



COUNTY OF DEL NORTE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
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Gary R. Blatnick, Director/Public Guardian

January 23, 2009

Children's Services Operations and Evaluations Bureau
744 P Street, M.S. 3-90
Sacramento, CA 95814
Attention: Mary Ellen Borba

RE: Del Norte County Child Welfare Services and Probation Department System Improvement Plan (SIP)
Annual Update Report

We have enclosed our Annual Update Report regarding the SIP progress. The activities that were completed during 2008 are outlined in the attached document.

Our designated individual who is responsible for the SIP administration is:

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Sincerely,

Gary R. Blatnick, Director
Department of Health and Human Services

Connie Merrill, Chief Probation Officer
Probation Department

Enclosure: SIP Update Report

Del Norte County Health and Human Services Child Welfare Services and Del Norte County Probation 2009 System Improvement Plan Update

Outcome/Systemic Factor:

S1.1 NO RECURRENCE OF MALTREATMENT: This safety measure reflects the percentage of children who were victims of a substantiated or indicated child maltreatment allegation within the first 6 months of a specified time period for whom there was no additional substantiated maltreatment allegation during the subsequent 6 months. The denominator is the total number of children with a substantiated allegation during the first 6 months of the period; the numerator is the count of these children who had no other substantiated allegation in the following 6 months.

Improvement Goal 1.0

Increase the effectiveness of efforts to protect children from abuse and neglect as measured by a 10% improvement in Federal Indicator S1.1 – No Recurrence of Maltreatment by October of 2010.

Baseline October 2007: 83.1% (participation rate 74 out of 89)
 October 2008: 87.4% (participation rate 90 out of 103)

Strategy 1. 1

Continue to apply Structured Decision Making Safety, Risk and Strengths and Needs Assessment Tools to all referrals and cases

Strategy Rationale

Intake is standardized and can be completed by all workers using the same criteria. Immediate harm and future risk can be assessed based on a consistent and agreed upon set of definitions. Regular use of the tools will promote the most efficient use of limited resources. Families with the highest level of need will receive services.

Milestone	<p>1.1.1 Continue to apply Structured Decision Making Tools to all referrals and cases</p>	Activities Completed	Assigned to
		<p>Structured Decision Making Tools are used in each referral and case.</p> <p>Review of SDM from April 2008 to September 2008, indicates that the Department received 378 reports of suspected abuse, neglect and/or exploitation.</p> <p>* Hotline Tool and Path Decision was applied to 99.1% of the 378 referrals received.</p> <p>Out of the 378 reports, the Department responded to 232.</p> <p>The Safety Assessment is required to be completed within 2 days of the initial face-to-face and the Risk Assessment is to be completed prior to the closing of the referral.</p> <p>* Safety Assessment was completed timely for 230/232 referrals.</p> <p>* Risk Assessment was completed timely for 230/232 referrals.</p>	<p>Susan Wilson – Intake Supervisor Julie Cain – On-going Supervisor Crystal Markytan – Program Manager, Social Services Branch Roy Jackson- Wraparound/Visitation/Special Projects Supervisor</p>

<p>1.1.2 Monitor areas of the child welfare system where Structured Decision Making is not being applied based on reports from Children’s Research Center and data from Safe Measures. Give feedback to supervisors and staff in areas where compliance with goal is not being met</p>	<p>Each month, beginning August 2008, a SDM “Investigation Summary Report” is reviewed and copies are given to both the intake and on-going supervisor.</p> <p>The report includes Hotline Tool Completion, Hotline Screening Decision, Safety Assessment Completion, Safety Assessment Time to Completion, Risk Assessment Completion, Risk Assessment Time to Completion, Initial Family Strengths and Needs Assessment Completion, and Initial Family Strengths and Needs Assessment Time to Completion.</p> <p>Data is reviewed with staff during unit meetings and general CWS staff meetings so that CWS can work together toward the common goals.</p> <p>A policy and procedure was developed in July of 2008.</p>	<p>Susan Wilson – Intake Supervisor Julie Cain – On-going Supervisor Roy Jackson- Wraparound/Visitation/Special Projects Supervisor</p>
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Strategy 1. 2
Retain CalWORKs-Child Welfare Services Partnership (Linkages)

Strategy Rationale
Linkages is a promising practice which has been in place in Del Norte County for the past seven years. It recognizes that poverty is a significant risk factor for child abuse and neglect and supports the coordinated assessment, case planning, and service delivery in Child Welfare Services and CalWORKs.

<p>1.2.1. Continue to refer all eligible Family Maintenance cases to Linkages.</p>		<p>Social workers refer all eligible Family Maintenance cases to Linkages. A formal policy to be established by May 2009.</p>		<p>Susan Wilson –Linkages Coordinator/Intake Supervisor</p>
<p>1.2.2 Monitor areas of the Linkages program where the referrals are not being made or the program is not being applied and give feedback to supervisors or staff on how to improve program effectiveness.</p>	<p>Activities Completed</p>	<p>Supervisor reviews SDM each month to determine client participation in the program.</p> <p>Intake supervisor meets weekly with their staff to discuss all FM and VFM cases.</p> <p>The Linkages group meetings occur a minimum of once every two months to discuss Linkages and AB 429 case plans which are developed to avoid duplication and conflicting service components between CalWORKS and CWS.</p> <p>Linkages Plan was revised in 2008. Major change includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - After care as part of the Linkages/AB 429 Plan <p>Establish a policy and procedure implementing a tracking system for Linkages. The tracking system will integrate information from the assigned Integrated Case Worker and the assigned Social Worker. The tracking system will be implemented by May, 2009.</p>	<p>Assigned to</p>	<p>Susan Wilson –Linkages Coordinator/ Intake Supervisor Amber Davis- Staff Services Analyst</p>

