

California Program Improvement Plan Overview

State Progress

Quarter Ending June 30, 2005

Overall PIP Strategies

The California PIP is governed by a series of overarching strategies that establish the direction the State is taking to achieve required program improvements. These strategies focus on improving data reliability through ongoing analysis; improved program management and oversight through the California Outcome and Accountability System; improved practice through standardized training and implementation/expansion of "Promising Practices"; implementation of systemic changes to the way the California CWS program operates through the Child Welfare Services Improvements effort and improved communication and coordination between all stakeholders through the State Interagency Team.

Progress Report by Item

Safety Outcome 1, Item 2A: Repeat Maltreatment

Goal:

California has met our improvement goal of 8.8% as of June 29, 2005. The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) remains committed to further improvements in this goal and will continue to measure progress, even though the goal was achieved for purposes of the PIP.

Action Steps:

California has completed all five action steps for this item by June 30, 2005.

Safety Outcome 1, Item 2B: Incidence of Child Abuse and/or Neglect in Foster Care

Goal:

California has shown slight decrease in this area during the last quarter. Safety Outcome 1, Item 2B: Incidence of Abuse in Foster Care, decreased from the previous quarter by 0.11 of a percentage point, from 0.85 percent to 0.74 percent. While the goal is to see this indicator decrease, we have maintained consistently that the data used in the PIP for this item is inaccurate.

As we have reported previously California continues to work on issue of data quality in this area of safety. The Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) was not originally designed to capture data for this indicator. In order to address this issue, CDSS has worked throughout the term of the PIP on solutions to resolve data quality issues for this item

As a result of these concerns, CDSS determined and Region IX agreed in the approval of the revised PIP that a new action step was necessary. Specifically, we are working in partnership with the County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA) and our Data Center to review existing regulations and statutes to identify what policies, documentation requirements, and processes were provided to counties for reporting incidents of abuse in out-of-home care. This new action step aimed at better understanding this indicator by exploring both existing practice and the reporting processes used by

social workers statewide. As a result of the completion of the action step, the State issued new instructions for recording the incidence of abuse in out of home care in order to provide better data to determine what program changes are necessary. It is clear from our analysis that the base in the PIP is inaccurate and that our new methodology for reporting this item will cause it to rise over all in the State.

It is the view of the State that we will not begin to see improved data statewide until July of 2006. At that time, we believe it will be appropriate to revisit this data item with Region IX, to share the status and to discuss the implications on the PIP target for this item.

Action Steps:

California has completed all nine action steps for this item by June 30, 2005.

Safety Outcome 2, Items 3 and 4: Services to Family to Protect Children in Home and Prevent Removal and Risk of Harm to Children

Goal:

California performance has decreased slightly for this measure during the quarter. Safety Outcome 2, Items 3 & 4: Services to Family to Protect Children in Home and Prevent Removal and Risk of Harm to Children, increased from the previous quarter by 0.2 of a percentage point from 22.5 percent to 22.7 percent in this quarter (CDSS applied the same methodology change used in Repeat Maltreatment Item 2a to this measure). Our goal for this outcome is 20.5 percent. The CDSS continues to analyze this measure to determine accuracy of data. Upon completion of our analysis the State will report the results to Region IX, to determine if there is any impact with regard to the PIP target.

Action Steps:

California has completed all four action steps for this item by June 30, 2005.

Permanency Outcome 1, Item 5: Foster Care Reentries

Goal:

California has shown a slight increase in this area. The percentage increased from 10.3 to 10.4 during the quarter. The goal for this indicator is 9.4 percent. CDSS continues to analyze this measure to determine the impact of other factors, such as increased statewide reunification on this measure and the processes used by social workers to record this information. Our analysis has already shown that a significant number of cases that show as re-entries are for cases closed less than 30 days and in a number of instances less than 5 days. The State believes that continued analysis of this area will identify specific solutions that will result in more accurate reporting. As soon as that information is ready the State will discuss with Region IX to determine the impact on the PIP target.

