects, the DHHS allowed flexibility in the use of federal funds with the intent of promoting the development and understanding of effective innovations in child welfare systems.

Chapter 1 provides an overview of the CAP and of the evaluation. The sections describe the background and context for the CAP, the purpose of the CAP, the capped allocation model and amounts, and the evaluation timeframe and evaluation framework. The sections in this chapter also appeared in the Interim Evaluation Report.

1.1 Background and Context

The child welfare system in the State of California functions under a shared governance structure. The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) supervises the system and is responsible for providing oversight and support related to funding, program and policy development, regulatory compliance, licensing, and evaluation. County departments of children and family services in each of California’s 58 counties are responsible for the day-to-day administration of the child welfare system, working in conjunction with the Juvenile Dependency Court, a division of the Superior Court in each county.

Similarly, each of California’s 58 counties operates a probation department that serves adults and juveniles. A proportion of the juvenile probation population receives services in out-of-home placements, and probation departments seek Title IV-E reimbursement for eligible youth. The county juvenile probation component works in conjunction with the Juvenile Delinquency Court, a division of the Superior Court in each county.

Since 2000 and building upon earlier efforts, the child welfare system in California has been the focus of several intensive reform efforts. In 2000, the enactment of Assembly Bill 1740 established the Child Welfare Services Stakeholders Group, which included 60 individuals who represented a diverse range of expertise and who shared a common concern for children. Their mandate was to review the child welfare system and develop a set of recommendations for redesigning that system. In 2003, this stakeholders group issued its final report (known as the “Child Welfare Services Redesign”) describing a set of redesign objectives. In 2006, the California Child Welfare Council was established by the enactment of AB 2216. An advisory body similar to the stakeholders group, the California Child Welfare Council considers recommendations to improve outcomes for children and youth in California’s child welfare system in collaboration with the organizations that serve children and their families. Also in 2006, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of California established the California Blue

Ribbon Commission on Children in Foster Care to provide recommendations to the Judicial Council of California on ways to improve safety, permanency, well-being, and fairness for children and families in the child welfare system.

In 2001, the Child Welfare System Improvement and Accountability Act (Assembly Bill 636, 2001) was enacted to develop, monitor, and improve outcomes for children in the child welfare system. On January 1, 2004, the five key components of the new California Child and Family Services Review (C-CFSR) system under Assembly Bill 636 were implemented. These components included (a) quantitative and qualitative quarterly monitoring, (b) qualitative case reviews, (c) county self-assessments, (d) county system improvement plans, and (e) state technical assistance.

In 2002, the Children’s Bureau conducted its first federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) of California’s child welfare system and found that California was not in compliance on a number of measures. As a result, California began developing a Program Improvement Plan designed to guide state and county improvement efforts. The federal CFSR process conducted by the Children’s Bureau and California’s Child Welfare Outcome and Accountability System became the organizing structure for child welfare system reform efforts in the state.

Between October 1, 1998, and September 30, 2003, California and seven of its counties participated in their first Title IV-E Waiver Demonstration Project. Under that waiver, the CDSS and the counties focused on implementing and testing discrete interventions for specific populations of children and youth in the child welfare and probation systems. The Children’s Bureau granted a ten-month “bridge” extension that began October 1, 2003, and ended July 31, 2004. The Children’s Bureau also granted three six-month “bridge” extensions, ending December 31, 2005.

The CAP, an extension of these earlier reform efforts, focused on the financing component of child welfare services. On March 31, 2006, the Children’s Bureau and the CDSS signed the terms and conditions for the demonstration project.

1.2 The Purpose of the Capped Allocation Project

1.2.1 The Central Purpose of the Capped Allocation Project

The purpose of the CAP was to assist the child welfare and probation systems in Alameda County and Los Angeles County in developing and implementing alternative services to foster care to bring about better outcomes for children and families. These ends were to be accomplished by providing counties, through a capped allocation strategy, with both the impetus and the capacity for the flexible use of Title IV-E dollars necessary to create a more responsive and comprehensive array of services and supports for children and their families, regardless of federal eligibility or placement in out-of-home care.

The goals of the CAP matched the goals articulated in the federal CFSR and in California’s Child Welfare Outcomes and Accountability System. The primary goals were (a) to improve the array of services for children and families and engage families through a more

individualized approach that emphasized family involvement; (b) to increase child safety without an over-reliance on out-of-home care; (c) to improve permanency outcomes; and (d) to improve child and family well-being.

1.2.1.1 Alameda County

As stated in its county five-year plan, the Alameda County Department of Children and Family Services (ACDCFS) and the Alameda County Probation Department (ACPD) were pursuing a series of reinvestment strategies in order to allocate financial resources to strategies that promoted prevention, early intervention, and long-term support. More specifically, financial resources were being directed away from expensive, congregated care and ineffective services and toward services and supports that were engaging, familial, community-based, and cost-effective.

1.2.1.2 Los Angeles County

As stated in its county five-year plan, the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (LACDCFS) and the Los Angeles County Probation Department (LACPD) were using the financial flexibility granted by the waiver to build on current system improvement efforts. These two departments sought to invest strategically in structural and programmatic reforms to meet the needs of dependent and delinquent children and their families. County agency efforts focused on increasing the number of services, the array of services, and the use of individualized services, while they increased their emphasis on community alternatives, case planning, and caseload reduction.

1.2.2 The Purpose of the Capped Allocation Project Evaluation

The primary purpose of this CAP evaluation was to determine whether and how changes in the funding structure for foster care (i.e., suspending the Title IV-E entitlement during the term of the CAP, eliminating eligibility restrictions, and capping the dollar amount in exchange for spending flexibility) affected the functioning of county child welfare systems and relevant probation systems. The secondary purpose of the evaluation was to assess outcomes for dependent and delinquent children and their families before the CAP began and then during its implementation. It was not within the scope of the evaluation to assess separately the impact of discrete interventions (i.e., specific programs) implemented by the counties under their CAP.

1.3 The Capped Allocation Model and Amounts

Without the waiver, Title IV-E is a federal entitlement. A state may claim and be reimbursed for the federal share of payments for foster care board and care (i.e., assistance) and related administrative costs for eligible children. There is no limit on the amount a state may claim; however, spending is restricted to only those board-and-care costs and specific administrative activities for those eligible children. Under the conditions of the demonstration project, the traditional relationship between the entitlement of unlimited reimbursement and the restrictiveness of allowable activities is reversed. While reimbursement is capped under the demonstration project, restrictions on use are reduced. In other words, the two counties in California participating in the CAP elected to trade guaranteed entitlement for the flexibility to use the money for all child welfare services and all children, including those normally outside the scope of traditional Title IV-E funding.

State and county administrators in California had sought that change, arguing that the Title IV-E provisions created a disincentive for reducing foster care-related expenditures. The disincentive is that efficiencies, such as placing fewer children in foster care, results in the loss of Title IV-E funding. Absent a source of funding for community-based services that support families, child welfare departments are left with little choice but to remove children from questionable environments and place them in foster care. When restrictive funding drives what programs and services are offered by the state and counties, it also defines the philosophy and mission of child welfare in California. State and county officials believed that the CAP provided an opportunity to have family and community needs drive what services counties provided, supported by the funding.

In accepting a capped allocation in exchange for flexibility, county administrators hoped to implement changes in operations and services to reduce foster care expenditures while improving child welfare-related outcomes for children and families. The reduction in foster care expenditures could be accomplished by reducing the number of children going into foster care, reducing the length of stay for children in foster care, and reducing the use of high-cost foster care placements. These reduced expenditures, set against the capped allocation amount, represented reinvestment savings that then could be used to fund further investments in service alternatives to foster care—with a focus on strengthening families and communities.

The model selected to determine the federal base allocation for the CAP—a cost look-back model—calculated the average of expenditures for assistance and administration for Federal Fiscal Years (FFY) 2003 through FFY 2005. There was an annual growth of 2% beginning in FFY 2006. The State of California and the participating counties of Alameda and Los Angeles also contribute to the capped allocation funds. The state's assistance contribution to the CAP was from the state's general fund for foster care assistance. It was a capped-base allocation determined by the actual expenditures for State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2005–2006. The state's contribution from its general fund for child welfare services-related programs—CWS Basic and foster care administration—was a capped-base allocation calculated using county allocations for SFY 06/07. An annual growth of 2% beginning in SFY 07/08 was also included in this portion of the state's contribution. Both counties contributed funding equivalent to their actual expenditures in SFY 05/06. The Waiver Base consisted of the combined three sources. Appendix A contains the revenue schedules for Alameda County and Los Angeles County.

There are two additional allocation categories. The second allocation category is the Non-Base Waiver. This category included new programs added since the determination of the Waiver Base and some general fund programs that did not draw down Title IV-E and were not part of the base calculation. While some programs may be eligible for reimbursement under Title IV-E provisions, the federal capped allocation cannot be increased. As a result, only the state general fund amount was provided to the counties for the activities. The Waiver Base and the Non-Base Waiver are the two categories included in the analysis.

In the final category, called the Non-Waiver Allocation, the costs were excluded from the Waiver Base and Non-Waiver Base. These included program costs for training, licensing, adoption administration and assistance, non-recurring adoption costs, reimbursements, evaluation, and the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS). These

program costs were not subject to the capped allocations included in the CAP. County Fiscal Letter (CFL) NO. 07/08-36, located in Appendix B, contains a list of the activities in each of three categories. In addition, costs related to the other federal funding sources such, as Titles IV-A, IV-B, and XIX of the Social Security Act, were not included in the CAP and are outside the purview of this evaluation.

The CAP, in accordance with the California Waiver Terms and Conditions, was to be cost neutral to the federal government. To achieve cost neutrality, the counties were to receive payments for expenditures that did not exceed the five-year cumulative amount determined by the methodology previously described. Similarly, adoption assistance payments, part of the Non-Waiver Allocation, had a cost-neutrality cap. Adoption assistance payments were to continue as a matching program up to the limit of the cost-neutrality cap. The cost-neutrality cap for each of the counties included a base-year amount equal to the federal adoption assistance payment for FFY 2005 and an annual increase of 15% for each of the five years of the CAP. The threshold for the cost-neutrality cap was the cumulative five-year total. Federal matching fund payments could continue, provided the cumulative cap was not surpassed. The state and counties were responsible for expenditures in excess of the cost-neutrality cap.

From the vantage point of demonstration projects designed to study the influence of the flexible use of federal funding—without providing new money—the capped allocation amounts were meant to represent the amounts of revenue the counties would have received under traditional Title IV-E provisions—absent their participation in the CAP. However, the combination of the model chosen to determine the federal base allocation, along with the FFYs selected for the calculation, proved fiscally advantageous for the counties that elected to participate in the CAP. For both Alameda County and Los Angeles County, foster care expenditures for assistance and administration were higher in FFY 2003 through FFY 2005 than they were when the counties began operating under the capped allocation July 1, 2007. The effect was revenue enhancement resulting from the difference between the capped allocation and then-current costs—revenue that would not have existed absent the CAP. The initial enhancement was projected for some time prior to the start of the CAP and was to serve as an additional attractive feature that influenced the counties’ decision to participate in the CAP. This initial enhancement of revenue also assisted counties in funding service alternatives to foster care from the start of the CAP, without needing first to generate reinvestment savings by reducing foster care intakes, length of stays, and reliance on high-cost foster care placements. In other words, the revenue enhancement became “seed” money, necessary to begin early development of alternative services.

In electing to participate in the CAP, the counties were assuming some degree of risk. If expenditures increased beyond the ceiling of the CAP, the county would be responsible for dollars spent beyond the limit. Expenditures could increase for reasons unrelated to the performance of the county’s services, such as additional program requirements brought about by new legislation, or a reduction in other revenues resulting from economic crisis. A number of factors, however, mitigated the risk. First, the additional revenue would not have been available absent the CAP. Second, the capped allocation was guaranteed. The amount received was not tied to the performance of control counties or even the participating counties themselves, provided their expenditures stayed below the cap limit. Finally, the *Terms and Conditions*

between the CDSS and the Children’s Bureau contained an “opt-out” clause for the state and participating counties. With 60 days notice, the parties could return to the traditional provisions of Title IV-E funding and the entitlement.

1.4 Evaluation Timeframe and Implementation Status

This Final Evaluation Report timeframe includes the five years of the CAP, from July 1, 2007, through June 30, 2012. However, data from the final year of the project for the fiscal study and for the outcome study were not available, given the timetable for conducting analyses and preparing the final report. An addendum report in the spring of 2013 will include information from the final year of the project.

1.5 The Evaluation Framework

The CAP evaluation plan emerged from a development process that included representatives from the CDSS and the CAP principal investigator. The plan contained three study components (process, fiscal, and outcome) designed to assess information aggregated to the county level. The plan did not call for an evaluation of specific programs implemented by the participating departments. The evaluation used, at the behest of the CDSS, existing data sources, primarily in the outcome component where data on the Federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) indicators for each of the participating counties were publicly available. However, the CDSS elected to forgo county comparisons that would have led to a more rigorous evaluation, concluding that it was unlikely that a county electing *not* to participate would submit to full data collection. In addition, the inclusion of Los Angeles County presented a methodological challenge (i.e., identifying an appropriate comparison county) the CDSS decided it could not overcome.

1.5.1 Overview of the Evaluation Questions

One central question was to be answered in the evaluation of the CAP :

What is the impact of a capped, flexible Title IV-E funding strategy on the implementation of the child welfare services system and relevant probation system, and on federal and state outcomes for children and their families served by those two systems in participating counties?

From this central question flowed three sub-questions that guided the three components of the evaluation.

First, the Process Study addresses the following question:

What is the impact of a capped, flexible Title IV-E funding strategy on the implementation and operations of the child welfare services system and relevant probation system in participating counties?

Second, the Fiscal Study will address the following question:

What is the impact of a capped, flexible Title IV-E funding strategy on child welfare services and relevant probation expenditures in participating counties?

Third, the Outcome Study will address the following question:

What is the impact of a capped, flexible Title IV-E funding strategy on outcomes for children and families in the child welfare services system and relevant juvenile probation systems in participating counties?

1.5.2 Theories of Change

The CAP was based on the premise that a significant proportion of children in foster care in California were not in care based on need or appropriateness of service but were in foster care due to the orientation and fiscal structure of the child welfare system. Two theories of change formed the basis for the initiative’s approach. The first theory supposed that eliminating the “open entitlement” approach to funding foster care would reduce the fiscal incentive to placing children in out-of-home care. The second and more concrete theory held that eliminating the categorical nature of eligibility and allowing reimbursements (i.e., board and care) would provide the authority and the funds (through cost savings) necessary to reorient the service structure to focus on prevention, early intervention, and permanency, including reunification and after-care efforts, and ultimately lead to improved outcomes for children and families.

1.5.3 Data Collection Methods

The evaluation used an interrupted, time-series design to guide data-collection activities. The time-series design is a quasi-experimental method (Campbell & Stanley, 1963; Rossi, Lipsey, & Freeman, 2004) that accounts for a number of threats to internal validity. However, as the time-series design is not a true experimental design (i.e., random assignment to comparison groups), the design does not allow for statements of causality.

The notations for the design are described in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1: Data Collection Design



The number and timing of the observations (O₁₋₁₀) is dependent upon the specific study component (process, fiscal, or outcome). In addition, the X—or “treatment”—is not static; it continues after the CAP’s onset for the duration of the CAP.

Historical data was collected to establish within each participating county department a baseline pattern of outcomes prior to the onset of the CAP. During the implementation of the

CAP, data collection continued in participating counties to establish a second pattern of outcomes. Outcome patterns post-CAP are compared to outcome patterns pre-CAP.

Implementing a true experimental design (i.e., random assignment) is not feasible, given the nature of the CAP. The broad scope of the CAP—its focus on restructuring a county’s child welfare services system—precluded the development of comparison groups through a random assignment of cases within counties. Randomly assigning counties to such status as “Demonstration County” or “Comparison County” also was not possible, given the voluntary nature of county participation in the CAP.

In addition, developing a dyadic “match” of comparison counties required overcoming certain obstacles. The list of counties participating in the CAP, in combination with the voluntary nature of the initiative, made it unlikely that adequate comparison counties could be identified and encouraged to participate. This issue was most notable in the case of Los Angeles County, where the size of the child welfare system is much larger than potential comparison sites.

An additional consideration for data collection was the desire to make the evaluation as unobtrusive as possible for counties. As such, the preference was to use whenever possible those data sources that were already available (and without unnecessarily compromising the evaluation) in order to limit the workload required of counties participating in the evaluation.

1.5.4 Sampling

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

1.5.5 Analysis

The analysis plans for the three components of the evaluation are described in the pertinent sections. Excel software was used to analyze quantitative data, where appropriate, while Atlas.ti software was used to analyze qualitative data. Also noteworthy is that, for each of the three components of the evaluation, data from the ACDCFS, ACPD, LACDCFS, and the LACPD were analyzed separately. Their respective information was not combined for purposes of analysis.

1.5.6 Limitations

As with any evaluation, this study faced a number of limitations, both methodological and practical. First, the overall design—the interrupted time-series design—does not allow the evaluation to determine causality. In other words, it cannot be said that changes—those observed in the patterns of outcomes of the participating counties post-CAP as compared to their pre-CAP pattern of outcomes—were caused by the CAP.

Second, county-level data prepared by a third party were used for the outcome study. Importantly, the data served as the basis for the federal and state CFSR processes. However, the

aggregated nature of the data precludes the kinds of statistical analyses that could have been conducted in this evaluation if the data used had been at the level of the individual.

Third, as both participating counties have indicated, the CAP is one part of larger environments within systems that contain co-occurring initiatives and reforms. These larger operating systems make challenging any effort to tease out the CAP's possible influence.

The final issue relates to the sample and sampling plan. Selection bias is a possibility, given that the participating counties are self-selected. The counties that choose to participate in the CAP—Alameda County and Los Angeles County—may have characteristics and conditions that are different from those of counties choosing not to participate. Those characteristics and conditions are difficult to control for and may have made the CAP opportunity more attractive to the self-selecting counties, or may have made them more successful at taking advantage of funding flexibility.

Chapter 2: Process Study

2.1 Key Questions

The evaluation question guiding the process study asked, “What is the impact of a capped, flexible Title IV-E funding strategy on the implementation and operations of the child welfare services system and relevant probation system in participating counties?” This process study is divided into two components to address this question: (a) implementation and (b) county services. The Implementation Component is further divided into two subsections. The first section looks at the Planning Phase undertaken by the counties and the state. The Planning Phase findings were presented in the Interim Evaluation Report and are not repeated in this Final Evaluation Report. The second section focuses on the Implementation Phase of the Capped Allocation Project (CAP). The county services component of the process evaluation is concerned with the service delivery system within each county and how those systems changed (or did not change) during the years of the CAP. The evaluation also includes four substudies. The substudies each provide a point-in-time description of a single intervention implemented by each of the two departments in the two participating counties.

The questions for the Implementation Phase are in Table 2.1.

| Table 2.1 Implementation Phase Questions |
|---|
| What elements of the CAP were implemented as planned, and what required modification? |
| What were the structures for the oversight and monitoring of the CAP implementation? |
| What were the challenges and facilitators to the CAP implementation? |
| What staff, staff changes, and/or training were necessary for the implementation of the CAP? |
| What was the frontline staff/supervisor perception of the CAP? |
| What was the impact of the CAP implementation on the morale of child welfare and probation departments? |
| What was the impact on the structures of the county departments (child welfare and probation) resulting from the implementation of the CAP? |
| What was the role of leadership in the implementation of CAP? |
| What was the role of the courts in the implementation of the CAP? |
| What were the key contextual factors influencing the implementation of the CAP? |

The questions for the County Services Component are in Table 2.2.

| Table 2.2 County Services Component Questions |
|---|
| How did the process for accessing services change as a result of the CAP? |
| How did the process of case management change as a result of the CAP? |
| How did the array of services change as a result of the CAP? |
| How did the availability and the intensity of services change as a result of the CAP? |
| How did service integration change as a result of the CAP? |
| How did the processes for quality assurance change as a result of the CAP? |

2.2 Methods

2.2.1 Data Sources and Data Collection

Informant interviews were the primary source of information for the process study, along with information from focus groups. The interviews and focus groups were conducted during site visits to Alameda County and Los Angeles County in the summer of 2007, the spring and summer of 2008, the spring and summer of 2009, the summer and fall of 2010, the spring and summer of 2011 (interviews only), and the spring of 2012. An interview and focus group protocol was developed based on the questions that guided the process study. Informant interviews took approximately 60 minutes to complete and were conducted during the site visits or via telephone. Focus groups were conducted separately with direct-service staff, with supervisors, and with program managers in the department of child and family services (DCFS) and the probation department (PD) in both counties. Each focus group took approximately two hours and included between three and twelve members. The informant interviews and focus groups were semistructured and based on the protocol. The audio recordings of the interviews were transcribed, coded using the categories of the interview and focus group protocol as a guide, and analyzed for central themes and lessons learned. Relevant documents were also reviewed, including progress reports and county publications.

Information used in the substudies was collected through informant interviews and focus groups conducted during site visits. The site visits were conducted in the spring and summer of 2011. The informant interviews and focus groups were conducted with DCFS and PD personnel who staffed and supervised the interventions, as well as with any relevant contracted community-based providers.

2.3 Analysis

The analysis of the Implementation Phase and the County Services Component is descriptive. The focus of the analysis is on identifying central themes and lessons learned to provide insight into the process study questions.

2.4 Findings: Alameda County Department of Children and Family Services

2.4.1 Implementation Phase

2.4.1.1 Plan*

The Alameda County Department of Children and Family Services (ACDCFS), as shown in Table 2.3, funded 37 initiatives and investments over the five-year period of the CAP in support of six goals. In the first year of the CAP, 6 initiatives and investments were funded, followed by 13 in the second year, 18 in the third year, 25 in the fourth year, and 36 in the fifth year. The department claimed approximately \$56 million in expenditures for its CAP initiatives and investments, with 77% going to external contracts, 22% being spent internally for staff, and 1% spent directly on children and families.

| Table 2.3 ACDCFS Goals, Initiatives and Investments, and Expenditures (in thousands) | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| Goals and CAP Initiatives and Investments | SFY 07/08 Actual | SFY 08/09 Actual | SFY 09/10 Actual | SFY 10/11 Actual | SFY 11/12 Actual | Total Actual | Internal Expend | Direct Expend | External Expend |
| Reduced First Entries | | | | | | | | | |
| Another Road to Safety (ARS) | \$532 | \$1,530 | \$1,455 | \$1,423 | \$1,655 | \$6,595 | | | \$6,595 |
| Mobile Response Team (MRT) | \$38 | \$87 | \$85 | \$85 | \$85 | \$380 | | | \$380 |
| Voluntary Diversion | | \$11 | \$1 | \$30 | \$15 | \$57 | | | \$57 |
| Children's Hospital Consultation | | | \$154 | \$232 | \$233 | \$619 | | | \$619 |
| Increased Least Restrictive Settings | | | | | | | | | |
| Faith Initiative | \$250 | \$264 | \$275 | \$251 | \$241 | \$1,281 | | | \$1,281 |
| Screening, Stabilization, and Transition Services (STAT) | \$100 | \$200 | \$150 | | | \$450 | | | \$450 |
| Family Finding and Engagement (FFE) | | \$268 | \$279 | \$275 | \$330 | \$1,152 | \$1,152 | | |
| Enhanced Kinship Support Services Program (KSSP) | | \$433 | \$359 | \$919 | \$964 | \$2,675 | | | \$2,675 |
| Subsidized Child Care | | | \$18 | \$267 | \$762 | \$1,047 | | | \$1,047 |
| Project Permanence (Wraparound) | | | \$124 | \$195 | \$299 | \$618 | | | \$618 |
| Additional Family Finding/Transportation Workers | | | | \$62 | \$175 | \$237 | \$237 | | |
| Foster Parent Recruiter | | | | | \$136 | \$136 | \$136 | | |
| Increased Reunification | | | | | | | | | |
| Paths to Success (P2S) | | \$962 | \$1,500 | \$1,471 | \$1,559 | \$5,492 | | | \$5,492 |
| The Gathering Place (TGP) | | | | \$352 | \$746 | \$1,098 | | | \$1,098 |
| Increased Timely Guardianships/Adoptions | | | | | | | | | |

Table 2.3 ACDCFS Goals, Initiatives and Investments, and Expenditures (in thousands)

| Goals and CAP Initiatives and Investments | SFY 07/08 Actual | SFY 08/09 Actual | SFY 09/10 Actual | SFY 10/11 Actual | SFY 11/12 Actual | Total Actual | Internal Expend | Direct Expend | External Expend |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| Services to Enhance Early Development (SEED) Enhancement/Public Health Nurse | | | | \$84 | \$178 | \$262 | | | \$262 |
| Bay Area Collaborative of American Indian Resources | | | | | \$31 | \$31 | | | \$31 |
| Increased Supports for Foster Care Exits | | | | | | | | | |
| Parent Advocate Expansion | | | \$366 | \$275 | \$858 | \$1,499 | | | \$1,499 |
| Post-Dependency Services Package | | | | | \$6 | \$6 | | | \$6 |
| Enhanced Safety Net for Transitional Age/Emancipating Youth | | | | | | | | | |
| Independent Living Skills Program (ILSP)-education specialist, education mentors, ILSP contract | \$58 | \$216 | \$888 | \$862 | \$925 | \$2,949 | | | \$2,949 |
| Youth Fellow Board (i.e., Youth Advocate Panel) | | \$30 | \$220 | \$974 | \$911 | \$2,135 | \$279 | \$245 | \$1,611 |
| Beyond Emancipation Education Specialist | | | | \$26 | \$60 | \$86 | | | \$86 |
| Young Parent Opportunities | | | | | \$790 | \$790 | | | \$790 |
| Summer Youth Employment Program | | | | | \$2,048 | \$2,048 | | | \$2,048 |
| Alameda County Office of Education Mentors | | | | | \$208 | \$208 | | | \$208 |
| MISSEY Advocates | | | | | \$46 | \$46 | | | \$46 |
| General Goals | | | | | | | | | |
| High-End Group Homes | \$1,379 | \$2,880 | \$1,340 | \$2,255 | \$1,096 | \$8,950 | | | \$8,950 |
| Child Welfare Staff | | \$138 | \$3,504 | \$3,515 | \$1,686 | \$8,843 | \$8,843 | | |
| Additions to County Counsel | | \$23 | \$299 | \$1,447 | \$1,488 | \$3,257 | | | \$3,257 |
| Medi-Cal Consultant | | | \$16 | \$92 | \$108 | \$216 | \$216 | | |
| Research and Evaluation Consultants | | | | \$274 | \$357 | \$631 | \$631 | | |
| Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Program | | | | \$40 | \$314 | \$354 | | | \$354 |
| Discretionary Fund | | | | \$41 | \$309 | \$350 | | \$350 | |
| Cultural Competency | | | | \$70 | \$252 | \$322 | | | \$322 |
| Eligibility Program Specialist | | | | | \$119 | \$119 | \$119 | | |
| Child Welfare Case Study | | | | | \$55 | \$55 | \$55 | | |

Table 2.3 ACDCFS Goals, Initiatives and Investments, and Expenditures (in thousands)

| Goals and CAP Initiatives and Investments | SFY 07/08 Actual | SFY 08/09 Actual | SFY 09/10 Actual | SFY 10/11 Actual | SFY 11/12 Actual | Total Actual | Internal Expend | Direct Expend | External Expend |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| Employment Counselors in Linkages Program | | | | | \$835 | \$835 | \$835 | | |
| School Resource Officer | | | | | \$158 | \$158 | | | \$158 |
| Total Expenditures | \$2,357 | \$7,042 | \$11,033 | \$15,517 | \$20,038 | \$55,987 | \$12,503 | \$595 | \$42,889 |
| Percent of Total Expenditures | | | | | | | 22% | 1% | 77% |

* The initiatives and investments listed in the table include those for which the department claimed expenditures before June 30, 2012. Descriptions and additional information about the initiatives and investments can be found in California Department of Social Services. (2012). *Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project (CAP), Semi-Annual Progress Report for January 1, 2012 Through June 30, 2012*. Sacramento, CA: Author.

For the first 18 months of the project, the ACDCFS was guided by a CAP implementation plan that was approved by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors (ACBOS) in February 2007. The plan contained 20 initiatives and investments developed to address the six goals. Seven of the initiatives/investments were considered fundable programs (listed in Table 2.3), six were philosophical policy and practice commitments on the part of the department that required ongoing staffing commitments, and seven were practice changes that were made without the need for additional resources. Starting in early 2009, the ACDCFS began to expand the initiatives and investments implemented as part of the CAP. The department also combined its CAP Plan with its System Improvement Plan (SIP) because the two had the same priorities and the same approaches to addressing those priorities.

Ideas for initiatives and investments for most of the CAP years originated from the ACDCFS, where a proposal was prepared (e.g., how it would work, what its expected impact would be, what it would cost, how it would fit in with other programs) before being presented to the CAP executive team. In the latter years of the project, proposals were also accepted from community members and community groups. According to respondents, the proposal process had always been open to the community in an attempt to partner around improving the system but that the ACDCFS had done a poor job at publicizing the fact over the first several years of the project.

The department planned its activities in sequences of initiatives. The process for achieving approval for these sequences changed over time. For the first several years of the CAP, individual initiatives received approval from the CAP executive team before being presented as a sequence to the Social Services Committee at the ACBOS. In the fourth year of the CAP, initiatives were presented to the Alameda County Interagency Children's Policy Council (ACICPC) before going to the Social Services Committee. While the ACICPC did not provide approval per se, involving them in this additional step held the possibility of the council making additional changes to the initiative; but the respondents felt it built broader support for the ACDCFS efforts. However, respondents also reported that the step added a layer of complexity to the logistics of the process (e.g., scheduling) and opened the sequence of initiatives to conflicting agendas.

The primacy of cost-benefit considerations in the early years of the CAP gave way to an increased acceptance of proposals that were weighted more heavily as good practice, according to respondents. This shift occurred for a number of reasons. Because concerns about fiscal forecasts were greater in the first several years of the project, a more conservative approach was adopted, including the requirement that initiatives be shown to be cost-neutral. As savings were generated over time and funds were available for reinvestment, this strict requirement became less important. Also, respondents reported that the CAP executive team had gotten better at acquiring, understanding, and incorporating fiscal information into its decision-making process about initiatives, so more explicit assessment requirements were not as necessary.

Budgeting for the ACDCFS under the CAP was the responsibility of the Alameda County Social Services Agency (ACSSA) finance director. His role in the initiative approval process was to determine whether the proposal could be afforded, how it fit in with the CAP fiscal model over time, whether the costs in one area reduced/increased costs in other areas, and how much savings might be derived from reducing assistance expenditures. The county relied on a small amount of grant funds and fee revenues in addition to the federal, state, and county general fund dollars included in the capped allocation. The department also had access to an Alameda county-wide program called the Fiscal Management Rewards Program. The Alameda County County Administrator's Office (ACCAO) allowed departments that achieved administrative savings in county general funds to set those funds aside for future one-time costs/use, such as computer systems updates and physical plant-related costs.

The finance director's approach to fiscal planning for the CAP was to maintain budget neutrality by the end of the project in June 2012. This meant that in the latter years of the project the department would be spending more than its annual allocation and back-filling the deficit with reinvestment funds. The bridge-year extension in State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2012–2013 provided an extended budget-planning horizon so that funded programs could continue operating at least until the decisions about a longer-term extension were made.

2.4.1.2 Oversight and Monitoring

At the interim point of the evaluation, it was reported that two groups met monthly to monitor and oversee the implementation of the CAP. The first group was tasked with planning, coordinating, and implementing the CAP on a day-to-day basis. This group included the four ACDCFS division directors, one of whom was the CAP coordinator; program managers; and representatives from the research and evaluation unit, the Alameda County Probation Department (ACPD), the ACSSA finance department, and Casey Family Programs (CFP). The second group constituted the CAP executive team, and it was tasked with providing oversight, approving strategies, monitoring the budget, and reducing any systemic barriers. This group included the ACSSA director and finance director, the ACDCFS director and four division directors, and the ACPD chief and assistant chief probation officers.

By the end of the third year of the CAP, the role of the first group had been subsumed into the general oversight and monitoring operations of the department that were conducted by the ACDCFS executive team (director and four division directors); that first group no longer met, its tasks having assumed by the executive team. The CAP executive team continued to meet on a monthly basis, although it changed its configuration. Representatives from the county's

ACICPC and from the Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services (ACBHCS) were added, as were the ACSSA policy director and public information officer. The additional members helped the team keep the CAP initiatives in line with the goals of the ACDCFS as well as to keep the county's system-wide picture in mind. According to respondents, the multiple lenses provided to overall team with a better understanding of how potential initiatives might impact other organizations' policies and practices, what those organizations' roles might be, and what other resources might be available.

Programmatic and fiscal data continued to be important components of the oversight and monitoring of the CAP. Multiple systems were used to gather and organize data; these included Safe Measures, the Data Dashboard, and the Child Welfare Dynamic Report System. Safe Measures was used by child welfare supervisors during individual and monthly staff meetings to review the caseloads of child welfare workers. The Data Dashboard generated a higher-level view of systems indicators; data from this source were distributed department-wide on a quarterly basis so that all staff had a sense of the department's performance—where things were going well and where improvement was necessary. The Child Welfare Dynamic Report System from the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and the University of California, Berkeley (UCB), provided a comprehensive systems-level view of department performance, including performance on the federal progress indicators.

The ACDCFS and ACSSA, with the assistance of the CFP and International Business Machines (IBM), worked over the years of the CAP to develop and implement a data warehouse system called the Social Services Integrated Reporting System (SSIRS). The SSIRS was to include data from various county social services operations so that practitioners and policy-makers could understand the characteristics of cases from a variety of perspectives and be able to make links between services, costs, and outcomes to inform decision making. Representatives from program, fiscal, and data operations were included in its development. The SSIRS resided with the ACSSA's Information Services Division, with reports prepared by the Office of Data Management and analysis and interpretation conducted by the Research and Evaluation Unit. The long-term intent was for the system to be decentralized so that reports could be generated by individual staff. By the end of the CAP, the SSIRS was not completely functional, although some degree of report production was available. Respondents indicated that the development of the system had been a more complex undertaking than was originally anticipated. Linking the disparate data systems was challenging and time consuming, and as development progressed there were concerns that the technology and format might become obsolete before the system was fully functional.

Respondents reported that the use of data in the ACDCFS increased over the years of the CAP as it became more ingrained in the culture of the department. Increasingly, operations at all levels of the department were data driven in a desire to improve outcomes for children and families through better decision making and greater accountability. Importantly, staff had become increasingly comfortable with the use of data, and an increasing number of staff understood its role in the process of their work. Applying the knowledge gained from data into practice and policy making continued to be a challenge, according to respondents, but that effort had improved over the years, as well.

The increase in the use of data corresponded with an increase in evaluation activity at the ACDCFS. The ACSSA had added staff to its research and evaluation unit at the end of the Interim Evaluation Report period and since then evaluation plans were developed and implemented for each of the CAP initiatives. Despite concerns about sample size and a lack of comparison groups, the results from the internal evaluations were intended to provide an assessment of implementation efforts and to inform decision making about the continued status of individual initiatives.

2.4.1.3 Staffing and Training

The CAP brought about an increase in staffing in the ACDCFS as it was a significant component of the department's sequence of strategies. By the end of the project, 63 child welfare workers had been hired to help in reducing the caseload in the areas of investigations, family reunification, family maintenance, and permanent placement. As well, these worker augmented staffing in the area of family finding and engagement. The net average increase over the staffing level before the start of the CAP was nine. Family Finding and Engagement was an initiative that started before the CAP project but that the ACDCFS expanded during the CAP. The initiative's efforts were also augmented by the hiring of four clerk positions and two transportation workers. Finally, three management analysts were hired to enhance the research and evaluation team in the ACSSA, the group tasked with carrying out internal evaluations of CAP initiatives.

The new child welfare workers were hired as temporary workers; and while they retained the same salary schedule and benefits as permanent workers, they had limited union representation and could be terminated at the end of the CAP if no extensions of the project were forthcoming. Their status in regards to union representation gave the ACDCFS executive team greater flexibility in their deployment, job descriptions, and case-load restrictions.

Respondents reported that less attrition due to unhappiness with the work seemed to be taking place during the CAP, and they posited that it was due to the dearth of other employment options. They noted an increase in interdepartmental transfers and surmised there might be two reasons for the change. First, there was an increase in the amount of supervision, evaluation, and performance accountability as a result of lower caseloads. Second, with the initiatives under the CAP there were more opportunities for child welfare workers to take on new tasks and find a better match for their skills.

The hiring of additional child welfare workers created space issues for the ACDCFS, and towards the end of the CAP the ACDCFS had developed a model of mobile workers as a response. This had its own unique set of challenges (e.g., selecting workers and monitoring and managing them) that were still being worked out by the end of this study, but it also had benefits (e.g., increased flexibility and ownership of work) beyond reducing the need for space.

Finally, respondents expressed that hiring infrastructure staff earlier in the project timeline would likely have provided important, additional administrative support and would likely have been beneficial to the department's efforts. These staff included the three ACSSA management analysts and two additional management analysts who had responsibilities related to ACDCFS contracts and budgets.

The basic structure for training child welfare workers in the ACDCFS did not change as a result of the department participating in the CAP. New hires participate in a three-month-long Academy, a series of trainings that establish the basics of child welfare work. There are subsequent mandatory trainings that all department child welfare workers supervisors are required to attend; these trainings address items such as a new assessment tool. Staff can request follow-up training during more individualized sessions. Refresher trainings can be requested by supervisors if they feel a worker would benefit from an update on a certain topic, tool, or procedure. Finally, child welfare workers and supervisors are required to attend 40 hours of professional training annually on the topics of their choice. Topics must be approved by a supervisor and are usually those that would assist them with their current caseload and that fit into their schedules.

There are fewer training opportunities for program managers. Some are available through a program at the University of California, Davis; and others through the Bay Area Social Services Consortium, but they are limited in number and availability. Towards the end of the project, the director and division directors had made preliminary efforts at establishing an executive development program that would increase the availability of management-type trainings.

2.4.1.4 Structure and Operations

The general organizational hierarchy at the ACDCFS, before and during the CAP, consisted of a director, division directors, program managers, child welfare supervisors, and child welfare workers. Administrative staff (e.g., clerks, transportation workers) performed duties in support of the programmatic staff. As was described in the Interim Evaluation Report, personnel turnover among executive level staff and the department's participation in the CAP prompted a departmental reorganization. A division director position was added prior to the start of the CAP for the primary purpose of implementing the CAP, although the position held other responsibilities. Positions for program managers were added in response to programmatic needs created by the CAP. As well, a shifting of certain responsibilities occurred between the division directors and the program managers. The reorganization was centered on specialized operations and generally did not affect the areas of emergency response, family maintenance, and family reunification.

The ACDCFS underwent another reorganization beginning in the fourth year of the CAP. In the winter of 2010, the division director who had been the CAP coordinator was promoted to another position within the ACSSA, leaving three remaining division directors. The director of the department retired in the spring of 2011. As a result, one of the division directors was promoted to acting director while a search was conducted, and a program manager was promoted to division director. Several months later the acting director was appointed director of the department. This change prompted a larger review of department operations, and the executive-level staff determined that a reorganization would help to reduce the top-heavy nature of the department. The number of division directors stayed at three, and the number of program managers was reduced from 14 to 13. The ACDCFS executive team, in consultation with the ACSSA, determined it was no longer necessary to have a division director whose primary responsibility was the CAP and that other responsibilities could be adequately distributed amongst the three division directors. Similarly, the ACDCFS executive team sought to align

programs and distribute responsibilities equally among program managers; the team determined this to be possible with 13 program managers. Respondents indicated that the changes in structure were the result of a desire for increased efficiency and alignment and not due to the CAP.

According to respondents, there was a fair amount of specialization in the department at its program, section, and unit levels pre-CAP; this model of specialization continued to increase during the CAP. This resulted in a practice model of a case-responsible primary worker assisted by multiple secondary workers. The model was implemented before the start of the CAP with the development of placement units—child welfare workers and supervisors focused solely on securing foster care placements. The trend continued with the addition of CAP initiatives.

A change in organizational structure also occurred at the ACSSA when a policy director position was added at the end of the fourth year of the project. The research and evaluation unit that conducted data analysis and interpretation for the ACDCFS, as well as internal evaluations of CAP initiatives, moved from the finance department to the policy department.

Contracting, as was reported in the Interim Evaluation Report, became the primary way to increase the variety and scope of the initiatives, an easier alternative to creating programs in-house. The ACSSA and the ACDCFS began looking at performance-based contracting as a possible way to structure agreements between the department and its contractors during the CAP, and at one point it seemed as though the larger economic crisis might present an additional impetus for such a change. However, such a change proved logistically and politically challenging, and more modest changes to the process were made. The ACSSA did move to a model of unit pricing in its contracts. During the CAP, the process of developing contracts became increasingly collaborative between the department and its contractors and less driven solely by the department. The department viewed its contractors as “partners,” in keeping with the Family-to-Family philosophy, and continued to nurture those partnerships through a communications loop, while at the same time making clear its goals, directions, and expectations.

Prior to the CAP, the ACSSA and the ACDCFS had sought ways to maximize their revenues. These kinds of efforts continued throughout the CAP. Reinvestment savings could be used for other initiatives if additional funding sources could be located and accessed. One strategy involved the use of claiming codes by the ACSSA and using those codes to legitimately claim against allocations that were outside the capped allocation. This was possible in cases where a claim could justifiably be made against either allocation. During the CAP years it was to the advantage of the department to spend down allocations outside of the capped allocation before claiming against the capped allocation. Other strategies for maximizing revenue continued during the CAP years; these strategies included pursuing foundation grants and collaborating with other agencies.

2.4.1.5 Leadership

As reported in the Interim Evaluation Report, respondents indicated that the ACDCFS had benefited from strong leadership; child welfare workers and supervisors felt trusted and respected. Respondents also reported that the leaders demonstrated such characteristics as strength, vision, and inclusiveness.

The leadership process in the department was described as being top-down, with decisions regarding policy and departmental direction being made by an executive team comprised of the director and the division directors. ACDCFS program managers served as the conduit between this executive team and the child welfare workers and supervisors.

In the latter years of the CAP project there had been significant change at the top of the department, with the ACSSA director retiring in January 2011 and the DCFS director retiring in March 2011. Permanent appointments were made in July 2011 and September 2011 respectively. The fact that both appointments came from inside the ACSSA and the fact that both individuals had served as the CAP coordinator provided a degree of continuity in the transition and in CAP leadership. In addition, there were a number of changes in personnel at the division-director level of the ACDCFS. Despite these changes within the department, there did not appear to be any fundamental change in priorities or a significant change in leadership style.

The ACDCFS benefited from the expertise and leadership provided by the ACSSA finance director and finance department staff. Staff members retained a fundamental and nuanced understanding of the fiscal characteristics of the CAP and of how to operate in the new funding environment while at the same time retaining much of the traditional structure for allocation and claiming. This expertise proved beneficial to the other participating departments, as well.

2.4.1.6 Perception and Morale

Nearly 75% of the respondents in a worker-supervisor survey, which was conducted in the first thirty months of the CAP, reported that the CAP was having a positive effect on the county's child welfare environment; and almost 60% felt that the CAP was making available a wider array of services in the county. These perceptions of the CAP were echoed in the focus groups conducted in the later years of the project.

The positive perceptions about effect and service array helped to improve morale in the ACDCFS, but the biggest contribution to morale was the degree of fiscal stability that the CAP provided. Other Alameda County departments and a variety of other county departments statewide faced budget cuts and staff reductions, issues the ACDCFS was protected from due to the commitment of funding under the CAP. Over the years the respondents reported feeling relatively secure that their positions would not be eliminated.

General morale was varied and harder to gauge. Workers and supervisors were happy with lower caseloads, which they also attributed to the CAP, and the opportunity it gave them to spend more time with their existing cases. At the same, there was a greater preponderance of intense and challenging cases. Internal events such as changes in leadership at the executive level of the ACDCFS and issues such as challenges in departmental communication also contributed to a sense of anxiety and frustration. By and large, morale was good, but it could change by the day and by the individual.

2.4.1.7 Court

The relationship between the ACDCFS and the court was characterized by respondents as generally being a good one, though the quality of that working relationship could vary, depending upon the specific bench officer. Respondents also felt that the presiding judge and

bench officers were in agreement with the department's policy and practice philosophy and supportive of its activities under the CAP. There were some reports of attorneys and bench officers requesting that department reinvestment funds be used to pay for specific services for individual children and families. This was not viewed by respondents as an attempt by the court to undermine the efforts of the department under the CAP but instead as an ad hoc effort to provide services.

Communication between the department and the court was cited as crucial, and the ACDCFS director met quarterly with the juvenile court presiding judge in the Superior Court in Alameda County to discuss the activities of the department and to provide information and updates about the CAP. These meetings were important, because the position of presiding judge changed several times over the course of the project. Representatives from the department also held monthly meetings with the bench officers in the two districts of the county to address various issues and update the officers on the department's activities and progress under the CAP.

2.4.1.8 Contextual Factors

The downturn in the national and state economy had an ongoing impact over the years of the CAP in a number of ways. The concern about a possible 10% reduction in state funding described in the Interim Evaluation Report came to pass in SFY 09/10. Since then no further reductions in allocations to the department were necessary. However, reductions in funding to other departments due to state budget cuts resulted in some amount of ACSSA-wide overhead costs being shifted to the ACDCFS. The department had planned accordingly for both circumstances and was able to absorb the reduction, although it reduced a proportion of the funds available for reinvestment.

Then-Governor Schwarzenegger, as part of the same budget reduction efforts in 2010, had lifted a legislative mandate regarding services to severely emotionally disturbed youth who are not child welfare dependent. There was uncertainty at the time as to whether the fiscal responsibility for youth in out-of-home placements previously covered by Assembly Bill (AB) 3632—along with new youth who needed such placements—would fall to the ACDCFS in Alameda County. The concern was that a significant portion of the department's reinvestment savings would be needed to cover the costs of those placements, which were typically group home placements that were more expensive. In 2011, Governor Brown realigned responsibility for the youth to local school districts, relieving the department of any possible fiscal responsibility for the youth.

In 2011, Governor Brown announced his plans for Realignment, a broad-ranging effort to partially contend with the state's budget crisis. The plan called for reducing state responsibilities and transferring them to the counties, along with fiscal support. For child welfare, that meant a significant change in both the source of the funding from the state to the local system as well as a change to the process for providing that funding to the local system. According to respondents, there were not concerns about funding for the final year of the project. However, there were details yet to be worked out that would have an impact on the bridge extension year, SFY 12/13.

The financial status of the ACDCFS was also affected by an increase in the group home reimbursement rate, which was followed by an increase in the rate of reimbursement for foster homes. The increases were the result of lawsuit settlements with effective dates of December

2009 and May 2011 respectively. The CDSS and the CAP-participating departments requested an additional federal allocation to their capped allocation to help offset the cost of the reimbursement increase, as it came after the onset of the project. The Children's Bureau and the Office of Management and Budget chose not to provide additional federal funds. The departments did receive an additional allocation from the state. The rate increase did not create fiscal concerns for the ACDCFS as much as it created issues around planning and disbursing resources. Sufficient funds were budgeted for the increase in reimbursement rates; but the uncertainty about federal assistance caused planning to be delayed, and the denial of federal assistance meant that those funds had to be used for foster care placements and could not be used for other services.

Throughout the years of the project, respondents reported that both the ACBOS and ACCAO were supportive of the department's efforts under the CAP. Programmatic and fiscal plans for CAP initiatives required the approval of the ACBOS. The board received regular progress updates from senior staff at the ACDCFS and the ACSSA through meetings, presentations, and data sharing. According to respondents, the board provided oversight and expected results from the department's efforts, but it was not overly involved in the details in a way that promoted a particular agenda or advocated that funds be used for specific activities. The ACSSA finance director met regularly with the ACCAO to provide fiscal and programmatic updates.

Respondents did sense that the ACBOS was frustrated to some degree with the requirement that CAP reinvestment funds be spent only within the child welfare system, particularly in light of the budgetary impact on other county departments. However, in at least one case, the ACDCFS was able to preserve a de-funded program from another ACSSA department after a review showed the majority of program consumers were child-welfare involved, making it an appropriate use of CAP-related funds. The board was also reluctant to spend department reinvestment funds in an economic climate in which other departments needed to reduce expenditures, particularly in the area of staffing. The ACBOS was initially apprehensive about adding staff and then needing to lay them off, given that the CAP was set to terminate and an extension of the project was not guaranteed. While staff were eventually added, there was a delay in implementation due to these concerns of the board.

The ACDCFS interacts most closely with the ACPD and the ACBHCS. The relationship with the PD has historically evolved, changing from generally contentious to generally cooperative. Most improvements in the relationship occurred at the administration level, notably after a change in leadership at the ACPD in early 2011, although changes also occurred among line staff through their work on dual-involved youth. According to respondents, the change in ACPD leadership resulted in an increased interest in using the CAP opportunity to reconfigure the county's juvenile justice system, and the ACSSA finance staff worked with the PD leadership to configure funding for those ideas. The ACDCFS also assisted the ACPD in the areas of social security advocacy for youth and training for Family Finding and Engagement activities. Respondents described a positive and collaborative working relationship with the ACBHCS. The ACDCFS contracted with the behavioral health department on a number of programs, notably Wraparound, and the department has customized programs to support the efforts of the child welfare department. Respondents also reported positive working relationships with a number of other public departments, including the CDSS, the Alameda County Regional Center, and the Alameda County Office of Education.

The relationship between the ACDCFS and the union representing its workers was positive, according to respondents. There were the usual issues around such things as the lengthy review process for altering job descriptions that were specified in the contract; but the union was reportedly supportive of hiring additional staff, helpful in developing staffing plans, and supportive of the CAP in general.

Advocacy organizations were active opponents of the CAP since before the start of the project, with some groups focused on the evaluation and its interpretation and use in further fiscal policy discussions and other groups concerned that a decline in caseloads represented a denial of services and opportunities available in foster care. According to respondents, the ACDCFS sought to keep an open dialogue with the advocacy organizations by involving them at some level in the internal evaluations of the department's initiatives and considering their proposals for new initiatives under the CAP.

2.4.2 County Services Component

2.4.2.1 Accessing Services

The ACDCFS sought to reduce the number of children entering the child welfare system; reduce the length of time a child spends in the system; and, for those needing long-term foster care, providing care in the most family-like setting possible. Respondents continued to report that the focus of the department's philosophy of operations, as well as the initiatives developed under the CAP, worked towards those ends in part by altering how children and families access services through the department.

A developmental process of improving practice and the influence of the CAP effected changes in decision making at the front-end of the child welfare system. Respondents reported that the ACDCFS has become more sensitive to what it meant for the family to have child welfare workers visit the home. They described a greater understanding of the trauma that could be caused by an investigation and a removal, and that efforts were made to ensure that either was absolutely necessary. The structured decision-making (SDM) tool was used more frequently and incorporated into the decision-making process in a more substantive way, although concerns about its reliability and validity still remained. Also, as part of the department's efforts around the issue of disproportionality, more descriptors and explanations were being requested by hotline workers to better understand the meaning behind the calls and reduce investigations. Team decision-making (TDM) meetings were held to develop a strong safety plan and address issues so that children could remain at home safely. Voluntary family maintenance (VFM) and probate guardianship were potential options in place of removal in appropriate circumstances, although these options had to be used cautiously because families sometimes did not comply with voluntary services and probate guardianship did not have a service component.

The CAP assisted in the process of front-end decision making by providing a consistent funding stream that resulted in sufficient numbers of child welfare workers and supervisors. According to respondents, adequate staffing meant child welfare workers could be more deliberate and supervisors could oversee the process, asking additional questions where necessary and providing additional review. Respondents also cited two CAP initiatives—Another Road to Safety (ARS) and Paths to Success (P2S)—that gave child welfare workers and

their supervisors other program and service options besides bringing a child into the child welfare system and into foster care.

As was reported in the Interim Evaluation Report, decision making regarding foster care placements were fundamentally important to the ACDCFS due to the department's emphasis on reducing out-of-home placements and focusing on kinship placements when placement was necessary. Placement decisions were also important because of the high cost associated with group home placements. In the year prior to the start of the CAP, the department adopted the One Child, One Placement program approach and reconfigured its placement section into generic units responsible for locating placements for children for the primary case-carrying child welfare worker. The placement approval process was centralized to ensure that the least restrictive placement setting was considered first and to ensure that all placement options were explored prior to recommending a group home placement. A committee was formed to review the appropriateness of recommendations for group home placement; as well, an interagency review committee oversees the approval process for the most restrictive and expensive group homes used by the department. In addition, placement recommendations and approvals were tracked and the data were reviewed to identify trends and develop modifications where necessary.

A number of issues emerged regarding placement decisions, according to respondents. First, respondents expressed that a clinical assessment of a child's behavioral and emotional needs should run concurrent with an assessment of the kinship placement's capacity to address those needs; and, where necessary, additional services and supports should be brought to bear. Or another placement should be considered. Second, federal eligibility determination took a long time, in the interim leaving families without access to services and supports. Third, the de-emphasis on group home placements, particularly high-level placements, has resulted in a lack of such placements in the county. Youth with that level of need were placed out of county. Fourth, youth who would have been given a group-home placement ten years ago based on their behavior were more recently placed in foster care, often without the necessary services and supports for the family. Finally, it continued to be difficult to locate placements for certain populations of children, including teens, those with special medical needs, and youth who have been sexually exploited.

2.4.2.2 Case Management

The ACDCFS began moving in the direction of increased specialization in case management prior to the onset of the CAP. This meant that a typical case would have a primary child welfare worker and one or more secondary workers, depending upon where the case was within the child welfare system (family reunification, family maintenance, etc.). According to respondents, there were pros and cons to this model. It meant that the primary worker was not responsible for everything; and that responsibilities, such as locating a placement (which could be time-consuming), were handled by a secondary worker, freeing up the primary worker to develop a relationship with the child and family. It also meant that decisions could be made collaboratively with input from multiple professionals. The sense from respondents was that decisions and plans could arise from the consideration of multiple view points, making the ultimate decision stronger and reducing the reliance on just one person's understanding of the case. The challenge was that there was not an established protocol or set of processes for incorporating input from secondary workers or for having a broader discussion about the case.

Without a structure to support the interaction, the input from this wider range of sources sometimes resulted in conflict that then had to be moderated by supervisors or program managers if it could not be resolved by the child welfare workers. Such conflict, according to respondents, was not beneficial to the child and family.

2.4.2.3 Service Array, Intensity, and Integration

Respondents reported that participating in the CAP had enabled the ACDCFS to expand the array of services available to children and families and, depending on the initiative, increase the intensity of services. The first CAP initiatives expanded existing services, but as the CAP progressed, the initiatives implemented represented new services. Respondents also noted several areas of concern, such as the concentration of services in the Oakland/Berkeley/Hayward areas versus other areas of the county, and the lack of several important services: transportation services, services exclusively for fathers, substance-abuse treatment programs, and substance-use testing.

Respondents also reported that cooperation and partnerships with other departments and community-based organizations had increased over the time of the CAP. The relationship with the ACPD had improved, particularly in the last 18 months of the project; and there was an increase in efforts to address the needs of dually involved youth. The relationship with ACBHCS continued to be strong, particularly with the Wraparound program and the Visitation Center, as well as with the Alameda County Department of Public Health (ACDPH) and its support of the Services to Enhance Early Development (SEED) program with public health nurses. A large number of contracts were established with community-based organizations to provide services to children and families involved in the child welfare system.

2.4.2.4 Quality Assurance

The use of data by the ACDCFS for monitoring child and family outcomes extended to quality assurance activities. Respondents reported that all levels of the department used data and reports to monitor cases and the work of the department. Respondents indicated that data were assessed for trends at the individual level, unit level, section level, and program level to ensure that protocols were followed, timeframes were met, and tasks completed. Data was also used to ensure that decision making was in line with the goals of the department. In some cases, the data on individual compliance performance were posted in offices. There continued to be discussions about whether this use of data promoted healthy competition or was unfairly punitive, given issues around timeframes for data entry. The information was used during supervision and was part of the process for improving practice, ensuring compliance, and making personnel decisions.

Quality assurance also extended to monitoring contracts with providers. Programmatic quality assurance was the responsibility of program managers, who monitored the contracts within their scope of operations. Respondents reported that there was not a template or uniform protocol for the programmatic monitoring of contracts, so each program manager devised his or her own process. Fiscal quality assurance was uniform and conducted by analysts from the ACSSA finance department. While contracts were not performance based, a contractor could be put on a corrective action plan for such things as not meeting the mission of the contract or using resources in a way that raised concerns about expenditures.

2.5 Findings: Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services

2.5.1 Implementation Phase

2.5.1.1 Plan*

The Los Angeles County Department of Child and Family Services (LACDCFS), as shown in Table 2.4, funded 12 initiatives and investments over the five-year period of the CAP in support of three broad goals. Three initiatives and investments had expenditures in the first year of the CAP, followed by two in the second year (one of the first year initiatives continued in the second year but had no expenditure claims), five in the third and fourth years, and eleven in the fifth year. The department claimed approximately \$55 million in expenditures for its CAP initiatives and investments, with 49% spent internally for staff, 45% spent externally on contracts, and 6% spent directly on children and families.

| Table 2.4 LACDCFS Goals, Initiatives and Investments, and Expenditures (in thousands) | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| Goals and CAP Initiatives and Investments | SFY 07/08 Actual | SFY 08/09 Actual | SFY 09/10 Actual | SFY 10/11 Actual | SFY 11/12 Actual | Total Actual | Internal Expend | Direct Expend | External Expend |
| Improved Safety | | | | | | | | | |
| Upfront Assessments (UFA) | \$114 | \$78 | \$1,965 | \$8,535 | \$9,314 | \$20,006 | \$1,439 | | \$18,567 |
| Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project (PIDP) | | | | \$3,140 | \$2,039 | \$5,179 | | | \$5,179 |
| Emergency Response (ER) staffing | | | | | \$945 | \$945 | \$945 | | |
| Medical Hub Program | | | | | \$27 | \$27 | \$27 | | |
| Parents In Partnership (PIP) | | | | | \$183 | \$183 | | | \$183 |
| Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention, Intervention and Treatment Program (CAPIT) | | | | | \$285 | \$285 | | | \$285 |
| In-House Legal Services | | | | | \$480 | \$480 | | | \$480 |
| Coaching and Mentoring | | | | | \$90 | \$90 | | | \$90 |
| Increased Permanency | | | | | | | | | |
| Team Decision Making (TDM)/Permanency Planning Conferences | \$787 | \$3,818 | \$3,531 | \$3,513 | \$3,349 | \$14,998 | \$14,998 | | |
| Youth Permanency (YP) Units | \$538 | | \$2,875 | \$2,949 | \$2,852 | \$9,214 | \$9,214 | | |
| Alternative Services for Youth | | | \$134 | | | \$134 | | | \$134 |
| Enhanced Self-Sufficiency | | | | | | | | | |
| Youth Development Services | | | \$357 | \$694 | \$2,111 | \$3,162 | | \$3,162 | |
| Total Expenditures | \$1,439 | \$3,896 | \$8,862 | \$18,831 | \$21,675 | \$54,703 | \$26,623 | \$3,162 | \$24,918 |
| Percent of Total Expenditures | | | | | | | 49% | 6% | 45% |

* The initiatives and investments listed in the table include those for which the department claimed expenditures before June 30, 2012. Descriptions and additional information about the initiatives and investments can be found in California Department of Social Services. (2012). *Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project (CAP), Semi-Annual Progress Report for January 1, 2012 Through June 30, 2012*. Sacramento, CA: Author.

Respondents reported that the LACDCFS CAP plan was written to accommodate changes in need and context that would occur over the five years of the project. The initial plan was approved by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (LACBOS) in June 2007. A flexible approach allowed the plan to be updated to include the new initiatives and investments necessary to respond to current conditions. In addition, the LACDCFS did not know the amount of reinvestment savings available until several months after each fiscal year. This meant that planning for the second sequence of activities did not begin until the beginning of the second fiscal year of the CAP. The planning group (made up of the executive team and children's deputies) sought to optimize outcomes by maintaining the activities they felt had been successful in the first sequence, taking advantage of program maturity. The approach was deliberate and reflected a reluctance to widely expand the types of funded activities. The data structures necessary to make real-time decisions about whether to continue specific initiatives based on their performance were not in place; but, perhaps more importantly, there was not sufficient time within the context of the CAP to allow the programs to mature and then be evaluated. Because the executive staff was pleased with the overall results of the first sequence of activities and because they were not able to tease out the individual influences of each, they chose to continue with those activities en masse. As a result, the second sequence of activities maintained and built upon the first sequence, with a limited expansion of initiatives and investments. The second sequence of the department's implementation plan was approved by the Chief Executive Office and the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors in February 2009.

Planning for the third sequence began during the third year of the CAP. A more ambitious approach was taken with this third wave of initiatives and investments, at least in terms of numbers. By the final year of the grant, the CAP program had added and was making expenditure claims for six new initiatives and investments. These were not new initiatives and investments per se; instead, they were activities that were already being implemented by the LACDCFS and that the department elected to expand. The third sequence of the department's implementation plan was approved by the Chief Executive Office and the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors in December 2011.

The planning process for the initiatives implemented by the LACDCFS changed over time. As described in the Interim Evaluation Report, planning for the second sequence of activities did not include as much community outreach and information gathering as did the first, although planners did receive community input from a single organized event and a series of five smaller service bureau gatherings. There was also limited community input in the planning for the third cycle of initiatives. This was due in part to the realistic approach taken by the LACBOS as a result of the larger budget crisis and a centralization of decision making. The LACDCFS regional office staff provided input through the internal communications processes, and this information was disseminated throughout the department, up through the bureau and division directors. The bulk of the planning process took place with executive staff at meetings and retreats and in meetings with the LACBOS Children's Deputies. Proposed programs were

analyzed to gauge the fiscal implications, and options were considered based on connection to the department's guiding philosophy, expected outcomes, and costs.

Along with the CAP, several other closely related initiatives and processes were underway in the county, as was reported in the Interim Evaluation Report. These included the county Katie A. Settlement Agreement Plan, the Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project (PIDP, the PIDP became a CAP initiative in the second sequence), the Residentially Based Services (RBS) reform efforts, and the (SIP) developed as part of California's Child and Family Services Review process. These multiple initiatives and processes led to some degree of confusion about how everything fit together as a cohesive plan to reach the desired outcomes. The decision-making processes regarding planning and implementation had become siloed to some extent, even though there was a fair degree of overlap between the initiatives and ways they could be linked.