<p>Strategy 1.3 Increase the Emergency Response and Voluntary Family Maintenance caseload capacity</p>		<p>Strategy Rationale The Emergency Response/Family Maintenance Unit should have four Master's level social workers with a total of seven full time social workers. Over the period of the last System Improvement Plan, this unit did not achieve full staffing due to the inability to recruit and retain social workers.</p> <p>Emergency Response and Family Maintenance services are evidence-informed activities designed to assess child safety and provide in-home protective services to prevent or remediate abuse and neglect. Voluntary Family Maintenance emphasizes engaging families in the change process rather than substantiating allegations. Both are pre-placement preventative services and sustained full staffing would predict that a lower incidence of reoccurrence would take place.</p>			
Milestone	<p>1.3.1 Recruit and retain two masters level social workers for Family Maintenance Services</p>	Activities Completed	<p>Del Norte County was unable to recruit any MSW social workers for Family Maintenance services.</p> <p>Currently, there are two SWII's.</p>	Assigned to	<p>Crystal Markytan – Program Manager, Social Services Branch</p>
	<p>1.3.2 Recruit and retain two masters level social workers for Emergency Response Services</p>		<p>Since November of 2007 we have had ten social worker recruitments. We were able to recruit 1 MSW investigating Social Worker.</p> <p>Additionally in Emergency Response we have 1 SW II investigating referrals 1 SW II screening referrals</p>		<p>Crystal Markytan – Program Manager, Social Services Branch</p>
	<p>1.3.3 Train the Emergency Response and Family Maintenance social workers</p>		<p>Social workers attend:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * CWS first & second phase CORE * Differential Response Intake *Safe Measures and Ongoing SDM. 		<p>Crystal Markytan – Program Manager, Social Services Branch Susan Wilson – Linkages Coordinator/Intake Supervisor</p>

			*Local policies including: Drug endangered child, SART exams, emergency relative placement, Family Search and Engagement.	
Strategy 1. 4		Strategy Rationale		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Differential Response - Life Elevation Action Program (LEAP) Differential Response - Public Health Nursing-Home Visiting Program 		Maintaining a differential Child Welfare Services Intake structure that includes contracting with community based service providers insures that a larger proportion of referrals will receive change oriented services at an earlier point in the intervention process.		
Milestone	1.4.1 Maintain contract with Community Assistance Network for Life Elevation Action Program (LEAP) services.	Activities Completed	Contract with LEAP continues.	Assigned to
	1.4.2 Offer all eligible families community based services when they do not meet the criteria for a Child Welfare Response		Contract with PHN Home Visiting program is on hold. The Public Health Branch is currently recruiting for Public Health Nurses. All families that meet the criteria for LEAP are referred by the intake social worker. Presentation of Child Welfare Prevention and Early Intervention Services was given at the Children's Services Coordinating Council on October 16, 2008. Bi-annual presentations will be given to accommodate membership changes. The goal of the presentations will be to inform our community partners about pre-placement services that exist in our community. A presentation on Child Welfare Prevention and Early Intervention Services (CWPEI Services) was	

			<p>made to the Community in the Board of Supervisors Chambers at the Meth Forum on January 22, 2009.</p> <p>The goal is to make regular presentations to the community, upon request, about the status of CWPEI Services in the community.</p> <p>A presentation on CWPEI Services was made to the System Improvement Plan/Blue Ribbon Commission Meeting on March 9, 2009.</p> <p>The goal is to create a workgroup around CWPEI Services in the community.</p>		
<p>Strategy 1.5 Team Decision Making</p>			<p>Strategy Rationale Evidenced Based strategy used to reduce the number of placements, placement changes and increase child safety by including family and committed team members in placement decisions every time a placement decision is made. The strategy includes the use of an in-house trained facilitator.</p>		
Milestone	<p>1.5.1 Train staff, community partners and other interested parties on principles of Team Decision Making</p>	Activities Completed	<p>This Strategy is on Hold. Budget constraints have prevented Del Norte From training and implementing an additional program that would require an independent staff person.</p> <p>The goal is to re-look at the feasibility of this strategy in the next fiscal year.</p>	Assigned to	<p>Crystal Markytan – Program Manager, Social Services Branch Tom Crowell – Assistant Chief, Probation</p>
	<p>1.5.2 Implement Team Decision Making – Emergency Response and Family Maintenance</p>				

1.5.3 Implement Team Decision Making – Family Reunification and Permanency Planning				
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Outcome/Systemic Factor:

C1.3: Reunification Within 12 Months (Entry Cohort): This measure computes the percentage of children reunified within 12 months of removal for a cohort of children first entering foster care. The entry cohort is comprised of children entering foster care for the first time during a 6-month period. This measure contributes to the first permanency composite.

The 12 month cutoff to reunification is based on the latest date of removal from the home with children in care for less than 8 days excluded. Children with a current placement of “trial home visit” are included in the count of children reunified in less than 12 months if that visit lasted at least 30 days, its start-date fell within 11 months of the latest removal date, and it was the final placement before the child was discharged from foster care to reunification.

The denominator is the total number of children in the 6-month entry cohort; the numerator is the count of children in the cohort who were reunified within 12 months of removal.

Improvement Goal 2.0
 Increase the effectiveness of efforts to reunify children safely to their own homes within twelve months of the date of removal as measured by a 20% improvement in Federal Measure C1.3: Reunification Within 12 Months (Entry Cohort) by October 2010.

Baseline October 2007: 23.8 % (participation rate 5 out of 21)
 October 2008: 17.4 % (participation rate 4 out of 23)

Strategy 2.1
 Case Transfer Protocol

Strategy Rationale
 Protocol will formalize the process of promoting a referral to a case which includes completing; all necessary case management activities, data collection fields and pertinent documentation and the introduction to clients and out of home caregivers. The implementation of a protocol will ensure that information is transferred most efficiently and that families receive the best services possible.

