County of Santa Barbara
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
234 Camino Del Remedio, Santa Barbara CA 93110-1369 (805) 681-4400 Fax (805) 681-4403

Kathy M. Gallagher
Director

RECEIVED
MAR 16 2007

March 7, 2007

California Department of Social Services
Children's Services Operations Bureau
744 P Street, M.S. 3-90
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: California Child and Family Services Review System Improvement Plan

To Whom It May Concern:

Attached please find Santa Barbara County Child Welfare Services March 2007 System Improvement Plan. The enclosed document was submitted electronically on March 2, 2007.

If you have any questions, please contact Melissa Hoesterey at (805) 346-7248.

Sincerely,

Ken D. Jensen, Psy.D
Deputy Director

Attachments

County of Santa Barbara
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
Minute Order

February 27, 2007

Present: Supervisor Carbajal, Supervisor Wolf, Supervisor Firestone, Supervisor Gray and Supervisor Centeno

SOCIAL SERVICES — File Reference No. 07-00182

RE: Approve and authorize the Chair to execute the System Improvement Plan developed in accordance with Assembly Bill 636, Chapter 678, Statutes of 2001, and the California Child and Family Services Review for submission to the California Department of Social Services.

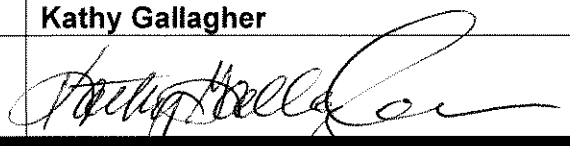
A motion was made by Supervisor Carbajal, seconded by Supervisor Centeno, that this matter be Approved; Chair to Execute. The motion carried unanimously.

A-1

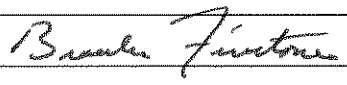
California's Child and Family Services Review System Improvement Plan

County:	**Santa Barbara**
Responsible County Child Welfare Agency:	**Department of Social Services**
Period of Plan:	**March 2007 thru March 2010**
Period of Outcomes Data:	**County Data Report January 2007**
Date Submitted:	

County Contact Person for County System Improvement Plan	
Name:	**Melissa Hoesterey**
Title:	**SS Operations Division Chief**
Address:	**2125 S. Centerpointe Pkwy., Santa Maria, CA 93455**
Phone/Email	**(805) 346-7248 / m.hoesterey@sbcsocialserv.org**

Submitted by each agency for the children under its care	
Submitted by:	**County Child Welfare Agency Director (Lead Agency)**
Name:	**Kathy Gallagher**
Signature:	

Submitted by:	**County Chief Probation Officer**
Name:	**R. Scott Deu Pree**
Signature:	

County Board of Supervisors		
Approved by:	**Name:**	13
	Title:	
Signature:		

California Child and Family Services Review
(C-CFSR)

System Improvement Plan

Santa Barbara County
March 2007

Kathy M. Gallagher, Director
Department of Social Services

R. Scott Deu Pree, Chief Probation Officer
Probation Department

1. Executive Summary

Assembly Bill 636 (Steinberg) established a new Child Welfare Outcome and Accountability System replacing the former CWS Oversight System which had focused exclusively on regulatory compliance. Pursuant to AB 636, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) developed the California – Child and Family Services Review (C-CFSR). The C-CFSR brings California into alignment with the Federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) by establishing a new review system designed to promote improved Child Welfare Services (CWS) outcomes for children and families in each county in California. The vision created by the C-CFSR is that every child in California would live in a safe, stable, permanent home nurtured by healthy families and strong communities. Thus, "the purpose of the C-CFSR system is to significantly strengthen the accountability system used in California to monitor and assess the quality of services provided on behalf of maltreated children."[1]

The basis of the C-CFSR improvement and accountability system lies in a philosophy of continuous quality improvement, interagency partnerships, and community involvement with an overall focus of improving outcomes for children and families. The CDSS, in conjunction with the University of California at Berkeley (UCB), developed Outcome Measures that indicate how each county Child Welfare system in California is performing. Each county was required to conduct a Self-Assessment to explore how local programs, systems and factors impacted on Outcome Measures in three major areas (Safety, Permanency and Stability, and Child and Family Well-being) and to use that Self-Assessment as the basis for developing a System Improvement Plan.

Santa Barbara County CWS conducted its second Self-Assessment from May – October 2006. The reports provided by CDSS combined with Safe Measures reports and internal data analysis sources provided sufficient data to inform the Self-Assessment process. As in the initial Self-Assessment, Santa Barbara County focused on obtaining extensive input from our many public and private partners believing that their knowledge of and experience with CWS were critical in identifying the strengths, needs, and gaps in our service delivery system. The process focused on completing a gaps analysis with several existing groups who are integrally involved in promoting the safety and well-being of children and families. Seven focus groups were conducted involving members of the KIDS Network and Child Abuse Prevention Council (CAPC); the Children's System of Care (CSOC); the Juvenile Court; all Child Welfare Services (CWS) line staff at the Santa Maria, Lompoc, and Santa Barbara regional meetings; and the CWS Team, which includes managers and supervisors. Additionally, surveys were conducted with a random population of foster parents and relative or non-related extended family members, as well as with the Independent Living Program (ILP) youth to ensure their voices had representation in our county self-assessment. Overall, more than 200 people representing over 40 agencies and organizations took part in the Self-Assessment. Many Self-Assessment participants/organizations were invited to join the System Improvement Plan Workgroup.