The LACDCFS had started a process of developing a strategic plan that would tie together all of the pieces into a cohesive whole so that the various initiatives would be seen as less distinct. The department also created the Office of Strategy Management in support of efforts to have a unifying plan for the department. The initial planning process had progressed to the point of establishing a departmental review of a draft plan before being put on hold in response to a personnel change in the director's position. A second strategic plan process was initiated by the LACDCFS director in February 2012.

2.5.1.2 Oversight and Monitoring

The basic oversight and monitoring structure in place at the start of the CAP continued through the end of the project in the LACDCFS, although there were significant changes in personnel beginning in 2010. The director was removed by the LACBOS in December 2010 and replaced with an interim director. The interim director served for four months before resigning in April 2011. During that period, the waiver coordinator resigned and was replaced. The second waiver coordinator subsequently became the second interim director two months later, and a third waiver coordinator was appointed. The second interim director resigned in September 2011 and was replaced by a third interim director. That individual was appointed as department director by the LACBOS in February 2012. Between December 2010 and the end of the CAP in June 2012, several senior positions were vacant at one time or another, including chief deputy director, senior deputy director, and a number of deputy director positions.

The director met weekly with the executive team, which was made up of the deputy directors, and bureau directors. This group was responsible for planning and policy development. Day-to-day CAP oversight and monitoring was the responsibility of the waiver coordinator (a bureau director), supported by two staff. Workgroups met as necessary in support of the various CAP activities. LACDCFS CAP representatives also met with external partners to keep them apprised of the CAP and to elicit their input. Representatives of the LACDCFS and the Los Angeles County Probation Department (LACPD) met on an ad hoc basis to discuss CAP-related issues. The waiver coordinator participated in a monthly conference call with representatives from the CDSS and the coordinators from the three other participating departments. Regular meetings were held with the Los Angeles County Commission for Children and Families and the

Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Children's Deputies; and a monthly meeting took place between the County Steering Committee with the Chief Executive Office representatives.

Throughout the CAP, data analysis was an important component of the oversight and monitoring efforts at LACDCFS. The department relied on information from the Child Welfare Dynamic Report System produced by UCB and from the CDSS, as well as on its own internal data production capabilities for most of the project. The department had been working on the development of a data dashboard that amassed, organized, and provided access to various types of necessary information. The first iteration of this dashboard included regional office data, with fiscal data and non-regional office programs to follow. The system was brought online at the end of 2011, along with a process for understanding the information. The process was modeled after the CompStat developed by the New York Police Department. The purpose of the process was to assess performance, to identify areas of need and allocate resources, and to engage staff in the process of data-driven decision making. There was a monthly review of identified measures, with questions and answers facilitated by the department director in a large room with placards and microphones. The proceedings were recorded, action items were generated, and follow-up occurred at the next meeting. All subdivisions of the department were included, although each review was focused on a particular area of operations or regional office.

Fiscal staff, as was reported in the Interim Evaluation Report, developed enhanced internal tracking and monitoring mechanisms in response to the LACDCFS participation in the CAP. While fiscal staff routinely tracked data through the usual budgeting and accounting processes, the CAP required a greater level of detail. According to respondents, the purpose of the enhanced mechanisms was to monitor both those activities and expenditures related to the CAP and those activities and expenditures not related to the CAP in order to operate efficiently within the capped allocation.

2.5.1.3 Staffing and Training

The LACDCFS utilized the CAP to increase staffing for six activities implemented under the project. The department added facilitators and a manager as part of its expansion of Family Team Decision Making conferences. The department also added children's social workers and supervisors to implement upfront focused family finding and engagement and focused family finding and engagement through specialized permanency units. Children's social workers (CSW) and public health nurses (PHN) were added to the Medical Hub Program and seven managers were added to the Up Front Assessment (UFA) program.

Starting in the spring of 2009, a backlog of LACDCFS referrals received negative public attention as the result of a series of *Los Angeles Times* newspaper articles that criticized the department. The department determined an emergency response crisis, and temporary personnel were hired to assist the department in reducing this backlog.

Respondents reported that the hiring process for the LACDCFS was generally challenging. Civil service regulations and the regulations of two human resource agencies (the Chief Executive Office and the LACDCFS) had to be met, causing the process to be deliberate and slow. Approval from the Chief Executive Office was also required for certain positions. The process was further slowed by a countywide hiring freeze that began in 2009. Because the staff positions requested by the department were to be funded by reinvestment savings, they were

eventually approved. However, additional requirements added to the delay. This resulted in a slow implementation of sequence activities early in the project.

The emergency response crisis had a significant impact on staffing, according to respondents. The LACDCFS leadership redeployed child welfare workers from other areas of the department to assist with closing emergency response cases. Over time, this strategy increased caseloads in the other areas of the department until those workers could return to their original positions. The crisis also resulted in the elimination of a category of workers who served as transition workers, assisting with cases and working with families as they transferred from emergency response to another area of the department. Such workers did not have case-carrying responsibilities, and it was determined that those staff would be better utilized assisting with the backlog of emergency response cases.

The emergency response crisis also had a disruptive impact on staffing at the executive level of the LACDCFS (also described in the 2.5.1.5 Leadership section of this report). By the end of 2010, the director had been removed by the LACBOS and was replaced by an interim director, the chief deputy director had resigned and was replaced, and the senior deputy director had retired. The interim director served four months before resigning and was replaced by the chief deputy director. During that four-month period in early 2011, the deputy director with direct oversight responsibilities for the CAP resigned and was replaced twice. The second interim director served five months before resigning. The third interim director was eventually appointed to the position of LACDCFS director in February 2012.

The changes at the director level resulted in lengthy vacancies in the positions of chief deputy and senior deputy, as well as in other deputy director positions. Typically directors were closely involved in the selection of deputies and the instability at the highest level meant that filling positions was put on hold until a permanent director was appointed. The director appointed in February 2012 began a process of recruiting executive-level staff that coincided with the director's reorganization efforts.

Staff training in the LACDCFS did not change as a result of the department participating in the CAP; however, the process of staff training continued to evolve over the course of the project. The number of field-experience days for the Academy (the training process for new child welfare workers) was increased to give workers more familiarity with field practice. The department, according to respondents, also attempted to improve the coordination between the Academy and the regional offices, in some cases assigning a trainer to the office, to improve the field-experience learning process. The department was also developing best-practice models for the various activities of the department (e.g., emergency response, family maintenance, family reunification) and developing trainings to assist in the implementation of the models. Respondents reported that there was an increased emphasis on training for strengths-based supervision through coaching and mentoring at all levels of the organization.

2.5.1.4 Structure and Operations

The LACDCFS enhanced its infrastructure in a number of ways to better support the general operating needs of the department and of the CAP. The department centralized and enhanced its quality control systems in the form of a Quality Improvement Unit on the program side and an Internal Controls Unit on the administrative side of the organization. The department

also made changes to the administrative structure of the organization. The department added the position of senior deputy director with responsibilities akin to a chief financial officer. The LACDCFS renamed its Bureau of Resources to the Bureau of Strategic Management and created the Office of Strategy Management in response to the multiple projects being implemented by the department. The bureau was responsible for coordinating the management of the department's projects and enhancing its planning processes. As the CAP ended, another LACDCFS reorganization process was underway at the behest of the director in an effort to improve operations.

Respondents continued to report an increased use of fiscal data for decision making within the LACDCFS and an increased understanding of the connection between programs and funding. As reported in the Interim Evaluation Report, respondents stated that this increase in the use of data took place for three reasons: (a) the state's fiscal crisis; (b) the department's participation in the CAP; and (c) the increase in fiscal information made available to other sections of the department by the Bureau of Finance and Administration.

The LACDCFS increased the level of accountability in its contracts with provider agencies during the CAP, continuing an effort started before the onset of the project. Such efforts were important, according to respondents, given the level of services being purchased by the department. The department continued to use scorecards with desired performance outcomes for foster family agencies and group homes and contract language that defined the goals and deliverables and established for what the provider could be held accountable. However, while future contracts were not tied to performance, there was a formal process and specific consequences for noncompliance. If major problems persisted, a foster family agency or group home could be placed on a "do not refer" list until problems were rectified. Contract monitoring (programmatic and fiscal) was decentralized, according to respondents, and handled primarily by program managers.

Respondents indicated that the department continued to move in the direction of developing performance-based contracts, and for at least one specific program such contracts were in place. Two issues were cited as having an impact on the development of such contracts. First, data-linking services with child-level outcomes had to be collected at the program-level, but absent a system-wide database that linked such information; this represented an onerous task. Second, the contracting process for the LACDCFS was not flexible: contracts took several years to develop and implement due to departmental and county-level requirements; and once finalized, they were typically in place for three years.

The LACDCFS, throughout the years of the CAP, continued to seek ways to maximize its revenue in many of the same ways as in years prior to the project. According to respondents, the department made efforts to identify and eliminate redundant operations and programs; to assess to the extent possible whether programs were achieving their desired outcomes so as to expend funds elsewhere if they were not; and to maximize other sources, such as Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) funds through partnerships with other departments. Fiscal staff and program managers worked together to develop budgets, and they continued to work together during implementation to ensure that budgeted dollars were fully utilized. In addition, a grants management section of the department was charged with securing funds through additional sources, both public and private.

The emergency response crisis had the biggest impact on the operations of the LACDCFS during the years of the CAP. This crisis resulted from the department's response to a succession of *Los Angeles Times* articles beginning in the spring of 2009. The articles publicized a series of child deaths over a number of years in cases where the department had been involved at some level. The articles came about because of a change in the law governing disclosure of child deaths. All of the deaths had previously been reported to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and investigated by the department. Despite the previous disclosures and in response to the public reaction to the initial newspaper article, some 50 individuals were placed on desk duty while additional investigations were conducted. Procedural changes were made to the emergency response process to increase diligence. However, the changes increased the amount of time necessary to close a case, eventually resulting in a backlog of cases that violated completion timelines, despite a waiver granted by the CDSS that extended the usual timeline from 30 days to 60 days. CSWs from other areas of the department were redeployed to assist with closing emergency response cases; over time this redeployment increased caseloads in those areas of the department that lost staff. Temporary CSWs were also hired as a CAP initiative to assist with the backlog. In the last year of the CAP the emergency response backlog had markedly declined, and resources were returning to their original, pre-deployment levels.

2.5.1.5 Leadership

The LACDCFS was described by respondents as a top-down, hierarchical organization with major policy and departmental decisions being made at the executive level. However, the organization is quite large. As a result, leadership was more diffuse than it might have been in a smaller organization. Respondents reported that the administrative layers within regional offices, which served as conduits between the executive level and line staff, had an important influence on the implementation of departmental policy and direction.

The LACDCFS underwent a series of significant leadership changes beginning in early 2010. By the end of that year, the director had been removed by the LACBOS and was replaced by an interim director; the chief deputy director resigned and was replaced; and the senior deputy director retired. The interim director served four months before resigning and was replaced by the chief deputy director. During that four month period in early 2011, the deputy director with direct oversight responsibilities for the CAP resigned and was replaced. The second interim director served five months before resigning. The third interim director was eventually appointed to the position of LACDCFS director in February 2012.

Respondents noted changes in leadership style after the appointment of the current director. One described change involved a shift from a collective decision-making process to one that also valued consensus and collaboration but stressed that the final decision rested with the director. Increasing the lines of communication between the director and the rest of the department was stressed and included such things as office visits that involved sitting down with line staff to discuss their work. Planning for the succession of the current director also got underway with the creation of a leadership team that could support the development of leadership in the department.

As reported in the Interim Evaluation Report, respondents cited various leadership characteristics as important. Leaders needed to have a vision of the direction they wanted their

organization to take or of what they wanted the organization to achieve; leaders also needed a set of values and priorities that guided their actions. The ability to build support across a broad range of stakeholders was important as well, as was the ability to stay focused on the department's goals, despite inevitable distractions. Transparency, accountability, and communication were also essential, as was the ability to institutionalize those characteristics in a way that enhanced leadership throughout the department.

2.5.1.6 Perception and Morale

In the worker-supervisor survey conducted in the first 30 months of the CAP, approximately 51% of the respondents reported that the CAP was having a positive effect on the county's child welfare environment, and roughly 53% felt that CAP was making available a wider array of services in the county. The strengths of those sentiments appeared to increase in the subsequent years of the project based on the response in focus groups. Staff were most pleased with the fiscal stability and the sense of job security that the CAP provided in a difficult economy.

Morale was less affected by the CAP than by the emergency response crisis that was precipitated by the way the *Los Angeles Times* portrayed the department. In the midst of the crisis, respondents reported that the nature of the articles and the way the county (i.e., the LACDCFS, the LACBOS, and the Los Angeles County Chief Executive Office) responded had increased their level of cautiousness regarding case decision making and produced an operating culture that was apprehensive. This was compounded by the redeployment of staff in efforts to deal with the crisis, which created further disruption in the department's operations. Temporary CSWs were also hired to help mitigate the crisis. By the end of the project the emergency response crisis had been resolved and respondents reported that staff were cautiously optimistic, although this optimism was not uniformly present by day, by section of the department, or by individual. The appointment of a permanent director was also cited as a factor in improving the morale of the department.

2.5.1.7 Court

The presiding judge, the other judges, and the commissioners from the Los Angeles County Juvenile Dependency Court continued to be supportive of the CAP over the course of the project, according to respondents. In the Interim Evaluation Report, respondents described a kind of tension between the LACDCFS and the court, a tension that is common to county child welfare departments nationwide. Some judges and commissioners had a positive relationship with the department and some did not. Other relationships were affected by concerns on the part of judges and commissioners over insufficient efforts on the part of the department or poorly presented court reports. On the other hand, the department staff could become frustrated with continuances or what they perceived as social work from the bench, particularly when recommendations made by the department were overridden. Respondents expressed concern that an increase in legal representation for all involved parties had resulted in an increased focus on client wants and needs and not necessarily on efforts for prevention and intervention. Also, the presiding judge had ruled to allow the media to attend court hearings, but it was too early to gauge the ramifications of this ruling.

While concerns and tensions remained, respondents reported that the working relationship between the two entities was generally positive. This was the result, in part, of regular meetings between the department director and the presiding judge to address various issues. Respondents also cited regionalization of the court as assisting in the development and maintenance of a positive working relationship. (Regionalization of the court meant that a judge/commissioner was assigned to a particular region to work directly with department staff from that region.) Despite regionalization, conflicts with judges still had a detrimental impact on the relationship in some cases, according to respondents; but in other cases regionalization provided the opportunity for both sides to better understand the other's role, responsibilities, and resources, and to increase the communication between all of the involved parties, including department staff, attorneys, and the bench officers.

2.5.1.8 Contextual Factors

The downturn in the national and state economy affected the LACDCFS in a number of ways over the years of the CAP. The state portion of the capped allocation was reduced by 10% in SFY 09/10 as part of a balanced budget settlement, reducing the amount of reinvestment savings that might have been otherwise available. The department also absorbed funding reductions in non-CAP-related budgets in the same way that other county departments experienced funding reductions due to the state's ongoing budget crisis. The LACDCFS did not use CAP reinvestment savings to offset the reductions in other areas. The economic downturn seemed to reduce staff attrition, leaving the department with greater stability in its staffing levels.

Respondents reported that they were pleased to be operating in a capped allocation environment, despite the reduction in SFY 09/10 of the state's allocation, and that the guarantee of funding provided fiscal security in an uncertain fiscal environment. However, the economic issues facing other county departments due to the state's ongoing budget issues and general economic pessimism induced a sense of caution on the part of the LACBOS. The board adopted a conservative approach to the use of LACDCFS reinvestment savings and slowed the implementation of any planned sequences of activities.

As discussed in the ACDCFS section of this report, Governor Brown announced his plans for Realignment in 2011. Realignment was a broad-range effort for contending with, in part, the state's budget crisis. The plan called for reducing state responsibilities and transferring them to the counties, along with fiscal support. For child welfare, that meant a significant change in both the source of funding to the local system and the state's process for providing that funding. According to respondents from both departments, there were not concerns about funding for the final year of the project but there were details yet to be worked out that would have an impact on the bridge extension year, SFY 12/13.

The financial status of the LACDCFS, like the ACDCFS, was also affected by a group home reimbursement rate increase, followed by an increase in the rate of reimbursement for foster homes. The increases, as previously described, were the result of lawsuit settlements with effective dates of December 2009 and May 2011, respectively. The CDSS and the CAP-participating departments requested an additional federal allocation to their capped allocation to help offset the cost of the reimbursement increase, as the increase came after the onset of the project. The Children's Bureau and the Office of Management and Budget chose not to provide

additional federal funds. The departments did receive an additional allocation from the state. The rate increase did not create fiscal concern for the LACDCFS as much as it created a challenge for the planning and disbursement of resources. Sufficient funds were available for the increase in reimbursement rates, but the uncertainty about federal assistance meant that planning was delayed; and the denial of federal assistance meant that those funds had to be used for foster care placements and could not be used for other services.

The relationships among the LACBOS, the Los Angeles County Chief Executive Office (LACCEO), and the LACDCFS underwent a number of changes over the course of the CAP. Respondents had indicated in the Interim Evaluation Report that the relationships were positive and that both the LACBOS and the LACCEO were supportive of the CAP and the department's efforts. Regular meetings were held between representatives from the LACDCFS and the LACBOS and the LACCEO for the purpose of gathering information and providing feedback and influence on the department's plans for new sequences of activities and initiatives. The LACBOS was responsible for authorizing department plans, based on a recommendation from the LACCEO. Despite some tension around the use of the reinvestment savings and the definition of child welfare services, respondents reported that ultimately the department was able to define its plan and the use of its funds.

The relationship between the LACBOS and LACDCFS's director began to change when a succession of articles were published in the *Los Angeles Times*, beginning in the spring of 2009 (see discussion in Structure and Operations). The LACBOS removed the director in December 2010. The relationship between the LACBOS and the director's position remained contentious until September 2011, when an interim director was appointed. This director was subsequently approved by the board as director in February 2012.

The relationship between the LACCEO and the LACDCFS changed in May 2011, when the LACBOS removed department oversight responsibility from the county chief executive. Instead, the board assumed the role of providing direct oversight to the department, along with the LACPD. The LACDCFS did continue to work directly with the LACCEO regarding budgeting for the department.

Respondents reported that the LACBOS and LACCEO remained supportive of the CAP, despite the shifts in the dynamics of the relationships and the changes in oversight responsibilities.

The relationship between the LACDCFS and the LACPD was routinely described as "a work in progress," hampered by leadership changes in both departments. The most significant source of tension between the departments centered on the details of an agreement that defined their fiscal relationship under the CAP (the relationship is detailed in Chapter 3 of this report). The two departments did seek to enhance their relationship in their efforts regarding contracting and developing a model for working with cross-over youth in attempt to keep youth out of the juvenile probation system.

The LACDCFS worked closely with the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH), particularly in response to the state *Katie A. v. Bonta* (2011) settlement that resulted in an expansion of mental health services for children involved with the child welfare

system in Los Angeles County. The relationship was in part defined by a memorandum of understanding that defined what services the mental health department would provide and the cost of those services. A quality review process was done jointly with the LACDMH, which had mental health staff co-located to a number of LACDCFS regional offices. Respondents described the relationship as positive, with good communication between the departments.

2.5.2 County Services Component

2.5.2.1 Accessing Services

The goals of the LACDCFS, according to respondents, were to try to reduce the number of children entering the child welfare system, reduce the length of time a child spent in the child welfare system, and provide care in the most family-like setting possible for those children needing long-term foster care. Respondents reported that the CAP provided the department with an opportunity to support prevention and alternatives to out-of-home placements efforts begun prior to the project, as well as to improve how services were accessed by children and families. Point of Engagement (POE) was the service delivery system for the LACDCFS during the CAP. The purpose of the system was to encourage collaboration between professionals, the community, and families to develop plans that allowed children to remain safely at home. POE was multidisciplinary and used a number of components, including differential response, alternative response, informal resources, voluntary services, intensive services workers, Team Decision-Making/child safety conferences, and emergency response investigations. Up Front Assessments (UFA; mental health, substance abuse, and domestic violence assessments which could be used during emergency response investigations) and TDM efforts were both expanded as CAP initiatives at the start of the project. The Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project (PIDP) began in the years prior to the CAP. The PIDP was a community-based effort designed to improve economic opportunities, increase social interaction, and increase access to resources. As part of its second sequence of CAP initiatives and investments, the LACDCFS began funding the project to expand on those initial efforts in the development of differential response programs. Two additional initiatives, both designed to enhance access to services, were implemented under the CAP and expanded as part of the CAP: the Medical Hub program, a partnership with the LACDMH and LACDHS, provided medical examinations, forensic examinations, and mental health screenings; and Project Screening and Assessment for Family Engagement was designed to improve screening and assessment for substance-use issues in order to provide access to treatment.

The biggest influence on the decision-making process at the front-end of child welfare system, at least for a period of time, was the concern that arose from the series of *Los Angeles Times* articles that began in April 2009 and that reported on child deaths in the county. Respondents indicated that the response by the LACDCFS to the articles, as well as the response by the larger county governing structure, created a sense of anxiety among department staff. The result was a decision-making process that erred on the side of caution when it came to how hotline calls were assessed, how emergency investigations and dependency investigations were conducted, and what recommendations were made to the court regarding detainments. Additional protocols were put in place, along with requirements (e.g., collateral contacts) that needed to be met before a referral for child abuse and neglect could be closed by emergency response workers. Respondents reported a general decision-making shift away from the family-focused philosophy of the department. When in the past diversion services or family maintenance would

have been the recommendation, the new approach involved recommending a child be detained. However, respondents indicated that by the mid-point of 2011–2012, decision making had shifted back to being guided by the philosophies of the department as they had been before the start of the crisis.

The structured decision-making (SDM) tool continued to be integrated into the decision-making process throughout the period the CAP, although respondents reported continued concerns with the tool's reliability and validity. TDMs were also part of the front-end decision-making process. An initial TDM was conducted during the emergency investigation period and when the case transferred from emergency response to family maintenance or family reunification. Respondents reported that voluntary family maintenance (VFM) was a possible option in place of removal in appropriate circumstances, although it had to be used cautiously because families sometimes did not comply with voluntary services. Respondents also described that in the latter years of the CAP there was an emphasis by the department to clarify its detention policy: that to detain a child at risk of abuse or neglect, a child welfare worker must have one of three things: (a) consent of the parent/guardian to detain the child, (b) exigent circumstances to support the detention, or (c) a court order.

The LACDCFS continued to deemphasize the use of group homes throughout the years of the CAP, maintaining the policy direction that was in place before the start of the CAP project. A resource management process (RMP)—a product of the county Katie A. Settlement Agreement plan—was incorporated into the placement TDM process for children residing in or at risk of placement in high-level group homes. In general, placing a child in a group home required the approval of a program manager, and placing a child younger than 12 in a group home required the approval of the LACDCFS director.

According to respondents there were a number of issues that stood out regarding accessing services. First, there was generally a decrease in the number of available foster homes across the county, and some regions had none. Teens and medically fragile children were the hardest to find foster home placements for, and when a placement was found it typically meant the teen or child had to change schools. Second, it was increasingly difficult to find appropriate, high-level group home placements given the trend away from group home placements in general and the occasional reluctance on the part of providers to accept more behaviorally challenging youth. Third, the requirements for the kinship-placement assessment process was time-consuming and sometimes meant children had to be placed in a foster home or foster family agency until the approval process was complete. Fourth, the county needed but did not have a 23-hour assessment center that could help ease the transition for children between removal and placement. Finally, the lack of necessary services in the regions, such as substance abuse treatment or domestic violence treatment, meant that court-ordered conditions could not be met and timelines had to be extended.

2.5.2.2 Case Management

POE was the service delivery system for the LACDCFS. As was previously described, the purpose of the system was to encourage collaboration between professionals, the community, and families in order to develop plans that allowed children to remain safely at home. One component of the system was Intensive Services Workers (ISWs). The role of ISWs was to

ensure that the transition of the case from an emergency response worker to a new worker was a smooth one and thus provide a connection as a child's case moves from detention to family reunification or family maintenance. The ISW also began connecting the child and family to the necessary services immediately after detention and then as the case transitioned. The use of ISWs was expanded beyond the Compton office, although not all offices eventually had ISWs working on cases. The use of ISWs as a case management strategy ended with the redeployment of staff in reaction to the emergency response crisis.

2.5.2.3 Service Array, Intensity, and Integration

Respondents reported that the LACDCFS had been deliberate in its expansion of services by focusing growth on three initiatives in the first two years of the CAP and on two additional initiatives in the third and fourth year of the project. It was only in the last year of the project that the department expanded initiatives substantively by adding 14 additional initiatives. Sixteen of the initiatives were expansions of existing services and three were new services (not all of the initiatives had expenditure claims in the final year of the CAP). The LACDCFS also included several other non-CAP strategies in its efforts to improve outcomes for children and families. These strategies included the Intensive Treatment Foster Care program and the Residentially Based Services Demonstration Project.

Respondents noted several areas of concern related to services that were needed but that did not exist, such as the disparities in services available in the various regions of the county; the need for a 23-hour assessment center; the lack of counseling programs for children, especially those who've experience sexual abuse; resources for medically fragile children; and resources for Spanish-speaking children and families.

Cooperation and partnerships with other departments and community-based organizations had increased over the time of the CAP, according to respondents. The relationship with LACDMH continued to be strong, primarily a result of the programmatically collaborative relationships that resulted from the county Katie A. Settlement Agreement plan. The relationship the LACDCFS had with the LACPD had improved, particularly in efforts to address the needs of dually-involved youth. The LACDCFS also continued also have strong working relationships with the LACDPH and the LACDSS. The department also had a large number of contracts with community-based organizations to provide services to children and families involved with child welfare services, as well as working relationships with a variety of school districts in the county.

2.5.2.4 Quality Assurance

The LACDCFS centralized and enhanced its quality control systems in a number of ways as part of its efforts to improve its infrastructure in support of practice and as part of its efforts to meet the requirements of the county Katie A. Settlement Agreement plan. Respondents reported that quality control processes had been conducted at the regional level and that these processes allowed for a nuanced understanding of the environment. However, centralizing the process gave the department a better understanding of the whole system and created learning opportunities between regions.

The Quality Improvement Unit, according to respondents, significantly enhanced the quality assurance processes and was implemented as part of the department's compliance with

the county Katie A. Settlement Agreement plan. The unit was responsible for conducting Quality Service Reviews (QSR), a process for determining what was working and what was not working with child welfare cases. QSRs involved an extensive examination of how families were engaged and how services were provided. Quality Improvement Unit staff visit regional offices and review the history of a random sample of cases and then interview parents, children, relevant department staff, attorneys, therapists, community providers, and other key individuals in order to learn more about engagement and service provision. Information learned from the process was then presented to the LACDCFS executive team so that they could address any issues that emerged from the review. The LACDCFS was also developing core practice models as part of the QSR process.

Other quality assurance efforts included enhancing the Internal Controls Unit, working to standardize operations across the 19 regional offices, and establishing regional office quality assurance processes. The Internal Controls Unit was responsible for reviewing such departmental administrative functions as purchasing, mileage claims, and the use of bus tokens and gift cards for children and families. There were also efforts underway to increase the level of standardization across the offices regarding the implementation of policies and regulations while retaining a degree of flexibility so that operations could be adapted to regional characteristics. Finally, regional offices continued to engage in quality assurance efforts alongside the larger centralization process. Regional administration routinely reviewed various compliance and performance metrics along with outcomes as they pertained to a specific office.

2.6 Findings: Alameda County Probation Department

2.6.1 Implementation Phase

2.6.1.1 Plan*

The ACPD, as shown in Table 2.5, funded 10 initiatives and investments over the five-year period of the CAP in support of two broad goals. Three initiatives and investments had expenditures in the first four years of the CAP. In the fifth year, seven additional initiatives and investments were added. The department claimed approximately \$18 million in expenditures for its CAP initiatives and investments, with 81% spent internally for staff, 18% spent on external contracts, and 1% spent directly on youth and families.

| Table 2.5 ACPD Goals, Initiatives and Investments, and Expenditures (in thousands) | | | | | | | | | |
|--|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Goals and CAP Initiatives and Investments | SFY 07/08 Actual | SFY 08/09 Actual | SFY 09/10 Actual | SFY 10/11 Actual | SFY 11/12 Actual | Total Actual | Internal Expend | Direct Expend | External Expend |
| Reduced Out-of-Home Placements | | | | | | | | | |
| Family Preservation Unit (FPU) | \$1,253 | \$1,484 | \$1,726 | \$1,811 | \$1,908 | \$8,182 | \$8,056 | \$126 | |
| JusticeWorks | | | | | \$485 | \$485 | | | \$485 |
| Data Research and Reporting Team (DARRT) | | | | | \$465 | \$465 | \$465 | | |
| Increased Alternatives to Out-of-Home Placement | | | | | | | | | |
| Collaborative Court | (in FPU Actual) | | | | |
| Increased Business and Vocational Employment Opportunities | | | | | | | | | |
| Summer Youth Employment Program | (in FPU Actual) | | | | |
| Maintained Staffing Levels | | | | | | | | | |
| Emergency Family Support Services | | | | | \$50 | \$50 | | \$50 | |
| Delinquency Prevention Network Contracts | | | | | \$1,807 | \$1,807 | | | \$1,807 |
| Juvenile Services—Other Probation Staff Time | | | | | \$2,628 | \$2,628 | \$2,628 | | |
| Juvenile Services—Public Defender Staff | | | | | \$400 | \$400 | | | \$400 |
| Juvenile Hall Unit 6 | | | | | \$1,027 | \$1,027 | \$1,027 | | |
| Total Expenditures | \$1,253 | \$1,484 | \$1,726 | \$1,811 | \$8,770 | \$15,044 | \$12,176 | \$176 | \$2,692 |
| Percent of Total Expenditures | | | | | | | 81% | 1% | 18% |

* The initiatives and investments listed in the table include those for which the department claimed expenditures before June 30, 2012. Descriptions and additional information about the initiatives and investments can be found in California Department of Social Services. (2012). *Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project (CAP), Semi-Annual Progress Report for January 1, 2012 Through June 30, 2012*. Sacramento, CA: Author.

The ACPD, according to respondents, did not initially view the CAP as an opportunity to develop and implement new initiatives or enhance existing programs. Instead, the department viewed the CAP as an opportunity to be a good partner to the ACDCFS and to stabilize a federal funding source that had been in decline in recent years. As a result, the ACPD did not develop an extensive plan at the start of the CAP that included novel programming initiatives.

The ACPD's main programmatic objective coming into the CAP was to provide a secure source of funding for its Family Preservation Unit (FPU) in order to shield the program from the possibility of future layoffs. FPU was not a new program, but it was aligned with waiver principles emphasizing family reunification and permanency; as well, it exemplified the philosophical shift towards a child welfare approach that ACPD was already undergoing upon its entry into the CAP.

Beginning in early 2011, with changes in leadership, ACPD was able to take advantage of the opportunity to implement innovative programming utilizing flexible funding, and put several new strategies into place.

2.6.1.2 Oversight and Monitoring

For the first several years of the CAP, the day-to-day oversight and monitoring of the CAP was carried out by the CAP coordinator, a deputy chief probation officer overseeing the project, in conjunction with the deputy chief probation officer responsible for the Placement Unit and other key units. The CAP coordinator and the chief probation officer were also part of the executive team working with representatives from the ACDCFS. Internally, a weekly meeting included the chief probation officer, the assistant chief probation officer, and the two deputy chief probation officers most closely affiliated with the CAP. In the 18 months of the CAP prior to the completion of this report, the chief probation officer served as the CAP coordinator, with assistance from the chief of staff.

As reported in the Interim Evaluation Report, in its efforts to monitor placements and track placement expenditures, the ACPD was hampered in the first half of the CAP by the inadequacy of its aging data management system. The development of a new data management system, called the Probation Rehabilitation Intensive Services and Management (PRISM) system, had been underway for several years and became operational in October 2010. It was anticipated that the system would allow department staff to track a youth's placement history in its entirety and to measure and track youth outcomes, with both capacities enhancing staff decision making and providing the capacity to evaluate the effectiveness of their interventions. However, while the department did consider PRISM an upgrade in its ability to track probation referrals and court outcomes, the system still did not include the components that would allow for evaluation and reporting. PRISM was also expected to aid in fiscal management and make it possible to track placement costs; however, PRISM did not make this tracking possible. Due to PRISM's limited functionality, ACPD considered replacing it with an entirely new system after just two years. In response, the ACPD developed stand-alone databases as needed. The ACPD also purchased reports from the Alameda County Information Technology Department when needed. The department began using the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) in 2010. However, respondents reported that its implementation and use proceeded slowly.

In 2012, ACPD created a new data unit, the Data Research and Reporting Team (DARRT), which was expected to support waiver strategies in a significant way and support the provision of data management and reporting throughout the ACPD. Specific to the CAP, the unit was expected to enhance decision making surrounding the question of out-of-home placements and to coordinate useful data for ongoing quality assurance.

2.6.1.3 Staffing and Training

Staffing levels remained fairly consistent over the course of the CAP. Early in the CAP, a number of placement deputy probation officers (DPOs) were shifted to the department's FPU, a process that constituted ACPD's main waiver strategy. In the years following, the FPU held roughly the same number of DPOs, although one position was lost in a major reorganization in 2011. Respondents reported rising caseloads in the FPU over the course of the CAP, despite the reduction in juvenile cases overall in recent years. One additional DPO was added in 2010 to support the Collaborative Court, another waiver strategy; and then another was added in 2011 when the ACPD decided to double the capacity of the program.

ACPD was affected by the countywide hiring freeze and the impact of the State's budget crisis in the first half of the CAP. As a result, Juvenile Services lost 15 probation staff in SFY 09/10. However, those DPOs were eventually rehired beginning in SFY 10/11. JusticeWorks, a private for-profit organization, provided case-management support to DPOs by adding six staff members to Placement and the FPU. According to respondents, the inclusion of additional case-management staff through JusticeWorks helped to alleviate staffing shortfalls caused by the budget crisis and by hiring freezes in Alameda County.

DPOs participated in a number of ongoing trainings. These included trainings for the use of the CWS/CMS and PRISM data systems, and for the Screening for Out-of-Home Services (SOS) Committee protocols. Respondents expressed a need for training that would help new JusticeWorks staff better understand their roles and become integrated into the ACPD operations.

2.6.1.4 Structure and Operations

Many changes took place at the executive level of the ACPD over the course of the CAP. Over a period of five years, the department had four different chiefs of probation and five different deputy chiefs of juvenile services. In 2011, under the new chief probation officer, new deputy chiefs were appointed and the assistant chief position was replaced with a chief of staff position.

In the earliest phase of CAP implementation, an additional position for a deputy chief of juvenile probation was made available specifically to oversee CAP activities. While a deputy chief was still required to oversee the day-to-day operations of Juvenile Probation Services, a Title IV-E position, funded by CFP, focused entirely on waiver-related issues and was active between 2008 and 2010. In 2010, budgetary constraints left the department unable to support two deputy chief probation officers for Juvenile Probation Services, leaving just one. As of the start of SFY 11/12, CFP no longer supported the deputy chief position. Major responsibilities for the management and coordination of the Title IV-E waiver have since shifted to the director of placement and family preservation.

An important change in the structure of the department involved the elimination of the position of assistant chief of probation in 2011 and the attendant creation of the comparable but non-sworn position of chief of staff. Both positions were second in command at the PD, serving the chief directly; and both were responsible for planning, organizing, directing, and coordinating the activities of the ACPD. Prior to its elimination, the assistant chief position held responsibility for the management of both the administrative departments and the program departments, including supervision of all deputy chiefs. The chief-of-staff position supervises all administrative services, while ACPD's programs fall under the supervision of the deputy chiefs, who report directly to the chief probation officer. Respondents report that the shift from a sworn to a non-sworn position for the chief of staff represented a major change for the department, especially regarding chain of command. Some respondents expressed concern about a senior position in a law enforcement agency not being a sworn probation officer.

ACPD underwent a major departmental reorganization, which took place in two stages: in December 2010 and then in February 2011. These reorganizations consisted primarily of a shifting of personnel: the units themselves were not reorganized, no positions were added or cut, and no changes were made to responsibilities or duties. However, a large number of personnel were moved, with many transferring between adult and juvenile probation. Respondents believed that the purpose of the reorganization was to reinvigorate practice by changing duties and responsibilities. However, respondents reported a general dissatisfaction with the reorganization, characterizing it as an unnecessary disruption.

In 2010, the ACPD combined its intake and investigations units into a single unit. The intake and investigation functions were integrated and vertically managed by DPOs. The integration streamlined the process and allowed for a more sustained and enhanced relationship between the DPO and the youth and their families.

2.6.1.5 Leadership

Leadership was challenging for ACPD over the course of the CAP. The ACPD had four different acting, interim, and permanent chief probation officers over the five years of the CAP, and five different deputy chiefs of juvenile services over the same time period. The ACPD had been without a permanent deputy chief of juvenile services since early 2010. Similarly, the agency had been headed by a permanent chief probation officer for only one year since early 2010.

The shifts in leadership had a considerable effect on the implementation of the CAP. In February 2011, the ACBOS hired a nationally known juvenile justice reformer who, according to respondents, brought much excitement and hope to the ACPD. Under his leadership, the ACPD began to plan and implement several new initiatives utilizing flexible funding. However, in February 2012, the chief was placed on administrative leave pending investigation of allegations made against him by a subordinate (DPO). Although an internal investigation found no evidence to support the accusing officer's claims, the chief announced his resignation in June 2012. As a result, initiatives begun during the chief's tenure were not fully implemented. While the programs did get underway, respondents described a lack of enthusiasm for them in the ACPD, combined with a lack of both understanding and leadership regarding their implementation.

2.6.1.6 Perception and Morale

The CAP began with an upswing in staff morale due to the hiring of a new chief probation officer who worked to alleviate tensions that had arisen with an embattled former chief and that had extended over a lengthy period of time. However, since that hiring several factors led to a sharp reduction in staff morale over the course of the CAP. The first factor was the state's budget crisis; in addition, there was a considerable reduction in two significant grants that supported ACPD's Community Probation Unit and some camp programs. These reductions led to layoffs and subsequent increases in caseloads for those remaining staff members. Prior to the layoffs there was a lengthy period of anxiety and turmoil for staff as they felt their jobs were imminently threatened.

The second factor that eroded morale was the recurring changes in leadership. As mentioned previously, ACPD had four different acting, interim, and permanent chief probation officers over the five years of the CAP and five different deputy chiefs of Juvenile Probation Services over the same time period. Respondents reported that these rapid changes in leadership led to feelings of instability and left many unanswered questions among staff members.

The third factor in the reduction of morale was JusticeWorks, a private probation management agency that was brought on by ACPD as a waiver initiative in 2011 to provide case management assistance in several juvenile probation units. Respondents reported a lack of communication and training within the department about JusticeWorks, a lack that resulted in concerns about the ACPD's privatization efforts. Respondents also reported that the juvenile court judges were not knowledgeable about the role of the JusticeWorks staff who were non-sworn case management providers. Judges sometimes looked to JusticeWorks staff for actions and information akin to those provided by sworn probation officers, all of which led to a degree of confusion about case responsibilities.

Respondents perceived the waiver as supporting a broad philosophical shift that was underway in the department prior to the start of the CAP; this shift emphasized the use of family-centered, in-home, strengths-based programming and a reduction in the use of suitable placement. Staff believed that the waiver encouraged creative ways of keeping youth in the community, and they felt this was very positive for the PD. However, respondents were not able to report on specific ways the waiver had made it possible for them to be more successful under the CAP, except in terms of the reduction in rates of youth entering congregate care.

Understanding and knowledge of the waiver improved in 2011 as a result of a new departmental administration and chief probation officer in early 2011. While during this period there was a greater understanding of the CAP at the administrative levels of ACPD, there did not appear to be an increased knowledge about the CAP among the DPOs and supervisors, as shown in the worker-supervisor survey conducted in the first thirty months of the CAP. In that survey, most respondents reported having at least a limited knowledge of the CAP, with fewer than 8% reporting that they had no knowledge of it at all. While most felt the CAP was having a positive effect, less than a quarter of respondents felt that a wider array of services had come available.

2.6.1.7 Court

As summarized in the Interim Evaluation Report, respondents viewed the Alameda County Juvenile Court as a critical component of the ACPD's efforts under the CAP. Respondents indicated that early in the CAP judges remained amenable to finding alternate strategies to out-of-home placements and reducing the length of group-home treatment programs. Beginning early in the CAP, the department provided systematic and continual education on CAP goals and procedures to bench officers to obtain their support. To assist with this issue, the presiding judge held regular court-probation meetings early in the CAP, with bench officers attending along with (at various times) the assistant chief probation officer, deputy chief probation officers, and placement director. Respondents held these meetings in high regard and characterized them as informative and constructive. Respondents credit these early meetings as creating strong support from bench officers for the initiatives under the CAP.

Respondents characterize the courts' view of ACPD's SOS as mixed. The SOS committee created a team-generated recommendation that was supported by the director of placement services and the deputy chief of juvenile services, rather than a recommendation from a single DPO supported by his or her supervisor. Respondents reported that, as a result of the team-generated recommendations, bench officers seemed to feel pressured to ensure that their rulings aligned with the recommendations, whereas in the past their rulings had not been constrained in such a way.

Additionally, the presence of JusticeWorks staff on cases led to some confusion with the court regarding their role. JusticeWorks staff were not legally responsible for the cases, and their input was to be incorporated by the case-carrying DPO. Respondents reported that, in their desire for collecting as much information as possible, bench officers sometimes ordered JusticeWorks staff to present details in court; this placed the DPO in a challenging position because it was not the role of JusticeWorks personnel to gather data or create reports.

2.6.1.8 Contextual Factors

Respondents reported that the type of cases the ACPD received changed through the course of the CAP, particularly those cases with suitable placement orders. Cases involving serious offenders and higher levels of criminality involving guns were much more prevalent. Respondents surmised that this may have been due in part to the removal of the California Division of Juvenile Justice (CDJJ) as a supervisory option for these minors due to Senate Bill (SB) 81, The California Juvenile Justice Realignment Act of 2007. As was mentioned in the Interim Evaluation Report, SB 81 had a noteworthy impact on the ACPD. The legislation left county PDs with fewer options for minors committing serious offenses. Because the county now must retain youth who would have normally gone to CDJJ, a slightly larger population of serious juvenile offenders has been created and is now held in county custody overall. The Youth Offender Block Grant, created by SB 81, helped to offset some of the challenges.

2.6.2 County Services Component

2.6.2.1 Accessing Services

The process for accessing services for youth changed substantially for ACPD over the course of the CAP. Arguably the most important change in the process for accessing services

was the SOS Committee, a multidisciplinary team charged with decision making regarding placement in out-of-home programs. As reported in the Interim Evaluation Report, DPOs were required to take part in a SOS Committee meeting prior to making out-of-home placement recommendations; as well, they were required to have all recommendations to out-of-home placement approved by the SOS Committee prior to making these recommendations to the court. The team meetings began in April 2009, and the courts were apprised of these changes at that time.

2.6.2.2 Case Management

Case management also changed over the years of the CAP. The ACPD combined its intake and investigation units into a blended unit in 2009. Prior to the change, minors first came into contact with an intake officer who performed an initial case review and determined whether the minor would either be released or remain in custody; the case then moved to a different officer, who investigated and then prepared a full dispositional report. Under the blended unit model, a single officer performs both functions, both intake and investigation. The intent of the model was to enhance the ability of families to access information more readily and for deputies to have the opportunity to engage in their cases more fully, leading to enriched relationships among probation, youth, and their families.

The ACPD also implemented the Youth Level of Service Case Management Inventory (YLS) assessment tool in 2009. The YLS assisted DPOs in determining the risk levels of each minor at the time they entered the system, and in determining appropriate treatment plans. The inventory's outcomes were presented at SOS Committee meetings, where they were used to help inform the decision-making process regarding out-of-home placement.

JusticeWorks, a private juvenile justice agency, was contracted to provide case management assistance. JusticeWorks staff assisted on cases but are not primary caseworkers; instead, they were contracted to support probation by providing a greater degree of contact with youth on probation than DPOs could typically provide due to caseload requirements. JusticeWorks staff were not sworn DPOs and typically did not appear in court, but they did attend SOS Committee meetings, had access to probation case files, and brokered services. The JusticeWorks contract with the ACPD began in January 2012.

As discussed in the Interim Evaluation Report, respondents asserted that the ACPD worked closely with group home providers in the early years of the CAP to reduce the length of stay in treatment programs. Respondents reported that, in response to this change, some service providers diversified their service offerings. For example, a new direction in programming by some providers was reported to be more family focused, sometimes providing treatment in the home. Respondents described these programs as successful, although capacity was quite limited. The ACPD had entered into contracts with providers who offered this type of care, creating identified slots specifically for youth on suitable placement. Respondents reported that other service providers also began to adopt this model.

2.6.2.3 Service Array, Intensity, and Integration

Although the array of services available to probation youth did not change substantially over the course of the CAP, existing programs in residential settings changed to some degree,

becoming less lengthy and more intensive in order to accommodate ACPD's mandate to reduce the length of time youth spend out of their homes under placement orders.

As reported in the Interim Evaluation Report, although the ACPD and bench officers were inclined to keep youth close to home when under a placement order, respondents stated that local group homes within Alameda County did not meet the service needs of many minors on suitable placement orders. This was particularly true for high-need youth; and respondents preferred larger, out-of-county programs for those youth, with more staff and a greater array of professional services, including on-site schools and intensive counseling. Respondents also identified several areas in which they felt services for youth were either unavailable or deficient, including group homes for sexually exploited minors, gang-competent group homes, programs for Spanish speakers, locked services for minors who habitually run away from group homes, and transitional services (including transitional housing) for youth 17 and over who were moving into adulthood.

Respondents point to the CAP as facilitating a much more positive and collaborative relationship with the ACSSA and the ACDCFS. They felt the waiver had made it necessary for the ACDCFS and ACPD to work together in new ways and that this promoted an increase in cooperation between the two departments.

2.6.2.4 Quality Assurance

The ACPD, as reported in the Interim Evaluation Report, was hampered by a dearth of information for decision making and quality control. Data issues in the latter years of the CAP continued to challenge the department's quality control efforts, although respondents reported that the implementation of DARRT was intended to address at least some of the quality-control issues.

2.7 Findings: Los Angeles County Probation Department

2.7.1 Implementation Phase

2.7.1.1 Plan*

The LACPD, as shown in Table 2.6, funded five initiatives and investments over the five-year period of the CAP in support of two broad goals. One initiative had expenditures in the first year of the CAP, followed by three in the second year, four in the third year, and five in the fourth and fifth years. The department claimed approximately \$20 million in expenditures for its CAP initiatives and investments, with 92% spent internally for staff and 8% spent on external contracts.

| Table 2.6 LACPD Goals, Initiatives and Investments, and Expenditures (in thousands) | | | | | | | | | |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Goals and CAP Initiatives and Investments | SFY 07/08 Actual | SFY 08/09 Actual | SFY 09/10 Actual | SFY 10/11 Actual | SFY 11/12 Actual | Total Actual | Internal Expend | Direct Expend | External Expend |
| Increased Placement Stability | | | | | | | | | |
| Enhanced Cross-Systems Case Assessment and Case Planning (CSA) | | \$194 | \$333 | \$337 | \$123 | \$987 | | | \$987 |
| Increased Permanency | | | | | | | | | |
| Functional Family Probation (FFP) | \$112 | \$627 | \$4,283 | \$5,923 | \$5,938 | \$16,883 | \$16,882 | | |
| Functional Family Therapy (FFT) | | \$156 | \$87 | \$109 | \$129 | \$481 | | | \$481 |
| Prospective Authorization and Utilization Review (PAUR) Unit | | | \$146 | \$414 | \$514 | \$1,075 | \$1,075 | | |
| Multisystemic Therapy (MST) | | | | \$32 | \$60 | \$92 | | | \$92 |
| Total Expenditures | \$112 | \$977 | \$4,849 | \$6,815 | \$6,764 | \$19,518 | \$17,957 | | \$1,560 |
| Percent of Total Expenditures | | | | | | | 92% | 0% | 8% |

* The initiatives and investments listed in the table include those for which the department claimed expenditures before June 30, 2012. Descriptions and additional information about the initiatives and investments can be found in California Department of Social Services. (2012). *Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project (CAP), Semi-Annual Progress Report for January 1, 2012 Through June 30, 2012*. Sacramento, CA: Author.

As mentioned earlier, the LACPD's involvement with the CAP was concentrated in one area of its operations, the Placement Services Bureau, which was housed within the department's Juvenile Special Services Division and provided case management and other services to minors who received suitable placement orders. A child who has been removed from his or her home and placed in an alternative environment (e.g., relative or non-relative care or a group home) to better meet his or her needs is considered a suitable placement minor.

The LACPD was included in the planning process for the CAP six months prior to the implementation of the project in July 2007. Since that date, according to respondents, restructuring and change in leadership has created a context for a reorientation of Placement

Services Bureau towards policies and practices that were more child and family centered, with a distinct child welfare orientation.

LACPD's implementation plan included the introduction of initiatives and investments over two phases that would take place in the first three years of the CAP. The first set of initiatives was approved by the LACBOS in June 2007, an additional initiative was approved in February 2009, and a third set of initiatives and investments were approved in December 2011.

The planning process for the LACPD was the responsibility of the Juvenile Special Services deputy director and the Placement Services Bureau chief, with input from the waiver management team. Proposals for new initiatives were prioritized and brought to the waiver executive team, where they were identified for presentation to the justice deputies of the LACBOS for approval. Approved initiatives and investments were presented again to the LACBOS for final approval.

2.7.1.2 Oversight and Monitoring

The LACPD Waiver Management Team oversaw the day-to-day implementation of the CAP and monitored related outcomes, including fiscal management. A waiver management team originally consisted of the waiver coordinator and two program analysts. By the fourth year of the project, the analyst positions had been reassigned due to other staffing needs in the department. An executive team that included the waiver coordinator, the chief of the Placement Services Bureau, the deputy director of the Special Services Division, the chief deputy probation officer, and the chief probation officer provided general oversight and policy direction for the CAP. The LACPD executive team worked closely with its LACDCFS counterparts to coordinate the efforts of both departments. The LACPD executive team attended bi-monthly meetings with CFP and monthly meetings with the LACCEO. The LACPD executive team made numerous presentations to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, Justice Deputies, and the Children's Commission. The LACPD facilitated internal meetings focused on CAP priorities. The Placement Services Bureau held monthly meetings specific to a number of initiatives. Quarterly meetings were held with representatives from group home providers, as were meetings with Bench Officers, to keep the groups informed and solicit feedback.

As described in the Interim Evaluation Report, the LACPD introduced the first phase of its Probation Case Management System (PCMS), replacing its Juvenile Case Management System, in the spring of 2009. Along with its case management functions, the PCMS was intended to provide more accurate and complete data collection and reporting, including the ability to monitor when minors entered the system, when they exited, placement information, and what services they receive. PCMS was intended to assist the department in monitoring the numbers of youth in out-of-home care on any given day, how many are involved in other interventions, and the fiscal impact of these services. However, respondents reported that the system was only partially operational and not sufficient for the needs of the bureau. Because of the inadequacy of the PCMS management information system, the LACPD developed stand-alone systems for all of its placement units.

The LACPD was mandated by the CDSS to enter child welfare information into the child welfare data management system, CWS/CMS, for Placement Services Bureau-involved youth in 2010. Respondents from LACPD described initial efforts to enter data as challenging, as no

additional funding or technical assistance was provided to the department with the advent of the new system. However, the Residential Based Services Unit found the system useful for managing cases. Another drawback to the introduction of CWS/CMS to the LACPD, however, was that staff were required to do multiple entries of the same case management data in different data systems (i.e., PCMS, stand-alone databases, and CWS/CMS).

2.7.1.3 Staffing and Training

In the first two years of the CAP, staffing shortfalls due to attrition and intermittent hiring freezes—neither of which were related to the CAP—created a substantial challenge for Placement Services Bureau DPOs because the LACPD’s involvement with the CAP was concentrated in this one area of its operations. The bureau’s loss of staff due to staff attrition was compounded by a department-wide perception of the Placement Bureau as a uniquely demanding place within the LACPD, with DPOs not eager to transfer there when positions opened up. Caseloads increased during this time period. Respondents reported that these high caseload levels affected the quality of case management, leaving DPOs with little time to adequately perform tasks related to family finding, family reunification, and permanency. Respondents reported that in the latter years of the CAP and once the new programs were implemented, the Placement Bureau became a more desirable post within the LACPD because of the kind of work experience it offered.

LACPD experienced some change in staffing at the executive level over the course of the CAP, with the position of chiefs of probation changing three times and the leadership within the Placement Bureau changing once in 2009. Towards the end of the CAP, the Placement Bureau lost staff positions due to the needs of other areas in the department. This was a particular challenge to the bureau, as many of its staff had undergone extensive training in Functional Family Therapy (FFT) and Functional Family Probation (FFP).

Respondents reported that staff had received the necessary training for the initiatives implemented under the CAP, and that trainings were ongoing. These included Cross-Systems Case Assessment and Case Planning (CSACP), FFT, and FFP.

2.7.1.4 Structure and Operations

In May 2011 the LACBOS placed the LACPD under its direct oversight, along with LACDCFS, replacing the oversight of the county’s chief executive officer, who had held responsibility for the agencies since 2007. Respondents described the shift in oversight as having fairly little impact on the operations of the department.

As discussed in the Interim Evaluation Report, the Placement to Community Transition Services Unit (PCTS) was created as a unit within the Placement Bureau in response to the LACPD’s plans under the CAP. The PCTS began operations in June 2007 and was responsible for the oversight and coordination of most in-house, evidence-based programming implemented by the Placement Services Bureau. As part of its second sequence CAP initiatives, LACPD created a new unit to manage community-based services and oversee community-based organization (CBO) slots. The Prospective Authorization and Utilization Review Unit (PAUR) monitored the availability of FFT, Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST), and Wraparound programs

with service providers. In 2011, the LACPD created an additional unit of DPOs who worked within Residential Based Services Unit (RBSU) and were trained in FFP.

Additionally, as described in the Interim Evaluation Report, the LACPD changed the place where youth with suitable placement orders were detained. In the first two years of the CAP, youth were detained in one of the three juvenile halls operated by the department. The policy changed in the spring of 2009 so that suitable placement youth were detained in one particular juvenile hall in order to facilitate service delivery by making it easier and more expeditious to meet with youth; access necessary case records; engage in case planning; coordinate placements; and coordinate with external service providers, such as group homes, the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, and Los Angeles County Health Services. In response, the unit of probation staff responsible for cross-systems assessments and youth movement coordination were relocated to the one specific juvenile hall.

A number of operational challenges were described by respondents. A major hurdle described by respondents involved the structure of the LACPD's budget and accounting processes. In order to determine the amount of funds available for CAP initiatives in any given year, the savings generated through reductions in out-of-home care costs had to be calculated, and they required 45 to 60 days to complete. According to respondents, the processes presented challenges in program planning and maintaining program continuity under the CAP. The contracting process in Los Angeles County also presented operational challenges. The contracting process was typically lengthy; it took several years to complete and execute, making it difficult for the department to be responsive to programmatic needs.

2.7.1.5 Leadership

Leadership was perhaps the most important factor in the implementation of the CAP for the LACPD. Beginning with the Planning Phase and through initial implementation, the vision provided by bureau administrators drove an important paradigmatic shift in the department, one that embraced family-oriented, strengths-based programming, which the LACPD envisioned as its major strategies under the waiver. In later stages of the CAP, respondents described an enhancement in communication among program managers and bureau administrators as an essential factor in the implementation of CAP programs, as was a sense of fairness and trust purposefully developed by bureau leadership. The Placement Bureau was described as an empowering environment in which bureau leadership encouraged autonomy in decision making and where strategizing among program managers was encouraged. Staff reported feeling supported and trusted by bureau leadership. They stated that this support and trust provided them with the ability to implement waiver strategies successfully and allowed them to flourish.

Placement Bureau leaders also sponsored the creation of a practice model that provided a framework for best practices in working with youth on probation. This model aligned with their shift in focus to evidence-based practices involving greater family engagement. The practice model provided direction for such system improvements as reductions in youth in congregate care, reductions in the maltreatment of youth, and improvements in the numbers of children achieving permanency. The Placement Practice Model was developed through the Breakthrough Series Collaborative Model for System Improvement sponsored by CFP and Georgetown University. The placement model also included input from bureau administrators, program

managers, and unit supervisors; this input contributed to a broad sense of shared responsibility for the success of the model. Respondents credited the practice model—and the leadership responsible for it—with creating a strong positive feeling within the bureau and for getting the waiver strategies started and flourishing. Although the practice model was authored by placement staff, it continues to be used throughout the Los Angeles County juvenile probation system.

2.7.1.6 Perception and Morale

Morale among line DPOs associated with LACPD's Placement Bureau increased substantially over the course of the CAP, according to respondents. In the early years, respondents reported that the Placement Bureau was considered an undesirable post within the LACPD, as caseloads were high and geographically inconsistent; and it was difficult to connect youth with services other than group homes. In the second half of the CAP, respondents reported an elevation in morale due to lowered caseloads, more variety in the services available to probation youth as a result of the CAP, and strong administrative leadership. However, respondents also noted that while the broader array of services available to youth improved their ability to serve youth, thus improving morale, the increased tasks and paperwork associated with certain service referrals was frustrating.

Respondents from focus groups in the latter years of the project showed themselves to be knowledgeable about the CAP, including CAP programs and CAP structure and purpose. This increased knowledge represented a shift from the first years of the CAP, where most respondents reported having limited or no knowledge of the CAP, based on the worker-supervisor survey conducted in the first thirty months of the CAP. Respondents viewed the CAP as being positive and beneficial and aligning with the current strength-based, family-focused orientation of the department. Respondents described the CAP as being directly responsible for their practice model, as well as for the implementation of evidence-based programming that supported the department's orientation and helped to make more treatment options available. Respondents also felt that, due to the CAP, their work was more interesting, their caseloads were smaller, and they were able to provide more individualized case planning. They also stated they believed the CAP was responsible for providing better equipment for probation officers, including laptops for all DPOs in the field, and access to unit vehicles.

2.7.1.7 Court

Respondents reported that the relationship between the LACPD and the Los Angeles County Juvenile Dependency Court improved over the course of the CAP. Whereas initially the courts were somewhat cautious regarding the changes wrought by the CAP and CAP initiatives, respondents felt the court became very supportive and an intrinsic element to the successful implementation of the CAP.

Juvenile court judges were brought into the process later than they were with other groups planning for the CAP, and this created an initial challenge; however respondents cited that, early on in the project, educational sessions that were attended by all juvenile court judges created a stronger partnership with the LACPD under the CAP. The sessions focused on the CAP, CAP initiatives, and the rules and procedures associated with them. To enhance knowledge of the CAP further, one bench officer held meetings for other judges to discuss these areas. As a

result, respondents reported that the judges appeared more interested in such CAP programs as FFT, and they seemed supportive of them. Respondents indicated that they felt they were working more collaboratively with the courts, district attorneys, and public defenders to achieve better outcomes for youth.

2.7.1.8 Contextual Factors

The State of California's financial crisis had a significant impact on the LACPD, stopping its ability to hire new staff and reducing juvenile probation funding overall.

In 2007 with SB 81, a juvenile justice realignment effort shifted all nonviolent juvenile offenders from the CDJJ to local control. Although the effort provided funds for the shift, counties were concerned that resources would still be strained with the influx of youth from state facilities, and they feared that the realignment might necessitate the use of waiver funds. Although these fears were not borne out and the impact of realignment proved to be minimal in its early stage, the concern that waiver funds may be needed led to uncertainty in planning for specified waiver strategies.

In 2011, additional realignment efforts were implemented under AB 109, which shifted criminal justice program and fiscal responsibilities for nonviolent criminal offenders from the state to county control. AB 109 focused strictly on adult offenders; however, because the bill reassigned supervision of adult probationers to counties, local departmental resources came under strain, and DPOs were transferred out of juvenile probation and the Placement Services Bureau to adult supervision.

California group home rates increased by 32% starting in December 2009 as a result of ruling in response to a lawsuit by the federal Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in early 2010, with the judge making the ruling retroactive from December 2009. The increase had important implications for waiver counties in particular, as they were working within a capped allocation environment. The two CAP counties sought adjustments to their capped allocation from the federal government, but their request was not granted. As a result, it was necessary for the LACPD to use part of its allocation to offset the increase in rates, portions of which would have otherwise gone to programs.

2.7.2 County Services Component

2.7.2.1 Accessing Services

As discussed in the Interim Evaluation Report, respondents indicated that youth came into the system under the CAP much as they did in the past, although the process for accessing services was altered to some degree under the CAP. Prior to the CAP, youth with suitable placement orders had been detained in one of the three juvenile halls in Los Angeles County, awaiting placement. That policy shifted under the CAP: almost all youth entering suitable placement were housed in Central Juvenile Hall. This was done to assist the Placement Services Bureau in the CSACP, and enabled them to move youth out of detention more quickly. Although the LACPD decreased its use of CSACP in favor of the more comprehensive assessments performed in Placement Assessment Centers (PACs), most placement youth were still initially housed in Central Juvenile Hall. It was the intent of LACPD to have every youth entering suitable placement to be assessed in either a PAC or through a CSACP.

The process for accessing aftercare programs, as well as some programs used to divert cases from suitable placement, was altered as a result of one of the PD's second sequence of waiver initiatives. The PAUR Unit served as a gateway to such services such as FFT, MST, Wraparound, and Family Preservation. These programs were used mainly as aftercare services, but they were also used as diversions from suitable placement for youth at risk of removal from the home. Whereas in the past DPOs made recommendations for these services directly, DPOs are currently required to make these recommendations to the PAUR Unit, which monitors the availability of services, examines case files individually to determine the most beneficial service for each minor, and places the minors in the programs.

Increasingly, LACPD is focusing such family-centered treatment efforts as FFT at the front end, aiming to prevent youth from being removed from the home. As the prevention effort has expanded, the department has split the supervision of the FFT and FFP programs between two units in placement: the RBSU and the Placement to Community Transition Services Unit (PCTS). RBS currently manages aftercare FFP cases; and PCTS manages all FFT cases, all FFP cases at the front end, and aftercare FFP cases. LACPD is currently seeking to place all youth exiting congregate care under intensive aftercare supervision with a DPO trained in FFP.