Milestone	2.1.1 Create a workgroup to develop the protocol – include members of the intake unit and the ongoing unit	Activities Completed	A workgroup consisting of both the intake and ongoing unit created the case transfer policy (June 2008).	Assigned to	Julie Cain – Ongoing Supervisor Susan Wilson – Intake Supervisor
	2.1.2 Provide staff training and implement the Case Transfer Protocol		The case transfer policy was implemented July 2008. Supervisors trained staff in their unit meetings and discussed the case transfer protocol and procedures at the general CWS staff meeting. New social workers will be briefed on the case transfer policy during their orientation training.		Julie Cain – Ongoing Supervisor Susan Wilson – Intake Supervisor
Strategy 2.2 Refer all children to Remi Vista Inc., a mental health Medi-Cal organizational provider, for mental health assessment and on-going services as needed.			Strategy Rationale Early mental health assessment will identify problem areas and allow for targeted treatment of children and their families or caregivers.		
Milestone	2.2.1 Continue to refer all children to Remi Vista Inc. for a mental health assessment within 30 days of the Detention Hearing. This should occur when the court has ordered the child detained and if the child is not already an established mental health client or a client of alternative counseling services.	Activities Completed	All children who have been detained are being referred to Remi Vista for a mental health assessment within 30 days of detention, unless they already have an established provider (June, 2007).	Assigned to	Julie Cain - Ongoing Supervisor Karen Dieter – Remi Vista, Clinical Supervisor
	2.2.2 Monitor that referrals are being made timely and that assessments are being scheduled by the service provider.		Legal clerk began tracking referrals to Remi Vista in a binder in June, 2007 (formal Policy and Procedure in process). A minimum of one meeting per month occurs with DHHS and Remi Vista staff. Meeting topics: * Review which families are accessing services.		Marci Clough, Legal Clerk Julie Cain - Ongoing Supervisor Karen Dieter – Remi Vista, Clinical Supervisor

			<p>*Scheduling and completing assessments.</p> <p>Reports are electronically mailed to the case carrying social worker.</p>	
<p>Strategy 2.3 Refer families who meet the criteria to Strengthening Families Program (SFP)</p>		<p>Strategy Rationale Evidence based program for families with children ages 10 -14 who have problems with substance use and/or abuse, child behavior problems, dysfunctional family interactions and poor parenting skills. The program is interactive and involves both the parents and the youth. Weekly in class participation and out of class assignments assist to break the cycle of generational family dysfunction.</p>		
Milestone	<p>2.3.1 Using the SDM Strengths and Needs Assessment Tool determine if the family is a good candidate for SFP.</p>	Activities Completed	<p>The SDM Strengths and Needs Tool is completed by the social worker and the family to determine if they would benefit from participation in the SFP (March, 2008).</p>	Assigned to
	<p>2.3.2 SFP becomes part of the client's written case plan. Client engages in next available session offered.</p>		<p>If SFP is recommended, the social worker adds this information to the family's case plan. A referral is given to the Community Assistance Network and the family can enroll in the next available session.</p>	
	<p>2.3.3 Protocol developed for referral to CAN - SDFFC Program</p>		<p>A protocol for making referrals (August 2007) within the county network is in place and will be used for making a referral to CAN-SFP.</p>	
<p>Strategy 2.4 Apply the Structured Decision Making "Reunification Reassessment" Tool to all Family Reunification cases with specified periodicity. Follow the reunification recommendations unless documentation shows well established rationale for deviation.</p>		<p>Strategy Rationale Application of Structured Decision Making Safety, Risk and Strength and Needs Assessment Tools to all referrals and cases consistently and correctly under direction of unit supervisors and with technical assistance from Children's Research Center provides for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highly structured assessments of child safety, family risk and 		

		<p>strength and needs as recommended in the California Child and Family Services Review System Improvement Plan,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A system of case review and reassessment to supplement, as required by California Department of Social Services Child Welfare Services regulations, and • A comprehensive information system that provides data for program monitoring, planning, and evaluation 			
Milestone	<p>2.4.1 Document outcome of SDM “Reunification Reassessment” Tool in all dependency court report updates. Make specific reference to the visitation quality and compliance.</p>	Activities Completed	<p>Social Workers continue to utilize SDM “Reunification Reassessment” Tool before each six month court review. The information is relayed to the court in reports and used to assist in determining the Department’s decision to either continue services to the family, return child home, or begin permanency planning for the child.</p>	Assigned to	<p>Julie Cain – Ongoing Supervisor</p>
	<p>2.4.2 Check Safe Measures for compliance of Family Reunification social workers. Give social workers monthly feedback.</p>		<p>A monthly report is generated to determine social worker efficiency in completing the Reunification Reassessment Tool and given to the ongoing unit supervisor.</p> <p>In addition, the ongoing supervisor discusses the monthly report with social workers during their conference.</p> <p>Began process in July 2008. Formal Policy and Procedure will be developed.</p>		<p>Julie Cain – Ongoing Supervisor Roy Jackson- Wraparound/Visitation/Special Projects Supervisor</p>
	<p>2.4.3 Meet with CRC consultant Rod Caskey twice yearly to discuss worker progress</p>		<p>Consultation with Rod Caskey scheduled for April, 2009.</p>		<p>Crystal Markytan – Program Manager, Social Services Branch Rod Caskey – Children’s Research Center</p>

<p>Strategy 2.5 Retain and strengthen CalWORKs-Child Welfare Services Partnership – Linkages/AB-429 coordinated case planning.</p>	<p>Strategy Rationale Linkages/AB-429 is a promising practice which has been in place in Del Norte county for the past seven years. It recognizes that poverty is a significant risk factor for child abuse and neglect and supports the coordinated assessment, case planning, and service delivery in Child Welfare Services and CalWORKs.</p>
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Milestone	<p>2.5.1 Refer all families of children entering out of home placement for AB-429 services – Document in the case record.</p>	Activities Completed	Assigned to	<p>Julie Cain – Ongoing Supervisor Susan Wilson- Intake Supervisor/ Linkages Coordinator</p>
	<p>2.5.2 Record AB - 429 status in the case contacts of CWS/CMS</p>			<p>Social workers documents families receiving AB 429 services in the contact section of CWS/CMS.</p> <p>AB 429 cases are tracked manually in a binder. This method will begin on March 1, 2009. This method replaces the special projects codes, used since 2004, and was found to be ineffective.</p>

