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JUL 31 2020

SOLANO COUNTY  
GRAND JURY

July 31, 2020

Honorable Donna L. Stashyn  
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court  
Solano Superior Court  
600 Union Ave  
Fairfield CA 94533

**Regarding: County Responses to FY2019-20 Grand Jury Report Entitled: Staff Retention Impacts Child Welfare Services**

Dear Judge Stashyn,

The Department of Health and Social Services (H&SS) is in receipt of the 2019-2020 Grand Jury Report entitled: "*Staff Retention Impacts Child Welfare Services*," dated June 5, 2020. The following is submitted in response to the findings and recommendations of the report.

H&SS appreciates the review of the Child Welfare Services (CWS) program. The Child Welfare Services Agency is a state supervised, county administered program. The program's purpose is to prevent, identify and respond to allegations of child abuse and neglect. Families in the child welfare system receive services so children can remain safely in their homes, and children who are temporarily removed from their homes can reunify with their families. For cases in which children are unable to reunify with their families, efforts are made to find a permanent home through adoption or guardianship. CWS services are mandated pursuant to state and federal laws, e.g., Title IV of the Social Security Act, and Chapter 978, California Statutes of 1982.

The mission of CWS is to protect children from abuse and neglect by strengthening families or finding safe, permanent homes so children can grow into healthy productive adults. CWS includes 24-hour, 7-day a week, Hotline and Emergency Response Services, Family Maintenance and Family Reunification Services, Transition to Permanency including Adoption Services, Supportive Transition Services, and Support Services. The programs were passed by state legislation in 1982 with Senate Bill 14 to implement federal requirements under Public Law 96-272.

Administrative  
Services

Behavioral  
Health Services

Child Welfare  
Services

Employment &  
Eligibility Services

Medical  
Services

Older & Disabled  
Adult Services

Public Health  
Services

Substance  
Abuse Services

States and counties conduct regular assessments of the outcomes and effectiveness of their child welfare systems. A major change in the California child welfare services system was the passage of Assembly Bill (AB) 403 on October 11, 2015, launching the Continuum of Care Reform (CCR). AB 403 ensures that all children will live with a committed, permanent and nurturing family.

As we endeavor to support the children and families who are our shared responsibility as well as to help create safe and secure homes, I want to thank our child welfare team, Board of Supervisors, internal and external partners and providers for the ongoing support that assist in our efforts to ensure we have the necessary support to keep children safe from abuse and neglect.

### **First Finding and Recommendations**

**Finding 1 – Child Welfare Services has a workforce turnover rate negatively affecting the performance of the agency and outcomes for the children of Solano County.**

**Response to Finding 1 – The Department of Health and Social Services partially agrees with the finding.**

The Department of Health & Social Services agrees that staff turnover rates for any organization can negatively affect an agency's performance and outcomes. Recognizing high rate of workforce turnover is common in the child welfare field; Solano County Child Welfare over the years continues to be proactive towards mitigating many of the factors that cause turnovers.

Research from Casey Families Program notes that staff retention within child welfare agencies is common and a challenge nationwide. They cite that a healthy annual turnover rate is below 10-12 percent, while turnover rates in child welfare for the past 15 years have been estimated at 20-40 percent. While it is widely known that staff retention is a serious challenge in this field, there is no single solution as an individual's choice to leave the job can be influenced by many factors. This requires a child welfare agency to apply multiple strategies concurrently. Today, Solano County, with a current hiring freeze for the past two months due to the current pandemic, is at a 13% vacancy among its social worker classifications. This percent is very close to optimal and well within reach.

Solano County's Child Welfare Services ongoing attention over the years to address this systemic issue within our field and specifically our agency, has afforded us the opportunity to lower our staff turnover in child welfare, while constantly striving to fill remaining vacancies. Efforts such as "Stay Interviews" with social workers and strategic planning that involves all staff, online job fairs in partnership with Human Resources, Training Academies for Managers, Supervisors and Social Workers, employee incentives and self-care space to address secondary trauma are just a few ways that have assisted our practice towards retention strategies.

The Department of Health and Social Services and Human Resources collaborated on implementing Solano County's first "Stay-Interview" study. Stay Interview is an opportunity to build trust with employees and a chance to assess the degree of employee satisfaction and engagement that exists in a department or agency. Stay Interviews provide a two-way conversation and a chance to ask questions, and follow-up on ideas. In collaboration with a hired consultant, Solano County CWS conducted a survey on the following categories:

- **Job Impact:** how connected an employee feels to the mission of the organization
- **Listened to and valued:** do the employees feel their ideas and opinions matter and are their contributions valued
- **Positive Stay Factors:** understanding what employees are positive about and how can we replicate positive experiences for retention
- **Feedback/Acknowledgement:** do employees receive feedback and are they acknowledged for their contributions
- **Exposure to Executives' Learning and Growth:** career growth and learning is important to the workforce. Do employees feel they have exposure to leadership within the organization and are they able to learn and grow their career?
- **Challenge factor:** do staff feel challenged in their work?
- **Positive/less desirable elements:** understanding how the various work duties and responsibilities impact an employee's retention.

Using the results from this survey, Child Welfare and Human Resources worked with Social Worker supervisory and management staff to create solutions to promote employee retention.

Another area critical to strengthening our recruitment and retention efforts was an intentional focus on building a staff development infrastructure. During the downturned economy in 2008-2009, Solano County Child Welfare was compelled to return its licensing function to California Department of Social Services as well as limit its staff development capacity along with other program areas to maintain core case carrying social workers. We have worked tirelessly to rebuild this infrastructure. Research shows the investment in training that an organization makes shows the employees they are valued. The training creates a supportive workplace. In June 2019, a full-time Staff Development and Training supervisor was brought onboard, who has further helped develop our onboarding process, and was working toward the development of ongoing training and support for our staff prior to the hiring freeze.

Whereas not all turnovers are preventable, Solano County Child Welfare understands it must remain vigilant of the factors that are predictive of high turnover and continue to implement strategies to mitigate those factors. Nevertheless, in order to establish a baseline, turnover and retention rates were calculated for 2019, and will continue to be tracked on a quarterly basis.

In regard to child welfare outcomes, the graphic that is displayed in the Grand Jury Report on page 5 incorrectly identifies the data as "Outcome data", when in actuality the data (number of children, number of substantiations, number of entries, etc.) are rates of participation.

Outcome data is defined by the State of California following guidelines outlined by the US Federal Government. The federal government created the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) in response to the 1997 Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA). The CFSR is an assessment of a state's performance related to child welfare. All states are assessed in the areas of child protection, foster care, adoption, family connections and independent living services. Much of the CFSR looks at outcomes data and other sources to assess each state's ability to achieve 1) Safety, 2) Permanency, and 3) Well-being for

children and families<sup>1</sup>. All 58 counties in California are held to the same federal and state standards. The CFSR-3 Outcomes<sup>2</sup> include:

- Maltreatment in Foster Care
- Recurrence of Maltreatment
- Permanency In 12 Months for Children Entering Foster Care
- Permanency In 12 Months for Children in Foster Care 12-23 Months
- Permanency In 12 Months for Children in Foster Care 24 Months or More
- Re-Entry to Foster Care
- Placement Stability

The state monitors other child welfare rates and measures including, but not limited:

- Referrals by Time to Investigation
- Timely Monthly Caseworker Visits—Out of Home
- Timely Monthly Caseworker Visits—In Home
- Placement Stability—Entry Cohort
- Siblings placed together (some or all)
- Least Restrictive Placement—Entries—First and Predominant Placement

Solano County CWS has a Five-Year System Improvement Plan (SIP) which was developed in 2017 to monitor and address key state and federal outcomes. This plan was developed in collaboration with stakeholders including staff and clients and approved by the California Department of Social Services Department. A copy of the most recent progress report on the county's State Improvement Plan is attached (attachment A) as well as confirmation and approval of the County Progress Plan. (attachment B)

**Recommendation 1a** – Fill allocated Social Worker (SW) positions and employ additional support staff for Child Welfare Services.

**Response to Recommendation 1a** – Recommendation 1a has been implemented. (see summary)

Since 2018, the Solano County Human Resources Department has facilitated continuous and open recruitment for this position. We have provided a tracking process that provides comprehensive and efficient onboarding training to all our new hires.

Regarding the employment of "additional support staff for Child Welfare Services," CWS has implemented this recommendation in a number of ways. First, CWS requested five (5) additional positions from the Board of Supervisors which was approved for the FY 2019/20. These positions included 2 Social Worker III positions to be assigned as facilitators of Child and Family Team Meetings, 2 Social Worker II positions to be assigned to support placement services, and 1 new "To Be Determined" (TBD) position to be assigned in the transition to the new Child Welfare statewide data system entitled CARES. Three of the five positions have been filled and are providing additional support to Social Worker IIIs.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/child-welfare-program-improvement/federal-child-and-family-services-review>

<sup>2</sup> <https://ccwip.berkeley.edu/childwelfare/index/r>

Another position that was filled in June 2020 was a Project Manager position. The position provides support to contract management, data tracking and analysis, and program oversight. These positions have helped support the core programs of CWS. Due to the COVID pandemic, the Department of H&SS has had to implement a hiring freeze due to a loss of state revenues coming to the county. The department will be evaluating how we can assure compliance with state and federal requirements for child welfare over the next fiscal year.

**Recommendation 1b** – Provide cross-training to staff members to maintain all services at all times.

**Response to Recommendation 1b** – Recommendation has been implemented.  
(see summary)

CWS uses a comprehensive Staff Development & Training model that provides cross training both in systems and CWS programs. This model builds organizational effectiveness through four distinct action steps: New Hire Onboarding Training, Continued Staff Development/Education, External Training Coordination, and Policy and Procedures/Information Management and is intended to improve child welfare outcomes.

All newly hired social workers participate in a 45 to 60-day onboarding training prior to program assignment. The onboarding covers a general overview of CWS in Solano County, the legal mandates in which CWDS is provided and all CWS programs from the point of a call of suspected child abuse and neglect to adoptions/permanency. This model ensures that all social workers are familiar with CWS operations and its functionality. Social workers receive further specificity program trainings once assigned to program (Hotline, Emergency Response, Dependency Investigation, Family Maintenance / Family Reunification, Transitions to Permanency or Adoptions). All social workers must also complete a yearlong state mandated CORE training that covers general child welfare practice in California. Social workers, supervisors and managers must also complete ongoing training after completion of CORE training to support continued education and is a state mandate.

The Bay Area Academy, in which child welfare workers are trained, has over 297 courses in their course catalog that we can tailor to better support training needs to learn assigned jobs in addition to the core trainings. California Health and Human services Department is currently involved with an initiative with UC San Diego School of Social work to provide technical assistance to child welfare on the impacts of trauma on our staff and the families we are involved with. Our county is one of half a dozen counties in the state involved with UC San Diego to better respond to the issues of training that impacts many aspects of Child Welfare Services.

### **Second Finding and Recommendation**

**Finding 2** – Retention of Child Welfare staff is difficult due to the complex, demanding, and emotionally challenging responsibilities, exacerbated by limited support from supervisors.

**Response to Second Finding – The Department of Health and Social Services partially agrees with the finding.**

The Department of Health and Social Services agrees with the demands of social worker and trauma on workers. Although this report states one contributing factor may be that of lack of supervisor support, we believe it may be situational while recognizing continuous development of supervisors is something the department needs to build upon.

Additionally, the last child welfare caseload study by the California Department of Social Services was done over two decades ago, and the work we do today with the increase in demands and mandates is different than the work of two decades ago. The resources have not aligned for this change thereby contributing to the difficult, complex, demanding and emotionally challenging responsibilities.

**Recommendation 2 – Provide time and replacement staff for managers and supervisors to receive area-specific management training to improve staff emotional and procedural support.**

**Response to Recommendation 2 – Recommendation has been implemented.**

In January 2020, we began to implement additional strategies to include administration of a workforce survey, creating a trauma informed work environment, and developing and supporting our Social Services Supervisors. Throughout this time, we have been working to research and develop a Workforce Survey for Social Worker IIIs in order to capture the current agency climate and morale, and gather input on induction training for new staff, ongoing training, and supervision.

As noted above, the department initiated a partnership with the Advancing California's Trauma-Informed Systems (ACTS) Project, a program designed for child welfare systems to work toward creating a trauma informed work environment. We have completed the initial phase of completing our self-assessment and are working to develop our implementation team. Lastly, to develop and support our supervisors, an 11-month training series titled "Unraveling Child Welfare Services, Solano Style" was created which is aimed at supporting supervisor development, coaching, and peer connections. Participation for Social Services Supervisors is mandatory, and training topics and structure for this curriculum has been developed by the supervisors themselves to ensure their needs are being addressed.

In December 2019, we expanded our exit interviews for consistency to the Child Welfare Administrator with all separating staff in order to compile data to improve our hiring and retention efforts, supervisory support, and staff development and training process.

A Program Coordinator position was filled in August 2019, to assist in tracking data to include length of time on the job, retention, turnover, vacancy, and reasons for separation. Tracking this quantitative data allows for a more complete picture of what is occurring within our workforce, and provides insight into the issues that may be impacting retention. Furthermore, caseload stats are tracked on a monthly basis, and are disseminated to management to facilitate conversations around caseloads which have a high impact on stress and burnout, and may ultimately lead to increased turnover.

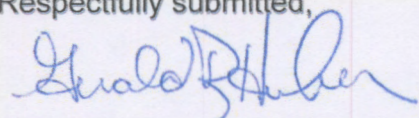
The remaining identified retention strategies have yet to be developed and were anticipated to start this year, but may be prolonged due to the current pandemic. These

strategies include facilitation of a focus group for staff who have just completed onboarding in order to gather feedback on this process, implementation of a retention workgroup/resiliency taskforce, and following cohorts of staff to track differences between those who received onboarding training and those who did not.

Finally, the department realizes that it takes an entire community to protect children from harm and allows all families to thrive. In 2019 the department received approval from the county Board of Supervisors to begin a "reframing" initiative which allows us to begin to integrate various services the department provides around the specific needs of families and individuals. Part of this initiative includes the creation of a new branch within the H&SS Department around children and family services. With this initiative, various programs within the department working with children and families will be integrated under a new human services branch of the department to improve coordination and integration of various services. This initiative has had a delay somewhat due to the pandemic, but is still in the planning stages to move forward over the next few years.

In conclusion, the Department of H&SS appreciates the issues raised by the Grand Jury regarding the child welfare services in the county. The Department of H&SS is proud of the work done by our incredible team of professionals and look forward to improving our practice.