The State requirement for the SIP is to address the priority areas identified during the Self-Assessment process. There was one Safety Outcome identified being Recurrence of Maltreatment, which has two separate measures. Although the Self-Assessment process did not identify Permanence and Stability Measures as being a high priority issue, the SIP Workgroup identified improvement goals to assist with the Outcome Measures for Timely Reunification and Multiple Foster Care Placements. Additionally, the Well-being Measure regarding Foster Youth Transitioning to Self-Sufficient Adulthood continued to be an area of high priority recognizing, as the research indicates, that foster youth emancipating from care do not fare well in health, education, employment, and housing arenas. Additionally, several Systemic Factors were identified as areas

[1] All County Information Notice I-50-06

II. Local Planning Body

Santa Barbara County Child Welfare Services ("County CWS") obtained extensive input from our public and private partners, who are integrally involved in promoting the safety and well being of children and families during the C-CFSR process. Participants were from the following key systems of support for children in Santa Barbara County:

KIDS Network

KIDS Network serves as an advisory group to the Board of Supervisors and is a countywide interagency collaborative dedicated to promoting a coordinated system for children's services in Santa Barbara County. KIDS Network is sponsored by the County Board of Supervisors and County DSS/CWS. General membership includes, but is not limited to community-based organizations, parents, community members, faith-based groups, educators, County and other public agencies. In addition, two members of the Board of Supervisors serve as Chair and Vice-Chair of the KIDS Network. This network serves as a forum for public and private agencies to discuss issues relevant to comprehensive, collaborative and integrated services for children, youth and families. The Network identifies three focus areas every three years. The focus areas for 2005-2008 are Family Support, Health Care Access, and Children in the System. Standing and ad-hoc committees work on strategies to address these focus areas. Another key project of the Network, in partnership with the University of California at Santa Barbara and other agencies, is publication of an annual Santa Barbara County Children's Scorecard.

Child Abuse Prevention Council (CAPC)

The Child Abuse Prevention Council (CAPC) is a community council with the primary purpose of coordinating Santa Barbara County's efforts to prevent and respond to child abuse and neglect. Membership of CAPC includes representatives from the prevention and treatment communities, the criminal justice system, County Child Welfare Services, other public agencies, education providers, community-based organizations, faith-based groups, parents, and the community. CAPC members assist in decision making to identify and prioritize projects. CAPC is currently focusing on the following areas: Mandated Reporter Training, Public Awareness, Cross-Training, and Advisory Functions regarding the three-year Child Abuse Prevention Plan. The CAPC also serves as an advisory body for funding sources related to prevention and intervention.

Children's System of Care (formerly MISC)

Children's System of Care is a collaboration of four public agencies (CWS, Alcohol, Drug, and Mental Health Services (ADMHS), Probation, and Public Health) as well as a variety of contracted Community Based Organizations and representatives from our Local Education Agency. The program features pooling of resources and staff, utilizing their input and expertise of these many disciplines to perform comprehensive case planning, assessments and delivery of services. Private agency service providers currently include Child Abuse Listening and Mediation (CALM), Community Action Commission (CAC), Santa Maria Valley Youth and Family Center, Casa Pacifica, and Sojourn. Managers, supervisors and staff from these agencies and other interested organizations such as the Mental Health Commission and the County Office of Education attend a monthly meeting that focuses on discussing programmatic and policy issues to support making continual improvements to the system.

III. Self-Assessment Summary

A. DEMOGRAPHICS AND PARTICIPATION RATES

As noted in the body of the Self-Assessment, U.S. Census figures show that population growth in Santa Barbara County is overwhelmingly due to live births with the majority of that taking place in our North County region of Santa Maria. The significant population growth in Santa Maria mirrors the rapid growth of low-wage agriculture jobs in the area as this industry has been experiencing growth rates of up to 30% for the past few years. On the South Coast, where the high cost of housing and living seems to be exacerbating already tight living conditions "a large percentage of the low paying jobs are within the Leisure and Hospitality Services and Retail Trade sectors."[2] These rapid demographic changes and conditions present current and future challenges to CWS and must be taken into consideration as we develop services for children and families especially in Northern Santa Barbara County.

Participation Rates regarding referrals and foster care continue to be an area in need of further exploration. Since the initial Self-Assessment, Santa Barbara County has seen a rather significant change in these rates overall. The County's rate of reporting (40 per 1000 children in the population) is lower than the state average (50.1 per 1,000) declining 33% in the past two years, compared to the State's rate of decline at 13%. The County's rate of children with substantiated referrals (8.6 per 1,000 children) remains lower than the State average (11.3 per 1,000). First entries into foster care for the County (2.4 per 1,000 children) have doubled in the past two years and are closer to the State rate (3 per 1,000). In addition, the rate of children in care for the County (5.8 per 1,000 children) nearly doubled, and is almost two-thirds of the State rate (8.2 per 1,000).

