

California - Child and Family Services Review

Fresno County System Improvement Plan

December 27, 2019 – December 26, 2024



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Introduction

Fresno County is a large county in Central California. Fresno County has a population of 994,400 and is the 10th most populous county in the state. Fresno County is unique in that it has both significant urban and rural areas. Fresno County has 15 incorporated cities comprised of: Clovis, Coalinga, Firebaugh, Fowler, Fresno, Huron, Kerman, Kingsburg, Mendota, Orange Cove, Parlier, Reedley, San Joaquin, Sanger and Selma¹.

Census-Designated locations include: Auberry, Big Creek, Biola, Bowles, Calwa, Cantua Creek, Caruthers, Centerville, Del Rey, Easton, Fort Washington, Friant, Lanare, Laton, Malaga, Mayfair, Minkler, Monmouth, Old Fig Garden, Raisin City, Shaver Lake, Squaw Valley, Sunnyside, Tarpey Village, Three Rocks, Tranquility, and West Park.

Unincorporated Communities include: Avocado, Burrel, Dunlap, Highway City, Mercey Hot Springs, Prather, Rolinda, and Tollhouse.

About the California Child and Family Services Review (C-CFSR)

The C-CFSR is a result of Assembly Bill (AB) 636 enacted in 2001, which provided a framework for the development of a new outcome-based review to be conducted in all 58 counties in California. The purpose of the C-CFSR is to strengthen the accountability system used in California for the entire continuum of services from prevention through aftercare for the Child Welfare and Juvenile Probation systems. The C-CFSR system establishes core outcomes that are central to maintaining an effective system of child welfare services based on mandated federal measures and outcomes. The C-CFSR system focuses on the safety, permanency, and well-being of foster and probation children and youth. Included in the C-CFSR process is the County Self-Assessment (CSA), which includes the Peer Review, the System Improvement Plan (SIP), and SIP Progress Reports.

The CSA is the first component of the five-year C-CFSR cycle, and it informs the development of the County SIP. The CSA is a comprehensive assessment of the county population, Child Welfare and Probation services, County-level performance on Federal and State outcome measures, and the Peer Review. The CSA also includes child abuse prevention requirements for a needs assessment as required by the Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP). Fresno County completed its most recent CSA in 2019.

Following the completion of the CSA, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and the County enter into an operational agreement known as the SIP to address areas needing improvement. The SIP is developed every five years by the lead agencies in collaboration with their local community, prevention and early intervention partners and is approved by the county Board of Supervisors (BOS). It provides an outline for how the county will improve their system of care for children and families. The SIP also identifies how programs and services funded with Child Abuse Prevention and Intervention Treatment (CAPIT), Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP), and Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) funds will address priority needs within the Child Welfare services continuum.

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Cities_in_Fresno_County,_California

Following the development of the five-year SIP, the County Child Welfare Department and Probation Placement Agency, in collaboration with their community partners, will develop and submit to CDSS an annual SIP Progress Report.

The stakeholder feedback received during the CSA assisted in the development of the Fresno County's SIP. Stakeholders and core representatives provided insight into the needs of Child Welfare and Probation populations. In addition, the CSA included Fresno County's demographic information, Child Welfare and Probation's infrastructure, and outcome measure performance. The County has utilized all of the information gathered from the CSA to identify strengths, needs, and gaps in services to determine the goals and strategies to improve performance and outcomes for the 2019-2024 SIP.

SIP Narrative

C-CFSR Team and Core Representatives

The 2019 Fresno County CSA was a collaborative effort involving many external stakeholders and internal county staff. The contribution from stakeholders provided invaluable information for the CSA and ensured the successful development of the SIP. Principal participants in the C-CFSR process include representatives from the County Child Welfare and Juvenile Probation departments, CDSS, and local community stakeholders. CDSS provided consultation, support, and assistance to Child Welfare and Probation to ensure requirements and federal guidelines were met throughout the process. Stakeholders consisted of required participants and other agency/community organizations that deliver services to children and families in Fresno County who were invited to participate in the CSA and SIP process and/or development.

The following list represents the Core Representatives:

Child Welfare:

- Delfino Neira, Social Services Director
- Tricia Gonzalez, Deputy Director – Child Welfare
- Dalvin Baker, MSML, Program Manager
- Laura Lopez, Program Manager
- Lauri Moore MSW, Program Manager
- Dana Parker, Program Manager
- Shawn Peyvandi MHC, Program Manager
- Renee Ramirez, Program Manager
- Rita Valenzuela Bohannon MSW, Program Manager
- Cheri Archuleta, Social Work Supervisor
- Justin Johnson, Social Work Supervisor
- Raymundo Zermeno, Senior Staff Analyst
- Michael Kifer, Staff Analyst
- Cheng La Yang, Staff Analyst
- Sharlee Lorenzo, Staff Analyst

Probation:

- Kirk Haynes, Chief Probation Officer
- Vicki Passmore, Juvenile Division Director
- Chris Maranian, Probation Services Manager

California Department of Social Services:

- Katie Sommerdorf, Outcomes and Accountability Manager
- Trang Do, Outcomes and Accountability Consultant

- Krista Gurko, Social Services Consultant, Office of Child Abuse Prevention

C-CFSR Stakeholder Engagement

Fresno County developed its SIP goals and strategies from input received during the CSA process. Throughout the SIP planning process, the Fresno Implementation Team (FIT) Data and Evaluation committee, which includes Child Welfare management and Probation representatives, was engaged in the SIP development process. The management team then sought buy-in from internal staff, stakeholders, and community partners to continue the SIP efforts in Fresno County. The SIP is a continuation of the work plan that was developed during the CSA and information learned during the CSA has been utilized in the SIP’s development. The outcome measures selected for the SIP, as described in the following pages, were gathered from a collective of information throughout the CSA process. The information included in the development of the SIP was comprised of baseline data from the CSA, feedback learned from focus groups, surveys and stakeholder meetings, and ongoing collaboration with CDSS that assisted Fresno County in learning about its strengths, areas needing improvement and gaps in service.

Stakeholder Meetings

As part of the CSA, a large stakeholder meeting was held in January 2019 that included core team members, child welfare and probation representatives, and partners from various agencies in Fresno County. Approximately 90 stakeholders were invited and of those, 57 attended, at an attendance rate of 64%. Fresno County Staff Development facilitated small table discussions and asked for feedback on pre-selected topics including: Re-Entry/Reunification, Recurrence of Maltreatment, Placement Stability, Transitional Age Youth, service array, workforce efficacy and development, engagement, and permanency. The large stakeholder meeting sought to examine the strengths and needs within Fresno County’s continuum of care from prevention to aftercare. The table below represents the stakeholders that participated.

Fresno County Stakeholder Meeting	
Agency/Community Organization	
Aspiranet	Focus Forward
California Department of Social Services (CDSS)	Foster Care Standards and Oversight Committee
California Psychological Institute	Fresno County Child Abuse Prevention (FCCAP)
Central Valley Regional Center (CVRC)	Fresno County Superintendent of Schools
Comprehensive Youth Services	Fresno Police Department
County Counsel	Marjaree Mason Center
Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)	North Fork Rancheria

Department of Behavioral Health	North Star Foster Family Agency
Department of Probation	Picayune Rancheria
Department of Public Health	Universal Health Network
Department of Social Services	Valley Teen Ranch
First 5 Fresno County	Workforce Development Board

Child Welfare held focus groups the week of February 4, 2019 with Social Workers, Social Work Supervisors, Resource Parents, Birth Parents and current and former Foster Youth. Probation held focus groups on May 16, 2019 with Resource Parents, Birth Parents, and Probation Youth. Probation Placement Officers participated via web-based surveys to provide their feedback. The Fresno County Child Welfare, Data and Evaluation committee developed a set of questions for each focus group that centered on permanency.

Child Welfare Program Managers and Supervisors that attended the planning meetings identified Social Workers and Supervisors to participate in the focus groups. It was determined that the Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI) group of resource parents that meet on a monthly basis would be utilized to participate the resource parent focus group. A birth parent support group that is facilitated through Fresno County's Parent Partner contract was identified to participate in the birth parent focus group. Finally, Fresno County's Independent Living Skills (ILP) program agreed to assist with the identification of youth to participate in the foster youth focus group.

Fresno County Staff Development was utilized to assist in conducting the focus groups for social workers, social work supervisors, resource parents, birth parents, and foster youth. Focus Forward facilitated the focus groups for Probation as well as the foster youth focus group. E-mail invitations were sent out to social workers, social work supervisors and resource parents. Fresno County's Parent Partners reached out to birth parents to solicit their participation in the focus group and an ILP social worker coordinated the foster youth focus group. The facilitators were provided a script to explain the purpose of the focus groups and all participants signed a confidentiality agreement.

The goal was to have 8-10 participants in each focus group. The social worker group and the social work supervisor group each had nine participants. The resource parent group had the largest number of participants at 30, as the focus group was held during one of the Quality Parenting Initiative's (QPI) regularly scheduled monthly meetings. The birth parents had 10 participants in the first focus group held on February 8, 2019 and a second focus group was requested by the birth parents, which had three participants and was held on February 26, 2019. The foster youth focus group had six participants.

Peer Review

Fresno County's Peer Review was completed during the week of February 25, 2019 with six Child Welfare Social Workers and three Probation Officers from counties throughout California (listed below). County Child Welfare agencies and Probation departments were responsible for jointly conducting the Peer Review in collaboration with the California Department of Social Services (CDSS). The Peer Review is the process by which counties learn, through qualitative examination of county practice, how to improve services for children and families with respect to a specific outcome. During the review, staff from peer counties interview host county case carrying social workers and probation officers regarding county practice. Utilizing peers from other counties promotes the exchange of best practice ideas between the host county and the peer counties.

The focus of the review for Child Welfare and Probation was on timely permanence. Child Welfare selected P1: Permanency in 12 months (entering foster care) and Probation selected P2: Permanency in 12 months (12-23 months in care).

Fresno County in conjunction with CDSS selected peer counties based upon their strong performance in the selected focus areas. Child Welfare social workers from Madera, Riverside, Sacramento, Santa Clara, Tulare and Ventura and probation officers from Monterey, Riverside and Sonoma counties participated as peer reviewers. There were a total of six Child Welfare services peers and three Probation peers.

During the five-day review, there were three review teams comprised of two Child Welfare peers and one Probation peer. Each team reviewed six Child Welfare cases and two Probation cases. A total of 34 Child Welfare cases and Probation cases were randomly selected by CDSS for children with a removal date from October 1, 2016 to October 1, 2017. Child Welfare then selected 18 cases for review from the 34 provided by CDSS, which included a variety of permanency status, age ranges, genders, ethnicities, Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) status and removal reasons. Probation selected nine cases for review.

Systemic Factors, Unmet Needs and Gaps in Services Identified in the CSA

A number of systemic factors, unmet needs and gaps in services were identified through the CSA process. Fresno County has made efforts to include strategies and action steps in the SIP to address as many of these areas as possible. Areas presenting opportunities for growth identified by the C-CFSR stakeholders include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Lack of participation by family members in Child and Family Team (CFT) meetings
- Lack of preparation by the social worker for CFT meetings
- More aftercare services needed for children and families when cases close
- Need to strengthen Family Finding efforts throughout the life of the case
- Delays in placing with relatives when an initial emergency placement is not possible
- Need to expedite court ordered services for parents such as domestic violence services,

substance abuse treatment, and mental health services

- More services needed to rural areas such as transportation and substance abuse treatment
- More substance abuse services needed for youth
- Staff turnover/lack of stability in workforce in Child Welfare
- High caseloads for Child Welfare social workers
- Inconsistent court reports – lack of detail as well as late reports

Following the completion of the CSA, the FIT Data and Evaluation committee engaged in regular meetings to discuss the findings of the CSA and develop possible goals and strategies for the SIP. In addition, Fresno County continued to collaborate with their stakeholders and CDSS through the development of the SIP. Fresno County has designed its SIP goals and strategies based on feedback received from stakeholder input and focus groups conducted during the CSA and ongoing discourse with the leadership team and key stakeholders. The following pages describe Fresno County's SIP goals, strategies and action steps designed to improve outcomes for Child Welfare and Probation families.

Prioritization of Outcome Data Measures/Systemic Factors and Strategy Rationale

Outcomes Measure and Strategy Selection

The Fresno County Department of Social Services (DSS) is committed to improving outcomes for children and youth in the following areas:

- Safety – Preventing and responding to the maltreatment of children and youth.
- Permanency – Helping children remain with their family and out of foster care whenever possible, by preserving family relationships and connections for foster youth, and by establishing a permanent plan, such as guardianship and adoption, when it is unsafe for youth to return home.
- Well-Being – Partnering with families as they improve their capacity for meeting their children's physical, emotional, and educational needs.

Fresno County understands that community feedback and internal analysis such as that conducted during the CSA and SIP development is paramount to upholding those commitments. Based on the analysis of data collected during the CSA and SIP process through stakeholder meetings, focus groups, and the peer review, Fresno County has identified the outcomes to be addressed as the focus for this next 5-year SIP by Child Welfare, Juvenile Probation, and OCAP providers:

- Child Welfare – P1 Permanency in 12 Months (entering foster care)
- Child Welfare – P3 Permanency in 12 Months (24 months or more)
- Child Welfare – Staff, Caregiver, and Provider Training

- Child Welfare – Agency Collaboration - Court
- Probation – P1 Permanency in 12 Months (entering foster care)
- Probation – P2 Permanency in 12 Months (in care 12-23 months)

For priority outcome measure P1 – Permanency on 12 months (entering foster care) the target improvement goal identified is to increase the permanency rate to 35% by the end of the five-year SIP. A permanency rate of 35% falls below the national standard of 40.5% however, the most recent data performance shows Fresno County has been trending in the negative direction for this outcome measure. Therefore, Fresno County hopes to make progress for this outcome measure in the current SIP cycle while looking for opportunities for further growth in the future. For priority outcome measure P3 – Permanency in 12 months (24 months or more) the national standard was chosen as the target improvement goal. This goal was chosen because the most recent performance data reflects that Fresno County is trending in the positive direction in this area and the national standard of 30.3% permanency rate is achievable.