Respectfully submitted,



Gerald R. Huber, Director, Health & Social Services

Cc: Aaron Crutison, Deputy Director Child Welfare Services  
Birgitta Corsello, County Administrative Officer  
Solano County Board of Supervisors  
Grand Jury Office [cdclower@solanocounty.courts.ca.gov](mailto:cdclower@solanocounty.courts.ca.gov)

California - Child and Family Services Review

**Solano County**  
**Annual SIP Progress Report Year Two**  
**January 16, 2019 – January 16, 2020**



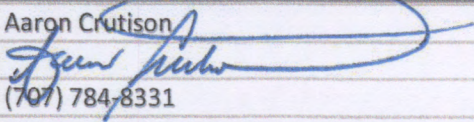
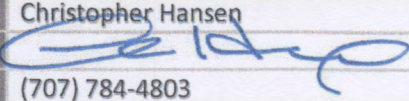
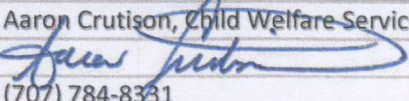
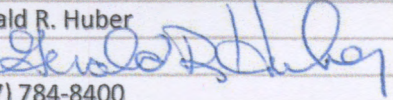


## Table of Contents

SIP PROGRESS REPORT SIGNATURE SHEET.....	PAGE 3
INTRODUCTION.....	PAGE 5
SIP PROGRESS REPORT NARRATIVE .....	PAGE 6
SIP CHART.....	Attachment

# CALIFORNIA – CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES REVIEW SIGNATURE SHEET

For Submittal of  CSA  SIP  Progress Report

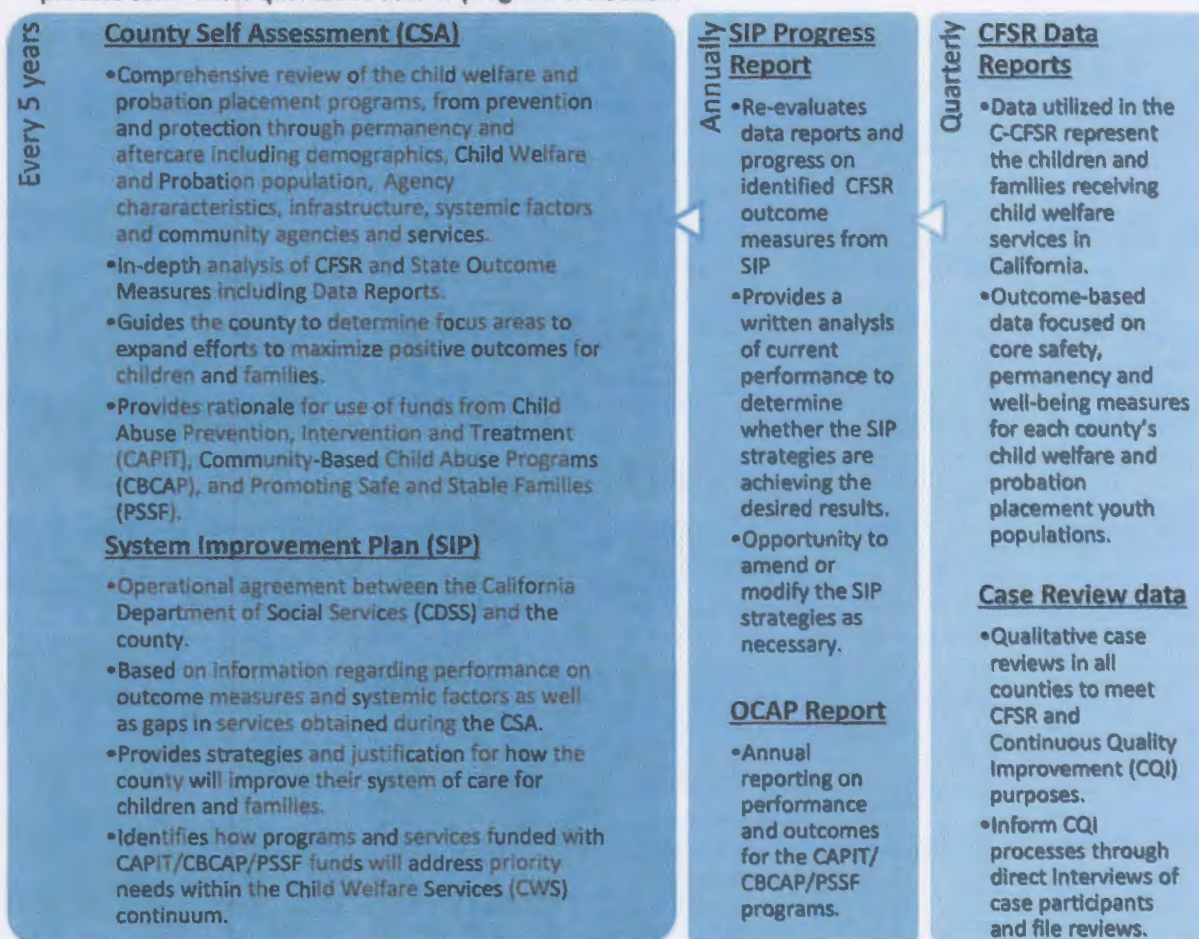
County	Solano County
SIP Period Dates	January 16, 2019 to January 16, 2020
Outcome Data Period	Quarter 1, 2018
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County Chief Probation Officer	
Name	Christopher Hansen
Signature*	
Phone Number	(707) 784-4803
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Public Agency Designated to Administer CAPIT and CBCAP	
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Signature*	
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Board of Supervisors (BOS) Signature	
BOS Approval Date	
Name	
Signature	

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## California – Child and Family Services Review (C-CFSR)

The California Child and Family Services Review (C-CFSR) was formed as a result of the passage of the Child Welfare System Improvement and Accountability Act (Assembly Bill (AB) 636) in 2001 and modeled after the Federal CFSR. The C-CFSR was designed to improve outcomes for children in the child welfare system while holding county and state agencies accountable for the outcomes achieved. This statewide accountability system includes the completion of a County Self-Assessment (CSA) which includes a peer review, development of a five-year System Improvement Plan (SIP), the submission of annual SIP Progress Reports, quarterly monitoring of SIP strategies and the effects on Child Welfare and Probation outcomes. The recently added Case Review process contributes qualitative data to program evaluation.



This Annual Progress Report covers the period January 16, 2019, through January 16, 2020, the second year of the Solano County System Improvement Plan (SIP) cycle. The Solano County Board of Supervisors approved the SIP on January 23, 2018.

## SIP Progress Narrative

### STAKEHOLDERS PARTICIPATION

Solano County benefits from a collaborative partnership with its county agencies and community partners. This relationship has enabled Child Welfare Services (CWS) to actively participate in several community meetings with our stakeholders, including weekly Inter-Agency Case Management Committee, quarterly Continuum of Care Reform (CCR), quarterly Foster Family Association, quarterly Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) Steering Committee, monthly Foster Kinship Care Education Association and other community partner meetings. On a quarterly basis, Solano County also meets with our community Title IV-E training partners who provide program updates, share information on resources, coordinate trainings offered to families and professionals (including staff) and address potential service needs or emergent challenges within the County. Our participation in these meetings affords us the opportunity to ensure that the voice of children and families are at the center of our discussions. Our collaborative efforts also afford us the opportunity to provide our many stakeholders the County's System Improvement Plan (SIP) strategy updates and activities.

In alignment with the process of becoming a Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI) county and SIP strategy 2, Solano County held multiple listening sessions in February and March of 2019. The QPI listening sessions were facilitated by the Youth Law Center (YLC), originator of the initiative, and included both internal and external stakeholder participation. Representation at the listening sessions included: our community partners, the faith-based community, youth, birth parents, resource parents, behavioral health services, probation, education, public health and our legal partners (Court Appointed Special Advocates, attorneys and judicial members). The listening sessions were well attended and offered invaluable insight into how our practices are perceived among our partners.

An area in which we are aware more work needs to be done is in capturing our youth voice. We are having discussions around ways to strategize this, and identify ways to provide incentives to youth for participating in committees. As this time, in order to capture youth voice, two listening sessions were held at First Place for Youth with current and former foster youth. Due to the feedback received from this population, we developed a Parent and Youth Mentors workgroup through QPI. The lead on this workgroup is the current education advocate at First Place for Youth, who will ensure their Youth Action Team (YAT) will be involved in the recommendations made through this workgroup. We have also had the opportunity to request feedback from the YAT on the policy we have begun developing regarding the iFoster Phone Pilot and hope to continue this process with policies/procedures that have an impact on foster youth.

In an effort to begin having more robust conversations regarding our SIP strategies, we implemented quarterly internal SIP meetings to discuss our outcome measures, and progress in each of our strategies. The initial meeting was held on October 1, 2019, and will continue on a quarterly basis. Participants in the initial meetings included multiple levels of Department staff, to include: Deputy Director, Administrator, Program Coordinator, all three section managers, CQI Supervisor, RFA Supervisor, Supportive Services Supervisor, and a Dependency Investigations

Social Worker. Participants invited, but unable to attend, included: Staff Development & Training Supervisor, Court Officer, a Transitions to Permanency Supervisor, and an Emergency Response Supervisor. Participants discussed the importance of obtaining ideas and feedback from internal stakeholders invested in the SIP strategies, and it was requested additional members be invited to future meetings, to include more line staff. In the initial meeting, all strategies were discussed to include action steps that have been implemented in the past year, and discussions were held regarding our Quarter 1, 2019 data. The need for focused meetings were discussed, and follow up has been scheduled in each of these areas.

Another way we are soliciting feedback is by way of survey. For example, a survey was sent out to the supervisor team in September 2019 requesting feedback as to the barriers we have faced in engaging parents at the systemic level. The survey requested information as to what we can do differently as a Department in the future to ensure parents are involved at the systemic level. We received feedback from six (6) supervisors, and we are in the process of analyzing the information to develop ways in which we can better involve parents in this process.

## **Child Welfare CURRENT PERFORMANCE TOWARDS SIP IMPROVEMENT GOALS**

### **PRIORITY OUTCOME MEASURE OR SYSTEMIC FACTOR**

- 1) **CFSR3: Permanency Performance Area 1 - Permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care. Of all children who entered care in the 12-month period, what percent discharged to permanency within 12 months?**

National Standard: >40.5%

Baseline Performance (Quarter 3, 2016): 21.2%

5 Year SIP Performance (Quarter 1, 2017): 31.5%

SIP Year 1 Performance (Quarter 1, 2018): 32.6%

Current Performance (Quarter 1, 2019): 28.6%

Year Two Target Improvement Goal: Increase by 4% to 35.5%

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

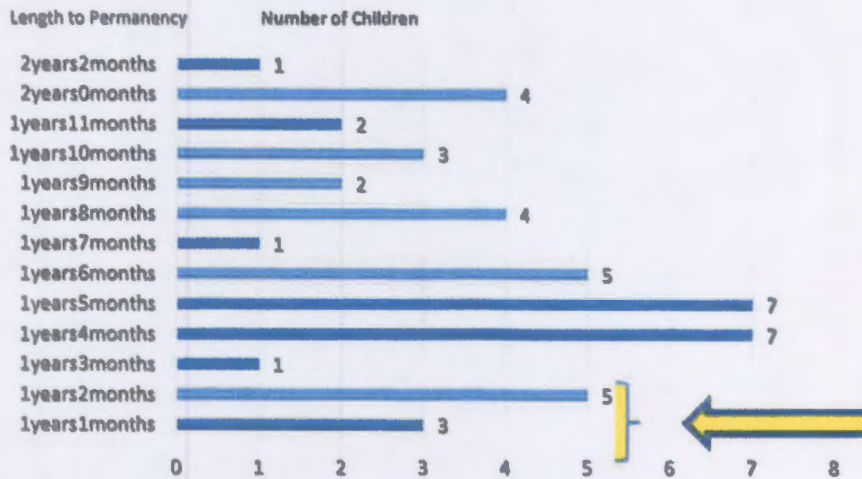
There was a decline in the performance of Permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care (P1) this reporting period, Quarter 1, 2019. This period's (4/1/17-3/31/18) outcome measured 28.6% (34 of 119 children), down by 2.9% since the beginning of this SIP analysis (Quarter 1, 2018). To meet this year's goal of 35.5%, 8 additional children needed to achieve permanency (guardianship or reunification). This is a -10.2% one-year change from last year's performance. In an analysis of the Quarter 1 2019 data in Safe Measures, of those children (33) who found permanency within 12 months, 19 found permanency within 180 days and 14 within 365 days. (Please note that Safe Measures' data is dynamic and there are slight variances in numbers when compared to the static data chart.)

Of the 88 youth who did not Exit to Permanency within 12 months, 40 children remain in foster care, 11 were adopted, 1 death, 8 achieved guardianship, 1 exited at 18, 2 were adjudged 601/602 and 25 more reunified (chart below).

<b>No Exit in Time</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>No Permanency</b>	<b>40</b>
Adoption Finalized	11
Death of Child	1
Guardianship	8
NMDEligible for Reentry	1
Reunified with Parent/Guardian (Court)	25
<b>Other</b>	<b>2</b>
Child Adjudged 601/602	2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>88</b>

Of this cohort, there were 45 children who subsequently achieved permanency within 2 years after entering placement. The chart below delineates the number of children that exited to permanency greater than 1 year. It is interesting to note that if the 8 children who achieved permanency within 14 months (demarcated by the arrow), had actually achieved permanency within 1 year, we would have met our goal of 35.5%.

**Length to Permanency - Children entering foster care between 04/01/2017 and 03/31/2018.**



Source: SafeMeasures, CFSR Measure P1: Permanency in 12 Months for Children Entering Care, Solano County, extraction date 10/13/19.

Upon review of the data above, it's not surprising that we performed above the National standard for P2 (Permanency for children in foster care between 12-24 months) and P3 (Permanency for children in foster care more than 24 months). P2 measured 58.8% (40 of 68 children) which is 15.2% higher than the National Standard of 43.6%. P3 measured 34.1% (45 of 132 children) which is 2.8% higher than the National Standard of 30.3%.

In order to effect change in this outcome, we have implemented a variety of activities to influence improvement in this area. One of our activities is the development of an intensive parent/child visitation coaching model. Last year was a period of development and launch of the Parent/Child Coach (PCC) visitation model. During this reporting period, there has been continued progress including training our visit coaches and supervisors on the model in April 2019. During this reporting period, the Visitation Center began to schedule routine case reviews between the primary social worker assigned to the family and the visitation coach. These meetings have been instrumental in resolving barriers to providing services to families, review of the Step-Down Visitation plan and assurance of collaboration. However, during this reporting period, we lost a key staff member due to retirement which created some implementation challenges. This position is being filled and we are hopeful to see continued development over the next reporting period. Further analysis of the Parent/Child Visitation Coaching model occurs in the discussion of Strategy 1.

Another area of focus in 2020 will be the increased focus on engaging families in Child and Family Team Meetings (CFTM) and ensuring the utilization of the Child and Adolescent Strengths and Needs (CANS) tool within the CFTM. A Teaming, Engagement, Assessment, and Monitoring



(TEAM) Workgroup launched in November 2019. This workgroup strives to focus on ensuring:

- Facilitation of high quality and effective child and family teams (CFT) Meetings that facilitate assessment of children's and parent's needs;
- Improving engagement of clients in their case plans and determining the best ways to utilize CFT meetings and the cans assessment as engagement tools; and
- Developing effective systems and procedures to ensure timely CFT Meetings occur and monitoring of outcomes.

We are in the process of publishing a Request for Proposal (RFP) to identify a community-based agency that will implement a Child Welfare Services Parent Partner Program, with a goal of the program commencing in the start of the next fiscal year. We envision this program to strategically support parent clients at the beginning of their Child Welfare Case, supporting them in the CFTM and orienting them to the Case Planning process. Proposed outcomes include increasing parent engagement in CFTMs, increasing satisfaction and knowledge of the Child Welfare process, increase involvement and engagement in the case plan, and increase the likelihood to achieve permanency for children.

Our analysis reveals that P1 is negatively impacted by our staffing turnover. The social workers assigned to our FM/FR program are new to the county, and usually new to Child Welfare. The confidence that is needed to return children home earlier than a year may be lacking in this young workforce. Additionally, in year 1 and part of this year, we had two relatively new supervisors in the program. They also were working through their learning curve and this may further challenge the process. Midway through this past year however we assigned a seasoned supervisor to FM/FR. We hope this will help infuse more knowledge and experience into the overall program. Another barrier related to staff turnover is the actual impact of the resulting caseload turnover. Each time a social worker leaves, for example 20 children's cases, those children and families are re-assigned to a new social worker, who inevitably is also new to the program. Warm hand-offs do not always occur and in some cases the newly assigned social worker feels compelled to start the assessment over from scratch. We hope to mitigate this barrier with the increased use of CFTMs and increased assignment of Family Preservation Social Workers. CFTs can provide continuity as a team can "hold" the historical information related to family's progress and convey this to the new social worker. The Family Preservation social worker is a Social Worker II who is dually assigned to reunifying families. This classification tends to be more stable and can also provide some transition support.

**2) CFSR3: Permanency Performance Area 5 - Placement Stability. Of all children who enter foster care in a 12-month period, what is the rate of placement moves per 1000 days of foster care?**

National Standard: Less than or equal to 4.12 moves  
Baseline Performance (Quarter 3, 2016): 6.72 moves  
5 Year SIP Performance (Quarter 1, 2017): 7.25 moves  
Year 1 Performance (Quarter 1, 2018): 7.39 moves  
Current Performance (Quarter 1, 2019): 6.69 moves  
Year Two Target Improvement Goal: Decrease by .65 moves to 5.42

## DATA ANALYSIS

There has been improvement in P5 this reporting period, Quarter 1, 2019 (period: January-March 2019). P5 measured 6.69 moves, which is -0.56 moves less than the beginning of this SIP Reporting period, Quarter 1, 2017. However, it is still 2.57 moves higher than the National standard of 4.12 moves.