The significant changes in these statistics present several critical questions for County CWS requiring a higher level of monitoring and evaluation of business processes to ensure good outcomes for children and families. A five year trend analysis shows that although referral rates are decreasing, those referrals are resulting in an increased substantiation rate, and higher numbers of children are entering foster care or being opened for case management by CWS than in previous years. Although CWS is serving more children, the data related to recurrence of maltreatment continues to be higher than the State average, suggesting a need for service enhancement to "at risk" children. With the implementation of Structured Decision Making as a safety/risk assessment tool and the addition of 3 staff to provide Voluntary Family Maintenance Services countywide, it is hopeful that CWS will be able to identify those children at high risk and provide time-limited services to those families to reduce the re-substantiation rate. The rapid growth in the rate of first entries and the number and rate of children in foster care is taxing the County's already over-burdened foster care resources and creating additional demands on social workers to find adequate, supportive placement resources for children. With the

[2] http://www.countyofsb.org/cao/pdf/budget/0607/Sectionb.pdf

children including Structured Decision Making, addition of staff for dedicated Voluntary Family Maintenance/Family Preservation cases, and the pending expansion of Differential Response services through CWSOIP grant funds. County Data reports show that CWS has considerably improved the outcomes for youth with respect to the Rate of Foster Care Re-Entry (federal) and is presently performing at a rate that is half the Federal Standard.

County CWS and our community partners identified the following barriers to safety for children in our communities and provided strategies to overcome these barriers; thereby identifying some of the gaps in service delivery. A cursory summary of the barriers and strategies are presented below.

Needs Assessment

- ***Resources*** including financial supports, housing, childcare, and residential treatment facilities are limited. The income for most families is not commensurate with the high cost of living in SB County. What resources are available are limited and not readily accessible to families or are generally unknown to the populations being served.
- ***Knowledge Gaps*** or misinformation regarding available resources, supports, and services; child development issues; and general life management skills in the client population.
- ***Systemic Issues*** thought to inhibit child safety tended to focus heavily on the rising CWS workload. Workload is not readily captured in caseload numbers and social workers have multiple demands on their time, which is resulting in a decreased amount of face-to-face time spent with children and families. Despite the many collaboratives, an additional concern was the general lack of a coordinated response/integrated services to children and families. Rising demands for services, coupled with the increasing demands for social worker time often result in communication breakdowns and the independent functioning of team members.

Gaps Analysis

- ***Resources Gaps*** were identified by the participants as being key to addressing the complex familial issues. Service delivery options that provide in-home services or residential programs to children and families were viewed as highly desirable. Additional residential treatment programs for substance abuse and/or dual diagnosis would be optimal for providing family focused services. Developing a primary support person for each child and family by utilizing children and families who have been through the system and graduated or tapping into the resources of extended family members more would provide supportive services to children and families in ways that professional services cannot. Extending a system of checks and balances to service delivery by creating an after care program to CWS intervention through community agency involvement for the linking of services/supports was viewed as providing a continuum of care for children/families.

Gaps Analysis

While the outcome data currently looks good for Santa Barbara County, the ILP youth survey poses a question bearing additional investigation. Systemic issues arise regarding the content of contacts with youth and whether the youth are adequately informed of their rights. Further still and at the root of the under-reporting may be more than just lack of knowledge regarding making a report, but the potential consequences for youth if a report is made.

- **Timely Response and Visits by Social Worker**

Santa Barbara County has placed an increased emphasis on ensuring compliance with these outcome measures commensurate with Division 31 regulations by increased monitoring compliance status through Safe Measures. Timely contacts and the corresponding data entry are a high priority for County CWS. Although it is believed that staff is doing the work, the delayed entering of data and the inconsistent use of the visit exception may be resulting in the sub-par performance on these measures.

Gaps Analysis

County CWS needs to better understand the monthly visit reporting methodology that the State and UC Berkeley use to derive the data for this outcome measure. In addition, the balancing of competing high priority demands for social worker time will need to be recognized as impacting the integrity of the CWS/CMS data.

Permanency and Stability

Permanence and stability are crucial factors in "normal" child development and key to providing good outcomes for children. Historically, Santa Barbara County has performed well in the following measures:

- Length of Time to Exit Foster Care to Reunification
- Length of Time to Exit Foster Care to Adoption

County CWS continues to perform very well in the federal and state standards in Length of Time to Exit Foster Care to Adoption. Although recent data reports, reflect a change in county performance for Exits to Reunification a closer analysis of the statistic reveals that County CWS is missing the federal measure by 3 children. This is one

present in the client population. Staff turnover and inexperience coupled with the time required to complete various tasks for obtaining permanence through adoptions are added challenges to a process that is often time consuming in and of it self. Recognition was given to the legal process, particularly regarding continuances as potential barriers for untimely reunification.

Gaps Analysis

- ***Resources Gaps*** were readily identified by participants focusing on the need for more family intervention type services such as residential drug treatment programs, intensive in-home services, and placement resources to foster a family, not just a child. Targeted recruitment of caregivers for specific populations of youth and the need for family/child mentors is an area of significant need in light of the growing population of youth in county care.

- ***Educating*** the community/caregivers regarding permanency options of adoption and guardianship were identified to increase the understanding and open paths for obtaining new placement resources. Additional education for all caregivers regarding the complex behavioral and emotional issues of youth in care is needed to support caregivers in providing services to youth. The concept of providing wrap around services to caregivers, particularly those receiving their first placement, would provide them with an overall better understanding of the process and what to expect from children. Providing additional supports and maintaining regular contact for caregivers receiving their first placements was viewed as a valuable option to enhancing stability and possibly permanence for youth. While participants saw relevance to enhancing education of potential caregivers, the majority of caregivers who participated in the foster parent survey acknowledged feeling part of the team providing services to youth, that social work staff was helpful in obtaining needed resources and supports, and noted that they were prepared by licensing staff about what to expect. While there is always room for improvement, County CWS and licensing may have provided a fairly stable foundation for achieving these goals with caregivers.