In regards to the systemic factor, Staff, Caregiver, and Provider Training the target improvement goal is to increase social work staff retention by 20% by the end of the 5-year SIP. A goal of increasing social work staff retention by 20% was chosen because Fresno County employee data collection information from 2015-2018 reflects that Fresno County's turnover rate for social work staff for that timeframe was 61%. In regards to the systemic factor, Agency Collaboration – Court the target improvement goal is to decrease court continuances by 30% by the end of the 5-year SIP. A goal of decreasing court continuances by 30% was chosen because Fresno County juvenile court data from 2016-2018 reflects that the juvenile court continuance rate is 16.2% for that timeframe.

Child Welfare – P1 Permanency in 12 Months (entering foster care)

The C-CFSR team has identified Permanency in 12 months (entering foster care) as a priority outcome for the 2019-2024 SIP. As described in the CSA, Fresno County's rate of permanency in 12 months from entering foster care has decreased from 26.8% in Q4 2014 to 21.6% in Q4 2018. Despite Fresno County's effort to improve its permanency rate in the previous SIP cycle, Fresno County continues to perform well below the National Standard of 40.5%.

Fresno County has historically struggled to make a significant positive impact to the outcome measure P1. In the previous SIP, Fresno County's focus was on the visitation planning model as the primary method with which to facilitate timely permanence. While the progression of visitation between children and their parents is an important component in achieving permanency, there are many other factors that impact permanency for children. As Fresno County has integrated Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) over the past several years into its policy and practices there is an emphasis on a greater team approach to the safety, permanence, and well-being of children. Child and Family Team (CFT) meetings, Family Finding, Resource Family Approval, Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) assessment, and Levels of Care are just a few of the practices that have helped to re-shape how Child Welfare and Probation work

with children and families to achieve positive outcomes.

In order to effect a positive change in achieving permanency for children in foster care, Fresno County plans to focus its efforts on strengthening the components that appear to have the greatest potential impact on timely permanence. According to the California Department of Social Services' legislative report on Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) released in January 2015, the guiding concepts and principles for CCR include:

- Working with the child, youth and family as part of a team is fundamental
- Recognition that children and youth in foster care have been affected by trauma due to being separated from their families in addition to the circumstances that led to their removal
- The need for culturally relevant services and supports for children and youth
- Efforts to achieve legal permanency are necessary for every child and youth including establishing connections to siblings and extended family members²

It is these guiding principles that lead Fresno County to believe that strengthening the CFT process, augmenting Family Findings efforts, and expediting the timeframe with which parents are engaged in services will lead to an increase in timely permanence for children in foster care.

Strategy 1: Strengthen child and family team (CFT) meetings in order to identify permanency outcomes early and ongoing throughout the life of a case.

One strategy that Fresno County will use to address outcome measure P1 Permanency in 12 months (entering foster care) is Child and Family Team meetings. CFT meetings have the common goals of safety, permanence, and well-being through shared decision-making and building positive relationships between social workers and the families they serve. The CFT meeting is a process by which staff, parents, extended family members, service providers and youth are engaged in a teaming effort to coordinate, communicate and collaborate on such issues as case plan development, stabilizing placements for children and youth, and establishing permanent connections for children and families.

The results of the Fresno County stakeholder meeting and focus groups conducted during the CSA revealed that birth parents, resource parents, social workers, and service providers saw the benefits of CFT meetings in achieving positive outcomes for families. A study conducted in Washington (District of Columbia) compared permanency outcomes for children who had family team meetings with those who did not. The study found that, "The meetings significantly increased the likelihood that children would be placed in kin foster homes, have family group-type permanency goals, exit care faster, and be discharged to family or relatives."³ The difficulties reported for CFT meetings in the CSA were the overall lack of consistency, preparation, and

² https://www.cdss.ca.gov/cdssweb/entres/pdf/CCR_LegislativeReport.pdf

³ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0190740910001027>

participation. Specifically, concerns were identified regarding the lack of preparation for CFTs by social workers and the lack of participation by all team members, particularly family members.

Fresno County began working on the implementation of CFT meetings since the inception of Continuum of Care Reform. CDSS mandates that a CFT meeting be held every six months for every child in foster care. The implementation of CFT meetings has been a dynamic process that constantly requires monitoring and evaluation. As a result, the department developed a CFT workgroup comprised of department staff, community partners, and service providers to implement and monitor the CFT process.

In 2018, the department had several staff participate in a training for trainers on the facilitation of CFT meetings. Beginning in January 2019 through July 2019, the department trained all social workers on facilitating CFT meetings. Fresno County's current practice is to hold a CFT meeting a minimum of every ninety days or more often as needed. Initially, case managers were facilitating all CFT meetings however, in the latter part of 2019, Team Decision Making (TDM) meeting facilitators began facilitating the initial CFT on all cases and are assisting with the facilitation of the more challenging CFT meetings. TDM facilitators have received specialized training and are more experienced on group facilitation therefore; they are better equipped to handle the unique challenges that often come with leading group discussions. This training and experience has helped provide greater consistency in the preparation of CFTs and assists in having clear, concise, and focused discussions.

Fresno County continues to work to refine and enhance its CFT process and the CFT workgroup is actively working to identify issues and challenges with the CFT process. CFT meetings are the cornerstone of improving the goal of timely permanence for foster youth. The department expects that the continued implementation of the CFT process and the action steps discussed below will enhance the working relationships with families, service providers, and community partners. By increasing our engagement efforts with families and partners through the CFT process, the department anticipates greater openness, improved understanding, and solutions that will be tailored to the unique needs of children and families served. Fresno County remains committed to ensuring CFT meetings ongoing successful implementation in the 2019-2024 SIP.

Action Steps

- A. Develop a policy and procedure guide adhering to the state guidelines and feedback received during the CSA. The department is currently drafting the CFT procedures to support the continued implementation of the CFT process. The policy will include the following elements in accordance with State mandates:
 - Purpose of CFT meetings
 - Frequency of CFT meetings
 - Triggering events for CFT meetings such as a placement disruption or mental health crisis for the child
 - Team participants or who should be invited

- Pre-meetings including individual and joint meetings designed to prepare birth parents, youth, resource parents and others for the CFT meeting
- The incorporation of the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) assessment in the CFT discussion

B. Provide training to staff on the CFT policy and procedure guide. The department is currently working with Fresno County Staff Development on the implementation of continued CFT/CANS training for staff. This training will be provided to newly hired social workers during induction training. The training will also be open to all staff who need a refresher training on CFT and CANS. The training will include best practices in the facilitation of CFTs along with training to the policy and procedure guide. A significant challenge identified in the CSA was the lack of preparation by social workers for CFT meetings and the lack of participation family members. By training staff on best practices and providing the tools and language necessary to fully engage clients in the CFT process, the department anticipates a shift in quality of CFT meetings resulting in improved outcomes for youth and families.

B1. Child Welfare will collaborate with Fresno County Staff Development to provide training to all social work staff on the CFT policy and procedure guide, including CANS, in induction training.

B2. Child Welfare will collaborate with Fresno County Staff Development to provide a refresher course to all current social work staff and have ongoing trainings for newly hired staff.

C. Analyze compliance regarding the frequency of CFT meetings. Fresno County currently documents CFT meetings in the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS). Safe Measures captures the initial and ongoing CFT meetings through data extracts from CWS/CMS. The department will monitor its compliance of the initial and ongoing CFT meeting.

D. Evaluate and monitor CFT meeting implementation. The department will develop surveys for CFT participants to determine:

- The department's adherence to the policy and procedure guide
- The quality of the CFT meeting i.e. did the team accomplish the goals set forth in the meeting
- The responsiveness of team members i.e. were they actively engaged and participating in the CFT meeting

Collecting information via surveys will assist in identifying and addressing the concerns raised in the CSA regarding preparation and participation in CFTs. The department will compile the data on a quarterly basis into a qualitative report to then be combined with the

quantitative data collected on the frequency of CFT meetings. This data will then be shared with the Child Welfare leadership team on a quarterly basis.

Evaluating and Monitoring

The CFT workgroup, which supports the monitoring of CFT implementation and development, has been meeting since 2016. The CFT workgroup meets to discuss the strengths and areas needing improvement of the CFT process. As previously mentioned, the workgroup is also currently working on the development of a policy and procedure guide for CFTs. The CFT workgroup will continue to meet and provide guidance and recommendations on evaluation activities. The CFT workgroup will test the validity of the surveys that will be provided to CFT participants. The CFT workgroup will utilize the CFT surveys as a means to evaluate the fidelity of CFT implementation. It will also monitor the frequency of CFT meetings department wide using data extracts from Safe Measures.

The department expects the CFT strategy to improve the performance over time for the following federal outcomes measures:

- P1 Permanency in 12 months (entering foster care)
- P2 Permanency in 12 months (in care 12-23 months)
- P3 Permanency in 12 months (in care 24 months or more)
- P4 Re-entry into foster care
- P5 Placement stability

The department's Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) unit monitors Fresno County's performance in these outcome measures as well as practice elements linked to the safety, permanence, and well-being of children in foster care through quarterly case reviews.

Systemic Changes Needed

There are no systemic changes that are needed at this time.

Education and Training Needs

The department is in the process of working with Fresno County Staff Development on the implementation of the CFT/CANS training that will be rolled out in 2020. The training will adhere to State mandates in regards to the CFT process and CANS assessment as well as the county policy and procedure guide currently in development.

Roles of Other Partners

The CFT workgroup includes partners from Fresno County Behavioral Health, Foster Family agency representatives, and Fresno County Staff Development. In addition, the department is looking to engage our Differential Response (DR) providers in CFT meetings for those families who are exiting the Child Welfare system for linkage to aftercare services. The need for more

aftercare services was an area identified as needing improvement in the CSA. The department hopes to engage its contracted DR providers to fulfill the need for more aftercare services families upon dismissal of their case.

The success of this strategy and impact of CFTs on the outcome measure performance depends significantly on the role of partners within a family's CFT and their support network.

Technical Assistance

The department does not anticipate the need for technical assistance for the successful implementation of this strategy.

Strategy 2: Implement intensive family finding efforts to ensure that children and youth in care can maintain and develop permanent connections with relatives and other important individuals in their lives early and ongoing.

The purpose of undertaking family finding activities is to ensure that children and youth in care are able to maintain and develop permanent connections with relatives and other important individuals in their lives, as well as reduce the length of time children are in foster care. According to the National Institute for Permanent Family Connectedness:

“The Family Finding model seeks to build or maintain the youth’s Lifetime Family Support network for all youth who are disconnected or at risk of disconnection through placement outside of their home and community. The process identifies relatives and other supportive adults, estranged from or unknown to the child, especially those who are willing to become permanent connections for him/her. Upon completion of the process, youth have a range of commitments from adults who are able to provide permanency, sustainable relationships within a kinship system, and support in the transition to adulthood and beyond. Keeping safety at the forefront and using a family-driven process, families are empowered to formulate highly realistic and sustainable plans to meet the long-term needs of children and youth. Child outcomes may include increased reunification rates, improved well-being, and placement stability, transition out of the child welfare system, decreased re-entry rates, and stronger sense of belonging for children.”⁴

Fresno County began its family finding efforts in 2008 while participating in the Family-to-Family initiative. At that time, the department had two permanency specialists to assist social workers with the identification of relatives and mentors in order to establish permanent connections for children and youth in care. In 2011, Fresno County began participating in the California Partners for Permanency (CAPP) grant, which was a five-year federal grant aimed at improving permanency outcomes for all children and reduce the disparities for African American and

⁴ <http://www.familyfinding.org/moreaboutfamilyfinding.html>

American Indian children in or entering foster care. At that time, the department created a dedicated family finding unit.

Currently, the family finding unit is comprised of a social work supervisor, three social workers, and two office assistants whose sole purpose is to assist social workers in locating relatives for children and youth in foster care. California Welfare and Institutions Code sections 309 and 628 requires that counties identify, locate and notify relatives of a child who has been removed from his or her home as enacted by Assembly Bill (AB) 938. In alignment with state mandates, Fresno County requires that a family finding referral be initiated within 30 days for every child who comes into the foster care system.

It is the practice in Fresno County that throughout the life of a case, social workers routinely inquire about relatives and mentors. At the time a child comes into care, Fresno County makes concerted efforts to place with relatives or mentors if possible. In addition, staff can make a referral to our Family Finding unit to assist with locating relatives for placement or permanent connections. The Family Finding unit has provided training to social work staff in the case management divisions on an ongoing basis. In addition, Family Finding staff has stationed themselves in the various Child Welfare buildings to answer questions from social work staff and to provide information and support on Family Finding efforts.

During the Peer Review, family finding was identified as an area needing improvement. While it appears that social workers routinely submit family finding referrals, there is a breakdown in how the information provided by the family finding unit is being used to establish and/or maintain permanent connections for children and youth. Family finding plays a pivotal role in the safety, permanence, and well-being of children in foster care. Fresno County believes that family finding can lead to positive outcomes for children and youth in foster care by providing them with lifelong connections to family. Whether family members are able to provide a permanent plan for children in the absence of their parents or provide a sense of belonging by remaining connected to a child in out of home care, family connections can lessen the trauma and loneliness experienced by foster children and youth.

The department expects that the implementation of intensive family finding efforts and the action steps discussed below will improve identification and engagement of relatives and other important adults in the lives of foster children and youth across the child welfare spectrum. Fresno County remains committed to augmenting its family finding and engagement efforts in the 2019-2024 SIP.

Action Steps

- A. Develop a Policy and Procedure Guide (PPG) for intensive family finding that clearly defines the continuum of family finding and engagement efforts across the child welfare spectrum from Prevention through Permanency. The department will organize a strategy workgroup to assess current practices and compare with best practices (gap analysis) in

the area of family finding. The Peer Review that was completed during the CSA involved several California counties reviewing a sample of Fresno County's cases specifically looking at Permanency in 12 months (entering foster care). That review resulted in the identification of several gaps in family finding efforts. First, concerns were raised with how information provided by the family finding unit is being utilized by social workers to engage family members and other important adults in the lives of children and youth in foster care. Second, while there appeared to be consistent use of family finding at the initial opening of a child welfare case, as the case moved through the system the use Family Finding and Engagement efforts appears to taper off.

The Family Finding unit has provided training to staff in an effort to bolster Family Finding and Engagement efforts department wide. Despite these efforts, the family finding unit remains an underutilized resource within the department. By creating a strategy workgroup and developing a PPG, that clearly outlines the expectations and best practices regarding Family Finding, the department hopes to continue to strengthen and broaden its efforts to identify and locate permanent family connections for children and youth in foster care.

