

CALIFORNIA'S  
TITLE IV-B  
CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES PLAN  
ANNUAL PROGRESS AND SERVICES REPORT  
FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2009  
JUNE 30, 2009



California Department of Social Services  
Children and Families Services Division  
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**APSR  
FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR (FFY) 2009  
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## **Executive Summary**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

While significant progress has been made to reach our goals, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) realizes that continued efforts to improve practice and outcomes for children and families are essential to meet California's vision for child welfare practice. The state's efforts to examine and improve the child welfare services (CWS) system, as well as respond to the federal review with a Program Improvement Plan (PIP), continues to support the need for developing a system that can provide a public accounting of outcomes for children and families. This report highlights progress made since the June 30, 2008 Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR) in implementing the changes needed to make this a reality. This is the fifth and last APSR to the state's 5-year Child and Family Services (Title g150 IV-B) Plan, approved September 17, 2004, for federal fiscal years 2005 through 2009.

California's PIP of June 30, 2005, provided a range of activities that have continued over the past five years, and marked the end of California's PIP. However, some of the activities from the original specific goals and objectives are incorporated in the current APSR.

California's 2005 PIP, is available on the CDSS web site and located at:

<http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/cfsr/default.htm>.

While California is committed to improving outcomes for children and their families, it is clear that critical to the success of our improvement efforts will be both adequate and flexible funding, as well as the active participation and collaboration with other stakeholders at the state, county, community and neighborhood levels.

California will continue, through its CWS System Improvements, to make enhancements to ensure the safety of children, to promote their right to a stable, permanent home and enhance their well-being. California has made significant financial commitment to child welfare services, but it is important to note that California's future budget is uncertain. The following are state general fund allocations for state fiscal year (SFY) 2008/09 for CWS System Improvement:

- \$51.2 million for the Child Welfare Services Outcomes Improvement Project (CWSOIP). These funds were allocated to counties to finance activities identified in the counties' system improvement plans and other improvement activities.
- \$4.5 million to support additional administrative responsibilities associated with the planning and coordination of the periodic county self-assessments and the annual updates to the county system improvement plans.
- \$1.1 million to reimburse counties for costs associated with the peer quality case review and costs related to the additional data requirements associated with Assembly Bill (AB) 636 and System Improvement Plan activities.

In addition to the funding augmentation, California passed key legislation in recent years to continue efforts to improve gaps in the state's foster care system. The Child Welfare Leadership and Performance Accountability Act of 2006, AB 2216 (Chapter 384, Statutes of 2006), signed into law by Governor Schwarzenegger, established, among other things, the California Child Welfare Council (CWC). The CWC first convened in November 2007. The CWC is designed to address the needs of foster children in the foster care system or in danger of out-of-home placement throughout the state. The first of its kind in California, the Council brings together the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches to improve child

and youth outcomes through increased collaboration and coordination among the programs, services and processes administered by the multiple agencies and courts that serve children and youth in California's child welfare system. The CWC builds upon the work of the Blue Ribbon Commission (BRC), the State Interagency Team (SIT) for Children and Youth, and other collaborative efforts throughout the state.

The SIT, chaired by CDSS, is comprised of representatives from Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), the Department of Mental Health (DMH), the Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs (ADP), the Department of Developmental Services (DDS), the California Department of Education (CDE), the Employment Development Department (EDD), the Department of Justice (DOJ), the Judicial Council/Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), the California First 5 Commission, the California Workforce Investment Board, the Office of the Chancellor for California Community Colleges, and the Foundation Consortium. The purpose of the SIT is to provide innovative leadership and guidance to facilitate implementation of improved system benefiting the common population of children, youth and families served by SIT agencies. The SIT promotes shared responsibility and accountability for the welfare of children by promoting the alignment of planning, funding and policy across state departments. An update of the SIT activities is contained in the Safety section.

The BRC was established by Chief Justice Ronald M. George to provide recommendations to the Judicial Council of California (JC) on ways the courts and their partners can improve safety, permanency, well-being, and fairness outcomes for children and families. The commission is a high level, multidisciplinary body providing leadership on the issues that face our foster children and their families and the courts and agencies that serve them. The commission presented its final recommendations to the JC in August 2008. On August 15, 2008, the JC unanimously accepted the commission's final recommendations to reform the juvenile dependency court and child welfare system in this state. The 79 specific recommendations focused on four areas: 1) efforts to prevent removal and achieve permanency; 2) court reforms; 3) collaboration between the courts and their child welfare partners; and 4) resources and funding. The JC directed the Administrative Director of the Courts to refer 26 of the recommendations that could be acted on by the judicial branch alone to the appropriate advisory committee or AOC staff. Work on implementing those recommendations has already begun. The JC also directed that the BRC develop an action plan for recommendations that required collaboration with the executive and legislative branches. An update of the BRC activities this year is contained in the Permanency section.

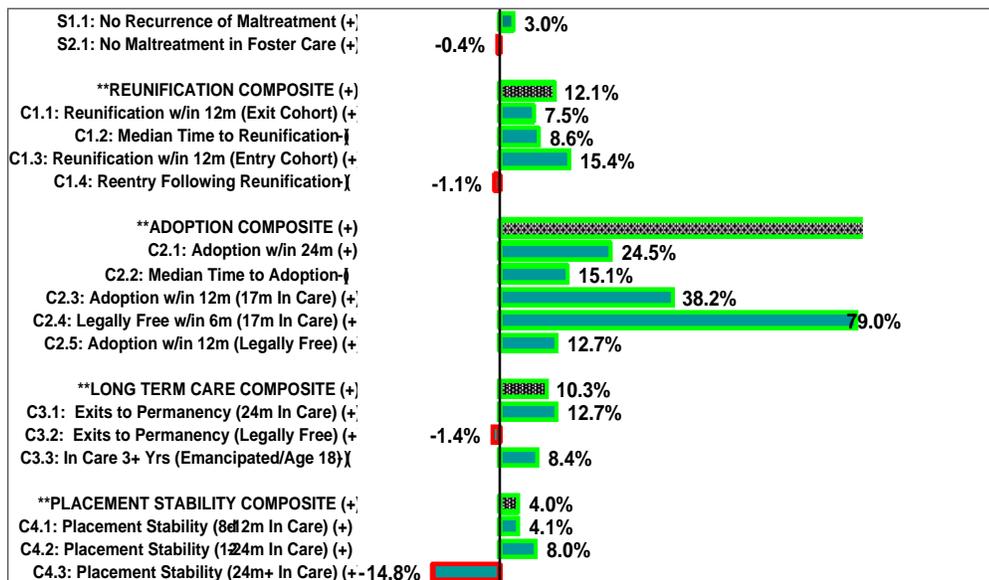
The Child Welfare Co-Investment Partnership (Partnership) is a public-private partnership whose purpose is improving the lives of children and families who are in or at risk of entering the state's child welfare system. Formed in 2006, the Partnership includes organizations committed to investing in the practices and supportive infrastructure that will improve the child welfare outcomes. The Partnership includes the CDSS, the California Welfare Director's Association (CWDA), the AOC, and private philanthropic foundations including the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Casey Family Programs, the Stuart Foundation, the Walter S. Johnson Foundation, and the Zellerbach Family Foundation. An update of their activities is contained in the Systemic Factors section.

## Current Status of California's 2007 Children and Family Services Review (CFSR)

The CFSR Steering Committee convened throughout summer 2008 to develop the first draft of the PIP, which was submitted to Administration for Children and Families (ACF), ACF on September 8, 2008. The draft PIP is posted to our website at <http://www.childsworld.ca.gov/PG1520.htm>. The ACF provided comments on the draft December 2008 and a second draft PIP incorporating the recommendations was submitted May 2009 following a review by the CFSR Steering Committee. ACF approved the six broad strategies and related action steps, however, required the state to develop additional measures to determine impact of PIP activities. The state's PIP was submitted for approval to ACF in August 2009 and it is anticipated that it will be approved. The following table indicates the state's performance on federal measures from 2004 to 2009.

### January 2004-July 2009 CWS Outcomes System: Federal Measures, % Improvement<sup>1</sup>

(+) or (-) indicates direction of desired change



<sup>1</sup> Needell, B., Webster, D., Armijo, M., Lee, S., Dawson, W., Magruder, J., Exel, M., Glasser, T., Williams, D., Zimmerman, K., Simon, V., Putnam-Hornstein, E., Frerer, K., Cuccaro-Alamin, S., Winn, A., Lou, C., & Peng, C. (2009). Child Welfare Services Reports for California. Retrieved April 1, 2009, from University of California at Berkeley Center for Social Services Research website. URL: <[http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb\\_childwelfare](http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb_childwelfare)>

# **California's Child Welfare Services System: Overview**

## California's Child Welfare

### Services System: Overview

California's state-supervised child welfare system is administered at the local level by 58 counties, each governed by a county board of supervisors. While there are challenges inherent in the complexity of this type of system, its central strength lies in the flexibility afforded each county to determine how best to meet the needs of its own children and families. As the most populous state in the country, California's rich culture and ethnic diversity includes 224 languages and, according to the Department of the Interior, 106 federally recognized Indian tribes, and an estimated 40-50 non-federally recognized tribes. The state's counties differ widely by population; economic base; mix of urban, rural and suburban settings; and topographies that span desert, forest, mountain, coastal and inland valley formations. Within a single statutory and regulatory framework, these counties are charged with providing the full array of services necessary to meet the needs of at-risk children and families.

For additional information about California's CWS system, please refer to the 2010-2014 CFSP submitted along with the 2009 APSR.

**PIP Outcome:  
Safety**

## Safety

Safety for children is an important part of the state's vision for children and families and a measurable outcome of the state's child welfare services (CWS) system. California strives to ensure that children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect and that they are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.

### Child Safety Outcomes

Over the last two decades, California has experienced high numbers of child abuse reports that have grown increasingly complex and challenging to the CWS system's capacity to effectively respond. The complexity of the issues facing child welfare families reaches beyond the CWS system's ability to handle alone and requires coordination with other partners who have shared responsibility for the individuals and families served. Thus, the emphasis of the CDSS herein is on system reform and collaborative action.

For the purposes of this APSR, the program improvement goals from the prior year report have been identified as objectives and cover the period from July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009.

#### **OBJECTIVE 1: The State's objective is to reach the target of 8.9% in the rate of repeat maltreatment of children. (Safety Outcome 1, Item 2A.)**

For Round One of the CFSR California met the improvement goal of 8.9 percent as reported in the previous APSR of Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2005. For Round Two of the CFSR there was a directional change. The first Safety measure is now the Absence of Recurrence of Maltreatment with a standard of 94.6 percent or more. In FFY 2008, California's performance on this safety data indicator was 92.7 percent (CA CFSR Data Profile, May 29, 2009). This represents continued improvement and the CDSS remains committed to further improvements in this objective and will continue to measure progress in this area.

#### **OBJECTIVE 2: The State's objective is to decrease two percentage points in the rate of recurrence of abuse or neglect in cases where children are not removed from the home. (Safety Outcome 2, Items 3 & 4.)**

This objective was met in January 2007 and is no longer being tracked.

#### **OBJECTIVE 3: The State's objective is to reach the target of 0.58% in the data indicator for child abuse or neglect in foster care based on the existing data indicator. (Safety Outcome 1, Item 2B.)**

This measure has also had a directional change for Round Two with a new standard of 99.68 percent or more. In FFY 2008, California's performance on the Absence of Child Abuse and/or Neglect in Foster Care was 99.71 percent.. Based on the state's CFSR Data Profile dated May 29, 2009, performance exceeded the national standard in both FFY 2007 and in FFY 2008.

In an ongoing effort to improve data quality California uncovered a programming error in the collection of this data that had caused duplicated counts of victims. In consultation with the

state's National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) consultant, a correction was made and is represented in the FFY 2007 data resulting in a significant decrease in the number of victims, compared to FFY 2006 data. On page 3 of the Profile (dated May 29, 2009), there is a summary of NCANDS data completeness and quality used for the two safety indicators. It states, "There were no data quality issues found that would call the safety data indicators into question." Although the state has exceeded the standard for Absence of Child Abuse and/or Neglect in Foster Care, CDSS remains committed to improving performance and will continue monitoring progress in this area. (The decreases in relative and group home placements are commensurate with the overall decrease in the FC population. GH placements have remained at 17 percent of the total FC population over the past 4 years.)

### **Benchmarks:**

The following benchmarks were intended to improve the ability to identify safety threats so children are removed from their families when it is appropriate, to develop a process to provide families with services to prevent abuse and neglect, and to reduce repeat maltreatment of children. To achieve these goals, CDSS' efforts were focused on:

- The implementation of a Standardized Safety Assessment System, and
- The development of an early intervention – Differential Response Intake Structure.

**By June 30, 2006, CDSS will, based on the experience of the 11 counties, make recommendations to the Administration and Legislature via the State budget process regarding phasing in additional counties to begin implementation of the Standardized Safety Assessment System.**

This benchmark was met in June 2005.

**By June 30, 2006, CDSS will report, in the Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR), its findings and plans for the appropriate next steps regarding the phasing in of additional counties to begin implementation of the Standardized Safety Assessment System or the elimination of this strategy to achieve the objectives for this goal.**

This benchmark was met in June 2006.

**By June 30, 2006, CDSS will, based on the experience of the total participating counties, and the approval of the Administration and Legislature via the State budget process, begin phasing in 15 additional counties to begin implementation of the Standardized Safety Assessment System.**

This benchmark was met in June 2006.

**By June 30, 2007, CDSS will, based on the experience of the total participating counties, and the approval of the administration and legislature via the State budget process, begin phasing in 16 additional counties to begin implementation of the Standardized Safety Assessment System.**

This benchmark was met in June 2007.

**By June 30, 2008, CDSS will, based on the experience of the total participating counties, and the approval of the administration and legislature via the State budget process, begin phasing in 16 additional counties to begin implementation of the Standardized Safety Assessment System.**

This benchmark was met in June 2007. All 58 counties implemented the Standardized Safety Assessment System countywide by June 30, 2007. During SFY 07-08 four counties decided to stop using the Comprehensive Assessment Tool (CAT) and have implemented Structured Decision Making (SDM). A fifth county is currently in the process of implementing SDM after deciding not to continue using CAT. Now there are fifty counties that have implemented or are in the process of implementing SDM and 8 counties that have CAT.

**By June 30, 2009, barring any unforeseen barriers to full implementation, the new Standardized Safety Assessment System will be utilized in all counties in California.**

This benchmark was met in June 2009. See above.

**By June 30, 2005, a minimum of 11 counties will have implemented and begun validation of a consistent approach to the assessment of safety, risk, protective capacity and family strengths.**

This benchmark was met in June 2005. A full evaluation was completed February 2008 and can be viewed at: <http://www.childsworld.ca.gov/res/pdf/11CountyPilot2008.pdf>

**By June 30, 2005, the CDSS will have established a uniform screening system that utilizes the safety, risk and family protective capacity assessment process, and establishes criteria for each Differential Response path.**

This benchmark was met in June 2005.

**By June 30, 2005, each of the 11 counties will have developed the community resource capacity to respond to service referrals in targeted communities.**

This benchmark was met in June 2005.

**By June 30, 2005, a minimum of 11 counties will have begun the implementation and validation of the Differential Response Intake Structure in specific, targeted communities.**

This benchmark was met in June 2005.

**By January 30, 2006, CDSS will, based on the experience of the 11 counties, have determined and evaluated the factors (cost, statutory and/or regulatory changes, practice changes, resources: staffing/funding/community support, etc.) necessary to implement the Differential Response Intake Structure in additional counties.**

This benchmark was met in June 2006.

**By June 30, 2006, CDSS will, based on the evaluation of implementation experience of the 11 counties, make recommendations to the administration and legislature via the State budget process, regarding phasing in additional counties to begin implementation of the Differential Response Intake Structure.**

This benchmark was met in June 2006.

**By June 30, 2006, CDSS will report, in the Annual Progress and Services Report, its findings and plans for the appropriate next steps regarding the phasing in of additional counties to begin implementation of the Differential Response Intake Structure or the elimination of this strategy to achieve the objectives for this goal.**

This benchmark was met in June 2006.

**By June 30, 2006, if implementation is identified as appropriate and doable, and budgeted in the State Budget, CDSS will begin phasing in an additional 15 counties to implement the Differential Response Intake Structure.**

This benchmark was met in June 2006.

**By June 30, 2007, if implementation is identified as appropriate and doable, and budgeted in the State Budget, CDSS will begin phasing in an additional 16 counties to implement the Differential Response Intake Structure.**

This benchmark was met in June 2006.

**By June 30, 2008, if implementation is identified as appropriate and doable, CDSS will begin phasing in an additional 16 counties to implement the Differential Response Intake Structure.**

This benchmark was met in June 2007.

**By June 30, 2009, barring any unforeseen barriers to implementation; and if budgeted in the State Budget, CDSS will have implemented the Differential Response Intake Structure in all 58 counties.**

This benchmark has not been met, however due to the current fiscal crisis in California, some counties have scaled back on their DR efforts due to lack of funds to contract with local community agencies.

### **The State Interagency Team (SIT)**

The purpose of the SIT is to provide leadership and guidance to facilitate implementation of improved systems that benefit the common population of children, youth and families served by SIT agencies. The SIT promotes shared responsibility and accountability for the

welfare of children, youth and families by promoting the alignment of planning, funding and policy across state departments and philanthropy.

In 2004 through 2005, the State Interagency (Children's) Team (SIT) completed the defining of its role, increased the number of agencies participating and continued work on a variety of issues that impact children and families. The SIT is chaired by the CDSS, and is comprised of representatives overseeing programs effecting children from departments within the California Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) such as the California Department of Health Services, the California Department of Mental Health, the California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs, the California Department of Developmental Services and the CDSS. In addition to those agencies, the California Department of Education, the Employment Development Department, the California Workforce Investment Board, the California Department of Justice and the Foundation Consortium are also participants. The SIT is charged with looking at cross-cutting issues for children, including supporting CWS System Improvements. Some of the issues the Team has been working on include the issue of confidentiality across systems, funding issues and access to services by families.

In 2006, the SIT continued to increase the number of agencies participating and also continued work on a variety of issues that impact children and families. The SIT Team added the California Employment Development Department, the California First 5 Commission, and the Judicial Council/Administrative Office of the Courts

The SIT has created work groups to achieve several of its objectives.

**IN 2006, THE ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG (AOD) WORKGROUP RESULTS INCLUDED:**

- Improving the collection of data on substance abuse by families in the child welfare, health and education systems; and assisting counties in estimating substance abuse treatment needs for child welfare families.
- They also developed a county survey of AOD screening protocols and tools to determine promising practices and recommendations for improving screening and referral.
  - This survey was presented to the SIT in June 2007.
- In October 2007, the counties and regional offices that participated in the survey were notified how the survey summary was to be used and how to keep the SIT informed regarding the implementation of the recommendations.

In 2007, the SIT added one more team representative from the Office of the Chancellor for California Community Colleges.

**2007 AOD WORKGROUP ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

- Developed a Screening Survey Summary (SSS) report to the SIT with interagency recommendations, which were endorsed by the SIT.
- Developed a SSS Recommendation Implementation Work Plan.

- o Collaboration Accomplishments related to the SSS Recommendations include: Agreement on common terms to define AOD Screening;
- o ADP incorporated Student Assistance Programs (SAPs) in its Safe and Drug Free Schools grants;
- o CDE distributed information regarding the February SAP Conference to AOD Work Group agencies to encourage their participation;
- o CDSS is including two AOD screening workshops at the CalWORKS Summit;
- o ADP solicited Work Group Member agencies to promote the services provided through their systems at the 2008 ADP Conference;
- o ADP is making technical assistance contractors available to other systems to provide training for AOD screening.

**The Work Group to Eliminate Disparities** is comprised of representatives from the Departments of Alcohol and Drug Program, Health Services, Mental Health, CDSS, Education, Developmental Services, Judicial Council and the Annie E. Casey Foundation. The Work Group developed recommendations to the SIT for policy, practice and cross system changes to reduce the disproportionate representation of children of color in the CWS, as well as to improve outcomes for children and families of color across the state of California.

- In October 2007, the *Eliminating Disproportionality and Disparities: CA Disproportionality Project and Family to Family Key Elements & Rating Tool* was drafted and piloted. The tool was finalized in November 2007

**The Core Indicator Workgroup** has been charged with developing a state enriched core set of indicators of child and family well-being for the California Outcomes and Accountability System. This includes recommendations for the potential use of outcome data from systems other than child welfare, such as health, education, substance abuse treatment, etc.

- In 2006, the CDSS, through their contract with the University of California, Davis, completed an analysis of relevant SIT member agencies' key outcomes, indicator and data systems.
- With the assistance of appropriate staff from those agencies, the potential for using the data for the Outcomes and Accountability System was discussed, and recommendations were identified, developed and prioritized recommendations to the SIT and pursued during 2007.

**2007 SIT DEPARTMENT MEMBERS ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

- DMH collaboration with local probation chiefs in the development of prevention and early intervention guidance materials to reflect the mental health needs of minors involved with local probation departments.
- CWDA and California Mental Health Directors Association (CMHDA) cross training activities that highlights the federal CFSR challenges and identifies potential local MH programs serving children, youth and families in the child welfare system.
- CDMH and CDSS coordination is ensuring that all necessary prevention and early intervention training (P&EI) and orientation are provided to local program managers.

**California Statewide Leadership Group on the Co-occurrence of Domestic Violence and Child Maltreatment**

(The Leadership Group) is a voluntary affiliation of governmental and non-profit organization representatives from a broad spectrum of services and supports that touch the lives of families with the co-occurring challenges of domestic violence and children exposed to it. The membership which convened in 2006 as a collaborative taskforce to build on the success of the federal Greenbook (*Effective Intervention in Domestic Violence & Child Maltreatment Cases: Guidelines for Policy and Practice*) project includes leaders from child welfare, juvenile and family courts, domestic violence, public health, emergency services, law enforcement, alcohol and drug abuse, and mental health at the state and local levels. Recognized as a workgroup of the State Interagency Team in 2008, the Leadership Group's mission is to review and develop policy recommendations for governmental agencies and non-profit and community-based organizations, independently and collaboratively. These recommendations will be designed to foster best practices and establish policies that enable public and private organizations to make available the most appropriate protections, supports and services so that vulnerable families can expect that:

- Their experiences are understood,
- Their efforts to protect themselves and their children are valued and supported,
- Their safety and well-being are prioritized, and
- They and their children are effectively supported by adequately-resourced social services, the courts, domestic violence service providers and other agencies and organizations designed to serve their interests.

In June 2008 the Leadership Group received a grant from the Blue Shield of California Foundation to conduct an information gathering effort to include:

- Email surveys to local domestic violence service providers and county child welfare agencies;
- In-depth interviews with selected local domestic violence service providers and county child welfare agencies triggered by survey responses; and
- State agency self-assessments to identify gaps in policy, guidelines, data and other state agency tools, including professional development, education and training and technical assistance.

The analysis of the responses, currently underway, will generate findings and recommendations for policy and practice improvements. The Leadership Group will share findings and recommendations with the SIT and with networks of the group's members, as well as pursue ways to further disseminate the findings and recommendations, foster their implementation, and explore additional research and pilot projects that will move the agenda forward.

**The State Interagency Team (SIT) Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Workgroup**

is comprised of representatives from the ADP, DHCS, CDPH, DMH, CDSS, CDE, DDS, JC/AOC, and California's First 5 Commission. The SIT AOD workgroup was charged with strengthening services for children, youth and families where there is nexus between AOD use and child safety, education, workforce readiness and success, maternal/child health, and mental health. The first outcome of the work group's 2006-2007 work plan was to

“improve screening, identification, and intervention regarding AOD risk in families and children.”

The following recommendations for Interagency Systems were submitted by the Work Group to the SIT for endorsement and action:

- Develop common definitions for terms such as screening and assessment to improve communication and evaluation. Definitions vary between and sometimes within systems.
- Actively support and engage the Department of Education’s Student Assistance Programs (SAPs). Encourage and facilitate collaboration/partnering among local systems (CDE, ADP, DMH) to broaden the use of SAPs.
- Promote the use of standardized, validated screening and assessment tools throughout all agencies.
- Request the County Welfare Directors Association (CDWA), the County Alcohol and Drug Program Administrators Association of California (CADPAAC), the Maternal, Adolescent and Child Health County Directors Association (MCAH), the County Mental Health Directors Association, and the courts to convene an annual meeting to highlight county level collaborations that have improved outcomes for clients with AOD issues.
- Include an AOD screening workshop at the CalWORKS Summit.
- Explore the potential for accessing Mental Health Services Act – Prevention and Early Intervention Initiative funds to raise awareness of the importance of AOD screening.
- Include a Partner Workshop in the ADP Conference to promote the services provided by other agencies to address AOD.

The AOD Work Group concluded in April of 2008 and in April 2009, the SIT established the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) Work Group. Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders is an umbrella term used to describe the range of effects which may occur in an individual whose mother drank alcohol during pregnancy. These effects may include physical, mental, behavioral and/or learning disabilities with possible lifelong implications.

**The Work Group to Eliminate Disparities** serves as the California Disproportionality Project’s State Level Team and consists of thirteen members from nine Departments, including: DMH, Corrections Standards Authority, CDSS, ADP, CDE, DPH, DHCS, Center for Families, Children and the Courts, JC/AOD, California Workforce Investment Board.

The California Disproportionality Project (Project) is a collaborative learning effort co-sponsored by the CDSS, Casey Family Programs, and the Annie E. Casey Foundation. This initiative was launched in June of 2008 and, in addition to the state level team, the project includes 12 county teams comprised of county CWS agencies and their community and interagency partners. The counties are: Alameda, Fresno, Kern, Los Angeles (two teams; Pomona and Metro North offices), Orange, Placer and San Diego (both focusing on Native American/American Indian children), Riverside, Sacramento, San Francisco, San Joaquin, and San Mateo.

As the state level team, the Work Group will develop recommendations to the SIT for policy, practice and cross system changes to reduce the disproportionate representation of

children of color in the CWS, as well as to improve outcomes for children and families of color across the state of California.

**California Statewide Leadership Group on the Co-occurrence of Domestic Violence and Child Maltreatment** (The Leadership Group) is a voluntary affiliation of governmental and non-profit organization representatives from a broad spectrum of services and supports that touch the lives of families with the co-occurring challenges of domestic violence and children exposed to it. The membership includes leaders from child welfare, juvenile and family courts, domestic violence, public health, emergency services, law enforcement, alcohol and drug abuse, and mental health at the state and local levels. The Leadership Group's mission is to review and develop policy recommendations for governmental agencies and non-profit and community-based organizations, independently and collaboratively. In direct support of the SIT goal to Strengthen Programs and Services: Domestic Violence (DV), these recommendations are designed to foster best practices and establish policies that enable public and private organizations to make available the most appropriate protections, supports and services so that vulnerable families can expect that:

- Their experiences are understood,
- Their efforts to protect themselves and their children are valued and supported,
- Their safety and well-being are prioritized, and
- They and their children are effectively supported by adequately-resourced social services, the courts, domestic violence service providers and other agencies and organizations designed to serve their interests.

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The AOD Work Group concluded in April of 2008 and in April 2009, the SIT established the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) Work Group. Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders is an umbrella term used to describe the range of effects which may occur in an individual whose mother drank alcohol during pregnancy. These effects may include physical, mental, behavioral and/or learning disabilities with possible lifelong implications.

**The Work Group to Eliminate Disparities** serves as the California Disproportionality Project’s State Level Team and consists of thirteen members from nine Departments, including: DMH, Corrections Standards Authority, CDSS, ADP, CDE, DPH, DHCS, Center for Families, Children and the Courts, JC/AOD, California Workforce Investment Board.

The California Disproportionality Project (Project) is a collaborative learning effort co-sponsored by the CDSS, Casey Family Programs, and the Annie E. Casey Foundation. This initiative was launched in June of 2008 and, in addition to the state level team, the project includes 12 county teams comprised of county CWS agencies and their community and interagency partners. The counties are: Alameda, Fresno, Kern, Los Angeles (two teams; Pomona and Metro North offices), Orange, Placer and San Diego (both focusing on Native American/American Indian children), Riverside, Sacramento, San Francisco, San Joaquin, and San Mateo.

As the state level team, the Work Group will develop recommendations to the SIT for policy, practice and cross system changes to reduce the disproportionate representation of

children of color in the CWS, as well as to improve outcomes for children and families of color across the state of California.

2008 Work Group Accomplishments:

- The SIT Work Group identified opportunities to strengthen collaboration across state agencies to define and address disparities and disproportionality and to work toward developing culturally competent organizations. Work Group members shared their agency's aggregate data on service population and outcomes as well as policy goals, strategies, projects and initiatives to decrease disparities and disproportionality.
- A twenty-one member faculty has been assembled for the Project consisting of experts in child welfare administration, disproportionality and disparity in child welfare, adoption reform, the Multiethnic Placement Act and its Interethnic Adoption Provisions of 1996 (MEPA-IEP), parent engagement, youth engagement, and child welfare reform.
- Finalized Core Teams (Total 15) and Established Team Member Roles
- The California Disproportionality Project Extranet tool was created to collaborate sharing of ideas and assist with the Project's learning process.
- Three to four separate conference calls occurring monthly since October 2008. The primary purposes for the conference calls is to provide support and resource options, build awareness, provide technical assistance, and facilitate open communication.
- Completed the first two of four Learning Sessions (Convenings)
  - Learning Sessions are two-day meetings of all participating Core Teams and the Faculty to collaborate and learn more about key changes that can be tested in the various components of the practice using (Plan Do Study Act) PDSA's. PDSA's provide a structured method for planning changes, making the changes, studying the impacts of those changes and acting again based on what was learned.

The next two Learning Sessions (Convenings) will be held in Sacramento in:

- November 2009
- January 2010.

**The Core Indicator Workgroup** was charged with developing a state enriched core set of indicators of child and family well-being for the California Outcomes and Accountability System. Recommendations were made for the potential use of outcome data from systems other than child welfare, such as health, education, substance abuse treatment, etc. The CDSS lead the workgroup, which also included the Departments of Health Services, Mental Health, Education, Developmental Services, and Alcohol and Drug Programs and the Judicial Council.

**The SIT Work Plan and Tracking Leads** highlighted progress and accomplishments for 2008 and expectations for the 2009 Goals and Outcomes.

Goal: Decrease racial disproportionality and disparities in outcomes:

2008 Progress and Accomplishments:

- Endorsed the SIT Work Group to Eliminate Disparities (Work Group) report and recommendations for supporting and leveraging member agencies efforts to decrease disparity disproportionality and disparities in services and outcomes.
- Engaged, through the Work Group in a variety of activities to prepare for participation as the State Level Team for the California Disproportionality Project (Project). These included submitting the SLT and individual agency applications, participating in training and completing the Project Learning Session pre work packets.

This goal is being tracked by monitoring the decrease of the percentage of racial disproportionality throughout the state and in individual counties.

Goal: Improve access to high wage, high growth training for young adults and family members

2008 Progress and Accomplishments:

- In collaboration with the State Youth Vision Team (SYVT), developed an All County Letter (ACIN) advising county support programs of employment and training services available through the One-Stop Career Center (One-Stop) system and request coordination in providing cross program services to youth in most need. The ACIN describes how to access services and includes mapping of youth services provided by state agencies along with identification of the youth populations served by those agencies (Youth Services Matrix).
- Provided input to the Youth Services Matrix.

This goal is being tracked by monitoring the increased employment of the identified youth population.

Goal: Strengthen Programs and Services: Child Welfare Services

2008 Progress and Accomplishments:

- Participated in the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) stakeholder input process
- CDSS submitted the CFSR Program Improvement Plan (PIP) to the federal government for approval. The PIP includes a number of opportunities to strengthen state agency collaboration to improve CWS services and outcomes.

Goal: Strengthen Programs and Services: Domestic Violence

2008 Progress and Accomplishments:

- Established collaboration with the California Statewide Leadership Group on Domestic Violence (DV) and Child Well-Being, which will develop recommendations to the SIT for DV policy and practice improvements.

Goal: Share specific client information to improve specific services

2008 Progress and Accomplishments:

- BRC adopted recommendations to remove barriers to sharing client information and developed implementation plan.
- BRC convened counties to develop local plans for implementing BRC recommendations.
- BRC presented their analysis of confidentiality barriers and recommendations for sharing client data to the Child Welfare Council.

Goal: Provide needed services to children placed out of county (Tracking Status)

2008 Progress and Accomplishments:

- DMH issued regulation amendments requiring timely services and reimbursement for mental health services for children placed out of county.
- DMH developed the standardized contract and forms required by SB 785 to be implemented in January 2009.
- CDE action included.

Goal: Strengthen Programs and Services: Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Screening (Tracking the Status)

2008 Progress and Accomplishments:

- Endorsed and implemented the SIT AOD Work Group recommendations to strengthen AOD screening.
- Presented to Secretary Kim Belshe, the SIT AOD Work Group AOD screening findings and recommendations, which resulted in a meeting with HHS directors and experts regarding recommendations to improve AOD screening.

Goal: Increase Utilization of Mental Health Services: Prevention and Early Intervention (P&EI) Services (Tracking Status)

2008 Progress and Accomplishments:

- CDSS and CDMH continued to ensure that all necessary training, orientation and supports regarding Prevention and Early Intervention provided to local program managers.

Goal: Share aggregate data for Accountability Reporting (Tracking Status)

2008 Progress and Accomplishments:

- BRC adopted recommendations for removing barriers to appropriate data sharing and presented its analysis and recommendations to the CWC.
- CWC identified Data and Information Sharing as a CWC priority and established a committee that is developing specific goals due in June 2009.
- CWC Data Committee is building on the SIT *Interagency Measurement of Child Well Being Report* findings and recommendations.

## 2009 Challenges and Opportunities

The members to identified state level challenges and opportunities in 2009, the state's fiscal environment presents many challenges, focusing on opportunities that the SIT may be able to leverage.

### Challenges:

- National and state level severe economic downturn
- Increased need for a broad range of services for families coping with the impact of the poor economy
- Service and administrative cuts needed to balance the state budget

### Opportunities:

- Collaborate/support other groups working on common goals, e.g. data sharing, to leverage efforts, avoid duplication or working at cross purposes. These groups include the BRC, CWC and Co-Investment Partnership.
- Identify ways to leverage potential funding in the national Economic Stimulus Package (Stimulus Package) to meet the educational employment and needs of foster youth. For example, the proposed Stimulus Package includes funds for education and youth summer employment.
- Look for ways to serve youth already receiving services to avoid their entry into the juvenile justice system and/or improving services to youth transitioning out of the juvenile justice system.
- Leverage county level BRC Recommendation Implementation efforts by encouraging their service providers to collaborate. The Judicial Council and local judges and attorneys will lead, staff and track these efforts
- Build on work that will emerge from the implementation of CFSR PIP to achieve common goals for share populations
- Identify promising practices from what the counties are doing in the local BRC work and the California Disproportionality Project.
- Create website links that facilitate access to information regarding services provided across systems

Members highlighted the work that is going on with the BRC, CWC, Co-Investment Partnership and the CFSR PIP.

The members suggested the following next steps in 2009 and beyond:

- Share the analysis of the potential crossover with the BRC, CWC, Co-Investment Partnership goals and efforts and will add the SIT to highlight where there are opportunities for collaboration and support.
- Look for linkages between the CFSR PIP to leverage common SIT and individual member agency work.
- Share the local BRC Recommendation Implementation efforts to help SIT identify the role their agencies could play in supporting local service delivery systems participation and will provide a demonstration of the BRC Implementation website.

- Keep the Co-Investment Partnership apprised of related SIT efforts to inform Partnership decisions and look out for potential partnerships to support/fund the implementation of SIT recommendations.
- Track and keep the SIT apprised of Economic Stimulus Package funding for education and employment of foster and transition age youth, which would include kids in the CW and juvenile justice system.
- Identify ways to better serve youth in or at risk of entering the juvenile justice system
- Inform the SIT about county issues that emerge from the California Disproportionality Project related to decreasing racial disparity and disproportionality.

**Casey Family Programs & American Humane Association Breakthrough Series Collaborative on Safety and Risk Assessments**

In July 2007, Casey Family Programs formed a unique partnership with the American Humane Association to use an innovative quality improvement methodology to help 21 teams from across the country improve the assessments of safety and risk in the child protection system. The mission for jurisdictions participating in this three year Breakthrough Series Collaborative (BSC) is to increase the capacity of their public or Tribal child welfare agency, of their community, and of the families they serve to conduct assessments and make related decisions that keep children safe from imminent danger and protect them from future maltreatment. Concretely, this can be attained by:

- Defining and creating a common language and understanding of child safety and risk of future maltreatment within the context of child welfare;
- Identifying roles and responsibilities for the public child welfare agency and the community, in order to effectively assess both safety and risk of maltreatment for the families who come to the agency's attention;
- Implementing strategies, policies, protocols, and practices that respect and actively engage families and communities, while providing workers with support for ongoing learning and practice improvement through data and case analysis, training, supervision, resources and supports necessary to complete thorough, accurate, child-focused safety and risk assessments to support an informed process of clinical decision making; and
- Integrating safety assessments and risk assessments in an ongoing and continuous way throughout the life of the case.

***Participating Teams:*** Fresno County; LA County, Pasadena and Pomona offices; San Francisco, City and County; and Stanislaus County.

Casey Family Programs publishes a monthly newsletter, "The Safety and Risk Review" that provides information on the process of this BSC and highlights of individual teams. One of the accomplishments of this BSC is a document entitled, "Risk and Safety Assessment in Child Welfare: Instrument Comparisons."

### **Consolidated Home Study**

Under California's first PIP, the CDSS convened a workgroup to develop a proposal for a consolidated home study, which would replace the existing separate processes and requirements for foster care licensing, relative and non-related extended family members' approval and adoption home studies all into a single process, using a single standard for approval. The workgroup included representatives from the CWDA, various counties and CDSS Divisions including Legal Affairs, Community Care Licensing and Children and Family Services. In April 2009, an All County Information Notice was issued to invite counties to submit proposals. Implementation has been delayed due to lack of funding for implementation.

In August 2009, representatives from CDSS and various Stakeholders completed a review process of county proposals. Up to five counties, representing varying geographical locations and foster care populations, will be selected and approved to participate in the pilot. Once the recommended counties are approved they will be asked to submit a Comprehensive Implementation Plan (CIP). Once the CIP is approved, the selected counties will be trained and provided the necessary resources to implement the pilot. In addition, the CDSS is also addressing the Consolidated Home Study in our Children and Family Services Review Program Improvement Plan Sections The anticipated program date of implementation is July 2010, contingent upon funding.

Up to five counties will be selected to participate. Those selected counties will be asked to submit a Comprehensive Implementation Plan. The anticipated date to select counties is July 2009. Once counties are selected to participate, they will be trained and provided the necessary resources to implement the pilot. The anticipated program date of implementation is July 2010, contingent on funding.

### **Child Abuse Prevention Month 2009**

One of OCAP's most popular activities is the "Kids' Day at the Capitol" event held in April. Planning for the next year's Child Abuse Prevention Month activities commenced almost immediately following the current year's activities. Kids' Day continues to grow and expand and has become the highlight of Child Abuse Prevention Month in California.

Kids' Day is done in collaboration with Prevent Child Abuse California and the CDSS Public Affairs Office. The event is advertised several months in advance and children from local preschools and elementary schools are invited to attend. Approximately 3,000 people attended in 2009, including children, parents, teachers, and community child abuse prevention professionals. As in the past, each county's local Child Abuse Prevention Councils (CAPC), as well as programs throughout California, are invited to showcase what they do and share information. Annual activities include events such as:

- Recognition speeches by legislators, Department of Social Services Director, community-based organizations and child abuse prevention advocates.
- Entertainment and other fun activities for children

- An Exhibition Expo for agencies to disseminate information regarding their child abuse prevention programs and services.
- A “Heroes for Kids Art Contest” display with awards going to the winners of each age group: preschool through high school, publicly acknowledging their artwork.
- The theme for 2009 was Strengthening Families to Prevent Child Abuse.
- Prior to each event, CDSS designs Public Service Announcements for distribution to the communities.
- Local public agencies including fire stations, law enforcement agencies, and other state agencies are invited to participate.
- Local businesses willingly volunteer to contribute items such as snacks for the kids.

CDSS/OCAP continues to highlight child abuse prevention at the State Capitol, where local child abuse prevention councils (CAPCs), Family Resource Centers (FRCs), and agencies throughout the state can participate in raising awareness about child abuse and neglect.

**PIP Outcome:  
Permanence**

## Permanence

Permanence for children is one of California's primary goals; specifically, permanence in a home in which the child is safe and can grow into a healthy stable adult. The state of California and the CDSS are committed to ensuring that children have permanence and stability in their living situations, continuity of family relationships and on-going connections to family, friends, community and racial heritage. Further, the CDSS is dedicated to ensuring that, for children who cannot remain safely in their homes, reunification, adoption, guardianship, alternative permanent placement or transition from foster care to independent living occurs in a timely manner.

**Objective 1: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) target of decreasing the rate of children re-entering foster care within 12 months of reunification to 9.4%. (PIP Permanency Outcome 1, Item 5.)**

**By June 30, 2009, the State will achieve a minimum statewide improvement over June 2004 data of 3.43 percentage points or better, in the rate of children re-entering foster care within 12 months of reunification.**

Although the state did not achieve substantial conformity on the 2008 CFSR for the overall Permanency Outcome 1 measure, the state obtained a rating of "strength" for item 5: Foster Care Re-Entries Reduced. The state has not met the 3.43 benchmark.

**Objective 2: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target to increase the percentage of children who have two or fewer foster care placements in the first year of their latest removal by 3.8 percentage points. (PIP Permanency Outcome 1, Item 6.) By June 30, 2009, the State will achieve a minimum statewide improvement over June 2004 data of 3.73 percentage points or better, in the percentage of children who have two or fewer foster care placements in the first year of their latest removal.**

The state has asserted that we successfully reduced the rate of children re-entering the foster care system.

To officially recognize this improvement for purposes of the PIP, this must be verified by the corrected November Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) report. Therefore, the state has requested approval from our Regional Office for this methodology and to change our November AFCARS submission to accurately report California's data. Revised AFCARS data was submitted by the state yet neither this item nor the re-entry rate achieved our PIP target.

On January 4, 2008, the state received a notice of PIP penalty for "failure to successfully complete all the requirements of its approved PIP", pursuant to 45 CFR 1355.36(e). The state is currently appealing that decision to the federal Departmental Appeals Board.

**Objective 3: The State's objective is to reach the PIP target to improve the timely establishment of appropriate permanency goals from 70.4%. (PIP Permanency Outcome 1, Item 7.)**

This objective was met in September 2003. California met the improvement goal of 70.4 percent as reported in the APSR of FFY 2005. The most recent data for the year ending March 31, 2008, indicates that California is performing at 81 percent, which demonstrates steady improvement in the measure. The continued improvement in timeliness of adoption planning is contributing to this improvement.

**Objective 4: By June 30, 2009, the State's objective is to achieve a minimum statewide improvement over June 2004 data of 2.88 percentage points or better, in the proportion of children who exited to reunification and did so within 12 months of the latest removal. (PIP Permanency Outcome 1, Item 8.)**

This objective has been met. California met the PIP objective in this area on December 2003. The most recent data for the year ending March 31, 2008, indicates that we are currently at 69.8 percent which indicates a steady improvement in the measure and up from 68.9 percent from the prior APSR reporting period. Data Profile dated 05/29/09, FFY 2008 performance was 65.3 percent, FFY 2007 performance was 66.7 percent.

**Objective 5: By June 30, 2009, the State has set an overall objective of a minimum statewide improvement over June 2004 data of 1.34 percentage points or better, in proportion of children who exited to adoption and did so within 24 months. (PIP Permanency Outcome 1, Item 9.)**

This objective has been met. California met the PIP objective in this area on December 2003. The most recent data for the year ending March 31, 2008, indicates that California is performing at 30.8 percent, a steady improvement in the measure and up from 30.3 percent reported during the prior APSR. Data Profile dated 05/29/09, FFY 2008 performance with 29.5 percent, FFY 2007 performance with 32.8 percent

**Objective 6: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target to reduce the proportion of children with a goal of long-term foster care at two years after entry to 31.3%. (PIP Permanency Outcome 1, Item 10.)**

This objective was met in the third quarter of 2004. California met the improvement goal of 31.3 percent as reported in the APSR of FFY 2005. The most recent data for the year ending March 31, 2008, indicates that we are at 32.4 percent.

**Objective 7: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target to increase from the baseline survey by three percentage points, the percentage of children whose primary connections are preserved. (PIP Permanency Outcome 2, Item 14.)**

This objective was met in June 2005.

**Objective 8: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target that Family to Family (see glossary) will be available in those counties whose caseload**

**combined represents 60% of the CWS caseload statewide. (PIP Systemic Factor 2, Item 25.)**

California met the improvement goal in June 2005 for this systemic factor.

**Objective 9: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target to decrease the proportion of children in care for 17 of the most recent 22 months without a Termination of Parental Rights (TPR), by 2%. (PIP Systemic Factor 2, Item 28.)**

This objective was met in June 2005.

### **Benchmarks**

The following benchmarks were intended to increase family and foster youth engagement. To achieve these goals, CDSS' efforts were focused on:

- The development of quality case planning, team-based decision making and service delivery protocols; and
- Quality case planning protocols that include family engagement; child and youth involvement; and preservation of primary connections

**By June 30, 2005, the CDSS will have developed and implemented quality case planning and service delivery protocols that include team-based approaches to promote family engagement, such as team decision-making, family conferencing, etc., for targeted cases in each of the 11 pilot counties.**

**By June 30, 2005, the CDSS, in partnership with the 11 pilot counties, will have developed and implemented protocols to include children and youth in case and transition planning.**

These benchmarks were met in June 2005.

**By June 30, 2006, CDSS will, based on the experience of the total participating counties, begin phasing in an additional 15 counties to implement the quality case planning and service delivery protocols.**

This benchmark was met in June 2006.

**By June 30, 2007, CDSS will, based on the experience of the total participating counties, add an additional 16 counties to begin implementation of the quality case planning and service delivery protocols.**

This benchmark was met in June 2007.

**By June 30, 2008, CDSS will, based on the experience of the total participating counties, add an additional 16 counties to begin implementation of the quality case planning and service delivery protocols that include team-based approaches to promote family engagement, such as team decision-making, family conferencing, etc.**

Funding to phase in an additional 16 counties has not been available, so this benchmark has not been achieved.

**By June 30, 2009, CDSS will have implemented the quality case planning and service delivery protocols in all 58 counties.**

Funding was not extended so this benchmark will not be achieved.

### **The Family to Family Initiative**

The California Family to Family Initiative is an opportunity to reconceptualize, redesign and improve the state's child welfare systems and is comprised of a partnership between the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Stuart Foundation, Casey Family Programs, the Walter S. Johnson Foundation, and the CDSS. Family to Family consists of four core strategies, including: 1) recruitment, development, and support of resource families, 2) building community partnerships, 3) team decision making (TDM), and 4) self-evaluation. There are also several emerging strategies that address additional areas needing improvement that are closely linked to the five core strategies. They are: 1) Eliminating Racial Disparity and Disproportionality; 2) Immigration and Child Welfare; 3) Improving Youth Engagement; 4) Improving Parent Engagement; 5) Domestic Violence and Child Welfare; and 6) Children with Incarcerated Parents.

Members of the Annie E. Casey staff met with the CDSS administration earlier this year and are looking at expanding the F2F Initiative to all 58 counties in California possibly in the next state fiscal year. There are currently 25 California counties who voluntarily participate in the F2F Initiative whose goal is to improve outcomes for foster youth by implementing the F2F five core strategies: Recruitment, Development and Support of Resource Families; Building Community Partnerships; Self Evaluation; Team Decision Making; and Connected by Twenty-Five. The Federal review in 2008 identified the strategy, Team Decision Making, as a "pocket of excellence," and as a result, the focus of expanding F2F will start with the TDM strategy.

### **Casey Family Programs Breakthrough Series Collaborative on Timely Permanency Through Reunification**

The mission for the collaborative that is comprised of all the jurisdictions participating in this Breakthrough Series Collaborative (BSC) is to increase the capacity of public or Tribal child welfare agencies and courts to effect safe, timely reunification of children with their families. Concretely, this can be attained by:

- Creating and defining a common language and a common understanding of safe, timely, successful reunification;
- Implementing strategies, policies, protocols, and practices that respect and actively engage families and communities while providing workers and court personnel with support for ongoing learning and practice improvement; and
- Integrating practices that lead toward reunification of families in an ongoing and continuous way throughout the life of the case.

The goal for each participating jurisdiction in this Collaborative is to identify, develop, test, implement and spread promising strategies for improving practice in their child welfare, tribal, and related legal systems to support safe timely permanency through reunification for children in out-of-home care.

**Participating Teams:** LA County, Compton and Pasadena Offices; San Francisco, City and County; and Sacramento County

### **Judicial Review and Technical Assistance (JRTA)**

The JRTA staff consists of 5.5 attorney positions, including a supervising attorney. The JRTA attorneys work directly with juvenile court judicial officers, court staff, attorneys, and department staff (social workers and probation officers) to improve compliance with Title IV-E of the Social Security Act.

During the 2008-2009 fiscal year, title IV-E site visits were made to the juvenile courts in 37 counties (the 14 most populated courts and 23 of the remaining 44 courts with the remainder to be visited next year). During each site visit, the assigned attorney conducted an on-site educational review of juvenile court placement files, observed courtroom proceedings, and met with judicial officers, court staff, attorneys, juvenile probation staff and child welfare staff to discuss the data collected and observations made during the site visit. The assigned attorney also provided educational material and information related to a variety of topics including well-being and permanency related issues, such as, meeting the child's educational needs, finding life-long connections for youth, engaging youth in permanency planning, and using the Independent Living Program to help the youth plan for the future.

JRTA attorneys also conducted trainings tailored to meet the individual needs of judicial officers, clerks, attorneys, social workers, and probation officers as requested. The workshops focused on federal laws and regulations related to families with children in Title IV-E-eligible placements. The trainings provided from July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009 included the following:

- Mono County—August 4, 2008, Title IV-E related issues for social workers, county counsel, and attorneys
- Santa Barbara County, Santa Maria—September 10, 2008, Title IV-E related issues for social workers, county counsel, judge, probation officers, attorneys, and court staff
- Riverside County—September 17, 2008, Title IV-E related issues for social workers,
- Riverside County—September 18, 2008, Consultation with Department of Public Social Services management team
- California Department of Social Services, Eligibility Unit, Sacramento—October 28, 2008
- Humboldt County—January 30, 2009 Title IV-E related issues for social workers, county counsel and court staff
- Plumas County—March 11, 2009 Title IV-E findings and orders, Department of Social Services and Juvenile Courts

JRTA attorneys also responded to telephone and e-mail enquiries regarding title IV-E and related issues such as timeline compliance, case planning, and report requirements from judicial officers, court staff, attorneys, juvenile probation staff and child welfare staff on a regular basis.

Technical assistance is provided for judges, referees, commissioners, court clerks, probation and county welfare department staff on Title IV-E Foster Care requirements. JRTA staff attends all quarterly project planning sessions and project updates with CDSS. JRTA staff participates in meeting with county welfare departments and county probation department staff as appropriate which consists of discussing promising practices in permanency issues, such as, finding life-long connections for youth, engaging youth in dependency process, concurrent planning, and prioritizing permanency for youth, ADR methods, Family to Family models, termination of parental rights, and adoption.

The AOC ICWA Initiative staff provides technical assistance to a wide range of individuals involved in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems including:

- Judges in the state juvenile, family and probate guardianship courts;
- Clerks and other court staff;
- Social Workers;
- Probation Officers;
- Attorneys, including County Counsel and attorneys representing parents and children;
- Tribal representatives from both inside and outside California, including tribal ICWA and social service workers, native service providers and tribal court judges; and
- Individuals involved in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, including caregivers and extended family of Indian children

In addition to the ICWA trainings which are often broadly attended, technical assistance includes answering specific questions to provide information such as court procedures, rules and forms, where to find tribal information and addresses, availability of resources (expert witnesses, etc), reviewing protocols, and generally serving as a clearing house of ICWA related information and practices throughout the state.

### **The Judicial Council of California's Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Initiative**

Effective December 2005, the CDSS entered into an interagency agreement with the Administrative Office of the Courts of California (AOC) to create the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Initiative. The ICWA Initiative is effective from 2007 through 2010, and will likely be renewed for another three years given how successful the partnership is between the CDSS and the AOC. The ICWA Initiative provides the following services:

- Educational offerings;
- Curriculum development;
- Technical assistance;
- Statewide resources; and

- Tribal engagement on domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and teen dating violence.

These services are made available to stakeholders in the following three case types: family, juvenile, and probate. Stakeholders include judicial officers, clerks, attorneys, social workers, and probation officers. Services are tailored to meet the needs of stakeholder groups, individual local court systems, or regions.

### **Educational Offerings**

The AOC ICWA Initiative became effective in 2005. Since that time the education offerings which the initiative has offered include:

- Hosted nine regional ICWA conferences throughout the state. Four directed primarily towards ICWA and SB 678 in juvenile dependency cases and six directed primarily towards ICWA and SB 678 in juvenile delinquency cases.
- Provided over fifteen county specific facilitated trainings on ICWA, SB 678 and new Judicial Council of California ICWA Rules and Forms for counties throughout California which were either identified by the State DSS ICWA Working Group or self-identified as needing training on the Indian Child Welfare Act.
- Staff of the AOC ICWA initiative have presented at over eighteen conferences for child welfare and tribal professionals including: LA Partnership, Beyond the Bench, ICWA Statewide Conference, COW County Institute for Rural Judges and others with a particular focus on educating Judges and child welfare professionals on developments in the law and best and innovative ICWA practices throughout the state.
- In addition ICWA Initiative staff have collaborated colleagues in the AOC who work in the Center for Judicial Education and Research (CJER) on several ICWA Broadcasts including:
  - ICWA 101 – Introduction to the Indian Child Welfare Act for Court staff;
  - ICWA 102 – Advanced Provisions of the Indian Child Welfare Act for Court staff;
  - Continuing the Dialogue: The Linked Histories of the People of California: A New Way of Learning. This broadcast focused on the background to and purpose of ICWA with a particular emphasis on California Indian history. It was broadcast on the AOC's closed circuit TV Channel throughout California and watched by Judges, court staff and others throughout California.
  - Filmed a presentation by the Hon. William Thorne of the Utah Court of Appeals regarding the background and history of the Indian Child Welfare Act. This presentation is used routinely as part of our ICWA trainings.

All of these programs are now available on DVD for courts, tribes, county agencies and others who wish to use them in their trainings.

- ICWA staff have worked with CJER to update and revise the ICWA Bench Handbook produced by CJER and distributed to Judges and others throughout California;

- Worked on the development of ICWA curriculum which will soon be completed including:
  - Online ICWA inquiry and noticing course being developed by CJER;
  - Module I: Active Efforts, Case Planning and Placement of an advanced ICWA curriculum soon to be launched by the ICWA Initiative;
  - Collaboration with the California State ICWA Working Group curriculum committee work on ICWA 102 Curriculum.
- Development of a variety of tools for courts and child welfare professionals to comply with ICWA and SB 678.

Educational workshops have been provided by a broad-based group of subject matter experts on a statewide, regional and local basis. This initiative continues to impact not only the preservation of connections for Indian children but also to achieving permanency, as defined by the Indian community. During this reporting period, project staff completed the following trainings and presentations:

- June 5, 2008 – Eastern Sierra Training for court and agency personnel from Alpine, Mono, and Inyo Counties in Bishop, CA;
- June 10, 2008 – Presentation at the ICWA Conference in Visalia, CA;
- June 25, 2008 – San Francisco, Bay Area Regional ICWA Training for Probation Departments
- November 5, 2008 – French Camp (Stockton), CA
- December 2008 – Beyond the Bench conference workshops held in San Francisco, CA: a presentation by Justice William Thorne focused on what juvenile court state judges need to know about domestic violence in native communities;
- a judges' track (attended by approximately 50 state court judicial officers) on these issues as well as state court/tribal court cooperation;
- two 90-minute sessions for social workers; and
- two 90-minute sessions for probation officers.
- January 2009 – 23rd Annual San Diego International Conference on Child & Family Maltreatment;
- January 28, 2009 – Pala Tribe and Tribal Star collaboration, Southern Regional Probation Training;
- February 25, 2009 – San Francisco, Family Law Conference;
- February 2009 – Emeryville, Administrative Office of the Courts Juvenile Law Institute, advised on the ICWA workshop for judges;
- March 11, 2009 – Amador County Social Services, County Counsel, as well as parents' attorneys;
- March 25, 2009 – Fresno County, Central California Regional Probation Training
- April 17, 2009 – Yolo County Public Defenders' office (who represents parents and children in dependency cases); and
- June 3, 2009 – The Redding Rancheria, Northern Regional Probation Training.

## **Curriculum Development**

The ICWA Initiative has developed presentations that serve as the basis for an ICWA 101 (basic course) and ICWA 102 (advanced course) curriculum. During the spring of 2009, the ICWA Initiative will hire an education specialist as a consultant to develop advanced ICWA curriculum in a variety of areas. The first areas of focus will be active efforts and case planning.

In consultation with the ICWA Working Group subcommittee on expert witness issues, project staff will develop a Request for Proposals (RFP) to get bids to develop curriculum in the area of qualified expert witnesses in ICWA cases.

## **Technical Assistance**

As part of the ICWA Initiative, the project staff provides technical assistance to all stakeholders and fields questions relating to the federal requirements under the ICWA and the state requirements under the state statutes and rules of court that implement ICWA. The project staff has given technical assistance to several counties looking to adopt local rules or protocols to implement ICWA in delinquency proceedings.

In addition to technical assistance provided to individuals seeking assistance to improve compliance locally, project staff has also been involved in helping to design and implement ICWA compliance in the new California Court Management System ("CCMS") which is a major initiative of the judicial branch. Also, project staff has worked closely with the CDSS to provide input into the development of a proposed ACIN on ICWA compliance in adoption proceedings.

ICWA Initiative staff provides a wide array of technical assistance including:

- Responding to individual calls from judges, court staff, social workers, probation officers, county counsel, private attorneys, tribal representatives and individuals on issues involving the Indian Child Welfare Act. The issues can include questions about ICWA applicability, rules, forms, resources and procedures. Depending on the question staff will refer callers to the appropriate provisions of the Indian Child Welfare Act, Welfare and Institutions Code, Family or Probate Code, Judicial Council rules or forms, case law, listing of expert witnesses, Native American resources, or other resource as appropriate. This is where the bulk of the technical assistance is provided. These calls come from counties throughout the state;
- Conducting file reviews upon request. To date, ICWA Initiative staff have conducted file reviews in Glenn and Alameda Counties;
- Reviewing draft ICWA protocols and policies and procedures. To date, we have reviewed and commented upon protocols and policies and procedures for Santa Clara County, Los Angeles County, Inyo County; San Francisco County and San Diego County;
- Collecting promising practices and protocols relating to ICWA compliance from local county collaboratives focusing on ICWA;

- Assisting courts to establish new collaboratives or promote existing collaboratives; and
- Conducting ICWA self-assessments to help courts assess where ICWA compliance may be lacking and target training. A self-assessment tool was sent to all the Courts throughout California. In addition additional self-assessments have been completed with San Diego and Merced Counties.

Part of providing technical assistance is the development of job aids for stakeholders. Project staff continue to keep current the judicial handbook, the descriptions of available services to Indian children and families, a qualified ICWA expert witness list, and job aids for use by social service departments, probation departments, other agencies and judicial officers in ensuring ICWA compliance.

All technical assistance resources can be found at the link below:

<http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/programs/description/jrta-ICWAResources.htm>

The job aids available at the above website are listed below:

- Family Courts: Requirements Under the ICWA and SB 678 (pdf);
- Family Courts: Recommended Legal Findings and Orders for Cases Involving the ICWA;
- ICWA Requirements;
- Juvenile Courts: Recommended Legal Findings and Orders for Cases Involving the ICWA;
- Probation Departments Requirements: ICWA and SB 678 (pdf);
- Probate Courts Recommended Findings and Orders for the ICWA (pdf);
- Probate Courts: Requirements under ICWA and SB 678;
- Social Service Departments: Requirements - ICWA and SB 678 (pdf);
- Understanding ICWA Noticing Issues in California; and
- ICWA Inquiry Interview.

## Resources

The ICWA initiative's statewide clearinghouse of Native American resources went live this past year and has an interface enabling users to search services by type and region in California. Below is the link to the Web site:

<http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/programs/description/ICWA/index.cfm> and

The California Dependency Online Guide Web site also went live this past year. It can be accessed at the court info Web site by typing [courtinfo.ca.gov/dependencyonlineguide](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/dependencyonlineguide) or then link at: <http://168.75.202.29/>. Since the website is a free resource open to all child welfare professionals, it can serve as a clearinghouse of ICWA resources and trainings. All ICWA job aides and trainings are posted to this Web site.

The ICWA requires that agencies and others seeking to make a foster care placement or terminate parental rights to an Indian child provide proof of "active efforts". These active efforts must be culturally appropriate. Courts, agency staff and others with the obligation to provide "active efforts" may be unaware of the culturally appropriate, native specific resources which may be available in a particular area. The purpose of the statewide

clearinghouse of Native American resources is to provide a central, comprehensive listing of services, resources and programs which are available to and tailored for Native American parents and children. The goal is to ensure that the active efforts requirement of ICWA is met and that Native American parents, children and families receive the services which are most suited to their particular needs.

### **Tribal Engagement on Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking, and Teen Dating Violence**

In collaboration with others at the AOC, project staff is working on the Native American Communities Justice Project – Beginning the Dialogue: Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking, and Teen Dating Violence. With funding from the OES, the AOC launched a short-term project designed to enhance access to and improve the administration of justice for Native American victims of family violence. Drawing on community expertise and guidance, this project will engage Native American communities in identifying needs relating to family violence. The project involves collaborating with tribes and community members to gather information about, and develop strategies to address the needs of Native American victims of family violence. The project culminated in a planning meeting on May 22, 2009, to examine the data identified by the community consultants and gathered during the local meetings and compiled with the help of a research consultant working with CFCC staff. A portion of the May meeting was devoted to presenting local meeting results to Native American community representatives; and discussing how to prioritize and address identified needs.

### **Kinship Support Services Program (KSSP)**

California's Kinship Support Services Program (KSSP) began in 1998 with 11 counties (*Alameda, Contra Costa, Los Angeles, Monterey, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara and Stanislaus*). Legislation enacted in FY 2006/07 changed requirements to expand county participation, and increased the funding to \$4 million an augmentation of \$2.5 million. Currently, there are 20 counties (*original eleven and El Dorado, Kern, Napa, Orange, Placer, Sacramento, San Luis Obispo, Sonoma, and Ventura*) operating KSSP programs. The KSSP provides relative caregivers with community-based services that strive to ensure permanent family kinship placements for vulnerable children and their relative caregivers to increase stability and permanence without child welfare intervention. These services are available to relative caregivers and children who have been placed with them by the juvenile court, children who are at risk of juvenile court dependency, and children voluntarily placed with them.

Participating counties must work toward achieving the mandated outcome improvement goals of moving children out of foster care to the Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program or Adoption Assistance Program, supporting placement stability, and preventing a child from entering foster care. If needed to meet the unique needs of its relative caregiver population, counties may also identify additional goals and activities or services needed to meet those additional goals.

With the passage of AB 1808 (Chapter 75, Statutes of 2006), participating counties are required at the beginning of the SFY to develop a self-identified plan of service provision and activities to focus on each of the three statutorily required outcome improvement goals. At this time, KSSP-specific outcome data is not collected. However, counties are required to report twice a year on identified activities. Individual county outcomes are reported through California's Outcome and Accountability System.

Some of the participating KSSP counties indicated in their System Improvement Plan incorporating KSSP as a part of its provision of child welfare services. One county uses its program as part of Wraparound, another uses the program as a strategy to ameliorate safety factors to maintain permanency with relative caregivers. Another county includes KSSP in its relative retention plan. In biannual reports, programs reported assisting relative caregivers establish legal guardianship or adoption of children in their care, developing permanency plans through provision of case management services, and support to prospective relative caregivers at team decision meetings concerning placement of a dependent child.

### **Improving Adoption Outcomes**

The Budget Act of 2006 augmented county adoption funding to improve permanency outcomes for children through adoption. The funding was utilized to hire additional adoption caseworkers to increase the number of adoptions completed.

The initial phase of the process was the dissemination of the money to the counties, who in return began the process of hiring staff. The initial phase was expected to take at least six months. Once new adoption social workers were hired and trained, the permanency services to children were initiated. Due to the process timelines and data reporting timeframes, results were expected to start reflecting in the statewide statistics beginning in or around July of 2008.

Preliminary data indicates there has been an increase in the number of adoptions.

Adoptions reported to AFCARS for 2006 were 7,393;  
Adoptions reported to AFCARS for 2007 were 7,481; and  
Adoptions reported to AFCARS for 2008 were 7,580.