<p>Strategy 2.6 In each case where the case plan goal is Family Reunification provide a concurrent plan and; document monthly contacts with the parents about the status of the case plan and the concurrent plan.</p>	<p>Strategy Rationale Permanency alternate goal planning and case management activities to support that goal are required by California Department of Social Service Manual of Policies and Procedure section 31-201.12 Parents will be fully informed of all concurrent goal planning and their input will be sought in determining what that plan should be.</p>
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Milestone	2.6.1 Include a concurrent case plan goal in each initial and updated Family Reunification case plan	Activities Completed	Social worker selects a concurrent case plan goal for each child placed out- of- home and documents plan in CWS/CMS.	Assigned to	Julie Cain – Ongoing Supervisor
	2.6.2 Regular training on concurrent case planning including once yearly training with California State Adoptions		In-service for CWS staff by California State Adoption on concurrent planning was held on June 23, 2008. Regular monthly meetings occur between State Adoptions and DHHS on-going services staff.		Suite Wheeler, Adoption Specialist Supervisor, State Adoptions Tedee Boyland, Senior Adoptions Specialist, California State Adoptions Crystal Markytan – Program Manager, Social Services Branch Julie Cain – Ongoing Supervisor
Strategy 2.7 Implement Family Search and Engagement techniques to find more relative resources for children earlier in the dependency process.			Strategy Rationale This evidence based strategy is employed at the “front end” of the system to aide the social worker in asking the question of who the child may have available as a placement resource in a broader way than has been done in the past. This begins the expanded effort for concurrent planning. Search techniques learned will enable the social worker/probation officer to contact a larger pool of resources for a specific child. Engagement techniques assist the social worker/probation officer to first establish then maintain a long term committed relationship between the child and the resource. Additionally, this strategy can be used in the “back end” of a case to help find permanent homes for youth who have been in long term foster care placements for lack of a better permanent plan.		
Milestone	2.7.1 Contract with Northern California Training Academy at the University of California at Davis – Center for Family Focused Practice for training and technical support	Activities Completed	The Department contracted with Northern California Training Academy and trained social workers on Family Search and Engagement.	Assigned to	Crystal Markytan – Program Manager, Social Services Branch Eileen Myster – Probation Supervisor
	Train Child Welfare and Probation staff and interested community partners		Community partners that attended were from Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA), LEAP, Del Norte Superior Court, Probation Department, Foster Youth Services DNCOE.		

	<p>Training for DHHS staff and community partners occurred on February 26, 2008, March 25, 2008, and April 29, 2008.</p>	
<p>2.7.2 Develop protocols and procedures for Family Search and Engagement Techniques</p>	<p>Program manager implemented Family Search and Engagement (February 2008).</p> <p>Workgroup created in December 2008 and first meeting held on January 29, 2009. Work group will create formal protocol and procedures.</p> <p>To encourage initial relative placement, the Department created, implemented, and trained CWS social workers on “Emergency Placement with a Relative/Non-related extended family member (NREFM) in April 2008.</p> <p>To accommodate initial Tribal placement for Indian children, the Department created, implemented, and trained social workers on the “Tribe Approved Home” process. (August 2008).</p> <p>Both policies and forms are available to social workers via a shared drive on their computer.</p>	<p>Crystal Markytan – Program Manager, Social Services Branch Eileen Myster – Probation Supervisor Amber Davis – Staff Services Analyst</p>
<p>Strategy 2.8 Incredible Years Parenting Program</p>	<p>Strategy Rationale Evidenced based parenting program.</p>	

Milestone	<p>2.8.1 Use Structured Decision Making Family Strengths and Needs Assessment Tool to determine the benefit of a parenting program to the over all service plan for each family with children ages 0-10. If the family will benefit from the service, make the referral to the Del Norte County Child Care Council for the Incredible Years (IY) parenting program.</p>	Activities Completed	<p>SDM “Strengths and Needs” tool is completed on all families. If determined the family will benefit from parent education and there is a child between the ages of 0-10 living in the home, the social worker will refer the family to the Incredible Years Parenting Program.</p>	Assigned to	<p>Susan Wilson – Intake Supervisor Julie Cain – Ongoing Supervisor</p>
	<p>Track families that have participated in the Incredible Years parenting program for re-referral for abuse and/or neglect and children of families that have participated in IY for re-entry into out-of-home placement in the Child Welfare System.</p>		<p>A policy was created to define the procedure for DHHS staff to refer to the Incredible Years Parenting Program. Implementation for procedure completed (August 2008).</p> <p>The legal clerk and IY coordinator track referrals from DHHS to IY.</p> <p>The staff services analyst reviews participant’s outcomes for re-entry into out-of-home placement and recurrence of maltreatment.*</p> <p><u>2007: 38 participant referrals to IY</u></p> <p>* 15/ participants were not in a case and did not have a re-referral.</p> <p>* 22 participants remained in active case after class but did not have a re-referral.</p> <p>* 1 participant had a re-referral and re-entry into out of home placement.</p> <p><u>2008: 56 participant referrals to IY</u></p>		<p>Amber Davis – Staff Services Analyst Marcie Clough- Legal Clerk Melodee Waggener, Parent Education Program Coordinator (IY)</p>

		<p>* 11 participants were not in a case and did not have a re-referral.</p> <p>* 43 participants remained in active case after class but did not have a re-referral.</p> <p>* 2 participants had a re-referral and re-entry into out of home placement.</p>	
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Outcome/Systemic Factor:
C1.4 Permanency of reunification: This measure computes the percentage of children reentering foster care within 12 months of a reunification discharge. The denominator is the total number of children who exited foster care to reunification in a 12 month period; the numerator is the count of these reunified children who then reentered care within 365 days of the reunification discharge date. This measure contributes to the first permanency composite.

