



System Improvement Plan

Roadmap for Superior Service

Children and Family Services and Probation

DRIVING TO:

- IMPROVE SAFETY
 - IMPROVE PERMANENCY
 - IMPROVE WELL-BEING

*THE CALIFORNIA CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES
REVIEW FOR SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY*

The Mission of Child Welfare Services

The County lead agencies for the California Children and Family Services Review (C-CFSR) are Children and Family Services (CFS) and the Probation Department

The **Probation Department** protects the community through assessment, treatment and control of adult and juvenile offenders by providing a range of effective services based on legal requirements and recognized professional standards.

Children and Family Services protects endangered children, preserves and strengthens their families, and develops alternative family settings. Services mandated by law and regulation will be provided in the least intrusive manner with a family centered focus. This mission's accomplished in collaboration with the family, a wide variety of public and private agencies and members of the community.

Families in need of help

Child abuse and neglect are serious problems facing our society today. In San Bernardino County (2012) there were over **30,000 reports of abuse or neglect**, more than 4,000 of which were confirmed. San Bernardino County's rates are not unusual. Child maltreatment is a statewide and national problem. Unfortunately, it is also a long standing problem with deep **historical, social and cultural roots**. Child abuse and neglect are the symptoms of a **family in crisis**.

In 2012, Probation placed over 250 wards in out of home facilities. These juvenile offenders receive treatment for behaviors which led to their involvement with the juvenile system. Many of these families engaged by Probation are also in crisis.



Finding a Path

For years, **child abuse and juvenile delinquency** have been problems that were difficult to solve. All over the country agencies followed different paths with varying degrees of success. It was decided at the national level that there should be uniform standards established to enhance the ability to determine child welfare goals and assess progress.

The Child and Family Services Review

In 2001 the Federal Government passed the Child and Family Services Review.

California established their own version: the **California Child and Family Services Review (C-CFSR)**.

The **C-CFSR** is a way for child welfare agencies (**CFS and Probation**) to establish practical goals and develop the means to achieve them.

The **C-CFSR** allows Child Welfare Agencies to draw a map to follow over five years. That map is called the:

System Improvement Plan (SIP)



The C-CFSR Team

The **SIP Oversight Committee**, also known as the **C-CFSR Team**, directs and oversees the **SIP** by creating:

- **Workgroups** to implement and monitor strategies.
- **Ad Hoc** committees that plan specific events, such as the:
 - **County Self-Reassessment Kickoff event**
 - **Peer Review**
 - **SIP convening**

The **SIP Oversight Committee** includes representatives of:

- CFS and Probation
- Human Services (HS) Research Outcomes and Quality Support (ROQS)
- HS Program Development Division
- Department of Behavioral Health, and
- California Department of Social Services (CDSS).

Other stakeholders are also invited to attend the Committee's monthly meetings.

The Committee is chaired by the **Director** of Children and Family Services or her designee.



Continuous Quality Improvement

The **System Improvement Plan** is not a fixed set of goals. After reaching one goal, another must be selected. This is called **Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)**.

Through the **SIP of 2009-12**, San Bernardino County achieved two of its goals:

- **Placement Stability** and
- **Emancipating Youth in Long-term Care.**

Every **five years** the County renews the cycle of improvement by:

- Conducting a thorough **County Self-Assessment, Reassessment** and **Peer Review**
- Developing a new 5-year **SIP**, building on gains of the prior SIP
- Providing regular **updates**



Family to Family (F2F) is a family centered approach to providing Child Welfare Services

Family to Family (F2F) practices

San Bernardino County has embraced the Family to Family Philosophy

F2F practices match the goals of the **C-CFSR System Improvement Plan (SIP)** which include:

- **Family Preservation** when safe for the child
- Reducing the number, length of stay, and placement moves of children in care
- Increasing the number of **siblings placed together** and
- Expanding **family-centered** placements and **family finding**

F2F Strategies include:

- **Team Decision-Making Meetings (TDMs)**,
- Recruiting, training and supporting **resource families**
- Building **community partnerships**, connecting to the **child's community** and being sensitive to **cultural differences**
- Responsiveness to the **individualized needs** of children and their families

The Office of Child Abuse Prevention Programs (OCAP)

The needs Assessment and Plan for OCAP services has been integrated into the SIP since 2008

Promoting Safe and Stable Families (**PSSF**) and Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention and Treatment (**CAPIT**) programs are planned under the **SIP**. The services supported by the **OCAP programs** include:

- Individual, Family and Group **Counseling**,
- **Parenting** Education, **life skills** classes and **in-home** services
- **Anger Management, Domestic violence** services and **support groups**
- **Adoption** Promotion and Support programs



A five year journey begins with the first step: clearly defining the problem helps to determine which way to go.