- ***Systemic Issues*** identified the need for more family centered early intervention strategies combined with a community approach to service delivery. Improved integration of targeted services meeting the comprehensive needs of all family members could provide added supports to improve outcome measures. Parent/Child visitation programs that would afford parents the opportunity to interact and provide for their children's needs in a supervised setting could speed reunification and provide in vivo parenting education.

- ***Knowledge Gaps*** identified include information regarding the child's medical, dental, educational, and familial history. Life skills training for parents/ children and better dissemination of available resources are needed.
- ***Systemic Issues*** hampering well-being for youth include placement disruptions and the corresponding educational disruption; separation of siblings due to limited placement resources for multiple children; acknowledgement that it is more challenging to serve children adequately when placed out of county; and that connections for youth/families often ceases when the funding for services ends.

Gaps Analysis

There is a need to develop a continuum of care for foster youth providing supportive services to ensure that children have their medical, dental, mental health, and educational needs met while in placement and then create a follow-up supportive system for youth upon emancipation. Interagency case management teams so that youth have multiple connections that will not all cease upon emancipation are needed. There remains a lack of formalized transitional programs for youth with particular gaps in financial and housing supports for emancipated youth. Job training and linking opportunities should be explored to support financial independence for youth. A total needs assessment of youth preparedness for self-sufficiency is needed. There is limited participation on behalf of caregivers in preparing youth for transition to adulthood and remaining a resource for them once placement funding has ended. Social programs where children and families can learn to have fun together are just as important as professional services. There is no local California Youth Connection Chapter, as Santa Barbara County is currently on a waiting list.

C. Areas for further exploration through Peer Quality Case Review

Santa Barbara County regularly partners with San Luis Obispo County and Ventura County on a variety of Child Welfare Services issues including reciprocal assistance on complex cases and conflict-of-interest situations. The Child Welfare Directors from each county meet regularly to share ideas and information on services, programs, fiscal matters and data reports. All three counties belong to the Southern Region of the Central California Public Social Services Academy.

At present, there are two potential areas identified for further exploration through the Peer Quality Case Review process. The first area of concern is the doubling of Participation Rates for Number and Rate of First Entries and the Number and Rate of Children in Care. The drastic rise of children in care has taxed placement, financial, and personnel resources beyond capacity. Delving into the philosophical and practice issues regarding detaining children may provide some insight into the rising number of children entering care, despite the decline in referral numbers. The second area of concern concentrates on the outcome measures for Recurrence of Abuse. Despite

IV. Prevention Strategies

County Child Welfare has partnered with both the KIDS Network and the Child Abuse Prevention Council to enhance prevention and early intervention strategies in Santa Barbara County.

Differential Response
KIDS Network in conjunction with County CWS provides funding and oversight to the Differential Response program entitled Front Porch. Providing Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) funding administered through KIDS Network support two community based agencies in providing early intervention services to children and families that have been referred to CWS, but do not currently meet the legal criteria of abuse and/or neglect. Based on the assessment of our hotline or investigations by social workers, referrals are made to the Front Porch program. This program has proven to be effective as indicated by the outcome data for fiscal year 2005/2006 in which 99 families were referred to services and only 3 families (3%) had a subsequent referral to CWS. Recognizing the importance of early intervention, CWS applied and was granted Child Welfare Services Outcome Improvement Program (CWSOIP) funds to augment the current program. Additionally, the CAPC, First 5, and The Human Services Commission are engaged in a one-year operational planning project with CWS to expand Differential Response services in the county.

Family Resource Centers
Family Resource Centers have been established in several regions of Santa Barbara County. The centers are funded through a variety of sources including PSSF Family Support dollars, First Five, Children and Families Commission, the Human Services Commission, as well as others to provide case management, parenting classes, and counseling services to families in need.

CAPIT, CBCAP, and Children's Trust Fund Grants
The Planning Team for the CAPIT, CFRS, and Children's Trust Fund Grant included members of the Department of Social Services, Public Health, ADMHS, and Probation. Parents and parent consumers were included on the Team, as were members of the Human Services Commission and professionals from the nonprofit sector. The Team, now known as the CAPC, underscored that it is neither possible nor helpful to isolate the factors that lead to child abuse because in most cases multiple factors often interact to produce child abuse or neglect. The most effective abuse prevention programs identified by the team for the 2005-2008 cycles included: home visitation programs, high-quality childcare programs with required parent participation, family resource centers, child-focused prevention activities, and parent support and education services. The Human Services Commission awarded grants through a competitive bid process to those community agencies targeting services that were identified as most effective.

Family Preservation Program

The Board of Supervisors approved three new social work positions beginning in fiscal year 2006/2007 for Child Welfare Services to initiate a Family Preservation Program. The program focuses on providing intervention services to children and their families who are assessed utilizing Structured Decision Making (SDM) to be at high or very high risk of abuse and neglect. Providing services to families at this juncture is key to preserving the family unit and preventing children from entering the overburdened foster care system.

VI. System Improvement Plan (SIP)

Outcome Factor: SAFETY - 1A. Recurrence of Maltreatment, 2A: Recurrence of abuse or neglect in homes where children were not removed.

