California Outcomes and Accountability System

SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE

COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

March 2011

Kathy Gallagher, Director, Department of Social Services

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Present: 5 - Supervisor Carbajal, Supervisor Wolf, Supervisor Farr, Supervisor Gray, and Supervisor Lavagnino

SOCIAL SERVICES File Reference No. 11-00633

RE: Approve the 2009-2012 Santa Barbara County System Improvement Plan (SIP) and the 2010 Update developed in accordance with Assembly Bill 636, Chapter 678, Statutes of 2001, and the California Child and Family Services Review for submission to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS).

A motion was made by Supervisor Carbajal, seconded by Supervisor Lavagnino, that this matter be Approved. The motion carried by the following vote.

Ayes: 5 - Supervisor Carbajal, Supervisor Wolf, Supervisor Farr, Supervisor Gray, and Supervisor Lavagnino

California's Child and Family Services Review
System Improvement Plan Update 2010

County:	**Santa Barbara County**
Responsible County Child Welfare Agency:	Department of Social Services
Period of Plan:	**October 2009 – September 2012**
Period of Outcomes Data:	**Quarter ending: Quarter 4 2008**
Date Submitted:	**August 1, 2011**
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Board of Supervisors (BOS) Approval	
BOS Approval Date:	8/9/11
Name:	FONI GRAY
Signature:	Joni Gray

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Executive Summary

Assembly Bill 636 (Steinberg, 2001) established a new Child Welfare Outcome and Accountability System replacing the former CWS Oversight System which had focused exclusively on regulatory compliance. Pursuant to AB 636, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) developed the California – Child and Family Services Review (C-CFSR) which became effective January 1, 2004. The C-CFSR brings California into alignment with the Federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) by establishing an enhanced version of the Federal system designed to promote improved Child Welfare Services (CWS) outcomes for children and families in each county in California. The C-CFSR designates the County Probation Department as an equal partner with CWS to improve the outcomes of youth in foster care. The C-CFSR now referred to as the California Outcomes and Accountability System (COAS) tenets are steeped in a philosophy of continuous quality improvement, interagency partnerships, and community involvement intended to make measurable improvements in the safety, permanence, and well-being of the children and families served by Child Welfare Services (CWS) and Juvenile Probation. The overarching goals of this system are to:

- Protect children from abuse and neglect.
- Have children safely maintained in their own homes whenever possible and appropriate.
- Provide children permanency and stability in their living situations.
- Preserve the continuity of family relationships and connections for children.
- Enhance families' capacity to provide for their children's needs.
- Ensure children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.

- Ensure children receive adequate services to meet mental health and physical needs.
- Prepare youth emancipating from foster care to transition into adulthood.

The Outcomes and Accountability system is a four part system of continuous quality improvement incorporating a Peer Quality Case Review (PQCR), County Self-Assessment (CSA), System Improvement Plan (SIP), and Quarterly Data Reports reflecting the County performance on Federal and State Measures. The Quarterly Data Reports are used to inform all other components of the quality improvement system, which historically has operated on a three year review cycle beginning with the PQCR. The CFSR is in the initial stages of revision on will be moving to a five year cycle beginning in fiscal year 2011-2012.

Peer Quality Case Review (PQCR)

Santa Barbara County conducted its second PQCR in September 2008 in partnership with San Luis Obispo and Ventura Counties, as well as a few of our community partners. The focus area for the CWS/Probation PQCR was C4. Placement Stability and the information gleaned informed the self-assessment and the themes appear in the improvement plan. The following information is directly from the Conclusion of the PQCR report:

> As CWS and Probation embarked in the planning process for PQCR related to our focus area of placement stability, we independently had theories about what information we might glean throughout this process. While much of the promising practices and barriers/challenges to ensuring placement stability aligned with our expectations, there were some instances when practices were reported as being both promising and a barrier to achieving positive outcomes for the children in care.
>
> CWS heard overwhelmingly from staff that the resources in place through the Home Connection Finders and the Placement Search Assistant have been very helpful in identifying potential relatives and placement options for children in care. The sample data indicates that CWS is placing many children with relatives and it appears that those in relative care experience both higher rates of placement stability and better outcomes to include transitioning from placement to home. The theme of transitions was reflected throughout the various tools and an

area where the staff felt there is much work to be done. Assisting children in transitioning to and from placements is both time consuming and requires significant coordination with the caregivers, which staff felt was limited by their lack of time to spend with the children given their other responsibilities. The importance of adequately preparing children to move to and from placement was echoed in the youth focus group and bears continued efforts to ensure children are supported during the challenging times around transitions.

Expectedly, CWS also heard concerns from line staff around the challenges of moving children from shelter care within the 14 day policy. While this policy was instituted to ensure vacancies in the shelter for emergency placements, the unintended consequence at times has been the need to move children to any placement as opposed to the right placement for the child. Recommendations surrounding the availability of greater detail about our out of home care providers would assist staff in making better informed decisions when placing children , even under short deadlines, and will be pursued in our continued commitment to ensuring better outcomes for children under our care. While this policy seemed to present a challenge for staff, the data at the time of PQCR, to the credit of our staff, does not reflect that this policy change has overwhelmingly resulted in greater placement turnover. In addition, we recognize that placement changes particularly if moving from foster home to relative/non-related extended family member care is a positive outcome for the child – even when not in compliance with the measure.

Through PQCR, CWS has been able to affirm that many of our practices related to placement have been successful in achieving intended outcomes, even though they may not always be seen as favorable by line staff. Yet, there is always room for improvement and fine-tuning is still needed to provide better support to our staff and the children whom they serve.

Probation finds strong support for our Placement Review Committee and use of SB 163. These provide opportunities to minimize the use of out of home placement when possible and to determine what services, resources, and options are available prior to placing a youth. SB 163 provides valuable wrap services to families to prevent the need for placement, or reduce the number of, or time a youth spends in out of home placements. Additionally, it provides a high level of support for youth who are transitioning to, or returning from a placement. Probation further understands a desire for increased training for staff in reference to placement protocols and Division 31 policies and procedures. Increasing the level of training will allow for an increased service delivery to placement youth and can assist staff in

understanding their responsibilities when placement transitions occur. Additionally, greater centralization of information and personnel would assist in keeping staff informed and ensure greater consistency of information and changes in practice. Probation recognizes the need to maintain, or increase, the training and responsibilities of support staff that provide invaluable assistance with placement cases. Another identified need is to engage our partners in education so that they have a greater understanding of the educational responsibilities associated with placements and to ease the transitions that occur when placement changes are necessary. Overall, the process was informative as it highlighted gaps in information and processes. It was also positive in that it underscored the importance of our strong and collaborative relationship with DSS.

Overall, the information obtained through the PQCR process will be used to inform our County Self Assessment and provide a greater depth of knowledge to the gaps analysis for the measure of placement stability. Moreover, the selection of this focus area has illuminated the inter-relationship between many of the State and Federal Measures, supporting the need to give the interaction more focus in our upcoming self-assessment then perhaps we have in previous years.

County Self Assessment (CSA)

Santa Barbara County CWS conducted its third Self-Assessment from January - May 2009. The CSA is a macro analysis of how local programs, systems and factors impact performance on the Federal and State Outcome Measures in three major areas: Safety, Permanency, and Well-being. The information and analysis included in the CSA form the basis for developing a System Improvement Plan (SIP). The reports provided by CDSS combined with Safe Measures reports and internal data analysis sources provided sufficient data to inform the Self-Assessment process. As in the previous Self-Assessments, Santa Barbara County focused on obtaining extensive input from our many public and private partners, believing that their knowledge of and experience with CWS and Probation were critical in identifying the strengths, needs, and gaps in our service delivery system. The process focused on completing a gaps analysis with several existing groups who are integrally involved in promoting the safety and well-being of children and families such as KIDS Network, the Child Abuse Prevention Council; CWS Team meeting targeting all CWS supervisors/managers, and the Juvenile Court “Brown Bag” obtaining input from key stakeholders in the legal process. In addition, focus groups were arranged to solicit input from all CWS/Probation line staff and all service providers, including an invitation to the Foster Parent Association and several foster parents. CWS

also extended an opportunity to our foster youth to provide feedback regarding the CWS/Probation service delivery system. In total, more than 150 people representing the public, private, and consumer sectors participated in the gaps analysis process used to inform the Self-Assessment. Many Self-Assessment participants/organizations were invited to join the System Improvement Plan Workshop.