Final data totals will not be available until at least twelve months after the end of the reporting period. Additionally, final data totals are expected to be slightly higher than the preliminary numbers reported above.

### **The California Blue Ribbon Commission on Children in Foster Care**

The California Blue Ribbon Commission on Children in Foster Care was established by the Judicial Council as a high level, multidisciplinary body to provide leadership and recommendations on how courts and their partners can improve safety, permanency, well-being and fairness outcomes. The Blue Ribbon Commission seeks to improve court performance and accountability, to improve collaboration between courts and child welfare

agencies, and to address the need for adequate and flexible funding. Appointed by Chief Justice Ronald M. George, the Commission is chaired by Associate Supreme Court Justice Carlos R. Moreno, who is a foster parent himself. The representative Commission includes trial, appellate, Supreme Court, and tribal judges and justices, as well as legislators, attorneys, foster youth, community leaders and representatives from CDSS, county social services, education, substance abuse and mental health.

The Commission has met quarterly since March 2006, and has held meetings, briefings and hearings with foster youth, parents, representatives of the CDSS ICWA workgroup, caregivers, social workers, Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA), educational representatives and the California Legislature. The Commission worked closely with representatives from CDSS and the Center for Social Services Research to draft quantitative performance measures for the juvenile court. In October, 2008, the Judicial Council approved a new rule of court, effective January 1, 2009, implementing the court performance measures in conjunction with the development of the California Court Case Management System (CCMS).

Christopher Wu, of the Administrative Office of the Courts, Center for Families, Children & the Courts, is the Executive Director of the Commission.

### **California Permanency for Youth Project (CPYP)**

California Permanency for Youth Project (CPYP) is a project of the Public Health Institute, started in January 2003 as a result of a five-year grant awarded by the Stuart Foundation. This grant has since been extended through 2009, with the vision is that every youth who enters foster care in California will return home safely or find an alternative lifelong family. CPYP's objectives are to:

- Increase awareness among the child welfare agencies and staff, legislators and judicial officers in the state, of the urgent need that older children and youth have for permanency.
- Influence public policy and administrative practices so that they promote permanency.
- Assist interested California county child welfare agencies and their community partners to implement effective practices to achieve permanency for older children and youth.

The CPYP has provided technical assistance to 20 California county/regional child welfare agencies, published several documents related to permanency for youth in foster care, and established the Emancipated Youth Connections Project Program Model, which assists emancipated foster youth in gathering information about their personal/familial histories.

In 2003 the CPYP began working with four initial counties: Alameda, San Mateo, Monterey and Stanislaus. In 2005 the following counties were added: Contra Costa, Fresno, Humboldt, Kern, Orange, Sacramento, San Francisco, San Luis Obispo, Sonoma, and one region in Los Angeles County. Lastly, in 2008 the following counties were added: Madera, Riverside, San Bernardino and two additional regions in Los Angeles County.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> This information is located on-line at: <http://www.cpy.org/update-map2.html>

All 20 counties/ regional offices have received technical assistance from the CPYP and have worked on the challenge of bringing the youth permanency work to scale so that all county youth have this service available. Each county has developed a youth permanence plan that includes the following target areas: administrative practices, permanency practice, identification of the project target group, staff development, partnerships and involvement of youth in finding their own permanency and integration with other initiatives.

To measure results, CPYP is gathering data and published a guide in 2007<sup>3</sup> that provided information to the child welfare field on strategies for future implementation and change. The data was collected from the 14 counties, who entered the program in 2003 and 2005, on the children and youth targeted for youth permanency services. In addition, the CPYP completed a formative evaluation of each county's implementation process. The initial four counties reported a 76 percent success rate of youth who were able to form a lifelong connection. A lifelong connection is defined as, "a permanent connection with at least one committed adult who provides: a safe, stable and secure parenting relationship, love, unconditional commitment and lifelong support." Additionally, 22 percent of the youth had a finalized legal connection or were completing the process, which included adoption, guardianship, or reunification. The subsequent ten counties reported an overall increase in the number of connections for the participating youth, who reported 3.2 connections initially and 7.7 connections at the last measurement.

### **Cultural Brokers**

Fresno County Department of Children and Family Services along with community partners have been involved in developing and implementing strategies to address the disproportionate representation of African-American children in the Fresno County Foster Care System, since approximately 2005. Two strategies that have been identified are community representatives in Team Decision Making (TDM) meetings and cultural broker services. Fresno County is currently the only county participating in this program.

Cultural Brokers are community members that have received extensive training on the child welfare system, the Family to Family Initiative, including TDM meetings and Family Group Conferences. Ideally (but not always) the brokers will be of the same culture as the family and/or have an extensive knowledge base of the family's culture. Cultural brokers work to increase the quality of the relationship between the DCFS and the families it serves, so that better outcomes are achieved for families. The cultural broker helps the agency work with the family, and the family work with the agency. Cultural brokers are trained in the DCFS program activities and purposes, Child Welfare mandates, and how to work with the Juvenile Court. They are trained on the role of the case manager and that partnership with the case manager is a must for successful bridge building between the broker and the family.

As a result of the different strategies Fresno County has been able to reduce the number of African-American children entering foster care over the past several years from a high of almost 18 percent to a low of approximately 7 percent. African-American children in foster care went down from a high of almost 24 percent to a low of approximately 15 percent.

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<sup>3</sup> The guide can be located online at <http://www.cpy.org/Files/OrgDevelopmentGuide.pdf>

African-American children represent around 5-6 percent of the population during that period of time.

### **California Connected By 25 Initiative**

The California Connected by 25 Initiative (CC25) is a Family to Family initiative designed to assist public welfare agencies and their communities in building comprehensive supports and services to address the needs of transition age foster youth. The California Connected by 25 Initiative (CC25), which began in 2005, is a Family to Family initiative designed to assist public welfare agencies and their communities in building comprehensive supports and services to address the needs of transition age foster youth. The goal of the initiative is that “through positive youth development and integrated systems of support and services, transitioning foster youth are connected by age 25 to the opportunities, experiences and support that will enable them to succeed throughout adulthood.” The initiative is part of a national CC25 work of the Youth Transition Funders Group. Currently, eight counties participate in CC25: Fresno, Glen, Humboldt, Orange, San Francisco, Santa Clara, Solano and Stanislaus.

The goal of the initiative is that “through positive youth development and integrated systems of support and services, transitioning foster youth are connected by age 25 to the opportunities, experiences and support that will enable them to succeed throughout adulthood.” The initiative is part of a national CC25 work of the Youth Transition Funders Group. Currently, eight counties participate in CC25: Fresno, Glen, Humboldt, Orange, San Francisco, Santa Clara, Solano and Stanislaus.

CC25 counties are assisting in the development of CC25 values, tools and practices that will be used for building a comprehensive continuum which will improve outcomes for transitioning foster youth. CC25 counties are implementing strategies that can be replicated statewide to improve the adult transition experiences of all California’s foster care youth in the following areas: The initiative is being developed to assist county child welfare agencies and their communities to build a comprehensive continuum of supports and services across seven key focus areas:

- K-12 Education
- Employment/Job Training/Postsecondary Education
- Housing
- Independent Living Skills Program
- Financial Competency, Savings and Assets
- Personal/Social Asset Development
- Permanency

### **Dependency Drug Courts**

Dependency drug courts monitor families who are involved with the child welfare system and for whom substance abuse is a significant issue. These courts oversee compliance with the law, protection and permanency planning for children, and therapeutic interventions

for individuals with substance abuse problems. In California and in other states, dependency drug courts have been determined to have important positive effects on child welfare case outcomes.

In 2006, UCLA conducted a comparative analysis of dependency drug courts in San Diego, Sacramento and Santa Clara Counties. Consistent with previous research in California and in other states, UCLA's results suggest that dependency drug courts are generally cost-neutral, improve family reunification rates, and reduce foster care reentries. Dependency drug courts do not appear to reduce the time to reunification or short-term foster care costs but are expected to result in significant long-term foster care cost avoidances.

From 2004 to 2006, the CDSS provided technical assistance and staff support to the Judicial Council's Collaborative Justice Advisory Committee and since 2007 has held full membership and works closely with ADP.

Since SFY 2006/07, \$4.8 million was allocated to 17 counties (El Dorado, Modoc, Merced, Orange, Sacramento, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Butte, Lake, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Francisco, San Joaquin and Tehama for dependency drug court expansion.

Since the beginning of SFY 2007/08, the dependency drug court general fund appropriation was directed to the ADP with the goal of establishing a closer link between funding and program oversight, however the two departments continue to collaborate with local courts and the AOC to expand and demonstrate the effectiveness of dependency drug courts

Supported by the state General Fund, Drug Court Improvement Act grant funds, and local sources, 38 counties have established dependency drug courts, and two counties (Sacramento and San Diego) have comprehensive programs.

In 2008, the National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare announced the availability of in-depth technical assistance to be awarded through a nationwide, competitive application process. The CDSS and ADP and the AOC submitted a successful application in support of dependency drug courts, and with technical assistance provided by the National Center the three departments will establish a comprehensive plan to establish dependency drug courts in every county.

In summary, data compiled and analyzed by UCLA and by key counties in California support the evidence from other states: Dependency drug courts significantly improve permanency outcomes for children in foster care. In response, California has established a partnership between the ADP, the CDSS and the AOC. Staff from these agencies are now conducting an environmental scan of existing dependency drug courts in preparation for drafting a comprehensive plan for a statewide dependency drug court program. CDSS expects that this plan will be completed by the end of calendar year 2011 and subsequently submitted to the appropriate policy and budgets committees of the California Legislature.

**PIP Outcome:  
Well-Being**

## Promote the Well-Being of Children and Families

California is committed to the well-being of children and families. To measure progress towards well-being, the following specific outcomes have been established:

- Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.
- Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.
- Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.

In the spring of 2004, The CDSS used a statewide, statistically valid survey that established a baseline performance level for the well-being measures. Three subsequent surveys are being used to measure change from the baseline performance.

**Objective 1: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target to increase by three percentage points, the percentage of children, parents and caregivers whose needs were assessed and who received services to meet those needs. (PIP Well-Being Outcome 1, Item 17.)**

This objective was met in June 2005.

**Objective 2: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target to increase by three percentage points, the percent of children, parents and caregivers involved in case planning. (PIP Well-Being Outcome 1, Item 18.)**

**By June 30, 2009, the State's objective is to achieve a minimum statewide improvement over June 2004 data of 0.81 percentage points or better, the percentage of children, parents, and caregivers involved in case planning.**

This objective was met in June 2009.

**Objective 3: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target to increase by three percentage points the percentage of compliance by workers with planned parent visit schedules; the percentage of parents whose ability to meet their case plan goals was promoted/assisted by social worker visits; and the percentage of parents whose ability to safely parent the in-home child was promoted/assisted by social worker visits. (PIP Well-Being Outcome 1, Item 20.)**

This objective was met in June 2007.

**Objective 4: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target to increase by three percentage points, the percent of all children in the home, or in out-of-home placement, who were assessed and received services for educational needs. (PIP Well-Being Outcome 2, Item 21.)**

This objective was met in June 2005.

**Objective 5: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target to increase by three percentage points, the percent of all children in the home, or in out-of-home placement, who were assessed and received services for mental health needs. (PIP Well-Being Outcome 3, Item 23.)**

This objective was met in June 2005.

Regarding health care and education, the available data and analyses have been provided in this section of the APSR. Important new data are being compiled on the proportions of children and youth for whom court approval for psychotropic medications has been obtained. Trends are not yet apparent, but once consistent data entry processes have been established, the CDSS will report on the distribution of these approvals by age and placement type. Additional data measures will address the timelines of health and dental health assessments.

### **Benchmarks**

The following benchmarks were intended to develop protocols and strategies to safely maintain children in their homes when appropriate. To achieve these goals, CDSS' efforts were focused on implementing:

- A team based decision-making process in the 11 counties,
- a family participation protocol in targeted cases in the 11 counties, and
- a protocol to include youth in case and transition planning in the 11 counties.

Additionally, CDSS' efforts focused on developing community resources that will be available to help preserve and strengthen families' capacity to provide ongoing safety and stability for their children, and to restore their capacity to care for their children after removal.

**By June 30, 2005, CDSS will have developed and implemented quality case planning and service delivery protocols in each of the 11 pilot counties for targeted cases in each county.**

**By June 30, 2005, CDSS, in partnership with the 11 pilot counties, will have developed and implemented protocols to enhance family participation in case planning.**

**By June 30, 2005, CDSS, in partnership with the 11 pilot counties, will have developed and implemented protocols to include children and youth in case and transition planning.**

These benchmarks were met June 2005.

**By June 30, 2006, the 11 counties will develop strategies for community resource development to better serve children and families in targeted cases.**

This benchmark was met in June 2006. As reported previously, as part of the implementation of Differential Response, resources in the community were developed in order to serve the families being referred by CWS.

**By June 30, 2006, CDSS will, based on the experience of the total participating counties, begin phasing in an additional 15 counties to implement the quality case planning and service delivery protocols; the protocols to enhance family participation in case planning; the protocols to include children and youth in case and transition planning; and develop strategies for community resource development to better serve children and families.**

This benchmark was met in June 2006.

**By June 30, 2007, CDSS will, based on the experience of the total participating counties, begin phasing in an additional 16 counties to implement the quality case planning and service delivery protocols; the protocols to enhance family participation in case planning; the protocols to include children and youth in case and transition planning; and develop strategies for community resource development to better serve children and families.**

This benchmark was met in June 2006.

**By June 30, 2008, CDSS will, based on the experience of the total participating counties, begin phasing in an additional 16 counties to implement the quality case planning and service delivery protocols; the protocols to enhance family participation in case planning; the protocols to include children and youth in case and transition planning; and develop strategies for community resource development to better serve children and families.**

Funding to phase in an additional 16 counties was not available so this benchmark was not achieved.

**By June 30, 2009, CDSS will have implemented the quality case planning and service delivery protocols; the protocols to enhance family participation in case planning; the protocols to include children and youth in case and transition planning; and develop strategies for community resource development to better serve children and families in all 58 counties.**

Funding was not extended so this benchmark will not be achieved.

California's current Program Improvement Plan provides the available data and analyses on children's well-being. The observed data trends, if any, are reflected in the PIP, and where known, the factors that influenced these trends are identified.

### **Assessment of Health Needs by Medical Professionals**

Under the Health Care Program for Children in Foster Care, funded through and managed by the CDSS and the DHCS, public health nurses play a crucial role in assessing and meeting the health care needs of children in foster care. Housed within county child welfare services agencies, these nurses provide administrative case management, which includes examining health records and case files and determining the need for health-related evaluations and services. Fifty five of California's 58 counties currently participate in the Health Care Program for Children in Foster Care. The Welfare and Institutions Code was recently amended to require that all counties participate effective January 1, 2010.

When a nurse overseeing a child's medical care identifies unmet healthcare needs, she arranges for and follows up on the provision of services from primary and specialty care physicians and associated health care providers. Using the recommended periodicity schedule of the American Academy of Pediatrics and the individual health needs of each child, each public health nurse determines the need for periodic and interperiodic health assessments that conform to the standards established by the DHCS. These health assessments are conducted by or under the direct supervision of physicians who have met DHCS's standards, and the public health nurses collaborate directly with those physicians and their professional staff to ensure that follow-up care is provided. In addition, as health care professionals, public health nurses serve as consultants to county child welfare services staff and juvenile probation officers on interpreting and carrying out the recommendations of the children's physicians.

The CDSS confers, on a quarterly basis, with a subcommittee of the County Mental Health Director's Association to discuss and work to improve program and placement options to meet the needs of foster youth with high level mental health needs. The chair of that subcommittee is a county medical director. In this forum and at other levels the following issues related to foster youth with high level mental health needs have been identified. There are not enough child psychiatrists and other mental health professionals willing to serve foster youth at the Medi-Cal reimbursements rates, particularly in rural areas. The number of community treatment facilities, which were intended to serve this population, has been decreasing, due to funding, regulatory and local acceptance issues. However, California's group home reform regional pilot projects may provide new service approaches that will better serve this population of foster youth.

As judicial approval is mandated by California law prior to the administration of psychotropic medications to foster youth, the CDSS collaborates with the judiciary and child psychiatrists to ensure that the necessary processes and protections are in place and current. In 2007, the Governor sponsored AB 1514 (Chapter 120, Statutes of 2007), which expanded those protections and processes to all children in foster care. On April 2, 2008 the Department issued All County Information Notice I- 20-08 to reiterate existing requirements and to clarify data entry procedures regarding psychotropic medications prescribed for dependents and wards in foster care. Preliminary data are now being obtained on the numbers of children for whom parental or judicial consent for the administration of psychotropic medications has been requested. Data entry procedures are being revised to improve statewide consistency and accuracy, and when those revisions have been implemented, the CDSS will issue quarterly reports.

With staff dedicated to this specific purpose, the CDSS has begun to identify protocols for early mental health and developmental assessments for all children entering foster care. In collaboration with health care professionals in the DHCS, DMH, and DDS, the CDSS has begun a multi-year process during which it is intended that practices, protocols and funding mechanisms will be identified and put into place. CDSS staff have attended several training venues in SFY 2008/09: The Zero to Three National Training Institute and First Five Pre-Institute; California's Working Families Summit. These venues provided opportunities to build partnerships and outreach to families, primary care health care providers, and others in positions working together to recognize the early signs of developmental and mental health needs in young children. Further, CDSS has established state and regional collaborative with the public health nurses employed in the Health Care Program for Children in Foster Care. The CDSS provides instruction and consultation regarding documentation in children's case records of the results of mental and developmental screens, assessments, and treatment services. In an effort to assure affordable access to medically necessary care provided by county mental health programs for children with severe mental illness, the CDSS is participating in important negotiations with the publishers of standardized, validated developmental screening tools.

**Casey Family Programs and the Center for Juvenile Justice Reform Breakthrough Series Collaborative on Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare Integration**

This BSC will provide multi-disciplinary teams with a common vision and the tools needed to take on the challenge of supporting crossover youth and their families. It will do so by exposing the selected teams to both the substantive knowledge and a proven change methodology, known as the Breakthrough Series Collaborative methodology. This will allow jurisdictions to advance their reform efforts without the need of new legislation or appropriations.

By participating in the CPT/BSC selected jurisdictions will work to:

- Enhance services to crossover youth;
- Enhance practices and policies that focus on improving specific outcomes related to crossover youth;
- Reduce the flow of youth from the child welfare to the juvenile justice system;
- Reduce the number of out-of-home and institutional placements;
- Acquire knowledge about blending and braiding various funding streams, sharing information across systems, and conducting joint case assessments and management;
- Strengthen the linkage to community partners;
- Develop and improve their proactive and reactive communication strategies;
- Ensure that parents and youth are equal partners in the reform process; and
- Address the disparity in services and treatment that lead to the disproportionate representation of minorities in the system.

It is also our expectation that the jurisdictions selected to participate in the CPT/BSC will be able to utilize their knowledge of the Breakthrough Series Collaborative methodology in instituting future reform efforts outside of those related to juvenile justice or child welfare.

**Participating Teams:** LA County.

### **The Foster Youth Services Program**

In 1981, the California Legislature declared that the instruction, counseling, tutoring and provision of related services for foster youth as a state priority and established the Foster Youth Services (FYS) Program within the California Department of Education. Six sites in Los Angeles, Sacramento, Placer and Nevada Counties were designated Core District Programs to provide advocacy and direct services to support the educational success of foster youth attending schools in their districts. In 2006, FYS support was expanded to establish Countywide Programs in 57 counties to serve youth residing in foster family homes, foster family agency certified homes, court-specified homes and group homes. The FYS Countywide Programs now serve more than 45,000 students.

The FYS Countywide Programs and the Core District Programs share the following goals: (1) Identify the educational, physical, social and emotional needs of foster youth; (2) determine gaps in the provision of educational and social support services and provide those services, either directly or through referral to collaborative partners; (3) identify inadequacies in the completion and timely transfer of health and education records to facilitate appropriate and stable care and educational placement; (4) improve student academic achievement and reduce student truancy, dropout rates and delinquent behavior; and (5) provide advocacy to promote the best interests of foster youth throughout California.

Foster Youth Services programs have achieved important academic outcomes: (1) Core District Programs achieved a 1.6 month average academic gain for each month of tutoring based on the results of repeated standardized testing; (2) Core District Programs achieved a 1.83 month average academic gain; (3) more than two-thirds of participating FYS pupils had attained at least one month of academic growth for every month of tutoring, surpassing the 60 percent FYS target objective; (4) 75 percent of participating foster youth received academic tutoring from FYS Countywide Programs, either directly or through partner agencies; (5) 76 percent of participating foster youth received educational assessments, Individualized Educational Plans, or case management services from FYS Countywide Programs or partner agencies; and (6) 86 percent of participating foster youth received educational assessments and case management services.

### **Residentially Based Services Reform**

AB1453, signed by Governor Schwarzenegger on October 11, 2007 (Chapter 466, Statutes of 2007, is based on the Framework for a New System of Residentially Based Services (RBS) in California developed by a coalition of committed stakeholders and advocates who worked with CDSS to reassess the role of group homes for children and youth. AB 1453 authorizes a five-year pilot demonstration project, beginning January 1, 2008, aimed at transforming the state's current system of group care, providing long-term congregate care and treatment to a system of Residentially Based Services (RBS) programs, which combine short-term residential stabilization and treatment with follow along community-based services to reconnect youth to their families, schools and communities. To guide the development of the RBS program, two integral committees have been established: the Family and Youth Advisory Group, and the RBS Steering Committee. The Family and Youth Advisory Group serves as the state level advisory body of current and former foster youth, parents, grandparents and relatives and provides feedback and input into the

development of the RBS program. The RBS Steering Committee serves as the state level oversight and implementation committee of public and private stakeholders who manage the development and implementation of the RBS program. Casey Family Programs, in collaboration with the California Alliance of Child and Family Services and Sierra Health Foundation, are providing substantial resources and technical assistance for the successful implementation of the pilot demonstration project.

The RBS Reform Pilot Demonstration Project is in the final planning, early implementation phase with four participating demonstration sites:

- Bay Area Consortium (Contra Costa, San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Clara),
- Los Angeles,
- Sacramento, and
- San Bernardino.

The four demonstration sites have selected their participating private non-profit agency partners and are working together collaboratively to develop their RBS program plan, which include three deliverables: Voluntary Agreement, Alternative Funding Model, and Waiver Request. The Voluntary Agreement serves as the agreement between the county and private non-profit agency, and includes the details of their program. The Alternative Funding Model outlines the payment system for their program in lieu of the current Rate Classification Level (RCL) used for paying private nonprofit child welfare group home providers in California. The Waiver Request, contingent on approval from the CDSS Director, will allow the counties to request to waive specific child welfare regulations that may prohibit or impair the implementation of their RBS program.

The demonstration sites will begin submitting their RBS program plans to CDSS for approval midyear 2009. Full implementation of all demonstration sites is anticipated by the end of 2009. CDSS will begin convening a Workgroup, as identified in AB 1453, to develop a recommendation for the RBS Statewide Plan in October 2009. This Plan is due to the California Legislature on January 1, 2011.

### **The California Foster Youth Education Task Force**

The California Foster Youth Education Task Force (CFYETF) was created in 2004 to address critical issues related to foster youth education, including those articulated by recent legislative action. The CFYETF comprises over 35 participants, including the CDSS and DOE, Casey Family Programs, the California Youth Connection, and the Child & Family Policy Institute of California. CFYETF has published fact sheets related to the educational needs of children in foster care, including eight published fact sheets with topics such as AB 490 (Chapter 862, Statutes of 2003), Education Rights, Special Education, Non-public Schools, AB 3632 (Statutes of 1984), Functional Behavioral Assessments and Behavioral Intervention Plans, School Discipline, and Special Education Discipline. These well-received fact sheets are intended to form the basis for public policy discussion and to support local educational agency adherence to state and federal statutes.

The purpose of the task force is to support successful educational outcomes for California's students in foster care by increasing awareness of the student's educational needs,

promoting best and promising practices, and promoting policy improvements and reforms across educational, child welfare, and juvenile and family court systems.

In 2007 and 2008, CFYETF convened annual education summits, and each included over 300 participants from parents, youth and professionals in child welfare, probation, education, and the courts. In May 2009, the CFYETF convened its third annual conference in Sacramento. Speakers included Jaiya John, author and executive director of Soul Water Rising, and topics included: Coalition Building, Child Welfare and Education, School Discipline, Leveraging/Managing Resources, Promising Practices, Assessment Models, Local Partnership, School Engagement, Multiple Pathways, Mental Health, Educational Rights, Recent Legislation, Higher Education, Information/Data Sharing, Academic Supports, Special Education, and AB490.

The California Foster Youth Education Task Force has:

- Developed and maintain a statewide forum to discuss and address practice and policy issues that affect educational outcomes for children and youth in foster care
- Supported three annual summits to share best practice and address cutting edge policy and practice issues
- Developed a model and create on-going opportunities to support interagency county teams focusing on improving educational outcomes
- Increased the visibility and urgency related to educational issues
- Enhanced legislative and executive awareness and interest in the educational needs of children and youth in care
- Provided recommendations to the legislature to address issues that affect educational outcomes for youth in foster care, incorporating the voices of young people currently and formerly in care
- Coordinated legislative visits with members of the Assembly and Senate Education Committees, as well as other key legislators, to increase their awareness of the unique educational issues facing children and youth in foster care and programs and services that have been shown to improve educational outcomes for these children and youth.
- Supported the promulgation of rules of court to provide guidance to juvenile court judges in the operation of educational rights for foster children
- Created and widely disseminated wallet cards, fact sheets and policy briefs on AB 490 and other issues that affect educational outcomes for youth in foster care.

### **Education Coordinating Council**

In addition to statewide efforts, many counties have devoted considerable resources to the area of educational needs of their children. One example of this is the Los Angeles County Education Coordinating Council (ECC). The ECC was created by the Los Angeles Board of Supervisors in November 2004, and was charged with raising the educational achievement of foster and probation youth throughout the county. More than 200 educators, child welfare and probation experts, advocates, community leaders, youth and caregivers developed a set of recommendations. The establishment of a coordinating body that would provide oversight and accountability for raising the educational attainment of these youth was recommended.

The ECC brings together the major stakeholders responsible for the educational performance of foster and probation youth. Its 23 members include the leadership of school districts with significant numbers of system youth, county departments, the juvenile court, city and county children's commissions, advocacy and planning groups, community agencies, and youth and their caregivers. Its purpose is to coordinate efforts across organizations and jurisdictions, encouraging networks of people to collaborate to expand best practices and fill the gaps in communities where little help or support for families is available so that none of the Los Angeles County's children are left behind.

During its initial year, the ECC reached out to hundreds of organizations, agencies, constituent groups and communities in Los Angeles working to overcome the existing barriers to effectively working together and building solid relationships with those who share responsibility for or have an interest in the education of system youth. The ECC developed a comprehensive blueprint for raising the educational achievement of Department of Children and Family Services and probation youth.

As a body, the ECC is now engaged in championing the seven basic agreements outlined in the Blueprint, promoting needed partnerships, developing and coordinating new ideas for raising educational achievement, tracking indicators of success, monitoring and reporting progress, intervening when called upon, and problem-solving in order to implement the recommendations and actions suggested in the Blueprint.

Some key ECC accomplishments:

- In 2005, obtained a fee waiver from Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP) for foster parents, parents whose children are under the auspices of DCFS, and teen parents in the foster care or juvenile justice systems.
- In 2005, established a pilot program within DCFS and Probation to fill available openings in State Preschool, Early Head Start, Head Start, and LAUP programs with foster children and the children of foster and probation youth.
- Initially in 2005, and redesigned in 2008, developed a sample Educational Case Plan for DCFS and Probation youth and outlined the responsibilities of the departments, caregivers, and the court for implementing these plans.
- In 2005, and updated in 2009 to include all 81 school districts in Los Angeles County, secured a blanket order from the Juvenile Court permitting DCFS and Probation to share information on their youth with the seven school districts that are members of the

ECC. To implement it, the ECC adopted a Collaborative Agreement to Share Educational Records of Foster and Probation Youth that outlines a protocol for sharing this information, along with a Student Records Request Form.

Currently, the ECC is:

- Working at the local, state, and federal levels to increase the ability to share records between county agencies and school districts in the most effective and streamlined way possible. This accomplishment is still in progress but significant headway has been made in 2009. This information will be further updated in the next APSR.

### **The Tutor Connection Program**

The Tutor Connection Program is a collaboration with the San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE), Foster Youth Services Program (FYS), San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, Child Welfare Services, Casey Family Programs and California State University, San Marcos, College of Education (CSUSM) and Office of Community Service Learning and; the program strives to bridge the worlds of public education and public child welfare. The dual goals are to provide high quality, low cost, one-on-one tutoring to students in foster care while teaching future teachers about the unique needs of this student population. Pre teachers learn about the child welfare system, foster care and the educational impacts of trauma abuse and neglect. They then perform Community Service as in-home tutors. The program is administered by SDCOE, FYS. Tutoring hours can be applied to the required student contact hours for entry into the teacher credential program at the CSUSM.

Since the Tutor Connection Program was initiated in 2002, over 1,350 pre-teachers and 1600 students in foster care have benefitted from the program. Analysis of the program's impact has found statistically significant increases in reading scores for 69 percent of the participants and that nearly 80 percent have improved in one or more academic area being tested. The program has been recognized by the Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter Partnership Award for Campus-Community Collaboration, The California Superintendent of Schools and The California State Association of Counties. The program is in the process of being replicated by The Anchorage Unified School District in partnership with Alaska Child Welfare and The University of Alaska, Anchorage, College of Education. Additionally, Santa Clara, Child Welfare will be receiving Peer to Peer Technical Assistance from San Diego and Casey Family programs this spring in order to replicate the program in their jurisdiction.

### **Foster Youth Student Information System (FY-SIS)**

The Foster Youth Student Information System (FY-SIS) is a web-based database that is administrated by San Diego County of Education, Foster Youth Services (SDCOE, FYS). This database displays, in a secure and filtered manner, specific educational information on all students in foster care in San Diego County. Downloaded information is received from San Diego County Child Welfare, local school districts and REGIS. REGIS is a data

management system used by San Diego County Juvenile Court. There are multiple user groups with authorized access to FY-SIS. These include Child Welfare, Juvenile Court, Public Defenders, CASA and school district personnel. Each user group has a unique screen set that contains only the information they are authorized to view. This database exists through collaboration between San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, San Diego County Probation, San Diego County Juvenile Court and San Diego County school districts. There is an interagency agreement and a Memorandum of Agreement allowing for this data exchange.

### **Foster Youth Career Development and Employment Summit**

On January 8 and 9, 2008, more than 300 foster youth, former foster youth, caretakers, community-based organizations, employers, and professionals from child welfare, workforce development, education, and probation from across California came together in Sacramento to address employment and career development issues and forge solutions for the nearly 85,000 young people in foster care in California. Sponsored by Casey Family Programs, New Ways to Work, and the Child and Family Policy Institute of California (CFPIC), the summit was the first statewide gathering of its kind.

This gathering was an extension of recent innovative work at the national, state, and local levels demonstrating the positive results of a streamlined, cross-disciplinary approach across government sectors. It was also built on the importance of public/private partnerships in preparing foster youth for success in living wage, career entry-level employment. The Summit brought policy makers together with a statewide network of county-based, cross-disciplinary teams working to improve quality employment and career development practices for foster youth in California.

Forty-eight counties were represented at the Summit which featured interactive strategic planning and priority setting sessions, cross-disciplinary county team sessions to develop local commitments and define next steps. There was also a panel of leaders from Child Welfare, Education, Workforce and Philanthropy who identified opportunities and shared the need for program alignment at the state and local levels.

The two-day summit focused on providing solutions and policy recommendations aimed at achieving the following four outcomes:

- Prioritize career development and employment for every foster youth.
- Connect youth to education and workforce development programs.
- Support emancipating and emancipated youth in their transition to adulthood.
- Provide work experience and job opportunities that lead to economic success.

The Summit culminated with a hearing at the state Capitol, where the sponsoring partners, local practitioners from around the state, and current and former foster youth shared priority actions with members and staff of the state Assembly and Senate.

**Summit recommendations included:**

**Prioritize Career Development and Employment for Every Foster Youth**

- Develop a consolidation bill that creates a unified vision for transitioning foster youth, brings together the various pieces of existing law that address one or more related foster youth transition issues, and coordinates systems. A cross-disciplinary workgroup including youth should work with the Legislature and create uniform policies and an efficient coordinated service system in which foster youth receive priority for services across departments.
- Ensure that all existing laws directly related to transition issues, career development, and/or employment preparation are fully implemented and resourced appropriately.
- The Child Welfare Council should prioritize the creation of common assessments and outcome measures in the areas of permanence, education, and employment across all systems working with transitioning youth. The Council should formalize Memoranda of Understanding among state agencies and departments that define ways to allow for the sharing of data and information about common program participants. Agencies and Departments should be charged with implementing common data systems and reporting cycles to maximize cross-program collaboration.

**Connect Youth to Education and Workforce Development Programs**

- Actively support cross-program collaboration in order to leverage and link services across systems for foster youth by addressing issues of resource sharing, data alignment and reporting, program design, technical assistance, professional development, oversight, and governance.
- Establish a statewide program in which former foster youth are employed as transition navigators in each county to link foster youth to systems and services and ensure that when youth relocate their services are maintained. (Modeled after the current Disability Navigators.)
- Bring together the multiple plans that guide a youth's transition by creating a system for and requiring a common, youth-centered and youth-led transition plan across all agencies, departments, and programs that work with transitioning youth.

**Support Emancipating and Emancipated Youth in their Transition to Adulthood**

- Support or establish comprehensive, youth-led transition centers that coordinate existing resources and provide a place for youth to be supported and connected to one another and their community.
- Expand eligibility and resources for career development and employment supportive services and Independent Living Programs to ages 12-25.
- Build on the successes of the THP+ model and create additional transitional housing opportunities. Adjust program eligibility and program participation requirements to allow youth to maintain housing while pursuing the goals of permanence, education (including secondary and post-secondary), and employment. Transitional housing and affordable residential opportunities must be developed on or near community college campuses.

### **Provide Work Experience and Job Opportunities that Lead to Economic Success**

- Encourage the hiring of youth in entry level, career pathway positions through a subsidized, transitional work-experience program in partnership with the private and public sectors, ILP, and Workforce Investment Boards. The program should include the provision of support to worksite supervisors to maximize their participation, youth to build confidence and skills, and foster families to support youth participation.
- Encourage the State Youth Vision Team and the California Workforce Investment Board to develop a statewide “Hire-a-Youth” campaign in partnership with the California Chamber of Commerce and other state-level business groups.

Career development is important for all youth, but it is especially important for foster youth who “age out” of the foster care system at the age of 18. Foster youth are often left to face the transition to adulthood on their own in the face of daunting odds and without the support of family or community. According to a recent study by the Pew Charitable Trust, one in four foster youth is incarcerated within the first two years of leaving foster homes, one in five becomes homeless sometime after the age of 18, only 58 percent complete high school, and only 3 percent earn college degrees (compared to 87 percent and 28 percent respectively in the general population).

### **Other Community Efforts**

Efforts have been made by local organizations to join forces with the community and make a difference in the lives of local foster children. In addition to other charitable programs, one company in particular (in operation throughout California) has targeted non-profit organizations that support foster youth and established Foster Kids Agency Partners. With the help of the community, they have obtained and provided items/services to foster children such as school supplies, tutoring, summer camp, soccer shoes, birthday presents and warm clothes. The same company led a campaign to collect new shoes, clothes, coats, and a Secret Santa toy drive. These items are distributed to local foster children through Agency Partners.

### **Breakthrough Series Collaborative on Independent Living Transformation**

The ILP Breakthrough Series Collaborative (BSC) Framework highlights a comprehensive set of changes that when packaged together will result in a system that achieves dramatically improved outcomes for foster youth. This represents a new vision for California’s permanency and transition programs:

- Young people are at the heart of the planning and decision-making process.
- Permanency, Education, and Employment preparation is integrated into every aspect of a youth’s daily life, rather than offered as training in single session workshops and activities.
- All youth receive a broad array of services, supports, and opportunities that are integrated, relevant, developmentally appropriate, and tailored to meet their individual needs.
- Transition services are community based, and integrated across a range of public and private systems maximizing leverage of resources and opportunities.

Nine county team and one state team are being trained on an ILP Transformation framework developed for the BSC which guides sites in their testing and implementation of practices supporting youth, caregiver and community partnerships to achieve permanency, education and employment for all foster youth. Each team developed a core and extended team that reflects a cross-system approach locally, and completed a self-assessment and a measurement plan. As of June 2009, two of four, in-person two day Learning Sessions have been conducted in which all the teams gathered for training, the refining of identifying small tests of changes in practice, identifying ways of spreading practice improvements and the development of action plans. The initiative will continue until June of 2010 where the impact of the series will be learned when all teams will share their projects and newly-learned practices.

**Participating Teams:** State, Butte, Fresno, Los Angeles, Monterey, Napa, Orange, Sacramento, San Francisco, Santa Clara, and Solano.

### **Peace4Kids**

- Peace4Kids, founded in 1998, provides programs and services for foster and at-risk youth from ages 5-18, and after emancipation until age 24, addressing the needs of foster and at-risk youth in South Los Angeles.
- Peace4Kids is dedicated to empowering foster and at-risk youth by providing community as family by creating a strong foundation through programs focused on creative expression and life skills. Peace4Kids promotes a sense of stability amidst uncertainty. Trained staff and volunteers interface with youth on a consistent basis to model healthy relationship building and effective communication, and is committed to serving vulnerable children and youth in foster care, Peace4Kids creatively inspires them to discover their unique voice while providing the tools for success and encouraging the health and well-being of the individual by ensuring that they are a valued part of the whole.
- The program provides intensive supports and services that enable youth to access the most basic and vital of community services during the years before and after aging out, and is uniquely positioned to steward these teens into adulthood.
- All transitioning youth need better access to physical and mental health services, as well as vocational counseling, transitional housing consultation, and general guidance regarding self-sufficiency. Though these services exist for emancipated youth, these "new adults" do not know how to access them.
- Trained Resource Specialists, part of the full-time staff at Peace4Kids, assist emancipating foster youth by connecting them with these life lines, as well as teaching them basic life skills such as understanding how to manage finances and developing basic soft skills that will aide them in whatever career path they may choose. The practical realities of finding a home or a job can be a daunting task that is wrought with the potential of crisis and confusion. For this reason, a Resource Specialist is on-call 24 hours a day. Peace4Kids provides our youth with 4 programs: Saturday program, Teen Program, Emancipation Services program, mentor program.
- Peace4Kids is a non-profit organization funded by private donations.

## **The Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) - Wraparound Services**

The CDSS Child Protection and Family Support Branch (CPFS) have administrative authority for California Wraparound Programs, and the responsibility for meeting CDSS obligations under the MHSA. Prior to the passage of the MHSA, the Wraparound Services could be established at county option pursuant to SB 163 (Chapter 759, Statutes of 1997). The Department's role includes leadership, oversight and expertise to social services and mental health partners at both state and local levels, as it directly relates to the requirement that counties provide children with services such as Wraparound Services, pursuant to California Welfare and Institutions Code, section 18250.

CDSS continues to expand the Wraparound program and increase the number of families receiving wraparound services.

CDSS and DMH are actively continuing their engagement in efforts to develop and implement a protocol for defining and measuring wraparound outcomes at a state-level. Several counties now track outcomes such as Los Angeles, Orange and Sacramento counties which are impacting group home placements, placements and permanency. The collaborative Wraparound Community Development Team Project, (CDT) which is funded by DMH, included a strong emphasis on measuring outcomes, such as children are at home, in school and out of trouble, and are improving their behavioral functioning. CDSS attended a Wraparound Symposium in December of 2008 facilitated by the California Institute for Mental Health (CiMH) with an emphasis on increasing fidelity monitoring and evaluation using the CDT model. The results from the CiMH project provided CDSS insights into how outcomes can accurately and effectively be measured on a statewide basis. It also strengthens meaningful connections between child welfare and mental health at the state and county levels. The CDSS CPFS supports increased tracking of outcomes all counties by providing opportunities to participate in collaborative workgroups in an effort to simplify the process of collecting and processing data in the CWS/CMS database.

- As implementation of the MHSA extended through California, many counties include in their planning activities efforts to develop and implement a Wraparound Services Program.
- When the MHSA went into effect in January 2005, Wraparound Services were available in 28 counties. As of July 2009, Wraparound Services were available in 43 counties.
- The average number of children enrolled in services during January through June 2006 was approximately 1,100. The average number of children enrolled in services during January through June 2009 was approximately 1,852.
- Eight counties currently planning an active wraparound program are: Calaveras, Imperial, Lake, Sierra, Sonoma, Stanislaus, Tuolumne, and Yuba.
- CPFS Integrated Services Unit and DMH continue to collaborate and provide counties appropriate training and technical assistance with respect to the MHSA requirements and California Wraparound. During the current SFY 2008/09, approximately 66 days of training statewide were provided to participating counties. An additional 29 days are currently scheduled for the upcoming months.
- CDSS and DMH data exchanges are in place. (MOU # 06-6001)
- An MOU specific to the MHSA establishing the formal relationship, roles, and responsibilities has been approved for sign off.

- In March 2009, CDSS and its partners began the planning process for the Sixth California Wraparound Institute to be held in Anaheim, CA during June 2010. It is expected over 1,000 attendees will learn practical strategies for improving wraparound services to build relationships, and identify resources.
- The revision of the standardized training curriculum for California Wraparound was completed in October 2008.
- An ACIN 1-91-08, "Questions and Answers on California Wraparound Services (SB 163)" was released on November 28, 2008. An explanation of the MHS is included in this document. An ACL 08-66, "Assignment of a Wraparound Special Project Code in the Child Welfare Services/Case Management Systems (CWS/CMS)" to help identify children receiving Wraparound services was released December 31, 2008.
- A summary of approved and pending Prevention and Early Intervention plans submitted by counties to the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission highlights activities focusing on children was disseminated throughout the CFSD of CDSS.

### **Increasing Access to Mental Health Treatment Services for Foster Youth Placed Out Of County**

Senate Bill (SB) 785 (Chapter 469, Statutes of 2007) requires the DMH to create a standardized contract, service authorization procedures, and related procedures to facilitate a foster child's receipt of medically necessary mental health services. As directed by SB 785, the CDSS continues to collaborate with the DMH to develop and disseminate informational documents for use by local mental health and social services providers to implement the mandates of that bill. Those informational documents have been drafted and approved by the CDSS. Stakeholder groups continue to negotiate standardized contracts and service authorization procedures. The DMH expects to achieve final consensus with their stakeholders by June 2009. The primary goal of these efforts is to ensure that children and youth placed out-of-county receive the mental health services determined to be necessary to meet their needs.

### **The Implementation of Legislation to Increase Connections for Foster Youth**

The CDSS has implemented two laws that facilitate connections for foster children. The first was AB 408 (Chapter 813, Statutes of 2003), which dealt with efforts to identify, evaluate and assess relationships between foster children and other important people in their lives and the second was AB 1412 (Chapter 640, Statutes of 2005) created a phased-in expansion of requirements that county social workers ask children 10 years of age or older, beginning with those children placed with a non-relative, about important adult relationships and to make efforts to support those relationships. AB 1412 also required a court determination whether the agency has made reasonable efforts to maintain the child's relationships with individuals other than the child's siblings who are important to the child, consistent with the child's best interests. Further, AB 1412 specified that every foster child, 10 years of age or older, has the right to be involved in the development of both his/her case and permanent placement plans. It requires that a child's case plan include a statement of the child's wishes regarding their permanent placement plan and an

assessment of those stated wishes. It also allows foster children 12 years of age or older to review, sign and be given a copy of their own case plan.

The provisions of AB 408 and AB 1412 are monitored by the courts, which are required to make a judicial determination whether the agency has made reasonable efforts to maintain a child's relationships with individuals other than the child's siblings who are important to the child, consistent with the child's best interests.

In order to overcome barriers to maintaining or restoring relations for a child who was previously a dependent of the court and was previously adopted, and whose adoption has been disrupted or set aside, or who has been released into the custody of the department or a licensed adoption agency by the adoptive parents, AB 714 (Chapter 108, Statutes of 2007) allows CDSS and any licensed adoption agency to search for a relative and furnish identifying information relating to the child to that relative, if it is believed the child's welfare will be promoted. This legislation provided that a relative includes a member of the child's birth family and non-related extended family members, regardless of whether the parental rights were terminated.

### **The Linkages Project**

The CalWORKs/Child Welfare Partnership Project, also known as the Linkages Project, was launched in November 2000 to develop a coordinated services approach to better serve families and improve outcomes. The Linkages Project is a state and private non-profit partnership. Linkages assist both state and county CWS and California Work Opportunities and Responsibility to Kids (Cal-WORKs) programs with systems integration strategies. The purpose of this Project is to develop a coordinated services approach to improve safety, permanency, and wellbeing outcomes for children and families in California

The Statewide Linkages Oversight Committee (SLOC) continues to meet on a monthly basis to provide guidance and oversight to the project. The SLOC also serves as the advisory body on a separate grant provided to the California Center for Research on Women and Families (CCRWF) to update the Child Welfare and CalWORKs Primers that have been used by our Linkages counties as cross-training tools.

An outreach effort to determine the level of implementation in the Linkages counties consisted of the county coordinators completing a "snapshot" of their Linkages initiative with a follow-up interview. In May 2008, regional convenings were held in the southern part of the state (San Bernardino County), the Bay/Central area (Contra Costa County) and the northern area (Tehama County) to provide training on local evaluation, provide information about what they found from the "snapshot" outreach project, and to provide coordinators an opportunity to share information with other Linkages counties in their region.

On September 8 and 9, 2008, the Annual Fall Statewide Convening was held in Sacramento and 240 individuals attended. The theme and title of the Convening was "Linkages: Working Together to Fight Poverty and Child Maltreatment." A separate leadership session was held late in the afternoon on September 10, 2008, with the target audience of directors and program directors. Approximately 40 people were in attendance from 11 counties.

Three Regional Training Academies (RTAs) responded to the request for proposal that will provide regional trainings to address some of the needs expressed by the coordinators. These RTAs have agreed to develop specific trainings after consultation with the counties in their region or will include non-child welfare staff in trainings related to Linkages, such as coordinated case planning, integrated case planning, and supervision.

The project has continued to publish a monthly newsletter, "Keeping Linked", and the Linkage intranet site allows counties to access information. Also, several site visits to counties to support their local work have been completed. Outreach is being developed to re-engage three counties that are not participating in any activities or terminate them from the formal project.

Linkages has been included in the state's PIP as a strategy to improve family engagement in case planning and a strategy to improve the array of services for child welfare families when there is a linked case. Linkages recently started the evaluation of the program which is being conducted by Harder + Co. Thus far, Harder +Co. has completed the first round of case studies for three counties: Los Angeles, Stanislaus, and San Bernardino. They have also completed the first round of two of the three surveys that go out to all Linkages counties: implementation survey, staff survey, and the organizational change survey. The initial evaluation finds that staff working on coordinating their case plans and engaging families have found that families are more receptive, respect one another's profession, and appreciate the support each program can provide the family.

Additionally, the Children's Bureau has funded a robust evaluation for the five year grant and the CDSS should have the results before the end of the grant period, although it is still in the collection phase at this time.

## **PIP Outcome: Systemic Factors**

## Systemic Factors

Progress made through the Program Improvement Plan (PIP) in the federal Systemic Factors is as follows:

**Objective 1: California will develop and fully implement its new outcomes based quality assurance system, the California Child and Family Services Review (C-CFSR) in January 2004 and complete a review of at least 15 counties by June 2005. (PIP Systemic Factor 3, Item 31.)**

This objective was in met June 2005.

**Objective 2: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target that a core curriculum is developed and delivered by all training entities statewide. (PIP Systemic Factor 4, Item 32.)**

This objective was met in June 2005.

**Objective 3: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to meet the PIP target that statewide minimum requirements for the ongoing training of existing staff will be established and implemented. (PIP Systemic Factor 4, Item 33.)**

This objective was met in June 2005. The regulations went into effect on October 29, 2008. ACL (08-23) dated May 19, 2008, was released to counties. The ACL informed the counties of the new regulation regarding mandatory hours of training for ongoing line workers and supervisors.

**Objective 4: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to meet the PIP target that a standard core curriculum will be developed and used to train caregivers in all counties. (PIP Systemic Factor 4, Item 34.)**

This objective was met in June 2005.

**Objective 5: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to meet the PIP target that where service gaps are identified by counties in the C-CFSR process, 20% of the counties will have addressed at least one identified service gap. (PIP Systemic Factor 5, Item 36.)**

This objective was met in June 2005.

**Objective 6: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to meet the PIP target that of counties where improvement is needed, as identified in the C-CFSR process for 1) service array for youth and Native American and African American children, and 2) case plans are generic and lack an individualized approach, 20% of the counties will have addressed at least one identified service gap. (PIP Systemic Factor 5, Item 37.)**

This objective was met in June 2005.

**Objective 7: By June 30, 2005, the State will ensure that all State/county licensing and approving staff are trained on and apply the same licensing/approval standards to all foster family homes. (PIP Systemic Factor 7, Item 42.)**

This objective was met in June 2005.

**Objective 8: By June 30, 2005, the State's objective is to reach the PIP target that each county will implement a State-approved recruitment plan that reflects the racial and ethnic diversity of children in care. (PIP Systemic Factor 7, Item 44.)**

This objective was met in June 2005.

### **California Child Welfare Council (CWC)**

During the September 18, 2008, meeting, each Council Committee reviewed their goals and shared their current thoughts on implementation.

The Prevention and Early Intervention Committee goals are: 1) promoting early interventions for those already in the foster care system; and 2) promoting strategies to prevent families from entering the system. Key questions include how broad the Prevention and Early Intervention Committee should go and how it can narrow focus on what can be accomplished in measurable and affordable ways.

In a draft form, by June 30, 2009, the Prevention and Early Intervention Committee team plans to develop a set of coherent, statewide strategies to serve families referred to the child welfare system so children and youth can be safely kept at home and to develop a coherent, statewide set of strategies for vulnerable families to prevent child maltreatment. In addition, by June 30, 2009, they will develop a set of core components and implementation plan for a comprehensive, family-driven, statewide prevention and early intervention framework which identifies vulnerable families early and intervenes with the supports and services they need to succeed and thrive.

The Permanency Committee goals are: 1) improving permanency for all children in care, 2) increasing the number of permanency-competent mental health providers, 3) increase use of participatory case planning, and 4) ensuring caregivers are appropriately trained on permanency. Additionally, the Committee is looking at permanency training for caregivers and mental health professionals.

In their draft, the Permanency Committee states by December 31, 2010, they will develop a strategic plan for statewide implementation of dependency drug courts. By June 30, 2009, they will develop a strategic plan to implement Family Finding and Engagement (FFE) for all children upfront and continuously, while they are in the child welfare or justice systems so they exit the system as early as possible, with positive permanency outcomes. To address their third goal, by December 30, 2010, they will have worked with the California Mental Health Director's Association (CMHDA) to develop strategies for contracting with and training of mental health providers to expand access to appropriately trained mental health providers. By June 30, 2010, this Committee will develop strategies to implement effective child, family and tribal engagement and participation in concurrent case planning at every

decision point regarding services, placement, visitation and permanency in order to improve permanency outcomes for children.

The Child Development and Successful Youth Transitions Committee goals are: 1) all foster youth graduate from high school and have the opportunity for post-secondary education, employment and/or vocational training, and 2) every current and former foster youth has access to a range of continuous, comprehensive, coordinated, culturally competent, effective, individualized, strength-based and youth-guided services. This Committee will review the resources, approaches and practices available to build its recommendations.

By June 30, 2009, the Child Development and Successful Youth Transitions Committee will develop a set of recommended strategies to increase the percentage of foster youth and former foster youth, including juvenile justice involved youth, enrolling, attending and graduating from postsecondary education institutions, including exploring the statewide implementation of the Guardian Scholarship Program and other promising financial assistance and support initiatives. At the same time, they plan to develop a set of strategies to increase foster youth and former foster youth, including juvenile justice involved youth, access to best and promising vocational training and employment programs. By June 1, 2010, they will develop recommendations for expanding partnerships among K-12 education, postsecondary education, vocational training and employment, private industry, and child welfare agencies to meet the K-12 and postsecondary education and employment needs of foster youth and former foster youth, including juvenile justice involved youth.

The second goal for access will be addressed by June 1, 2010, by developing a set of strategies for establishing local systems which promote individualized care planning and collaboration among foster youth, caregivers, families, and multidisciplinary teams in identifying and meeting the needs of foster youth and ensuring continuity of services during and post-foster care. In addition, they will explore the alternatives to current statutes in order to identify policy solutions to address foster youth who need access to mental health services when they are moved to a different county for foster care services.

The Data Linkages and Information Sharing Committee goals are: 1) clarifying state policy on the importance of data integration and information sharing to strengthen relationships between different entities; 2) scanning entities maintaining data on children and families to identify potentially helpful common data and performance measures; and 3) inventorying data integration and information sharing barriers. The Committee will also review confidentially and, privacy and how systems interact.

In their draft, the Data Linkage and Information Sharing Committee first objective is to formalize a policy statement about the importance of data integration and information sharing, providing a strong statement regarding the benefits of being able to share data to inform CWS practice and risks for failing to do so. By June 2009, they will create a universal template/agreement to allow more seamless access to data. By December 2008, they conducted research which identified common data elements and performance measures which would be mutually beneficial if shared. Goal three was addressed by December 2008 by creating an inventory of the data integration and information sharing barriers existing between the different entities maintaining data on children and families assisted by the child welfare system

### **The Court Improvement Program (CIP)**

The CIP staff and the JRTA supervising attorney attended all the joint meetings on the CFSR, including serving on the CFSR steering committee and the statewide assessment team. Additionally, the JRTA supervising attorney served on the PIP committee and provided input into the PIP.

In October 2008, CDSS staff, including Glenn Freitas, Chief, Children's Services Operation and Evaluations Branch attended the national Court Improvement Program meeting in October 2008, to plan California's coordination of efforts during the CIP meeting.

The CIP continued its interagency agreement with CDSS to use data resources at the UC Berkeley Center for Social Services Research to provide data on safety and permanency outcomes for children specifically to judicial officers to further their involvement in the state's Outcomes and Accountability project. The CIP staff is also coordinating the input of CDSS and CWS/CMS designers into the upcoming Court Case Management System (CCMS) to align data elements, reduce duplication, enhance information sharing and follow a common schema of performance measurement.

### **Child Welfare Co-Investment Partnership**

The California Child Welfare Co-Investment Partnership is a public-private partnership whose purpose is improving the lives of children and families who are in or are at risk of entering the state's child welfare system. Formed in 2006, the Partnership includes organizations committed to investing in the practices and supportive infrastructure that will improve the child welfare outcomes of safety, permanency and well-being.

Founding members of the Co-Investment Partnership include the CDSS, the CWDA, and the AOC and private philanthropic foundations including the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Casey Family Programs, the Stuart Foundation, the Walter S. Johnson Foundation and the Zellerbach Family Foundation. Staff support is provided by the Child and Family Policy Institute of California.

Private philanthropy has been a crucial partner in improving outcomes for children and families involved with the child welfare system. While philanthropic investments have played a pivotal role in seeding localized child welfare improvements, never before has there been an intentional, public-private effort to consider how philanthropic investments can be leveraged to create statewide impact. That is a primary goal of the Co-Investment Partnership—to institute an ongoing, strategic approach that identifies and seeds promising ideas, monitors outcomes, documents results and educates about the need for increased public resources to sustain and spread proven strategies.

In 2009, the partnership decided to maintain their focus on the priority improvement areas identified in 2008. Priorities for 2009 include:

- Establish statewide leadership, training and support for permanency practices that support family connections and ensure each foster youth has love, a sense of belonging, and parent-like support and guidance for a lifetime.

- State and local capacity for assessment, recruitment and support of caregivers who are able to meet the individual needs of foster children and youth and provide them with safe, stable and permanent homes.
- Increase the ability of the child welfare and education systems to ensure each foster child and youth receives the preparation and support needed to succeed in school and to pursue postsecondary education and career pathways by informing and engaging leaders and stakeholders on targeted activities across both systems.
- Create opportunities for leaders and others in the child welfare and public mental health systems to engage in collaborative activities that will improve the lives of children and families.
- Collect and disseminate information and create opportunities for key stakeholders and partners to guide the development of an informative evaluation process that would support child welfare system improvement efforts and investments.
- Updating and aligning the partnership's five-year strategic plan in order to address the current political and fiscal environment, leverage existing opportunities and ensure continued progress.
- Utilizing the partnership's advisory committee as a primary vehicle for collaborating with child welfare stakeholders and ensuring a coordinated approach to child welfare investments. With representatives from more than 40 organizations, the partnership's advisory committee functions as an inclusive, collaborative body that identifies how best to implement, sustain and spread critical child welfare improvements. The partnership's advisory committee is continuing its work to build and support an infrastructure that will ensure coordinated, collaborative and consistent implementation of key strategies and best practices throughout California and to advance the partnership's policy priorities.
- Undertaking public education and outreach activities to increase policymakers' understanding of child welfare issues and the critical need for continued reforms and investments. The partnership is continuing to engage in focused policymaker education and outreach in 2008, working to improve the understanding of California's child welfare system, current improvement efforts and the need to support proven approaches.

In 2008, the partnership identified four priority areas to focus its efforts as listed below. The partnership's efforts resulted in:

- Permanency
  - The development of a comprehensive sustainability plan that includes leadership, training, and fiscal strategies. Input was provided by more than 40 key state and local stakeholders of over a 6-month period.
  - The identification of six fiscal strategies to support sustainability.
  - The recommendation of seven priority training areas for curriculum development and integration within California's statewide framework for child welfare training.
- Foster Family Recruitment, Development and Support
  - Public education efforts that highlighted the costs of caring for foster children.
  - Implementation assistance in support of a Resource Family Assessment Pilot.
- Foster Youth Education Supports
  - An integrated set of education recommendations categorized by the population served (i.e., Early Childhood, K-12, and Post-secondary education).
  - The active participation of more than 100 stakeholders, including key agencies and organizations.

- The establishment of three workgroups to support the implementation of the various recommendations. Workgroups include the California Foster Youth Early Care and Education Collaborative (0-5), California Youth Education Task Force (K-12), and the California College and Career Pathways Collaborative (which includes post-secondary and workforce career development representation).
- Connecting Child Welfare and Mental Health
  - Interviews with more than 20 key informants in both fields regarding factors which enhance and factors which seem to impede collaboration as well as questions about core values and key concepts in both fields.
  - Identification of nine shared core elements and values.
  - Identification of five factors which encourage or result in improved collaboration and two main factors which make collaboration more difficult to achieve.
  - Development of a vision for a child welfare/mental health collaborative partnership based on instilling shared values, beliefs, goals, and outcomes throughout both systems at all levels in order to improve outcomes for children and families.
  - Development of a proposal for strategies and activities for moving forward with this vision, including three specific activities:
    - Creation of a collaborative leadership academy.
    - Development of a collaborative child welfare/mental health curriculum module with in California social work schools.
    - Collaborative efforts and training in the area of evidence-based practices.

### **Accomplishments of the Co-Investment Partnership**

Each year, the Co-Investment Partnership takes stock of their accomplishments – what they have collaboratively achieved as a working public-private partnership.

The following summarizes overall accomplishments in 2008.

- **Facilitated Investments in the Child Welfare Services Program Improvement Fund** – Effectively leveraged nearly \$1.9 million to achieve a total investment of more than \$3 million in critical child welfare strategies and practices.
- **Convened ad hoc workgroups and conducted research in the Partnership’s priority areas of permanency, education and mental health** – resulting in the development of comprehensive approaches and/or increased understanding of needed improvements in each of these areas.
- **Established an Integration Team** – Resulting in the coordination of multiple efforts throughout California to ensure consistency in practice and prevent duplication of efforts.
- **Implemented Public Education and Outreach Program to Support Partnership Priorities** – Developed materials to increase understanding of child welfare, conducted media outreach that resulted in news stories, and developed Partnership identity and communication materials, including initial development of a Web site.

- **Conducted Targeted Outreach to Policymakers** – Worked to educate policymakers on the needs of vulnerable children and families and the impact of various policy and budget proposals.
- **Completed First Landscape of Child Welfare Programs in California** – Conducted a scan of child welfare improvement efforts resulting in the development of a document that provides information on key programs and practices across California.

### **Symposium on Fairness and Equity Issues in Child Welfare Training**

The seventh annual Symposium on Fairness and Equity Issues in Child Welfare Training was held on April 29-30, 2009, at the University of California, Berkeley. It was sponsored by CalSWEC in conjunction with the Regional Training Academies, the Inter-University Consortium and the CDSS. The Symposium serves as a statewide forum to create collaborative training solutions to advance fair and equitable practice and policy in child welfare. Presenters and participants shared their expertise, and this year's keynote speaker was Kenneth V. Hardy, Ph.D., Professor of Family Therapy, Drexel University, Philadelphia, and Director, Eikenberg Institute for Relationships, New York City.

### **The California Disproportionality Project**

As previously described in the Safety section, racial disproportionality in California's CWS system is being addressed through our participation on the California Disproportionality Project, which is co-sponsored by the CDSS, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, and Casey Family Programs through the California Co-Investment Partnership. This initiative launched in June 2008 and its primary focus is on African-American and Native American/American Indian children and families. In addition to a state level team, the project includes 12 county CWS agencies. The counties are; Alameda, Fresno, Kern, Los Angeles (two teams; Pomona and Metro North offices), Orange, Placer and San Diego (both focusing on Native American/American Indian children), Riverside, Sacramento, San Francisco, San Joaquin, and San Mateo. Each of the 14 county teams includes their community and interagency partners.

The goal in the California Disproportionality Project is to reduce ethnic and racial disproportionality and disparities for children, youth, and families of color in the child welfare system. County teams work together to form a shared value to define success in its own county and communities. Shared value is created through conversations with families, youth, communities, partners, and agency staff. Ultimately, this shared value statement, together with the results of ongoing data review and a facilitated self-assessment process forms the core of a county-developed workplan that serves as the foundation for the team's work. Work in this project includes:

- Facilitation of open communication so that challenging conversations can occur within the teams, with others in the county, across the state, and ultimately across the country;

- Active community engagement that occurs on an ongoing and continuous basis in recognition of the fact that it will take the wider community to brainstorm ideas and implement solutions;
- Active family and youth engagement, in both identifying challenges in the system and being part of the solutions; and
- Training and engagement of staff in order to educate staff on how their decisions and day-to-day practices impact disproportionality and disparities, as well as how to change those practices.

## Relative Approval Standard Compliance

### **Relative Approval Standards Compliance**

From the effective date of ASFA to the present, California has been fully committed to ensuring that relatives approved by counties to provide care to Title IV-E eligible children were approved using the same standards for the licensure of foster family homes. During the last several years, the CDSS has developed a comprehensive strategy to bring counties into compliance with ASFA standards. Those strategies included the issuance of several All County Letters (ACLs) and All County Information Notices (ACINs) to provide direction to counties regarding ASFA required relative approval standards since 2001 to present which can be found on CDSS' website, and ASFA compliance training by contracted vendors to over 1,000 county staff from January 2003 through June 2004. Additionally, CDSS provides ongoing technical assistance to counties via telephone and email, and attends a regularly scheduled convening of county relative approval staff to discuss relative approval issues.

Evidence of California's improvement can be found in the 2006 Federal Title IV-E Review. The 2006 Title IV-E Review audited 80 cases which included relative placements. California passed this review and there were no patterns of noncompliance. Additionally, in 2008, CDSS conducted a CWS/CMS on-line review of over 150 relative placements for 2007. The cases represented a statistically valid random sample of initial placements made with relatives in the last quarter of 2007. The focus on initial placements was to assess current compliance with California's licensing/ approval standards. This review monitored compliance with criminal record/prior abuse clearances, safety of the home and grounds, caregiver qualifications, training and orientation, and personal rights information that is documented on the SOC 815, 817 and 818 forms utilized by counties for completing the relative approval process. The CDSS allowed the represented counties reviewed to submit rebuttal documentation for deficiencies that were noted. After the review of rebuttal documentation, 90 percent of the cases were found to be in compliance.

We believe the 2006 and 2008 review results demonstrate that due to our past efforts to provide training, guidance and clarification, California has made great progress and has achieved our mutually desired outcome of ASFA compliance. The Youth Law Center, who brought the Higgins lawsuit against CDSS in 2002 over ASFA compliance in 2002, have stated that based on the results of the 2006 IV-E Federal Review and the 2008 CDSS on-line review of relative placements in 2007, they are satisfied that CDSS is in ASFA compliance. Accordingly, CDSS is no longer conducting on-line CWS/CMS reviews in this area. For the future, CDSS plans to monitor relative placement compliance with ASFA standards by using the same federal Triennial Title IV-E Reviews that are used for assessing Title IV-E program compliance in all other program areas. In the event these reviews ever demonstrate noncompliance with respect to relative review standards, the CDSS will reexamine the issue at that time.