County's Current Performance: **1A.** Our current rate is 9.9%[3] compared to the State average of 8.0% and the Federal standard of 6.1%. (4/1/05-3/31/06) Our rate at the time of the previous SIP was 13.1% (7/1/02-12/31/02)

2A. Our current rate is 14% (4/1/04-3/31/05) State data from this time period is not currently available. There is no Federal standard for this measure. Our rate at the time of the previous SIP was 11.5% (10/1/01-9/30/02)

Although the County has improved in the area of recurrence of maltreatment, the rate of recurrence continues to be higher than the State average. Moreover, the rate of subsequent substantiated referrals for those children who remained in their homes after an initial substantiated or inconclusive referral has increased during this cycle. These two safety measures continue to be of high priority for Santa Barbara County Child Welfare Services (CWS) and the County has initiated several strategies to address these outcomes. In March of 2006, CWS implemented the Structured Decision-Making Assessment tool (SDM) to strengthen safety and risk assessments, as well as improve consistency and accuracy in decisions related to safety and risk. Supervisors, managers and social workers have access to the Safe Measures program to monitor staff's performance and responsibilities, including monitoring the consistent use of the tool. Another strategy employed was to provide Family Preservation Services countywide. The Assessments and Investigations units in each region were assigned a social worker dedicated to a Family Preservation caseload. In order to address drug-exposed infants earlier and more consistently, CWS collaborated with local hospitals and public health clinics on developing a protocol for referrals regarding babies born with positive toxicology. The 2006 Self-Assessment process identified resources, including financial supports, housing, childcare, and substance abuse treatment programs are limited, as is knowledge of available resources, supports, and services. A common concern communicated in the Self-Assessment process was the lack of knowledge regarding child development and general life management skills in the client population. Systemic issues thought to inhibit child safety tended to focus heavily on the rising CWS workload. Social workers have multiple demands on their time, which results in a decreased amount of face to face time spent with children and families.

[3] All statistics are from the CWS Outcome and Accountability County Data Report of October 2006 (http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports)

Strategy 1.2: Utilize established MOUs to more creatively maximize resources that meet specific family needs			**Strategy Rationale:** Community resources are limited requiring creativity to ensure services address the strengths and needs of individual families		
Milestones	1.2.1. Identify needed resources	Timeframes	June 2007	Assigned to	CWS
	1.2.2. Develop needed resources		Ongoing		CWS Probation County Agencies CBOs and Community Partners
	1.2.3 Knowing available resources and partnerships, match families' needs to resources that meet those needs		Ongoing		CWS Probation
	1.2.4 Train CWS staff on developing individualized case plans that are written with the family		January 2008		CWS Training Supervisors CWS Supervisors
	1.2.5 Identify stipends, scholarships, etc. to assist in funding services to families		Ongoing		CWS Probation County Agencies CBOs

Strategy 1.3: Develop Resource Lists			**Strategy Rationale:** Reduce barriers to locating and time spent researching needed resources by having a listing available to social workers and families.		
Milestones	1.3.1 Inventory existing resources – KIDS Network, CAPC, CWS, First 5, Human Services Commission, FSA (211) Helpline	Timeframes	December 2007	Assigned to	KIDS Network CWS staff CBOs
	1.3.2 Develop a list for SW's and a user friendly, personalized list for the family. Multiple lists should be developed in the languages of the populations served.		June 2008		KIDS Network CWS Staff CBOs
	1.3.3 List will include resources by region and category		December 2008		KIDS Network

Improvement Goal 3: Expand early intervention/Differential Response to a larger population of the community

Strategy 3.1: Enhance Differential Response (DR) services to families in Santa Barbara County

Strategy Rationale: Additional early intervention services are needed to support the demand and deter children and families from becoming involved in the Child Welfare System

Milestones		Timeframes	Assigned to
3.1.1	A taskforce has been established to enhance Differential Response services by gathering detailed community input regarding needs for the service, the current service delivery model, and ideas for future service delivery	Ongoing	KIDS Network CWS CAPC DR Taskforce First 5 Human Services Commission
3.1.2	Taskforce will write an operational plan at the end of the project period	May 2007	Taskforce
3.1.3	Develop resources to operationalize the taskforce plan, considering specific community needs	May 2008	KIDS Network CAPC CWS First 5 Human Services Commission
3.1.4	Implement and/or expand recommendations of the taskforce	June 2008	KIDS Network CAPC CWS CBOs

Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal.

- There is a need for additional alcohol and drug (AOD) services especially in the West and North County regions. Expansion of these services should target residential programs that provide family focused services. Such expansion will require maximizing collaborations between CWS, AOD services, and the community based treatment providers to secure funding and creatively maximize existing resources to meet the growing needs of our communities.
- Service providers need advanced training in trauma treatment to effectively serve the high risk/high needs CWS/Probation population.
- Supportive services that teach basic life skills and child development to parents are needed to reduce risk to children in our community.

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

- Our County Self-Assessment identified community training needs regarding Mandated Reporting and the parameters under which CWS operates to assist in holding

Improvement Goal 4: Increase support to biological families to strengthen their skills, establish relationships in the community, and increase their capacity to provide adequate care and parenting for their children on a permanent basis.				
Strategy 4.1 Establish multi-purpose community Family Resource Centers that will provide a family focused, integrated service delivery system.			**Strategy Rationale** A community-based resource center would be a method of providing family centered, integrated services that are conducive to building strong, safe parent-child relationships. The center would serve as a central point of contact and connections for families and adopted or emancipated youth who are no longer receiving formal CWS, as well as for the general public needing information regarding resources and services.	
Milestones	4.1.1 Identify the partners who will be participants in the collaborative.	Timeframes	December 2007	Assigned to: KIDS Network, CAPC, First 5, CWS, Probation, CBOs
	4.1.2 Explore and identify the vision, goals, and services for the center		June 2008	The Collaborative
	4.1.3 Assess the functioning and possibility for expansion of the current Family Resource Centers or the Workforce Resource Centers to incorporate the identified concepts		December 2008	The Collaborative
	4.1.4 Pursue and obtain funding for the project.		June 2009	The Collaborative
	4.1.5 Identify and secure a location for the Resource Center		June 2009	The Collaborative