System Improvement Plan (SIP)

The System Improvement Plan (SIP) is the operational agreement between the State and the County defining actions the County will implement to improve outcomes for children and families based on the findings in the CSA. In the Summer of 2009, former members of the CSA workgroups were brought together to synthesize and prioritize the vast amount of information gathered through the CSA process. While there were several priority areas addressed in the CSA, the SIP workgroup chose to concentrate efforts to improve performance on three primary Outcome Measures along with the Systemic Factor of maximizing staff resources to allow them to spend more time with clients. Thus, the Santa Barbara County 2009-2012 System Improvement Plan (SIP) for Child Welfare Services and the Probation Department provides the framework to make measurable improvement along three chosen outcome factors for children and families as indicated below:

- C1.1 Reunification within 12 months (Exit Cohort)
  - Improvement Goal: Actively engage the family and community supports in early reunification services to decrease the time to reunification.
- C1.4 Re-entry Following Reunification
  - Improvement Goal: Support reunified families to prevent re-entry into the foster care system.
- S1.1 No Recurrence of Maltreatment
  - Improvement Goal: Enhance and expand existing prevention/early intervention strategies that are working to prevent recurrence of maltreatment.
  - Improvement Goal: Introduce more evidenced-based Home Visitation service delivery models into prevention and intervention service delivery systems.

The SIP is in the prescribed format and annual updates to the State are required. The SIP Update provides an opportunity to reflect on our achievements under the plan to date and refocus our efforts, where needed, to continue to make strides in achieving the desired outcomes for

children and families. To assist in providing context for the changes, the actual 2009 SIP details are included along with the insertion of the 2010 Update section for each priority outcome factor.

Quarterly Data Reports

CDSS in conjunction with the University of California at Berkeley (UCB) developed State Outcome Measures to indicate performance of each county Child Welfare system in California. While the reports are updated quarterly, the data may not be reflective of the most recent activities due to the elapsed time required by each individual measure. The January 2011 Outcomes System Summary Data was utilized to inform the SIP Update given the March 2011 review.

Santa Barbara County overall has relatively small numbers of children involved in both CWS and Probation system, which can have a significant impact on percentage based measures. In order to further illustrate the concept of economy of scales, County CWS had previously been meeting the measure for Exits to Reunification During the Year: Reentry within 12 months; however, in between the annual data ending June 2007 and the annual data ending September 2007, County CWS dropped below the national standard for this measure. A closer analysis of the numbers indicated that CWS missed succeeding on this measure by 4 children. In effect, this could have been one family. Yet, the change in the percentage was significant enough to move from previous success on this measure to failure. It is with this understanding that evaluation of progress regarding success or failure of the Outcome Measures must be considered.

Outcome Measure data is improving for Probation, but does not yet fully align with the existing Federal and State Measures. Relevant outcome measure data for Probation has been included in the SIP Update when available. The area of greatest relevance in the SIP to both agencies is improving outcomes for youth reunifying with their families from the foster care system and preventing re-entry into care.

System Improvement Plan (SIP) Update 2010

The 2009 System Improvement Plan proposed some good operational strategies; fine tuning and full utilization of what is known to provide positive outcomes; and a few ambitious projects. CWS and Probation are pleased to report that many of our strategic goals have been completed and/or are now moving into an oversight status for continued monitoring. Operational strategies accomplished include:

- Expansion of the Family Drug Treatment Court Program (1.2)
- Intensified services planning with the families during reunification (2.1)
- Implementation of a small Aftercare Program to support families transitioning from formal services to community supports (2.2)
- Expansion of the Differential Response Program to include service delivery by the Family Resource Centers (3.1)
- Implementation and expansion of the SafeCare© Home Visitation Model for "in-vivo" parenting education (4.1)

In addition to our SIP accomplishments, the Outcome Measure Data continues to show promise that our strategies for improvement over the last few years are truly making a difference. While our successes are celebrated and promoted as promising practices, there continues to be additional areas of high priority needs as identified in the 2009 SIP and supported by the January 2011 Outcomes System Summary Data. Recurrence of Maltreatment (S1.1) continues to be a challenging measure for Santa Barbara County. Recent data reports show a fairly consistent pattern of progress until about Spring of each year, marked by a period of rapid decline.

While there remains work to be done in order to achieve the remaining strategies and further analysis to determine if our plan is truly achieving intended outcomes, CWS and Probation are genuinely pleased with the accomplishments to date and will begin planning efforts this summer to begin the next CFSR cycle in the Fall of 2011.

I. System Improvement Plan (SIP) - Update for 2010

[All updates to the SIP are noted in blue]

Outcome/Systemic Factor: C1.1 Reunification within 12 months (Exit Cohort)

This measure answers the question: Of all children who had been in foster care for at least 8 days or longer that exited the foster care system to reunification, what percent were reunified in less than 12 months from the latest date of removal from home?

County's Current Performance:

CWS

In 2008, 116 children were reunified with their parent or primary caretaker. Of those 116 children, 55 reunified in less than 12 months from their date of removal.

Most recent start date	Most recent end date	Most recent numerator	Most recent denominator	Most recent performance	Most recent State performance	National Standard
01/01/08	12/31/08	55	116	47.4%	61.9%	75.2%
01/01/09	12/01/09	60	104	57.7%	64%	
07/01/09	06/30/10	52	113	46%	63.9%	

From the baseline year of July 1, 2002 to June 30, 2003, the percentage of children reunified within 12 months has decreased from 74.3% to 47.4%. The decline in performance is actually attributed to a positive outcome, which is the increased total number of children exiting foster care to reunification (74 at baseline compared to 116). There have been almost twice as many children reunifying annually in the last 3 years than in previous years. During both the baseline and recent performance year the number of children reunified in less than 12 months was the same at 55. However given the higher number of children reunifying, the current performance fell below the Federal Standard (75.2%) as well as the statewide performance (61.9%), which is why this measure was identified as an improvement focus area.

SIP Update 2010: In 2009, 104 children reunified with their parent or primary caretaker. Of those, 104 children 60 reunified in less than 12 months from their date of removal showing an increased percentage of children reunifying timely. There were 5 more children who reunified timely in 2009 than in 2008 accounting for a 10.3% performance increase. Yet overall, there were 12 less children who reunified in 2009 than in 2008, which illustrates the volatility created by small variances in performance based measures when the total populations comprising both the numerator and denominator are relatively small. The volatility continues as illustrated in the most recent annual data available beginning in July of 2009 through June of 2010, where there were 3 less children who reunified with their families (most likely one family) which resulted in a declined performance from the 2008 data by 1.4%.

The inherent challenges of providing comprehensive family reunification services further exacerbate performance on this outcome measure. Since 2008, Santa Barbara County has continued to enhance the family preservation program (voluntary family maintenance), which allows families assessed to have high or very high safety and risk assessments to participate in program services voluntarily; thereby keeping their children out of foster care. The direct result of the family preservation program is that those families where the children were placed in foster care and are receiving family reunification services are the most severe in terms of safety/risk to the child and/or parental motivation to participate in services. Multiple competing priorities and factors drive timely reunification including early parental engagement in program services, availability of community resources to address family needs, and competing priorities amongst juvenile dependency court participants.

Probation

In 2008, Probation reunified 18 youth with their parent or primary caretaker. Of those 18 youth, 10 or 55.6% were reunified in less than 12 months exceeding the State performance of 50.9%.

Most recent start date	Most recent end date	Most recent numerator	Most recent denominator	Most recent performance	Most recent State performance	National Standard
01/01/08	12/31/08	10	18	55.6%	50.9%	
01/01/09	12/01/09	11	21	52.4%	64.2%	75.2%
07/01/09	06/30/10	11	15	73.3%	59.9%	

SIP Update 2010: In 2009, Probation reunified 21 youth with their parent or primary caretaker. Of those 21 youth, 11 or 52.4% were reunified in less than 12 months falling short of the State performance of 64.2% and the 75.2% national average. Like Child Welfare, Probation experiences minimal changes in the number of youth who reunify overall and who reunify in a timely manner, but these small population variances (1-6 youth) have dramatic changes on the performance percentage.

Improvement Goal 1.0 Actively engage the family and community supports in early reunification services to decrease the time to reunification.