- B. Provide training to staff on the family finding policy and procedure guide. The family finding team will consult with Fresno County Staff Development on the development of family finding training material. The training will, at a minimum, include:

- When to make a family finding referral
- What information to include in a family finding referral
- How to proceed with the information received from the family finding unit
- How to document family finding efforts in CWS/CMS
- How to document family finding efforts in a court report
- The supervisor's role in reviewing family finding efforts

B1. The family finding unit will provide training to all social work staff on the family finding policy and procedure guide by individual units throughout the department until all staff have been trained.

B2. The family finding unit will provide a refresher course to all current social work staff and have ongoing trainings for newly hired staff.

- C. Analyze current data collection methods for family findings referrals and outcomes. Currently, the family finding unit collects data on the number of family referrals received. The family finding strategy workgroup will combine that data with family finding information that is documented in CWS/CMS.

D. Evaluate and monitor intensive family finding efforts. The department will monitor family finding efforts through the following activities:

- Number of family finding referrals received
- Family finding efforts as documented in CWS/CMS
- Social work supervisor review of family finding efforts as documented in court reports
- Number of children placed with relatives
- CQI case reviews
- Monitor federal outcome measures on permanency

Evaluating and Monitoring

The family finding team, which supports family finding and engagement efforts for the department was formally established in 2011. The family finding team is the hub for family finding and engagement information, resources, training tools, and data collection. The family finding strategy workgroup work will work with the family finding team to provide guidance and recommendations on evaluation activities. The family finding workgroup will also monitor the number of family finding referrals through the family finding unit and data extracts from CWS/CMS. In addition, the family finding workgroup will elicit feedback from social work supervisors on the quality of information provided in court reports.

The department expects the intensive family finding strategy to improve the performance over time for the following federal outcomes measures:

- P1 Permanency in 12 months (entering foster care)
- P2 Permanency in 12 months (in care 12-23 months)
- P3 Permanency in 12 months (in care 24 months or more)
- P5 Placement stability

The department's Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) unit monitors Fresno County's performance in these outcome measures as well as practice elements linked to the safety, permanence, and well-being of children in foster care through quarterly case reviews.

Systemic Changes Needed

There are no systemic changes that are needed at this time.

Education and Training Needs

The department will consult with Fresno County Staff Development on training curriculum for family finding efforts and engagement. The training will adhere to State mandates, best practices as well as the county policy and procedure guide that will be developed

Roles of Other Partners

This strategy involves no collaboration with outside agencies or partners.

Technical Assistance

The department does not anticipate the need for technical assistance for the successful implementation of this strategy.

Strategy 3: Expedite services to parents to ensure that parents are able to reunify with their children in a timely manner.

The CSA process revealed a barrier to timely permanence in regards to delays in connecting parents to services. What the CSA process uncovered is that there are multiple systemic factors hindering parents getting into court ordered services in a reasonable timeframe. Parents who participated in the focus group held on February 8, 2019, reported extensive wait times for parenting classes, mental health assessments, domestic violence treatment, and substance abuse treatment. Social Workers also reported in their focus group that it takes a significant amount of time for clients to have assessments completed, which slowed the overall movement of the case.

Fresno County has a social work supervisor that oversees our service delivery team. At this time, the service delivery team consists of a service coordinator who makes all of the initial referrals for services when a family becomes involved with the child welfare system. The service delivery team also consists of several substance abuse specialists that complete substance abuse screenings in-house for child welfare clients. In 2019, the service delivery team began examining Fresno County's service delivery system to identify barriers to timely services. The initial analysis revealed several factors that are leading to delays in services.

First, the department began examining reasons for delays in substance abuse treatment for parents. What was discovered is that parents were not being referred to substance abuse treatment following their assessment, as it was determined that there was no medical necessity for treatment, per Medi-Cal criteria. As is often the case, when parents become involved with the Child Welfare system due to the abuse and/or neglect of their children as a result of their substance abuse issues, parents will frequently minimize their drug use. When parents are referred for their substance abuse assessment, they often do not view their drug use as a problem at the time and report this accordingly to the substance abuse specialist. As a result, parents do not meet the criteria for medical necessity for substance abuse treatment. In response to the findings regarding substance abuse treatment, the department put a practice into place in which anytime a parent becomes involved with the Child Welfare system related to their substance abuse issues, as identified in the Juvenile Dependency Petition, a referral will be made for treatment regardless of the results of the substance abuse screening. This process began in midyear in 2019.

Next, the service delivery team also did an analysis of the type of domestic violence treatment services that are being recommended for child welfare clients. An analysis was completed of the domestic violence referrals made between January 2019 and May 2019, which totaled 202 referrals or approximately 40 per month. Of those assessments, 86% or 173 clients were referred for a 52-week treatment program while 14% or 29 clients were referral for a 26 week or less treatment program. The service delivery team reviewed all of the assessments completed and found that they agreed with the treatment recommendation for 72% of the clients, they recommended to downgrade the treatment for 22% of clients and recommended to upgrade the treatment for 2% of the clients.

Fresno County will continue to work with its service delivery team, including our substance abuse specialists and service coordinator, to identify barriers that lead to undue delays in services. In order to move this practice forward, the department will continue to analyze its service delivery system to identify barriers and gaps in services for parents and children. The department expects the action steps discussed below will assist in identifying and eliminating systemic barriers that cause delays in services to parents and hinder timely permanence for children. Fresno County remains committed to expediting services to parents in the 2019-2024 SIP.

Action Steps

- A. Create a strategy workgroup to continuing analyzing the current service delivery system in Fresno County. As previously mentioned, the department has a service delivery team that consists of a social work supervisor, service coordinator, and substance abuse specialists. The department plans to create a workgroup that will include the service delivery team and will serve as the primary evaluation group for service delivery throughout child welfare. Currently, the service delivery team meets with contracted providers, parenting, visitation, and behavioral health, on a monthly basis and non-contracted vendors, such as substance abuse and domestic violence vendors, on a quarterly basis. The service delivery workgroup will continue to engage with service providers and vendors on a regular basis to identify any systemic barriers to service delivery.
- B. Review and monitor the current service delivery system. Fresno County's service delivery team and workgroup will continue to monitor the current service delivery system in a similar manner to the 2019 analysis. Fresno County will review internal and external factors that affect overall service delivery to child welfare clients in an effort to identify any systemic barriers. The service delivery team and workgroup will complete an analysis a minimum of every six months to assess the timeliness and quality of the following services:
 - Substance abuse treatment
 - Domestic violence treatment
 - Mental health treatment
 - Parenting classes

- Visitation services

Finally, the service delivery team and workgroup will make recommendations to the child welfare leadership team regarding changes to the current service delivery system as a result of the ongoing system analysis.

- C. Analyze child welfare staffing needs in order to ensure timely service delivery to parents. The service delivery team and workgroup will identify any additional staffing needs resulting from the analysis of the current service delivery system. For example, the department has one service coordinator however, the team will determine if there is a need for additional service coordinators and/or support staff in order to ensure successful implementation of this strategy and make recommendations to the child welfare leadership team for consideration.
- D. Provide training for children welfare staff and service providers in order to expedite timely service delivery to parents.
 - D1. Provide guidance and training for child welfare staff on the needs assessment of parents so that appropriate referrals for services are made.
 - D2. Provide training to service providers regarding the child welfare court process and timelines with which parents have to reunify with their children.
- E. Monitor and evaluate the service delivery system with an analysis completed a minimum of every six months on the timeliness and quality of services including:
 - Substance abuse treatment
 - Domestic violence treatment
 - Mental health treatment
 - Parenting classes
 - Visitation services

This will be accomplished by reviewing referrals for services, as initiated by the social worker. The data will include the number of referrals received and the type and level of treatment recommended based on the assessments completed. In addition, a qualitative review will be completed on a sample of cases to determine if the department agrees with the recommendations for services.

Evaluating and Monitoring

As previously mentioned, in 2019 the service delivery team completed an analysis in of substance abuse services and domestic violence services that resulted in system changes designed to

expedite services to parents. The service delivery team and workgroup will continue this analysis on an ongoing basis to identify barriers to service delivery to parents and timely permanence for children and youth. The department will utilize the service delivery team and workgroup as a hub for data monitoring and evaluation. The department will develop a data dashboard to monitor service delivery trends over time. This analysis will be completed a minimum of every six months.

The department expects the expediting service to parents strategy to improve the performance over time for the following federal outcomes measures:

- P1 Permanency in 12 months (entering foster care)

Systemic Changes Needed

The department anticipates the need to educate vendors on child welfare practices and court timelines so that services can be tailored to the unique needs of child welfare clients. Currently, child welfare clients who are enrolled in services such as domestic violence treatment are receiving the same curriculum, rules and timelines as those receiving the same treatment through probation or parole.

Education and Training Needs

Social work staff need further training on needs assessments to avoid over-referring parents to services that are not pertinent to the safety and well-being of their children. In addition, as mentioned above there is a need to educate and train vendors on the dependency court process and timelines. It is the recommendation that vendors receive training on the department's Core Practice Model that focuses on engagement with families.

Roles of Other Partners

This strategy will require intense collaboration with vendors, service providers, and other agency partners for successful implementation of this strategy. This collaboration will occur during the monthly meetings with contracted service providers and quarterly meetings with non-contracted service providers.

Technical Assistance

The department does not anticipate the need for technical assistance for the successful implementation of this strategy.

Child Welfare – P3 Permanency in 12 Months (24 months or more)

The C-CFSR team has identified Permanency in 12 months (24 months or more) as priority outcome for the 2019-2024 SIP. Fresno County's rate of permanency in 12 months (24 months or more) has fluctuated from 24.2% in Q4 2014 to 29.5% in Q4 2018, as reported in the CSA.

Most recently, Fresno County's rate of permanency for this outcome measure is 25.2% for Q1 2019. The National Standard is 30.3%. Fresno County has consistently performed slightly below the National Standard for this measure.

Similar to outcome measure P1 Permanency in 12 months (entering foster care), P3 Permanency in 12 months (24 months or more), was a focus area in the prior SIP. In the previous SIP, Fresno County focused on the visitation planning model to enhance permanent connections. In addition, staff were trained, coached, and supported in communicating permanency options and the termination of reunification services. For the current SIP cycle, Fresno County will focus on the same strategies for outcome measure P3 Permanency in 12 months (24 months or more) that are being utilized to address P1 Permanency in 12 months (entering foster care), omitting strategy three, expediting services to parents .. As reported in the CSA, the most common form of permanency for children in care 24 months or more is adoption, particularly for children ages 1-10. Therefore, Fresno County will focus on strengthening the CFT process and intensive family finding efforts specifically around the permanent plans of adoption and legal guardianship.

*P3: Permanency in 12 Months (24 months or more)
Strengthening Child and Family Team Meetings*

Fresno County plans to utilize strategy one, strengthening child and family team meetings to address P3 Permanency in 12 months (24 months or more). Child and Family Team meetings take place every six months throughout the life of a case. The goal of CFT meetings is to support the safety, permanence, and well-being of the children and youth in care. CFT discussions around permanency will vary depending on where the case is along the child welfare continuum. For example, when a parent was not successful in reunifying with their child, the department is legally mandated to develop a concurrent permanent plan for that child. That permanent plan, depending on the circumstances of the case, would likely be adoption.

While CFT meetings are vitally important throughout the life of a case, they become an essential tool in identifying permanent families and permanent connections for children and youth in foster care when the child is unable to return home to a biological parent. According to the National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being (NSCAW), "After children spend 12 to 18 months in foster care, their chances of leaving foster care decrease rapidly, and once children spend 36 to 42 continuous months in foster care, their chances of leaving foster care are extremely low."⁵ Fresno County anticipates that by strengthening child and family team meetings, the department will increase the rates of permanency for children and youth who have experienced lengthier stays in the foster care system. By increasing our engagement efforts with families, mentors, and service providers throughout the life of a case the department can increase the likelihood of finding permanent, loving homes for children and youth. Fresno County remains committed to ensuring CFT meetings ongoing successful implementation to address P3 Permanency in 12 months (24 months or more) in the 2019-2024 SIP.

⁶ <https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/wasw20/current>

Action Steps

The same action steps as outlined above for P1 Permanency in 12 months (entering foster care) will be used for P3 Permanency in 12 months (24 months or more) (refer to strategy one, strengthening child and family team meetings action steps as outlined on page nine).

Evaluating and Monitoring

When a parent is unable to reunify with their child(ren) the department develops a concurrent permanent plan for the children including adoption and legal guardianship. Just as outlined in strategy one, the CFT workgroup supports the monitoring of CFT implementation and development. The CFT workgroup will be inclusive of the monitoring and evaluation of the CFT process throughout the continuum of the child welfare system from prevention to permanency. The CFT workgroup will continue to meet and provide guidance and recommendations on evaluation activities that include all permanency options. The CFT workgroup will utilize the CFT surveys as a means to evaluate the fidelity of CFT implementation. It will also monitor the frequency of CFT meetings department wide using data extracts from Safe Measures.

The department expects the CFT strategy to improve the performance over time for the following federal outcomes measures:

- P1 Permanency in 12 months (entering foster care)
- P2 Permanency in 12 months (in care 12-23 months)
- P3 Permanency in 12 months (in care 24 months or more)
- P4 Re-entry into foster care
- P5 Placement stability

The department's Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) unit monitors Fresno County's performance in these outcome measures as well as practice elements linked to the safety, permanence, and well-being of children in foster care through quarterly case reviews.

Systemic Changes Needed

There are no systemic changes that are needed at this time.

Education and Training Needs

The department is in the process of working with Fresno County Staff Development on the implementation of the CFT/CANS training that will be rolled out in 2020. The training will adhere to State mandates concerning the CFT process and CANS assessment as well as the county policy and procedure guide currently in development.

Roles of Other Partners

The CFT workgroup includes partners from Fresno County Behavioral Health, Foster Family

agency representatives, and Fresno County Staff Development. The need for more aftercare services was an area identified as needing improvement in the CSA; this will include post adoption services that will be addressed in CFT meetings.

The success of this strategy and impact of CFTs on the outcome measure performance depends significantly on the role of partners within a family's CFT and their support network.

Technical Assistance

The department does not anticipate the need for technical assistance for the successful implementation of this strategy.

