

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY
Children & Family Services

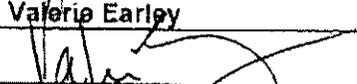
A Bureau of the
Employment & Human Services Department

SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT PLAN

April 2007

SIP Cover Sheet

California's Child and Family Services Review System Improvement Plan

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| County: | Contra Costa County |
| Responsible County Child Welfare Agency: | Children & Family Services Bureau |
| Period of Plan: | March 2007- February 2010 |
| Period of Outcomes Data: | Q3 - Oct. 2006 |
| Date Submitted: | April 2007 |
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| Submitted by each agency for the children under its care | |
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| Signature: |  |
| Submitted by: | County Chief Probation Officer |
| Name: | Lionel Chatman |
| Signature: |  |

EMPLOYMENT AND HUMAN SERVICES
CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

TO: Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors

FROM: Joe Valentine, Director
Employment and Human Services Department

SUBJECT: Child Welfare Redesign System Improvement Plan

DATE: April 30, 2007

Attached for your review prior to the May 8, 2007 Board of Supervisors Meeting is our updated "Child Welfare Redesign System Improvement Plan" plus the updated copy of our child welfare "Self Assessment" that the Plan is based on. This report was reviewed at the April 16, 2007 meeting of the Family and Human Services Committee and they recommended that it be referred to the full Board for a presentation and acceptance.

As you may recall, the Employment and Human Services Department's Children and Family Services Bureau began a formal process in 2001 to "redesign" its child welfare practices with the goal of improving outcomes for children. This was partially in response to both federal and state mandates to track, report, and improve key measures of child well being. These included the provisions established by the 1997 Federal "*Adoptions and Safe Families Act*" which required all states to adopt plans that would improve child safety, permanency and well being outcomes in order to continue to receive Federal Child Welfare funding. In 2003, the state of California implemented the "*Child Welfare Performance Outcomes and Accountability Act*" which set state specific performance goals for California child welfare departments and required self-assessments, "System Improvement Plans", and the collection and reporting of specific outcome measures.

However, Contra Costa County's commitment to improving its child welfare practices went beyond just meeting federal and state standards. The county was seeking to improve its entire "system" of services for children and families - an effort which it used to leverage additional funds as a "child welfare redesign" pilot county as well as one of 7 national sites for a "Child Welfare System of Care" grant.

More recently, the Employment and Human Services conducted an intensive review of two highly publicized child fatalities of children who had been involved with the child welfare system. These reviews pointed out the need to reach out and involve other community systems and institutions that come into contact with families and children in specific strategies to protect the safety and well-being of children. The 2007 update to our System Improvement Plan - which also includes an appendix defining the key terms used - not only reports on and updates our strategies to improve child welfare outcomes, it also incorporates some of the strategies and lessons learned from our recent child fatality reviews.

The other attached report - the December 2006 "*County Self-Assessment*" - provides a comprehensive look at the data that forms the basis for our updated strategies. It shows that we've been successful in making progress in many areas such as making a timely response to referrals of child abuse and neglect or reducing the disproportionate removal of African American children from their own homes. However, it also points out areas that we need to continue to improve such as protecting the safety of children in foster care, or keeping siblings together when they are placed out of the home.

Our continued commitment to collecting a wide range of outcome measures and to innovative strategies that include partnerships with other county departments and organizations should help us continue to make significant progress in improving the safety and well-being of our most vulnerable children and youth.

SUMMARY REPORT ON THE 2005/2006 SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT PLAN

| Outcome | County's Past Performance | Improvement Goal | County's Current Performance |
|---|--|--|---|
| <p>Child Abuse/Neglect Referrals with a Timely Response (10-Day Responses)</p> | <p>For the quarter ending June 30, 2003, Contra Costa County had a 52% compliance rate for timely completion of 10-day investigations.</p> <p>For the quarter ending March 2005, we improved compliance on 10-day responses to 95.1%.</p> | <p>A1.0: Maintain compliance at 90% or above.</p> | <p>Update: On track to meet goal. 1st Qtr 06 shows compliance at 92.8%.</p> <p>Strategies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use of Safe Measures by management to track worker compliance. 2. Expand pilot project of assigning workers to geographical areas and assign 10-day referrals accordingly |
| <p>Timely Social Worker Visits with child</p> | <p>For the quarter ending June 30, 2003 compliance with social worker visits ranged from 77.9% to 79.4%.</p> <p>For the quarter ending March 2005, we improved compliance for timely social worker visits ranging from 90.7% to 91.5%.</p> | <p>B1.0: Maintain compliance of social worker visits at 90% or above.</p> | <p>Update: On track to meet goal. 1st Qtr 06 shows compliance at 91.3%.</p> <p>Strategies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use of Safe Measures by management to track worker compliance. 2. Identify system issues re Probate Guardianships, PP cases and Adoption cases and implement a plan to resolve them |
| <p>Number and Rate of First Entries to Foster Care</p> | <p>In 1998, the incidence rate for first entries to Foster Care for African-American children in Contra Costa County was 8.69/1000 (2.83/1000 for White children).</p> <p>For calendar year 2004 there was a decrease of first entries of African-American children to 6.59/1000</p> | <p>C1.0: Reduce the overrepresentation of African-American children who are placed in out of home care by 5%.</p> | <p>Update: On track to meet goal. Calendar year 2005 first entries of African-American children into Foster Care shows a 9.2% decrease – to 5.95/1000.</p> <p>Strategies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Utilize Differential Response 2. Improve family engagement and good case planning by expanding use of TDMs 3. Enter positive tox referrals in CWS/CMS and complete policy regarding drug-exposed infants |