This measure displays the rate of placement moves per day of foster care for children who enter foster care in the selected 12-month period. We analyzed children who entered foster care between 04/01/2018 and 03/31/2019 utilizing SafeMeasures data. SafeMeasures counts the total number of placement moves and the total number of days in foster care at the end of the selected 12-month period. This is then multiplied by 1,000 to determine the rate of placement moves per 1,000 days. The following exclusions apply:

- Entries to foster care and exits from foster care (including exits to trial home visits, runaway episodes, and respite care) are not counted as moves.
- Foster care episodes that last less than eight days are excluded. Episodes longer than eight days are counted for the number of placement days within the 12-month period.
- Youth age over 18. For youth who turn 18 during the selected period, placement days are calculated up until their birthday.

The table below displays 195 children and the number of moves they have had during the period measured. Of the 195 children below, 77 have subsequently exited placement. Seventy-one percent (71%) of the children below had 1 or less moves during this measured period.

# of Moves	# of Children
0	63
1	76
2	38
3	13
4	2
5	1
6	1
11	1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>195</b>

Source: SafeMeasures, CFSR Measure P5: Placement Stability, Solano County, extraction date 10/13/19

There are 76 children who experienced 1 placement move, which is likely attributed to the use of our Emergency Placement contract, in which children enter into emergency placements for up to five business days while the next best placement for the youth is searched for.

There are 3 children who had 5, 6 and 11 moves respectively. The child with 11 moves has subsequently reunified and is sibling to the child with 5 moves, who remains in care along with the child with 6 moves. In regards to the youth with 11 placement moves, this was their third episode in care, and they spent a total of 11 months in foster care in this current episode prior to reunifying with their parent. The minor's experience of 11 placement moves is an outlier,

however, it is important for Solano County to discuss this child's placement experience and make efforts to ensure youth, no matter what behaviors are present, are not experiencing this amount of moves, especially in such a short period of time in care. Based on the reasoning for this youth's continued placement changes, it is essential that we continue to work on ensuring Resource Parents are adequately trained, and that youth with mental health and behavioral needs are getting these needs addressed immediately upon entering care.

In addition to this, it is essential we continue to support our youth when placement disruptions occur. In order to do this, we have ensured implementation of Child and Family Team Meetings immediately occurring upon receiving notice from care providers in order to work as a team to support both the youth and caregiver in mitigating concerns and limiting placement disruptions. Additionally, with the implementation of our QPI workgroups, our youth voice will be more present allowing for us to gather insight into the needs they have in times of placement instability. One barrier we have identified that have caused our youth to have multiple placement moves include our staff utilizing our emergency foster homes for initial placements, prior to making attempts to find a least restrictive placement. In addition to this, we are in need of putting a system in place to authorize emergency placements with relatives and NREFM's after business hours, to include nights and weekends. Lastly, our emergency placement contract with Aldea allows for our youth to be placed into their homes for five days, which does not allow for adequate time for staff to locate the best ongoing placement for youth. At this time we are addressing this barrier by working with our contracted provider to increase placement days from five business days to ten to allow for additional time for more comprehensive placement searches.

As discussed in last year's Progress Report, there are a number of issues impacting our placement system. Concerns include a lack of in-county placement options, lack of internal support to locate and match placements, use of Emergency Foster Homes, delay in accessing services for youth, insufficient concurrent planning and communication barriers between caregivers and social workers. We have focused this past year on improving our Placement system by increasing our Placement Team. Before the below efforts were made, there was only one Full Time Equivalent (FTE) SWIII providing support to staff during placement. The below have occurred this period:

- In September, an additional 0.5 FTE SWIII was added to the Placement Team to support resource family recruitment and retention efforts.
- In July 2019, two new Resource Family Approval Social Worker II positions were approved. These positions will be dedicated to supporting Social Worker IIIs during the placement process with the goal of increasing family finding efforts in the early stages of CWS involvement and improve placement stability. The two approved positions were filled in January 2020.
- All efforts are in alignment with the implementation of Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI) that supports the delivery of excellent parenting services to all children placed in out of home care.

It should also be noted that the implementation of the Adoption Guardianship Support (AGS) contract in FY18-19 may account for some decrease in the amount of placement moves youth experienced in this reporting period. AGS provides supportive services for Pre and Post Adoption and Guardianship to stabilize acute or developing situations where there is a risk of disruption of

placement, or a significant strain between child and caregiver. The voluntary program utilizes a Wraparound-style model with community and home based services which value and support the uniqueness of the families and their natural supports. Of the ten (10) families served in FY18-19, four (4) were open child welfare cases and a total of eight (8) children were served, all of which currently remain in the homes of the caregivers they were residing with prior to the intervention. The services provided by AGS likely had an impact on the stability of the children's placements, and therefore may have impacted the decrease in placement moves experienced by youth over this reporting period.

### 3) Systemic Factor - Staff Training

Our System Improvement Plan indicated a need for a structured new hire training program, consistency in social work practice, improved transfer of learning, ongoing professional development and coordination of existing training resources to meet the increasing mandates and associated expectations of Child Welfare Services (CWS). It further stressed the need to develop a fully functional online learning management system (OLMS) where policies and procedures are current and readily accessible as the foundation of such a training model.

#### DATA ANALYSIS

##### *New Hire Induction Training:*

In year one of this SIP, a robust model was developed with the intent of fully addressing the training needs of new and continuing staff. Efforts to advance our training model have included: the creation of a 60-day new hire induction training program, the development of an annual training plan informed by managers, supervisors, staff, legal partners and findings from case reviews, improved coordination between the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) unit, a contractual partnership with Bay Area Academy (BAA) and other community partners and replacement of our existing online policy guide.

Retaining Child Welfare staff has been a challenge for many California Counties. Efforts to fill the Social Worker II vacancies have been ongoing and sustained. We developed an agreement with Human Resources to maintain our Social Worker III classification on a continuous recruitment status throughout on an ongoing basis. We hired 21 Social Worker III's in 2018 and 26 Social Worker III's in 2019 (*hiring data as of 12/2/19*). To address this systemic factor and to improve staff retention, we assigned a Child Welfare Supervisor to oversee the Staff Development & Training program in June 2019. On June 17<sup>th</sup>, the first new hire induction training class was shepherded through the onboarding process. Subsequent waves of new hire cohorts have continued. All but 3 of the new hires completed the induction training, who completed modified induction training due to their history in child welfare. At this time, we have not yet set up a formal process to obtain feedback from our new hires or trainer regarding the induction training, however, we have started completing exit interviews for all SW III's leaving the agency. It should be noted that staff who began on or after June 17, 2019 and have left the agency have noted no concerns regarding the induction training in their interviews. Our Department is exploring holding focus groups for new staff following induction training, and analyzing data comparing outcomes (i.e. length of stay as SW III) for staff who received induction training and those who did not.

Recruitment and Retention continues to be an area of focus despite robust hiring. We analyzed separations over a two-year period – November 1, 2017 to November 2, 2019. CWS had 70 allocated Full Time Social Worker III positions during this two-year period (Note: two new limited term project SWIII positions were approved by the Board of Supervisors in July 2019, but not filled at the time of this analysis). During this two-year period, a total of 27 Social Worker (SW) IIIs separated from CWS. The table below displays the length of time employees were employed before separation. It's notable that 9 employees exited before 1 year on the job.



(Source: Peoplesoft Database)

The calculated turnover rate from November 1, 2017, to November 1, 2018, was 20.8%. The turnover rate from November 2, 2018, to November 2, 2019, was slightly higher at 25.8%. According to the Casey Family Programs, annual turnover rates below 10–12 percent are considered optimal or healthy. For the past 15 years, child welfare turnover rates have been estimated at 20–40 percent (<https://www.casey.org/turnover-costs-and-retention-strategies/>)<sup>1</sup>. It appears that we are mirroring the trend identified in this report. Additionally, California publication references that research over the years identifies three areas critical to addressing retention in child welfare: 1) resources, 2) a positive organizational culture and climate, especially for those with less than three years of child welfare service, and 3) the need for strong supervisory support.

Of the staff who separated, there were a variety of reasons given for their departure with the majority being due to obtaining new positions and/or for personal reasons. Of the staff who left the agency between November 1, 2017 and November 1, 2019, 59% were employed less than 2 years, 26% were employed 2-5 years, and 15% were employed 5+ years.

**Online Management System (OLMS):**

CWS partnered with the County's Department of Information Technology (DoIT) to create a more

<sup>1</sup> Healthy Organizations Information Packet, Casey Family Programs, October 2017.

user friendly and easily adaptable online learning management system (OLMS) that would use a web-based, PowerDMS, platform to house its policies and procedures.

During this reporting period, several action items have been completed to build OLMS including reestablishing a supervisor policy workgroup to work on policy conversion and creation. Beginning in June, we expanded testing the upload of policies into OLMS and finalized the document approval workflow process in August. This process was further refined with managers and the Child Welfare Deputy Director in October. Additionally, an OLMS Steering Committee has been launched. This Committee will oversee the writing, uploading, approving, and publishing of policies into OLMS, manage policy updates and OLMS functionality, and ensure policies and procedures are reflective of current ACLs/ACINs, BARC recommendations, and HR and H&SS requirements.

In August, we developed and conducted a satisfaction survey of our current Online Policy Guide (OPG) system in order to establish our baseline for comparison beginning next year after launch. Forty-eight staff responded to the 5 question survey. Of the 48 staff, 41.67% were employed more than 5 years, 24% between 1-5 years, and 15% less than one year. Respondents were queried regarding their familiarity with the current OPG system. 40% responded that they were "not so familiar" and "not at all familiar" with OPG. The majority (73%) indicated that they have accessed OPG less than 50 times. Only 25.5% of respondents reported that OPG is "somewhat friendly" and 2% "Very Friendly". No respondents reported it to be "Extremely friendly".

The plan is to fully launch OLMS in January 2020. While policies will continue to be updated and created, staff will be able to begin accessing the new system once trained to the new system. The current Online Policy Guide (OPG) will continue to be available to staff.

The following policies have been updated and/or created: Court Appointed Special Advocates, Level of Care, Court Officer, Resource Family and Approval, Ergonomic Requests, Case Transfer, Child Support Waiver, Foster Youth Rights, Detention Hearings, Status Review Hearings, Findings and Orders, Inter-County Transfers, and Trial Prep/Testifying. Additional policies continue to be worked on, and will be uploaded into the system on an ongoing basis.

## **Child Welfare STATUS OF STRATEGIES**

**CWS Strategy 1: Improve permanency by increasing Family Engagement through an intensive parent/child visitation coaching model.**

### **ANALYSIS**

Solano County continues to be committed to impacting permanency through increased family engagement with intensive parent/child visitation. In the previous reporting year, Solano County made significant improvements to our visitation space and model, to include updating the referral process, remodeling our visitation rooms, implementing a step-down model, and beginning the process of training visitation staff to become in the Parent/Child Coaching Model. During this Progress Report period, visitation staff attended Visit Coaching Curriculum training and became fully educated on this model and how to incorporate all elements into their practice. Parent/Child

Coaches began to utilize a visitation log to detail the parent's progress in visits to include observations of behavioral change. The visit log is provided to case carrying social workers every sixty (60) days and helps to facilitate conversations around stepping families down to less restrictive visitation.

In August, 2019, 1 of the 3 parent child coaches retired from Solano County Child Welfare. In order to ensure all visits with families still occurred, interns and case carrying social workers filled in to supervise visits for the families this employee was assigned to. Due to this, Parent/Child Coaching was not implemented at the same level as done so with the Parent/Child Coach due to staff not receiving the extended training in the model. In November 2019, a new SW II was hired and placed into this position. This SW II will receive training in the Parent/Child Coaching model. We do not anticipate the loss of this visit coach to negatively impact our visitation program as the Supervisor is able to train and coach the newly hired social worker.

#### **ACTION STEP STATUS**

**1A. Restructure visitation model by developing and implementing an intensive Parent/Child Coaching model to strengthen the parent/child relationship and decrease the need for supervised visits.**

**1A.4 Train Visitation Coaching/Family Preservation Social Workers in the PCC Model and visitation step down tool. Then, expand training to include overview for all staff (Social Workers and Supervisors) in the PCC model and step-down tool.**

- January 2019-December 2019- Completed and Ongoing
  - On January 10, 2019, visitation supervisor presented at a Pre-Dispo meeting on the PCVC program and objectives.
  - April 29-30, 2019, all visiting coaches and supervisor attended Visit Coaching Curriculum training.

#### **METHOD OF EVALUATION AND/OR MONITORING**

Solano County will conduct program evaluation of the PCVC model by utilizing all aspects of Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI), including analysis of data reports from the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS), SafeMeasures, C-CFSR reports, case reviews, surveys, assessments and interviews to analyze the impact of PCVC and Visitation Step-Down plan with families. An initial and ongoing plan for evaluation is being discussed between the current program manager, program supervisor, CQI supervisor, and Program Coordinator, which will be implemented by January 2020. Ongoing annual evaluation of the PCVC model will allow us to identify areas of growth and adjust our practice when necessary.

**ADDITIONAL STRATEGIES (WHEN APPLICABLE) Not Applicable**

**PROGRAM REDUCTION Not Applicable**

**CWS Strategy 2: Improve youth's placement stability through improved resource family recruitment, retention and support activities, including implementation of Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI).**

## ANALYSIS

Over the past reporting year, Solano County has continued to offer extensive support to our resource families to include continued collaborative meetings with our Foster Family Associations, Foster Kinships Care Education (FKCE) Association, resource parents, community partners, and our county agencies. Solano County has utilized Foster Parent Recruitment, Retention, and Support (FPRRS) funding to remove barriers for placement of children and youth with relatives and Non-Related Extended Family Members (NREFMS). Additionally, feedback is provided within the abovementioned collaborative meetings, which assists Solano County is continually assessing and adapting its Resource Family Approval (RFA) process to remove programmatic processes that delay the approval process.

Solano County is working toward bringing back quarterly meetings with our Foster Family Agencies (FFAs) to support retention of resource families, and have scheduled an initial meeting to occur on January 23, 2020. Over the past four (4) years, our dependent youth have spent an average of 35% of their placement days in a FFA placement, and over the past year, between 33% and 37.5% of youth were residing in a FFA home in any given month. Given the significant amount of time our youth spend in this placement setting, it is essential we improve our communication with our FFAs, and work toward ensuring we are supporting the resource families whom are licensed through these agencies.

It is too early in our implementation process to measure the immediate impact of implementing Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI). Our efforts have included attending both national and state conferences to learn from existing QPI jurisdictions, participation in listening sessions with the Youth Law Center, forming a Child Welfare Services QPI lead team, forming Solano Fosters (a body of resource parents, FFAs, the FKCE, CWS staff, birth parents and community partners) to share resources, training needs and emerging issues. Most recently, workgroups were formed to address areas in which Solano County would like to focus our efforts to better serve youth and families. The workgroup topics were identified based on the outcomes of the listening sessions the Youth Law Center held in February 2019. At this time, four (4) workgroups are active, that address the following issues: Placement Practices, Resource Family Support/Encouraging Relationships, Parent and Youth Mentors, and Community Outreach/Branding/Marketing. Participants in workgroups include child welfare supervisors, line staff, and office assistants, resource parents, and contracted community partners. Solano County is working to further identify individuals in the community who would be open and willing to engage in this process. While there are multiple workgroups, quarterly meetings began in October 2019, to bring all members together to discuss their progress, and to ensure collaboration is occurring amongst all involved.

While the impact of QPI on placement stability cannot yet be measured, it is imperative to note the impact of introducing QPI has had on positive relationship building amongst Child Welfare Services, resource parents, and community agencies, all of which play an essential role in meeting the needs of the children and families we serve. During the initial QPI quarterly meeting held in October 2019, the foster parent association expressed concerns to the group regarding continued miscommunication between the county and resource families, and indicated prior to the implementation of QPI, they would not have felt comfortable sharing this information in an open venue with many child welfare staff present. While QPI has only just beginning to be



operationalized, it has already begun to allow for the creation of safe spaces to begin developing more open, honest, and trusting relationships between all those involved in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our children and families.