P3: Permanency in 12 Months (24 months or more) Intensive Family Finding

As reported in the CSA, there appears to be a lack of family finding efforts throughout the life of a case. The department makes a concerted effort to place children with relatives, if possible, upon their initial removal from the home. In addition, there is most often a family finding referral at the time of the initial removal if the department is unable to locate relatives. During the Peer Review process, it was discovered that relatives may be located initially but sometimes are unable to take placement of a child for various reasons such as; they are unable to pass a criminal background clearance or their lack of space in the home. There appears to be lack of follow-up to locate other relatives and/or permanent connections following the initial family finding referral. Just as there is a need to continue child and family team meetings throughout the life of a case, there is also a need to continue intensive family finding efforts to ensure that every child exits the foster care system with a loving, permanent family.

In 2011, when Fresno County began participating in the CAPP grant and created a dedicated family finding unit, the focus was on finding relatives and permanent connections for those children and youth in the permanency planning division who had experienced extended stays in foster care. In order to improve permanency outcomes for children and youth who are in care 24 months or more, the department will focus on intensive family finding and engagement efforts. Fresno County remains committed to ensuring CFT meetings ongoing successful implementation to address P3 Permanency in 12 months (24 months or more) in the 2019-2024 SIP.

Action Steps

The same action steps as outlined above for P1 Permanency in 12 months (entering foster care) will be used for P3 Permanency in 12 months (24 months or more) (refer to strategy two, intensive family finding action steps as outlined on page twelve).

Evaluating and Monitoring

The family finding team, which supports family finding and engagement efforts for the

department, was formally established in 2011. The family finding team is the hub for family finding and engagement information, resources, training tools, and data collection. The family finding strategy workgroup work will collaborate with the family finding team to provide guidance and recommendations on evaluation activities. The family finding workgroup will also monitor the number of family finding referrals through the family finding unit and data extracts from CWS/CMS. In addition, the family finding workgroup will elicit feedback from social work supervisors on the quality of family finding efforts as documented in court reports.

The department expects the intensive family finding strategy to improve the performance over time for the following federal outcomes measures:

- P1 Permanency in 12 months (entering foster care)
- P2 Permanency in 12 months (in care 12-23 months)
- P3 Permanency in 12 months (in care 24 months or more)
- P5 Placement stability

The department's Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) unit monitors Fresno County's performance in these outcome measures as well as practice elements linked to the safety, permanence, and well-being of children in foster care through quarterly case reviews.

Systemic Changes Needed

There are no systemic changes that are needed at this time.

Education and Training Needs

The department will consult with Fresno County Staff Development on training curriculum for family finding efforts and engagement. The training will adhere to State mandates, best practices as well as the county policy and procedure guide that will be developed

Roles of Other Partners

This strategy involves no collaboration with outside agencies or partners.

Technical Assistance

The department does not anticipate the need for technical assistance for the successful implementation of this strategy.

Child Welfare – Staff, Caregiver, and Provider Training

The C-CFSR team has identified Staff, Caregiver, and Provider Training as a priority outcome for the 2019-2024 SIP. The CSA revealed concerns across all stakeholders and focus group participants regarding social work staff turnover. As described in the CSA, Child Welfare data specific to hires, retirements, resignations, promotions, transfers and terminations from 2015-

2018 reflects a consistent amount of turnover in social work staff. Between the years 2015 and 2018, Fresno County Child Welfare hired 379 social work positions. During the same period, there were a total of 229 workers leaving social work positions at a rate of 61%. Of the 229 social workers who left during this timeframe, 146 were due to resignations at a rate of 63%. Social workers are resigning for various reasons such as; more lucrative job opportunities, returning to school, or they completed the required two years needed in Child Welfare for Title IV-E graduates. The table below illustrates the number and percent of resignations for social work positions by year.

Fresno County Child Welfare Social Work Resignations		
Year	N	%
2015	25	52%
2016	39	67%
2017	42	69%
2018	40	67%

There are three main impacts as a result of staff turnover; increased caseloads for workers across all programs, increased training needs for newly hired social workers, and lack of continuity and consistency for families who experience multiple social workers assigned to their case. These impacts are interwoven with one another in that, high caseloads impact a social worker's availability and their ability to engage effectively with the families. In addition, there are increased demands on the social work supervisors who continually have a turnover of staff whom they must provide training, coaching and mentoring. As reported in the CSA, the average caseload sizes from January 2018 through April 2019 according to task area are as follows:

Emergency Response															
Average Number of Referrals Assigned per Month per Social Worker															
2018												2019			
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
18	19	21	23	25	21	15	19	23	25	23	27	17	19	19	29

Voluntary Family Maintenance Caseload Average															
2018												2019			
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
19	19	19	20	19	17	17	18	18	19	19	19	19	20	20	21

Family Reunification Caseload Average															
2018												2019			
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
24	23	23	23	22	23	22	22	22	21	21	20	23	24	25	26

Permanency Planning Caseload Average															
2018												2019			
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
19	18	18	18	18	18	17	18	18	19	19	20	19	20	20	20

Assessment/Adoptions Caseload Average															
2018												2019			
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
21	22	24	25	26	27	27	26	27	25	23	22	23	23	23	24

Fresno County's Child Welfare Leadership team have implemented targeted plans to stabilize specific task areas that have been highly impacted by staff turnover. For example, some non-case carrying staff have been required to assist in the investigation of referrals in Emergency Response or complete mandated monthly contacts with children and families in the Family Reunification area. In 2019, Fresno County began a telecommute pilot project in which social workers were selected to work from home on certain days of the week under specific guidelines in order to promote job satisfaction. Despite efforts to stabilize the workforce, social work staff retention has continued to be a struggle for Fresno County.

In order to effect a positive change in the priority outcome Staff, Caregiver, and Provider Training, Fresno County plans to focus its efforts on peer mentoring/training and social work supervisor support and coaching.

Strategy 4: Develop a peer mentoring/ training program for social work staff so they feel more supported and are better equipped to meet job expectations.

On February 7, 2019, Fresno County social workers participated in a focus group discussion regarding reunification and permanency. In that discussion, social workers were asked about their level of preparedness and training in working with families and how this might affect permanency. Social workers described the transfer of learning from seasoned social workers as more valuable to them than formal training. Social workers reported that having peer support and learning the day-to-day functions of their job from experienced staff was beneficial to them. Social workers generally expressed the need for concrete guidance, tools, and organizational skills to support their daily job functions. Additional concerns reported by social workers were, high caseloads, time constraints, and lack of experienced staff.

Staff turnover was not only a concern for social workers but for social work supervisors and birth parents, as reported in their focus group discussions. Social work supervisors related that they do not have enough time to coach, mentor and train their staff due to the demands of their positions. Supervisors reported that having lead workers in units and/or divisions to assist in coaching and mentoring new staff would be helpful and would bridge the gap between staffs' training needs and the supervisor's availability. Birth parents reported that having multiple social workers throughout the life of their case caused confusion and delays in service delivery.

In 2008, a study examined the relationships among stress, social support, and intention to leave employment in 418 public child welfare workers. Researchers found that workers with higher levels of stress were more likely to think about leaving, while those receiving greater social support were less likely.⁶ Another study examined the interactive effects of role stress, job autonomy, and social support in predicting burnout and turnover intention among social workers. The study included a subsample of 346 social workers identified from a cross-sectional random survey of 1,500 California state-registered social workers. The results of the study suggested that creating decentralized job conditions is essential for preventing burnout, and that building supportive job conditions is needed to retain social workers who are experiencing high role stress.⁷

Fresno County would like to address staff retention on multiple levels including creating a peer mentoring/training program for new staff. Currently, the practice is to place newly hired social workers into task areas in which vacancies exist. The department will review the process by which new social workers are placed in their respective task areas and develop a method that looks at purposeful placement of staff based on their level of experience and skill set. In addition, Fresno County will honor the social worker's feedback from the CSA and develop a peer mentoring/training program that can help staff feel more supported. The department hopes to assist staff in developing engagement, organizational and critical thinking skills. The department expects the action steps discussed below will assist in developing a mentoring/training program for newly hired social work staff in the 2019-2024 SIP.

Action Steps

- A. Convene a mentoring/training workgroup to create a strategic plan for a mentoring/training program. The mentoring/training workgroup will include members of the leadership team, staff development, and members of the Family Reunification training unit. The department will build upon the ideas and structure behind the Family Reunification training unit, and other specialized units, to examine how this might be expanded from its current size and functionality.
- B. Collaborate with Fresno County Staff Development to coordinate the social worker core training with the practice elements needed for the mentoring/training program in order to ensure core training curriculum and mentoring/training practice elements are aligned. It is essential for child welfare to partner with Staff Development, as the mentoring/training program will be utilized to augment formal training so that newly hired social workers feel supported and adequately trained to meet their job expectations.
- C. Develop a work proposal for the mentoring/training program. The mentoring/training

⁶ <https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/wasw20/current>

⁷ <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/03643100801922357>

workgroup will develop a work proposal, which will be presented to the child welfare leadership team for input and feedback. The work plan/proposal will include:

- Which task areas need a mentoring/training program
 - What are the staffing needs for a mentoring/training program
 - Criteria to be a mentor/trainer
 - How long are newly hired social workers connected to a mentoring/training program
 - How will it be determined which task area newly hired social workers are placed
 - How will the program's effectiveness be evaluated
- D. Develop a training curriculum for trainers/mentors utilizing the current family reunification training unit as a model to develop and expand the current training program for newly hired social workers.
- E. Evaluate and monitor mentoring/training program.

E1. Develop and administer job satisfaction surveys for newly hired social workers. The mentoring/training workgroup will develop job satisfaction surveys for newly hired social workers to determine indicators of staff retention and turnover. The surveys will be administered every six months for the first two years of employment.

E2. Develop and administer exit surveys for all social workers leaving county employment. This data will be compiled and shared with the child welfare leadership team on a quarterly basis.

Evaluating and Monitoring

The mentoring/training workgroup will serve as the team to evaluate and monitor this strategy. The workgroup will collect data derived from the job satisfaction surveys. This data will include both quantitative and qualitative data collected from the surveys. The department will develop a data dashboard to monitor staff retention trends over time.

Systemic Changes Needed

This strategy will require systemic changes in how social work staff are placed and trained. There will also likely need to be a shift in staffing resources. These proposed changes will be presented to the child welfare leadership team and vetted with staff.

Education and Training Needs

The department will collaborate closely with Fresno County Staff Development on training elements and practices for the mentoring/training program.

Roles of Other Partners

This strategy involves no collaboration with outside agencies or partners.

Technical Assistance

The department does not anticipate the need for technical assistance for the successful implementation of this strategy.

Strategy 5: Enhance social work supervisor training and coaching in order to help supervisors provide greater support and guidance to their staff.

Beginning in January 2019, Fresno County DSS has contracted with CPS HR Consulting to provide leadership training to social work supervisors. The training consists of 10 classes to which supervisors will complete all 10 as a cohort over a nine-month period. There will be six cohorts to complete the training in 2019 and five cohorts to complete the training in 2020. The training consists of the following topics:

- Creating a Culture of Trust
- Leading Effectively
- Motivation and Teams
- Changing Organizational Habits
- Communicating Effectively
- Conflict Resolution
- Problem Solving and Decision Making
- Coaching as a Management Tool
- Extraordinary Leader

The goal of the leadership training is to provide specialized supervisor training consistent with efforts to promote and enhance professional skills, management capabilities and organizational performance. Fresno County has experienced significant turnover in social work staff, which has included supervisors. As a result, the current social work supervisor staff is relatively inexperienced when compared to the level of experience from previous years. Supervisors would like concrete tools to effectively manage and support staff.

In addition to the CPS HR training, Fresno County works with contracted with services, currently Victoria M. Sanders (VMS) training, to provide ongoing coaching and training to supervisors. Each supervisor is assigned a coach who meets with them on a monthly basis and the sessions are customized to the individual needs of that supervisor. The coach also meets with the supervisor's staff to understand the effectiveness of that supervisor's leadership style. The coach also provides training on Safety Organized Practice (SOP) designed to deepen SOP practice within child welfare. In providing leadership training, the department believes this will assist in developing the supervisors' coaching, problem-solving, organizational and critical thinking skills.

It is the hope of the department that with additional training and supports for supervisors this will translate into social workers feeling more supported and thus increase staff retention. The department expects the action steps discussed below will assist in assessing the social work supervisor's ability to support and coach their staff in the 2019-2024 SIP.

Action Steps

- A. Collaborate with Fresno County Staff Development to monitor the completion of the supervisor leadership training. The department will collaborate with Staff Development to monitor the completion of the supervisor leadership training and develop a training plan for newly hired social work supervisor that did not have the benefit of attending the training.
- B. Create a workgroup to develop assessment tools to evaluate the effectiveness of the social work supervisor leadership training and ongoing contracted coaching for administration to supervisors and line staff. The goal of providing leadership training and ongoing coaching to assist social work supervisors in developing the skills and tools to be an effective leader within the department. Following the completion of leadership training the department's expectation is that supervisors will utilize the practical tools they learned in the training in order to support, coach, and lead their staff.
- C. Develop evaluation tools/surveys to assess the fidelity of supervisor's use of the leadership skills and tools learned in leadership training and coaching sessions. The department has administered fidelity assessments to staff in 2017-2018 to assess the social work supervisor's ability to effectively model and coach the elements of Safety Organized Practice. The department will seek to develop a similar tool to assess the supervisor's leadership skills (post training).
- D. Administer evaluation surveys and develop a schedule to administer evaluation surveys annually.
 - D1. The department will work with Staff Development to administer evaluation surveys to all social workers whose supervisor has completed leadership training.
 - D2. Administer evaluation surveys to all social workers annually. The results of these surveys will be combined with the data collected from strategy four regarding employee job satisfaction and retention rates.

Evaluating and Monitoring

The supervisor coaching and support workgroup will serve as the team to evaluate and monitor this strategy. The workgroup will collect data derived from the evaluation tool used to assess the supervisor's use of leadership skills. The data from these evaluations will be combined with data collected from strategy four and one data dashboard for Staff, Caregiver, and Provider Training

will be developed.

Systemic Changes Needed

There are no systemic changes that are needed at this time.

Education and Training Needs

The department will collaborate with Fresno County Staff Development in order to monitor the completion of the leadership training.

Roles of Other Partners

This strategy involves no collaboration with outside agencies or partners.

Technical Assistance

The department does not anticipate the need for technical assistance for the successful implementation of this strategy.

Strategy 6: Improve the quality of court reports in order to provide comprehensive and detailed assessments and recommendations to the court regarding child welfare families.