| Outcome | County's Past Performance | Improvement Goal | County's Current Performance |
|--|--|--|--|
| <p>Length of Time to Exit Foster Care to Reunification.</p> | <p>For the entry cohort period 7/1/01 through 6/30/02, 38.6% of all children who entered foster care for the first time (and stayed at least five days) during the entry cohort period were reunified within 12 months.</p> <p>For the entry cohort period 4/1/03 through 3/31/04, we increased the percent of children who are reunified within 12 months to 50.2%.</p> | <p>D1.0: Increase the percent of children who are reunified within 12 months to 50%.</p> | <p>Update: We are above baseline, but below levels of one year ago. For the 12-month study period 4/1/04 through 3/31/05, 43.3% of children were reunified within 12 months.</p> <p>Strategies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analyze problems and difficulties attaining 12 month reunification goal 2. Utilize culturally competent family engagement techniques 3. Implement a standardized safety and risk assessment tool for the seven decision making points in child welfare 4. Continue collaborating with the judicial system to explore ways of improving family engagement 5. Implement "Icebreaker Meetings" and "Enhanced Visitation" strategies 6. Provide parents entering the system with assistance from a Parent Partner 7. Provide integrated case plans by improving communication between WFS and CFS workers |
| <p>Multiple Foster Care Placements</p> | <p>For all children in child welfare supervised foster care for less than 12 months during the period 7/1/02 through 6/30/03, 85.9% had 1 or 2 placements. This is below the national standard of 86.7%</p> | <p>E.1.0: Increase the percentage of children with no more than two placements to the National Standard of 86.7% or greater</p> | <p>Update: On track to meet goal. For the period 4/1/05 through 3/31/06, 87.6% of children had 1 or 2 placements.</p> <p>Strategies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop an assessment tool for determining risk factors for children at risk of multiple placements 2. Provide TDMS for children and youth who have had multiple placements |

| Outcome | County's Past Performance | Improvement Goal | County's Current Performance |
|--|--|--|--|
| Children Transitioning to Self-Sufficient Adulthood | For the year period 10/1/01 through 9/20/02, the ILP reported 66 children with a high school diploma or equivalent (e.g., GED) and 53 enrolled in College/Higher Education. | F.1.0: Increase the number of youth graduating from High School (or equivalent) | <p>Update: On track to meet goal. For latest reporting period (10/1/04 through 9/30/05) there were 98 youth reported as having completed High School and 188 enrolled in College/Higher Education.</p> <p>Strategies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide emancipation conferences to identified youth aged 17 to ensure appropriate planning 2. Ensure they have received a viable TLP |
| Siblings Placed Together in Foster Care | We are below state averages for percentages of children placed together with all siblings as well as percentages of children placed together with some or all siblings. For the point in time of July 1, 2003, 38% of children were placed with all siblings and 59.6% were placed with all or some siblings (state averages for the same time period were 41.3% and 65.4%, respectively). | G.1.0: Increase the % of siblings placed together with all their siblings to 40.5% or greater and siblings placed with all or some of their siblings to 62.2% | <p>Update: We need to continue work towards meeting this goal. For the point in time of April 1, 2006, 36.2% of children were placed with all siblings and 57.1% were placed with all or some siblings. Our percentages are somewhat below our baseline.</p> <p>Strategies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase the number of licensed foster homes that can accommodate siblings being placed together 2. Examine additional policy and practice changes needed to accomplish goal |

Component A: Safety

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| Outcome 1B: | | | | | | | |
| Recurrence of Maltreatment | | | | | | | |
| County's Current Performance: For the base period Oct 1, 2004 to Sept 30, 2005 (the latest available data from UCB which allows 12 month follow-up) there was a 7.8% recurrence of abuse. This is a decrease from 13.3% for the base period Oct 1, 2003 to Sept 30, 2004. | | | | | | | |
| Improvement Goal: Decrease recurrence of maltreatment by an additional 25% to less than 6% for the base period Oct 1, 2007 through Sept 30, 2008 (the latest period which will allow Mar 2010 reporting). | | | | | | | |
| Strategy: Improve use of existing resources such as Differential Response, the Child Abuse Prevention Council, Team Decision Making and the Comprehensive Assessment Tool to engage families, educate reporters, assess families, plan for safety and prevent recurrence of maltreatment. | | Strategy Rationale: By ensuring maximum use of available resources, staff will have better information for decision making, families will have access to more supportive services and incidences of recurrence of maltreatment will decrease. | | | | | |
| Reduce Recurrence | DR | 1. Review DR Policy and revise to allow re-engagement and to allow for data collection on engagement, re-engagement and service outcomes (re-referrals). | <table border="1"> <tr> <td style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Timeframe</td> <td>April 2007 - June 2007</td> <td style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Assigned to</td> <td>Redesign Division Manager</td> </tr> </table> | Timeframe | April 2007 - June 2007 | Assigned to | Redesign Division Manager |
| Timeframe | April 2007 - June 2007 | Assigned to | Redesign Division Manager | | | | |

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| Recurrence of Maltreatment Milestones | | 2. Provide training to Community Engagement Specialists, screening staff, Managers, ER staff and community providers regarding the re-engagement process. | Timeframe | April 2007 - August 2007 and ongoing | Assigned to | Division Manager of Adoptions/Homefinding Redesign Division Manager |
| | DR | 3. Develop a DR database for tracking engagement and service outcomes. | | June 2007 – January 2008 | | Division Managers for Evaluation, Research & Redesign |
| | CAT | 1. Reassess the use of CAT and develop a plan for full utilization of the CAT in practice, via management accountability reports and supervisory tracking systems. | | September 2007 - January 2008 | | Administrative Team |
| | | 2. Provide training to all staff to ensure full implementation of the CAT. | | February 2008 and ongoing | | Redesign Division Manager |
| | | 3. Establish screening work group to map the screening workflow process including staffing, clearances, CAT, reviewing and recording CWS history. Develop and implement a plan to streamline the process. | | May 2007- January 2008 | | County Wide Division Manager |
| | CWS/C | 1. Develop a best practice policy for recording CWS history in the screener and investigative narrative. | | August 2007 - December 2007 | | County Wide Division Manager, Policy Division Manager |