#### **ACTION STEP STATUS**

**2A. Enhance recruitment of Resource Family homes through implementation of Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI), improved resource family and community outreach, and partnerships with Foster Parent Associations and community partners.**

2A.1 Form a Quality Parenting Initiative Steering Committee to include resource parents, community stakeholders, Child Welfare Services (CWS) staff and youth. This Steering Committee will meet at least quarterly to guide development of the roll-out and training plans and to provide continuous feedback and input.

- Timeline: July 2018 – January 2023 – Completed and Ongoing
  - The QPI Steering Committee was formed and meets quarterly. Participants in this committee include CWS management and line staff, probation staff, FKCE, foster family association, community partners, and resource families.
  - The Steering Committee has provided feedback as to the placement packets being too complex and inconsistent, which is being addressed by the Placement Practices workgroup. In addition to this, feedback has been provided regarding resource families needing additional support upon initial placement, and the desire for the county and community partners to facilitate meetings connecting birth parents to resource families. Each of these suggestions are being further discussed within the designated workgroups as to how to address them successfully.
  - The steering committee attended the National QPI Conference in April 2019.
  - In May 2019, Solano County CWS was matched with Brevard County in Florida as a pilot to better transition new QPI jurisdictions. We began monthly consultation meetings with our matched QPI partner.
  - In September 2019, submitted National Conference workshop topic as the pilot onboarding jurisdiction: QPI 101, From Theory to Practice: The Nuts and Bolts of Becoming a QPI County.
  - Scheduled initial Foster Family Agency quarterly meeting for January 2020.
  - Began introducing FKCE at the initial training for resource families in order to provide new families with support as soon as possible in the RFA process.

2A.2 The QPI Steering Committee will guide the internal implementation of QPI including training for leadership and staff.

- Timeline: January 2019 - December 2019 – Ongoing
  - In January 2019 held an introduction to QPI during a CWS Boutique Training with 77 staff in attendance.
  - On March 6, 2019 the QPI launch was held with 27 staff members in attendance.

- On April 16, 2019, 81 staff members attended a CWS Boutique Training where a QPI update was given

2A.3 The QPI Steering Committee will guide the external implementation of QPI and conduct outreach to resource families, FFAs, Foster Parent Associations, and community partners about QPI.

- Timeline: September 2019- March 2020 - Ongoing
  - The QPI Steering Committee meets monthly at the Solano Fosters Meetings. The Steering Committee consists of members of FKCE and the foster parent associations, who regularly conduct outreach to resource families regarding the implementation of QPI with the goal of educating them on QPI and increasing participation at the meetings and workgroups.
  - The Solano Fosters Meetings are open meetings, and FFAs and community partners are welcome to attend. Education regarding QPI is provided at these meetings.
  - In October 2019, the initial quarterly QPI workgroup meeting occurred, and CWS management requested that CWS staff, resource parents, FFAs, and community partners in the room invite those they work with to the next scheduled meeting to provide further education on QPI and the identified needs being worked on within the workgroups. Currently, the following community partners are involved in QPI workgroups: Aldea, FKCE, First Place for Youth, and the Foster Parent Association. The next quarterly meeting is scheduled for January 29, 2020.

2A.4 Partner with existing FFAs and Community Based Organizations (CBOs) for general recruitment utilizing strategies from QPI.

- Timeline: June 2019- January 2023 - Ongoing
  - Convening quarterly Foster Family Agency quarterly meetings to begin January 2019.
  - Involved CBOs in our QPI workgroups and in our Solano Foster's Meetings with a goal of discussing recruitment strategies. Have begun conversations regarding the ELITE 360 program within the Program Practices workgroup, which includes CBOs and is centered around the idea of recruitment of resource homes for children with high needs.

2A.5 Develop a targeted annual recruitment plan utilizing strategies from QPI, for "high end" youth (CSEC, significant medical or mental health needs, high trauma background) most likely to experience placement instability.

- Timeline: Annually beginning October 2019 – Ongoing
  - A part time placement coordinator was hired in October 2019, who will assist with recruitment. Both our full time and part time placement coordinator will play a role in the FFA Quarterly Meetings with a goal of increasing communication with our FFAs placement staff and identifying ways to support the retention of their care givers.
  - Our full time placement coordinator attended a training titled Transitioning youth from Congregate Care to Home Based Family Care by Denise Goodman on September 24 and 25, 2019.
  - Our RFA team attended a resource fair at a church in Vallejo and set up a booth to

recruit families. Profile sheets were provided describing two (2) high needs youth with an explanation of their needs. Our RFA team plans to continue to attend events such as these.

- RFA held a booth at the annual foster care picnic to help support recruitment and retention. The booth allowed for resource families to ask questions and establish relationship with our RFA team. Due to increased recruitment and the criteria for invites becoming less restrictive (including guardianship and adoptive homes), this year's picnic was the most attended picnic thus far.
- The QPI Placement Practices workgroup has begun to discuss the possible implementation of a program titled ELITE 360, which would identify and recruit resource families to receive increased mentorship and training in order to take in our high needs youth for a period of sixty (60) days while the Department makes efforts to search for the best and most permanent placement setting for these youth. Efforts are being made to include mental health services in this program, to ensure services are available for resource families who have taken in this population of youth.

**2B. Improve retention and support of Resource Families through implementation of Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI), improved communication, use of direct supports, and partnerships with Foster Parent Associations.**

2B.1 Utilize current Foster Parent Recruitment Retention and Support (FPRRS) funding for concrete supports for Resource Families including items necessary for RFA approval, RFA training stipends, and summer respite programs. The QPI Steering Committee will serve as the mechanism for recommendations for establishment of the annual FPRRS funding priorities.

- Timeline: January 2018- January 2023 – Completed and Ongoing
  - Solano County continues to utilize the FPRRS funding to provide supports to resource families including, but not limited to, purchasing beds, smoke detectors, door locks, training courses, storage sheds, summer camp for youth (respite), foster youth back-to-school picnic and conference registration fees.
  - Began having conversations with the Steering Committee regarding the use of FPRRS funding. Discussions have just begun to be had regarding resource family's needs upon initial placement prior to funding beginning, and how FPRRS funds can support these needs, which often include the need for clothing for children prior to clothing allowance's being issued.

2B.2 Facilitate a monthly forum hosted by CWS to partner with and support new and existing Resource Families (consistent with QPI principles).

- Timeline: June 2018- January 2023- Completed and Ongoing
  - Solano County in partnership with its foster family associations and FKCE continue to host the monthly Solano Fosters meetings. The monthly meeting is a forum for new and existing Resource Families to share experiences and resources, hear updates on QPI implementation, discuss emergent issues and provide input to shape practice.

2B.3 Provide high quality customer service to resource parents and partner with existing FFAs, Foster Kinship Care Education (FKCE) and others to acknowledge and appreciate resource

families.

- Timeline: June 2019-January 2023- Ongoing
  - Solano County has incorporated FKCE into RFA training. FKCE representatives are present at the initial Orientation Module to ensure relatives are provided with essential support as soon as possible. At this training, FKCE informs relatives/NREFMs about the supports available to them, including Solano Fosters and support groups.
  - An additional SW III was hired as a part time placement coordinator in RFA to support the retention of our current homes.
  - Two additional SW IIs were hired and are in training. The SW IIs will be assigned to the RFA unit, and will be utilized to support recruitment and retention of resource homes in the front and the back end programs. The SW II's will assist with Family Finding, approval of relative/NREFM resource homes, and recruitment of new homes.
  - RFA unit has begun teaming with Foster Care Eligibility to receive placement change information immediately to allow Placement Coordinators to contact care providers within 24 hours of a new placement to ask if any support is needed. This strategy was developed in the Placement Practices workgroup and is in the early phases of implementation.

#### **METHOD OF EVALUATION AND/OR MONITORING**

This strategy requires substantial work in the early years of the plan. The RFA database continues to be used to track approved resource families, including the target population of non-matched and specially recruited families/homes. We continue to compare our data with data provided by the state and our foster care eligibility unit. As of the SIP writing date, there were 26 non-matched (baseline) Community Care Licensing (CCL) licensed homes undergoing conversion into Resource Family Homes. To date, we have successfully converted 5 home and 2 are still undergoing the process. The other 19 have elected to not convert to Resource Family homes. We have approved a total of 236 Resource Family Homes, all relative or Non-Related Extended Family Member (NREFM) applicants. Of these 236 homes, 139 remain active, and 97 have chosen to close once their relative/NREFM children were no longer in their care. Approximately 10-12 approved homes have begun taking in youth with whom they did not have a prior relationship with, and there has been 1 home approved through recruitment for a specialized home for children with high medical needs. Solano County has not yet begun to extensively recruit homes due to a need for increased resources within the RFA unit to complete the assessment process.

Quarter 1 2019 data indicates that 64.5% of our children's initial placements are in Foster Family Agency homes. Through continued recruitment of RFA homes, and retention of certified homes whom previously took in relative children, our hope is we will see a decrease in children's initial placements occurring in FFA homes, as this tends to occur due to our reliance on our emergency placement contract with Aldea. Utilization of this contract creates a need for children to have at least one placement move within a week of their entry into foster care, while placement into a RFA home could decrease the amount of placement moves children receive during their placement episode.

**ADDITIONAL STRATEGIES (WHEN APPLICABLE)** Not Applicable

## **PROGRAM REDUCTION Not Applicable**

**CWS STRATEGY 3: Improve youth's placement stability through increasing placement with relatives and non-relative kin.**

### **ANALYSIS**

The Relative Placement Workgroup began meeting in January 2019, and has continuously met once per month since this initial convening. The workgroup has made progress assessing needs for completing relative placements in three focus areas: resources, processes, and regulations. During the 2018 and 2019 RFA site visits, Solano County received technical assistance that indicated our previous emergency placement standards were too strict, and the workgroup has modified these regulations and procedures to better align with the state's standards. The revised emergency placement process was amended immediately, and the full process is awaiting approval, to include a modified home and grounds checklist.

In an effort to increase relative placements in the front end, the Department approved a SW II position to assist with this process. Prior to the hiring of this social worker, Solano County completed a pilot program in which an already employed SW II was "loaned" to the emergency response unit to assist with the identification of relatives/NREFMS. The SW II was assigned to ER from July 2019 to October 2019, and was able to assist in completing multiple placements with relatives/NREFMS. While this pilot was successful, the SW II was "on loan" from the RFA unit, and was placed back into her position in RFA to ensure these job duties continued to be met. As this pilot proved to be successful, the Relative Placement Workgroup has begun to develop similar job duties for the SW II assigned as a placement liaison, who is expected to start in at the end of 2019.

### **ACTION STEP STATUS**

**3A. Prioritize relative placement by designing a Relative Placement workgroup. The workgroup will meet at least quarterly to develop an implementation plan for the SIP strategy with the initial task to develop a messaging strategy that expands the values of first placement with family.**

- **Timeline: January 2019-December 2019- Ongoing**
  - The first Relative Placement Workgroup meeting occurred on January 29, 2019. Meetings continue to occur one (1) time per month. Participants include Pre-Dispo Manager, Post-Dispo Manager, RFA Supervisor, Post-Dispo Supervisor, ER Supervisor, Program Coordinator, Staff Development and Training Supervisor, One (1) ER Line Staff, Two (2) DI Line Staff, and a SW II in RFA.
  - Development of a messaging strategy was not the focus of the initial meetings within the workgroup, however, was placed back onto the agenda for discussion at the meeting scheduled for November 27, 2019. The workgroup will begin working on developing a messaging strategy that expands the values of first placement with family.

**3B. The Relative Placement workgroup will update policies and procedures to provide structure and guidance for staff to increase relative placements. Child Welfare Services will utilize tools, technology, and training to support this process.**

- Timeline: June 2019 - January 2021
  - The Relative Placement workgroup has updated the Home and Grounds for emergency placements. The team received feedback from the RFA units CDSS site visit and reviewed the emergency placement WIC requirements, and determined we were being overly restrictive. The workgroup has created less restrictive requirements within the homes and grounds and placement packet, and continue to review how to better these procedures.
  - The Relative Placement workgroup began teaming with the QPI Placement Practices workgroup to develop an easily navigable booklet that includes all documents to go over with resource families upon placement of children in their home. This includes forms that need to be provided to and signed by the resource family home. This booklet will ensure all families are receiving the same information regarding the children placed in their home no matter what agency they are licensed through.
  - The Relative Placement Workgroup began to develop a tool for social workers to share information with prospective emergency placement providers regarding the RFA process, funding, and other necessary information needed prior to placement.

**3C. Increase family search and engagement activities at initial placement and for any child or youth lacking permanency. Update/expand internal policies and procedures to ensure that family finding and relative diligent search efforts are occurring across the agency prior to any non-kin placement happening and throughout the life of a case by creating monitoring tools for supervisors and managers.**

- Timeline: January 2019- January 2022
  - Development of procedures for the pending Social Worker II to complete initial family finding on all children coming into care. This family finding will be in conjunction with our existing utilization of Family Finding Software, and will increase the number of relatives identified in the CWS/CMS system to allow for a greater number of relatives notified during the initial 30-day notification letter.
  - Through October 11, 2019 the RFA unit continued to “loan” a Social Worker II staff member to assist with initial placement with relatives. The Social Worker II piloted initial family finding on multiple cases to assist with identifying gaps and assisted in the emergency placement process.
  - Began teaming with Seneca to identify trainings for the upcoming Social Worker II’s to attend for Family Finding information.

**3D. Provide relative support liaisons to navigate the transition from the emergency placement process to the Resource Family Approval Unit following the emergency placement assessment.**

- Timeline: January 2020- August 2022
  - The Board of Supervisors granted approval of two (2) new Social Worker II positions to support RFA. One of these SW II’s will be assigned to the front end to assist in the identification of relatives, education on the emergency placement and RFA process, and with the approval of emergency placement. As of December 2, 2019 the positions have been filled.

**3E. Evaluate county outcome performance regarding placement with relatives and consider impact on placement stability.**

- Timeline: January 2018-January 2023
  - Outcome monitoring continues quarterly with regards to placement with relatives/NREFMs initially, overall, and in consideration of its impact on placement stability.
  - The error identified in the last progress report regarding RFA families who are relatives not being captured as relatives has been corrected in CWS/CMS and accompanying data measures, allowing the Department to more accurately track youth placed in relative placements. It should be noted that this change in tracking placement type has made it difficult to evaluate Improvement in this measure.

**METHOD OF EVALUATION AND/OR MONITORING**

Solano County has continued to monitor state measure 4B, least restrictive placement, specifically children whose first placement upon entering care was with a relative/NREFM.

- Based on the CWS Outcomes System Summary for Solano County (dynamic comparison report) in Quarter 1 of 2018, our data indicated 9.9% (14/142) of children who entered care were immediately placed into the home of a relative/NREFM. In Quarter 1 of 2019 this number increased to 16.6% (36/217). This is a 68.3% increase in first entries from the following year. It should be noted that the data from Quarter 1 2018 may be inaccurate due to the data entry errors in the Child Welfare System/Case Management System (CWS/CMS), which labeled many relative/NREFM homes as "RFA" without indicating a relationship to the children in the home.
- Additionally, the same time periods show point in time placement (using the California Child Welfare Indicators Project (CCWIP) dynamic reporting to capture updated data) slightly decreasing from 28.4% at the end of Quarter 1 2018 to 27.7% at the end of Quarter 1 2019. While initial placements with relative/NREFMs appeared to have increased over this time period, the decrease in the point in time data show a possibility of children being removed from their initial placements, and not placed into another relative/NREFM home.
- While more children experienced relative/NREFM placements as their initial placement setting in Quarter 1 2019, 64.5% of children's first entries were in Foster Family Agency Homes, which reflects a continued reliance on our emergency placement contract with Aldea Foster Family Agency.