## **Caseworker Visits for Children in Foster Care**

### **Caseworker Visits for Children in Foster Care**

Because the caseworker visits for children in foster care affect child well-being, safety and permanence, the caseworker visit plan has been included in this document in its own section as follows:

California is currently developing a plan to achieve monthly visitation and has included it in this document. The state has developed an allocation methodology for additional funds under Title IV-B by increasing funding for visits where the child was previously in exception status. California is a large and complex state and it has taken additional time to identify our data entry needs and to develop a plan for probation staff to enter their own visit data into the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS).

California currently uses the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS) system, the CWS/CMS to capture data on social worker visits. CWS/CMS captures the location of the visit and it is a required field when a contact is entered. The state will continue to use this system for federal reporting on this issue. In addition, because Foster Family Agencies (FFA), with whom counties have placement agreements, do not have access to input data to CWS/CMS, an alternate method of collecting/reporting the data is being developed.

California is currently working with public and private agency stakeholders to implement the new federal requirements: These changes will involve at least these key areas:

- Clarifying social worker and visitation requirements including the purpose of the visits and documentation.
- Eliminating monthly visit exceptions.
- Identifying alternate data collection processes.
- Clarifying reporting requirements for contract agencies.

California currently has a monthly social worker visit standard for children in foster care, however exceptions may be granted under specified circumstances. An exception may be granted if the child is routinely visited by other child welfare agency representatives and there is a written agreement for those contacts to be reported. No exceptions may be granted when a child is placed in a group home.

The most common circumstances for a visit exception is when a child is placed by the county having care and supervision of the child with a FFA. The county signs a placement agreement with the FFA for each child placed. The FFA has responsibility for developing a needs and services plan for the child and for visiting the child and the caregiver. The FFA makes quarterly reports to the county agency documenting the visits with the child and caregiver. Currently, the FFA visits are not required to be entered into CWS/CMS by the county worker. This placement agreement is currently under revision to align it with federal requirements.

Caseworkers (Social Workers) visit and care for children in accordance with Manual of Policy and Procedures (MPP) Division 31 section 31-320 (Social Worker Contacts with the Child). The MPP section 31-206.24 requires the social worker to document in a

case plan a schedule of “planned social work contacts and visits with the child”. The contacts must take place in accordance with section 31-320 (social worker/probation officer contacts with the child). MPP 31-320.11 emphasizes the social worker visit objectives to ensure the child’s safety, permanency and well-being by focusing on the following achievements in conjunction with the child’s case plan: verifying the location of the child, monitoring the safety of the child, assessing the child’s well-being, and assisting the child in preserving and maintaining religious and ethnic identity; gathering information to assess the effectiveness of services provided to meet the child’s needs, to monitor the child’s progress, and to meet identified goals; establishing and maintaining a helping relationship between social worker and child to provide continuity and stability point for the child; and soliciting the child’s input on his/her future, informing the child as to current and future placement plans and progress, and discussing these plans and progress with the child.

The child’s caseworker is a social worker as defined by Title 22, Division 6, Chapter 1, General Licensing Requirements: “Social Worker means a person who has a graduate degree from an accredited school of social work.”

California meets the requirements of the Safe and Timely Interstate Placement Act of 2006, which increased the “frequency of required caseworker visits from every 12 months to every 6 months for children in out-of-State foster care placements...” SB 933 (Chapter 311, Statutes of 1998), required that children placed in group homes out-of-state are visited once a month and this requirement is captured in the MPP 31-320.414. Additionally, the MPP 31-510 Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC), 31-510.3 requires California comply with Family Code sections 7900 through 7909 when sending foster children out-of-state. Family Code section 7906 provides that requirements for visitation of children can be met when a child is placed out of state if the sending and receiving state enter into an agreement to that effect.

Currently, the MPP Division 31, sections 31-320.4 and 31-320.412 provide for less than monthly visit exceptions if certain conditions are present. Visit exceptions are primarily based upon the stability of the child in their current foster care setting and the effectiveness of the services provided to meet the child’s needs. A visit exception is to be granted if the conditions set forth in Division 31 are met and is only applicable to the placement home in which the child is placed at the time the exception is approved. Therefore, if a child’s placement changes, the exception is no longer valid and the requirement for social worker visits with the child becomes monthly until a new visit exception is approved. Exceptions are allowed for: court supervised cases--court approval of a specific visitation plan and for voluntary cases--county deputy director approval of a specific visitation plan. The CDSS continues to develop regulations to clarify and eliminate visit exceptions and issued All County Letter Number 09-11 notifying counties of the new federal requirements.

As required by the Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006, the state of California will provide by June 30, 2008, “an outline of the steps it will take to ensure that 90 percent of children in foster care are visited by their workers on a monthly basis, and that the majority of the visits occur in the residence of the child by October 1, 2011.” These exceptions will be eliminated within the timeframe allowed by federal law. CDSS is currently reviewing data to determine the extent of the use of visit exceptions in various

circumstances and placement types. The specific plan is being developed and was submitted as required in June 2008.

**California's Plan to Conform with the Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006 – Monthly Caseworker Visits**

**Summary:**

With the passage of Public Law (PL) 109-288, Congress enacted new provisions of law related to caseworker visits to foster children under the care of a state. The new provisions require California, and other states, to meet certain performance goals related to the number of caseworker visits a child in foster care receives and the location of those visits. In addition, each state must submit a plan to the federal Department of Health and Human Services that describes the state standards for the content and frequency of caseworker visits for children who are in foster care under the responsibility of the state, which, at a minimum, ensures that the children are visited on a monthly basis and that the caseworker visits are well-planned and focused on issues pertinent to case planning and service delivery to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of the children. The plan must also outline California's performance goals as well as California's plans for meeting those goals. This document represents California's plan to meet those specific goals.

**Mandate:**

By October 1, 2011, 90 percent of California's foster care children must receive a caseworker visit no less frequently than monthly for each full calendar month the child has been in foster care. Secondly, a majority of those visits must occur in the child's home.

**Current California Regulations:**

Current California regulations require a monthly visit by a county caseworker (social worker, probation placement officer) with each child in foster care. Regulations allow for exceptions to the monthly visit requirements, upon written supervisory approval, when the child is in a stable placement, has no severe physical or emotional problems caused or aggravated by the placement, and prior to any exception being granted, the child is visited in three of the most recent four consecutive months. Exception criteria are found in MPP, sections 31.320.31, .411, .412, and .6.

California statute and regulations require that a child placed in a group home or community treatment facility be visited by the social worker/probation officer at least once each calendar month, with at least a two week time frame between visits and the visit documented. (MPP §§ 31-320-414.)

For example, if a child is in a stable placement at least six calendar months with a caretaker relative and has no severe physical or emotional problems caused or aggravated by the placement, then the case worker may visit the child quarterly rather than monthly.

### **Steps in Development:**

In July 2007, the CDSS formed a workgroup consisting of CDSS staff, representatives from the county welfare and probation departments, the CWDA, the Chief Probation Officers of California (CPOC), and the California Alliance for Child and Family Services (Alliance).

The workgroup discussed every aspect of the federal requirements, identified the populations of children who are not receiving monthly caseworker visits and why, and outlined the plan to bring California into compliance with PL 109-288.

The workgroup identified many areas where we can improve in order to meet the new federal requirements. The majority of the discoveries were relevant to the untimely entering of visitation data in the CWS/CMS by caseworkers. The lack of information regarding the juvenile justice population visitation and the incomplete visitation information recorded in CWS/CMS for children placed through a FFA indicated that we must be more vigilant in capturing and recording this data. On a positive note, it was ascertained that FFA social workers and juvenile justice probation officers are far exceeding the monthly visitation requirements. Additionally, the workgroup discovered that interstate placement data is not being captured consistently and we will be addressing this data entry issue also. California's baseline data is as follows:

Percentage of children visited monthly by a caseworker: 56.7 percent

Percentage of visits that occurred in the child's home: 69.9 percent

### **Specific Strategies**

#### **Federal Fiscal Year 2008**

California's strategies for 2008 were:

1. Analyze California data to identify which populations require increased visits in order to meet the new federal monthly visit requirement. Initiate regulations to remove any existing monthly visit exceptions for foster children and clarify the purpose and location of monthly visits of foster care and adoption caseworkers and contracted FFA social workers.

UPDATE: California has identified which populations require increased visits in order to meet monthly visit requirements and are formulating ways to address those populations. California has also drafted and initiated regulations to remove existing monthly visit exceptions, necessary to meet the federal requirement. The CDSS anticipates that these regulations will be promulgated by Fall of 2010.

2. Where monthly visits are being conducted but not reported, disseminate proper data reporting procedures to make maximum use of technology.

UPDATE: California has issued ACL 09-11 on April 9, 2009, which informed counties of the necessity to properly record data on monthly visits.

- Review and update the Intercounty Transfer (ICT) Protocols to ensure monthly visits continue to occur and are documented during transfer period.

UPDATE: CWDA is currently working on updating the protocol and nearing a completed draft.

### **Performance Improvement Target**

Description of Goal	Target Percentage End of FFY 2008
Children in foster care who were visited on a monthly basis	63%
Visits that took place in the residence of the foster child	Maintain a minimum of 51%

### 2008 Reporting

Description of Goal	Actual Percentage End of FFY 2008
Children in foster care who were visited on a monthly basis	63.2%
Visits that took place in the residence of the foster child	70.7%

### **Federal Fiscal Year 2009**

California's goals for 2009 are:

- Eliminate existing exceptions to the monthly visit requirements that are currently allowed by California regulations as necessary to comply with federal requirements. Those exceptions are found at Manual of Policy and Procedures, Sections 31.320.31, .411, .412, and .6.

UPDATE: California has drafted and initiated regulations to remove existing monthly visit exceptions, necessary to meet the federal requirement. The CDSS anticipates that these regulations will be promulgated by Fall of 2010.

- Implement data reporting of caseworker visits by FFA caseworkers for county agency data entry.

UPDATE: California is currently working with county and advocate groups to initiate a new data entry process.

- Implement data collection for juvenile justice foster children receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children-Foster Care (see goal #3, FFY 2008).

UPDATE: California is working with probation, county and CWS/CMS staff to develop this process.

4. Implement changes to departmental regulations which align the purpose, frequency, and location of caseworker visits and FFA social worker visits with the child with federal requirements, to eliminate monthly visit exceptions, and to reflect monthly visit data reporting requirements regarding FFA, probation, and out-of-county/out-of-state courtesy supervision placements. California will revise its regulation to require that all foster children placed out-of-state are visited monthly.

UPDATE: California has drafted and initiated regulations to remove existing monthly visit exceptions, necessary to meet the federal requirement. The CDSS anticipates that these regulations will be promulgated by Fall of 2010.

### **Strategy One**

The CDSS will work with counties and other stakeholders to revise regulations to reflect that every child will be visited on a monthly basis. CDSS will work with counties and other stakeholders to revise existing exceptions to monthly visit requirements pertaining to case carrying county child welfare social workers to take into account that foster family agency social workers or out of state child welfare social workers would be able to complete the required monthly visits for the case carrying county child welfare social worker in order to meet federal requirements.

### **Strategy Two**

California has been and will continue to meet with the Alliance and representatives of FFAs to work on developing a process for reporting of monthly FFA caseworker visits to the child. Concepts such as revising and solidifying the placement agreements with FFAs to specify the purpose/quality and visit frequency standards and require reporting of caseworker visits with the child for recording in the CWS/CMS will be developed. Once the standard contract used with FFAs have been modified and a reporting method has been agreed upon, monthly FFA caseworker visits will be reported to the county. Those visits will then be entered into the CWS/CMS system by local county staff.

### **Strategy Three**

The CDSS will continue to work with the CPOC to develop a method of documenting child specific monthly visit information for juvenile justice youth. California will work with the CPOC and the counties to determine the best way to document juvenile justice youth data. This will likely include development of a child specific manual reporting form, or modification of an existing one, to capture additional juvenile justice data. Because the majority of juvenile justice youth are placed in group homes for which there are no exceptions to monthly visits, it is anticipated that improved data collection will result in a nearly 100 percent compliance rate for monthly visits to juvenile justice youth and that the majority of these visits will be in the child's place of residence.

### **Strategy Four**

The CDSS will begin its regulatory revision process in FFY 2008 with an anticipated effective date in 2009. The CDSS will evaluate any additional funding sources, including

use of PSSF grants to use for this purpose. Regulations will be synchronized with new federal requirements as to the purpose and location of monthly caseworker visits to a foster child. In addition, the CDSS will revise and implement the regulations to reflect new juvenile justice youth, FFA, courtesy supervision and out-of-state reporting procedures, including the requirement that all foster children placed out-of-state are visited monthly.

In addition to the above plan detailing our actions to meet the requirements, the CDSS is also addressing the quality of caseworker visits in our Children and Family Services Review (CFSR) PIP Sections 2.3 (2.3.1 through 2.3.2). To underscore this commitment further, in addition to the federal Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) funding, the Governor has proposed over \$9 million in additional state and county funds to increase caseworker visits. For further information and for future goals and strategies, please see the 2009 CFSP.

# Training and Staff Development Plan

## **TRAINING AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

California's state-supervised, county-administered Child Welfare System (CWS) presents unique challenges and opportunities for developing and delivering training to various professional and paraprofessional child welfare staff and providers throughout the state. The 58 county CWS programs: from rural to highly urbanized; from a workforce of a few public child welfare workers to a staff of thousands; and from no formal staff development organization to very sophisticated staff development departments.

Welfare and Institutions Code section 16200 et. seq. requires the CDSS to provide practice-relevant training for social workers, agencies under contract with county welfare departments, mandated child abuse reporters and all members of the child welfare delivery system. The stated purpose of the program is to develop and implement statewide coordinated training programs designed specifically to meet the needs of county child protective service social workers assigned emergency response, family maintenance, family reunification, placement and permanency responsibilities (Wel. & Inst. Code §16206).

Consistent with the CDSS' federally approved cost allocation plan, training expenses are directly charged to the benefiting program. For costs allocated to Title IV-E, the non-federal discount rate is applied to account for the non-federal caseload. Also, all training contracts reflect the appropriate allocation of Title IV-E dollars for the application of the 75 percent enhanced training rate, the appropriate phased in training rate (Public Law 110-351), and the 50 percent administrative rate.

## **THE TITLE IV-B PLAN TRAINING AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT GOAL**

### **GOAL V 4: Prepare and support the workforce to help children and families reach positive outcomes.**

Objective 1: Develop and implement a core curriculum for all new child welfare workers and supervisors.

This objective has been met as of June 2005.

Objective 2: Establish minimum training requirements for ongoing training of existing staff.

This objective has been met as of June 2005.

Objective 3: Develop and implement a standard core curriculum for caregivers.

This objective has been met as of June 2005.

### **Regional Training Academies (RTAs)**

The five academies listed below are committed to offering a continuum of training services that will eliminate the duplication of, and offer consistency in, the delivery of training; assure linkages between the classroom and the field; support staff retention; promote the professionalism of current and potential staff in public social services and child welfare agencies within California; and promote promising practices in the field of child welfare.

### **Bay Area Training Academy (BAA)**

The BAA at San Francisco State University serves 12 counties that are very diverse in size, challenges faced, and internal resources. The BAA provides professional development services for the following 12 counties: Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Monterey, Napa, San Benito, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano, and Sonoma.

- The BAA is at the beginning of the seventh cycle this year of Child Welfare Worker Core Training (CORE) (24 days). Many of the BAA counties have had hiring freezes, resulting in smaller class size. A few counties have moved social workers from other disciplines which have continued the need for CORE. There is one more CORE cycle planned this fiscal year, beginning in June, and crossing over to the new fiscal year.
- Foundations of Supervision (10 days plus one day of their life experience when they go to another supervisor's county and spend the day with them). There is a Foundations Transfer of Learning day scheduled for June for past graduates.
- Scheduled two days of Law and Ethics training.
- Continued the work on Undoing Racism and addressing disproportionality by having two days of follow-up with most counties attending.
- Supervisor continuum of training in a three-part series on collaboration, working in team, case conferencing, etc.
- Roll out Safe Measures in three Bay Area Counties. Two trainers have been certified to train both supervisors and staff.
- Advanced SDM for supervisors and workers utilizing the new curriculum.
- Completed two adoption series for two counties.
- Continued work on Visitation with a summit planned for June 2009.
- Court Officer Day planned for March 2009.

### **Significant Accomplishments**

- Continue to meet with all counties on a quarterly basis for planning and partnership.
- Continued co-lead with Bay Area Social Services Consortium (BASSC) in developing knowledge management (transfer-of-learning and evidence-informed practices) processes for the Bay Area counties.
- Improved the BAA Peer Quality Control Review (PQCR) website for counties.
- Trained Gomez officers to develop a pool for all counties and developed a TAB on the BAA website for this resource.
- Continued to review curriculum for Fairness and Equity, Strength-Based Practice, Family Engagement, and Evidence-Based Practice.

- Actively participate as members of Statewide Training and Education Committee Content Development Oversight Group, Macro-Evaluation, Fairness and Equity planning event, West Coast Trainers, Bay Area Social Services Consortium, Bay Area Human Resources Committee, Regional Children's Committee, and Research and Training Network that is co-sponsored by the CFPIC and CalSWEC.
- Developed an evaluation survey that was sent to all counties, giving BAA feedback on performance. Addressed the strengths and challenges and action plans for each question.
- Participated in three PQCRs with six more to go before the end of June 2009.
- Developed a training plan to include Linkages workers from Cal Works in some of the CORE training. This followed a survey of the eight Linkages counties.

### **Changes**

- Trained and certified two Safe Measures trainers.
- Developed four new curriculums including Advanced Child Development, Adoptions 101, 102, and 103, Visitation, and Advanced Petition Writing.
- Continue development of the BAA website.
- Development of the new Learning Management System (LMS) system, ready to go live in July of 2009.
- Involved staff in the BAA reorganization to better serve the counties in our region.

### **Barriers**

- Many counties in the Bay Area have had serious layoffs which have affected training and training attendance. Some counties have travel restrictions, which also changes how we deliver training, class size, and training attendance.
- Morale is low in child welfare, which also affects training delivery and attendance.

### **Plans for the Future**

- Reorganizing the Academy to better meet county needs and to improve internal efficiencies with limited resources.
- Work closely with counties as their training needs change as the fiscal situations change.
- Review all System Improvement Plans (SIPs) as a guide to advanced training.
- Identify and develop training for next year that will build skills. These trainings will replace the CORE cycles we may not be providing next year due to changes in hiring.
- Develop supervisor training series with a focus on change, fiscal crisis, etc.
- Work closely with other RTAs as new Program Improvement Plan (PIP) requirements are identified.
- Identify training needs that have emerged during the PQCR process.

### **Northern California Training Academy (NCTA)**

The NCTA located at the University of California, Davis, provides training tailored to the varied needs of 29 counties in Northern California: Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras,

Colusa, Del Norte, El Dorado, Glenn, Humboldt, Inyo, Lake, Lassen, Mendocino, Modoc, Mono, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Tuolumne, Yolo, and Yuba.

The participant and county totals are representative of only the first three quarters in SFY 2008/09.

The NCTA has:

- Delivered 5 Phase I Core trainings for approximately 150 new child welfare social workers. Delivered 42 Phase II Core trainings for approximately 789 child welfare social workers. Phase 1 Core was offered in Sacramento, Davis, Rocklin, Humboldt, & Redding.
- Delivered 2 Supervisor Core trainings for 47 new supervisors.
- Delivered 13 Online Courses to approximately 122 participants. Courses included: Confidentiality, Dependency Legal Update, ICWA, Ethics in Social Work, and Multi-Ethnic Placement Act.
- Delivered numerous advanced or specialized courses, including Rural Cultural Competency, Planned, Purposeful & Progressive Visitation, Recognizing Drug Abuse in the Home, Tell it Like it Is: Hard Conversations from a Strength-Based Approach, My Way or the Highway: Hard Conversations for Supervisors, Child and Adolescent Sexual Misbehavior, Children with Developmental Disabilities, Investigating and Intervening in Child Maltreatment with Culturally Diverse Families and more.
- Our special projects included courses in Motivational Interviewing, Impact of Trauma on Child Development, SafeMeasures (beginning and advanced), ICWA Roundtable, Cultural Humility, and Gomez Hearings.
- Provided a 10-month intensive Supervisory Excellence leadership program with approximately 21 supervisors and 7 mentors.
- Provided a 10-month intensive Managers Excellence leadership program with approximately 12 managers and 4 mentors.
- Provided specialized training to individual counties as needed.

### **Significant accomplishments**

- Tools for Supervisory Excellence Program
- Tools for Managers Excellence Program
- Chapin Hall – Advanced Analytics in Child Welfare
- CORE
- PQCR's - piloted the integration of a case review process in PQCR's
- SafeMeasures
- Motivational Interviewing
- Secondary Trauma for Child Welfare
- On-site county assistance.

## **Barriers**

- Numerous conference calls, lack of streamlined coordination in finalized curriculum changes, and management of evaluation related to curriculum has caused confusion about content delivery with regard to the CORE.
- The increase in the cost in facilities.

## **Plans for the future**

- Continue to provide excellent customer service.
- Deliver Continuous Quality Improvement training with Chapin Hall.
- Continue Supervisory Excellence program.
- Signs of Safety
- SDM Case Reading

## **Central California Training Academy (CCTA) (Central)**

Located at California State University, Fresno, Central Academy works collaboratively with 11 counties in the central region: Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Stanislaus, Tulare, and Ventura.

- Provided 74.5 training days of "CORE" for new line workers in the Region as of 12/31/08.
- Provided four training days of Supervisor CORE for 23 new supervisors as of 12/31/08.
- Provided 53 "specialized" training days, excluding CORE, based on county needs identified among 113 topic areas.
- Provided 53 training days of CWS/CMS/Safe Measures training in the Region as of 12/31/08.
- Assisted with the implementation and training of SDM in Tulare County.
- Assisted with the conversion and training from CAT to SDM in Mariposa County.
- Assisted with the evaluation of the statewide core curriculum and with the evaluation of items used for the evaluation tools.
- Developed a new "Working in a Multi-Cultural Environment" CORE curriculum to meet the standardized objectives and competencies.
- Participated on Statewide Training and Education Committee (STEC) sub-committees to update the CORE curriculums to meet the standardized objectives and competencies in curriculum for ICWA, Values and Ethics, Basic Interviewing, Court Procedures, Multicultural Practice, Domestic Violence, Caregiver Substance Abuse, and CWS Documentation for Use in the Legal System.

## **Significant Accomplishments**

- Certified as a SafeMeasures training site and Training for Trainers offered to expand trainer pool.
- Updated CWS/CMS training curriculums and has posted all CWS/CMS training guides on the CCPSSSTA website.
- Updated all data training for supervisors and managers with current CFSR measures.

- Co-sponsoring the Third Annual Central Valley ICWA conference attended by tribal representatives, county child welfare staff, and juvenile court judges and attorneys (05/14/09)
- Partnering with the Bay Area and Northern Training Academies to offer the Third Annual Central Valley Symposium for Title IV-E Public Health Nurses. (Date TBD)
- Provided Peer Quality Case Review (PQCR) training and support to Kings, Santa Barbara, Fresno and Mariposa counties.
- In partnership with CWDA, Central Region utilized our existing trainers to maintain a regional "pool" of hearing officers for *Gomez v. Saenz* fair hearings. Developed training curriculum and trained hearing officers for use by Central Region counties. Developed and delivered a specialized training curriculum on CW "Best Practice" in Referral Classification.
- Continue with "Phase III" of an ongoing evaluation of the use of field trainers/mentors for transfer-of-learning.
- Completed "CWS/CMS New User" and California Child Welfare Services Outcome System (CCWSOS) training of all second year MSW and BSW Title IV-E students at CSU, Fresno. CWS/CMS "New User" training also completed for second year MSW Title IV-E students at CSU, Stanislaus. (approx. 70 total students trained to date).
- Continued to support the "Cultural Broker" training curriculum as part of Fresno County's Family to Family implementation. Presented on the curriculum and training of Cultural Brokers at the annual National Black Administrators in Child Welfare conference. (March 2008).
- Assisted Child and Family Policy Institute of California (CFPIC) and the Co-Investment Partnership with development of an updated statewide training curriculum for supervisors and managers on the CCWSOS.
- Facilitated ongoing trainings for the Central California Area Social Services Consortium (CCASSC) directors and Regional CWDA managers/supervisors on the 2008 CFSR with a review of the process, findings, and program policy and training implications.
- Revised curriculum and delivered specialized trainings on "Diversity" and "Disproportionate Representation" to counties in the Region.
- Assisted the California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse (CEBC) with delivery of a regional specialized trainings on "Evidence-Based Practice" to supervisors/managers.(4/16/09)
- In partnership with CCASSC, Stuart Foundation and Stichting Promotie Intensieve Thuisbehandeling Nederland (SPIN),USA, continued development of a "CCTA [Central California Training Academy] Leadership Institute" using a video interactive training method to prepare future child welfare leaders for Central California counties.
- Provided facilitation support for the California Disproportionality Project Convening sponsored by Casey foundation and CFPIC
- Established a regional IBM "Business Objects" workgroup to provide regular training and technical assistance to counties using this computer software tool to track local CFSR data trends.
- Provided training support to CYC Youth and ILP Youth for several trainings they delivered to Fresno County DCFS
- Delivered training to nearly 800 foster parents/care providers through separate training agreements with Fresno and Tulare counties.

## **Plans for the future**

- CCTA will offer beginning-through-advanced Safe Measures training to their eleven regional counties.
- CCTA will offer advance SDM training topics to counties within the Central Region
- Continue with the development and implementation of the CCTA Leadership Institute.
- Expansion of training for ICWA tribal child welfare staff.
- Expansion of training with care provider groups in the eleven regional counties.

## **Public Child Welfare Training Academy (PCWTA)**

A division of the Academy for Professional Excellence

<http://theacademy.sdsu.edu>

Based at San Diego State University, and in partnership with California State University, San Bernardino, the Academy provides a comprehensive, competency-based in-service training program for the five southern California counties: Imperial, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and San Diego.

## **In SFY 2008/2009 fiscal year PCWTA has to date (through 02/28/09):**

- Delivered 71 days of Line Worker Core for 108 trainees. We have an additional 13 days of training scheduled at this time through 06/30/09.
- 10 days of Manager CORE for 38 trainees with an additional 2 days scheduled through 06/30/09.
- 22 days of Supervisor CORE for 64 trainees with an additional 10 days scheduled through 06/30/09.
- 181 days of Advanced classes for 4,420 trainees.
- 2 training for Trainers for 44 trainees for PCWTA.
- 2 Trainer Forums for 44 trainers with an additional two scheduled through 06/30/09.

These classes, effective 02/28/09, total 301 days of training with 4,718 trainees and trainers. With additional classes currently scheduled, we will accomplish the terms of CDSS contract of 350 days of training.

Additionally, the Leaders in Action component of PCWTA delivered 5 days of training for executive development in child welfare with 8 remaining training days scheduled for the duration of the fiscal year.

## **Significant Accomplishments**

- Designated a lead for E-Learning. An E-Learning committee has been developed within the Academy. We participate in the California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC) Statewide E-Learning Committee.
- Formulated a definition and plan around Evidence Based Practice (EBP) as a result of a year long committee's work which emphasizes the infusion of EBP into all Academy curricula.
- Continued participation in committees and conference calls to revise the Standardized Line Worker CORE classes.

- Continued participation in the STEC.
- Scheduled to present at the annual Fairness & Equity Symposium on the curriculum, "The African American Father: the Forgotten Parent".
- Implemented a new policy on class attendance. Policy developed in concert with our County training partners and the CWS directors in our region.
- Held two Trainer Forums on Evidence Based Practice and the infusion of EBP into curricula.
- Developing a "Specialized Supervisor Series" to further the transfer of learning efforts around the Standardized Core topics. Utilizing teaming strategies in the development by including regional supervisors in the planning stages.
- Held the first meeting with San Diego State University (SDSU) School of Social Work faculty to form a closer relationship between school and academy curricula. There will be periodic meetings held around curricula specific topics.
- PCWTA Program Coordinator sitting on the CalSWEC Board Child Welfare Subcommittee.
- Implemented a "scorecard" process for tracking PCWTA practice in the areas of training delivery, curriculum development, enhancement trainer development, evaluation, budget, and staff training. Revised scorecard content and format in concert with the Organizational Development Program Coordinator.
- Regarding Evaluation: have moved forward with transfer of learning evaluations related to the Child Interviewing Institute by conducting 3 and 6 month call-back sessions; and, have developed and implemented a Trainer feedback evaluation tool.
- Leaders in Action (LIA) implemented an individual coaching model for the participants in the executive development series
- LIA conducted a Southern Area Consortium of Human Services (SACHS) Human Resources workshop.
- LIA revised their evaluation tool to incorporate recency into results. The evaluation is now conducted at three, six, and twelve month intervals.

### **Changes**

- Extended the hours of a staff person (Training & Curriculum Specialist) to focus on E-Learning implementation.
- The Tribal Star program has been incorporated into PCWTA.

### **Barriers**

- The state budget has impacted our training delivery significantly. We delivered 17 Line Worker COREs in the previous fiscal year. We have delivered three COREs this SFY to date and one is scheduled for delivery at this writing for a total of four. There are no others scheduled at this writing. This shift in focus has pushed us to provide more advanced classes to meet our contract of 350 days of training. Recently two of our counties have announced limitations on their out-of-county travel which may impact our trainee numbers and challenge us to provide more in-county training delivery.

## **Plans for the Future**

- Continue to enhance how we respond to the needs of our counties by refining our communication via the roles of liaisons, the improved focus of our quarterly Training Planning Committee meetings with our training partners in the five southern counties, and meeting regularly with Children's Directors. This focus has expanded to include communications around Linkages training and will include the expanded delivery to those groups in HR 6895, when defined by CDSS.
- In the last report, we were working with our counties on looking at alternative training delivery models to better blend the cognitive training experience with practice. This meant a more focused look at transfer of learning in and out of the classroom as well as allowing for expanded opportunities for on-the-job experiences during the line worker CORE timeframe. This effort has slowed down due the budget impact and the counties' shift in focus. We will keep this effort in abeyance while the focus is on advanced training and SIP demands.
- Continue focus on moving our evaluation processes to a higher level by the transfer of learning emphasis mentioned above as well as on ongoing refining of our evaluation methods. This effort is assisted by the designated Evaluation Coordinator and his collaboration with the Statewide Macro Evaluation Committee (STEC Subcommittee).
- Work continues on the updating and revising of our Manager CORE series to better reflect the overall changes in child welfare practice reflected in Supervisor CORE and Line.
- Worker CORE standardized elements. Preliminary work has been completed in a collaborative effort with regional managers and training partners. The work completed by the Academy for Professional Excellence Leaders in Action (LIA) executive development training will inform PCWTA's revised Manager Core in the area of Learning Objectives and Competencies. Share our proposed revisions with our RTA partners.
- One of our counties completed the PQCR process in this fiscal year and we are working in concert with them on their County Self-Assessment (CSA) process. The training needs identified there as well as in the soon to be released PIP will define our training emphasis in the coming years with all of our client counties.
- Continue to utilize the "Trainer Forum" model in working with our trainers. Held two successful forums on Evidence Based Practice. Another is planned on Evaluation and utilization of the Classroom Performance System.

## **Tribal Successful Transitions to Adult Readiness (STAR) Project**

Initially funded by a five year grant from the United States Department of Health & Human Services, Administration on Children, Youth & Families (ACF), Children's Bureau, Tribal STAR is a training program designed to ensure that Tribal foster youth are connected to culture, community and resources as they successfully transition to adulthood. Effective July 1, 2008, Tribal STAR is being funded by CDSS through San Diego State University School of Social Work's Academy for Professional Excellence's regional child welfare training contract.

Tribal STAR provides interdisciplinary training for providers who work with Native foster youth. In addition, communities are also offered technical assistance to aid them as they work to build collaborative relationships and implement the training.

As an interdisciplinary training program, Tribal STAR training is designed for all Tribal youth service providers, including: Native American professionals and leaders, public human service agency staff, regional training academy staff, MSW students, and others who provide services to Native American foster youth. Topic areas covered in the training include: Tribal values and culture, collaboration, youth development philosophy, protocol, and ways to effectively address the needs of Native American foster youth.

Tribal STAR provided the Summit Training, a one-day training designed for supervisory and management staff. The goal is to impact practice and policy in Public Child Welfare, ultimately leading to increased positive outcomes for Tribal foster children and youth by enhancing collaborative efforts between Tribal and non-Tribal entities. During the course of the current SFY, the Summit has been provided as followed:

- July 29, 2009, in Hemet, CA.
- October 29, 2008, for San Bernardino and Orange, CA Trainees - 21 attendees.
- November 4, 2008, in Riverside, CA Trainees - 38 attendees.
- February 18, 2009, in San Diego, CA Trainees - 32 attendees.
- March 19, 2009, in Imperial, CA anticipated Trainees - 30 attendees.

Tribal STAR provided the Gathering Training, a two-day training designed for frontline staff. The goal is to impact practice and policy in public child welfare, ultimately leading to increased positive outcomes for Tribal foster children and youth by enhancing collaborative efforts between Tribal and non-Tribal entities. During the course of the current SFY, the Gathering has been provided as followed:

- November 18-19, 2008 in San Bernardino, Orange and Riverside, CA Trainees - 33 attendees.
- April 28-29, 2009 in San Diego and Imperial, CA anticipated Trainees - 40 attendees.

On September 16, 2008, Tribal STAR hosted the Fourth Annual Tribal STAR Celebration, attended by sixty community supporters, workgroup members, and partners. Highlights of the event included the honoring ceremony for those who have worked to improve outcomes for Tribal foster youth, several accounts given by attendees of improved collaborative efforts within the community, and the celebration of five years of work within the community.

Tribal STAR hosted a Forum: ICWA-ASFA-MEPA, A Community Discussion on January 12, 2009, in San Diego, CA. Attended by 38 Tribal and non-Tribal community members from throughout southern California, the intent of the Forum was to discuss the challenges in child welfare when attempting to adhere to the ICWA, MEPA and the ASFA. Recognizing that the guidelines of these Acts can appear to be in conflict, the Forum provided a venue for the child welfare and Tribal community to identify solutions to improve outcomes. The Tribal STAR Team is working to coordinate another Forum in May/June of 2009.

Tribal STAR hosted a Trainer Development Institute on January 13, 2009, in San Diego, CA. The focus on the Institute was on skill building activities and mediation techniques that support effective cross-cultural communication. The Institute was attended by 27 trainers and those providing leadership in their agency or community.

### **Significant Accomplishments**

As a result of the training provided and Tribal STAR's technical assistance efforts, including participation in the following meeting/events: Statewide ICWA Workgroup, San Diego County SIP/PQCR/CSA, Riverside Tribal Coalition, Riverside County ILP Summit, and the AOC ICWA Training several impacts are reported:

- Increased cross-cultural collaboration at the local, regional, and statewide level that result in increased awareness and increased positive outcomes for tribal foster youth.
- Increased access to services for rural Tribal foster youth on reservations, e.g., Independent Living services.
- Increased advocacy for compliance with the ICWA.
- Greater participation of the tribal community in San Diego County child welfare review process (CFSR, PQSR, and county Self-Assessment).
- Greater awareness of Native American culture as it relates to behavior, practice, and policy for masters level social work students.
- Increased number of social workers throughout California that better understand the challenges to serving tribal rural foster youth and have resources to address these challenges.
- Increased number of multidisciplinary venues that are interested in increasing cross-cultural collaboration with Native American communities

### **Barriers**

Tribal STAR continues to receive several technical assistance requests, as well as, requests for the provision of training in the Central and Northern Regions of California. Many of these requests reflect a need for increased understanding of resources and processes among those providing services to Tribal foster youth, many requests reflect a need for increased opportunities for training, and many reflect a need for additional tools to bridge the gap between the Tribal and non-Tribal child welfare communities. As a team, Tribal STAR addresses each request, weighing the level of response with our current contract. If Tribal STAR was to respond to the majority of the requests, a significant increase of funding would be needed. Therefore, we are tracking these requests to ensure that future program efforts reflect community need and are financially feasible.

### **Plans for the Future**

Tribal STAR will continue to provide training within the Southern California Region. The training will focus on the provision of the Summit and the Gathering. In addition, the Team intends to conduct a needs assessment within the Southern Region to identify other training needs. The Team will also work with the community to identify Forum topics and intends to provide two community Forums within each fiscal year. Tribal STAR will continue to support county child welfare agencies and state in achieving PIP and SIP.

**Inter-University Consortium-Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family services (IUC-DCFS)**

The Inter-University Consortium Department of Children and Family Services (IUC/DCFS) Training Project continues as a collaborative endeavor between DCFS and the graduate social work programs at California State University, Long Beach (CSULB), California State University, Los Angeles (CSULA), University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), the University of Southern California (USC), California State University, Northridge (CSUN), and California State University, Dominguez Hills (CSUDH). The overall goal of this collaborative project is to increase the professional skills and knowledge of Los Angeles County public child welfare workers. Through specialized training centers located at each university (with the exception of CSUN and CSUDH), the Training Project provides in-service training to newly hired social workers, case-carrying social workers, supervisory social workers, and management staff. The IUC also provides generous stipends and specialized training to up to 16 MSW students at each university who intern at DCFS, receive specialized child welfare training as part of their MSW course work, and commit to a year employment at DCFS after graduation. To date, more than 600 individuals have received IUC stipends to support their MSW training. The IUC/DCFS Training Project is coordinated by a centralized staff that serves as the liaison between DCFS and the universities, conducts evaluation of training activities, operates the Training Project's data system, and coordinates activities affecting all four universities.

The IUC has developed a range of methods for evaluating the training that is offered to DCFS. Using an online, electronic resource, the IUC assesses participant reactions to training in almost all presentations, generally assessing satisfaction, trainees' perceptions of learning in the training, and its applicability to the job situation. Assessment of knowledge learned by new workers in the CSW Core Academy has been conducted for many years through pre- and post-Academy training evaluation. In 2004, the IUC initiated the assessment of knowledge learned by staff in system-wide training, including Strength-Based Family Centered Practice, Concurrent Planning, Kinship Caregiver Training, and Team Decision-Making. The latter two continue in 2008. In 2005, the IUC initiated evaluation of knowledge and skill in key priority areas, and now include Legal Overview, SDM Safety and Risk Assessment, Kinship Caregiver, Court Report Writing, Child Maltreatment Identification (Physical), Child Maltreatment Identification (Sexual), Family Engagement in Case Planning and Case Management, Placement and Permanency, and Child and Youth Development.

- The IUC presented 200 training classes to 4,216 staff through February 28, 2008; between March 1, 2008 and June 30, 2008, approximately 100-150 classes are planned. DCFS presented 262 training classes to 3,733 staff through February 28, 2008, and approximately 100-150 classes are planned for the remainder of the year.
- Six new worker eight-week CSW Core Academies have been delivered and five more are planned. In all, some 300 new staff will have been trained.
- One 15-day SCSW Core Academy was delivered to 16 new SCSWs. Ongoing SCSW Core Training and in-service training as needed to fill/support promotions to Supervisor.

Training in major initiatives in support of department program outcomes have or will be delivered. Highlights of these include, but are not limited to:

- SDM (refresher, Hotline, etc): 44 presentations to 461 staff with more planned.
- TDM Reinforcement Training: 5 presentations to 79 staff with more planned for each office.
- Full Disclosure Interview Training: 19 presentations to 459 staff with more planned for each office.
- Management training on various initiatives and department outcome priorities (TDM, Title IV-E Waiver, etc.) have been offered to 344 managers, with more being planned.
- Court Report Writing Training: 19 classes were delivered to 579 staff following CSW Core Academy with more planned.
- Permanence Training to 201 staff with more planned.
- Transitional Independent Living training was delivered to 100 Supervising Case Social Worker (SCSW) with more planned.
- Selected E-Learning Modules that have now been made available to staff, including ICWA, Substance Abuse Issues, and AB 490 Training, etc.
- Large scale management and Community Partner Training Events on the Title IV-E Waiver and Visitation.

The IUC/DCFS partnership continues to provide vital training support to our large/complex child welfare workforce; managing high numbers of new hires with the roll outs of major initiatives to support improved practice. IUC has seen solid success in efforts to provide increased training support for supervisory rank and file and plan to continue these efforts for the coming year. The continuing goal in partnership with the line operations leadership is to improve supervisory training, coaching, and support. We also plan to continue efforts to further implementation of core strategies and initiatives. DCFS and its training partners continue to focus on ways and means to strengthen transfer of learning for accountable managers and supervisors to support the application of what is learned in training to the field.

### **Katie A. Strategic Plan**

As directed by leadership and consistent with the Los Angeles County's Katie A. Strategic Plan, the IUC/DCFS partnership has been highly focused on developing and delivering training to support increased and improved screening, assessment and service delivery for children and families in the child welfare system with mental health needs. Training deliverables are organized, planned and readied to support key Katie A. plans including:

- Training focused on integrating and implementing DCFS/DMH Core Practice Model, follow-up coaching, mentoring and skill development for line staff and supervisors, the expansion of Child and Family Teams and Quality Services Review standards/practices that serve as the exit criteria for the Katie A. Settlement Agreement.
- Implementation of Coordinated Services Action Teams (CSAT) and Katie A. plan components and commitments for screening, assessment, and service delivery.
- Training for line staff and provides to support the expansion of Wraparound as described and mandated by the Katie A. plan.

#### **Title IV E Waiver**

The CDSS and its stakeholders also are now rigorously working together to implement Title IV-E Waiver for California and for Los Angeles County. IUC is working closely with the leadership in this new fiscal environment to support practice improvements that are so critical to outcome achievement.

#### **California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC)**

<http://calswec.berkeley.edu/>

The CDSS partners with the CalSWEC to facilitate the integration of education and practice to assure effective, culturally competent service delivery to the people of California. CalSWEC, based at the University of California, Berkeley, is the nation's largest state coalition of social work educators and practitioners. It is a consortium of the state's 20 accredited social work graduate schools, the 58 California county departments of social services and mental health, the CDSS, and the California Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. In addition, the Administrative Office of the Court (AOC), Judicial Review and Technical Assistance (JRTA), project staff serves as a liaison to CalSWEC. CalSWEC is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the following projects.

#### **California's Title IV-E Child Welfare Training Project**

Through the Title IV-E Project, the CalSWEC coordinates and supports MSW programs in the state's 19 accredited schools of social work, as well as BSW programs in six of the member schools. The number of MSW students enrolled during the 2008/09 academic year totaled 741. An additional 11 students were on temporary leave from the program and 23 students are completing their theses. The 6 BSW programs enrolled 56 students during the 2008/09 academic year, with an additional 2 students on leave and 1 student whose graduation is pending.

The participating MSW programs include the following 15 California State Universities: Bakersfield, Chico, East Bay, Fresno, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Northridge, Sacramento, San Bernardino, Stanislaus, Humboldt, San Diego, San Francisco, San Jose, and

Dominguez Hills. In 2008/2009, our 20th school was accepted into the consortium, CSU Fullerton will begin its first cohort of Title IV-E student in academic year 2009/10. Two University of California schools (Berkeley and Los Angeles) are included, as well as two private schools (University of Southern California and Loma Linda University). CSU, Long Beach also delivers distance education programs at the Channel Islands and Sonoma campuses. The participating BSW programs are at the following California State Universities: Chico, Fresno, Humboldt, Long Beach, San Bernardino, and San Diego.

The MSW programs, each of which follows a specialized child welfare curriculum, are designed to increase the number of professionally trained social workers in the public child welfare workforce, as well as, increase the ethnic diversity of the workforce. The BSW program offers a child welfare concentration in the senior undergraduate year and prepares graduates to work in entry-level public child welfare positions. Students commit to a number of years of employment equivalent to the number of years for which they received aid. Priority for financial aid is given to current county employees and persons who reflect the populations they serve.

The Title IV-E project also conducts program evaluation activities. This year has been a year of implementation for the evaluation team. Two major parts of the evaluation have completed the data collection phase and are currently being analyzed. The first is the first phase of the new evaluation study called the Career Path Study. During the summer and fall of 2008, data was collected from the program sites that had any of the 1,589 graduates eligible for the study. This study will explore the career paths of all graduates 5+ years post graduation. The first report on this study will be presented to CDSS in 2009. The second study is the 2008 Statewide Workforce Study. Data collection began in the spring of 2008 and was closed in the fall of 2008. This recurring study was last completed in 2004 and is a survey of all individual child welfare workers, supervisors, and managers to assess educational level, case assignments, and other variables that would demonstrate that we are making progress toward raising overall workforce educational levels by offering concrete opportunities for degree education.

The MSW program at California State University, Stanislaus, under a special contract with CalSWEC, has spearheaded a full-time effort to recruit students from California's Native American communities to the Title IV-E Master of Social Work program. This is part of the ongoing contract and training efforts with CalSWEC. The goal of the program is to improve the perception of both leaders and youth in the Native American community about the role of the university, and more specifically to promote the relevance of social work in their lives and the value of a career in public child welfare.

***Highlights for SFY 2008/09:***

- California State University, Dominguez Hills began teaching its first cohort of Title IV-E students.
- Continued support and development of the Title IV-E BSW Program, including ongoing development of process and program evaluation components. This year CalSWEC continued meetings of the BSW Planning Group.
- Annual implementation of the New Graduate Survey, a survey in which recent graduates are asked to examine the relationship between their academic programs and their work in the field of public child welfare.

- Planned and facilitated the Title IV-E Student Day, an annual conference of MSW and BSW students enrolled in the Title IV-E programs throughout the state. This conference, coordinated by a team of MSW students, provides current and former students with the opportunity to learn clinical and theoretical approaches utilized in the field of child welfare that are not necessarily taught during the traditional academic calendar. The 2009 conference theme is: "*Ties that Bind: Integrative Approaches to Child Welfare*". Workshop offerings will be based primarily on areas identified in the upcoming CFSR PIP.
- The new MSW California Public Child Welfare Competencies were implemented in the 2008/09 academic year. The current version updates the 2002 version and reflects current child welfare practice. The educational competencies are also woven into training models utilized in the California RTA and the IUC in Los Angeles.
- Continuation of a series of web-based educational presentations on selected public child welfare curriculum topics offered to IV-E Project Coordinators, University faculty, and county and CDSS staff, managers, and supervisors. In the spring of 2009, a series of webinars will be implemented that focus on a comparison of two county differential response systems, as well as a study and curriculum on reunification efforts of one county systems and broader implications for child welfare practice.
- In partnership with the CWDA's Human Resources Committee disseminated a job preview video to all program sites for use to prepare soon to be graduates for interviewing with county child welfare services.
- Delivered two faculty development institutes. The first was "Data Are Your Friend" by Dr. Barbara Needell. This institute covered California's Outcomes and Accountability system for the Title IVE faculty. The second is a daylong institute by the Youth Offering Unique Tangible Help (Y.O.U.T.H) Training Program to offer a full day workshop on the issues and challenges that face foster youth in the California foster care system.
- Began implementation of a distance education pilot program to rural and remote regions of California. This pilot will develop a hybrid model of delivering social work curriculum at the AA, BSW, and MSW levels to county employees in the rural remote regions of the state.

**Highlights of the Survey of Graduates:**

- CalSWEC maintains a master list of the IV-E students and graduates and their status. The schools track their own data and send it to CalSWEC on a quarterly basis. CalSWEC then incorporates this information into an annual report which was sent to the CDSS in October 2008.
- Graduates and alumni of this project have been employed in 52 of the 58 counties and with state adoptions.
- Graduates have a broad and diverse ethnic and cultural background, as well as, considerable language diversity. Forty-one percent of the MSW graduates and fifty-two percent of the BSW graduates in the program reported speaking at least one language other than English.
- To date, 205 (70 percent) of the Title IV-E MSWs who graduated in the 2007/08 academic year found employment in 30 of the 58 counties.
- To date, 20 (39 percent) of the Title IV-E BSWs graduated in the 2007/08 academic year found employment in 7 different counties.

- Three hundred-twelve Title IV-E MSW graduates completed their payback obligation years to public child welfare during the 2007/08 academic year. These MSWs are from earlier multiple cohorts.
- Twenty CalSWEC BSW graduates have completed their work obligation in public child welfare.
- Based on the 1,001 graduates who had completed their work obligation in public child welfare from 1996 through 2008 and responded to the CalSWEC Retention Survey, the number who remained in public child welfare has averaged 82 percent.

#### ***Plans for the future***

- Develop the new distance education program at the three sites with an option of developing a virtual Title IV-E child welfare curriculum via a web based format.
- Enhance field instruction by developing field unit models that will incorporate site rotation models, unified field competency models and integration between pre-service and in-service programs.
- Enhance program evaluation by fully implementing the Career Path Study in the coming year and linking it to ongoing findings from the Workforce Study.
- Develop dissemination channels between academia and the practice community by increasing the number of times faculty presents research findings to practice community, and in turn, incorporating practice community “new and emerging practices” into academia via Faculty Development Institutes and Field Seminars, as well as web-based seminars to faculty and county staff simultaneously.

#### **The Regional Training Academy Coordination Project**

In this project, CalSWEC supports the CDSS in its mission to improve training throughout the state by coordinating training efforts, sponsoring trainings and symposia, and developing statewide curricula.

#### ***Highlights for SFY 2008/09***

- Co-chaired (with the CDSS) the Statewide Training and Education Committee (STEC), which coordinates statewide training initiatives and oversees the development of statewide curricula.
- Facilitated the continued implementation, evaluation, and improvement of the standardized common CORE training for newly hired line workers and supervisors. CalSWEC provides funds and coordinates curriculum development for the entire common CORE. With the implementation of the Framework for Evaluation of Training, CalSWEC also coordinates the evaluation of the CORE, including data analysis and reporting.
- Planned and facilitated the Twelfth Annual National Human Services Training Evaluation Symposium held May 21-22, 2009. The Symposium is widely known as the premier national event for training evaluation in the human services field.
- Planned and facilitated the Seventh Annual Symposium on Fairness and Equity Issues in Child Welfare Training. This was held April 29-30, 2009, and was a forum for the

training community to present and discuss the issues of culture, fairness and over-representation in child welfare.

- Planned and co-sponsored (with the Children and Family Policy Institute) a symposium on evidence-based practice in child welfare, held January 30, 2009, with the aim of infusing research evidence into child welfare practice via training and education.
- Facilitated the review and revision of training materials to provide guidance to counties in implementing California's Outcomes and Accountability System.
- Sponsored trainings for trainers to improve the ability of the training system to assist counties in effectively using their administrative data to monitor and enhance performance. These included three trainings for trainers: two to prepare training staff to use the data monitoring system in the counties and one to generally improve trainers' ability to integrate outcomes and accountability into all of their training.

#### **Plans for the future**

- STEC will continue to provide coordination and oversight of the child welfare training system.
- Curriculum development activities are ongoing, and the Common CORE Curricula will be revised systematically, integrating practice changes and training evaluation results.
- Symposia will be convened to address Training Evaluation, Fairness and Equity, and Evidence-Based Practice issues, as well as other emerging areas of child welfare practice.
- Innovative training delivery models will be developed, with a focus on promoting transfer of learning and delivering training in E-Learning format.
- Practice-oriented research will be used to inform training and curricula provided across the state.

#### **Resource Center for Family-Focused Practice (RCFFP)**

<http://humanservices.ucdavis.edu/resource>

The Resource Center for Family-Focused Practice supports the continuum of services to families from prevention, intervention with vulnerable children and their families, to juvenile justice with a focus on strengthening families through family-centered practice approaches. This includes supporting child abuse prevention councils throughout California, providing mandated child abuse reporter training, Family to Family, family group decision making, integrated services, Wraparound Services, and training for juvenile probation placement officers.

RCFFP has:

- Developed a nine-day training program for juvenile probation officers. The training covers legal and regulatory requirements related to delinquent minors placed in IV-E eligible placements, including: required face-to-face visits, safety, strengths and needs assessments, case planning, transitional independent living program plans, concurrent planning, youth and family engagement, termination of parental rights and permanency planning for youth. Four regional trainings were conducted by June 2009 for approximately 84 deputy probation placement officers from throughout the state.

- Delivered 3, 3-day curriculum for juvenile probation placement supervisors throughout the state for approximately 33 supervisors and managers from 12 counties.
- Delivered a 1-day training for probation department managers regarding IV-E services and requirements with emphasis on case planning, face-to-face visits, permanency, and federal outcomes for approximately 15 probation managers from seven counties.
- Co-training with Kevin Campbell, national expert on Family Finding, a family finding class for 47 deputy probation officers from 16 counties. This class meets once a month for 6 months and develops the skills for not only locating, but developing, family and family-like lifelong connections for juvenile justice youth.
- Developed and piloted 2 new curricula for juvenile probation placement officers in permanency and family engagement. By June 2009, will deliver these trainings in four regions for about 140 participants.
- Conducted training in Family Centered Practice topics (including strengths based training for social workers) for 2 counties and for 382 participants.
- Wraparound Training for 4 counties with 147 participants was provided throughout the state.
- Specialized training for Wraparound counties and providers regarding using Wraparound as post-adoption services in 4 regional trainings for 95 participants from 18 counties
- Specialized training in fiscal claiming for Wraparound counties and providers in four regional trainings for 140 participants from 21 counties.
- Participation in site reviews for Wraparound services in Sacramento, Santa Clara and Sonoma counties.
- Eight Family to Family trainings for TDM leaders were conducted with a total of 134 participants. Two convenings to provide training to groups of counties implementing Family to Family were conducted with a total of 183 participants.
- Integrated services training has been provided to 5 counties (plus 1 regional training) with approximately 195 participants on such topics as basic orientation and coordinated case planning.
- Support Family Group Decision-Making through training in 3 counties to 117 participants. Initiated a statewide advisory committee on family group decision-making to develop a strategic plan to promote implementation in child welfare.
- Provided asynchronous web-based training for mandated reporters of child maltreatment to approximately 1,927 participants. This training educates mandated reporters about the legal definitions of child abuse and neglect, their legal mandate to report, and the protocol for reporting training.
- Worked in partnership with the OCAP for the development of the Regional Coordinators for Child Abuse Prevention Councils. These eight coordinators provide direct support for the development of child abuse prevention councils in each of the 58 counties.
- Developed and delivered a one day California Child Abuse Prevention Summit to 330 participants that included topics such as poverty and neglect, the long-term impact of child maltreatment, relational worldview, strengthening families, social marketing of child maltreatment prevention, and other topics in 30 workshops and four plenary sessions.
- Actively collaborate through participation on statewide advisory committees for the Linkages Project, the California Parent Engagement Center, and the Statewide Training and Education Committee.

- Delivered a summit for all child abuse prevention councils from throughout the state to coordinate the efforts of CBCAP funded efforts for prevention and develop skills for community assessment and logic model training.

***Significant Accomplishments***

- Lead the standardization of practice in juvenile probation placement through training, technical assistance, and a standing advisory committee that brings together probation professionals from throughout the state, the AOC, the CDSS, and the Resource Center for Family-Focused Practice.
- Widened the support for child abuse and neglect prevention through opening the annual Summit for Child Abuse Prevention to a broader audience and with varied topics.
- Collaborated in strategic planning for statewide child maltreatment prevention.

***Plans for the Future***

Juvenile Probation Placement Officers: Deliver and refine permanency and parent and youth engagement curricula and provide it regionally throughout the state. Update all juvenile probation placement curricula. Support the statewide advisory committee. Develop two additional curricula to address the unique needs of juvenile probation placement officers, supervisors, and managers consistent with the PIP. Deliver Family Finding: Building Lifelong Relationships at additional sites throughout the state.

Family Group Decision Making: Implement the strategic plan for revitalizing the use of family group decision-making.

Family-focused Practice: Developing a series of workshops for child welfare workers, supervisors and managers around “Doing Good in Bad Times.” These workshops will provide knowledge and skills for working under adverse circumstances and developing resilience.

Wraparound: Deliver the Sixth California Wraparound Institute in June 2010.

**Eastfield Ming Quong (EMQ)-FAMILIES FIRST, FAMILY PARTNERSHIP INSTITUTE (FPI)**

<http://www.emqff.org/EMQTraining/training/fpi/index.shtml>

FPI provides onsite technical assistance to counties and provider agencies regarding various elements of a Wraparound program. This technical assistance is given by traditional classroom methods, open forums, or coaching and mentoring at the child and family team level. FPI also assists CDSS conduct site reviews of county Wraparound Services programs. The activities and expertise of FPI contribute to CDSS’s efforts to ensure Wraparound Services programs are successful and that fidelity to the model is maintained. Technical assistance is usually tailored to the individual needs and circumstances of a county or provider agency. Technical assistance typically occurs on-site and may include the following activities:

- Solution-focused technical assistance for counties as they develop and adjust Wraparound programs that fit the county's unique situation.
- Assistance for counties to start new programs or expand existing programs pursuant to the MHSA.
- Assess and/or respond to needs and requests from existing Wraparound programs that are at various stages of implementation.
- Participate in site visits to assess and strengthen a program's fidelity to the Wraparound model and standards.
- Provide coaching and mentoring at the child and family team level.
- Conduct open forums and other activities in order to facilitate discussion of specific questions or issues, as well as, to consider systemic integration of Wraparound with other initiatives.

### ***Accomplishments***

In October 2008, FPI finalized a collaborative effort with counties to revise CDSS's standardized Wraparound curriculum. FPI began using the new curriculum for its Training for Trainers classes later that month. FPI also produces a quarterly newsletter highlighting California Wraparound. Since July 1, 2008, FPI has provided 44 days of technical assistance for approximately 740 people.

### ***Plans for the Future***

FPI continues to provide technical assistance on Wraparound to individual counties and provider agencies. Additionally, FPI is working with CDSS on the development of a northern California Wraparound Hub that will use a peer-run model of support. The Hub is a venue for Wraparound counties and other stakeholders to share information, learn from peers, and help inform decisions at the state level.

### **Structured Decision Making (SDM)**

The purpose of SDM is to assist child welfare workers in assessing risk; to assist counties in targeting services to children who are at greatest risk of maltreatment and to improve outcomes for children and families such as the reduction of the recurrence of child maltreatment. Workers are trained to use the tools, which consist of a safety and risk assessment, family strengths and needs assessment, and reunification tools. The tools are used throughout the life of a case, from the intake at the hotline until the child is reunified with his or her family. The only time the use of the SDM tools ceases is when it is determined that the child may not be reunified with his or her parents, and the case goal is changed from reunification to permanent placement.

Training on the SDM tools is a two-step process. In California, child welfare workers are trained to use SDM by either attending a class at the Regional Training Academies or by being trained by county trainers. Workers gain an understanding of the philosophy and research behind SDM through the training. They learn to use SDM by examining and practicing each tool in the SDM model. The second step is to learn to use the web-based tools. Staff from the National Council on Crime and Delinquency's Children's Research

Center conducts the training for trainers in each county. Supervisors and managers are trained separately, prior to line staff being trained. They are trained using an additional module, which includes conducting supervisory case reviews, producing and utilizing management reports, and motivating staff to fully utilize SDM.

In SFY 2008-09, CRC provided 36 days of on-site training/technical assistance to counties, including collective or centralized on-site training/technical assistance such as core team, lead expert, trainer summit, and conference presentations. CRC also provided 31 training/technical assistance session hours using Webinar. The Northern Regional Academy reported they delivered ongoing SDM training to 633 participants from 18 counties. The Bay Area Academy reported providing SDM training in San Francisco County for 114 participants and regional SDM training to 154 participants. The Central California Training Academy reported they delivered ongoing SDM training of 14 days to 227 participants. The Inter-University Consortium - Los Angeles County (IUC-LAC) reported they provided SDM training of 80 presentations to 1,127 participants.

### **Comprehensive Assessment Tool (CAT)**

The Social Policy and Health Economics Research and Evaluation (SPHERE) Institute maintains a Safety and Risk Assessment System for use in county child welfare agencies. The system is currently utilized in the following counties: Amador, Contra Costa, Imperial, Napa, San Bernardino, Santa Clara, Sonoma and Stanislaus Counties and includes tools and methods of gathering and reporting data to document and support social workers' safety and risk assessment decisions. The purpose of the CAT is to create a standardized assessment approach, which supports consistency, fairness, and equity in the process used to assess each child and family referred to a county child welfare agency. The components of the CAT include five safety and risk assessment tools for use at seven critical decision points in the life of a child welfare case.

Presently, most of the CAT Counties conduct their own CAT training for new workers. As part of the initial training offered by SPHERE at the inception of the project, SPHERE conducted both on-site CAT training in the counties for new staff and co-sponsored Train-the-Trainer sessions for county staff development personnel and consultants who train for the RTAs. Currently, each county works with their designated RTA to determine whether their own staff or a RTA consultant will offer CAT training as part of the CORE curriculum training new workers receive. Since most counties have hired small numbers of new staff, they have assumed the primary responsibility for new worker CAT training.

SPHERE training efforts in 2008/09 primarily focused on preparing experienced CAT County social workers, supervisors, and managers for the changes in the CAT system. Throughout 2008, a CAT User Group, comprised of SPHERE staff and staff from the participating CAT Counties, met monthly with the goal of revising the content and technological functioning of the CAT tools and preparing for the release of a new version of CAT (CAT 2.0) in 2009. The revisions included the following elements:

- A more comprehensive cultural assessment: In order to support culturally competent assessment practices, the new tools focus the social worker's attention on the role of

religion, ethnicity, language, and social or economic background throughout the life of a case.

- Standardization of content across CAT tools used by all CAT counties:  
Prior to the new release, the CAT tools contained customized content to accommodate variations in business practice from county to county. The revised tools standardized content across all counties.
- New placement content and completion criteria:  
The CAT Placement Assessment (PA) tool and Continuing Services (CS) tools were revised to better support social workers' assessment practices for children in out-of-home care. Revisions to tool content and completion requirements were designed to support assessments of fragile placements at risk of disruption, identify when a child's level of care needs to change, and more effectively integrate the PA and CS tools with each other and into the ongoing assessment process.
- A new user interface:  
SPHERE has developed two versions of CAT 2.0; a web-based tool and a desktop system that operates within CWS/CMS. The purpose of revising the interface was to provide social work staff with a more user-friendly interface that is more intuitive and allows for quicker completion of the tools.

SPHERE worked with each county to develop a plan for the release of CAT 2.0 that included preparing IT staff for deployment of the CAT system, developing individualized training plans, and determining logistics for the timing of training and the wide release of the new tools. SPHERE developed training materials for the purposes of this training which included updated user guide materials, an on-line help resource, desk guides, and training videos. SPHERE also delivered on-site sessions according to county preferences. In addition to revising and developing training materials and resources for the new release training, SPHERE revised the CAT New Worker Training Curriculum to reflect the changes in the CAT system and developed a data analysis training module to present preliminary analysis findings relevant to each CAT County.

The SPHERE Institute continues to provide ongoing support to counties by conducting on-site training and technical assistance as requested, working with county staff to support implementation, providing updated support material, and facilitating User Group, Policy Committee, and other ad-hoc meetings to guide ongoing development. SPHERE maintains a secure website to allow county workers to download training materials, user guides, and reports. The website also allows counties to upload completed batches of CAT tools directly into SPHERE's database.

In SFY 2008/09 SPHERE provided 50 person-days of on-site training and technical assistance to counties which included site visits and training for a new release. Also, 45 person-days of in-person training and technical assistance in the form of committee meetings and on-site presentations were provided. There were 18 person-days of remote training and technical assistance sessions such as WebEx presentations and conference calls. An additional 110 person-days of training or technical assistance were provided including on-call support by telephone or email; technical support for CAT tools, data upload, and website access; and committee support and website materials. Policy Committee meetings with representation from each CAT county have taken place quarterly beginning on September 11, 2008.

## **County Staff Development and Training**

Counties provided various levels of in-service training to all their staff, which is described in an annual training plan. Counties are required to adhere to the Staff Development and Training regulations contained in the CDSS' Division 14 of the Manual of Policies and Procedures. These regulations serve as a guide to county welfare departments in the administration of county training programs. Division 14 provides the mandate and structure of county accountability in the development and implementation of training programs, annual training plans, evaluation and training need assessments. These regulations establish claiming and cost reimbursement criteria and guidelines for allowable staff development cost and activities.

### **Fiscal Academy**

The purpose of the UCD Fiscal Academy contract is to provide program and fiscal academy training for county agencies that serve and/or support children and families by providing participants with the fundamentals of child welfare services funding, allocations, claiming, and budgeting. The training also introduces new changes in federal and or state law that impact both programmatic and fiscal management policymaking at the state and local level.