As described in the Interim Evaluation Report, perhaps the largest change in the way youth potentially move through the system has been an alteration in the length of time required to complete most treatment programs provided by group homes. The LACPD encouraged service providers to increase the intensity, but reduce the duration of its treatment programs from an average of twelve months to around six months. According to respondents, this reduction in out-of-home program duration has served a dual purpose for the department: it has allowed it to actively pursue its over-riding goal of family reunification, reuniting youth with their families earlier and with more support than ever before; and it has allowed the Placement Services Bureau to reduce out-of-home care costs, creating a reserve of savings they are able to reinvest in evidence-based after-care programming to assist youth in the transition from congregate care back home and into the community. Respondents posit that with a focus on solid, intensive aftercare, levels of re-entry will drop.

Just prior to this report, the LACPD had implemented a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) decision-making program that aids in linking youth in congregate care with aftercare services by creating individualized "Transition Plans." MDT meetings take place at three prearranged intervals while a youth is in congregate care; these meetings include representatives from the group home, family members, and other interested parties. MDTs are thought to ensure there is a minimum of lag time between placement and aftercare services.

2.7.2.2 Case Management

Case management shifted in a number of ways during the years of the CAP, according to respondents. For example, there was an increased focus on case planning from the point of detention; consideration of the impact of and the availability of supports from family members, friends, and the community; emphasis on the use of information for decision making; and focus on the youth's outcomes rather than on the process of case management as measures for success.

2.7.2.3 Service Array, Intensity, and Integration

The LACPD has increased its after-care services for youth leaving out-of-home care and returning to their families as a result of the CAP, according to respondents. Service intensity has increased in the group home treatment programs and in the evidence-based programs, such as FFP and FFT, which are more rigorous in their approach. Respondents continued to report that certain categories of services continued to be difficult to find in Los Angeles County. In particular, respondents cited group homes for pregnant teenagers, special programs for arsonists, and special programs for sex offenders as the kinds of services that the county needs but that are in extremely short supply.

The LACDP collaborates with the LACDMH in its CSACP. As part of this initiative, the LACDMH performs comprehensive psychological screenings of all new cases coming into placement for the first time. Respondents also reported that there has been greater collaboration between the LACPD and the LACDCFS at administrative and practice levels, a result of both departments participating in the CAP, particularly around dually involved youth.

2.7.2.4 Quality Assurance

The Placement Permanency and Quality Assurance Unit, which had been in operation since before the CAP, performs all quality assurance activities for the Placement Services Bureau. As reported in the Interim Evaluation Report, the Placement Permanency and Quality Assurance Unit utilizes information gathered by supervising DPOs to monitor all new cases to ensure that LACPD's recommendations and actions are in compliance with court orders and state and federal mandates. The unit also closely monitors efforts towards family reunification, ensuring that the process is not overly lengthy. Information gathered by the Placement Permanency Quality and Assurance Unit to monitor cases is kept in a database and shared monthly by supervising DPOs with the probation officers in their units. The probation officers then use the information to improve services, to develop and conduct trainings, and to ensure compliance.

Group homes are monitored regularly to ensure the safety and well being of youth who are under the supervision of the LACPD and housed in congregate care facilities. According to respondents, the Placement Permanency and Quality Assurance Unit has been under-resourced in this area for many years, with only five group home monitors on staff. These individuals are tasked with monitoring more than 100 group home sites, which house approximately 1,000 probation youth. In 2012, the Placement Services Bureau hired four analysts to track issues of group home compliance. The Placement Permanency and Quality Assurance Unit is in the process of developing a quality rating system and scorecard to identify lower performing group homes. The unit also hired four analysts in 2012 to analyze the various components that will be included in the rating system. Once the LACPD begins implementing the scorecard, these analysts will track the data and perform the calculations.

2.8 Substudies

Substudies in this report are descriptions of a single intervention being implemented by each of the four participating county departments. Information for the substudies was collected during site visits conducted in the spring and summer of 2011. The descriptions are representative of the initiatives at that point in time.

2.8.1 Alameda County Department of Children and Family Services: The Family Finding and Engagement Program

The ACDCFS Family Finding and Engagement (FFE) program is an extension and enhancement of a program begun in 2003. At that time, the original program was intended to help address what the department staff thought of as the overuse of group homes and other types of congregate care for youth in the foster care system. According to participants, there were no adequate interventions to aid in moving children out of congregate care. Family finding was brought on board as a way to seek alternatives for these youth, who had already been placed in group homes or other institutions. Eventually the program evolved into the FFE, which was designed to reduce the number of children in congregate care and to move them into more permanent, family-like settings.

FFE was expanded in 2009 to test its possible effectiveness at the front end, with the goal of increasing the number of placements with relatives when a child first enters foster care. While the ACDCFS's original FFE programs were staffed with workers whose sole responsibility was to search for and work with relatives of children in the foster care system, the expanded program was implemented in part to explore tasking specified units of case-carrying child welfare workers (CWW) with family-finding responsibilities as part of their everyday duties. These workers would carry reduced caseloads to allow for their increased responsibilities.

The program objectives for FFE included (a) increasing at intake the number of potential relative caregivers, whose presence tends to result in fewer out-of-family placements per child per year; and (b) increasing the number of children who safely and permanently reunify with family members within 12 months.

The Program

The FFE program is currently comprised of four Family Finding and Engagement teams: two newer units are called primary teams, and the two original units, are called secondary teams. The ACDCFS' Permanent Youth Connections unit and the Family Reunification unit both house primary FFE teams. Working at the front end of the child welfare system, these teams search for and engage with family members who may potentially act as permanent family connections for youth entering foster care. The secondary teams are stand-alone units that engage in family finding for children who have been in foster care for some time. Alongside the four FFE teams stands the Search Clerk Unit, which searches for family members and kin.

Both the primary and secondary teams engage in a two stage process: (a) family finding, which is comprised of searching for family members or fictive kin who may act as a permanent family connection in the youth's life; and (b) family engagement, which encompasses working with the family to develop these life-long, permanent relationships.

Once a case is identified as a candidate for FFE, CWWs from both the primary and secondary teams request that searches for family members be performed by the department's Search Clerk Unit. These searches are comprehensive and include many different tools and databanks, including DMV records, court records, medical records, probation databases, phone books, voter registration databases, CalWins information, criminal records, and more. The department also contracts with LexisNexis Accurint databases, which enhance the unit's searching abilities. Although the Search Clerk Unit performs searches for other units in the department, it gives top priority to FFE searches. These searches can take up to four days to complete; the results are sent back to the referring social worker, who then performs the engagement piece.

With the file prepared by the search clerks, the CWW who is responsible for the case then contacts the family and acquaints them with the child's situation and begins the process of engagement with family members. The hope is that this engagement will lead to permanent, life-long connections for the child. To foster these relationships, FFE CWWs facilitate written correspondence between the child and family members, as well as telephone conversations, family reunions, barbecues, informal and formal group conferences, video conversations over Skype, family attendance at team decision-making meetings (TDMs), and any other method of engagement that may present itself. This process may take only a few days or it may take months to complete. At the conclusion, family members go through an evaluation and approval process performed by the FFE social worker carrying the case. Finally, the child may be placed with the family member, or the connection cultivated during this process may be used to support the child if he or she is placed in non-relative placement.

The program serves children as old as 15 years, most of whom are situated in high-level group homes or in foster care with families other than their relatives. FFE has also begun to take cases at the front end prior to placement in group homes or foster care. The primary teams work on cases that have not included family finding in the past and with children who are not already placed with relatives. The secondary teams work mainly with minors who have been in congregate care for extended periods of time. Several strategies are used by both primary and secondary teams when they gather cases. These strategies include attending TDMs; taking referrals from social workers; reviewing reports prepared by the dependency investigation CWW, which identify cases that might be appropriate for the program; and reviewing detention reports, searching specifically for ones with no mention of relatives. The primary teams also look at each case that comes through their particular units for the possibility of making a family connection.

Theory

The FFE model is based on the belief that all children need a safe and loving family environment in order to thrive. Children who emancipate from the foster care system without permanent family connections find it more difficult to find employment, have higher rates of homelessness, and are at increased risk for depression, anxiety, and other emotional disorders. Children benefit from permanent, life-long connections with family members, and it is in the child's best interests to create relationships with relatives rather than place them in congregate care or with non-relative foster families.

Respondents believed that timely, effective searches for family members and subsequent engagement with relatives will keep some children out of foster care and reduce the length of stay and numbers of placements for others. Vast technological advances have made searching for family members much more fruitful than in the past and currently yield substantial results in connecting children with relatives. The theoretical model utilized by ACDCFS, called simply “family finding,” was developed by Kevin Campbell, founder of the Center for Family Finding and Youth Connectedness.

Staffing and Training

The two secondary teams are made up primarily of seasoned, very experienced workers who have been with the ACDCFS for quite a while. In the past, staff were required to interview for a position on a secondary team and were only transferred to the secondary unit after a competitive process. Because of changes in union criteria, however, competitive transfers are no longer allowed for this unit. Instead, a transfer list is used, with preference given to those with longevity on the list.

The two primary teams are made up primarily of newer staff with less experience in the field of social work. Staff who make up the primary teams have been selected to be regular workers in the Family Reunification or Permanent Youth Connections Units and then trained in family finding as part of their regular duties. As of 2011, the primary teams were made up of nine social workers, all hired as part of a larger hiring initiative.

Search clerks are generally seasoned workers who have been with the ACDCFS for many years. Their hiring involves a competitive transfer process, which includes an interview. For some, a transfer to the Search Clerk Unit represents a promotion. Initially, five search clerks were hired. As of December 2011 there were seven search clerks.

Pre-service FFE training is provided by the National Institute for Permanent Family Connectedness. Training is provided on the protocols, tools, and techniques used in family finding; and it also includes extensive work on the philosophical underpinnings of the practice. While the secondary teams have received this training, as of the writing of this report the primary teams had not yet received their formalized training. Members of the secondary teams have provided in-service training to the primary teams and the general social workers. These trainings have focused mainly on the philosophy of family finding and how this practice advocates working with families.

Management Information Systems

There is no new data management system associated with the Family Finding and Engagement initiative. However CWS/CMS now has a new data field associated with this strategy in which to notate lifelong connections.

Challenges

Respondents expressed concern about the adequacy of the training process and the development of FFE practice protocols that could be incorporated into the ACDCFS’s policy and practice manual. Respondents described the challenging nature of working in a program whose

model is still under development with no way to measure their success. This is made more difficult as CWWs on the primary teams are often new to social work altogether.

Because members of the secondary teams do not formally carry the cases they work with, collaboration between them and the case-carrying CWWs is crucial. Respondents described this collaboration as challenging for several reasons. First, the case-carrying CWW can be busy with complex caseloads. Second, there is sometimes resistance to the philosophy that underpins family finding. Third, there has been a limited amount of department-wide education and training regarding FFE, its purpose, and its role in assisting children and families.

Respondents felt that changes in hiring practices for the secondary teams due to union intervention had compromised the effectiveness of the program. Competitive transfers, which included interviewing for the position, are no longer allowed due to concerns regarding favoritism. Currently staff are hired for the Secondary Unit based solely on their longevity on the list of requested transfers.

2.8.2 Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services: The Up Front Assessment Program

The Up Front Assessment (UFA) program utilizes the expertise of mental health clinicians in cases where domestic violence, substance abuse, or other mental health issues are thought to be present. Providers make available immediate, comprehensive assessments to aid caseworkers in determining the degree to which the above issues may be impacting parental capacity and to help caseworkers decide whether or not to remove a child from the home. Respondents reported that it was sometimes difficult for emergency response caseworkers to determine parental capacity when any of the three above-cited issues are present because they often did not have the level of expertise to make the fine distinctions that impact a child's safety in these particular cases. LACDCFS began to see the need for graduate-level clinical expertise for decision making when domestic violence, substance abuse, and/or mental health issues were present. Expertise in these particular areas allowed providers to determine how any one of the issues could impact a parents' ability to care for their children and keep them safe; the expertise also made it possible for providers to make recommendations on detention and services.

In addition, UFAs are also used to recommend and provide linkages to specific programs and services once LACDCFS has determined the appropriate programs for the family. Because the clinicians who perform the UFAs are attached to organizations that have current county contracts to provide services when domestic violence, substance abuse, and mental health issues are present, these clinicians are able to connect the families they assess to the appropriate services immediately, cutting out the waiting period often associated with obtaining services in emergent situations.

UFAs were implemented as a part of POE, the service delivery system for the LACDCFS. UFAs were piloted in the LACDCFS's Compton office for six weeks in 2008, and the results looked promising. It was the intent of the LACDCFS to roll out UFAs to other offices as part of the CAP. The program was rolled out to all other offices between November 2008 and April 2009, with full implementation occurring in June 2010.

Program objectives include (a) reducing the number of children removed from their families; (b) reducing timelines to permanency for those detained; (c) reducing re-entries to foster care; and (d) performing within 24–48 hours assessments in appropriate situations where domestic violence, substance abuse, and/or mental health issues present high risk to the family.

The Program

UFAs involve a multistage process that is used at the initial point of engagement in appropriate situations where domestic violence, substance abuse, and/or mental health issues are present and decisions surrounding child detention are ambiguous and difficult to make. UFAs include an assessment by mental health clinicians using the Behavioral Severity Assessment Program (BSAP) to determine parental capacity. These assessments are used to assist in the decision-making process regarding detention and to determine if a family needs services and what category of services they need. UFA clinicians then provide linkages to services in the community.

The decision to call for a UFA is in the hands of the social workers carrying the cases and their unit supervisors. Cases are initially received by LACDCFS' Child Protection Hotline, where the SDM Priority Tool is used to determine appropriate response time. Cases move from there to Investigations Unit, where the social worker attached to the case considers a UFA by reviewing the case file, visiting the home, and establishing if at least one of the three issues presents a high risk to the family. If the CSW is unsure about removal after these three steps, a formal request for a UFA is made. The UFA is used to help the CSW make better informed decisions. Because UFAs are not mandatory, families must choose to take part.

UFA assessors who are mental health clinicians with expertise in the three trigger areas visit the family home and perform an immediate, comprehensive assessment using the BSAP, which was created by Orion Healthcare Technology as part of its AccuCare program. Providers use the tool as a comprehensive screening of the three trigger areas; but it is not considered a comprehensive child welfare assessment, as it does not take into account prior history with DCFS. Assessors are free to add other information to the tool as they feel necessary.

Some regional offices have UFA liaisons who handle requests for cases and keep track of all activity generated by the UFA assessor, including attempts to contact the client. These community-based liaisons (CBLs) also provide some limited training to CSWs on UFA protocols and policies. Liaisons also handle disputes between assessors and CSWs working on the same case.

Once assessments have been completed, the findings are used in case planning. Because the agencies that perform the UFAs are under existing contracts with the county to provide services in the three target areas, staff in these agencies are able to connect the families they have assessed to services almost instantaneously, doing away with lengthy wait times. Respondents reported one challenge to this process: not all agencies connected with UFAs provide services in all three of the targeted areas.

When the UFA program was first implemented, UFAs played a crucial role in the TDM process, which was the anchor of the POE service delivery model. UFA assessors were invited to attend TDM meetings and present their detailed findings, which were intended to inform the

members of the TDM meeting on questions of parental capacity, to make general recommendations regarding categories of services, and to provide immediate linkages to specific service providers. In recent years, UFA assessors attend TDMs much more infrequently. Although they still provide social workers with their findings, assessors now more commonly transmit information over the telephone rather than at TDM meetings. Respondents speculate that there may be several reasons for the lack of UFA attendance at TDM meetings: (a) UFA assessors may not be invited to meetings; (b) the TDM meeting may occur prior to the UFA; (c) the agencies providing UFA assessors may be short on staff; and (d) the information gathered during UFAs has privacy limitations and cannot be shared legally with the entire team.

The target population for UFAs is families where there is high risk of abuse and neglect due to issues related to domestic violence, substance abuse, and/or mental health. However, respondents describe the use of UFAs as much more widespread and contend that UFAs are frequently requested for lower-risk cases. Since UFAs are meant to be used when there is some subtlety to the case that makes discernment difficult for the social worker and when it is difficult to determine to what extent the parent's behavior presents danger for the child, respondents contend that the use of UFAs on lower risk cases makes sense, as it is these and not the more obvious, higher risk cases where there is more ambiguity and more need for information.

The use of UFAs varies among different area offices across the county. Some use it extensively and for all types of cases, while others restrict their use to high-risk referrals. Other offices don't use UFAs at all. Respondents suggest that the reason for the variability may be the lack of clear protocols for how and when to use the strategy.

Theory

The theory underlying the UFA program contends that assessments performed by experts in the areas of substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health will provide comprehensive and reliable information to be utilized by the emergency response CSW in the case planning process and the TDM, allowing for more informed decision making and preventing inappropriate out-of-home placements.

In addition, POE designers theorized that, since UFA assessors are connected with agencies that also provide many of the services utilized by families with substance abuse, domestic violence, or mental health issues, the UFAs will also provide an instantaneous and seamless link to services, thus giving families more expedient access to services. This quick access to services was thought to reduce the risk of detention.

The theory that underlies the POE initiative, and thus UFA, is a strengths-based, best-practices theoretical model of service delivery that focuses on family needs, strengths, and participation and that emphasizes collaboration with community stakeholders.

Staffing and Training

UFAs are performed by mental health clinicians staffed in community-based organizations with expertise in substance abuse, domestic violence, and family mental health issues. All clinicians who perform UFAs must have a masters-level degree in psychology or an MFT, or MSW. They are supervised by a licensed clinician.

There has been no new staffing by LACDCFS directly associated with UFAs, aside from a single UFA program manager who also manages other programs. Most offices staff a CBL who handles all referrals for both the Family Preservation and the UFA programs.

The clinicians who perform the UFAs internally receive training through the organizations they work for. This training includes how to reach families and get them involved in their assessments; how to include families in the decision-making process; and how to provide education to families on mental health services in general, readying families for therapeutic services. In addition, training on how to use the BSAP tool is given by Orion Healthcare Technology to clinicians and some LACDCFS staff.

Directly after the program was introduced to the LACDCFS, an initial training was provided for CSWs and their supervisors on the UFA process. While there has been no formal training in recent years, the CBLs present the UFA protocol at general staff meetings or by email. Respondents felt that a refresher on this process would be appropriate at this time.

Management Information Systems

The Upfront Assessment System, a new, web-based management information system created specifically for the UFA program, is currently in use to follow families from the initial point of contact with LACDCFS. Families are entered into the system prior to a request for a UFA, and the system is updated as the process continues. The UFA program is part of a larger management information system that is shared among different programs, such as Alternative Response Services and Family Preservation. Levels of access to the system differ; the CSWs at LACDCFS access the system for their cases only, while the clinicians who perform the UFAs only have access to the cases being handled by their specific organization.

While the UFA program follows the progression of families, the assessments themselves and the findings resulting from them are not included in the larger management information system. Respondents reported no real mechanism for tracking the information found in the UFA itself. The LACDCFS Bureau of Information Systems (BIS) also provides data support for the UFA program through the tracking of families who receive UFAs regarding detentions and subsequent referrals. Respondents reported having access to the data provided by both the BIS and the UFA System, but little knowledge on how to use it for internal evaluative purposes. They would like the opportunity to use this data to look at outcomes in terms of the waiver in order to determine if they are using their resource efficiently and if the resource has produced the desired effect.

Challenges and Facilitators

Clinicians who perform assessments come from service providers under contract with the county to provide such services as Alternate Response Services and Family Preservation. It is their role to (a) assess the family regarding their needs and strengths, and in particular their parental capacity, leading to a recommendation regarding detention, (b) recommend a category of treatment, and (c) provide linkages to actual programs. The LACBOS became concerned with the potential appearance that it could be making referrals to its own programs, and it subsequently ordered the contracted providers to stop recommending specific programs and to limit themselves to recommendations for categories of programs. This created a conundrum for the providers, as they are also charged with providing the linkages to the programs.

Respondents reported that there have been suggestions that UFA providers be given greater authority in the decision-making process regarding removal from the home. However, from a clinical licensing standpoint, this granting of additional authority would present complications for the UFA providers and complicate the legal responsibility held by the LACDCFS CWW. In fact, greater authority has not been granted to UFA providers, and their levels of accountability have actually been reduced in these situations. UFA providers may only provide recommendations, not decisions; and they are not to write their assessment findings in formal reports.

The UFA program was originally intended to be used at the time of an emergency response referral to provide input that may assist CSWs to make better decisions on behalf of families. Respondents claim, however, that the program is being used in a much more widespread manner and as a sort of safety net in which another layer of information, gathered by mental health professionals, assists in making the serious decision to remove the child from the home. While respondents see the benefits of more widespread use of the program, some believe it is being overused in cases where it is not necessary, creating long waiting periods for families who are in true need among the population for whom the program was initially intended.

Sometimes UFAs are performed after children have already been taken into care, even though the original intent for the assessments was that they be done before removal. Respondents posit that these later-occurring assessments may be administered in cases of imminent danger and where there were no sooner openings for UFAs; as well, these assessments may also be used in cases where CSWs have already made the decision to detain, don't need help with referral or services, but use the UFA to write their court recommendations and case plans.

Respondents almost universally described the tool used for the UFA program, the BSAP, as inadequate for the program at hand and too limited in scope. Respondents explained that the BSAP was used in the pilot program in Compton, where the program was initially focused on substance abuse. According to respondents, the BSAP was intended as a substance-abuse screening tool; as such it worked well in the pilot. However, the BSAP but did not generalize when the program was expanded to the other regional offices and when domestic violence and mental health issues were included as focal points. Respondents described the problematic nature of being charged with determining parental capacity, clearly a weighty aspect of child welfare, but mandated to use a tool that they felt does not provide the information needed to make this determination. Respondents stated that they supplemented the BSAP with tools of their own in order to provide a quality assessment, but they felt that this was also problematic because it leads to a lack of uniformity in UFAs across the county.

2.8.3 Alameda County Probation Department: The Family Preservation Unit

The Family Preservation Unit (FPU) is intended to provide intensive supervision to youth who are at risk of being removed from the home and placed in congregate care. The goal of FPU is to provide an alternative to out-of-home placement, with the intent of maintaining the family unit and enhancing permanency through the use of therapeutic and educational, community-based services. All minors under the supervision of the FPU receive services of some sort, all of which are located in their home communities. The FPU deputy probation officers (DPO) provide linkage to these programs for youth and families and monitor their progress.

The FPU has been a part of juvenile probation since at least 1994. Initially put into place for lower-level offenders, the FPU has evolved over the years to focus mainly on the supervision of cases that involve the most serious offenses. Under the CAP and in alignment with a general philosophical shift towards family-focused, strengths-based treatment goals, the ACPD has sought to reduce the overall number of youth in out-of-home placements. The FPU has been instrumental in reaching these goals through its intensified supervision of youth who have received placement orders, giving them a final opportunity to stabilize at home under probation supervision. The intention of the FPU is to support families in doing therapeutic work together as a complete unit, in their homes and communities, with the goal of having the youth's orders de-escalated from placement to general supervision. Minors may be referred to the FPU at any stage in the probation trajectory.

The program objective for the FPU is to provide intensive supervision to high-risk youth in order to mitigate the use of out-of-home placements.

The Program

The FPU serves selected male and female minors currently under placement orders in any geographic area of Alameda County. Although the only set of criteria for inclusion in the program is age (a youth must be less than 17 years, 9 months old when entering the FPU), the cases most likely to be referred to the FPU are those that involve serious and violent offenses and are marked by instability in the home. The majority of youth in the FPU have been charged with so-called "strikeable" offenses, which often include bodily injury and the use of a weapon. In years past, the FPU rarely took on cases that included gun-related offenses, but now those cases are the norm. The FPU has also recently experienced an increase in referrals for minors charged with misdemeanor prostitution, these cases also having been unusual for the unit in earlier years of the program. While for the majority of cases the FPU is considered a point of escalation, there are some instances in which the FPU is used to de-escalate cases for youth who are exiting Alameda County's juvenile detention center, Camp Sweeney, and who are found not ready for general supervision.

Minors are referred to the FPU through several channels. The ACPD's Investigations Unit may determine a case appropriate for the FPU after administering the Youth Level of Service Inventory, or a DPO managing a case may consider the FPU an appropriate program. In both of these instances, a case must be brought before the Screening for Out-of-Home Services (SOS) Committee in order to be referred for the FPU supervision. The SOS Committee is a multidisciplinary team that meets twice weekly and includes members from the ACPD, Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services (ACBHCS), the Alameda County Department of Children and Family Services (ACDCFS), and sometimes members of various county school districts. The SOS Committee screens all cases being considered for out-of-home placement orders, including those under consideration for the FPU, ultimately deciding on a case recommendation for the court. It is up to the judge to make the final referral to the FPU. The court may make this referral based on the recommendation of the SOS Committee, or it has the option to refer cases to FPU directly. In addition, according to respondents, approximately 10% of youth exiting congregate care are referred to the FPU for aftercare supervision.

The FPU is made up of a team of nine DPOs with reduced caseloads that enable them to work more intensively with the youth they supervise. Whereas DPOs working general probation

supervision carry a caseload of between 60 and 120 cases at a time, the caseloads of the FPU DPOs run between 15 and 20. With fewer cases, members of the FPU team have the opportunity to meet once a week or more with youth and their families in their homes, at school, or at other community locations. DPOs create and carry out an individualized, extensive case plan for each minor; this plan in every case includes some type of service, such as drug treatment or psychotherapeutic counseling. Although the FPU DPOs do not provide services themselves, their lengthy experience as probation officers gives them an extensive knowledge of the resources and services available in the community and of contacts within those resources. They broker services and then help families navigate them and related systems, such as the school system. The program is intended to take between four and six months, with most clients subsequently moving on to general supervision.

According to respondents, approximately 30% of youth in the FPU receive Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST), which is a family-oriented therapeutic program with intense parental involvement. The ACPD has contracts with a local CBO, Seneca Center, for five clinicians to provide MST services for five cases each, or 25 slots total. Eligible FPU youth charged with sex offenses may receive services from Alameda County's Adolescent Sex Offender Treatment Program. Minors with serious mental health needs may receive services at the Fred Finch Youth Center. The ACPD holds contracts with several other community-based organizations (CBOs) that provide a range of services, including individual and family counseling, case management, parenting and anger management classes, drug and alcohol counseling, and more.

Each year the FPU offers a mandatory, eight-week summer program to selected youth currently under its supervision. The summer program takes place at the FPU offices weekly for three hours each day for five days each week, with all FPU probation officers in attendance. The summer program acts as both a weekly probation visit and as an opportunity for educational enrichment. Each week a speaker is invited to discuss relevant topics, such as gang involvement, victims of violence, and sexually transmitted illnesses. DPOs perform drug tests on those for whom it is required. Transportation to the FPU offices and lunch is provided. Parents are welcome to attend. The FPU obtains funds to take the youth on one field trip each year at the conclusion of the summer program and have in the past gone bowling and to the zoo. Respondents describe the summer program as highly effective in engaging the youth and encouraging stronger relationships between them and their probation officers, thus moving the probation process forward more successfully.

Theory

Providing intensive supervision by highly experienced probation officers to the most high-risk youth offenders, while allowing those youth to remain in the home, is thought, by the ACPD to be the most effective way to handle cases of this severity. The FPU allows for a much more individualized case plan and more focused attention than does general supervision. Frequent face-to-face visits enhance the relationship between the FPU DPOs and those they supervise, allowing them to provide very targeted and appropriate care.

Staffing and Training

Besides the undergraduate degree required to be hired as a DPO in Alameda County, there are no specific staffing criteria necessary for the FPU officers specifically. There is no

formalized recruitment for the position. Staff members are selected internally and are either voluntarily or involuntarily transferred to the FPU from other jobs within the PD. Most DPOs have been with the ACPD for several years and have an educational background in the social sciences; however these are not requirements. In general, the FPU officers have diverse professional and educational backgrounds.

There is no training, consultation, or coaching specific to the FPU.

Management Information Systems

Probation began to use the new PRISM case management system in approximately January 2011. The FPU staff view PRISM a vast improvement over the previous system, Juvenile Information System (JUVIS). Although the new system cannot yet run reports, all current cases are being inputted directly into PRISM. Respondents state that although PRISM is an improvement, it could be improved for the FPU. They would like to see include the following: (a) data fields on arrest, restitution, and referral history; (b) the capacity to provide case summaries, including why a minor was arrested, what the minor bargained for and stipulated to, what kind of probation was ordered, and what (if any) restitution information is available; (c) links between a minor's zip code and the services offered in the minor's geographical area; and (d) the ability to view and analyze outcomes.

Challenges

The availability of services and easy access to the funding to pay for them are the FPU's greatest challenges. Programs for sex offenders and adequate drug treatment programs are particularly scarce. Probation does not hold contracts with any programs for sex offenders at all and does not retain contracts with the more effective drug treatment programs identified by DPOs. Additionally, because programs in the area are so scarce, good programs have long waiting lists, often 30 to 60 days; but the minors involved are in need of immediate services.

West Oakland and Berkeley are two locations within the county with a particular need for an increase in services appropriate to the juvenile probation population, especially gang intervention services. While there is one gang intervention program that is especially well thought of in the area, the FPU does not retain a contract with it; and when the program is needed, the FPU must come up with additional funds, which are not readily available.

The FPU would like to have access to other types of programs, including educational assistance programs and tutoring, art programs, and other pro-social activities. FPU staff feel these programs have been highly effective in the past, but they are currently out of the program's reach due to lack of funds.

Respondents explained that funds for services and programs are occasionally available, but that the lengthiness of the process required for obtaining these funds does not align with the immediacy of their work with youth.

2.8.4 Los Angeles County Probation Department: The Functional Family Therapy Program

The LACPD's primary goal under the CAP was to reduce the time youth spend in congregate care, thus enhancing timelines to reunification and effecting permanency and the well-being of youth and families. The underlying belief was that treatment programs that serve youth at home and in the community provide longer-term success and ultimately reduce re-entry into the system. The LACPD intended to effect this change, in collaboration with group home providers, by reducing the average duration of out-of-home treatment programs from 12 months to between 6 and 9 months and by providing substantial therapeutic aftercare services to support youth and their families in the home while the youth is still under probation jurisdiction. The LACPD chose Functional Family Therapy (FFT) as its primary aftercare service. FFT is an intensive, family-oriented, strength-based approach that works to stabilize families and helps youth to create strong positive ties in the community.

The program objectives for FFT are to shorten timelines to family reunification and permanency for youth under suitable placement orders by implementing home-based, intensive, therapeutic aftercare services.

The Program

FFT's therapeutic sessions are delivered in the community, mainly in the home but sometimes at school or other community locations. The sessions focus on teaching communication and problem-solving skills to families as a holistic unit. FFT is a clearly delineated, three phase process that involves (a) engagement and motivation, designed to support the clinician in connecting and building trust with the family; (b) behavior change, which includes skills training in such areas as parenting, anger management, coping, relaxation, and others; and (c) generalization, so that family members can use the skills they have learned outside the family setting; for instance in school, with probation officers and neighbors, and so forth.

FFT clinicians, known as interventionists, estimate that the process takes an average of 14.5 sessions total. During the engagement and motivation phase they see the family more frequently; the goal is to see them three times in the first ten days. During the remainder of the treatment, the interventionists meet with the youth and family on a weekly basis. Once the generalization phase has been completed, the family graduates from the program.

The target population for FFT is youth in placement, ages 11–18, who through assessment are found to have higher risk factors and exhibit behavioral problems at home and school. Because FFT is a family-oriented model, only youth who have homes and some form of family structure are eligible to participate, although the program has served families that have moved into homelessness during the course of the treatment. Families must be willing to participate and have the cognitive ability to do so.

Although the LACPD had originally intended to deliver FFT services solely through community-based service providers, FFT services provided by these organizations are only available to youth eligible for Medi-Cal and located within the specific geographic areas they serve. As of 2008, the LACPD increased its program capacity by training 15 DPOs in Functional

Family Therapy to become FFT interventionists. The LACPD's in-house FFT teams fill in the gaps left by the community-based service providers—gaps involving those youth not eligible for Medi-Cal—and provide services in homes in every part of Los Angeles County. Because the interventionists meet with their clients in their homes, families with factors that may be considered a safety risk are sometimes rejected from the program.

Field DPOs working with youth in congregate care refer cases suitable for FFT to the Prospective Authorization and Utilization Review Unit (PAUR). The PAUR Unit acts as a hub for LACPD staff seeking referrals for community-based services for youth under their supervision. PAUR analyzes case documents and then makes referrals to the services most suitable for that particular case, including FFT and other probation services, such as the Family Preservation program, Functional Family Probation (FFP), and Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST). The PAUR Unit has been housed in the Placement Services Bureau since spring 2010 and has helped increase referrals to FFT. Although FFT is currently used mainly as an aftercare service for youth who have been placed in group homes, in August 2010 PAUR began referring cases to FFT as a preventative program for youth at risk of removal from the home and prior to a placement order from the court. FFT cases can originate from juvenile camps, field supervision, and investigations. Judges are also referring youth to the program from the bench, prior to a placement order.

The FFT program falls under the supervision of the Placement to Community Transition Services Unit (PCTS), which was created as a first-line waiver strategy to oversee LACPD's expanded aftercare programs. From the start of the CAP through SFY 09/10, PCTS worked directly with general supervision probation officers to increase their awareness of and referrals to FFT. As of August 2010, the PAUR Unit was tasked with the responsibility for oversight and utilization for all of the Placement Unit's aftercare programs, including FFT. PAUR oversees when services start and stop and manages capacity and service utilization.

Theory

FFT is a short term, multi-systemic prevention program that identifies the family as the primary focus of intervention. FFT reflects an understanding of multiple relational systems and attempts to work within each family's unique system to develop family members' inner strengths, leading to lasting positive outcomes and self-sufficiency beyond therapy. Functional Family Therapy was developed by Dr. James F. Alexander in 1972. Since that time the efficacy of the model has been established through numerous research studies.

Staffing and Training

Probation currently utilizes five FFT teams with the capacity to serve 240 cases at a time. These teams encompass three agencies. Star View Community Services, a community-service subcontractor for the FFT, has one team of six clinicians and one supervisor work on a half time basis for the LACPD and who is contracted to provide approximately 60 slots.

Shields For Families, another FFT subcontractor, has two teams, each consisting of four full-time clinicians and one supervisor, all working on a full-time basis for the LACPD and contracted to provide approximately 100 slots. The LACPD has two teams, each with approximately six deputy probation officers and with supervision provided by supervising

deputy probation officers (SDPOs) managing both FFT and FFP teams. These teams have the capacity to work with approximately 80 cases at a time.

Hiring criteria differ by agency. Recruitment for LACPD interventionists is only internal and requires DPO II status, scheduling flexibility, and the ability to work both independently and as a member of a team. Desired qualifications include a masters degree in a behavioral science field; fluency in Spanish, a social work or mental health background, and probation casework experience; the willingness to engage families; and a knowledge of juvenile probation computer systems.

Qualifications for community-based service providers include a bachelors degree, although with preference for those with a masters degree, in behavioral science. The program seeks candidates who are good conversationalists, enjoy working with families, possess good organizational skills, and are willing to take feedback. No clinical experience is necessary, but field experience is important.

In general, staff hired to provide FFT have not been previously trained in this therapeutic method. Prior to working with families, all prospective FFT interventionists, both those working for community-based service providers and the LACPD staff recruited for internal FFT teams, must go through an initial three-day FFT training program provided by FFT Inc. This training is followed by bimonthly “replacement” trainings during the first year of service, and a yearly symposium in subsequent years. All initial and replacement FFT trainings are done through the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH).

In addition, all FFT interventionists take part in one-and-one-half to two-hour “staffings” each week, where cases are discussed and monitored by team leaders, who have undergone specific training as FFT consultants. Team leaders also meet individually with each interventionist for one hour each week for case consultation. Team leaders are given ongoing telephone supervision by FFT Inc. consultants; and they attend national FFT conferences, which provide further training.

Challenges and Facilitators

The two greatest obstacles to success in the LACPD’s FFT program are (a) youth falling out of the program before completion due to being violated, arrested, or going AWOL from probation, and (b) a lack of family engagement due to the belief by family members that the problem does not lie within the family as a whole but rather centers on the youth on probation.

Interventionists are seeing more and more family homelessness and family’s with serious financial problems, both issues creating problems with availability of the family and impeding the LACPD’s ability to provide FFT services.

The most pervasive deficit for all teams is the lack of Spanish-speaking staff members. Current Spanish-speaking interventionists are always at or over capacity, and they simply do not have enough bilingual slots to serve the Spanish-speaking community, which makes up a significant portion of families taking part in the LACPD’s FFT program.

Virtually all respondents mentioned risks to their own personal safety in the homes of families receiving services as a major concern of the program. Guns, drugs, and gang activity are common in the homes that interventionists visit. If they are aware of these safety issues in advance, they can arrange to meet the family at a different site or have someone else, such as another interventionist or a probation officer, accompany them. Respondents felt that this issue could be somewhat alleviated by more extensive pre-screening for these particular details by the PAUR Unit before admittance into the program.

Respondents expressed a few concerns regarding the FFT model itself and the way they are able to implement it. The FFT model uses a scoring rubric for determining how well a family is progressing through the program and establishes the point of graduation from the program. However, respondents felt that the rubric does not adequately capture the different phases families experience upon the return of a child home from a congregate care and that the scoring at the end doesn't accurately reflect the changes families have made over the course of the program. In addition, respondents felt that supervisors should have more oversight regarding the initial phases of treatment than they are currently allowed under the FFT model.

Respondents felt that training is adequate, but because initial trainings take place infrequently, interventionists are sometimes hired and then forced to wait up to six months for a CIMH sponsored FFT training to take place.

Despite these concerns, respondents on the whole were enthusiastic about FFT and felt that it has been an extremely positive intervention. They appreciated the simplicity of the model its clear delineation by phases, with clear goals for each phase. Respondents described the model as one that is easy for clients to understand and that provides skills for the family to take away and utilize in the community, once treatment is complete. Respondents felt very strong cohesion with their peers and are fully invested in the program.

Respondents within the LACPD stated that the department's commitment to the program and its success has encouraged a substantial shift in paradigm for department as a whole. DPOs and their supervisors, working alongside FFT interventionists on cases, are witnessing the positive changes the service is making. The family-focused approaches and philosophy of the FFT are beginning to permeate all of their work with children and families.

Chapter 3: Fiscal Study

3.1 Key Questions

The evaluation question guiding the fiscal study asked, “What is the impact of a capped, flexible Title IV-E funding strategy on child welfare services and relevant probation expenditures in participating counties?” A number of additional questions emerged about the specific effects of this funding strategy and from the strategies outlined by Alameda County and Los Angeles County in their five-year plans. The first two questions address the reduction of expenditures: Will the county departments of children and family services reduce their foster care assistance expenditures from levels preceding the implementation of the CAP? Will the departments reduce their foster care administration expenditures from levels preceding the implementation of the CAP? Finally, will the departments shift their expenditures from foster care services (i.e., assistance expenditures) to non-foster care services (i.e., administration expenditures) after the start of the CAP? These three key questions, along with their indicators, are presented in Table 3.1.

| Table 3.1: Fiscal Study Questions and Indicators |
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| <p>Question 1: Did the county departments of children and family services and probation reduce their foster care assistance expenditures from levels preceding the implementation of the CAP?</p> <p>Indicator 1.1: Total foster care assistance expenditures Indicator 1.2: Two components of foster care assistance payments: 1.2.1: Total number of paid placement days 1.2.2: Average daily cost of assistance</p> |
| <p>Question 2: Did the county departments of children and family services and probation reduce their administration expenditures from levels preceding the implementation of the CAP?</p> <p>Indicator 2.1: Total administration expenditures Indicator 2.2: Average daily cost of administration</p> |
| <p>Question 3: Did the county departments of children and family services and probation shift their expenditures from foster care services to non-foster care services after the start of the CAP?</p> <p>Indicator 3.1: What was the amount of revenue available for reinvestment? Indicator 3.2: Flexible spending analysis: 3.2.1: “New administration spending” amount 3.2.2: “Assistance savings” reinvestment amount 3.2.3: Remaining reinvestment amount 3.2.4: “New administration spending” financed by other revenue 3.2.5: Ratio of assistance expenditures to administration expenditures</p> |

The tenor of the questions has shifted subtly since the start of the CAP. When the evaluation plan was written, it was believed to be possible to isolate from other administration expenditures those expenditures associated with the activities that supported foster care placements. Question 2 originally asked if foster care administration expenditures had been reduced from levels preceding the CAP, expecting that those expenditures would be reduced, along with assistance expenditures. However, discussions with the evaluator’s fiscal consultant raised concerns about whether those distinctions were reliably represented in the fiscal data. As a result, the analyses have been conducted on aggregate assistance expenditures and administration expenditures. Question 2 is still phrased in the same manner, although now the expectation is that aggregate administration expenditures will increase.

Assistance expenditures are those expenditures associated with the board-and-care costs of an out-of-home placement. Administration expenditures refer to those expenditures associated with staff, services, and programs.

This section of the final report is inclusive of the first four years of the project, State Fiscal Years (SFY) 2007–2008 through 2010–2011. These years are pre-Realignment. Under Realignment, there would be a significant change in both the source of funding to the local child welfare system and the state’s process for providing that funding.

3.2 Mechanisms and Relationships

3.2.1 The Mechanisms of Financing

The traditional, pre-Realignment financing structure for counties includes federal, state, and county funding for administration and assistance. Within this structure, the federal government provides 50% of the funding for administration, the state provides 35%, and the county provides 15%. For assistance, the federal government provides 50% of the funding, the state provides 20%, and the county provides 30%. Counties claim against that allocation using two mechanisms. For administration costs, the counties use the County Expense Claim (CEC), which is based on time studies carried out by staff from each county’s department of children and family services (DCFS) and probation department (PD). The counties claim against the allocation for assistance expenditures (i.e., board and maintenance) using the CA800.

Counties are able to overspend (or “overmatch”) their allocation, but those overmatch amounts are county-only dollars. Counties have the opportunity to recoup some of those dollars through a “close-out” process at the end of each fiscal year when unspent allocations are combined by officials at the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and distributed to “overmatch” counties.

Under the CAP, an annual allocation was developed based on a predetermined capped (fixed) allocation amount (Waiver Base and Non-Base Waiver), as well as the Non-Waiver allocation. The traditional financing structure continues to operate, meaning the counties continue to use the CEC and the CA800 to claim their expenditures against the capped allocation. While the sharing ratios for allocations also followed the traditional breakdown, the two counties participating in the CAP had the option to adjust the federal, state, and county disbursement ratios so that their use was more evenly distributed in the claiming process.

3.2.2 The Children and Family Services and Probation Fiscal Relationship

In both counties, the DCFS and the PD are nested within a larger structure. In Alameda County, the Alameda County Department of Children and Family Services (ACDCFS) is part of the Alameda County Social Services Agency (ACSSA), along with several other departments. The director of the ACSSA and the chief probation officer both report to the Alameda County Administrators Office (ACAO). The ACAO reports to the Alameda County Board of Supervisors (ACBOS). The ACSSA and the Alameda County Probation Department (ACPD) work in conjunction with the ACAO to prepare a budget and monitor fiscal implementation during each fiscal year. All of the budgets for individual county agencies and departments form the “county budget,” which is managed by the ACAO. All budgets require the approval of the ACBOS, which provides oversight to county operations.

The structure in Los Angeles County is somewhat different. From the start of the CAP in July 2007 until May 2011, the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (LACDCFS) director and the chief probation officer reported to the Los Angeles County Chief Executive Office (LACCEO), with the LACCEO reporting to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (LACBOS). The LACCEO was responsible for the day-to-day management of the various county departments, leaving oversight to the board. In May of this year, the LACBOS removed the LACDCFS and the Los Angeles County Probation Department (LACPD) from the purview of the LACCEO and placed them under the direct supervision of the LACBOS. However, both departments continue to prepare their budgets and monitor their fiscal implementation in conjunction with the LACCEO.

While PD staff complete the time study and the paperwork needed for reimbursement for assistance expenditures, the majority of fiscal processes, including processing the CEC and making eligibility determinations, are handled by the SSA in Alameda County and by the DCFS in Los Angeles County. Both organizations act as a “pass through” for federal dollars going to the PDs. In other words, the PDs are linked to federal child welfare financing through their local child welfare systems.

Initial proposals from the CDSS for participating in the CAP did not include PDs as project participants; whether to include them was part of the negotiation process with the Children’s Bureau. The CDSS argued that probation costs should be excluded for three reasons: “(a) the service strategies for child welfare and probation populations are usually different; (b) the role of the court is different for the two populations, and the length of stay in out-of-home placements for youth on probation are often predetermined, limiting programmatic flexibility; and (c) future probation-related legislation is possible that would be incompatible with the department’s participation in the CAP” (CDSS, 2005). However, PDs in California had historically used Title IV-E dollars to fund the assistance and administration costs associated with eligible youth with out-of-home placement orders; and in many ways, the CDSS had viewed the two populations of youth as similar in issues and service needs. In fact, the CDSS does not disaggregate child welfare expenditures from probation expenditures in the assistance claim. The ultimate inclusion of PDs in the CAP was based on the federal view that the relevant probation population is part of the child welfare financing system.

The inclusion of the PDs in the CAP posed challenges for the project. The capped allocation could have been thought of as a salary to be paid out over a five-year period in annual allocations. And the recipient then had to live within the constraints of that salary, being sure not to spend more than the salary allowed. An important concern with the CAP was that there was not just one recipient; there were two: the DCFS and the PD. The challenge in each county was to determine how much of the total capped allocation should be apportioned for the DCFS and how much should be apportioned for the PD. Two other issues added to the complexity of the situation. The first was that the CAP only pertained to the juvenile portion of the PD and not the entire department, as it did with the DCFS. The second issue involved the aforementioned “pass through” relationship with the DCFS. At the state and county levels, PDs exist outside of the purview of the CDSS. In other words, the PD does not have an independent relationship with the CDSS. As a result, the fiscal arrangements that did develop had to exist solely between the DCFS and the PD.

A number of fiscal arrangements were possible. The two organizations could agree to a cap-within-a-cap model, whereby the PD would receive a capped allocation for assistance and for administration, similar to the larger project and determined by a mutually agreed-upon methodology. Each department would then have the opportunity to generate reinvestment savings independent of the other department. Another possibility was to operate joint expenditures claimed against the CAP and share any reinvestment savings or overspending based on some predetermined percentage.

Alameda County initially took the former approach. In the original memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the ACSSA and the ACPD in July 2007, the ACPD accepted a cap on its administration allocation over the course of the CAP but not on its assistance allocation. This meant the department had to maintain its administration expenditures within the capped amount but could continue to claim assistance expenditures as necessary. It also meant that the department did not assume any of the risk associated with assistance expenditures; the SSA managed that risk. However, after the first year of the CAP (SFY 07/08), the ACPD realized that its administration expenditures were increasing beyond the agreed-upon amount and creating budget pressures, while its assistance expenditures were decreasing. The Alameda County SSA was amenable to a renegotiation of the agreement. The ACPD accepted a cap on its assistance allocation equaling the amount it expended in the first year of the project, while maintaining the cap on the administration allocation and assuming the aforementioned risk. The intent of the renegotiation was to provide the ACPD with the opportunity to generate reinvestment savings through the decrease in its assistance expenditures. The ACPD's allocation for the next fiscal year was adjusted to reflect any generated savings. The change was reflected in an amendment to the MOU in June 2009.

The change in methodology was used in Alameda County for SFY 08/09 and SFY 09/10. In SFY 09/10, the ACSSA held the ACPD harmless for the court-mandate group home rate increase that was implemented in December 2009, and as a result the ACPD's administration allocation was increased above the amended amount. The ACPD did not spend \$23,686 of its administration allocation (roughly 0.1% of the administration allocation). Because there was not a provision in the agreement to "roll forward" those funds and because the ACSSA and ACPD anticipated a revision of the allocation methodology for SFY 10/11, the administration allocation for SFY 09/10 was set at the actual expenditure amount. For SFY 10/11, the ACSSA and PD agreed to an increase in the ACPD administration allocation to fund an increase in staff serving juveniles. For SFY 11/12, the administration allocation for the ACPD was increased by \$12,000,000 to fund new strategies.

The approach taken to determining the fiscal relationship between the departments in Los Angeles County is less clear: there is no written agreement between the LACDCFS and the LACPD that established the parameters of its financial association. An outline of the spoken agreement was constructed from discussions with LACDCFS senior executive staff and a review of documents. The initial administration allocation for the LACPD, occurring in SFY 07/08, was based on the projected expenditures for SFY 06/07 plus a cost-of-doing-business increase. LACPD administration allocations in each of the remaining four years of the CAP were based on the previous year's administration allocation, along with a cost-of-doing-business increase for each year. Regarding the assistance allocation, the LACPD would receive as its current-year allocation the amount of its actual expenditures from the previous year. In other words, the

amount of the actual expenditures for SFY 06/07 became the amount of the assistance allocation for SFY 07/08; the actual expenditures for SFY 07/08 became the amount of the assistance allocation for SFY 08/09, and so forth in each fiscal year for the term of the CAP. The LACPD could generate reinvestment savings in any fiscal year by having expenditures that were less than what they were allocated. It should be noted that this outline was constructed for the purpose of this report. Issues surrounding the lack of a written agreement between the departments have been ongoing since the first year of the project.

3.3 Methodology

The purpose of the CAP Evaluation Fiscal Study was to determine if and how expenditure patterns changed during the period of the CAP compared to a period of time preceding the CAP. The pre-CAP years provided a fiscal context for the departments absent the CAP. Given the evaluation design, it is not possible to determine whether patterns changed as a result of the CAP. However, describing any changes is an important aspect of understanding the experience of the four departments while they operated in a “capped allocation” environment. The following section describes the data sources and why they were selected, how the data were collected, and how the data were analyzed to answer the three key study questions.

3.3.1 Data Sources and Data Collection

Multiple data sources were used for the fiscal study, including allocation and expenditure information from the CDSS and from the individual counties. The fiscal data come from existing data sources or from reports based on existing data sources developed by the CDSS and counties for use during the CAP. As such, data are aggregated to the department level (i.e., not at the case- or child-level). The optimal source of data for the various requirements evolved over the course of the project as issues were identified and resolved and new reporting procedures were developed. The evaluator worked closely with county department fiscal representatives and fiscal staff from the CDSS throughout the process to determine which source would be most appropriate for a particular need.

3.3.1.1 Expenditure Data

All of the data used to understand expenditure trends originated with the CEC and CA 800 process as previously described. Administration and assistance expenditure data for the pre-CAP years were compiled from fiscal information available in the CDSS-maintained Generic Reporting Information System (GRIS) and augmented by data provided by the SSA in Alameda County and the DCFS in Los Angeles County. Only the administration expenditures related to activities included in capped allocation (i.e., Waiver and Non-Base Waiver) were included in the calculations of the administration expenditures in the pre-CAP years. Assistance expenditure information from the GRIS was not disaggregated between the DCFS and the PD within each county, a condition necessary for the analyses. To derive the required information, the evaluator requested assistance expenditure figures from the SSA in Alameda County and the DCFS in Los Angeles County for the pre-Waiver years and, using those figures, calculated the percentage attributed to the DCFS and the PD. The percentages were then applied to the total assistance expenditure amounts from the GRIS. This study chose to use the DCFS/PD assistance expenditure totals rather than the figures from the counties because of slight variations between the data sources.

The expenditure data for the first three years of the CAP were drawn from the fiscal information reports developed by each county department and submitted to the CDSS for inclusion in the Annual Progress Report. The progress reports are prepared and submitted to the Children’s Bureau, a requirement under the terms and conditions of the CAP. Importantly, the fiscal information reports include expenditure data for administration and assistance and disaggregated by department.

3.3.1.2 Allocation Data

Allocation data were also drawn from the fiscal information reports that county departments prepared for inclusion in the CAP’s Annual Progress Report. This information was not available in the county fiscal letters, which only identified the overall allocation amount. So it was necessary to obtain these figures from the fiscal information reports, which identified the allocation amounts received by the county DCFS and the county PD. These data were used to determine the amount of savings available for reinvestment.

3.3.1.3 Paid Placement Day Data

Paid placement day data, including the number of paid placement days and the number of group home paid placement days for the DCFS and the PD, were provided by representatives at the SSA in Alameda County and the DCFS in Los Angeles County. Paid placement day data were used to assess the utilization of foster care and calculate its per-day cost.

3.3.2 Interpreting the Fiscal Data

The purpose of this fiscal study was to assess the relationship between the CAP and changes in child welfare and probation expenditures over the five-year span of the demonstration project. In order to explore this relationship, trends in aggregated expenditure data were assessed, along with paid placement days and the average daily cost of assistance and administration. In the majority of analyses, trends in the first three-year period of the CAP (SFY 07/08, SFY 08/09, SFY 09/10) were compared to a baseline period of the two years preceding the CAP (SFY 05/06, SFY 06/07), or an average of that baseline period. To assess for a shift from expenditures for foster-care to non-foster-care expenditures, several analyses were conducted. First, the amount of reinvestment savings available to each department was assessed, along with the source of the reinvestment savings. Second, a model of “new administration spending” was provided by comparing spending in the CAP years to an expenditure amount based on spending in the pre-CAP years. Finally, the ratios of assistance expenditures to administration expenditures were calculated. Calculations were conducted with the whole number. However, some values have been rounded or reported in the thousands or millions for ease of display.

3.3.3 Issues and Challenges in Interpreting the Analysis

The fiscal study was faced with a number of issues and challenges that should be considered in the process of interpreting the analysis.

3.3.3.1 Evaluation Design Issue

A nuanced understanding of the expenditure analysis is not possible given the absence of comparison counties in the evaluation. For example, knowing the expenditure patterns in non-CAP counties would have been helpful in understanding the trends seen in CAP counties, as

those counties would have contended with the same larger economic forces. Absent that information it's difficult to have a complete understanding of the impact of waiver participation on the CAP counties.

The lack of connection between the available fiscal data systems and outcome data systems created a second design issue. As a result, the evaluator could not link programmatic expenditures to outcomes. Unfortunately, the degree of technical complexity and the resource intensity required in overcoming the barrier was beyond the scope of the evaluation.

3.3.3.2 Conceptual Issues

There are a number of possible conceptual orientations to the CAP that are important to keep in mind. The participating departments did not receive one large lump sum of money to manage and use as they choose over the five years of the project. Nor did they receive a lump sum of money each year to manage and use in the same manner. Instead, the counties continued to receive their annual allocation—albeit, based on their annual cap—and they continued to claim against that allocation in the way they traditionally had to access the various silos of money that made up the overall allocation. The differences under the CAP lay in the relatively fixed amounts the departments were to receive over the course of the project, the risk they assumed of not keeping expenditures within their capped allocation, the flexibility they had in the use of those dollars, and the opportunity they had to generate and keep reinvestment savings.

The departments continued to operate within a larger county governance and budgetary structure in ways that they always had. This means that their usual processes for decision making were still in place, notably that the budgets that represented the policy and practice philosophy of the department and capped allocation dollars still required approval from the county government. Importantly, the departments also continued to operate within a larger federal and state policy structure: they were required to adhere to certain policy and regulatory mandates that may or may not have been congruent with their intentions and plans under the CAP.

3.3.3.3 Structural Issues

The aforementioned issues surrounding the agreements between the child welfare departments and the PDs made the interpretation of the probation expenditures analysis particularly challenging. Without a defined agreement or allocation numbers that were static, it was difficult to get a valid sense of the PDs' fiscal operation during the project or of their ability to generate and utilize reinvestment savings.

3.3.3.4 Data Source Issues

The primary data sources, the CEC and CA800, were designed as accounting systems and not as data collection tools for use in an evaluation. Fiscal data were collected from multiple entities and sources, making compilation more challenging and creating reliability issues that needed to be addressed. For example, pre-CAP expenditure data were from one source while CAP-years data were collected from another source, a situation that threatened to produce an apples-to-oranges comparison. A version of this occurred in both counties in the case of PD administration expenditure data. In the pre-CAP years, the nonfederal discount rate was applied to PD administration expenditures before they were entered onto the CEC. In the CAP years, the

nonfederal discount rate was not applied because the departments could use the CAP allocation for children who were not eligible for federal dollars.

3.3.3.5 Conclusion

In general, the evaluation was designed to maximize the use of existing sources of information. Several criteria guided the selection of data sources: (a) their ability to provide the necessary information, (b) their prior existence or purpose other than the evaluation, and (c) their use having as minimal an impact on the resources of the county departments and the CDSS as possible. The result was the use of data sources that had not been designed for the specific purpose of the fiscal component of the evaluation. As mentioned, the evaluator and a fiscal consultant worked in conjunction with fiscal staff from both the county and the CDSS to identify and resolve data-related issues. However, given the limitations inherent in the data, the evaluator has interpreted the expenditure trends conservatively.

3.4 The Impact of the CAP on Expenditures

The purpose of the fiscal study was to describe the impact of the CAP on the expenditure patterns of the four departments participating in the CAP. It was projected that the departments participating in the CAP would reduce their expenditures in order to generate reinvestment savings that could then be used to pay for additional strategies to improve outcomes for children and families. These reductions could be made by making changes in policies and practices that did not require spending or by investing in programs that reduced the need for foster care in general and/or the need for expensive group home placements. The data presented here are for two fiscal years (SFY 05/06 and SFY 06/07) preceding the CAP and for the first three fiscal years of the CAP (SFY 07/08, SFY 08/09, and SFY 09/10). Again, the pre-CAP fiscal data present a context for the departments absent the CAP. The expenditure data provide information on spending, but they also approximate the allocation that departments received in those pre-CAP years.

This next portion of the report is divided according to the study questions outlined in Table 3.1. Information for each department is presented within each question section. The report addresses Question 1 and Question 2 by presenting data on assistance and administration expenditures, as well as paid placement days. Reinvestment savings data is presented to address Question 3.1; and Question 3.2 is discussed in terms of administration spending and expenditure ratios. A summary for each department is provided in a final section.

3.4.1 Question 1 and Question 2: Were there reductions in expenditures?

3.4.1.1 Assistance and Administration Expenditures

The evaluation posited that, under the CAP, departments would shift their expenditure patterns. The tables in the following subsections display the assistance, administration, and total expenditures for the two pre-CAP years and the first three years of the CAP for the four departments, along with additional information. The tables also display a baseline expenditure, which is the average expenditure of the pre-CAP years, and an expenditure average for the CAP years. Included in each table is the percent change from the baseline to SFY 09/10 and the percent change between the baseline and the CAP average. The same information is displayed

graphically in two figures within each subsection: the first figure shows the expenditure trend lines, while the second figure displays expenditures compared to the baseline.