Based on the data above, Solano County will continue the development of a messaging statement Department wide to ensure all sections understand the importance of ongoing identification of, and placement with relative/NREFMs. While initial placements have increased, and our placement stability has begun to improve, we must also increase our ongoing efforts in order to best serve our children and families. Additionally, with the new procedures being implemented for the emergency placement process, we hope to see an increase in initial placements being with relatives/NREFMs, rather than utilizing our Aldea

contract and placing children into FFA homes while working to complete emergency approval with relatives/NREFMS.

**ADDITIONAL STRATEGIES (WHEN APPLICABLE)** Not applicable

**PROGRAM REDUCTION** Not applicable

**CWS STRATEGY 4:**

**Develop and maintain a comprehensive staff development and training model including a fully operational online learning management system (OLMS) that links the agency's policies and practice, informed by Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI).**

#### **ANALYSIS**

Solano County experienced a change in its staffing of both the Staff Development and Training (SD&T) and Continuous Quality Improvement units in 2018. Many efforts under this SIP strategy have been impacted due to this. Our current SD&T supervisor was transitioned into this position in June 2019, and our current CQI supervisor was promoted to this position in October 2019.

We continue to exercise earlier implemented efforts to provide ongoing staff development and training. Efforts to revamp our current online policy guide are in progress. While we continue to be committed to ongoing training for our Social Services Supervisors, due to supervisor turnover, Social Services Supervisors who have been trained in Art of Coaching has dropped from 70% to 37%, and those trained on Safety Organized Practice has dropped slightly from 80% to 75%. At this time, our Staff Development and Training unit are working with the Bay Area Academy to ensure all of supervisors receive both trainings as they are in alignment with our training model.

Solano County continues to partner with its community partners, the Bay Area Academy, and Chabot-Las Positas to offer an expanded array of child welfare specific trainings based on an annual training plan informed by an analysis of training needs and practice challenges. Solano County continues to host regular CWS Boutiques and release CWS "Did You Know" documents to ensure that staff are kept abreast of current legal mandates, new or reinforced practices and available resources in the community.

In the previous reporting year, the OLMS Workgroup successfully developed the infrastructure for our new online platform, and identified early adopters of the PowerDMS platform and trained workgroup members to upload documents, track the work flow of a document, send alerts, and respond to received alerts. In this reporting year, documents have begun to be uploaded into OLMS, which has allowed for discussion regarding what is working well, and what may need to be changed within the system. In order for those involved in the use of the platform to further communicate, an OLMS Steering Committee has been identified, and will meet monthly beginning in November 2019.

In December 2018, Solano County began a pilot of using our Resource Family Approval program to test the new platform. As the platform has proven to be successful, we have now begun to expand the upload of policies and forms to the Court and Staff Development and Training units.



Additionally, our Program Coordinator has received training on how to utilize the platform, and has begun placing existing policies into the new template and uploading them to the platform. The OLMS workgroup successfully analyzed our current online policy guide and categorized existing policies in alignment with the new OLMS infrastructure, removed duplication and repaired broken web-based links. This has allowed for easier access to existing policies, which has assisted in the workgroup identifying levels of need for policy development. In order to ensure policies are being updated and created, a Supervisor Currently, implementation of OLMS remains on track to completion as projected.

In order to ensure we continue to focus our efforts in the OLMS, a Steering Committee was formed and began meeting in November 2019 to oversee the writing, uploading, approving, and publishing of policies into OLMS and manage the policy updates and OLMS functionality. The committee plans to meet once per month.

#### **ACTION STEP STATUS**

**4A. Build a Staff Development team to work in partnership with managers and workgroup members to develop the online learning management system structure and content.**

4A.1 Develop an Online Learning Management System (OLMS) workgroup (also interchangeably referred to as the OLMS Steering Committee) comprised of representation from all classifications no later than January 2018, that will initially meet a minimum of two times per month until the infrastructure of the system is created (estimated to be complete June 2018). After which will meet monthly throughout the reporting period for this SIP.

- Time Frame: January 2018 – January 2023 Ongoing
  - Staff continue to meet monthly, and on an as needed basis to discuss the functionality of OLMS, and how to best utilize the system.
  - All pages have been built in OLMS and policies have begun to be uploaded by the originators group.
  - Workflows were created within OLMS to allow for policies to be uploaded directly into OLMS for review. Each workflow includes individuals within the agency who need to review and approve the policy prior to it going live for staff to view. The workflows allow for tracking of the documents, and easy navigation for reviewers.
  - Our IT Analyst will be completing a training for all staff included in workflows in January 2020 to ensure staff understand the process of reviewing policies.
  - OLMS Steering Committee was developed and began meeting monthly beginning in November 2019.

4A.2 Create and update policies and forms (informed by ongoing CQI efforts) that are readily available and include tracking, approval, assessment, and feedback process.

- Time Frame: January 2018 – January 2023 – Ongoing
  - Extensive work was done on creating a spreadsheet to include all policies currently in the Online Practice Guide (OPG). This spreadsheet tracks policies that are in need of updating with hyperlinks on where to locate both the existing policy and any supporting documents or legislation.
  - A Policy Writing Workgroup began in August 2019. Participants in this workgroup include all Social Services Supervisors. The supervisors are working in three teams to complete assigned policies.

- A Social Services Program Coordinator was hired in July 2019, who helps to support the organization of the Policy Writing Workgroup, to include facilitation of the breakout groups, and updating the policies spreadsheet. The Program Coordinator is also tasked with writing policy and transferring policies from the OPG onto the policy templates and placing these into OLMS.
- Four (4) policy topics were identified as areas in which to prioritize, to include Child and Family Teams (CFTs), Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) implementation, Level of Care (LOC), and Sexual Health and Wellness. The LOC policy was written and is under final review. A workgroup focused on CANS/CFT implementation began in November 2019.

4A.3 Review data and case review practice points to make recommendations for the creation of new policies, modification of policies, and training needs.

- Time Frame: January 2020 – January 2023
  - The CQI supervisor vacancy was filled in October 2019. Due to the vacancy recently being filled, the timeline has been moved to begin in January 2020.

**4B. Develop a Staff Development & Training team to provide comprehensive new hire induction training.**

4B.1 Expand and strengthen new hire training that introduces, clarifies, and reinforces the agency’s practice model with a formal curriculum using a variety of training modalities including:

1. Field based practice (by direct supervisors)
  2. Coaching (direct supervisors trained through “Art of Coaching” curriculum)
  3. Simulated exercises
  4. Web based instruction
- Time Frame: July 2019 – December 2021
    - The supervisor vacancy in Staff Development and Training was filled in June 2019.
    - The Staff Development and Training supervisor is currently utilizing the previously developed training curriculum which is in alignment with our Annual Training Plan. The training curriculum is constantly being assessed and revised as needed based on staff needs.
    - Supervisors who have been trained in the Art of Coaching, are conducting field based training with their staff. In Emergency Response, supervisors are present in the field with their staff on their 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> referrals.

4B.2 Use the OLMS to support new hire training needs by ensuring that OLMS is equipped with online instruction to enhance new hire support, training videos, quizzes, and an evaluative process to include surveys.

- Time Frame: July 2019 – December 2020
  - Began the process of preparing to include this information on the platform by moving from paper based instruction material to computer based. New hires can obtain all written training materials on a shared drive until OLMS goes live in January 2020.

**4C. Develop a Staff Development & Training team to provide development opportunities and ongoing training for staff members.**

4C.1 Build staff capacity by providing individual coaching, based on the coaching model developed by Solano County and skill development opportunities to increase their knowledge base and capacity to perform tasks associated with their positions.

- Time Frame: July 2019 – January 2023
  - A social worker III position in Staff Development and Training was approved to support providing individual coaching to staff. This position is currently being recruited for.
  - Began discussions regarding developing support groups for staff to be used to provide more individual based coaching.

4C.2 Establish an annual staff development and training plan, assessing current training curriculum for Core Practice Model values and principles including an ongoing review and assessment of the training process.

- Time Frame: July 2019 – January 2023
  - An annual staff development and training plan has been established incorporating values and principles from Core Practice Model. The training plan includes Safety Organized Practice training for all line staff and the supervisors.
  - The management and supervisor team attended a two (2) hour training on November 5, 2019 to discuss the concept of Core Practice Model. Upcoming activities designed to reinforce the concept in our everyday practice were discussed.

4C.3 Provide an OLMS to support communication regarding available ongoing training including:

1. Internal master training calendars
  2. “Did You Knows”
  3. Case management services (CMS) bulletin announcements
  4. Boutique videos
- Time Frame: July 2019 – January 2023
    - The OLMS platform has been built and will go live in January 2020.
    - Internal master training calendars are created on an ongoing basis, and are currently posted on a bulletin board and are accessible via a shared drive titled Staff Development & Training. The master training calendars will be available via the OLMS platform once live in January 2020.
    - “Did You Knows” are currently accessible via a shared drive titled Staff Development & Training, and will be uploaded into OLMS as they are created.

**METHOD OF EVALUATION AND/OR MONITORING**

A key function of the OLMS is that we will have the ability to track the development, approval, and review of policies. Solano County will also have the ability to embed quizzes attached to recently released policies that must be completed as part of the reviewing process. A report can be generated to determine the number of staff who have successfully reviewed each uploaded document in which a request of acknowledgement was made. Solano County will conduct biannual reviews of staff utilization of the OLMS. It is expected that 90% of documents embedded

in the OLMS will be registered as reviewed. In an effort to measure the expanded training program, Solano County will hold annual focus groups of newly hired staff (employed 6 months or less). Embedded in the OLMS is the capacity to generate user satisfaction surveys, this feature will be used to receive ongoing feedback from staff as they navigate the system. All data will be assessed by the SD&T unit on an annual basis to ensure that desired outcomes are achieved, including monitoring progress in transforming to a learning organization.

As OLMS is not yet live, we have not yet begun to implement the abovementioned evaluation and/or monitoring of the system.

**ADDITIONAL STRATEGIES (WHEN APPLICABLE)** Not applicable

**PROGRAM REDUCTION** Not applicable

### **Probation CURRENT PERFORMANCE TOWARDS SIP IMPROVEMENT GOALS**

The areas of focus for the Solano County Probation Department (Department) can be categorized into two concentrated efforts as follows: Permanency in 12 months for youth in foster care 12-23 months, and collaboration with other agencies, such as child welfare, other Departments, and Independent Living Skills Program (ILSP) providers to leverage resources, increase permanency and address out of county placement challenges. For this reporting period, the Department has not met its goal of Permanency in 12 months for youth in foster care 12-23 months, as indicated by the Outcomes System Summary Quarter 1, 2019, in which the Department achieved 0%. The Department continues to work on improving Family Finding throughout the life of the case to improve permanency outcomes by attending training, convening a focus group, and working toward training all staff on a tool to improve family finding.

The Department remains committed to ongoing efforts to achieve permanency. In Quarter 1, 2019, the Department had three youth who did not achieve permanency. Obtaining permanency for youth in foster care remains challenging for several reasons. Youth absconding from placement remains a major factor in the Department's inability to achieve permanency. Youth who abscond are not always readily located and when they are located, it takes longer to obtain placement for them, some youth commit new crimes after having absconded, and some have a myriad of treatment needs that continue to present after absconding. In addition, youth in placement are older, as the average age of youth in placement is 16. Many youth who are eligible, elect to participate in Extended Foster Care under Non-Minor Dependency jurisdiction. While Extended Foster Care presents an opportunity for continued support of youth, it does not achieve the goal of permanency. In addition, when a youth moves between systems, from dependency to delinquency, time in placement is prolonged and can present barriers to achieving permanency.

The Department continues to collaborate with Child Welfare Services (CWS) and ILSP providers to improve and increase the use of Independent Living Services. During this reporting period, The Department has engaged in bi-monthly meetings with the ILSP provider in Solano County, First Place for Youth. During these bi-monthly meetings probation officers and the Department's Social Worker collaborate with First Place for Youth staff to assist youth who are eligible to receive services. The Department was able to successfully obtain Transitional Housing Program Plus housing for a parenting youth who was aging out of extended foster care. The relationship

fostered between First Place for Youth and the Department is important in obtaining these services and will provide ongoing support and stability for not only one youth, but for a young family.

#### **PRIORITY OUTCOME MEASURE OR SYSTEMATIC FACTORS DATA ANALYSIS:**

##### **1. P2: Permanency in 12 months for children in Foster Care 12-23 months:**

Probation Outcome: The National Standard for this measure is 43.6%. Currently, Quarter 1, 2019, shows Solano County at 0%. The Department has been unable to meet national standards due to multiple factors. One factor is the age of youth in placement. Due to the older age of youth, many youth elect to participate in Extended Foster Care under Non-Minor Dependency jurisdiction rather than return to the home of their parent. For many youth, this choice represents making connections in the community where they received care such as employment and education. While Extended Foster Care provides additional supports, it does not meet the goal of permanency. In addition, while the Department has been working to step down youth from congregate care to Resource Family Approved homes, adoption or legal guardianship is not typically pursued by the Resource Family, which also does not provide for permanency. Additional factors include youth absconding from treatment and remaining in warrant status and the need to address complex treatment needs including mental health, substance abuse, and sex offender treatment, prolong time in placement, and reduce the number of youth achieving permanency. Another factor is the low number of youth in placement. A small number of youth not achieving permanency has a greater effect on statistical outcome percentages.

##### **2. Systemic Factor: Agency Collaboration (CWS, Other Probation Departments, ILSP Providers)**

The Department has a targeted goal of increasing youth participation in ILSP services by 10% each year for a total of a 50% overall increase by year five. Previously the Department had contact with ILSP providers in Shasta and Alameda County. The Department has contacted additional providers in Tulare and Madera County, as placements are often made in these counties. ILSP services are part of programming for group homes or Short Term Residential Treatment Programs (STRTP) where youth have been placed. Therefore, youth have access and are provided ILSP services as part of programming while they are placed in group homes, and referrals for Independent Living services are made for all eligible youth. Youth returning to Solano County post placement are connected to First Place for Youth for ILSP services in Solano County. According to First Place for Youth, 10 probation foster youth were served during their fiscal year 2018/2019 and three youth have been served in the present fiscal year (2019/2020).

The Department has worked to improve collaboration with the local ILSP provider in Solano County, First Place for Youth, by hosting bi-monthly collaborative meetings. In these meetings, service referrals are discussed, ILP curriculum is reviewed, and needs of youth are addressed. Staff collaboration has been important in increasing the number of eligible youth who are receiving services.

The Department collaborates with other Departments, as well as other stakeholders, through the

attendance at the Probation Advisory Committee meetings. The Social Worker assigned to the Department collaborates regularly with CWS to attend training, design RFA training curriculum, and attend Quality Parenting Initiative collaborative meetings.

## **Probation STATUS OF STRATEGIES**

**Probation Strategy 1: Improve and increase family finding efforts and permanency planning by engaging extended families throughout the life of a case.**

### **ANALYSIS:**

When a youth enters the probation system, court staff establish a family chart identifying family members. The Department is working to expand this practice to all officers for family finding efforts to occur at any time, throughout the life a case. A cross section of staff attended training regarding Family Finding and Engagement. A focus group has been convened regarding the selection of an additional tool and strategies to identify non-related supportive adults. The Department has been successful in identifying additional family members to participate in Child Family Team (CFT) meetings, resulting in one family member agreeing to become a Resource Family. Through collaborative CFT meetings, increased connections to supportive adults are made which assists youth in being successful in placement and provides alternatives to congregate care when appropriate. The Department has also utilized Lexus/Nexus to identify other family members when other means of identification have not been successful.

### **Action Step Status:**

**1A. Develop a focus group utilizing a cross section of staff to assist in increasing family finding efforts. The focus group will work to plan and implement new strategies to engage parents and caregivers.**

A focus group consisting of a cross section of department staff has been identified, after staff including intake officers, court officers, supervision officers, and placement staff attended Family Finding and Engagement Training. A tool was introduced at this training and the focus group will assess the implementation of this tool juvenile division wide, as well as training needs of the juvenile division related to family finding efforts. In addition, a new position in the placement unit has been identified to work with pre-placement youth and families. Family finding and engagement with families and other supportive adults while the youth is at imminent risk of removal may reduce the number of youth who are removed from the home. It is anticipated that this new position will be filled during the next reporting period.