The Fiscal Academy Training includes but is not limited to the following items listed in the syllabus:

- Building the State Budget
- Federal Funding
- CWS Allocation
- The Time Study
- County Expense Claim (CEC)
- Tools for Fiscal Management
- Budgeting

### ***Allowable Title IV-E administrative functions the training activity addresses***

Some of the IV-E Administrative training addresses items related to the Deficit Reduction Act (DRA) of 2005 such as; administrative cost for a child placed with a relative for the lesser of 12 months or the average length of time it takes for a state to license or approve a foster home, administrative cost when a child moves from an unallowable facility to a licensed or approved foster family home, and or IV-E administrative cost for children who meet the foster care candidacy.

The training occurs at the UCD Davis campus and in other locations throughout the state. There are four (two-day) sessions, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily. Total number of training days is eight days and fifty-six hours for this contract. There are approximately 240 participants for all four sessions (sixty participants per two-day session).

A two-day training course and a one-day workshop forum provided by The Center for Human Services, UC Davis Extension University of California, who contracts an instructor

and retired as an Administrative Services Director for the county of Santa Cruz. This instructor has over 20 years of experience in human services.

This training provide continuing information and training to deputy directors, program managers and fiscal officers of child welfare services, as well as directors, program administrators and fiscal officers of other county departments such as mental health and probation. CDSS Fiscal and Program staff also participates in this training. The contract amount is \$255,956.65 annually.

### ***Cost Allocation Methodology***

These activities will be cost allocated to the benefitting programs. The actual class training, syllabus, and targeted groups will be considered when determining the benefitting programs. Furthermore, the discount rate will be applied to IV-E qualifying activities. Prior to claiming, separate supporting documentation will be prepared that provides additional details regarding allocation to benefitting programs in accordance with OMB A-87. The training meets goals and objectives by assisting participating counties in having the knowledge and skills to better use their combined resources to achieve better outcomes for children and to provide ongoing funding to evidence-based programs that support these outcomes. Participants in the academies shall leave with a solid foundation in how the child welfare and foster care funding stream works, its limitation, and opportunities. There are approximately 240 or 60 participants per session.

### **Significant accomplishments**

This is very useful training information for county program and fiscal staff. Providing this information annually keeps staff up-to-date on state and federal budgetary issues and concerns.

### **Fiscal/Programmatic Training for the Karuk Tribe**

This is a separate effort that is not conducted through the Fiscal Academy Training Courses.

A portion of the UCD contract amount was utilized to provide training to Karuk Tribal staff. This training focused on federal Title IV-E eligibility requirements to Karuk social services staff and management i.e., staff development. The training agenda is as follows:

#### **Overview of Federal Eligibility:**

- Purpose
- Removal and Placement
- Court Orders
- Linkage Determination
- AFDC Eligibility
- Federal Requirements for Payment of Federal Foster Care
- Facilities Eligible for Payment

**Documenting Eligibility:**

- FC 2, FC 3, FC 3A, SOC 158A, SOC 155
- Verification of AFDC Eligibility
- Redeterminations
- Other scenarios

The training for the Karuk tribal staff received through the UCD contract did not focus on Title IV-E administrative functions, the training focused on the Title IV-E eligibility process including topics such as licensing/approving foster family homes, court orders, linkage to AFDC-FC and re-evaluations of federal eligibility. Training also included the use of state forms to document federal eligibility. The two-day small group training is held at the Karuk Tribal offices located in Yreka, California, and provided through The Center for Human Services, UC Davis Extension University of California.

This contract may provide continuing information and programmatic training to Tribal staff and leaders on an as needed basis. Karuk Training is included in the UCD Contract Scope of Work, the total contract amount is \$255,956.65 per year, and will be cost allocated to the appropriate benefitting programs.

**Plans for the future**

- Develop a multi (three-year) contract verses a one year contract.

**SA/HIV Infant Program (formerly Options for Recovery Perinatal Program)**

Please refer to "Foster Care/Adoption Recruitment Plan Section" for update.

**CWS/CMS Training**

California's federal Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS) is referred to as the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) and is currently operational in all 58 counties and serves approximately 19,000 State and county CWS workers. The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) has provided statewide training to all California counties since 1997. A standardized statewide CWS/CMS curriculum is available to all state and county staff. In addition, the state also offers counties Customized Business Objects training in order to allow counties to run queries and reports based on data inputted into the CWS application.

The state currently provides a variety of training options to all counties and state users of the CWS/CMS. These training options are categorized as New Users, Intermediate User, On-site Training classes, Basic Business Objects, Intermediate Business Objects and Customized Business Objects.

The New User training is primarily for new county and state staff. The New User training includes five, 8 hour days of training. This training is offered at approved training facilities one time per month.

The Intermediate training is intended for county and state staff who have a need to learn more advanced skills within the CWS/CMS. The Intermediate training has one, eight-hour session and a choice of three, four-hour sessions. This training is offered at approved training facilities one time per month.

On-site training classes are delivered at county or state offices. On-site trainings provide training to staff specific to their individual or county specific needs. A specific need can include but is not limited to refresher or intensive training in the use of the application or customized business objects and one-on-one training at the staff person's desk. Each county and the state are allowed five days of on-site training per 12 months. The state uses customized curriculum for customized business objects training only.

Basic and Intermediate Business objects is used in conjunction with the CWS/CMS data to create ad hoc reports. This Basic Business Object training introduces the CWS/CMS database and Business Objects. Participants in this class receive an overview of CWS/CMS and the tools available in the Business Objects application. Intermediate Business Objects training is provided to assist participants in learning to create complex queries and reports using the Business Objects application. The state provides access to twelve trainings for each Basic and Intermediate Business Objects training in a twelve month period.

The Customized Business Object training is provided based on the county or state staff's need. This training teaches advanced concepts and is intended for individuals already familiar with the CMS/CMS and Business Objects application. The state provides access to six trainings for Customized Business Objects in a twelve month period.

A separate CWS/CMS training allocation (CWS/CMS staff development) is provided to counties to train staff on how to use the CWS/CMS. Counties use these funds to provide local system training to new staff, staff whose functions within the program are changing, or special training to meet specific needs of county or individual staff members. Classes include both locally delivered training similar to that provided under the statewide contract curriculum, as well as locally determined training priorities, which may not be readily available at a statewide level.

Scenario Manager is a software-training tool that utilizes modules (scenarios) that simulate the CWS/CMS application. It is used in conjunction with the New User Statewide Curriculum and the New User Process Maps to complete the Skill Building Exercises. Scenario Manager simulates working through a process necessary to complete a job related task. It works within the parameters of scenarios developed to train a new user. It is a stand-alone application and is not host connected. Each county has the Scenario Manager Application on a CD that is provided by the CWS/CMS Project Office.

The Training Region allows participating counties to conduct training in a production-like environment where social workers, support staff, and other users can be trained on the use of the CWS/CMS Application. The Training Region provides the flexibility for each participating county to access county-specific caseload and resource data. In this environment, users are allowed to enter, add and delete data, and navigate as they would in the production environment without altering real data.

The CWS/CMS Statewide Training Support Unit develops, updates, and maintains all of the state's CWS/CMS training tools and materials, including the Statewide Training Application Resource, Online Release Notes and Quick Reference Guides. The standard training curriculum is maintained on the CWS/CMS website. Updates and maintenance are performed on an ongoing basis to ensure that training tools and materials provide statewide uniformity on how the CWS/CMS application should be used.

The CWS/CMS Statewide Training Support Unit provides oversight of CDSS vendor contracts for statewide classroom training, manages the Training Regions and provides training for CWS/CMS trainers.

### **Training for Group Home Staff**

Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations requires group home staff be trained regarding the children served in the group home and requires the group home administrator to develop a training and orientation plan for group home staff. The regulations require the plan to have an overview of the client population served by the group home and training on the group home regulations. The training plan also includes training on the needs and services plan that is required for each child in care. Additionally, staff is to develop the needs and services plan based on the needs of the child as outlined in the case plan with the child and the placement social worker.

Licensing Program Analysts who visit these homes are required to examine a portion of the records to assess whether or not the homes are complying with regulation. If they are found to be out of compliance, they are written a citation with a corrective action to comply by a certain date. The CFSD does not have access to these records.

The group home must obtain written approval from the child's placement social worker on the needs and services plan. If the child is 16 or older, the needs and services plan incorporates the child's Transitional Independent Living Plan (TILP) in the case plan and outlines the group home role in meeting the child's goals in the needs and services plan. The CFSD does not have access to these records.

New group home administrators must complete 40 hours of training, which may include modules on the needs of transition age youth. Community Care Licensing reports that some vendors have offered these modules, but they do not have the information on the numbers of classes offered or the numbers of administrators trained. Similarly, continuing education for group home administrators may include this topic. The CFSD does not have access to these records. Licensing Certification exams are conducted by regional offices. Any records of how many persons have participated in these trainings would be in the Licensing Division's Regional Offices.

The child's social worker must meet the Manual of Policies and Procedures, section 30-504.1, Service Delivery Methods: "1. Independent living services shall be provided to all eligible youth, based on needs, services and goals identified in the most recently completed Transitional Independent Living Plan (TILP)." The placement social worker and the group home staff work together to meet the child's needs as outlined when the child is placed in the facility.

Training for group home staff, foster parents and child welfare workers in group home placements are provided through several different ways. Community Care Licensing offices provide initial and ongoing training to group administrators, staff and prospective foster parents. The group home and foster home licensing application must outline what type of training will be provided to staff with regard to working with adolescents and preparing them for independence. The training is provided by internal or contracted professional trainers. In title 22 section 84065, it outlines the training hours that are required for initial and ongoing group home staff.

Additional training opportunities are available to child welfare and group home staff, and foster parents regarding the needs and services of working with transitional age adolescents. Opportunities are available to attend state training conferences, agency conferences and presentations in community based settings. CDSS hosts the annual ILP Institute where training opportunities are provided to all child welfare staff, including group home and foster family agency staff, and foster parents on topics related to transitional age youth and youth who have aged out of care. County social services agencies also provide local training opportunities to staff, foster parents, and adoptive parents on a regular basis.

### **Child Death Review Team Training**

At this time, CDSS is no longer providing this training.

### **Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) Training**

The CDSS plans to provide training when the new Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children replaces the current Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children. This will happen when the compact is adopted by and enacted into state statutes by at least 35 states (including California).

In the interim, the CDSS Out-of-State Placement Policy Unit (OSPPU) schedules quarterly regional meetings with northern and southern California ICPC liaisons. These meetings provide the opportunity for CDSS to consult with county staff and clarify ICPC requirements. During these meetings, information is shared from the Annual Conference presented by AAICPC through American Public Human Services Association (APHSA), county ICPC issues are discussed, and county best practice information for the processing and tracking of ICPC information is shared. This year, two County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA) ICPC representatives, one for the northern counties and one for the southern counties, were identified to attend ICPC conferences/meetings/trainings. They will act as liaisons between the state ICPC Office, CWDA and counties relative to operation of the statewide ICPC program, and identification of ICPC county issues and training needs. Other activities include the following:

- The CDSS ICPC Deputy Compact Administrator or representative attends the Northern California Placement Committee meetings on an as-needed basis to share information directly with placement workers.
- Additionally, OSPPU staff is continually available by telephone, email and facsimile to provide technical assistance to parties involved in the interstate placement of a child.
- The CDSS, over the last year, has developed a California County ICPC Liaison Web site to be used by the CDSS and counties to share relevant ICPC information including

statutes, ACLs, county best practices, etc. It is anticipated that the web site will provide counties with quick access to information on ICPC rules, practices, etc. that will assist them in their daily ICPC functions.

- Finally, the CDSS OSPPU continues to provide on-going technical assistance to county welfare, mental health and probation staff for the out-of-state group home placement of children.

### **Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICAMA) Training for County Liaisons**

- The CDSS OSPPU provides on-going technical assistance to county ICAMA liaisons by sharing information from the Annual Conference presented by APHSA or other information shared with OSPPU by APHSA.
- The American Association of the Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (AAICAMA) through APHSA previously released ICAMA training on CD at its annual conferences. The CDSS/OSPPU refers counties to APHSA to obtain a copy of ICAMA training, on CD, if needed.
- The CDSS/OSPPU staff provides on-going training and technical assistance by telephone, email and facsimile to county ICAMA liaisons as needed.
- CDSS/OSPPU is currently discussing with the DHCS how to more quickly expedite ICAMA case processing, thus giving children crossing state lines via ICPC faster access to medical care. When accomplished, staff will provide associated technical assistance to counties on any new procedures developed as needed via ACL and other avenues. OSPPU works daily with DHCS staff, who process the actual paperwork for incoming ICAMA cases. During the next year we will work together to identify county ICAMA training issues and determine how best to address any identified training needs (i.e formalized training, question and answer letters, etc.).

### **Kinship Support Services Program (KSSP)**

#### **Allowable IV-B**

\$225,000

#### **Setting/Venue**

Twenty counties currently operate a KSSP. The training provider conducts training and technical assistance at the KSSP sites within each of the 20 counties. The training provider also conducts three regional conferences per fiscal year: one for the Bay Area counties/sites, one for the other northern California counties/sites, and one for the counties/sites in southern California.

#### **Training Duration**

July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009

**Training Activity Provider**

Edgewood Center for Children and Families

**Approximate Number of Days/Hours of Training Activity**

Each county with an existing KSSP may have county and site personnel attend a multi-day regional training for their area. The Bay Area training was in October 2008, the Northern California training was in March 2009, and the Southern California training will be held in May 2009.

In addition to the training provided at the multi-day regional conferences, training and technical assistance is provided by telephone, email, other written means and via onsite visits on an ongoing, as-needed basis throughout the term of the training period. Training and technical assistance is also provided related to data collection and reporting activities. The number of days/hours varies per county and per site as the training/technical assistance is specific to the county's program.

**Target Audience**

County and private nonprofit personnel who administer and/or operate the KSSP sites and relative caregivers/volunteers who help staff the KSSP sites.

**Total Cost Estimate**

SFY 2008/09 = \$225,000 (100 percent PSSF funds)

**Cost Allocation Methodology**

This training is allocated to Title IV-B.

**Description of How Training Meets Goals and Objectives of the CFSP**

The KSSP promotes the well-being of children and families by providing funds for the planning, start-up, continuing, and expansion of county kinship support services programs. These programs provide community-based family support services to relative caregivers and the court-dependent children placed in their homes, and to children who are at risk of dependency or delinquency and their relative caregivers. Training and technical assistance is provided to county and non-profit personnel operating KSSP sites so that they can provide the most effective and efficient services to children and their relative caregivers. Support services provided via this program contribute to improved outcomes related to safety, stability, permanency and the well-being of both dependent and non-dependent, at-risk children. The program also improves the potential for a child to experience additional connections with other family members through supportive services to the relative caregiver that strengthen stability of the placement.

## **NOTEWORTHY PROJECTS, CONFERENCES AND SYMPOSIUMS**

### **Annual ILP Teen Forum**

The CDSS sponsors a Teen Forum for foster youth, ages 16-18, to provide them with an opportunity to learn more about independent living skills, housing resources, educational and employment resources and eligibility for the Former Foster Youth Medi-Cal Program. This year, the Foster Club All-Stars were featured; the group travels throughout the country and members share information about their personal experiences in an effort to improve the lives of youth in foster care.

This annual event provides youth with a unique opportunity to network with other youth throughout the state. The forum was held June 25-27, 2009 on the University of California, Davis. Approximately 175 youth and sponsors attended this event.

### **Beyond the Bench Conference XIX**

Many juvenile dependency and delinquency professionals attended this annual statewide conference in December 2008. This multidisciplinary conference will cover issues relevant to all aspect of the juvenile court, such as: juvenile justice, collaborative and community justice, dependency and delinquency law, family violence, child abuse and neglect, mental health, permanency planning, ICWA, education, and immigration.

### **Annual California Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Conference**

The 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Statewide ICWA Conference was held in June 2009 in Santa Rosa, California. It was hosted by Lytton Rancheria, Coyote Valley Tribe, Stewarts Point Rancheria, and the Indian Child and Family Preservation Program located in Sonoma County, California. The theme of the conference is "*Preserving the Whole Indian Child.*" The conference included a number of workshops such as Title IV-E Models and Agreements, Tribal-State Agreements, Expert Witness, Best Practices, Engaging Native Fathers, Delinquency, Placing Indian Children, Transitional Youth Programs, Tribal TANF, Healing the Healers, along with panels made-up and focused on youth and another on national and state legislative issues. The CDSS provides \$25,000 from the state General Fund to partially support the Annual Statewide ICWA Conference.

## **COUNTY STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING**

Counties provided various levels of in-service training to all their staff, which is described in an annual training plan. Counties are required to adhere to the Staff Development and Training regulations contained in the CDSS' Division 14 of the Manual of Policies and Procedures. These regulations serve as a guide to county welfare departments in the administration of county training programs. Division 14 provides the mandate and structure of county accountability in the development and implementation of training programs, annual training plans, evaluation and training need assessments. These regulations

establish claiming and cost reimbursement criteria and guidelines for allowable staff development cost and activities.

**ADDITIONAL TRAINING HIGHLIGHTS**

**County Counsel/Social Worker Joint Trainings**

The purpose of this training activity is to further the IV-B Plan Training and Staff Development Goal of workforce preparation and support.

Goal V: Prepare and support the workforce to help children and families reach positive outcomes through multi-disciplinary training regarding permanency. This goal is achieved by providing:

- Specific training on case planning as related to reunification and other permanent plans.
- Training emphasizing respective participant roles in achieving systemic permanency goals.

This training activity falls under the following category necessary for the administration of the foster care program: preparation for and participation in judicial determinations. These training activities are short-term. The duration of specific training programs varies according to type of training offered and audience served. The trainings will be coordinated and overseen by the AOC; and the AOC will contract with statewide and local training providers with experience in the specific subjects being covered by the trainings.

Trainings have been expanded to thirteen counties: Amador, Del Norte, El Dorado, Imperial, Lake, Marin, Mendocino, Plumas, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, San Joaquin, Santa Cruz, and Stanislaus. The number of attendees per training is as follows:

<b>County</b>	<b>Total Attendees</b>	<b>Social Worker Attendees</b>	<b>County Counsel Attendees</b>
Amador	32	18	1
Del Norte	17	8	1
El Dorado	21	15	2
Imperial	32	24	3
Lake	18	10	1
Marin	28	18	1
Mendocino	35	23	2
Plumas	14	6	1
San Diego	145	52	9
San Luis Obispo	27	16	2
San Joaquin	86	52	3

Santa Cruz	33	19	1
Stanislaus	42	36	2

**Significant Accomplishments**

This year's trainings have been enormously successful so far, with particularly positive feedback from social workers, judicial officers, education representatives and treatment providers. Social workers have reported that they benefit tremendously from working closely with attorneys, judicial officers, education representatives and service providers on role understanding and information sharing.

**Changes**

Last year's training plan focused on courtroom advocacy to advance permanency goals. This program was so successful (and nominated for a national award in continuing education), that it has been adapted for classroom use in law and social work programs throughout California and will be conducted in a modified format for attorneys and social workers in small counties in FY 2009/10.

This year's program was developed in response to a statewide need to discuss information sharing between agency, courts, attorneys, educational representatives and service providers. While related, there is a different emphasis in this year's training – the vehicle for advocacy last year was in-court activity, while this year the focus is more on preparation for the actual process. Both years have included a heavy focus on the interdisciplinary nature of permanency work, with the training emphasizing respective participant roles in achieving systemic permanency goals.

**Barriers**

There are two extremely innovative aspects of this year's training program. These innovations have been strengths, but also present real challenges. The first innovative aspect of the training is an interdisciplinary court-practice program, meaning that the focus is on both lawyers and social workers and their respective roles in the court process. This has proven to be both a true strength of the training program, but also a challenge. It can be difficult to balance the differences in skill sets, experience, and focus reflected in our training audience. The second innovative aspect of the training is that it takes place in one-day, as opposed to the multi-day format of all other court-practice focused training programs.

A challenge is the significant time and energy that has been put into the development of a one-day agenda; there is still a sense that it is not enough time for all participants to fully engage. Another challenge is preparing training for small and large counties. In smaller counties, training has been broad as staff duties encompass a wide range of assignments and the positions are more similar to generalists. With large counties, training is targeted for specialized audiences because their roles are much more narrow than smaller counties. Larger counties have more social workers and county counsel who rarely see the inside of a courtroom. Topics are narrowed for larger counties because it seems unnecessary to pay

for large number of attendees who will never use the knowledge or skills being taught. Tailoring the trainings to the needs of each county is laborious, but the process ensures federal dollars are maximized.

### **Plans for the future**

A courtroom advocacy permanency training proposal for 2008-2011 has been submitted; many of the county teams and training participants have identified this as a critical training need. In addition, based upon universal demand and acknowledgment of these fiscal times, any training for the following year will include a core component which merges the mandate for reasonable services with the realities of fiscal limitations.

### **Judicial Review and Technical Assistance (JRTA)**

JRTA attorneys conducted trainings tailored to meet the individual needs of judicial officers, clerks, attorneys, social workers, and probation officers as requested. The workshops focused on federal laws and regulations related to families with children in Title IV-E–eligible placements. The trainings provided from July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009 included the following:

- Mono County—August 4, 2008, Title IV-E related issues for social workers, county counsel, and attorneys
- Santa Barbara County, Santa Maria—September 10, 2008, Title IV-E related issues for social workers, county counsel, judge, probation officers, attorneys, and court staff
- Riverside County—September 17, 2008, Title IV-E related issues for social workers,
- Riverside County—September 18, 2008, Consultation with Department of Public Social Services management team
- California Department of Social Services, Eligibility Unit, Sacramento—October 28, 2008
- Humboldt County—January 30, 2009 Title IV-E related issues for social workers, county counsel and court staff
- Plumas County—March 11, 2009 Title IV-E findings and orders, Department of Social Services and Juvenile Courts

JRTA attorneys also responded to telephone and e-mail enquiries regarding title IV-E and related issues such as timeline compliance, case planning, and report requirements from judicial officers, court staff, attorneys, juvenile probation staff and child welfare staff on a regular basis.

### **TRAINING EVALUATION**

The following outcomes were planned from July to December 2008 and have been met:

- Data from the common CORE evaluations have been collected and analyzed by CalSWEC. Reports are generated as the data are received, and are used to inform curricula revisions and improve delivery of the training.

## **Background**

The CDSS uses a multi-pronged approach to the evaluation of training programs. To address the ever-increasing importance of evaluating training activities, the Macro Evaluation Team was established. The membership is comprised of representatives from the CDSS, county staff development organizations, RTAs, the Resource Center for Family Focused Practice (RCFFP), and the Inter-University Consortium (IUC) in Los Angeles. The Team is charged with making recommendations about statewide CWS training evaluation that includes the development of a statewide training evaluation framework, as mandated by California's PIP. Counties and RTAs can also access training from CalSWEC and national experts in training evaluation via the Macro Evaluation Team. This evaluation framework was first applied with the introduction of the common CORE curricula training for new child welfare workers and supervisors.

The framework addresses assessment at seven levels of evaluation, which together are designed to build a "chain of evidence" regarding training effectiveness.

These levels are:

- Level 1: Tracking attendance.
- Level 2: Formative evaluation of the course (curriculum content and delivery methods).
- Level 3: Satisfaction and opinion of the trainees.
- Level 4: Knowledge acquisition and understanding of the trainee.
- Level 5: Skills acquisition by the trainee (as demonstrated in the classroom).
- Level 6: Transfer of learning by the trainee (use of knowledge and skill on the job).
- Level 7: Agency/client outcomes - degree to which training affects the achievement specific agency goals or client outcomes.

Establishing that training is effective and lays the groundwork for tying training outcomes to program outcomes. This is being done by the field as a whole.

Benefits of implementing a framework for training evaluation:

- Data about the effectiveness of training at multiple levels (a chain of evidence) can be used to help answer the overall question about the effectiveness of training and its impact on child welfare outcomes.
- Data about training effectiveness is based on rigorous evaluation designs.
- Curriculum writers and trainers have data focused on specific aspects of training, allowing for targeted revisions of material and methods of delivery.
- Evaluation provides a standardized process for systematic review and evaluation of different approaches to delivery of training.

For the time period, 07/01/08 through 06/30/09:

### **Significant accomplishments**

The total number of subjects who have participated in the evaluations of common CORE curricula since its inception and through December 31, 2008 is 3,692.

- Knowledge tests continued to be administered by the RTAs/IUC and analyzed by CalSWEC for the initial and revised versions of the common CORE curricula with standard content. New or revised versions of knowledge tests were implemented for the following curricula: *Placement and Permanency*. Information from the preliminary analyses was used to refine the curricula and test materials.
- To date about 176 (or 64 percent) of the total 275 multiple choice test questions have been piloted in actual tests, as a result of test revisions for several CORE curricula. An additional 18-20 multiple choice test questions may be piloted (reflecting a total of about 70 percent of the item bank in circulation) before the end of SFY 2008/09. The majority of the piloted items appeared to perform adequately enough to continue without revision. However, some multiple choice test items were revised for use with knowledge tests (based on feedback from RTAs/IUC), with the goal of creating a bank of items that reflects current CORE curricula, and which can be used interchangeably. This will enhance the validity and the security of the items, and allow for flexible use of different items at different sites.
- Embedded evaluations continued to be administered by the RTAs/IUC and analyzed by CalSWEC for the initial and revised versions of the common CORE curricula with standard content AND standard delivery. Revised versions of embedded evaluations were implemented for the following curricula: *Child Maltreatment Identification, Part I: Neglect, Emotional Abuse, and Physical Abuse*; *Child Maltreatment Identification, Part II: Sexual Abuse and Sexual Exploitation*; *Casework Supervision (Supervisor Core)*.
- An embedded evaluation was developed for the *Critical Thinking in Child Welfare Assessment: Safety, Risk & Protective Capacity* curriculum that can be used with the assessment tools used by SDM counties in California.
- Course-level evaluations of the pilot of the next version of the curriculum *Child & Youth Development in a Child Welfare Context* was administered by CalSWEC during the November 2008 pilot this curriculum. CalSWEC collected and summarized these evaluations to inform the revision of this curriculum.
- The time period covered by the current strategic plan for child welfare training evaluation in California is coming to an end. CalSWEC initiated the process for the next strategic plan.
- CalSWEC finalized the design of secure web pages on the CalSWEC website for training evaluation materials as a central resource for academy evaluation personnel. CalSWEC implemented and continued to update evaluation documents as needed on these secure website pages during SFY 2007/08.

## Barriers

Test item development and validation continues to be a lengthy process, which involves collecting data over a fairly long period of time. While the items that have been developed are performing very well, more test data is needed to complete a bank of validated items. This process is complicated by the fact that the curriculum has also been under revision.

## Plans for the Future

- Training evaluation and curriculum revision is by design an ongoing process, and the evaluation and revision activities will continue beyond SFY 2009/10. The evaluation

framework will continue to guide the ongoing curriculum development and revision process. This includes continued use of knowledge tests and embedded evaluations with common CORE curriculum trainees.

- The validation process continues for multiple choice test questions that are used for knowledge tests. Items will be updated to reflect revisions to common CORE curricula.
- As part of moving forward in the evaluation framework, evaluation of transfer of learning activities will be developed and integrated into common CORE and/or supervisor CORE curricula. A new strategic plan will be finalized to help guide child welfare training evaluation efforts for the next several years in California.

**Evaluation and Technical Assistance**

## **EVALUATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

### **Supporting Father Involvement (SFI) Study**

From the beginning of the Supporting Father Involvement Study in 2002, until the end of the first phase of funding, June 30, 2009, families (mostly) without involvement in the child welfare system were recruited to and received services. Benefits these families derived from the study were overwhelmingly positive. To test the benefits of the Study to child welfare (CW) families the program was extended to June 30, 2012. From July 1, 2009 until June 30, 2012, the focus of the Study will be to work with CW families who have had referrals and/or have an open case. CW families will comprise 75% of families to be served. Families without any involvement in the CW system will make up the remaining 25% of families involved in the Study.

In 2003, the California Department of Social Services' Office of Child Abuse Prevention entered into an Interagency Agreement with the University of California, Berkeley to conduct a research study and intervention designed to: 1) strengthen family relationship 2) Increase the positive involvement of fathers in their families; 3) enhance children's development; 4) prevent child maltreatment, and; 5) change organizational culture to become more father friendly and father inclusive.

Service elements for SFI families are implemented through public-private partnerships between Child Welfare Services agencies and Family Resource Centers in the counties of Santa Cruz, San Luis Obispo, Tulare, Yuba, and Contra Costa. This evidence based program has proven successful with low income, at risk, co-parenting, Caucasian, Latino, and African American families with children age seven and younger.

Families, who volunteer for services, are randomly assigned to one of three groups: 1) a one-time educational presentation on the impact of positive father involvement upon outcomes for children; 2) a 16-week group for fathers; or, 3) a 16-week group for couples group. All project participants receive case management services.

### **Significant Accomplishments**

Research analyses thus far have revealed the following:

- Fathers were significantly more involved emotionally and physically in caring for their children.
- Both parents' levels of anxiety and parenting stress had decreased measurably.
- Mothers' and fathers' satisfaction with their relationship as a couple had been maintained, in contrast with the control participants who had shown declines in satisfaction with their relationship over time.
- The children of fathers in both groups had demonstrated less aggressive behavior, over time, when compared with the children of parents in the control group.
- Most married couples stayed married during the study.
- Positive changes in father-only groups had also been significant, but slower to emerge.
- Couple relationship satisfaction was maintained
- Mothers saw fathers as more involved

- Decrease in parenting stress for fathers
- Decrease in anxiety symptoms for mothers
- Less social withdrawal and symptoms in children

The intervention is equally effective with:

- Mexican-American, Anglo, and African American participants
- Lower-income and higher-income participants
- Married and cohabiting couples
- More and less depressed parents
- More and less satisfied couples

### **Future Plans**

Funding for this project is being extended until June 30, 2012 to focus upon work with families referred by Child Welfare Services. It is projected that SFI will be just as effective with this new population of families. Child Welfare Services (CWS) families will comprise seventy percent (70 percent) of the families receiving SFI services.

### **Differential Response (DR)**

The development work for the pilots started in July 2003, and in June 2006, all 11 counties implemented the pilots in accordance with their plans. These improvements, which impact both system and practice, are the keys to the ongoing effort to improve statewide program outcomes and continually improve outcomes for children and families including the prevention of child fatalities. The Results Group completed an initial evaluation on the effectiveness of these pilots on February 8, 2008. The evaluation report indicates that “Quantitative and qualitative data indicate the pilot strategies are effective in achieving permanency for children – primarily through family reunification or adoption– while maintaining their safety and well-being.” The data indicates that from 2004 – 2006, the pilot counties improved by 1.6% in the area of “no recurrence of maltreatment,” due in part to the implementation of Differential Response. During the same time period, non-pilot counties improved by .05%. The evaluation report also states that “CWS staff and community partners note higher level of service engagement under Differential Response, and attribute the program’s success to its tendency to be less threatening to families.” The final evaluation was to be completed in November 2008, however due to the California budget crisis the contract with The Results Group was suspended in August 2008. The Results Group has now restarted the 11-County Pilot Project evaluation report in May 2007. This report is due to be completed in February 2009.

California continued to provide Child Welfare Outcome Improvement funding to all 58 counties to enhance service delivery systems in ways that improve safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes for children and families consistent with the strategies contained in the county System Improvement Plan (SIP). The eleven Child Welfare Services Program Improvement pilot counties can access these funds to support their efforts to implement the three key improvement strategies, including Differential Response. The CDSS, Office of Child Abuse Prevention also provides an array of funding (both state and federal sources)

that counties use for prevention, intervention and treatment services. These resources support local services that may be utilized for Differential Response referrals.

The California Child Welfare Council, Prevention/Early Intervention Committee is currently forming its agenda for the coming year. One area under consideration is an in-depth look at Differential Response and the impact of this approach to reaching children and families at risk of child abuse and neglect. Topics currently under discussion include an assessment of the core elements of DR, identification of related promising practices, determination of how core elements could be made consistent across counties, and cost estimate and cost benefits of DR.

### **All County Information Notices (ACIN)**

#### **Policy Guidance and Information Provided to Counties**

[ACIN I-16-08 \(March 10, 2008\)](#)

Association Of Administrators Of The Interstate Compact On The Placement Of Children (AAICPC) 33rd Annual Conference

[ACIN I-19-08 \(March 28, 2008\)](#)

Assembly Bill (AB) 2488; Adoption: Sibling Mutual Consent Program - Confidential Intermediary

[ACIN I-20-08 \(March 26, 2008\)](#)

Psychotropic Medications

[ACIN I-21-08 \(March 26, 2008\)](#)

Child Abuse Central Index (CACI) Grievance Hearing Instructions

[ACIN I-22-08 \(March 26, 2008\)](#)

Implementation Activities For Gomez V. Saenz Lawsuit Settlement

[ACIN I-30-08 \(April 30, 2008\)](#)

Revised Agency-Relative Guardianship Disclosure Form (SOC 369)

[ACIN I-41-08 \(June 4, 2008\)](#)

Integration Of The Child Abuse Prevention Intervention And Treatment, Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention And Promoting Safe And Stable Families Three-Year Plan Into The California Children And Family Services Review Process

[ACIN I-41-08E \(July 16, 2008\)](#)

Integration Of The Child Abuse Prevention Intervention And Treatment, Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention And Promoting Safe And Stable Families Three-Year Plan Into The California Children And Family Services Review Process

[ACIN I-52-08 \(July 15, 2008\)](#)

Prohibitions On Counties In Requesting Personally Identifying Information Of Victims Of Domestic Abuse From Service Providers In Awarding Grants

[ACIN I-60-08 \(August 15, 2008\)](#)

Application Release For Team Selection For The California Breakthrough Series Collaborative (BSC) On Independent Living Program (ILP) Transformation

[ACIN I-67-08 \(October 27, 2008\)](#)

Letter Of Intent To Request Participation In The Transitional Housing Placement Program And/Or The Transitional Housing Program-Plus, Transitional Housing County Coordinators Assignments

[ACIN I-68-08 \(October 3, 2008\)](#)

Kinship/Foster Care Emergency Fund

[ACIN I-70-08 \(October 6, 2008\)](#)

Instructions For Annual Report For The Child Abuse Prevention Intervention And Treatment/Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention/Promoting Safe And Stable Families/County Children's Trust Fund Programs; And Annual Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Application And Allocations

[ACIN I-73-08 \(October 8, 2008\)](#)

Title IV-E Foster Care Eligibility Review

[ACIN I-79-08 \(November 12, 2008\)](#)

California State Ombudsman For Foster Care

[ACIN I-81-08 \(October 17, 2008\)](#)

Independent Living Program (ILP) Annual Statistical Report [SOC 405A (10/08)]

[ACIN I-82-08 \(October 8, 2008\)](#)

Outcome Indicator On Health And Dental Assessments

[ACIN I-85-08 \(November 14, 2008\)](#)

County Children's Trust Fund Share Of Kids' Plate Revenue

[ACIN I-86-08 \(November 20, 2008\)](#)

Tribally Approved Foster Homes

[ACIN I-88-08 \(December 1, 2008\)](#)

Implementation Of Assembly Bill (AB 1331)

[ACIN I-90-08 \(December 15, 2008\)](#)

Statewide Foster Care Eligibility Training

[ACIN I-90-08E \(December 23, 2008\)](#)

Correction To All County Information Notice No. I-90-08 Statewide Foster Care Eligibility Training

[ACIN I-91-08 \(November 26, 2008\)](#)

Questions and Answers On California WrapAround Services (Senate Bill 163)

[ACIN I-01-09 \(January 9, 2009\)](#)

Child And Family Services Review Parent And Foster Parent Survey

[ACIN I-02-09 \(January 5, 2009\)](#)

Federal Family Unification Program

[ACIN I-04-09 \(January 27, 2009\)](#)

Organization Of The Children And Family Services Division

[ACIN I-06-09 \(January 23, 2009\)](#)

Administrative Office Of The Courts Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Initiative

[ACIN I-13-09 \(February 10, 2009\)](#)

Documentation Of Referrals In Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS)

[ACIN I-14-09 \(March 25, 2009\)](#)

Independent Living Program Annual Narrative Report and Plan For Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2008

[ACIN I-17-09 \(February 19, 2009\)](#)

Association Of Administrators Of The Interstate Compact On The Placement Of Children (AAICPC) 35th Annual Conference

[ACIN I-21-09 \(March 12, 2009\)](#)

Questions And Answers On Child Welfare Training Regulations

[ACIN I-31-09 \(April 22, 2009\)](#)

Invitation For County Participation In The Resource Family Approval (RFA) Pilot Program

[ACIN I-32-09 \(April 24, 2009\)](#)

Criminal Record Background Check

[ACIN I-36-09 \(May 7, 2009\)](#)

Resource Family Recruitment Training And Retention Survey State Fiscal Year 2007/2008

[ACIN I-41-09 \(May 27, 2009\)](#)

Funding For Citizen Review Panels Request For Applications

**All County Letters (ACL)**

[ACL 08-26 \(May 28, 2008\)](#)

Federal and State Changes to Requirements for Interstate placement of Children and Caregivers Rights

[ACL 08-31 \(July 18, 2008\)](#)

New Transitional Independent Living Plan (TILP) Agreement For Foster Youth

[ACL 08-33 \(July 10, 2008\)](#)

Exit Outcomes For Youth Aging Out Of Foster Care Quarterly Statistical Report [SOC 405E (7/08)]

[ACL 08-33E \(July 10, 2008\)](#)

Exit Outcomes For Youth Aging Out Of Foster Care Quarterly Statistical Report [SOC 405E (7/08)]

[ACL 08-40 \(December 19, 2008\)](#)

Private Adoption Agency Reimbursement Program (PAARP) Funding Increase Claiming Guidelines

[ACL 08-43 \(October 6, 2008\)](#)

Assembly Bill (AB) 714 (Chapter 108, Statutes of 2007): Release Of Information To Birth Relatives Of Previously Adopted Children

[ACL 08-45 \(October 6, 2008\)](#)

Increased Fees And Related Statutory Changes In The Independent Adoptions Program

[ACL 08-45 \(October 6, 2008\)](#)

Increased Fees And Related Statutory Changes In The Independent Adoptions Program

[ACL 08-48 \(November 14, 2008\)](#)

Sharing Ratios For Group Home Programs Fiscal Year 2008-09

[ACL 08-49 \(October 31, 2008\)](#)

Adoption Provisions Of The Adam Walsh Child Protection And Safety Act Of 2006

[ACL 08-49E \(February 23, 2009\)](#)

Correction To All County Letter (ACL) 08-49 (Adoption Provisions Of The Adam Walsh Child Protection And Safety Act Of 2006)

[ACL 08-51 \(November 13, 2008\)](#)

Social Worker Responsibility To Educate Foster Children On Foster Youth Personal Rights

[ACL 08-52 \(October 22, 2008\)](#)

Child Welfare Services Disaster Response Plan Update

[ACL 08-54 \(December 1, 2008\)](#)

Instructions Regarding The Supplement To The Rate Paid On Behalf Of A Dual Agency Child

[ACL 08-57 \(November 25, 2008\)](#)

Relative/Nonrelative Extended Family Member (NREFM) Approvals - Revised SOC 815 Form

[ACL 08-57E \(December 4, 2008\)](#)

Relative/Nonrelative Extended Family Member (NREFM) Approvals - Revised SOC 815 Form (Errata Provides Corrections To Contact Information)

[ACL 08-58 \(December 1, 2008\)](#)

Relative And Nonrelative Extended Family Member (NREFM) Caregivers - Criminal Record Clearance And Exemption Transfers

[ACL 08-58E \(December 23, 2008\)](#)

Correction To All County Letter (ACL) 08-58

[ACL 08-60 \(December 3, 2008\)](#)

Fiscal Year (FY) 2008/2009 Process For County Certification To System Utilization Of The Child Welfare Services/Case Management System And The Availability Of An Associated Funding Augmentation

[ACL 08-62 \(December 23, 2008\)](#)

Fiscal Year (FY) 2008/09 Allocation Of Funds For The Transitional Housing Placement Program (THPP) And Transitional Housing Program-Plus (THP-PLUS)

[ACL 08-63 \(December 24, 2008\)](#)

Independent Living Program (ILP) Annual Statistical Report For ILP Eligible Probation And Aftercare Youth [SOC 405A.1 (10/08-09/09)]

[ACL 08-66 \(December 31, 2008\)](#)

Assignment Of A Wraparound Special Project Code In The Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS)

[ACL 09-02 \(March 19, 2009\)](#)

Regulations Implementing Senate Bill 39 Child Fatality Disclosure And Reporting Requirements

[ACL 09-09 \(February 23, 2009\)](#)

Relative Caregivers And Permanency Options

[ACL 09-10 \(February 27, 2009\)](#)

Intercountry Adoptions

[ACL 09-11 \(April 9, 2009\)](#)

Monthly Caseworker Visits With Foster Children

[ACL 09-15 \(March 5, 2009\)](#)

Implementation Of Assembly Bill (AB) 1512 (Torrico, Chapter 467, Statutes of 2007); Clarification And Instructions For Disenrollment Of Children In Foster Care From The County Organized Health System And Medi-Cal Change Of Address Procedures For Children In Foster Care And Adoption Assistance Programs

[ACL 09-16 \(March 12, 2009\)](#)

Assembly Bill 2651 (Chapter 701, Statutes of 2008): Approvals For Prospective Adoptive Applicants

[ACL 09-17 \(April 27, 2009\)](#)

Supplement To The Rate Requests For Dual Agency Aid To Families With Dependent Children-Foster Care (AFDC-FC) And Adoption Assistance Program (AAP) Children Quarterly Statistical Report

[ACL 09-23 \(May 20, 2009\)](#)

Supplement To The Rate Requests For Dual Agency Aid To Families With Dependent Children-Foster Care (AFDC-FC) And Adoption Assistance Program (AAP) Children Quarterly Statistical Report [FC-AAP 84 (1/09)]

**County Fiscal Letters (CFL)**

[CFL 08/09-03 \(July 24, 2008-09\)](#)

Fiscal Year (FY) 2008-09-09 Independent Living Program (ILP) Planning Allocation

[CFL 08/09-04 \(August 5, 2008-09\)](#)

Fiscal Year (FY) 2008-09-09 Planning Allocation For The Promoting Safe And Stable Families (PSSF) Program

[CFL 08/09-05 \(November 12, 2008-09\)](#)

Fiscal Year (FY) 2008-09-09 Planning Allocation For Adoptions Program Basic Costs, Improving Adoptions Outcomes, And Safe And Timely Interstate Placement

[CFL 08/09-06 \(August 5, 2008-09\)](#)

Fiscal Year (FY) 2008-09/09 Kinship/Foster Care Emergency Fund General Fund (GF) Planning Allocation

[CFL 08-09-07 \(August 18, 2008-09\)](#)

Fiscal Year (FY) 2008-09-09 Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention, And Treatment (CAPIT) Program And Citizen Review Panel Planning Allocations

[CFL 08/09-09 \(August 18, 2008-09\)](#)

Fiscal Year (FY) 2008-09-09 Planning Allocations For Child Welfare Services (CWS) Outcome Improvement Project (CWSOIP) Grant, CWS Differential Response (DR), Safety Assessment (SA), Permanency And Youth Services (PYS), And County Probation Departments

[CFL 08/09-09E \(November 13, 2008-09\)](#)

Fiscal Year (FY) 2008-09-09 Planning Allocations For Child Welfare Services (CWS) Outcome Improvement Project (CWSOIP) Grant, CWS Differential Response (DR), Safety Assessment (SA), Permanency And Youth Services (PYS), And County Probation Departments

[CFL 08/09-12 \(August 18, 2008-09\)](#)

Fiscal Year (FY) 2008-09-09 Group Home Monthly Visits (GHMV) General Fund (GF) Planning Allocation

[CFL 08/09-15 \(September 4, 2008-09\)](#)

Fiscal Year (FY) 2008-09-09 Planning Allocation For The Administration Of The Foster Care (FC) Program

[CFL 08/09-15E \(January 21, 2009\)](#)

Fiscal Year (FY) 2008-09-09 Planning Allocation For The Administration Of The Foster Care (FC) Program

[CFL 08/09-16 \(September 9, 2008-09\)](#)

Fiscal Year (FY) 2008-09/09 Assembly Bill (AB) 2129 Foster Parent Training And Recruitment Planning Allocation

[CFL 08/09-23 \(November 4, 2008-09\)](#)

Fiscal Year (FY) 2008-09-09 In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Program Administrative Allocation

[CFL 08/09-24 \(November 6, 2008\)](#)

California County Welfare Department (CWD) Cost Allocation Plan (CAP) Changes For The 2006/2007 Fiscal Year

[CFL 08/09-26 \(November 4, 2008-09\)](#)

Fiscal Year (FY) 2008-09-09 Kinship Guardianship Assistance Payment (Kin-GAP) Administration Final Allocation

[CFL 08/09-28 \(November 4, 2008-09\)](#)

Fiscal Year (FY) 2008-09-09 Emancipated Foster Youth Stipends Final Allocation

[CFL 08/09-30 \(December 23, 2008-09\)](#)

Fiscal Year (FY) 2008-09-09 Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Planning Allocation Project (CAP)

[CFL 08-09-31 \(November 7, 2008-09\)](#)

Fiscal Year (FY) 2008-09-09 Child Welfare Services (CWS) Planning Allocation For 56 Counties

[CFL 08-09-37 \(January 30, 2009\)](#)

Fiscal Year (FY) 2008-09-09 Planning Allocation For The Promoting Safe And Stable Families (PSSF) Caseworker Visits Grant

[CFL 08-09-41 \(February 11, 2009\)](#)

Fiscal Year (FY) 2008-09-09 Kinship Guardianship Assistance Payment (Kin-Gap) Administration Planning Augmentation

[CFL 08-09-44 \(February 11, 2009\)](#)

Fiscal Year (FY) 2008-09-09 Child Welfare Services (CWS) Planning Augmentation For 56 Counties

[CFL 08/09-45 \(March 17, 2009\)](#)

2009 Child Welfare Services Electronic Data Processing County Annual Planning Estimates

[CFL 08-09-46 \(March 25, 2009\)](#)

Final Fiscal Year (FY) 2008-09-09 Child Welfare Services (CWS) Augmentation Allocation

[CFL 08-09-49 \(May 20, 2009\)](#)

Fiscal Year (FY) 2008-09 Child Welfare Services (CWS) Augmentation For 56 Counties

## **Promoting Safe and Stable Families**

## **THE PROMOTING SAFE AND STABLE FAMILIES PROGRAM**

California continues to use the Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) grant to operate and expand on a PSSF program that incorporates services covering the federally identified categories of Family Preservation, Community-Based Family Support, Time-Limited Family Reunification and Adoption Promotion and Support.

To verify that the CDSS has met the non-supplantation requirements for Title IV-B subpart 2 programs in Section 432(a)(7)(A) of the Social Security Act, we have compared the state and local funds spent in the state Family Preservation programs for FFY 1992 and FFY 2007. The state Family Preservation program is the state level program that relates directly to the Title IV-B subpart 2 programs. In FFY 1992, CDSS spent \$13,138,422 in state and local funds for this program compared to \$37,396,892 spent in PSSF for FFY 2007.

### **Selection Process for County PSSF Programs**

California allocates approximately 85 percent of its PSSF grant directly to counties for the community provision of direct services and sets aside 15 percent of the total PSSF grant for state operated programs and administrative costs (no more than 10 percent of the total grant). The state does not take any administrative costs out of the matching state Family Preservation Fund. The total amount is allocated to counties to use for service.

Each county selects programs for funding in accordance with its own needs assessment, and conducts procurement activities in accordance with local administrative requirements. This occurs at least every three years, as counties are required to develop and submit PSSF plans to the CDSS for review and approval on three-year cycles, including annual PSSF updates. The CDSS provides technical assistance to the counties, addressing the need for consistency and coordination among the C-CFSR, the county's SIP and the county's three-year PSSF plan. The CDSS reviews the three-year plans addressing the need for such consistency and coordination, prior to approving a county plan and authorizing its PSSF allocations.

### **Three-Year Plans**

California has required counties to develop plans for use of the PSSF funds on a three-year cycle with annual updates based on federal fiscal year with the current cycle ending September 30, 2008. Accordingly, on May 23, 2005, the CDSS disseminated All-County Information Notice 1-25-05, for the current three-year cycle of October 1, 2005 through September 30, 2008, outlining Three-Year Plan instructions. To best address the findings of the federal CFSR, the state's PIP, the county SIP, the CWS System Improvement activities and the new Outcomes and Accountability System (AB 636), California required counties to combine their PSSF plans with their Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention and Treatment (CAPIT)/Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention plans. The cycle began on July 1, 2005, and extends through June 30, 2008. The resulting consolidated plan provides a more complete picture of the continuum of needs and services within each county and facilitates blending and maximizing of funds.

The CDSS in collaboration with the Child Welfare Director's Association (CWDA), continues its efforts to integrate California's Outcomes and Accountability System also known as the

California Children and Family Services Review (C-CFSR), County Self Assessment (CSA), and the System Improvement Plan (SIP) with the CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF three year plan. These integrated processes and documents will be required from counties triennially. CDSS is currently finalizing the CSA and SIP user guides. It is anticipated both guides will be released in 2009. Because the Outcomes and Accountability System is on a triennial cycle with each county having different due dates for their County SIP, a CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF interim plan was requested. In 2008, CDSS released an instructional letter informing counties an interim CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF plan must be maintained until such a time as an integrated CSA and SIP (due after July 1, 2009) are approved by CDSS.

The CDSS' Office of Child Abuse prevention (OCAP) has the oversight responsibility for the PSSF Program. As such, OCAP provides technical assistance to the counties. The technical assistance provided by OCAP stresses the need for consistency and coordination between the C-CFSR, CWS System Improvements and the consolidated three year plan and annual updates.

### **Needs Assessments and Types of PSSF Services**

Preventive services are determined by each county based on their own community needs assessment. Such assessments have identified a greater need for family preservation and support services in rural areas where isolation is a challenge to families needing preventive services. The needs assessments also show that the size of the population in these areas does not support a wide variety of adoption services.

On the other hand, these assessments show a greater parity among categories of services in the urban areas where a larger population base increases the need for, and provision of family reunification, adoption and adoption support services.

It is the intent of CDSS to continue to have local community services funded by PSSF funds to follow PSSF program criteria in each of the four federal categories. PSSF criteria states that at minimum 20 percent of the service funds must be spent in each of the four federally identified categories: Family Preservation, Family Support, Time-Limited Family Reunification, and Adoption Promotion and Support services. Current examples of PSSF services provided by counties this year include, but are not limited to the following:

- **Family Preservation**  
Programs such as in-home services for at-risk children and their families; programs providing follow-up care to families where a child has been returned after a foster care placement, including integrated case management, intensive home visiting and strength-based parenting services designed to improve parenting skills by reinforcing parents' confidence in their strengths.
- **Family Support**  
Health screenings and physical examinations including kindergarten health check-ups, nutrition education classes, family assessment and referral services, strength-based parenting and parent leadership services, individual and group counseling, mentoring, gang intervention, and other services designed to enhance student success and youth enrichment programs.

- **Time-Limited Family Reunification**

Individual, family and group counseling; inpatient residential and outpatient substance abuse treatment; mental health; domestic violence; temporary child care; therapeutic services for families, including crisis nurseries; transportation to and/or from services; family assessment and referral services; case plan development; supervised and guided visitation services; father involvement services; in-home support; crisis intervention for children at risk of removal (emphasizing reunification when in the best interest of the children) and aftercare services to reunifying families.

NOTE: Unless specifically tailored for reunifying families (e.g., aftercare, case plan development and supervised visitation specific to targeted reunifying families), these services are also available under the other three categories.

- **Adoption Promotion and Support Services**

Services include, but are not limited to, adoptive parent recruitment, including public service announcements; orientations for pre-adoptive families to prepare them for adoptive home studies, parenting skills and training programs for adoptive parents.

The OCAP has utilized the PSSF expenditure data to identify the counties that did not meet the federal mandate of allocating a minimum of twenty (20) percent for each service category or provide a strong rationale in the annual report if the allocations were below 20 percent for any one of the service categories. The OCAP consultant followed up with the assigned county liaison to discuss why the twenty (20) percent mandate was not met and/or if there was a discrepancy in reporting.

As mentioned above, review of the community assessments and discussions with county liaisons supported the challenges in the rural areas regarding providing Adoption Promotion and Support due to either the lack or no adoption occurring during the reporting year whereas urban areas show a greater parity among the PSSF categories. For the larger counties who did not meet the 20 percent requirement, they noted services in specific categories could be highlighted or developed, although the amount of PSSF funding did impact the availability of services in all counties. Post-adoption services are very weak or non-existent in some counties, specifically small rural counties, as these small counties reported no adoptions during the reporting year.

The CDSS continues its efforts to integrate the C-CFSR, CSA and SIP with the CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF three year plan which will allow OCAP consultants to work closely with Child Welfare Services and community partners during their development of the CSA. This process will provide OCAP consultants an opportunity to provide critical technical assistance to ensure PSSF services are available statewide; specifically in counties where the CSA process identifies specific needs which could be addressed with PSSF services.

The attached CFS-101, PART II: Annual Summary of Child and Family Services chart includes specific data on the estimated number of individuals and/or families to be served and the estimated expenditures by fund source for the services.

Activities funded by these funds are described throughout the APSR and include child protective services, assessing a family's needs, referrals to appropriate resources, home

visiting programs, etc. for families where the children remain in the home. In addition, for those children who are removed from the home, counseling services as needed, outpatient substance abuse treatment for parents, transportation to services, etc. are provided.

Among other services, for those instances when a child will not return home, adoption home studies are conducted and pre-adoptive families are recruited and trained.

Activities for this federal fiscal year and next will be focused on those strategies contained in California's Program Improvement Plan.

### **Identified Gaps in PSSF Services**

Although gaps in PSSF services have been identified through county-submitted PSSF updates, the C-CFSR process, and the CDSS' consultation process, current information shows strong county efforts to close the gaps.

However, due to the decrease in PSSF funding, it has become more challenging for state and local service providers to provide rural services consistently and effectively as funds determine how many services are available. CDSS continues to explore new ways of addressing these gaps and have incorporated tribal representation into local planning. Some of the gaps are being addressed through the work being done at the state level through the SIT.

Types of gaps existing in rural areas include: lack of readily accessible transportation to-and-from services and limited availability of appropriate foster family homes making it more difficult to access and provide time-limited family reunification services. Having geographically rural populations to serve makes adoptive parent recruitment and provision of post-adoption services more challenging.

The CDSS/OCAP annual reporting process identified the existing gaps mentioned above, and the consultants provided technical assistance to county liaisons regarding their plan to close the gaps. County liaisons were highly encouraged to utilize their PSSF funds to leverage other funds in order to close the gaps in services.

### **Twenty percent minimum of PSSF funds are to be spent in each of the identified categories**

Although counties make their local categorical decisions based on local needs, the OCAP continues to instruct them on the 20 percent categorical spending requirement through an annual PSSF update instruction letter disseminated to counties. The annual letter requires that a strong rationale must be provided for each decision where a county is not meeting the specified 20 percent minimum.

In addition, OCAP monitors county expenditure data from CDSS fiscal staff, and provides technical assistance and administrative assistance necessary to correct any issues. The OCAP monitors these county expenditures quarterly to determine if additional technical assistance or development of a corrective action plan (CAP) is necessary for a county not meeting its goals as identified in the county plan and/or its subsequent annual updates.

Each situation where there is a deficiency will be examined as to the reasonableness of meeting the goals on a county-specific basis. If there are reasons for not meeting each one of the goals, the specific county goals and the associated justifications will be documented. To ensure that the 20 percent goals are met on a statewide basis, the OCAP considers the information reported by each county when assessing the state's overall achievement.

There are some difficulties with reporting expenditures on a FFY basis, as the state allocates funds to the counties on a state fiscal year basis of July 1 to June 30. This means that when the state reports its expenditures, because of the nature of the state's budgeting and accounting system, it would include funding from two separate federal grants as well as funding from special projects, partially funded by the 15 percent set aside. Notwithstanding this, for FFY 2007, the state expended funds in the following proportions:

- Family Preservation: 28.96 percent.
- Family Support: 30.37 percent.
- Time-Limited Family Reunification: 20.48 percent.
- Adoption Promotion and Support Services: 20.18 percent.

Current fiscal data clearly indicates that counties have made tremendous progress toward achieving the required 20 percent minimum in each category and OCAP continues to provide technical assistance to counties that do not meet the percentage requirement by working with the CWDA to ensure that both county fiscal personnel, as well as county program personnel, are aware of the 20 percent requirement.

Internally, OCAP's Prevention Network Development Unit is now regularly in communication with CDSS fiscal staff in order to monitor expenditures on a quarterly, county-by-county basis. As the quarterly expenditure reports are issued, OCAP evaluates what steps to take with the counties that appear to be having difficulty meeting the minimum percentages.

Through the various efforts outlined above and OCAP's continued work with county contacts, along with a swift OCAP administrative response to county discrepancies, the state continues to monitor counties on achieving the PSSF federal 20 percent minimum spending requirements.

In addition, counties are now more closely scrutinizing their claiming process to assure that they are claiming to the proper PSSF category, thus better reflecting their actual compliance with the PSSF requirements. In prior years, this failure of accurate claiming had been a considerable problem, especially with Los Angeles County.

### **The Impact of Los Angeles County on California's Percentage Deficiency**

A significant issue with respect to the state's inability to achieve the 20 percent spending requirement had been the PSSF expenditure patterns of Los Angeles County. The county in past years had not claimed PSSF funds for its Time Limited Family Reunification or for Adoption Promotion and Support services. This is highly significant for the state, as Los Angeles County receives the largest PSSF county allocation.

In response to our concerns, Los Angeles County submitted a corrective action plan (CAP) to the OCAP. The CDSS and Los Angeles County representatives engaged in constant communication regarding their progress on the CAP. The Los Angeles Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) started to demonstrate progress in all areas of their CAP.

SFY 2007/08 fiscal data shows that again Los Angeles is in complete compliance with the 20 percent minimum requirement. The SFY 2007/08 information shows Los Angeles having the following expenditure percentages:

- 23.06 percent for Family Support
- 25.09 percent for Family Support
- 28.49 percent for Adoption Promotion & Support
- 23.36 percent for Time-Limited Family Reunification

The CDSS will continue to support Los Angeles County with focused technical assistance regarding claiming and coordination of services to ensure continued PSSF compliance.

#### **Program Technical Assistance**

With most counties showing a marked improvement in SFY 2006/07 on meeting the 20 percent requirement in the four PSSF categories, with Los Angeles County vastly improving to the point of meeting 20 percent compliance, the state was quite close to achieving 20 percent compliance for each category of service. The CDSS expected full compliance to be achieved in the 2007/08 reporting period as the OCAP staff provided technical assistance through in-person visits and via e-mail and phone contact to counties that were not demonstrating a minimum of 20 percent expenditure in each category.

The combination of a more resolute OCAP effort as outlined above and a corresponding mutual cooperation between its consultants and county contacts made the compliance possible.

OCAP will be revisiting how percentage figures are gathered and determined to see if there is an internal fiscal reporting discrepancy of percentage determination, counties not correctly reporting the percentages, or if identified counties simply are not grasping the federal 20 percent PSSF minimal distribution per category requirement.

#### **PSSF Linkages to Other Family Support and Family Preservation Services**

The OCAP will continue working with counties to identify linkages with existing family support and family preservation services. The OCAP requires counties in their PSSF reports to submit information on linkages with other programs. Of particular interest to the OCAP is information that identifies county PSSF efforts linked to the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) cash assistance program, parenting training, and other programs such as substance abuse, child abuse prevention, early intervention services, mental health, local correctional facilities and work force development.

## **Blending of Funds**

The OCAP encourages counties to maximize services through linking to other fund sources. As a rule, counties blend funds from available sources that include the following programs: PSSF, CAPTA, CBCAP, the CAPIT Program, the Children's Trust Fund, funds from tobacco tax, city and county funds, foundations and private donations. The intent is to maximize services by providing a continuum of services for children and families from all serving agencies.

## **Differential Response (DR)**

### **The PSSF Funds Used to Develop and Expand Family Support and Family Preservation Services**

Counties are using a variety of funding sources to fund the implementation and expansion of DR, including PSSF, grant funds, etc., and future expansion is dependent on the availability of funds.

The PSSF funds will continue to be used to broaden the network of services that counties have available to serve families without having to open a case in the CWS system. These services are essential for the early intervention intake system within a DR framework. They will allow CWS to respond earlier, with greater flexibility, and with customized services and support for families ensuring child safety and reducing or eliminating re-entry into the CWS system.

Some communities have gaps in services so that families are not able to obtain the appropriate services when they need them. Some counties, typically the larger, more urban areas, have more service providers available than the smaller, more rural counties. As a result, counties with little community service support find it more challenging to effectively engage families in preventive services. As a result, circumstances in the family often deteriorate to the point that CWS must become involved, and perhaps, remove children from their homes. By expanding on these services in a carefully planned manner so that they are integrated with existing services, a complete spectrum of core services may become available.

DR redefines the relationship between the child welfare agency and existing and new community providers as partners in protecting children. The goal is that PSSF funds will be used to build this network of services through the partnership between CWS and community providers. As mentioned on page 137, in the section *Needs Assessment and Types of PSSF Services*, PSSF criteria states that at minimum 20 percent of the service funds must be spent in each of the four federally identified categories: Family Preservation, Family Support, Time-Limited Family Reunification, and Adoption Promotion and Support services. CDSS does not track the specifics of how the funds are spent in each category, nor does it intend to capture this information in the future. Counties claim their expenditures using particular codes created for this purpose, but they are not required to itemize each expense. The overall goal of DR is to provide support and preservation services to families before they become formally involved with the CWS agency. This process involves an active partnership with community based organizations, as well as other county service agencies.

Funding for future years is heavily dependent on the amount of state General Fund monies available for the CWS System improvement activities. Although PSSF funding is utilized, the amount of federal funds received are insufficient to sustain these improvements.

### **Differential Response Linkages to Other Services and the Child and Family Services**

Within California, the DR strategy creates a new early intervention intake system in which the child welfare agency responds in a more flexible manner (with three response paths rather than one) to referrals of child abuse or neglect based on the perceived safety and risk factors present in the family. Services are provided based on the family's needs, resources and circumstances.

Path One assumes there will be no further involvement of CWS in the case unless the circumstances prove to be different than what was known at intake. These cases would be typically low or no-risk of child abuse and neglect, but it is clear the family is experiencing problems or stressors which could be addressed by community services. Through this path, community agencies expand CWS ability to have someone respond, see the child is safe, preserve the family and provide support/services to families.

Path Two is for families that present with moderate risks of child abuse and neglect. Safety factors may not be immediately manifested in all cases, but risk is present. CWS will conduct an in-person contact (this contact may include a community partner). Services may be provided through CWS and/or partnership with community organizations to ensure that families are receiving services and support based upon their needs.

Path Three is for families that present with higher risk and/or safety concerns. These cases require a more immediate response to ensure child safety. CWS and law enforcement (where necessary) will be the key responders for this path. Through the support of county interagency partners and community service providers, services and support will be enhanced to ensure child safety within the home or in out-of-home care.

### **Child Abuse and Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) Funds Integration and Coordination with Child and Family Services**

The CAPTA funds are used to strengthen child abuse prevention services and support various demonstration projects that implement best practices for integration with the local child and family services continuum. The emphasis is on child abuse prevention services, including family preservation and support. For example, CAPTA funds are used to provide training and technical assistance that focus on FRCs and the wide variety of child and family services they provide; the development and support of Citizen Review Panels (CRPs) in selected counties; to provide stipends to parents and foster parents to attend statewide CRP meetings; and the development and implementation of the SFI Study as a promising practice.

In SFY 2003/04, the SFI Study began testing a particular family-based intervention that is designed to improve the positive involvement of fathers with their children and to enhance the organizational culture of FRCs to be more inclusive of fathers. In addition to the outcomes of the intervention, the study has increased parent engagement into FRC

services due to increased outreach and training and technical assistance for staff on skills related to community engagement, retention of families and expertise in referral strategies. The study was extended through June 2009 in order to test the intervention with new populations and to disseminate research findings. It is anticipated that a final report of SFI results will be prepared in 2009. Because of the success of the intervention, the study has been extended through June 2012. This new phase will focus on including families known to the child welfare system. It is anticipated that the intervention will provide similar, positive results to this new population.

## **Title IV-B, Part 1 Funds**

The funds for Title IV-B, Part 1 were used last year by counties to fund their basic child protective services programs. These include providing pre-placement prevention activities as well as in-home family maintenance services to families, to prevent abuse and neglect and to reduce out-of-home care placements. Services provided to families and children include transportation, counseling, emergency in-home caretakers, substance abuse treatment, parenting education, domestic violence intervention, etc.

In addition, the funds were also used for the family reunification program, which provides support services to families and children who have been removed from the home to make the family environment safe for the child to return. A reunification plan is created and services made available to the parents that can include parent training, homemaking skills, substance abuse treatment, counseling, etc. Funds were also used for the permanent placement program, which is designed to help children who can't return to their birth family find a safe, stable, permanent home. This includes arranging for adoption or guardianship, preferably in the home of a relative. If for some reason these options are not available, a youth may remain in out-of-home care with annual permanency reviews until he/she leaves the child welfare system at age 18 under an emancipation plan. Funds for Title IV-B, Part 1 will continue to be utilized by counties to fund the same programs for the upcoming federal fiscal year.