Action Steps:

California has completed all six action steps for this item by June 30, 2005.

Permanency Outcome 1, Item 6: Stability in Foster Care

Goal:

California has improved in this outcome area. Stability of Foster Care Placement improved by .2 percent--to 85.4 percent during the quarter ending June 30, 2005. The baseline figure that the State must improve from is 85.2%, which was recalculated by Region IX from the original Federal CF SR Report of 77.8%. The new target is 86.7% or the current national standard. The State has performed extensive analysis of this data element which eventually resulted in a more accurate data; however it also resulted in the Federal recalculation of the base. This changed the state PIP from passing this item to improvement. The CDSS will continue to track performance of this item to determine if changes to CWS/CMS scheduled for later this year and/or completion of the action steps in this area will result in changes by September 30, 2006.

Action Steps:

California has completed all four action steps for this item and by June 30, 2005.

Permanency Outcome 1, Item 7: Permanency Goal for Children

Goal:

California has met out improvement goal of 70.4% as of June 2004.

Action Steps:

California has completed all three action steps for this item by June 30, 2005.

Permanency Outcome 1, Item 8: Length of Time to Achieve Reunification

Goal:

California has met our improvement goal of 57.2% as of December 10, 2003

Action Steps:

California has completed all three action steps for this item by June 30, 2005.

Permanency Outcome 1, Item 9: Length of Time to Achieve Adoption

Goal:

California has met our improvement goal of 20.9% as of December 10, 2003

Action Steps:

California has completed all ten action steps and by June 30, 2005.

Permanency Outcome 1, Item 10: Permanency Goal of Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement

Goal:

California has met our improvement goal of 31.3% as of March 2005.

Action Steps:

California has completed the two action steps for this item by June 30, 2005.

Permanency Outcome 1, Item 14: Preserving Connections

Goal:

California has improved performance to above the 90% compliance rate for this item.

The mid-PIP statewide survey showed improvement in Item 14; the percentage of children whose primary connections, including extended family, community and racial heritage are preserved. The baseline survey was 89.3 percent, and the improvement goal for this item is 92.3 percent. The latest survey indicated improvement of 1.2 percentage points, from 89.3 percent to 90.5 percent.

California must wait for the results of the third statistically valid statewide survey to determine if we have passed this item by September 30, 2006.

Action Steps:

California has completed all nine action steps for this item by June 30, 2005.

Well-Being Outcome 1, Item 17: Needs and Services of Child, Parents, and Foster Parents

Goal:

California has met one of the two measures and improved in the second. The mid-PIP survey indicated we obtained our improvement goal for one of the two measures for Item 17, the percentage of children, parents and caregivers whose needs were assessed and who received services to meet those needs. The first measure, which was the assessment percentage (the number of persons receiving assessment divided by the number of persons identified as case/family members), has met

the goal. The improvement goal for this item is 58.7 percent. The latest survey for measure 1 indicated a 60 percent assessment, an increase of 4.3 percent from the 55.7 percent at the baseline. Although this improvement goal has been met, CDSS remains committed to further improvements in this area.

In the second measure, which is the services percentage (the number of persons receiving services divided by the number of persons assessed), there has been improvement. The improvement goal for this item is 69.4 percent. The latest survey for measure 2 indicated an increase of 1.2 percentage points, from 66.4 percent at the baseline to 67.6 percent.

California must wait for the results of the third statistically valid statewide survey to determine if we have passed this item by September 30, 2006.

Action Steps:

California has completed all nine action steps for this item by June 30, 2005.

Well-Being Outcome 1, Item 18: Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning

Goal:

California has improved in all three measures and is performing above the 90% compliance rate in two of the three measures. The mid-PIP survey indicated improved performance in the improvement goals for the two measures for Item 18, the percentage of children, parents and caregivers involved in case planning. The first measure, the percentage of cases in which the case plan was discussed at all. The improvement goal for this item is 93.9 percent. The latest survey for this measure indicated an increase of 2.5 percentage points, from 90.9 percent at the baseline to 93.4 percent. .