**1B. Partner with CWS and other Probation Departments that have family finding efforts in place to assist in developing strategies to identify relatives and extended family members.**

The Department attended a Family Finding and Engagement training, which was also attended by other departments throughout the state. Tools and strategies for family finding were identified. One tool identified during this training was "The Tree of Life." This tool allows youth to look at all areas of their life in a strength-based way to identify family and non-family members who may have played important roles in their lives. Identifying these people may result in fostering supportive relationships. Other strategies included use of internet-based searches, such as LexisNexis and social media site searches. The training also provided an opportunity to

collaborate with other departments to learn more about their practices regarding family finding. In addition, the Department continues to partner and collaborate with Child Welfare and other departments by attending the Continuum of Care Reform conference on a yearly basis. Breakout work sessions regarding best practices in family finding and permanency are part of this conference and offer the opportunity to learn new techniques and tools to assist in family finding efforts. The Department also attends bi-monthly Probation Advisory Committee meetings and the Northern California Placement Committee meetings, which both offer opportunities to collaborate with other Child Welfare departments, probation departments, and other stakeholders regarding youth in care. The Department also makes a practice of partnering with the eligibility department of Health and Social Services as part of family finding efforts.

The Department's Social Worker and probation officers collaborate in attending and facilitating CFT meetings. During one of these meetings, a family member who was participating in the meeting agreed to become a Resource Family. The Department will continue to use the CFT process to assist in identifying family members to participate for the wellbeing of the youth.

**1C. Increase contact with parents (minimum of monthly) and extended family members to increase permanency efforts for youth in placement throughout the placement process.**

Increasing contact with parents and extended family members remains a challenge. Youth in foster care on Probation are typically older youth who may have victimized family or extended family members. They also may have had a history of failed interventions through both Probation and Child Welfare that creates challenges and barriers to engagement with parents and family members. The Department continues to make efforts to reach out to parents through text, phone, mail, and e-mail to reach parents who are non-responsive.

**1D. Provide training on the tool and develop procedures on how to use the tool. The tool will be implemented following the training and review of the procedures.**

The Department has convened a focus group. Delay on providing training was due to the timeframe of attendance at the Family Finding and Engagement Training. As soon as training was made available and a cross section of staff was able to attend that training, the focus group convened. The group is working to decide if the "The Tree of Life Tool" will be utilized, as well as looking at other possibilities to take to the division for training.

**METHOD OF EVALUATION AND/OR MONITORING**

The Department keeps monthly statistics regarding the number of Resource Family Homes that are approved and those pending approval. As noted, Resource Family Approval is an important piece of family finding. Although Resource Family Approval does not address permanency, it can be an important step-down in care, and part of developing life-long connections for foster youth. The addition of a new position to focus on CRF meetings prior to placement will also build rapport and engagement, which may reduce the number of youth who enter care. Supervisors continue to monitor for completion of the family chart. Through these efforts, the Department hopes to increase the number of youth achieving permanency within 12 months.

**ADDITIONAL STRATEGIES (WHEN APPLICABLE) Not Applicable**

**PROGRAM REDUCTION Not Applicable**

**Probation Strategy 2: Improve and increase use of ILSP services through collaboration with CWS and ILSP providers.**

**ANALYSIS:**

The Department has worked to improve collaboration with the ILSP provider within Solano County. Bi-monthly meetings with First Place for Youth staff and the Department's staff continued throughout this reporting period. This collaboration has greatly improved communication and participation in services for youth in the county. Probation officers continue to discuss ILSP services and assess ongoing needs throughout monthly contacts. Contact has been made with two additional providers outside of Solano County in counties where youth are frequently placed, Madera and Tulare. A contact person has been identified for ongoing contact and collaboration to address the needs of youth in placement outside of Solano County. The Department will continue to build upon these contacts to include additional out of county providers.

**Action Step Status:**

**2A. Meet with Solano County Probation Supervision and Placement staff to identify service needs for transitional age youth in placement and assess the availability of ILSP resources within the communities locally and where probation youth are placed.**

The Department's placement staff continue to discuss ILSP services with youth during monthly contacts. Placement staff meet regularly with First Place for Youth and discuss areas of need and resources available in the community. A monthly calendar of events is shared, and youth are encouraged to attend events that meet both their needs and interests. One area of need that has been identified in these meetings is transitional housing in Solano County. The capacity of the provider, First Place for Youth, is not able to meet the need for housing. The high cost of housing in the bay area is also identified as a barrier for youth in obtaining affordable housing.

Further training for supervision officers is planned for early 2020. All supervision officers have been invited to attend an open house by First Place for Youth in November 2019. Further training will also be provided to staff on how to identify non-placement youth who are eligible for ILSP services to insure all eligible youth have the opportunity to participate in services.

**2B. Meet with ILSP providers in the communities where probation youth are placed and CWS to communicate the findings discovered to ensure service needs are met.**

Probation officers continue to discuss case plan goals and services with youth during monthly visits. The STRTP's where youth are placed have ILSP services that are offered to youth in those communities. Additional contact with providers has been made with Madera County and Tulare County, as these are counties in which placement is more frequent due to the needs of youth and the placements available in those counties. A calendar of events has been received and a contact person identified in those counties. The Department will continue to work to expand the number of counties where direct contact is facilitated between the Department and the ILSP provider.



**2C: Assist ILSP provider(s) in designing a curriculum to outline the resources available to youth.**

An overview of the curriculum provided by First Place for Youth has been provided and reviewed. A robust curriculum including the topics self-care, healthy living, goal setting, communication, etiquette, social media, and sex education, is currently being provided. Classes offered in Tulare County include suicide prevention, sex education, career planning, cooking, and first aid and CPR.

The Department is designing an informational outline of the resources available to youth in Solano County, to include services through First Place for Youth and services that will be important for youth leaving extended foster care. Information on these resources will be provided to youth upon entering and exiting foster care.

**2D: Develop a process to review quarterly data regarding referrals to ILSP providers and address any issues which may arise regarding utilization of services.**

The ILSP provider in Solano County is providing quarterly data to regarding the number of youth referred for services. The ILSP provider indicated that 10 youth referred to their program in 2019 were Probation youth. In addition, a process has been put in place for the case manager to notify Department staff when a referral is received. Through this process, the Department is able to track if youth referrals are not being received or processed. The Department is in the process of expanding this practice to other counties to ensure that referrals are being received by the providers.

**2E. Educate youth regarding local resources in the community where they reside to foster a relationship with ILSP providers during placement and upon their return to the community.**

Probation officers continue to educate youth regarding local resources during monthly contacts. During this reporting period, the probation officers and Social Worker have assisted in transporting youth to the local provider to provide an opportunity for the youth to meet staff and get connected to services. As noted, the monthly calendar of events at ILSP is now provided to staff which helps facilitate discussions, engage youth, and motivate participation.

**2F. Continue to refer identified youth and families to services, monitor performance, and track what services are provided.**

The Department has a practice of referring all eligible foster youth to ILP services. This practice has continued. During required monthly visits, staff continues to discuss needs of youth and services available. Incentives to attend services are also offered to youth to help motivate participation. Monitoring of services out of county is achieved primarily through discussions with youth and staff in STRTPs to discuss services that are being facilitated by the STRTP, as well as any gaps in services that may exist. The Department is continuing to expand contact with out of county providers to obtain calendars and curriculum. This information is shared and reinforced in monthly meetings with youth in placement.

**METHOD OF EVALUATION AND/OR MONITORING**

The Department will continue meeting with the ILSP provider bi-monthly to ensure collaboration and continued contact. Quarterly statistics are obtained from the provider in Solano County. Case note entries will also be monitored to insure discussions continue with youth placed out of the county. A template for continued auditing of ILP participation has been created.

**ADDITIONAL STRATEGIES (WHEN APPLICABLE)** Not Applicable

**PROGRAM REDUCTION** Not Applicable

## **OBSTACLES AND BARRIERS TO FUTURE IMPLEMENTATION**

### **Child Welfare**

As described in the Solano County Self-Assessment, CWS continues to experience a high turnover in the Social Worker III classification. As of November 1, 2019, there were 12 vacancies out of 72 Social Worker IIIs or a 16% vacancy rate. All CWS units were impacted by these vacancies. Twenty-six Social Worker IIIs have started since the beginning of 2019. As of November 21, 2019, new workers (one year of employment and under) comprise 40% (24 of 60) of our current workforce and they require additional training and close supervision. The workers need time to become aware of the community resources and to develop networks with our service and care providers. Staff changes also result in families experiencing a change in the assigned social worker and additional time to engage families. These staffing concerns result in high caseload numbers and may have a direct impact on all outcomes and are to be considered in the analysis of performance on all outcomes. Additionally, new social workers tend to be more cautious as they develop their assessment and decision-making skills, thus impacting the recommendations we make to the Juvenile Court.

### **Probation**

Youth in placement through the Department present a risk to the community and have complex needs that need to be addressed. Mental health, past trauma, commercial sexual exploitation, sex offense, and substance abuse related issues can make placement difficult and require lengthier treatment stays. The shortage of appropriate STRTP placements for youth makes placement difficult. Youth absconding from treatment also creates a cycle of detention and placement searches that prevent permanency. The age of youth in placement also creates a barrier in parental engagement, as parents of older youth may be less willing to engage and actively pursue reunification in a timely manner.

ILP services are voluntary services in which the youth may chose not to participate. Engaging youth who may have multiple other needs being addressed concurrently through cognitive behavioral groups or in individual counseling can be challenging. Youth who return from placement may also believe that all their needs were met while in placement and they feel stigmatized by the label "foster youth" and are therefore reluctant to participate in services.

## **PROMISING PRACTICES/OTHER SUCCESSES**

## **Child Welfare**

### **Bringing Families Home (BFH) Program**

The Bringing Families Home (BFH) Program was established to reduce the number of families in the Child Welfare system experiencing or at risk of homelessness, to increase family reunification, and to prevent foster care placement. Solano County was one of twelve counties participating in BFH's two-year pilot that ended June 30, 2019. In coordination with Employment and Eligibility Housing Programs, we successfully housed or retained housing for 39 families over a two-year period. These families overcame multiple barriers, and with the hard work of county staff in both programs, and the BFH resources, Solano County became one of only three counties to meet housing goals at the end of year one of the two-year pilot program. Solano County submitted our application for continued Bringing Families Home funding on October 31, 2019 and are currently utilizing the planning allocation to continue the program as we await approval from CDSS to secure funding through 2022.

### **Allocation of New Positions**

The Board of Supervisors approved for four new Social Worker positions to be added in Child Welfare Services, two within the Social Worker II classification and two within the Social Worker III classification. The allocated Social Worker II positions will have an assignment in the RFA unit, and will assist with family finding and emergency placement in both the front and back end. The Social Worker IIIs will be Child and Family Team Facilitators, and will be tasked with scheduling, facilitating, and following up on action steps for CFT meetings. One CFT Facilitator has been chosen through a Voluntary Change of Assignment, and will begin in the new position on January 7, 2020.

Solano County Child Welfare Services is excited about the allocation of these new specialized positions, as they will assist in better identification of, and engagement with, children's families and natural supports.

### **Probation**

The Department is working to increase the number of youth and families receiving wraparound services. The Department's goal is to expand this service to youth who are returning from placement as a step-down from placement, as well as offer it to more family's pre-placement to reduce the number of youth who enter care. The Department has successfully utilized wraparound services as a step down from care in one case during this reporting period. This youth and family have greatly benefitted from the intensive service to successfully reunify and achieve permanency. In addition to wraparound, the Department also successfully utilized Transitional Aged Youth (TAY) services through collaboration with Seneca during a Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) Multi-Disciplinary Team meeting. In addition to the expansion of Wraparound, a CFT position has been added to the placement unit. This position will be filled in 2020, with a goal of providing pre-placement services to youth at imminent risk of removal. The focus of this caseload will be increasing family engagement at the pre-placement stage. The Department is also in the process of contracting with a parent partner to assist families at risk of removal.

The Department has collaborated with California Department of Social Services in technical

assistance phone calls regarding difficult to place youth and worked to remove obstacles to placement in RFA homes by purchasing beds, linens, and other items. This practice reduces the time spent in detention for youth awaiting placement. The Department has also actively worked to remove barriers for family engagement while a youth is in placement by providing gas cards to parents attending visits and paying for overnight accommodations for parents attending CFT meeting and visiting their children. These practices help achieve the goal of permanency in 12 months by reducing the time in detention pre-placement and by fostering connections with parents to facilitate reunification.

The availability of Resource Family homes has increased in Solano County over the last year. Homes that were initially identified for a specific family member have remained willing to provide services to non-family members. During this reporting period, the Department was able to place two youth in non-matched homes due to the positive experience approved Resource Families have had in working with youth on probation. In one instance, a homeless youth was able to be placed in an RFA home without ever experiencing detention through the collaboration of CWS and due to the availability of a probation approved home. Over the next year, The Department expects to be able to expand this collaboration and sharing of homes and resources with Child Welfare in Solano County.

## **OUTCOME MEASURES NOT MEETING STATE/NATIONAL STANDARDS**

### **Child Welfare**

Solano County Child Welfare Services is currently underperforming in three performance standards aside from the performance standards being addressed in the SIP. The data below is from the CWS/CMS Data Extract Quarter 1, 2019.

- 1. Measure P-4 Re-Entry to foster care in 12 months. Of all children who enter foster care in a 12-month period who discharged with 12 months to reunification, living with a relative, or guardianship, what percent re-enter foster care within 12 months of their discharge?**
  - National Standard: <8.3
  - Current Performance (Quarter 1, 2019): 17.4

This measure looked at children who entered foster care between 04/01/2016 and 03/31/2017 and were discharged to reunification or guardianship within 12 months. P4 is linked closely with P1. Child Welfare staff worry that a return too quickly might unfortunately lead to re-entry as the problems that led to the original removal might not have been adequately addressed.

A review of SafeMeasures for this period revealed that 11 children re-entered foster care. All 11 children's permanency reason was Reunification. Of the 11 children, there were two sibling sets (one with 2 children, and one with 3 children) totaling 5 children. The average length of time before re-entry was 192 days, just over 6 months. Of the children who re-entered, the average length of time to permanency was 6.5 months. As we dug into this data, it does not appear there is a pattern as to the reasons for return and or re-removal amongst these four cases (8 children) who experienced this. One of the youth in this data

set was out of our county's control due to the transfer of the case to another county. A safety plan was documented for the case in which jurisdiction was terminated, and there was no reason to believe the mother could not follow through with the safety plan. In the additional two cases, Family Maintenance Services were offered to continue to work with the family on the concerns that brought the youth into care, and it does not appear as though the youth were prematurely returned to their parent's care, nor that the cases closed prematurely.

A review of P4 over the last 5 periods (2011-2017), shows variability in the measure (see table below).

PERCENT	Interval					
	APR2011- MAR2012	APR2012- MAR2013	APR2013- MAR2014	APR2014- MAR2015	APR2015- MAR2016	APR2016- MAR2017
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Children with re-entries	8.1	15	11.5	6.9	4.5	17.4
Children with no re-entries	91.9	85	88.5	93.1	95.5	82.6

We will continue to monitor P4 to ensure that practices are not negatively impacting re-entry into foster care.

2. **Measure 2B Timely Response (10 Day Response).** Child abuse and neglect referrals that require, and then receive, an in-person investigation with the 10-day response time.
  - National Standard: 90%
  - Current Performance (Quarter 1, 2019): 77.1%

Solano County has historically met the State Standard for this measure, and as previously reported, we continue to struggle with timely data entry. A review of the current data as it exists in SafeMeasures shows an increase in compliance, from 77.1% reported in the static report, to 80% compliance as of November 13, 2019. The increase in compliance supports the hypothesis of data lag, which is further supported by the increase from 89.1% to 94.2% compliance in the previous reporting period (Q1, 2018).

We have seen an increase in the amount of children coming into care, with 211 children entering care from July 2017-June 2018, and 260 entering care from July 2018-June 2019. Due to this increase in numbers, our Emergency Response unit has filed an increase in petitions (from 17 in Q1 2018 to 37 in Q1 2019), which would allow less time for these social workers to enter in timely contact notes for their 10 day investigations. In addition to this, there have been instances of staff leaving the agency without completing notes for their investigations, which are then reassigned for investigation and due to the initial notes not being entered, will remain out of compliance although contact with children was made prior to the 10-day response time.