The visiting peer review counties identified Fresno County's court reports as needing improvement. Peer reviewers reported there was a lack of detail in the court reports. Specifically, they found that in reviewing the reports for the peer review, they were left with many questions about the case, services to the family, and the children's well-being. In addition, the peer reviewers found that many of the social workers who were interviewed lacked an understanding of why the children were removed initially. This may be, in part, due to staff turnover and several different social workers managing the case over time.

Fresno County has court writing units in Emergency Response (ER) and Family Reunification (FR). The court writers in ER prepare the petition and the detention report while the writers in FR complete the jurisdictional report or the combined jurisdictional/disposition report, whichever has been ordered by the court. Reports that are generated out of these two units are generally consistent and do not suffer from the same issues as those prepared by the case managing social worker. The case manager is responsible for any Review of Dependency Status (RDS) reports, Interim Reviews, Addendums reports and other reports.

Fresno County will address the quality of court reports in several ways including training, supervisor oversight, and policies surrounding court reports. Currently, the supervisors over the court writer units and county counsel provide training to staff on various elements of the court process and the writing of court reports. While this training may be helpful to staff there is a need for additional training and support for social workers in producing high quality, detail oriented reports. In addition, supervisors will receive training in order to provide quality

oversight, coaching and guidance on court report writing. The department will also ensure that its policies and procedures are aligned with the expectations of generating quality court reports. The department expects the action steps discussed below will aid in improving the quality of court reports in the 2019-2024 SIP cycle.

Action Steps

- A. Convene a workgroup to develop a plan to improve the quality of court reports. The workgroup will include child welfare leadership, supervisors and social workers from the court writer units, court officers and case carrying social workers. The court officers will provide specific input from the court regarding any specific concerns the judges may have with the quality of reports.
- B. The workgroup will review a sample of court reports to identify strengths and areas needing improvement on current court reports. The sample will include reports written by court writers as well as reports written by case managing social workers across all task areas.
- C. The workgroup will review court reports from other counties for formatting and content to select the elements that would work best for Fresno County.
 - C1. Determine elements to include in Fresno County's court reports that are in-line with best practices and feedback from the court. As an example, several of the peer review counties advised their counties include the entire history of a case in every court report. Fresno County does not engage in this practice, as the feedback received from the Fresno County juvenile court judges has been that they do not want that amount of information in every report, as they are generally familiar with the history of the cases they hear in their respective courtrooms. Therefore, Fresno County will look to strike a balance between adding important and vital details to reports without restating the entire case history.
- D. Consult with county counsel on developing a checklist for social workers to ensure that court report writing standards are met. There appears to be a need moving forward to staff on writing more detailed and focused reports.
- E. Provide training to social workers and social work Supervisors on court report writing.
 - E1. The department will provide training to all child welfare social workers on court report writing by task area throughout the department until all staff have been trained.
 - E2. Provide a refresher course to all current social work staff and have ongoing trainings for newly hired staff.

F. Monitor court reports for consistency and detail (post training).

F1. Court reports are reviewed on a continuous basis by social work supervisors for consistency and detail. Social work supervisors will be responsible for the oversight of their staff's court reports and ensuring that they are thorough, detailed, focused, and contain all of the necessary elements as outlined in the training.

F2. Court officers will review court reports on a quarterly basis to ensure that all standards are met using the checklist tool developed for social workers. Court officers are in a unique position to provide oversight and feedback as to the quality of reports being presented to the court.

F3. A qualitative data report will be developed on a quarterly basis and provided to leadership. Areas that are meeting the standard, as well as areas needing improvement will be addressed by the social work supervisor to their staff.

Evaluating and Monitoring

The workgroup will serve as the oversight for the collection of information on the quality of court reports. Feedback will be elicited from social work supervisors and court officers as to the quality of court reports over time. The quality of court reports strategy is inextricably tied to strategy seven, reducing court continuances. The department will monitor department caused court continuances through data collection methods by the court and court officers, as outlined in strategy seven. The department will collect qualitative data from social work supervisors and court officers as to the quality of court reports and combine that information quantitative data being collected on department caused court continuances on a quarterly basis.

Systemic Changes Needed

There are no systemic changes that are needed at this time.

Education and Training Needs

The department will work with court writer unit supervisors and county counsel to develop training on writing effective and detailed court report writing for social workers and social work supervisors.

Roles of Other Partners

The department will collaborate with county counsel and the court to assist with successful implementation of this strategy.

Technical Assistance

The department does not anticipate the need for technical assistance for the successful implementation of this strategy.

Child Welfare – Agency Collaboration – Court

The C-CFSR team has identified agency collaboration with the court as a priority outcome. The Fresno County peer review conducted the week of February 25, 2019, brought to light several areas needing improvement in regards to collaboration with the court. The peer review counties highlighted the lack of detail in Fresno County’s court reports and the social worker’s lack of knowledge of their case, particularly around the reason for removal. In addition, Fresno County has struggled with court continuances over the past several years. While some court continuances are to be expected, excessive continuances due to late reports, poor quality of reports, and overall lack of knowledge of the case ultimately slows the overall movement of a case and potentially delaying timely permanence for children. The tables below illustrate the rate of continuances that were caused by DSS, such as late reports, and then all continuances for the years 2016-2018.

Fresno County Juvenile Court Continuances – Caused by DSS			
	2016	2017	2018
January	11.5%	10.1%	14.3%
February	7.8%	10.0%	9.5%
March	11.5%	13.7%	10.0%
April	8.1%	11.9%	7.1%
May	6.5%	7.8%	7.0%
June	8.6%	11.8%	11.0%
July	9.4%	9.3%	10.0%
August	8.7%	9.9%	9.7%
September	9.4%	11.3%	8.4%
October	10.1%	12.1%	10.8%
November	10.1%	13.8%	7.6%
December	12.0%	11.0%	10.8%
Total	9.5%	11.0%	8.9%

Fresno County Juvenile Court Continuances – All			
	2016	2017	2018
January	17.2%	16.4%	19.8%
February	17.3%	14.2%	14.3%
March	17.3%	19.6%	14.9%
April	12.8%	15.8%	15.3%
May	12.1%	12.4%	13.3%
June	16.7%	16.1%	14.1%
July	15.3%	16.1%	17.3%
August	15.2%	15.2%	14.2%
September	15.3%	15.4%	18.7%
October	18.6%	15.7%	20.9%
November	18.0%	17.8%	14.8%
December	17.4%	15.8%	23.2%
Total	16.1%	15.9%	16.7%

The tables illustrate that from 2016 through 2018 the Fresno County Juvenile Court experienced a rate of court continuances from 8.9% - 11.0% that were caused by DSS. These court continuances may have been caused for a variety of reasons such as late or missing reports. In contrast, for the same time period, the Fresno County Juvenile Court experienced a rate of court continuances from 15.9% - 16.7% that are caused by DSS or other reasons. Other reasons may include, the parent's or child's attorney requests a continuance, or the court continues the hearing on its own motion. When a comparison is made between court continuances caused by the department and all other continuances the greater majority of the court continuances are caused by the department. The department plans to address Agency Collaboration – Court by reducing court continuances that are caused by the department.

Strategy 7: Reduce court continuances in order to avoid unnecessary delays in case progression for children and families

Fresno County is in the process of actively examining the causes for court continuances and is committed to finding solutions to minimize continuances. The department has a number of policies and procedures on its court processes that provide guidance to staff on such topics as timelines for submitting court reports and discovery, content of court reports, and noticing requirements. Fresno County also has social workers identified as court officers who serve as the DSS representative in all court hearings. Court officers also provide support and guidance to case managers on court processes. The court officers are in a unique position to collect data on court continuances and provide insight on issues before the court.

As previously mentioned, the department has a monthly meeting with the Juvenile Court Judges and court personnel to foster collaboration and address any concerns or training needs that may arise. The department has identified several issues to be addressed in regards to court continuances and ongoing collaboration with the court. First, the department will be looking at ways to reconfigure the way court data is collected to ensure accuracy and completeness. Second, the department is will be looking for opportunities to elicit input and feedback from the court specific to court continuances. Lastly, the department will review and update its current policies and procedures on court processes.

In order to move this practice forward, the department will continue to partner with the Court to analyze existing data on continuances and develop a process for collecting detailed and accurate data. A workgroup will be developed to review all policies and procedures as they relate to the court process and work with the Child Welfare Program Specialist to revise the policies as appropriate. The workgroup will also identify any training needs for staff in regards to court continuances. The department will also continue to work together with the court as they explore options for contracted legal representation for parents. The department expects the action steps discussed below will help promote greater collaboration and partnership with the court in the 2019-2024 SIP cycle.

Action Steps

- A. Convene a meeting with the juvenile court judges. The department will convene a small group discussion with the juvenile court judges to have a detailed and in-depth discussion about court continuances. It is the hope that the court can assist the department in developing next steps and realistic milestones to address court continuances. In addition, the department will discuss court continuances during the monthly meetings held with the court in order to monitor progress and mitigate concerns.
- B. Analyze current data collection methods for continuances. The department will work with the court and the court officers, who represent the department in court, to obtain clear data on the number and reasons for court continuances. The department will focus its efforts on identifying department caused continuances.
- C. Train supervisors to monitor, review and remind staff of court report due dates during weekly/monthly conferences.
- D. Expand the use of technology to improve timeliness of court reports such as electronic filing, going paperless, text reminders for mediation and court hearing in an effort to minimize continuances. The department is currently pursuing several of these ideas and will continue to work towards developing its use of technology to improve the timeliness of court reports.
- E. Develop a data dashboard to monitor department caused court continuances. Data will be collected from the court and court officers on a quarterly basis to monitor continuances over time.

Evaluating and Monitoring

The department will continue to evaluate and monitor court continuances through data collection from the court and court officers. The department will continue to meet with the juvenile court judges and court personnel to discuss challenges in regards to court continuances and to make adjustments to policy and practice as information and tools are evaluated through the implementation of this strategy.

Systemic Changes Needed

The systemic changes needed for successful implementation of this strategy involve expanding the use of technology. The department has been in the process of going paperless since 2018. This process requires a great deal of procedural changes and coordination for successful implementation. As part of the department's efforts to go paperless, the department is exploring methods for electronic signatures on department wide documents, which includes court reports and other court documents.

Education and Training Needs

The department will collaborate with the Information Technology (IT) department as the use of technology is being explored for this strategy. Should the need for training arise, the department will consult with the IT department Staff Development to assist in creating training tools.

Roles of Other Partners

The department will collaborate closely with the court, as the feedback and buy-in from the court will be essential to the successful implementation of this strategy.

Technical Assistance

The department will seek technical assistance from its IT department to assist with obtaining the technology needed to implement electronic signatures.

Probation –

Introduction

During the County Self-Assessment (CSA) process, Probation was able to obtain valuable feedback from the Stakeholder Meeting, Peer Review, Focus Groups, and Federal Data Measures. Through the CSA process, it was determined that Probation will focus on improving Federal Data Measure P-1 Permanency in 12 Months (entering foster care) and P-2 Permanency in 12 months (in care 12-23 months) for the System Improvement Plan (SIP).

Prioritization of Outcome Data Measures/Systemic Factors and Strategy Rational

Permanency has been a continuing challenge for our foster youth on Probation; therefore, efforts will be made to improve the outcomes for both P1 Permanency in 12 months (entering foster care) and P2 Permanency in 12 months (in care 12 – 23 months). The National Standard for P1 is 40.5% and Probation’s baseline performance for Q4 2018 was 18.6%. Additionally, the National Standard for P2 is 43.6%, and Probation’s baseline performance for Q4 2018 was 14.3%.

Through the self-assessment process, systematic factors that have contributed to Probation’s struggle to achieve the National Standard regarding the permanency measures were identified, and through the 5-year system improvement plan cycle, strategies will be implemented to make improvement.

These strategies will focus on improved and continuous family finding efforts and implementation of services to be available to reunifying families.

Youth who are on Probation for victimizing a sibling in the home, often related to a sex offense, and the family is unable to provide a plan of care, are removed from the home and enter foster care in an effort to mitigate future victimization. In these circumstances, achieving permanency in 12 months is often challenging due to various reasons. Often times the victim of the offense continues to reside in the home, and as it is deemed unsafe to return the youth home to prevent further victimization. Additionally, when a youth is placed in a sex offender program, their timeline of completion is dependent on how well they are responding/participating with the program. Another factor that can delay completion of a sex offender program within one year is if the youth runs away or gets terminated from the placement. If this occurs and the placement will not allow the youth to return to their program, the youth will lose the progress they made at the previous treatment program, as most clinicians will not accept the progress made from another program.

Other challenges of achieving permanency occur when neither parent is suitable, and family finding efforts are unable to locate and identify a willing and/or suitable placement option for the youth. In these circumstances, upon the youth completing their Court-ordered programs, a Welfare & Institutions Code (WIC) 241.1 staffing with Child Welfare is initiated and the youth is transferred to the jurisdiction of the Dependency Court, as keeping them on probation is no

longer justified.

Family finding is a continuous process, and the inception of the Child Family Team (CFT) meetings has assisted the family finding process. Probation currently has two full-time social workers from Focus Forward, a community-based organization, whose primary responsibility it to facilitate CFTs and assist with providing services to youth and their families. The engagement that the social workers have with the youth and their families has been helpful with the family finding process, and it is expected that their role will continue to assist with youth reaching permanency in a timely manner.

It should be noted that permanency in 12 months (in care 24 or more) was identified as an area of focus for the previous SIP but remains an area that needs improvement. Probation did not meet the outcome goals identified in the previous SIP cycle due to much of the resources at the time being dedicated to the implementation of everything related to the Continuum of Care Reform. One of the previous strategies to improve outcomes for this measure was to pursue guardianship for youth placed with long-term caregivers but unfortunately, probation was not able to achieve this goal during the previous SIP. It is promising to note that probation was successful in having guardianship granted for a foster youth on probation through our Delinquency Court in August of 2019. Therefore, guardianship will now be a realistic permanency option for foster youth on Probation.

Unlike Child Welfare, Probation has not had services available to parents, outside of wraparound services, to assist with strengthening parenting practices. It is believed that improved parenting practices will lead to a more stable environment for reunifying youth, therefore improving permanency. Child Welfare utilizes Focus Forward to provide Nurturing Parenting Programs for parents in their jurisdiction, and probation currently utilizes Focus Forward to facilitate their CFT's. Due to Focus Forward having the ability to provide this programming, and the working relationship already established with probation, the plan is to begin implementing the Nurturing Parent Program for parents with placement involved youth on probation.