Improvement Goal 3.0
Reduce the number of children by 20% who re-enter foster care subsequent to reunification or guardianship by January 2010.

October 2007: 29.1% (participation rate 16 out of 55)
October 2008: 12.1% (participation rate 7 out of 58)

<p>Strategy 3.1 Commitment to Differential Response intake structure:</p> <p>Pathway 2: Child Welfare assessment and joint community based response with an offer of community based services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life Elevation Action Program (LEAP) and • Public Health Nursing Home Visiting Program (PHNHVP) 	<p>Strategy Rationale Provide families with an opportunity to work with community based partners to bring about stability in their homes through a non-adversarial process.</p>
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Milestone	3.1.1 Assess referrals using a Differential Response model at intake.	Activity	It is policy to use a Differential Response model during referral intake. Differential Response was	Assigned	Susan Wilson – Intake Supervisor/ Linkages Coordinator
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		implemented in July of 2004.	
<p>3.1.2 Offer all families that meet Pathway 2 criteria (without safety factors) community based service option during a joint assessment with LEAP or PHNHVP.</p>		<p>Once safety factors are stabilized or determined not to be present by Emergency Response or Intake social worker, a joint visit is completed and families are offered community based services.</p>	<p>Susan Wilson – Intake Supervisor/ Linkages Coordinator Doug Morgan – Executive Director, CAN</p>
<p>Strategy 3.3 Apply the Structured Decision Making “Family Strengths and Needs Assessment” and “Reunification Reassessment” Tools to all Family Reunification cases</p>		<p>Strategy Rationale Application of Structured Decision Making “Family Strength and Needs Assessment” and “Reunification Reassessment” tools to all Family Reunification cases consistently and correctly under direction of unit supervisors and with technical assistance from Children’s Research Center provides for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly structured assessment of the families strengths and needs, helps to determine the level of service and “drives” the case plan, • A tool to aide in the consideration of returning the child home from foster care. It systematically reassesses risk, safety, compliance with the case plan, and visitation quality and compliance. 	

Milestone	<p>3.3.1 Use the Structured Decision Making “Family Strengths and Needs Assessment” tool for the basis of all initial and updated case plan documents.</p>	Activities Completed	<p>Social workers complete SDM “Family Strengths and Needs Assessment” for all cases in need of an initial or updated case plan. A copy of the assessment is provided to the supervisor for approval, along with the case plan. This process is currently in place on an informal basis. The goal is to complete a formal Policy and Procedure by July, 2009.</p>	Assigned to	<p>Susan Wilson – Intake Supervisor Julie Cain – Ongoing Supervisor</p>
	<p>3.3.2 Use the Structured Decision Making “Reunification Reassessment” tool to reassess Family Reunification cases at the time of Dependency Status Review Hearings</p>		<p>SDM Reunification Reassessment tool is being used consistently and monitored by the supervisor as needed.</p>		<p>Julie Cain – Ongoing Supervisor</p>
	<p>3.3.3 Use Safe Measures to monitor social worker compliance with use of the Structured Decision Making tools.</p>		<p>A monthly SDM report of “Investigation Compliance Summary” is generated and given to the intake and ongoing supervisors each month (January 2008).</p>		<p>Roy Jackson- Wraparound/Visitation/Special Projects Supervisor Susan Wilson – Intake Supervisor Julie Cain – Ongoing Supervisor</p>
<p>Strategy 3.4 Review and refine protocol for parent-child visitation implementing best practice standards.</p>			<p>Strategy Rationale Research indicates that quality parent-child visitation is the most highly correlated component to successful reunification.</p>		

Milestone	3.4.1 Convene workgroup to review best practice standards for parent-child visitation congruent with successful reunification	Activities Completed	<p>Research indicates that quality parent-child visitation is the most highly correlated component to successful family reunification services.</p> <p>CWS invited community partners to participate in a workgroup to review best practice standards for parent-child visitation.</p> <p>The workgroup met: September 22, 2008 October 30, 2008 November 30, 2008 December 18, 2008 January 15, 2009 February 26, 2009</p>	Assigned to	Roy Jackson- Wraparound/Visitation/Special Projects Supervisor
	3.4.2 Workgroup to review existing protocol and practices for parent-child visitation		<p>Overview of this outcome measure, best practice standards, and current protocol was completed in the first workgroup session. The workgroup is reviewing and changing the protocol/policy as needed.</p>		Roy Jackson- Wraparound/Visitation/Special Projects Supervisor
	3.4.3 Workgroup to move forward with modifications to protocol so that it is consistent with the objective of using best practices towards achieving successful reunification through parent-child visitation.		<p>As of March, 2009 the new protocol is 75% completed.</p>		Roy Jackson- Wraparound/Visitation/Special Projects Supervisor

<p>Strategy 3.5 Expand Linkages: CalWORKs and Child Welfare Collaboration to Improve Outcomes for those families who have formally exited the “system”.</p>	<p>Strategy Rationale By providing one additional year of step down, “after care” services families can stabilize by consolidating the gains they made in treatment programs and supportive services while not having to shoulder the</p>
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		burdens of day to day living without any form of support. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent with the goal of the 2007-8 Linkages Plan • Assists families as they becomes less dependent on agency interaction • Provides for in-person, bi-monthly non-adversarial monitoring 			
Milestone	3.5.1 Convene workgroup to develop a protocol to expand services to the aftercare population	Activities Completed	CWS invited their community partners to become part of the workgroup which would review the current protocol for aftercare services. Meetings took place: January 15, 2009 February 19, 2009 March 19, 2009	Assigned to	Susan Wilson -Linkages Coordinator
	3.5.2 Begin service delivery to aftercare population		Informally serving this population since 2006. Goal is for formal protocol to be completed by July, 2009.		