The Department is working to remedy the abovementioned worries through increased efforts

to retain staff in the Emergency Response unit as well as improve training and accountability related to timely data entry into CWS/CMS. We have increased our allocation of SWIII's from 18 to 20 in an effort to improve the workload. In addition to this, the Department is piloting the OneNote program, which will allow for staff to link notes they took on their phones while in the field to their computers for easier uploading into CWS/CMS.

**3. Measure 2F- Monthly Visits (Out of home).** This measure calculates the percentage of children in placement who are visited by the social workers. Each child in placement for an entire month must be visited at least once. This measure summarizes data by 12-month period.

- National Standard: 95%
- Current Performance: 94.9%

Solano County is minimally under the State Standard for this measure. A review of the current data as it exists in the California Child Welfare Indicators Project shows that this performance is likely a result in a lag in data entry rather than lack of timely contact with clients as information pulled from SafeMeasures for the same period shows compliance at 95.3%. Additional work on timely entry of contact notes will continue, including technology solutions such as dictation and additional mobile work options.

### Probation

Per data obtained from Quarter 1, 2019, there are three areas that the Department is not currently meeting the National and State Standards.

**1. Measure S1: Maltreatment in Foster Care.** Of all children in care during the 12-month period, what is the rate of victimization per day?

- State Standard: <8.50%
- Current Performance (Quarter 1, 2019): 15.03%

This is a measure for which the Department has historically been meeting or exceeding National Standards. A review of the data indicates that one youth experienced abuse in this quarter. This youth had a substantiated referral to Child Welfare while he was AWOL from care, and the referral was not regarding treatment received in care. This is a unique situation, as when a youth is AWOL from care, the Department continues to attempt contact, but the youth's whereabouts were unknown in this situation. The Department continues to work through Child and Family Team meetings to maintain stability in placement and prevent youth from going AWOL whenever possible.

**2. Measure P2: Permanency is 12 months (in care 12-23 months).** Of all the children in care of the first day of the 12-month period who had been in care between 12-23 months, what percent discharged to permanency within 12 months?

- State Standard: >43.6%
- Current Performance (Quarter 1, 2019): 0.0%

The Department had three youth in placement during this timeframe who did not reach permanency as noted by this measure. Youth for whom this standard was not met have AWOL behavior that prevents them from reaching goals in treatment and completing

treatment to return home. Youth leaving treatment and remaining on warrant status for extended timeframes continues to be one of the biggest barriers for successful outcomes for youth.

**3. Measure 2F: Monthly Visits (Out of home).** This measure calculates the percentage of children in placement who are visited by the probation officers. Each child in placement for an entire month must be visited at least once. This measure summarizes data by 12-month period.

- State Standard: >95%
- Current Performance (Quarter 1, 2019): 85.6%

The Department continues to work to achieve monthly visit requirements for youth in placement. While probation officers successfully make contact with all youth in care on a monthly, if not more frequent, basis, monthly visit standards require staff to continue to make contact with youth who have absconded. While the Department makes attempts to locate youth who have absconded, we are not always able to locate them. The Department staff maintains contact with parents or legal guardians of youth who have absconded from placement in attempts to locate youth or gain information regarding their whereabouts. The Department makes every attempt to locate the most appropriate placement for youth, in an attempt to make the first placement the right placement, but the non-secure nature of placement in communities sometimes results in youth leaving placement.

## CHILD WELFARE/PROBATION PLACEMENT INITIATIVES

### The California Children, Youth, and Families Integrated Core Practice Model

The California Integrated Core Practice Model (ICPM) for Children, Youth, and Families provides practical guidance and direction to support county child welfare, juvenile probation, behavioral health agencies, and their partners in delivery of timely, effective, and collaborative services to children, youth, and families. The model has been built on the agreements from the Katie A. v Bonta lawsuit and the Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) legislation. In 2013, Solano County Child Welfare Services and Mental Health established a Katie A. Implementation Team, which created a system for identifying all Class/Potential Subclass and Subclass children. The Katie A. process continues to be developed and refined.

The fundamental principles of CCR are:

- All children deserve to live with a committed, nurturing, and permanent family that prepares youth for a successful transition into adulthood.
- The experiences and viewpoints of children, youth, and families are important in assessment, placement, and service planning. A process known as the “child and family team,” which includes the child or youth and family, and their formal and informal support network, will be the foundation for ensuring these perspectives are incorporated throughout the duration of placement.
- Children should not have to change placements to get the services and supports they need. Research shows that being placed in foster care is a traumatic experience. For home-based placements to be successful, services, including substance use disorder and

mental health (also known as behavioral health) interventions, should be available in a home setting.

- Agencies serving children and youth, including child welfare, juvenile probation, mental health, education, and other community service providers, must collaborate effectively to engage and surround the child and family with needed services, resources, and supports, rather than requiring a child, youth, and caregivers to navigate multiple service providers.
- The goal for all children and youth in foster care is normalcy in development while establishing permanent, lifelong, familial relationships. Therefore, children should not remain in a group living environment for long periods of time.

Solano County officially introduced CPM to its workforce in January 2018. However, it began county implementation in 2017 when its Deputy Director, Aaron Crutison, participated in the state sponsored workgroups to develop the leadership behaviors based on the CPM elements. A result of his involvement, Mr. Crutison began reviewing CPM practice elements in his management meetings and encouraged supervisors to review them with their staff in preparation for full implementation. Furthermore, the values of CPM are in direct alignment with those of our agency, a reminder that was presented to our workforce at the close of 2017. In January 2018, the Staff Development & Training unit began to highlight a practice element or behavior monthly on both the County's intranet and a dedicated bulletin board. The element or behavior was highlighted in our staff meeting agendas, discussed in all work-related meetings, and emphasized in our day-to-day practice. Presently, the values and expectations of CPM is a discussion that guides our policy development, practice changes and collaboration with community partners, families and stakeholders.

#### **Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC)**

In 2015, Solano County initiated the formation of a Commercially and Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) Steering Committee. The committee is comprised of members from the following agencies: Child Welfare Services, Probation, Mental Health, Public Health, Juvenile Courts, Substance Abuse, Education, Attorneys, County Counsel, Placement Providers, Law Enforcement, Direct Service Providers, Advocates and Other Community Partners. The Steering Committee Members have been meeting quarterly and have established workgroups to address specific issues such as service and placement needs. Solano County has an approved CSEC Interagency MOU, which includes all key players and Departments. This committee has been providing the forum for countywide trainings to increase CSEC awareness, knowledge and community resources.

#### **Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI)**

The Quality Parenting Initiative, a strategy of the Youth Law Center, is an approach to strengthening foster care, refocusing on excellent parenting for all children in the child welfare system.

QPI is based on five core principles:

- Excellent parenting is the most important service we can provide to children and youth in care. Children need families, not beds;
- Child development and trauma research indicates that children need constant, consistent, effective parenting to grow and reach their full potential;



- Each community must define excellent parenting for itself;
- Policy and practice must be changed to align with that definition; and
- Participants in the system are in the best position to recommend and implement that change.

Solano County began our efforts by attending both national and state conferences to learn from existing QPI jurisdictions, forming a Child Welfare Services QPI lead team, forming Solano Fosters (a body of resource parents, FFAs, the FKCE, CWS staff, birth parents and community partners) to share resources, assess training needs and address emerging issues. Solano County held multiple listening sessions in February and March of 2019 in alignment with the process of becoming a QPI County under the direction of the Youth Law Center (YLC), originator of the initiative. The QPI listening sessions were facilitated by the YLC and included both internal and external stakeholder participation.

## CHILD WELFARE SERVICES

### Priority Outcome Measure or Systemic Factor:

1. **CFSR3: Permanency Performance Area 1 - Permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care.**

**Federal Definition:** Of all children who entered care in the 12-month period, what percent discharged to permanency within 12 months?

**National Standard:** 40.5%

**CSA Baseline Performance (Quarter 3, 2016):** 21.2%

**5-Year SIP Performance (Quarter 1, 2017):** 31.5%

**SIP Year 1 Performance (Quarter 1, 2018):** 32.6%

**Current Performance (Quarter 1, 2019):** 28.6% (34 of 119 children)

#### **Target Improvement Goal:**

The target improvement goal is to meet or exceed the national standard of 40.5%. If the national goal had been met, forty-eight children would have experienced permanency during this current reporting period. This is fourteen more children that would have experienced permanency. If our identified year 2 increase goal of 4% to 35.5% would have been met, a total of forty-two children, or eight additional children, would have experienced permanency.

#### **5-year plan:**

- o Year 1: Maintain 5-Year SIP performance at 31.5%
  - Year 1 performance was 32.6%; meeting and exceeded our goal for Year 1 of the SIP
- o Year 2: Increase by 4% to 35.5%
  - Current performance (Quarter 1, 2019) is 28.6% which is a decrease of 4% from the last SIP year and 6.9% less than our Year 2 goal
- o Year 3: Increase by 3% to 38.5%
- o Year 4: Increase by 4% to 40.5%
- o Year 5: Maintain performance at 40.5% (National Standard)

**Priority Outcome Measure or Systemic Factor:**

**2. CFSR3: Permanency Performance Area 5 - Placement Stability**

Federal Definition: Of all children who enter foster care in a 12-month period, what is the rate of placement moves per day of foster care?

**National Standard:** Less than or equal to 4.12 moves

**CSA Baseline Performance (Quarter 3, 2016):** 6.72 moves

**5-Year SIP Performance (Quarter 1, 2017):** 7.25 moves

**SIP Year 1 Performance (Quarter 1, 2018):** 7.39 moves

**Current Performance (Quarter 1, 2019):** 6.69 moves

**Target Improvement Goal:**

The target improvement goal is to meet or decrease below the national standard of 4.12 moves. If the national goal had been met this reporting period, children would have experienced eighty-six fewer placement moves. If the year two goal of 5.42 moves had been met this reporting period, children would have experienced forty-three fewer placement moves. The goal will be met incrementally over the five-year period, resulting in meeting the national standard of 4.12.

**5-year plan**

- Year 1: Decrease by .65 moves to 6.07
  - Performance was 7.39 moves, did not meet our goal
- Year 2: Decrease by .65 moves to 5.42
  - Performance is 6.69 moves, are not meeting our goal, however, decreased moves by .70 since Year 1
- Year 3: Decrease by .65 moves to 4.77
- Year 4: Decrease by .65 moves to 4.12
- Year 5: Maintain performance at 4.12 or less (National Standard)

## Priority Outcome Measure or Systemic Factor:

### 3. Systemic Factor - Staff Training

National Standard: N/A

**CSA Baseline Performance (Quarter 3, 2016):** CSA findings indicated a need for a fully functional online learning management system (OLMS) where policies and procedures are current and readily accessible. Given that this is a new system, there is no performance baseline. In year two of the SIP, Solano County will run a usage report of the new OLMS platform and administer a staff survey to determine a performance baseline.

#### Target Improvement Goal:

90% of policies posted into the new OLMS will be registered as reviewed by staff.

85% of staff will report positive experiences with use of the OLMS and its support of their daily practice.

#### 5-year plan:

- Year 1: Administer staff satisfaction survey for the current system (to obtain comparison between the current and new systems); Develop OLMS
  - Satisfaction surveys were not conducted in the first year; development began on OLMS.
- Year 2: Update and transfer all existing policies into OLMS, run usage report, and administer staff satisfaction survey to obtain OLMS baseline, adjust as needed.
  - Satisfaction surveys were conducted for the current system.
  - Policies began to be updated and transferred into OLMS, however, not all policies have been updated and transferred.
  - OLMS did not go live in the second year, therefore a usage report has not been run and staff satisfaction surveys have not been obtained.
- Year 3: Run usage report and administer staff satisfaction survey, adjust as needed.
- Year 4: Run usage report and administer staff satisfaction survey, adjust as needed.
- Year 5: Run usage report and administer staff satisfaction survey, adjust as needed.

## PROBATION

### Priority Outcome Measure or Systemic Factor:

#### 1. CFSR3: Performance Area 2 - Permanency in 12 months for children in Foster Care 12-23 months.

Federal Definition: Of all children in foster care on the first day of the 12-month period who had been in foster care (in that episode) between 12 and 23 months, what percent discharged from foster care to permanency within 12 months of the first day of the 12-month period?

**National Standard:** 43.6%

**CSA Baseline Performance (Quarter 3, 2016):** 0%

**5-Year SIP Performance (Quarter 1, 2017):** 0%

**SIP Year 1 Performance (Quarter 1, 2018):** 33.3%

**Current Performance (Quarter 1, 2019):** 0%

#### Target Improvement Goal:

The target improvement goal is to meet or exceed the national standard of 43.6%. If the national goal had been met, three youth would have experienced permanency in the baseline performance. The goal will be met incrementally over the five-year period, resulting in the national standard of 43.6%. The five-year plan will include increasing permanency for at least one youth in years one, three, and five, and maintaining the performance for years two and four. This plan is largely based on the low number of youth in care. As such, one or two youth can drastically affect the outcome percentages.

#### 5-year plan:

- Year 1: Increase to 14.6% (one youth)
  - The Department has met and exceeded its targeted goal for Year 1 as the current performance is 33.3%.
- Year 2: Maintain performance at 14.6%
  - The Department has not met the targeted goal for Year 2, however the average over year one and year two still meets the targeted goal for the first two years.
- Year 3: Increase by 14.6% to 29.2% (one youth)
- Year 4: Maintain performance at 29.2%
- Year 5: Increase by 14.6 to 43.8% to meet the national standard (one youth)

## Priority Outcome Measure or Systemic Factor:

### 2. Systemic Factor - Agency Collaboration (CWS, Other Probation Departments, ILSP Providers)

National Standard: N/A

#### Target Improvement Goal:

- 75% of the youth will be aware of the ILSP services that are available in the community where they reside following group home placement.
- 50% of the youth will utilize ILSP services in the community where they will reside following group home placement.

The Department has continued to reach out to county partners where youth are placed to collaborate regarding ILSP services. Two more counties have been added, and information regarding services and points of contact have been shared. The Department will continue to discuss services with youth in placement to ensure that the youth in placement outside of Solano County are aware of services that are available and they are able to access services while in placement.

In Solano County, the Department has continued to increase collaboration with the local provider of ILSP services, First Place for Youth. The Department has continued to attend bi-monthly meetings with First Place for Youth to ensure the needs of youth in Solano County are being met. Transitional housing needs, as well as curriculum offered to all eligible youth have been reviewed and continue to be reviewed in bi-monthly meetings. This collaboration has resulted in one youth being able to participate in transitional housing beyond his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. The Department continues to collaborate closely with First Place for Youth to increase the participation of youth in Solano County. The Department has met the Year 2 goal by increasing the number of out of county service providers.