3.4.1.1.1 ACDCFS

ACDCFS expenditures in the pre-CAP years were on a downward trend (see Table 3.2). Assistance expenditures continued to decline in the CAP years, while administration expenditures increased. Assistance expenditures decreased 38% between the baseline and SFY 10/11 and 24% between the baseline and the CAP average. The percent change for the increase in administration expenditures was slightly larger, at 55% and 32% respectively. Total expenditures stayed relatively stable over time, as displayed in Figure 3.1 (below), reversing to a small extent the downward trend seen in the pre-CAP years. The expenditure information is also displayed in Figure 3.2, comparing each type with a corresponding baseline. Total expenditures tracked relatively closely to their baseline while administration expenditures started above their baseline in the first year of the CAP and continued to rise. Assistance expenditures started below their baseline and continued to decline over the years of the CAP.

| | SFY 05/0 6 | SFY 06/07 | Base | SFY 07/08 | SFY 08/09 | SFY 09/10 | SFY 10/11 | CAP Ave | Δ Base - SFY 10/11 | Δ Base - CAP Ave |
|----------------|------------------|--------------|------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Assist | \$47 | \$44 | \$46 | \$42 | \$37 | \$31 | \$28 | \$35 | -38% | -24% |
| Federal | \$15 | \$15 | | \$15 | \$14 | \$14 | \$12 | | | |
| State | \$13 | \$12 | | \$14 | \$12 | \$10 | \$9 | | | |
| County | \$19 | \$18 | | \$13 | \$11 | \$8 | \$7 | | | |
| Admin | \$45 | \$41 | \$43 | \$51 | \$53 | \$58 | \$67 | \$57 | +55% | +32% |
| Federal | \$17 | \$16 | | \$18 | \$18 | \$22 | \$23 | | | |
| State | \$19 | \$18 | | \$18 | \$18 | \$19 | \$25 | | | |
| County | \$9 | \$7 | | \$16 | \$16 | \$17 | \$20 | | | |
| Total | \$92 | \$85 | \$89 | \$93 | \$90 | \$89 | \$95 | \$92 | +7% | +3% |

Figure 3.1: ACDCFS CAP Expenditures

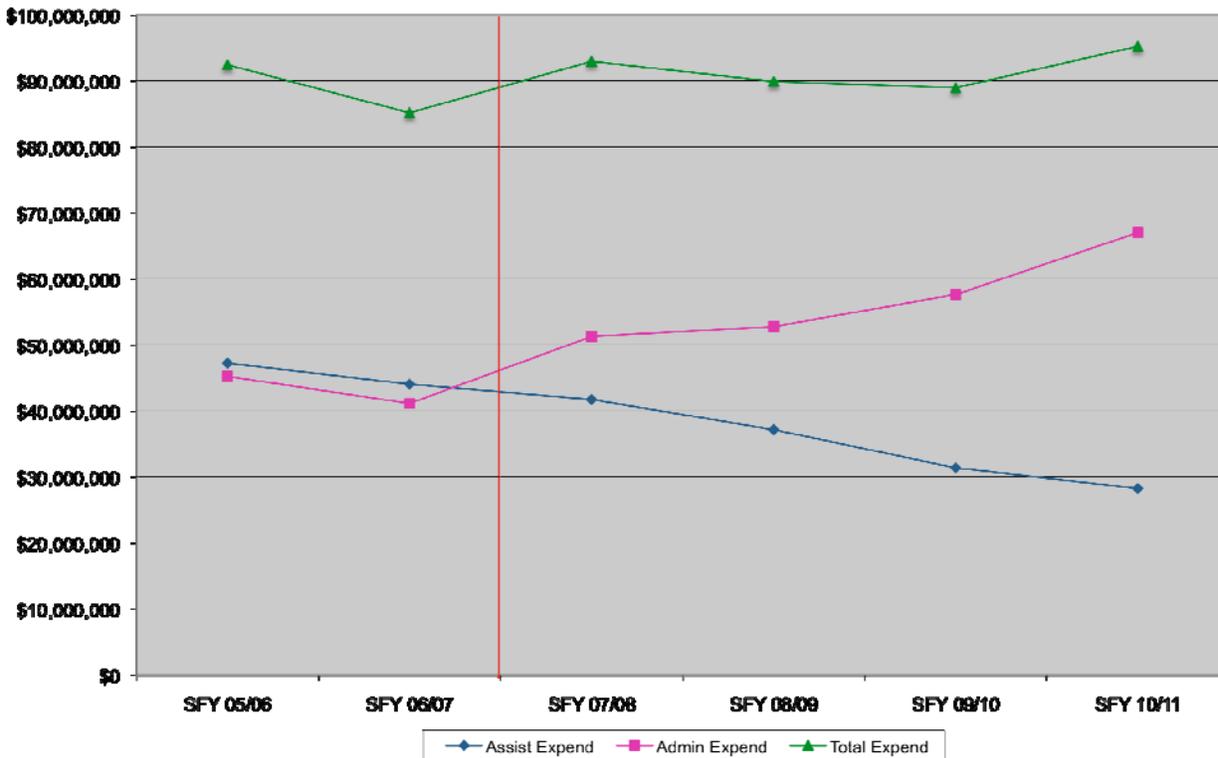
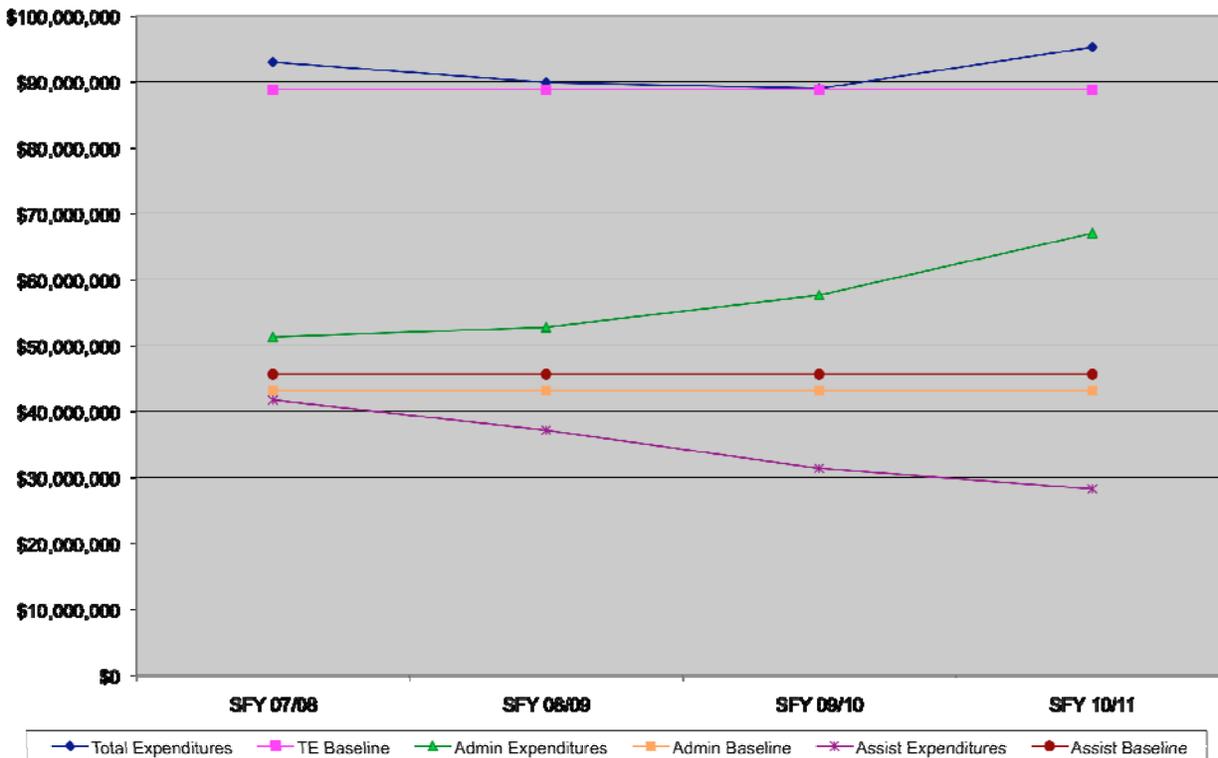


Figure 3.2: ACDCFS Annual CAP Expenditures Compared to a Baseline



3.4.1.1.2 LACDCFS

Administration and assistance expenditures were stable in the pre-CAP years, with the former accounting for the majority of total expenditures (see Table 3.3 and Figure 3.3). Administration expenditures increased in the first year of the CAP and continued to rise over the next two fiscal years. The increase between the baseline and the CAP average was 36%, and the increase between the baseline and SFY 10/11 was 52%. Assistance expenditures began a slow decline in SFY 07/08. The trend continued for one more year but leveled off in SFY 09/10 and SFY 10/11. When compared to the projected baseline in Figure 3.4 (below), the drop in assistance expenditures in SFY 08/09 brought the total expenditures closer to the projected baseline before the increase in administration expenditures in SFY 10/11 reversed the trend.

| | SFY 05/06 | SFY 06/07 | Base | SFY 07/08 | SFY 08/09 | SFY 09/10 | SFY 10/11 | CAP Ave | Δ Base - SFY 10/11 | Δ Base - CAP Ave |
|---------------------|--------------|--------------|-------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Assist Total | \$322 | \$316 | \$319 | \$312 | \$253 | \$256 | \$252 | \$268 | -21% | -16% |
| Federal | \$90 | \$79 | | \$109 | \$88 | \$98 | \$88 | | | |
| State | \$93 | \$95 | | \$106 | \$88 | \$85 | \$88 | | | |
| County | \$139 | \$142 | | \$97 | \$76 | \$74 | \$76 | | | |
| Admin Total | \$404 | \$413 | \$408 | \$493 | \$524 | \$582 | \$621 | \$555 | +52% | +36% |
| Federal | \$182 | \$177 | | \$172 | \$182 | \$194 | \$222 | | | |
| State | \$150 | \$161 | | \$169 | \$185 | \$205 | \$216 | | | |
| County | \$73 | \$74 | | \$152 | \$156 | \$183 | \$183 | | | |
| Total | \$726 | \$728 | \$727 | \$805 | \$777 | \$838 | \$873 | \$823 | +20% | +13% |

Figure 3.3: LACDCFS CAP Expenditures

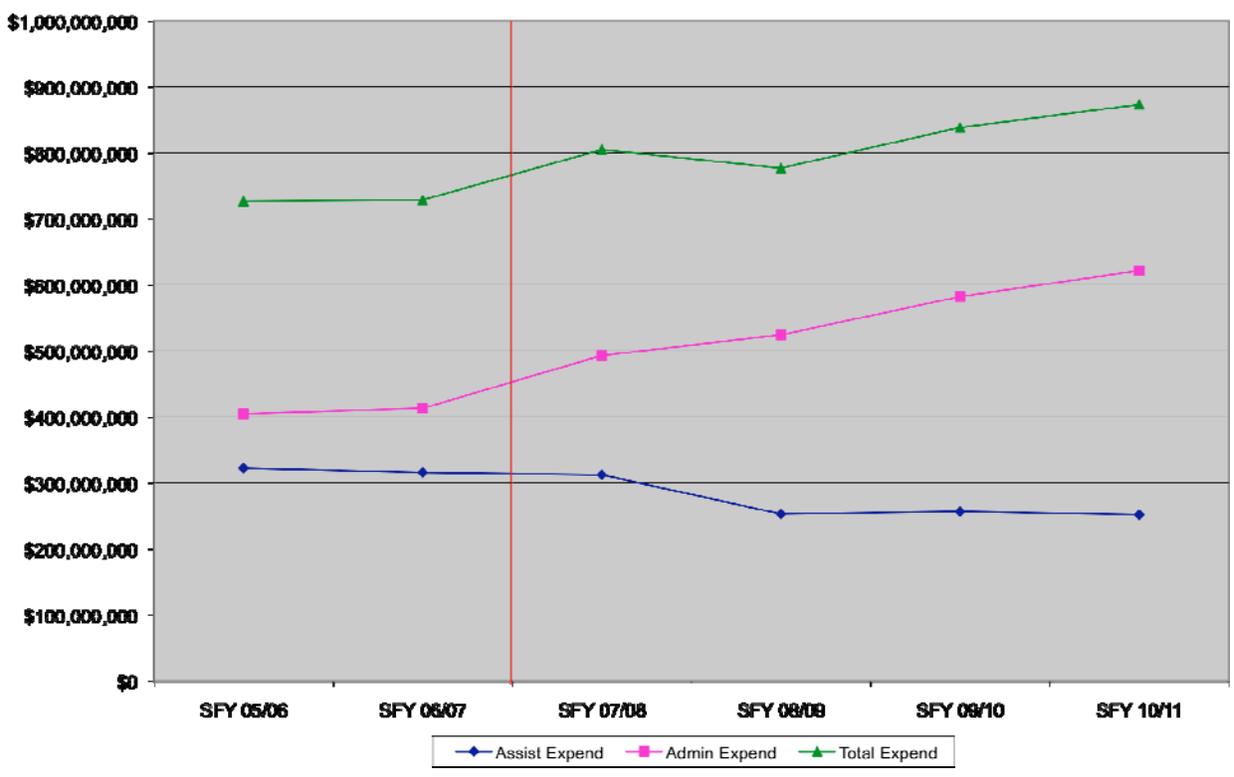
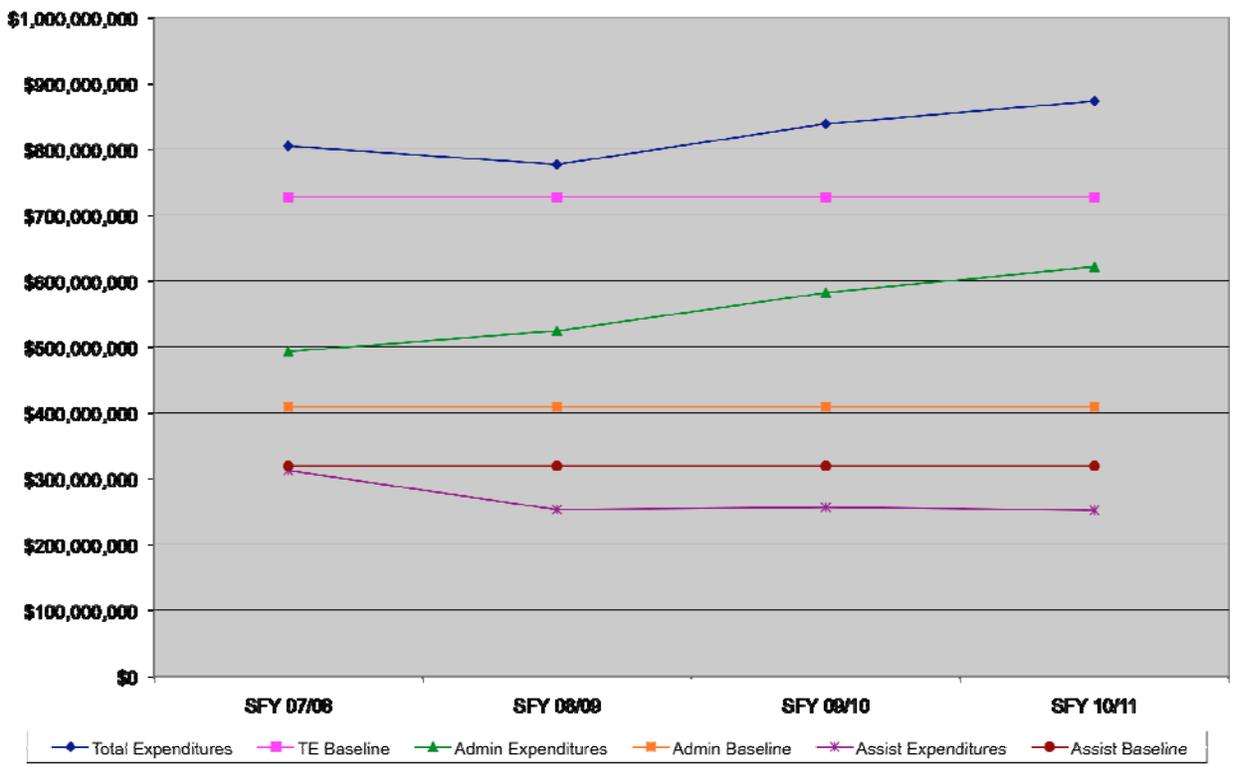


Figure 3.4: LACDCFS Annual CAP Expenditures Compared to a Baseline



3.4.1.1.3 ACPD

The increase in assistance expenditures for the ACPD that began in the pre-CAP years continued in the first year of the CAP before reversing in the second and third year of the project (see Table 3.4 and Figure 3.5). The trend appeared to reverse again in SFY 10/11, rising to the level of SFY 07/08. The level of administration spending was higher than assistance spending. After a small decrease in the second pre-CAP year, administration spending increased in each of the four CAP years, growing by 27% between the baseline and SFY 10/11. Total expenditures increased based on the growth in administration spending. Administration and total expenditures were above a projected baseline, while assistance expenditures showed little deviation from their projected baseline (see Figure 3.6 below)

| | SFY 05/06 | SFY 06/07 | Base | SFY 07/08 | SFY 08/09 | SFY 09/10 | SFY 10/11 | CAP Ave | Δ Base - SFY 10/11 | Δ Base - CAP Ave |
|----------------|--------------|--------------|------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Assist | \$11 | \$12 | \$11 | \$13 | \$11 | \$11 | \$13 | \$12 | +14% | +6% |
| Federal | \$3 | \$4 | | \$5 | \$4 | \$5 | \$5 | | | |
| State | \$3 | \$3 | | \$4 | \$3 | \$3 | \$4 | | | |
| County | \$4 | \$5 | | \$4 | \$3 | \$3 | \$3 | | | |
| Admin | \$18 | \$17 | \$18 | \$18 | \$21 | \$22 | \$23 | \$21 | +27% | +17% |
| Federal | \$9 | \$8 | | \$9 | \$10 | \$11 | \$11 | | | |
| State | \$0.2 | \$0.2 | | \$0.2 | \$0.2 | \$0.2 | \$0.3 | | | |
| County | \$9 | \$8 | | \$9 | \$10 | \$11 | \$11 | | | |
| Total | \$29 | \$29 | \$29 | \$31 | \$31 | \$33 | \$35 | \$33 | +22% | +13% |

Note: The total administration expenditures for the PD are not reflected in the pre-CAP years. The administration expenditures in the pre-CAP years include only those expenditures for children who were eligible for federal dollars, not all children. Please see Section 3.3.3.4 Data Source Issues.

Figure 3.5: ACPD CAP Expenditures

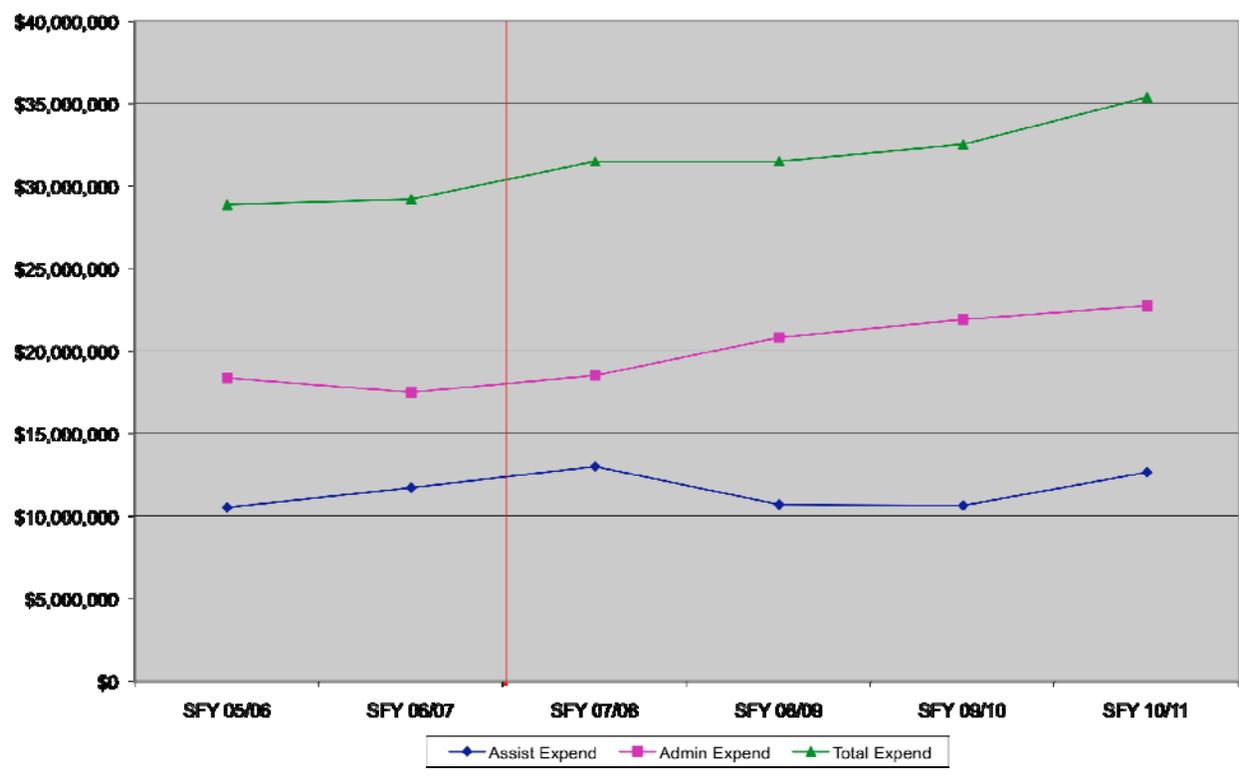
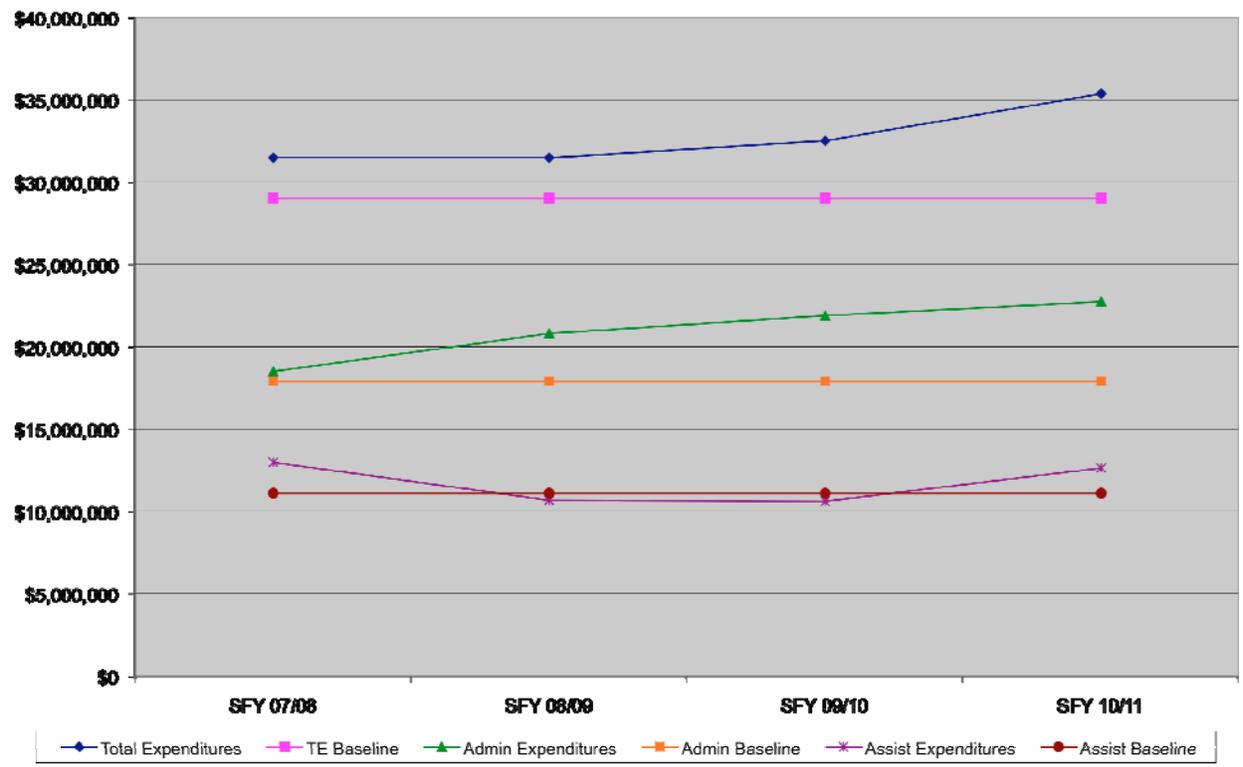


Figure 3.6: ACPD Annual CAP Expenditures Compared to a Baseline



3.4.1.1.4 LACPD

In the pre-CAP years, both assistance and administration expenditures were stable, although with greater spending on administration-related costs (see Table 3.5 and Figure 3.7). The alignment continued during the CAP, when administration spending increased until it had risen 26% above the baseline in the CAP's fourth year. Assistance expenditures stayed flat throughout the same period, with a slight increase in SFY 10/11. In SFY 10/11, total spending grew 19% from the baseline amount. Figure 3.8 shows that assistance expenditures essentially matched their projected baseline figures, while administration expenditures and total expenditures were higher than their respective projected baselines.

Table 3.5: LACPD Annual Expenditures (in millions)

| | SFY 05/06 | SFY 06/07 | Base | SFY 07/08 | SFY 08/09 | SFY 09/10 | SFY 10/11 | CAP Ave | Δ Base - SFY 10/11 | Δ Base - CAP Ave |
|----------------|--------------|--------------|-------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Assist | \$87 | \$91 | \$89 | \$89 | \$89 | \$89 | \$99 | \$92 | +11% | +3% |
| Federal | \$24 | \$23 | | \$31 | \$31 | \$34 | \$35 | | | |
| State | \$25 | \$27 | | \$30 | \$31 | \$29 | \$35 | | | |
| County | \$37 | \$41 | | \$28 | \$27 | \$26 | \$30 | | | |
| Admin | \$96 | \$96 | \$96 | \$106 | \$115 | \$121 | \$121 | \$116 | +26% | +20% |
| Federal | \$49 | \$49 | | \$51 | \$54 | \$64 | \$64 | | | |
| State | \$1 | \$1 | | \$2 | \$3 | \$3 | \$2 | | | |
| County | \$47 | \$47 | | \$53 | \$57 | \$53 | \$54 | | | |
| Total | \$183 | \$187 | \$185 | \$196 | \$204 | \$209 | \$219 | \$207 | +19% | +12% |

Note: The total administration expenditures for the PD are not reflected in the pre-CAP years. The administration expenditures in the pre-CAP years include only those expenditures for children who were eligible for federal dollars, not all children. Please see Section 3.3.3.4 Data Source Issues.

Figure 3.7: LACPD CAP Expenditures

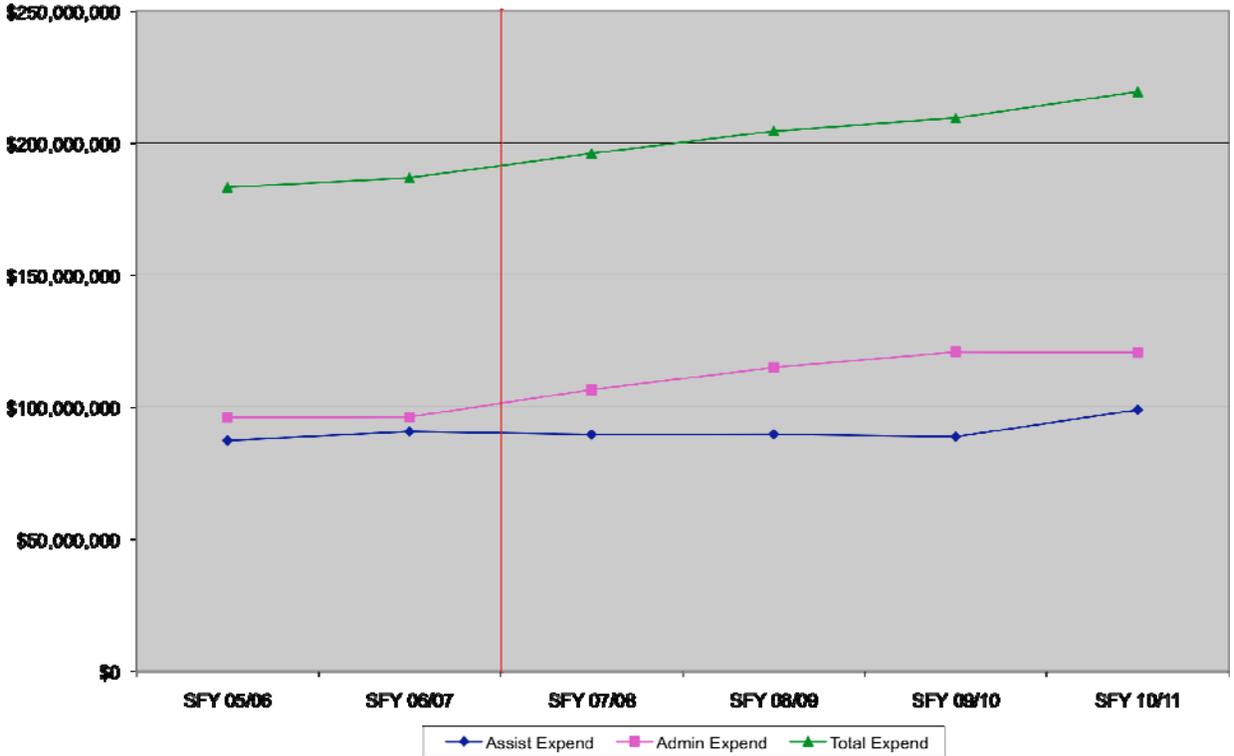
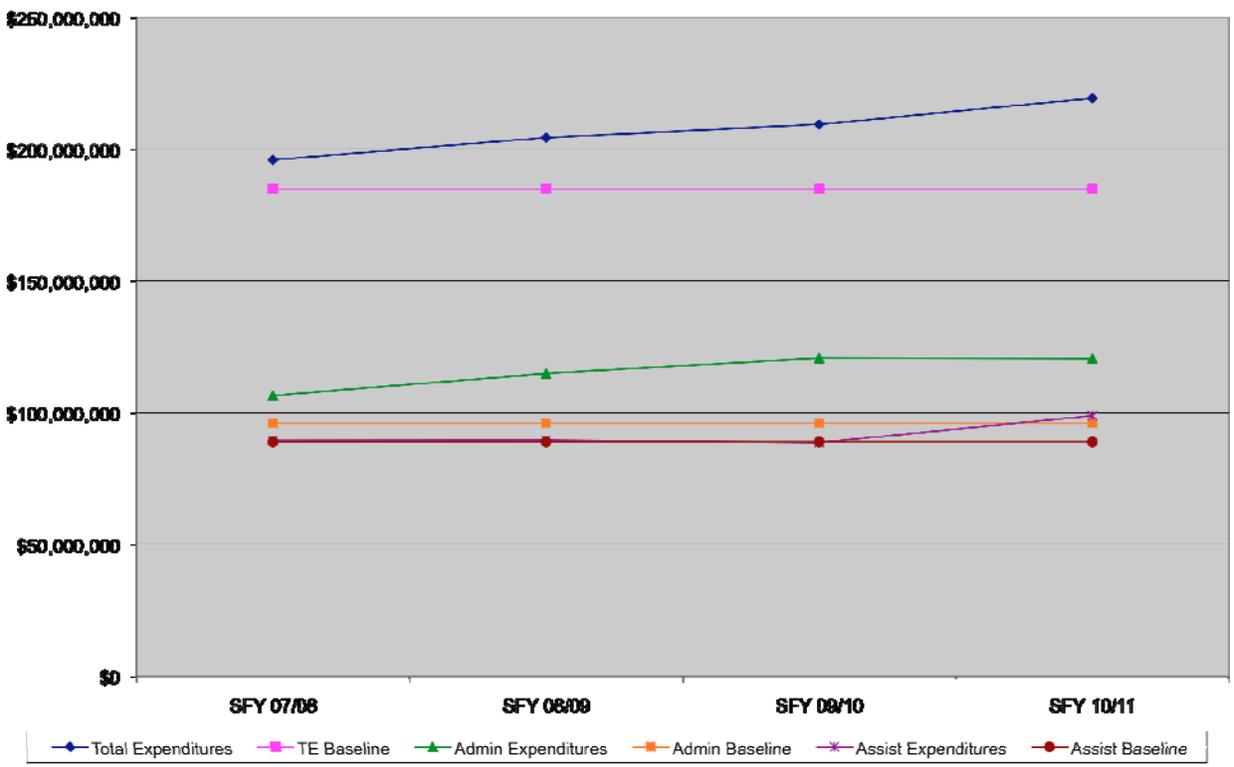


Figure 3.8: LACPD Annual CAP Expenditures Compared to a Baseline



3.4.1.2 Paid Placement Days and Average Daily Cost of Assistance and Administration

“Paid placement day” data was analyzed to assess whether the departments purchased fewer days of foster care during the CAP years compared to the pre-CAP years. The analysis was complicated by the fact that some payments for a used placement day may have occurred in the following year; in other words, what may have been registered in the data was the payment year and not the actual year of service. The first table in each of the following subsections displays data from SFY 05/06 to SFY 10/11 reflecting the number of paid placement days, the number of paid placement days categorized as “group home/residential,” and the percent of paid placement days categorized as “group home/residential.” The baseline is an average of the pre-CAP years. This same information is shown graphically in the first figure of each subsection.

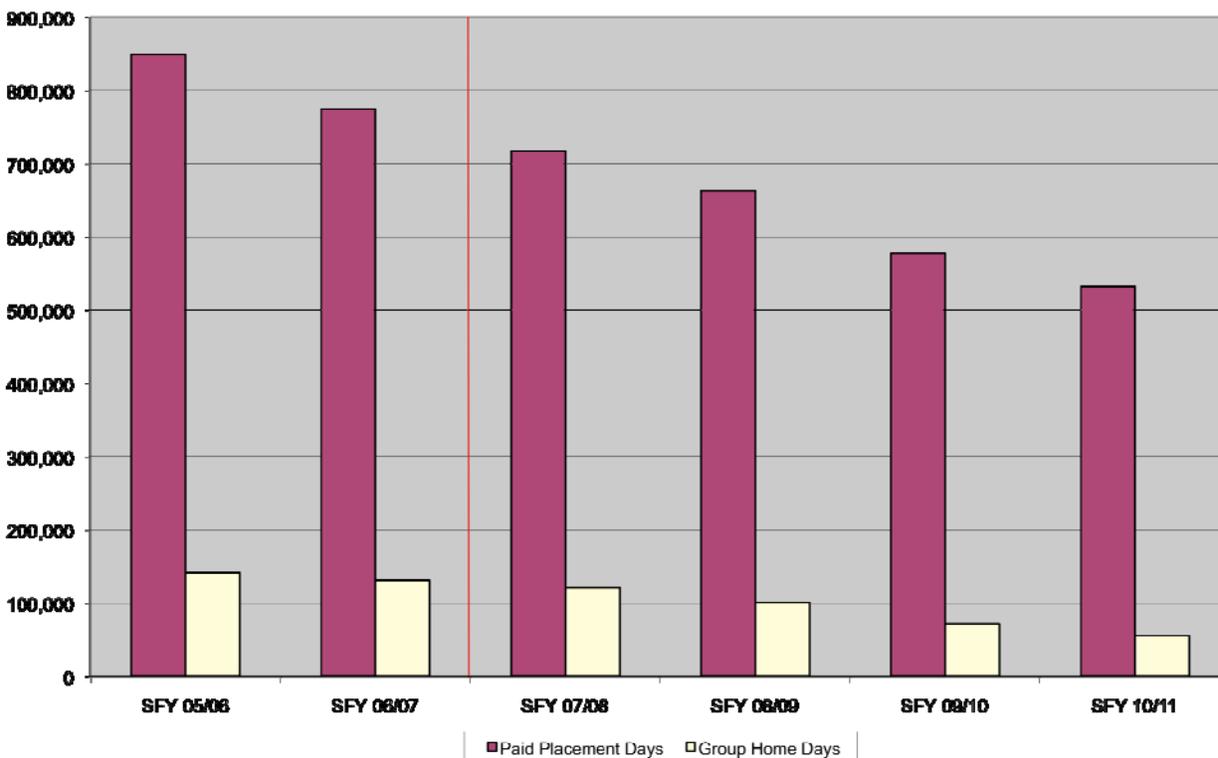
An average daily cost of CAP assistance and CAP expenditures was calculated to describe any changes in unit costs that might have occurred over the five-year period included in the report. This average daily cost was calculated by dividing the assistance expenditures in each SFY by the number of paid placement days for that year. The average daily cost of administration was calculated the same way. The data are displayed in the second set of tables and figures in each subsection.

3.4.1.2.1 ACDCFS

Both the number of paid placement days and the number of paid placement days categorized as “group home/residential” had been in a steady decline since SFY 05/06 (see Table 3.6 and Figure 3.9). The percentage of paid placement days categorized as “group home/residential” was stable until it too began to decline in SFY 08/09, moving from 17% to 10% in SFY 10/11. The percentage of paid placement days categorized as “group home/residential” declined 38% between the baseline and the fourth year of the CAP.

| | SFY 05/06 | SFY 06/07 | Base | SFY 07/08 | SFY 08/09 | SFY 09/10 | SFY 10/11 | CAP Ave | Δ Base - SFY 10/11 | Δ Base - CAP Ave |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|--------------------|------------------|
| Total | 849 | 775 | 812 | 718 | 663 | 578 | 532 | 623 | -34% | -23% |
| GH/Res | 141 | 131 | 136 | 121 | 101 | 72 | 55 | 87 | -59% | -36% |
| % GH/Res | 17% | 17% | 17% | 17% | 15% | 12% | 10% | 14% | -38% | -18% |

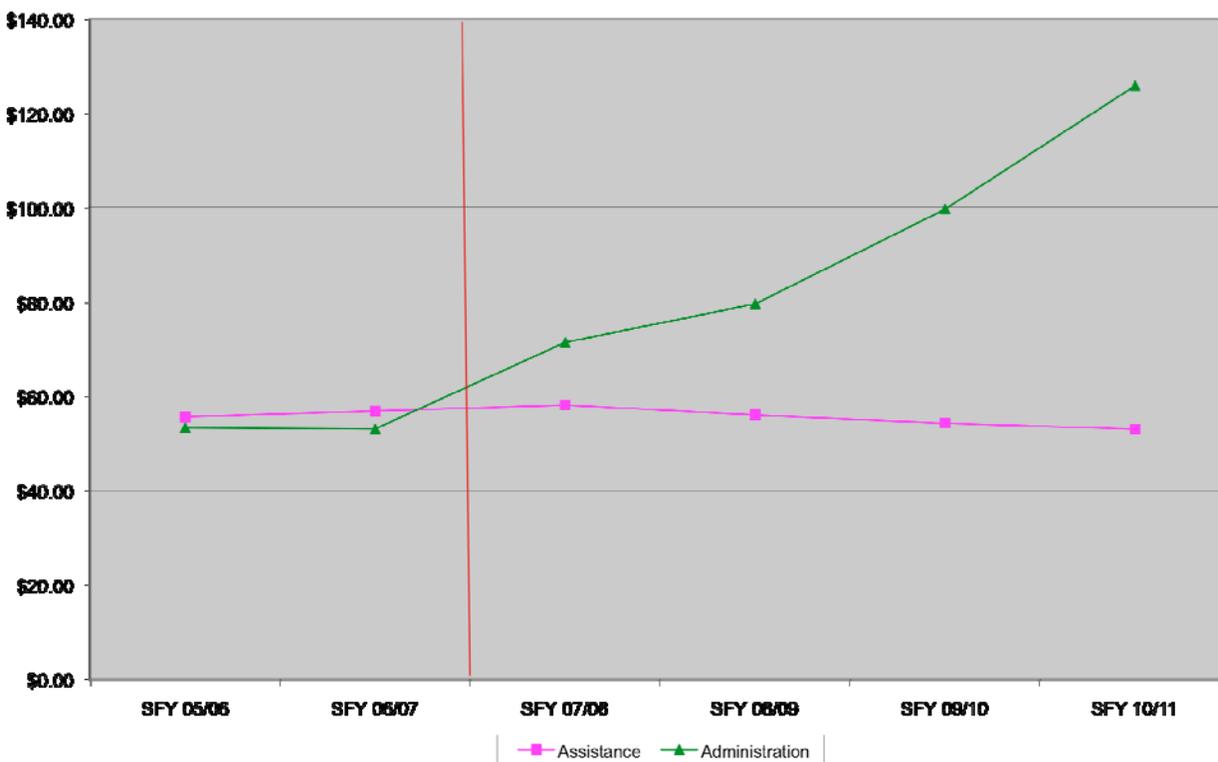
Figure 3.9: ACDCFS Paid Placement Days



The average daily cost of assistance and the average daily cost of administration were stable in the two years prior to the onset of the CAP (see Table 3.7 and Figure 3.10). In the first year of the CAP, the average daily cost of assistance rose slightly before dropping below the baseline amount and below the lowest amount in the pre-CAP years, a decline of 6% between the baseline and SFY 10/11. The average daily cost of administration began to rise in the first year of the CAP and continued rising into SFY 10/11, when that year's cost represented a 137% increase over the baseline.

| | SFY 05/06 | SFY 06/07 | Base | SFY 07/08 | SFY 08/09 | SFY 09/10 | SFY 10/11 | CAP Ave | Δ Base - SFY 10/11 | Δ Base - CAP Ave |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|--------------------|------------------|
| Assist | \$56 | \$57 | \$56 | \$58 | \$56 | \$54 | \$53 | \$55 | -6% | -2% |
| Admin | \$53 | \$53 | \$53 | \$71 | \$80 | \$100 | \$126 | \$94 | +137% | +77% |

Figure 3.10: ACDCFS Average Daily Cost

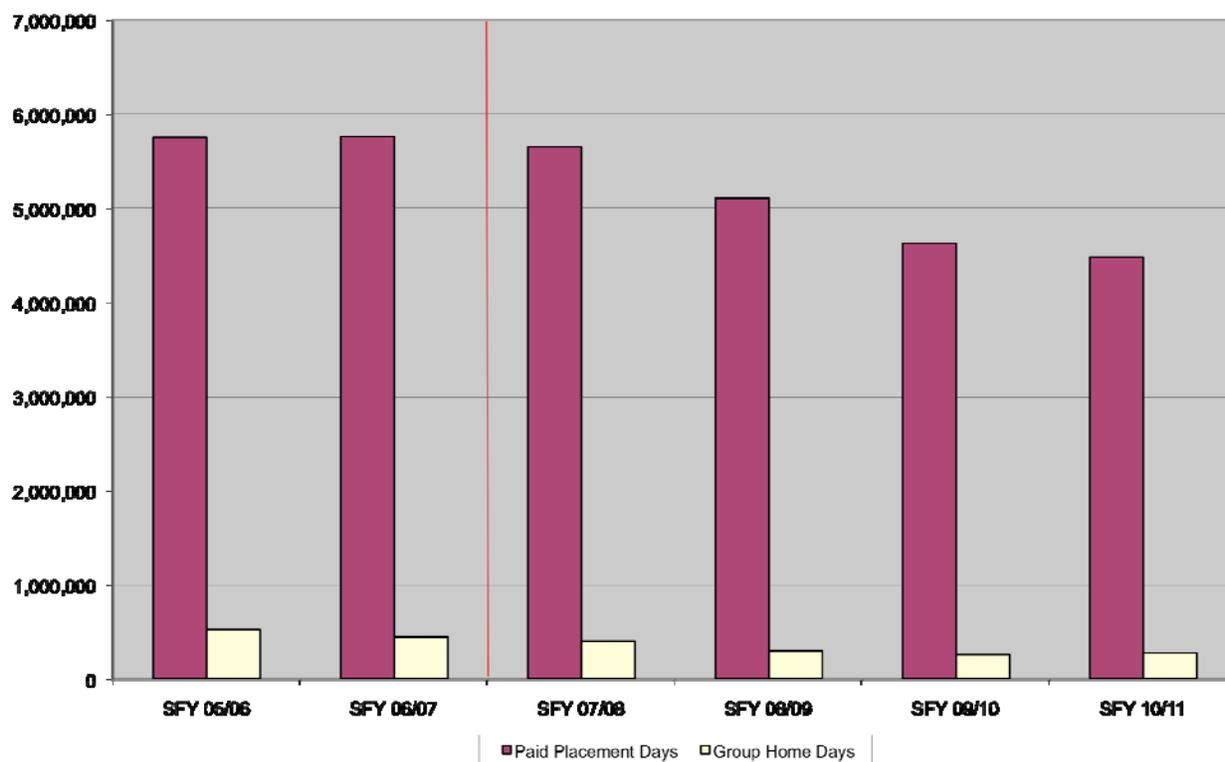


3.4.1.2.2 LACDCFS

The total number of paid placement days was stable in the two pre-CAP years before beginning to decline in the first year of the CAP, eventually decreasing 22% by the fourth year, compared to the baseline (see Table 3.8 and Figure 3.11). In the first several years of the CAP, the group home/residential “paid placement days” continued a decline that began in the pre-CAP years, although the number of days rose in SFY 10/11. Still, the number of days dropped 43% between the baseline and the fourth year of the project. The percentage of paid placement days categorized as “group home/residential” continued a decline into the second year of the CAP from the pre-CAP years but stabilized at 6% from SFY 08/09 through SFY 10/11.

| | SFY 05/06 | SFY 06/07 | Base | SFY 07/08 | SFY 08/09 | SFY 09/10 | SFY 10/11 | CAP Ave | Δ Base - SFY 10/11 | Δ Base - CAP Ave |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|-------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|--------------------|------------------|
| Total | 5,754 | 5,760 | 5,757 | 5,651 | 5,109 | 4,626 | 4,485 | 4,968 | -22% | -14% |
| GH/Res | 523 | 449 | 486 | 403 | 299 | 261 | 278 | 310 | -43% | -36% |
| % GH/Res | 9% | 8% | 8% | 7% | 6% | 6% | 6% | 6% | -27% | -27% |

Figure 3.11: LACDCFS Paid Placement Days

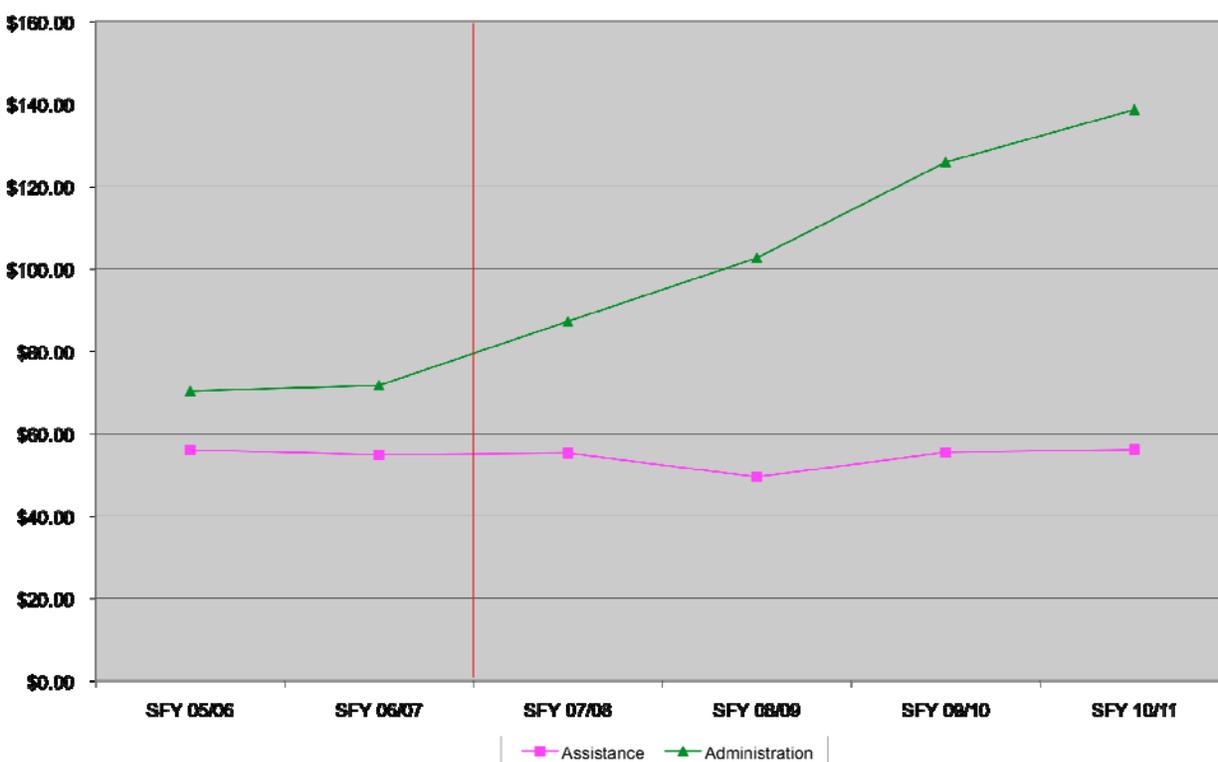


The average daily cost of assistance was stable in the pre-CAP years and remained stable into the first year of the CAP (see Table 3.9 and Figure 3.12). In the second year of the project, the average dipped below the baseline before returning in the fourth year of the project to a level on par with the baseline. The average daily cost of administration was also stable in the pre-CAP years before beginning a steady increase in each of the four years of the CAP, a change of 95% between the baseline and SFY 10/11.

Table 3.9: LACDCFS Average Daily Cost

| | SFY 05/06 | SFY 06/07 | Base | SFY 07/08 | SFY 08/09 | SFY 09/10 | SFY 10/11 | CAP Ave | Δ Base - SFY 10/11 | Δ Base - CAP Ave |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|--------------------|------------------|
| Assist | \$56 | \$55 | \$55 | \$55 | \$49 | \$55 | \$56 | \$54 | +1% | -2% |
| Admin | \$70 | \$72 | \$71 | \$87 | \$103 | \$126 | \$139 | \$114 | +95% | +60% |

Figure 3.12: LACDCFS Average Daily Cost

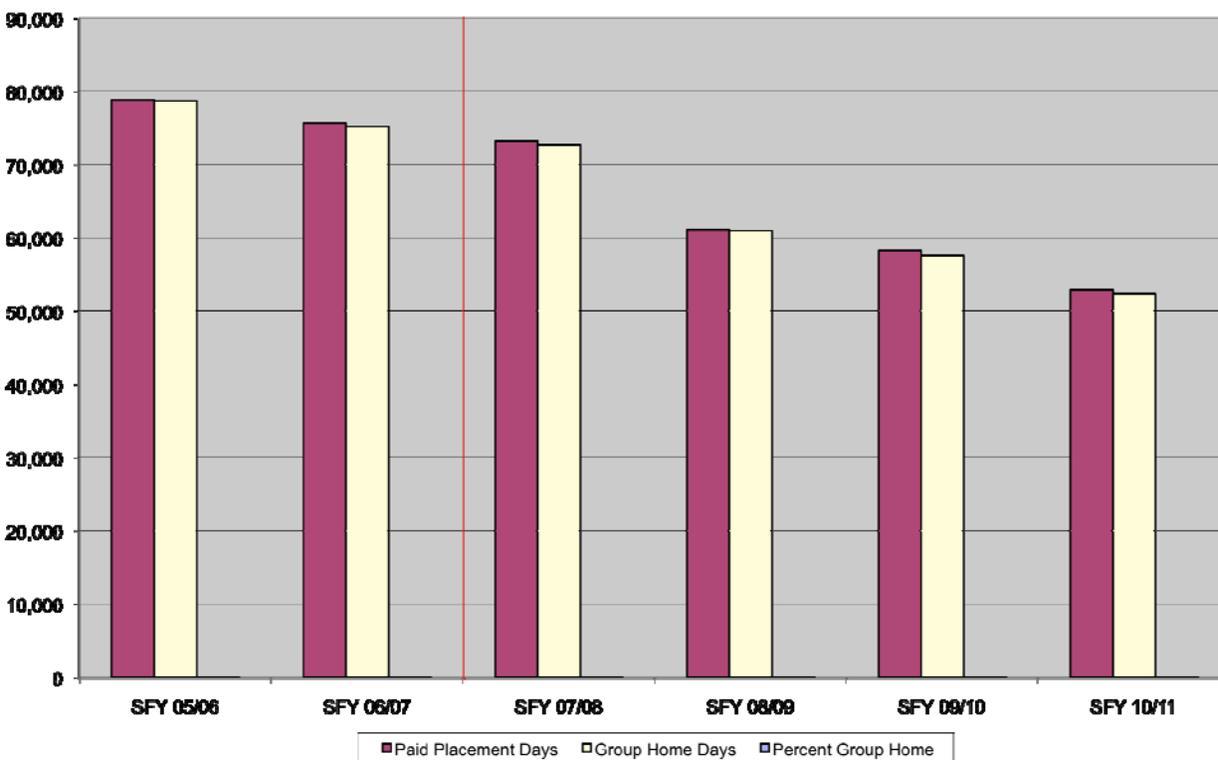


3.4.1.2.3 ACPD

Almost all of the foster care placements in the ACPD are group home/residential placements (see Table 3.10 and Figure 3.13). The use of out-of-home placements, as defined by paid placement days, had been in decline since before the start of the CAP. There was a change of 32% between baseline and the fourth year of the CAP and a change of 21% between the baseline and the average of the CAP years.

| | SFY 05/06 | SFY 06/07 | Base | SFY 07/08 | SFY 08/09 | SFY 09/10 | SFY 10/11 | CAP Ave | Δ Base - SFY 10/11 | Δ Base - CAP Ave |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| Total | 79 | 76 | 77 | 73 | 61 | 58 | 53 | 61 | -32% | -21% |
| GH/Res | 79 | 75 | 77 | 73 | 61 | 58 | 52 | 61 | -32% | -21% |
| % GH/Res | 100% | 9% | 100% | 9% | 100% | 9% | 9% | 9% | -1% | -0.4% |

Figure 3.13: ACPD Paid Placement Days

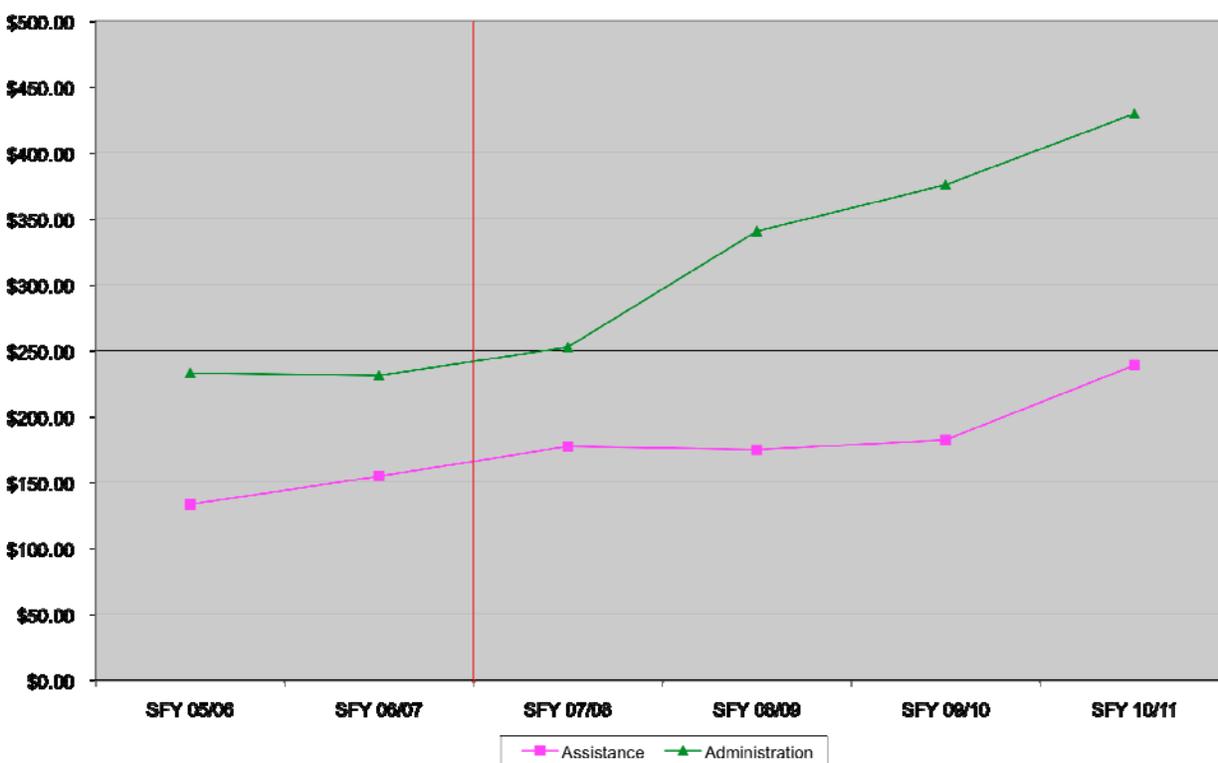


The average daily cost of assistance increased steadily in the pre-CAP years and continued to increase into the first year of the CAP before leveling off for the next two years (see Table 3.11 and Figure 3.14). In SFY 10/11, the average daily cost of assistance increased again from \$182 to \$239. The average daily cost of administration began an upward trend with the start of the CAP and increased substantially, for a change of 85% between the baseline and the fourth year of the CAP.

| | SFY 05/06 | SFY 06/07 | Base | SFY 07/08 | SFY 08/09 | SFY 09/10 | SFY 10/11 | CAP Ave | Δ Base - SFY 10/11 | Δ Base - CAP Ave |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|-------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|--------------------|------------------|
| Assist | \$133 | \$155 | \$144 | \$177 | \$175 | \$182 | \$239 | \$193 | +66% | +34% |
| Admin | \$233 | \$231 | \$232 | \$253 | \$340 | \$376 | \$430 | \$350 | +85% | +51% |

Note: The total administration expenditures for the PD are not reflected in the pre-CAP years. The administration expenditures in the pre-CAP years include only those expenditures for children who were eligible for federal dollars, not all children. Please see Section 3.3.3.4 Data Source Issues.

Figure 3.14: ACPD Average Daily Cost

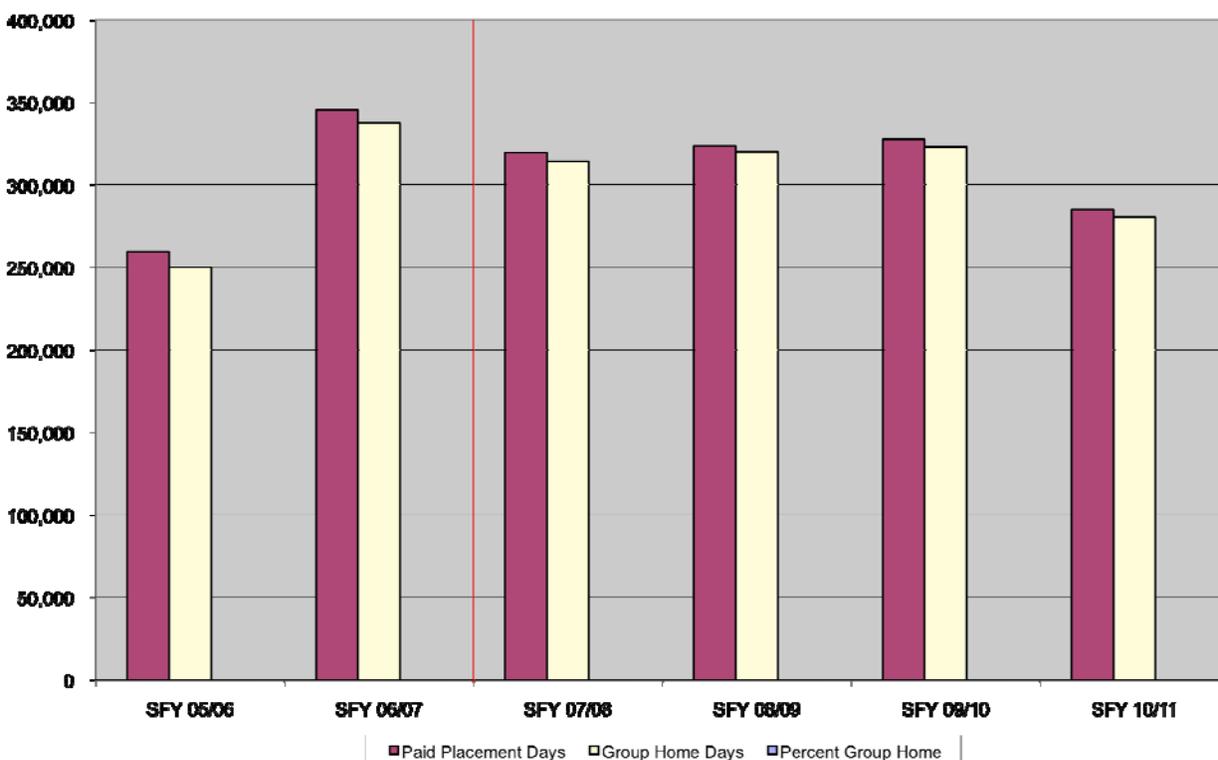


3.4.1.2.4 LACPD

Group home/residential “paid placement days” accounted for almost all of the paid placement days for the LACPD (see Table 3.12 and Figure 3.15). Both of these totals and those for the total number of placement days rose in the year preceding the CAP but then declined in the first year of the CAP, remaining relatively stable at the lower number for the next two years. Both sets of numbers declined in SFY 10/11. The decline between the baseline and the fourth year of the CAP was 6% for the total number of placement days and 5% for group home/residential paid placement days. However, there was an increase between the baseline and the average of the CAP years by 4% and 5%, respectively.

| | SFY 05/06 | SFY 06/07 | Base | SFY 07/08 | SFY 08/09 | SFY 09/10 | SFY 10/11 | CAP Ave | Δ Base - SFY 10/11 | Δ Base - CAP Ave |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|--------------------|------------------|
| Total | 259 | 345 | 302 | 319 | 323 | 327 | 285 | 314 | -6% | +4% |
| GH/Res | 250 | 338 | 294 | 314 | 320 | 323 | 280 | 309 | -5% | +5% |
| % GH/Res | 96% | 98% | 97% | 98% | 99% | 99% | 98% | 99% | +1% | +2% |

Figure 3.15: LACPD Paid Placement Days

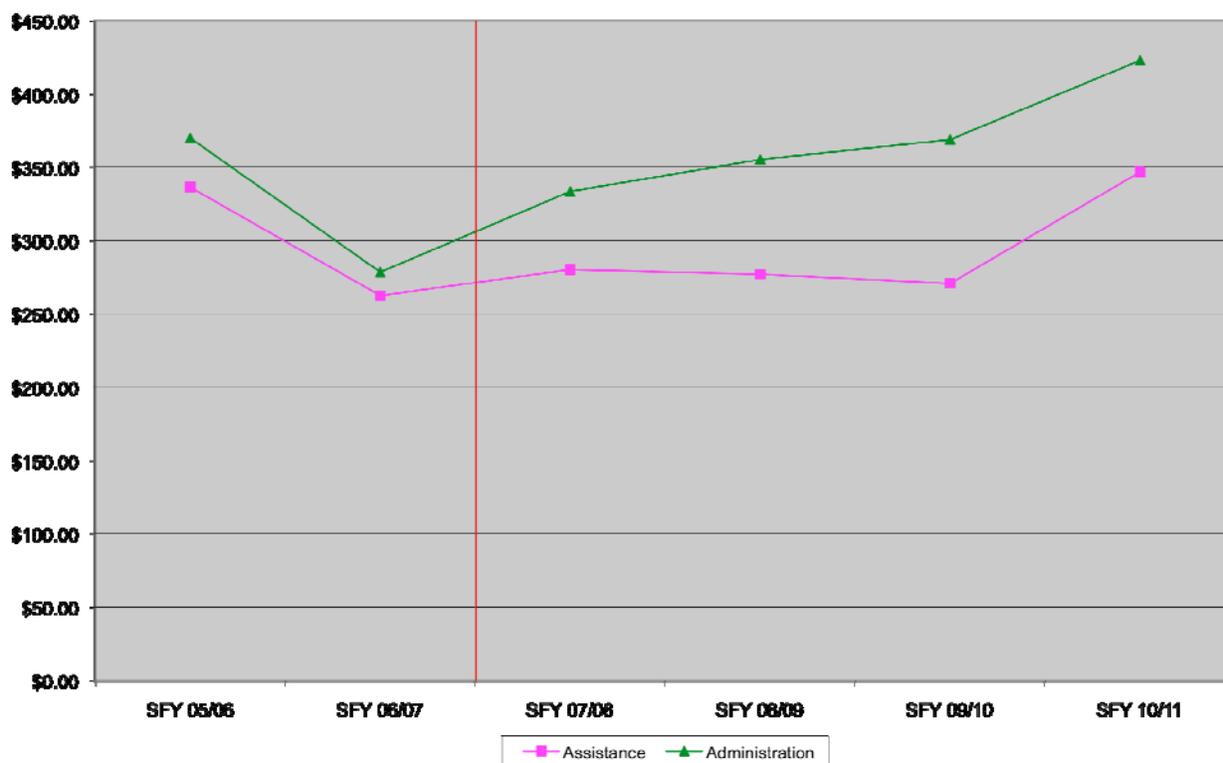


The average daily cost of both assistance and administration declined during the pre-CAP years, with administration representing the higher cost (see Table 3.13 and Figure 3.16). The average daily cost of administration increased steadily in the first three years of the CAP and then increased sharply in SFY 10/11. The average daily cost of assistance was stable in the first three years of the CAP, decreasing slightly before it too increased sharply in the fourth year of the project. The comparison of the “average daily cost of assistance” baseline to the CAP average showed a decrease of 2%.

| | SFY 05/06 | SFY 06/07 | Base | SFY 07/08 | SFY 08/09 | SFY 09/10 | SFY 10/11 | CAP Ave | Δ Base - SFY 10/11 | Δ Base - CAP Ave |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|-------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|--------------------|------------------|
| Assist | \$336 | \$262 | \$299 | \$280 | \$277 | \$271 | \$347 | \$294 | +16% | -2% |
| Admin | \$370 | \$278 | \$324 | \$333 | \$355 | \$369 | \$423 | \$370 | +30% | +14% |

Note: The total administration expenditures for the PD are not reflected in the pre-CAP years. The administration expenditures in the pre-CAP years include only those expenditures for children who were eligible for federal dollars, not all children. Please see Section 3.3.3.4 Data Source Issues.