Fundamental Principles of the C-CFSR

- **Continuous Quality Improvement**—The 5-year Cycle: CSA, SIP and Updates
- **Data Driven Policy:**
 - **Outcome Measures** and **Systemic Factors:** Defining the Problem
 - **County Self-Assessment:** What is working and what can be improved
 - **System Improvement Plan: Goals and Strategies** to direct policy
 - **Updates and Self Reassessment** continuously evaluate results
- **The C-CFSR Team: CFS, Probation and their Partners**

Outcome Measures

How do we know when something works well?

When Outcome Measures, specific data elements, demonstrate improvement in the following areas:

- **Safety**—How responsive is the agency, are children protected in care, and is further maltreatment prevented?
- **Permanency**—
 - Is Reunification with parents completed timely, safely and for the long-term?
 - Are placements stable, in the least restrictive setting and leading to long-term permanent connections with caring adults?
 - Are Adoptions and Guardianships completed in a timely and effective manner?
 - Are those leaving or transitioning from the Child Welfare System well-equipped for self-sufficiency?
 - Are the continuity of family relations—with siblings or caring relatives—being maintained?
- **Well-Being**—
 - Are the educational, physical, emotional and mental health needs of children in care being met?
 - Are Health and Dental exams being performed regularly and timely?
 - Are prescribed medications, especially for those affecting behavior, being monitored properly?





*Review of **Outcome Measures and Systemic Factors**
guides us on the road to improvement.*

Systemic Factors

7 Systemic Factors are the “nuts and bolts” of how a Child Welfare Agency works. They are the essential tools, resources and partnerships of Child Welfare:

- **Statewide Information Systems** — The tools used to collect information and make information useful.
- **Case Review Systems** — Oversight of individual case files meant to ensure the needs of families are being met.
- **Foster and Adoptive Licensing, Recruitment and Retention** — County standards for Foster and Adoptive Family Homes.
- **Staff, Caregiver and Service Provider Training** — County training of those who directly serve our children and families.
- **Agency Responsiveness to the Community** — The extent and degree to which CFS and Probation partner with other agencies to provide services and resources for children and families.
- **Service Array** — The County’s capacity to provide service and how those services are delivered.
- **Quality Assurance** — The identifiable process in the County that evaluates ongoing practice, policies, and procedures.

County Self-assessment (CSA), Reassessment and Updates

- The **CSA** is a comprehensive evaluation of how the County is performing on all the **outcome measures** and **systemic factors** and includes:
 - The **Peer Review process** includes inviting partners from other counties to review cases and practices and to make recommendations for improvement
 - **Reassessment**, which is an evaluation of the prior **SIP** to determine whether identified goals were achieved and whether progress was made on previous strategies
 - Demographic, economic and program specific data for San Bernardino County and service populations.
- Annual **updates** are provided to the **California Department of Social Services** and help to gauge our progress

THE FOLLOWING AREAS FROM THE **2012 COUNTY SELF-REASSESSMENT** IDENTIFY WHERE THE COUNTY IS DOING WELL **OR** WHERE ADDITIONAL EFFORT IS INDICATED.

What is working

- **Safety** measures are stable or improving
- **Adoption** measures are largely moving in the right direction
- Two measures targeted on the previous SIP for improvement have met their goals:
 - **Placement Stability** and
 - **Emancipation for Children in Long Term Care**
- **High School graduation** rates for transition age youth
- **TDMs** and **Parent Partners** are promising practices that contribute to positive results

Where can we improve

- **Timeliness to Reunification**
- **Permanency** for children and youth that have been in care more than two years
- The referral and feedback processes for **OCAP** programs
- **Family Engagement** for Probation youths
- **Resource Family** development by the County
- Additional **Mentoring** services for parents, caregivers and children
- Transitioning youth from **Group Homes** to **less restrictive settings**
- Continual **Reassessment** of placement needs



The SIP is created by working together with partners concerned about children and families.