#### 5-year plan:

- Year 1: Increase to 10%
- Year 2: Increase from 10% to 20%
- Year 3: Increase from 20% to 30%
- Year 4: Increase from 30% to 40%
- Year 5: Increase from 40% to 50%

## 2018-2023 SIP Strategies

<b>Strategy #1 (CWS):</b>  Improve permanency by increasing family engagement through an intensive parent/child visitation coaching model.	<input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT <input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP <input type="checkbox"/> PSSF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s):  <b>P1: Permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care</b>  <input type="checkbox"/> Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project
ACTION STEPS	TIMELINE	ASSIGNED TO
<b>1A. Restructure visitation model by developing and implementing an intensive Parent/Child Coaching model to strengthen the parent/child relationship and decrease the need for supervised visits.</b>		
<b>1A.1</b> Establish a Visitation Team to develop and select a Parent/Child Coaching (PCC) visitation model that will utilize parent/ child assessments and evaluation tools.	January 2018 – June 2018 <b>COMPLETED</b>	<del>Intensive Family Maintenance/ Family Reunification Services Manager</del> <b>SUPPORT SERVICES MANAGER</b>
<b>1A.2</b> Restructure the current visitation space to be more conducive to the PCC Model.	June 2018 - <del>December 2018</del> <b>APRIL 2019</b> <b>COMPLETED</b>	<del>Intensive Family Maintenance/ Family Reunification Services Manager</del> <b>SUPPORT SERVICES MANAGER</b>
<b>1A.3</b> Develop a visitation step down tool for use by social workers, parent child coaches and family.	July 2018 – December 2018 <b>COMPLETED</b>	<del>Intensive Family Maintenance/ Family Reunification Services Manager</del> <b>SUPPORT SERVICES MANAGER</b>
<b>1A.4</b> Train Visitation Coaching/Family Preservation Social Workers in the PCC Model and visitation step down tool. Then, expand training to include overview for all staff (Social Workers and Supervisors) in the PCC model and step down tool.	January 2019 – December 2019 <b>COMPLETED AND ONGOING</b>	<del>Intensive Family Maintenance/ Family Reunification Services Manager</del> <b>SUPPORT SERVICES MANAGER</b>

<p><b>1A.5</b> At least annually, monitor and evaluate the visitation model to include analyzing permanency data, satisfaction surveys, and parenting skill assessments. This will include evaluating the length of time families receive intensive PCC and their length of time to move toward unsupervised visits.</p>	<p>January 2020 - January 2023</p>	<p><del>Intensive Family Maintenance/ Family Reunification Services Manager</del> <b>SUPPORT SERVICES MANAGER</b></p>
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<b>Strategy #2 (CWS):</b>  Improve youth's placement stability through improved resource family recruitment, retention and support activities, including implementation of Quality Parenting initiative (QPI).	<input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT <input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP <input type="checkbox"/> PSSF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s):  <b>PS: Placement Stability</b>  <input type="checkbox"/> Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project
ACTION STEPS	TIMELINE	ASSIGNED TO
<b>2A. Enhance recruitment of Resource Family homes through implementation of Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI), improved resource family and community outreach, and partnerships with Foster Parent Associations and community partners.</b>		
<b>2A.1</b> Form QPI <del>Advisory Group</del> Steering Committee to include resource parents, the community, stakeholders, CWS staff and youth. This <del>advisory group</del> Steering Committee will meet at least quarterly to guide development of the roll-out and training plans and to provide continuous feedback and input.	July 2018- January 2023 <b>COMPLETED AND ONGOING</b>	<del>Supportive Transition Manager</del> Support Services Manager
<b>2A.2</b> The QPI <del>advisory group</del> Steering Committee will guide the internal implementation of QPI including training for leadership and staff.	January 2019- December 2019 <b>ONGOING</b>	<del>Supportive Transition Manager</del> Support Services Manager
<b>2A.3</b> The QPI <del>advisory group</del> Steering Committee will guide the external implementation of QPI and conduct outreach to resource families, FFAs, Foster Parent Associations, and community partners about QPI.	September 2019- March 2020	<del>Supportive Transition Manager</del> Support Services Manager
<b>2A.4</b> Partner with existing FFA's and Community Based Organizations (CBOs) for general recruitment utilizing strategies from QPI.	June 2019- January 2023	<del>Supportive Transition Manager</del> Support Services Manager

<p><b>2A.5</b> Develop a targeted annual recruitment plan utilizing strategies from QPI, for “high end” youth (CSEC, significant mental health needs, high trauma background) most likely to experience placement instability.</p>	<p>Annually beginning October 2019</p>	<p>Support Services Manager <del>Supportive Transition Manager</del></p>
<p><b>2B.</b> Improve retention and support of Resource Families through implementation of Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI), improved communication, use of direct supports, and partnerships with Foster Parent Associations.</p>		
<p><b>2B.1</b> Utilize current Foster Parent Recruitment Retention and Support (FPPRS) funding for concrete supports for Resource Families including items necessary for RFA approval, RFA training stipends, and summer respite programs. The QPI <del>Advisory group</del> Steering Committee will serve as the mechanism for recommendations for establishment of the annual FPPRS funding priorities.</p>	<p>January 2018- January 2023 <b>COMPLETED AND ONGOING</b></p>	<p>Support Services Manager <del>Supportive Transition Manager</del></p>
<p><b>2B.2</b> Facilitate a monthly forum hosted by CWS to partner with and support new and existing Resource Families (consistent with QPI principles).</p>	<p>June 2018- January 2023 <b>COMPLETED AND ONGOING</b></p>	<p>Support Services Manager <del>Supportive Transition Manager</del></p>
<p><b>2B.3</b> Provide high quality customer service to resource parents and partner with existing FFAs, Foster Kinship Care Education (FKCE) and others to acknowledge and appreciate resource families.</p>	<p>June 2019- January 2023</p>	<p>Support Services Manager <del>Supportive Transition Manager</del></p>

<b>Strategy #3 (CWS):</b>  Improve youth's placement stability through increasing placement with relatives and non-relative kin.	<input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT	Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s): <b>P5: Placement Stability</b>  <input type="checkbox"/> Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project
	<input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP	
	<input type="checkbox"/> PSSF	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	
ACTION STEPS	TIMELINE	ASSIGNED TO
<b>3A.</b> Prioritize relative placement by designing a Relative Placement workgroup. The workgroup will meet at least quarterly with the initial task to develop a messaging strategy that expands the values of first placement with family.	<del>January 2019- December 2019</del> <del>2018-2019</del> ONGOING	Pre-Disposition Manager
<b>3B.</b> The Relative Placement workgroup will develop policies and procedures to provide structure and guidance for staff to increase relative placements. Child Welfare Services will utilize tools, technology, and training to support this process.	<del>June 2018</del> 2019-January 2021	Pre-Disposition Manager
<b>3C.</b> Increase family search and engagement activities at initial placement and for any child or youth lacking permanency. Update/expand internal policies and procedures to ensure that family finding and relative diligent search efforts are occurring across the agency prior to any non-kin placement happening and throughout the life of a case by creating monitoring tools for supervisors and managers.	<del>June 2018</del> January 2019- January 2022	Pre-Disposition Manager
<b>3D.</b> Provide relative support liaisons to navigate the transition from the emergency placement process to the Resource Family Approval Unit following emergency placement assessment.	January 2020- August 2022	Pre-Disposition Manager
<b>3E.</b> Evaluate county outcome performance regarding placement with relatives and consider impact on placement stability.	January 2018-January 2023	Pre-Disposition Manager

<b>Strategy #4 (CWS):</b> Develop and maintain a comprehensive staff development and training model including a fully operational online learning management system (OLMS) that links the agency's policies and practice, informed by Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI).	<input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT	Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s):  <b>Systemic Factor- Staff Training</b>
	<input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP	
	<input type="checkbox"/> PSSF	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project
ACTION STEPS	TIMELINE	ASSIGNED TO
<b>4A. Build a Staff Development team to work in partnership with managers and workgroup members to develop the learning management system structure and content.</b>		
<b>4A.1</b> Develop an Online Learning Management System (OLMS) workgroup comprised of representation from all classifications no later than January 2018, that will initially meet a minimum of two times per month until the infrastructure of the system is created (estimated to be complete June 2018). After which will meet monthly throughout the reporting period for this SIP.	January 2018 - January 2023 ONGOING	CWS Administrator
<b>4A.2</b> Create and update policies and forms (Informed by ongoing CQI efforts) that are readily available and include tracking, approval, assessment, and feedback process.	January 2018 - January 2023 ONGOING	Staff Development & Training Supervisor
<b>4A.3</b> Review data and case review practice points to make recommendations for the creation of new policies, modification of policies, and training needs.	<del>January 2018 - July 2019</del> January 2020 - January 2023	CQI Supervisor
<b>4B. Build a Staff Development &amp; Training unit to provide comprehensive new hire induction training.</b>		

<p><b>4B.1</b> Expand and strengthen new hire training that introduces, clarifies, and reinforces the agency's practice model with a formal curriculum using a variety of training modalities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Field based practice (by direct supervisors)</li> <li>• Coaching (direct supervisors trained through "Art of Coaching" curriculum)</li> <li>• Simulated exercises</li> <li>• Web based instruction</li> </ul>	<p><del>January 2018</del> July 2019-December 2021</p>	<p>Staff Development &amp; Training Supervisor</p>
<p><b>4B.2</b> Use the OLMS to support new hire training needs by ensuring that OLMS is equipped with online instruction to enhance new hire support, training videos, quizzes, and an evaluative process to include surveys.</p>	<p><del>January 2018</del> July 2019-December 2020</p>	<p>Staff Development &amp; Training Supervisor</p>
<p><b>4C. Build a Staff Development &amp; Training unit to provide development opportunities and ongoing training for staff members.</b></p>		
<p><b>4C.1</b> Build staff capacity by providing individual coaching, based on the coaching model developed by Solano County and skill development opportunities to increase their knowledge base and capacity to perform tasks associated with their positions.</p>	<p><del>January</del> July 2019- January 2023</p>	<p>Staff Development &amp; Training Supervisor</p>
<p><b>4C.2</b> Establish an annual staff development and training plan, assessing current training curriculum for Core Practice Model values and principles including an ongoing review and assessment of the training process.</p>	<p><del>January</del> July 2019- January 2023</p>	<p>Staff Development &amp; Training Supervisor</p>

<p><b>4C.3</b> Provide an OLMS to support communication regarding available ongoing training including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal master training calendars</li> <li>• “Did You Knows”</li> <li>• Case management services (CMS) bulletin announcements</li> <li>• Boutique videos</li> </ul>	<p>January 2018 July 2019- January 2023</p>	<p>Staff Development &amp; Training Supervisor</p>
<p><b>4C.4</b> Annual reviews of staff utilization of OLMS to have at least 90% of documents registered as reviewed. Staff surveys of the OLMS usage will show that 85% of staff who used the system found it useful.</p>	<p>January 2020- January 2023</p>	<p>Staff Development &amp; Training Supervisor</p>
<p><b>4C.5</b> Develop an agency, supervisor, and individual report/dashboard that reflect all CWS-related trainings to inform the annual training report, ensure timely CORE completion, and are embedded with an alert system.</p>	<p>January 2020- January 2023</p>	<p>Staff Development &amp; Training Supervisor</p>

<b>Strategy #1 (Probation):</b>  Improve and increase family finding efforts and permanency planning by engaging extended families throughout the life of a case.	<input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT	Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s):  <b>P-2: Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 12-23 months.</b>
	<input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP	
	<input type="checkbox"/> PSSF	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project
ACTION STEPS	TIMELINE	ASSIGNED TO
<b>1A.</b> Develop a focus group utilizing a cross section of staff to assist in increasing family finding efforts. The focus group will work to plan and implement new strategies to engage parents and caregivers.	January 2018-December 2023 <del>2020</del> ONGOING	Juvenile Division Manager Juvenile Division Staff
<b>1B.</b> Partner with CWS and other Probation Departments that have family finding efforts in place to assist in developing strategies to identify relatives and extended family members.	January 2019- July 2019 ONGOING	Juvenile Division Manager Juvenile Placement Supervisor
<b>1C.</b> Increase contact with parents (minimum of monthly) and extended family members to increase permanency efforts for youth in placement throughout the placement process.	July 2019- January 2023	Juvenile Placement Supervisor Probation Officer of Record
<b>1D.</b> Provide training on the tool and develop procedures on how to use the tool. The tool will be implemented following the training and review of the procedures.	July 2019-January 2020	Juvenile Division Manager
<b>1E.</b> Conduct case reviews and case audits (youth's physical file and electronic records) to ensure that family finding efforts are being explored and documented prior to and following removal from the home.	January 2020- January 2023	Juvenile Division Manager Juvenile Division Supervisors

<b>Strategy #2 (Probation):</b>  Improve and increase use of ILSP services through collaboration with CWS and ILSP providers.	<input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT	Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s):
	<input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP	
	<input type="checkbox"/> PSSF	Systemic Factor- Agency Collaboration
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project
<b>ACTION STEPS</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>	<b>ASSIGNED TO</b>
<b>2A.</b> Meet with probation staff to identify service needs for transitional age youth in placement and assess the availability of ILSP resources within the communities locally and where probation youth are placed.	January 2018- July 2023 <del>2018-2020</del> <b>ONGOING</b>	Juvenile Division Manager Juvenile Placement Supervisor
<b>2B.</b> Meet with ILSP providers in the communities where probation youth are placed and CWS to communicate the findings discovered to ensure service needs are met.	July 2018- December 2023 <del>2018-2020</del> <b>ONGOING</b>	Juvenile Placement Supervisor Probation Officer of Record
<b>2C.</b> Assist ILSP provider(s) in designing a curriculum to outline the resources available to youth.	January 2019- July 2019	Juvenile Placement Supervisor Probation Officer of Record ILSP provider(s)
<b>2D.</b> Develop a process to review quarterly data regarding referrals to ILSP providers and address any issues which may arise regarding utilization of services.	January 2019- June 2023 <del>2019-2020</del> <b>ONGOING</b>	Juvenile Division Manager Juvenile Placement Supervisor
<b>2E.</b> Educate youth regarding local resources in the community where they reside to foster a relationship with ILSP providers during placement and upon their return to the community.	January 2018- January 2023 <b>ONGOING</b>	Juvenile Placement Supervisor Probation Officer of Record



<p><b>2F.</b> Continue to refer identified youth and families to services, monitor performance, and track what services are provided.</p>	<p>January 2018- January 2023</p>	<p>Juvenile Placement Supervisor Probation Officer of Record</p>
<p><b>2G.</b> Develop a resource binder, in conjunction with community based partners, to be provided to all transitional youth prior to exit from placement.</p>	<p>July 2020- December 2020</p>	<p>Juvenile Placement Supervisor Probation Officer of Record Community Based Organizations</p>
<p><b>2H.</b> Provide copies of the resource binder to transitional youth prior to exit from placement, receive feedback through surveys and interviews, and make modifications to the binder as needed.</p>	<p>January 2021- January 2023</p>	<p>Juvenile Placement Supervisor Probation Officer of Record</p>



**KIM JOHNSON**  
DIRECTOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY  
**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**  
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**GAVIN NEWSOM**  
GOVERNOR

*Attachment B*

*7-28-2020*

July 23, 2020

Mr. Aaron Crutison, Deputy Director  
Solano County Child Welfare Services  
275 Beck Avenue, MS 5-230  
Fairfield, CA 94533

Mr. Christopher Hansen, Chief Probation Officer  
Solano County Probation Department  
475 Union Avenue  
Fairfield, CA 94533

**SUBJECT: SOLANO COUNTY CALIFORNIA-CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES  
REVIEW SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT PLAN PROGRESS REPORT**

Dear Mr. Crutison and Mr. Hansen:

Thank you for submitting Solano County's System Improvement Plan (SIP) Progress Report, which was originally due on January 16, 2020, with an approved extension of March 06, 2020, and received by the California Department of Social Services on July 16, 2020, as part of the California-Child and Family Services Review (C-CFSR). The Outcomes and Accountability Section (OAS) has reviewed and approved the SIP Progress Report.

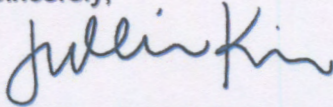
The OAS has conducted an analysis of Solano County's Quarterly County Data Reports and SIP. At this time, we concur with the direction and the county's prioritization of activities for this upcoming SIP period.

On a quarterly basis, Stevie Rodgers, your OAS Consultant, will continue to contact Neely McElroy and Amy Potter with Solano County to obtain updates on SIP implementation and County performance on all of the outcome indicators. If Neely and Amy are no longer the contacts for the county, please provide Stevie with the new contact information. In the event that the Quarterly County Data Report indicates insufficient progress toward improvement, or a negative data trend in any of the outcome indicators, including those not contained within the SIP, the OAS will contact the County to request an amendment to the SIP. In addition to quarterly contacts, Stevie is always available to answer questions, provide technical assistance, and address any concerns that may arise.

Mr. Crutison and Mr. Hansen  
Page Two

We appreciate Solano County's commitment to the C-CFSR process and to continuous improvement of outcomes for children and families. Should you have any questions, please contact Stevie by phone at (916) 651-8971 or by e-mail at [stevie.rodgers@dss.ca.gov](mailto:stevie.rodgers@dss.ca.gov).

Sincerely,



for

SHAHLA CRAGGS, Bureau Chief  
Performance and Program Improvement Bureau