Strategy 1. 1	**Strategy Rationale**[1]
Fully utilize available tools, strategies, and resources to partner with the family and community by establishing and working towards common goals. **SIP Update 2010 Status: Completed** - Overall, CWS appears to be utilizing the Structured Decision Making (SDM) tools at an approximate 80-90% compliance/not required rate. On average, case plans are being completed without SDM tool completion on only about 10% of the cases presently, which is a drastic reduction from previous practices. Team Decision Making (TDM) meetings are being held often before detention in an effort to engage families at the onset of CWS involvement as a partner in the planning process. Supervision for quality case work has become the priority training topic for our supervisors and will begin in April 2011 to ensure staff are partnering with their families at the onset and utilizing all available resources in support of early family engagement. Probation has made a concerted effort to engage parents and guardians in reunification efforts frequently during a placement episode, and has promoted the idea of placement as a temporary intervention in all but the most severe cases.	Partnering with the family in the early identification of common goals increases chances for success and supports earlier engagement with community resources towards timely completion of case plan goals.

[1] Describe how the strategy will build on progress and improve this program/outcome area.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
1.1.1 Fully utilize Structured Decision Making (SDM) tools and protocols as the standardized assessment procedure for identifying family needs and risk factors in support of developing goals. Utilization will be monitored through supervisory review of tools during case conferences, case transfers, and case closures.	October 2009 - September 2010	CWS - Social Workers (SW), Supervisors, Managers
1.1.2 Assure parent has access to and contact information for the following to minimize delays in information and service delivery: ▪ Current Social Worker/Probation Officer ▪ Social Worker/Probation Officer Supervisor ▪ Attorney ▪ Services and community supports	October 2009 - September 2010	CWS Probation Juvenile Court Assigned legal counsel
1.1.3 Hold Family Meetings such as Team Decision Making (TDM) before Disposition to actively engage the family and their natural supports in the reunification process and hold follow-up Family Meetings minimally every 3 months thereafter.	October 2009 - September 2010	CWS
1.1.4 Engage the parent as a partner in developing the case plan goals and objectives.	October 2009 - September 2010 Ongoing	CWS Probation
1.1.5 Fully implement the Linkages Project to ensure coordinated case plans and services with the family and CalWorks partners for all eligible families.	October 2009 - September 2010	CWS CalWorks
1.1.6 Foster parents will learn about the tenants of reunification during the assessment and training process and will actively support reunification efforts through transportation, visitation, and ongoing feedback to the Social Worker/Probation Officer. **SIP Update 2010:** In support of this milestone at a countywide level, CWS has begun project activities under the Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI) Pilot Project. CWS's application for	October 2009 - September 2010 QPI: November 2010 – October 2011	Foster Parent Recruiter Pride Trainers Licensing/Relative Approval Unit Resource Families

	participation in the QPI Pilot with the California Youth Law Center and California Department of Social Services (CDSS) was accepted and project activities initiated in Fall of 2010. The QPI focus is to reinvent the public image of foster care. Through this initiative, CWS is emphasizing collaboration between social workers, caregivers, parents and family members to ensure better outcomes for our children and families. This QPI has been provided here for informational purposes and is included in this SIP update as Strategy 6.2.				
	1.1.7 Assure existing contracts and Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) provide timely, responsive services.		October 2009 - September 2010		CWS Probation Community Based Organizations (CBOs)

Strategy 1. 2 Access the Family Drug Treatment Court (FDTC) model for eligible families to provide a comprehensive array of services and close supervision/oversight as a means of early engagement when substance abuse is the primary contributing factor. **SIP Update 2010 Status: Completed** - The Family Drug Treatment Court Pilot (FDTC) has been dramatically successful in reunifying children with their parents or moving to permanency earlier when reunification appears unlikely. In an effort to expand the population served, DSS, Alcohol, Drug, and Mental Health Services (ADMHS), and a few of our Community Based Organizations (CBOs) partnered to apply for a Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSA) grant to expand the FDTC program. We were awarded the grant in October 2010 and began program expansion in January 2011. The grant services are focused on Children Affected by Methamphetamines and will essentially double the population served, as well as expand the eligible age population from up to age 5 to 17.	**Strategy Rationale** Utilize an evidence based drug court model to engage families early in drug treatment services.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
1.2. Complete the pilot phase of the Family Drug Treatment Court (FDTC) model in North County and based on positive outcomes of the pilot, fully implement and build the FDTC program. (move from pilot to program operation)	October 2009 - September 2010 Completed	CWS Juvenile Court Treatment Providers
1.2.2 Develop a reporting system to track and monitor results of those served in the FDTC to support efficacy of the program.	October 2010 - September 2011 Completed	CWS FDTC Stakeholders
1.2.3 Seek new funding strategies and resources to fully augment existing program and support potential future year expansions.	October 2009 - September 2012 Completed	CWS Juvenile Court Stakeholders Treatment Providers Alcohol and Drug Programs (ADP) FDTC stakeholders
1.2.4 Develop a tracking system for use of the current program and the volume of cases that could benefit from future program expansions to support decision-making around program expansions.	October 2010 - September 2011 Completed	CWS Juvenile Court
1.2.5 Expand FDTC model to serve more families.	October 2011 - September 2012 January 2011 - Expansion in progress	CWS Juvenile Court Stakeholders Treatment Providers Alcohol and Drug Programs (ADP) FDTC stakeholders

Strategy 1.3	**Strategy Rationale**
Develop foster care options that will decrease the timeframe leading to or improve the likelihood of successful reunification. **SIP Update 2010 Status:** Probation foster care numbers have been steadily declining over the last few years. Granted the total population is relatively small, yet utilization of program resources appropriately has been contributing to this decline in use. Probation readily utilizes the SB163 program and as of March 2011 has youth in more than half of the county program slots. Local foster care options for probation youth are essentially non-existent and the development of appropriate programs that might provide such options is often difficult and limited by resources. Nonetheless, Probation remains committed to exploring alternatives to group care for delinquent foster youth.	Foster care options that target specific population needs, provide an abbreviated local alternative to group care, or transition a youth back home should improve reunification outcomes.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
1.3.1 Identify and utilize local foster care options designed to meet specific treatment needs and which limit the foster care episode to six months or less.	October 2009 - September 2010 Ongoing	CWS - Social Work staff Probation - Deputy Probation Officer (DPO)
1.3.2 Diligently monitor group care program treatment models and plans to insure lengthy ones serve some legitimate need or can be modified to decrease their duration by case conferencing with the treatment provider during placement visits. Case conferences will include a review of the treatment plan to ensure relevancy and the status of goals achieved.	October 2009 - September 2012 Ongoing	Probation
1.3.3 Fully utilize SB 163 as a step-down option from group care to return a youth to their family in a timely manner.	October 2009 - September 2011 Ongoing	Probation

Describe any additional systemic factors needing to be addressed that support the improvement plan goals.

- A review of departmental philosophies with all staff to ensure consistency in understanding regarding parent/child visitations, Relative/Non-Related Extended Family Member placements, and the degree of parent participation in case planning.
- Review the reasoning and frequency of court continuances to minimize their use to decrease delays in reunification
- Timely access to adult and children's mental health services
- Availability and access for parents to community supports such as parent partners, mentors, or family service advocates
- Availability of foster placements for teenagers within the community to facilitate parental connection during the reunification process

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

- Review court timelines with all staff, given the changes in the date the child was considered to have entered care, to ensure 6 and 12 month reviews are occurring timely
- Educate involved parents regarding the Juvenile Court process
- Educate caregivers regarding their role in the reunification process

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

- Alcohol, Drug, and Mental Health Services (ADMHS) support is needed to ensure the availability of treatment providers on the network promoting timely receipt of counseling/assessment services for families including bilingual/bicultural services

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

- More flexibility with funding sources and services, such as that which is available through SB163 Wraparound.
- Contradiction between State regulations extending reunification time for families with particular issues and the Adoption and Safe Family Act (ASFA) national standards for which counties are accountable to in the Outcomes and Accountability System

Outcome/Systemic Factor: C1.4 Re-entry Following Reunification

This outcome measure answers the question: Of all children who exited the foster care system to reunification, how many re-entered foster care within 12 months?

County's Current Performance:

CWS

During 2007, 146 children exited foster care to reunification. Within 12 months of reunifying, 24 children (16.4%) re-entered foster care.

Most recent start date	Most recent end date	Most recent numerator	Most recent denominator	Most recent performance	Most recent State performance	National Standard
01/01/07	12/31/07	24	146	16.4%	11.6%	
01/01/08	12/31/08	26	145	17.9%	11.9%	9.9%
07/01/08	06/30/09	15	105	14.3%	11.7%	

From the baseline year of July 1, 2001 to June 30, 2002, the percentage of children re-entering foster care within 12 months of reunification has declined from 19.1% to the current 16.4%. CWS has made progress on this measure moving closer to the State performance of 11.6% and the Federal standard of 9.9%.