Figure 3.16: LACPD Average Daily Cost



3.4.2 Question 3: Was there a shift in expenditures from assistance to administration?

3.4.2.1 Reinvestment Savings

The CAP model provided departments with the opportunity to generate reinvestment savings by reducing costs below their allocation and either using those savings to fund strategies or to retain the savings to be used in the future. Table 3.14 below displays the amount of

reinvestment savings generated by the departments in each of the four fiscal years of the CAP. The amount was calculated by subtracting the department's total expenditures from its allocation. This information is displayed graphically for each department in the first figure within the subsections below. The tables also show the reinvestment savings as a percent of the total expenditures and as a percent of the administration expenditures.

Reinvestment savings could be generated either through a reduction in assistance expenditures, in administration expenditures, or in both. These numbers were calculated by subtracting the expenditures for each category ("assistance" and "administration") from the allocation for each category. The second figure under each department's subsection displays the source of any generated reinvestment savings.

3.4.2.1.1 ACDCFS

The ACDCFS generated reinvestment savings in each of the four fiscal years of the CAP (see Table 3.14 and Figure 3.17) for a total of \$43 million. This represented approximately 12% of total expenditures over those four years and 19% of administration expenditures over the same period. Figure 3.18 shows that in SFY 07/08 reinvestment savings were generated through a reduction in both assistance and administration expenditures. The department generated over \$14 million in reinvestment savings through reductions in its assistance expenditures in SFY 08/09 but overspent its administration allocation slightly, thereby reducing the total amount available. The same pattern of savings offset by overspending occurred in SFY 09/10 and in SFY 10/11, although in these two years the department overspent its administration allocation by a much larger amount.

| | SFY 07/08 | SFY 08/09 | SFY 09/10 | SFY 10/11 | Total |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|---------------|
| Allocation | \$101,488,508 | \$103,432,653 | \$103,142,574 | \$102,089,614 | \$410,153,349 |
| Federal | \$35,072,127 | \$37,288,082 | \$38,152,264 | \$37,302,321 | \$147,814,794 |
| State | \$34,717,688 | \$35,811,587 | \$34,963,592 | \$35,572,225 | \$141,065,092 |
| County | \$31,698,693 | \$30,332,984 | \$30,026,718 | \$29,215,067 | \$121,273,462 |
| Expenditures | \$92,945,439 | \$89,871,036 | \$88,937,202 | \$95,218,077 | \$366,971,754 |
| Federal | \$32,453,470 | \$32,882,895 | \$35,397,843 | \$34,095,386 | \$134,829,594 |
| State | \$31,747,468 | \$30,098,094 | \$28,910,934 | \$34,114,781 | \$124,871,277 |
| County | \$28,744,501 | \$26,890,047 | \$24,628,425 | \$27,007,910 | \$107,270,883 |
| Savings | \$8,543,069 | \$13,561,617 | \$14,205,372 | \$6,871,537 | \$43,181,595 |
| Admin Expend | \$51,249,191 | \$52,744,804 | \$57,596,860 | \$66,997,817 | \$228,588,672 |
| Savings: % of Total Expend | 9.19% | 15.09% | 15.97% | 7.22% | 11.77% |
| Savings: % of Total Admin Expend | 16.67% | 25.71% | 24.66% | 10.26% | 18.89% |

Figure 3.17: ACDCFS CAP Savings Available for Reinvestment

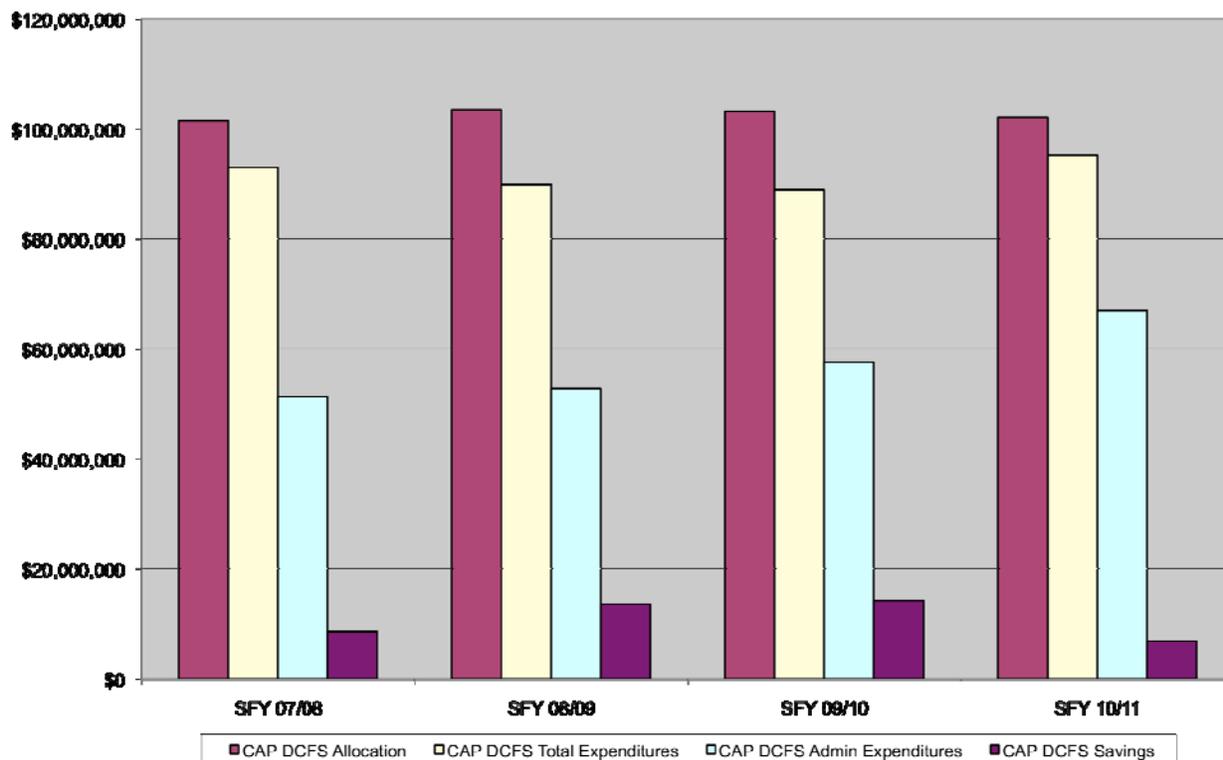
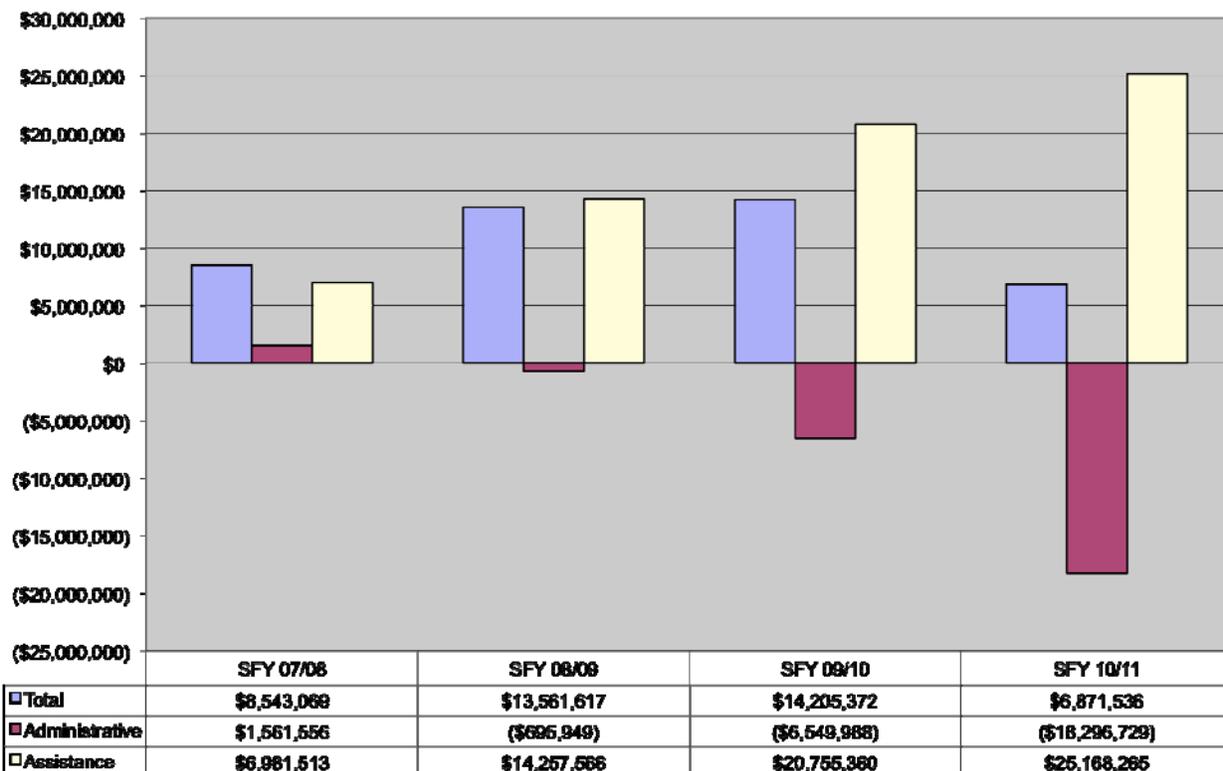


Figure 3.18: ACDCFS CAP Savings Source



3.4.2.1.2 LACDCFS

The LACDCFS generated reinvestment savings in the first two years of the CAP, but not in the third and fourth years (see Table 3.15 and Figure 3.19). Reinvestment savings as a proportion of both total expenditures and total administration expenditures grew between years one and two. By the end of the fourth year of the CAP, the total reinvestment savings generated represented approximately 2% of total expenditures and approximately 3% of administration expenditures. A reduction in assistance expenditures created the savings in the first two years (see Figure 3.20). In the third and fourth years, spending on administration outpaced the reduction in assistance expenditures, negating any reinvestment savings for those years.

Table 3.15: LACDCFS CAP Savings Available for Reinvestment by SFY

| | SFY 07/08 | SFY 08/09 | SFY 09/10 | SFY 10/11 | Total |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Allocation | \$830,313,270 | \$839,559,209 | \$833,514,902 | \$850,605,502 | \$3,353,992,883 |
| Federal | \$304,515,463 | \$296,201,973 | \$293,630,564 | \$299,809,843 | \$1,194,157,843 |
| State | \$288,343,675 | \$292,854,974 | \$288,513,415 | \$298,103,191 | \$1,167,815,255 |
| County | \$237,454,132 | \$250,502,262 | \$251,370,923 | \$252,692,468 | \$992,019,785 |
| Expenditures | \$804,720,513 | \$776,672,071 | \$838,290,574 | \$873,018,899 | \$3,292,702,057 |
| Federal | \$280,727,874 | \$270,910,924 | \$291,487,233 | \$310,189,680 | \$1,153,315,711 |
| State | \$275,347,951 | \$273,551,791 | \$290,254,398 | \$303,279,955 | \$1,142,434,095 |
| County | \$248,644,688 | \$232,209,356 | \$256,548,943 | \$259,549,264 | \$996,952,251 |
| Savings | \$25,592,757 | \$62,887,138 | (\$4,775,672) | (\$22,413,397) | \$61,290,826 |
| Admin Expend | \$492,716,805 | \$524,063,355 | \$582,005,970 | \$621,463,521 | \$2,220,249,651 |
| Savings: % of Total Expend | 3.18% | 8.10% | -0.57% | -2.57% | 1.86% |
| Savings: % of Total Admin Expend | 5.19% | 12.00% | -0.82% | -3.61% | 2.76% |

Figure 3.19: LACDCFS CAP Savings Available for Reinvestment

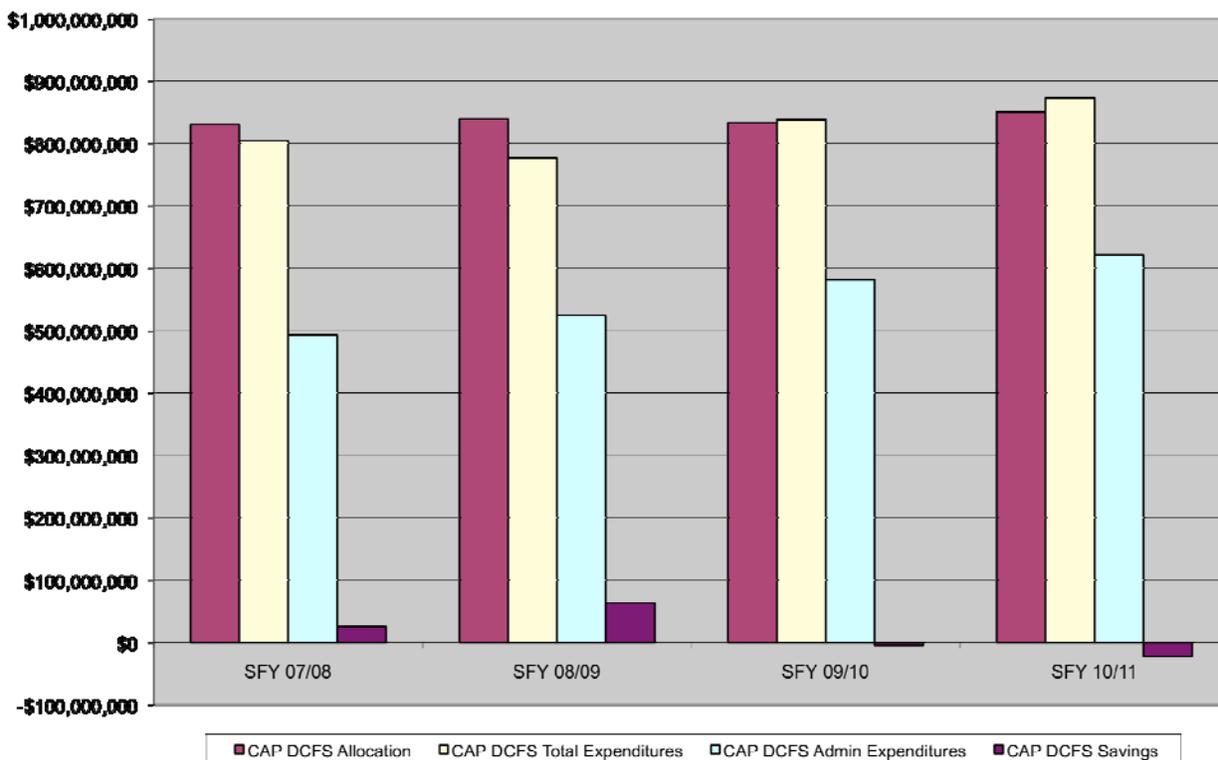


Figure 3.20: LACDCFS CAP Savings Source



3.4.2.1.3 ACPD

The ACPD did not generate any reinvestment savings in the first four years of the CAP due to the fiscal arrangement between the department and the ACSSA. The ACPD received an allocation equal to its expenditures in those years (see Table 3.16).

| | SFY 07/08 | SFY 08/09 | SFY 09/10 | SFY 10/11 | Total |
|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Allocation | \$31,477,042 | \$31,477,042 | \$32,507,325 | \$35,364,310 | \$130,825,719 |
| Federal | \$13,791,494 | \$14,569,869 | \$15,609,968 | \$16,360,195 | \$60,331,526 |
| State | \$4,598,232 | \$3,664,385 | \$3,477,137 | \$4,518,005 | \$16,257,759 |
| County | \$13,087,316 | \$13,242,788 | \$13,420,220 | \$14,486,111 | \$54,236,435 |
| Expenditures | \$31,477,042 | \$31,477,042 | \$32,507,325 | \$35,364,310 | \$130,825,719 |
| Federal | \$13,791,494 | \$14,569,869 | \$15,609,968 | \$16,360,195 | \$60,331,526 |
| State | \$4,598,232 | \$3,664,385 | \$3,477,137 | \$4,518,005 | \$16,257,759 |
| County | \$13,087,316 | \$13,242,788 | \$13,420,220 | \$14,486,111 | \$54,236,435 |
| Savings | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Admin Expend | \$18,496,857 | \$20,801,628 | \$21,892,081 | \$22,729,622 | \$83,920,188 |
| Savings: % of Total Expend | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| Savings: % of Total Admin Expend | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% |

3.4.2.1.4 LACPD

The LACPD's total expenditures were greater than its allocation in the first two years of the CAP and then again in the fourth year, resulting in a deficit for those years (see Table 3.17 and Figure 3.21). In the third year of the CAP, the department generated just over \$1 million in reinvestment savings through a reduction in both administration and assistance expenditures (see Figure 3.22).

| | SFY 07/08 | SFY 08/09 | SFY 09/10 | SFY 10/11 | Total |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| Allocation | \$193,937,631 | \$200,511,619 | \$210,521,011 | \$208,853,547 | \$813,823,808 |
| Federal | \$69,927,779 | \$85,730,134 | \$95,940,185 | \$97,552,321 | \$349,150,419 |
| State | \$29,598,463 | \$33,418,226 | \$34,086,228 | \$32,128,173 | \$129,231,090 |
| County | \$94,411,389 | \$81,363,259 | \$80,494,598 | \$79,173,053 | \$335,442,299 |
| Expenditures | \$195,935,986 | \$204,388,775 | \$209,380,447 | \$219,349,067 | \$829,054,275 |
| Federal | \$82,419,614 | \$85,317,285 | \$98,083,519 | \$98,468,245 | \$364,288,663 |
| State | \$32,545,565 | \$34,786,168 | \$32,345,245 | \$37,000,220 | \$136,677,198 |
| County | \$80,970,807 | \$84,285,322 | \$78,951,683 | \$83,880,602 | \$328,088,414 |
| Savings | (\$1,998,355) | (\$3,877,156) | \$1,140,564 | (\$10,495,520) | (\$15,230,467) |
| Admin Expend | \$106,477,088 | \$114,843,445 | \$120,754,311 | \$120,525,534 | \$462,600,378 |
| Savings: % of Total Expend | -1.02% | -1.90% | 0.54% | -4.78% | -1.84% |
| Savings: % of Total Admin Expend | -1.88% | -3.38% | 0.94% | -8.71% | -3.29% |

Figure 3.21: LACPD CAP Savings Available for Reinvestment

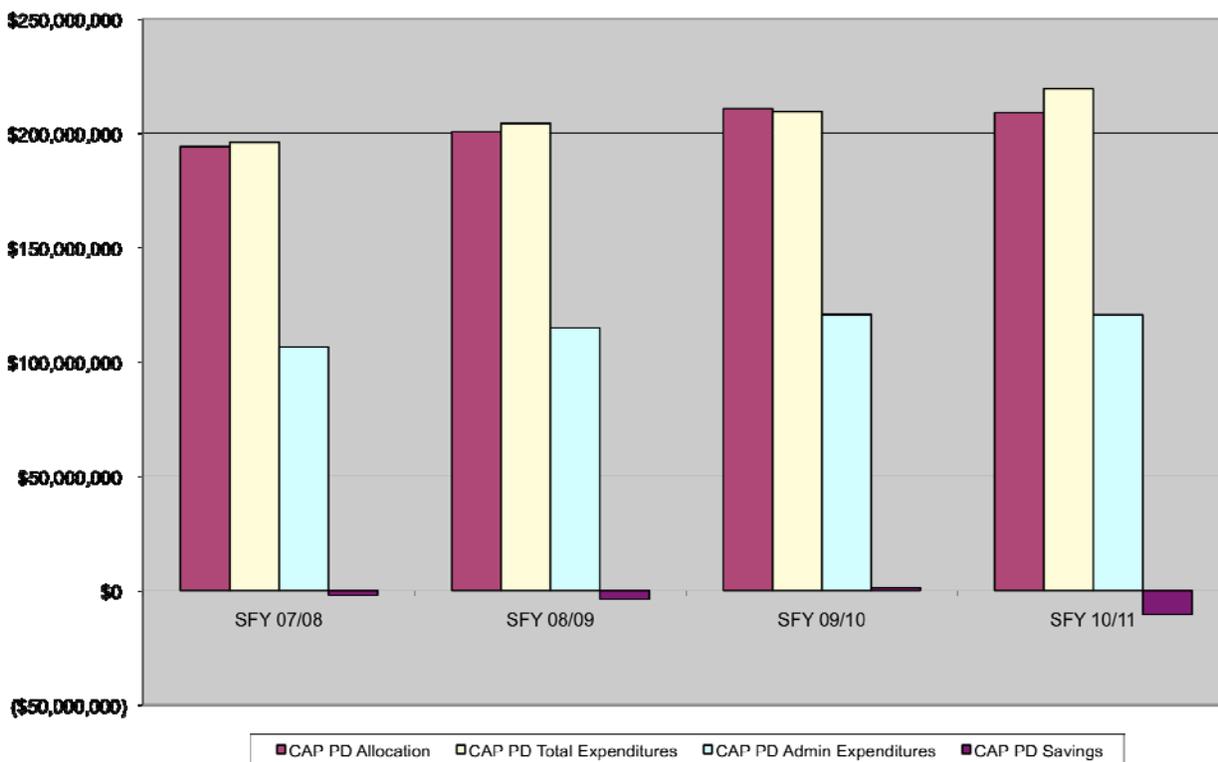


Figure 3.22: LACPD CAP Savings Source

3.4.2.2 Administration Spending

This evaluation sought to model “new administration spending” in a way that was different from calculating the total expenditures on strategies identified by the departments as the focus of their efforts under the CAP. The new model was based on the assumption that the departments would attempt to increase their administration expenditures under the CAP and reduce their assistance expenditures. To build the model, a baseline—an average—of administration expenditures and assistance expenditures was established from the pre-CAP years for each department so that the average administration expenditures and assistance expenditures would simulate what the administration spending and assistance spending would have been absent the CAP. Then, administration expenditures in each SFY of the CAP were compared to the baseline to establish “new administration spending” in each fiscal year. Combining these totals produced a cumulative total of “new administration spending” over the first four SFYs of the CAP. Similarly, assistance expenditures in each SFY of the CAP were compared to the baseline to establish “assistance savings” that would be available to the departments. “New administration spending” was then compared to the amount of “assistance savings” available in each department to determine whether the savings were sufficient to support the “new” expenditures. In cases where “new administration spending” exceeded “assistance savings,” it

was assumed that “other revenue” was available to support the expenditures. The data are displayed for each department in the tables below.

3.4.2.2.1 ACDCFS

The analysis model of “new administration spending” for ACDCFS showed that the department spent almost \$56 million over the baseline in the first four years of the CAP, accounting for approximately 15% of total expenditures and more than 24% of total administration expenditures (see Table 3.18). The amount of “assistance savings” was slightly more than \$44 million and was insufficient to support the “new” spending, meaning the department would have needed “other revenue” to cover the difference.

| “New Admin Spending” | “Assistance Savings” Available for Spending | Remaining “Assistance Savings” | “New Admin Spending” Financed by “Other Revenue” | “New Admin Spending” as a % of Total Expenditures | “New Admin Spending” as a % of Total Admin Expenditures | “New Admin Spending” Financed by “Savings” as a % of Total Expenditures | “New Admin Spending” Financed by Other Revenue as a % of Total Expenditures |
|----------------------|---|--------------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|
| \$55,955 | \$44,081 | \$0 | \$11,874 | 15.25% | 24.48% | 12.01% | 3.24% |

3.4.2.2.2 LACDCFS

The spending model developed for the evaluation showed that the LACDCFS had more than \$586 million in cumulative “new administration spending” over a baseline for the first four years of the CAP (see Table 3.19). This accounted for slightly more than 26% of administration expenditures and almost 18% of total expenditures. The department generated slightly more than \$203 million in “assistance savings” over the four years of the project, leaving \$383 million to be financed by “other revenue.”

| “New Admin Spending” | “Assistance Savings” Available for Spending | Remaining “Assistance Savings” | “New Admin Spending” Financed by “Other Revenue” | “New Admin Spending” as a % of Total Expenditures | “New Admin Spending” as a % of Total Admin Expenditures | “New Admin Spending” Financed by “Savings” as a % of Total Expenditures | “New Admin Spending” Financed by Other Revenue as a % of Total Expenditures |
|----------------------|---|--------------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|
| \$586,355 | \$203,173 | \$0 | \$383,182 | 17.81% | 26.41% | 6.17% | 11.64% |

3.4.2.2.3 ACPD

The ACPD spending model showed that the ACPD had more than \$12 million in “new administration spending” over the baseline for the first four years of the CAP (see Table 3.20). Assistance expenditures in the years of the CAP, however, exceeded the assistance baseline, resulting in a \$2.5 million deficit. This meant that the department needed almost \$15 million in “other revenue” to offset the shortfall under the model.

| “New Admin Spending” | “Assistance Savings” Available for Spending | Remaining “Assistance Savings” | “New Admin Spending” Financed by “Other Revenue” | “New Admin Spending” as a % of Total Expenditures | “New Admin Spending” as a % of Total Admin Expenditures | “New Admin Spending” Financed by “Savings” as a % of Total Expenditures | “New Admin Spending” Financed by Other Revenue as a % of Total Expenditures |
|----------------------|---|--------------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|
| \$12,254 | (\$2,505) | \$0 | \$12,254 | 9.37% | 14.60% | 0.00% | 9.37% |

3.4.2.2.4 LACPD

The LACPD had more than \$78 million in “new administration spending” over the baseline for the first four years of the CAP, according to the spending model (see Table 3.21). However, the department also had almost \$11 million in “assistance” spending above the baseline. Approximately \$88 million in “other revenue” was necessary under the model to offset the deficit spending.

| “New Admin Spending” | “Assistance Savings” Available for Spending | Remaining “Assistance Savings” | “New Admin Spending” Financed by “Other Revenue” | “New Admin Spending” as a % of Total Expenditures | “New Admin Spending” as a % of Total Admin Expenditures | “New Admin Spending” Financed by “Savings” as a % of Total Expenditures | “New Admin Spending” Financed by Other Revenue as a % of Total Expenditures |
|----------------------|---|--------------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|
| \$78,584 | (\$10,850) | \$0 | \$78,584 | 9.48% | 16.99% | 0.00% | 9.48% |

3.4.2.3 Expenditure Ratios

Expenditure ratios were calculated to further assess whether a shift from assistance expenditures to administration expenditures had taken place in each of the departments. The results are displayed in Table 3.22 through Table 3.25 below.

3.4.2.3.1 ACDCFS

Table 3.22 shows that a shift in expenditures occurred after the start of the CAP. Whereas in the pre-CAP years the ratio of administration expenditure to assistance expenditure was approximately one-to-one, the ratio in the CAP years changed, with administration expenditures increasing for every dollar spent on assistance. Administration expenditures were 70% of the total expenditures in SFY 10/11; they had been less than 50% of total expenditures at the start of the CAP.

| SFY | Assistance | Administration | Total | Ratios | | |
|-------|--------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|
| | | | | Assist : Admin | Assist/Total | Admin/Total |
| 05/06 | \$47,206,462 | \$45,212,804 | \$92,419,266 | 1.04 : 1 | 51% | 49% |
| 06/07 | \$44,025,473 | \$41,104,223 | \$85,129,696 | 1.07 : 1 | 52% | 48% |
| 07/08 | \$41,696,248 | \$51,249,191 | \$92,945,439 | 1 : 1.23 | 45% | 55% |
| 08/09 | \$37,126,232 | \$52,744,804 | \$89,871,036 | 1 : 1.42 | 41% | 59% |
| 09/10 | \$31,340,342 | \$57,596,860 | \$88,937,202 | 1 : 1.84 | 35% | 65% |
| 10/11 | \$28,220,260 | \$66,997,817 | \$95,218,077 | 1 : 2.37 | 30% | 70% |

3.4.2.3.2 LACDCFS

The expenditure ratios for the LACDCFS had favored spending on administration in both the pre-CAP years and the years of the CAP (see Table 3.23). In the pre-CAP years, the department was spending between \$1.25 and \$1.31 on administration for every dollar spent on assistance, resulting in slightly less than 60% of the total expenditures. Administration expenditures in the fourth year of the CAP made up almost 70% of total spending.

| SFY | Assistance | Administration | Total | Ratios | | |
|-------|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|
| | | | | Assist : Admin | Assist/Total | Admin/Total |
| 05/06 | \$322,206,630 | \$404,266,326 | \$726,472,956 | 1 : 1.25 | 44% | 56% |
| 06/07 | \$315,606,308 | \$412,681,130 | \$728,287,438 | 1 : 1.31 | 43% | 57% |
| 07/08 | \$312,003,708 | \$492,716,805 | \$804,720,513 | 1 : 1.58 | 39% | 61% |
| 08/09 | \$252,608,716 | \$524,063,355 | \$776,672,071 | 1 : 2.07 | 33% | 67% |
| 09/10 | \$256,284,604 | \$582,005,970 | \$838,290,574 | 1 : 2.27 | 31% | 69% |
| 10/11 | \$251,555,378 | \$621,463,521 | \$873,018,899 | 1 : 2.47 | 29% | 71% |

3.4.2.3.3 ACPD

The ACPD ratio of assistance expenditures to administration expenditures fluctuated over time (see Table 3.24). The ratios decreased over the two pre-CAP years and the first year of the CAP project, but they increased in the second and third year of the project. The trend appeared to reverse again when the ratio decreased in SFY 10/11. Administration expenditures have historically accounted for between 59% and 67% of spending.

| SFY | Assistance | Administration | Total | Ratios | | |
|-------|--------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|
| | | | | Assist : Admin | Assist/Total | Admin/Total |
| 05/06 | \$10,502,276 | \$18,350,874 | \$28,853,150 | 1 : 1.75 | 36% | 64% |
| 06/07 | \$11,698,130 | \$17,482,181 | \$29,180,311 | 1 : 1.49 | 40% | 60% |
| 07/08 | \$12,980,185 | \$18,496,857 | \$31,477,042 | 1 : 1.43 | 41% | 59% |
| 08/09 | \$10,675,414 | \$20,801,628 | \$31,477,042 | 1 : 1.95 | 34% | 66% |
| 09/10 | \$10,615,244 | \$21,892,081 | \$32,507,325 | 1 : 2.06 | 33% | 67% |
| 10/11 | \$12,634,688 | \$22,729,622 | \$35,364,310 | 1 : 1.80 | 36% | 64% |

Note: The total administration expenditures for the PD are not reflected in the pre-CAP years. The administration expenditures in the pre-CAP years include only those expenditures for children who were eligible for federal dollars, not all children. Please see Section 3.3.3.4 Data Source Issues.

3.4.2.3.4 LACPD

The LACPD's spending ratio was almost even in the pre-CAP years: slightly more than a dollar was spent on administration for every dollar spent on assistance (see Table 3.25). Administration expenditures increased in share during the first three years of the CAP, rising to 58% percent of total expenditures until they dropped to 55% in SFY 10/11.

| SFY | Assistance | Administration | Total | Ratios | | |
|-------|--------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|
| | | | | Assist : Admin | Assist/Total | Admin/Total |
| 05/06 | \$87,204,590 | \$95,896,631 | \$183,101,221 | 1 : 1.10 | 48% | 52% |
| 06/07 | \$90,597,416 | \$96,111,722 | \$186,709,138 | 1 : 1.06 | 49% | 51% |
| 07/08 | \$89,458,898 | \$106,477,088 | \$195,935,986 | 1 : 1.19 | 46% | 54% |
| 08/09 | \$89,545,330 | \$114,843,445 | \$204,388,775 | 1 : 1:28 | 44% | 56% |
| 09/10 | \$88,626,136 | \$120,754,311 | \$209,380,447 | 1 : 1.36 | 42% | 58% |
| 10/11 | \$98,823,533 | \$120,525,534 | \$219,349,067 | 1 : 1.22 | 45% | 55% |

Note: The total administration expenditures for the PD are not reflected in the pre-CAP years. The administration expenditures in the pre-CAP years include only those expenditures for children who were eligible for federal dollars, not all children. Please see Section 3.3.3.4 Data Source Issues.

3.5 Department Summaries

The following sections summarize the fiscal findings for each of the four departments. It is important to consider the reimbursement rate increases for group homes, foster homes and foster family agencies when reviewing the summaries. The reimbursement rate increases were the result of lawsuit settlements with effective dates of December 2009 (group homes) and May 2011 (foster homes). The reimbursement rate increases likely influenced assistance expenditures in the latter years of the CAP most notably for the ACPD and the LACPD where almost all of the out-of-home placements were group home placements. The increase in the average daily cost of assistance and the decrease in the expenditure ratio between assistance expenditures and administration expenditures could likely be attributed to the reimbursement rate increase. The reimbursement rate increase also likely had an influence on the amount of reinvestment savings the departments were able to generate in the latter years of the CAP given that reinvestment savings were generated from reductions in assistance expenditures.

3.5.1 ACDCFS

Compared to the pre-CAP years, the ACDCFS reduced foster care assistance expenditures while increasing administration expenditures during the years of the CAP. The information from the ACDCFS showed that both types of expenditures were trending downward in the years preceding the start of the CAP. Assistance expenditures continued their downward trend in the first four years of the CAP while administration expenditures increased as the department spent more money on services and staff. Correspondingly, the number of paid placement days and paid placement days categorized as “group home/residential” continued their decline in the CAP years. The use of more expensive placements dropped more substantially in the second year of the CAP in terms of numbers and in proportion to all other placement types. Echoing these patterns, both the average daily cost of assistance and administration were stable in the pre-CAP years before they trended in different directions, with the average daily cost of administration increasing the years of the CAP.

The second set of analyses showed that the ACDCFS was shifting its expenditures from foster care assistance to administration. The department was able to generate reinvestment savings primarily by reducing its use of assistance-related services and then purchasing administration-related services and staff. The analysis model that compared CAP years expenditures to the pre-CAP baselines also indicated that the department was spending more on administration and less on assistance, although the increase in administration expenditures was not being offset by the decrease in assistance expenditures. The shift from assistance expenditures to administration expenditures was further supported by the change in ratios over the years of the CAP.

3.5.2 LACDCFS

The LACDCFS reduced foster care assistance expenditures by a moderate margin while consistently increasing administration expenditures through the first four years of the CAP as compared to the pre-CAP years. The total number of paid placement days began to decrease with the onset of the CAP and the use of more expensive placements and the percentage of such placements continued the decline that began in the pre-CAP years, although the percentage increased in the fourth year of the project. The average daily cost of assistance did not fluctuate

to a noteworthy degree, while the averaged daily cost of administration rose in each of the first four years of the CAP.

The second set of analysis showed a system already spending more on administration than assistance, though the ratio increased in the first four years of the CAP. The LACDCFS generated reinvestment savings through a reduction in assistance expenditures, but in the third and fourth year of the CAP the administration expenditures were greater than the assistance savings, resulting in no reinvestment savings. The department had “new administration spending,” according to the analysis model. Similar to years three and four of the CAP, the administration expenditures in the model outpaced the amount of savings generated by a reduction in assistance expenditures.

3.5.3 ACPD

Assistance expenditures and administration expenditure for the ACPD increased during the years of the CAP as compared to expenditures in the pre-CAP years. The ACPD foster care assistance expenditures returned to a pre-CAP level after a slight increase in the first year of the CAP, indicating a reduction in foster care-related costs, though they rose again in year four of the project. Administration expenditures, however, increased substantially, in part due to the difference in the way expenditures were captured in the CEC between the two time periods. The use of paid placement days and subsequently the use of group home/residential paid placement days continued to decline during the CAP. Given the decline in paid placement days and the increase in administration expenditures, the average daily cost of administration also increased considerably in the years of the CAP.

The ACPD did not generate reinvestment savings due to the fiscal arrangement between the department and the ACSSA. In the analysis model the ACPD had “new administration spending” above the baseline; but it also spent more on assistance than in the pre-CAP years, which resulted in a lack of “assistance savings.” The shift in the ratios favoring administration expenditures in the second and third year of the CAP reversed in the fourth year of the project, going from approximately \$2 on administration for every \$1 spent on assistance at its height to \$1.80 for every \$1, respectively.

3.5.4 LACPD

In comparison to the pre-CAP years, administration expenditures for the LACPD increased during the CAP in part due to the difference in the way expenditures were captured in the CEC between the two time periods; assistance expenditures, however, were stable across both periods until the fourth year of the project. The number of paid placement days was comprised almost entirely of group home/residential paid placement days, and they were relatively stable during the first several years of the CAP until they decreased in the fourth year. Given the rise in administration expenditures and the stability of the number of paid placement days, the average cost of administration increased over the course of the four years of the CAP.

The second set of analyses indicated that the LACPD shifted the focus of its expenditures from assistance to administration to some degree. The department generated a small amount of reinvestment savings in the third year of the CAP. The LACPD had “new administration spending” above the baseline in the analysis model; however, it also spent more on assistance

than in the pre-CAP years, which resulted in a lack of “assistance savings.” The expenditure ratio analysis also showed a shift from assistance expenditures to administration expenditures when comparing the pre-CAP years to the years of the CAP.

Chapter 4: Outcome Study

4.1 Key Questions

The specific outcome study question asks, “What is the impact of a capped, flexible Title IV-E funding strategy on outcomes for children and families in the child welfare services system and relevant juvenile probation systems in participating counties, as compared to outcomes prior to the implementation of the CAP?” This final evaluation report outcome study focuses in particular on describing the longitudinal changes in the following outcomes:

- Child safety
- Exits to permanency
- Placement stability, and
- Appropriateness and restrictiveness of new and existing out-of-home placements.

This study also describes participation rates and general caseload indicators.

The indicators are presented and defined in Table 4.1 below. The indicators for which data are available for the juvenile probation system are noted parenthetically at the end of respective definitions.

| Table 4.1 Outcome Study Outcomes and Indicators | |
|--|---|
| Child Safety | |
| S1.1 No Recurrence of Maltreatment: | This safety measure reflects the percentage of children who were victims of a substantiated or indicated child maltreatment allegation within a specified 6-month period for whom there was no additional substantiated maltreatment allegation during the subsequent 6 months. |
| S2.1 No Maltreatment in Foster Care: | This safety measure reflects the percentage of children who were not victims of a substantiated maltreatment report by a foster parent or facility staff while in out-of-home care. (Probation) |
| Recurrence of Allegations: | Children who were not removed from home with a substantiated base disposition who had substantiated allegation within 12 months. |
| 2B Timely Response (Immediate Response Compliance): | These reports provide the percentage of child abuse and neglect referrals that require, and then receive, an in-person investigation within the specified time frame. |
| 2C Timely Social Worker Visit with a Child: | These reports measure the compliance rate for case worker visits with children. The rate is equal to the percentage of children requiring a caseworker contact who received the contact in a timely manner. |
| Exits to Permanency | |
| C1.1 Reunification Within 12 Months (Exit Cohort): | This measure computes the percentage of children discharged to reunification within 12 months of removal. (Probation) |
| C1.2 Median Time to Reunification (Exit Cohort): | This measure computes the median length of stay (in months) for children discharged to reunification. (Probation) |
| C1.3 Reunification Within 12 Months (Entry Cohort): | This measure computes the percentage of children reunified within 12 months of removal for a cohort of children first entering foster care. (Probation) |
| C1.4 Reentry Following Reunification (Exit Cohort): | This measure computes the percentage of children reentering foster care within 12 months of a reunification discharge. (Probation) |
| C2.1 Adoption Within 24 Months (Exit Cohort): | This measure computes the percentage of children adopted within 24 months of removal. |

| Placement Stability |
|---|
| C4.1 Placement Stability (8 Days to 12 Months in Care): This measure computes the percentage of children with two or fewer placements who have been in foster care for 8 days or more, but less than 12 months. (Probation) |
| C4.2 Placement Stability (12 Months to 24 Months in Care): This measure computes the percentage of children with two or fewer placements who have been in foster care for at least 12 months, but less than 24 months. (Probation) |
| C4.3 Placement Stability (At Least 24 Months in Care): This measure computes the percentage of children with two or fewer placements who have been in foster care for 24 months or more. (Probation) |
| Appropriateness and Restrictiveness of New and Existing Out-of-Home Placements |
| 4B Least Restrictive (Entries First Placement): This measure is derived from a longitudinal database of all entries to out-of-home care (in care 8 days or more) during the time period specified and computes the percentage of children who have a first placement of "Kinship," "Foster Home," "FFA," "Group," "Shelter," or "Guardianship." (Probation) |
| 4B Least Restrictive (Point-in-Time Placement): This measure is a point-in-time count of all children who have an open placement episode of "Kinship," "Foster Home," "FFA," "Group Home/Shelter," "Other," "Runaway," "Guardianship," or "Pre-Adopt." (Probation) |
| Participation Rates (children per 1,000) |
| Rate of children with maltreatment referrals. |
| Rate of children with substantiated referrals. |
| Rate of children with entries to foster care. |
| Rate of children in foster care. |
| General Caseload |
| Case Service Component |
| Entries (Probation Only)* |
| Point-in-Time (Probation Only) |
| Exits (Probation Only) |

* This parenthetical designation indicates that there is no other data available for these three *General Caseload* categories aside from the probation data.

Note: The numbers attached to the indicators above refer to those used in the system of federal indicators that gauges state welfare performance. The definitions of the indicators come directly from the Methodology link from the Dynamic Reporting Interface (http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb_childwelfare/).

This final evaluation report outcome study also includes information from the 56 county departments of children and family services (NPCDCFS) and probation departments (NPCPD) in California who are not participating in the CAP. The purpose of including this additional information is to provide a context for the description of the longitudinal changes in the participating counties. It is important to note that the non-participating county departments from the 56 counties do not form a comparison group in the evaluation sense of the word, given that the evaluation team did not collect process and fiscal information from those counties.

4.2 Methods

4.2.1 Data Sources

The data source for the outcome study was the California Child Welfare Performance Indicators Project (http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb_childwelfare/), located at the Child Welfare Research Center, the Center for Social Services Research, at the University of California at Berkeley (UCB). The project is a collaboration between the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and the UCB and funded by the CDSS and the Stuart Foundation. The

Performance Indicators Project is conducted by UCB researchers and is wholly separate from the CAP evaluation. The case-level source data are drawn from the state's automated Child Welfare Services Case Management System (CWS/CMS) and aggregated to the county level. Summary tables are updated quarterly and made available on a public website where they can be customized on a variety of parameters.

4.2.2 Data Collection

The various data tables for each participating county department of children and family services and the other 56 county departments were downloaded in May and June 2012 and included the data extract Quarter 4 (December 31), 2011. The various data tables for each participating county probation department and the other 56 county departments were downloaded in January and February 2012 and included the data extract Quarter 3 (September 30), 2011. The trend lines that constitute the CAP's comparison period include data from July 1, 2002, through June 30, 2007, just prior to the onset of the CAP on July 1, 2007. The CAP trend lines include data from the onset of the CAP through June 30, 2011, unless otherwise indicated.

4.2.3 Data Analysis

As previously stated, the purpose of the outcome study is to assess the impact of the CAP on child welfare and probation outcomes over the five-year span of the demonstration project, as compared to outcomes prior to the implementation of the CAP. In order to explore this possible relationship, graphic analysis on the outcome indicators was conducted.

Linear trend lines were created using Excel to assist in the graphic analysis where suitable. Trends in the indicators during both time periods—the five-year span of the study and the five years prior to the implementation of the CAP—were assessed for slope, celeration (i.e., deceleration, acceleration, horizontal stability), and magnitude (i.e., increase or decrease between the two time periods); they were also assessed to determine whether or not the slope/celeration was trending in the desired direction. Finally, they were assessed to determine whether or not change occurred between the two time periods and whether any change occurred in the desired direction.

The data analysis also included an assessment of whether or not national goals or standards had been met or exceeded. When the national standards/goals were met or exceeded, the number of data points during each period of the evaluation were totaled and compared to the possible data points within each indicator. For example, if there were five data points during the comparison period and the national standards/goals were met or exceeded three times during that period then a "score" of 3/5 was noted for that indicator.

Tables that display the preceding information were developed for the indicators where trend lines could be produced. The summary score in the tables reflect an effort to account for some of the subjective nature of interpreting trend lines by triangulating several pieces of information for a single indicator. For each indicator a score was created that combined three important aspects of the analysis. One point was awarded if there was a shift in magnitude in the desired direction for the indicator. A second point was awarded if the indicator was at or exceeded the national standard/goal for at least one data point during the intervention period. A

third point was awarded if the indicator's trend had changed to or was continuing in the desired direction during the intervention period (i.e., the years of the CAP).

The outcomes were viewed as existing within an interrelated cycle of measures, analyzed over time, and considered within the operational contexts of the four departments that were central to this study: the Alameda County Department of Children and Family Services (ACDCFS), the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (LACDCFS), the Alameda County Probation Department (ACPD), and the Los Angeles County Probation Department (LACPD). The information from the non-participating counties provided a statewide context for performance on the selected indicators over time. The indicators used in the analyses are presented above in Table 4.1.

4.2.4 Data Issues and Limitations

The nature of the outcome analysis is descriptive, given the structure of the evaluation design. As previously stated, it cannot be said that changes observed in the patterns of outcomes of the participating counties post-CAP as compared to their pre-CAP pattern of outcomes were caused by the CAP. It is impossible to attribute changes to participating in the CAP, absent comparison counties undergoing the same scope of data-collecting activities as the participating counties.

The descriptive nature of the analysis itself presents challenges. To some extent, the process is subjective. Although attempts have been made to strengthen the interpretations by triangulating different types of information about the same indicator, they are still open to alternative interpretations.

Adding to the interpretation challenge is the fact that the participating county child welfare departments are not using the CAP opportunity to dramatically reform their philosophies or practice. Instead, they are adding initiatives to further a core set of goals guided by established philosophies and in line with current practice. As a result, it can be reasonably anticipated that any changes in the CAP period would be incremental and difficult to observe.

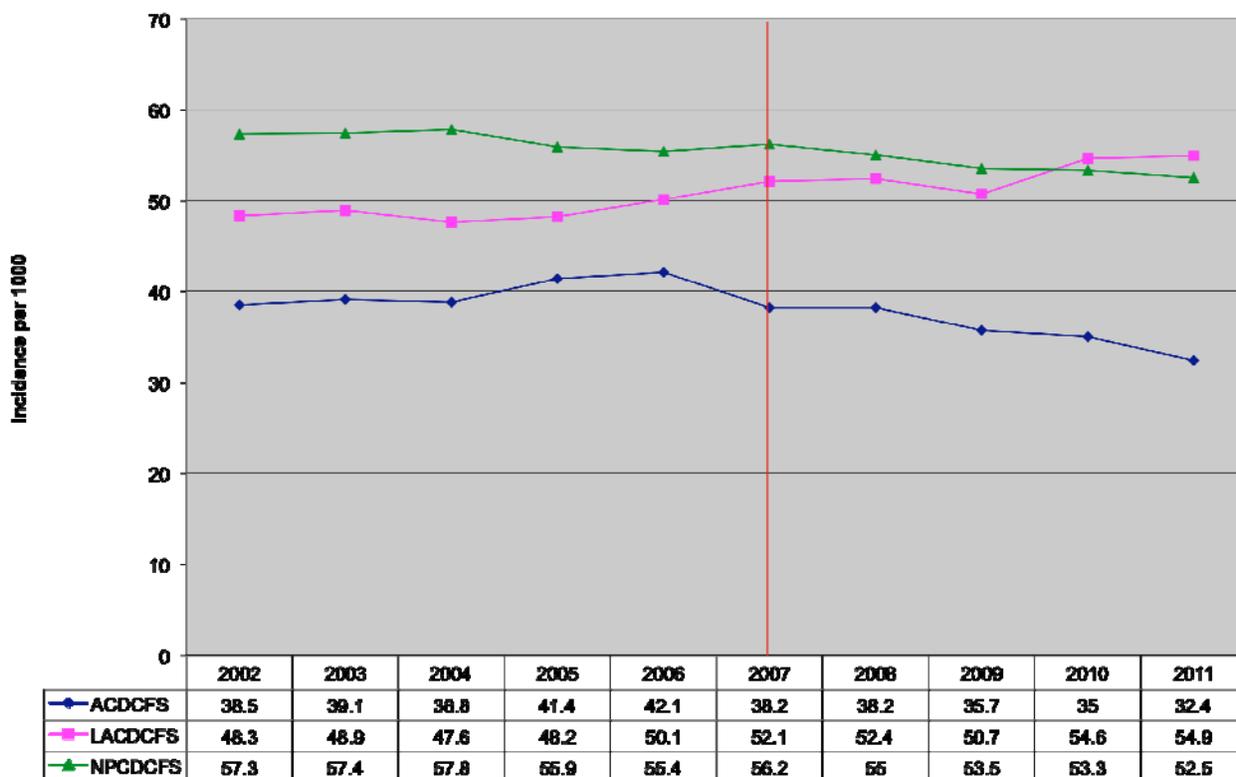
As well, there are lingering reliability and validity concerns regarding the probation department data. The aforementioned CWS/CMS system is not native to the probation departments, and it was only in the latter years of the CAP that the departments had direct access to the system and data-entry responsibilities. Previously, the probation departments provided their child welfare counterparts with rudimentary case information in paper form, and those data were then entered into the CWS/CMS. As a result of this history, the findings based on the data should be interpreted with caution.

4.3 Findings: Departments of Children and Family Services

4.3.1 Participation Rates and General Caseload

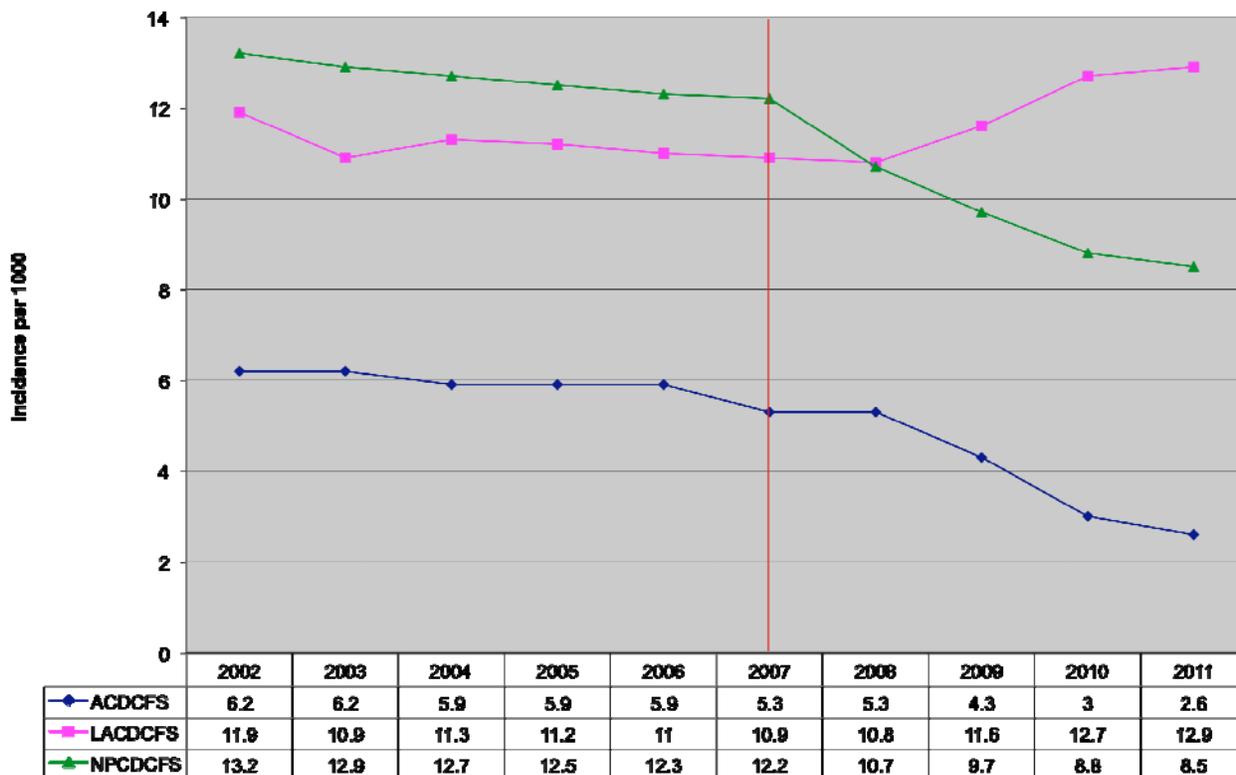
Figure 4.1 below shows the allegation rates (Incidence per 1000) for the ACDCFS, the LACDCFS, and the NPCDCFS. Allegation rates rose slightly in the last two years of the comparison period for the ACDCFS and the LACDCFS, but they then declined over the course of the CAP, from 38.2 in 2007 to 32.4 in 2011 for the ACDCFS. The rates continued to rise for the LACDCFS, reaching their highest point in 2011 (54.9). Allegation rates were lower for the ACDCFS and the LACDCFS, though the LACDCFS rates rose above those for the NPCDCFS during 2010 and 2011.

Figure 4.1: ACDCFS-LACDCFS-NPCDCFS - Allegations



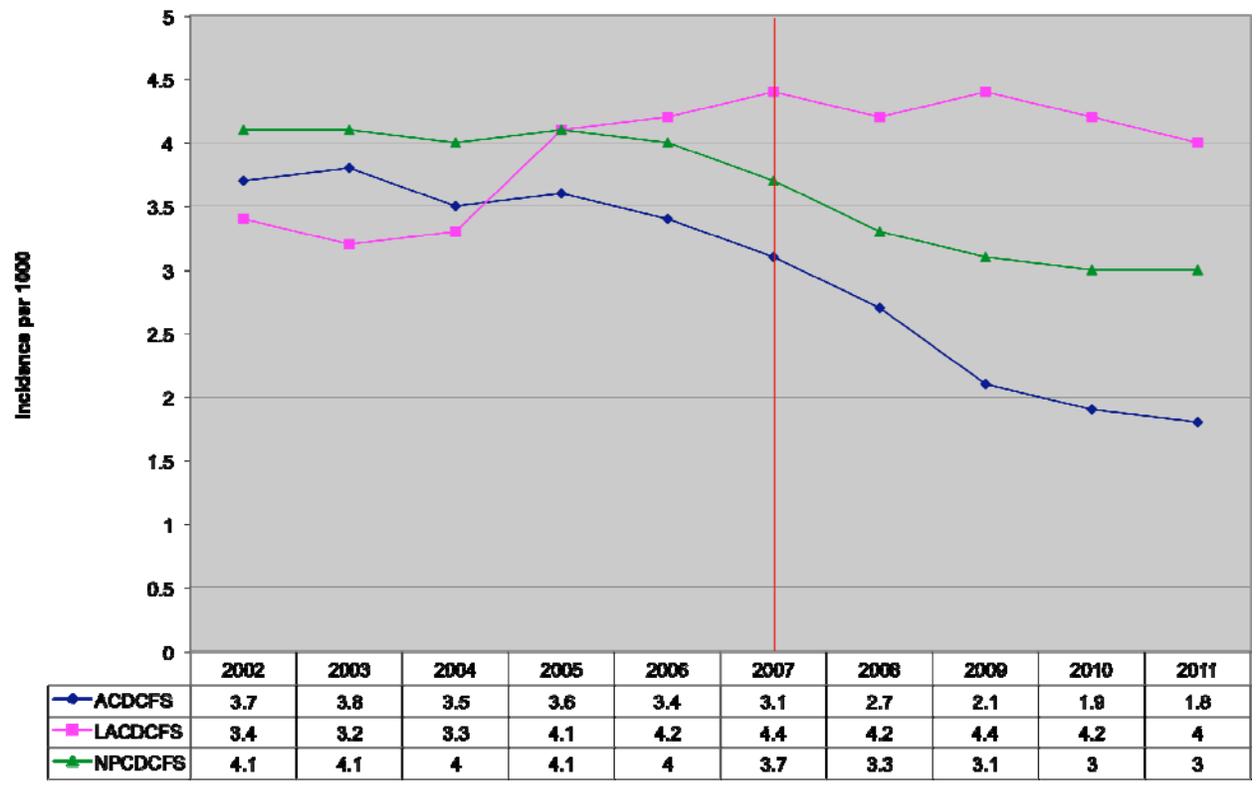
Substantiation rates, as shown in Figure 4.2 were in slight decline in the ACDCFS, the LACDCFS, and the NPCDCFS during the comparison years. The decline in the rates increased during the years of the CAP for the ACDCFS and the NPCDCFS. For the ACDCFS, the decline between 2006 and 2011 was 56%. The decline was 31% for the NPCDCFS. However, substantiation rates increased for the LACDCFS beginning in 2009 and continuing through 2011, increasing by 19%.

Figure 4.2: ACDCFS-LACDCFS-NPCDCFS - Substantiations



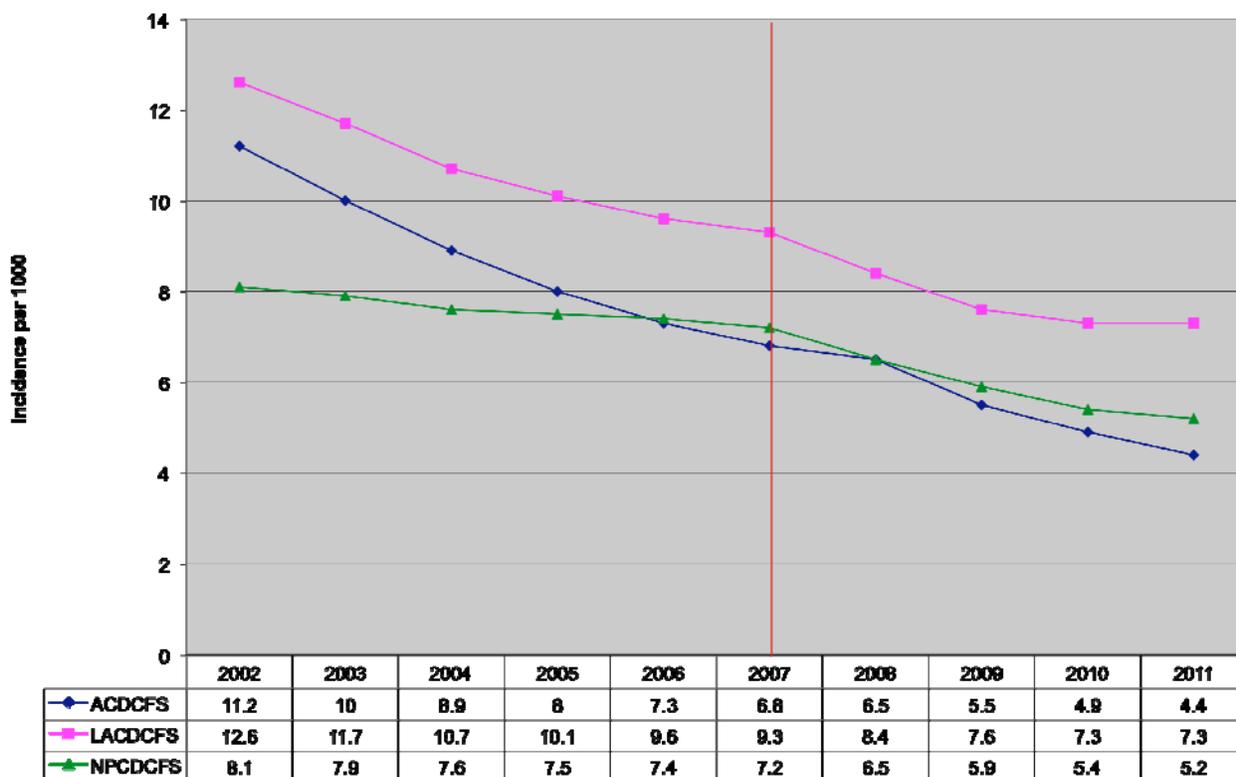
Entry rates for the ACDCFS and the NPCDCFS were relatively stable during most of the comparison years before beginning a decline in 2006 that continued to 2011 (see Figure 4.3). The ACDCFS experienced a decline of 47% between 2006 and 2011 while the NPCDCFS experienced a decline of 25% during the same time period. The entry rates of the LACDCFS were stable in the first three years of the comparison period before increasing in 2005. The LACDCFS entry rates then fluctuated between 2007 and 2009 before declining in 2010 and 2011.

Figure 4.3: ACDCFS-LACDCFS-NPCDCFS - Entries



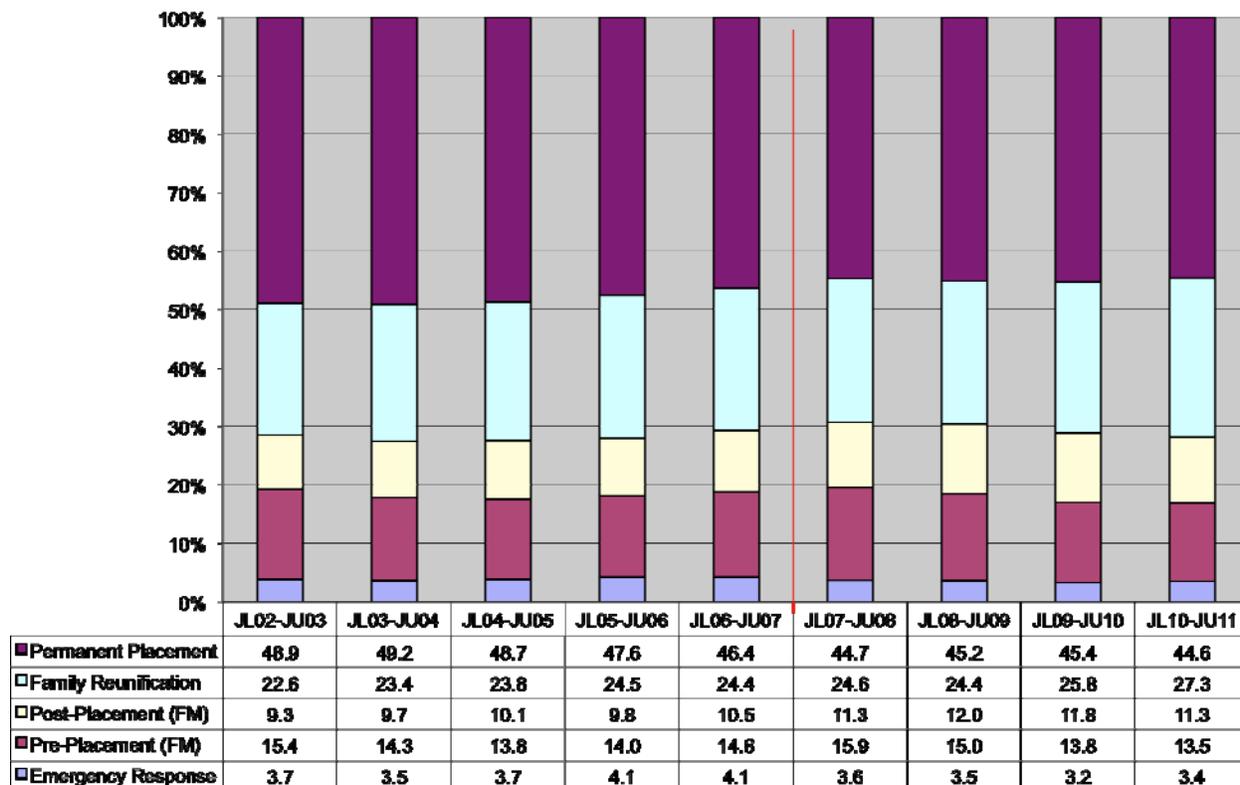
The ACDCFS, the LACDCFS, and the NPCDCFS all began a decline in in-care rates during the comparison years (see Figure 4.4). The decline for the ACDCFS slowed slightly at that start of the CAP years but then increased, while the LACDCFS decline leveled off by 2011. The decline for the NPCDCFS steepened with the start of the CAP, although it had slowed again by 2011. Rates were highest for the LACDCFS, while the ACDCFS and the NPCDCFS had changed positions by 2009.