Outcome/Systemic Factor:

C2.4 Permanency of children in foster care: Legally freed within 6 months. This measure computes the percentage of children who were in foster care for 17 continuous months or longer and not legally free for adoption within the next 6 months. The denominator consists of all children in foster care for 17 continuous months or longer who, on the first day of the period, were not yet legally free; the numerator included those children who were then declared legally free within the next 6 months (including the first and last days of the 6 month interval). This measure contributes to the second permanency composite.

A child is considered to be legally free for adoption if there is a parental rights termination date recorded for all parents with legal standing. If a parent is deceased, the date of death is reported as the parental rights termination date.

Children in care for 17 continuous months or longer on the first day of the period who are then declared legally free at some point between that first day or the last day of the 6 month period are counted in the numerator (i.e., legally free within 6 months). Also included in the numerator are any children declared legally free and then discharged during the 6 month interval.

Excluded in the measure (i.e., not counted in either the numerator or the denominator) are those children who were in care for 17 continuous months or longer, but who did not become legally free for adoption, instead exiting foster care during the next 6 months with a placement episode termination reason of reunification with parents or primary caretakers, or discharge to guardianship.

Improvement Goal 4.0

Of children in foster care continuously for 17 months, increase the percentage that becomes legally freed for adoption within the subsequent six month period by 5% by January of 2010.

October 2007: 7.1% (participation rate 1/14)

October 2008: 15.8% (participation rate 3/19)

Outcome Improvement Goal has been met.

<p>Strategy 4.1 Monthly case staffing between California State Adoptions case workers and Ongoing Unit Supervisor to determine the status of current adoptions referrals.</p>		<p>Strategy Rationale All referrals made to State Adoptions for concurrent planning should be made by Disposition. Regular staffing will serve to insure that initial referrals are being made. It will also function as a forum for noticing the Department when there is missing information in the Adoptions file. And any impediment to achieving permanence within the subsequent six month period.</p>	
<p>Milestone</p>	<p>4.1.1 Set a day and week of the month for a regularly scheduled meeting to occur.</p>	<p>Activities Completed</p>	<p>Setting a specific day and week of the month did not fit with staff schedules. Therefore the regular monthly meetings that occur between State Adoptions and DHHS on-going staff, are scheduled a month at a time. (July 2008)</p>
		<p>Assigned to</p>	<p>Julie Cain, Ongoing Supervisor Tedee Boyland, Senior Adoptions Specialist, California State Adoptions</p>
<p>Strategy 4.2 Use Safe Measures to find which cases historically have not been freed for adoption within the six months subsequent to 17 months in foster care.</p>		<p>Strategy Rationale Determine if there is a pattern in the cases where children have not been freed for adoption within the six month period following 17 months of foster care. If so, what pattern emerged, and how can it be addressed in terms of case management?</p>	

Milestone	<p>4.2.1 Using Safe Measures, go back to previous 6 month intervals to see what cases did not meet the standard of having been legally freed for adoption after 17 months in care during the subsequent 6 months.</p>	Activities Completed	<p>Reviewed Safe Measure Report <u>C2.4 Legally free within six months</u> from (Matching Q1 2007 to Q1 2008 from U.C Berkeley Data)</p>	Assigned to	<p>Amber Davis- Staff Services Analyst</p>
	<p>4.2.2 Determine if there is a pattern in the cases that fit the criteria.</p>		<p>Determined that 10 out of 17 children not legally free between 4-1-07 to 9-30-07 (Q1 2008 data) have been in long term foster care since before 4-1-06 to 9-30-06 (Q1 2007 data)</p> <p>The 10 children were not legally free because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Not adoptable due to severe mental or behavior issues. * Tribe placements that do not support adoption. <p>Six of the remaining 7 children have subsequently exited foster care since September 30, 2007, because CWS established permanency or children aged out of foster care.</p>		<p>Amber Davis- Staff Services Analyst</p>
	<p>4.2.3 Develop a case management plan to improve the outcome and a method of tracking the improvement effort.</p>		<p>Continue to refer all new Family Reunification cases to California State Adoptions for screening.</p> <p>This is done at monthly case staffing.</p> <p>Adoptions worker determines if a full referral/assessment is warranted at that time.</p> <p>Cases continue to be staffed in an ongoing cycle.</p> <p>Process in informal at this time. Formal Policy and Procedure will be completed by August, 2009.</p>		<p>Julie Cain, Ongoing Supervisor</p>

Outcome/Systemic Factor:

C3.2 Permanency of children in foster care: This permanency measure computes the percentage of legally free children who were discharged to a permanent home prior to turning 18. The denominator consists of all children discharged from foster care during the year who were legally free for adoption at the time of discharge; the numerator includes those children who have a discharge date that is prior to their 18th birthday and a discharge reason coded as reunification with parents or primary caretakers, discharge to guardianship, or discharge to adoption. This measure contributes to the third permanency composite.

Improvement Goal 5.0

Increase efforts by 10% to discharge children from foster care who are legally free to a permanent home before their 18th birthday.

October 2007: 90.9 % (participation rate 20 out of 22)

October 2008: 100% (participation rate 19 out of 19)

Outcome Improvement Goal has been met.

Strategy 5.1 Increase Wraparound caseload capacity by fully staffing the program.