Strategy: Improve Family Finding

Actions Steps

- A. Provide Family Finding training to the Probation Officers assigned to the Placement Unit. (June 2020 – June 2021)
To ensure all Probation Officers assigned to the Placement Unit know how to use the resources available to conduct family finding efforts, training(s) will be provided. The Probation Services Manager (PSM) assigned to the Placement Unit will coordinate with Child Welfare for Child Welfare to provide training regarding family finding resources available through the two department's collaborative partnership. Additionally, the Placement PSM will research available training opportunities, which may include the Chief Probation Officer of California (CPOC) training curriculum.

- B. Develop Protocol to ensure Family Finding is a continuous process. (June 2021 – December 2021)
In an effort to promote family finding as a continuous process for all youth in foster care and on probation, the Placement Unit PSM will develop a system to ensure this is occurring. Options may include the PSM having regular scheduled meetings with the respective officers assigned to the Placement caseloads to discuss family finding strategies and outcomes and making family finding a reoccurring topic at unit meetings.
- C. Develop system to evaluate and monitor family finding efforts. (June 2021 – June 2022)
The Juvenile Division Director, the Information Technology Manager, and the Placement Unit PSM, will work together to develop data tracking points in the departments pre-existing case management system. The ability to track efforts and outcomes of family finding will allow for well-informed decision-making and analysis for continued efforts in this category.
- D. Placement probation officers and support staff to receive CWS/CMS training (June 2020 – June 2021)
To ensure appropriate information is being entered and captured for accurate outcome information related to permanency and other foster youth related data, all probation officers assigned to the placement unit and related support staff will be required to attend CWS/CMS training. The PSM will be responsible to schedule this training, which is currently being offered via CPOC's training curriculum.

Strategy: Provide Parental Support

Action Steps

- A. Develop contract with Focus Forward to provide Nurturing Parenting Program (January 2021 – January 2022)
The PSM, Juvenile Division Director, and the Administrative Director will coordinate with Focus Forward to develop a contract where probation officers can refer identified parents of youth in placement to the Nurturing Parenting Program.
- B. Provide training to probation officers regarding the Nurturing Parenting Program. (January 2022 – June 2022)
The PSM will work with Focus Forward to provide a presentation to the probation officers regarding the curriculum of the Nurturing Parenting Program and present how the referral process will work.
- C. Identify and refer reunifying families to the Nurturing Parenting Program (June 2022 – Ongoing)
Upon completion of the training and referral system being developed, the probation officers will begin presenting the program to the families and making referrals as appropriate.

- D. Develop system to evaluate and monitor referrals and outcomes of the Nurturing Parent Program participants. (March 2022 – Ongoing)

The Juvenile Division Director, the Information Technology Manager, and the Placement Unit PSM, will work together to develop data tracking points in the departments pre-existing case management system. The ability to track efforts and outcomes of the Nurturing Parent Program, which will allow for well-informed decision-making and analysis for continued efforts in this category.

Summary of Child Welfare Data for Performing and Underperforming Measures

***These measures indicate areas of focus for this SIP Report

**Most recent State performance is the combined total for all counties in California

Measures highlighted in green indicate areas that are meeting the Federal or State standard.

Measures highlighted in red indicate areas that are not meeting the Federal or State standard.

Baseline Quarter vs. Current Performance Quarter

Measure	Baseline (Q4 2018)	Current Performance (Q1 2019)	Desired Direction	Most Recent State Performance**	National Standard or Goal
S1 Maltreatment in Foster Care	5.88%	4.59%	↓	7.33 %	≤8.50 %
S2 Recurrence of Maltreatment	5.8%	6.1%	↓	9.2%	≤9.1%
P1 Permanency in 12 months (entering care)***	24.9%	23.2%	↑	33.6 %	≥40.5 %
P2 Permanency in 12 months for children in care 12-23 months	5252.0 %	48.4%	↑	45.3 %	≥43.6 %
P3 Permanency in 12 months for children in care 24 months or more	28.1%	25.2%	↑	32.3 %	≥30.3 %
P4 Re-entry to foster care in 12 months	9.6%	8.1%	↓	10.3 %	≤8.3%
P5 Placement stability	4.2020 %	4.11%	↑	3.75 %	≤4.12 %

Measure	Baseline (Q4 2018)	Current Performance (Q1 2019)	Desired Direction	Most Recent State Performance**	National Standard or Goal
2B Timely Response (Immediate Response)	9898.7%	97.7%	↑	96.2%	≥90.0%
2B Timely Response (10 days)	8787.3%	83.2%	↑	90.0%	≥90.0%
2D Timely Response – Completed (Immediate Response)	93.1%	91.6%	↑	91.6%	N/A
2D Timely Response – Completed (10 days)	5656.7%	54.3%	↑	64.6%	N/A
2F Timely Visits (Out of Home)	93.0%	93.3%	↑	95.0%	≥95.0%
2F Timely Visits in Residence (Out of Home)	94.5%	94.8%	↑	79.4%	≥50.0%
4A Siblings (All)	5151.6%	54.3%	↑	52.0%	N/A
4A Siblings (Some or All)	76.8%	77.4%	↑	72.4%	N/A

Source: California Child Welfare Indicators Project

Measure	Baseline (2018 Q4)	Current Performance (2019 Q1)	Desired Direction	Most Recent State Performance	National Standard or Goal
4B Least Restrictive (Entries First Placement)	Relative Homes				
	14.0%	12.6%	↑	29.8%	N/A
	County Foster Homes				
	22.2%	20.8%	N/A	20.8%	N/A
	Foster Family Certified Homes				
	58.8%	61.4%	N/A	36.8%	N/A
	Group Homes				
	3.6%	3.9%	↓	9.9%	N/A
	Other				
	1.4%	1.3%	N/A	2.6%	N/A
Measure	Baseline (2018 Q4)	Current Performance (2019 Q1)	Desired Direction	Most Recent State Performance	National Standard or Goal
4B Least Restrictive Placement (Entries Predominant Placement)	Relative Homes				
	2626.0%	29.0%	↑	41.1%	N/A
	County Foster Homes				
	17.1%	16.7%	N/A	17.3%	N/A
	Foster Family Certified Homes				
	4747.9%	45.4%	N/A	29.9%	N/A
	Group Homes				
	5.0%	4.7%	↓	7.1%	N/A
	Other				
	4.0%	4.2%	N/A	4.7%	N/A

Source: California Child Welfare Indicators Project

Summary of Probation Data for Performing and Underperforming Measures

***These measures indicate areas of focus for this SIP Report

Measures highlighted in green indicate areas that are meeting the Federal or State standard.

Measures highlighted in red indicate areas that are not meeting the Federal or State standard.

Baseline Quarter vs. Current Performance Quarter

Measure	Baseline (Q4 2018)	Current Performance (Q1 2019)	Desired Direction	National Standard
S1 Maltreatment in Foster Care	9.3%	12.69%	↓	≤8.5%
P1 Permanency in 12 months (entering care)	18.6%	17.5%	↑	≥40.5%
P2 Permanency in 12 months for children in care 12-23 months	14.3%	7.1%	↑	≥43.6%
P3 Permanency in 12 months for children in care 24 months or more	0.0%	11.1%	↑	≥30.3%
P4 Re-entry to foster care in 12 months	50%	25%	↓	≤8.3%
P5 Placement stability	2.7373%	2.23%	↑	≤4.12%

Source: California Child Welfare Indicators Project

2F Timely Visits (Out of Home)	72.72%	69.9%	↑	≥95.0%
2F Timely Visits in Residence (Out of Home)	79.6%	74%	↑	≥50.0%

Source: California Child Welfare Indicators Project

S1 - Maltreatment in Foster Care

Every effort continues to be made to ensure youth are placed in safe and appropriate placements, including Short Term Residential Therapeutic Programs and Resource Families. To mitigate maltreatment in care, probation officers will continue to ensure timely monthly face-to-face visits with the youth and maintain regular contact with the care providers. Additionally, probation officers will inquire about the youth's physical, emotional, and psychological status during their contacts.

P1 - Permanency in 12 months (entering care)

Achieving permanency in 12 months (entering care) for youth on probation is challenging due to multiple factors. At the time of disposition, the Court may order the youth to serve a commitment at the Juvenile Justice Campus, with the amount of days dependent on the youth's age, delinquent history, and severity of offense. Upon completion of the commitment, youth may remain in custody pending suitable placement. Youth who have not performed well in previous placements or have unique needs such as being a victim of human trafficking or severe behavioral issues are often more difficult to place as programs are less likely to accept, therefore prolonging their time pending placement.

Once placed, it is not uncommon for probation youth to abscond from placement, resulting in their whereabouts being unknown, which leads to the Court issuing a warrant for their arrest. Upon being arrested and returning to custody, the cycle repeats itself regarding a possible commitment in custody and the time it takes to locate a suitable placement willing to accept the youth.

The above mentioned challenges combined with the challenges to locate suitable family who are willing and/or capable completing the RFA process all have an effect on probation's ability to reach permanency in 12 months with youth in foster care and one probation

P3 - Permanency in 12 months for children in care 24 months or more

The challenges of achieving permanency in 12 months for children in care 24 months or

more, and on probation are the same as the barriers identified with reaching permanency in 12 months. If youth continue to be in care after 24 months, it is likely that the continued family finding efforts have not been successful and/or the youth has significant challenges that have prevented him or her from remaining in a placement for a period of time.

P4 - Re-entry to foster care in 12 months

Unfortunately, reunification and permanency efforts are not always successful. While every effort is made to prepare and provide supports to a reunifying family, sometimes those efforts fail. In those situations, due to a variety of circumstances, the only option may be return the youth to foster care.

2F - Timely Visits (Out of Home)

Due to the continued turnover of staff in the Probation Department, combined with reassignments and promotions, maintaining accurate and timely CWS/CMS entries will continue to be a challenge. During this rating period, the placement unit had multiple new hires in the unit who were required to undergo their initial probation officer training while simultaneously learning about managing their caseloads of foster youth on probation. Regardless of staffing issues, monthly face-to-face contacts are a priority and are completed, but improvement is needed with data entry.

Summary of Child Welfare SIP Prioritizations

As previously stated, Fresno County Child Welfare has prioritized the following outcome measures that were performing below the National Standard. In addition, Fresno County has prioritized the following systemic factors that were noted as an area needing improvement in the CSA for this 5-year SIP. Please see the Strategy Analysis section on pages 21 – 33 for further analysis of these measures:

- Child Welfare – P1 Permanency in 12 Months (entering foster care)
- Child Welfare – P3 Permanency in 12 Months (24 months or more)
- Child Welfare – Staff, Caregiver, and Provider Training
- Child Welfare – Agency Collaboration – Court

Fresno County Child Welfare’s baseline data shows performance below the National Standard for the following outcomes measures:

- 2B Timely Response (10 days)
- 2F Timely Visits (Out of Home)

Fresno County Child Welfare’s performance in outcome measures 2B and 2F are below the State

Standard. However, compared to P1, the discrepancy between Child Welfare’s performance and the State Standard is minimal. In addition, measure P3 was selected even though the discrepancy between Fresno County’s performance and the National Standard is not as significant as P1, it was a logical choice as the strategies implemented for P1 should have a positive impact on P3. Finally, the systemic factors of Staff, Caregiver, and Provider Training and Agency Collaboration – Court were identified as areas needing improvement in the focus groups and Peer Review conducted during the CSA process. Measures 2B and 2F were not identified as areas needing improvement in the CSA.

2B Timely Response (10 Days)			
2015	2016	2017	2018
88.5%	90.6%	89.5%	88.6%

Based upon a four-year trend, Child Welfare’s performance for measure 2B was at or slightly below the State goal of 90% of referrals with a timely response for 10-day response. For the years 2015, 2017, and 2018, Fresno County was .5% - 1.5% percent below the State standard. This reduction in timely response may be due, in part, to staff turnover. According to the CSA, social work staff turnover for the same time period was at 61%. Vacant positions increase caseloads for existing Social Workers thus causing delays in response times. As reported in the CSA, caseload sizes in Emergency Response (ER) average 15-29 referrals per month.

It is the expectation that Fresno County Social Workers in ER complete 100% of responses within the mandated timeframes. Fresno County will be addressing this area through close monitoring and reviews. For example, Social Work Supervisors meet with their staff on a monthly basis at which time Safe Measures is reviewed for compliance with timeliness. In addition, Program Managers (PM) randomly pull referrals to review for quality assurance purposes to ensure a thorough assessment was completed and documented, the referral was responded to timely, and Structured Decision Making tools were completed, as appropriate.

2F Timely Visits (Out of Home)			
2015	2016	2017	2018
94.1%	95.3%	94.4%	93.8%

The standard for 2F Timely Visits (out of home) is 95%. From 2015-2018, Fresno County was at or slightly below the State standard. For the years 2015, 2017, and 2018, Fresno County was .6% - 1.2% percent below the State standard. It should be noted that measure 2F Timely Visits in Residence (Out of Home) the State standard is 50% however Fresno County is consistently well above this benchmark. This is due to a policy requiring that all out of home visits be conducted in the residence. Fresno County will continue to strive to meet the standard for both outcomes measures. The department is committed to continuous analysis and implementation of quality improvement measures to increase positive outcomes for children and families. Organizational and systemic process concerns will be addressed by the Child Welfare Leadership team.

While there are no national standards for the following outcome measures, baseline data

suggests that Fresno County needs to improve its performance when compared to statewide performance for the following outcome measures:

- 4B Least Restrictive Placement (Entries with First Placement)
 - Relative Homes
- 4B Least Restrictive Placement (Entries Predominant Placement)
 - Relative Homes

These outcome measures will be addressed by Fresno County Child Welfare with the strengthening of other initiatives such as Child and Family Team meeting, Family Finding, Child and Family Service Reviews (CFSR), and/or through prevention and intervention services performed by the county's OCAP funded partners.

Prioritization of Direct Service Needs

PSSF, CAPIT, and CBCAP funding provides child abuse prevention and intervention services throughout the county to ensure the health and well-being of children and families. To the extent possible, the services funded are evidence-based and/or evidence-informed programs.