Contra Costa County System Improvement Plan March 2007 – March 2010

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| Reduce Recurrence of Maltreatment Milestones | | 2. Train screening and ER staff (including after hours and ER back-up staff) on the requirements for recording and reviewing child welfare history for all referrals. | | September 2007 - December 2007 | | Division Manager of Adoptions/Homefinding and County Wide Division Manager |
| | TDM | 1. Explore the expansion of TDMs across the county, revise policy, train staff and implement changes. | Timeframe | March 2007 - July 2008 | Assigned to | County Wide Division Manager, Policy Division Manager and Division Manager of Adoptions/Homefinding |
| | | 2. Revise Voluntary Family Maintenance and TDM Policy and develop a new plan for eligibility for VFM. | | January 2008 - May 2008 | | Administrative Team |
| | Mandated Reporter Training | 1. Review the training curriculum for mandated reporters provided by the Child Abuse Prevention Council (CAPC), and staff. | | April 2007 – August 2008 | | Administrative Team |
| | | 2. Develop updated mandated reporter training curriculum and provide training for the Mandated Reporter Speakers Bureau. | | May 2007 - September 2007 and ongoing | | Administrative Team |
| | | 3. Coordinate with Health Services and CAPC to develop a training plan for medical and dental providers regarding recognizing and reporting abuse and neglect. | | March 2007- May 2007 | | CFS Director |

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| | <p>4. Provide new mandated reporter training curriculum to mandated reporters county-wide using teams of trained staff, community members and medical professionals. Explore ways to include information about disproportionality in the training</p> | <p>June 2007 and ongoing</p> | <p>Division Manager of Adoptions/Homefinding</p> |
| <p>Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal. Revise policy for engagement in the Differential Response program and develop a data base to track the changes. Streamline the Response Determination program.</p> | | | |
| <p>Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals. Train staff and community partners in engagement strategies and new procedures for Differential Response. Train all staff in Comprehensive Assessment Tool. Develop mandated reporter training curriculum.</p> | | | |
| <p>Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals. Differential Response community partners to assist in the development and implementation of the DR changes. Child Abuse Prevention Council and selected mandated reports to assist in the development and delivery of the mandated reporter training curriculum.</p> | | | |
| <p>Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals. None needed.</p> | | | |

Component B: Safety

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| <p>Outcome 1C: Rate of Child Abuse and/or Neglect in Foster Care.</p> | | | | | |
| <p>County's Current Performance: For the period Oct 1, 2005 through Sept 30, 2006 (the latest available data from UCB), the percentage of substantiated cases of maltreatment by a foster parent was 51%.</p> | | | | | |
| <p>Improvement Goal: Decrease child abuse and/or neglect in foster care by 50% to 25% or less for the period Oct 1, 2008 through Sept 30, 2009 (the latest period which will allow Mar 2010 reporting).</p> | | | | | |
| <p>Strategy: Establish comprehensive system to record and respond to allegations of child abuse and neglect in out of home care.</p> | | | <p>Strategy Rationale: A comprehensive response system will ensure children in out of home care are safe from abuse and neglect while providing supportive, preventive and ameliorative services for substitute care providers.</p> | | |
| <p>Abuse/Neglect in FC Milestones</p> | <p>Allegations</p> | <p>1. Establish work group to clarify policy and practice for documenting and investigating allegations of abuse and neglect in out of home care.</p> | <p>Timeframe</p> | <p>April 2007- June 2007</p> | <p>Assigned to</p> |
| | | <p>2. Train staff and implement practice change in recording allegations of abuse and neglect in out of home care.</p> | | <p>June 2007</p> | |

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| Reduce Abuse/Neglect in Foster Care Milestones | Workgroup | 1. Establish work group comprised of foster parent liaison, licensing staff, foster parents and Parent Partner to review current Homefinding procedures including the licensing homestudy to reflect strength based language and assessments of the caretaker's ability to work with children placed in the child welfare system and their birth families. | Timeframe | August 2007 | Assigned to | Division Manager of Adoptions/Homefinding |
| | Geo-Assignment | 1. Explore staffing concerns, barriers and potential gains associated with geographic collocation, of licensing social workers in the district offices. | | January 2008 | | Division Manager of Adoptions/Homefinding |
| | Licensure | 1. Establish and implement procedure for dual licensure cross checking prior to licensure/placement | | September 2007 | | Division Manager of Adoptions/Homefinding |
| | Clinic and Pharmacy | 1. Coordinate efforts with Public Health to provide specialized medical and pharmacy services for children and youth in foster care via specified health clinic days for foster children and youth in three geographic locations across the county. | | April 2007- July 2007 | | CFS Director and Redesign Division Manager |

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| Reduce Abuse/Neglect in FC Milestones | FP Mentor | 1. Define the parameters of a formalized foster parent mentor program in partnership with the Foster Family Network including Memorandum of Understanding, expectations, roles and responsibilities. | | June 2007 - June 2008 | | Foster Parent Steering Committee |
| | Mentor | 1. Train all staff on the Foster Parent Mentor Program and implement mentor program. | | July 2008 | | Division Manager of Adoptions/Homefinding |
| | FP Training | 1. Establish a policy and procedures for enforcing, prioritizing and monitoring the 8 hours per year of mandatory training for foster parents to include prioritizing areas of training to be emphasized. | | July 2008 | | Division Manager of Adoptions/Homefinding Policy Division Manager |
| | | 2. Continue coordination of foster parent training with Community Colleges and Staff Development. | | Ongoing | | Division Manager of Adoptions/Homefinding |

Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal.