Figure 4.4: ACDCFS-LACDCFS-NPCDCFS - In-Care



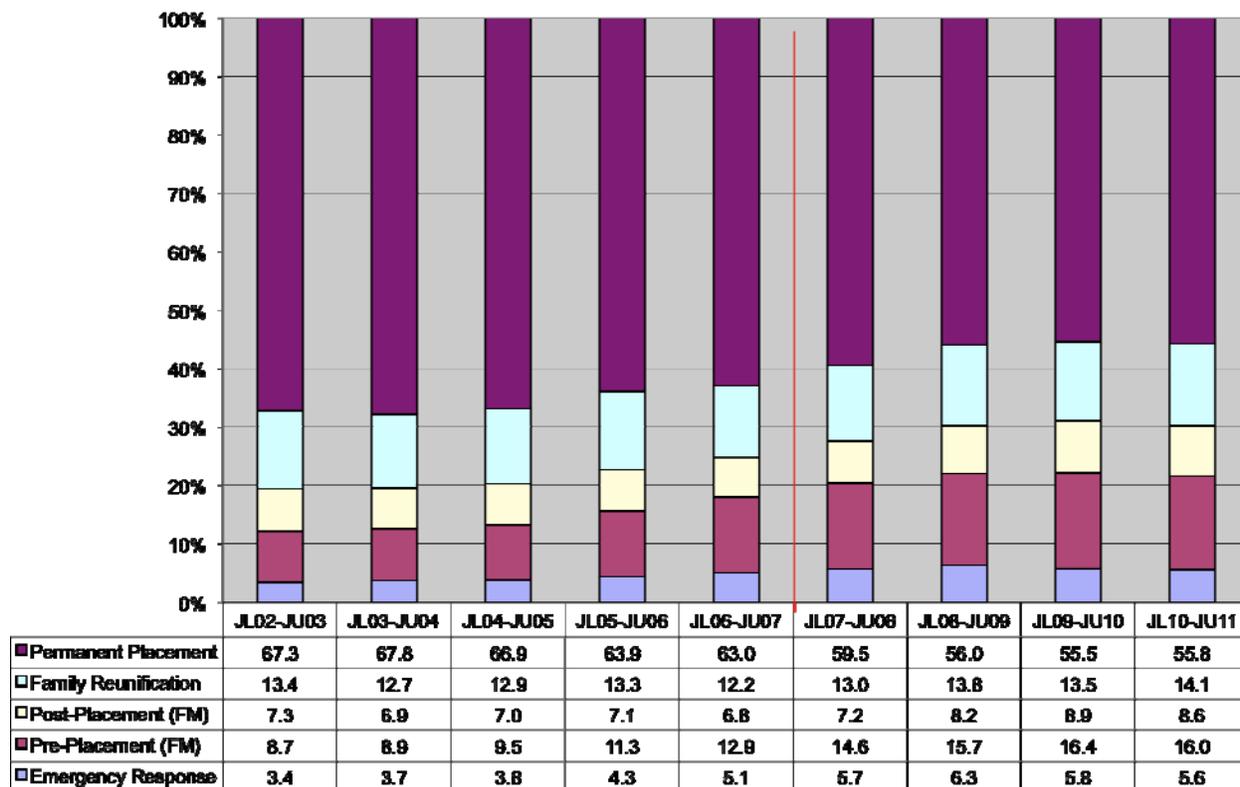
The NPCDCFS had a slight reduction in “Permanent Placements” over time, with the offset coming with a slight increase in “Family Reunification” and “Post-Placement Family Maintenance” (see Figure 4.5). Those placements in the “Permanent Placement” category made up the largest percentage of cases throughout the evaluation time periods, followed by “Family Reunification” cases.

Figure 4.5: NPCDCFS - Case Services



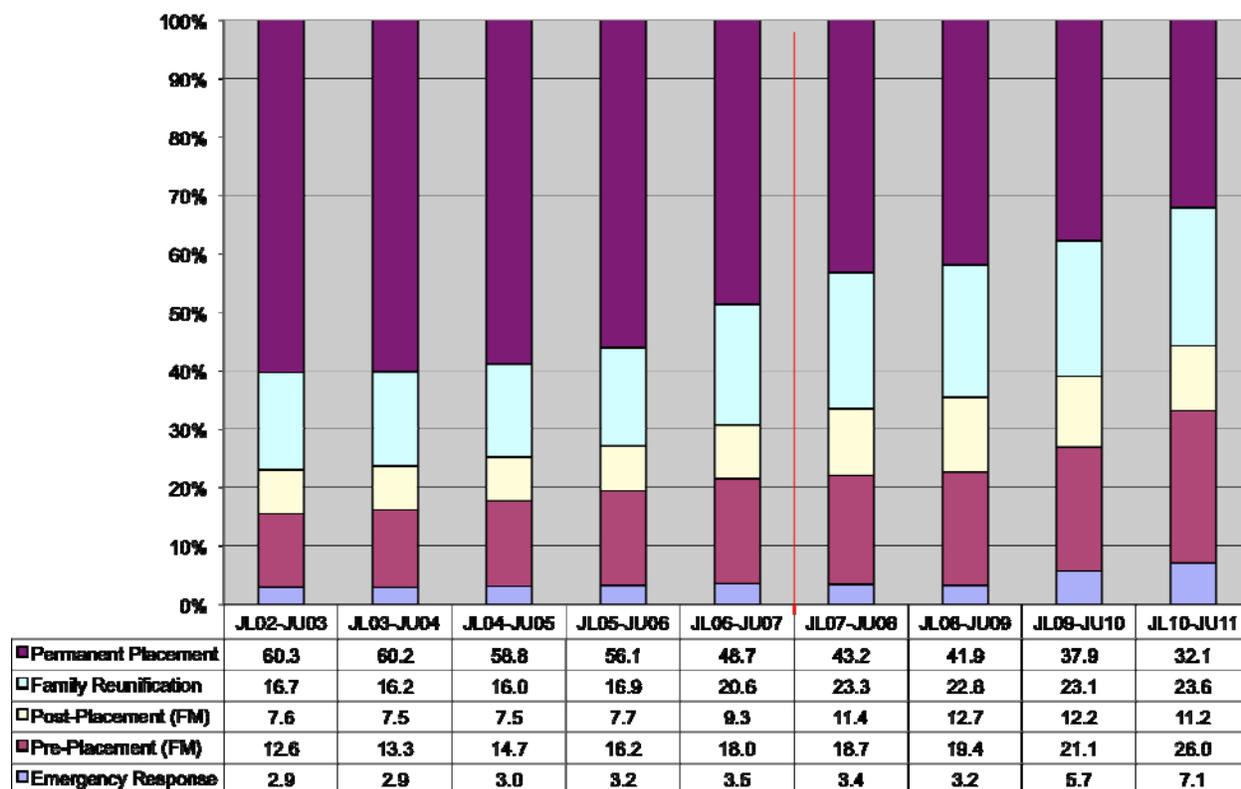
The distribution of cases within the ACDCFS is shown in Figure 4.6. Between the comparison period and the years of the CAP, the ACDCFS showed a reduction in the “Permanent Placement” category and a slight increase in “Post-Placement Family Maintenance.” The largest increase was in “Pre-Placement Family Maintenance,” where an upward trend that started in the comparison period continued in the years of the CAP. The majority of cases continued in the category of “Permanent Placement” during the comparison period and the CAP years, but the second largest percentage of cases shifted from the “Family Reunification” category to the “Pre-Placement Family Maintenance” category between the two periods.

Figure 4.6: ACDCFS - Case Services



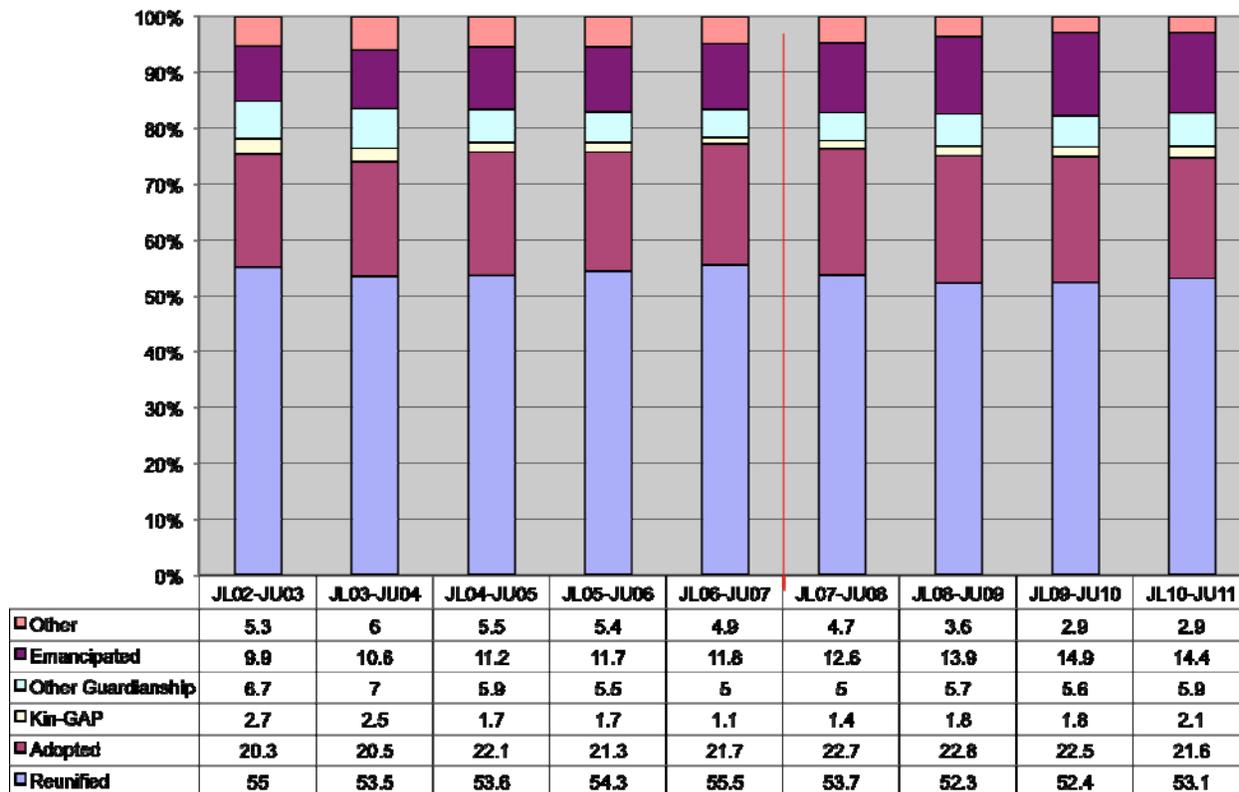
The distribution of cases within the LACDCFS is shown in Figure 4.7. The LACDCFS saw a sizeable reduction in its percentage of “Permanent Placement” cases between the comparison period and the years of the CAP. The four other case services categories all experienced increases during the CAP period, although “Family Reunification” cases stabilized between 22.8% and 23.6% and “Post-Placement” cases stabilized between 11.2% and 12.7%. The percentage of “Pre-Placement” services continued to increase during the years of the CAP. The percentage of “Emergency Response” cases increased in the last two years of the CAP period.

Figure 4.7: LACDCFS - Case Services



The distribution of exits for the NPCDCFS stayed relatively stable through both the comparison period and the years of the CAP (see Figure 4.8). Exits in the “Reunified” category made up the majority of exits during both periods, followed by those in the “Adopted” category.

Figure 4.8: NPCDCFS - Exits



The distribution of exits within the ACDCFS is shown in Figure 4.9. The ACDCFS had a reduction in the percentage of cases classified as “Other” and “Other Guardianship”; both trends began during the comparison period. The department also saw reduction in the percentage of reunification exits, although the downward trend occurred during the CAP years after an upward trend during the comparison period. A shift in the distribution of exits occurred through “Kin-GAP” (Kinship Guardianship Assistance Payment program); this kind of exit increased from 3.3% in the year preceding the start of the CAP to 12.2% in the fourth year of the project. A shift also occurred in “Adopted” exits in 2010-2011 when they dropped to 13.6% from between 19% and 23%. “Reunified” exits made up the largest percentage of exits, followed by “Emancipated” exits and “Adopted” exits in both the comparison period and years of the CAP.

Figure 4.9: ACDCFS - Exits

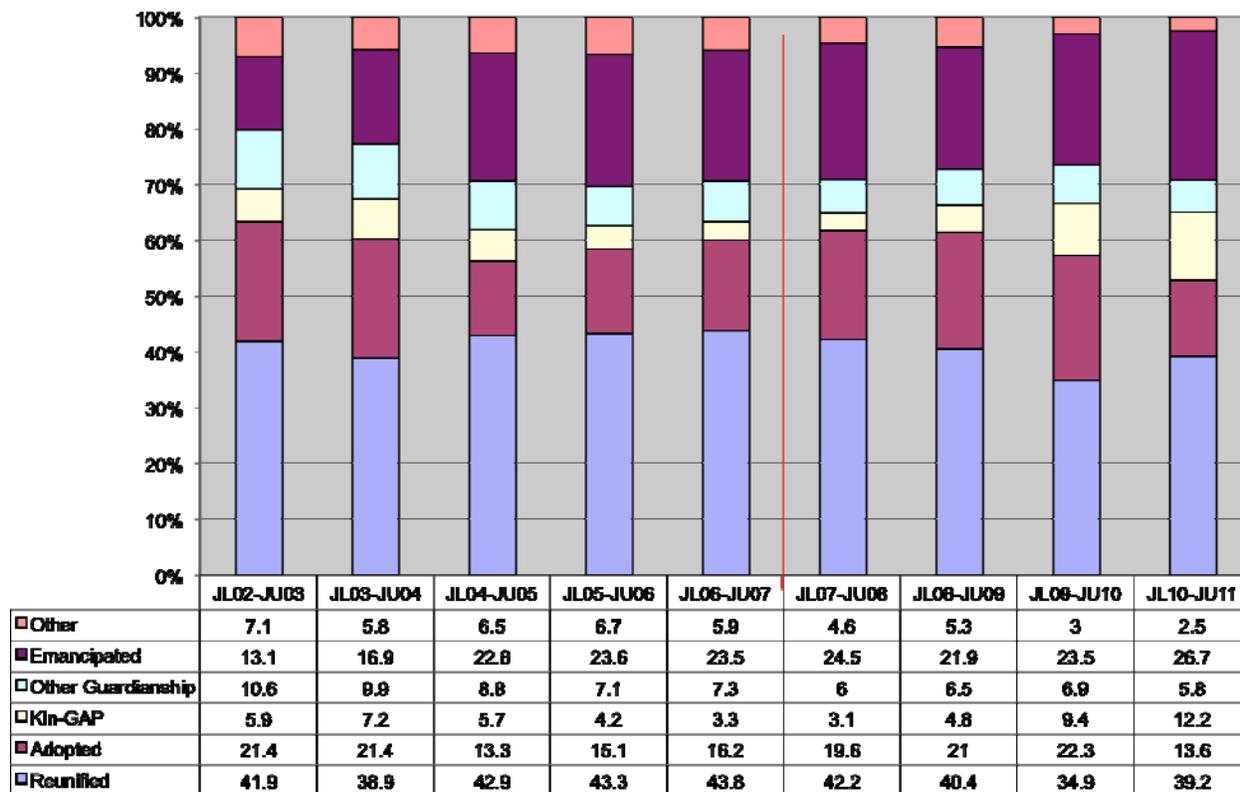
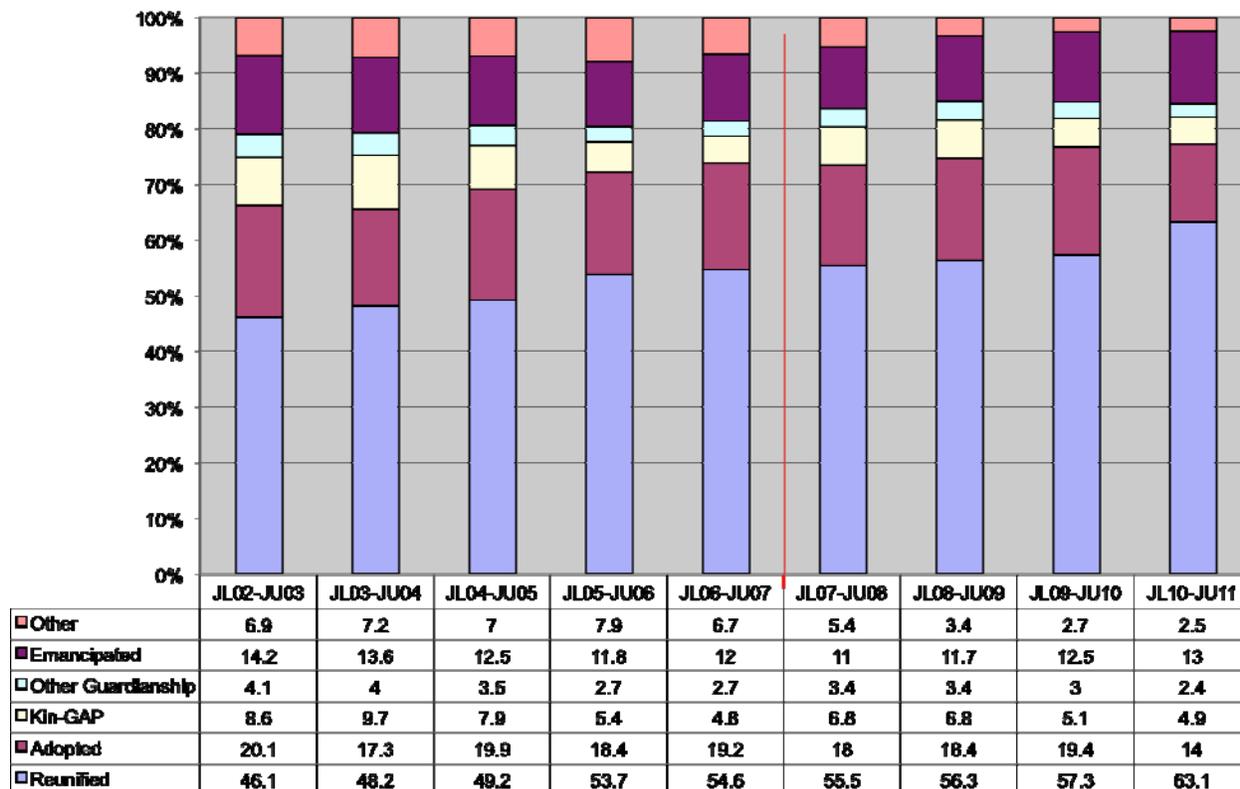


Figure 4.10 shows the distribution of exits for the LACDCFS. The number of exits that were categorized under “Reunified” began showing an increase during the comparison years. This increase continued in the CAP years, so that 63.1% of exits were reunifications by 2010–2011. Exits in the “Adopted” category stayed relatively stable throughout both periods until 2010–2011, when they dropped to 14% from between 18% and 20%. The percentage of “Kin-GAP” exits cycled through an increase and reduction in both the comparison period and the years of the CAP. Exits in the “Reunified” category made up the majority of exits in the last two years of the comparison years and in each of the years of the CAP.

Figure 4.10: LACDCFS - Exits



4.3.2 Child Safety Indicators

The findings for the *Child Safety* indicators are discussed below. Each entity is discussed separately, with the additional 56 counties providing a context for the two CAP counties. Tables display the results of the analysis described in section 4.2.3.

4.3.2.1 NPCDCFS Child Safety Indicators

Table 4.2 shows the results for four of the five *Child Safety* indicators. The fifth indicator, *Recurrence of Allegations*, does not have the technical function available from the data source that allows for the exclusion of data from the two participating counties. Three of the four indicators were trending in the desired direction during the comparison years. During the years of the CAP, one of those indicators stabilized, leaving two other indicators to continue in the desired direction. The two process-oriented indicators, 2B (*Timely Response*) and 2C (*Timely Social Worker Visit with a Child*), had better summary scores than the other two *Child Safety* indicators.

| | Baseline | | | | Intervention | | | | Comparison | | | |
|------|----------|-------|-------|---------|--------------|-------|-------|---------|------------|------------------|------------------|-----|
| | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Mag | $\Delta B \nu I$ | $\Delta Des Dir$ | Sum |
| S1.1 | +0.29 | Acc | Y | 0/10 | +0.00 | HS | U | 0/7 | 0 | U | U | 0/3 |
| S2.1 | -0.08 | Dec | N | 5/5 | -0.02 | Dec | N | 0/4 | 0 | C | CN | 0/3 |
| 2B | +0.89 | Acc | Y | NA | +0.37 | Acc | Y | NA | 0 | C | CY | 1/2 |
| 2C | +4.19 | Acc | Y | NA | +0.93 | Acc | Y | NA | +6% pts | C | CY | 2/2 |
| RoA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA |

Note: *Cel*=Celeration, *Acc*=Acceleration, *Dec*=Deceleration, *HS*=Horizontal Stability, *Nat S/G*=National Standard/Goal, *Mag*=Magnitude, $\Delta B \nu I$ =Trend Change between Baseline and Intervention, $\Delta Des Dir$ =Trend Change in Desired Direction, *Sum*=Summary Score, *Y*=Yes, *N*=No, *NA*=Not Applicable, *U*=Unclear, *C*=Trend Continuing, *CY*=Trend Continuing in the Desired Direction, *CN*=Trend Not Continuing in the Desired Direction.

4.3.2.2 ACDCFS Child Safety Indicators

The results for the five *Child Safety* indicators for the ACDCFS are shown in Table 4.3. Three of the five indicators were trending in the desired direction during the comparison years, with four of the five trending in the desired direction during the years of the CAP. Indicators S1.1 (*No Recurrence of Maltreatment*) and *Recurrence of Allegations* both changed to the desired direction in the CAP years, while S2.1 trended in the other direction. Despite the slight decline, the indicator exceeded the national standard/goal in all four of the data points during the years of the CAP. The two remaining indicators (2B: *Timely Response*, and 2C: *Timely Social Worker Visit with a Child*) continued their trend in the desired direction from the comparison years and through the years of the CAP. All of the summary scores contained at least one point and three of the scores contained the full complement of points.

| | Baseline | | | | Intervention | | | | Comparison | | | |
|------|----------|-------|-------|---------|--------------|-------|-------|---------|------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-----|
| | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Mag | $\Delta B \ v \ I$ | $\Delta \text{Des Dir}$ | Sum |
| S1.1 | -0.28 | Dec | N | 0/10 | +0.42 | Acc | Y | 2/7 | +2% pts | Y | Y | 3/3 |
| S2.1 | -0.01 | HS | Y | 5/5 | -0.03 | Dec | N | 4/4 | 0 | Y | N | 1/3 |
| 2B | +0.85 | Acc | Y | NA | +0.49 | Acc | Y | NA | +3.5% pts | C | CY | 2/2 |
| 2C | +7.98 | Acc | Y | NA | +3.76 | Acc | Y | NA | 0 | C | CY | 1/2 |
| RoA | +0.81 | Acc | N | NA | -0.67 | Dec | Y | NA | -1% pts | Y | Y | 2/2 |

Note: *Cel*=Celeration, *Acc*=Acceleration, *Dec*=Deceleration, *HS*=Horizontal Stability, *Nat S/G*=National Standard/Goal, *Mag*=Magnitude, $\Delta B \ v \ I$ =Trend Change between Baseline and Intervention, $\Delta \text{Des Dir}$ =Trend Change in Desired Direction, *Sum*=Summary Score, *Y*=Yes, *N*=No, *NA*=Not Applicable, *U*=Unclear, *C*=Trend Continuing, *CY*=Trend Continuing in the Desired Direction, *CN*=Trend Not Continuing in the Desired Direction.

4.3.2.3 LACDCFS Child Safety Indicators

The results for the five *Child Safety* indicators for the LACDCFS are shown in Table 4.4. Four of the five indicators were trending in the desired direction during the comparison years. Only two continued to trend in the desired direction during the CAP years. Indicator 2C, *Timely Social Worker Visit with a Child*, increased in magnitude by 7 percentage points, although its direction was unclear during the CAP years. Three of the five summary scores contained at least one point, although two of those represented process-oriented outcomes.

| | Baseline | | | | Intervention | | | | Comparison | | | |
|------|----------|-------|-------|---------|--------------|-------|-------|---------|------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-----|
| | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Mag | $\Delta B \ v \ I$ | $\Delta \text{Des Dir}$ | Sum |
| S1.1 | +0.31 | Acc | Y | 0/10 | +0.08 | Acc | Y | 0/7 | 0 | C | CY | 1/3 |
| S2.1 | -0.05 | Dec | N | 5/5 | -0.03 | Dec | N | 0/4 | 0 | C | CN | 0/3 |
| 2B | +0.86 | Acc | Y | NA | +0.25 | Acc | Y | NA | 0 | C | CY | 1/2 |
| 2C | +3.03 | Acc | Y | NA | 0.00 | HS | U | NA | +7% pts | Y | U | 1/2 |
| RoA | -0.11 | Dec | Y | NA | +0.13 | Acc | N | NA | 0 | Y | N | 0/2 |

Note: *Cel*=Celeration, *Acc*=Acceleration, *Dec*=Deceleration, *HS*=Horizontal Stability, *Nat S/G*=National Standard/Goal, *Mag*=Magnitude, $\Delta B \ v \ I$ =Trend Change between Baseline and Intervention, $\Delta \text{Des Dir}$ =Trend Change in Desired Direction, *Sum*=Summary Score, *Y*=Yes, *N*=No, *NA*=Not Applicable, *U*=Unclear, *C*=Trend Continuing, *CY*=Trend Continuing in the Desired Direction, *CN*=Trend Not Continuing in the Desired Direction.

4.3.3 Exits to Permanency Indicators

The findings for the *Exits to Permanency* indicators are discussed below. Each entity is discussed separately, with the additional 56 counties providing a context for the two CAP counties. The tables below display the results of the analysis previously described in section 4.2.3.

4.3.3.1 NPCDCFS Exits to Permanency Indicators

During the comparison period, all five *Exits to Permanency* indicators were trending in the desired direction (see Table 4.5). During the years of the CAP, however, four of the five indicators reversed their trend, and three of those did so with a difference in magnitude. Indicator C2.1 (*Adoption Within 24 Months*) was the only indicator that continued the desired trend, and it did so with a relatively sizeable change in magnitude. At no data point did an indicator meet or exceed a national standard/goal. The majority of indicator summary scores contained only one out of three possible points, and two of the summary scores contained zero points.

| | Baseline | | | | Intervention | | | | Comparison | | | |
|------|----------|-------|-------|---------|--------------|-------|-------|---------|------------|-------------------|---------------------|-----|
| | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Mag | ΔB v I | Δ Des Dir | Sum |
| C1.1 | +0.62 | Acc | Y | 0/5 | -0.03 | Dec | N | 0/4 | -2% pts | Y | N | 0/3 |
| C1.2 | -0.08 | Dec | Y | 0/5 | +0.21 | Acc | N | 0/4 | 0 | Y | N | 0/3 |
| C1.3 | +0.33 | Acc | Y | 0/10 | -0.59 | Dec | N | 0/7 | +2% pts | Y | N | 1/3 |
| C1.4 | -0.27 | Dec | Y | 0/5 | +0.10 | Acc | N | 0/3 | -1.6% pts | Y | N | 1/3 |
| C2.1 | +0.94 | Acc | Y | 0/5 | +1.06 | Acc | Y | 0/4 | -5.0% pts | C | CY | 1/3 |

Note: *Cel*=Celeration, *Acc*=Acceleration, *Dec*=Deceleration, *HS*=Horizontal Stability, *Nat S/G*=National Standard/Goal, *Mag*=Magnitude, ΔB v *I*=Trend Change between Baseline and Intervention, Δ *Des Dir*=Trend Change in Desired Direction, *Sum*=Summary Score, *Y*=Yes, *N*=No, *NA*=Not Applicable, *U*=Unclear, *C*=Trend Continuing, *CY*=Trend Continuing in the Desired Direction, *CN*=Trend Not Continuing in the Desired Direction.

4.3.3.2 ACDCFS Exits to Permanency Indicators

The ACDCFS had four of its five *Exits to Permanency* indicators trending in the desired direction during the comparison years (see Table 4.6). Those trends were reversed in the CAP years, when only one indicator was trending in the desired direction. Indicator C1.4, *Reentry Following Reunification*, had been trending in the opposite direction during the comparison years. Two of the four reversing trends also did so with a change in magnitude that emphasized the extent of the reversal. The national standard/goal was met or exceeded at one data point for indicator C2.1, *Adoption Within 24 Months (Exit Cohort)*, during the years of the CAP. All but one of the summary scores contained at least one point.

Table 4.6 ACDCFS Exits to Permanency Indicators

| | Baseline | | | | Intervention | | | | Comparison | | | |
|------|----------|-------|-------|---------|--------------|-------|-------|---------|------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-----|
| | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Mag | $\Delta B \ v \ I$ | $\Delta \text{Des Dir}$ | Sum |
| C1.1 | +1.19 | Acc | Y | 0/5 | -3.52 | Dec | N | 0/4 | +3% pts | Y | N | 1/3 |
| C1.2 | -0.40 | Dec | Y | 1/5 | +0.84 | Acc | N | 0/4 | +1% pts | Y | N | 0/3 |
| C1.3 | +0.12 | Acc | Y | 1/10 | -1.04 | Dec | N | 0/7 | -4% pts | Y | N | 1/3 |
| C1.4 | +0.45 | Acc | N | 0/5 | -3.20 | Dec | Y | 0/3 | 0 | Y | Y | 1/3 |
| C2.1 | +4.53 | Acc | Y | 0/5 | -0.68 | Dec | N | 1/4 | 0 | Y | N | 1/3 |

Note: *Cel*=Celeration, *Acc*=Acceleration, *Dec*=Deceleration, *HS*=Horizontal Stability, *Nat S/G*=National Standard/Goal, *Mag*=Magnitude, $\Delta B \ v \ I$ =Trend Change between Baseline and Intervention, $\Delta \text{Des Dir}$ =Trend Change in Desired Direction, *Sum*=Summary Score, *Y*=Yes, *N*=No, *NA*=Not Applicable, *U*=Unclear, *C*=Trend Continuing, *CY*=Trend Continuing in the Desired Direction, *CN*=Trend Not Continuing in the Desired Direction.

4.3.3.3 LACDCFS Exits to Permanency Indicators

The condition of the *Exits to Permanency* indicators during the comparison period in the LACDCFS mirrored that of the ACDCFS (see Table 4.7). During the CAP years, however, two indicators continued their trend in the desired direction, with Indicator C1.1, *Reunification Within 12 Months (Exit Cohort)*, increasing in magnitude. Two other indicators reversed their trends, although Indicator C1.3, *Reunification Within 12 Months (Entry Cohort)*, increased in magnitude before beginning its deceleration. During the years of the CAP, the national standard/goal was met or exceeded at two data points for Indicator C1.3. Three of the five summary scores contained at least one point, and two of those contained two of the possible three points.

Table 4.7 LACDCFS Exits to Permanency Indicators

| | Baseline | | | | Intervention | | | | Comparison | | | |
|------|----------|-------|-------|---------|--------------|-------|-------|---------|------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-----|
| | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Mag | $\Delta B \ v \ I$ | $\Delta \text{Des Dir}$ | Sum |
| C1.1 | +4.79 | Acc | Y | 0/5 | +1.08 | Acc | Y | 0/4 | +2% pts | C | CY | 2/3 |
| C1.2 | -1.56 | Dec | Y | 0/5 | +0.04 | Acc | N | 0/4 | 0 | Y | N | 0/3 |
| C1.3 | +1.78 | Acc | Y | 0/10 | -0.61 | Dec | N | 2/7 | +5% pts | Y | N | 2/3 |
| C1.4 | +1.77 | Acc | N | 3/5 | +0.60 | Acc | N | 0/3 | 0 | C | CN | 0/3 |
| C2.1 | +3.64 | Acc | Y | 0/5 | +0.91 | Acc | Y | 0/4 | 0 | C | CY | 1/3 |

Note: *Cel*=Celeration, *Acc*=Acceleration, *Dec*=Deceleration, *HS*=Horizontal Stability, *Nat S/G*=National Standard/Goal, *Mag*=Magnitude, $\Delta B \ v \ I$ =Trend Change between Baseline and Intervention, $\Delta \text{Des Dir}$ =Trend Change in Desired Direction, *Sum*=Summary Score, *Y*=Yes, *N*=No, *NA*=Not Applicable, *U*=Unclear, *C*=Trend Continuing, *CY*=Trend Continuing in the Desired Direction, *CN*=Trend Not Continuing in the Desired Direction.

4.3.4 Placement Stability Indicators

The findings for the *Placement Stability* indicators are discussed below. Each entity is discussed separately, with the additional 56 counties providing a context for the two CAP counties. Tables display the results of the analysis described in section 4.2.3.

4.3.4.1 NPCDCFS Placement Stability Indicators

Of the three *Placement Stability* indicators, two were trending in the desired direction during the comparison period (see Table 4.8). The same two indicators, C4.1 (*8 Days to 12 Months in Care*) and C4.2 (*12 Months to 24 Months in Care*), continued to trend in the desired direction for the NPCDCFS during the years of the CAP. Indicator C4.2 also increased in magnitude by three percentage points. Each of the summary scores contained at least one point.

| | Baseline | | | | Intervention | | | | Comparison | | | |
|------|----------|-------|-------|---------|--------------|-------|-------|---------|------------|----------------|------------------|-----|
| | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Mag | $\Delta B v I$ | $\Delta Des Dir$ | Sum |
| C4.1 | +0.72 | Acc | Y | 0/5 | +0.84 | Acc | Y | 0/4 | 0 | C | CY | 1/3 |
| C4.2 | +0.76 | Acc | Y | 0/5 | +1.22 | Acc | Y | 0/4 | +3% pts | C | CY | 2/3 |
| C4.3 | -1.35 | Dec | N | 0/5 | -0.10 | Dec | N | 0/4 | 0 | C | CN | 1/3 |

Note: *Cel*=Celeration, *Acc*=Acceleration, *Dec*=Deceleration, *HS*=Horizontal Stability, *Nat S/G*=National Standard/Goal, *Mag*=Magnitude, $\Delta B v I$ =Trend Change between Baseline and Intervention, $\Delta Des Dir$ =Trend Change in Desired Direction, *Sum*=Summary Score, *Y*=Yes, *N*=No, *NA*=Not Applicable, *U*=Unclear, *C*=Trend Continuing, *CY*=Trend Continuing in the Desired Direction, *CN*=Trend Not Continuing in the Desired Direction.

4.3.4.2 ACDCFS Placement Stability Indicators

Indicators C4.1 (*8 Days to 12 Months in Care*) and C4.2 (*12 Months to 24 Months in Care*) were also trending in the desired direction for the ACDCFS in the comparison years (see Table 4.9). However, they reversed direction during the years of the CAP. Both did increase in magnitude before beginning their slight deceleration, where they met or exceeded the national standard/goal at seven out of the eight possible data points. Indicator C4.3 (*At Least 24 Months in Care*) did improve during the CAP years, reversing its trend and increasing in magnitude by 2.5 percentage points. Summary scores for each of the indicators contained two of the three possible points.

| | Baseline | | | | Intervention | | | | Comparison | | | |
|------|----------|-------|-------|---------|--------------|-------|-------|---------|------------|----------------|------------------|-----|
| | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Mag | $\Delta B v I$ | $\Delta Des Dir$ | Sum |
| C4.1 | +1.17 | Acc | Y | 1/5 | -0.35 | Dec | N | 3/4 | +1% pts | Y | N | 2/3 |
| C4.2 | +2.26 | Acc | Y | 0/5 | -0.36 | Dec | N | 4/4 | +6% pts | Y | N | 2/3 |
| C4.3 | -2.24 | Dec | N | 0/5 | +0.82 | Acc | Y | 0/4 | +2.5% pts | Y | Y | 2/3 |

Note: *Cel*=Celeration, *Acc*=Acceleration, *Dec*=Deceleration, *HS*=Horizontal Stability, *Nat S/G*=National Standard/Goal, *Mag*=Magnitude, $\Delta B v I$ =Trend Change between Baseline and Intervention, $\Delta Des Dir$ =Trend Change in Desired Direction, *Sum*=Summary Score, *Y*=Yes, *N*=No, *NA*=Not Applicable, *U*=Unclear, *C*=Trend Continuing, *CY*=Trend Continuing in the Desired Direction, *CN*=Trend Not Continuing in the Desired Direction.

4.3.4.3 LACDCFS Placement Stability Indicators

Identical to the NPCDCFS and the ACDCFS, the C4.1 (*8 Days to 12 Months in Care*) and C4.2 (*12 Months to 24 Months in Care*) indicators were trending in the desired direction for the LACDCFS in the comparison years (see Table 4.10). Indicator C4.1 continued to trend in the desired direction, although it dropped two percentage points in magnitude. Indicator C4.2 reversed its trend, although it increased in magnitude before doing so. The C4.1 and C4.2 indicators also met or exceeded the national standard goal at six of the possible eight data points during the years of the CAP. The summary scores for two indicators contain two points and the other a single point.

Table 4.10 LACDCFS Placement Stability Indicators

| | Baseline | | | | Intervention | | | | Comparison | | | |
|------|----------|-------|-------|---------|--------------|-------|-------|---------|------------|----------------|------------------|-----|
| | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Mag | $\Delta B v I$ | $\Delta Des Dir$ | Sum |
| C4.1 | +0.56 | Acc | Y | 4/5 | +0.03 | Acc | Y | 2/4 | -2% pts | C | CY | 2/3 |
| C4.2 | +0.87 | Acc | Y | 5/5 | -0.88 | Dec | N | 4/4 | +1% pts | Y | N | 2/3 |
| C4.3 | -1.36 | Dec | N | 2/5 | -0.74 | Dec | N | 0/4 | +2.5% pts | C | CN | 1/3 |

Note: *Cel*=Celeration, *Acc*=Acceleration, *Dec*=Deceleration, *HS*=Horizontal Stability, *Nat S/G*=National Standard/Goal, *Mag*=Magnitude, $\Delta B v I$ =Trend Change between Baseline and Intervention, $\Delta Des Dir$ =Trend Change in Desired Direction, *Sum*=Summary Score, *Y*=Yes, *N*=No, *NA*=Not Applicable, *U*=Unclear, *C*=Trend Continuing, *CY*=Trend Continuing in the Desired Direction, *CN*=Trend Not Continuing in the Desired Direction.

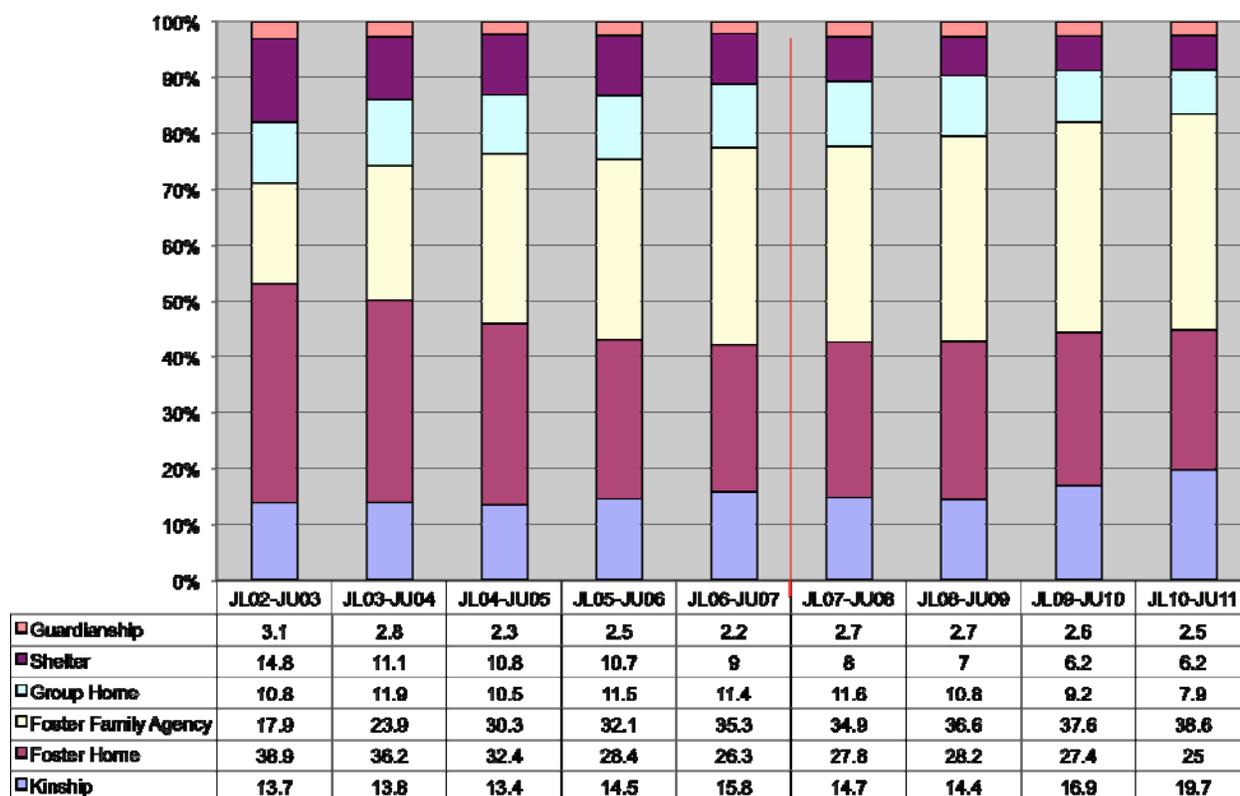
4.3.5 Appropriateness and Restrictiveness Indicators

The findings for the *Appropriateness and Restrictiveness* category of indicators are discussed below. Each entity is discussed separately, with the additional 56 counties providing a context for the two CAP counties.

4.3.5.1 NPCDCFS Appropriateness and Restrictiveness Indicators

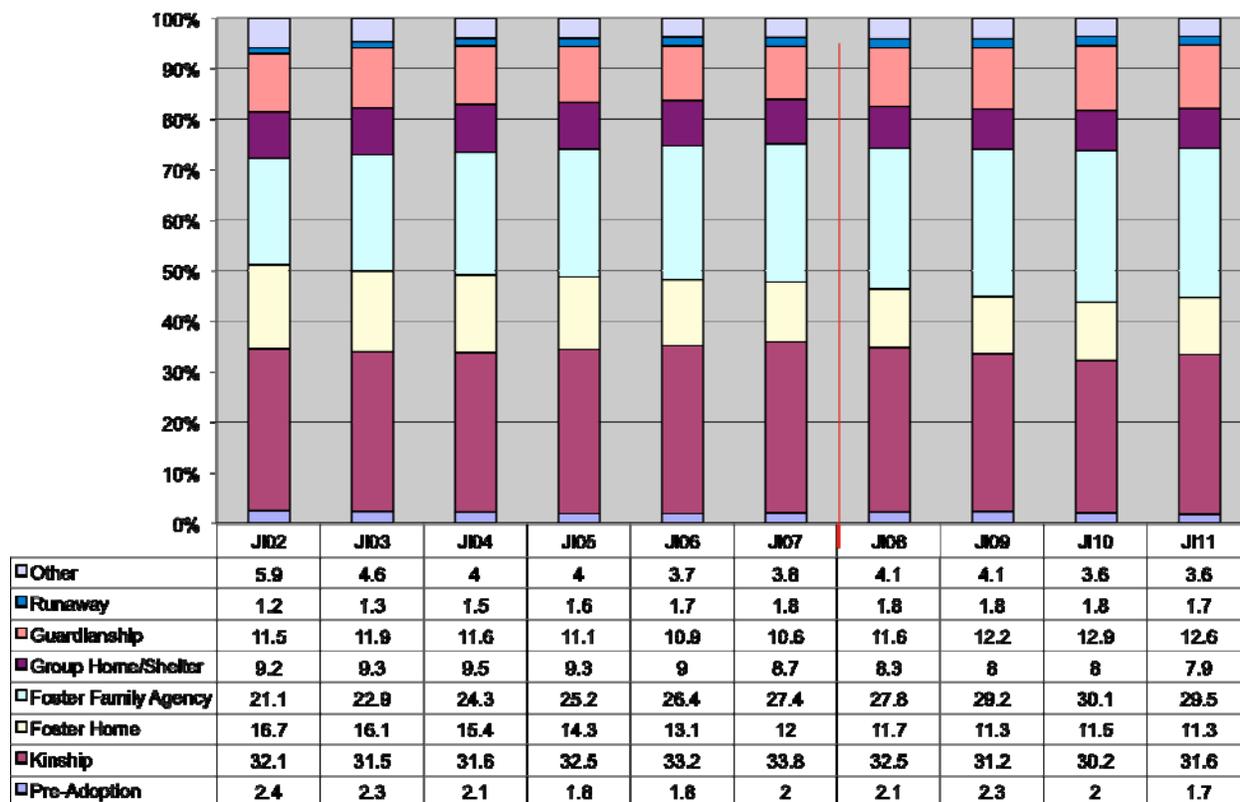
The *Entries First Placement* indicator for the NPCDCFS changed in a number of ways (see Figure 4.11). During the first three-year comparison period, those placements in the “Foster Home” category made up the largest percentage of first placements; after that, placements in the “Foster Family Agency” category represented the largest percentage of first placements. There was a steady decline in the use of “Shelter” as first placements over both periods of the evaluation and a decrease in the “Group Home” first placements during the years of the CAP. There was an increase in the use of “Foster Family Agency” first placements over both periods of time. There was also a slow increase in “Kinship” first placements, which were marked by an even greater increase in the latter years of the CAP. There was a decrease in the use of “Foster Home” as first placement, although most of that decrease occurred during the comparison period.

Figure 4.11: NPCDCFS - 4B Least Restrictive Placement (entries first placement)



Point-in-time placement patterns were relatively stable over time, with “Kinship” placements making up the largest percentage of placements (see Figure 4.12). The percentage of “Foster Family Agency” placements began to increase during the comparison period, and that increase continued during the years of the CAP. The percentage of “Foster Home” placements declined over both periods of the evaluation.

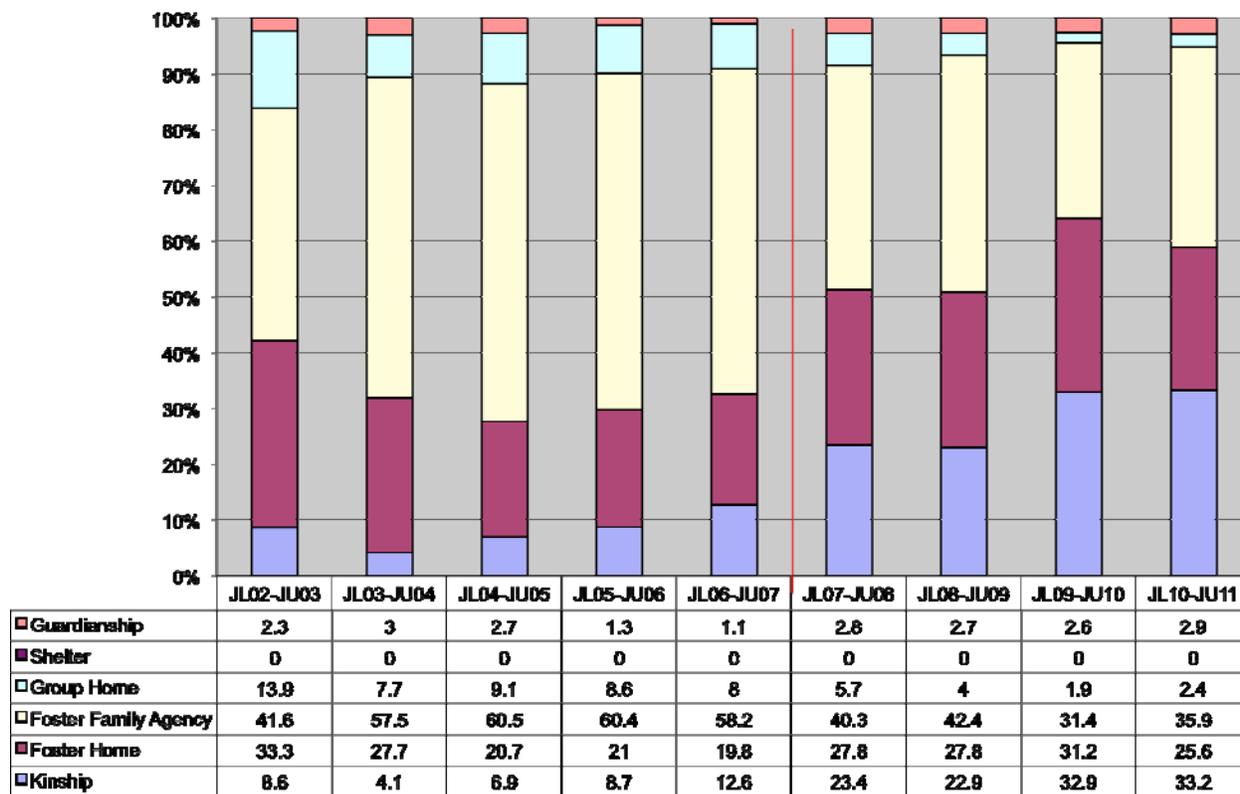
Figure 4.12: NPCDCFS - 4B Least Restrictive Placement (point in time)



4.3.5.2 ACDCFS Appropriateness and Restrictiveness Indicators

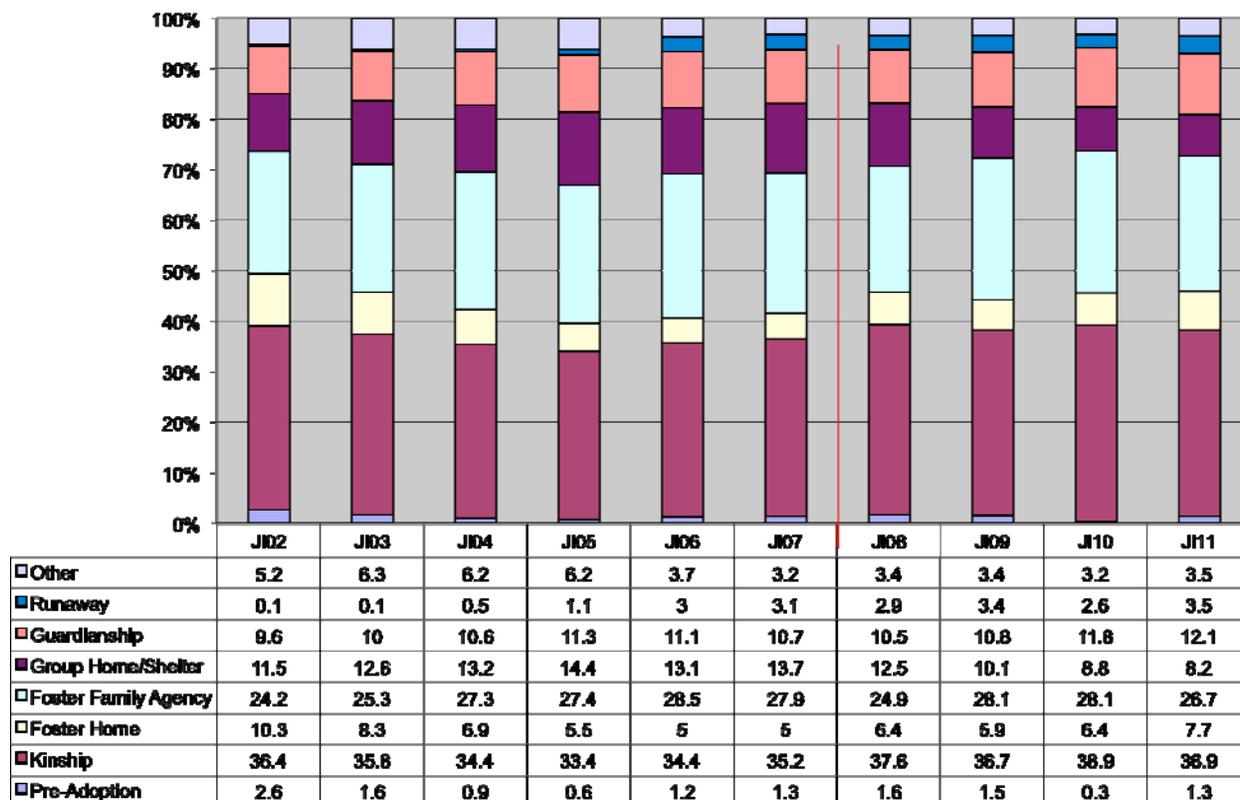
The “Foster Family Agency” category held the majority of first placements in four of the five comparison years, totaling between 57% and 61% (see Figure 4.13). The percentage of first placements in this group, however, first dropped to between 31% and 43% during the CAP years. A decline in family “Foster Home” first placements that occurred during the comparison period reversed to some degree in the years of the CAP. “Kinship” first placements also increase their share during the years of the CAP.

Figure 4.13: ACDCFS - 4B Least Restrictive Placement (entries first placement)



“Kinship” placements were the largest percentage of point-in-time placements for the ACDCFS (see Figure 4.14). There was an increase in the percentage of runaways that began during the comparison years and a decrease in the percentage of “Group Home/Shelter” placements during the years of the CAP. The remaining categories experienced fluctuations in their percentages over both periods of the evaluation.

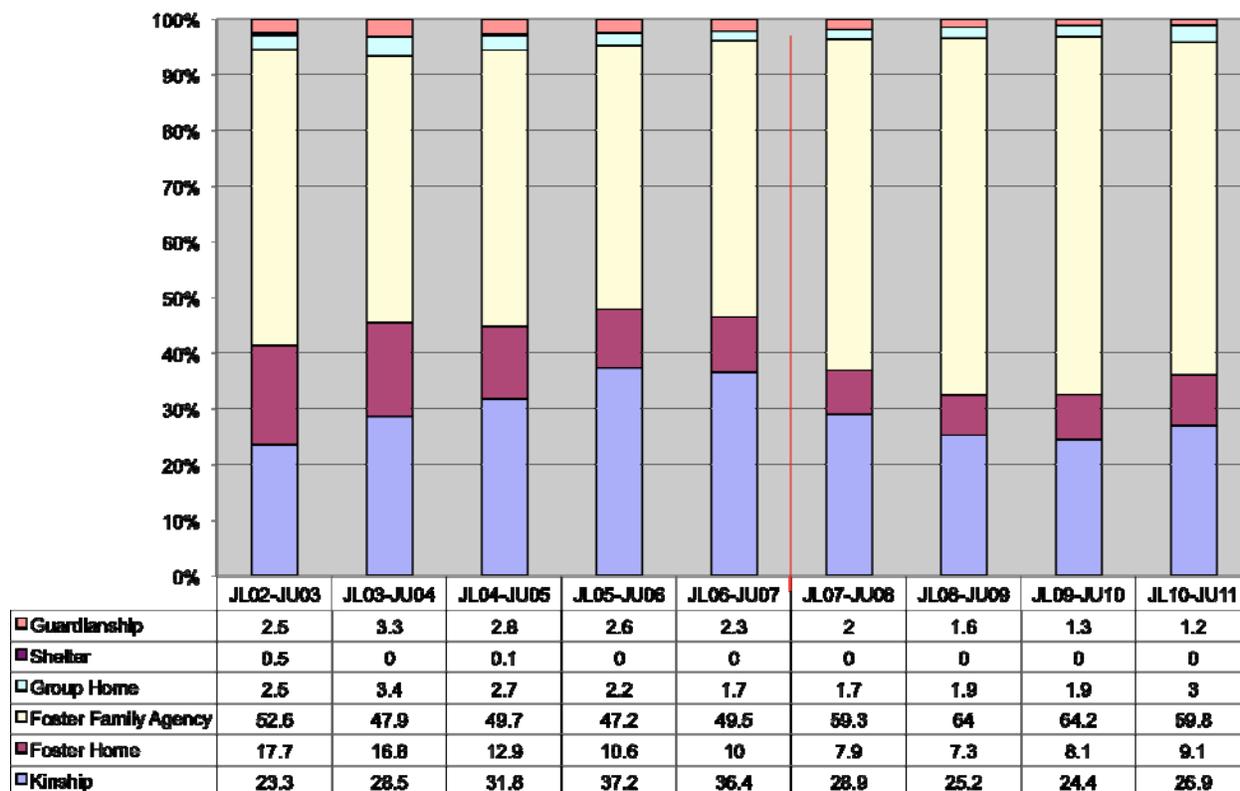
Figure 4.14: ACDCFS - 4B Least Restrictive Placement (point in time)



4.3.5.3 LACDCFS *Appropriateness and Restrictiveness Indicators*

Foster homes made up the greatest share of first placements in the first three years of the comparison period before “Foster Family Agency” placements assumed that distinction (see Figure 4.15). “Group Home” first placements decreased over both periods of the evaluation, while “Kinship” first placements increased in the latter two years of the CAP period.

Figure 4.15: LACDCFS - 4B Least Restrictive Placment (entries first placement)



For the LACDCFS, “Kinship” placements also constituted the largest percentage of point-in-time placements, increasing over both time periods (see Figure 4.16). “Foster Home” placements continued their decline in share of placements in the CAP years that began during the comparison period, as did “Group Home/Shelter” placements and those placements categorized as “Other.” “Foster Family Agency” placements followed a different trend and increased their percentage of placements over time.

Figure 4.16: LACDCFS - 4B Least Restrictive Placement (point in time)



4.4 Analysis: Department of Children and Family Services

The ACDCFS and the LACDCFS, in operating under the CAP, sought to safely reduce the number of children entering foster care as well as reduce the number of children in foster care. When foster care was a necessity for children, the departments attempted to reduce the time children spent in foster care and provide them with the most stable and family-like setting possible.

This outcome study sought to understand the performance of the two departments as they operated in a new fiscal environment, based on a series of outcomes and indicators. Given the descriptive nature of the evaluation, the data were assessed in multiple ways, including pre and post comparisons of trend lines, changes in magnitude, and the degree to which national standards/goals had been met or exceeded. An analysis of data from the NPCDCFS was also conducted to provide a context for the findings from the CAP counties.

Participation rates in the NPCDCFS were generally trending downward (the desired direction) during the years of the CAP; notably, the downward trend for substantiations, entries, and in-care rates accelerated during the years of the CAP. These counties showed a slight reduction in permanent placements over time, while their exits from care remained stable; their reunifications made up the majority of exits in both periods of the evaluation. The *Child Safety* indicators garnered only 30% (3/10) of the possible points on the summary scores, while the *Exits to Permanency* indicators garnered just 20% (3/15), and the *Placement Stability* indicators garnered 44% (4/9). During the comparison period 83% (10/12) of the indicators were trending in the desired direction. During the years of the CAP the percentage dropped to 42% (5/12). These counties did not meet or exceed the national standards/goals at any point during the years of the CAP and only 8% (5/60) of the time during the comparison period. Over time, the NPCDCFS increased its use of “Kinship” and “Foster Family Agencies” (FFAs) as first placements; as well, it increased its use of FFAs as shown in the point-in-time assessment of placement distribution.

4.4.1 ACDCFS

In general, participation rates were trending downward over the course of both evaluation time periods, which represented a desirable outcome. Allegation rates and substantiation rates decreased most markedly after the onset of the CAP. Case services, which are the point-in-time indicators of where children are in the system, showed that a greater percentage of children were receiving services pre-placement (i.e., before being placed in foster care); and a decreasing percentage of children were receiving services in permanent placement (i.e., in foster care) during the years of the CAP. However, while Kin-GAP represented a larger percentage of exits from care, reunifications made up a smaller proportion of exits during the CAP years, and more than 20% of those exits were still due to emancipation.

The findings from the analysis of the indicators were mixed. During the comparison years, 69% (9/13) of the indicator trend lines were trending in the desired direction; 46% (6/13) were trending in the desired direction during the years of the CAP. The *Exits to Permanency* indicators are a concern given that they tallied only 27% (4/15) of the possible points on the summary score. However, the findings also suggest that certain indicators and outcomes were doing better during the years of the CAP. The *Child Safety* indicators attained 75% (9/12) of the possible summary scores points, and placement stability attained 67% (6/9). In addition, a larger percentage (31%, 14/45) of data points met or exceeded the national standard/goal during the years of the CAP than during the comparison period (13%, 8/60). The descriptive findings of the *Appropriateness and Restrictiveness* indicators showed an increase in the use of less-restrictive first placements as well as general placements, although the increase in the percentage of runaways calls for attention. The decrease in the use of more restrictive types of placements has implications for reducing costs as well as for meeting the goal of placing children in the most family-like setting possible.

4.4.2 LACDCFS

The decline in in-care rates that began during the comparison years continued in the years of the CAP, although the decline flattened out in the last two years of the CAP period. Of concern were the remaining three participation rates. Entry rates were relatively stable in the CAP years after increasing during the comparison period. The remaining two participation rates,

allegations and substantiations, increased during the comparison period. Reunifications continued to make up a greater percentage of exits during the years of the CAP, a trend that started during the comparison period.