Strategy Rationale Wraparound Services is a service delivery method with values consistent with objectives necessary to meet this Improvement Goal:

- Family Centered
- Broadens efforts towards restoring family capacity
- Collaborative
- Strengths Based
- “Can Do” attitude

Milestone	<p>5.1.1 Increase Wraparound Services caseload capacity by fully staffing the program.</p>	Activities Completed	<p>Wraparound facilitators are supplemented by CalWORKS funding.</p> <p>Wraparound Services is fully staffed with 2 facilitators.</p> <p>As of January 2009, Del Norte County has 22 families participating in Wraparound Services.</p>	Assigned to	<p>Crystal Markytan – Program Manager, Social Services Branch Tom Crowell – Assistant Chief, Probation Roy Jackson- Wraparound/Visitation/Special Projects Supervisor</p>
<p>Strategy 5.2 Implement Family Search and Engagement techniques to find more relative resources for children earlier in the dependency process.</p>			<p>Strategy Rationale This strategy is employed at the “front end” of the system to aide the social worker/probation officer in asking the question who the child may have available as a placement resource in a broader way than has been done in the past. This is the beginning of the effort for concurrent planning. Search techniques learned will enable the social worker and probation officer to contact a larger pool of resources for a specific child/youth. Engagement techniques assist the social worker or probation officer to first establish then maintain a long term committed relationship between the child/youth and the resource. Additionally, this strategy can be used in the “back end” of a case to help find permanent homes for youth who have been in long term foster care placements for lack of a better permanent plan.</p>		

Milestone	5.2.1 Contract with Northern California Training Academy at the University of California at Davis – Center for Family Focused Practice for training and technical support	Activities Completed	The Department contracted with Northern California Training Academy and has received technical support	Assigned to	Crystal Markytan – Program Manager, Social Services Branch Eileen Myster – Probation Supervisor
	5.2.2 Develop protocols and procedures for Family Search and Engagement Techniques		Program manager implemented Family Search and Engagement. Workgroup created in December 2008 and first meeting held on January 29, 2009. Work group will create formal protocol for Family Search and Engagement (August 2009).		Julie Cain- ongoing supervisor
Strategy 5.3 Twice yearly system reviews with California State Adoptions.			Strategy Rationale Caseload specific and system wide review will provide an opportunity for bi-annual evaluation of collaborative services.		
Milestone	5.3.1 Schedule system review date with California State Adoptions case manager	Activities Completed		Assigned to	Julie Cain – Ongoing Supervisor Crystal Markytan – Program Manager, Social Services Branch Tedee Boyland, Senior Adoptions Specialist, California State Adoptions
	5.3.2 Review cases that have been referred for adoptions assessments and cases that are in the adoptions process.		Completed on a monthly basis.		
	5.3.3 Define any systemic problems that are apparent as a result of the review and make a plan to address them				

Outcome/Systemic Factor:													
2C Timely Social Worker Visits: This measure computes the percentage of children who received a monthly visit, out of all those children for whom a visit was required. Children for whom a determination is made that monthly visits are not necessary (e.g. valid visit exception) are not included in this measure.													
Improvement Goal 6.0 The improvement goal is for 98% of social worker visits to be consistently timely by January 2010.													
<table border="0"> <tr> <td>October 2007</td> <td>SW visits</td> <td>76.1% month 1</td> <td>84.6% month 2</td> <td>88.5% month 3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>October 2008</td> <td>SW visits</td> <td>90.1% month 1</td> <td>93.9% month 2</td> <td>95.5% month 3</td> </tr> </table>				October 2007	SW visits	76.1% month 1	84.6% month 2	88.5% month 3	October 2008	SW visits	90.1% month 1	93.9% month 2	95.5% month 3
October 2007	SW visits	76.1% month 1	84.6% month 2	88.5% month 3									
October 2008	SW visits	90.1% month 1	93.9% month 2	95.5% month 3									
Strategy 6.1 Use Safe Measures case management tool to determine which children are not being seen timely.		Strategy Rationale Social Workers are able to run monthly reports to identify the children where visit exceptions apply, where have already made a visit and where they have not.											
Milestone	6.1.1 Use Safe Measures to determine which children are not being seen timely.	Activities Completed	Assigned to										
		<p>Training on Safe Measures for social workers occurred in August 2008.</p> <p>Social workers are encouraged to use Safe Measures as a case management tool to track social worker/child visits on a monthly basis (August 2008).</p> <p>Monthly reminders to maintain home visit timeliness occurs in general Staff Meetings. (August 2008)</p>	Social Workers and Probation Officers responsible for case management										

	<p>6.1.2 Supervisors run Safe Measures reports by the third week of each month to monitor social workers progress for social worker/child monthly visits.</p>	<p>Each month, supervisors review Safe Measures for timely social worker visits (June 2008)</p> <p>If a social worker has not made a monthly contact by the 3rd week of the month, the supervisor will assist the social worker in developing a plan to make the visit with the child including assigning an alternate social worker to meet with the child. (August 2008)</p>	<p>Julie Cain, Ongoing Supervisor Susan Wilson, Intake Supervisor Eileen Myster, Probation Supervisor</p>
<p>Strategy 6.2 Determine all cases meeting the criteria for visit exceptions and file the proper paperwork in the hard copy file; follow up by making the correct data entry into CWS/CMS.</p>		<p>Strategy Rationale Cases meeting the criteria for visit exceptions will not be counted against the total count.</p>	
<p>Milestone</p>	<p>6.2.1 Develop a protocol around visit exceptions using ACIN: 1-34-07 as a guide.</p>	<p>Activities Completed</p>	<p>Amber Davis – Staff Services Analyst</p>
	<p>6.2.2 Train and implement the protocol for visit exceptions.</p>		<p>Amber Davis – Staff Services Analyst Julie Cain, Ongoing Supervisor Susan Wilson, Intake Supervisor Eileen Myster, Probation Supervisor</p>
	<p>6.2.3 Monitor results of visit exception protocol using “Safe Measures” case management tool.</p>		<p>Amber Davis – Staff Services Analyst</p>

Outcome/Systemic Factor:

8A Transitional Age Youth: For each youth in placement, 15 ½ and not yet 16 years of age, the social worker/probation officer of the county of jurisdiction shall insure that the youth shall actively participate in the development of the Transitional Independent Living Plan (TILP). The TILP describes the youth’s current level of functioning; emancipation goals identified in California Department of Social Services Manual of Policy and Procedure, Section 31-2136.6; the progress towards achieving the TILP goals; the programs and services needed, including, but not limited to, those provided by the ILP; and identifies the individuals assisting the youth. The TILP shall be reviewed, updated, approved, and signed by the social worker/probation officer and the youth every six months. The youth shall be informed of the county Independent Living Program (ILP) and encouraged to participate.