SIP Update 2010: During 2008, 145 children exited foster care to reunification with 26 of those re-entering care within 12 months of reunifying. The most recent data available covering the time periods of July 2008 to June 2009 indicates improved performance on this measure with only 14.3% (15 children) re-entering care within 12 months of reunification.

Probation

During 2007, there were 15 youth who reunified with their family/caretakers. None of these youth re-entered foster care within 12 months.

Most recent start date	Most recent end date	Most recent numerator	Most recent denominator	Most recent performance	Most recent State performance	National Standard
01/01/07	12/31/07	0	15	0%	10.9%	
01/01/08	12/31/08	0	18	0%	8.4%	9.9%
07/01/08	06/30/09	0	19	0%	10.1%	

SIP Update 2010: During 2008, Probation increased the number of youth reunifying with their families/caretakers from 15 in the previous year to 18 (19 in FY 08/09). None of these youth re-entered foster care within 12 months.

Improvement Goal 2.0 Support reunified families to prevent re-entry into the foster care system.

Strategy 2.1	Strategy Rationale
Intensify services planning with the family during the reunification process up through case closure to create a realistic, robust aftercare plan. **SIP Update 2010 Status: Completed – Moved to ongoing maintenance and oversight** CWS and Probation continue to utilize the Family Meeting approach as a means of planning for reunification and/or problem solving	Advanced planning with the family to support aftercare needs and linking to community supports will augment services provided and support the family in getting their ongoing needs met when formal services cease at case closure.

individual case challenges. Children/youth are referred to the Home Connection Finders program at detention for support in locating relative/non-related extended family member for placement and/or mentor support.					
Milestone	**2.1.1** Conduct a Family Meeting (TDM for CWS) with the family and their natural supports at least 2 months prior to reunification to identify and support the family needs upon the children returning home.	Timeframe	October 2009 - September 2010 Ongoing	Assigned to	CWS Probation
	2.1.2 Refer all children involved with the Juvenile Court to Home Connection Finders program to assist in locating relative/non-related extended family members for placement options and/or to serve as an adult mentor who will be available to support the child during the reunification process and beyond.		October 2009 - September 2010 Ongoing		CWS Probation
	2.1.3 Actively engage the family in decision-making and development of the Family Maintenance Case Plan.		October 2009 - September 2010 Ongoing		CWS
	2.1.4 Actively monitor service delivery during Family Maintenance to begin titrating formal services and linking the family to more community/informal supports prior to case closure.		October 2009 - September 2010 Ongoing		CWS
	2.1.5 Conduct a discharge planning Family Meeting (TDM) prior to case closure to identify and link families to available informal and formal supports. Ensure the parents are linked and participating in these supports at case closure to provide ongoing services as needed when CWS and Probation close the case (or move to community supervision for Probation) and remove all formal supports.		October 2009 - September 2010 Ongoing		CWS Probation

Strategy 2. 2	Strategy Rationale
Utilize the service broker model of our existing Differential Response program, which reinforces the development of familial connections with natural supports and affordable community resources, to sustain the achievements that occurred during formal services after the termination of Juvenile Court dependency/wardship. **SIP Update 2010 Status: Completed – Moved to ongoing maintenance and oversight** In October 2010, a small AfterCare Program contract was established to assist in linking families to community supports upon termination of the formal interventions services. Monitoring of the contract and program outcomes will continue to ensure that the services are meeting the identified goals. Probation efforts in this regard are generally limited to support and services upon reunification. Although some probation cases may terminate from Juvenile Court jurisdiction upon the completion of a placement episode, most probation youth will remain under probation supervision once reunified.	Building upon the concepts we know to work for prevention, provide a similar support structure targeting the aftercare needs of families with children who have been placed in foster care.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
2.2.1 Convene staff and stakeholder group to identify the elements needed for an aftercare program considering current community and agency resources.	October 2009 - September 2010	CWS Probation CBOs
2.2.2 Formulate a staged aftercare program model and implementation strategy within existing resources to support the linking of families to natural supports prior to case closure.	October 2010 - September 2011	CWS Probation CBOs
2.2.3 Define funding sources to support an after care case management model for families in need of additional support once CWS and Probation are no longer involved.	October 2010 - September 2011	CWS Probation
2.2.4 Establish contracts and MOUs for the aftercare case management model.	October 2011 - September 2012 Completed October 2010	CWS Probation

Describe any additional systemic factors needing to be addressed that support the improvement plan goals.

- Availability and access for parents to informal and community supports such as parent partners, mentors, or family service advocates
- Stronger link for families to access community services and resources for ongoing treatment, counseling, etc. once formal supports have ended
- Review of departmental philosophies regarding social work/probation officer responsibility to families during intervention in preparation for case closure or transfer to community supervision (Probation)

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

Educating families on where to find resources in their community independent of public agency involvement

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

- Community Based Organizations and services will be key to providing families with the resources needed once formal supports are removed
- ADMHS support is needed to ensure the availability of services and resources to parents and children with complex behavioral and emotional needs requiring ongoing mental health services

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

- More flexibility with funding sources and services, such as that which is available through SB163 Wraparound

Outcome/Systemic Factor: S1.1 No Recurrence of Maltreatment

This measure answers the question: Of all children who were victims of a substantiated maltreatment allegation during the 6-month period, what percent were not victims of another substantiated maltreatment allegation within the next 6 months?

County's Current Performance:

During the first half of 2008, there were 445 substantiated allegations of child maltreatment of which 92.4% of those children were not a victim of another substantiated allegation of maltreatment within the next 6 months.

Most recent start date	Most recent end date	Most recent numerator	Most recent denominator	Most recent performance	Most recent State performance	National Standard
01/01/08	06/30/08	411	445	92.4%		
01/01/09	06/30/09	393	423	92.9%	93.0%	94.6%
07/01/09	12/31/09	342	390	87.7%		

Santa Barbara County CWS continues to demonstrate progress on this measure since the baseline period of July 1, 2002 to December 31, 2002 at 86.9%. In addition, the recent performance (92.4%) is close to the State performance of 93%.

SIP Update 2010:

Santa Barbara County continued to see increased performance on this measure one year later edging closer to the state average. However, the second half of 2009 indicated a decline in the total number of substantiated allegations during the six month period as well as an increase of 18 additional substantiated allegations over the previous period.

Improvement Goal 3.0 Enhance and expand existing prevention/early intervention strategies that are working to prevent recurrence of maltreatment.

Strategy 3.1	**Strategy Rationale**[2]
Expand the Differential Response – Front Porch Program to include service delivery by the Family Resource Centers. **SIP Update 2010 Status: Completed – Moved to ongoing maintenance and oversight** The stakeholders group continues to meet and refine strategies to improve service delivery. Through these partnerships, services continue to be expanded allowing for more families to be served through this early intervention modality. In July of 2010, services were expanded to a larger population of families by lowering the initial threshold criteria for participation in the Front Porch program. Through a blending of multiple funding streams, contracts with our community partners were expanded to manage the additional families referred.	The Differential Response system in place through the Front Porch program has proven to successfully support referred families over the past few years and is achieving the intended outcome of mitigating additional referrals to CWS. Accessible, preventative services will mitigate the needs of families and ultimately decrease the incidences of child abuse and neglect.