System Improvement Plan Development

At **California State University, San Bernardino** on March 26, 2013 CFS and Probation hosted the extended **C-CFSR team** to develop the **SIP**.

Representatives from Community and Faith Based Organizations, Service Providers, Healthcare agencies, Mental Health agencies, Parent and Peer partners, Law Enforcement, Juvenile Court, Education, Foster Care and Group Homes, Tribes and County Departments participated in the presentations, focus groups and ensuing workgroups that subsequently met to review particular topics.

The **135 individuals** present were first provided with background information then participated in **focus groups**. The information from those groups was then used to develop the **2013 SIP**.

2013 SIP Goals and Strategies

The Two Primary Goals are:

- **Improve Timely Reunification**
- **Increase Permanent Placements for children in care more than two years (Permanency)**

To achieve these goals the SIP includes 18 specific strategies:

- Five **Reunification** Strategies
- Six **Permanency** Strategies
- Four **Probation** Strategies
- Three **OCAP** program Strategies

For each strategy there are specific time limited **milestones** that need to be achieved.

Strategies also seek to improve on related **systemic factors**. For example, the third **OCAP** strategy seeks to improve **Quality Assurance**.



Reunification Strategy 1:

Increase **Team Decision-making Meetings (TDMs)** to enhance early engagement of parents

*A **TDM** is a collaborative meeting designed to produce the best joint decisions concerning a child's safety and placement and includes parents, family members, Community Partners, service providers and the family's support network.*

Reunification Strategy 2:

Increase and enhance the role of **Parent Partners** in early engagement.

***Parent partners** have had children in foster care and have successfully resolved their case. They are familiar with the court process and the foster care system and provide guidance and support to reunifying parents.*



REUNIFICATION STRATEGIES

Reunification Strategy 3:

Safety Organized Practice (SOP)

***SOP** is a best practice approach to casework designed to encourage all involved with the child to focus on assessing and enhancing child safety.*

***SOP** emphasizes developing good working relationships, working as a team with the family, use of critical thinking with decision support tools, and creating detailed plans for enhancing child safety.*

Reunification Strategy 4:

Increase training and support to parents, relatives and caregivers.

Use Visitation Centers, training for relative caregivers and support groups to promote safe reunification. Foster parents are encouraged to be mentors to reunifying parents.

Reunification Strategy 5:

Emphasize reunification planning to facilitate early transition of children to parents' home.

Help reunifying parents understand court timelines and increase their awareness of community resources.



Permanency Strategy 1: Expand and optimize mentoring programs for children/youth in care over 24 months.

Programs to mentor children and youth are essential to their ability to achieve permanency and success in their lives. Both well-established programs and new initiatives can be accessed to provide mentoring services.



Permanency Strategy 2: Expand and optimize mentoring programs for parents and caregivers of children/youth in care over 24 months.

Wraparound, Kinship Centers and Visitation Centers are examples of programs currently in place that can be used to further provide opportunities to mentor reunifying parents.

Permanency Strategy 3: Increase and enhance transition from group homes to less restrictive settings.

*CFS will also apply the principles of the **Core Practice Model** to engagement of mental health services, partnering extensively with the **Department of Behavioral Health** to ensure children are provided high quality, integrated services as an alternative to group homes.*

Permanency Strategy 4: Improve accuracy of data entry regarding Non-Related Legal Guardians (NRLG).

Refining data entry will lead to improved information.

Permanency Strategy 5: Improve matching of children/youth to foster homes which increases the likelihood of permanency.

CFS will redeploy resources for foster parent recruitment and training. This will include:

- A shift from general to **targeted recruitment**
- Emphasizing that CFS is seeking to find **appropriate parents for children in care**, first and foremost
- Facilitate foster care licensing and improve retention efforts
- Cultivate community relations to enhance recruitment

Permanency Strategy 6: Continually reassess parents, relatives and supports for return and/or placement of children in care.