## **Title IV-E Waiver Demonstration Project**

## **TITLE IV-E CHILD WELFARE WAIVER DEMONSTRATION PROJECT UPDATE**

On March 31, 2006, the CDSS received approval from the U.S. DHHS for California's Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project (CAP). The five-year demonstration project allows counties flexibility to use federal and state foster care maintenance and administrative funds that were previously restricted to provide direct services and support to children and their families.

The intent of the CAP is to test a capped allocation strategy of federal Title IV-E and SGF assistance and administrative costs; and will support improved safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes for children and families. The specific goals of the CAP are:

- To improve the array of services for children and families and engage families through a more individualized approach that emphasizes family involvement;
- To increase child safety without an over-reliance on out-of-home care;
- To improve permanency outcomes and timelines; and
- To improve child and family well-being.

This flexible funding waiver demonstration will support practice, program, and system improvements for early intervention, reunification efforts, and reduction in out-of-home placements. Foster care savings that occur as a result of the CAP will be reinvested by the counties in CWS program improvements. The CAP will target Title IV-E eligible and non-IV-E eligible children ages zero through nineteen currently in out-of-home placement, or who are at-risk of entering or re-entering foster care. Alameda County and Los Angeles County are the two participating counties in the CAP. The two participating counties represented approximately 37 percent of the foster care caseload in California at the time implementation of the demonstration project began on July 1, 2007.

In addition, the CDSS is required to conduct an independent, third party evaluation of the demonstration consisting of a process evaluation, outcome evaluation, and a cost analysis. The evaluation contractor is the San Jose State University Research Foundation with Dr. Charlie Ferguson is the principal investigator for the project.

To implement the CAP, Alameda County will utilize the flexibility for a series of proactive reinvestment strategies to better direct resources to prevention, early intervention, and long-term family-based supports. The outcome of reinvestment efforts is to serve youth and their caretakers with localized, familial, and neighborhood-based supports. During the initial phase, Alameda County will fund the following six strategies based on outcome improvement and cost effectiveness.

The Alameda Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS) implemented the following in year one:

- One Child, One Placement - Child Welfare Workers Relative Approvals and Placement.
- Enhanced Family Finding.
- Expanded Reunification Team Decision Meetings.
- Expanded CalWORKS – Child Welfare Services Linkages Pilot Project.
- Permanency Concurrent Planning Team Decision Meetings.

- Expanded the Alternative Road to Safety Program countywide and target population to serve ages zero through eighteen.

Alameda DCFS year two strategies used the enhanced fiscal flexibility to fund a number of new programs including:

- Increasing the ability of child welfare workers to provide intensive services to families by, reducing caseload to staff ratio, restructuring /retooling the group homes units, and expanding TDM's.
- Enhancing the department's ability to recruit county foster parents by implementing child care option, deepening partnership with faith community, and restructuring the licensing and training process.
- Enhancing the parent advocate program.
- Implementing front end family finding and engagement.
- Fully implementing the Another Road to Safety Family Maintenance program.
- Expanding county counsel support in court rooms.
- Creating visitation center for families in the reunification program.

For year two, Alameda County Probation will continue to implement strategies under the CAP to reduce unnecessary out of home placement recommendation/referrals and reduction in the average monthly rate of out-of-home placements for probation youth.

Improved data collection, capabilities, program/policy, and education are foundations for the CAP implementation, including:

- Collecting data on primary sources and numbers of out-of-home placements recommendations, including primary issues that have resulted in out-of-home placement.
- Emphasis on the written criteria/guidelines for determining a minor's removal from home.
- Development of review and approval processes that prevent unnecessary recommendations/referrals to out-of-home placement.
- Increased utilization and support to the Family Preservation Unit to prevent unnecessary out-of-home placements and to facilitate improved transitions upon leaving group home care.
- Development of awareness and use of alternate dispositions that may include Camp, Family Preservation, Community Probation, and participation in enhanced Community-based programs.
- Education of new and existing bench officers on efforts to treat minors in least restrictive environment while providing improved supportive services to primary caregivers and family.
- Continued re-education of vendors' service delivery time frames.

Under the CAP, Los Angeles County has targeted improved community partnerships, improved service delivery, and creating new accountability structures. The county will use the flexibility to make strategic investments in reforms to better serve children and families and improve outcomes. These reforms build on significant systems improvements already underway among county departments and community partners. The county has identified

universal and specific needs and requirements for dependent and delinquent foster care populations. The Child Welfare and Probation Departments will operate under a sequenced implementation of service delivery enhancement that is based on feasibility and speed of implementation, target population, and extent of estimated impact.

LA DCFS implemented the following year one sequence priority initiatives:

- Expansion of Family Team Decision Making Conferences.
- Focused Family Finding and engagement through pilot specialized permanency units at three regional offices.
- Up-front assessments on high-risk cases for domestic violence, substance abuse, and mental health issues.

LA county probation implemented the following first sequence priorities during year one:

- Enhanced Cross-Systems Case Assessment and Case Planning.
- Expansion of Multi-Systemic Therapy and Functional Family Therapy
- Restructuring of placement services.
- Utilization of aftercare support services.

After review and analysis of data regarding the impact of CAP services on outcomes during years one, probation committed to the continuation of the first sequence priorities and additionally, has identified the Prospective Authorization and Utilization review Unit as a third program priority.

The Prospective Authorization and Utilization Review Unit will be established to assist in the decision making process to match youth and families with appropriate services, improving consistency in service utilization, as referrals to services will be pre-approved, based on whether or not a youth and family meet the specified focus for each service. This unit will be responsible for reviewing the use of each of these services at designated intervals to ensure that there is a systematic approach to the rationale that allows for extended services that may be required to obtain desired outcomes on a case-by-case basis.

## Indian Child Welfare Act

## **INDIAN CHILD WELFARE ACT (ICWA)**

The CDSS continues to work with the self identified representatives of 106 federally recognized California tribes, as well as the approximately 50 tribes that are not currently recognized. The activities/projects discussed below describe the measures that the CDSS continues to take to ensure compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA).

### **Specific Accomplishments/Progress**

P.L. 110-351: California held a public forum to inform and disseminated information regarding PL 110-351, Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions. The informational meeting included NICWA and ACF presenters who explained the intent of the law and the options for tribes per the new law which allows tribes direct access to IV-E funding. Prior to PL 110-351 Indian tribes could not access Title IV-E funds to administer their own foster care or adoption assistance programs unless the tribe had an agreement with the state. Currently, in California there is only one Tribal-state agreement, and one pending agreement.

### **Child and Family Services Division ICWA Workgroup**

The ICWA Workgroup was formed in July 2002. It continues to expand its membership which now consists of 86 tribal ICWA workers/advocates, 43 county child welfare and probation representatives, 20 CDSS staff, and 25 state/university representatives and other interested parties. The CDSS utilizes the ICWA Workgroup as a means of consulting with tribes. The tribal members of the Workgroup were chosen by the California tribes as their representatives to the CDSS.

The ICWA Workgroup continues to meet bi-monthly to identify ICWA issues/problems that exist and develop recommendations and solutions for tribes, counties and the state. The agenda for ICWA workgroup meetings is set in accordance to issues and topics emerge from discussions in the workgroup or in discussions as CDSS staff consults with tribal and county representatives through-out the state. Significant topics of discussion this year included the implementation of SB 678, tribally approved homes, traditional/customary adoptions, expert witnesses, ICWA training, including training of Tribal ICWA Workers, data regarding Indian children in the California child welfare system, etc. As a result the following are some of the key accomplishments of the Workgroup this year are (details follow):

- State policies regarding permanency/adoption are largely in conflict with tribal customs. The purpose of the Permanency for Children and Youth Sub-workgroup which was established by CDSS in the spring of 2008, is to develop a permanency model for Indian children and youth in California that incorporates traditional cultural values and customs and meets Title IV-E requirements. As a result of tribal interest in recognition of 'customary adoption' in California, the Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians sponsored AB 2736, which was carried by Assemblyman Paul Cook, in February of 2008. At the time of the submittal of this report this bill, reintroduced as AB 1325, is still moving through the legislature. There is strong support for this bill including the County Welfare Directors Association of California.

- In collaboration with the ICWA Workgroup, CDSS established a Sub-Workgroup on “Tribally Approved Homes”. In response to reports from California tribes that the counties were not recognizing “tribally approved homes” as a viable option for the placement of Indian children. The sub-group reviewed the existing county placement practices and Title IV-E policies to determine 1) what guidance was used by the counties to make their placement decisions for Indian children; 2) the barriers that existed; and 3) determine what policy changes or state guidance was necessary to facilitate the understanding of ICWA and Title IV-E provisions regarding the use of tribally approved homes. In response to their field work, ACIN 1-86-08 was issued in November 2008, clarifying when tribally approved homes should be considered. Further, the ACIN reminded counties regarding the ICWA provisions that Tribes have the authority to approve foster homes using their own socially and culturally appropriate standards pursuant to the ICWA, at 25 U.S.C. section 1931, which also provides that tribally approved homes are deemed equivalent to licensing or approval by a state. The Sub-workgroup on Tribally Approved Homes was inactivated upon completion of the ACIN 1-86-08.
- Developed a “Qualified Expert Witness” Sub Workgroup to consider the need to develop guidelines to counties regarding the use of expert witnesses per ICWA. The ICWA requires the testimony of a Qualified Expert Witness (QEW) in any state proceeding prior to the placement of an Indian child in foster care or prior to the termination of parental rights. The Sub Workgroup’s purpose was to review 1) the intent of QEW in ICWA; 2) Difficulties in finding QEWs; 3) Confidentiality and QEW; 3) What qualifications should be required, 4) Recommendations for how counties select a QEW, and 6) Consideration of payments to QEWs.
- Re-established an ICWA Training Sub Workgroup to review training curriculums (ICWA 101 and ICWA 102) for training county ICWA workers and to develop a training curriculum for tribal ICWA workers.

California in the past has provided training to county workers via the California Social Work Education Center and its Regional Training Academies. The basic curriculum, developed in collaboration with representatives of the ICWA Workgroup was titled “ICWA 101.” The training included an overview of the ICWA, the historical context of ICWA and the basic ICWA requirements. The Sub Workgroup is now reviewing the more advance curriculum “ICWA 102” which was developed to give county social workers and probation officers more “how to” tools for understanding and implementing the provisions of ICWA. This curriculum provides for more in depth understanding of historical trauma to Native Americans caused by federal and state policies that removed Indian children from their parents and tribal community; the intent of ICWA regarding ‘active efforts”, working with Tribes in addressing local policies and practices to more effectively serve Indian children and families, etc. The Sub Workgroup will now address the expressed desire of the ICWA Workgroup that training be developed to train Tribal ICWA Workers regarding the provisions ICWA including the tribe’s rights and role per ICWA; understanding the child welfare system and the courts, and the availability of resources to assist tribes in responding to ICWA issues.

- Continued work with the Judicial Council of California in the continuation of the ICWA Initiative Project.

## **Tribal/State Agreements**

The CDSS is continuing to facilitate the negotiations of tribal/state agreements which will allow for the pass-through of Title IV-E funds to California tribes. These funds will provide tribes with foster care funding for Indian children. Further, CDSS will continue to assist tribes as necessary, and as requested, to access direct funding through PL 110-351

On March 14, 2007, the CDSS and the Karuk Tribe of California signed the first ever tribal/state agreement in California. State staff is continuing to provide training and technical assistance to staff of the Karuk Tribe to prepare them for the implementation of the agreement. CDSS and the Karuk Tribe secured technical assistance through ACF and the National Resource Center for Organizational Improvement (NRCOI) to provide assistance to the Karuk tribe in the development of the tribe's Child Welfare Services Plan. The Tribe's CWS Plan was submitted to ACF for approval in early summer 2008. It is expected that the Karuk Tribe will be able to implement the agreement before the end of this fiscal year. CDSS has provided the Karuk Tribe with training on fiscal claiming procedures, Title IV-E eligibility screening and data reporting requirements. Upon approval of the Tribe's CWS Plan, CDSS will provide training and technical assistance regarding child welfare practice to ensure Title IV-E compliance.

While there has been a hiatus in the negotiations of a Tribal/state agreement with the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California, recent communications with the Washoe Tribe indicate a renewed interest in pursuing an agreement. The most recent version of the agreement has been presented to the Tribe for their review, and the CDSS is still awaiting a formal response as they recently indicated a renewed interest.

With the signing of the Karuk agreement, CDSS has experienced an increased interest from other tribes in pursuing such Tribal/state agreements. CDSS has developed a presentation it utilizes to inform interested tribes regarding the benefits and costs of Title IV-E agreements. CDSS has conducted orientation meetings with the Yurok Tribe, Hopland Band of Pomo Indians, the Lone Band of Miwok Indians and the Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians. In addition, there are others interested including the Morongo Band of Mission Indians, the Dry Creek Rancheria, and the Tule River Rancheria. The Yurok Tribe initiated negotiations of a Tribal/state Title IV-E Agreement in August 2007. The language of the agreement is in final review and is expected to be signed before the end of June, 2009. Subsequently, the Yurok Tribe will develop its CWS Plan and it will be submitted to ACF for approval by the end of summer 2009. With the passage of Public Law 110-351 last fall, tribes have also been given the option of negotiating a Title IV-E agreement directly with the federal government effective October 1, 2009. Tribes are awaiting more information on the federal agreements, as they weigh whether or not to pursue a Tribal/state or a federal/Tribal agreement.

## **ICWA Training Projects/Conferences**

### **Annual ICWA Conference**

The CDSS continues to support the annual statewide ICWA Conference hosted by a volunteer tribe or group of tribes. This is an activity the ICWA Workgroup continues to see as a priority to promote improved ICWA compliance. The 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Statewide ICWA

Conference was held in June 2009 in Santa Rosa, California. It was hosted by Dry Creek Rancheria, Coyote Valley Tribe, Stewarts Point Rancheria and the Indian Child and Family Preservation Program located in Sonoma County, California. The theme of the conference was "*Preserving the Whole Indian Child*." The conference included a number of workshops such as Title IV-E Models and Agreements, Tribal/state Agreements, Expert Witness, Best Practices, Engaging Native Fathers, Delinquency, Placing Indian Children, Transitional Youth Programs, Tribal TANF, Healing the Healers, along with panels made-up of and focused on youth, and another panel on national and state legislative issues. The CDSS provides \$25,000 each year from the state General Fund to partially support this annual conference

See information under Indian Child Welfare Initiative for additional training activities this year.

### **Indian Child Welfare Act Initiative**

Effective December 2005, the CDSS entered into an interagency agreement with the Administrative Office of the Courts of California (AOC) to create the ICWA Initiative. The ICWA Initiative is effective from 2007 through 2010, and will likely be renewed for another three years given how successful the partnership is between the CDSS and the AOC. The ICWA Initiative provides the following services:

- educational offerings;
- curriculum development;
- technical assistance;
- statewide resources; and
- tribal engagement on domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and teen dating violence.

These services are made available to stakeholders in the following three case types: family, juvenile, and probate. Stakeholders include judicial officers, clerks, attorneys, social workers, and probation officers. Services are tailored to meet the needs of stakeholder groups, individual local court systems, or regions.

### ***Educational Offerings***

Educational workshops have been provided by a broad-based group of subject matter experts on a statewide, regional and local basis. This Initiative continues to impact, not only the preservation of connections for Indian children, but also achieving permanency, as defined by the Indian community. During this reporting period, project staff completed the following trainings and presentations:

- French Camp (Stockton), 54 attendees (42 probation officers, 3 tribal representatives, 1 social worker, 6 court staff/judicial officers, 2 unspecified) (November 5, 2008).
- Beyond the Bench conference workshops held in San Francisco, December 2008, that included 1) a presentation by Justice William Thorne focused on what juvenile court state judges need to know about domestic violence in native communities; 2) a judges track on these issues as well as state court/tribal court cooperation; 3) two 90

minute sessions for social workers; and 4) two 90 minute sessions for probation officers,

-39 Attendees, Beyond the Bench Delinquency (5 judicial officers, 15 attorneys, 8 tribal representatives, 11 probation officers)

-61 Attendees, BTB Dependency (7 judicial officers, 16 attorneys, 9 tribal representatives, 29 social workers)-77 Attendees, BTB VAWEP Judges' Roundtable (77 judicial officers).

- 23rd Annual San Diego International Conference on Child & Family Maltreatment, 6 Attendees (3 social workers, 3 academics/students) (January 2009).
- Pala Tribe and Tribal Star collaboration, Southern Regional Probation Training, 45 Attendees (3 CASA, 30 probation officers, 5 social workers, 3 attorneys, 3 court staff, 1 tribal representative) (January 28, 2009).
- San Francisco, Family Law Conference, 15 Attendees (15 attorneys) (February 25, 2009).
- Emeryville, Administrative Office of the Courts Juvenile Law Institute, advised on the ICWA workshop for judges (February 2009).
- Amador County, 8 Attendees (7 social workers, 1 attorney) (March 11, 2009).
- Fresno County, Central California Regional Probation Training , 45 Attendees (37 probation officers, 5 tribal representatives, 3 court staff/judicial officers) (March 25, 2009).
- Yolo County, 8 Attendees (8 attorneys) (April 17, 2009).
- The Redding Rancheria, Northern Regional Probation Training, 50 Attendees (42 probation officers, 5 tribal representatives, 3 court staff/judicial officers) (June 3, 2009).

### **Curriculum Development**

The ICWA Initiative has developed presentations that serve as the basis for an ICWA 101 (basic course) and ICWA 102 (advanced course) curriculum. During the spring of 2009, the ICWA Initiative will hire an education specialist as a consultant to develop advanced ICWA curriculum in a variety of areas. The first areas of focus will be active efforts and case planning.

In consultation with the ICWA Working Group subcommittee on expert witness issues, project staff will develop an RFP to get bids to develop curriculum in the area of qualified expert witnesses in ICWA cases.

### **Technical Assistance**

As part of the ICWA Initiative, the project staff provides technical assistance to all stakeholders and fields questions relating to the federal requirements under the Indian Child Welfare Act and the state requirements under the state statutes and rules of court that implement ICWA. The project staff has given technical assistance to several counties looking to adopt local rules or protocols to implement ICWA in delinquency proceedings.

In addition to technical assistance provided to individuals seeking assistance to improve compliance locally, project staff has also been involved in helping to design and implement ICWA compliance in the new California Court Management System

("CCMS") which is a major initiative of the judicial branch. Also, project staff has worked closely with the CDSS to provide input into the development of a proposed ACIN on ICWA compliance in adoption proceedings.

Part of providing technical assistance is the development of job aids for stakeholders. Project staff continue to keep current the judicial handbook, the descriptions of available services to Indian children and families, a qualified ICWA expert witness list, and job aids for use by social service departments, probation departments, other agencies and judicial officers in ensuring ICWA compliance.

All technical assistance resources can be found at the link below:  
<http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/programs/description/jrta-ICWAResources.htm>

The job aids available at the above Web site is listed below:

- Family Courts: Requirements Under the Indian Child Welfare Act and Senate Bill 678 (pdf)
- Family Courts: Recommended Legal Findings and Orders for Cases Involving the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)
- Indian Child Welfare Act Requirements
- Juvenile Courts: Recommended Legal Findings and Orders for Cases Involving the Indian Child Welfare Act
- Probation Departments Requirements: Indian Child Welfare Act and Senate Bill 678 (pdf)
- Probate Courts Recommended Findings and Orders for the Indian Child Welfare Act (pdf)
- Probate Courts: Requirements Under the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and Senate Bill 678
- Social Service Departments: Requirements - Indian Child Welfare Act and Senate Bill 678 (pdf)
- Understanding ICWA Noticing Issues in California
- Indian Child Welfare Act Inquiry Interview

## **Resources**

The ICWA Initiative's statewide clearinghouse of Native American resources went live this past year and has an interface enabling users to search services by type and region in California. Below is the link to the Web site:  
<http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/programs/description/ICWA/index.cfm> and

The California Dependency Online Guide Web site also went live this past year. It can be accessed at the court info Web site by typing [courtinfo.ca.gov/dependencyonlineguide](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/dependencyonlineguide) or then link at: <http://168.75.202.29/>. Since the website is a free resource open to all child welfare professionals, it can serve as a clearinghouse of ICWA resources and trainings. All ICWA job aides and trainings are posted to this Web site.

### **Tribal Engagement on Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking, and Teen Dating Violence**

In collaboration with others at the AOC, project staff is working on the Native American Communities Justice Project – Beginning the Dialogue: Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking, and Teen Dating Violence. With funding from the Office of Emergency Services, the AOC launched a short-term project designed to enhance access to and improve the administration of justice for Native American victims of family violence. Drawing on community expertise and guidance, this project will engage Native American communities in identifying needs relating to family violence. The project involves collaborating with tribes and community members to gather information about, and develop strategies to address the needs of Native American victims of family violence. The project will culminate in a planning meeting on May 22 to examine the data identified by the community consultants and gathered during the local meetings will be compiled with the help of a research consultant working with CFCC staff. A portion of the May meeting will be devoted to presenting local meeting results to Native American community representatives; the balance of the May meeting will be used to discuss how to prioritize and address identified needs.

### **Coordination with Tribes Regarding the Section 422 Protections for Children**

In 1953, Congress enacted Public Law (PL) 280, which required several states, including California, to assume criminal and some civil jurisdiction over all or part of Indian country within these states. PL 280 did not eliminate tribal jurisdiction. Although states were delegated criminal and civil jurisdiction, that jurisdiction remained concurrent with some aspects of inherent tribal jurisdiction. However, not all tribes have developed courts and so not all tribes exercise their jurisdiction.

There continue to be very few Indian children in California under tribal jurisdiction, as only a small number of tribes have tribal courts and social services departments that could provide necessary services; partly due to the size of the tribes and the lack of adequate funding to the tribes for these services. For those tribes that do take jurisdiction, most often the initial contact regarding a family is made to the local child welfare agency who then contacts the tribe to allow them to take jurisdiction.

Many tribes and county child welfare agencies have developed protocols whereby they work together to provide child welfare services. A number of counties and tribes have convened ICWA roundtables/working groups which meet on a regular basis to discuss issues relative to the provision of child welfare services and how to better protect children. Some counties contact the tribal social services worker when an emergency response call is received allowing for both parties to respond to the family. Some tribes have services that can be provided early in the case to allow for the children and families to remain together. Counties are responsible for applying section 422 protections including the care and supervision of tribal children that remain under the state/county's jurisdiction. For tribes that enter into a Title IV-E agreement with the state, and assume responsibility for the care and supervision of tribal children, the tribe is responsible for applying section 422(b)(8) protections for those children, including six month periodic review, twelve-month permanency hearings, reunification services, services to achieve other permanency goals, pre-placement preventative services, etc.

The CDSS ILP staff attends Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Workgroup meetings quarterly. The next Workgroup meeting is scheduled for October 2009. The Department also has collaboration with a tribal Indian Child Welfare Specialist who also attends the monthly California Welfare Directors Association/Independent Living Program (ILP) Subcommittee meetings as well the ICWA Workgroup. This ICWA specialist serves as the liaison between CDSS and ICWA on tribal issues. The ILP Subcommittee discusses issues impacting eligibility, barriers to receiving services, as well as working to come up with possible processes to remove the barriers.

With the passage of PL 110-351 Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008, CDSS has introduced legislation to authorize the state to implement various provisions of this law, including more explicit language regarding the requirement that the state negotiate Title IV-E agreements in good faith.

CDSS Staff has attended a Tribal Successful Transitions to Adult Readiness (STAR) forum on September 16<sup>th</sup> 2008 and discussed issues and concerns around tribal youth's ability to attend ILP classes. The next Tribal Star Forum is currently under development.

To ensure that tribal youth receive fair and equitable treatment while receiving ILP services, the Foster Care Ombudsman's Office advocates for Tribal Youth throughout California to resolve issues and complaints.

## **Foster Care/Adoption Recruitment Plan**

## **FOSTER CARE/ADOPTION RECRUITMENT PLAN**

### **The CDSS' Role in the Family to Family Initiative**

CDSS, in partnership with the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Stuart Foundation, the Walter S. Johnson Foundation and the Center for Social Services Research at UC Berkeley oversees the implementation of the Family to Family Initiative. The Family to Family model is designed to promote positive changes to California's child welfare system by providing more outcome based, community-supported, and family-centered services for foster children and their families. Currently, there are 25 counties involved in Family to Family

In support to the Family to Family Initiative, CDSS manages two contracts with the Child & Family Policy Institute of California which provides the training and technical assistance to the Family to Family counties. The department provides an annual report on the progress of the Family to Family counties and their implementation of the strategies. CDSS continues to meet and work with their partners on how to maintain and sustain the Family to Family initiative as well as update and maintain a Family to Family website, [www.f2f.ca.gov](http://www.f2f.ca.gov), which has a wealth of information.

While a formal evaluation of Family to Family is pending, it is likely that Family to Family strategies are in part contributing to the decline in the foster care population including the reduction of foster care entries and more timely reunification.

The Family to Family Initiative consists of five core strategies: 1) Recruitment, development and support of resource families; 2) Building Community partnerships; 3) Team Decisionmaking; 4) Self-Evaluation; and the 5) California Connected by 25 Initiative. Along with the five core strategies, there are emerging strategies. They are: 1) Eliminating Racial Disparity and Disproportionality; 2) Immigration and child welfare; 3) Youth engagement; 4) Parent engagement; 5) Domestic violence and child welfare; and 6) Children of incarcerated parents. Training and technical support are provided to the Family to Family counties which are divided into four regional clusters: Northern (Glenn, Humboldt, Placer, Sacramento, Tehama, Trinity and Solano), Bay Area (Santa Clara, Contra Costa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Alameda, Monterey and Santa Cruz), Central/Coastal (San Luis Obispo, Stanislaus, Fresno, Santa Barbara, Ventura and Kern), and Southern (Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside, and San Diego).

In 2008, CDSS attended and participated in four regional trainings, one for each of the geographic cluster regions. Regional trainings allow sites to bring in a large number of participants to convenings to access information through workshops and plenary sessions as well as encouraging peer to peer learning. CDSS also participated in three Family to Family coordinator meetings which are a forum for peer-to-peer information sharing and support. The Family to Family coordinators are surveyed prior to meetings and they discuss relevant topics, such as recruitment, to share strategies to improve and retain resource families.

## **General Recruitment Activities**

### **Family Builders by Adoption (California Kids Connection) Program**

California Kids Connection, a program of Family Builders, is the California online adoption exchange registry of children whose placement plan is adoption. An adoption exchange is an organized means of sharing information about available children and searching families. The exchange facilitates permanence on a local, regional, statewide, and nationwide level for California's children. California Kids Connection services include an internet registry site, exchange meetings, matching events, and training and education for caseworkers. In addition, Family Builders is the California Recruitment and Response Team for the National AdoptUSKids Campaign and works with the AdoptUSKids federal exchange. The contractor provides the CDSS with monthly data reports. These reports reflect cumulative totals of: children who are registered, successful matches, case outcomes, ethnicity, legal status, and trainings provided, as well as other statistical categories of data. Data specific to queries not currently listed on the reports may be extrapolated upon request.

At the present time, 78 percent of all public agencies participate in exchange meetings and list children on the exchange, as well as 75 private agencies that participate by attending exchange meetings.

As of March 1, 2009, there were 564 children listed on the California Kids Connection website. Of these children, 307 (54 percent) were listed on the public section of the website and 257 (46 percent) were listed on the secure section of the website.

From March 1, 2008 – March 1, 2009, California Kids Connection staff organized two matching picnics and two Family Fairs; and participated in two other matching picnics and three other Family Fairs. During this same period, Family Builders by Adoption focused resources on capturing outcome data. As a result, the California Kids Connection program recorded 281 matches attributable to state exchange activities, including the California Kids Connection website, exchange meetings, and matching events such as Family Fairs and matching picnics. This number is higher than the yearly average for 2001 2008- (approximately 125/year).

The actual number of matches is higher than what is currently reported by Family Builders. Unfortunately, county social workers routinely do not report outcomes to the California Kids Connection staff, or they may request that a child to be removed from the website with no explanation of the removal. Family Builders by Adoption reminds county social workers to report more specific outcomes of children placed on the California Kids Connection website for tracking purposes. During the SFY 2008/09, Family Builders by Adoption reminded social workers of this at each exchange.

Family Builders receives calls from various prospective adoptive/foster parents in California seeking information. Each of the recruitment and retention team members works only 25 hours a week, responding to intake calls and doing required follow up calls. Thus, Family Builders does not have the time and resources available to track all of the outcomes resulting from the initial contact from prospective adoptive/foster parents. Once a family begins working with the county, the communication shifts solely to the county and the

prospective adoptive/foster parent. Below is information from the Family Builders, AdoptUsKids intake database for the period of 2004-2009.

From 2004 - 2009, the AdoptUsKids responded to 6966 California families. The statuses of some of these families are as follows:

- Intake call – 1 (This is the number of calls that haven't been assigned yet to a recruitment and response team (RRT) worker during the specified period)
- Assigned to group - 5 (The RRT has not called the family back yet, but will do so within 3 business days)
- Attempted contact – 51 (The RRT called the family, but was unable to reach them and will try again)
- Personal contact – 376 (The RRT had a conversation with the family, sent them information and a list of agencies in their area, and will follow up with them in 4 weeks.
- Attending orientation – 46 (# of families that attended orientation)
- Working with agency – 87 (# of families working with a county)

Below are inquiries that were closed by Family Builders due to the following reasons:

- homestudy/license completed - 61
- family request – 3742
- no contact – 830
- no recontact – 1539
- no service – 53
- post support completed – 87
- duplicate – 87
- Reopened – 1

### **Foster Care Initiative (Assembly Bill 2129 – Chapter 1080, Statutes of 1993)**

This Foster Care Initiative makes funds available in the annual Governor's budget county allocations through the CDSS to support county recruitment efforts. All counties are responsible for recruiting foster and adoptive families and pursuant to the passage of AB 2129 are required to complete the annual year-end report/survey in order to be eligible for the funding. The survey is designed to collect recruitment, training and retention program data and accomplishments achieved during the fiscal year. This data is compiled into a comprehensive report for statewide distribution via the internet. The Resource Family Recruitment, Training and Retention Annual Report 2007 is completed in collaboration with the community colleges, counties, and foster parent associations. In addition, the data from the online survey is shared with counties in the report that is sent out to all 58 counties and discussed at quarterly regional meetings, and at Family to Family meetings for resource families.

The 2008 report indicates many positive results including a 47 percent increase in resource families financially sponsored to attend recruitment, training and retention events. Statewide, there was a 17 percent increase in the amount of time dedicated to the recruitment of resource families. Of the 52 counties responding, 45 had bilingual staff dedicated to resource family recruitment. Youth ages 16 to 18 with special needs continue

to be the most difficult group to place with resource families, followed by adolescents ages 13 to 15 with special needs. Goals were in place in 49 counties to measure the success of resource family recruitment efforts. As a result, recruitment in 33 of these counties somewhat improved and significantly improved in 11 counties. The most frequently cited improvements in recruitment were activities to expand community outreach and media usage, and establish recruitment campaigns.

Below are some of the positive outcomes associated with the AB 2129 funding as outline in the Resource Family Recruitment, Training and Retention Annual Reports for the period of (FY) 2004-2007:

- In FY 2006-2007, forty-five counties, an increase over the previous year, had bilingual staff dedicated to resource family recruitment. All had staff fluent in Spanish.
- In FY 2006-2007 twenty-five of the fifty-two counties operated a toll-free telephone line to receive calls from prospective resource families. This reflected a 38.9 percent increase over 18 counties the previous year.
- In FY 2004-2005, twenty-two out of fifty counties had a resource family mentoring program, with 762 resource family mentors. The number of counties providing this resource remained relatively the same for FY 2006-2007.
- In FY 2004-2005, Child care was available to resource families attending pre-service and post-service training in twenty-six out of 50 counties. A total of 1,021 families received services. In FY 2006-2007 the number increased slightly to twenty-seven out of 52 counties.

The report can be accessed on the California Department of Social Services' Children and Families Services Division website at <http://www.childsworld.ca.gov>, under "Foster Care Reports" or the California Family to Family website at <http://www.f2f.ca.gov>, under the "What's New" section.

In addition to their annual survey, many counties also addressed recruitment in their SIPs. In order to increase the number of resource families, some counties identified media outreach as part of their strategy. Others identified faith based outreach efforts, targeted recruitment (such as for sibling groups or older youth), education of the community on the need for foster parents and the children who need homes, media campaigns and booths at community events as their planned strategies to recruit more resource families.

*The links to the completed the Resource Family Recruitment, Training and Retention Annual Report for fiscal years 2003-2007 are:*

<http://www.childsworld.ca.gov/res/pdf/RFSurveyReport2006-07.pdf>  
<http://www.childsworld.ca.gov/res/PDF/RFSurvey05-06.pdf>  
<http://www.childsworld.ca.gov/res/PDF/RFSurvey04-05FinalReport.pdf>  
[http://www.childsworld.ca.gov/res/PDF/RFSurvey\(03-04\)FinalReport.pdf](http://www.childsworld.ca.gov/res/PDF/RFSurvey(03-04)FinalReport.pdf)

**Multi-Ethnic Placement Act/Interethnic Adoption Provision**

This section of the APSR was added in 2005 after a complaint against Los Angeles county was substantiated. Subsequently, the State published an All County Information Notice (ACIN) I-41-05<sup>4</sup>, completed a corrective action plan with Los Angeles County, and enhanced the Core Curricula for Child Welfare Workers (CORE) offered through the Regional Training Academies (RTA) to all new and current public child welfare workers in this State.

Los Angeles County has made efforts to recruit potential foster and adoptive families that reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of the children served. Although they still have not yet had the refresher training on Multi-Ethnic Placement Act/Interethnic Adoption Provision, Los Angeles County has consciously made an effort to recruit in the two ethnic and racial communities that most reflect the county’s children, which are Latino and African American.

Initial Multi-Ethnic Placement Act/Interethnic Adoption Provision training was provided through the National Child Welfare Resource Center for Adoption with a recommendation that follow-up training be provided by that organization. In subsequent conference calls with ACF-ACF advised that additional training was “on hold” until the curriculum could be developed. The CDSS has recently submitted a new request for Multi-Ethnic Placement Act/Interethnic Adoption Provision training from the National Child Welfare Resource Center for Adoption.

01/06/09-03/10/09	KJLH Radio	Advertising	African American community
February	Telemundo Ch 52	Advertising	Spanish speaking/Latino community
01/18/09	Kingdom Day Parade and Festival	Float in the parade and booth at the festival	African American community
02/07/09 - 2/15/09	Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Mall	Heart Gallery and Booth	African American community

Los Angeles County initiated a billboard campaign in February 2009 showing two different adoptive families. One family is African American and the billboards are in primarily African American communities and the others are of a Latino family and are in primarily Latino communities. In March 2009, the Resource Family Recruitment section began partnering with the Placement and Recruitment Units (PRU) to launch a program for three months where waiting children will be featured on Telemundo a Spanish speaking TV station. In April 2009, Yonkany El Mago presented a free magic show to primarily Latino families that want to learn more about adoptions. The Heart Gallery featuring Latino children will be on display at the theater along with bilingual recruiters to answer any questions. Flyers and posters in Spanish and English were distributed and Telemundo did a segment with

<sup>4</sup> This ACIN is located on-line at : [http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/lettersnotices/entres/getinfo/acin05/pdf/I-41\\_05.pdf](http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/lettersnotices/entres/getinfo/acin05/pdf/I-41_05.pdf)

Yonkany and a sibling group of waiting children to feature the children and promote the event.

On June 27, PRU hosted the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Black Adoption Fair, a recruitment and matching event for families under study or with a completed home study. Further, advertising on KJLH radio promoted the event to encourage new families to attend an information meeting and then the fair.

Recently, Los Angeles County obtained approval to use OYAP funds for a Youth Theater Group comprised of youth waiting to be adopted. Los Angeles County will partner with a large African American Church – West Angeles Church of God in Christ to identify theater mentors for the youth in the program. The goal is to have the theater group perform at the church and other locations.

Lastly, Los Angeles County is in the process of producing two commercials featuring the same African American and Latino families as on the billboards. The plan is to air these commercials on two local stations during times when the stations have identified a strong Latino or African American viewing audience.

#### **Toll-Free Hotline**

The CDSS continues to fund a toll-free adoption and foster care information telephone service to improve public access to resources, information and licensed adoption agencies throughout California. During normal business hours, this toll-free number is answered by staff trained to handle inquires and make referrals to local public or private foster care and adoption agencies. An average of 500 calls are received in the typical business month. Fifty-five percent of the calls come from Los Angeles, Sacramento and Orange counties. Calls are also received from Nevada and Arizona. The toll-free hot line number is 1-800-543-7487.

#### **Substance Abuse/Human Immunodeficiency Virus (SA/HIV) Infant Program** (Formerly known as Options for Recovery)

The CDSS has the authority and funding to plan and implement services for court dependent children, aged 0-60 months, residing in out-of-home care that are substance-exposed or test positive for Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). All participating counties submit a county plan for approval to CDSS, specifically outlining a proposed budget, budget justification and detailed job specification for each requested staff position within the SA/HIV Infant Program

The following counties are currently participating in this Program: Alameda, Butte, Glenn, Contra Costa, Monterey, San Francisco, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, Santa Cruz and Shasta. The philosophy of this program recognizes that drug and alcohol abuse is a disease that requires treatment and compassion. The service delivery consists of interagency collaboration, targeted recruitment, specialized training, respite care and support services for foster parents and federally-eligible relative caregivers.

CDSS and Santa Cruz County co-sponsored a statewide training for SA/HIV Infant Program staff on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. Diane Malbin, M.S.W., the Executive Director of FASCETS (Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Consultation, Education and Training Services) was a keynote speaker. The purpose of this training was to educate counties of FASD (Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders) by increasing understanding of the disorder as a brain-based physical disability, thereby preventing secondary defensive behaviors and improving outcomes. The convening was held in Santa Cruz County on March 20, 2009.

**Update information on training classes and number of students.**

**Alameda:** The foster parents must take Parent Resources for Information, Development and Education (PRIDE) training 24 hours before taking 36 hours of SA/HIV Infant training. Two training classes were presented to 41 new parents.

**Butte/Glenn:**

- The fall 2008 Butte/Glenn SA/HIV Infant Program 40-Hour and Infant Massage training had 22 participants.
- The spring 2009 Butte/Glenn SA/HIV Infant Program 40-Hour and Infant Massage training will begin on 4/21/09, for prospective foster parents and relative caregivers. There are 14 participants signed up at this time, with several more prospective participants who may take the training.
- The SA/HIV Infant Program cross training is scheduled for 5/20/09, at the Masonic Family Center in Chico. This year's keynote speaker will be Stephen Bavolek, author of the Nurturing Parenting Programs.

**Monterey:** Monterey County Family and Children's Services (FCS) in partnership with Hartnell College, one of their local community colleges has provided 144 training hours to the caregivers of the SA/HIV Infant population through two training series.

- SPARK — Successfully Parenting At-Risk Kids is an ongoing training developed through a collaboration of several public and private sector agencies. In SFY 2008/09, Hartnell College and Door to Hope, an outpatient rehabilitative service agency delivered 7 series of SPARK. These are 12 hour series: 5 series in English and 2 series in Spanish, for a total of 84 hours.
- Specialized care training also provided through Hartnell College is a series for the caregivers of special needs children 0 to 5 years of age with medical and behavioral issues as a result of prenatal substance exposure. 5 series of 12 hours each were offered in SFY 2008/09 for a total of 60 hours.

The total training provided through the SA/HIV allocation was 144 hours. The total number of licensed, approved, and/or certified participants was 134.

**San Diego:** Two training classes were held in September 2008 and November 2008, where 16 people were trained, and 4 of these were Spanish-speaking. Two more training classes were held in March and May of 2009.

**San Francisco:** They completed 2 training classes this fiscal year. Out of those 2 classes, 15 students graduated. Out of the 15 graduates, 10 were Spanish speaking foster parents. Their current cycle has 24 participants which include 5 childcare providers wishing to provide childcare to the SA/HIV targeted population. To date, 53 percent of their Foster Family Homes have completed the SA/HIV training.

**San Luis Obispo:** The SA/HIV Infant program currently offers 69 classes per year with a total of 850 students divided among those trainings.

**Santa Cruz:** They conducted 2 SA/HIV Infant trainings for foster parents (with 30 attendees total) and 6 trainings for birth parents (with 40 attendees total).

**Shasta:** In collaboration with Northern Valley Catholic Social Services and Shasta College, they provided three 36 hour SA/HIV trainings this year. Their training incorporates a variety of speakers with expertise in their area of presentation in relation to the SA/HIV curriculum. Of the total of 46 people who completed the SA/HIV trainings: 39 were new foster parents, 6 were relatives and 1 was a substitute care provider. A total of 473 Shasta County foster parents/relatives have completed the 36 hour training since the SA/HIV program was re-implemented in Shasta County in 1998. Shasta County currently has a total of 131 SA/HIV trained foster homes. This training is so comprehensive and relevant, that our agency requires that all Shasta County foster parents desiring to care for children ages 0-5 years attend.

As Shasta County has seen a tremendous increase in opiate exposed infants over this last year, a BSW intern working with the SA/HIV program developed two brochures, one for doctors and one for birth parents, regarding the effects of opiate exposure in children. This brochure has been distributed throughout their county and has been extremely well received by the medical community.

Shasta County employs a nurse through an agreement with Shasta County Public Health. The SA/HIV nurse provides thorough training during their 36-hour classes specific to the medical needs of their children and certifies appropriately trained foster parents in the skills necessary to meet the specific needs of the child.

Their monthly training/support group meetings are well established and are regularly attended by an average of 16 people.

The Professional Cross Training was co-sponsored this year by the SA/HIV program and the STAP (Specialized Training Adoptive Parents) program. This year's training was entitled, "Substance Exposed Children...Now What?" The training consisted of three topics related to treatment of substance exposed children. Kathleen Morris, MS, CC-SLP addressed sensory based interventions. Patricia Crossman, RN-C, MS addressed psychotropic medication therapy. Ray Carlson, PhD and previous Chief of Shasta County's Mental Health Services, addressed neurological/psychological/behavioral recommendations. It is proposed that next SFY's training revisit these topics with additional time to explore each further. Lilliput children's Services provided continuing education units for therapists and clinical social workers, and Shasta County Public health provided continuing education units for nurses. There were 160 community professionals and foster and adoptive parents in attendance.

## **What are the significant accomplishments?**

**Alameda:** The SA/HIV Infant program is about reunification and demonstrates a true partnership.

There are more parents interested in working with the birth parents and doing concurrent planning. This is due to the parent advocates hired by the department, who have had their children removed, and successfully returned. The parent advocates work with birth parents that have experienced the removal of their children. They provide training and demonstrate how to work with Alameda Department Social Services. They have CHATS (Communicating, History and Transition) with birth parents and foster parents. The birth parents and foster parents are introduced, and share information about the child in care facilitated by the parent advocate.

**Butte/Glenn:** They employ a social worker as a SA/HIV Infant Program recruiter to increase the number of qualified, licensed foster placements for substance-exposed children. The program also employs a .75 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Nurse Trainer and a .75 Early Intervention Outreach Specialist (EIOS)

There were a multitude of significant activities

- Provided monthly play groups for the SA/HIV Infant program children, their foster parents and relative caregivers. The SA/HIV Infant program coordinator, nurse/trainer, and a physical therapist and/or an occupational therapist were present at all the SA/HIV Infant program play groups. The play groups provided an opportunity for the child to be observed and assessed by the professional team. It also provided the foster parents and relative caregivers an opportunity to meet and network with other caregivers.
- Conducted quarterly sensory integration play groups with an occupational therapist (sensory integration certified) for children with sensory integration issues.
- Ongoing SA/HIV Infant program foster parent mentoring program in Butte county.
- Hosted a holiday party for SA/HIV Infant program foster children and their caregivers in December 2008.
- The Butte/Glenn SA/HIV Infant program Foster Parent and Relative Caregivers Appreciation Event is scheduled for March 11, 2009 at Cal Skate in Chico, with approximately 100 attendees expected.
- The Butte/Glenn Project currently has 98 foster homes (84 in Butte county and 14 in Glenn county), which include three homes that are designated as Shelter Homes for eligible children who are newly detained.

**San Diego:** San Diego currently has 186 SA/HIV Infant foster homes and 9 SA/HIV Infant relative homes.

- Prior to 2006, San Diego had no Spanish speaking SA/HIV Infant homes because it had no resources to train Spanish speaking caretakers. In late 2005, San Diego utilized SA/HIV Infant funds to purchase translation equipment. To date, San Diego has trained a total of 26 Spanish speaking SA/HIV Infant caretakers. There are currently 17 active Spanish speaking SA/HIV Infant foster homes. As the number of SA/HIV Infant Spanish speaking foster homes increase, the program becomes better known among the Latino community.

- In August of 2008, San Diego held an annual training/picnic for SA/HIV Infant families. A total of 140 people attended.
- On May 30, 2008 San Diego held a Cross Training given by Dr. Constance Lillas, Ph.D., MFT, RN, "Identifying Children Who Have Been Exposed to Trauma: Infant Mental Health and Early Intervention Coming Together." A total of 90 SA/HIV Infant foster, parents, child welfare social workers, and Alcohol and Drug Services Perinatal Workers attended. This was a one day training which introduced the physiological and social emotional aspects of trauma; and the causes of trauma in infants and very young children.
- The SA/HIV Infant Support Group meets monthly, with an average of 30 foster parents attending.

**San Francisco:** The first Spanish language training for their Spanish speaking foster parents was considered to be a great success. Their Spanish language support group continues to meet on a monthly basis. Additionally, they continue to hold monthly support groups for their non-Spanish speaking population. They are encouraging back-up childcare providers, identified by the foster parent, to take the SA/HIV training. There are a large number of infants coming into care, because of their medical complications, they qualify for the services offered by the SA/HIV Program. It is important that the childcare providers have the knowledge, skills and training to provide services for these children.

San Francisco county SA/HIV Infant program staff built a solid partnership with the San Francisco Department of Public Health, including the Community Health Services, Car Seat Safety Program. They continue to include in their training; community partners, biological parents and SA/HIV foster parents as facilitators for their training. They have added a new Child Health and Disability Prevention (*CHDP*) nurse to the SA/HIV Infant program, to assist with coordinating the training; assisting with triage, resources referral, and consulting with their foster parents on how to properly complete medical forms for their foster care medical staff, CHDP nurses, child welfare workers, and the children's medical providers. They continue to strengthen their relationship with their Relative/Non-Relative Extended Family Member (NREFM) unit to provide services and resources for the targeted children placed with them, who may require additional support and services.

**San Luis Obispo:** San Luis Obispo (SLO) County continues to be innovative and is always looking to expand trainings for foster and birth parents. SLO County continuously listens to the voices of the foster parents and birth parents to establish the direction of annual trainings. The SA/HIV Infant program is the main driver for parent and birth parent interactive trainings in SLO county.

The birth parent classes continue to grow and be a popular vehicle to prepare parents for the potential return of their children following family reunification services. Social workers are aware of their participants' attendance and stay in close contact, so that any issues that a participant is facing at the time can be addressed in class. Additionally, the foster parent classes are also very popular in their county and are important to the proper training, innovation and empathy that is required of their foster parents to mentor their birth families.

This will be the third year of being able to offer an all inclusive weekend retreat for all foster, relative and adoptive foster families. They collaborate with their local community college

and provide a weekend for the entire family to promote retention, clarity and education. San Luis Obispo county stands behind this type of training as the results are phenomenal. The families leave rejuvenated and ready to take on the challenges that face them next in this ever changing field.

Their biggest accomplishment this year was forming a more comprehensive collaboration with their local community college to insure that they are able to reach out to more foster and birth families in the community. Their efforts paid off and their reunification rate in San Luis Obispo county is approximately 45 percent and there have been zero unnecessary moves for children in the SA/HIV program.

**Santa Cruz:** They recognize two significant accomplishments for their program this year:

- A higher number of birth parent trainings than they have conducted in the past, and more attendees this year than in previous years; and
- They have completely revised their birth parent curriculum based upon the latest research on parent-infant relationship models.

#### **Were there any changes?**

**Butte/Glenn:** Due to increased costs of doing business, Butte had to reduce the amount of money available for respite care, as some of this money needed to be earmarked for recruitment and training activities.

After many years without a local Foster Parent Association, several Butte and Glenn county foster parents are researching the possibility of creating a local chapter.

#### **Monterey:**

- Monterey County's budget allocation ratios have changed. Currently, 40 percent of their allocation is used for recruitment. There are 1.97 FTEs (full time equivalent) focused on recruitment according to Family to Family guidelines. At the same time, 15 percent of the allocation is used to augment the services of a Substance Abuse/HIV Drug Intervention Specialist who does Alcohol and Drug Assessments for their clients through a continued relationship with Monterey County Behavioral Health.
- Two community based organizations, "Community Human Services" and "Alisal Community Healthy Start" provide prevention and intervention services for the families of the 0 to 5 year-old population.
- Thirty-seven percent (37 percent) of the allocation supports Parents as Teachers through a consortium of Monterey County Adult schools and Door to Hope's McSTART Coalition (Monterey County Screening Team for Assessment, Referral and Treatment). The five percent (5 percent) balance of the SA/HIV Infant allocation covers the costs of respite care for families who have completed the SPARK training.

Family and Children's Services (FCS) has had an increase in the number of families utilizing Parents as Teachers. FCS has been able to maximize the SA/HIV allocation by charging 90 percent of services to EPSDT Medi-Cal funding thereby further leveraging dollars. FCS has

also increased the use of the Mentor Moms and Mentor Dads Program which supports parents working toward family reunification.

**San Diego:** In January of 2009, one SA/HIV Infant Coordinator and one SA/HIV Infant Licensing Worker retired from county service. Both had worked many years in the SA/HIV Infant program. Their support and expertise will be missed in the SA/HIV Infant community. A new Licensing Worker has been hired and will begin training in late February. The Coordinator position remains vacant at this time.

**San Francisco:** With the budget, there have been some staff changes and organizational changes. The SA/HIV Coordinators position has been eliminated, and the program will be under the supervision and direction of the policy manager. The department does not expect there to be any changes to the operational functioning of the SA/HIV Program in San Francisco county.

**San Luis Obispo:** This year in order to expand their program in a more comprehensive way, the county decided to opt out of working with CSU Fresno so that they were able to work closely with their own community college. This enabled them to partner with a college that had working knowledge of their families and the community which they live in.

**Santa Cruz:** This year there were a higher number of birth parent trainings than they have conducted in the past, with more attendees this year than in previous years. They also completely revised their birth parent curriculum based upon the latest research on parent-infant relationship models.

**Barriers encountered. Steps that were taken to overcome them.**

**Butte/Glenn:**

- Continues to experience difficulty with SA/HIV Infant Program foster families being able to transport children to visits with their birth families due in part to the number of weekly visits ordered by the court, increased transportation costs, and reduced availability of county staff to assist due to budget challenges and shortfalls.
- The contractor for the program has had difficulty keeping the part-time Parent Educator position filled. This position may be eliminated altogether in SFY 2009/10 due to increased costs of doing business and salary increases for other positions.
- Encounter challenges placing eligible children in their trained foster homes when there are older siblings. Often, the sibling group will be placed in a Foster Family Home instead because of the flexibility of taking more children and older children together (often our SA/HIV Infant trained homes do not want to take older children).

**Monterey:**

- The impact of the current fiscal climate limits the development and ability of community based organizations to partner in matching funds. Capacity is limited with increases to program costs.
- Monterey County's Respite Program remains financially limited. Reduction in respite hours per month per family has created a negative impact to the caregivers of

substance exposed children. Family stressors have increased and willingness and/or ability to foster more than one or two children at a time has become increasingly difficult. Caregivers require more respite care hours than the county is able to provide.

**San Diego:** The Spanish speaking SA/HIV Infant Coordinator was on leave from July 2008 to December 2008. San Diego addressed this barrier by having the SA/HIV Infant clerk attend portions of the SA/HIV Infant training to assist, support, and translate for the families.

**San Francisco:** Due to the financial crisis, the only barrier to date is that Department of Public Health (DPH) is no longer offering their staff compensatory time off for facilitating the SA/HIV Infant on their own time. San Francisco continues to work with the Department of Public Health to ensure that any DPH staff that provides training for this program is compensated.

**San Luis Obispo:** The only barrier that they encountered this year was being able to expand their service to more families in their community. The county was able to achieve this with the support of their supervisor and their upper management; through the partnership with their community college and that they could service through education and support. This is a very positive development for the county.

**Santa Cruz:** Unfortunately, they were required to cancel an entire SA/HIV Infant training series earlier in the year because they did not have a sufficient number of interested foster parents to justify the costs associated with conducting the training. They also had a really low number of people interested in the PRIDE training at that time. However, the number of people enrolled in the next PRIDE training has increased, and they anticipate that a reasonable number of those individuals will enroll in the next SA/HIV Infant training. They are currently looking at their Foster Parent Orientations and subsequent SA/HIV Infant trainings to identify reasons for fluctuating numbers of people who complete both of these trainings.

#### **Plans for the future:**

**Monterey County:** Monterey Family and Children's Services would like to look at more equitable ways to provide respite to caregivers of substance-exposed children and provide additional services to create positive role modeling and to reduce the cycle of substance abuse in our communities. Currently, Monterey County is not able to build on plans for the future with the fiscal uncertainties.

Effectiveness of the program:

Children in the Substance Abuse/HIV (SA/HIV) Infant Program foster homes are cared for by specifically trained foster parents, who are skilled in the use of medical equipment necessary for home care of a child exposed to drugs, and/or alcohol during gestation. In San Diego County, there are fewer complaints in the SA/HIV Infant foster homes than in other foster homes. (4.8%)

The Substance Abuse/HIV Infant program training ensures that children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs. The physical health and medical needs of children are identified in assessments, and case planning activities. Those needs

are being addressed through services being provided via the SA/HIV Infant Program. Infant, neonatal, and post neonatal mortality is one of the most widely used indicators for the health and welfare of a population. A promising practice in addressing the physical needs of this population is the SA/HIV Infant program which provides:

- Early intervention
- Prevention of the devastating effects of substance abuse on children.
- Specialized training
- Increased collaboration between social services and alcohol and drug treatment agencies and program participants.

During the initial phase of the program, data was researched for a three year time period, which utilized a multi-method evaluation methodology. Three year program evaluation findings are as follows:

- Decreased involvement with Child Welfare Services between admission and discharge (27% decrease)
- Increase in the number of children residing with their biological mothers, between admission and discharge (4% increase)
- More likely to be reunited with their biological families than children in other types of facilities (42%)

### **Specialized Training for Adoptive Parents (STAP)**

This program provides specialized recruitment, training and services to pre-adoptive/adoptive parents of children born HIV positive and/or substance exposed. The program is designed to assist the adoption of medically fragile children who are dependent children of the court, have an adoption case plan, and reside with pre-adoptive or adoptive parents. There are currently 9 counties participating in the Program (Monterey, Santa Cruz, Shasta, San Luis Obispo, Mendocino, Riverside, El Dorado, San Francisco and Santa Clara).

Shasta County is placing increasing emphasis on relative training and support. In Shasta County, kinship care has a large focus in the placement of children; one quarter of all Shasta County's SA/HIV Infant Program children are placed with relatives. However, few are trained and adequately supported. Shasta County plans to complete a needs assessment and determine how better to allocate their existing placement resources. Using their parent partners, Shasta County will introduce elements of the 36 hour training to the birth parents in an attempt to improve their rates of successful family reunification.

Santa Cruz County plans to expand direct services to substance-exposed children in the form of a new program that will be similar to Monterey County's Screening for Assessment, Referral and Treatment Program. Children between birth and five have been identified as a service priority in the Santa Cruz System Improvement Plan, and this effort will fit appropriately into those parameters. In addition, Santa Cruz County continues to develop methods for increasing participation of kin caregivers in the Traditions of Caring training.

## **Barriers**

Participating counties have reported barriers, including the loss of caregiving families due to attrition. Some of these families were homes that finalized an adoption and no longer chose to do foster care. There is also a struggle to provide respite care to meet the need of families. Obtaining referrals to the program for eligible caregivers is a barrier. San Luis Obispo County overcame a significant barrier to provider participation by making child care available on-site during training classes. Counties are developing new policy and training procedures families and mentors, and new collaboration opportunities. For example, Santa Cruz is developing innovative ways of generating referrals and to increase and improve outreach to kinship providers. Shasta County has experienced difficulty getting social workers to create placements with concurrent planning families during the reunification process. This was solved through training and education; the establishment of a concurrent planning multi-disciplinary team and by the creation and support of adoptive and pre-adoptive parent liaison support groups.

## **Foster Care Month**

As a special recognition to foster parents and adoptive parents, the CDSS continues to partner with Casey Family Program and over 20 statewide organizations to launch foster care month in California. The 2009 State Capitol Foster Care Month Kickoff Event was held on May 12, 2009. This year will mark the 5-year anniversary of the Capitol Foster Care Month Kickoff event. The theme for this year is "Change a Lifetime: Foster Connections to Success." Scheduled events for this year include an Education Summit, Job Shadow Day, a California Connection 20-Year Anniversary Reception on May 4, 2009, a Heart Gallery Exhibit at the state Capitol, and a Foster Parents Walk-a-Thon.

## **Other Activities**

### **Specific Progress and Accomplishments Related to Diligent Recruitment (FCS to update.)**

The SFY 2006/07 Resource Family Recruitment Training and Retention Annual Report provided a general view of the cultural and linguistic challenges reported by counties in placing foster youth. In their survey responses, 26 of 58 counties reported such challenges: Alameda, Butte, Contra Costa, Del Norte, Glenn, Humboldt, Imperial, Lake, Lassen, Mendocino, Merced, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco, San Joaquin, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Shasta, Solano, Sonoma, Tulare, and Yolo. The purpose of the Report is not to evaluate the effectiveness of county recruitment efforts but to provide an overall view of the continued need for such efforts. [However, report did indicate that in FY 2006/2007 45 out of the 52 counties showed that recruitment numbers improved compared to FY 2004/2005 which was 38 out of 50.] Additionally, in FY 2006/2007 39 counties out of 52 noted improvements in retention of foster parents compared to FY 2004/2005 which was 37 out of 50. Resource family recruitment remains at the county level to ensure that regional needs are addressed. The SFY 2007/08 report is due to be released in November 2009.

## **Adoptions Program**

## **ADOPTIONS PROGRAM**

### **Intercountry Adoption**

#### **Activities That the State Has Undertaken For Children Adopted From Other Countries, Including the Provision of Adoption and Post Adoption Services**

Under California law (Family Code section 8900 et seq.), the provision of intercountry adoption services fall exclusively within the purview of licensed private adoption agencies and adoption facilitators. In order for an agency to obtain an adoption agency license to provide intercountry adoption services in California, the agency must be an entity accredited by the Council on Accreditation or supervised by an accredited primary provider. California now requires ALL intercountry adoption agencies, both custodial and non-custodial, to be accredited, regardless of whether they are completing adoptions in Convention or non-Convention countries.

In order for an adoption facilitator to provide intercountry adoption services in the United States, the individual MUST be approved by the Council on Accreditation and registered with the California Department of Social Services.

When a California agency is acting as the primary provider (PP) in an intercountry adoption, they must have an agreement with any supervised provider (SP) in the foreign country which, among other things:

- Identifies the lines of authority between the PP and SP, the PP employee responsible for supervision, and the SP employee responsible for compliance with the written agreement;
- Delineates how billing and fees will be billed, collected, and refunded;
- Requires that the SP meet certain personnel qualifications;
- Requires the SP to safeguard personal data;
- Requires the SP to respond to certain requests for data;
- Requires the SP to disclose any negative actions taken against the supervised provider by the Council on Accreditation or any licensing authority; and
- Identifies the adoption services to be provided by the foreign SP;
- Provides that if the foreign SP is to provide medical or social information, it must comply with 22 CFR 96.49(d) through (j);
- Provides that the foreign SP adhere to the Hague Convention's prohibition on child buying and have written policies in place reflecting such and provides training to its employees on these policies; and
- Provides that the foreign SP NOT compensate its employees on a per child or contingent fee basis.

California licensed intercountry adoption agencies perform home studies on prospective adoptive parents, provide required post-placement supervision on adoptions finalized in California, and may provide post-finalization supervision as required by the child's native country if the adoption is finalized in that country. Agencies also assist with re-adoption if required. Additional information about California's intercountry adoption program may be found in Title 22, California Code of Regulations section 35241 et seq.

### **Children Who are Adopted From Other Countries and Who Enter Into State Custody**

As a result of the disruption of a placement for adoption or the dissolution of an adoption, including the number of children, the agencies who handled the placement or the adoption, the plans for the child, and the reasons for the disruption or dissolution, pursuant to Family Code 8903, if an adoption agency fails to meet its responsibility with respect to a child in a failed adoption, and the child becomes a dependent of California, California will assume financial responsibility for the child.

In 2008, the California Department of Social Services conducted an informal survey of counties who reported that approximately 10 cases within the last five years fell under the auspices of Family Code 8903.

In March 2009, the California Department of Social Services adoptions district offices, reported that in the last year, there have been two cases which fell under the auspices of Family Code 8903. Unfortunately, this data is not currently captured in the CWS/CMS application. However, the CDSS has submitted a request that the CWS/CMS application be changed to capture this data.

For any children who came to the United States for the purpose of adoption but entered foster care prior to the finalization of the adoption, California law requires that a prior agreement be made between the private intercountry adoption agency facilitating the adoption and the country of the child's origin to address who will take responsibility of the child if such a disruption occurs. In these cases either the private adoption agency will take care, custody and control of the child or the child will be sent back to their country of origin who will resume responsibility for the child.

**Cross-Jurisdictional Plan and Probation Data**

## **CROSS-JURISDICTIONAL PLAN AND RESOURCES**

The CDSS has continued to increase the use of cross-jurisdictional resources for adoptive placements, which include recruitment strategies such as the California Kids Connection (CKC) program/website. Statewide, four regional exchanges met monthly to share specific information regarding family and children. California's adoption exchange program, California Kids Connection, provides several important services - all of which have the final goal of finding permanent adoptive families for children who are available and waiting in the foster care system. Four California Kids Connection staff members assist in matching waiting children with available families identified at the exchanges

The California Kids Connection website has both a secure section and a public section. The public section of the website is accessible to any Internet user. Visitors indicate their interest in specific children by sending an e-mail to the placing agency identified for each child. Several public adoption agencies throughout the state also maintain their own website featuring children who are available for adoption.

Additionally, California Kids Connection collaborates with AdoptUSKids. The AdoptUSKids website a program of the Children's Bureau, and is funded by the Adoption Exchange Association, the federal Health and Human Services/Administration for Children and Families, and the Children's Bureau. The CKC Recruitment Response Team is a part of AdoptUSKids' national recruitment initiative campaign for finding adoptive families.

CKC has been very successful in finding permanent homes for our foster children/youth. On March 1, 2009, 564 children were listed on the CKC website:

- 54 percent of the children were on the public section of the website.
- 48 percent were on the secure section of the website.
- 82 percent were children of color.
- 43 percent were over the age of 12.

There was a monthly average of 665 inquiries by qualified and approved families during this period, and 33 children were reported as being matched through CKC. At the present time, 78 percent of all public agencies participate in exchange meetings and list children on the exchange, as well as 75 private agencies that participate by listing families on the exchange site.

## **CWS/CMS CASES CLOSING TO PROBATION OR INCARCERATION**

All CWS/CMS cases that closed during the Federal Fiscal Year (10/01/YYYY to 09/30/YYYY) with an indicated closure reason of probation or non-601/602 incarceration.

**Period of Report: 10/01/1999 to 09/30/2008**

Report#: 6085-kz

All 600/Incarceration case closure reason types are included:

Incarcerated - Adjudicated 601/602

Not Incarcerated – Adjudicate 601/602

Incarcerated – Adjudicated Non 601/302

Child receiving services from Probation, Case Suspended

Data from CWS/CMS, California's Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS) is used to identify CWS/CMS cases that close each federal fiscal year with one of the above 600/Incarceration closure reasons.