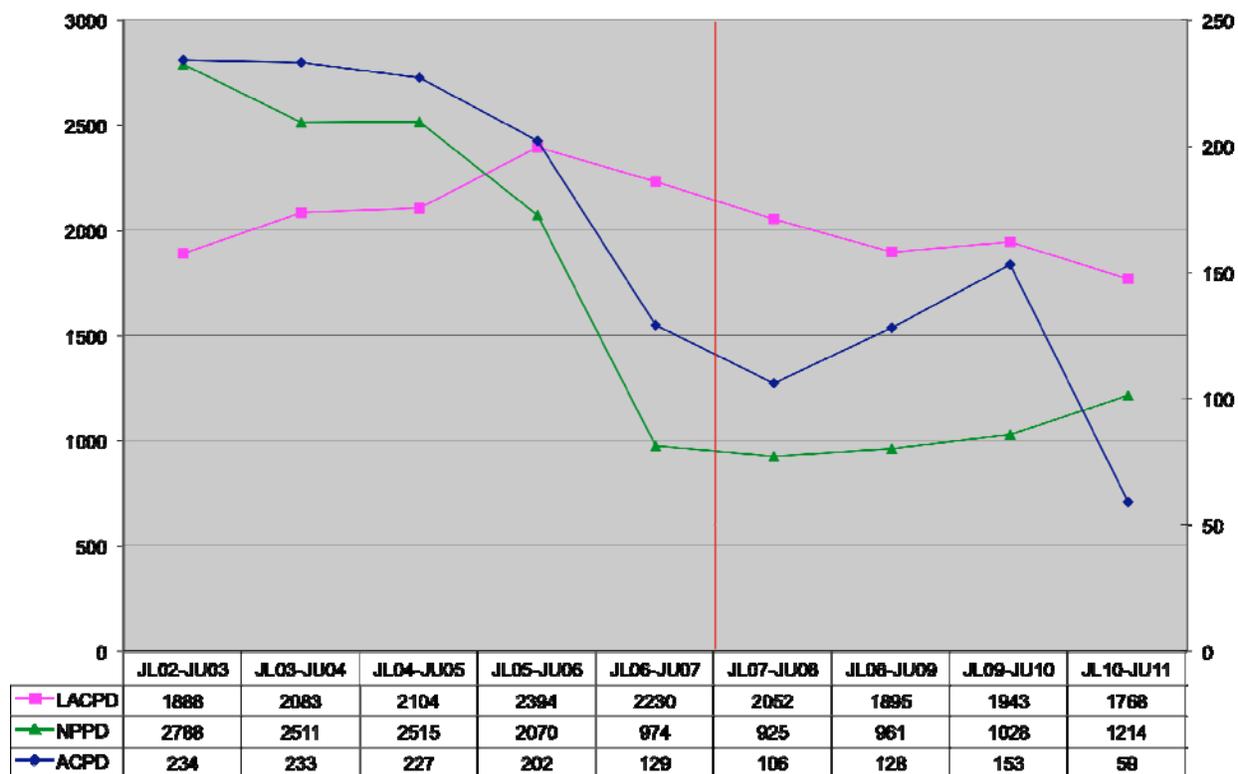
Based on the findings it is difficult to suggest that the indicators and outcomes were doing better during the years of the CAP. The best performing set of indicators were those for the outcomes of *Placement Stability*, although those three indicators garnered 56% (5/9) of the possible summary score points. *Exits to Permanency* indicators tallied 33% (5/15) of the possible points while *Child Safety* indicators garnered only 25% (3/12) of the summary score points. Among the trend lines for indicators, 78% (10/13) were trending in the desired direction during the comparison period. During the CAP years that number had dropped to 38% (5/13). Additionally, a smaller percentage (13%, 6/45) of data points met or exceeded the national standard/goals during the years of the CAP than during the comparison period (32%, 19/60). A review of the two *Appropriateness and Restrictiveness* indicators showed that foster family agencies constituted the greatest share of first placements during the comparison period and increased their share during the years of the CAP. The increase came as the percentage of foster home and kinship placements declined. Kinship placements were the largest percentage of point-in-time placements. Foster family agency placements increased over time while group home placements decreased. The reduction in the percentage of group home placements has implications for costs as it does for meeting the goal of placing children in the most family-like setting possible.

4.5 Findings: Juvenile Probation Departments

4.5.1 General Caseload

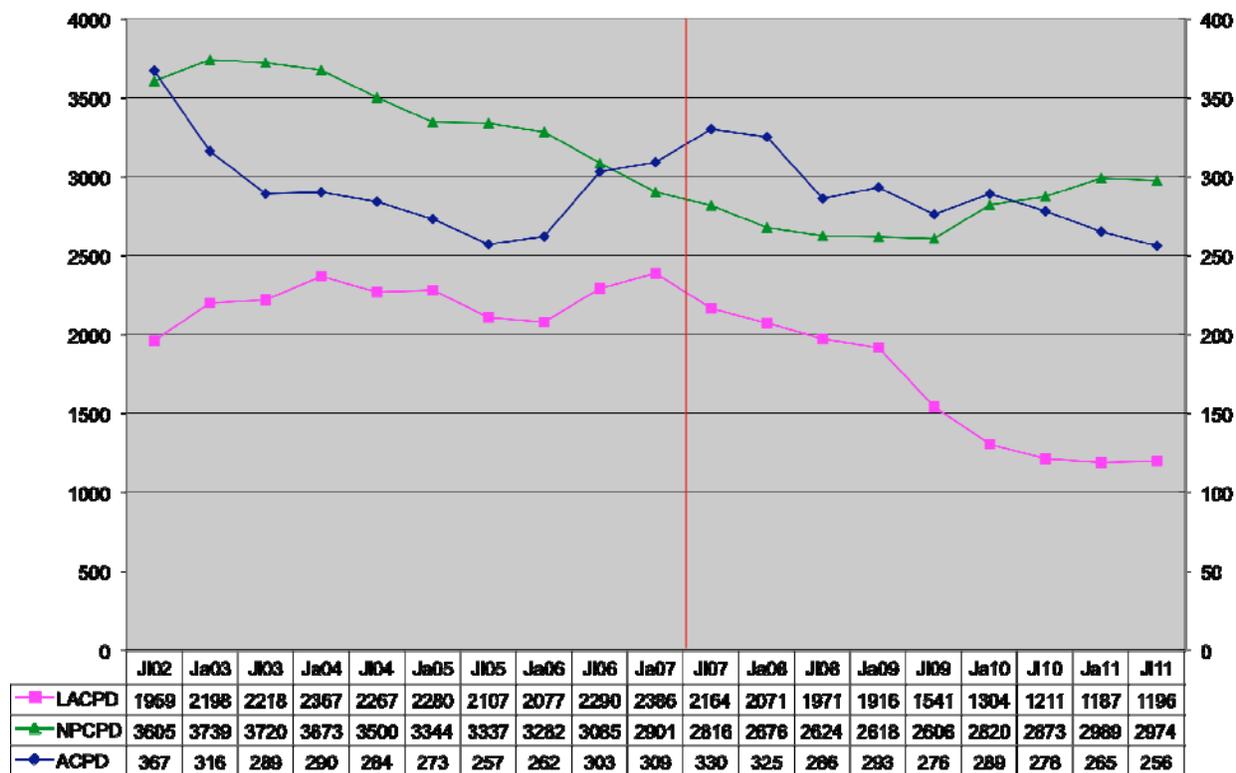
Figure 4.17 shows the number of entries into out-of-home care for the Alameda County Probation Department (ACPD), the Los Angeles County Probation Department (LACPD), and the NPCPD. The ACPD and the NPCPD began a decline in entries in the years of the comparison period. The ACPD experienced an increase in entries in the second and third year of the CAP, although they dropped again in Year 4, while the NPCPD experienced only a slight increase in entries in the CAP years. Entries over time for the LACPD were relatively stable, with an increase in the comparison years offset by a decline in the CAP years; the decline canceled out the gains, returning the numbers to their original entries. The decline in the average number of entries between the comparison years and the CAP years was 11%. The decline was 46% and 52% for the ACPD and the NPCPD.

Figure 4.17: ACPD-LACPD-NPCPD - Entries



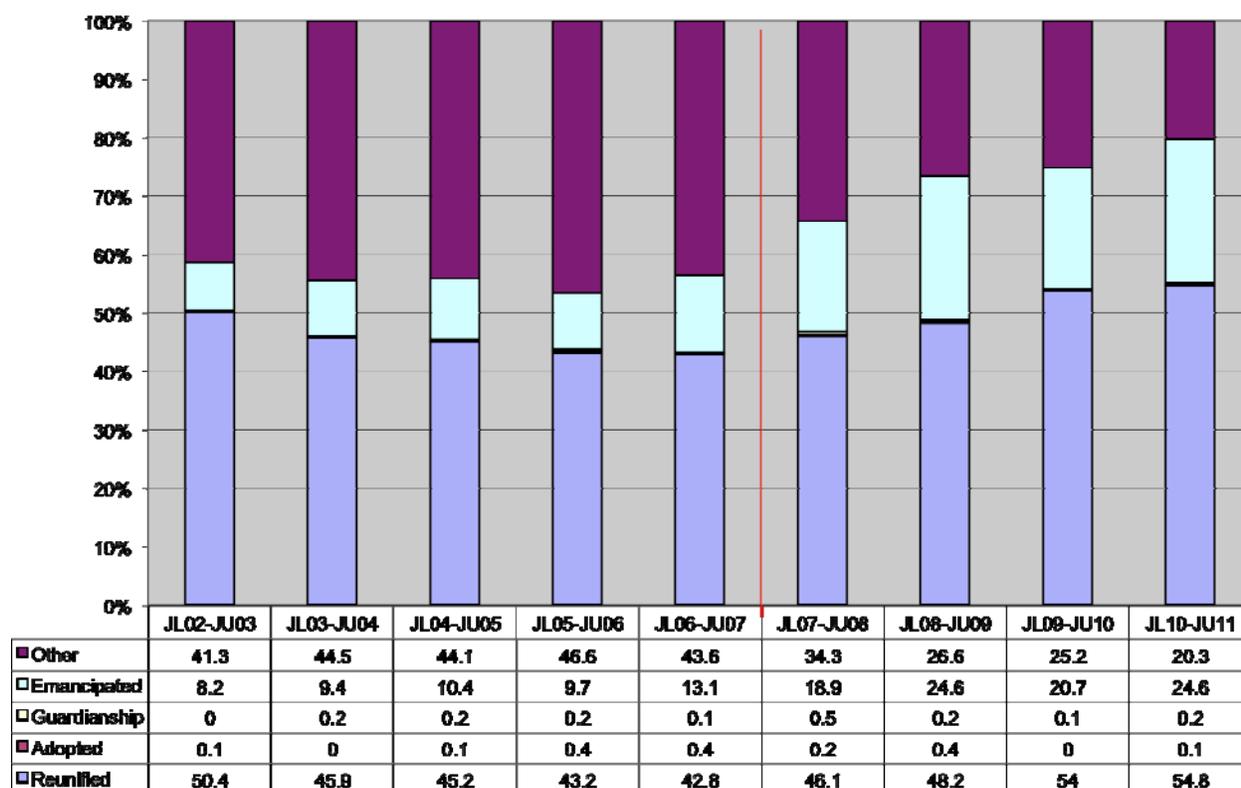
The number of probation youth in out-of-home care is shown in Figure 4.18. The pattern for the two CAP counties is similar after the first two years of the comparison period, first dipping and then rising as the CAP gets underway, only to reverse the trend yet again. The decline for the LACPD resulted in a 27% drop between average number of children in care in the comparison years and the CAP years. The decline was 2% for the ACPD. The NPCPD experienced a steady decline in the number of children in care starting in the pre-CAP years before the numbers started to rise in 2010. The decrease in the average number of children in care between the two periods was 19%.

Fig 4.18: ACPD-LACPD-NPCPD - Youth In Out-of-Home Care



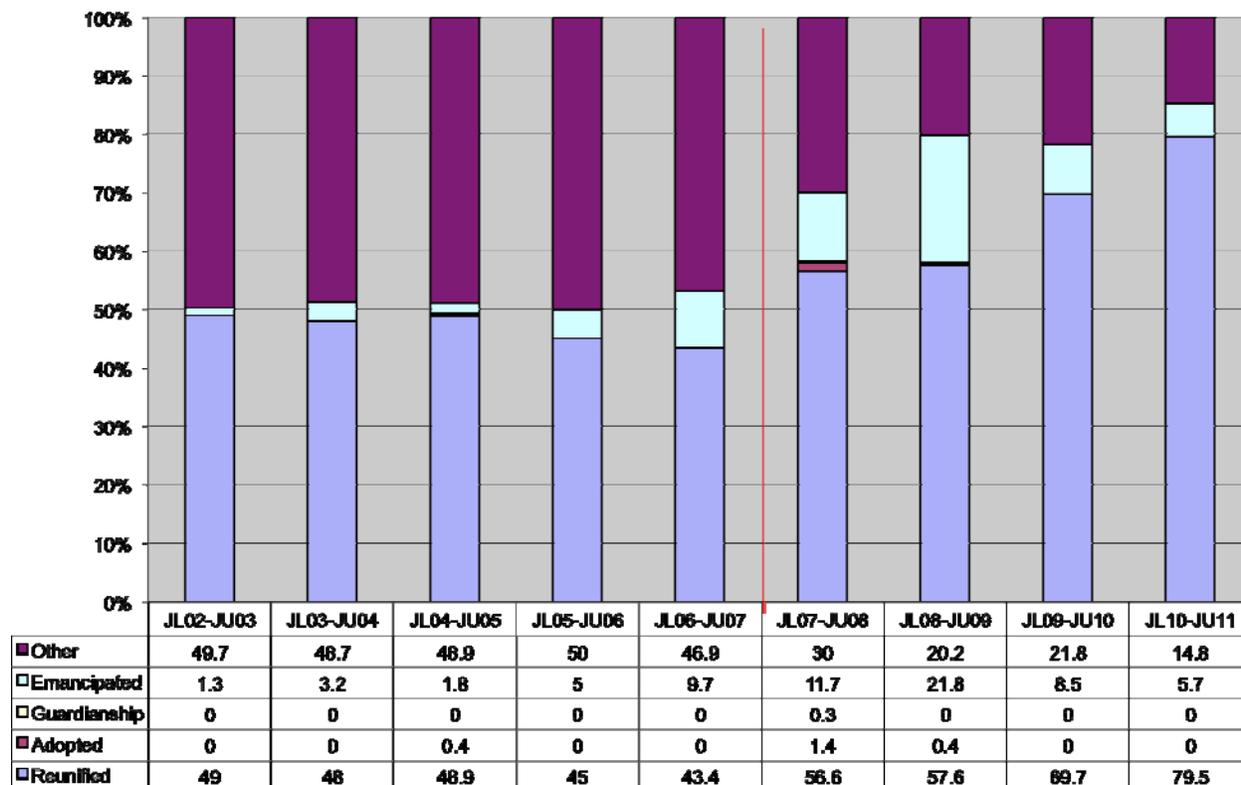
The distribution of exits for the NPCPD is shown in Figure 4.19. Exits in the “Reunified” category were on the rise in the CAP years, increasing by 12% when juxtaposing the average percentage of the comparison years to the CAP years and accounting for roughly 50% of exits from care. Exits categorized under “Emancipated” in the CAP years were well above the percentage of total in the comparison years, increasing by 119%. Exits attributed to the category “Other” dropped by 40%.

Figure 4.19: NPCDP - Exits



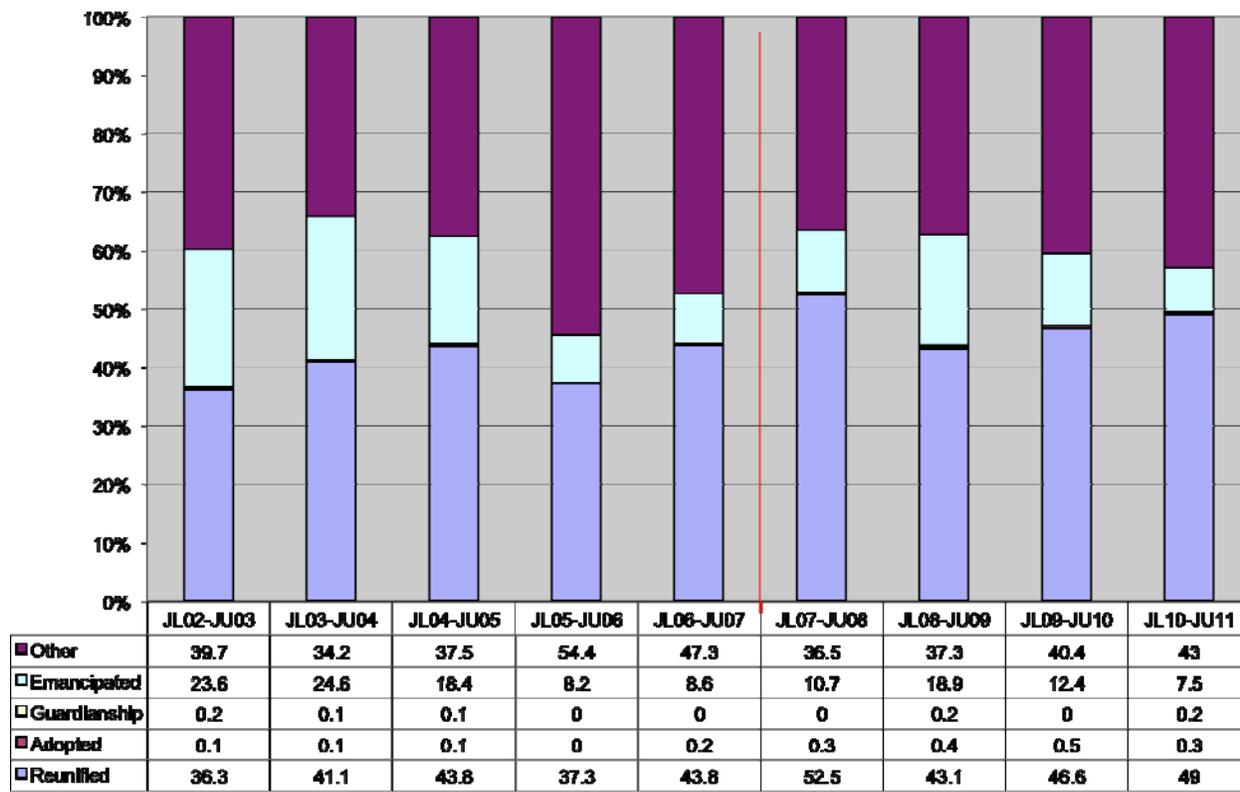
Exits in the category of “Reunified” grew by 41% between the comparison years and the years of the CAP, accounting for almost 80% of the exits by the 2010–2011 (see Figure 4.20). The percentage of exits categorized as “Emancipated” also shifted for the ACPD in the CAP years, increasing by 184% when comparing the average percentage between the two time periods. Exits attributed to the category “Other” declined by 56%.

Figure 4.20: ACPD - Exits



The changes in the distribution of exits for the LACPD create a picture that differs from that of the ACPD (Figure 4.21). Here exits in the “Reunified” category increased by 18% between the comparison period and the years of the CAP; but on average, the “Reunified” exits in the CAP years made up less than 50% of the distribution. Also, exits categorized under “Emancipated” decreased in the CAP years by 26%. Exits attributed to the category “Other” declined by 8%.

Figure 4.21: LACPD - Exits



4.5.2 Child Safety Indicator

The findings for the *Child Safety* indicator are discussed below. Each entity is discussed separately, with the NPCPD providing a context for the two CAP counties. Tables display the results of the analysis previously described in section 4.2.3.

4.5.2.1 NPCPD Child Safety Indicator

Table 4.11 shows the result for the single *Child Safety* indicator for the NPCPD. The small fluctuations in percentages (between 99% and 100%) made it impossible to determine any trend. The indicator exceeded the national standard/goal at each of the data points.

| | Baseline | | | | Intervention | | | | Comparison | | | |
|------|----------|-------|-------|---------|--------------|-------|-------|---------|------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----|
| | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Mag | $\Delta B \ v \ I$ | $\Delta Des \ Dir$ | Sum |
| S2.1 | -0.004 | HS | U | 5/5 | 0.00 | HS | U | 4/4 | 0.00 | U | U | U |

Note: *Cel*=Celeration, *Acc*=Acceleration, *Dec*=Deceleration, *HS*=Horizontal Stability, *Nat S/G*=National Standard/Goal, *Mag*=Magnitude, $\Delta B \ v \ I$ =Trend Change between Baseline and Intervention, $\Delta Des \ Dir$ =Trend Change in Desired Direction, *Sum*=Summary Score, *Y*=Yes, *N*=No, *NA*=Not Applicable, *U*=Unclear, *C*=Trend Continuing, *CY*=Trend Continuing in the Desired Direction, *CN*=Trend Not Continuing in the Desired Direction.

4.5.2.2 ACPD Child Safety Indicator

The results for the single *Child Safety* indicator for the ACPD are shown in Table 4.12. Given the slight changes in percentages (between 99% and 100%), it was impossible to determine any trend. The indicator exceeded the national standard/goal at each of the data points.

| | Baseline | | | | Intervention | | | | Comparison | | | |
|------|----------|-------|-------|---------|--------------|-------|-------|---------|------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----|
| | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Mag | $\Delta B \ v \ I$ | $\Delta Des \ Dir$ | Sum |
| S2.1 | 0.00 | HS | U | 5/5 | 0.00 | HS | U | 4/4 | 0.00 | U | U | U |

Note: *Cel*=Celeration, *Acc*=Acceleration, *Dec*=Deceleration, *HS*=Horizontal Stability, *Nat S/G*=National Standard/Goal, *Mag*=Magnitude, $\Delta B \ v \ I$ =Trend Change between Baseline and Intervention, $\Delta Des \ Dir$ =Trend Change in Desired Direction, *Sum*=Summary Score, *Y*=Yes, *N*=No, *NA*=Not Applicable, *U*=Unclear, *C*=Trend Continuing, *CY*=Trend Continuing in the Desired Direction, *CN*=Trend Not Continuing in the Desired Direction.

4.5.2.3 LACPD Child Safety Indicator

Table 4.13 shows the result for the single *Child Safety* indicator for the LACPD. Again, there were only small changes in the percentages (between 99% and 100%), which made it impossible to establish a trend. The indicator exceeded the national standard/goal at each of the data points.

| | Baseline | | | | Intervention | | | | Comparison | | | |
|------|----------|-------|-------|---------|--------------|-------|-------|---------|------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-----|
| | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Mag | $\Delta B \ v \ I$ | $\Delta \text{Des Dir}$ | Sum |
| S2.1 | 0.00 | HS | U | 5/5 | 0.00 | HS | U | 4/4 | 0 | U | U | U |

Note: *Cel*=Celeration, *Acc*=Acceleration, *Dec*=Deceleration, *HS*=Horizontal Stability, *Nat S/G*=National Standard/Goal, *Mag*=Magnitude, $\Delta B \ v \ I$ =Trend Change between Baseline and Intervention, $\Delta \text{Des Dir}$ =Trend Change in Desired Direction, *Sum*=Summary Score, *Y*=Yes, *N*=No, *NA*=Not Applicable, *U*=Unclear, *C*=Trend Continuing, *CY*=Trend Continuing in the Desired Direction, *CN*=Trend Not Continuing in the Desired Direction.

4.5.3 Exits to Permanency Indicators

The findings for the *Exits to Permanency* indicators are presented below. Each entity is discussed separately, with the NPCPD providing a context for the two CAP counties. The tables display the analysis previously described in section 4.2.3.

4.5.3.1 NPCPD Exits to Permanency Indicators

One indicator, C1.4: *Reentry Following Reunification (Exit Cohort)*, was trending in the desired direction during the comparison period (see Table 4.14). However Indicator C1.3, *Reunification Within 12 Months (Entry Cohort)*, was also trending in the desired direction during the years of the CAP. Indicator C1.4, *Reentry Following Reunification (Exit Cohort)*, did surpass the national standard/goal at all three of the data points during the CAP years. Three of the four indicator summary scores contained only one out of the three possible points.

| | Baseline | | | | Intervention | | | | Comparison | | | |
|------|----------|-------|-------|---------|--------------|-------|-------|---------|------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-----|
| | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Mag | $\Delta B \ v \ I$ | $\Delta \text{Des Dir}$ | Sum |
| C1.1 | -0.42 | Dec | N | 0/5 | -0.77 | Dec | N | 0/4 | +3.00 | C | CN | 1/3 |
| C1.2 | +0.05 | Acc | N | 0/5 | +0.18 | Acc | N | 0/4 | -0.70 | C | CN | 1/3 |
| C1.3 | -0.85 | Dec | N | 0/10 | +0.78 | Acc | Y | 0/6 | -2.50 | Y | Y | 1/3 |
| C1.4 | -0.66 | Dec | Y | 2/5 | +2.35 | Acc | N | 3/3 | -3.00 | Y | N | 2/3 |

Note: *Cel*=Celeration, *Acc*=Acceleration, *Dec*=Deceleration, *HS*=Horizontal Stability, *Nat S/G*=National Standard/Goal, *Mag*=Magnitude, $\Delta B \ v \ I$ =Trend Change between Baseline and Intervention, $\Delta \text{Des Dir}$ =Trend Change in Desired Direction, *Sum*=Summary Score, *Y*=Yes, *N*=No, *NA*=Not Applicable, *U*=Unclear, *C*=Trend Continuing, *CY*=Trend Continuing in the Desired Direction, *CN*=Trend Not Continuing in the Desired Direction.

4.5.3.2 ACPD Exits to Permanency Indicators

Three of the four *Exits to Permanency* indicators were trending in the desired direction during the comparison period; and the same was true during the years of the CAP, although the combinations of positively trending indicators for each of the respective time periods differed slightly (see Table 4.15). The summary score for Indicator C1.2, *Median Time to Reunification*, was zero while the other three indicators garnered at least one point each.

| | Baseline | | | | Intervention | | | | Comparison | | | |
|------|----------|-------|-------|---------|--------------|-------|-------|---------|------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-----|
| | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Mag | $\Delta B \ v \ I$ | $\Delta \text{Des Dir}$ | Sum |
| C1.1 | +3.36 | Acc | Y | 0/5 | +1.09 | Acc | Y | 0/4 | -7.50 | C | CY | 1/3 |
| C1.2 | -1.04 | Dec | Y | 0/5 | +0.56 | Acc | N | 0/4 | +1.50 | Y | N | 0/3 |
| C1.3 | -0.08 | Dec | N | 0/10 | +0.17 | Acc | Y | 0/6 | -5.00 | Y | Y | 1/3 |
| C1.4 | -0.21 | Dec | Y | 5/5 | -0.35 | Dec | Y | 2/3 | 0.00 | C | CY | 2/3 |

Note: *Cel*=Celeration, *Acc*=Acceleration, *Dec*=Deceleration, *HS*=Horizontal Stability, *Nat S/G*=National Standard/Goal, *Mag*=Magnitude, $\Delta B \ v \ I$ =Trend Change between Baseline and Intervention, $\Delta \text{Des Dir}$ =Trend Change in Desired Direction, *Sum*=Summary Score, *Y*=Yes, *N*=No, *NA*=Not Applicable, *U*=Unclear, *C*=Trend Continuing, *CY*=Trend Continuing in the Desired Direction, *CN*=Trend Not Continuing in the Desired Direction.

4.5.3.3 LACPD Exits to Permanency Indicators

All four of the *Exits to Permanency* indicators were trending in the desired direction during the comparison period, and all but one of those indicators continued to do so during the years of the CAP (see Table 4.16). Two indicators, C1.1 (*Reunification Within 12 Months: Exit Cohort*) and C1.3 (*Reunification Within 12 Months: Entry Cohort*), surpassed their national standard/goal at two data points during the CAP years. Indicator C1.1 garnered three points on the summary score, and Indicators C1.2 (*Median Time to Reunification: Exit Cohort*) and C1.3 each garnered two points.

| | Baseline | | | | Intervention | | | | Comparison | | | |
|------|----------|-------|-------|---------|--------------|-------|-------|---------|------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-----|
| | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Mag | $\Delta B \ v \ I$ | $\Delta \text{Des Dir}$ | Sum |
| C1.1 | +2.41 | Acc | Y | 0/5 | +5.13 | Acc | Y | 2/4 | +3.00 | C | CY | 3/3 |
| C1.2 | -0.62 | Dec | Y | 0/5 | -0.81 | Dec | Y | 0/4 | -0.50 | C | CY | 2/3 |
| C1.3 | +1.69 | Acc | Y | 0/10 | +2.47 | Acc | Y | 2/6 | 0 | C | CY | 2/3 |
| C1.4 | -0.04 | Dec | Y | 0/5 | +0.40 | Acc | N | 0/3 | -0.60 | Y | N | 1/3 |

Note: *Cel*=Celeration, *Acc*=Acceleration, *Dec*=Deceleration, *HS*=Horizontal Stability, *Nat S/G*=National Standard/Goal, *Mag*=Magnitude, $\Delta B \ v \ I$ =Trend Change between Baseline and Intervention, $\Delta \text{Des Dir}$ =Trend Change in Desired Direction, *Sum*=Summary Score, *Y*=Yes, *N*=No, *NA*=Not Applicable, *U*=Unclear, *C*=Trend Continuing, *CY*=Trend Continuing in the Desired Direction, *CN*=Trend Not Continuing in the Desired Direction.

4.5.4 Placement Stability Indicators

The findings for the *Placement Stability* indicators are presented below. Each entity is discussed separately, with the NPCPD providing a context for the two CAP counties. The tables display the results of the analysis previously described in section 4.2.3.

4.5.4.1 NPCPD Placement Stability Indicators

The trends for each of the three *Placement Stability* indicators went from not trending in the desired direction during the comparison years to trending in the desired direction during the years of the CAP (see Table 4.17). In addition, all three surpassed the national standard/goal for at least one data point during the years of the CAP, and each indicator garnered two of three points for its summary score.

| | Baseline | | | | Intervention | | | | Comparison | | | |
|------|----------|-------|-------|---------|--------------|-------|-------|---------|------------|----------------|------------------|-----|
| | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Mag | $\Delta B v I$ | $\Delta Des Dir$ | Sum |
| C4.1 | -0.35 | Dec | N | 5/5 | +1.28 | Acc | Y | 4/4 | -1.00 | Y | Y | 2/3 |
| C4.2 | -0.23 | Dec | N | 5/5 | +2.39 | Acc | Y | 4/4 | -1.00 | Y | Y | 2/3 |
| C4.3 | -0.88 | Dec | N | 0/5 | +3.37 | Acc | Y | 1/4 | -1.50 | Y | Y | 2/3 |

Note: *Cel*=Celeration, *Acc*=Acceleration, *Dec*=Deceleration, *HS*=Horizontal Stability, *Nat S/G*=National Standard/Goal, *Mag*=Magnitude, $\Delta B v I$ =Trend Change between Baseline and Intervention, $\Delta Des Dir$ =Trend Change in Desired Direction, *Sum*=Summary Score, *Y*=Yes, *N*=No, *NA*=Not Applicable, *U*=Unclear, *C*=Trend Continuing, *CY*=Trend Continuing in the Desired Direction, *CN*=Trend Not Continuing in the Desired Direction.

4.5.4.2 ACPD Placement Stability Indicators

Only one indicator (C4.1: *8 Days to 12 Months in Care*) was trending in the desired direction during the comparison period, but all three indicators were doing so during the years of the CAP (see Table 4.18). Two of the three indicators, C4.1 and C4.2 (*12 Months to 24 Months in Care*), surpassed the national standard/goal during both the comparison period and the years of the CAP, and both earned the full summary score.

| | Baseline | | | | Intervention | | | | Comparison | | | |
|------|----------|-------|-------|---------|--------------|-------|-------|---------|------------|----------------|------------------|-----|
| | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Mag | $\Delta B v I$ | $\Delta Des Dir$ | Sum |
| C4.1 | +0.13 | Acc | Y | 5/5 | +0.22 | Acc | Y | 4/4 | +0.50 | C | CY | 3/3 |
| C4.2 | -0.94 | Dec | N | 4/5 | +3.62 | Acc | Y | 4/4 | +3.50 | Y | Y | 3/3 |
| C4.3 | -3.97 | Dec | N | 0/5 | +3.08 | Acc | Y | 0/4 | +13.00 | Y | Y | 2/3 |

Note: *Cel*=Celeration, *Acc*=Acceleration, *Dec*=Deceleration, *HS*=Horizontal Stability, *Nat S/G*=National Standard/Goal, *Mag*=Magnitude, $\Delta B v I$ =Trend Change between Baseline and Intervention, $\Delta Des Dir$ =Trend Change in Desired Direction, *Sum*=Summary Score, *Y*=Yes, *N*=No, *NA*=Not Applicable, *U*=Unclear, *C*=Trend Continuing, *CY*=Trend Continuing in the Desired Direction, *CN*=Trend Not Continuing in the Desired Direction.

4.5.4.3 LACPD Placement Stability Indicators

Similar to the findings for the ACPD, only one indicator (C4.2: *12 Months to 24 Months in Care*) was trending in the desired direction during the comparison period, but all three indicators were doing so during the years of the CAP (see Table 4.19). All three of the indicators surpassed the national standard/goal during both the comparison period and the years of the CAP, and two of the three (C4.1: *8 Days to 12 Months in Care*; and C4.3: *At Least 24 Months in Care*) collected the full summary score.

| | Baseline | | | | Intervention | | | | Comparison | | | |
|------|----------|-------|-------|---------|--------------|-------|-------|---------|------------|----------------|------------------|-----|
| | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Slope | Celer | Trend | Nat S/G | Mag | $\Delta B v I$ | $\Delta Des Dir$ | Sum |
| C4.1 | -0.65 | Dec | N | 5/5 | +0.61 | Acc | Y | 4/4 | +0.75 | Y | Y | 3/3 |
| C4.2 | +0.48 | Acc | Y | 5/5 | +0.99 | Acc | Y | 4/4 | -2.00 | C | CY | 2/3 |
| C4.3 | -1.43 | Dec | N | 2/5 | +1.27 | Acc | Y | 4/4 | +2.75 | Y | Y | 3/3 |

Note: *Cel*=Celeration, *Acc*=Acceleration, *Dec*=Deceleration, *HS*=Horizontal Stability, *Nat S/G*=National Standard/Goal, *Mag*=Magnitude, $\Delta B v I$ =Trend Change between Baseline and Intervention, $\Delta Des Dir$ =Trend Change in Desired Direction, *Sum*=Summary Score, *Y*=Yes, *N*=No, *NA*=Not Applicable, *U*=Unclear, *C*=Trend Continuing, *CY*=Trend Continuing in the Desired Direction, *CN*=Trend Not Continuing in the Desired Direction.

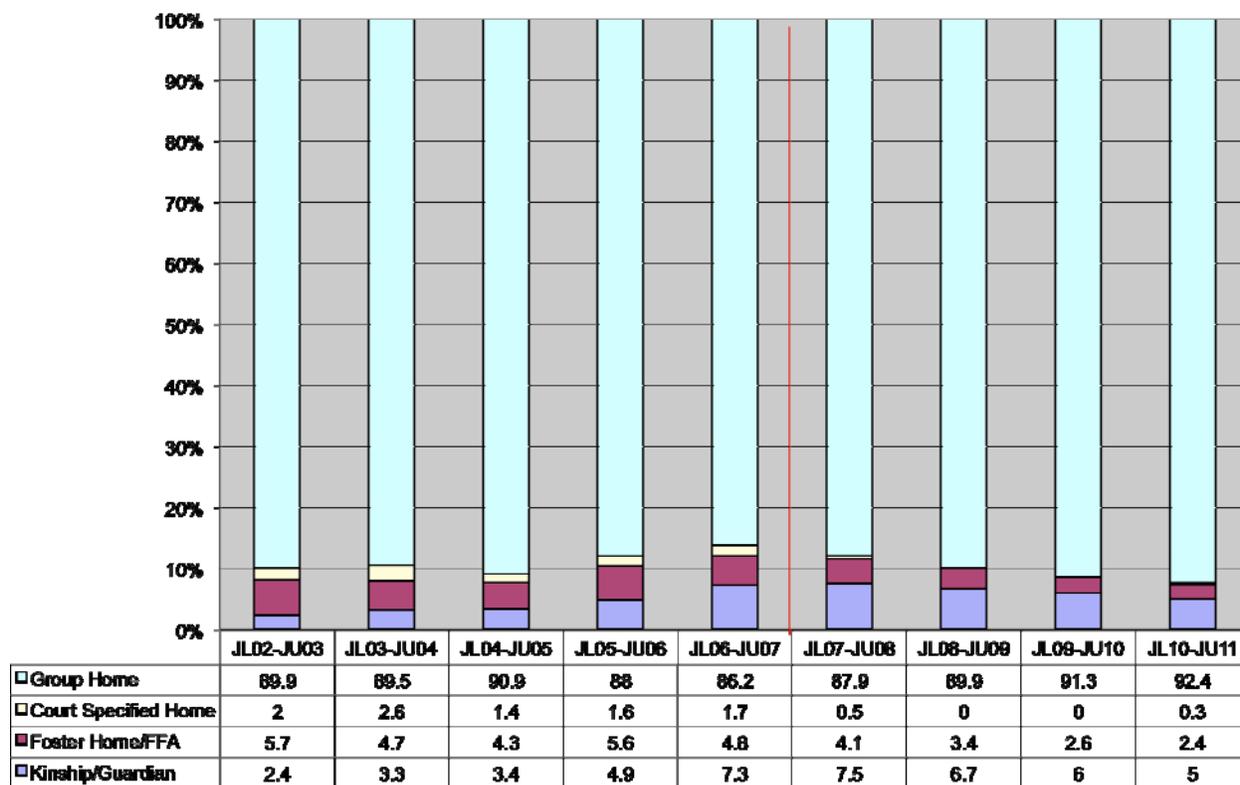
4.5.5 Appropriateness and Restrictiveness Indicators

The findings for the *Appropriateness and Restrictiveness* indicators are presented below. Each entity is discussed separately, with the NPCPD providing a context for the two CAP counties.

4.5.5.1 NPCPD Appropriateness and Restrictiveness Indicators

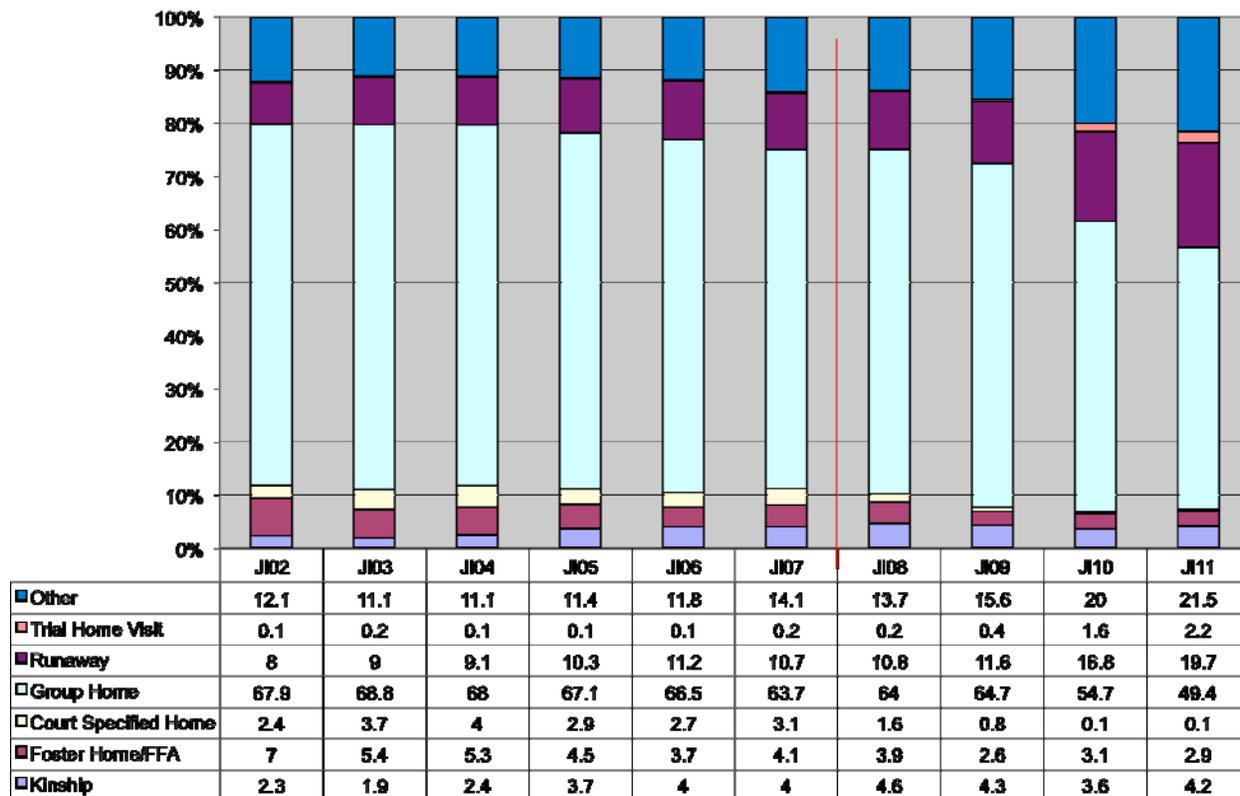
The distribution for the NPCPD showed that there was some variability in the type of first placements (see Figure 4.22). There was an increase in the use of “Kinship/Guardian” homes in the comparison period that continued into the years of the CAP, although there was a slight decrease at the end of the period. The counties decreased their use of “Foster Home/FFA” as first placement towards the end of the CAP years, as well.

Figure 4.22: NPCPD - 4B Least Restrictive Placement (entries first placement)



Point-in-time placement patterns showed a sizeable decrease in the use of “Group Home” placements during the years of the CAP, along with a decrease in “Court Specified Home” placements (see Figure 4.23). The decrease coincided with an increase in placements classified as “Runaway” and “Other” and a small percentage increase in placements categorized under “Trial Home Visit.”

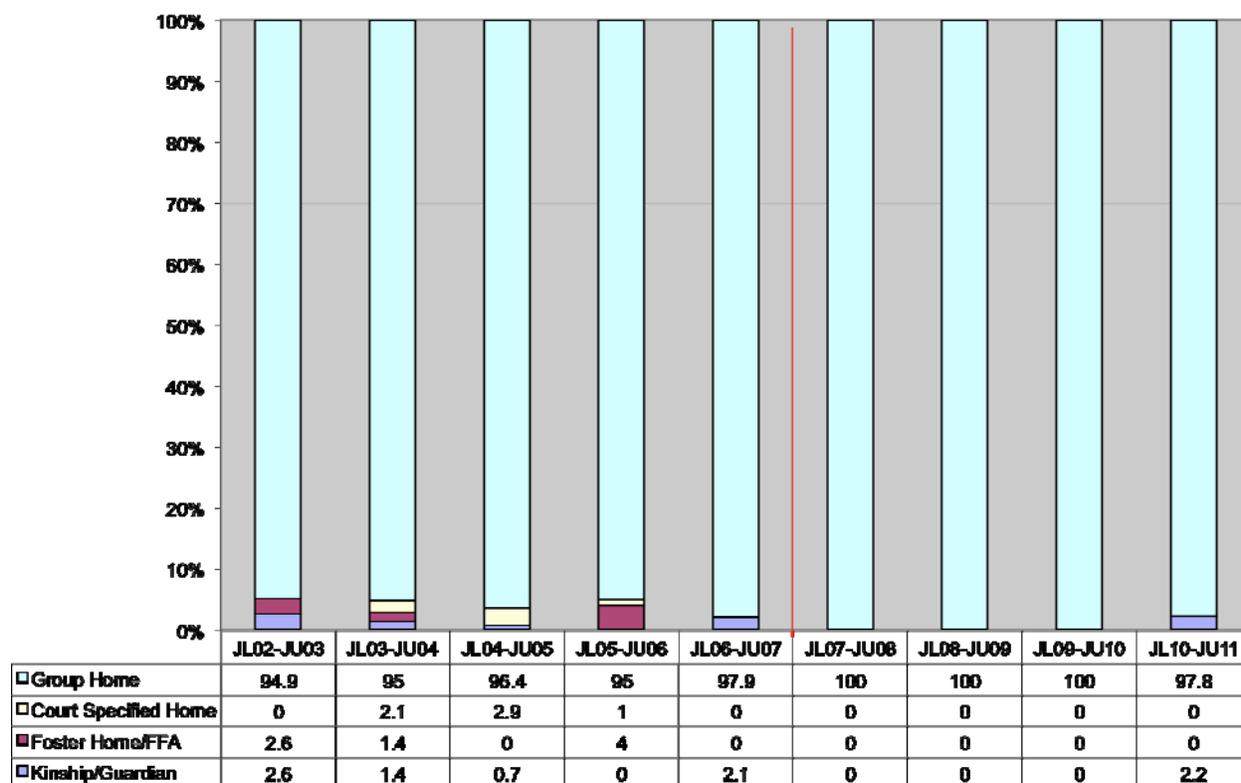
Figure 4.23: NPCPD - 4B Least Restrictive Placement (point in time)



4.5.5.2 ACPD Appropriateness and Restrictiveness Indicators

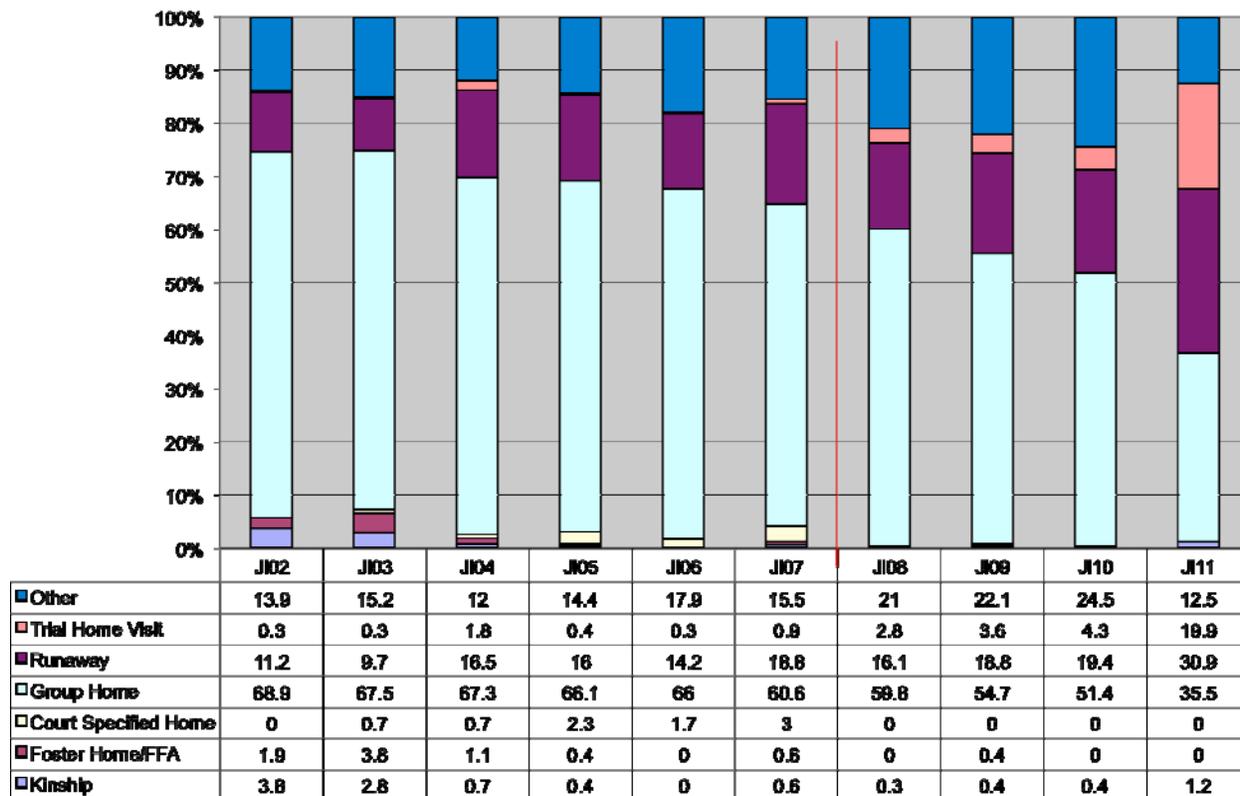
There was very little variability in the distribution in the types of first placements for the ACPD in the comparison years, and taken together these placements never accounted for more than 5.1% (see Figure 4.24). During the CAP years, almost every first placement was in the “Group Home” category.

Figure 4.24: ACPD - 4B Least Restrictive Placement (entries first placement)



Point-in-time placement patterns in the ACPD showed a decline in the category of “Group Home”; this decline had begun during the comparison years and increased during the years of the CAP (see Figure 4.25). There was an increase in the percentage of placements classified as “Runaway,” particularly in July 2011. In that same year there was a sizeable increase in “Trial Home Visit” placements.

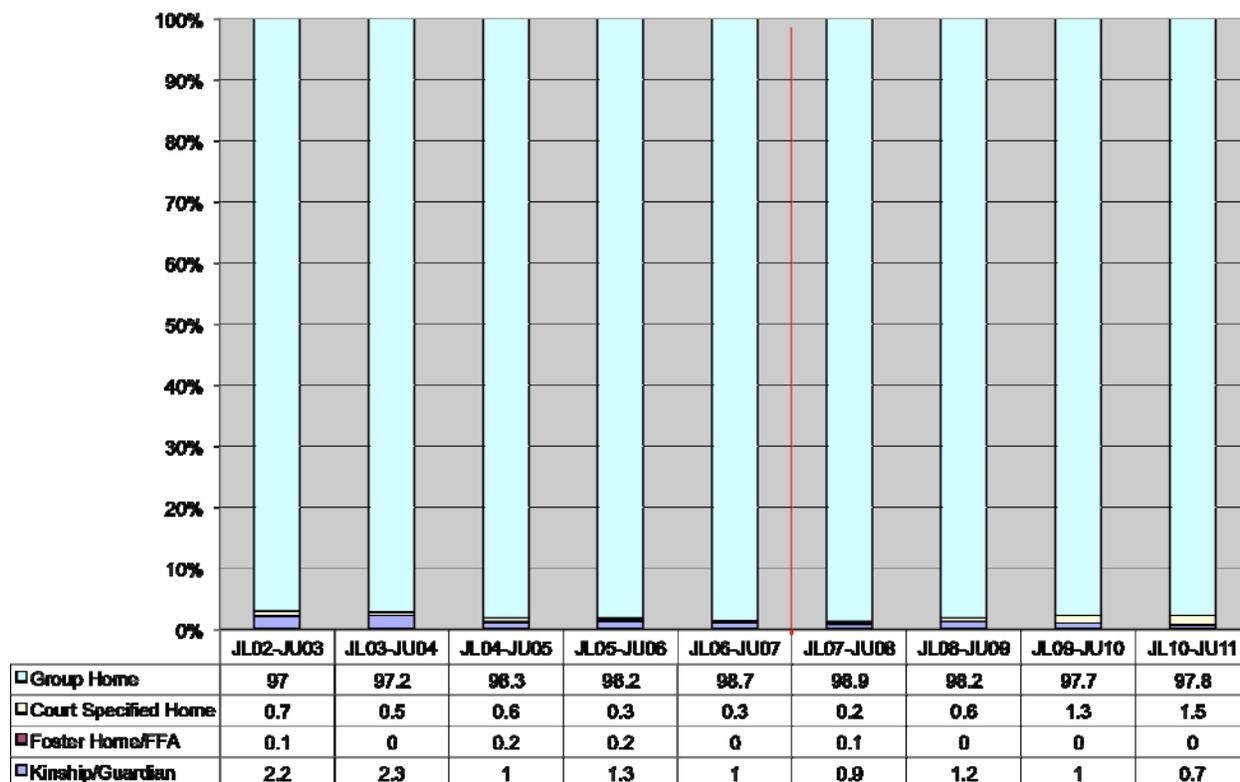
Figure 4.25: ACPD - 4B Least Restrictive Placement (point in time)



4.5.5.3 LACPD Appropriateness and Restrictiveness Indicators

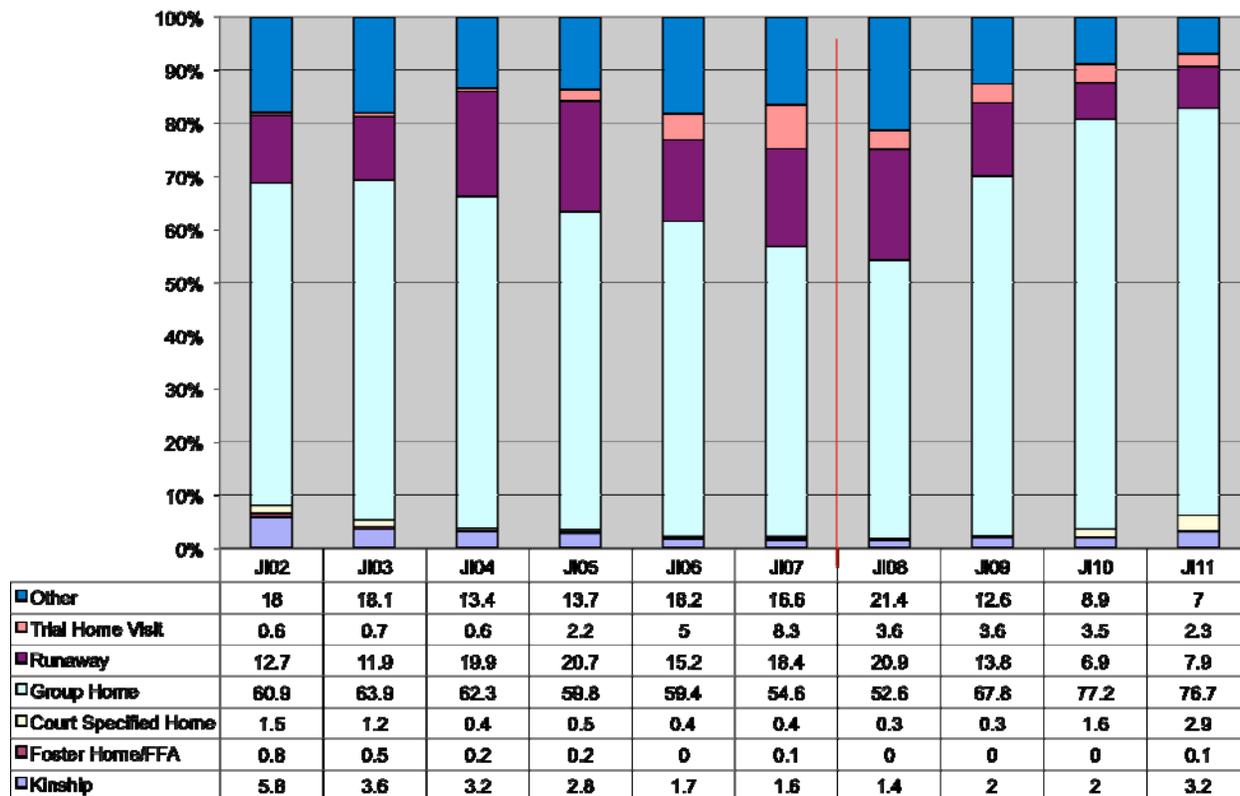
The distribution of first placements stayed roughly the same between the comparison period and the years of the CAP with no less than 97% of the placements being made in the “Group Home” category (see Figure 4.26).

Figure 4.26: LACPD - 4B Least Restrictive Placement (entries first placement)



“Group Home” placements declined in their share of overall distribution in the LACPD during the comparison period, but these placements increased markedly during the CAP years—the percentage of “Group Home” placements in July 2009, 2010, and 2011 all exceeded the highest level during the comparison period (see Figure 4.27). The percentage of placements classified as “Runaway” decreased in the years of the CAP, as did those classified as “Other.”

Figure 4.27: LACPD - 4B Least Restrictive Placement (point in time)



4.6 Analysis: Probation Departments

The ACDP and the LACPD, in operating under the CAP, sought to safely reduce the number of youth entering out-of-home placements as well as reduce the number of youth in out-of-home placements. When out-of-home placements were a necessity for youth, the departments attempted to reduce the time youth spent in those placements and to provide them with the most stable and family-like placement setting possible.

The outcome study, as previously stated, sought to understand the performance of the two departments as they operated in a new fiscal environment and based on a series of outcomes and indicators. Given the descriptive nature of the evaluation, the data were assessed in multiple ways, including pre and post comparisons of trend lines, changes in magnitude, and the degree to which standards/goals had been met or exceeded. An analysis of data from the NPCPD was also conducted to provide a context for the findings from the CAP counties. Interpreting the findings from the analysis of the probation departments faces certain challenges. The case management system, as described in section 4.2.4 Data Issues and Limitations, that was the source of the data for the California Child Welfare Performance Indicators Project was not native to the probation departments until recently. It is unclear to what extent the patterns reflected in the trend line analysis are the result of data issues or actual changes in trends.

Entries into out-of-home care and the number of youth in out-of-home care declined during the comparison period for the NPCPD. The numbers began to increase during the years of the CAP, although not to the highest levels of the previous time period. Exits to reunification increased during the years of the CAP, reversing a downward trend in the comparison years. The *Child Safety* indicator was difficult to interpret (see explanation in the section 4.6.1). *Exits to Permanency* garnered 42% (5/12) of the possible points, and placement stability garnered 67% (6/9). Only 14% (1/7) of the trend lines were moving in the desired direction during the comparison period, although that pattern improved to 57% (4/7) during the years of the CAP. The share of data points where a national standard/goal had been met or exceeded increased from 38% (17/45) in the comparison period to 48% (16/33) in the years of the CAP. Among all of the possible first out-of-home placements, group homes continued to be the primary placement used. The share of “Group Home” placements that were measured at specific points in time declined in the years of the CAP, continuing a trend begun in the later part of the comparison period.

4.6.1 ACPD

The caseload findings for the ACPD were mixed. Entries had decreased during the CAP years as compared to the previous time period, but they had started to increase in the second and third year of the CAP before dropping in 2010–2011. The number of youth in out-of-home placements remained relatively stable between the comparison period and the years of the CAP, with only a 2% reduction between the time periods. On a positive note, the percentage of exits to reunification increased by 41% during the years of the CAP, comprising the majority of exits in each year of the project.

The ACPD *Child Safety* indicator is difficult to interpret. The outcome is positive if in fact no maltreatment occurred while youth were in out-of-home placements. However, it seems likely that some amount of maltreatment occurred over the years included in the evaluation, and the results may be due to an underreporting of maltreatment information.

The remaining findings were varied. Three of the four *Exits to Permanency* indicators were trending in the desired direction in the years of the CAP, although the indicators garnered only 33% (4/12) of the possible summary score points. All of the *Placement Stability* indicators were trending in the desired direction during the years of the CAP and had garnered 89% (8/9) of the possible summary score points. The use of group home placements continued to decline in the years of the CAP, falling below 50% of total placements for the first time in 2011, and the percentage of trial home visits increased. However, the percentage of placements classified as “Runaway” increased during the CAP years. During the years of the CAP, 86% (6/7) of the trend lines were moving in the desired direction, compared to 57% (4/7) during the comparison period. There was no improvement on meeting or exceeding national standards/goals, with the ACPD attaining 42% (19/45, 14/33) during both time periods.

4.6.2 LACPD

The caseload findings for the LACPD were generally positive. Entries declined during the years of the CAP, the continuation of a trend that had started at the end of the comparison period; the number of youth in out-of-home placements was in decline pre-CAP and during the CAP years, as well. Exits to reunification increased during the years of the CAP reversing the trend during the comparison period.

The LACPD *Child Safety* indicator is difficult to interpret for the reasons stated in the discussion of the ACPD *Child Safety* indicator. The outcome was positive, even with the small indication of maltreatment (less than 0.02%) in out-of-home placements in the years of the CAP. However, it again seems likely that a greater amount of maltreatment occurred over the years included in the evaluation, and the low numbers may be due to an underreporting of maltreatment information.

The findings on the remaining indicators for the LACPD were also positive with one exception. Group homes continued to be the primary placement option for entries into out-of-home care and when assessing the placement distribution at a point-in-time. On the positive side, all but one of the *Exits to Permanency* indicators were trending in the desired direction during the time of the CAP, and the outcome garnered 67% (8/12) of the possible summary score points. The placement stability outcome garnered 89% (8/9) of the possible summary score points, and all of the *Placement Stability* indicators were trending in the desired direction during the years of the CAP. Trend lines improved during the years of the CAP, with 86% (6/7) trending in the desired direction compared to 71% (5/7) in the comparison years. The LACPD also had more data points that met or exceeded the national standards/goals in the years of the CAP (61%, 20/33) than it had during the comparison period (44%, 20/45).

Chapter 5: Summary, Lessons Learned, and Conclusion

5.1 Summarizing the Planning Phase and the Early Stages of the CAP

Counties in California participating in the CAP were required to accept a predetermined limit on their allocation of Title IV-E dollars, traditionally an entitlement program, in exchange for the flexibility to use the money for all child welfare services, including those normally outside the scope of traditional Title IV-E funding. Such a proposition was not without financial risk for participating counties. In order to exist within a capped allocation environment and not overspend the capped amount of money, counties would need to alter their operations to reduce three things: the number of youth entering their systems, the length of time youth had contact with the system, and the per-case cost of operating the system.

Perhaps the principle initial question to consider when reviewing the first two years of the CAP asks what the key organizational characteristics were of the two departments of children and family services participating in the project. Both departments had undergone systemic changes in the early to mid-2000's. The departments had developed and defined departmental goals, policies, and practices that were focused on better outcomes for children and families, emphasizing improved safety, decreased timelines to permanency, reduced reliance on the use of out-of-home care, and when out-of-home care was necessary ensuring that it be in the most family-like setting possible. Following these organizational changes, the departments had experienced some success in reducing the number of children in out-of-home care. Each department was guided by what respondents described as "visionary" leaders. In fact, it was the director of the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (LACDCFS) who originally proposed the idea of a flexible funding/capped allocation project in California.

These internal characteristics are important to note, although without comparison counties it is impossible to ascertain whether the characteristics were necessary for participating in the CAP. Respondents from both departments of children and family services, however, were adamant about what exactly constituted the necessary precursors to a flexible funding/capped allocation project; in their minds, a system that was grounded in a policy and practice philosophy that established positive outcomes for children and families as a paramount goal was essential. In effect, fiscal flexibility in a capped allocation environment doesn't drive a systems-change effort; it supports it. The incorporation of the components of Family-to-Family were cited as laying the groundwork for taking advantage of the CAP: the focus on goals and outcomes; the orientation to best-practices; the use of data in decision making; the team decision-making approach; and the importance of developing community partnerships and supports. Evidence of some success in achieving the goals of the departments (e.g., reducing caseloads) reinforced the notion that they were on the right track.

Leadership was important in successfully implementing the CAP for two reasons. First, leadership helped ensure that the departments had established goals for children and families and had put into place the policies and practices necessary to achieving those goals. Second, leadership was necessary to take advantage of the opportunity presented by the CAP. Gaining fiscal flexibility in exchange for accepting a capped amount of money entails risk, and departments had an opt-out clause under the CAP, which mitigated the risk of over-expending

the capped allocation. However, the departments knew that if they opted out they would incur the risk of leaving in place services that they could then no longer support through a return to the traditional funding model and because of the resulting loss of fiscal flexibility. Leadership was necessary to convince important stakeholders that the trade-off was worth the risk and that the CAP was an opportunity to improve outcomes for children and families.