In the second measure there has also been improvement. This measure, which is a two part measure, is the percentage the case plan is discussed with (a) interviewee and (b) interviewee and case child. The latest survey for part (a) of this second measure indicated an increase of 2.3 percentage points, from 89.6 percent at the baseline to 91.9 percent. The improvement goal for item 18, measure 2(a) is 92.6 percent.

The latest survey for measure 2(b) indicated an increase of 0.3 of a percentage point, from 50.7 percent at the baseline to 51.0 percent. The improvement goal for this item is 53.7 percent.

California must wait for the results of the third statistically valid statewide survey to determine if we have passed this item by September 30, 2006.

Action Steps:

California has completed all nine action steps for this item by June 30, 2005.

Well-Being Outcome 1, Item 20: Worker Visits with Parents

Goal:

California has met the improvement goal for two of the three measures and has improved in the third. The mid-PIP survey indicated we obtained our improvement goal for two of the three measures for Item 20, which measures worker visits with parents. The survey also indicated improved performance in the first measure for this item. The first measure is the compliance of workers with planned parent visit schedules. The improvement goal for this item is 88.2 percent. The latest survey for this measure indicated an increase of 1.4 percent, from 85.2 percent at the baseline to 86.6 percent.

California has met its goal for the second measure for this item - the percentage of parents in whose ability to safely parent children in the home was promoted/assisted by social worker visits. The improvement goal for this item is 73.8 percent. The latest survey for this measure indicated an increase of 6.5 percentage points, from 70.8 percent at the baseline to 77.3 percent. Although this improvement goal has been met, CDSS remains committed to further improvements in this area.

California has also met its goal for the third measure for this item - the percentage of parents in whose ability to meet their case plan goals was promoted/assisted by social worker visits. The improvement goal for this item is 69.6 percent. The latest survey for this measure indicated an increase of 3.2 percentage points, from 66.6 percent at the baseline to 69.8 percent. Although this improvement goal has been met, CDSS remains committed to further improvements in this area.

California must wait for the results of the third statistically valid statewide survey to determine if we have passed this item by September 30, 2006.

Action Steps:

California has completed all six action steps for this item by June 30, 2005.

Well-Being Outcome 2, Item 21: Educational Needs of Child

Goal:

California has improved in one measure and declined in the second. The mid-PIP survey indicated improved performance in one of the two improvement goals for Item 21, the percentage of children receiving in-home services or who are in out-of-home care who were assessed and received services for educational needs. The first measure is the percentage of cases in which educational needs were assessed. The improvement goal for this item is 64 percent. The latest survey for this

measure indicated an increase of 2.1 percentage points, from 61 percent at the baseline to 63.1 percent.

The second measure, the percentage of children with educational needs who received services, has not improved. The improvement goal for this item is 74.4 percent. The latest survey for this measure indicated a decrease of 1.9 percent, from 71.4 percentage points at the baseline to 69.5 percent. The CDSS is working with the California Department of Education to improve the provision of services to children.

California must wait for the results of the third statistically valid statewide survey to determine if we have passed this item by September 30, 2006.

Action Steps:

California has completed all action steps for this item by June 30, 2005.

Well-Being Outcome 2, Item 23: Mental Health of Child

Goal:

California has improved in both measures for this item. The mid-PIP survey indicated improved performance in the percentage of children receiving in-home services or who are in out-of-home care who were assessed and received services for mental health needs. The first measure is the percentage of cases in which mental health needs were assessed. The improvement goal for this item is 46.7 percent. The latest survey for this measure indicated an increase of 1.1 percent, from 43.7 percent at the baseline to 44.8 percent.

The second measure for Item 23, the percentage of children with mental health needs who received services, also indicates improvement. The improvement goal for this item is 58.2 percent. The second survey for this measure indicated an increase of 1.3 percentage points, from 55.2 percent at the baseline to 56.5 percent.