The Fresno Council on Child Abuse Prevention (FCCAP) acts as the coordinator of community efforts to prevent and respond to child abuse and neglect in Fresno County. FCCAP provides evidence-based prevention and intervention education programs such as; Mandated Reporter training, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES), Stewards of Children (SOC), and Talking about Touching (TAT).

Selection process for the priority direct service needs funded by CAPIT

The following services were identified as being effective in preventing child abuse and neglect.

- Parenting Education
- Early Intervention Services for children ages 0-5
- Housing Assistance
- Transportation
- Neighborhood Resource Centers

Families involved in the child welfare system present with multiple struggles that require support and services to meet their unique needs. With the development of Neighborhood Resource Centers coupled with feedback obtained through the CSA, the department determined the scope of services that should be provided to at risk families. Prevention services funded through CAPIT provide a safety net for children and families at high risk of abuse and neglect.

Evidence-Based and/or Evidence Informed Programs

The Fresno County Department of Social Services is committed to utilizing CAPIT service providers that employ evidence-based and/or evidence informed programs and practices.

CAPIT service providers, specifically Exceptional Parents Unlimited (EPU), utilize the North

Carolina Family Assessment Scales (NCFAS) at intake to assess the family's needs, prioritize goals and services and develop a case plan. The NCFAS is also used to measure the family's progress following the delivery of services. In addition, all Neighborhood Resource Centers input data regarding families and services in the Efforts to Outcome (ETO) database. Providers may incorporate other assessment tools that are evidence based or evidence informed to determine the efficacy of program services. Providers are encouraged to show that their work incorporates best or promising practices or evidence based or evidence informed practices.

Populations at greatest risk of maltreatment

- Children ages 0-5
- Parents who are former victims of child abuse or neglect
- Families with disabilities
- Families with a history of domestic violence
- Families with a history of substance abuse issues
- Racial and ethnic minorities
- Pregnant and parenting teens
- Homeless families
- Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC)
- Families in rural communities

Contract Selection Process (CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF)

Fresno County engages in a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process to select programs and services funded by service providers funded through CAPIT, CBCAP, and PSSF. Current providers are based upon an RFP issued in 2016, which solicited Neighborhood Resource Center services and Differential Response. A new RFP will not be conducted until 2021.

For the upcoming RFP, the Department intends to continue to use CAPIT, CBCAP, and PSSF funding to continue to support NRCs and DR. As described in the CSA, there is a lack of resources and services for populations located in rural communities in Fresno County.

Selection Process for the Priority Direct Service Needs Funded by PSSF

Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) funding managed by the Department of Social Services and the oversight authority resides with the Administrative Branch. The criteria for determining which services will be provided using this particular funding stream is based on the needs of the children and families involved with child welfare. As identified in the CSA, the priority needs identified include:

- More aftercare services for children and families when cases close
- The need to expedite parents getting into court ordered services
- More services to the rural areas
- More substance abuse services for youth

It was determined that aftercare services for children and families upon the closure of a case was a priority need. Fresno County has dedicated PSSF funding to four contracted agencies to provide preventative services through Differential Response (DR) and Neighborhood Resource Centers (NRC), which includes a pathway four response for families who have reunified. Some of these services include parenting education, counseling, substance abuse treatment for adults and youth, domestic violence treatment, and housing. The goal of these aftercare services to support families as they transition out of the foster care system and reduce recurrence of maltreatment and re-entry into the foster care system. In addition, Differential Response providers offer services and support to Fresno County's rural communities.

Fresno County also identified the need to expedite parents getting into court ordered services as a priority need. Similar to the aftercare services, court ordered services are provided through PSSF funding. As part of the SIP, Fresno County will work with vendors and service providers to identify and eliminate barriers to getting parents into court ordered services timely and efficiently. The Department of Social Services has dedicated service coordinators, substance abuse specialists, contracted mental health providers, domestic violence partners, parent partners, and cultural brokers to connect, guide, and support parents as they engage in services.

Child Welfare/Probation Placement Initiatives

Child Welfare

Mental Health Screening Tool

Fresno County utilizes the Child Welfare Resource Referral, which serves as a mental health screening tool. In 2019, the tool was revised and includes behavioral indicators to assist staff in articulating the level of severity in different areas of consideration. The tool is completed by the assigned social worker for each child/youth who is detained by Fresno County Juvenile Dependency Court. The tool is located in CWS/CMS as part of the referral/case management section. The tool is sent upon completion to the Child Welfare Mental Health (CWMH) team for prioritization and referral to one of the contracted vendors. The CWMH team triages the referrals and provides consultation to social work staff regarding mental health questions they may have related to a youth or family. They also determine the expediency of the referral based on the responses within the screening tool. Referral levels are: Urgent (3 days); Priority (15 days); and Routine (30 days). The Child Welfare Resource Referral is not being utilized routinely for yearly mental health re-screening as required in the Katie A. vs. Bonta lawsuit. Child Welfare went through a re-organization of several divisions in an effort to comply with yearly mental health re-screenings.

Child & Adolescent Needs and Services (CANS)

CANS implementation began on September 1, 2018. Fresno County began providing an introduction training to CFT meetings and the CANS tool. The department trains staff to align the

work of all our team members with identified strengths and needs of the child to help achieve a collaborative, consensus-based assessment that aids system understanding of presenting issues, impact and effectiveness across multiple levels – family, program, system.

As Fresno County continues through 2019, the Regional Training Academy is developing additional training to align CANS, CFT, case planning, Structured Decision Making and Safety Organized Practices. The additional training will be offered to staff in early 2020. The Central California Training Academy is currently revamping social worker core training in and will also be available in 2020.

Interagency Resources and Placement Committee (IRPC) aka Interagency Placement Committee (IPC)

Interagency Resources and Placement Committee (IRPC) is a committee that consists of Education, Behavioral Health, Probation and Child Welfare. IRPC meets weekly and reviews referrals for wraparound services as well as recommendations for Short Term Residential Therapeutic Placement (STRTP). The team is provided packets with a referral that provides information as to the youth as well as all supporting documentation from the case that would support the recommendation for wraparound or STRTP placement.

The Social Worker and/or Probation officer provide a verbal presentation based on an outline that is provided to give additional information regarding the youth. The outline allows the team members to hear the current circumstances and ensure that all options have been explored. Additionally, IRPC learns about the Child & Family Teaming meeting recommendations and heavily weighs its decision on that outcome.

Child & Family Teaming (CFT)

Fresno County began CFT's in 2017. The purpose of CFT's is to have an informed discussion with the child and family team to collaboratively develop a case plan that outlines the current situation with clear expectations and agreements regarding the safety, well-being, and relationships leading towards permanency for the child. CFT's are held throughout the life of the case. The first teaming meeting will be held within approximately 60 days of a child entering foster care. Subsequent CFT's will be held every 90 days thereafter or whenever a significant change occurs, and communication and planning is needed. A CFT must convene when there is a placement change, significant event, formal change to the case plan, or by request of the family or team member.

As of April 2019, Fresno County has six CFT facilitators and they have completed 31 CFTs in addition, to continuing to facilitate Team Decision Making meetings at Intake. We expect this number to increase as we move through the year, as the CFT facilitators will now schedule the initial CFT following removal.

Family Finding and Kinship Support

Fresno County prioritizes placement of children with relatives and non-related extended family members in an effort to support permanency and permanent connections. Fresno County has a

dedicated family finding unit to assist in locating relatives and to provide support to Social Workers in pursuit of making permanent connections for children.

Foster Parents Recruitment Retention Support (FRRS)

Child Welfare applied for received FRRS funding for the 2018-2019 budget year. Child Welfare used this funding to provide pre-service training for resource parents, to purchase items for relatives who have taken placement of their kin in order to meet the buildings and grounds requirements of the RFA Written Directives. FRRS funding was also utilized to pay for extracurricular activities for foster youth. Finally, FRRS funds are used to support the Mockingbird Constellation of Resource Families.

Assembly Bill (AB)12

Fresno County social workers supervise approximately 200 non-minor dependent youth between 18-21 years old. An Independent Living Plan (ILP) Social Worker is responsible to work with current and former foster youth aged 14-21 years old. Each ILP social worker is assigned to a specific Permanent Plan Living Arrangement (PPLA) unit and is the point of contact for ILP services with that unit and the PPLA social workers. ILP social workers attend meetings with their assigned PPLA unit and maintain a list of all the ILP eligible youth in that unit. They make quarterly contacts with those ILP eligible youth. They participate in CFTs, 90-day Transition conferences, and TDMs for any ILP eligible youth.

ILP social workers engage the youth one on one and provides referrals and direction to the youth that are ILP eligible either in or after they exit foster care. They assist the AB12 re-entry process. ILP staff meet with the youth, complete the SILP readiness assessment, reviewing and verify the eligibility requirements, maintain monthly contact until the youth has re-entered care, complete the case plan, write the re-entry court report, and attend Court as needed. ILP social workers also create curriculum and teach weekly enrichment classes. The courses offered include: ILP Orientation, Housing & Finance, Safety, Self-Esteem Building, Access to Higher Education, Life Skills, DMV Preparation, and Sexual Health & Adolescent Risk Prevention. Lastly, ILP social workers meet with youth on a “drop-in” basis and assist them with needs they may have, including finding clothing, shelter, and resources.

Certain ILP social workers function as liaisons for youth from other counties to receive ILP services in Fresno County, as these youth would not have the opportunity to receive ILP services since they are placed outside of their county of origin. ILP social workers participate on Fresno County Child Focus Team and review all the cases of youth aged 14-17 that are coming into foster care. The ILP social worker reaches out to the ongoing SW to assist with getting the youth linked to ILP. The ILP social workers also put on events such as ILP graduation and smaller celebrations.

Fresno Implementation Team (FIT)

FIT began in 2015. Its purpose is to embed the core practice model into the Child Welfare System in order improve our outcomes. The success of FIT shall be determined by six data measures:

1. Decrease entries into foster care
2. Decrease reoccurrence of maltreatment
3. Increase rate of first placement with kin

4. Increase overall Kinship placements
5. Increase timeliness of Permanency
6. Decrease reentry into foster care

Each subcommittee's goals are created to help achieve the one or more of the six data measures. There are seven subcommittees that makeup the FIT team:

1. Supervisor Learning Circles (SLC)
2. Communication
3. Data & Evaluation
4. Family Teaming
5. Equity & Practice
6. Campus Development
7. Child Welfare Training Plan

Continuum of Care Reform (CCR)

Fresno County has fully implemented CCR. Fresno County efforts regarding CCR are centered on our Resource Family Approval (RFA) units. First, priority is given for relative home approval to relatives who obtained emergency placement of their kin and must now complete the approval process. Second, priority is for those families interested in becoming a resource parent but who do not yet have placement of a child. Fresno County engaged Foster Family Agency (FFA) partners to assist in processing non-relatives who are interested in foster care.

FFAs, STRTPs, and social workers will provide trauma informed and culturally relevant core services to foster youth. These core services are offered to the child along the continuum of care or the placement settings deemed best and most appropriate for the youth or child on their path towards reunification or permanency.

Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS)

Fresno County began STS education for staff in 2017. STS training is mandatory for all staff. At this time, Fresno County is receiving technical assistance from private contractors. They teach, coach and mentor supervisory staff who in turn, transfer these skills, knowledge, and abilities to social work staff. Fresno County has completed five modules. The curriculum of these early modules included: Understanding Secondary Traumatic Stress, focusing on rewarding aspects of the job, and increased ability to perform job tasks with excellence. Supervisory staff recently completed training for modules six through nine and will begin training social work staff soon.

5 – YEAR SIP CHART CHILD WELFARE

Priority Outcome Measure or Systemic Factor: 3-P1 Permanency in 12 Months (entering foster care)

National Standard: $\geq 40.5\%$

CSA Baseline Performance: **21.7%** (Q4 2018). According to the Q4 2018 data reports, there were 938 children with entries between 1/1/2017-12/31/2017. Of those 938 children, 204 exited from foster care to permanency (reunification, guardianship, or adoption) within 12 months (21.7%)

Target Improvement Goal: Year 3 (December 27, 2021 – December 27, 2022): $\geq 26.1\%$
Year 4 (December 27, 2022 – December 27, 2023): $\geq 30.5\%$
Year 5 (December 27, 2023 – December 27, 2024): $\geq 35.0\%$

(Due to the time it will take to implement the strategies and the methodology for 3-P1, the county does not anticipate any significant data changes until Year 3).

If the permanency population remains static at 938 children for the next 5 years, Fresno County will have to establish permanency for approximately:

- 44244 children to meet the year 3 benchmark goal of $\geq 26.1\%$
- 286 children to meet the year 4 benchmark goal of $\geq 30.5\%$
- 328 children to meet the year 5 benchmark goal of $\geq 35.0\%$

Priority Outcome Measure or Systemic Factor: 3-P3 Permanency in 12 Months (24 months or more)

National Standard: $\geq 30.3\%$

CSA Baseline Performance: **28.1%** (Q4 2018). According to the Q4 2018 data reports, there were 427 children in care 24 months or more between 1/1/2018-12/31/2018. Of those 427 children, 120 exited from foster care to permanency (reunification, guardianship, or adoption) within 12 months (28.1%).

Target Improvement Goal: Year 3 (December 27, 2021 – December 27, 2022): $\geq 28.8\%$
Year 4 (December 27, 2022 – December 27, 2023): $\geq 29.5\%$
Year 5 (December 27, 2023 – December 27, 2024): $\geq 30.3\%$

(Due to the time it will take to implement the strategies and the methodology for 3-P3, the county does not anticipate any significant data changes until Year 3).

If the permanency population remains static at 427 children for the next 5 years, Fresno County will have to establish permanency for approximately:

- 122 children to meet the year 3 benchmark goal of $\geq 28.8\%$
- 125 children to meet the year 4 benchmark goal of $\geq 29.5\%$
- 129 children to meet the year 5 benchmark goal of $\geq 30.3\%$

Priority Outcome Measure or Systemic Factor: Staff, Caregiver, and Provider Training

National Standard: N/A

CSA Baseline Performance: 61% (as reported in the CSA). According to Fresno County's employment data from 2015-2018, Child Welfare hired 379 Social Worker positions. During the same time period, there were 229 workers leaving social work positions at a rate of 61%. Conversely, the retention rate is 39%.

Target Improvement Goal: Increase staff retention by 20% by the end of year five of the SIP.