[2] Describe how the strategy will build on progress and improve this program/outcome area.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
3.1.1 Continue stakeholder group to redefine and implement newly identified strategies for the expansion of the Differential Response – Front Porch program.	October 2009 - September 2010	CWS First 5 Contracted CBOs Family Resource Centers
3.1.2 Establish a communication and feedback loop between CWS, Contracted CBOs, and the FRCs to monitor consistency in program implementation.	October 2009 - September 2010	CWS First 5 Contracted CBOs Family Resource Centers
3.1.3 Fine tune system of data collection to monitor family outcomes and determine efficacy of service delivery model.	October 2010 - September 2011	CWS First 5 Contracted CBOs Family Resource Centers
3.1.4 Continue to seek resources and tools for program expansions and refinement to support serving more families effectively.	October 2010 - September 2011	CWS First 5 Contracted CBOs Family Resource Centers Child Abuse Prevention Council (CAPC)
3.1.5 Provide reports to the prevention community on the effectiveness of the Differential Response – Front Porch Program through existing reporting mediums such as the Children's Scorecard or the CAPC newsletter.	October 2010 - September 2011	CWS First 5 CAPC Contracted CBOs

Strategy 3. 2	Strategy Rationale
Define and enhance/expand the use of existing already proven techniques to reduce child abuse and neglect. **SIP Update 2010 Status: In progress** Implementation of this strategy is underway in close collaboration with our local Child Abuse Prevention Council (CAPC) and the Kids Network. The local partnership with our prevention community affords the opportunity to share resources and information focused on improving outcomes for children and families in our community.	Expand use of current practices and services that are currently working within our community to reduce child abuse and neglect.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
3.2.1 Identify those techniques and/or service delivery models that have some efficacy in preventing recurrence of maltreatment based on local practices/data collection.	October 2010 - September 2011	CWS CAPC KIDS Network Community Partners
3.2.2 Assess current usage of effective techniques and service delivery models.	October 2010 - September 2011	CWS CAPC KIDS Network Community Partners
3.2.3 Provide resource information to social work staff for use as a client referral source for those services that have proven to be effective.	October 2010 - September 2011	CWS
3.2.4 Encourage and support the expansion of community services proven to be effective in reducing child maltreatment through referrals to services, sharing of information/cross training between agencies, and MOUs identifying the roles/responsibilities of participating partners.	October 2010 - September 2011	CWS Community Partners
3.2.5 Monitor continued use and efficacy of services through expansion efforts.	October 2011 - September 2012	CWS Community Partners

Improvement Goal 4.0 Introduce more evidence based Home Visitation service delivery models into prevention and intervention service delivery systems.

Strategy 4.1	Strategy Rationale
Implement the SafeCare© Home Visitation Model for "in-vivo" parenting education, coaching, and mentoring. **SIP Update 2010 Status: Completed – Moved to ongoing maintenance and oversight** The SafeCare© Program was implemented in February 2010 and families were enrolled in services that same month. In January 2011, one of our home visitors was trained to become a SafeCare© and provided with her Ventura counterpart training to 6 new home visitors, 5 of which come from the Santa Barbara prevention community.	Applied for and received in July 2009 a one year Training and Technical Assistance Grant through the California Evidenced Based Clearing House to implement the SafeCare© Home Visitation Program. The program is a series of parenting modules designed to reduce parenting issues that contribute to neglect in children aged 0-7. The SafeCare© model is specifically designed to remediate parenting deficits that contribute to neglect, which constitutes roughly 78% of all referrals to CWS.

additional anticipated, CWS and program partners have , which included					
Milestone	**1.2.5** Participate in planning activities and develop the infrastructure to support implementation of the SafeCare model	Timeframe	October 2009 - September 2010 Completed	Assigned to	CWS CBO project partners CDC Funded SafeCare Project staff Ventura County Project counterparts
	1.2.6 Develop learning collaborative with project participants and technical support to ensure fidelity to the program model.		October 2009 - September 2010 Completed		CWS CBO project partners CDC Funded SafeCare Project staff Ventura County Project counterparts
	1.2.7 Work with CBO project partners to creatively fund 6 countywide SafeCare© case managers.		October 2009 - September 2010 Completed		CWS CBO Project Partners
	1.2.8 Establish contracts and MOUs with Project Partners in preparation for implementation		October 2009 - September 2010 Completed		CWS CBO project partners
	1.2.9 Participate in training with the National SafeCare Training and Resource Center		October 2009 - September 2010 Completed		CWS CBO project partners CDC Funded SafeCare Project staff Ventura County Project counterparts
	1.2.10 Identify and enroll families in the SafeCare© project		October 2009 - September 2010 Ongoing		CWS Probation ADMHS CBO Project Partners
	4.1.7 Monitor program implementation and fidelity		October 2009 - September 2010 Ongoing		CWS CBO project partners CDC Funded SafeCare Project staff
	1.2.11 Receiving training and support to become a certified SafeCare© Trainer by training Cohort 2		October 2010 - September 2011 In progress		CBO project partners
	4.1.9 Cascade the model into other community prevention and intervention service delivery systems		October 2010 - September 2012 Completed		CWS CBO project partners

Strategy 4.2 Define evidenced-based home visitation models that have proven effective in mitigating child abuse/neglect and expand the use of such models as a tool for prevention and a resource for intervention services. **SIP Update 2010 Status: In Progress –** In partnership with our local Child Abuse Prevention Council (CAPC) and the Coastal Tri-Counties Child Abuse Prevention Coalition, the work to identify evidenced-based/evidence informed practices has begun and strategies identified with key stakeholders that are showing promise within our local communities.			**Strategy Rationale** Home visitation has solid research base and has been proven to be effective for child abuse prevention efforts. It is a flexible strategy that can be stand-alone or incorporated into various service delivery models including child care centers, Family Resource Centers, Community Based Organizations, and Differential Response. Home visitation service delivery models were identified multiple times throughout the County Self Assessment as a means of reaching families in their natural environment, allowing for an individualized response to clients' needs, and providing "in-vivo" coaching/mentoring/parent education. There are currently several in-home service delivery models being implemented countywide with positive, measurable outcomes.		
Milestone	**Timeframe**		**Assigned to**		
	4.2.1 Research into models of home visitation that have proven to be effective in mitigating child abuse and neglect		October 2010 - September 2011 January 2011		CAPC Child Abuse Listening and Mediation (CALM) Prevention partners
	1.2.12 Assess local use of home visitation models and the corresponding outcomes for clients participating in those programs		October 2010 - September 2011 January 2011- September 2012		CAPC Community Prevention Partners CWS
	1.2.13 Support implementation and expansion of community and evidence-based home visitation models through the prevention planning process and corresponding funding development opportunities		October 2010 - September 2011 January 2011- September 2012		CAPC Human Services Commission CWS
	1.2.14 Coordinate community-based partners with CWS to provide high-quality, home visitation programs as part of the spectrum of services from prevention to intervention		October 2010 - September 2011 January 2011- September 2012		Community Partners utilizing evidenced-informed/based Home Visitation models CWS
	1.2.15 Track outcomes related to effectiveness of coordinated home-visitation approach		October 2010 - September 2012 January 2011- September 2012		Community Partners utilizing evidenced-informed/based Home Visitation models CWS

Describe any additional systemic factors needing to be addressed that support the improvement plan goals.

- The general lack of awareness of formal and informal resources available to families within the community

- Limited access to adult and children's mental health services
- Lack of capacity in integral services such as affordable, quality child care, affordable housing, bilingual

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

- SafeCare© training through the National SafeCare Training and Resource Center (NSTRC) as a means of providing parents with "in vivo" parenting education when child neglect is of concern
- Educate partners and staff on availability of SafeCare© as a resource.

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

- Community partners are a vital resource and safety net for Santa Barbara County children
- ADMHS support is needed to ensure the availability of services and resources to parents and children with complex behavioral and emotional needs requiring ongoing mental health services

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

- More flexibility with funding sources and services are needed to provide adequate prevention and early intervention services to the community.

Outcome/Systemic Factor: Maximize staff resources to allow staff the opportunity to spend more time with their clients.

County's Current Performance:

A recurrent theme during both the Peer Quality Case Review and the County Self Assessment from both CWS and Probation staff was the desire to provide more proactive case management supports to their clients. Concerns raised during the CSA focused on the timely filling of staff vacancies as critical to maintaining the quality of work that has led to improved performance over time. Work from vacant positions is shifted to existing staff inhibiting more frequent contacts with children, caregivers, and parents (beyond those statutorily required) that could assist in stabilizing children/families and limit the need for crisis intervention and placement changes. In addition, youth responses during the CSA indicated a desire for better communication with their social worker/probation officer and that people have helped them the most, not programs.

Improvement Goal 5.0 Provide a more intensive case management model that engages children, families, and caregivers as partners in providing stability and permanency through regular client contact and proactive case management techniques.