Establish and implement procedure for dual licensure. Develop and implement foster parent mentor program. Assign licensing workers geographically. Coordinate specialized medical and pharmacy services for children and youth in foster care in three geographic locations across the county.

Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.

Provide training to appropriate staff on policy for dual licensure.

Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.

Foster Parent Network to participate in the development of the Foster Parent mentoring program.

Partner with Health Services to develop the three geographic locations across the county that provide specialized medical and pharmacy services for children and youth in foster care.

Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.

None needed.

Component C: Safety

Outcome 2B:

Child Abuse and Neglect Referrals by Time-to-Investigation.

County's Current Performance: For 2nd quarter 2006 (the latest period for which we have data from UCB), the timely response for immediate and 10-day referrals was 96% and 90.3%, respectively. More recent Safe Measures data for 4th quarter 2006 suggests that timely responses have fallen for immediate referrals (94.1%) and 10-day referrals (75.5%), although the methodology is slightly different from that used by UCB.

Improvement Goal: Maintain timeliness of immediate and 10-day referrals at or above 90%.

Strategy:

Review staffing strategies, work-flow procedures, use of data, and training plans to ensure screening and emergency response units are fully functional at all times.

Strategy Rationale:

Fully staffed screening and emergency response units with strategic procedures will run smoothly to ensure children receive a timely response.

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| Timely Investigation Milestones | Safe Measures | 1. Consistently use Safe Measures and provide ongoing training to staff and supervisors to enhance use of Safe Measures by staff as a tool to assess ongoing compliance. | Timeframe | May 2007 and ongoing | Assigned to | Division Manager for Evaluation |
| | Geo Assignment | 1. Continue to monitor geographic assignment of ER staff. Consider refinement to address work flow and different requirements in different geographic areas (i.e.: TDM, DR). | | Quarterly, ongoing | | Operational Division Managers |
| Timely Investigation Milestones | ER Workgroup & After hours | 1. Form an ER work group to address consistency of practice countywide. Establish and implement a plan for responding to work flow variations in ER and screening. | Timeframe | May 2007 - December 2007 | Assigned to | Operational Division Managers |
| | | 1. Complete a work process map for the After-Hours program and implement changes to After Hours program as needed to enhance safety of children served. | | May 2007 - March 2008 | | County Wide Division Manager |

Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal.

Develop an Emergency Response Strategic Plan to establish and implement a plan for responding to work flow variations and consistency of practice.

Develop and implement modifications to the After Hours Program as needed to enhance safety of children served.

Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.

Provide ongoing training in Safe Measures.

Provide training to the identified back up ER staff.

Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.

None needed.

Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.

None needed.

Component D: Safety

Outcome/Systemic Factor:

2 C - Timely Social Worker Visits With Child

County's Current Performance: For 2nd quarter 2006 (the latest period for which we have data from UCB), timely social workers visits were at slightly more than 95%. More recent Safe Measures data for 4th quarter 2006 suggests that timely social worker contacts have fallen into the 80-85% range, although the methodology is slightly different from that used by UCB.

Improvement Goal: Maintain compliance at 90% or higher.

Contra Costa County System Improvement Plan March 2007 – March 2010

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| Strategy: Use policy development and data review to resolve barriers to increasing compliance with timely social worker visits. | | Strategy Rationale: Safe Measures data and clear policy expectations support worker accountability. | | | | |
| Timely Visits Milestones | Safe Measures | 1. Consistently use Safe Measures and provide ongoing training to staff and supervisors to enhance use of Safe Measures by staff as a tool to assess ongoing compliance. | Timeframe | May 2007 and ongoing | Assigned to | Operational Division Managers and Division Manager for Evaluation. |
| | Guardian Visits | 1. Finalize policy regarding visits to children in probate guardianships. 2. Train staff, including Social Casework Assistants on policy changes and implement policy regarding visits to children in probate guardianships. | Timeframe | April 2007 | Assigned to | Policy Division Manager |
| Timely Visits Milestones | Contacts, Waivers, | 1. Develop policy recommendations regarding waivers/exceptions, including the philosophy of waivers/exceptions and when they are appropriate. 2. Develop policy for waivers/exceptions. | | July 2007 | | Division Manager of Adoptions/Homefinding |
| | | | | August 2007 - October 2007 | | Director's Advisory Team |
| | | | October 2007 - January 2008 | Administrative Team | | |

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| | <p>3. Train all staff on the changes to the policies regarding face to face contacts and waivers/exceptions.</p> | | <p>February 2008</p> | | <p>Division Manager of Adoptions/Homefinding</p> |
| | <p>4. Implement contacts policy and waiver/exceptions policy.</p> | | <p>March 2008</p> | | <p>Operational Division Managers</p> |

Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal.

None needed.

Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.

Provide ongoing training in Safe Measures.

Provide training regarding waiver/exceptions, probate guardianships and contacts.

Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.

None needed.

Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.

None needed.