Federal Fiscal Year	Count of Cases
2000	885
2001	1,014
2002	917
2003	918
2004	934
2005	917
2006	1,026
2007	1,017
2008	882
<b>Sum</b>	<b>8,510</b>

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

**CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION  
AND  
TREATMENT ACT (CAPTA)**

**APPLICATION  
for  
Federal Fiscal Year (FFY)  
2009**

**CFS-101**

**June 30, 2009**

**State of California  
Department of Social Services**

**CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT ACT**

**APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR (FFY) 2009 FUNDING  
PLAN FOR FEDERAL FISCAL YEARS 2005-2009**

**APPLICANT AGENCY:**

**State of California, Department of Social Services**

**Organizational Unit:**

Office of Child Abuse Prevention  
744 P Street, M.S. 11-82  
Sacramento, California 95814

**Designated Child Abuse and Neglect State Liaison Officer with NCCAN:**

Linné Stout, Branch Chief  
Child Protection and Family Support Branch  
(916) 651-6600

**Application Information Contact:**

Lee Ann Kelly Acting Chief  
Office of Child Abuse Prevention  
(916) 651-6960

**Applicant Agency's Employer Identification Number:**

94-6001347

The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) Plan is the primary prevention component of the state's Child and Family Services IV-B Plan, which is also referred to as the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP). The programs, services, and activities outlined in the CAPTA component are linked to the following goals and objectives of the entire CFSP plan:

- **Safety Outcome**

Goal 1: Children are first, and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect; they are safely maintained in their homes whenever appropriately possible and provided services to protect them.

- **Well Being Outcome**

Goal 3: Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate; families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs; children, youth and families are active participants in the case planning process; and children receive adequate and appropriate services to meet their educational, physical and mental health needs.

It is the state's intent to ensure a clear link between CAPTA and the Title IV-B CFSP goals by utilizing CAPTA funds to enhance community capacity to ensure the safety of children and promote the well-being of children and families. The California Department of Social Services (CDSS), through its Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP), uses the CAPTA grant, in combination with other funds such as Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) and state funds from the Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention and Treatment (CAPIT) Program and the state Children's Trust Fund to support counties, family resource centers, and other community based organizations through grants, contracts and interagency agreements to promote child abuse prevention and to provide early intervention services that serve children and families within their own communities whenever possible.

When evaluating the programs that provide the services and the training necessary to ensure that there is the sufficient capacity to keep children safe and to enhance the well being of children and families, CDSS/OCAP reviews the activities and assesses the results associated with these specific programs. The following is a report on the CDSS/OCAP programs and activities for federal fiscal year (FFY) 2008. Discussions of future directions address FFY 2009.

There have been no substantive changes in state law that could affect California's eligibility for CAPTA funds.

#### **Identification of Program Areas Selected for Improvement**

Area 8: Developing and facilitating training protocols for individuals mandated to report child abuse and neglect.

Area 12: Developing and enhancing the capacity of community-based programs to integrate shared leadership strategies between parents and professionals to prevent and treat child abuse and neglect at the neighborhood level.

Area 14: Supporting and enhancing collaboration among public health agencies, the child protection system and private community-based programs to provide child abuse and neglect prevention and treatment services (including linkages with education systems) and to address the health needs, including the mental health needs, of children identified as abused or neglected, including supporting prompt, comprehensive health and developmental evaluations for children who are the subject of substantiated child maltreatment reports.

## **PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT AREA 8: PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES, SERVICES AND TRAINING**

### **Mandated Reporter Training**

In response to the increasing numbers of mandated reporters requiring training, CDSS continues to focus on the availability and accessibility of mandated reporter training. Free online training is offered, and in all instances, attendance, and consumer profiles are collected for this online training. The mandated reporter training is offered through a grant with University of California, Davis. The current contract with the Resource Center for Family-Focused Practice, the Center for Human Services, University of California Davis Extension is ending June 30, 2008. CDSS/OCAP is in the process of developing a contract with the Rady Chadwick Center in San Diego for the coming fiscal year.

### **Objective**

To provide online mandated reporter training, training of trainers, and educational materials.

### **Activities/Results**

A basic online training for mandated reporters was placed on the web during FFY 2003. The training was developed by subject matter experts, in cooperation with CDSS. The materials were developed to both enhance other forms of mandated reporter training (e.g., classroom) and/or provide stand-alone mandated reporter training to participants at-home and to other participants. Continuing education units are provided for a minimal fee upon request. Currently, from July 2007 through June 2008, the number completing the online training through the UCD Extension is 2,118. An online email reminder system was implemented, increasing completion rates from 47 percent to 82 percent. Previously over a three year period, while the contract was with Sonoma State, the number of people trained was 7,118 (March 2003-September 30, 2006).

Some challenges experienced in the past year include: it took longer than anticipated for the UCD Extension program to get the web site developed for the online training, and to address how to reach out to more mandated reporters notifying them of the change in contractors. Changes and improvements with the program are in process, including making the on-line training program easier to locate on the internet.

### **Strategies: Family Resource Center (FRC) and Family Support Program Training and Technical Assistance**

The CDSS/OCAP funded the development of a consortium of three regional training centers, Strategies, to enhance the capacity of FRCs and family support programs (FSPs) throughout California to provide services to strengthen families. The three non-profit organizations comprising Strategies are Youth for Change in Butte County (Region 1); Interface Children Family Services in Ventura County (Region 2) and, the Children's Bureau of Southern California with offices in Los Angeles and Orange Counties (Region 3).

Strategies work with many of the FRCs and FSPs who offer comprehensive support services that include case management, home visitation, child abuse/neglect treatment, family health and wellness, family economics, self sufficiency, family literacy, substance abuse treatment, youth development, and community development. Strategies works with professionals, paraprofessionals, volunteers, and parents by providing training and technical assistance in a myriad of areas including home visitation, team case management, non-profit management, public and private partnerships, and community leadership.

Techniques employed by Strategies in servicing programs entail on-site consultations, teleconferences, online communications, lending libraries, face-to-face group training, meeting facilitation, coaching, and office/phone consultation. Additionally, Strategies fosters communication among FRCs and FSPs through its comprehensive website and tri-annual publication.

The funding for the Strategies training and technical assistance project is being extended through June 30, 2011.

#### **Training Objectives**

- Statewide, there are 72 days of family strengthening training. Training topics include: FRC Core, Case Management, Home Visitation, Community Development, Family Economic Success, Working with Families with Special Needs, and Parent Involvement.
- Develop and conduct six new training topics per year, each to be presented three times for a total of 18 training days statewide.
- Develop and implement a transfer of learning (TOL) protocol to reinforce the long term effectiveness of training and to inform quality improvement related to participant job performance. Apply TOL protocol to three existing statewide trainings (one per region) annually and to all newly developed trainings.

#### **Activities/Results**

FRC Core Trainings: The FRC Core Training is designed to cover key elements of FRC operation. The curriculum is continuously updated to reflect changes in policy and practice in the field of family support.

Family Economic Success and Stability (*FES*): Children who live in poverty are at a higher risk of abuse and neglect, yet FRCs and FSPs staff often have little training in how to address these issues. This training provides staff who work directly with poor and low income families with tools and approaches to help families address how to move towards family economic success. It includes orientation to a California FES resource directory, developed by Strategies, of local, state and federal programs available to families.

Case management training continues to meet a critical need in the family strengthening field, with many family support professionals working in the field having little training in this area. Staff are introduced to the fundamental concepts of case planning, assessment and evaluation through lecture and interactive activities.

Two home visiting trainings are offered throughout the state. The two-day Home Visiting Essentials training, which was presented in each region, utilizes a case study to engage participants. In response to requests, Strategies developed and presented a third day of home visitor training, which addresses complex issues such as domestic violence and the use of methamphetamines and other controlled substances in the home.

Peer Review: The peer review process acts as a networking tool as it facilitates a self-reflective process that nurtures trust and self-disclosure within a working partnership of FRCs. These partnerships evaluate and strengthen the approaches and services offered by the participating FRCs. Through participation in peer review, FRCs develop an enhanced awareness of statewide issues affecting them, gain feedback regarding the effectiveness of services in meeting families' needs, identify strengths and challenges, and develop greater connections with other FRCs.

Strategies provides individual coaching to strengthen the follow-up technical assistance portion of the peer review process, which is designed to help participants achieve their goals.

Sustainability Project: As a three-year pilot project, the Sustainability Project served 65 FRCs and FSPs, providing them collectively with over 2,500 hours of individual and group technical assistance. In response to the current budget crisis and resultant strained community resources, Strategies is now developing a revised Sustainability Project model that will enable sites to choose from a menu of sustainability services and pricing structures. The anticipated date for offering the new model is fall 2009.

New Trainings: During this reporting period, the following new trainings were developed and by the end of June 2009 each will have been presented at least three times throughout the state.

- Supervision: A Partnership for Success
- Grandparents Raising Grandchildren
- Orientation to the Pathways/Matrix Project
- Diversity and Inclusion: Weaving Cultural Proficiency Into Family Support Practice
- Family Strengthening and the Five Protective Factors
- Advocacy Tools for Non-Profits

Teleconference Series: As a training tool, the teleconference series is used to connect participants from across the state, especially those in isolated areas, to expert trainers. The teleconference also provides a venue through which the participants might effectively network with one another. Designed with two tracks (FRC Fundamentals and non-profit Management) the teleconference series serves:

- To act as a training vehicle in program, organizational development, and professional development.
- To facilitate networking among FRCs across the state. On average, fifteen participants joined each session.

Given the vast geographical distances between FRCs, the teleconference series provides urban, rural, and suburban FRCs an opportunity to communicate with one another without the impediments of distance, cost, and time incurred through physical travel. The following are topics for this reporting period:

- Mental Health Services Act
- Common Childhood Mental Disorders
- Impact of Depression
- Priority/Time Management
- Customer Service/Cultural Competency
- Dealing with Difficult Situations and People
- Recognizing and Dealing with Bullying
- Working with Female Youth
- Working with Male Youth
- Supervision: Building A Partnership for Success
- Building and Maintaining an Effective Board of Directors
- Facilitation of Meetings.

### ***Capacity-Building Events***

The diverse (rural and urban) venue locations of training provided throughout the state show not only the challenge of serving a state as diverse as California, but Strategies' commitment to meeting that challenge. For example, during this reporting period training was conducted as far north as Lassen County, bordering onto Oregon, and as far south as San Diego County, bordering on Mexico.

It is anticipated that approximately 4,000 people will attend trainings by June 30, 2009. Strategies will have also provided over 2,100 hours of technical assistance to agencies and organizations throughout the state. During these sessions, Strategies staff helped build individual capacity amongst family support staff in a variety of areas pertinent to non-profit management, sustainability, program development, facility management, and family support principles. During this funding period, topics of training delivered in response to local requests or emerging needs include those represented in the following table.

Training Topics	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disability as An Issue of Cultural Competence</li> <li>• Self Care for the Care Giver</li> <li>• Problem Solving From the Inside Out with Dr. Ann Corwin</li> <li>• The Amazing Adolescent Brain</li> <li>• Supervision: A Partnership for Success</li> <li>• Introduction to Quality FRC Practice</li> <li>• Working with Families with Special Needs</li> <li>• Promoting High Performance Partnerships</li> <li>• Plan Do Study Act: A Process for Change</li> <li>• Support Staff Skills</li> <li>• Developing an Effective Multi-Disciplinary Team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Home Visiting Essentials</li> <li>• Home Visiting Next Steps</li> <li>• FRC Core</li> <li>• Pursuing Nobel Goals</li> <li>• Supporting Fatherhood Involvement</li> <li>• Grandparents Raising Grandchildren</li> <li>• Bridges Out of Poverty</li> <li>• Family Economic Success</li> <li>• Impact of Depression</li> <li>• Advocacy Tools for Non-Profits</li> <li>• Peer Review</li> <li>• Case Management</li> <li>• Parent Involvement</li> <li>• The 5 Protective Factors</li> <li>• Parent Leadership</li> <li>• Collaborating for Success</li> <li>• Home Visitation Safety</li> <li>• Domestic Violence</li> </ul>

To promote success, key lessons learned from Strategies' Leadership Academy, a former Strategies project, have been incorporated into Strategies' new projects: the sustainability project, the family development matrix, high performance partnerships, and community development training. These lessons have led to the design of each project to include a team capacity building approach, which includes on-site structured technical assistance.

CDSS/OCAP will fund Strategies through June 30, 2011.

### Network Development Objectives

- Support and promote existing and emerging regional family support networks', Children's Services Networks', and Interagency Coordinating Councils' abilities to promote child safety, permanency and well-being by coordinating training and technical assistance opportunities for 12 networks per year.
- Manage subcontracts with up to 4 networks annually to build local capacity to provide training and technical support to the field.

Network development has been approached through three interlocking ways: participation, partnership, and provision.

- **Participation:** Strategies' staff participates in FRC networks by first seeking out new, emerging or established networks and then becoming active network members. By attending meetings and generally contributing to network activities, Strategies staff

members build essential relationships within the network, contribute expert knowledge, and thereby actively contribute to FRC development.

- **Partnership:** Strategies' staff partner with networks to coordinate the development of network-specific training and technical assistance plans and co-sponsoring training and other network activities.
- **Provision:** Strategies' staff members also provide services to networks by assisting with the development and implementation of network training plans and providing network-specific technical assistance.

This year Strategies has provided over 605 hours of technical assistance (TA) toward the development of networks and identifying promising practices to assist FRCs with quality improvement of service delivery. One hundred and eighty-six agencies (186) were assisted with network development. Additionally, over 120 hours of TA was provided to the Ventura Pathways Partnership which brings together community based organizations and the local child welfare agency in a High Performance Partnership. Strategies estimates that approximately 800 hours of TA will be provided to networks by the end of the funding period. The following list summarizes the diverse areas of support Strategies has provided FRC networks:

- Retreat Facilitation.
- Strategic Planning Assistance.
- Training and technical assistance to strengthen partnerships between public and private agencies.
- Assistance in developing network wide training and TA plans.
- Co-sponsorship or co-development of conferences and convenings.
- Development of trainings customized to meet specific to network needs.
- Sharing of resources (such as standards, and decision-making structures) across networks.
- Training and TA in implementation of the Family Development Matrix as a shared outcomes tool.

In addition, Strategies provided small capacity building grants to eight FRC/FSP networks which were used for a variety of purposes ranging from developing a community needs/strengths assessment, to allowing network members to be trained as trainers in a nationally recognized FES community change model, to work on an in-depth plan for network sustainability. Strategies Region 2 is the only Strategies program that provided mini-grants (capacity building grants) were only made available to networks in their region. The availability of mini-grants was publicized via the Strategies listserv. The determination regarding which networks to fund was made based upon applications submitted. Along with reviewing completed applications, an assessment was made of each network's proposed scope of work, their willingness to participate in a peer review process, their level of network development at the time of the submission of applications, and whether it appeared that the \$3,500 would provide significant assistance to building their individual networks. These grants are provided to networks in the following counties: San Francisco, San Luis Obispo, Ventura, Sacramento, Santa Barbara, Monterey, Santa Cruz and Kings County. Along with the grant, each network received at least 12 hours of technical assistance.

### ***Highlights of Strategies' Work with Family Support Networks***

- Participating as associate members in the Ventura County Partnership for Safe Families, the Santa Cruz Family Resource Network, the Tulare County Family Resource Network and the San Francisco Family Support Network.
- Providing consultation to the Oxnard Visioning Partnership as they develop a strategic plan for addressing youth and family violence.
- Regularly attending and monitoring the progress of a variety of Los Angeles County networks including all eight of the Service Planning Areas (SPAs) Councils, the Children's Planning Council, the Los Angeles County Healthy Start/FRC Network, and the Family Resource Center Network of Los Angeles County (FRCNLAC).
- Regularly attending network meetings and providing support to a variety of San Diego County networks including San Diego Healthy Start Network, San Diego Family Support Network, San Diego FRCN, San Diego Child Abuse Prevention Committee, and the South Bay Partnership and Chula Vista Collaborative.
- Building relationships with and regularly attending network meetings to the five known FRC networks in San Bernardino County and the three known networks in Riverside.
- Facilitating the annual retreat/strategic planning sessions for the Santa Cruz Family Resource network.
- Facilitating the development of mission, vision, values, decision making agreements and methods for accountability for FRC networks in Tulare County, Monterey County, San Luis Obispo County,
- Facilitating the development of by-laws, committee structure, and job descriptions for the newly developed Mendocino County FRC Network.
- Facilitating the development of mission, vision, structure, and procedures for the newly formed Butte County Fit through 5 Collaborative. Develop a work plan for putting structure and procedures into place.
- Working closely with the Imperial County FRC network to develop individualized capacity building for their members, such as support of the incoming El Centro FRC coordinator and program planning for network FRCs.
- Participating in conference planning and design of the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual National Latino Fatherhood Conference and the Males as Positive Forces Awards of the Chula Vista Community Collaborative

### ***Future Directions***

Strategies continues to utilize these networking approaches to further the Family Development Matrix and the High Performing Partnerships initiatives.

### ***Outreach Objectives***

Produce and distribute tri-annual publication *Working Strategies*. Coordinate and maintain statewide data collection system and website.

## **Activities/Results**

Web page and listserv: Developed in FY 2006 a statewide listserv, known as “Strategies Announce,” has become a key resource for publicizing trainings. It is being used increasingly as a tool for staff recruitment by the FRCs. The Strategies website, [www.familyresourcecenters.net](http://www.familyresourcecenters.net), provides up to date information regarding trainings and other services provided by Strategies. During this report period, over 57,700 visits have been made to the website. This number will likely reach 80,000 by the end of June. The website, however, does not track the many visitors who enter through the link provided on the Strategies’ training calendar. Therefore, the total numbers of visitors is greater than those counted.

Working Strategies Publication: The Working Strategies has experienced a major revision this year. The publication has been elevated to the status of a professional publication at Strategies as it moved to being the primary publication for the field of family strengthening in California. The number of published issues changed from four per year to three to allow for staff to more thoroughly research and write articles. Each issue is made available via download from the Strategies’ website, distribution through the Strategies’ statewide mailing list, and the mailing of hard copies. In an effort to maintain content quality and relevancy to the family support field, topics have been chosen to reflect consumers’ areas of interest, current trends and issues of concern to those centers and programs within the state. The lead articles for this reporting period include:

- Fall/Winter 2008 – Leadership Succession for Non-Profit Organizations
- Spring 2009 – Strengthening Families Initiative: California Moves Forward
- Summer 2009 – Responding Creatively in Tough Times,

The most important outreach that Strategies has employed has been its ongoing relationship-building that has taken place at training events, in networking meetings, through phone calls and through site visits. The positive relationships developed through these activities has proven vital to the success of all aspects of Strategies’ service delivery.

Additionally, distance learning (teleconferences and web-conferencing) has been used to reach the diverse (urban, suburban, and rural) communities in the state, as well as those individuals unable to travel to a given site for training.

Standard surface mailing of project information and training flyers continued to be an effective outreach method. The statewide mailing list was continually updated to eliminate outdated information, thus lowering mailing costs and reducing duplication. The statewide mailing list currently has in excess of 7,000 entries.

California Family Resource Association (CFRA): CFRA contributes an article to each quarterly Strategies newsletter. The articles focus on areas of policy development and policy implementation that impact the field of family strengthening.

### ***Future Directions***

Strategies will continue to utilize outreach approaches that have proven successful: building relationships through network development, attending conferences/meetings, facilitating meetings/gatherings, as well as providing training and technical assistance.

### ***Outreach to Underserved Populations***

- Identify potential service users among isolated and underserved populations. Service “populations” may include: Tribes, Rural and frontier communities, small counties, underserved counties, various ethnic communities, families in agricultural work, and other isolated/underserved communities.
- Identify and implement the most effective ways to outreach and engage identified isolated and underserved populations.

### ***Activities/Results:***

Strategies is actively engaged in a process of developing into a cultural proficient organization. To support this effort each Strategies’ training incorporates this perspective. During this year’s funding period, Strategies has provided trainings specifically focused on improving services to underserved populations. Training topics include: Working with Families with Special Needs, Family Economic Success and Stability, Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, Diversity and Inclusion, and Diversity. Additionally, Strategies has extensively worked to help social service agencies to more effectively engage fathers. In an effort to provide service to the more isolated communities, Strategies’ trainings are frequently located in isolated, rural and frontier communities (such as Siskiyou, Tuolumne, and Imperial). Strategies is also increasingly employing distance learning strategies such as teleconferences and webinars to make capacity building resources available statewide.

Strategies is outreaching to Native American tribes in the Central Valley and is part of the planning group and a co-sponsor of a conference coordinated by Central Valley leaders involved with Indian Child Welfare Act . Strategies is also participating in an engagement process with a small community outside of Fresno to help a local collaborative think through how family and community strengthening approaches might be used as one vehicle for addressing the tremendous disparity between outcomes for native American school children (who comprise 15 percent of children in school) and other children.

### ***Supporting Father Involvement***

Promote evidence-based practice for child abuse prevention by leading and coordinating the dissemination and implementation of the Supporting Father Involvement (SFI) project.

### ***Dissemination Model***

Strategies has been selected to build the capacity of organizations, beyond the original five SFI research sites, to implement the evidence-based Supporting Father Involvement approach. In collaboration with OCAP and SFI Evaluation and Research team, Strategies

has developed trainings and web resources to assist organizations interested in implementing the **SFI** approach.

**Outreach:** Outreach occurs through presentations at conferences (such as the Child Abuse Prevention Summit, California Parent Leadership Conference, Family Resources Supports Institute, and the Central Valley Intra-Professional Development conference), community based half-day orientation sessions, and teleconference sessions with key stakeholders and site visits. The Strategies' three host agencies are currently engaged in "beta testing" all phases of the SFI project. As described below, community agencies can apply to participate in this project at one of three levels.

### **Training and Technical Assistance**

Strategies is using a phased approach to engage agencies in the SFI. The phases and resources offered are:

Level 1: Ongoing Engagement and Education: Provides agencies with an ongoing connection to the SFI project and with fatherhood engagement information.

Resources Offered: Mail and/or e-mail updates on fatherhood issues and SFI, participation in on-line resources and web community, general consultation regarding father engagement, an on-site or on-line SFI orientation session, and access to webinars.

Level 2: Assessment and TA to Increase Agency Father Friendliness

Resources Offered: Coaching sessions to prepare organizations to take and complete the on-line organizational self assessment, presenting each agency with an executive summary of results of its self assessment, assisting agencies with developing agency specific action plans, providing technical assistance (on-line, via phone or through site visit) to help agencies increase father-friendliness within the policies/procedures, practices/services provided.

Level 3: Supporting Father Involvement Program Implementation

Resources Offered: A full array of training-agency training, case management training and group leader training; group leaders' curriculum; assessment and screening forms for group leaders; TA to develop plans for clinical support to group leaders; TA to ensure that case managers/family support workers receive appropriate support; participation in clinical supervision teleconferences, written copies of updates on lessons to be learned during the future Phase IV of the research study; resource development assistance including sample language for grant applications to foundation for possible funding of SFI groups, analysis of implementation costs, and assistance in developing collaborative partnerships.

Thus far, Strategies has received multiple applications for agency participation in the project and is currently assessing resources to meet the demand. It is anticipated that by June 30, 2009 six agencies will have completed levels one and two of the project and will be poised to implement SFI groups in the following fiscal year.

## **PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT AREA 10:**

### **Special Start Training Program (SSTP)**

The CDSS continues to utilize CAPTA funds for the SSTP, which provides training to medical professionals, social workers, professionals from other disciplines, and foster and adoptive parents on assessment and developmental interventions for high-risk newborns who are discharged from intensive care nurseries. The program transitioned from Mills College to the University of San Francisco in July 2008. The primary objective of this program is to facilitate enhanced parent/infant interactions and promote the development and recovery of these medically fragile infants in the NICU. In learning to differentiate between what is stable behavior from what is stressful for the infant, parents are able to help their infant work towards organized behavioral patterns that support their medical recovery and development. The training is strength-based. Each training day is taught by a professional trainer, and a parent trainer who had an infant in the NICU. The CORE training program is called Family Infant Relationship Support Training (FIRST).

#### **Objectives**

- To provide CORE training for foster parents, relative caregivers, social workers and other professionals, including psychologists, physical, speech and occupational therapists, public health nurses, early childhood educators, marriage and family therapists and home visitors in the assessment and planning of appropriate interventions to meet the needs of medically fragile infants.
- To ensure the curriculum meets the certification standards for FIRST (Browne, et al, 1995), based on the methodology of the Newborn Individualized Development Care and Assessment Program (NIDCAP, Als, 1985).
- To increase and broaden the audience of professionals requesting training statewide in California.

#### **Activities/Results**

In FFY 2008, 154 people throughout California attended different aspects of the training (Day One, Day Two, Day Three, Birth to Three (aka Pre-to-Three), and one-on-one guidance). The primary model for training is the FIRST program. Counties receiving training included: Los Angeles, Ventura, Fresno, San Diego, Kings, Tulare, San Mateo, Alameda, San Jose, Mendocino, Stanislaus, Sacramento, Shasta, and Sonoma.

The SSTP program included training foster parents and biological parents to prepare for the transition of medically fragile infants from one caregiver to another. The training instructs foster parents on engagement techniques with biological parents to promote individualized caregiver interactions and support foster infant care during and after the transition period. Professionals including nurses, teachers, and social workers attended a variety of the "Special Start" trainings, specifically Day One (Introduction), Day Two (Practicum), and a Day Three (Mentoring Day).

On an on-going basis, SSTP will continue to offer the Day One Workshop Introduction and Overview (eight hours); the Day Two Practicum workshop (eight hours); individual practice

and mentoring sessions (based on FIRST); the advanced practicum (four hour workshop); continuing education days; and training trainers in a manner that meets certification requirements.

SSTP materials are developed, revised and updated as required. These materials include digital video training tapes of premature infant behavior, SSTP brochures and other hard copy material. Project staff utilizes the website to provide current resources/links regarding the condition/care of medically fragile infants on an on-going basis. Staff developed the booklet, "Getting to Know Your Baby" for caregivers and parents. It is available on the SSTP website to review and download. The companion book for caregivers/parents "Supporting Your Infant after the Neonatal Intensive Care Nursery Experience" has been written. It focuses on developmental information for parents after the infant has been in the NICU.

The SSTP website is in transition with UCSF. There are plans to provide webcasts and/or teleconferencing training sessions starting in 2009. Previously, the SSTP program while at Mills College provided information online that described the training program, training resources in both English and Spanish, and permits online training registration. Future plans in process, but not currently contracted, are to have the website expanded to provide training using the Internet. This will enable training of a much larger audience.

## **PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT AREA 12: PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES, SERVICES, AND TRAINING**

### **California Center on Parent Involvement**

In July 2007, the CDSS/OCAP and Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> Inc. began collaborating on a joint project to develop and maintain a California Center on Parent Involvement. The purpose of the Center is to assist the state in moving toward the use of evidence-based/evidence informed efforts that include meaningful involvement of parents in direct services, trainings, public awareness, education, policy and systems change. The Center will develop a statewide database with various resources on parent involvement programs and practices (e.g. research articles, publications, web-based tools) for California communities to improve outcomes for children and families.

As part of this effort, we have established a diverse state advisory committee that provides overall guidance on the work of the Center. The committee includes state, county and regional representatives from child welfare, mental health, health, child abuse prevention, the tribal community, FRCs, parent leaders, CBOs, foundations, and other key stakeholders. The committee is focusing on:

- Providing input on the content of an online survey instrument that will be utilized to gain vital information on currently existing Parent Involvement Programs statewide.
- Providing input on cataloguing different Parent Involvement Programs entered into the database.
- Promoting awareness of the Center resources and highlighting the effectiveness of existing California Parent Involvement Programs with other statewide departments, initiatives, counties, etc.

- Developing standards of practice for parent involvement programs.

The state advisory committee met this year to: (1) develop a purpose statement with principles and values for the California Center on Parent Involvement; (2) develop a logic model to help reach a common understanding of activities and intended outcomes; and (3) provide input on the survey tool that will be used to gather information on existing Parent Involvement Programs statewide.

The advisory committee discussed some of the important benefits and outcomes from this innovative project including:

- Establishment of baseline data on parent involvement programs and practices in California;
- California communities becoming aware of parent involvement programs and practices;
- California communities increasing use of parent involvement resources;
- California communities will improve evaluation of parent involvement practices;
- California communities and parents will increase their knowledge, skills and abilities on parent involvement practices and strategies;
- California communities will incorporate the values and principles of parent involvement;
- Reduction/prevention of child abuse and neglect; and
- Safety, well-being, permanency for children and youth.

As this work continues, CDSS/OCAP also look at other outcomes such as whether parent involvement and the results from the California Center activities are linked to (1) building stronger partnerships between parents, agencies and organizations; (2) changes in values and attitudes relating to parent involvement; and (3) increased utilization of parents as resources.

### **Parent Involvement**

<http://www.parentsanonymous.org/pahtml/paAbout.html>

Since 1999, Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> Inc. has been partnering with CDSS to provide parent leadership training and technical assistance to child abuse prevention agencies across the state to encourage and support shared leadership. Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> Inc.'s, grant objectives include:

- Establishing a state advisory committee to guide the work of the California Center.
- Building successful partnerships between Parent Leaders and professionals by supporting California State Parent Team members in working with the CDSS on various committees and task forces.
- Developing plan to implement recommendations from Wraparound Summit on Parent Partner Surveys with the state Work Group.

The overall goal of the grant is to foster a collaborative relationship in local communities where parents and professionals can work together to ensure quality services for children and families. This grant is funded through June 30, 2009.

### **California State Parent Team (CSPT)**

Given the commitment to ensure that the “parent voice” is heard in shaping the direction of family support programs, services and policies throughout California, the CDSS/OCAP has established a California State Parent Team (CSPT). The CSPT is composed of eight diverse parents with strong leadership skills and expertise who work collaboratively with professionals to improve the child abuse prevention services and systems throughout California. CDSS/OCAP is contracting with Parents Anonymous® Inc. to recruit members and provide training, technical assistance, mentoring, coaching and support to the CSPT to effectively carry out their important roles. The mission of the CSPT is to collaborate with CDSS/OCAP in developing the state’s capacity to establish a highly qualified and trained pool of active and diverse parents. They will also share responsibility with professionals and policymakers in planning, implementing and evaluating policy and program decisions to improve program performance in family support and child welfare services.

Each CSPT member receives a comprehensive handbook that outlines the CSPT roles, responsibilities and operating procedures. Some of the recent activities include:

- Reviewing and providing feedback and recommendations on the California’s 2008 CBCAP grant application.
- Child and Family Services Review site visits.
- Coastal Tri-Counties Child Abuse Prevention Coalition.
- Serving on the state Advisory Committee for the California Center on Parent Involvement.
- Participating in Child Abuse Prevention Month activities.
- Participating at the Statewide Child Abuse Prevention Summit.
- Wraparound Parent Partner Training Work Group.
- Planning for the annual statewide Parent Leadership Conference.

CDSS/OCAP is strongly committed to working with the CSPT members to support increased involvement of parents in meaningful leadership roles. Serving in an advisory capacity, as resource to agency administrators and policymakers at the statewide level these CSPT members help shape the direction of family support and child welfare services.

### **Coalition of Child Abuse Prevention Councils**

California has a coalition of child abuse prevention councils (CAPCs) network through eight regional coordinators assigned to geographically grouped counties throughout the state. The regional coordinators and CAPCs provide a vehicle for networking, coordination and improvement of services and increasing public awareness and commitment to the prevention of child abuse. The regional coordinators and coalitions of CAPCs are uniquely positioned to assist OCAP in the responsibility to direct, lead and evaluate the network of public-private partnerships and the continuum of preventative services for children and families in all regions of the state.

The regional coordinators will continue to utilize the Friends website and resources and work through the process of creating a logic model and assist other CBCAP funded CAPCs

and service providers to meet the CBCAP funding requirements through implementation of a logic model. The regional coordinators will use the goals outlined below as found in the Pathways to Prevention material:

The coalition of California's child abuse prevention councils will be responsible for coordination, collaboration and support of local CAPCs and region-wide child abuse prevention efforts in order to work toward the following goals, which are consistent with those outlined in the Pathways to Prevention material:

- Goal 1: Children and youth are nurtured, safe and engaged
- Goal 2: Families are strong and connected
- Goal 3: Identified families access services and supports
- Goal 4: Families are free from substance abuse and mental illness
- Goal 5: Communities are caring and responsive.

### **California Child Abuse Prevention Summit**

The University of California at Davis (UC Davis) Resource Center for Family-Focused Practice provided assistance in planning the annual Child Abuse Prevention Summit. The theme of the summit in February 2008 was "Building a Prevention Community." This year's summit focused on prevention practices and ideas for public agencies and local service providers to strengthen partnerships across systems of their communities by creating a comprehensive approach that engages the entire community in a process of prevention strategies based on family strengths rather than deficits with a goal of improving health, social, education and economic outcomes for entire families.

### **Wraparound Parent Partner Project**

The CDSS/CPFBSB has continued to be committed to strengthening the role and support of parent partners in our statewide Wraparound Programs. CDSS continues to work with Parents Anonymous<sup>®</sup> Inc. on a joint project to support parent partners in curriculum development and training. The following was accomplished during the past fiscal year:

Many innovative ideas were recommended as a result of the surveys and input received during SFY 2007/08. CDSS decided to move forward with two key recommendations to strengthen the critical role of Parent Partners within California Wraparound Programs. These recommendations were to: (1) establish an Outcomes Work Group that would design a fidelity tool to measure core competencies of the Parent Partner role in relationship to the Wraparound model; and (2) establish a Training Work Group that would focus on collecting information on Training Curricula for Parent Partners. These two Work Groups have been meeting monthly via teleconferences to move forward in carrying out their work plans.

**Outcomes Work Group** - This work group developed and defined the role and activities of the Parent Partner. The Role Description was finalized and approved by CDSS, the work group will began to develop a fidelity tool that will measure a Parent Partner's adherence to 4 or 5 core competencies. Presentation of the Role Description occurred at the 5<sup>th</sup> Statewide Wraparound Institute in California in June 2008. By June 30, 2009, after the validity of the tool is determined, the next will include a study measuring the fidelity of the Parent Partner role with the ultimate goal to provide additional training on the role description.

**Training Work Group** – This work group identify what training and curricula was currently being used by Wraparound Programs in California counties. The work group will utilize the skill sets identified in the role description developed by the Outcomes Work Group to develop the training standards. They will also look at other resources from the National Wraparound Initiative such as the Phases and Activities of the Wraparound Process: What the Family Partner Contributes and The Application of the Ten Principles of the Wraparound Process to the Role of Family Partners on Wraparound Teams.

### **Parent Leadership Conference**

In addition to meeting federal funding requirements, the OCAP recognizes the importance of parent engagement in child welfare services. It is critical for consumers of these services to have roles in the planning, implementing and evaluating programs and policy decisions aimed at the prevention of child abuse and neglect. The purpose of the "Parent Leadership Conference" is to conduct a one-day conference with focus on engaging parents into advisory groups, governance structures, decision-making bodies and leadership roles.

The goals of Parent Leadership Conference are to:

- Raise public awareness about the important roles parents play in shaping the lives of children and families.
- Expand opportunities for parents to participate in meaningful leadership activities.
- Recognize individual parents whose contributions make a positive difference to their families and communities.
- Build successful partnerships between parents and professionals to strengthen and support families and communities.

The CDSS/OCAP held the second annual Parent Leadership Conference in Sacramento on November 14, 2008 to continue to increase parent partnerships with child welfare services at the state level and in all 58 California counties. During the Conference, five individuals received Parent Leadership Awards for their outstanding efforts and contribution in the communities.

## **PROGRAM AREA 14: PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES, SERVICES AND TRAINING**

### **Evidenced-based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare Services in California**

<http://www.cachildwelfareclearinghouse.org>

The California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare (CEBC) is one of the CDSS' targeted efforts to improve the lives of children and families served within the (CWS). The CDSS' OCAP contracted with Rady Children's Hospital-Chadwick Center for Children and Families to create the CEBC. Children's Hospital, San Diego was awarded the grant on June 1, 2004. The project has been extended through June 2010.

The CEBC helps to identify and disseminate information regarding evidence-based practices relevant to child welfare, providing guidance on evidence-based practices to statewide agencies, counties, public and private organizations, and individuals. The CEBC is guided by an advisory committee (AC) and a scientific panel. The AC includes researchers, child welfare services practitioners, as well as representatives from the CWDA, CDSS, community agencies, and foundations. The Scientific Panel is comprised of five core members who are nationally recognized as leaders in child welfare research and practice, and who are knowledgeable about what constitutes best practice/evidence-based practice.

#### **Objectives**

Develop formal criteria for selection of practices as evidence-based and review a wide variety of sources to identify practices meeting the criteria.

To design a conceptual framework for an interactive web-based application of the CEBC that supports access to and implementation of evidence-based practices in the field of social work.

#### **Activities/Results**

The CEBC uses a standardized process to identify and review child welfare programs and practices for inclusion on the website. The statewide AC selects an average of 5 topic areas per year. The Clearinghouse staff works closely with the Scientific Panel to identify a leading child welfare authority with expertise for each selected topic area (topic experts). Working with the Scientific Panel and the Topic Experts, the CEBC staff select programs for inclusion on the website. These generally involve 5-15 programs selected within a topic area that fits one of the following criteria:

- Have strong empirical support for their efficacy.
- Is in common use in California.
- Are being marketed in California.

The CEBC staff work with the topic expert and with the developer of the program or model to identify all relevant program/model related literature. The CEBC staff examines all peer-reviewed research literature on the program/model along with a sample of proprietary and other relevant peer-reviewed clinical literature. The information from the reviews and the developers are synthesized to create the topic outline contained on the website. The

Clearinghouse staff and topic experts review the research and science supporting the model and “rate” the model based on the strength of the evidence supporting it using a scientific rating scale. They determine the research and particular program’s/model’s relevance to child welfare outcomes based on the three fundamental goals: safety, permanency and well-being. As of SFY 2008/09, one hundred forty (140) programs have been reviewed and rated in twenty (20) topic areas.

The website, <http://www.cachildwelfareclearinghouse.org>, became operational in the spring of 2006. Changes continue to be made to improve the look and function of the site.

The CEBC website is designed to:

- Serve as an online connection for child welfare professionals, staff of public and private organizations, academic institutions, and others who are committed to serving children and families.
- Provide up-to-date information on evidence-based child welfare practices.
- Facilitate the utilization of evidence-based practices as a method of achieving improved outcomes of safety, permanency and well-being for children and families involved in the California public CWS.

The CEBC website statistics for SFY 2008-2009 are as follows:

- 88,245 visitors counted.
- 16 percent of the total visitors were from over 169 international countries.
- 84 percent were from the United States.
- 36 percent were from California.

### **Objectives**

Develop a formal process for the implementation and maintenance of the CEBC.

### **Activities**

The CEBC provided two six hour trainings in December 2008 and another in April 2009. Additionally CEBC sponsored a six hour mini-conference in May 2009. In October 2008 CEBC presented a 1.5 hour workshop at CWDA, in January 2009, a 1.5 hour workshop at the San Diego Child Maltreatment Conference, two 1.5 hour workshops in April 2009, at the NCCAN conference in Atlanta, and a 1.5 hour workshop at APSAC in Atlanta in June 2009.

The CEBC conducted the annual face-to-face meeting with the Scientific Panel in January of 2009. The bi-annual meetings of the AC were held in October of 2008 and March of 2009.

### **Future Direction**

New topic areas that were selected for SFY 2009/10 are: intervention for families in poverty, adolescent substance abuse, mental health treatments for parents, parents as partners, and infant and family mental health.

Arrangements are underway for lectures/workshops on selected evidence-based practices for the 2010, San Diego International Child and Family Maltreatment Conference.

Funded by the CDSS' OCAP, the CEBC is managed by Chadwick Center and the Child and Adolescent Services Research Center (CASRC) at Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego. With funding support from the Administration for Child and Families these organizations are partnering to support the expansion of evidence-based practices for preventing and intervening with child neglect. The result of the collaboration is a five year federal grant, Safe Kids California Project (SKCP), to support the spread of SafeCare®, a home visitation model specifically designed to reduce child neglect.

SafeCare is a structured evidence-based home visitation program that provides direct skill training to high-risk parents. SafeCare®, and its earlier iterations, has been the subject of over 60 scientific publications over the last 30 years and is currently in the final stages of 2 large scale randomized clinical trials in Oklahoma with a child welfare population. Within California, San Diego County is currently in the process of implementing SafeCare®.

SafeCare® providers teach families specific skills on how to manage child behavior, keep their home free of safety hazards, and take care of a child's basic health care needs. SafeCare® typically takes 18-20 sessions to complete (about four-to-six months), and may run longer if other services are also needed. SafeCare® is typically delivered in the home by trained staff carrying caseloads of eight-to-ten families at a time.

Due to the intensity of training and support, only a limited number of counties and agencies will be able to be involved with the project. There will be one cohort of 12 trainees (two groups of six) each year for four years. The first of these is projected to start October 2009. With the annual selection of two to four high-performing cohort trainees to be trained trainers, the project is designed to grow and be sustained well after the grant is completed.

For more information, visit the National SafeCare® Training and Research Center website at [www.nstrc.org](http://www.nstrc.org).

### **Family Development Matrix**

The Family Development Matrix Project is a collaborative effort of: The Institute for Community Collaborative Studies, California State University Monterey Bay, Strategies, The CDSS' OCAP and The Pathways Mapping Initiative. The Family Development Matrix (FDM) <http://hhspp.csumb.edu/community/> Project developed a case assessment, planning, and evaluation model that is currently in use in thirteen California counties. Three thousand families have undergone single assessments while 1,800 of those families participated in two- to-three additional assessments based on need and time in the program. Each county has a collaborative team of agencies using shared outcome indicators between child welfare and family resource partners. This project uses evaluation data to guide the choice of interventions and to make any necessary modifications based on client progress. The model provides social workers with an easy to use tool to test the effectiveness of their interventions. Staff is trained to assess the current family condition identifying family strengths. These are then used in the development of a case plan. The model provides for

consistency in analysis and a process for standardizing outcome indicators allowing for cross agency comparison and analysis of outcome data. The FDM has been re-funded for three years SFY 2008/11 to further develop the FDM Outcomes Model and assist the participating counties in integrating The Pathway to the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (Pathway) goals and interventions. The Pathway is an innovative, comprehensive resource manual which was completed and made available on-line in 2007 <http://www.cdss.ca.gov/cdssweb/entres/pdf/Pathway.pdf>. It assembles a wealth of findings from research, practice, theory, and policy about what it takes to improve the lives of children and families. The emphasis is on acting strategically across disciplines, systems and jurisdictions to reduce the costs of abuse and neglect and to promote thriving children, families and communities.

### **Objectives**

- Support, broaden and extend existing public/private partnerships in thirteen California counties focusing on prevention and neglect.
- Strengthen the validity of the FDM model by establishing a panel of experts.
- Develop a strategy for the integration of the FDM model and the Pathways approach.

### **Activities/Results**

The Institute for Community Collaborative Studies (ICCS) sent invitation to FDM project teams and conducted teleconferences to assist counties through the application process.

A panel of experts (Panel) were nominated and selected. The Panel is comprised of state and local child welfare leaders, representatives from supporting organizations, and nationally respected authorities on child welfare. A telephone meeting took place on March 10, 2009. The Panel will provide input and advice on the selection of prevention indicators, assist in the evaluation of a Pathway intervention strategy and a common protocol for intervention measures, and provide advice on future statewide dissemination of the FDM model.

Using the FDM, Pathway Notebook, Strengthening Families and related indicator sources for preventing child abuse and neglect, a survey was conducted with members of the Pathway mental mapping meeting, members from the agencies from the thirteen FDM counties and prevention conference participants. The results of the surveys were examined with the Panel to validate a set of core prevention outcome indicators. The indicators are in the process of being made available to the agencies in the thirteen FDM counties to use for planning prevention programs. Work is also being done to broaden the website to showcase the Pathway with the core set of indicators.

The ICCS and Strategies are working together to help broaden and extend existing public/private partnerships in the thirteen FDM counties to include Family Resource Centers, County Welfare Agency representatives, Tribal communities, and other local partners to provide input into the counties' plans for the prevention of child abuse and neglect. Currently sixty resource centers and thirteen county welfare partners have created partnerships to share common outcomes to prevent child abuse and neglect. The counties

include: Butte, Del Norte, Lake, Madera, Placer, Sacramento, San Francisco, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Solano, Tehama, Ventura, and Yolo.

County collaborative have translated their FDM into at least six languages; Spanish, Tagalog, Hmong, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Russian. The Institute for Community Collaborative Studies has adapted the Matrix Creator to use languages as well as English for data entry and case planning.

### **Safely Surrendered Babies**

This effort provides public awareness of the state law regarding abandonment of newborn babies. The Safely Surrendered Baby (SSB) Law allows a responsible party to confidentially surrender a baby to a hospital and, in designated counties, fire stations. A parent who is unable or unwilling to care for an infant can legally and confidentially surrender their baby within three days of birth, so long as there is no evidence of abuse or neglect. The goal of the SSB program is to prevent injury or death to newborns that may have been abandoned under unsafe conditions.

### **Objective**

To provide public awareness through education and outreach by providing and disseminating materials that educates the general public about the state law.

### **Activities/Results**

In the ongoing effort to increase public awareness CDSS/OCAP continues to provide public outreach materials. The public education materials include posters and brochures that are available in both English and Spanish at no cost. To enable counties and public agencies to personalize the brochures, space on the back allows for the insertion of local information, e.g. toll-free telephone number or contact information.

Safely Surrendered Baby public education materials have continued to be distributed throughout the state to a wide variety of local public and private agencies that serve children and families. The types of agencies that receive the SSB materials are:

- Local health departments, hospitals and other health care organizations (e.g., the California Health Care Association).
- Community-based service organizations (e.g., FRCs).
- Law enforcement (e.g., district attorneys, police departments, sheriff's departments, and probation offices).
- Public agencies, private organizations, and policy/decision makers from local government.
- State Departments (e.g., Education and Health Services).
- Community Institutions (e.g., schools, colleges and universities).

### **Specific CDSS Activities**

CDSS continues to promote SSB. As a result of the audit of the SSB law by the California Bureau of State Audits (April 2007), a workgroup was convened to include statewide and local stakeholders and is making active plans to improve outreach efforts. The CDSS has completed new, updated pamphlets and posters, in English and Spanish, and is continuing to explore the possibility of a toll free hotline number.

### **Specific CDSS Activities**

The CDSS also continues to promote the SSB media campaign. As a result of the recent audit of the SSB law by the California Bureau of State Audits (April 2007), a workgroup was convened that included statewide and local stakeholders to improve outreach efforts and improve the implementation of the law among the responsible agencies. The CDSS has completed new, updated pamphlets and posters, in English and Spanish, and is exploring the possibility of a toll free hotline number and using the internet (i.e., U-Tube) to distribute educational materials to the public.

As of December 2008, 280 newborns have been safely surrendered in California while another 151 infants have been found alive following their illegal abandonment.

### **Supporting Father Involvement Study (SFI)**

During SFY 2002/03, CDSS/OCAP funded a research study to improve the quality and level of positive father involvement in at-risk families. Contractors were the child welfare services (CWS) agencies in five counties, which were required to partner with a local family resource center (FRC) for implementation.

Initially, Sacramento County participated in the study as the fifth site. When the FRC site experienced continuing difficulty identifying and engaging target population families, the CDSS/OCAP and Sacramento County mutually agreed to terminate the county's participation. The county provided alternative services to fathers who resided in the neighborhood of the FRC.

During SFY 2006/07, CDSS/OCAP entered into contract with Contra Costa County as a replacement site. The FRC implementing the SFI program is located in Richmond, California and primarily provides services to African-American families. Currently, the SFI program is implemented in Santa Cruz, San Luis Obispo, Tulare, Yuba, and Contra Costa counties.

The University of California, Berkeley (UC Berkeley) was contracted to conduct (provide assessment tools, curriculum, forms, data analysis, and clinical consultation) the SFI research study to:

- Determine the effectiveness of a particular intervention to increase positive father involvement.

- Measure organizational culture change to determine the extent to which the family resource centers implementing the intervention becomes more father friendly: engage fathers in other programs and services offered, reflect father inclusion in workers' attitudes/practices, agency policies and procedures, and within the agency physical environment.

The target population is comprised of co-parenting couples with children age seven and younger. Families are randomly assigned to one of three of the following groups:

- A one-time educational presentation about how positive father involvement improves outcomes for children.
- A 16-week (2 hours per week) group meeting for fathers.
- A 16-week group for couples (2 hours per week). All project participants receive case management services.

Data is being collected through a battery of assessments that are administered three times during each family's participation in the study. Funding for this program will continue through SFY 2012.

### **Activities/Results**

The principal investigators were retained through UC Berkeley. UC Berkeley subcontracted for clinical consultation from the Connecticut Department of Mental Health (to retain consultants from Yale University Medical School and Smith College). Project meetings to provide face-to-face training and technical assistance to staff of the five sites are held twice yearly. A project listserv in 2004 continues to be used to enhance communication between the sites, the research team, and CDSS. Additionally, twice monthly, separate teleconferences are held for group leaders, case managers, data coordinators, and the California Team, consisting of the researchers, principal investigators and staff from the CDSS/OCAP. The study sites (five family resource centers) have enrolled families into the study and are providing intervention services. As of March 2009, 2,125 families have been found eligible to participate in SFI.

The design of the SFI study involves random assignment to:

- A single informational session (the control group).
- A 16-week fathers-only group.
- A 16-week couple's group.

Case Managers conduct the information sessions, while group leaders (one male-female pair of licensed clinicians per site) facilitate the group sessions. While SFI is completing Phase III of the study, the results from Phase I and Phase II have been obtained. The researchers report the following findings for Phase II in comparison with Phase I:

#### Results that are the Same as Phase I

- Father involvement in completing tasks in the upkeep of the home and the care of the children (Who does what?) increased significantly as reported by members of the Couples groups.
- Couple relationship satisfaction was maintained by those in both Couples and Fathers groups.
- Children's problem behaviors remained stable in families from both Couples and Fathers groups.

#### Results that are Better than Phase I

- Parenting stress declined significantly in Fathers group members (in contrast with Phase I when it was only in Couples group).
- Couple conflict was reduced in Couples group parents.
- Conflict between parents about the children was reduced in the Couples group (marginally significant reduction in Fathers group parents).
- Violent problem solving (yelling, throwing things) declined significantly as reported by both partners in both Couples and Fathers groups.
- Life stress declined in Couples group parents.
- Social support increased according to mothers in Couples groups.

#### **Objective**

To continue to disseminate SFI results throughout the five counties hosting the current SFI programs and throughout the remainder of the state. To complete Phase III by June 30, 2009.

#### **Activities/Results**

CDSS/OCAP is in the process of completing Phase III, which will occur by June 30, 2009.

CDSS/OCAP, along with the Stuart Foundation, provided funding to Strategies Region 2 for the statewide dissemination of results beyond the five current counties. Funding also provides for the hiring of a Dissemination Project Manager, which was accomplished during the early part of FFY 2007/08.

#### **Objective**

Refine the plan for disseminating the SFI results from Phase I and Phase II. Increase dissemination efforts. Continue to deliver an effective training and technical assistance program to the five implementing sites to enable them to better meet the needs of participating families.

#### **Activities/Results**

During SFY 2008/09, training and technical assistance to the five sites implementing the SFI study centered upon the following:.

- Model fidelity.
- Data collection and reporting.
- Project oversight and sustainability development.
- Clinical skills/group intervention approaches.
- Case management strategies.
- Activities to disseminate the results of Phase I and Phase II throughout the five counties currently hosting the SFI programs, as well as throughout the remainder of the state.
- Creating a group leader training curriculum
- Creating a case manager training curriculum
- Developing collaborative partnerships between key FI and CWS staff

### **Significant Accomplishments**

Significant Accomplishments included:

- Analyzing the results of Phase I and Phase II
- Establishing workable partnerships between SFI and CWS with the institution of CWS liaisons from the county in each of the five host counties
- Hiring a Dissemination Manager
- Coordinating a statewide dissemination plan
- Successful implementation of the beginning stages of the dissemination plan
- Coordinating the collaborative participation of site representatives for the production of group leader and case management training manuals.

### **CalWORKS Child-Only Study**

This contract was terminated as of June 30, 2008.

### **Citizen Review Panels (CRP)**

Established by federal statute in the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) as a requirement for state grant, the function of CRPs is to examine the extent to which state and local child protection agencies are discharging their child protection obligations. Evaluation involves examining child protection policies, practices, and procedures. Recommendations are then made to county and state governments for improvement.

CRPs bring together citizens, former consumers of services, foster parents, child welfare services professionals, court-appointed special advocates, children's attorneys, educators, representatives of tribal governments, representatives of county public health and mental health agencies, law enforcement officials and others to review these policies, practices and procedures.

### **Objective**

Assure that there is a minimum of three citizen review panels operating in the state each year.

**Activities /Results**

CDSS/OCAP released a Request for Applications to fund panels for the period of July 1, 2006 through June 30, 2009. San Mateo and Calaveras Counties applied for and received funding. In addition to the two local panels, there is a statewide CRP which brings the number of citizen review panels in California to the required three panels.

**Objective**

Maintain compliance with all federal CAPTA requirements regarding CRPs.

**Activities/Results**

All county panels are required to submit an annual report including recommendations to the state and/or local government and to the CDSS/OCAP. The statewide CRP makes its recommendations to the CDSS/OCAP. The CDSS/OCAP responds in writing to the recommendations no later than six months after the date the report was submitted.

CRPs are engaging in on-going recruitment of members to create a diverse panel of private and public stakeholders.

CRPs are developing and implementing the means by which recommendations will be disseminated to county and state officials and the public.

**Objective**

The enhancement of training and technical assistance provided to the CRPs.

**Activities/Results**

To facilitate understanding of the changing focus of the child welfare system in California, the CDSS/OCAP engaged a consultant who had background in child welfare service system improvement. The consultant provides consultation to panels through site visits, conference calls and e-mails. October 1, 2008–September 30, 2009, the consultant has provided over 150 hours of technical assistance to the CRPs.

The technical assistance includes:

- Site visits to CRP counties with follow-up reports to the CDSS/OCAP.
- Program orientation and development of policies and procedures. Training to new CRP and CDSS/OCAP staff regarding all aspects of the CRPs.
- As requested by CRP, provide support documents, information about other state CRP practices, current trends and data to support chosen objectives.
- Telephone conference calls to obtain updates, provide guidance and answer questions.
- Review, provide input for, and make revisions of reports prior to their submission to the CDSS/OCAP

- Review work plans; assist in formalization of objectives and corresponding review activities.
- Provide on-going guidance to CRP counties, the state CRP and the CDSS/OCAP as requested.

Annual CRP Meeting:

The annual meeting was held in January 2009, with members from Calaveras, San Mateo and the state CRP attending. Focus of this meeting was to acquaint all of the CRPs with one another and to share successes and challenges. It also served as an opportunity to review CRP requirements.

## ANNUAL REPORTS

## CHILD FATALITY/NEAR FATALITY DISCLOSURE RESPONSIBILITIES

Since 2001, as part of its oversight responsibility for the delivery of child welfare services, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), Children Services Operations Bureau (CSOB) has conducted electronic and, as necessary, on-site case reviews of child fatalities and prepared summaries on the circumstances of the death. These reviews included all children under the agency's supervision or previously known to the agency and had not been limited to children in foster care.

The information from the reviews has been used to improve regulatory changes or policy changes that will protect vulnerable children. Further, the information identified additional training needs of social work staff. The CSOB also completed ad hoc reviews of fatalities based upon requests by the CDSS Directorate, Administration for Children and Families (ACF), or county Child Welfare/Probation Departments.

Starting in 2006 the CDSS implemented a corrective action plan with the federal Administration for Children and Families (ACF). The corrective action plan addressed California's compliance with the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) requirements for states to "have provisions which allow for public disclosure of the findings or information about the case of child abuse and/or neglect which has resulted in a child fatality or near fatality". Effective July 21, 2006, pursuant to All County Letter (ACL) 06-24, counties were required to submit a Child Fatality/Near Fatality Questionnaire to CDSS if:

- The county has reasonable suspicion that the fatality/near fatality was caused by abuse and/or neglect.
- A fatality/near fatality initially appears unrelated to abuse and/or neglect, but the county subsequently has reasonable suspicion that in fact it may have been so caused.

The plan and instructional ACL provided the counties with a definition of near fatality to guide them in reporting. For the purposes of reporting, a near fatality is defined as "a severe childhood injury or condition caused by abuse and/or neglect which results in the child receiving critical care for at least 24 hours following the child's admission to a critical care unit."

California state law was changed effective January 1, 2008, with the passage of Senate Bill (SB) 39, Chapter 468, Statutes of 2007, which clarified the requirements for disclosure of child fatality information in California and helped ensure compliance with CAPTA requirements. In accordance with SB 39, counties are required to submit to the CDSS a Statement of Findings and Information (SOC 826 form) to report child fatalities which are suspected or found to be caused by abuse and/or neglect. Additionally, beginning January 1, 2008, SB 39 required local child welfare agencies to respond directly to public requests for information related to child fatalities resulting from abuse and/or neglect.

Pursuant to ACL 08-13 counties also continue to have responsibility for providing the CDSS with a Statement of Findings and Information for child near fatalities that are the result of abuse and or neglect. CDSS has the responsibility for responding to public requests for information on near fatalities resulting from abuse or neglect. The CDSS meets this

responsibility by releasing a statement of findings/notification that includes CAPTA required information upon public request.

These Statements of Findings and Information have replaced the process outlined in ACL 06-24, and will serve as the basis for CAPTA disclosure in the future as well as the analysis to be presented in future APSRs. CDSS also remains responsible for reviewing all fatalities in California from an oversight perspective, and meeting the day to day operational needs for timely response to child fatality/near fatality case specific information and analysis from the federal government and the public.

SB 39 also requires CDSS to issue an annual report on the notifications received, and identifying numbers of fatalities and any systemic issues or patterns based on information provided by the counties in the SOC 826 forms. To reduce duplication as well as to provide the most comprehensive aggregate data reporting and analysis for all occurrences, and as agreed upon between CDSS and ACF, Children's Bureau, the Annual Report will also be provided as part of the Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR) of the state's Title IV-B Child and Family Services Plan and will be available to the public on the CDSS website beginning with the federal fiscal year 2009 reporting period. To the extent that this report does not reflect near fatality information, additional analyses will be submitted as needed as part of the APSR. Therefore, beginning with the federal fiscal year 2009 APSR report, CDSS will provide relevant child fatality/near fatality information for Calendar Year 2008.

#### **Current Programmatic Efforts to Improve Disclosure in California and Address Issues Identified During Child Fatality/Near Fatality Reviews**

During the last year, CDSS completed its commitment under its corrective action plan to provide a statement of findings and information for child fatalities/near fatalities that occurred as a result of child abuse and/or neglect in California during the period of July 21, 2006 through December 31, 2007. Additionally, the CDSS has made great strides in implementing the SB 39 public disclosure requirements in California that will greatly improve the information available to the public on cases involving child fatalities that are the result of abuse and/or neglect. Emergency regulations were enacted which implement the SB 39 child fatality disclosure requirements. These regulations, which were effective January 1, 2009, were drafted with the input of various stakeholders including county child welfare staff, child advocacy groups, and CDSS staff. The regulations adopted reflect the varying interests of the stakeholders and address county responsibilities in the areas of notification to CDSS, disclosure of case file information, redaction of confidential information, confidentiality laws, etc. It is anticipated that these emergency regulations will be adopted as final regulations during CY 2009.

The CDSS also revised the Statement of Findings and Information (SOC 826) form to provide clarification regarding the final determination of a child near fatality to make certain that all findings are captured on the form. Additionally, the form was modified to include expanded information related to near fatalities resulting from abuse and/or neglect. The most recent version of the form now captures information regarding the final findings for near fatalities to make the reporting for near fatalities consistent with the reporting for child fatalities. The new form was provided to counties via ACL 09-02. In February 2009, the CDSS issued All County Information Notice I-13-09 which reminded counties of existing policies and procedures regarding the investigation and documentation

of child abuse and neglect reports in the CWS/CMS application. This reminder was provided to ensure that counties maintain proper documentation of all child welfare activities including investigation of child fatalities/near fatalities.

In May of 2009, the CDSS also provided joint training with the County Welfare Directors Association on the new SB 39 statutory and regulatory requirements. This training provided county staff with an overview of the new requirements for disclosure and reporting to CDSS.

**CAPTA Budget for Federal Fiscal Year  
Basic State Grants**

<b>Activities</b>	<b>FFY 2008 (Actual)</b>	<b>FFY 2009 (Estimate)</b>	<b>Total</b>
Projects (90%)	\$2,769,656	\$2,718,231	\$5,487,887
Administrative Costs* (10%)	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$600,000
<b>Totals</b>	\$3,069,656	<b>\$3,018,231</b>	<b>\$6,087,887</b>
* Administrative costs include:			
Staff	\$264,163	\$270,000	\$534,163
Travel	\$35,837	\$30,000	\$65,837

(Administrative costs capped at \$300,000)

**CALIFORNIA CITIZEN REVIEW PANELS**  
**Ninth Annual Report**  
**October 1, 2008 – September 30, 2009**

**Background and Purpose:**

The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) was originally enacted in 1974 to provide annual grants to states. The purpose of the grant was to improve the state's child protective services system and was based on the population of children under 18. Since 1974, there have been additional amendments to CAPTA. In 1996, an amendment added a new eligibility requirement for states to establish Citizen Review Panels (CRPs) as oversight to the states' child protective services system. Under the legislation, each state was required to establish no less than three CRPs, with the exception of states that receive the minimum allotment under the statute. The panel members were to be volunteers who were broadly representative of the community at large to include concerned citizens, experts in child protection and prevention, advocacy, foster care, education, mental health, the court system, law enforcement, and children services. The mandate of the CRPs is to "evaluate the extent to which the agencies (state and local) are effectively discharging their child protection responsibilities." The panels are required to examine policies, procedures, and where appropriate, specific cases handled by the state and local agencies providing child protective services.

The federal statute broadly defines the function of CRPs. The panel must meet not less than once every three months and shall produce an annual public report containing a summary of their activities. In June 2003, CAPTA was amended when the "Keeping Children and Families Safe Act" was signed by the President. This revised the CRP duties to include: 1) requiring each panel to examine the practices (in addition to policies and procedures) of the state and local child welfare agencies, 2) providing for public outreach and comment in order to assess the impact of current procedures and practices upon children and families in the community, and 3) requiring each panel to make recommendations to the state and public on improving the child protective services system. In addition, the appropriate state agency is required to respond in writing no later than six months after the panel recommendations are submitted. The state agency's response must include a description of whether or how the state will incorporate the recommendation of the panel (where appropriate) to make measurable progress in improving the state child protective services system.

**Program Structure:**

The California Department of Social Services' (CDSS) Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP) administers California's CRPs. Currently there are panels in Calaveras and San Mateo counties and a statewide panel which reviews the policies, practices and procedures of California's child welfare services system. These panels are reflective of the demographic, economic, social, and political climate found in different areas throughout the state depicting the varied conditions of child protective services in California. Technical assistance, guidance and

coordination are available through OCAP. Additionally, technical assistance via a sub-contract with a consultant is provided through Strategies, Region II. During this reporting period approximately 140 hours of technical assistance have been provided by the consultant to the county panels, state panel and to OCAP.

#### **Overview of Current Activities at the State Oversight Level:**

The OCAP staff, in conjunction with the CRP consultant and the CRPs, is focusing on building strong panels that are reflective of their communities and are able to partner with local and statewide child protective service systems, as well as each other, to enhance the safety and well being of children.

The following activities/goals were established by OCAP in response to these requests:

- Convening of representatives from each panel at one site to provide information sharing, technical assistance and networking opportunities. The meeting was held on January 6, 2009, and was very successful. It provided an excellent opportunity for the panels to share successes and challenges and for OCAP staff to clarify guidelines and expectations.
- Promote information sharing and networking within the three California panels as well as with panels in other states. At the January meeting, panels were able to network and make connections with one another. Panels now have access to the national CRP website [www.uky.edu/SocialWork/crp](http://www.uky.edu/SocialWork/crp).
- Encourage panels to review the PIP developed in response to California's CFSR. The CDSS staff shared the PIP with the panels at the January 6, 2009, meeting and encouraged their involvement in implementation and monitoring components of the plan impacting their communities.
- Continue to contract services with the CRP consultant. The consultant is a valuable source of information and is helping to train and provide technical assistance to the panels.

The CAPTA requirements are broadly defined. The OCAP is reviewing current guidelines and considering their value to the structure of California CRPs.

- Some modifications and deletions to these guidelines have been made.
- OCAP is planning to create regulations to formalize the CRP processes.

A new funding cycle for CRPs begins July 1, 2009, and will end June 30, 2012.

- The selection process for the next funding cycle has begun with the issuance of an ACIN requesting applications from counties to operate a CRP. Current participants will be invited to continue with the possibility of having three-to- five panels in California.
- Applications submitted will be reviewed using a point system based on the responses to the questions which are outlined in the ACIN. Counties will be selected by these criteria and notified of the selection. Panels chosen will have funding available to assist in covering the cost associated with the operation of their panel.

## **PANEL INFORMATION**

### **Calaveras County**

#### **County Profile:**

Calaveras County is located in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains – 133 miles east of San Francisco and 135 miles west of Lake Tahoe, midway along state Highway 49, which links the towns of the Gold Country.