Improvement Goal 7.0

Continue of participation in ILP services to all those eligible as Child Welfare dependents and Probation wards.

Strategy 7.1

Expand ILP services to youth exiting the Child Welfare and Probation systems in probate guardianships and Adoption.

Strategy Rationale

These youth are not currently eligible to services however they would benefit from the opportunity to participate. Many youth who are in relative home care may be in the home of an elderly grandparent or a working relative. This is a prevention based activity in that it prepares the youth to become a productive member of society and educates them from coming back into the CWS system as a parent.

Milestone	7.1.3 Update protocol for serving this population. Maintain and monitor case load for this population.	Activities Completed	Policy and procedure was updated in May 2008. The policy includes eligibility criteria for ILP, creating and maintaining TILP, tracking ILP participants, types of classes to be offered each year, case notes in CWS/CMS, contact notes for Probation and Kin-gap participants, referrals to THPP and THP-Plus, and exiting foster care criteria.	Assigned to	Cookie Estes, ILP Coordinator
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			<p>The ILP Coordinator monitors the on-going ILP case load by cross referencing with the monthly list provided by the foster care eligibility worker (FC EW). The FC EW's list includes all youth in foster care for CWS or Probation, Kin-gap, and non-related guardians who are 14 years of older. (December 2004)</p>	
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<p>Strategy 7. 2 Continue ILP services to youth within the CalWORKs population between the ages of 16 and 18.</p>	<p>Strategy Rationale Del Norte County has a 19% poverty rate with 7.9% of the population receiving CalWORKs benefits. By introducing youth to the concept of Independent Living Skills, work ethic, and employment planning and the application process for grants and loans for post-secondary learning, there is the possibility of breaking the generational cycle of poverty and entry into the Child Welfare system as a result of parental neglect.</p>
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<p>Milestone</p>	<p>7.2.1 Provide the ILP Services to the youth of current CalWORKs recipients.</p>	<p>Activities Completed</p> <p>A Transitional Independent Living Plan (TILP) is completed with eligible youth and updated every 6 months.</p> <p>The following are a few of the preventative based services that are available to transitional age youth who are not under dependency or wardship:</p> <p>* Classes and guidance with vocational/educational opportunities,</p>	<p>Assigned to</p> <p>Carmen Chavez – Program Manager, Employment and Training Branch Michael Coats – Employment and Training Worker</p>
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			<p>life skill development and social skills acquisition.</p> <p>* Incentive payments for graduating from high school and household items</p> <p>* Helping youth obtain original birth certificates, social security cards, picture ID, and driver's license.</p> <p>Presentation on ILP services and Transitional Age Youth was given at the Board of Supervisors meeting on 1-27-09. The goal of this presentation was to educate the community about the services available to teens and young adults who are in foster care or who emancipated from foster care.</p>		
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<p>Strategy 7.3 Increase the number of ILP participants entering the Transitional Housing Placement Program.</p>		<p>Strategy Rationale Youth participating in the Independent Living Program, coming directly from foster care placement, and a minimum of 16 years of age are eligible for the Transitional Living Program until they graduate from high school. The program encourages the development of skills needed for independence.</p>			
Mi le	7.3.1 Form a workgroup with Remi Vista Inc. to review	A cti	Workgroup was formed September	A ss	Cindy Farren – ILP Coordinator

	the current policies and procedures to ensure that participants are supported in a way that is consistent with the way that a family would support a child/youth.		2008. Modifications were made to THPP Service Provider Plan, County Plan, and Participant Handbook (January 2009)	Stephanie Hailey - Remi Vista THPP Coordinator
	7.3.2 Make recommendations for modifications to policies and procedures		The modified plan recommends <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in the monthly THPP rate. • Peer aged mentors • Strength based language 	
	7.3.3 Implement changes		Changes will be implemented will be implemented as new participants enter the program. There are currently no participants in THPP.	
Strategy 7.4 Implement and fully utilize the Transitional Housing Plus Program for emancipated adults.			Strategy Rationale This program started in Del Norte County in December, 2007. Those eligible are dependents or wards having aged out of the Child Welfare Services or Probation system at age 18. They may contact the Independent Living Coordinator in any county with a THP-Plus Program and request services between ages 19 and 24. They are eligible for 24 months of supportive services and rental subsidies. Remi Vista Inc. provides the service in Del Norte County.	

Milestone	<p>7.4.1 Work with Remi Vista Inc. to refer those adults who are eligible based on exit records from Child Welfare Services and Probation</p>	Activities Completed	<p>THP-Plus was implemented in fiscal year 2008.</p> <p>Del Norte has the capacity for 10 THP-Plus participants. In 2008, eight young adults participated in the THP-Plus program.</p> <p>Referrals for the THP-Plus Program are made to Remi Vista through the Inter-County Case Management Team (ICMT). Candidates must first apply to the program, meet the minimum criteria for an interview and be approved by the ICMT for an interview before proceeding to the initial interview with Remi Vista.</p> <p>A Policy and Procedure for the THP-Plus Program has been completed but has not been ratified by all parties.</p>	Assigned to	<p>Cookie Estes - ILP Coordinator Eileen Myster – Probation Supervisor Stephanie Hailey, Remi Vista Coordinator for THPP and THP-Plus</p>
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Strategy 7.5 Coordinate services with the Mental Health Services Act program coordinator for Transitional Age Youth.		Strategy Rationale Maximize services for common target population	
st	7.5.1 Form workgroup to discuss coordinated services for Independent Living Population and	ig	Workgroup will be formed by August 2009
		ne	Crystal Markytan – Program Manager, Social Services Branch

	Transitional Age Youth				Karen Dieter – Remi Vista, Clinical Supervisor Eileen Myster – Probation Supervisor Cindy Farren – Social Worker/ILP Coordinator
	7.5.2 Make recommendations to the director				
	7.5.3 Develop a work plan				