Component E: Permanency and Stability

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| Outcome/Systemic Factor: | | | | | | |
| 3 C - Multiple Foster Care Placements | | | | | | |
| County's Current Performance: For the 12 month entry cohort period between Jul 1, 2004 and Jun 30, 2005 (the latest UCB data available), 72% of the children had no more than two placements. | | | | | | |
| Improvement Goal: Increase children with only 1 or 2 placements after 12 months to 75% for the entry cohort between Jul 1, 2007 and Jun 30, 2008 (the latest period which will allow Mar 2010 reporting). | | | | | | |
| Strategy: Use strategic planning process to incorporate all available resources in a comprehensive placement stability system. | | | Strategy Rationale: Use of placement resources will provide the best support to foster parents to maintain children in the least restrictive, stable placement. | | | |
| Multiple Placement Milestones | Tool | 1. Complete development of System of Care multiple placement assessment tool. | Timeframe | March 2007 - January 2008 | Assigned to | Research and Evaluation Manager |
| | Resource Map | 1. Assess and evaluate current placement preservation resources for coordination of services, overlaps and gaps in services, including mental health services available to preserve placements. | | January 2008 | | County Wide Division Manager and Redesign Division Manager |

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| Multiple Placement Milestones | TDM | 1. Continue to provide Team Decision Making meetings to children at highest risk of placement disruptions. | Timeframe | Ongoing | Assigned to | County Wide Division Manager |
| | Licensing Plan | 1. Develop a systematic plan for supporting relative, NREFM and licensed caregivers which may include a mentoring program, linkages to Kinship Resources, use of TDM's and referrals to community resources. | | December 2008 | | Division Manager of Adoptions/Homefinding |

Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal.

Develop a systemic plan for supporting relative, NREFM and licensed caregivers including a mentoring program and a link to the Kinship Program including use of TDM and community resources.

Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.

Train staff regarding coordination of placement resources.

Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.

Incorporate Kinship Program in the systemic plan to coordinate placement resources.

Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.

None.

Component F: Permanency and Stability

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| Outcome/Systemic Factor: | | | | | | |
| 3 A - Length of Time to Exit Foster Care to Reunification | | | | | | |
| County's Current Performance: For the 12 month entry cohort period between Jul 1, 2004 and Jun 30, 2005 (the latest UCB data available), 43.6% of the children reunified within 12 months. | | | | | | |
| Improvement Goal: Increase children who reunify within 12 months to 48% (a 10% increase), for the entry cohort period between Jul 1, 2007 and Jun 30, 2008 (the latest period which will allow Mar 2010 reporting). | | | | | | |
| Strategy: Improve provision of individualized, culturally competent reunification services with coordination of reunification efforts. | | | Strategy Rationale: Families who receive culturally competent individualized services with access to multiple support systems will reunify faster. | | | |
| Early Reunification Milestones | Early Reunification Resources | 1. Define resource barriers to early reunification by conducting an analysis of a sample of cases in which families took over 12 months to reunify. | Timeframe | May 2008 - May 2009 | Assigned to | Research and Evaluation Manager |
| | | 2. Define potential community partnerships and resources for housing services for families in need of housing. | | September 2008 | | Redesign Division Manager |
| | | 3. Establish early reunification housing service support system in partnership with homeless service agencies and the Housing Authority. | | September 2008 | | Redesign Division Manager |

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| Early Reunification Milestones | Early Reunification Resources | 4. Partner with other county agencies to establish childcare resource priority system for families who could reunify faster if they had quality childcare services available. | Timeframe | September 2008 | Assigned to | Redesign Division Manager |
| | | 5. Continue linkages with CalWorks and develop partnerships for streamlining specific services for families preparing to reunify. | | September 2008 | | Policy Division Manager |
| | | 6. Orient staff to online and published resources for families to facilitate early reunification. | | October 2007 | | Division Manager of Adoptions/Homefinding |
| | Case Plan | 1. Develop a protocol to ensure provision of individualized, culturally competent case plans, including linkages and engagement of parents and youth in the case planning process. Train staff in the case planning process and monitor changes. | | April 2008 | | Director's Advisory Team, Division Manager of Adoptions/Homefinding |
| | | 2. Explore already existing tools, guidelines and policies that promote early reunification. | | March 2008 | | Administrative Team |
| | Legal | 1. Continue collaboration with the court system through the Legal Ad Hoc Committee. | | Ongoing | | County Wide Division Manager |

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| Early Reunification Milestones | Residential Treatment for Parents | 1. Assess the practice and policy to ensure continuity of practice across the county regarding children returning to care of their parents while in AOD residential treatment programs. | Timeframe | June 2007 - March 2008 | Assigned to | Administrative Team |
| | | 2. Publish guidelines for children returning to the care of their parents while in AOD residential treatment programs. Train all staff and supervisors on the guidelines. | | March 2008 - June 2008 | | Policy Division Manager |
| | Ice-breakers | 1. Develop and finalize a plan to address barriers towards full implementation of Icebreakers. | | March 2007 March 2008 | | Administrative Team |
| | Parent Partner | 1. Maintain Parent Partner program and explore broadening the membership. | | June 2007 -September 2007 | | County Wide Division Manager |
| | Incarcerated Parents | 1. Develop specific roles, expectations and procedures for engaging incarcerated parents and reassessing what services are offered to incarcerated parents. | | April 2007 - January 2008 | | County Wide Division Manager |

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|--|------------|---|--|--------------------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| | Visitation | <p>1. Develop a best practice policy regarding visitation for parents and children to include transitioning from supervised to unsupervised visitation, extended overnight visits, visit logistics including maximization of transportation services, and social casework specialists regularly supervising visits.</p> | | <p>June 2007 - February 2009</p> | | <p>Administrative Team</p> |
|--|------------|---|--|--------------------------------------|--|----------------------------|

Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal.