Strategy 5.1	Strategy Rationale
Maintain social worker and probation officer staff levels through maximizing staff resources and defining appropriate staffing needs by unit and/or function.	A strong theme from both the PQCR and CSA process focused on the desire to have more frequent client contacts when indicated by family needs to provide a more proactive, intensive case management service

SIP Update 2010 Status: While elements of the improvement goal are imbedded in other strategies within this SIP, achievement of this particular strategy is integrally tied to both State and local fiscal resources that continue to diminish and are coupled with an increased cost of doing business making it fiscally challenging to maintain the staffing levels in existence at the writing of the original SIP in 2009. This strategy is no longer viable and would create an additional workload for existing staff. Strategies to improve efficiencies wherever possible are being implemented, supported through additional training/mentoring, and shared between units to maximize efficiencies in support of proactive case management. Probation has recently completed the centralization of all placement related functions to one unit housed in one location. Additionally, select staff members at various levels have been trained on specific placement related subjects. Due to budget challenges there has been some turnover in staff members, but generally Probation has been able to keep placement assignments stable.	delivery model. The intensive case management model would provide quality supportive services to children/families, address staff burnout and turnover, improve worker morale, and increase cooperation between units and regions.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
5.1.1 Identify current, real world tasks, duties and expectations for workers by unit/function.	October 2009 - September 2010 Ongoing	CWS Probation
5.1.2 Time study to identified tasks and duties by units and regions.	October 2009 - September 2010 Deleted	Line staff as monitored by Department Business Specialists
5.1.3 Meet with management, supervisory staff, and line staff to discuss outcomes of time study and problem solve options for maximizing staff resources to achieve the improvement goal	October 2009 - September 2010 Deleted	CWS/Probation management, supervisors, line staff and union.
5.1.4 Implement strategies within existing funding limitations identified during the meet and confer	October 2010 - September 2011 Deleted	CWS Probation unions/line staff
5.1.5 Evaluate implementation's impact on client outcomes and staff	October 2010 - September 2012 Deleted	CWS Probation

Describe any additional systemic factors needing to be addressed that support the improvement plan goals. ▪ Review of departmental philosophies, use of support staff, and additional resources that could assist social workers/probation officers in completing their case management responsibilities
Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals. ▪ Not Applicable
Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals. ▪ Not Applicable
Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals. ▪ Revision of the archaic CWS state caseload funding structure that was determined in 2000 by the SB 2030 Workload Study to no longer be commensurate with the time needed to provide adequate case management services to children and families. Since the original workload study was conducted, there has been an additional decade's worth of new state and federal regulations compounding case management and data entry demands on social work staff.

II. PQCR Additions to the SIP - Update for 2010

Outcome/Systemic Factor: Placement Stability Composite

- **C4.1 Placement Stability (8 days To 12 Months In Care)**
- **C4.2 Placement Stability (12 months To 24 Months In Care)**
- **C4.3 Placement Stability (At Least 24 Months In Care)**

The aggregate measures that form the Placement Stability Composite answer the questions:

C4.1 Of all children in foster care during the selected 12-month period who were in care for at least eight days but less than 12 months, what percent had two or fewer placements?

C4.2 Of all children in foster care during the selected 12-month period who were in care for at least 12 months but less than 24 months, what percent had two or fewer placements?

C4.3 Of all children in foster care during the selected 12-month period who were in care for at least 24 months, what percent had two or fewer placements?

County's Current Performance:

SIP Update 2010

CWS

There was an aggregate total of 787 children in placement at some time during July 2009 to June 2010 contributing to Permanency Composite data for two or fewer placements at the various length of stays in foster care measured. Overall, the weighted composite score indicated a compliance rate of 88.3% for Santa Barbara County during Quarter 2 of 2010.

Most recent start date	Most recent end date	Most recent numerator	Most recent denominator	Most recent performance	Most recent State performance	National Standard
07/01/09	06/30/10	C4. 1 199	250	79.6%	83.5%	86.0%
		C4.2 142	246	57.7%	62.8%	65.4%
		C4.3 85	291	29.2%	32.7%	41.8%

Santa Barbara County CWS continues to experience significant volatility in our performance on this measure since the baseline time period of July 1, 2001 to June 30, 2002. There has been marked improvement in placement stability during the 12 to 24 month time period since baseline at a 10.3% positive change. Yet, the data indicates a decline in performance on the other measures of this composite. Current performance indicates that Santa Barbara County is within approximately 5% of the state average on all placement stability measures.

The inherent challenge of sustained positive improvement on this measure is the limitation of two or fewer placements throughout the placement episode of a child that disregards the fact that some placement moves are considered a positive change towards compliance with regulations and in a child's best interests. To further illustrate the inherent conflict of this measure consider the following scenario:

> A sibling group of three was placed in a foster family home (placement #1) upon entering care while the parents were working their reunification plan. As Child Welfare learned more about the family, several relatives were identified as potential caregivers. CWS approved a relative caregiver and moved all three children into their home (placement #2). While this placement move meets regulatory criteria for least restrictive placement and is in the children's best interest, a placement move occurred thus any other placement move for these children would result in non-compliance for this measure.
>
> As the story continues, the parents failed to reunify with the children and the existing caregiver was not willing to offer the children permanency through adoption or guardianship as is the regulatory preference for permanency. However, one of the other relatives previously identified was willing to provide the children a permanent home through adoption. Thus, the children were moved into the prospective adoptive relative caregiver's home (placement #3). The adoption was finalized at a later date giving the children a family for life and ending their stay in foster care. While the adoption of these children and their exit of the foster care system is considered a success story, the move that resulted in adoption of these three children actually resulted in a failure to comply with the placement stability measure.

Probation

During July 2009 to June 2010, there were 57 children in placement at some time during this period contributing to the overall numbers in the Permanency Composite for two or fewer placements at the various lengths of stay in foster care measured. Overall, the weighted composite score indicated a compliance rate of 88.3% for Santa Barbara County during Quarter 2 of 2010.

Most recent start date	Most recent end date	Most recent numerator	Most recent denominator	Most recent performance	Most recent State performance	National Standard
07/01/09	06/30/10	C4. 1 22	25	88.0%	94.0%	86.0%
		C4.2 10	19	52.6%	74.5%	65.4%
		C4.3 4	13	30.8%	36.3%	41.8%

Santa Barbara County Probation also continues to experience significant volatility in performance on this measure since the baseline time period of July 1, 2001 to June 30, 2002. Contributing to this volatility is the relatively small numbers of youth entering foster care placements, which results in significant variations in percentage based measures. Additionally, delinquent youth who enter and remain in placement for an extended period are prone to re-offending, absconding, or non-compliant behavior, all of which contribute to multiple placement moves during their episode in care.

Improvement Goal 6.0 Enhance and expand existing strategies in identifying suitable first placements for children and youth to minimize the number of placement moves.

Strategy 6. 1	Strategy Rationale[3]
Fully utilize available tools, strategies, and resources to identify and secure a stable first placement for children/youth entering foster care.	Securing a stable first placement would provide opportunity for a placement move later to ensure permanency, if necessary.

[3] Describe how the strategy will build on progress and improve this program/outcome area.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
6.1.1 Fully utilize the Home Connection Finders program to assist in locating relative and/or non-related extended family members that could possibly provide a placement option for children/youth in care.	March 2011 – February 2012	CWS line staff CWS Supervisors Probation officers
6.1.2 Redefine the roles and responsibilities of the Placement Search Assistant contract to achieve improved performance in identifying placement resources for children/youth.	March 2011 – June 2011	CWS Operations Staff Contracted CBO
6.1.3 Fully utilize placement Team Decision Making Meetings (TDMs) to identify a stable, first placement to reduce the reliance on shelter care.	June 2011	CWS
6.1.4 Collaborate with Foster Family Agencies (FFAs) to ensure positive child/caregiver placement matches at initial placement and to ensure supportive services are available to caregivers to maintain a long-term placement.	June 2011 – May 2012	CWS FFA

Strategy 6. 2 Improve recruitment and retention of qualified foster parents/caregivers through implementation of the Quality Parenting Initiative.	**Strategy Rationale**[4] Having a pool of loving, high quality foster caregivers (resource parents) who are willing to provide permanency for children should reunification efforts fail could minimize the need for placement changes.

Milestone	Timeframe	Assigned to
6.2.1 Finalize Santa Barbara County's "Brand" under the QPI guidelines.	March 2011-June 2011	QPI Implementation Team: ▪ CWS Foster Parent Recruiter ▪ CWS Social Workers/Eligibility Staff ▪ Foster Parent Association Members ▪ Licensed Foster Parents ▪ Foster Parent Agencies ▪ Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) ▪ Former Foster Youth ▪ Youth Law Center
6.2.2 Develop a QPI strategic plan.	March 2011 – September 2011	QPI Implementation Team Members
6.2.3 Participate in the QPI Convening to	May 2011- June 2011	QPI Implementation Team Members

[4] Describe how the strategy will build on progress and improve this program/outcome area.

	increase our knowledge of the initiative and enhance relationships with other early implementers to further advance our local implementation efforts.		
	6.2.4 Market our "brand" as a tool for foster parent recruitment.	July 2011 – June 2012	CWS Foster Parent Recruiter
	6.2.5 Ensure all those involved in recruitment and retention efforts are kept apprised of the ongoing activities/goals of the QPI through regional and/or contract meetings.	July 2011 – June 2012	QPI Implementation Team Members CWS CBOs

Describe any additional systemic factors needing to be addressed that support the improvement plan goals.