The population for Calaveras County is approximately 46,844 residents of which 8,140 are children 18 years and younger. The breakdown of the county racial demographics are as follows: 93 percent Caucasian, 10.1 percent Latino/Hispanic, 1.8 percent Native American Indian, 1.4 percent Asian, 1.2 percent Black and the remaining 2.6 percent represents all other groups. The county child protection agency received 925 child abuse referrals of which 132 were substantiated cases. There are 67 children in foster care placement which represents 8.2 percent of the children population under the age of 18.<sup>5</sup>

#### **Activities:**

- Calaveras CRP actively recruited members after losing some during a transition to a new fiscal agent. Members spoke to agencies serving families and children and issued a press release to local print and internet media to specifically include parents on their panel.
- All members have signed a statement of confidentiality regarding the security and privacy of information obtained. Each member received a binder with the reference manual for California CRPs and CRP Guidelines and Protocols. Members understand that the scope of work defines the goals to be achieved for the year and reviewed it for clarification.
- Each panel member completed a self-evaluation, "Panel Member Perspective on the Citizen Review Panel Process" in October 2008. Panel members were unified in their purpose and strengths, but burdened by a loss of members and focus during the fiscal agent transition.
- Calaveras CRP focused on assessing the effectiveness of new policies and procedures of the Calaveras County Child Welfare System and consumer agencies regarding re-entry into the foster care system. The work resulted in improvements addressing parent education, parent involvement in developing case plans, and training for social workers.
- The SIP, effective until May 2011, was approved by the Board of Supervisors on September 16, 2008. One focus was on reducing the rate of children re-entering foster care within 12 months of reunifying with their parents. The CRP recommendations were included in the SIP.

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<sup>5</sup> Information provided by the Census Bureau and the Center for Social Research, University of California at Berkeley.

- According to the AB 636 Quarterly Data Report received, the number of children re-entering foster care from the time that the CRP made its first recommendation report to the most recent Quarterly Data Report has been reduced from 18.2 percent to 12.2 percent. The National Standard/Goal is 9.9 percent or less.
- A committee interviewed the Children's Services social workers and court-ordered parents to evaluate their understanding of case plans and ensure their involvement in the development and implementation of case plans. Based on the CRP recommendations last year, parents feel the process has improved.
- Internal policies and procedures were updated and a 12-week training program for all Children Services social workers and all new staff. Social workers were interviewed to access their understanding of new policies and procedures. Their responses support the policy changes.
- The Calaveras CRP annual report is provided at the regular public meeting of the Prevent Child Abuse Council Calaveras and is made available to county agencies and partners, foster care agencies, law enforcement, and the Board of Supervisors.

#### **Recommendations and Responses**

- 1. Utilize the new Perinatal Substance Abuse Program. Drug relapse has been a common reason for parents' inability to make positive life changes outlined in the case plans. Coordinate the efforts of Drug and Alcohol Abuse and Mental Health to reduce the rate of foster care re-entry in Calaveras County.**

The Calaveras County Behavioral Health Services' (BHS) Substance Abuse Program (SAP) began the Perinatal Program in February 2008 that is consistently full, with many referred clients. The Calaveras Works and Human Services Agency (CWHSA) consider their partners at BHS SAP the experts in this arena and defer to their recommended treatment plans. The philosophy of BHS SAP is that the client should be placed in the least restrictive environment, and CWHSA supports that. Therefore, female clients-in-common are typically referred to the Perinatal Program. During this first year, the program was massaged as needed to continually improve. The program has one main counselor who came to the CWHSA to give an overview, and she is quick to contact the CWHSA Program Manager and staff with updates, new ideas, and suggestions. In fact, the Perinatal substance abuse counselor recently contacted the CWHSA Program Manager to schedule a morning session at the Perinatal Program to provide an overview of the Child Welfare Services system and a Q&A session with the Perinatal attendees. This in-service occurred on February 11, 2009. Another suggestion by the Perinatal substance abuse counselor was to have the Children's Services social workers bring their referred clients to the Perinatal Program before they begin sessions to meet the counselor, see the facility, and learn about the program. This counselor is a regular member of the Calaveras County Multi-Disciplinary Team who provides valuable information and suggestions during these meetings. She has also participated in TDM meetings when invited, and she is also a Prevent Child Abuse Council/CRP member.

Additionally, the BHS SAP recently implemented a "Dual Diagnosis" program for those individuals who suffer from both substance abuse issues and mental illness. Again, the CWHSA considers their partners at BHS SAP the experts in this arena and defer to their recommended treatment plans, which include this new Dual Diagnosis program.

**2. Engage Families in developing case plans and selecting the support needed based on specific barriers. Individualize case plans.**

Engaging families in the case planning process is vital to successful outcomes. Although CWHSA included engagement activities in our previous County SIP, we recognize that these efforts are important and need to continue. We implemented TDM meetings in October 2008. One use of these meetings is for family engagement in case planning. Additionally, our Juvenile Court is developing a Family and Juvenile Court Mediation program. Representatives from the Juvenile Court and other partner agencies (including CWHSA and Probation) met on February 10, 2009, to discuss this and other issues and the first actual mediation session occurred on March 2, 2009. It is anticipated that there will be heightened family involvement in the case planning process through these TDMs and mediation sessions.

Individualized case plans are also crucial. The CWHSA has representatives who are regularly participating in a statewide workgroup to develop a concise, user-friendly case plan that will be included in a future CWS/CMS release. In fact, Calaveras County is credited with the model that has been selected. It is a one page "refrigerator list" case plan that clearly outlines what each worker's responsibilities are. Until then, CWHSA has revised our case plan language to be more tailored to the individual's needs. CWHSA began using this language in January 2009. Feedback so far from the court, parents and their attorney is that the case plans do seem to be more individualized.

**3. Adapt the intake/parent education/life skills program ("Beyond Talking") to trim redundancy. Parent Education needs to be tailored to the age of the child.**

CWHASA is in agreement that the Parent Education classes that are currently available are inadequate to meet the needs of all parents in general (not just CWHSA-referred individuals). CWHSA began refining the Beyond Talking program in July 2008. Since that time, the Beyond Talking Coordinator compared the Life Skills and Parent Education curriculums as well as the curriculum that is being used at the Perinatal Program to identify redundancy and was able to eliminate half of the classes/meetings that our Children's Services clients were previously required to attend. Still, it was recognized that the curriculum is broad and is not tailored to the age of the children. CWHSA has partnered with BHS in their efforts to implement the "Positive Parenting Program" (Triple P) parent education program in Calaveras County. This is a large undertaking and will require considerable time and effort by many agencies and individuals. In the meantime, the First 5 Calaveras is working on an interim parent education model and have consulted with various CWHSA employees on

this project. CWHSA is committed to improving the parent education that is available to all Calaveras County parents and will continue to analyze the current parent education offerings and partner with our community service providers in their efforts, as well.

**4. Consider ways to offer in-home Parent Education services for newly reunified families.**

The CWHSA is in agreement that in-home parent education is needed, especially for newly reunified families. CWHSA does have a family preservation social worker who is assigned to work with families who are about to reunify for an intensive, short-term period of time, but unfortunately budgetary restrictions have prevented CWHSA from developing a larger-scale internal in-home parent education program. CWHSA has decided to first focus their efforts on revising the general parent education in Calaveras County, but are committed to this as a longer term goal. In the meantime, CWHSA will provide as much support as our personnel and budget allow to other community partners who are considering implementing an in-home parent education program.

**5. Continue to update and revise CWHSA Policies and Procedures as needed, and share with staff and/or provide training on the newly updated or created Policies and Procedures as needed.**

Updates were completed on all of the CWHSA Policies and Procedures for Children's Services in December 2008. The updates were distributed to all of the Children's Services staff and were included in all of the Policy and Procedure binders. We will continue to update them as needed and provide any necessary training to the Children's Services staff once the updates are complete.

To summarize, here are the commitments we have made in this response report:

- CWHSA will continue to use the Perinatal substance abuse program (as recommended by the BHS SAP) and will continue to partner with the Perinatal substance abuse counselor on suggestions to improve the program, as needed.
- CWHSA will continue family engagement efforts by using our new TDMs and the Court's mediation program, and will continue to represent Calaveras County at the statewide case plan redesign workgroup.
- CWHSA will continue to participate in Triple P committee meetings, and will continue to work with First 5 Calaveras on implementing the parent education session planning.
- CWHSA will continue to provide as much support as our personnel and budget allow to other community partners who are considering implementing an in-home parent education program.
- CWHSA will continue to update internal CWHSA Policies and Procedures for Children's Services as needed, and provide any necessary training to the Children's Services staff once the updates are complete.

Submitted to Calaveras CRP on 2/13/09

Submitted to CDSS/OCAP on 2/16/09

## **San Mateo County**

### **County Profile**

San Mateo County is located in the western portion of the San Francisco Bay Area, directly below the city and county of San Francisco. It is one of California's most affluent counties and part of the "Silicon Valley," home of many high-tech firms.

The population for San Mateo County is approximately 706,984 residents of which 163,565 are children 18 years and younger. The breakdown of the county racial demographics are as follows: 46 percent Caucasian, 23 percent Latino/Hispanic, 24.1 percent Asian, 3.3 percent Black, 1.4 percent Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders, less than 1 percent Native American Indians, and 3.2 percent report two or more races. The county child protection agency received 4,397 child abuse referrals of which 591 were substantiated cases. There are 389 children in foster care placement which represents 2.4 percent of the children population under the age of 18.<sup>6</sup>

### **Activities**

- Working with a site developer, CRP planned and implemented an interactive website [www.smcprp.org](http://www.smcprp.org). It is designed to be the cornerstone of CRP's outreach efforts providing information about the mission and goals of the group, products of past work, and an opportunity for members of the public to contact CRP with thoughts and input and also a restricted access section for CRP members.
- The CRP developed and printed an informational brochure to use in outreach efforts. The brochure corresponds with the web site, utilizing the logo that exists on the web. A distribution plan is being developed and the brochure will be translated into Spanish in the next quarter.

The CRP developed an outreach plan for 2008-09:

1. Place an article in the Community Information Program (CIP) newsletter.
2. Develop two-way links from the CRP website to related websites.
3. Add CRP information to the CIP website.
4. Place CRP brochures in areas where members of the public have access (libraries, schools, adult education, Youth and Family Enrichment Services Hotline).
5. Use member connections to place articles about CRP in appropriate newsletters.

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<sup>6</sup> Information provided by the Census Bureau and the Center for Social Research, University of California at Berkeley.

- The San Mateo CRP developed an orientation manual for new members and made it available to all Panel members.
- For the second year, the CRP completed a self-evaluation process, using a scaled rating system and written comments.
- The CRP reviewed the recommendation related information it received during the past year and agreed to a “finding” for each recommendation.
- The CRP followed up on the prior year’s annual report recommendation, including any county and state responses to the recommendations.

## Recommendations

1. **Children and Family Services (CFS) should explore the thoughtful use of collaborative decision-making models (Team Decision Making, Family/Student Study Teams, Family Group Conferencing, Family Mediation, etc.) to engage families and caregivers in productive partnerships to benefit children. The CFS should look for opportunities to maximize the use of these models, increase referrals between models and promote quality and consistency in the implementation of these models.**

In the 2008-09 term, Children and Family Services expanded its use of Team Decision Making (TDM) meetings as part of its overall strategy to ensure families are engaged and participating in decisions involving youth in the child welfare system. Through the TDM process, a collaborative child support network consisting of HSA, Mental health, CBOs and family members is convened at each instance in which a child changes placement. The goal of these collaborative meetings is to allow families to select individuals with whom they feel comfortable to participate in discussions surrounding placements, who may then assist the parents in advocating for themselves. By encircling families in a network of support, TDM meetings empower families to take an active role in the design and implementation of an action plan, which leads to more cooperative participation and higher reunification rates.

CFS has taken steps toward working with County Counsel and the Private Defenders Office to educate them on the purpose and goals of TDMs, and to secure their support and participation, when necessary, in the process. It is expected this promising relationship will continue to grow in the coming year, as CFS and the legal team pursue cooperation in refining the TDM model.

In addition to engaging families in child welfare decisions and family plans, the TDM process has also been an important tool in CFS’s commitment toward addressing disproportionate outcomes for children of color involved in the system. The TDM meeting environment allows CFS to take a more thoughtful approach to considering cultural norms and how they affect families.

CFS continues to make progress towards ensuring that TDM meetings are a collaborative process, and that when appropriate, families are referred to other county and community resources that meet their needs. CFS has relationships with an expansive network of family engagement partners, allowing CFS to make

referrals that reflect that dynamics of each family and their unique challenges. During the TDM meeting, families may be referred to providers for mental health services, intensive in-home services, differential response, mediation services, kinship support services, or to a regional Family Resource Center. Recommendations may be made during the TDM meeting that families participate in Family Self Sufficient Teams, or other types of Multi-Disciplinary Team meetings. Families may also be connected with community-based services such as the local YMCA or Boys & Girls Club. When appropriate, the Asian American Recovery Services is invited to TDM meetings, and for families involving children under the age of five, staff from the Pre-to-Three program are invited. The partners identified above are a representative, but not exhaustive, list of community resources families may be referred to.

In addition to serving as community resources that support families beyond the TDM meeting, many of these partners offer their buildings as locations in which TDM meetings can take place. The level of support offered to families by CFS and its partners during the TDM process contributes to the larger goals of reunification or other forms of placement stability.

- 2. CFS should fully implement its System Improvement Plan (SIP) goal of using the case review process as a tool for improving practices in re-entry cases. CRP will participate in this case review approach when possible and may, use an independent case review process for re-entry cases:**

As part of the System Improvement Plan (SIP) CFS has been conducting quarterly Qualitative Internal Peer Case Record Reviews, wherein identified cases are reviewed using an evaluation tool developed in alignment with the Council on Accreditation (COA) standards. CRP members Ginny Stewart and Jamila Pounds have been participating in this quarterly review process. It is anticipated that one hundred case records will be reviewed during the fiscal years 2008-09 and 2009-10 term, of which approximately 13 percent are re-entry cases.

The SIP evaluation tool ensures a systematic approach is applied to each case record review, and allows CFS to ensure best practice models of service delivery are being implemented. Through this process, CFS is able to identify and address any deficiencies that are discovered. Data from the quarterly case record reviews is analyzed for trends on positive outcomes and areas for improvement, and incorporated in larger agency-wide self evaluation processes. Results from the analyses are disseminated to program managers and supervisors, and made available for all CFS staff to review.

- 3. CFS should continue to implement its evidence-based parent education program (addressing barriers such as transportation whenever possible) and explore expansion of this program to include parents of younger children and parents of teenagers.**

CFS has a contract with Lutra Group, which provides training to social workers and childhood education instructors in the Strengthening Families Program (SFP) curriculum. The Parent Education program was expanded in fiscal year 2008-09 to

include an SFP curriculum component on parents of children ages 3-5 years. CFS also entered into a contract with Melissa Dulla to co-facilitate the

new curriculum, along with Cañada College. The SFP curriculum is an evidence-based parent education series, and has been well received by participating families.

In December, 2009, CFS purchased the SFP teen curriculum component, and offered one session during the 2008-09 term. The addition of this component allowed CFS to expand its collaboration with Juvenile Probation, as many of the parents and families participating in the teen courses have engagement with the Juvenile Probation Department. CFS will be increasing its capacity in the upcoming year to offer more sessions on parents of teenagers.

In addition to offering more sessions for parents of young children and teenagers, the Parent Education classes have been held in regional locations in community buildings throughout the county to make them more accessible for families. While transportation is not provided, the goal is that by offering the classes in regional locations, transportation will be less of an obstacle for parents. CFS views these classes as an important service that provides families with the tools to implement positive parenting techniques and learn life skills that benefit the family as a whole, and serve as a potential deterrent to negative engagement with the child welfare system.

In the upcoming year, CFS will be exploring the development of a 'Parent Partnership Program', using graduates from the Parent Education program who have demonstrated leadership qualities as parent mentors. The Parent Education forum will be a great opportunity for CFS to work with potential parent mentors, and leverage their success to engage even more parents in family support.

**4. CFS should continue to pursue collaboration with Juvenile Probation to promote consistency in parent education programs and maximize resources directed to parenting education.**

CFS is pleased to have been collaborating with Juvenile Probation with respect to the Parent Education program. Juvenile Probation families were invited to participate in the parent education classes, and their referrals represented approximately 2/3 of the parents present for the SPF teen curriculum class.

As well as being represented among the participating families, Juvenile Probation has collaborated with CFS in a significant way by having one of its Probation Officer staff attend the 'Train the Trainer' program, qualifying the Officer to now team with CFS in teaching future courses. This partnership will strengthen the relationship between CFS and Juvenile Probation in moving forward with the parent education classes, and will contribute to ensuring consistent messages are disseminated to families.

**5. CFS should continue efforts to ensure that all materials used to educate families, caregivers and members of the public about the child welfare system are understandable and accessible and implement a consistent process to**

**ensure distribution of these materials to all parents involved in CFS:**

As part of the COA accreditation process, CFS undertook a review of all materials provided to families to ensure the documentation was consistent with best practices. A "Your Rights Documentation" form was developed that is issued to every parent at the point of initial contact, which confirms all materials related to client rights were received, and that the parent's preferred language choice is captured. The materials provided to parents during the initial contact include (1) A Parent's Guide to Child Protective Services Investigation, (2) Publication 13 *Rights and Responsibilities Publication*, (3) Parent's Guide to Foster Care, (4) Letter Regarding Shelter Care / Receiving Home, (5) Judicial Court Information Sheet (JV050), (6) Dependency Court: How It Works (JV055), (7) Child's Right (if applicable).

Materials given to families are available online, and in seven languages: English, Samoan, Simple Chinese, Spanish, Tagalog, Tongan, and Traditional Chinese.

**6. CFS should seek feedback from those who use the materials to ensure the distribution is effective:**

A parent review system, wherein a sampling of parents reviewed all documentation for content and ease of understanding, was conducted as part of the COA accreditation process. During this test review phase, parents were given the opportunity to comment on the forms and recommend changes. This feedback was incorporated into the final documentation that is now given to clients.

Materials developed by CFS have been shared with community and contracted partners, and a quality assurance review process, consistent with COA accreditation standards, is underway. This review process will ensure that feedback is solicited from staff, contracted and voluntary partners who interact with CFS clients. Furthermore, an internal survey on customer service is available to clients in each regional office.

**7. CFS should provide these materials to community partners so that they can assist parents to understand the child welfare system:**

The forms and documentation given to parents regarding the child welfare system have been distributed and are available to community partners including the Family Resource Centers, contracted partners that are service providers to clients, and other county entities that engage with CFS clients such as Prevention and Early Intervention, Juvenile Probation and Mental Health.

While the clarification of the forms that came out of the COA accreditation process has resulted in a more simplified dissemination of information, CFS will examine opportunities for outreach to community providers to make sure a clear and consistent message is conveyed.

**8. CFS should examine the impact of recent changes in the approach to differential response to determine if levels of family engagement have increased, and if participation in Path I has decreased the number of repeat referral and entry into the child welfare system:**

Engagement rates for the Differential Response program have been between 75 and 80 percent, with Path I engagement comprising approximately 10 percent of all referrals. Currently the data suggests no correlation between Path I referrals and entry into the child welfare system, as families engaged through Path I are typically not likely candidates to have entered the system at the point of referral.

For Path II referrals, however, CFS is observing a trend towards less entry into the child welfare system for families engaged at this referral level. This decrease in referrals is particularly notable among families with children in the 0-5 age group population. The larger impact of this has been a decreasing caseload for CFS, suggesting the funds used to support differential response have resulted in an overall cost savings to the County. Secondly, diverting potentially at-risk families to community resources allows them to be proactively engaged in the early intervention supports required for positive family functioning, rather than having CFS respond once the family is experiencing dysfunction and crisis. In this capacity, differential response serves as a preventative measure against families entering the child welfare system. Further empirical analysis of the data surrounding differential response and entry cases is necessary to understand more fully how the two statistically correlate, but preliminary evidence suggests the program measurably benefits both families and CFS.

Submitted to CDSS/OCAP: November 19, 2008

Submitted to Beverly Beasley Johnson, Director San Mateo County Human Services Agency, November 19, 2008

## **State CRP**

### **Membership**

All California Citizen's Review Panel (CCRP) members are acting as individuals/citizens on their own accord and not as representatives of their organizations. If an organization does not feel that it wants to send a citizen member, the Panel would welcome a non-voting advisor from that organization. It was felt that if all the members had to go back to their organizations to reach an agreement on recommendations that the process would become cumbersome.

### **Meetings**

In calendar year 2008, the CCRP met four times: January 15, April 8, August 11, and September 10. Two of the meetings were in Sacramento, one was in Burbank, and the fourth was a telephone meeting.

### **Activities**

Panel Member Nanette Gledhill presented the issues facing the implementation of the ICWA which is a federal law enacted 29 years ago. The provisions of ICWA were further codified in state law through:

SB 678 in part to help the child welfare agencies focus on implementation of ICWA. The SB 678 was effective January 2007 and filters into Family Law, Probate and Delinquency. Compliance with implementation of the act continues to be a systematically problematic throughout California. The three biggest problems are noticing, active efforts, and placement issues.

- The April 8, 2008, meeting was held in Southern California. There was a presentation by Principal Deputy County Counsel Randall Harris who demonstrated a web based software system called Simple Notice Application Program (SNAP) that creates the various notice documents for every dependency hearing. The system was recently enhanced to create the various documents required for ICWA notice. It draws information from the court data base and CWS/CMS to create the documents, including the next case, the biographical information, and identifies the appropriate Indian tribe and registered agent from the National Registry. The system is being piloted in one regional office in Los Angeles County.
- There was also a presentation on TDM from Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services on case plan development and TDM. Staff described the process which involves parents and families into the creation of the case plan.
- The August 10, 2008, meeting was held in Sacramento. There was a presentation by Karen Gunderson, CDSS, on concurrent planning and its implementation on a state wide basis. One of the state's goals is to decrease the time dependent children spend in foster care by either a more expeditious return home or the timely selection of an alternative permanent placement plan. Concurrent planning permits the child welfare agency to identify an appropriate permanent placement plan at the same time the social worker is working with the family to effectuate a safe reunification.
- Concurrent planning is a topic that the state CRP intends to focus upon next year. There was a concern that some social workers are not as "upfront" with the families about what concurrent planning means resulting in parents not understanding their children could be taken away permanently. They view concurrent planning as a significant motivation factor inspiring some parents to become very involved in the programs.
- There was a discussion about California's pip in Response to the federal CFSR. There are concerns that the recent legislation changing the statutory preference to place relative adoptions on at least an equal footing with adoption, extending the reunification period for incarcerated parents, and creating a sibling exception to TPR, will make it very difficult for agencies to make the improvements required in meeting the permanence goals set by the federal government. In order to pass the federal audit, the states have to beat 75 percent of the other states, or make a marked improvement in a number of categories including decreasing the time line for permanence.

### **Recommendation**

**The California Citizen's Review Panel strongly recommends that the California Department of Social Services include the Simple Notice Application Program (SNAP) developed by the Los Angeles County Counsel in the rewrite of CWS/CMS. The California Citizen's Review Panel feels that in inclusion of SNAP into the new CWS/CMS system being developed for the State will**

**ultimately save money but most importantly it will save children further time in the foster care system.**

The SNAP is a web based application which receives data from both the court data base and the CMS/CMS. It uses this information to complete notice documents and generate legally sufficient notices for all statutory dependency hearings. It reduces the notice legal analysis to a series of yes or no questions, which when answered correctly, will accurately identify what type of notice is required for the next scheduled hearings. It also will create all necessary Judicial Council forms and complete the necessary notices to comply with the provisions of the ICWA. It will also locate and address the notices to the designated agent for every federally recognized tribe and band. The system is also able to assimilate designated agents for non-federally recognized tribes which are important as recent legislation (SB 678) permits the Juvenile Courts to order notice to tribes who are not currently federally recognized.

The California dependency scheme contemplates that legal notices will be perfected by the social worker. The system is set up this way in part because the type of notice which is required in a particular case is dependent upon things that are solely within the social worker's knowledge, such as the parent's current residence or what the agency recommendation in a selection and implementation hearing will be. Many social workers have difficulty with what they view as complex legal work beyond the job description of a social worker.

In terms of ICWA documentation, successful notice requires a painstaking attention to detail. Many families who come before the Juvenile Court are poor historians of their family ancestry. This, coupled with the fact that many tribes have multiple bands, makes noticing the correct tribes a very difficult proposition. If the family is uncertain as to which band the child might be eligible for membership, notice is required for every possible band. As an example, the Chippewa tribes have twenty three separate designated agents and addresses. The social worker locates the appropriate tribes by referencing the Federal Register, which is not an easy document to search as it is organized by geographical location, and many tribes have entries in several geographical locations. As notices are required to return receipt requested, the social worker must organize and file the post cards with the corresponding notices to establish proper service. As membership in an Indian tribe is determined differently by each tribe or band, a seemingly innocuous misidentification of an ancestor's relationship to the child can cause notice deficiencies.

For all dependency hearings, notice failures are a common cause of continuances. These unnecessary delays are an additional expense for the agency, the parties, the attorneys, and court as they require additional reports, additional notices, and often delay outcomes for the children and families. Delays are particularly problematic in regards to the selection and implementation hearing as the continuance period is typically 120-days. The frequent inability of California counties to be consistent in their noticing procedures are causing delayed permanence for dependent children.

The notice problems caused by the dependency statute pale in comparison to the problems caused with noticing under the ICWA, which are wide spread throughout the state. Courts have repeatedly expressed frustration caused by the inability of child welfare workers to effectuate proper ICWA notice. ICWA notice deficiencies are most often identified on appeal from a termination of parental rights. The result is that the orders terminating parental rights are reversed and the cases are remanded to effectuate proper notice. As the overwhelming majority of the children are not eligible for membership in any tribe, these orders are reinstated once proper notice is completed. This process can postpone the finalization of adoptions and permanence for children for a year or more.

The primary causes of the delays are the failure to identify and serve the correct designated agent for all the tribes, the failure to adequately investigate Indian heritage usually because the necessary information is not provided to the caseworker, the failure to spell the Indian ancestor's name correctly, and misidentification of relatives. The ICWA SNAP was developed by a team of dependency attorneys in Los Angeles working with a computer programmer. The system was designed to proactively prevent or cure every identifiable cause of an ICWA notice failure. As the system draws biographical data from CWS/CMS, names are spelled correctly. The system has a family tree, so that the family ancestry is correctly identified by the program. The workers pick the applicable tribe, and all related tribes and bands are listed in a pick list with the correct designated agents and addresses. The worker would need to deselect a band that was inapplicable. When changes are made in existing data (e.g. the spelling of a name), the reasons for the change are documented and a legal affidavit is generated documenting why the change was made. The SNAP will search the postal services website twice daily to record when notices are received by the designated agents. Once notice is completed, SNAP will automatically create additional notices for subsequent hearings. This is very valuable as SB 678 requires subsequent notices be sent until a response is received from the tribes.

The system is currently being piloted in one regional office in Los Angeles County. This small pilot was very successful and it is being expanded to cover several regional offices. In 2005, Los Angeles County Counsel developed an e-mail system designed to improve notices in selection and implementation hearings. On all cases set for a section 366.26 selection and implementation hearing, the assigned attorney is sent an e-mail reminder. When the e-mail is opened, it creates an e-mail which is sent to the case carrying worker. Using the information contained in the County Counsel legal file, the trial attorney inputs data into SNAP. The SNAP sends a recommended notice to the worker with a suggestion that a notice conference occur. The program, which is far from fail safe as the caseworker may have different or more current information than County Counsel, improved notices in Los Angeles county selection and implementation hearings by approximately 25 percent. It received a Los Angeles County Quality and Productivity Award for saving a million dollars in 2006.

Submitted to CDSS/OCAP: May 14, 2009

Submitted to Teresa Contreras, Chief, Office of Child Abuse Prevention, California Department of Social Services, May 14, 2009

**State Citizen Review Panel Roster, Appendix A**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>TITLE and ORGANIZATION</b>
<b>Debby Jeter</b>	Deputy Director, San Francisco Human Services Agency
<b>Mary Butler</b>	Chief Probation Officer, Napa County
<b>Casey Blake</b>	City and County of San Francisco Human Services Agency, Family and Children Services Division, Principal Administrative Analyst
<b>Corene Kendrick</b>	Youth Law Center
<b>James Owens</b>	Assistant County Counsel, County of Los Angeles
<b>John Neiman</b>	Supervising Attorney, Office of Dependency Counsel
<b>Kate Cleary</b>	Consortium for Children, Executive Director
<b>Kelly Cleary</b>	Consortium for Children
<b>Mara Bernstein</b>	Center for Families, Children & the Courts, Judicial Council of California, Administrative Office of the Courts
<b>Mike Carll</b>	Parent Leader
<b>Nanette Gledhill</b>	Cal-ICWA, Director of Operations
<b>Pamela Maxwell</b>	Parent Partner
<b>Percy Tejada</b>	Dry Creek Rancheria of Pomo Indians, Indian Child Welfare Act Director

**CHAFEE FOSTER CARE INDEPENDENCE PROGRAM/EDUCATION AND TRAINING  
VOUCHERS PROGRAM**

**ANNUAL PROGRESS AND SERVICES REPORT**

**Program Contact Person**

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**1. Program Plan Narrative**

1) The CDSS administers, supervises or oversees the programs carried out under this plan; 2) CDSS agrees to cooperate in national evaluations of the effects of the independent living programs implemented to achieve the purposes of this plan; and 3) CDSS has reported on those accomplishments for the FFY 2008 that are promising practices, and demonstrated state technical assistance to counties in the provision of core services. While there were no significant programmatic changes made during the reporting period, CDSS continues its efforts to develop and implement promising practices to improve the delivery of services to current and former foster youth who are eligible for Independent Living Program (ILP) services.

The Transitional Independent Living Plan (TILP), available on the CWS/CMS, is a written service delivery plan that identifies the youth's emancipation goals and the specific skills needed to prepare the youth to live independently upon leaving foster care. The plan is mutually agreed upon by the youth, his or her social worker/probation officer, the youth's caregiver and other supportive adults.

The CDSS, in preparation for implementing the Chafee National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD), has been collaborating with counties to identify and develop methods for capturing information related to the demographics and outcomes of foster youth who receive ILP services. A workgroup, convened with members from CWDA, state and county employees, has identified a new method of data collection for all child welfare youth receiving ILP Services. The new process started October 1, 2008.

All County Letter (ACL), 08-31, dated July 18, 2008 instructed counties to begin entering identified delivered services to ILP participants in the Child Welfare Services/ Case Management System (CWS/CMS). This new process replaced manual data collection activities captured on the Department's SOC 405A form. The CDSS extracts the information from CWS/CMS for reporting purposes to the Federal Government. In addition, a new form, the SOC 405A.1, was developed to capture data elements for youth in probation and aftercare receiving ILP services. Information on these populations is not

included in the CWS/CMS. The SOC 405A.1 Form was introduced via ACL 08-63, dated December 24, 2008.

An additional workgroup, with members from CWDA, state and county employees, will be convened to identify the best methodology for planning and implementing the data collection on all foster youth in the baseline and follow-up populations for the purposes of NYTD. CDSS is also participating in a national advisory committee for NYTD.

The CDSS continues to require the submission of the ILP Narrative Report and Plan. All 58 counties must report relevant data regarding the administration of the ILP. Counties report on program policies/processes such as: equitable access to services for disabled youth, culturally appropriate services for Tribal youth, services for homeless youth, and services for parenting and pregnant youth. The data provided by counties is utilized to determine the need for technical assistance and to help counties improve in specific areas of service delivery. The report also helps us to identify innovative or best practices utilized by specific counties. Counties also provide statistical data on participants in their Independent Living and Transitional Housing Programs. This year the report has been updated to eliminate duplication of data from other reports and to clarify questions that counties had stated were confusing. County feedback has been positive on the revised form.

Additionally, counties are currently required to provide statistical data via the state of California 405A form. The form has been significantly reduced for the new fiscal year, but still meets federal data collection requirements.

For FFY 2008, the data captured in the 405A form:

- A 1 percent decrease in the number of youth to whom Independent Living services were offered
- A 1 percent decrease in the number of youth who received services
- A 3 percent decrease in the number of youth who completed Independent Living services or a component of those services
- An 4.6 percent decrease in the number of youth who completed high school, earned a GED or completed adult education
- An 18 percent decrease in the number of youth who completed vocational or on-the-job training
- A 7 percent decrease in the number of youth who enrolled in college

Although there have been decreases in several areas they represent small numbers of youth. For example, the 18 percent decrease in the number of youth who completed vocational or on-the-job training, represents a difference of 270 youth from last year to this year out of the 31,819 youth who received ILP services. Additionally, a few counties had problems submitting data this year so it is likely that the data contains some errors that may have resulted in the decreases in services. Related to that, the state changed its data submission procedures during the Federal Fiscal Year, which may have caused some confusion for counties and resulted in them not correctly submitting their data.

In 2006, California was one of six states chosen to participate in the National Governor's Association Policy Academy on Youth Transitioning out of Foster Care. This provided a

unique opportunity for state teams to work together, with the assistance of national and state experts, to improve outcomes for youth transitioning from foster care to adulthood.

California's team was comprised of county and state leaders from multiple public systems such as child welfare, mental health, employment, education, and corrections, as well as private providers, philanthropy, youth and advocates. The team has identified three key goals:

**Permanence** - Every youth will have lifelong connections with family and supportive adults.

**Education** - Every youth will have a quality education, a high school diploma and support in pursuing post-secondary opportunities.

**Employment** - Every youth will have work experience and training opportunities that will prepare them for and place them in living wage employment and careers.

To achieve these goals, California has embarked on a "New Vision for the Independent Living Program", a state joint venture sponsored by the California Child Welfare Co-Investment Partnership. The Partnership consists of both public and private partners and includes the CDSS, the CWDA, the Administrative Office of the Courts, the Anne E. Casey Foundation, Casey Family Programs, the Stuart Foundation, the Walter S. Johnson Foundation, and the Zellerbach Foundation. The project focuses on redesigning the Independent Living Program by providing services and experiential training based on an individual youth's needs. "The new vision" will promote and support the active engagement of caregivers in identifying and assisting youth to receive services based on individual needs as documented in their Independent Living Plan. This is being carried out through the ILP Transformation Breakthrough Series Collaborative (BSC).

Ten counties are currently participating in the BSC. County teams work individually to collect and develop baseline data concerning the ILP. Over the next two years, the counties will participate in "Learning Sessions" to compare information gathered, report progress, and to do collaborative problem solving. The first "Learning Session" was held in Sacramento in January 2009.

Eventually participation in the county teams will be expanded to caregivers, youth, employment/workforce, education, probation, the courts, and others to expand the pool that will test the ideas, success and the sustainability of the new ILP activities and processes.

The CDSS continues to implement the Transitional Housing Placement Program (THPP) and expand the Transitional Housing Placement Plus Program (THP-Plus).

For FFY 2008, the actual expenditure of federal and state ILP funds was \$34,338,000. For SFY 2008/09, the CDSS received a federal grant of \$19,166,000 and provided \$15,166,000 in state share dollars for a total allocation of \$34,332,000 combined federal and state funds. As of March 1, 2009, expenditures for FFY 2009 are \$ 23,556,966.

**a) Help youth make the transition to self-sufficiency**

In an effort to develop protocol to enhance the youth's engagement in the transition planning process, the CDSS convened a workgroup made up of social services staff and led by county representatives to collaborate on the revision of the TILP document.

The result is a new streamlined and youth-friendly document. The new document was implemented in July 2008. Positive feedback has been received by the County Welfare Directors Association on the use of the form. It is believed that the new form is easier for social workers to use and encourages more youth engagement in ILP.

An example of what counties are reporting about the new TILP is San Bernardino County. It reports that its social workers like the new TILP because it takes less time to fill out and they are able to engage the youth more in identifying their goals. In comparison, the previous five-page TILP took a substantial amount of time to fill out and youth lost interest and were harder to engage.

The SOC 405A data is included in the state's Child Welfare Outcome and Accountability System, and therefore underwent more recent review and has been revised. A new data collection method has been developed to meet federal regulations directing states to collect data on the types of independent living services that eligible foster youth have received. The services youth have received will be entered into the CWS/CMS and reports will be generated by the CDSS Child Welfare and Data Analysis Bureau that indicate which types of services foster youth receive. The testing of this process began in July 2008; counties were required to start entering data on October 1, 2008. This data collection process meets requirements for the National Youth in Transition Database that will be in effect in October 2010. To maintain current federal data collection requirements, counties will still be required to submit the SOC 405A. However, the form has been significantly shortened to ease the workload burden for counties. The reduced form, the SOC 405.1, still collects the required data, but has eliminated any duplicated data collection that would have occurred using the old 405A form and the new data collection process of entering ILP services into CWS/CMS.

According to the most current data available using the SOC 405A.1 form, counties reported that a total of 483 youth participated in THPP between October 2007 and September 2008. The ILP Narrative submitted by all California Counties participating in ILP provides additional information concerning the outcomes of youth participating in THPP. Of the counties reporting, four counties with large THPP populations were chosen to reflect what was happening in the program in FY 2007/2008. Counties chosen reported the number of youth entering and exiting the program that year. This is their breakdown:

- Alameda County reported 25 youth entered the THPP, and 20 of the 25 had exited the year;
- Los Angeles County reported a total of the 90 youth entering THPP, and 15 of the 90 exited that year;
- Orange County reported a total of 17 youth entering THPP, and 6 of the 15 had exited that year;
- San Francisco County reported 16 youth entering THPP and 2 of the 16 exited that year;

A new form, Exit Outcomes for Youth Aging Out of Foster Care, was introduced in July 2008 to capture outcomes that are required in the Child Welfare System Improvement and Accountability Act. This form captures data on outcomes such as educational attainment, living arrangements and health care coverage for all foster youth, including

those receiving Independent Living services, as well as a question to identify whether or not foster youth emancipate from care with a lifelong connection to a committed adult. This form is completed just prior to the youth aging out of foster care. Although the first quarter of data was collected for this form, due to the volume of the data, counties experienced significant difficulty in transmitting the data to the state. The department has been working closely with counties to resolve this issue.

The CDSS continues to implement THPP, which provides youth aged 16-18 with the opportunity to experience semi-supervised apartment living while receiving supportive services. For SFY 2007/08, 32 counties participated in the Transitional Housing Program. For SFY 2008/09, it is anticipated that the total number of counties participating will be reduced to 27. Due to the fact that counties participating in THPP must share 30 percent of the cost for THPP, some counties have opted to only participate in THP-Plus, which is 100 percent funded by state general funds. Additionally, Counties indicated that the lack of a yearly allocation for THPP was problematic because funding is available on a first-come, first-served basis. This is one of the primary reasons some counties are opting out of THPP. Also, some counties stated that their housing need was greater for youth who had emancipated from care rather than those still in care and thus opted to provide only THP-Plus.

For SFY 2008/2009, through December, the total federal and state funds expended for THPP was. \$1,070,800. Total expenditures for THP-Plus was \$14,024,868.

In FY 2008/2009, the CDSS allocated a total of \$3.5 million in SGF dollars to counties to provide counties with a dedicated fund amount for THPP.

In FY 2009/2010 it is estimated that there will be no change in the number of counties participating in or the funding level for THPP, barring funding cuts in the final budget.

The THP-Plus has continued to increase. This program provides youth, aged 18 to 24, with a safe living environment while helping them to achieve self-sufficiency and learn life skills after they exit from the foster care system. In SFY 2007/08, an additional 26 counties were approved to participate in the THP-Plus program. This brought the total to 44 counties participating in the program. In SFY 2008/09, a total of 48 out of 58 counties are participating in the THP-Plus program. The number of beds increased in SFY 2008/09 from 1,370 to 1,895.

The Independent Living Program Narrative Report for 2007-2008 submitted by counties reported that a total of 99 former foster youth who entered the THP-Plus program indicated that they were homeless prior to participating in the program. The THP-Plus program is the housing program for emancipated foster youth 18-24.

According to the National Center for Homeless Education and based on the McKinney-Vento Act definition, which includes students whose nighttime residence is a shelter, hotel or motel indicated that almost 4 percent of homeless youth were attending public school in California in 2007-2008.

For SFY 2009/2010, 51 counties have indicated their intention to participate in THP-Plus. However, it is estimated that the funding for THP-Plus will remain at the current funding levels.

For SFY 2009/2010, 51 counties have indicated their intention to participate in THP-Plus. However, it is estimated that the funding for THP-Plus will remain at the current funding levels.

CDSS is continuing its partnership with the John Burton Foundation for Children Without Homes to expand the Transitional Housing Placement Plus program (THP-Plus) through the THP-Plus Statewide Implementation Project. The John Burton Foundation is a non-profit organization based in San Francisco, California dedicated to improving the quality of life for California's homeless children, and developing policy solutions to prevent homelessness. During FFY 2008, The Statewide Implementation Project developed a Best Practices Guide for Implementing Transitional Housing and A Guide to Implementing a Host Family Model to assist counties that are starting a THP-Plus. The Implementation Project has also produced a THP-Plus Annual Report for State Fiscal Year 2007/2008 that outlines program growth and program outcomes. In addition, the John Burton Foundation issued a policy brief entitled, "Outcomes for Former Foster Youth in California's THP-Plus Program: Are Youth Faring Better?"

Counties continue to provide a variety of transitional living services through collaborations with local, state, federal and private agencies. Several counties are providing Transitional Living Youth Programs through federal grants. These programs are offered in the following cities: Santa Clara, Stockton, Sacramento, San Jose, Fresno, Camarillo, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Riverside, Eureka and San Diego. In LA County's federally funded program that serves homeless young adults, program participants are required to attend ILP classes. Additionally, LA is attempting to connect every youth with a mentor by 2010. To meet this goal, LA is collaborating with the Alliance for Children's Rights which has a mentoring program for emancipated foster youth.

Alameda County collaborates with private and faith based agencies to provide emergency and short term placement for homeless youth. Additionally they are assisting 50 pregnant or parenting youth in their transitional housing program by providing them with move in stipends. Sacramento County collaborates with Casey Family Programs which provides host family models and mentoring services for emancipated youth.

Sacramento County has encountered difficulties finding emergency housing for emancipated youth who are homeless. In the past, ILP social workers have been reluctant to refer the youth to the local shelters because of safety issues. Often youth are placed into situations where they are mixed with the chronically homeless adult population, some of whom may have mental health or substance abuse issues resulting in a potentially unsafe situation for the youth. To avoid these types of situations, youth are reluctant to go to the shelters and end up "couch surfing" at the homes of friends or strangers. To resolve this issue, Sacramento began collaborating with community members who provide emergency housing for homeless former foster youth. Several community members now open their homes temporarily to homeless youth until they

can find stable housing. Youth are able to share a room with another youth and they may reside there for up to two months, providing time for the youth to work with the ILP social worker to secure a more permanent housing plan. Additionally, Sacramento has worked with the Volunteers of America Shelter which has agreed to designate one bed, in a very secure location, for homeless emancipated youth.

Some counties collaborate with private agencies to help provide employment placement opportunities for foster youth. For example, San Diego works with UPS and Sea World to provide internships or job placement for foster youth. Similarly, San Diego also collaborates with county agencies to provide employment related services for foster youth, such as their Workforce Academy for Youth program which offers a limited number of paid internships in various county departments. Foster youth in this program are provided with a job coach and a life skills coach to help teach job and life skills that will empower the youth in finding permanent employment with the county or other agencies.

Due to budget constraints, the Annual Independent Living Program Institute will not be held in 2009. The funds normally allocated for the Institute will be diverted to help fund the Breakthrough Series Collaborative in which California is participating in a collaboration with the Casey Family Programs that is focusing on re-designing California's Independent Living Program through the Breakthrough Collaborative Series. The Department sponsors an annual Teen Forum for foster youth, ages 16-18, to provide them with an opportunity to learn more about independent living resources for housing, education, employment and foster youth rights. Youth also are provided with information on their eligibility for the Extended Medi-Cal Program that is available to them after they age out of the foster care system. The 2009 Teen Forum will be held from June 25-27, 2009 on the University of California, Davis campus. A total of 148 youth and sponsors attended last year's forum. It is likely that less youth will attend the forum due to county budget cuts for traveling expenses and some counties may have less staff due to potential social worker layoffs. Although there is no cost for the youth or sponsors to attend the forum, many counties that are not within driving distance of the forum may not be able to afford the travel expenses.

The Foster Club All-Stars are the primary leaders of the group sessions, as well as peer leaders during the conference. The group, comprised of former foster youth, travels throughout the country and members share information about their personal experiences in an effort to improve the lives of youth in foster care. This year's featured speaker is Janice Higgins, a former foster youth, who survived witnessing her mother's murder, physical and sexual abuse, homelessness and incarceration. She has authored a series of books titled "There Were No Parents Here" and has volunteered to help women in prison and at-risk youth. Her story is one that every foster youth will be able to relate to on some level and will teach them that regardless of their circumstances, they can survive and achieve their goals.

The event is held on a different college campus each year and foster youth stay in the campus dorms, which provide them the opportunity to experience college campuses and dorm life.

During this year's Forum, the CDSS will engage youth in the preparation planning for next year's forum. Additionally, youth are asked at the end of the forum to share what they learned and evaluate forum's helpfulness.

Counties also have the option to use 30 percent of their ILP allocation to provide housing to ILP participants.

Counties also receive a Chaffee Educational Training Voucher (ETV) allocation yearly funded by the CFCIP. In FY 2008/2009 the California Student Aid Commission, who administers the ETV reports that a total of 3,129 students received ETVs and the total Award was \$14,785,613.

The Transitional Housing Program-Plus (THP-Plus) funded by California State General Fund Dollars also serves ILP youth up to age 21. Services not received in THP-Plus can be paid for with ILP dollars if the youth meets ILP eligibility requirements.

### **FFY 2010 Planned Activities**

Due to the impact of Budget deficits in California, the CDSS will work to maintain current programs and services provided to youth in foster care and to emancipated foster youth.

The Department will continue to work with its partners including the John Burton Foundation for Children Without Homes and the Casey Foundation to improve ILP services and processes, including implementing the Breakthrough Series Collaborative recommendations.

Improve partnerships with caregivers in an effort to achieve improved outcomes for youth in keeping with the Departments Program Improvement Plan (PIP) goals and objectives.

Continue to involve Chafee ETV stakeholders in improving processes to support youth in Post-Secondary education.

The Department is leading workgroups to plan the necessary processes and procedures to implement the requirements of the Chafee National Youth in Transition Database. The plan is in place to make the necessary changes to CWS/CMS for data collection. It is anticipated that the system will be ready by August 2010 for testing to be ready for the October 1, 2010 data collection deadline.

The new TILP document was implemented in July 2008; the department plans to evaluate the new TILP through soliciting input from county ILP programs. Counties have been training social workers in the best ways to engage youth in developing goals that will help them succeed as they transition into adulthood.

The Department will continue collecting data from the new Exit Outcomes form and conducting preliminary analysis of the data. Due to problems experienced in the first quarter of data submission, the testing and preliminary analysis will be continue in this fiscal year.

The Department is working on implementing the provisions of Public Law 110-351, The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act. CDSS is in the process of analyzing current legislation that has been introduced in California to implement the various aspects of Public Law 110-351. The 90 day transition plan is specifically related to ILP. Preliminary workgroups including CWDA, County Representatives and former Foster Youth have met for the purpose of determining the most effective way to incorporate the 90 day transition plan into the current TILP and/or into other requirements that are completed when the youth exits from care.

Some foster youth emancipating from foster care discover they are unable to secure housing, employment, and other services because of negative credit reports or identity theft. The consequences for these youth could include homelessness and unemployment if credit report issues are not resolved. AB 2895, Statutes of 2006, established a process for detecting, addressing, and resolving issues around identity theft.

AB 2985 authorized county social services agencies to conduct a once-only credit check on behalf of a foster youth at age 16 to determine whether the youth's identity has been compromised or if there are negative entries in a credit report. If the credit check discloses a report that seems to indicate that identity theft has occurred or other negative credit history, the county would refer the youth to a credit counseling organization to assist in resolving credit report irregularities.

Currently, CDSS, in consultation with the CWDA and other relevant stakeholders is participating in the foster youth identity theft workgroup. The workgroup is charged with developing a list of approved credit counseling organizations for counties to use when referring a foster youth, who has received a negative credit report, for credit counseling.

**b) Help youth receive the education, training and services necessary to obtain employment**

The Foster Youth Employment and Training Taskforce continues to be a catalyst for multi-agency collaboration and partnering. The group consists of representatives from the EDD, Workforce Investment Board, the CDSS's Community Care Licensing Division and CFSB, the US Department of Labor, the New Ways to Work Initiative (a workforce development organization), Casey Family Programs, the Community College Chancellor's office, counties, school districts, and other community based organizations. The taskforce meets every two months. Through the taskforce collaboration promising practices are identified.

According to the SOC 405A.1 for FFY October 1 2007 to September 30, 2008 the number of youth who completed vocational or on-the-job training was 1,259. The number of youth currently enrolled in vocational or on-the-job training was 1,425. The number of youth who enlisted in the military, Job Corp or the California Conservation Corp was 341. The number of youth who were actively seeking employment was 6,856.

A promising practice is being piloted in some counties, with Gateway programs and the help of the California Connected by 25 Initiative. San Francisco has developed an Employment Specialist and a Youth Employment Case Manager position, as well as, the development of youth-friendly "one-stops." In addition, Santa Clara County has an Employment Services Unit within their child welfare agency that is serving transitioning foster youth. This unit has

been key in building the Emancipated Foster Youth County Jobs Program, which is a successful employment option (full-time/benefited county employment) for former foster youth. This program won the California State Association of Counties Challenge Award. This program allows former foster youth to apply for more than 20 job classifications with one application. This program was also deemed a “most replicable” program.

Some counties also contract out employment preparation services such as Fresno, Orange and Alameda counties’ use of Workforce Investment Boards which provide youth with a variety of employment assessment tools and services. These counties also have One Stop Centers which provide opportunities for the youth to get job experience, employment and education assistance, and job placement.

San Diego launched a new youth friendly website for foster youth [www.fosteringchange.org](http://www.fosteringchange.org) that provides information on education, employment, housing, health care and parenting. The website also provides a calendar of ILP events for youth to participate in as well as information on activities within their community.

The California Department of Education (CDE) provides funding for and oversight of the Foster Youth Services program (FYS), mandated through the Education Code sections 42920–25. The primary purpose of the FYS Countywide Programs is to provide advocacy and direct services to support the educational success of all foster youth attending school in their districts. FYS has expanded from 24 county programs in 1998/99 to 57 county programs in 2007/08. FYS provides foster youth with a wide range of academic support from tutoring to school based behavioral support, as well as, vocational education and emancipation services. In 2007/08, FYS provided over 41,000 direct services to foster youth. Orange county recently revised their FYS contract to include services to foster youth ages ten and older.

A new collaborative partnership was formed between a FYS Countywide Program, the California Student Aid Commission, community colleges, universities, juvenile court community schools, health and human services agency representatives, and independent living skills contractors. They worked to create an FYS College Connection Advisory Council to increase the number of foster youths who attend post-secondary education.

A significant change to FYS programming was the inclusion of monies to serve foster youths in juvenile detention facilities. Recognizing that a correlation existed between the foster care system and juvenile justice system and a strong need to support educational services for foster youths, the Legislature included \$643,000 in the budget augmentation to expand services to foster youths in juvenile detention facilities with a strong emphasis on educational transition services. In accordance with the expansion, the CDE released the 2006-07 RFA for the FYS Juvenile Detention program. This has resulted in the establishment of 28 FYS Juvenile Detention programs in FY 2007-08.

### **FFY 2009 Planned Activities**

The Department is working with the Foundation for California Community Colleges (FCCC) to provide ILP employment preparation services to eligible youth. The CDSS is finalizing the SFY 2009/2010 contract with FCCC. Current activities the with CDSS involvement include:

- The FCCC presented a workshop in this Year's Teen Forum on higher education and on VISTA and AmeriCorps programs. It teamed with the California Conservation Corps (CCC) in presenting job opportunities to emancipated foster youth. As a result of that collaboration, the FCCCC and the CCC It is currently collaborating with. The outcome of that collaboration is an anticipated program to allow ILP youth to have a clear pathway into the CCC programs.
- In cooperation with Contractor and county ILSP coordinators, annually assess statewide life skills education activities and develop alternatives for ensuring an equitable statewide distribution of available college funding.
- The FCCC held five boot camps at community colleges to give California foster youth the opportunity to learn critical skills in manufacturing trades. The first camp was held at the College of the Sequoias in Visalia, California on June 17, 2009.

The Department will continue to work with The Foster Youth Employment and Training Taskforce to ensure multi-agency collaboration and promotion of promising practices related to employment preparation services throughout the counties. The Taskforces goals for current year are:

- To find resources to support staff with dedicated time to focus on creating relationships and cross-system partnerships.
- To Implement strategies to engage leadership in developing ongoing career development and employment opportunities for foster youth.
- To develop ongoing opportunities and tools to network, develop relationships, and share knowledge across counties focused on developing better systems of career development and employment preparation services.
- To Identify strategies for measuring outcomes.

The Department plans to improve collaboration with the Foster Youth Services Program (FYSP) that provides to foster youth services including tutoring assistance in group homes and youth mentoring in other foster care placements as well as mentoring services. The CDSS is meeting with the FCSP in FFY 2009 to discuss strategies to ensure that county ILP Programs are aware of the resources and services the Program provides.

The ILP Breakthrough Series Collaborative (BSC) is an inter-disciplinary process focused on addressing the challenges facing foster youth who are transitioning out of care. The BSC methodology was identified as an effective approach that can help counties translate the NGA's recommendations into action. For FFY 2009 the process will include convening approximately 20 teams of public child welfare agencies and tribal representative, selected through a competitive application process, to begin work on making recommendations and implementing change in the way ILP services are provided.

Due to budget constraints, the Annual Independent Living Program Institute will not be held in 2009. The funds normally allocated for the Institute will be diverted to help fund the Breakthrough Series Collaborative in which California is participating in a collaboration with the Casey Family Programs that is focusing on re-designing California's Independent Living Program through the Breakthrough Collaborative Series.

The Department sponsors an annual Teen Forum for foster youth, ages 16-18, to provide them with an opportunity to learn more about independent living resources for housing, education, employment and foster youth rights. Youth also are provided with information on their eligibility for the Extended Medi-Cal Program that is available to them after they age out of the foster care system. The 2009 Teen Forum was held on June 25-27, 2009 on the University of California, Davis campus. A total of 128 youth and 47 sponsors attended as compared to a total of 148 youth and sponsors attending last year's forum. Less youth attended the forum due to county budget cuts for traveling expenses and some counties may have less staff due to potential social worker layoffs. Although there is no cost for the youth or sponsors to attend the forum, many counties that are not within driving distance may not be able to afford the travel expenses.

The Department will continue to work with The Foster Youth Employment and Training Taskforce to ensure multi-agency collaboration and promotion of promising practices related to employment preparation services throughout the counties.

The Department plans to improve collaboration with the Foster Youth Services Program through annual meetings to discuss strategies for ensuring county ILP Programs are aware of the resources and services they provide.

Several bills were introduced into the California Legislature, in early 2009, to implement the provisions of Public Law 110-351. Two of these bills related specifically to educational placement of foster youth.

- Assembly Bill 500 (Conway) contains intent language to provide for transportation for foster youth to and from their school of origin.
- Assembly Bill 1064 (Brownley) specifies that foster care placement proposals take school proximity into account and requires DSS to maximize eligibility for available federal funding for reasonable travel costs for foster youth.

**c) Help youth prepare for and enter postsecondary training and educational institutions**

- The CDSS has effectively administered the Chafee Education and Training Voucher Program with the assistance of the California Student Aid Commission.

For FFY 2008, to date, 100 percent of the funds have been committed or expended for the Education and Training Voucher Program. CDSS has entered into a three-year contract with the California Student Aid Commission allowing for the utilization of both federal and state funds. Federal funds can be spent over a two-year period rather than one year. The Chafee funds cannot be used to establish trust funds for youth.

The funds for ETV were not fully expended in 2007, therefore CDSS made process changes.

In an effort to make program improvements the state has implemented the following changes: Grants that are unclaimed by youth are reissued to other eligible youth as a way of preventing the forfeiture of funding. The California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) has asked financial aid offices to return checks to them no later than 10 business days from the initial receipt of Chafee checks in order to re-award to other eligible students expeditiously. In SFY 2006/07, a new three-year contract became effective between CDSS and CSAC. The contract allows for utilization of state funds at the beginning of the state fiscal year, July 1, with federal funds becoming available at the beginning of the federal fiscal year, October 1. This overlapping of the release of funds will facilitate the timely receipt of grants and eliminate any hardships experienced by youth awaiting grants from federal funding. CDSS is in the process of renewing another three-year contract (July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2009) with CSAC. Students can access their Chafee grant information on WebGrants for Students at <https://mygrantinfo.csac.ca.gov>.

Data received from the California Student Aid Commission shows, as of April 2008, that:

For FFY 2007 (for obligations beginning October 1, 2007 and ending September 30, 2008):

- 2,812 youth received awards

For FFY 2008 (for obligations beginning October 1, 2008 and ending September 30, 2009):

- 2,932 youth have received grants.
- The average award was \$4,031.
- The total expenditure as of March 28, 2008 is \$11,819,714.
- The total number of students that received the renewal Chafee grants was 2,219.
- The total number of students receiving the Chafee grant for the first time is 1,341.

For FFY 2009 (for obligations beginning October 1, 2009 and ending September 30, 2010):

- The estimated number of youth who could be eligible to receive an award is 2,932. This estimate is based on the number of awards that have been processed year-to-date.

Notification of the availability of the Education and Training Voucher grants and other funding opportunities for postsecondary education is provided by counties to youth participating in Independent Living Program services. Youth also receive information about the grants via inserts in mailings from the DHCS that are sent to youth to provide information about the Former Foster Youth Extended Medi-Cal Program. Additionally, the CDSS has a contract with the EDD to disseminate information about the Education and Training Voucher and other financial aid opportunities to all eligible youth.

A best practice related to providing supports for youth in postsecondary educational settings is the Guardian Scholars Program. It is a comprehensive program that supports former foster youth in their efforts to gain a university, community college or trade school education. The program began in 1997 at California State University, Fullerton. Since then, it has grown to include 20 plus universities and community colleges in California, including

San Francisco State University, University of California Santa Cruz, San Diego State University, California State University, East Bay, and Sacramento State University.

Departmental staff met with staff from the Guardian Scholars Program to gain an overview of their services. The program offers specialized counseling and financial aid services, mentoring and academic help, and year-round on-campus housing for former foster youth who qualify. In addition, the program connects these youth with supportive adults and peers who care about their well-being and have a stake in their success.

Educational liaisons continue strong advocacy efforts and educational support for foster youth. Fresno started a promising practice to base their ILP workers within high schools. Not only does the ILP worker have better and more frequent access to the youth and their educational status, this strategy has assisted greatly in building the educational institution's awareness of the needs of foster youth, the role of child welfare and ILP in the youth's life, services which are available to foster youth, and opportunities to work together to more effectively support the youth's education. Fresno ILP workers collaborate with the Office of Education through monthly meetings regarding educational services for youth in care. This is to ensure compliance with AB 490 and that the educational rights and needs of the youth are being met.

In February 2009, flyers were sent out to ILP eligible youth between the ages of 16 and 18 informing them of ILP eligibility and available services. The information was expanded to include ETV and Transitional Housing.

#### **FFY 2009 Planned Activities**

The Department plans to contract with the Employment Development Department to expand outreach to ILP eligible youth by sending informational flyers to high schools throughout the state containing information on both ILP services and ETV grants.

The Department is working with the Guardian Scholars Program to expand their program to include on campus summer housing for students who are former foster youth.

#### **d) Provide personal and emotional support to youth through mentors and the promotion of interactions with dedicated adults**

The CDSS continues to work on the provisions of Assembly Bill 1412 (Chapter 640, Statutes of 2005). This legislation created a phased-in expansion of requirements that county social workers ask children ten years of age or older, beginning with those children placed with a non-relative, about important adult relationships and to make efforts to support those relationships. The court is required to determine whether the agency has made reasonable efforts to maintain the child's relationships with individuals other than the child's siblings who are important to the child, consistent with the child's best interests. The CDSS is also required to encourage counties to develop approaches to ensure that no youth leaves care without a lifelong connection to a committed adult. Many counties include individuals, who have been identified by youth as significant in conferences during which emancipation plans are discussed and agreed to by the youth and the supportive individuals

in his or her life. This bill also allows foster children aged 12-years and older to review, sign and be given a copy of their own case plan.

The new TILP now includes a place to identify the adults that are helping youth to achieve their goals. Caregivers are also asked to sign the TILP to include them in the development of the youth's goals.

The new form, Exit Outcomes for Youth Aging Out of Foster Care, includes a question to identify whether or not a foster youth emancipates from care with a lifelong connection to a committed adult. This information will help to identify if gaps exist in the practice of identifying lifelong supports for foster youth as mandated in AB 1412. This will enable the CDSS and counties to identify if there are any systemic gaps in the practice of connecting youth to committed adults. However, the bill targets foster youth ages ten and older. Since the bill has been in effect for less than three years, it is highly unlikely that the department will be able to identify systematic gaps in connecting youth to an adult for at least another three years, as we will not have baseline data from the Exit Outcomes from for another year and we will not see the effects on the 10-12 year olds for another four to six years.

The "Family Finders" service has been identified as a promising practice to assist youth to connect with family members with whom the youth has lost contact. Due to the cost related to utilizing the technology developed by US Search, the CDSS and counties are examining ways of implementing methods for assisting youth through other methods. Santa Clara County created a unit of social workers dedicated to finding families for foster children and youth. A workshop was presented on the practice of family finding at the ILP Institute.

Shasta County has embarked on a promising practice for establishing enduring relationships for youth transitioning from care to emancipation. Long term, one-to-one relationships are established beginning at the age of 16 when a caseworker is assigned to each youth. Each case worker serves as a mentor to assist youth in establishing their transition plan and assist the youth in planning their short- and long-term goals. On an as-needed basis, the caseworkers help youth to cope with personal problems that arise; each youth is given the cell phone numbers of two or more caseworkers who can help them when they need it.

Merced County has recently revamped their ILP program to include services for foster youth ages 14-16. They have begun a program called Friday Night Fun which meets twice a month and provides an opportunity for youth to gather together and work on developing communication skills and building self-esteem. Additionally, Merced implemented the Transitional Housing Program Plus.

Imperial County took a unique approach to sensitivity training by having former foster youth co-lead the trainings which were presented to new Social Workers, Foster Parents and other community members, such as teachers and counselors, who provide direct services to foster youth.

### **FFY 2009 Planned Activities**

CDSS has started collecting data on youths' permanent connections to committed adults from the Exit Outcomes form. This is the same information currently entered in the TILP

that identifies an adult who is supporting the youth in reaching his/her goals. Currently, CDSS is working on including information on the youth's supportive adult connection in CWS/CMS.

CDSS has added a question on the narrative report to identify the practices counties are using to ensure that foster youth exit care with a permanent connection to a committed adult

On July 1, 2008, Orange County will begin requiring foster care providers to attend ILP workshops with the foster youth they serve at a minimum of one time per month. The life skills learned by the participating youth and witnessed by their foster care providers in the workshops will be practiced in the foster care placements, until such time as the foster care providers certify that the foster youth have mastered that life skill.

**e) Provide services such as financial, housing, counseling, employment, education and other appropriate support and services for former foster care recipients between 18 years of age and up to the day before their 21st birthday:**

**FFY 2008 Accomplishments**

Counties continue to provide aftercare services to emancipated youth aged 18 up to the day prior to their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday.

The youth continue to receive information on a wide range of successful daily living skills:

- Employment skills.
- Health, safety, and hygiene.
- Banking, money management, and budgeting.
- Consumer purchasing, loans, and contracts.
- Obtaining housing and home maintenance.
- Interpersonal skills.
- Knowledge of community resources.

The California Connected by 25 Initiative was developed to help address the needs of youth during the transition from the foster care system to adulthood. Participating counties collaborate with other agencies to ensure referral of youth to Connected by 25 programs and services. Santa Clara has recently determined that the Connected by 25 programs and services have touched the lives of at least 400 youth in their county during the past year.

Each year in California, approximately 4,200 youth age out of foster care at age 18 or 19. Of this total, two-out-of-three have an "imminent housing need." The housing needs of all emancipated youth increase yearly as additional youth leave foster care. In contrast, federal funding for the ILP has decreased yearly resulting in counties having to stretch their Chafee allocation further in order to provide a variety of services to emancipated youth in their counties.

The actual expenditure of the Chafee Room and Board funding for FFY 2008/09 was \$3,785,725. twenty counties reported utilizing the 30 percent allowance for assisting former

foster youth with housing related costs. The state remains well within the limit for use of these funds as only 9.5 percent of the state's allocation was spent.