Establish early reunification housing service support system in partnership with homeless service agencies and the Housing Authority. Revise policy to ensure continuity of practice across the county regarding child placement in AOD residential treatment programs with their parents. Implement Icebreakers. Establish visitation policy for parents and children.

Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.

Train staff regarding online and published resources related to early reunification. Train staff in the engagement component of the case planning process. Train staff regarding visitation policy for parents and children.

Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.

Partner with Housing Authority, Community Services and CalWORKS to streamline services to support reunification. Continue relationship with legal community. AOD partners will assist in streamlining policies related to residential treatment.

Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.

None needed.

Component G: Child and Family Well-Being

| | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|---|------------------|--------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Outcome 4A: | | | | | | |
| Siblings Placed Together. | | | | | | |
| County's Current Performance: On Jul 1, 2006 (the latest UCB data available), 59.9% of those with siblings were placed with some or all of their siblings. | | | | | | |
| Improvement Goal: Increase siblings placed together with some or all of their siblings to 65% by Jul 1, 2009 (the latest period which will allow Mar 2010 reporting). | | | | | | |
| Strategy: Continue to improve sibling placement policies and practices and increase the number of licensed foster homes. | | Strategy Rationale: Maintenance of the sibling relationship is significant to child well-being. | | | | |
| Sibling Placement Milestones | Sibling Placement Protocol | 1. Review policies related to placement and develop a placement policy, including reserving multiple vacancies in specific homes for placement of sibling groups, use of FFA placements for sibling groups. | Timeframe | January 2008 | Assigned to | Administrative Team |
| | Sibling Placement Protocol | 2. Publish a Sibling Placement Policy Protocol defining resources for sibling placements, priorities and paths to accessing sibling placements. | Timeframe | May 2008 | Assigned to | Division Manager Policy |

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|----------------------------------|-----------------------|---|------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|---|
| Sibling Plcmt. Milestones | Sibling | 3. Establish an accountability system for identifying siblings not placed together, convening a review of those placements and developing a plan to move siblings together. | | May 2008 | | Division Manager of Adoptions/Homefinding |
| | ESC/Homefindin | 1. Complete a process map for the current procedures in the coordination of ESC and homefinding. | Timeframe | April 2007 - April 2008 | Assigned to | Division Manager of Adoptions/Homefinding |
| | | 2. Implement a plan to streamline work practices in coordinating ESC and homefinding. | | May 2008 | | Division Manager of Adoptions/Homefinding |

Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal.

Establish an accountability system for identifying siblings not placed together. Coordinate Emergency Shelter Care and Homefinding.

Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.

None needed.

Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.

None needed.

Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.

None needed.

Component H: Child and Family Well-Being

| | | | | | | |
|--|------------|---|------------------|--------------|--------------------|---|
| Outcome 8A: | | | | | | |
| Number of Children Transitioning to Self-Sufficient Adulthood. | | | | | | |
| County's Current Performance: For the latest reporting period (Oct 1, 2004 through Sep 30, 2005), 98 youth received a high school degree or GED. While we have reported data on this element we do not believe have accurate data. Additionally, we do not have accurate information on housing after emancipation for our youth. | | | | | | |
| Improvement Goal: Increase the number of youth who have graduated from High School or have received a GED. With the help of our new ILP database, we will be able to more accurately track the number of emancipating youth who leave the Child Welfare system with a high school degree/GED. We also plan to track the housing status of our emancipating youth. | | | | | | |
| Strategy: Gather baseline information on the number of youth emancipating with a high school diploma and increase that number. | | Strategy Rationale: Emancipating youth with high school diplomas have been shown to have better well-being outcomes. | | | | |
| Emancipation Milestones | P2P | 1. Continue providing transitioning planning meetings (in the TDM style) for youth in preparation for emancipation, including assessing educational needs of youth. | Timeframe | Ongoing | Assigned to | County Wide Division Manager |
| | THP | 2. Provide training to staff on existing services for emancipating and emancipated youth, including THP/THP+ plan. | | January 2008 | | County Wide Division Manager, Division Manager of Adoptions/Homefinding |

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|--------------------------------|------|--|----------------------------|---|
| Emancipation Milestones | ILSP | 1. Provide staff training on ILSP resource binder. | November 2007 | Division Manager of Adoptions/Homefinding |
| | | 2. Explore expanding ILSP services in Richmond and Far East County. Implement these services as appropriate based on need. | December 2007 | County Wide Division Manager |
| | ID | 1. Revise proof of dependency ID card policy, procedure and system. | April, 2007 - October 2007 | Policy Division Manager County Wide Division Manager |
| | Data | 1. Complete development and implement ILSP data base, including accurate tracking of educational outcomes for youth. | March 2008 | Research and Evaluation Manager |

Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal.

Expand ILSP services in Richmond and Far East County as appropriate. Complete development and implement ILSP data base and other methods of tracking educational outcomes for youth

Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.

Train staff on ILP resource finders.

Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.

None needed.

Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.

None needed.