The counties also benefited from a growing federal- and state-wide orientation to planning and outcomes. Mandated planning processes had been established: the Peer Quality Case Review, the Program Improvement Plan, and the System Improvement Plan, all three of which link practice to outcomes; and the California's Child Welfare Outcomes and Accountability System, which focuses on the use of data for monitoring and decision-making. Together these systems created a supportive environment for continuing systems improvement—and for achieving the conditions necessary for operating in a capped allocation environment.

Possibly the most important factors influencing whether a county elected to participate in the CAP were the methodology and the data used for determining the federal base allocation for the project. A cost look-back model—calculating the average of expenditures—was selected, and assistance and administration expenditure data from three federal fiscal years were used as a base. The model and the data used appeared to influence which county departments elected to participate in the CAP, or at least they did in the cases of Alameda County and Los Angeles County. For both counties, the use of these data and this model meant they were going to receive more money under the CAP than they would have received had they chosen not to participate in the project. In essence, their participation gave them access to funds to invest in services that would not otherwise be available to them. However, the CAP allocation amounts were not attractive to any county that had already experienced a sizeable reduction in its expenditures caused by a drop in caseload (children in out-of-home care) preceding the selected base years and that didn't anticipate a sizeable drop in the future. For those counties, it appeared the margin of benefit was too small for the assumption of risk.

For the counties that did decide to participate in the CAP, there was, again, a supposition that to stay fiscally sound within a capped allocation environment, departments of children and family services would need to do three things to alter their operations: (a) lower the number of children entering their systems, (b) reduce the length of time children had contact with the system, and (c) reduce the per-case cost of operating the system. This supposition formed the basis of the evaluation plan, specifically the process study portion of this evaluation; data collection through interviews and focus group was designed to capture whether or not operations were put in place to achieve the three goals. What became evident after the first set of site visits was that the two departments of children and family services were already oriented to those ends. The systemic changes to policies and practices that took place in the years preceding the CAP, though not focused on fiscal concerns, had placed the departments in an advantageous position because the goals the program sought to achieve through its focus on practice and outcomes were the same ones necessary for remaining fiscally sound in a capped allocation environment.

The primary goal of the Alameda County Department of Children and Family Services (ACDCFS) and the LACDCFS since the mid-2000s has been to keep children out of the foster care system. The CAP provided the departments with an opportunity to increase those efforts,

and they elected to expand activities already underway before the onset of the CAP in July 2007. In other words, they have chosen to enhance their services; they have not chosen to dramatically change their systems.

A number of reasons emerged for why a project like the CAP does not work as a systems change effort. First, the degree of financial risk is too great for an organization not already defined by a set of goals and a philosophy to attain them; lacking that kind of infrastructure, the organization risks squandering its capped allocation while going through a change process. Also, the organization risks a degree of paralysis as it struggles to determine how best to utilize funds that are unrestricted in how they can be used. Factored into this was the notion of momentum. There was the sense that, with a set of goals and a policy and practice philosophy already adopted by a critical mass of the organization, early successes (e.g., improvement in outcomes) could build important momentum and allow the organization to assume a greater degree of financial risk with a greater sense of confidence. Finally, there was an expressed concern that an organization should be defined by its vision and goals and not by how it is funded; instead, funding should play a supportive role and not drive the agenda of the organization.

The departments struggled to some degree with defining the CAP: is it a funding mechanism for a broad range of child welfare services, or is it a program unto itself? The CAP is the former, but the natural inclination of most professionals is to think in terms of the latter. There seemed to be a basic understanding of what the CAP “is”; that it’s not a program, but a funding mechanism, or a change in a funding mechanism, and this understanding has increased over time. The distinction is important because it is not a funding mechanism that operates in the background in the same way that the traditional model did for most department staff; instead, it is a model that requires a change in individual and institutional behavior to stay within a defined dollar amount. There appeared to be a growing understanding within the departments of the connection between practice and funding, and that lowering the number of children entering the system, reducing the amount of time children stay in the system, and lowering the intensity level of care for children makes fiscal sense as well as good sense for children. The model was not without tension however, with concerns expressed that maybe the funding model—or the desire for reinvestment savings—was driving policy and practice decisions in ways that were not always in the best interest of children.

The two probation departments stand in contrast to the two departments of children and family services. First, the CAP affected only the juvenile section of each probation department; and then the PDs were late to the planning process because the Children’s Bureau required their participation only at a very late point in the planning period. While the chief probation officers of both departments viewed the CAP as an opportunity, they also agreed to participate in the project in the spirit of partnership with their counterparts at the department of children and family services.

The ACPD, while having begun a process of reducing the number of youth in out-of-home placements, entered into the CAP pleased that it would be able to stabilize an important funding source for a period of time, hedging against what it viewed as decreasing access to Title IV-E funding. The ACPD did not have plans to use the CAP to change its system in any profound way. Over time, that intention seemed to shift to some degree, and new strategies to

improve operations were proposed. However, the department's progress seemed to stall with concerns about the state's budget crisis and with the departure of the senior staff person most responsible for setting the department's agenda with regard to the CAP.

The Los Angeles County Probation Department (LACPD), despite its late start, embraced the CAP as an opportunity to help change the way it works with youth and families. The department had begun that effort prior to the CAP, led by a division director who felt that a social work model that was youth and family-focused would be more successful with placement youth than the traditional punitive, juvenile justice model. In general, the department staff believed that the CAP could be used to help further the philosophical shift in the department through a focus on improving outcomes for youth, as well as provide the funding for the evidence-based practices that staff felt could be successful with out-of-home placement youth.

5.2 Summarizing the CAP

5.2.1 The Process Study

It is difficult to generalize what was learned from the process study to some concept of a "California experience," given the unique characteristics of the four participating departments and the distinctiveness of their experiences operating under the CAP. It is also difficult to parse out, absent comparison departments, what resulted from participating in the CAP and what resulted from an evolution of the departments towards best-policy and best-practice. That said, a consideration of the process study questions from a collective approach is informative.

The departments took an incremental approach to their plans, for the most part building upon initiatives and investments that were already underway at the start of the CAP. In addition, they were cautious in the amount of resources they were willing to commit as they adjusted to the new fiscal environment. Their initial set of initiatives and investments were to be followed by subsequent sets of efforts informed by a real-time, data-driven decision-making process and a response to current service needs. This approach was hindered by two factors: the lack of data systems that provided evaluative information about the initiatives and investments in a real-time way and the state's unprecedented economic downturn and its impact on county-wide operations. In terms of data, it proved impossible for the departments to develop data systems that provided them with timely information. As a result, the departments chose to continue their initiatives and investments, despite the scarcity of evaluative information, because they felt there was sufficient program theory and anecdotal evidence to justify the programs. Internal processes in each department determined what was added to existing initiatives and investments. And then the state's economic downturn significantly influenced the timing within the departments of successive sets of initiatives and investments. With a stable five-year allocation, the departments were able to mitigate some of the budget reductions that other county departments had to undergo. However, the budget crises, the rate increases for group homes and foster homes, and the uncertainties regarding Realignment seemed to infuse the CAP plan approval process conducted by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors (ACBOS) and the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (LACBOS) with a greater degree of deliberation, resulting in a slower implementation process than what was intended.

The initial oversight and monitoring structure seemed typical of such large-scale organizational efforts. This structure involved a senior administrator who was appointed as coordinator and a separate set of meetings charged with overseeing the project's implementation. The CAP oversight and monitoring structure was supported by Casey Family Programs, whose fiscal contributions to the departments allowed a number of staff in each department to be dedicated to the project during the first several years of the CAP. Such a structure may have seemed unnecessary for what amounted to a change in the funding mechanism and not a project per se; however, the structure seemed to keep the departments focused on the fiscal change and opportunity at hand and provide a venue for the necessary discussions between the program and fiscal sides of the organizations, important discussions that otherwise might not have occurred. The oversight and monitoring structure also seemed central to informing and educating internal departmental staff and external stakeholders as to the characteristics of the CAP and what it meant for the department to be operating in a new fiscal environment. The structure and its functions appeared less distinct in the latter years of the CAP, as the department staff shifted their perception of the CAP from a project model to a fiscal model.

Regardless of the oversight and monitoring structure, the process required information. All of the departments were working to develop and implement comprehensive data systems or improve existing systems at the time the CAP got underway. The data needs for operating in a capped allocation fiscal environment provided additional encouragement for data systems development.

The CAP itself did not have a sizeable impact on the structure and operations of the departments or on staffing and training beyond what resulted from the implementation of initiatives and investments under the CAP. The fiscal environment of the CAP seemed to encourage discussions already underway in the departments about alternative contracting arrangements, including performance-based contracting. The largest operational affect was felt by the fiscal sections of the departments. The traditional allocation and claiming process continued during the CAP at the same time that the CAP allowed the departments to make changes to the process (e.g., claiming ratios). As a result, the departments found it necessary to develop and implement a second set of data systems to track and monitor allocations and expenditures under the CAP. In addition, fiscal data were now included in discussions within the departments in a way that they hadn't been before the CAP.

Leadership, in its various forms, had an important role in the implementation of the CAP. As discussed previously, leadership was essential for securing the CAP for the two counties. Active and positive leadership played a continued role in a number of the departments over the years of the project, most notably in the area of finance and in helping those involved understand the fiscal ramifications of the CAP. Leadership, or a lack of leadership, also played a role where the opportunities of the CAP were not acted upon or crises at the upper management levels left the departments in a period of stasis while the issues were resolved and permanent leadership was restored.

The CAP appeared to affect how services were accessed to the extent that it allowed for the implementation of services that did not previously exist or that it expanded existing services, thereby creating greater capacity. For example, a child welfare worker might determine that a

child and family would be best served by a diversion program. Because the CAP made additional programs and services available, a child welfare worker could proceed with the determination about where to best place the child; without the CAP, the child welfare worker would have made the same initial determination, but would have had to make a different decision about placement. The CAP also affected how services were accessed by giving departments the opportunity to implement initiatives that focused on screening children and families in various areas (e.g., mental health, substance use), which resulted in service provision or referrals to services. It did not appear that the CAP itself or the existence of a capped allocation altered the decision-making process. That process continued to be guided by the policy and practice philosophies of the departments.

The service array, service intensity, and the integration of services were influenced by the CAP, while the process of case management was not. The departments took advantage of the CAP to implement a small number of new initiatives and investments, notably in the latter years of the project. The departments mainly used the CAP to increase the intensity of existing services by expanding their operations and the numbers of children and families that could be served. Service integration was enhanced through the development of new contracts and the expansion of existing contracts with community-based organizations and other public departments, such as mental health. The availability of resources under the CAP encouraged a discussion of services and service integration between the departments and their counterparts in the broader service community.

Quality assurance efforts and operations were noted in most of the departments. Such efforts and operations did not seem to have been developed or to have changed as a direct result of the CAP, but the project did provide an environment that was supportive of the enhancement of quality assurance activities.

All of the departments experienced challenges as they operated under the new fiscal environment of the CAP. Some of those challenges cut across the departments, while others were exclusive to departments of children and family services (DCFSS) or to probation departments (PDs); a third category of challenges were unique to a specific department. The CAP provided the departments with flexibility in how they expended their allocation. However, the departments did not seem to undergo a corresponding shift in flexibility in their operations. For example, the process for establishing a new contract with a community-based organization to provide a service routinely took several years; it was typically easier to amend an existing contract. The contracting process was lengthy because it contained safeguards for fairness and recourse, but its length made it difficult for the departments to take full advantage fiscal flexibility. In another example, contracts between the departments and the unions representing workers made it difficult to change or add job descriptions or reassign staff to different service areas within the department or geographical regions within the county. Again, these safeguards were important, but they also limited operational flexibility.

The departments are not completely independent as they exist within a larger organizational structure. Day-to-day operational decisions are the responsibility of the departments' administration and staff. Long-term plans and expenditures, however, fall under the oversight and approval processes of other entities—primarily the county's board of

supervisors—and the departments are subject to the timelines and the political climate of those entities. This, too, had an impact on operational flexibility.

The state's budget crisis impacted the departments in several ways. There was a 10% reduction in the state's contribution to the CAP in State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2009–2010 that reduced operating revenue, and the departments also experienced reductions in revenue in allocations that were outside of the CAP. Despite these reductions, the departments' budgets remained relatively stable in comparison to their county public agency counterparts. Reductions in allocations at other county departments resulted in a climate of fiscal prudence, with the boards of supervisors proceeding cautiously in approving expenditures for CAP initiatives and investments. The state's budget crisis also brought about realignment both in children and family services and in probation in the latter years of the CAP, a process where responsibilities were transferred from the state level to the county level; and the source of the state's funding for the departments was changed. The full impact of realignment was yet to be understood at the end of the evaluation's reporting period.

All of the departments were affected by the rate increases for group homes and for foster homes that resulted from two federal lawsuits against the California Department of Social Services (CDSS). Although the departments budgeted for the possibility of the rate increases, the additional assistance costs reduced the amount of savings that might have been available for reinvestment.

The PDs faced a number of distinct challenges. Because they were included late in the initial planning process, they were left with less time to formulate a plan of initiatives and investments. The PDs represent a system that is different from the DCFS, one more oriented towards law enforcement than social work; and they are separate from the state-county child welfare structure and its established relationships. While the PDs have always had a relationship of one form or another with their counterparts at the DCFS, their relationship with the CDSS was new and took time to develop. The PDs did not have direct access to the state's Child Welfare Services Case Management System (CWS/CMS) until the fall of 2010 and faced utilization challenges that they felt were not adequately addressed through additional funding and/or training and technical assistance. Adding complexity was the fact that PDs did not receive their allocation directly; instead the allocation passed through either the Alameda County Social Service Agency (ACSSA) in Alameda County or the LACDCFS in Los Angeles County (this was the case in the traditional system as well as under the CAP). This meant that an agreement had to be forged between the PDs and their pass-through departments to determine the amounts the PDs were to receive under the CAP. An agreement was reached in Alameda County, while in Los Angeles County confusion about the terms of an agreement existed until the spring of 2012.

The emergency response crisis in the LACDCFS had a significant impact on the operations of the department for an extended period of time. This impact included the removal of the director by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (LACBOS). The succession of three interim directors during a period of 14 months before a permanent director was appointed added to the department's challenges.

The departments benefited from a number of facilitators. Several facilitators were discussed earlier in this section, including a fiscally advantageous capped allocation methodology, an established set of policy and practice philosophies, leadership, and an orientation towards monitoring data and outcomes. The departments also found support outside of their respective organizations. The juvenile court in both counties was supportive of the departments' efforts under the CAP, as were such county government entities as the Alameda County Administrators Office, the Los Angeles County Chief Executive Office, and both boards of supervisors. Casey Family Programs (CFP) assisted the departments in their efforts under the CAP by providing a variety of resources. Specifically, the CFP funded three positions in the LACDCFS and the LACPD and one position in each of the remaining two departments dedicated to CAP-related activities for the first several years of the CAP. The organization also provided technical assistance expertise in the areas of practice and administration as well as access to other Casey-related foundations and external organizations. In most cases the leadership of the departments would seek out these same kinds of resources from other organizations, but CFP provided the departments the advantage of multiple resources from a single source.

The four departments reported being pleased with their participation in the CAP. Their perception of the CAP appeared to shift over time from the notion that the CAP was a project to be implemented to the notion that the CAP was a different kind of environment for funding staff and services. The departments appreciated the fiscal stability provided by the CAP along with the expansion of initiatives and investments that took place during the years of the CAP. Both the fiscal stability and the opportunity for service expansion seemed to have a positive influence on staff morale, as did the departments' ability to retain staff during a period of constricting budgets.

5.2.2 The Fiscal Study

At the outset of the CAP, the participating departments anticipated reducing their assistance expenditures by reducing the number of paid placement days; they also anticipated increasing their administration expenditures as they expanded their administration-related activities (i.e., salaries and benefits, contracts with service providers, direct expenditures to children and families). It was also anticipated that any reinvestment savings generated would come from the reduction in assistance expenditures. The two DCFSs did in fact reduce their foster care assistance expenditures and increase their administration expenditures during the years of the CAP compared to the pre-CAP years. The reduction in assistance expenditures experienced by the LACDCFS was less pronounced, perhaps because of the ER crisis and the possibility that more children were brought into foster care as a result, at least for a period of time. Both departments had fewer paid placement days in general and fewer paid placement days of more expensive group home placements. In the ACDCFS the average daily cost of assistance decreased during the CAP, although in the LACDCFS the cost shifted only minimally owing to the less-pronounced reduction in assistance expenditures. As expected, the average daily cost of administration expenditures increased in both departments.

Following the anticipated changes in assistance and administration expenditures between the pre-CAP years and the years of the CAP, it was expected that the departments would shift expenditures from assistance to administration during the years of the CAP. This occurred in

both DCFSs as the departments reinvested their savings on administration related costs. The largest percentage of CAP initiatives and investment expenditures were on service provider contracts for the ACDCFS; for the LACDCFS there was an almost equal split between service provider contracts and salaries and benefits for the staff necessary to implement the initiatives and investments. The departments also had additional revenue available from the increase in their allocation that resulted from the methodology used to determine the amount of their capped allocation; that additional revenue was used for administration expenditures as well.

The findings were less apparent for the two PDs. Foster care assistance expenditures increased in the ACPD, as did administration expenditures when comparing the years of the CAP to the pre-CAP years. Foster care assistance expenditures in the LACPD were stable across both time periods, while administration expenditures increased. This increase in administration expenditures in both counties was due in part to a difference in the way the expenditures were captured in the state's claiming process. Paid placements days in both departments were almost all for group homes. The number of paid placement days declined between the pre-CAP years and the years of the CAP in the ACPD, but the trend was not clear for the LACPD. Both the average daily cost of assistance and the average daily cost of administration increased in the departments, reflecting a possible increase in the use of the highest levels of group home care as well as the increase in administration expenditures relative to the number of paid placement days.

The ACPD did not generate reinvestment savings due to the fiscal arrangement between the department and the ACSSA. The understanding of the reinvestment savings question for the LACPD is challenged by the fact that the fiscal arrangement between the department and the LACDCFS remained ill-defined until the fifth year of the CAP. The expected shift from assistance expenditures to administration expenditures did occur in the LACPD, although it was a mixed result for ACPD. The majority of administration expenditures for CAP initiatives and investments in both departments were on staff salaries and benefits.

Generally speaking, the county departments were better off fiscally for having participated in the CAP. They received a larger allocation than they would have otherwise received, given the methodology and the data used to determine the amount. They gained flexibility in the use of their allocations, the opportunity to generate reinvestment savings, and the ability to retain those savings if they went unspent. They also obtained a relatively stable amount of funding for a period of five years, as opposed to the usual single-year allocation. In exchange, they assumed a limited amount of risk, knowing the amount of their five-year allocation before the start of the project and retaining the right under the State County Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the CAP to terminate their participation in the project by 60 days written notice prior to the start of the new quarter.

CAP participation insulated the departments to a large degree from the national and state recession that began in the early part of the project. The departments were not completely immune, however, from external fiscal pressures. As previously noted, in SFY 09/10 the state reduced its contribution to the allocation by 10% in response to the budget crisis. And starting in December 2009, the departments had to adjust for an increase in the rates paid to group homes

and foster homes, the result of two federal lawsuits against the CDSS, without a corresponding adjustment in the capped allocation.

The four departments have been able to take advantage of the fiscal opportunity afforded them by the CAP. The process study shows that the departments, to varying degrees of robustness, expanded strategies and services they felt were already successful and implemented new strategies and services. Interviews and focus groups indicated that the fiscal flexibility provided by the CAP allowed the departments to implement strategies and services they would otherwise not have been able to put into practice.

Several fiscal-related challenges stand out. The first issue concerns the need for management information systems and tools that link fiscal information with service/program information and that link both with outcomes for children and families. The development of such systems is necessary for operating efficiently and effectively in a capped allocation environment, and efforts have been made to increase the capacity of existing systems. However, a sophisticated, integrated system has yet to be developed and implemented.

In a related issue, there continues to be a need for more integration between fiscal operations and program operations in the departments. This lack of integration lessened over the time of the CAP, and committees that include representatives from both groups made decisions around new CAP strategies or investments. However, it did not appear that any similar integration has extended to department-wide decision making.

Finally, the tenuous fiscal relationship and communication difficulties between the DCFSSs and the PDs complicated fiscal and program operations during the CAP. These issues had the greatest impact in Los Angeles County, where the lack of a written fiscal agreement hampered LACPD's ability to make fiscal and programmatic decisions under the CAP.

5.2.3 The Outcome Study

The outcome study sought to assess the influence of the CAP on outcomes for children and families by comparing the performance of those outcomes during the period of the CAP to performance prior to the CAP. The participation rates for the ACDCFS all decreased during the years of the CAP, notably the rate of entries and children in care. For the LACDCS, in-care rates were decreasing and entry rates stayed relatively stable during the years of the CAP. The increase in the referral rates and substantiation rates for the LACDCFS was most likely the result of the department's response to the ER crisis. In both departments, the case services indicator showed that during the CAP there was an increasing percentage of children who were receiving pre-placement services and a decrease in the percentage of children who were receiving services in permanent placement. This suggests a shift by both departments to providing services outside of a foster care placement.

The findings for the safety, permanency, and stability indicators were mixed for both the ACDCFS and the LACDCFS, suggesting that departmental operations during the CAP were having a similar overall amount of influence on indicators as departmental operations were having preceding the CAP. Safety indicators and placement stability indicators had the best summary scores for the ACDCFS. Placement stability indicators had the best summary score for

the LACDCFS. For the ACDCFS, family foster home and kin placements increased their share of the percentage of first placements during the CAP, while group homes accounted for a smaller percentage. Kin placements were the largest percentage of point-in-time placements in both time periods, while group homes again declined in share. For the LACDCFS, the pattern was the same as the ACDCFS for point-in-time placements, highlighting the emphasis in both departments on least-restrictive placements. The increased reliance on foster family agency placement as the first placement option for the LACDCFS, coupled with limitations surrounding foster home placements and kin placements, suggests a similar emphasis.

Participation rates were not available for the PDs. Instead, the evaluation compared caseload information—the number of entries, the number of youth in care, and the category of “exit”—during the CAP to the years preceding the CAP. For the ACPD, the number of entries fluctuated during the CAP without displaying a clear trend. The number of youth in care remained relatively stable between the two time periods. The percentage of exits due to reunification had become the majority by the end of the CAP period. Caseload indicators were favorable for the LACPD, with entries and in-care numbers lower in the years of the CAP. In addition, the percentage of exits to reunification increased.

The safety indicator for both departments was difficult to interpret and likely the result of an underreporting of maltreatment information. The results for the remaining indicators for the ACPD were mixed, although a greater percentage of trend lines were trending in the desired direction during the CAP years. Placement stability indicators had the best summary score for the ACPD. The results for the exits to permanency and placement stability indicators were both positive for the LACPD, as was the fact that a greater percentage of trend lines was trending in the desired direction during the CAP. The LACPD continued to rely primarily on group homes as first placements and during the point-in-time assessment. The ACPD decreased its percentage of point-in-time placements attributed to group homes during the years of the CAP.

5.3 Lessons Learned

Important lessons that emerged from the evaluation analysis or that were highlighted by respondents addressed leadership, collaboration, fiscal, data, and planning and implementation aspects of the CAP and are summarized below.

Leadership

- Leadership in a capped allocation environment requires individuals who are proactive, visionary, who are adept both programmatically and fiscally, and who have a clear understanding of the fiscal model.
- There are many competing values in child welfare, even when a department of children and family services has adopted a particular philosophical orientation. There is a risk that a capped allocation project can expose rifts within the organization because staff may view policy and practice decisions as being driven solely by money and not outcomes or best practices.
- The departments need to stay focused on their message about outcomes and their philosophy to achieve those outcomes. There will always be issues and politics to

contend with, but a focus on outcomes and philosophy will assist in working through those concerns. These messages need to be instilled throughout the organization.

Collaboration

- In order for PDs to take advantage of the opportunities under a child welfare waiver demonstration project, they must be made equal partners in the process. Relationships with the state and local social service agencies should be fostered and developed prior to the start of the CAP, and PDs should take part in planning in the very earliest stages. Because PDs are separate from the state's child welfare infrastructure, they will likely require increased technical assistance.
- Participating in the CAP required greater interaction between the program and fiscal sides of the department. This interaction has made clear the importance of developing internal structures to encourage information sharing and opportunities for learning about other operations. Understanding the connections between programs and funding sources has also increased due to the CAP and the state's budget crisis.
- The juvenile court and the service provider community, particularly group home providers, are important partners with the departments. Open and continued communication between the departments and their partners is necessary.
- The flexibility under a CAP provides departments with the opportunity (i.e., available funds and fiscal flexibility) to develop ways to serve children and families without placing them in foster care. The approach depends in large part on community resources to support and serve children and families. In austere economic times, traditional resources can be limited, and service providers will likely need to be flexible and adapt to the changes in the funding environment. At the same time, the department will need to assist the providers to the extent possible with the transition to this new environment.

Fiscal

- Typically, the department of children and family services (DCFS) (or social service agency) serves as a pass-through entity to the probation department (PD) for Title IV-E related allocations. A memorandum of understanding between the DCFS and PD regarding the methodology used to determine the PD's allocation should be negotiated and agreed upon prior the start of the CAP, and preferably prior to the start of the county planning process.
- The CAP posed significant challenges for the fiscal areas—budgeting, allocations, and accounting—at the state and county level. There was a general need for an increase in the level of sophistication in the areas of budgeting, revenue enhancement, and cost benefit/cost effectiveness analysis of proposed initiatives. The need for increased fiscal sophistication was most acute in the probation departments. At the CDSS, there was the need to develop and implement two systems for allocations and claiming, one for CAP counties and another for non-CAP counties. As the CAP was implemented, there were many details to be

worked through (e.g., finalizing the general fund methodology, establishing claiming codes, developing new sharing ratios, and creating a new waiver payment system) and issues were dealt with as they arose.

- The CAP meant that departments were now operating with a five-year budget as opposed to an annual budget. New thinking and new mechanisms were needed to support operating in this new environment.
- In California, a department of children and family services usually exists within a larger social services agency. Because of the way dollars are budgeted and allocated in the state, the fiscal impact of a budget reduction (e.g., due to a state budget crisis) on a separate social services agency department can have a detrimental effect on the department of children and family services. This occurs because a greater share of social service agency overhead/administration responsibility is shifted from the program undergoing the reduction to other departments, such as children and family services, possibly reducing the amount of reinvestment savings.
- Under the CAP, the use of reinvestment savings was limited to funding child welfare services and services for the probation out-of-home placement population. Having clearly articulated memorandums of understanding and terms and conditions has been crucial in challenging economic times where there might be attempts to expand the definition of “child welfare.” If conditions were not clear, it would have been harder to defend reinvestment savings from encroachment. In addition, a clear vision and priorities has served to maintain focus and define the uses for the reinvestment savings.

Data

- Data and data management structures are crucial to operating in a capped allocation environment and are necessary from the outset. Fiscal data, services data, and outcome data should be linked.
- The departments planned to employ a model of implementing various programs, use real-time information to assess performance, and then terminate any program that was not having the intended impact. However, the departments determined that there was not sufficient time in a five-year project to allow a program to mature; to be evaluated; and to be ended, if necessary, and then replaced. Despite the challenges, efforts should be made to assess programs as rigorously as possible within the given constraints.

Planning and Implementation

- Efforts to move programs from development to implementation in a capped allocation environment may benefit from the creation of a dedicated infrastructure for such a process rather than the use of an existing infrastructure that simply includes the new allocation efforts in the activities of department staff responsible for current program operations.
- Flexible funding requires flexibility in the operations of the departments in order to take full advantage of the opportunity.

- The departments were not independent actors. Long-term plans and expenditures fall under the oversight and approval processes of other entities—primarily the county’s board of supervisors—and the departments were subject to the timelines and the political climate of those entities. This influenced operational flexibility.

5.4 Conclusion

A capped allocation presents opportunities in the forms of fiscal flexibility and the ability to generate, retain, and redirect savings. It also presents risk in the form of a limited amount of revenue with which to pay for services. To generate reinvestment savings within this capped allocation environment, participating departments needed to alter their operations in three ways: (a) lower the number of children entering their systems, (b) reduce the length of time children had contact with the system, and (c) reduce the per-case cost of operating the system. The departments of children and family services enjoyed the advantage of already having institutionalized a policy and practice philosophy that corresponded with these three necessary capped allocation conditions. Additionally, all four departments were buffered to some extent by receiving an allocation larger than they would have received had they not participated in the CAP. The departments operated within their capped allocations. They were most adept at reducing the number of children entering foster care. The results were mixed, however, across the departments in reducing length of time in the system, as shown in the permanency indicators, and in reducing per case cost.

There is work to be done not just in the aforementioned areas but in child safety, placement stability, and well-being. Some of that work has already begun under the CAP and continues during the CAP extension. Methodological limitations notwithstanding, the evaluation suggests that the departments’ use of flexible funding facilitated their pursuit of expanded programs and improved outcomes for children and families.

Alameda County Revenue

Amounts are the total of the administrative and assistance allocations.

| SFY Qtrs | *Base Allocation | Federal | State | County | Total |
|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| | | \$ | \$ | \$ | |
| July-Sept 07/08 | | \$ 12,035,375 | \$ 9,105,937 | \$ 11,196,502 | \$ 32,337,814 |
| Oct-Dec 07/08 | | \$ 12,276,082 | \$ 9,105,937 | \$ 11,196,502 | \$ 32,578,521 |
| Jan-Mar 07/08 | | \$ 12,276,082 | \$ 9,105,937 | \$ 11,196,502 | \$ 32,578,521 |
| Apr-June 07/08 | | \$ 12,276,082 | \$ 9,105,937 | \$ 11,196,502 | \$ 32,578,521 |
| 07/08 Total | | \$ 48,863,621 | \$ 36,423,748 | \$ 44,786,009 | \$ 130,073,378 |
| July-Sept 08/09 | | \$ 12,276,082 | \$ 9,204,547 | \$ 11,196,502 | \$ 32,677,131 |
| Oct-Dec 08/09 | | \$ 12,521,604 | \$ 9,204,547 | \$ 11,196,502 | \$ 32,922,653 |
| Jan-Mar 08/09 | | \$ 12,521,604 | \$ 9,204,547 | \$ 11,196,502 | \$ 32,922,653 |
| Apr-June 08/09 | | \$ 12,521,604 | \$ 9,204,547 | \$ 11,196,502 | \$ 32,922,653 |
| 08/09 Total | | \$ 49,840,893 | \$ 36,818,187 | \$ 44,786,009 | \$ 131,445,089 |
| July-Sept 09/10 | | \$ 12,521,604 | \$ 9,305,129 | \$ 11,196,502 | \$ 33,023,235 |
| Oct-Dec 09/10 | | \$ 12,772,036 | \$ 9,305,129 | \$ 11,196,502 | \$ 33,273,667 |
| Jan-Mar 09/10 | | \$ 12,772,036 | \$ 9,305,129 | \$ 11,196,502 | \$ 33,273,667 |
| Apr-June 09/10 | | \$ 12,772,036 | \$ 9,305,129 | \$ 11,196,502 | \$ 33,273,667 |
| 09/10 Total | | \$ 50,837,711 | \$ 37,220,515 | \$ 44,786,009 | \$ 132,844,235 |
| July-Sept 10/11 | | \$ 12,772,036 | \$ 9,407,722 | \$ 11,196,502 | \$ 33,376,260 |
| Oct-Dec 10/11 | | \$ 13,027,476 | \$ 9,407,722 | \$ 11,196,502 | \$ 33,631,701 |
| Jan-Mar 10/11 | | \$ 13,027,476 | \$ 9,407,722 | \$ 11,196,502 | \$ 33,631,701 |
| Apr-June 10/11 | | \$ 13,027,476 | \$ 9,407,722 | \$ 11,196,502 | \$ 33,631,701 |
| 10/11 Total | | \$ 51,854,465 | \$ 37,630,889 | \$ 44,786,009 | \$ 134,271,363 |
| July-Sept 11/12 | | \$ 13,027,476 | \$ 9,512,368 | \$ 11,196,502 | \$ 33,736,346 |
| Oct-Dec 11/12 | | \$ 13,288,026 | \$ 9,512,368 | \$ 11,196,502 | \$ 33,996,896 |
| Jan-Mar 11/12 | | \$ 13,288,026 | \$ 9,512,368 | \$ 11,196,502 | \$ 33,996,896 |
| Apr-June 11/12 | | \$ 13,288,026 | \$ 9,512,368 | \$ 11,196,502 | \$ 33,996,896 |
| 11/12 Total | | \$ 52,891,554 | \$ 38,049,471 | \$ 44,786,009 | \$ 135,727,034 |
| Grand Total | | \$ 254,288,244 | \$ 186,142,810 | \$ 223,930,045 | \$ 664,361,099 |

*Methodology for IV-E, SGF, and County Allocations

- Federal base is calculated using the average of FFYs 2003/05 expenditures for assistance and administration.
- SGF assistance is capped at SFYs 2005/06 expenditures. SGF administrative allocation is SFYs 2006/07 allocations with 2% growth, beginning SFYs 2007/08.
- County share is based on the SFY 2005/06 assistance and administrative expenditures.

Sources:

Federal and State data is from Waiver Quarters by FFY and SFY dated April 11, 2007.

County admin data drawn from CEC on April 19, 2007. Assistance data from CA 800.

Los Angeles County Revenue

Amounts are the total of the administrative and assistance allocations.

| SFY Qtrs | *Base Allocation | Federal | State | County | Total |
|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| | | \$ 354,584,389 | \$ 287,886,579 | \$ 331,865,521 | |
| July-Sept 07/08 | | \$ 92,227,400 | \$ 72,801,271 | \$ 82,966,380 | \$ 247,995,051 |
| Oct-Dec 07/08 | | \$ 94,071,948 | \$ 72,801,271 | \$ 82,966,380 | \$ 249,839,599 |
| Jan-Mar 07/08 | | \$ 94,071,948 | \$ 72,801,271 | \$ 82,966,380 | \$ 249,839,599 |
| Apr-June 07/08 | | \$ 94,071,948 | \$ 72,801,271 | \$ 82,966,380 | \$ 249,839,599 |
| 07/08 Total | | \$ 374,443,242 | \$ 291,205,084 | \$ 331,865,521 | \$ 997,513,847 |
| July-Sept 08/09 | | \$ 94,071,948 | \$ 73,647,490 | \$ 82,966,380 | \$ 250,685,818 |
| Oct-Dec 08/09 | | \$ 95,953,387 | \$ 73,647,490 | \$ 82,966,380 | \$ 252,567,257 |
| Jan-Mar 08/09 | | \$ 95,953,387 | \$ 73,647,490 | \$ 82,966,380 | \$ 252,567,257 |
| Apr-June 08/09 | | \$ 95,953,387 | \$ 73,647,490 | \$ 82,966,380 | \$ 252,567,257 |
| 08/09 Total | | \$ 381,932,107 | \$ 294,589,959 | \$ 331,865,521 | \$ 1,008,387,587 |
| July-Sept 09/10 | | \$ 95,953,387 | \$ 74,510,633 | \$ 82,966,380 | \$ 253,430,400 |
| Oct-Dec 09/10 | | \$ 97,872,454 | \$ 74,510,633 | \$ 82,966,380 | \$ 255,349,467 |
| Jan-Mar 09/10 | | \$ 97,872,454 | \$ 74,510,633 | \$ 82,966,380 | \$ 255,349,467 |
| Apr-June 09/10 | | \$ 97,872,454 | \$ 74,510,633 | \$ 82,966,380 | \$ 255,349,467 |
| 09/10 Total | | \$ 389,570,749 | \$ 298,042,532 | \$ 331,865,521 | \$ 1,019,478,802 |
| July-Sept 10/11 | | \$ 97,872,454 | \$ 75,391,039 | \$ 82,966,380 | \$ 256,229,873 |
| Oct-Dec 10/11 | | \$ 99,829,903 | \$ 75,391,039 | \$ 82,966,380 | \$ 258,187,322 |
| Jan-Mar 10/11 | | \$ 99,829,903 | \$ 75,391,039 | \$ 82,966,380 | \$ 258,187,322 |
| Apr-June 10/11 | | \$ 99,829,903 | \$ 75,391,039 | \$ 82,966,380 | \$ 258,187,322 |
| 10/11 Total | | \$ 397,362,164 | \$ 301,564,156 | \$ 331,865,521 | \$ 1,030,791,841 |
| July-Sept 11/12 | | \$ 99,829,903 | \$ 76,289,053 | \$ 82,966,380 | \$ 259,085,337 |
| Oct-Dec 11/12 | | \$ 101,826,501 | \$ 76,289,053 | \$ 82,966,380 | \$ 261,081,935 |
| Jan-Mar 11/12 | | \$ 101,826,501 | \$ 76,289,053 | \$ 82,966,380 | \$ 261,081,935 |
| Apr-June 11/12 | | \$ 101,826,501 | \$ 76,289,053 | \$ 82,966,380 | \$ 261,081,935 |
| 11/12 Total | | \$ 405,309,408 | \$ 305,156,212 | \$ 331,865,521 | \$ 1,042,331,141 |
| Grand Total | | \$ 1,948,617,671 | \$ 1,490,557,942 | \$ 1,659,327,605 | \$ 5,098,503,217 |

*Methodology for IV-E, SGF, and County Allocations

- Federal base is calculated using the average of FFYs 2003/05 expenditures for assistance and administration.
- SGF assistance is capped at SFYs 2005/06 expenditures. SGF administrative allocation is SFYs 2006/07 allocations with 2% growth, beginning SFYs 2007/08.
- County share is based on the SFY 2005/06 assistance and administrative expenditures.

Sources:

Federal and State data is from Waiver Quarters by FFY and SFY dated April 11, 2007.

County admin data drawn from CEC on April 19, 2007. Assistance data from CA 800.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814



January 18, 2008

COUNTY FISCAL LETTER (CFL) NO. 07/08-36

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL COUNTY FISCAL OFFICERS

SUBJECT: FISCAL YEAR (FY) 2007-08 TITLE IV-E CHILD WELFARE WAIVER
DEMONSTRATION CAPPED ALLOCATION PROJECT (CAP)

This letter provides Alameda and Los Angeles Counties with the FY 2007-08 allocation for the Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration CAP that was approved by the federal Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) on March 31, 2006 and was implemented on July 1, 2007. The allocation displays the capped allocation for federal Title IV-E, General Fund (GF), and county funds that were established upon approval of Alameda and Los Angeles Counties' participation in the CAP.

Attachment I displays the FY 2007-08 individual county allocation for Waiver Base, Non-Base Waiver, and Non-Waiver activities:

- Waiver Base – The federal base allocation is the county's average of Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2003 thru FFY 2005 Title IV-E actual expenditures for administration and assistance with an annual growth of two percent beginning in FFY 2006. The GF for Foster Care (FC) Assistance is a capped base allocation based on the actual expenditures for FY 2005-06. For Child Welfare Services (CWS) related programs, CWS Basic, and FC Administration, the GF base allocation is based on the FY 2006-07 allocations with an annual growth of two percent beginning in FY 2007-08. Participating counties are required to provide funding equal to their FY 2005-06 actual expenditures. The allocation includes FC maintenance payments and CWS administration costs but excludes costs for training, licensing related activities, adoption administration and assistance, non-recurring adoption costs, reimbursements, evaluation, and Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS).
- Non-Base Waiver – These are new activities that are not included in the Waiver Base as well as those existing funds not included in the Waiver Base, such as CWS Outcome Improvement Project (CWSOIP) funds. Some of these activities may be federal Title IV-E eligible; however, since the federal Title IV-E Waiver capped allocation cannot be increased, only the GF amount is provided for each of these activities. The funds for these activities were distributed to Alameda and Los Angeles Counties using the same methodology as for the remaining 56 counties. Please refer to the CWS Allocation CFL 07/08-28 and FC Administration Allocation

CFL No. 07/08-36

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for the methodology description and any claiming instructions related to the activities listed. Due to lower revenues and other demands on the Administration's Budget, Alameda and Los Angeles Counties' Non-Base Waiver allocations have been adjusted to reflect the proposed Governor's Budget reduction for FC Assistance.

- Non-Waiver Allocation – These funds are for all other activities within FC Administration and CWS that are excluded from the Waiver. These funds include non-Title IV-E activities as well as Title IV-E funded staff development, relative approvals, and SACWIS. The federal Title IV-E share of costs for these activities is not subject to a cap. The funds for these activities were distributed to all counties in the same methodology as in previous years. Please refer to the CWS Allocation CFL 07/08-28 and FC Administration Allocation CFL 07/08-06 for the methodology description and any claiming instructions related to the activities listed. In addition, the evaluation costs are outside of the waiver and considered non-waiver expenditures.

Please note that the federal Title XX funds displayed on Attachment I are transferred from the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Block Grant and are used in lieu of GF.

Attachment II displays the program codes used for this allocation. The administrative expenditures charged against these codes are claimed on the County Expense Claim (CEC) and the assistance expenditures are claimed on the CA800 FC Assistance Claim.

In accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding, Alameda and Los Angeles Counties will be allowed to participate in the annual close-out process, along with the other 56 counties. Therefore, Alameda and Los Angeles Counties may receive a proportional share of any surplus GF available for redistribution. In order to participate in the annual CEC close-out process, the state will provide a business as usual (BAU) allocation in a separate letter. This BAU is for information only and will be used for close-out purposes.

Any questions regarding this allocation can be directed to fiscal.systems@dss.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By:

ERIC FUJII
Deputy Director
Administration Division

Attachments

c: County Welfare Directors Association

FY 2007-08 TITLE IV-E CHILD WELFARE WAIVER DEMONSTRATION CAPPED ALLOCATION PROJECT

| | ALAMEDA | | | | LOS ANGELES | | | |
|--|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | TOTAL | FED | STATE | COUNTY | TOTAL | FED | STATE | COUNTY |
| WAIVER BASE ALLOCATION | | | | | | | | |
| Foster Care Assistance | \$61,657,946 | \$20,063,812 | \$16,701,787 | \$24,892,347 | \$443,967,619 | \$140,613,863 | \$121,961,332 | \$181,392,424 |
| Foster Care Administration | \$5,000,201 | \$2,678,975 | \$1,604,764 | \$716,462 | \$32,663,166 | \$17,165,879 | \$10,827,362 | \$4,669,925 |
| Child Welfare Services | \$56,600,246 | \$21,457,253 | \$16,446,508 | \$18,696,485 | \$490,291,630 | \$193,509,536 | \$150,978,921 | \$145,803,172 |
| Foster Parent Training & Recruitment | \$82,877 | \$14,403 | \$68,474 | \$0 | \$645,429 | \$3,938 | \$641,491 | \$0 |
| Kinship/FC Emergency Fund | \$57,063 | \$8,667 | \$48,396 | \$0 | \$55,372 | \$6,972 | \$48,400 | \$0 |
| Group Home Monthly Visits | \$1,523,719 | \$710,531 | \$813,188 | \$0 | \$6,695,943 | \$3,266,870 | \$3,429,073 | \$0 |
| Substance Abuse/HIV Infant | \$492,417 | \$89,600 | \$353,925 | \$48,892 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| State Family Preservation | \$1,680,687 | \$1,248,864 | \$0 | \$431,823 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| CWSOIP (Cohort 1) | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$17,331 | \$17,331 | \$0 | \$0 |
| subtotal | \$127,095,156 | \$46,272,105 | \$36,037,042 | \$44,786,009 | \$974,336,490 | \$354,584,389 | \$287,886,579 | \$331,865,521 |
| Annual Growth | \$2,978,221 | \$2,591,516 | \$386,705 | \$0 | \$23,177,358 | \$19,858,853 | \$3,318,505 | \$0 |
| Title XX Transfer | \$0 | \$5,016,152 | (\$5,016,152) | \$0 | \$0 | \$35,992,119 | (\$35,992,119) | \$0 |
| Total Waiver Base | \$130,073,377 | \$53,879,773 | \$31,407,595 | \$44,786,009 | \$997,513,848 | \$410,435,362 | \$255,212,965 | \$331,865,521 |
| NON-BASE WAIVER PREMISES ALLOCATION | | | | | | | | |
| CWS Enhanced Kin-GAP Savings | (\$234,000) | \$0 | (\$234,000) | \$0 | (\$3,659,000) | \$0 | (\$3,659,000) | \$0 |
| CWS SB 1667 - Caregiver Court Filing | \$5,000 | \$0 | \$5,000 | \$0 | \$49,000 | \$0 | \$49,000 | \$0 |
| CWS AB 1774 Criminal Rec Chk | \$50,000 | \$0 | \$50,000 | \$0 | \$351,000 | \$0 | \$351,000 | \$0 |
| CWS Safe & Timely Interstate Placement | \$13,000 | \$0 | \$13,000 | \$0 | \$121,000 | \$0 | \$121,000 | \$0 |
| CWSOIP Augmentation | \$1,698,493 | \$0 | \$1,698,493 | \$0 | \$20,290,757 | \$0 | \$20,290,757 | \$0 |
| Gomez v. Saenz | \$38,318 | \$0 | \$38,318 | \$0 | \$496,023 | \$0 | \$496,023 | \$0 |
| Child & Family Services Review | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$21,875 | \$0 | \$21,875 | \$0 |
| Foster Care Assistance Rate 10% Reduction | (\$101,000) | \$0 | (\$101,000) | \$0 | (\$1,022,000) | \$0 | (\$1,022,000) | \$0 |
| Foster Care Assistance (Dual Agency & 5% Increase) | \$544,000 | \$0 | \$544,000 | \$0 | \$4,096,000 | \$0 | \$4,096,000 | \$0 |
| Foster Care Admin Kin-GAP Savings | (\$49,787) | \$0 | (\$49,787) | \$0 | (\$808,365) | \$0 | (\$808,365) | \$0 |
| Foster Care Admin Legacy Savings | (\$26,100) | \$0 | (\$26,100) | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| CWSOIP Grant | \$74,522 | \$0 | \$74,522 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| CWS, DR, SA & PYS Pilot | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$1,585,989 | \$0 | \$1,585,989 | \$0 |
| CWSOIP Probation | \$62,145 | \$0 | \$62,145 | \$0 | \$734,537 | \$0 | \$734,537 | \$0 |
| Total Non-Base Waiver Premises | \$2,074,591 | \$0 | \$2,074,591 | \$0 | \$22,256,816 | \$0 | \$22,256,816 | \$0 |
| TOTAL WAIVER BASE & NON-BASE WAIVER | \$132,147,968 | \$53,879,773 | \$33,482,186 | \$44,786,009 | \$1,019,770,665 | \$410,435,362 | \$277,469,782 | \$331,865,521 |
| NON-WAIVER ALLOCATION | | | | | | | | |
| FOSTER CARE ADMINISTRATION | | | | | | | | |
| Staff Development | \$5,790 | \$0 | \$5,790 | \$0 | \$47,117 | \$0 | \$47,117 | \$0 |
| Adoptions Assistance Program (AAP) | \$164,560 | \$0 | \$164,560 | \$0 | \$1,761,957 | \$0 | \$1,761,957 | \$0 |
| TOTAL FC Non-Waiver | \$170,350 | \$0 | \$170,350 | \$0 | \$1,809,074 | \$0 | \$1,809,074 | \$0 |
| CHILD WELFARE SERVICES | | | | | | | | |
| CWS Basic - Training | \$1,793,104 | \$1,008,621 | \$549,138 | \$235,345 | \$14,318,368 | \$8,054,082 | \$4,385,000 | \$1,879,286 |
| Title IV-B (capped) | \$1,067,388 | \$800,541 | \$186,793 | \$80,054 | \$11,269,567 | \$8,452,175 | \$1,972,174 | \$845,218 |
| Title IV-B (Fed Child & Family Svcs Review) | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$28,125 | \$28,125 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Title XIX (entitlement) | \$2,686,813 | \$1,385,742 | \$910,750 | \$390,321 | \$12,964,320 | \$7,220,052 | \$4,020,988 | \$1,723,280 |
| EA TANF (capped) | \$7,851,261 | \$6,500,059 | \$0 | \$1,351,202 | \$43,920,383 | \$36,363,456 | \$0 | \$7,556,927 |
| SCIAP | \$149,895 | \$0 | \$149,895 | \$0 | \$2,241,493 | \$0 | \$2,241,493 | \$0 |
| CWS/CMS System Support Staff | \$541,382 | \$294,213 | \$166,596 | \$80,573 | \$6,701,069 | \$3,641,684 | \$2,062,081 | \$997,304 |
| Minor Parent Investigations | \$45,922 | \$22,961 | \$16,068 | \$6,893 | \$737,008 | \$368,504 | \$257,879 | \$110,625 |
| Minor Parent Services | \$98,509 | \$49,264 | \$34,488 | \$14,757 | \$1,581,008 | \$790,662 | \$553,511 | \$236,835 |
| CWS/CMS Staff Development | \$157,001 | \$96,057 | \$39,947 | \$20,997 | \$1,798,164 | \$1,100,162 | \$457,523 | \$240,479 |
| Livescan / Background Checks | \$114,018 | \$42,734 | \$71,284 | \$0 | \$1,649,130 | \$618,094 | \$1,031,036 | \$0 |
| Relative Home Approvals | \$440,212 | \$165,097 | \$192,595 | \$82,520 | \$6,367,149 | \$2,387,938 | \$2,785,653 | \$1,193,558 |
| Multiple Relative Home Approvals | \$223,621 | \$83,858 | \$97,834 | \$41,929 | \$3,391,685 | \$1,271,882 | \$1,483,862 | \$635,941 |
| Grievance Review | \$17,272 | \$6,470 | \$7,553 | \$3,249 | \$261,968 | \$98,133 | \$114,559 | \$49,276 |
| Statewide Standardized Training | \$726,457 | \$408,632 | \$222,474 | \$95,351 | \$6,895,856 | \$3,878,919 | \$2,111,822 | \$905,115 |
| TOTAL CWS Non-Waiver | \$15,912,855 | \$10,864,249 | \$2,645,415 | \$2,403,191 | \$114,125,293 | \$74,273,868 | \$23,477,581 | \$16,373,844 |
| FOSTER PARENT TRAINING & RECRUITMENT | | | | | | | | |
| Training | \$18,182 | \$10,182 | \$8,000 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| TOTAL NON-WAIVER | \$16,101,387 | \$10,874,431 | \$2,823,765 | \$2,403,191 | \$115,934,367 | \$74,273,868 | \$25,286,655 | \$16,373,844 |
| TOTAL ALLOCATION | \$148,249,355 | \$64,754,204 | \$36,305,951 | \$47,189,200 | \$1,135,705,032 | \$484,709,230 | \$302,756,437 | \$348,239,365 |

PROGRAM CODES CHARGED AGAINST THE FOLLOWING ALLOCATIONS:

185

CWS BASIC

Waiver Codes

| | | | |
|-----|------------------------------|-----|--------------------------------|
| 004 | Probation PQCR | 051 | SUO- Grp Home Mo Visits (CWS) |
| 077 | CWS Basic Nonfederal | 089 | SUO - Peer Quality Case Review |
| 088 | Peer Quality Case Review | 198 | SUO - EA CWS Non-Fed |
| 143 | CWS Intake | 596 | SUO - CWS - IV-B Non Fed |
| 147 | CWS-Court Related Activities | 694 | SUO - EA-Case Mgmt Fed/Non-Fed |
| 148 | CWS-Case Management | 808 | SUO - CWS Emergency Relief |
| 695 | EA-Case Mgmt Title IV-E | | |
| 701 | IV-E Waiver Services | | |

STATE USE ONLY:

Non-Waiver Codes

| | | | |
|-------|---------------------------------------|-----|--|
| 007 | Relative/Non-Relative Home Approvals | 008 | SUO - Relative/Non-Relative Home Approvals |
| 016** | Title IV-E Waiver Evaluation | 166 | SUO - CWS 146 (Overmatch) |
| 100 | Special Care Incentives | 171 | SUO - CWS-Title XX To Ledgers |
| 106 | EA-CO OP-ESC (1-30 days) | 196 | SUO - EA/IV-E Cost Shift (Pull Costs) |
| 107 | EA-CO OP-ESC (Over 30 days) | 197 | SUO - EA/IV-E Cost Shift (Fund) |
| 134 | EA-Contracted - ESC (1-30 days) | 358 | SUO - CWS/Background Check (Non-Fed) |
| 136 | EA-Contracted - ESC (Over 30 days) | | |
| 138 | CWS-SPMP | | |
| 144 | CWS Health Related | | |
| 145 | CWS Training | | |
| 146 | CWS Services/Non-federal | | |
| 164 | State Only CWS IV-B - 146 | | |
| 176 | Title IV-E CAP Development | | |
| 359 | CWS/Live Scan/CLETS Background Checks | | |
| 513 | EA-ER | | |
| 520 | EA-Crisis Resolution | | |
| 536 | SACWIS-M&O | | |
| 544 | CWS MPI | | |
| 556 | CWS-MPS | | |
| 557 | CWS/CMS Staff Development | | |
| 558 | CWS/CMS Staff Development-NF | | |
| 575 | CWS-Training Admin | | |

STATE USE ONLY:

** From 1997 IV-E Waiver Demonstration Project

CWS AUGMENTATION

Waiver Codes

| | |
|-----|---------------------------|
| 122 | SUO - CWS Augmentation GF |
|-----|---------------------------|

STATE USE ONLY:

CWS TITLE XX & CWS AUGMENT TITLE XX

Non-Waiver Codes

| | |
|-----|--------------------------------------|
| 120 | SUO - CWS Augmentation Title XX Fund |
| 173 | SUO - CWS-Title XX Funding |
| 809 | SUO - CWS Aug Title XX Fund |

STATE USE ONLY:

CHILD WELFARE SERVICES OUTCOME IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (CWSOIP/COHORT 1)

Waiver Codes

| | | | |
|-----|-------------------------------|-----|--------------------------------------|
| 037 | CWSOIP/Cohort1 | 705 | SUO - CWSOIP - Probation (Overmatch) |
| 039 | CWSOIP/Cohort1-nonfed | | |
| 059 | CWSOIP/nonfedSGF/Cohort | | |
| 703 | CWSOIP - Probation | | |
| 704 | CWSOIP - Probation Nonfederal | | |

STATE USE ONLY:

Non-Waiver Codes

| | |
|-----|-------------------------------------|
| 038 | SUO - CWSOIP / COHORT 1 (Overmatch) |
|-----|-------------------------------------|

STATE USE ONLY:

PROGRAM CODES CHARGED AGAINST THE FOLLOWING ALLOCATIONS:

186

AB 2129 FOSTER PARENT TRAINING & RECRUITMENT PLANNING

Waiver Codes

506 AB 2129 Foster Parent Recruitment
507 AB 2129 Foster Parent Recruit - NF

Non-Waiver Codes

STATE USE ONLY:

504 AB 2129 Foster Parent Training 508 SUO - Foster Parent-504-507 (Overmatch)
505 AB 2129 Foster Parent Training-NF

FOSTER CARE ADMINISTRATION

Waiver Codes

029 Rosales v. Thompson
345 AFDC Eligibility Determination

Non-Waiver Codes

STATE USE ONLY:

223 EA-FC Eligibility 199 SUO - EA FC (Overmatch)
230 Adoptions Assistance IV-E 612 SUO - FC (Overmatch)
300 STEP Eligibility

GROUP HOME MONTHLY VISITS (CWD)

Waiver Codes

577 Mo Visits/Group Homes/CWS
586 NF MO Visits/Group Homes

Non-Waiver Codes

STATE USE ONLY:

045 SUO - GHMV CWD (Overmatch)

GROUP HOME MONTHLY VISITS (Probation)

Waiver Codes

STATE USE ONLY:

579 Mo Visits/Group Homes/Prob 580 SUO - NF MO Visits/Group Hm Probation
581 NF MO Visits/Group Homes Probation
702 IV-E Waiver Probation

Non-Waiver Codes

STATE USE ONLY:

329 SUO - GHMV (Overmatch)

SA/HIV INFANT PROGRAM

Waiver Codes

STATE USE ONLY:

172 SA/HIV Infant Program 561 SUO - SA/HIV Infant-Recruit NF
523 SA/HIV Infant-Recruit

Non-Waiver Codes

STATE USE ONLY:

137 SA/HIV Infant-Foster Parent Training 195 SUO - SA/HIV Infant-Foster Parent Training NF
552 SUO - SA/HIV Infant Prg (Overmatch)

PUBLIC AGENCY PASS-THROUGH

Waiver Codes

119 Public Agency IV-E PassThrough

PROBATION PASS-THROUGH

Waiver Codes

127 Prob IV-E Plan & Mgmt
128 Probation IV-E/Pre-Placement
129 Probation IV-E Eligibility

Non-Waiver Codes

130 Prob IV-E Training
131 Prob IV-E Licensing
576 Probation IV-E Training

PROGRAM CODES CHARGED AGAINST THE FOLLOWING ALLOCATIONS:

187

KINSHIP & FOSTER CARE EMERGENCY FUND**Waiver Codes**

| | | | |
|-----|--------------------------------------|-----|------------------------------|
| 562 | Kinship & FC Emergency Funding - Fed | 493 | SUO - Kinship/FC Emerg Funds |
|-----|--------------------------------------|-----|------------------------------|

STATE USE ONLY:**Non-Waiver Codes**

| | |
|-----|--|
| 563 | SUO - Kinship/FC Emerg Funds (Overmatch) |
|-----|--|

STATE USE ONLY:**STATE FAMILY PRESERVATION (SFP) PERMANENT TRANSFER****Waiver Codes**

| | |
|-----|----------------------------------|
| 177 | FPP Case Mgt Preventive Services |
| 179 | FPP Case Mgt Foster Care |

Non-Waiver Codes

| | | | |
|-----|-------------------------|-----|-----------------------|
| 159 | FPP-SPMP | 501 | SUO - FPP (Overmatch) |
| 168 | FPP-Health Related | | |
| 175 | FPP-Services/NonFederal | | |

STATE USE ONLY:**IV-E FOSTER CARE ASSISTANCE FEDERAL AND NON-FEDERAL - WAIVER CODES****FOSTER CARE FEDERAL**

| | |
|------|--|
| 42 | Foster Care FMAP Rate |
| 42 | Fed Adm Costs (FC1 Col E4) FFAs |
| 42 | Non Fed. Admin Costs (FC1 Col F2) FFAs |
| NONE | THPP Rate Increase |
| NONE | Supplemental Clothing Allowance |
| NONE | IV-E Child Care |
| NONE | SB 163 Wraparound FC Assist |
| NONE | SB 163 Wraparound ADMIN |

FOSTER CARE NON-FEDERAL

| | |
|------|---------------------------------|
| 40 | Foster Care |
| NONE | THPP Rate Increase |
| NONE | Supplemental Clothing Allowance |

NON IV-E FOSTER CARE ASSISTANCE FEDERAL AND NON-FEDERAL - NON-WAIVER CODES**FOSTER CARE FEDERAL**

| | |
|------|---------------|
| NONE | Funeral Costs |
|------|---------------|

FOSTER CARE NON-FEDERAL

| | |
|------|---------------|
| 05 | SED |
| NONE | Funeral Costs |

Acronyms

Alameda County Administrators Office (ACAO)
 Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services (ACBHCS)
 Alameda County Board of Supervisors (ACBOS)
 Alameda County Department of Children and Family Services (ACDCFS)
 Alameda County Department of Public Health (ACDPH)
 Alameda County Interagency Children’s Policy Council (ACICPC)
 Alameda County Probation Department (ACPD)
 Alameda County Social Service Agency (ACSSA)
 Alameda County County Administrator’s Office (ACCAO)
 Another Road to Safety (ARS)
 Assembly Bill (AB)
 Behavioral Severity Assessment Program (BSAP)
 Bureau of Information Systems (BIS)
 California Child and Family Services Review (C-CFSR)
 California Department of Social Services (CDSS)
 California Division of Juvenile Justice (CDJJ)
 Capped Allocation Project (CAP)
 Casey Family Programs (CFP)
 Child Welfare Services (CWS)
 Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS)
 child welfare workers (CWW)
 children’s social worker (CSW)
 community-based liaisons (CBL)
 community-based organization (CBO)
 County Executive Office (CEO)
 County Expense Claim (CEC)
 County Fiscal Letter (CFL)
 Cross-Systems Case Assessment and Case Planning (CSACP)
 Data, Research and Reporting Team (DARRT)
 department of children and family services (DCFS)
 Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
 departments of children and family services (DCFS)
 deputy probation officers (DPO)
 Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT)
 Family Finding and Engagement (FFE)
 Family Preservation Unit (FPU)
 Federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR)
 Federal Fiscal Year (FFY)
 Functional Family Probation (FFP)
 Functional Family Therapy (FFT)
 Generic Reporting Information System (GRIS)
 International Business Machines (IBM)
 Intensive Services Workers (ISW)
 Juvenile Information System (JUVIS)
 Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (LACBOS)

Los Angeles County Chief Executive Office (LACCEO)
 Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (LACDCFS)
 Los Angeles County Department of Health Services (LACDHS)
 Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH)
 Los Angeles County Department of Social Services (LACDSS)
 Los Angeles County Probation Department (LACPD)
 memorandum of understanding (MOU)
 Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT)
 Multi-systemic Therapy (MST)
 Non-participating county departments of children and family services (NPCDCFS)
 Non-participating county probation departments (NPCPD)
 Paths to Success (P2S)
 Placement Assessment Centers (PACs)
 Placement to Community Transition Services Unit (PCTS)
 Point of Engagement (POE) project
 Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project (PIDP)
 Probation Case Management System (PCMS)
 probation department (PD)
 Probation Rehabilitation Intensive Services and Management (PRISM)
 Prospective Authorization and Utilization Review Unit (PAUR)
 Quality Service Reviews (QSR)
 Residential Based Services Unit (RBSU)
 Residentially Based Services (RBS)
 resource management process (RMP)
 Screening for Out-of-Home Services Committee (SOS)
 Senate Bill (SB)
 Services to Enhance Early Development (SEED)
 Social Services Agency (SSA)
 Social Services Integrated Reporting System (SSIRS)
 State Fiscal Year (SFY)
 Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS)
 structured decision-making (SDM) tool
 supervising deputy probation officers (SDPOs)
 System Improvement Plan (SIP)
 Team Decision-Making (TDM)
 University of California, Berkeley (UCB)
 Up Front Assessments (UFA)
 voluntary family maintenance (VFM)
 Youth Level of Service Case Management Inventory (YLS)

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