Outcome Factor: PERMANENCY AND STABILITY– 3B Multiple Foster Care Placements

County's Current Performance: 3B Our current rate is 83.5% compared to the State average of 84.7% (4/01/05-3/31/06). The Federal standard is 86.7% Our rate at the time of the previous SIP was 85.6% (10/1/02-9/30/03)

The beneficial direction of this measure is a decrease. To increase the stability of the County's children in care, CWS obtained funds in 2005 and 2006 for placement assistance staff, referred to as Home Connection Finders. This service sought relatives and connections for children in out of home care with the goal of providing relative placements, long-term connections, and permanency for the children. The project was very successful, which is reflected by the fact that at the time of the 2006 Self-Assessment, 43% of Santa Barbara County's children were in relative or non-related extended family placements. Currently, SB County has obtained CWSOIP funds for the 2006/2007 fiscal year to continue the project. With the rising number of children in care, comes the continuing challenge of maintaining sufficient placement resources to meet the needs of our children. SB County CWS hired a Foster Parent recruiter in 2006 in order to expand our placement resources. Additionally, the Hope program was expanded to be able to provide supportive, therapeutic services to all substitute care providers 24/7 and to provide additional stability to youth in placement. Currently, SB County CWS is collaborating with ADMHS, Probation, and CBOs to implement SB 163 in order to reduce the overall number of youth in group home care, and return them to their communities.

Improvement Goal 5: Increase support to relative/non-relative extended family members to increase their skills and ability to provide more stability and permanency for children placed in their care.

Improvement Goal 6: Increase support for children in Permanency Planning to promote permanency and stability in placement.

Strategy 6.1 Create more in county placements for older children, especially teenagers.			**Strategy Rationale** Children who are placed close to their connections are more likely to experience placement stability.		
Milestones	6.1.1	Recruit for and identify in-county placement homes that will serve teenagers.	Timeframes: November 2007	Assigned to:	Foster Parent Recruiter
	6.1.2	Evaluate the use of Specialized Care Increments to care providers accepting teenagers for placement.	December 2007		CWS Staff CWS Supervisors
	6.1.3	Increase focus on permanency for teens, using the Home Connection Finders as part of the identification process of relatives or connections who would be interested in providing permanency for teens.	July 2008		CWS Staff HCF Staff
	6.1.4	Increase focus on adoption and guardianship as a permanent plan for youth post .26 hearing	Ongoing		CWS Permanency Unit

Strategy 6.2 Establish the SB 163 WrapAround program in Santa Barbara County			**Strategy Rationale:** The SB 163 program will provide funding for services targeted to return and maintain youth in group home care to family like settings in their communities, either with family, non-related extended family members, or foster care.		
Milestones	6.2.1	Develop Policy and Procedures for Implementation of SB 163 in Santa Barbara County	Timeline: April 2007	Assigned to:	CWS Probation Alcohol Drug and Mental Health Services (ADMHS)
	6.2.2	Establish a tracking mechanism for youth involved in SB 163 to include fiscal resources and progress updates	April 2007		CWS

Outcome Factor: WELL-BEING

County's Current Performance: There is limited data collected to know specifically for Santa Barbara County how well youth are doing in transitioning to adulthood. Based on the limited data, County CWS and Probation appear to be performing well, yet as the research indicates, foster youth emancipating from care do not fare will in health, education, employment and housing arenas. Therefore, improving well-being for youth while in care and as they transition to self-sufficiency remains a high priority for Santa Barbara County. Anecdotally, CWS has learned of 6 youth who emancipated in 2006 that have now become homeless reinforcing the need to develop programs that enhance preparation for living independently and after care support for this population of youth.

Improvement Goal 7: Develop Transitional and Emancipating Youth Housing

Strategy 7.1 Transitional Housing Placement Program (THPP)

Strategy Rationale: Utilizing THPP for youth preparing for emancipation will assist them in gaining independence needed to succeed upon termination of dependency/wardship.

Milestones		Timeframes	Assigned to
7.1.1	State approval on THPP Plan	July 1, 2007 if approved	CDSS
7.1.2	Develop referral process for entry to THPP	July 2007	CWS Family Care Network (FCN)
7.1.3	Educate CWS and Probation staff on the program and referral process	August 2007	CWS ILP Program Coordinator CWS Training Supervisors
7.1.4	Implement THPP	September 2007	CWS Probation
7.1.5	Develop data system to collect outcome measures for youth in THPP	December 2007	CWS
7.1.6	Expansion countywide by Family Care Network (FCN)	January 2008 – Lompoc Region	FCN
7.1.7	County to look at host family/other models if property in the Santa Barbara region is not available	June 2008	CWS

	7.3.5 Educate youth, Social Workers, Probation officers, Independent Living Program (ILP) involved parties, and community members dealing with foster care youth		February 2009		CWS Probation
	7.3.6 Housing program should include aftercare supports like an aftercare case manager, family planning, mental health services, and education regarding utilizing Medi-Cal and health care services		March 2009		CWS Probation Interested Community Partners CBOs
	7.3.7 Open the LaMorada Facility		May 2009		CWS Probation Interested Community Partners CBOs
	7.3.8 Develop a system for tracking and monitoring outcomes for youth in the program		August 2009		CWS Probation
	7.3.9 Monitor program/facility operations		Ongoing		CWS Probation