Permanency

| | | | | |
|---|-------------------|--|-----------|--|
| Outcome: | | | | |
| Permanency Composite 3, Component A2 | | | | |
| County's Current Performance: For all children in child welfare supervised foster care for at least 24 months prior to the start of the federal fiscal year (2005/2006), 12.6% were discharged to permanency in less than 12 months and prior to their 18 th birthday. | | | | |
| Improvement Goal: Increase the percentage of youth in child welfare supervised foster care for at least 24 months prior to the start of the federal fiscal year (2008/2009; the latest period which will allow Mar 2010 reporting) who were discharged to permanency in less than 12 months and prior to their 18 th birthday to 15%. | | | | |
| Strategy: | | Strategy Rationale: | | |
| Incorporate permanency in all aspects of practice in order to allow more children to achieve permanency. | | Children and youth who are discharged from foster care to a permanent family prior to emancipation have been shown to have better well-being outcomes. | | |
| Permanency Milestones | Permanency | 1. Define permanency and redefine due diligence for the agency, utilizing CPYP principles and integrating permanency efforts. | July 2007 | County Wide Division Manager, Operational Division Manager |
| | | 2. Integrate permanency efforts countywide to include principles of CPYP in the current P2P committee. | May 2007 | County Wide Division Manager, Operational Division Manager |

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|------------|---|--|--------------------------|--|--|
| | | 3. Explore, refine and redesign case review systems (PRT, AR, PP Review, Dispo) to define when staff are to use case reviews, the purpose of the various case reviews and the cultural component of case reviews. | | October 2007 | | Administrative Team |
| Permanency Milestones | Permanency | 4. Establish contract with internet database search engine to search for relatives. | | March 2007 - August 2007 | | Redesign Division Manager and Operational Division Manager |
| | | 5. Expand training to all staff. | | September 2007 | | Operational Division Manager |

Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal.

Establish contract with internet database search engine to search for relatives. Redesign case review systems.

Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.

Train staff regarding CPYP principles, permanency, case review systems.

Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.

None needed.

Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.

None needed.

Disproportionality

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Outcome: Disproportionality of first time removals for African American youth</p> | |
| <p>County's Current Performance: The calendar year 2006 incidence rate for first time removals of African American youth is 6.6/1000.</p> | |
| <p>Improvement Goal: Reduce the incidence rate of first time removals for African American youth by 15% to 5.6/1000 or less for calendar year 2009.</p> | |
| <p>Strategy: Utilize Differential Response and Team Decision Making and other culturally competent engagement strategies to decrease the number of first time removals for African American youth.</p> | <p>Strategy Rationale: Use of culturally competent engagement strategies will assist families to build on their strengths and link families with community leaders and resources.</p> |

Contra Costa County System Improvement Plan March 2007 – March 2010

| | | | | |
|---|-----------|----------------------------|-------------|--|
| 1. Review DR Policy and revise to allow re-engagement and to allow for data collection on engagement, re-engagement and service outcomes. | Timeframe | Ongoing | Assigned to | Redesign Division Ma |
| 1. Continue provision of TDM services for all African American children under age 5 at risk of removal. | | Ongoing | | County Wide Divisor |
| 1. Develop conversation guides for supervisors to lead staff in discussions of disproportionality at all unit and review meetings every other month. | Timeframe | June 2007 | Assigned to | Administrative Team Advisory Team |
| 1. Continue working with Public and Private Health Services to assist with the review and use of Health and Safety Code 123605. Explore use of protocols currently in place by hospitals in the county. | | April 2007 - April 2008 | | CFS Director |
| 2. Assess practices to determine if referrals related to Alcohol and Other Drugs are entered appropriately in CWS/CMS and if policy and practice are consistent with one another. | Timeframe | March 2008 | Assigned to | Division Manager for and County Wide Div Manager |
| 1. Continue to use the Cultural Competency Oversight Committee to establish a culturally competent agency, considering training and practice integration. Provide direction on moving change to the practice level to address disproportionality. | | March 2007 - March 2010 | | CFS Director and Ope Division Managers |
| 1. Continue gathering data to present to staff and community partners in the districts around causes for and responses to disproportionality. | | Ongoing | | CFS Director, Division for Evaluation |

temic changes needed to further support the improvement goal.

for engagement in the Differential Response program and develop a data base to track the changes. Review where to record positive toxicology reports reported to CFS.

educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.

conversation guides for supervisors to lead conversations in unit meetings.

roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.

with hospitals that they are following Health and Safety Code 123605 and collaborate together to address any non-compliance practice.

any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.

d.

Systemic Factors

Factor – Foster Home Recruitment and Retention

Current Performance: The percentage of youth currently (as of Mar 29, 2007) placed in foster homes is 18.5%.

Current Goal: Increase the number of available foster homes for youth to allow them to be placed within their own neighborhood and stay in the same school they were in at the time of removal.

| | | | |
|--|--|--------------|---|
| 1. Review and revise a plan for recruiting foster homes including a focus on high removal neighborhoods, sibling groups, and homes for older youth and bilingual foster homes. | | May 2008 | Division Manager of Adoptions/Homefinding |
| 2. Implement plan to increase the number of licensed foster homes and retain them for local placements. | | January 2009 | Division Manager of Adoptions/Homefinding |
| 3. Develop an internal process to communicate and address licensing regulation concerns within the county to increase understanding of licensing guidelines and protocols, and implement a teamwork approach of communication and coordination to improve recruitment and retention of foster parents. | | | |

Systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal.

1. Revise a plan to ensure that there are available foster homes for children and youth to remain placed in their neighborhoods.

2. Identify educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.

3. Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.