Reassessment of placements needs to be a regular process that includes:

- Use of **Case Assessment Forums**
- Improved **Search and Engagement** efforts meant to locate caring family members
- **Trauma informed** approaches (treatment addresses posttraumatic stress and related emotional/behavioral problems)
- Identification of relative and non-relative supports for children

Probation Strategies



Probation Strategy 1: Provide parents and the youth, at the onset, with training and resources

- Refer parents of youth on formal probation and first time offenders, at the earliest entry into the juvenile justice system, to Parent Project
- Refer an increased number of youth on formal probation to Interagency Youth Resiliency Team (IYRT) mentoring or similar programs
- Develop and improve data components and tracking methods or utilize established tracking methods and databases to determine outcomes and generate reports as needed.

Probation Strategy 2: Increase use of the Wraparound program

- Assign and train **Wraparound screeners**
- Develop procedures and guidelines for Wraparound screening
- Screen existing medium supervision wardship cases for the Wraparound program
- Utilize **established tracking methods** and databases to determine outcomes; Provide reports as needed



Probation

Probation Strategy 3: Increase family participation at **Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDTs)** for all minors in custody over 60 days

- Assign therapist to conduct **family therapy/reunification** for all youth detained longer than 60 days awaiting placement and deemed difficult to place.
- Allow clergy, extended family members and other family support systems to attend therapy/reunification/MDT's
- Develop and improve data components and tracking methods



Probation Strategy 4: Utilize **family finding** to locate extended family members for potential placement

- **Train** all juvenile services **Probation Officers** in family finding
- Conduct **family finding** on youth entering the juvenile justice system and at risk for out of home placement or removal from parent's home
- **Develop guidelines** and protocol for family finding
- **Develop and improve data** components and tracking methods



Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment — the Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP) programs

Every year San Bernardino County helps provide **Therapeutic Services, Parenting classes, Anger Management** and other family supports to thousands of families using Federal, State and Local funding. San Bernardino County will be changing the way these services are coordinated and delivered. The service model will be called **CAPTS**, Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Services, and will go into effect **on January 1, 2014**.

OCAP Strategy 1: Expand the number and variety of contracted service providers supported by Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) and Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention and Treatment (CAPIT)

OCAP Strategy 2: Use in-house Service Coordinators to engage and track referrals and attendance.

OCAP Strategy 3: Revise the Quality Assurance/Case Review protocols and upgrade the database.

The Goals of the new service model are to:

- Increase the **Timeliness** of services being delivered to children and their families
- Produce accurate documentation of referrals and appointments and timely client engagement.
- Ensure maximum **Engagement** of clients in the process of obtaining services
- **Improve tracking** instances where clients are not engaged
- Improve **Quality Assurance and Case Review** processes
- Develop **Service Coordinators** and optimize existing staff and processes.



CAPTS will provide important counseling services in a more timely and responsive manner.



Children and Family Services

CFS and Probation would like to thank all our partners who have contributed to the development of the **System Improvement Plan**. Partners include representatives from the following agencies and organizations:

2-1-1
ASPIRAnet
Bear Valley Community Healthcare District
Bilingual Family Counseling Service, Inc.
California Department of Social Services (CDSS)
CASA
Catholic Charities
Children's Network
County Counsel
Court
CSUSB – School of Social Work
CSUSB – Sociology
CYCS-CCIMS
DBH Administration – Children's Services
DBH Alcohol & Drug Services
District Attorney
DPH Administration
Education County Schools
EMQ Families First
Family Assistance Program / Our House
First 5
Hearts and Lives
HS – Performance Education Resource Center
HS Legislation Research Unit
HSS Auditing
Inland Empire Residential Centers, Inc.
Knotts FFA

Lutheran Social Services
Mental Health Systems, Inc.
Morongo Basin Counseling and Recovery Center
Morongo Basin Family Resource Center
Preschool Services
Program Development Division
Public Defender

San Diego State University
Sheriff's Department
Tlingit Tribe
Tribal Star
Yaqui Tribe
Victor Valley Community Support Services
Walden Family Services