California must wait for the results of the third statistically valid statewide survey to determine if we have passed this item by September 30, 2006.

Action Steps:

California has completed all seven action steps for this item by June 30, 2005.

Systemic Factor 2, Item 25: Provides a process that ensures that each child has a written case plan to be developed jointly with the child's parent(s) that includes the required provisions.

Goal:

California has met the improvement goal of at least 60% of the counties implementing Family-to-Family as of March 2005.

Action Steps:

California has completed all five action steps for this item by June 30, 2005.

- The CDSS is working on an ongoing basis with Family-to-Family counties to monitor progress and to provide technical assistance if needed.

Systemic Factor 2, Item 28: Provides a process for termination of parental rights proceedings in accordance with the provisions of the Adoptions and Safe Families Act.

Goal:

California has met our improvement goal of 87.5% as of October 2004.

Action Steps:

California has completed all 12 action steps for this item by June 30, 2005.

Systemic Factor 3, Item 31: The State is operating an identifiable quality assurance system that is in place in the jurisdictions where the services included in the CFSP are provided, evaluates the quality of services, identifies strengths and needs of the service delivery system, provides relevant reports, and evaluates program improvement measures implemented.

Goal:

California has met this improvement goal as of June 30, 2005.

Action Steps:

California has completed the action step for this item by June 30, 2005.

Systemic Factor 4, Item 32: The State is operating a staff development and training program that supports the goals and objectives in the CFSP, addresses services provided under titles IV-B and IV-E, and provides initial training for all staff who deliver these services.

Goal:

California has met this improvement goal of having a common core curriculum for all new workers that is delivered by all training entities as of June 30, 2005.

Action Steps:

California has completed all six action steps for this item by June 30, 2005.

Systemic Factor 4, Item 33: The State provides for ongoing training for staff that addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to the services included in the CFSP.

Goal:

California has met this improvement goal of minimum requirements for ongoing training of existing staff will be in place by June 30, 2005.

Action steps:

California has completed the two action steps for this item by June 30, 2005.

Systemic Factor 4, Item 34: The State provides training for current or prospective foster parents, adoptive parents, and staff of State licensed or approved facilities that care for children receiving foster care or adoption assistance under title IV-E that addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to foster and adopted children.

Goal:

California has met this improvement goal of having standard learning outcomes/objectives to be used in training caregivers by June 30, 2005.

Action Steps:

California has completed the two action steps by June 30, 2005.

Systemic Factor 5, Item 36: The services in Item 35 are accessible to families and children in all political jurisdictions covered in the State's CFSP. (Note: while the State passed item 35, the item refers to an array of services that assess the strengths and needs of children and families and determine other service needs, address the needs of families in addition to individual children in order to create a safe home environment, enable children to remain safely with their parents when reasonable, and help children in foster and adoptive placements achieve permanency).

Goal:

California has met this systemic improvement goal of at least 20% of counties addressing an identified service need as of June 30, 2005.

Action Steps:

California has completed all five action steps for this item by June 30, 2005.

Systemic Factor 5, Item 37: The services in Item 35 can be individualized to meet the unique needs of children and families served by the agency.

Goal:

California has met this systemic improvement goal of at least 20% of counties with an identified service gap will address that service need as of June 30, 2005.

Action Steps:

California has completed all five action steps for this item by June 30, 2005.

Systemic Factor 7, Item 42: The Standards are applied to all licensed or approved foster family homes or child care institutions receiving title IV-E or IV-B funds.

Goal:

California has met this improvement goal of all State/County licensing staff and approval staff are trained to the same standards as of June 30, 2005.

Action Steps:

California has completed the two action steps for this item.

Systemic Factor 7, Item 44: Recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families that reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the State for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed.

Goal:

California has met this systemic goal of the 10 largest counties developing a recruitment plan that reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of children in care as of June 30, 2005.

Action Steps:

California has completed all seven action steps for this item by June 30, 2005.