- Revisit the 14 day shelter care policy to balance the need for immediate placement openings with the identification of the best placement for those children transitioning out of shelter care.

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

- Probation will require training and technical assistance as they move into the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) environment for data entry on placement cases.

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

- Many of the services described as promising practices during PQCR for CWS are contracts held to assist in identifying potential caregivers. Therefore, it is important to have the right person in the position to achieve the intended contract outcomes.
- The commitment of the Placement Review Committee (PRC) members on behalf of probation impacts potential placement decisions and/or alternatives for youth.
- Reliance on Foster Family Agencies (FFAs) and the services they provide will be key to maintaining placement stability and permanency for children/youth placed in their care.

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

- Revision of the archaic CWS state caseload funding structure, would provide additional staff and thus additional time to fully investigate placement options for the children on their caseload and make placement decisions based on best fit more often than utilizing what is available at the time.
- The two or fewer placements goal for children in foster care does not take into consideration the placement moves that assist in meeting other regulatory compliance measures such as timely permanence and/or least restrictive placement. Therefore, consideration to the interaction between measures would provide a more realistic and comprehensive understanding of the circumstances that occur in the life of a foster child.

III. Review of Child Welfare Services Outcome Improvement Plan (CWSOIP) Funds

During this review period, all CWSOIP funds were spent on contracted services to enhance CWS and Probation outcomes as identified in this System Improvement Plan. There are three programs in receipt of CWSOIP funds. These programs and the resultant contracted services are identified below:

- **Home Connection Finders**: The purpose of the Home Connection Finder (HCF) Program is to search for/locate relatives or family friends for all children in foster care that might serve as a life-long personal connection for the child or as a potential placement option. These services are available to children in either the Juvenile Dependency (CWS dependents) or the Juvenile Delinquency (Probation wards) systems. When feasible, the HCF attends all detention hearings to gather as much relevant information from participants as possible to begin their search efforts. HCF is co-located with CWS staff to facilitate referrals and open communication regarding program activities.

- **Placement Search Assistant:** Placement Search Assistant (PSA) is charged with providing culturally sensitive foster home and group home placement searches for Santa Barbara County Child Welfare Services (CWS) children entering care or for children currently in the system that require foster home or group home placements. The PSA is co-located and works with CWS staff to assist in identifying a safe, stable, and supportive placement environment for children. PSA activities include being familiar with all resource families and assistance in matching children with a resource family willing and able to meet the child's needs. .

- **SafeCare®:** The SafeCare® program is an evidence-based, in-home parent training curriculum designed to reduce the recurrence of child maltreatment for parents with children aged 0-7 who are at risk or have been reported for child abuse or neglect. Families served will be those identified as having a history of neglect and/or physical abuse, or have risk factors for neglect and/or abuse. Through SafeCare®, trained professionals (Home Visitors) work with families in their home environments to improve the parents' skills. SafeCare® is provided in weekly home visits lasting from 1-2 hours for a period of 18-20 weeks for each family.

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Glossary and Acronyms for Santa Barbara County Programs

A

ADMHS - Alcohol, Drug, and Mental Health Services is a county agency and collaboration partner with CWS.

AFDC-FC – Aid to Families of Dependent Children – Foster Care is a federal program that provides for monthly payments to foster parents caring for foster youth.

AIU - Assessments and Investigation Unit is the Santa Barbara County CWS unit that investigates child abuse and neglect referrals and, if necessary places children in protective custody and initiates Juvenile Court action.

B

Beyond the Bench - is a Statewide Superior/Juvenile court forum for judges and attorneys involved with Juvenile court matters for child Welfare Services and Probation.

Blue Binder - Local Probation term used to refer to a minor's Health and Education Passport; we use blue binders for easy tracking of documents

C

CAC - Community Action Commission is a local CBO (community based organization) that administers a variety of human services programs.

CADA - Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse is a CBO which serves the South County region provides substance abuse services such as Adult Treatment Program, Perinatal Treatment Program, Detox, and Adolescent Treatment program.

CALM - Child Abuse Listening and Mediation is a local CBO that provides therapeutic services to children and families.

Camp - Los Prietos Boys Camp/Los Prietos Boys Academy; a secure detention facility providing residential programming for court ordered commitments.

CAPC – Child Abuse Prevention Council.

CASA - Court Appointed Special Advocates who are appointed by the court to support foster children in the CWS system.

Casa Pacifica - is a public/private partnership residential treatment center offering a wide range of assessment, crisis care, medical and educational services for abused and neglected children. They are also the contract provider for SB 163. *(See below)*

CBO – Community Based Organization.

CDSS – California Department of Social Services (State).

CEC - Counseling and Education Center; Probation school day program, on-site at Probation, in both Santa Maria and Santa Barbara.

Children in the Gap – committee formed by members of Board of Supervisors to identify needs and issues of youth in the Santa Maria region.

Children's System of Care (CSOC)/Enhanced Care - (formerly MISC) is a collaboration of CWS, ADMHS, Probation, and Public Health. The collaboration provides services to high-risk youth and

CSS - Children's Services Screener is a mental health screener who assesses children and their families who are entering the Juvenile Dependency system as well as children and families who are being served through CWS Voluntary Family Maintenance services. *(See below)*

CIU - Central Intake Unit is the Santa Barbara County CWS unit that receives child abuse and neglect referrals, evaluates them in terms of statutory definitions for CWS involvement and for immediate safety considerations, as well as to the choice of response time and for the path of response, such as Differential Response. *(See below)*

CMS - Case management System, is the statewide database that CWS staff use to do referral and case management.

Community Conversations (PSSF) – One time grant money to facilitate CWS and community collaboration and initial phase of CWS Redesign.

Concurrent Planning (CP) - is the process of immediate, simultaneous, and continuous assessment and case plan development providing options to achieve early, family-based permanency for every child removed from his/her family.

Court/241.1 – Refers to the Welfare and Institution Code 241.1 whereby the court can order a study to be done jointly by CWS and Probation to determine whether a child belongs under a CWS or Probation jurisdiction.

Court Unit - is the unit that receives cases from the AIU unit, writes Juvenile Petitions, and manages cases received from the AIU unit until such time as the Disposition Hearing occurs. The county-wide unit is comprised of Court Hearing Officers, who present CWS cases in Juvenile Court.

CRIS/211 - Community Resources Information Services is a local Santa Barbara County guidebook and web based directory to public and private human services and resources assembled by the local CBO Family Service Agency.

CSU – California State University (LB – Long Beach, F – Fresno).

CWS – Child Welfare Services.

CWS/CalWORKS Linkages ("Linkages") – intra-agency partnership to better facilitate service delivery and case planning between CWS and CalWORKS.

CWS/CMS – Child Welfare Services/Case Management System is the statewide database that CWS staff use to do referral and case management.

CWSOIP – Child Welfare System Outcome Improvement Project.

CWS OPS – CWS Operations Group.

D

Differential Response – Is a system of responding differentially to all referrals of child abuse and neglect made to the Hotline/Intake (CIU). Every referral is evaluated in terms of statutory definitions for CWS involvement for immediate safety considerations; for the choice of response time for the initial face to face interview and for the path or response. Children can be referred to a community network of response, with the parents'/caretakers' approval.

DSS – Department of Social Services.

DV Solutions - Domestic Violence Solutions is a local CBO which provides support and services to victims of Domestic Violence.

E

ESL – English as a second language.

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

F

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

Family Services Unit - is the Santa Barbara County CWS Unit that serves all Voluntary Family Maintenance cases.

Family to Family (FTF) - is an initiative to engage the community to better serve children and families.

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

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

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

Family Violence Coalition – Regional groups to address Domestic Violence and how it impacts other agencies including CWS.

FDTC – Family Drug Treatment Court.

FFA – Foster Family Agency.

First Five Commission – the governing body for the administration of Prop. 10 child development funds.

Five (5)P's – Purpose, principles, processes, people, performance.

FM - Family Maintenance is a term used by CWS for services delivered to families and children, while the children are residing in the family home. The services are designed to provide in-home protective services to remedy neglect and abuse. FM can be either voluntarily arranged (VFM), *(see below)* or ordered by the Juvenile Court.