4. Obtain input from the Foster Parent Network in providing input in to strategies to recruit and retain foster parents.

5. Identify regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.

Contra Costa County System Improvement Plan March 2007 – March 2010
**Point in Time Facts of Children Served by
 Children and Family Services
 On April 30, 2007**

- ❖ Number of youth in open CFS cases as of April 19, 2007 grouped by out of home and in home care.

| Location of Care | Count | Percent |
|------------------|-------|---------|
| Out of Home | 1642 | 64% |
| In Home | 921 | 36% |
| Total | 2563 | 100% |

- ❖ Number of youth by ethnicity.

| Ethnicity | Count | Percent |
|-----------------|-------|---------|
| Black | 1037 | 40.5% |
| White | 854 | 33.3% |
| Hispanic | 532 | 20.8% |
| Asian/Other | 107 | 4.2% |
| Native American | 19 | 0.7% |
| Unknown | 14 | 0.5% |
| Total | 2563 | 100.0% |

- ❖ Number of youth by gender.

| Gender | Count | Percent |
|--------|-------|---------|
| Female | 1287 | 50.2% |
| Male | 1276 | 49.8% |
| Total | 2563 | 100.0% |

- ❖ Youth in open CFS cases by age group.

| Age Group | Count | Percent |
|-------------|-------|---------|
| Age 00 – 05 | 804 | 31.4% |
| Age 06 - 11 | 725 | 28.3% |
| Age 12 - 14 | 425 | 16.6% |
| Age 15 + | 609 | 23.8% |
| Total | 2563 | 100.0% |

- ❖ Youth in open CFS cases by age group and by out of home and in home care.

| Age Group | Out of Home | In Home | Total |
|------------------|--------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Age 00 - 05 | 420 | 384 | 804 |
| Age 06 - 11 | 415 | 310 | 725 |
| Age 12 - 14 | 305 | 120 | 425 |
| Age 15 + | 502 | 107 | 609 |
| Total | 1642 | 921 | 2563 |

- ❖ Youth in open CFS cases by ethnicity and by out of home and in home care.

| Ethnicity | Out of Home | In Home | Total |
|------------------|--------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Black | 788 | 249 | 1037 |
| White | 532 | 322 | 854 |
| Hispanic | 256 | 276 | 532 |
| Asian/Other | 50 | 57 | 107 |
| Native American | 14 | 5 | 19 |
| Unknown | 2 | 12 | 14 |
| Total | 1642 | 921 | 2563 |

- ❖ Of the 1,642 youth in out of home care, their average current duration in care is three years and eight months

**Collaborations between
Children & Family Services and Other County offices**

| | <u>Frequency</u> | <u>Staff Involved</u> |
|--|------------------|------------------------------|
| <u>Collaborations with CAO Office</u> | | |
| Safe & Bright Futures Committee | Monthly | Debi Moss |
| DV Death Review Committee | Monthly | Debi Moss |
| DV Safety Audit | Intermittent | Debi Moss |
| Zero Tolerance Committee | Quarterly | Debi Moss |
| Admin. Oversight of SB 163 | Monthly | Debi Moss |
| <u>Collaborations with Health Services Dept.</u> | | |
| Placement Resource Expansion Team | Quarterly | Debi Moss, Valerie Earley |
| Mental Health Steering Committee | Quarterly | Debi Moss, Valerie Earley |
| Mental Health Coordinators | Monthly | Debi Moss |
| Home Visiting Leadership Team | Monthly | Debi Moss/Mary Kay Miller |
| CWD Redesign/w/PHNs | Monthly | Debi Moss/Ray Merritt |
| AODS/CFS Meetings | Quarterly | Lori Larks |
| Drug-Endangered Children | Quarterly | Brenda Sutherland |
| Perinatal Substance Abuse Program | Bi-monthly | Lori Larks |
| Supportive and Therapeutic Options | Quarterly | Cynthia Wright |
| Accessing Health Services Task Force | Quarterly | Cynthia Wright |
| System of Care Policy Council | Bi-Monthly | Neely McElroy/Valerie Earley |
| Interagency Transitional Aged Youth Collaborative | Bi-Monthly | Neely McElroy |
| Youth in Transition (West County) | Monthly | Stacie Buchanan/PHN's |
| P4P Interagency Operational Group | Monthly | Neely McElroy |
| <u>Collaborations with Community Services</u> | | |
| Economic Opportunity Council | Monthly | Victoria Mejia |
| <u>Collaborations with the Court System</u> | | |
| Judge's Meeting | Bi-Monthly | Valerie Earley |

Contra Costa County System Improvement Plan March 2007 – March 2010

Social Worker Attorney Meeting Bi-Monthly Rachel Foster

Collaborations with Probation Dept.

Juvenile Justice Commission Monthly Valerie Earley

County-Wide Collaborations

County-Wide Death Review Quarterly Lori Larks

Countywide Foster Youth

Transitions Action Team Monthly Neely McElroy

Acronyms in System Improvement Plan Report

| | |
|---------|---|
| AOD | Alcohol and Other Drugs (program in Health Services) |
| AR | Administrative Review |
| CAPC | Child Abuse Prevention Council |
| CAT | Comprehensive Assessment Tool |
| CFS | Children & Family Services (Bureau within EHS Department) |
| CPYP | California Permanency for Youth Project |
| CWS | Child Welfare System |
| CWS/CMS | Child Welfare System/Case Management System |
| DR | Differential Response |
| EHSD | Employment & Human Services Department |
| ER | Emergency Response |
| ESC | Emergency Shelter Care |
| F2F | Family to Family |
| FFA | Foster Family Agency |
| GED | General Education Diploma |
| ILP | Independent Living Program |
| ILSP | Independent Living Skills Program |
| NREFM | Non-Relative Extended Family Member |
| P2P | Pathways to Permanency |
| P4P | Partnering for Permanency |
| PP | Permanency Plan |
| PRT | Placement Resource Team |
| PSSF | Promoting Safe and Stable Families |
| SAP | Self-Assessment Plan |
| SIP | System Improvement Plan |
| SOC | System of Care |
| TDM | Team Decision Making |
| THP | Transitional Housing Program |
| TLP | Transitional Living Plan |
| UCB | University of California, Berkeley |
| VFM | Voluntary Family Maintenance |
| WFS | Workforce Service (Bureau within EHS Dept.) |