	8.1.9	Utilize information from the assessment tool to write a targeted TILP		May 2008 - Ongoing	CWS Probation
	8.1.10	Link the youth to resources that will assist them with areas of identified need and support areas of identified strengths		May 2008 - Ongoing	CWS Probation ILP Contractor Foster Youth Services

Improvement Goal 9: Enhance Aftercare Support to Emancipated Youth

Strategy 9.1 Develop a Comprehensive Aftercare Support System for Emancipating Youth			**Strategy Rationale:** Youth emancipating from foster care need a continuing support system (like the families of youth in the general population) to assist them with knowledge and resources to enhance their successful transition into adulthood.	
Milestones	9.1.1	Research and secure financial resources to support an aftercare program	Timeframes: September 2007	Assigned to: CWS Probation Interested Community Partners
	9.1.2	Invite interested parties to develop, create, and implement an after care program (Youth Aftercare Support Workgroup)	October 2007	CWS
	9.1.3	Establish Aftercare Coordinators	January 2008	CWS Youth Aftercare Support Workgroup
	9.1.4	Identify key support people in each region from service delivery systems to serve as the main contact for aftercare coordinators and the youth	February 2008	Youth Aftercare Support Workgroup
	9.1.5	Develop a youth peer support network	February 2008	Youth Aftercare Support Workgroup ILP Youth

Systemic Factor: Medical and Dental Care in Child Welfare Services

County's Current Performance: County CWS has found it challenging to meet our children's medical and dental needs, due to the shortage of medical and dental providers willing to accept the County's contracted Medi-Cal program, Health Initiative, or provide treatment to children in care.

Improvement Goal 10: Expand resources available to foster youth for medical and dental care to ensure receipt of timely CHDP medical and dental exams

Strategy 10.1 Collaborate with the Children's Health Initiative, Medical/Dental Providers, and other entities pursuing the expansion of services to Medi-Cal eligible youth.

Strategy Rationale: There are not enough Medi-Cal providers to meet the demands of the community resulting in appointments not being scheduled for many months.

Milestones		Timeframes	Assigned to
10.1.1	Identify collaboratives focused on meeting the medical and dental needs of youth in Santa Barbara County.	September 2007	CWS DART Oral Health Initiative Health Linkages Children's Health Initiative
10.1.2	Participate in a collaborative to share the challenges facing foster youth, to learn of new resources, and to partner in resource development	December 2007	CWS DART Oral Health Initiative Health Linkages Children's Health Initiative
10.1.3	Explore and identify creative ways to expand medical/dental services to foster youth	January 2008	KIDS Network Oral Health Initiative Health Linkages Children's Health Initiative
10.1.4	Educate all staff on the resources/strategies available to support youth in having their medical/dental needs met.	June 2008	Community Collaboratives
10.1.5	Implement new strategies	July 2008	CWS Staff
10.1.6	Monitor progress	Ongoing	CWS

Strategy 11.2: Educate, train, and support staff in data diligence efforts		**Strategy Rationale:** Consistent standards for data entry related to specific responsibilities, tasks, and/or job functions are needed to support the goal of data diligence. In addition to improving Outcome Measures, CWS has become more focused on utilizing data for practice and process improvements.	
Milestones	Timeframes		Assigned to
11.2.1 Develop a new prioritized list of data diligence needs for distribution to CWS managers, supervisors, and staff		June 2007	CWS Operations & Support Division
11.2.2 Develop policy/procedure for key areas of data entry to ensure consistency		August 2007	CWS Operations & Support Division CWS Supervisors
11.2.3 Provide necessary technical assistance and/or training on policies, procedures, or practices related to data entry		October 2007	CWS Operations & Support Division CWS Team CWS Training Supervisors CWS Regional Training Academy
11.2.4 Develop data reports that reflect regional performance for monitoring and tracking of data diligence efforts		Ongoing	CWS Operations & Support Division
11.2.5 Monitor progress and confer regarding corrective actions		Ongoing	CWS Operations & Support Division CWS Team

VI. Appendix

SIP Team 2007

Name	Agency
Joe Pollon	Allan Hancock College
Carolyn Contreras	Community Action Commission
Cecilia Rodriguez	CALM
Amy Krueger	DSS - CWS
Cindy Nott	DSS - CWS
Deborah Hartman	DSS - CWS
Devin Drake	DSS - CWS
Jo Ann Peterson	DSS - CWS
Julie DeFranco	DSS - CWS
Kathy Davis	DSS - CWS
Katrina Vogt	DSS - CWS
Leticia Alvarez	DSS - CWS
Linda Walch	DSS - CWS
Lisa Garrison	DSS - CWS
Marianne Reagan	DSS - CWS
Melissa Hoesterey	DSS - CWS
Nancy Filkens-Russo	DSS - CWS
Nikki Smith	DSS - CWS
Sheila Martinez	DSS - CWS
Susan Gordon	DSS - CWS
Yolanda Perez	DSS - CWS
Pat Wheatley	First 5
Teressa Rodriguez-Johnes	First 5
Katarina Zulliger	Kids Network
Bob Del Real	Probation
Gilbert Ibarra	Probation
Martin Conoley	Probation
Judy Osterhage	Santa Barbara City College
Bonnie Beedles	Santa Barbara County Education Office
Judi Nishimori	Santa Maria Valley Youth and Family Counseling

Children's System of Care (formerly MISC Cross-Agency):

Attendees:

Bob Del Real – Probation	Sandra Fahey – ECMH
Deborah Hartman – CWS	Tanja Heitman – Probation
Melissa Hoesterey – CWS	Maureen Leonard – ADMHS
Margaret Lydon – SBMH Association	Paula Perotte – Parent Advisory Council
Amanda Pyper – Casa Pacifica	Cecillia Rodriguez – CALM
David Scott – CAC	Tom Sodergren – Casa Pacifica
Linda Tuttle – ADMHS	Scott Whiteley – ADMHS
Margaret Dodge – Sojourn	Carol Metcalf
Rebecca Herron – Sojourn	Jim McKinney - SBCEO
Suzanne Grimmesey-Kirk - ADMHS	

Juvenile Court:

Attendees:

Judge Arthur Garcia	Carol Hubner-children's counsel
Francine Kelly-children's counsel	Robert Ostrin-parent's counsel
Jennifer Mills-CASA	Bonnie Beedles-Foster Youth Services
Gloria Sanchez-Foster Youth Services	Deputy Jim Bull
Carol Wingereid-CWS	Chris Farro-CWS
Laurie Haro-CWS	Cindy Nott-CWS

Child Welfare Services Regional Meeting, Santa Maria

Attendees:

Erica Perez	Barbara Bock
Susan Tognazzini	Claudia Kindell
Theda Parker	Alex Gonzales
Teresa Allman	Gisselle Rosas
Katy Hardman	Robert Luna
Laura Anadon	Gail Sarten

Child Welfare Services Team Meeting:

Attendees:

Devin Drake	Jan Stricklin
Debra Hartman	Amy Krueger
Nancy Filkins-Russo	Carol Wingereid
Jennifer Dale	Leticia Alvarez
Linda Walch	Carol Karnauskas
Cindy Nott	

Note: Sign-in sheets may not have all been completed. Our apologies to any participants who are not listed.

Superior Court of Santa Barbara County
Tri-Counties Regional Center
UCSB Community Affairs Associated Students
United Way
Workforce Investment Board
Workforce Investment Board Youth Council
YMCA

CWSOIP – CWS Outcome Improvement Project – CDSS offered additional funds to counties through a competitive grant process for system improvement projects.

Differential Response is a concept proposed in CWS Redesign where CWS Referrals will be evaluated for the level of risk and responded to by either CWS or a community partner agency.

DSS – Department of Social Services

DV Solutions – Domestic Violence Solutions is a local CBO.

ECMH – Early Childhood Mental Health is a local initiative to extend mental health and developmental services to children birth to 5 years of age.

Family to Family (F2F) is an initiative sponsored by the Annie E. Casey Foundation to engage the community to better serve children and families. Technical Assistance is being provided by a Stuart Foundation grant.

Family Maintenance (FM) is a term used by CWS for services delivered by CWS to children residing in their home. FM can be either voluntarily requested by the family or ordered by the Juvenile Court.

Families for the 1st Decade is a Santa Maria City community based collaboration between human services and the schools to address the needs of educationally limited low income neighborhoods.

Family Drug Court Initiative is an exploratory group sponsored by the Public Defender.

Family Resource Centers are community based neighborhood centers providing multiple services at local sites countywide.

Family Violence Coalition is a collaborative effort of regional groups to address Domestic Violence issues and promote interagency collaboration.

First Five Commission is the governing body for the administration of Proposition 10 child development funds.

Front Porch is a program funded by PSSF and operated by Community Action Commission under contract with County CWS to serve lower risk families referred to them by CWS. It is the first effort by County CWS to pilot Differential Response.

Head Start is the Federal program to assist low-income children and their families.

Healthy Families is a California medical insurance program for children.

Healthy Start is a school based service established in seven locations countywide and partially supported by PSSF funds.

HEP – Health and Education Passport is a CWS document that contains health and education information for a foster child.

Resource Family is a foster family (kin or non-kin), respite provider, or natural support for birth families.

RST is the CalWORKs funded ADMHS Resource Support Team

SART – Sexual Assault Response Team is a County-CBO collaboration between DSS, law enforcement, District Attorney, Health Care Services, and CALM to provide coordinated investigation of sexual assault and abuse.

Santa Maria Valley Youth and Family Center (SMVYFC) is a CBO providing services to children and families in North County.

Shelter Services for Women is a local CBO providing services to victims of domestic violence (countywide).

Sojourn –Sojourn Services is a CBO that delivers in home services to lessen the risk of child abuse and neglect.

TBS - Therapeutic Behavioral Services is a type of mental health service available to Medi-Cal eligible youth under 21 years of age who have serious emotional problems.

TDM – Team Decision Making meetings are part of the Family to Family Initiative where CWS concerns, family strengths, and resource supports are identified and discussed between CWS, birth families, service providers, youth, and natural family supports.

TFC - Therapeutic Foster Care is a CWS, CALM and SMVYFC collaboration to enhance resource, training and support for foster parents who care for children with more serious behavioral and emotional needs.

Therapeutic Justice Advisory Council is an interagency policy level council formed to promote and advance alternate court models such as Mental Health Treatment Court and Teen Drug Court.

Tri-Counties Regional Center TCRC is a contract agency with the State of California that provides supports and services for children and adults with developmental disabilities living in San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties.

UCB Performance Indicators are done by UC Berkeley, Center for Social Services Research.

UCSB Evaluations – UC Santa Barbara provides research support and analysis for DSS and Probation, and Mental Health.

WEB – Welcome Every Baby is a countywide home visitation program serving all newborn children through age 9 months.