FR - Family Reunification is a term used by CWS for services provided to families and children, while the children are residing in out of home placement. The services are designed to remedy neglect and abuse.

Front Porch - is a program operated by Community Action Commission under contract with Santa Barbara County to serve lower risk families. They provide Differential Response services.

FSNA – Family Strengths and Needs Assessment.

FUP – Family Unification Program – Federal program to provide subsidized housing for CWS families to promote family preservation and reunification.

G

Good Samaritan - is a CBO which serves the North County region which acts as an umbrella for various projects, programs, and services including: emergency shelter, transitional shelter, TC House Project P.R.E.M.I.E, First Steps, Recovery Point, Acute Care, and Acute Care Detox.

H

HCF-Home Connection Finders - is a service provided by a CBO which attempt to identify and locate relatives, extended non-related family members, or individuals important to the child, for possible placements for children as well as for individuals who can be life long connections for a child.

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

Healthy Families – is California's medical insurance program for children.
Healthy Start – school based health services established in seven locations countywide.

HIPAA – Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (Federal).

HOPE - Helping Others in Parenting Environments is a program of intensive in-home services available to foster home and extended family home placements. The providers are CALM and Santa Maria Valley Youth and Family Center.

I

IAPC – Inter Agency Policy Council.

IDT – Information and Data Team – SBC-DSS committee formed to turn data into useful information for workers, supervisors and managers.

ILP - Independent Living Program is a program which supports foster youth toward self-sufficiency. It is managed by CWS and contracted out to Community Action Commission.

J

Juvenile Court "Brown Bag"- is a regular meeting convened by the Juvenile Court judges to facilitate better collaboration between judges, attorneys, CWS, and Probation.

K

KIDS Annual Report and Scorecard – contains performance statistics and measures for children in Santa Barbara County for various agencies from DSS, Probation, Public Health, Health Care, census data, and others.

KIDS Network - Kids Interagency Delivery System is a network of children service agencies sponsored by the Board of Supervisors and DSS.

Kin-Gap – Kinship Guardian Assistance Payment.

L

La Morada - is a certified facility used for the THPP-Plus program. *(See below)*

Life Skills Educator/Mentor Services - is a program developed to support and educate parents who are raising children to create a home environment that is safe, healthy, and fosters the child's age appropriate development. CWS families who are at risk of having their children removed or who have had their children removed due to neglect can receive these services.
Linkages - is an intra-agency partnership to better facilitate service delivery and case planning between CWS and Cal WORKS. Common families are identified and documented in a referral.

M

MHAT – Mental Health Assessment Team (SB County) – provides emergent concern and immediate response to assess the mental health status of families in crisis.

MHSA – Mental Health Services Act.

MISC - Multi Agency Integrated System of Care is Santa Barbara County's Children's System of Care, collaboration between Mental Health, DSS, Probation, and Public Health, as well as CBOs that include CAC, CALM, and Santa Maria Valley Youth and Family Center.

MISC Network Providers - ADMHS contracts with medical, mental health and substance abuse treatment providers in the County to provide services to MISC clients.

N

Noah's Anchorage – YMCA Youth Crisis Center.

NREFM- Nonrelated Extended Family Member - a caregiver who has an established familial or mentoring relationship with the child.

O

OP - Short for Office Professional; a member of support staff working with staff in a clerical capacity.

P

PA - Short for Probation Assistant; a member of the support staff working on a case in a paraprofessional capacity.

PARP – Parent's and Reading Partners.

Permanency Unit - is the Santa Barbara County CWS unit that provides services to children in out of home placement with the goal of achieving family based permanency. It includes children who are in adoptive planning.

PO/DPO/DPO Sr. - Short for Probation Officer, Deputy Probation Officer, or Deputy Probation Officer Senior; provide direct case work service.

PP-Permanency Placement Services is the term used by CWS for services that are designed to provide an alternate permanent family for children who cannot safely remain home and who are unlikely to ever return home.

PRC - Placement Review Committee is a multi disciplinary team type of meeting held every week which involves Probation staff, mental health representatives, education representatives, and Child Welfare services focused on discussing Probation cases and whether they are appropriate for consideration of removal from the home for a court recommendation resulting in extra parental placement.

PRIDE - Parents' Resources Information Development Education is a training curriculum provided by Santa Barbara City College and Allan Hancock College to enhance foster parent training for relatives and non-relatives.

PRO-292/Yellow Sheet - Probation department form used to open and/or close a bed for a Probation placement case.

Promotoras –are effective disseminators of information, and act as the bridge between governmental and non-governmental systems and the communities they serve.

Provider Network ACCESS - is the function, provided by ADMHS, whereby social workers request services for CWS cases from an approved Provider Network.

PSA-Placement Search Assistant provides CWS support by locating available and appropriate foster or group home placements for children.

PSSF – Promoting Safe and Stable Families (Federal).

Q

QPI – Quality Parenting Initiative Pilot Project's focus is to reinvent the public image of foster care in hopes of attracting qualified resource families and partnering with caregivers in a new way to meet the needs of children in their care.

R

RAW-Relative Approval Worker is a specialized CWS worker that performs the approvals for the placement of children in relative and non-related extended family homes.

Regional Training Academy - (or Training Academy) is the regional provider for CWS Training.

Resource Family - is a foster family, (relative or non-relative).

S

SAFTY – The 24/7 mobile crisis response to children with complex emotional and behavioral needs.

SARB – School Attendance Review Board.

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

SB163 (DSS) - is a collaboration of CWS, Probation, ADMHS, parent partners, and CBOs whose focus is to reduce the number of children placed in high level group homes in and out of Santa Barbara County by providing creative, flexible services and supports to youth and their families.

SB 163 (PROB) - Intensive, wraparound services utilized to return a minor home from placement or prevent a minor from going to placement; services focus on engaging the entire family in rehabilitation and changes in thinking to maintain stability in the home.

SCI – Special Care Increment.

SDM - Structured Decision Making is a tool utilized by CWS staff to help them in making critical case assessments and decisions in order to minimize the trauma of child maltreatment and to prevent its recurrence.

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

SMVYFC -Santa Maria Valley Youth and Family Center is a CBO providing services to children and families in North County (Santa Maria, Guadalupe, Casmalia, Cuyama, New Cuyama) including therapy and parenting classes.

SOC - System of Care Unit is the Santa Barbara County CWS unit which provides services to high-risk youth and their families. The unit features pooling of resources and staff, utilizing their input and expertise of the collaborating agencies: CWS, ADMHS, Probation, and Public Health.

Sojourn Services - is a CBO that delivers in home services to lessen the risk of child abuse and neglect. Services include: Early Intervention and Child's Path. Early Intervention services help the families understand and enhance the child's development. A child's Path focuses on parent-child interactions and emotional and social growth.

SPO - Short for Supervising Probation Officer; equivalent to the role of first line supervisor.

STOP – Supportive Therapeutic Options Program.

T

T's & C's - A minor's terms and conditions of probation; a case specific set of rules.

TAPP – Teen Age Parenting Program.

TAY – Transition Age Youth.

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

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

TDM - Team Decision Making meetings where CWS concerns, family strengths, and resources supports are identified and discussed between CWS, birth families, service providers, youth, and natural family supports. TDMS are used:

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

THPP- Transitional Housing Placement Program is a Community Care licensed placement opportunity for youth ages 16-18 that are currently living in a foster care placement. The goal of the program is to provide participants safe living environments while helping them learn and practice life skills in order to achieve self-sufficiency.

THPP-Plus - is a certified placement opportunity for youth ages 19-24, who have emancipated from the foster care system. The program provides the greatest amount of freedom possible in order to prepare the participants for self-sufficiency.

TPR – Termination of Parental Rights.

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

U

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

UCSB Evaluations – U. C. Santa Barbara provides research support and analysis for DSS and Probation, and Mental health.

V

VAFB – Vandenberg Air Force Base.

Visitation Specialist - is a contracted service which provides transportation and/or supervision of visitations between children in placement and their families.

VOP/§777 - Violation of Probation pursuant to §777 W&IC filed with the court outlining how a 602 WIC ward of the court has failed to follow the terms and conditions of probation ordered by the court.

W

W& IC - The Welfare and Institutions Code

Ward/§602 - A minor who is on formal Probation pursuant to §602 W&IC.

WEB - Welcome Every Baby is a county wide home visitation program serving all newborn children through age 9 months.

WIB – Workforce Investment Board.