In 2001, California passed AB 427 (Chapter 125, Statutes of 2001) that created THP-Plus. This program is funded with 100 percent state General Fund dollars. This program allows counties to utilize state General Funds to provide more housing options to emancipated youth while enabling them to spend their federal Chafee fund for other much needed ILP services, which may explain why only 9.5 percent of the funding is used for room and board.

The THP-Plus was established to provide safe, affordable housing and supportive services to emancipated foster youth through the age of 21. Legislation that was passed in 2005, (AB 824 [Chapter 636, Statutes of 2005]), extends the maximum age for the receipt of THP-Plus services to youth aged up to 24 years.

Counties are also required to report on the services they offer to homeless, pregnant and/or parenting foster youth. Counties report collaborating with other human services agencies, community agencies and faith based programs to provide homeless youth with temporary housing, such as a hotel or homeless shelter, until they are able to transition into stable housing. It appears that counties are able to provide housing for pregnant and parenting youth primarily through THP-Plus. Counties without THP-Plus programs refer youth to other agencies that can provide services or to other county THP-Plus programs if the youth are interested in relocating to a neighboring county.

The California Connected by 25 Initiative provides assistance to participating counties in implementing or expanding their THP-Plus programs. As a result of receiving assistance from California Connected by 25, Santa Clara now provides 80 youth with stable transitional housing. Santa Clara also developed an innovative agreement with the San Jose State University Housing Services for foster youth attending the University. Fresno, Stanislaus and San Francisco also led with innovations in transitional housing by starting up a host family model of transitional housing that integrates a permanency focus.

Senate Bill 436 (Chapter 629, Statutes of 2005) requires counties to report on the housing resources available to parenting and pregnant youth. Counties are required to include in their reports information about increased services to this population of youth.

Emancipated Youth Stipends are 100 percent state General Fund allocation to counties. The Emancipated Youth Stipends are allocated to counties based on the number of ILP-eligible youth in care. \$3.6 million is allocated to the program. Counties utilize the funds for the emergency needs of youth such as rental deposits, minor medical emergencies, and transportation.

The state utilizes the option to provide extended Medi-Cal coverage to youth aged 18 to 20 who emancipated from foster care. Each year California has approximately 4,200 youth that age out of foster care. In order to receive federal funds for extending Medi-Cal benefits to these youth, counties are required annually to determine the youth's eligibility by verifying the following:

- The youth's consent to continue with the Medi-Cal services.
- The youth's current address.

- When a third-party health insurance is involved, Medi-Cal seeks reimbursement from the third party. If applicable, a youth's health insurance must be reported to the eligibility worker.

At this time, enrollment in the extended Medi-Cal program is not uniformly automatic throughout the state. According to the DHCS as of October 2008, an average of 6,029 youth a month (from July 2007 – July 2008) were recipients of extended Medi-Cal benefits. In July 2008, approximately 6,363 youth were receiving extended Medi-Cal.

### **FFY 2009 Planned Activities**

The Department plans to convene workgroups to identify strategies to help counties maintain contact with youth once they emancipate from foster care so they do not lose their extended Medi-Cal eligibility. Former foster youth are a mobile population, which creates a barrier that has been encountered in ensuring that former foster youth maintain their extended Medi-Cal is locating them annually to verify their consent and residency.

The Department also plans to examine the differences in counties' processes for verification of former foster youth's eligibility for extended Medi Cal to highlight successful practices and identify gaps in order to make recommendations of effective practices to counties.

The ILP and the child welfare system is administered via 58 counties with varying programs. It is expected that coordination and communication takes place prior to a youth moving to another county or state. The counties report to the State on an annual basis the numbers of youth who are eligible for independent living program services and how many youth received the services.

Orange County has submitted a THP-PLUS plan that will begin providing a Scattered-Site Apartment component with multiple providers on July 1, 2008 and a Single-site Family Campus component which will begin on April 1, 2009. Fresno County has implemented the use of the host family model with the THP-Plus plan and intends to expand its program to provide the Scattered-Site Apartment component.

CDSS is working with the Food Stamps program to create a streamlined form for foster youth to complete prior to emancipation to enable them to have food stamp benefits when they exit care. CDSS is actively working towards implementing this program, however, a waiver from the Federal Government to allow foster youth to apply for food stamps early was denied. The Department is continuing to work with the Federal Government as this program would be extremely beneficial to youth emancipating from foster care.

### **2. Briefly describe how the Independent Living Program is served by political subdivisions in the State.**

CDSS actively collaborates with other state of California Departments, such as the CDE, the DHCS, the EDD, counties, the Community College Chancellors Office, California State University, Sacramento and University of California at Berkeley. The state consistently encourages youth participation to inform public policy through the California Youth Connection, as well as, youth representatives referred to the state by counties and foster

youth alumni employed with the CDSS' Ombudsman's Office. In addition, the CDSS collaborates with statewide initiatives that are focusing on meeting the needs of youth who are aging-out from foster care into adulthood.

The Youth Transition Action Team Initiative focuses on bringing together the resources of the workforce, education and child welfare systems to better prepare adolescents who are aging out of foster care. It also provides technical assistance, training and support for county-based teams of leaders from child welfare, education, workforce development, social services, philanthropy, and other systems in their efforts to leverage local resources and programs to provide an integrated continuum of services and opportunities for current and former foster youth as they seek to make the transition to life on their own.

The teams are comprised of community leaders from child welfare, education, workforce development, juvenile justice as well as the philanthropic community.

Teams meet in their respective counties to identify and leverage the current approaches, strategies and resources in place to ensure successful transitions to adulthood. Additionally, each team is charged with assisting its respective county in achieving their child welfare system enhancement goals, particularly in the area of youth permanency.

During 2007, the Youth Transition Action Team expanded its collaboration with counties by adding 6 new counties to its Team. The Team worked with a total of 18 California Counties to create a comprehensive, integrated and sequenced set of services and supports to improve the likelihood that youth in the child welfare system will be prepared and ready to achieve success as adults. Teams participated in the Foster Youth Focus Series, a three-part series that resulted in the development of four policy focus areas that became the framework for the Foster Youth Career Development and Employment Summit that took place in January 2008. Participation at the summit consisted of nearly 300 foster youth, former foster youth, caretakers, community based organizations, employers and professionals from child welfare, workforce development, education, and probation from across California. Participants came together to address employment and career development issues and forge solutions for the nearly 85,000 youth in foster care in California. There were 48 counties represented at the summit. An evaluation protocol and tool has been developed and is in process to gauge the Youth Transition Action Team systems impacts on serving youth at the local level. Outcome measures include several indicators of systems collaboration, leadership, scope of partnership, measurement systems, and youth centered focus.

### **California Connected by 25 Initiative**

The California Connected by 25 Initiative, sponsored by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, was developed to help address the needs of youth during the transition from the foster care system to adulthood. The goal of the initiative is that "through positive youth development and integrated systems of support and services, transitioning foster youth are connected by age 25 to the opportunities, experiences and support that will enable them to succeed throughout adulthood." The initiative is being developed to assist county child welfare

agencies and their communities to build a comprehensive continuum of supports and services across seven key focus areas:

- K-12 Education.
- Employment/Job Training/Postsecondary Education.
- Housing.
- Independent Living Skills Program.
- Financial Competency, Savings and Assets.
- Personal/Social Asset Development.
- Permanency.

Six counties are currently participating in the initiative with two more counties preparing to join in 2008. Counties are also implementing the following Connected by 25 “strategies for success,” as these are important foundational core beliefs in their work:

- Youth as Leaders for Change and Decision-Makers in their Lives.
- Child Welfare Agencies and Communities as Invested Partners in Change.
- Caregivers as Transition Teachers and Partners.

All California Connected by 25 Initiative counties are increasing their capacity for data collection and self-evaluation of their transition-aged youth systems by implementing the Connected by 25 outcomes framework developed with the assistance of UC Berkeley’s Center for Social Services Research. On-going technical assistance and twice-yearly convenings arranged by California Social Work Education Center, at the University of California at Berkeley, are important to successful Connected by 25 implementation. The assistance helps counties to address barriers, develop innovative programs, implement work plans and achieve benchmarks.

Participating counties invite youth to the discussion table more frequently than non-participating counties, and agencies are working to ensure that child welfare, probation, and/or ILP have integrated referral of youth to Connected by 25 programs and services in their everyday practice. Santa Clara has recently determined that Connected by 25 programs and services have touched the lives of at least 400 youth in their county during the past year.

Educational liaisons continue strong advocacy efforts and educational support for foster youth. Fresno started a promising practice to base their ILP workers within high schools. Not only does the ILP worker have better and more frequent access to the youth and their educational status, this strategy has assisted greatly in building the educational institution’s awareness of the needs of foster youth, the role of child welfare and ILP in the youth’s life, services which are available to foster youth, and opportunities to work together to more effectively support the youth’s education.

**3) Describe how youth of various ages and at various stages of achieving independence, are to be served, particularly with regard to services for 1) youth under 16, (2) youth 16-18, and (3) youth at least 18 years of age that have not yet attained their 21st birthday.**

The CDSS convened a workgroup that is addressing the needs of youth in foster care placements and group homes. The work group is currently reviewing and drafting regulations to ensure that licensing requirements for foster family homes promote a “normal childhood” experience in a home-like environment, encourage the self-reliance and independence of youth who are leaving foster care, as well as promoting the health, safety and wellbeing outcomes.

The ILP regulations reinforce that counties may serve youth under 16 at county option. Los Angeles and San Francisco County have served youth aged 14 and older for many years and continues to offer services to this age group. Fresno, San Mateo, Merced, Orange, and King counties have also begun including services for youth at age 14.

The ILP regulations require that counties offer core ILP services to this age group, including education/career counseling, employment services, life skills training, housing, and mentoring opportunities. Services are designed to meet the individual needs of youth based on the ILP.

All counties are required to provide services to youth beyond age 18. The ILP services to youth at least 18 years of age and who have not yet attained their 21st birthday, focus on providing youth with postsecondary education information and referrals, transitional housing opportunities, employment assistance, mentoring and Medi-Cal services.

Effective October 2000, California enacted legislation that extended Medicaid services to eligible emancipating foster youth up to age 21. In early 2009, two pieces of legislation have been introduced to allow youth to maintain Medicaid benefits without completing any qualification or annual redetermination paperwork. A similar bill, SB 1132, was introduced last year, however it was vetoed by the governor because federal regulations require the paperwork be completed.

- SB 597 (Liu) contains provisions to implement several of the aspects of PL 110-351. This includes automatically keeping foster youth enrolled in Medicaid upon emancipation and

#### **4) Describe how the State involves the public and private non-profit sectors in helping adolescents in foster care achieve independence.**

Collaboration with the public and private non-profit sectors is a core value for the CDSS. All major initiatives have actively involved other state agencies, counties, state/local educational institutions, foundations and non-profits. The Foster Youth Employment, Training and Housing Taskforce and the Youth Transition Action Teams mentioned previously in this report are examples of current efforts.

On March 14, 2007, CDSS signed a historic agreement with the Karuk Tribe, located in northwestern California, to independently provide funding for services including foster care, independent living, and adoption assistance programs. The CDSS is now working to develop similar agreements with other California Tribes. A tribal representative reviewed the APSR, but did not provide any comments or feedback.

In January of 2009, representatives from the Federal government and CDSS participated met with state Tribal leaders to discuss and highlight tribal options in accessing funding and expanding foster care services to tribal youth available under P.L. 110-351

The CDSS is working to increase its outreach to state tribal leaders to inform them of the ILP services available to tribal foster youth. To better learn how ILP services can meet the unique needs of tribal foster youth, staff members of the CDSS's Foster Care Support Services Bureau are now members of the Department's ICWA Workgroup. The workgroup is comprised of tribal representatives, ICWA experts from throughout the state, and CDSS staff. The CDSS is in the process of ensuring tribal representation at the monthly CWDA, ILP Coordinators' Subcommittee meetings to ensure full access to ILP benefits and services to transition-aged tribal foster youth.

The CDSS continues to collaborate with Tribal STAR (Successful Transitions to Adult Readiness) regarding Independent Living Program policies and outreach to California tribes. The intent of Tribal STAR is to ensure that Native foster youth are connected to culture, community and resources as they successfully transition to adulthood. The program provides interdisciplinary training for Tribal youth service providers, including: Native American professionals and leaders, public human service agency staff, regional training academy staff, MSW students, and others who provide services to Native American foster youth. Topic areas covered in the training include: Tribal values & culture, collaboration, youth development philosophy, protocol, and ways to effectively address the needs of Native American foster youth. In addition, communities are offered technical assistance to aid them as they work to build collaborative relationships and implement the training. Years one and two of this five-year program focused on developing a curriculum and providing training for supervisors and frontline workers in southern California to enhance their competency in working with Native foster youth. During years four and five statewide training was provided with ongoing technical assistance provided to the communities that were trained in years two and three. Year five is currently devoted to training MSW students throughout the state as well as county staff on the needs of tribal foster youth.

As a promising practice for the state, Tribal STAR has provided several training sessions to staff from various counties around the state on techniques to use when presenting information and instruction regarding the needs of tribal foster youth. This training addressed how best to lead cross-cultural discussions that result in positive outcomes for tribal foster youth. It focuses on goals for tribal youth, their interests, what ILP supports and services are available to them and what the challenges are in providing these services. The training by Tribal STAR consultants in partnership with tribal representatives, have resulted in the provision of Independent Living Program services on the Rincon Reservation in San Diego County.

Tribal STAR provided the Summit Training in SFY 2008/09. The Summit is a one day training designed for supervisory and management staff. The goal is to impact practice and policy in Public Child Welfare, ultimately leading to increased positive outcomes for Tribal foster children and youth by enhancing collaborative efforts between Tribal and non-Tribal entities.

In the Annual ILP Narrative Report and Plan, counties are required to report on the provision of services to tribal youth. Counties report that when a tribal youth is identified, an ICWA coordinator or a tribal representative is contacted to confirm tribal membership and to provide the youth with access to any specialized services available. Most counties report having received training in providing culturally sensitive services to tribal youth. San Diego County, which provides services a larger population of tribal youth, has an Indian Specialty Unit within their Child Welfare Services Division. Counties report that tribal youth receive the same services as all eligible youth. Counties with higher populations of tribal foster youth report that they work with the county ICWA worker to assist in connecting youth to tribal leaders/members. Some counties work with specific organizations such as Indian health clinics and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. We are currently working to increase the number of counties working directly with tribes through the ILP participation on the ICWA workgroup. Additionally, tribal representatives have been invited and are now participating in subcommittee meetings held by the County Welfare Director's Association, County Independent Living Program Managers and Department staff.

CDSS makes efforts to include former foster youth in process and planning activities. Youth were engaged in the CFSR process in four ways: 1) members of the Statewide Assessment Team; 2) CDSS sponsored four focus groups statewide to gather feedback from youth on their perceptions/assessment of child welfare services in CA; 3) specific stakeholder interview groups were convened at the state and local level during the week long onsite reviews; and 4) youth are members of the CFSR Steering Committee. Additionally, youth from the California Youth Connection meet routinely with the Director of Social Services; former foster youth are on the Child Welfare Council and they are involved in planning the annual teen forum.

**5) Describe the objective criteria the State uses for determining eligibility for Independent Living Program benefits and services, including the process for developing the criteria.**

Youth who are eligible to receive ILP services are those youth whose placement meets the federal definition of foster care: "24-hour substitute care for children placed away from their parents or guardians and for whom the State agency has placement and care responsibility." Youth who are or were 16 years of age, and expected to remain in care up to the age of 18 are eligible for services. In addition, youth who were 16 years of age up to 18 years of age and in receipt of Kinship Guardianship Assistance Payment Program funds are eligible for ILP services.

Once eligibility has been determined, ILP participants are individually assessed on their needs in conjunction with the development of the Independent Living Program. The Independent Living Program is updated every six months or sooner, if necessary. In accordance with Welfare and Institutions Code section 11375, any child in receipt of Kinship Guardianship Assistance Program benefits is eligible to receive ILP services. California maintains state funding of ILP services, in addition to federal ILP funding, in order to meet this need. However, these funds are not included in the state funds that are used as a federal match.

**6) Describe how the State ensures fair and equitable treatment of benefit recipients.**

The ILP regulations are the primary means of ensuring fair and equitable treatment of ILP recipients. California is a county-administered state and as such the provision of the array of services is based on geography, local resources, and the individual needs of youth.

The Department's Independent Living Program Policy Unit, and the Foster Care Ombudsman's Office investigates and responds to complaints from ILP recipients to ensure that youth receive fair and equitable treatment while participating in ILP services.

**7) Public Comments**

Recipients of the Proposed State Plan:

- All County Independent Living Program Coordinators
- Executive Director, the County Welfare Directors Association
- Executive Director, the California Probation Officers Association
- Director, the Community College Foundation
- Foster Youth Services Program Coordinator, Educational Options Office, California Department of Education
- Chief, Program Support Branch, California Department of Health Services
- President, the California Foster Parent Association
- President, the California State Care Providers Association
- Executive Director, the California Youth Connection
- Tribal representatives

# Annual Budget Request & Summary

Placeholder for Budget info

Placeholder for Budget info

Placeholder for Budget info

## Disaster Plan

## DISASTER PLAN

The state of California's Office of Emergency Services' Emergency Plan (Part Two Attachment A, B and C) incorporates the CDSS in their overall disaster plan. The plan can be viewed at the following website:

<http://www.oes.ca.gov/Operational/OESHome.nsf/LevelTwoWithNav?OpenForm&Key=Plans+and+Publications>

In addition to the state's emergency plan, the CDSS' Disaster Services Section is responsible for supporting counties' mass care and shelter programs in California, and state and federal grant recovery programs for individuals and households. These program responsibilities are delegated to the CDSS by an Administrative Order from the California Emergency Management Agency, formerly the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, issued under the authority of Executive Order W-9-91.

The CDSS issued an All County Letter (ACL 08-52) informing all 58 counties of new federal disaster response requirements. The ACL established that counties are required to provide updated disaster response information annually to the CDSS.

As of March 11, 2009, the CDSS has received CWS Disaster Response Plans from all 58 counties.

All county plans include the following new federal requirements on how states would:

- 1) Identify, locate, and continue availability of services for children under state care or supervision who are displaced or adversely affected by a disaster;
- 2) Respond, as appropriate, to new child welfare cases in areas adversely affected by a disaster, and provide services in those cases;
- 3) Remain in communication with caseworkers and other essential child welfare personnel who are displaced because of a disaster;
- 4) Preserve essential program records; and
- 5) Coordinate services and share information with other states.

On January 5, 2008, January 7, 2008, and January 9, 2008, and January 14, 2008, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger declared a state of emergency in Sacramento, Butte, Placer, San Francisco, Yuba, Yolo, Colusa, Del Norte, El Dorado, Sierra, Mendocino CWS counties and cities of Oakland and Grass Valley due to extreme winds and heavy rain. During this time, the CSDSS maintained communication (via email and telephone) with all affected counties to insure the safety of children in the child welfare system were being met and to offer assistance, if needed.

On May 22, 2008, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger declared a state of emergency in Santa Cruz County due to the summit fire. During this time, the CDSS maintained communication (via email and telephone) with all affected counties to insure the safety of children in the child welfare system were being met and to offer assistance, if needed.

On November 15, 2008 and November 17, 2008, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger declared a state of emergency in Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, and San Bernardino counties due to the spread of wildfires. During this time, the CDSS maintained communication (via email and

telephone) with all affected counties to insure the safety of children in the child welfare system were being met and to offer assistance, if needed.

The CDSS also continues to develop and work towards a comprehensive, department wide disaster response plan that will incorporate all 58 county CWS emergency response plans. Efforts will include integration with other departmental programs, protocols and emergency response teams. Efforts will also include the use of a toll free number that counties could access in the event of an emergency.

The CDSS maintains an electronic and paper copy of all CWS Disaster Response Plans. All county plans are currently on the CDSS' website located at <http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/cdssweb/default.htm>.

The CDSS contact is:

Richard Smith, Bureau Chief  
California Department of Social Services, Adoptions Services Bureau  
744 P Street, MS 8-12-31, Sacramento, CA 95814-5512  
(916) 651-8089

The alternate contact is:

Ann Mizoguchi, Assistant Bureau Chief  
California Department of Social Services, Adoptions Services Bureau  
744 P Street, MS 8-12-31, Sacramento, CA 95814-5512  
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**California's Collaboration with the  
Courts in the Implementation of the  
Child and Family Services Plan**

## **CALIFORNIA'S COLLABORATION WITH THE COURTS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES PLAN**

The CFSD of the CDSS plays a vital role in the development of policies and programs that implement the goals of CDSS' mission. In developing policies and programs, the CFSD collaborates with other state and local agencies, tribal representatives, foster/kinship caregivers, foster youth, foster care service providers, community-based organizations, the Judicial Council, researchers, child advocates, the Legislature and private foundations to maximize families' opportunities for success. This section will discuss CDSS' numerous collaboration efforts with the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), the staff agency of the Judicial Council, which has policy-making authority over the state court system.

The AOC is based in San Francisco and maintains three regional offices. Chief Justice Ronald M. George serves as chair of the Judicial Council. William C. Vickrey is the Administrative Director of the Courts, and Ronald G. Overholt is the Chief Deputy Director. Under the direction of the Chief Justice and the council, the AOC serves the courts for the benefit of all Californians by advancing excellence, leadership, and service in the administration of justice. The AOC also serves as a major source of input for the Judicial Council's strategic planning efforts.

There are several interagency teams, commissions or other efforts that include both CDSS and the AOC. One important team that addresses a multitude of issues is the SIT. Not only has the SIT continued to increase the number of agencies participating, it has also continued to work on a variety of issues that impact children and families. The SIT is chaired by the CDSS, and is comprised of representatives overseeing programs effecting children from departments within the California Health and Human Services Agency (CHHS), such as the DHCS, the CDPH, the DMH, the ADP and the California DDS. In addition to those agencies, the DOE, the EDD, the California First 5 Commission, the California Workforce Investment Board, the DOJ, the AOC, Office of the Chancellor for California Community Colleges, and the Foundation Consortium also participated.

The SIT priority work plan objectives for years 2008/09, which involve collaboration with the AOC/Judicial Council, include 1) decrease racial disproportionality and disparities in outcomes across systems with a focus on CWS; 2) sharing data across systems; 3) improve access to AOD services by families in the child welfare system; and 4) overcome real and perceived legal barriers by sharing "confidential" client information in order to strengthen services.

### **SIT Work Groups**

The California Statewide Leadership Group on Domestic Violence and Child Well-being (The Leadership Group) is a voluntary affiliation of governmental and non-profit organization representatives from a broad spectrum of services and supports that touch the lives of families with the co-occurring challenges of domestic violence and children exposed to it. The membership includes leaders from child welfare, juvenile and family courts, domestic violence, public health, emergency services, law enforcement, alcohol and drug abuse and mental health at the state and local levels. The Leadership Group's mission is to review and

develop policy recommendations for governmental agencies and non-profit and community-based organizations, independently and collaboratively. These recommendations will be designed to foster best practices and establish policies that enable public and private organizations make available the most appropriate protections, supports and services so that vulnerable families can expect that:

- Their experiences are understood
- Their efforts to protect themselves and their children are valued and supported
- Their safety and well-being are prioritized, and
- They and their children are effectively supported by adequately-resourced social services, the courts, domestic violence service providers and other agencies and organizations designed to serve their interests.

In June 2008 the Leadership Group received a grant from the Blue Shield of California Foundation to conduct an information gathering effort:

- Email surveys to local domestic violence service providers and county child welfare agencies
- In-depth interviews with selected local domestic violence service providers and county child welfare agencies triggered by survey responses; and
- State agency self-assessments to identify gaps in policy, guidelines, data and other state agency tools, including professional development, education and training and technical assistance.

The analysis of the responses, currently underway, will generate findings and recommendations for policy and practice improvements. The Leadership Group will share findings and recommendations with the SIT on Children and Families (SIT) as well as with networks of the group's members, pursue ways to further disseminate the findings and recommendations, foster their implementation and explore additional research and pilot projects that will move the agenda forward.

**The State Interagency Team (SIT) Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Workgroup** is comprised of representatives from the ADP, DHCS, CDPH, DMH, CDSS, CDE, DDS, JC/AOC, and California's First 5 Commission. The SIT AOD workgroup was charged with strengthening services for children, youth and families where there is nexus between AOD use and child safety, education, workforce readiness and success, maternal/child health, and mental health. The first outcome of the work group's 2006-2007 work plan was to "improve screening, identification, and intervention regarding AOD risk in families and children." A non-scientific survey was developed with the survey goal being to gain qualitative information to inform interdepartmental collaboration. Through this survey process, proposed and expected outcomes were that departments would discover information that can be shared within their own system and find opportunities for partnership with other systems to address common challenges and perhaps leverage resources. This survey was presented to the SIT in June 2007. In October 2007, the counties and regional offices that participated in the survey were notified how the survey summary was to be used and how to keep the SIT informed regarding the implementation of the recommendations.

The following recommendations for Interagency Systems were submitted by the Work Group to the SIT for endorsement and action:

- Develop common definitions for terms such as screening and assessment to improve communication and evaluation. Definitions vary between and sometimes within systems.
- Actively support and engage the Department of Education's Student Assistance Programs (SAPs). Encourage and facilitate collaboration/partnering among local systems (CDE, ADP, DMH) to broaden the use of SAPs.
- Promote the use of standardized, validated screening and assessment tools throughout all agencies.
- Request the County Welfare Directors Association (CDWA), the County Alcohol and Drug Program Administrators Association of California (CADPAAC), the Maternal, Adolescent and Child Health County Directors Association (MCAH), the County Mental Health Directors Association, and the courts to convene an annual meeting to highlight county level collaborations that have improved outcomes for clients with AOD issues.
- Include an AOD screening workshop at the CalWORKS Summit.
- Explore the potential for accessing Mental Health Services Act – Prevention and Early Intervention Initiative funds to raise awareness of the importance of AOD screening.
- Include a Partner Workshop in the ADP Conference to promote the services provided by other agencies to address AOD.

The AOD Work Group concluded in April of 2008 and in April 2009, the SIT established the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) Work Group. Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders is an umbrella term used to describe the range of effects which may occur in an individual whose mother drank alcohol during pregnancy. These effects may include physical, mental, behavioral and/or learning disabilities with possible lifelong implications.

**The Work Group to Eliminate Disparities** serves as the California Disproportionality Project's State Level Team and consists of thirteen members from nine Departments, including: DMH, Health, Corrections Standards Authority, CDSS, ADP, CDE, DPH, DHCS, Center for Families, Children and the Courts, JC/AOD, California Workforce Investment Board.

The California Disproportionality Project (Project) is a collaborative learning effort co-sponsored by the CDSS, Casey Family Programs, and the Annie E. Casey Foundation. This initiative was launched in June of 2008 and, in addition to the state level team, the project includes 12 county CWS agencies teams comprised of county CWS agencies and their community and interagency partners. The counties are: Alameda, Fresno, Kern, Los Angeles (two teams; Pomona and Metro North offices), Orange, Placer and San Diego (both focusing on Native American/American Indian children), Riverside, Sacramento, San Diego, San Francisco, San Joaquin, and San Mateo.

As the state level team, the Work Group will develop recommendations to the SIT for policy, practice and cross system changes to reduce the disproportionate representation of children of color in the CWS, as well as to improve outcomes for children and families of color across the state of California.

#### 2008 Work Group Accomplishments:

- The SIT Work Group identified opportunities to strengthen collaboration across state agencies to define and address disparities and disproportionality and to work toward developing culturally competent organizations. Work Group members shared their agency's aggregate data on service population and outcomes as well as policy goals, strategies, projects and initiatives to decrease disparities and disproportionality.
- A twenty-one member faculty has been assembled for the Project consisting of experts in child welfare administration, disproportionality and disparity in child welfare, adoption reform, the Multiethnic Placement Act and its Interethnic Adoption Provisions of 1996 (MEPA-IEP), parent engagement, youth engagement, and child welfare reform.
- Finalized Core Teams (Total 15) and Established Team Member Roles
- The California Disproportionality Project Extranet tool was created to collaborate sharing of ideas and assist with the Project's learning process.
- Three to four separate conference calls occurring monthly since October 2008. The primary purposes for the conference calls is to provide support and resource options, build awareness, provide technical assistance, and facilitate open communication.
- Completed the first two of four Learning Sessions (Convenings)
  - Learning Sessions are two-day meetings of all participating Core Teams and the Faculty to collaborate and learn more about key changes that can be tested in the various components of the practice using (Plan Do Study Act) PDSA's. PDSA's provide a structured method for planning changes, making the changes, studying the impacts of those changes and acting again based on what was learned.

The next two Learning Sessions (Convenings) will be held in Sacramento on:

- November 2009
- January 2010.

**The Core Indicator Workgroup** was charged with developing a state enriched core set of indicators of child and family well-being for the California Outcomes and Accountability System. Recommendations were made for the potential use of outcome data from systems other than child welfare, such as health, education, substance abuse treatment, etc. The CDSS lead the workgroup including the Departments of Health Services, Mental Health, Education, Developmental Services, and Alcohol and Drug Programs and the Judicial Council.

The outcome of the workgroup ended its activities in 2007, however the report continues to help to inform various discussions regarding data linkage.

#### **Blue Ribbon Commission of Children in Foster Care**

The Commission began meeting in 2006 to begin a study of one of the most critical issues facing the justice system – the need to quickly secure safe and permanent homes for California's children. Appointed by Chief Justice Ronald M. George, the representative Commission, chaired by Associate Supreme Court Justice Carlos R. Moreno, is made up of

judges (including a tribal judge), legislators, attorneys, representatives from CDSS, county social services and probation representatives, former foster youth, community leaders and others. The commission issued its final recommendations to the Judicial Council in August, 2008, including those on how to improve the ability of courts to move children quickly out of foster care and into permanency. An update of their activities this year is contained in the Permanency section. The Commission worked closely with representatives from CDSS and the Center for Social Services Research to draft quantitative performance measures for the juvenile court. In October, 2008, the Judicial Council approved a new rule of court, effective January 1, 2009, implementing the court performance measures in conjunction with the development of the California Court Case Management System (CCMS).

### **ICWA Initiative**

Effective December 2005, the CDSS entered into an interagency agreement with the Administrative Office of the Courts of California (AOC) to create the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Initiative. The ICWA Initiative is effective from 2007 through 2010, and will likely be renewed for another three years given how successful the partnership is between the CDSS and the AOC. The ICWA Initiative provides the following services:

- educational offerings;
- curriculum development;
- technical assistance;
- statewide resources; and
- tribal engagement on domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and teen dating violence.

These services are made available to stakeholders in the following three case types: family, juvenile, and probate. Stakeholders include judicial officers, clerks, attorneys, social workers, and probation officers. Services are tailored to meet the needs of stakeholder groups, individual local court systems, or regions.

The overall goal of the ICWA Initiative is to improve compliance with ICWA. To date, the primary audience has been those working with the state courts and local agencies. In particular the ICWA Initiative has worked with, developed materials for and provided trainings for state court judges, court staff, attorneys, social workers and probation officers. Full compliance with ICWA requires communication and collaboration between state courts and agencies and tribes and tribal courts where they exist. In the last several years, the staff of the ICWA Initiative have begun working with and looking for ways to support tribal service organizations and tribal court personnel (where tribal courts exist) in working more effectively with state courts and agencies.

### **Educational Offerings**

Educational workshops have been provided by a broad-based group of subject matter experts on a statewide, regional and local basis. This Initiative continues to impact not only the preservation of connections for Indian children, but also achieving permanency, as defined by the Indian community. During this reporting period, project staff completed the following trainings and presentations:

- June 5, 2008 – Eastern Sierra Training for court and agency personnel from Alpine, Mono and Inyo Counties in Bishop CA
- June 10, 2008 – Presentation at the ICWA Conference in Visalia, CA
- June 25, 2008 – San Francisco, Bay Area Regional ICWA Training for Probation Departments
- November 5, 2008 – French Camp (Stockton)
- December, 2008 – Beyond the Bench conference workshops held in San Francisco:
  - a presentation by Justice William Thorne focused on what juvenile court state judges need to know about domestic violence in native communities;
  - a judges' track on these issues as well as state court/tribal court cooperation;
  - two 90 minute sessions for social workers; and
  - two 90 minute sessions for probation officers.
- January 2009 – 23rd Annual San Diego International Conference on Child & Family Maltreatment
- January 28, 2009 – Pala Tribe and Tribal Star collaboration, Southern Regional Probation Training
- February 25th, 2009 – San Francisco, Family Law Conference
- February 2009 – Emeryville, Administrative Office of the Courts Juvenile Law Institute, advised on the ICWA workshop for judges
- March 11, 2009 – Amador County
- March 25, 2009 - Fresno County, Central California Regional Probation Training
- April 17, 2009 – Yolo County
- June 3, 2009, The Redding Rancheria, Northern Regional Probation Training

### **Curriculum Development**

The ICWA Initiative has developed presentations that serve as the basis for an ICWA 101 (basic course) and ICWA 102 (advanced course) curriculum. During the summer of 2009, the ICWA Initiative will hire an education specialist as a consultant to develop advanced ICWA curriculum in a variety of areas. The first areas of focus will be active efforts and case planning.

In consultation with the ICWA Working Group subcommittee on expert witness issues, project staff will develop an RFP to get bids to develop curriculum in the area of qualified expert witnesses in ICWA cases.

### **Technical Assistance**

As part of the ICWA Initiative, the project staff provides technical assistance to all stakeholders and fields questions relating to the federal requirements under the Indian Child Welfare Act and the state requirements under the state statutes and rules of court that implement ICWA. The project staff has given technical assistance to several counties looking to adopt local rules or protocols to implement ICWA in delinquency proceedings.

In addition to technical assistance provided to individuals seeking assistance to improve compliance locally, project staff has also been involved in helping to design and

implement ICWA compliance in the new California Court Management System (CCMS) which is a major initiative of the judicial branch. Also, project staff has worked closely with the CDSS to provide input into the development of a proposed ACIN on ICWA compliance in adoption proceedings.

Part of providing technical assistance is the development of job aids for stakeholders. Project staff continue to keep current the judicial handbook, the descriptions of available services to Indian children and families, a qualified ICWA expert witness list, and job aids for use by social service departments, probation departments, other agencies and judicial officers in ensuring ICWA compliance.

All technical assistance resources can be found at the link below:  
<http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/programs/description/jrta-ICWAResources.htm>

The job aids available at the above Web site are listed below:

- Family Courts: Requirements Under the Indian Child Welfare Act and Senate Bill 678 (pdf)
- Family Courts: Recommended Legal Findings and Orders for Cases Involving the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)
- Indian Child Welfare Act Requirements
- Juvenile Courts: Recommended Legal Findings and Orders for Cases Involving the Indian Child Welfare Act
- Probation Departments Requirements: Indian Child Welfare Act and Senate Bill 678 (pdf)
- Probate Courts Recommended Findings and Orders for the Indian Child Welfare Act (pdf)
- Probate Courts: Requirements Under the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and Senate Bill 678
- Social Service Departments: Requirements - Indian Child Welfare Act and Senate Bill 678 (pdf)
- Understanding ICWA Noticing Issues in California
- Indian Child Welfare Act Inquiry Interview

### **Resources**

The ICWA Initiative's statewide clearinghouse of Native American resources went live this past year and has an interface enabling users to search services by type and region in California. Below is the link to the Web site:

<http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/programs/cfcc/programs/description/ICWA/index.cfm>

The California Dependency Online Guide Web site also went live this past year. It can be accessed at the court info Web site by typing [courtinfo.ca.gov/dependencyonlineguide](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/dependencyonlineguide) or then link at: <http://168.75.202.29/>. Since the website is a free resource open to all child welfare professionals, it can serve as a clearinghouse of ICWA resources and trainings. All ICWA job aides and trainings are posted to this Web site.

### **Tribal Engagement on Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking, and Teen Dating Violence**

In collaboration with others at the AOC, project staff is working on the Native American Communities Justice Project – Beginning the Dialogue: Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Stalking, and Teen Dating Violence. With funding from the Office of Emergency Services, the AOC launched a short-term project designed to enhance access to and improve the administration of justice for Native American victims of family violence. Drawing on community expertise and guidance, this project will engage Native American communities in identifying needs relating to family violence. The project involves collaborating with tribes and community members to gather information about, and develop strategies to address the needs of Native American victims of family violence. The project will culminate in a planning meeting on May 22nd to examine the data identified by the community consultants and gathered during the local meetings will be compiled with the help of a research consultant working with CFCC staff. A portion of the May meeting will be devoted to presenting local meeting results to Native American community representatives; the balance of the May meeting will be used to discuss how to prioritize and address identified needs.

### **Dependency Drug Courts**

Another example of collaborative effort with the courts is the Dependency Drug Courts (DDC). The DDC monitor families who are involved with the child welfare system and for whom substance abuse is a significant issue. Since 2004, the CDSS has provided technical assistance and staff support to the Judicial Council's Collaborative Justice Courts Advisory Committee and to local efforts to test and disseminate these practices. Currently, there are over 50 DDCs located in 33 counties throughout the state.

The DDC oversees compliance with the law, protection and permanency planning for children and therapeutic interventions for individuals with substance abuse problems. In California and in other states, dependency drug courts have been determined to have important positive effects on child welfare case outcomes.

California has launched a collaborative statewide effort between the JC, DSS and AOD to take DDCs to scale and to develop a statewide database that will track caseloads and outcome data regarding DDCs.

### **Administration of the AOC's Juvenile Court Assistance Team (Formerly the Court Improvement Program's Child Welfare Improvement Project)**

In SFY 2008/09, the Center for Families Children & the Courts (CFCC) consolidated its juvenile court improvement units into the Juvenile Court Assistance Team (JCAT). The JCAT team consists of representatives from the Dependency Representation Administration Funding and Training (DRAFT) program, the Judicial Review and Technical Assistance (JRTA) unit and the Juvenile Delinquency team. Though each unit maintains distinct goals and objectives, each also serve to further broader objectives relating to juvenile court

improvement and better outcomes for children and families who come before the juvenile court.

#### DRAFT Program Objectives: Training and Technical Assistance

SFY 2008/09 saw the DRAFT program expand from 10 to 20 counties.<sup>7</sup> In each of the counties, DRAFT staff has employed the following process to assist in determining and meeting training and technical assistance needs:

- Convene local planning teams. With the assistance of the Presiding Juvenile Judge, these teams consist of a social services representative, county counsel, parent's attorney, and child's attorney.
- Prior to meeting with the planning teams, DRAFT staff reviewed the county SIP and child welfare outcome measures to compare county performance with social service goals.
- In the original 10 counties, DRAFT staff facilitated a self-assessment focusing upon reunification efforts. Along with isolating system strengths, this process helped identify barriers to reunification, service gaps and areas of disconnect between the court process and the provision of services.
- As a result of these self-assessments, staff is developing a statewide training curriculum, adaptable for local use to address these issues. This curriculum will be completed in April and rolled out to several DRAFT counties this year in various forms.

DRAFT staff also continued their efforts to tailor training and technical assistance to each individual county, covering a variety of issues relating to Family Finding, Dependency Drug Court, Education, and ICWA.

Finally, all JCAT attorney staff serve as liaisons to the local Blue Ribbon Commissions.

#### **Judicial Review and Technical Assistance (JRTA)**

The JRTA project was created in 1995 in response to a 1992 eligibility audit of foster care cases by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of the Inspector General. Federal auditors determined that 39 percent of the cases reviewed were not eligible for Title IV-E (Social Security Act) funding, and California's programs consequently faced a potential loss of \$51.7 million.

More than 10 years later, the federal government conducted another eligibility review or audit, and in June 2003, California passed that review. The report cited the work of the JRTA project as a strength contributing to the state's compliance. California passed the next eligibility review in June 2006, in part due to the reviews of the local juvenile court systems undertaken by the JRTA project. The next federal review is scheduled for September 14-18, 2009.

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<sup>7</sup> The original 10 DRAFT counties: Imperial, San Diego, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, Santa Cruz, Stanislaus, San Joaquin, Marin and Mendocino. The new DRAFT Counties: Alameda, Amador, Del Norte, El Dorado, Lake, Plumas, Sacramento, Santa Clara, Solano, Sonoma.

The JRTA site visit team works directly with juvenile court judicial officers, court staff, attorneys, and department staff (social workers and probation officers) to improve compliance with Title IV-E. The JRTA project consultants—experienced juvenile court attorneys—visit local juvenile courts, review court files, observe courtroom proceedings, and provide written reports and memoranda as well as technical assistance and training to assist with the implementation of their recommendations. The JRTA project continues to assist courts and counties, as it has done since 1995, by providing the needed training and technical assistance. As the project has evolved, local juvenile courts have initiated requests for legal and court services provided by JRTA.

JRTA staff visited the 14 most populated courts this year and 23 of the remaining 44 courts (with the remainder to be visited next year), to conduct a courtesy review of court files, check for the findings and orders necessary to maintain compliance with Title IV-E and for overall compliance with state and federal laws. Monitoring and follow-up is arranged as needed.

JRTA staff conducted workshops tailored to meet the individual needs of judicial officers, clerks, attorneys, social workers, and probation officers in each county. The workshops focused on federal laws and regulations related to families with children in Title IV-E-eligible placements. Ongoing training and technical assistance is offered to courts by JRTA staff as needed and at the request of local courts.

The JRTA team provided the following title IV-E trainings from July 1, 2009 through March 19, 2009:

- Mono County—August 4, 2008, Title IV-E related issues for social workers, county counsel, and attorneys
- Santa Barbara County, Santa Maria—September 10, 2008, Title IV-E related issues for social workers, county counsel, judge, probation officers, attorneys, and court staff
- Riverside County—September 17, 2008, Title IV-E related issues for social workers,
- Riverside County—September 18, 2008, Consultation with Department of Public Social Services management team
- CDSS, Eligibility Unit, Sacramento—October 28, 2008
- Humboldt County—January 30, 2009, Title IV-E related issues for social workers, county counsel and court staff
- Plumas County—March 11, 2009, Title IV-E findings and orders, Department of Social Services and Juvenile Courts.

At the request of the CDSSS, Funding and Eligibility Unit, the team provided the unit with a Title IV-E training on judicial determinations and related issues on October 28, 2008. On March 2, 2009, (Sacramento County) and March 5, 2009, (Orange County) the team also presented at state-wide meetings held by the CDSS, Funding and Eligibility Unit's to provide background and training to county eligibility staff in preparation for the September 2009 Title IV-E Foster Care Eligibility Review.

### **Citizen's Review Panel**

As required by CAPTA, CDSS has established three Citizen's Review Panels (CRPs), including two local and one statewide panel. The judicial branch/AOC has one representative who sits on the statewide panel. The function of CRPs is to evaluate the effectiveness with which state and local child protection agencies are discharging their responsibilities. Evaluation involves examining child protection policies, practices, and procedures. Recommendations are then made to county and state governments for improvement. The membership of the panels draws from child advocates, parent leaders, tribal leaders, foundation officers, county mental health managers, county counsels, parents and children's attorneys, foster parents, social workers, the AOC, and other child welfare professionals. Membership is also geographically diverse with representatives from both metropolitan and rural counties in California.

In addition to making recommendations annually to CDSS, the statewide panel is also charged with reviewing and providing comment upon the Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR), which updates the Title IV-B Child and Family Services plan prior to its submission to ACF of the Administration for Children and Families.

### **Child and Family Services Review (CFSR)**

The AOC recruited two judicial officers and four attorneys from the CWIP and JRTA teams to serve as on-site reviewers. The CIP staff and the JRTA supervising attorney attend all meetings for the PIP and have provided feedback on areas of the PIP that the AOC will contribute.

### **Court Improvement Program**

Finally, CDSS staff attended the national Court Improvement Program (CIP) meeting in October 2008 as part of a team including: the CIP staff and Glenn Freitas, Chief, Children's Services Operation and Evaluations Branch. The team used the meeting to plan California's coordination of efforts during the CIP meeting.

The CIP entered into an interagency agreement with CDSS to use data resources at the UC Berkeley Center for Social Services Research to provide data on safety and permanency outcomes for children specifically to judicial officers to further their involvement in the state's Outcomes and Accountability project. The CIP staff is also coordinating the input of CDSS and CWS/CMS designers into the upcoming CCMS to align data elements, reduce duplication, enhance information sharing and follow a common schema of performance measurement. A working group on data exchange composed of CFCC, DCSS, county and Court members has been attending meetings in Santa Ana to further the development of data exchange via CCMS.

The CDSS has enjoyed a long and productive collaboration with the AOC and plans to continue the efforts in the future.

## **Training & Technical Assistance Provided**

### **Request for Training & Technical Assistance**

## **Request for Training and Technical Assistance**

As noted throughout the Annual Progress and Services Report, there are instances in which we believe the state would benefit from the training and technical assistance offered through ACF, either directly provided by the staff, or through a National Resource Center (NRC).

The CDSS continues to monitor counties' progress on their system improvement plans related to a number of areas, such as safety, concurrent planning, etc. Counties in the process of updating their SIPs or who undergo a peer quality case review may identify issues in which they would desire technical assistance. We anticipate in the coming year that some counties will request technical assistance from the National Resource Centers (NRC) through CDSS on a variety of issues. The CDSS issued an All County Information Notice outlining the process by which counties could request training and technical assistance, and continues to encourage counties to use the services offered by the NRCs.

The California plan for training and technical assistance offered through ACF, either directly provided by the staff, or through a NRC was submitted to ACF in 2009. A copy of the plan is included in this section.

## **Training and Technical Assistance**

Also included in this section is a list of entities, in addition to CDSS, that provide training and technical assistance to counties through contracts and other means.

Training and technical assistance is provided to California counties through contracts and also directly by California Department of Social Services (CDSS). Training and technical assistance has also been provided by the following groups:

- Administration for Children and Families, ACF.
- Annie E. Casey Foundation with CDSS (providing a "convening/training" around topics such as recruitment/training and retention of foster parent, youth permanence and disproportionality).
- California Connected by 25 Initiative (supported by the Anne E. Casey Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the Charles M. Schwab Foundation, the Stuart Foundation and the Walter S. Johnson Foundation).
- California Permanency for Youth Project (through the Public Health Institute) is funded by the Stuart Foundation, Walter S. Johnson Foundation, S.H. Cowell Foundation, Zellerbach Family Foundation and Casey Family Program.
- CalWORKS/Child Welfare Partnership Project or Linkages.
- Citizen Review Panels (Calaveras and San Mateo counties).
- Connecticut Department of Mental Health and U.C. Berkeley (Supporting Fatherhood Involvement Study).
- Eastfield Ming Quong Family Partnership Institute (EMQ-FPI).
- Family and Juvenile Law Advisory Committee of the Judicial Council of California.
- Family Support Training Model/Family Resource and Support Training and Technical Assistance Project ("Strategies").

- Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance (ICAMA) Training.
- Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) Training.
- Judicial Council through the California's Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Initiative (100 percent general fund).
- Judicial Council's Collaborative Justice Advisory Committee.
- Judicial Review and Technical Assistance (JRTA), Center for Families, Children, and the Court, Administrative Office of the Courts, Judicial Council.
- Kinship Support Services Program (KSSP).
- Mental Health Services Act – Wraparound Services.
- National Council on Crime and Delinquency/Children's Research Center (Structured Decision Making [SDM]).
- National Council on Crime and Delinquency/Children's Research Center's SafeMeasures Reporting Service.
- National Resource Center for Child Protective Services.
- National Resource Center for Organizational Improvement (NRCOI).
- Parents Anonymous Inc.
- Specialized Training for Adoptive Parents (STAP).
- Statewide Citizen Review Panel.
- Strategies: Family Resource Center and Family Support Program Training and Technical Assistance. Strategies is comprised of three non-profit organizations: Youth for Change/Paradise Ridge FRC in Butte County (Region 1), Interface Children Family Services in Ventura County (Region 2) and the Children's Bureau of Southern California (Region 3).
- SA/HIV infant Program (formerly Options for Recovery Perinatal Program).
- The Breakthrough Series Collaborative (BSC), Case Family Programs and the Peer Technical Assistance Teams.
- The Child and Family Policy Institute of California.
- The Court Improvement Project: Self-Assessment for California Juvenile Dependency Courts.
- The Dependency Court Improvement Project (CIP) of the Administrative Office of the Courts Center for Families, Children and the Courts (CFCC).
- The Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program, including the Peer Technical Assistance.
- The SPHERE Institute (Comprehensive Assessment Tool [CAT]).
- Tribal STAR.
- University of California, Berkeley- Performance Indicators/California Children's Services Archive.

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CALIFORNIA'S NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER (NRC) TRAINING/TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (T/TA) PLAN - FFY 2009

Describe the Training/ Technical Assistance Request	Branch	Timeframe When and # of Days (Estimated)	The need for T/TA is related to the following: (Check the appropriate subject)	Additional Information	National Resource Center/Regional Office Contact
Technical assistance on developing a statewide strategic plan addressing recruitment and retention of foster and adoptive families	CYPB (Karen Gunderson/ Jill Sevaaetasi)	Request approved for:  1 ½ day onsite  Judith & John McKenzie and Shari Black	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PIP <input type="checkbox"/> CIP <input type="checkbox"/> CFSP <input type="checkbox"/> Data Issues SACWIS/AFCARS) <input type="checkbox"/> Other needs (specify) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CFPSR <input type="checkbox"/> Federal Requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Other	The T/TA will be a convening of a steering committee comprised of various stakeholders, i.e. county child welfare staff, probation, foster parent associations, current/former foster youth, etc. in developing a statewide strategic plan. The T/TA will help to build foster home capacity so more children can be placed in family like settings instead of group/FFA placements.	Child and Youth Permanency Branch has discussed this request with Pat Pianko and it was approved on 4/29/09.  Next Step:
Technical assistance on ICWA has been requested by Los Angeles County.	OCAP (Linne Stout/Teresa Contreras)	TBD	<input type="checkbox"/> PIP <input type="checkbox"/> CIP <input type="checkbox"/> CFSP <input type="checkbox"/> Data Issues SACWIS/AFCARS) <input type="checkbox"/> Other needs (specify) <input type="checkbox"/> CFPSR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Federal Requirements <input type="checkbox"/> Other	LA Co. is requesting T/TA in the referral process, implementation barriers, strategies, and enhancement and improvement in staff knowledge, skills, and abilities with regards to ICWA.	They have been working with National Child Welfare Resource Center for Adoption/John Levesque.  Next step: A conference call to be scheduled after Memorial Day with LA Co. and Office of Child Abuse to clarify request.

**Comment [DS1]:** Each TA need could be listed in this column.

FFY 2008 Quarters:

- Oct – Dec 07
- Jan – Mar 08
- Apr – Jun 08
- Jul – Sep 08

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## **Glossary**

## **GLOSSARY**

### 10-Largest Counties

The 10 counties which in aggregate, contain 60 percent of the child welfare services caseload in California. These counties are: Alameda, Fresno, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco and San Mateo.

### Consolidated Home Study

Our current system licenses foster parents, and if a foster parent decides that they wish to adopt a foster child they have in their home, a separate process called an adoptive home study is completed. The consolidated home study is a one-time study that would certify families for foster care and/or adoption, and would facilitate concurrent planning.

### Differential Response (DR)

Differential Response is an intake structure that responds differentially to all the referrals of child abuse and neglect made to county hotlines/intake in order to support families and reduce the number of placements of children in out-of-home care. Each referral will be evaluated in terms of statutory definitions for child welfare system (CWS) involvement for immediate safety considerations; for the choice of a response time for the initial face-to-face interview and for the path of response. Some referrals will be screened out as not appropriate for CWS. Others will be referred to a community network of response (after permission from the parents/caretakers is granted), and still other referrals will be opened for CWS face to face assessment.

Some CWS face-to-face assessments will be done without anticipating court involvement, but with the expectation that the family will be engaged to participate in services to protect the children and strengthen parental protective capacity as well as child and family well-being. Some initial assessments will be handled by CWS alone, and some by a team including CWS and partner agencies from the community. The purpose of this initial assessment is to understand what is going on within the family, what has to be done immediately to assure child safety and to engage the family in services to support parental responsibilities. All families not screened out will receive a comprehensive assessment as to their needs. This may be done by the community network of services and supports or by CWS – alone or in partnership with team members.

### Fairness and Equity In the Child Welfare Services System

Fairness and Equity in the child welfare services system is characterized by:

- Families whose children enter foster care who are treated the same regardless of race or ethnicity.
- Children's lengths of stay in foster care are not related to their race or ethnicity.
- Children's rates of reunification with their birth families are the same regardless of race or ethnicity.
- Services are culturally competent and available in the languages of the families served.

### The Family to Family Initiative

The Annie E. Casey Foundation, in consultation with community leaders and child welfare practitioners nationwide, developed a reform initiative called Family to Family. Family to Family was designed in 1992 and has now been field tested in sixty communities nationwide. Family to Family is in a total of seventeen states, including Arizona, Alaska, Michigan, Ohio, Illinois, Colorado, North Carolina, Georgia, New York (New York City), Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, New Mexico, Oregon, Tennessee, Washington and California.

The Family to Family Initiative provides an opportunity for communities to better screen children being considered for removal from home, to determine what services might be provided to safely preserve the family and/or what the needs of the children are; be targeted to bring children in congregate or institutional care back to their neighborhoods; involve foster families as team members in family reunification efforts; become a neighborhood resource for children and families and invest in the capacity of communities from which the foster care population comes; and provide permanent families for children in a timely manner.

Family to Family is comprised of four core strategies: Recruiting, Training and Supporting Resource Families, Building Community Partnerships, Team Decision Making and Self Evaluation. The Annie E. Casey Foundation's role has been to assist states and communities with a portion of the costs involved in both planning and implementing innovations in their systems of services for children and families, and to make available technical assistance and consultation throughout the process. The Foundation also provided funds for development and for transitional costs that accelerate system change. The states, however, have been expected to sustain the changes they implement when Foundation funding comes to an end.

Counties in California presently participating in the Family to Family Initiative are: Alameda, Contra Costa, Fresno, Glenn, Humboldt, Kern, Los Angeles, Monterey, Orange, Placer, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Francisco, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano, Stanislaus, Tehama, Trinity and Ventura.

### Peer Quality Case Reviews (PQCR)

The PQCR is an extension of the county's self assessment process and is guided by questions raised by the analysis of outcome data and systemic factors. The goal of the PQCR is to analyze specific practice areas and to identify key patterns of agency strengths and concerns for the host county. The PQCR process uses peers from other counties to promote the exchange of best practice ideas within the host county and to peer reviewers. The peer reviewers provide objectivity to the process and serve as an immediate onsite training resource to the host county.

### Permanence

Permanence is the maintenance and/or establishment of enduring family attachments. This includes a broad array of individualized permanency options for all children and youth, including Reunification, Adoption, Legal Guardianship and alternative permanent living arrangements, to promote their safety, permanence and well-being.

### Pilot Counties

The 11 pilot counties are counties that volunteered to implement the child welfare system improvements (Standardized Safety Assessment System, Differential Response and

Permanency and Youth Transitions). These counties are Contra Costa, Glenn, Humboldt, Los Angeles, Placer, Sacramento, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Stanislaus, Tehama and Trinity.

#### Quarterly Reports

Each quarter, the state provides county child welfare agencies with county-specific data on outcome measures related to safety, permanency and well-being. These quarterly reports provide counties with quantitative data and serve as a management tool to track performance over time. The quarters are defined as:

1<sup>st</sup> Quarter: January – March

2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter: April - June

3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter: July - September

4<sup>th</sup> Quarter: October - December

#### Risk, Safety and Needs Assessments

After the initial face-to-face assessment, there will be subsequent meetings with the family to do a comprehensive assessment of strengths and needs, parental protective capacity, ongoing risks and continued review of safety plans. If safety is a continuing concern and the case is being handled by the community network, the agency will re-refer the case to CWS. The nature of the case plan that emerges from the comprehensive assessment will differ based on what has to be done to assure safety, what the goals are for the case, and who should be involved in promoting the necessary changes within the family. The tools for the comprehensive assessment will apply for both in-home and out-of-home cases.

Safety assessments will be done at multiple times during the life of a case. The first face-to-face assessment will be done when direct information is gathered as to the current safety and risk. Based on this initial assessment, safety plans will be put into place immediately, as needed. By gathering information as to the concerns about the protection of the child, by exploring the protective capacity of the parents, and by preliminarily identifying needs for services, the worker will address risk. As the case moves forward to comprehensive assessment and service planning, a more thorough understanding will be obtained of family strengths and needs, as well as changes that must be made to assure the ongoing safety and protection of the child. Services and resources will be evaluated as to their effectiveness in reducing risk and in making an impact towards the needed changes. Decisions on case closure will also address safety, risk and whether necessary changes to assure child safety have been made.

#### Team Decision-Making (TDM)

A meeting of key stakeholders in the child's case specifically used to determine placement decisions. The meetings are always facilitated by a trained facilitator.

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## Acronym Index

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AAP	Adoption Assistance Program
AB	Assembly Bill
ACHSA	Association of Community Human Services Agencies
AC	Advisory Committee
ACF	Administration of Children and Families
ACIN	All County Information Notice
ACL	All County Letter
ACYF	Administration on Children, Youth and Families
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
ADP	Dept of Alcohol and Drug Programs
ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
AFCARS	Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System
AFDC	Aid to Families with Dependent Children
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AOC	Administrative Office of the Courts/Judicial Council
AOD	Alcohol and Other Drugs
APHSA	American Public Human Services Association
APSR	Annual Progress and Services Report
BAA	Bay Area Training Academy
BASSC	Bay Area Social Services Consortium
BRC	Blue Ribbon Commission
BSC	Breakthrough Series Collaborative
BSW	Bachelor of Social Work
CACI	Child Abuse Central Index
CADPAAC	County Alcohol and Drug Pgm Admin Assn of California
CalSWEC	California Social Work Education Center
CalWORKs	California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids
CAP	Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project
CAP	Corrective Action Plan
CAPC	Child Abuse Prevention Councils
CAPIT	Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention and Treatment
CAPTA	Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act
CASA	Court Appointed Special Advocate
CASRC	Child and Adolescent Services Research Center
CAT	Comprehensive Assessment Tool
CATTA	Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention and Treatment Training
CBCAP	Community Based Child Abuse Prevention
CBO	Community Based Organizations
CBT	Computer Based Training
CC25	California Connected by 25 Initiative
CCASSC	Central California Area Social Services Consortium
CCAT	Children's Collaborative Action Team
CCMS	California Court Case Management System
CCTA	Central California Training Academy

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## Acronym Index

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CCWSOS	California Child Welfare Services Outcome System
CDE	California Department of Education
CDPH	California Department of Public Health
CDR	Child Death Review
CDRT	Child Death Review Team
CDSS	California Department of Social Services
CDT	Community Development Team
CEBC	California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare
CFCC	Center for Families, Children and the Courts
CFPIC	Child and Family Policy Institute of California
CFRA	California Family Resource Association
CFSD	Child and Family Services Division
CFSP	Child and Family Services Plan
CFSR	Child and Family Services Review
CGYETF	California Foster Youth Education Task Force
CHHS	California Health and Human Services Agency
CIMH	California Institute for Mental Health
CIP	Court Improvement Program
CKC	California Kids Connection
CMHDA	California Mental Health Directors Association
CMS	Case Management System
CO-PI	Co-Principal Investigator
CPFS	Child Protection and Family Services
CPFSB	Child Protection and Family Support Branch
CPLT	California Parent Leadership Team
CPOC	Chief Probation Officer of California
CPS	Child Protective Services
CPYD	California Permanency for Youth Project
CRP	Citizen Review Panels
CS	Continuing Services
CSA	County Self-Assessment
CSAC	California Student Aid Commission
CSOB	Children Services Operations Bureau
CSPT	California State Parent Team
CSUDH	California State University, Dominguez Hills
CSULA	California State University, Los Angeles
CSULB	California State University, Long Beach
CSUN	California State University, Northridge
CSUSM	California State University, San Marcos
CWC	Child Welfare Council
CWDA	Child Welfare Directors Association
CWIP	Child Welfare Improvement Project
CWS	Child Welfare Services
CWS/CMS	Child Welfare Services / Case Management System
CYC	California Youth Connection

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## Acronym Index

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DCFS	Department of Children and Family Services
DDC	Dependency Drug Courts
DDS	Department of Developmental Services
DHCS	Department of Health Care Services
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services (federal)
DMH	Department of Mental Health
DOJ	Department of Justice
DPH	Department of Public Health
DR	Differential Response
DRAFT	Dependency Representation Administration Funding and Training Project
DV	Domestic Violence
EBP	Evidence Based Practice
ECC	Education Coordinating Council (LA County)
EDD	Employment Development Department
EIOS	Early Intervention Outreach Specialist
EMQ	Eastfield Ming Quong
ER	Emergency Response
ETV	Education and Training Vouchers
FASD	Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders
FCS	Family and Children's Services
FDM	Family Development Matrix
FES	Family Economic Support and Stability
FFA	Foster Family Agency
FFE	Family Finding and Engagement
FFY	Federal Fiscal Year
FIRST	Family Infant Relationship Support Training
FM	Family Maintenance
FR	Family Reunification
FRC	Family Resource Centers
FRCNLAC	Family Resource Center Network of Los Angeles County
FSP	Family Support Program
FTE	Fulltime Equivalent
FYS	Foster Youth Services
FYSIS	Foster Youth Student Information System
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HR	House of Representatives
ICAMA	Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance
ICCS	Institute for Community Collaborative Studies
ICPC	Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children
ICWA	Indian Child Welfare Act
IEP	Interethnic Adoption
ILP	Independent Living Program
IT	Information Technology
IUC	Inter University Council

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## Acronym Index

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JC	Judicial Council
JCAT	Juvenile Court Assistance Team
JRTA	Judicial Review and Technical Assistance
KinGAP	Kinship Guardianship Assistance Payment Program
KSSP	Kinship Support Services Program
LACOE	Los Angeles County Office of Education
LAUSD	Los Angeles Unified School District
LIA	Leaders in Action
LMS	Learning Management System
MCAH	Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health
MEPA-IEP	Multi-Ethnic Placement Act, Inter-Ethnic Adoption
MPP	Manual of Policies and Procedures
MSW	Master of Social Work
NCANDS	National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System
NCCD	National Council on Crime and Delinquency
NCFR	National Council on Family Relations
NGA	National Governor's Association
NICU	Neonatal Intensive Care Unit
NIDCAP	Newborn Individualized Development Care and Assessment Project
NITA	National Institute of Trial Advocacy
NRC	National Resource Center
NRCOI	National Center for Organizational Improvement
NREFM	Non-Relative Extended Family Member
NYTD	National Youth in Transition Database
OCAP	Office of Child Abuse Prevention Bureau (in CFSD)
OSPPU	Out-of-State Placement Policy Unit (CDSS)
P&EI	Prevention and Early Intervention Training
PA	Placement Assessment
PAC	Prevention Advisory Council
PCWTA	Public Child Welfare Training Academy
PDSA	Plan – Do – Study – Act
PIP	Performance Improvement Plan
PL	Public Law
PMI	Pathway Mapping Initiative (Harvard University)
PP	Primary Provider
PQCR	Peer Quality Case Reviews
PSSF	Promoting Safe and Stable Families Act
PRU	Placement and Recruitment Unit
QEW	Qualified Expert Witness
RCL	Rate Classification Level
RFP	Request for Proposal
RCFFP	Resource Center for Family-Focused Practice
RTAs	Regional Training Academies
RBS	Residentially Based Services

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## Acronym Index

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SACHS	Southern Area Consortium of Human Services
SA/HIV	Substance Abuse / Human Immunodeficiency Virus
SACWIS	Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System
SAP	Student Assistance Program
SB	Senate Bill
SDCOE	San Diego County Office of Education
SDM	Structured Decision Making
SDSU	San Diego State University
SFI	Supporting Father Involvement
SFY	State Fiscal Year
SGF	State General Fund
SIP	Self-Improvement Plan
SIS	Student Information System
SIT	State Interagency Team
SKCP	Safe Kids California Project
SLO	San Luis Obispo County
SLOC	Statewide Linkages Oversight Committee
SPA	Service Planning Area
SP	Supervised Provider
SPARK	Successfully Parenting At Risk Kids
SPHERE	Social Policy Health Economics Research and Evaluation Institute
SSA	Social Security Administration
SSB	Safely Surrendered Baby
SSI	Social Security Income
SSS	Screening Survey Summary
SSTP	Special Start Training Program (Mills College)
STAP	Specialized Training for Adoptive Parents
STAR	Successful Transitions to Adult Readiness
STEC	Statewide Training and Education Committee
SYVT	State Youth Vision Team
T4T	Training for Trainers
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
TDM	Team Decision Making
THPP	Transitional Housing Placement Program (ages 16-18)
THP-Plus	Transitional Housing Placement Plus Program (ages 18-24)
TILP	Transitional Independent Living Program
TOL	Transfer of Learning
UCD	University of California, Davis
UCLA	University of California, Los Angeles
USC	University of Southern California

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