Year 2 (December 27, 2020 – December 27, 2021): 44%
 Year 3 (December 27, 2021 – December 27, 2022): 49%
 Year 4 (December 27, 2022 – December 27, 2023): 54%
 Year 5 (December 27, 2023 – December 27, 2024): 59%

(Due to the time it will take to implement the strategies and the methodology for Social Work Staff Retention, the county does not anticipate any significant data changes until Year 2).

Priority Outcome Measure or Systemic Factor: Agency Collaboration - Court

National Standard: N/A

CSA Baseline Performance: There is no baseline performance as reported in the CSA regarding Agency Collaboration – Court. Current court data from 2016-2018 reflects the overall Juvenile Court continuances rate between 16.1% - 16.7%.

Target Improvement Goal: Decrease court continuances by 30% by the end of year five of the SIP.

Year 2 (December 27, 2020 – December 27, 2021): 15.4%
 Year 3 (December 27, 2021 – December 27, 2022): 14.2%
 Year 4 (December 27, 2022 – December 27, 2023): 12.9%
 Year 5 (December 27, 2023 – December 27, 2024): 11.7%

(Due to the time it will take to implement the strategies and the methodology for Agency Collaboration - Court, the county does not anticipate any significant data changes until Year 2).

Strategy 1: Strengthen child and family team (CFT) meetings in order to identify permanency outcomes early and ongoing throughout the life of a case.	<input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT	Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s): 3-P1 Permanency in 12 Months (entering foster care) 3-P3 Permanency in 12 Months (in care 24 months or more)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP		
	<input type="checkbox"/> PSSF	<input type="checkbox"/> Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A		
Action Steps:	Implementation Date:	Completion Date:	Person Responsible:
A. Develop a CFT policy and procedure guide adhering to the state guidelines and feedback received during the CSA.	June 2020	December 2020	CWS Program Manager CFT Implementation Workgroup CWS Program Specialist
B. Provide training to child welfare staff on the CFT policy and procedure guide. B1. Provide training to all new child welfare staff on the CFT policy and procedure guide in induction training. B2. Provide a refresher course to all current staff and have ongoing courses for newly hired staff.	January 2021	December 2021	CWS Program Manager CFT Implementation Workgroup Fresno County Staff Development

<p>C. Ensure that all CFT meetings are documented in CWS/CMS in order to accurately capture the frequency of CFT meetings as provided in Safe Measures.</p>	<p>January 2022</p>	<p>December 2022</p>	<p>CWS Program Manager CFT Implementation Workgroup CWS SIP Strategy Lead</p>
<p>D. Evaluate and monitor CFT meeting implementation including.</p> <p>D1. The department will evaluate and monitor adherence to the policy and procedure, quality of the CFT meeting, and responsiveness of team members by developing, testing the validity, and administering surveys to participants.</p> <p>D2. The department will also monitor the number of CFT meetings through monthly Safe Measures data extracts.</p>	<p>January 2022</p>	<p>December 2022</p>	<p>CWS Leadership Team CWS Program Manger CWS SIP Strategy Lead CFT Implementation Workgroup</p>

Strategy 2: Implement intensive family finding efforts to ensure that children and youth in care can maintain and develop permanent connections with relatives and other important individuals in their lives early and ongoing.	<input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT	Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s): 3-P1 Permanency in 12 Months (entering foster care) 3-P3 Permanency in 12 Months (in care 24 months or more)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP		
	<input type="checkbox"/> PSSF	<input type="checkbox"/> Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A		
Action Steps:	Implementation Date:	Completion Date:	Person Responsible:
A. Develop a family finding policy and procedure guide that defines the continuum of family finding and engagement efforts across the child welfare spectrum from prevention through permanency.	June 2020	December 2020	CWS Program Manager CWS Family Finding Social Work Supervisor Family Finding Strategy Workgroup
B. Provide in-house training to child welfare staff on the family finding policy and procedure guide. B1. The family finding unit will provide training to all child welfare staff on the family finding policy and procedure guide by individual units throughout the department until all staff have been trained B2. Provide a refresher course to all current staff and have ongoing trainings for newly hired staff.	January 2021	December 2021	CWS Program Manager CWS Family Finding Social Work Supervisor CWS Family Finding Unit Family Finding Strategy Workgroup

<p>C. Analyze current data collection methods for family finding referrals and outcomes, including the number of referrals received and the information that is documented in CWS/CMS on family finding results.</p>	<p>January 2022</p>	<p>June 2022</p>	<p>CWS Program Manager CWS Family Finding Social Work Supervisor Family Finding Strategy Workgroup</p>
<p>D. Evaluate and intensive family finding efforts including:</p> <p>D1. Monitor the number of family finding referrals received, from staff.</p> <p>D2. Evaluate family finding efforts as documented in CWS/CMS, social for consistency.</p> <p>D3. Social work supervisors will review of family finding efforts as documented in court reports, to ensure social workers have followed up on family finding results and engaged relatives and mentors appropriately in the child’s case plan.</p> <p>D4. The department will monitor the number of children/youth placed with relatives.</p> <p>D5. Evaluate CQI case reviews, monitoring that monitor federal measures on permanency.</p>	<p>June 2022</p>	<p>June 2023</p>	<p>CWS Program Manager CWS Family Finding Social Work Supervisor Family Finding Strategy Workgroup</p>

Strategy 3: Expedite services to parents to ensure that parents are able to reunify with their children in a timely manner.	<input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT	Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s): 3-P1 Permanency in 12 Months (entering foster care)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP		
	<input type="checkbox"/> PSSF	<input type="checkbox"/> Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A		
Action Steps:	Implementation Date:	Completion Date:	Person Responsible:
A. Create a strategy workgroup to continue analyzing Fresno County's current service delivery system.	June 2020	December 2020	CWS Program Manager CWS Social Work Supervisor CWS Services Coordinator
B. Review and monitor Fresno County's current internal and external service delivery system to identify any systemic barriers to timely service delivery.	January 2021	December 2021	CWS Program Manager CWS Social Work Supervisor CWS Services Strategy Workgroup
C. Analyze child welfare staffing needs in order to ensure timely service delivery to parents.	January 2022	June 2022	CWS Program Manager CWS Social Work Supervisor CWS Services Strategy Workgroup

<p>D. Provide training for child welfare staff and service providers in order to expedite timely service delivery to parents.</p> <p>D1. Provide guidance and training for child welfare staff on the needs assessment of parents so that appropriate referrals for services are made.</p> <p>D2. Provide training to service providers regarding the child welfare court process and timelines with which parents have to reunify with their children.</p>	<p>June 2022</p>	<p>June 2023</p>	<p>CWS Program Manager CWS Social Work Supervisor CWS Services Strategy Workgroup</p>
<p>E. Monitor and evaluate the service delivery system with an analysis completed a minimum of every six months on the timeliness and quality of services including: substance abuse treatment, domestic violence treatment, mental health treatment, parenting classes, and visitation services.</p>	<p>June 2023</p>	<p>December 2024</p>	<p>CWS Social Work Supervisor CWS Services Coordinator CWS Services Strategy Workgroup</p>

Strategy 4: Develop a peer mentoring/training program for social work staff so they feel more supported and are better equipped to meet job expectations.	<input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT	Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s): Staff, Caregiver, and Provider Training	
	<input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP		
	<input type="checkbox"/> PSSF	<input type="checkbox"/> Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A		
Action Steps:	Implementation Date:	Completion Date:	Person Responsible:
A. Convene a mentoring/training workgroup to create a strategic plan for a mentoring/training program.	June 2020	December 2020	CWS Program Manager CWS Social Work Supervisors
B. Collaborate with Fresno County Staff Development to coordinate the social worker core training with practice elements and practices needed for the mentoring/training program in order to ensure the core training curriculum and mentoring/training practice elements are aligned.	January 2021	December 2021	CWS Program Manager CWS Social Work Supervisors DSS Staff Development Staff Mentoring/Training Workgroup
C. Develop a work proposal for the mentoring/training program to present to the Child Welfare Leadership team.	January 2022	June 2022	CWS Program Manager CWS Social Work Supervisors DSS Staff Development Staff Mentoring/Training Workgroup

<p>D. Develop a training curriculum for trainers/mentors utilizing the current family reunification training unit as a model to develop and expand the current training program for newly hired social workers.</p>	<p>June 2022</p>	<p>June 2023</p>	<p>CWS Program Manager CWS Social Work Supervisors DSS Staff Development Staff Mentoring/Training Workgroup</p>
<p>Evaluate and monitor the mentoring/training program, which will include.</p> <p>E1. Develop and administer job satisfaction surveys for newly hired social workers and to be administered every six months for the first two years of employment.</p> <p>E2. Develop and administer exit surveys for all social workers leaving county employment.</p>	<p>June 2023</p>	<p>December 2024</p>	<p>CWS Program Manager CWS Social Work Supervisors DSS Staff Development Staff Mentoring/Training Workgroup</p>

Strategy 5: Enhance social work supervisor training and coaching in order to help supervisors provide greater support and guidance to their staff.	<input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT	Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s): Staff, Caregiver, and Provider Training	
	<input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP		
	<input type="checkbox"/> PSSF	<input type="checkbox"/> Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A		
Action Steps:	Implementation Date:	Completion Date:	Person Responsible:
A. Collaborate with Staff Development to monitor completion of the supervisor leadership training and develop a plan for ongoing leadership training opportunities for newly promoted supervisors.	June 2020	January 2021	CWS Program Manager(s) DSS Staff Development
B. Create a workgroup to develop assessment tools to evaluate the effectiveness of the social work supervisor leadership training and ongoing contracted coaching for administration to supervisors and line staff.	June 2021	January 2022	CWS Program Manager(s) DSS Staff Development
C. Develop evaluation tools/surveys to assess the fidelity of supervisors' use of the leadership skills and tools learned in leadership training and coaching sessions.	January 2022	December 2022	CWS Program Manager(s) DSS Staff Development CWS Strategy Workgroup

<p>D. Administer evaluation surveys and develop a schedule to administer evaluation surveys annually.</p> <p>D1. Administer evaluation surveys to all social workers whose supervisor has completed leadership training.</p> <p>D2. Administer evaluation surveys to all social workers annually.</p>	<p>December 2022</p>	<p>December 2024</p>	<p>CWS Program Manager(s) DSS Staff Development CWS Strategy Workgroup</p>
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Strategy 6: Improve the quality of court reports in order to provide comprehensive and detailed assessments and recommendations to the court regarding child welfare families.	<input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT	Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s): Staff, Caregiver and, Provider Training	
	<input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP		
	<input type="checkbox"/> PSSF	<input type="checkbox"/> Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A		
Action Steps:	Implementation Date:	Completion Date:	Person Responsible:
A. Convene a workgroup to develop a plan to improve the quality of court reports.	June 2020	December 2020	CWS Program Manager CWS Social Work Supervisor CWS Social Workers
B. Review a sample of court reports to identify strengths and areas needing improvement.	June 2020	December 2020	CWS Program Manager CWS Social Work Supervisor CWS Social Workers CWS Strategy Workgroup
C. Review court reports from other counties for formatting and content. C1. Determine elements to include in Fresno County's court reports that are in-line with best practices and feedback from the court.	January 2021	June 2021	CWS Program Manager CWS Social Work Supervisor CWS Social Workers CWS Strategy Workgroup

<p>D. Consult with County Counsel on developing training materials checklist for social workers onto ensure that court report writing standards are met.</p>	June 2021	December 2021	<p>CWS Program Manager CWS Social Work Supervisor CWS Social Workers County Counsel CWS Strategy Workgroup</p>
<p>E. Provide training to social workers and social work supervisors on court report writing.</p> <p>E1. The department will provide training to all child welfare staff on court report writing by task area throughout the department until all staff have been trained.</p> <p>E2. Provide a refresher course to all current staff and have ongoing trainings for newly hired staff.</p>	January 2022	December 2022	<p>CWS Program Manager CWS Social Work Supervisor CWS Social Workers County Counsel CWS Strategy Workgroup</p>
<p>F. Monitor and evaluate court reports for consistency and detail (post training).</p> <p>F1. Court reports are reviewed on a continuous basis by Social Work Supervisors for consistency and detail.</p> <p>F2. Court officers will review court reports on a quarterly basis to ensure that all standards are met using the checklist tool developed for social workers.</p>	January 2022	December 2023	<p>CWS Program Manager CWS Social Work Supervisor CWS Social Workers CWS Strategy Workgroup</p>

<p>F3. A qualitative data report will be developed on a quarterly basis and provided to leadership. Areas that are meeting the standard, as well as areas needing improvement will be addressed by the Social Work Supervisor to staff.</p>			
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Strategy 7: Reduce court continuances in order to avoid unnecessary delays in case progression for children and families.	<input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT	Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s): Agency Collaboration – Court	
	<input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP		
	<input type="checkbox"/> PSSF	<input type="checkbox"/> Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A		
Action Steps:	Implementation Date:	Completion Date:	Person Responsible:
A. Convene a meeting with the juvenile court judges to have a detailed and in-depth discussions regarding court continuances.	June 2020	December 2020	CWS Program Manager CWS Social Work Supervisor CWS Court Officers
B. Analyze the current data collection methods by CWS court officers and juvenile court staff regarding court continuances to ensure that the most accurate information is being collected.	January 2021	April 2021	CWS Program Manager CWS Social Work Supervisor CWS Court Officers
C. Train supervisors to monitor, review and remind staff of court report due dates during weekly/monthly conferences.	January 2021	April 2021	CWS Program Manager(s) CWS Social Work Supervisor(s)

<p>D. Expand the use of technology to improve timeliness of court reports including: the use of electronic signatures for court reports, text reminders for social workers as to court report due dates, and other technology based methods to improve efficiency.</p>	<p>April 2021</p>	<p>April 2022</p>	<p>CWS Program Manager CWS Social Work Supervisor Fresno County Information Technology Department</p>
<p>E. Monitor the implementation of this strategy. This will occur through the development of a quarterly data dashboard process to evaluate the data indicator and outcome measure performance. The dashboard will monitor department caused court continuances over time.</p>	<p>April 2022</p>	<p>December 2024</p>	<p>CWS Program Manager CWS Social Work Supervisor CWS Court Officers CWS Program Technicians Fresno County Information Technology Department</p>



5 – YEAR SIP CHART PROBATION

Probation

Priority Outcome Measure or Systemic Factor: P1 Permanency in 12 months (entering foster care).

National Standard: 40.5%

CSA Baseline Performance: Probation's baseline performance in P1 Permanency in 12 months (entering foster care) from Q4 2018 was 18.6%.

Target Improvement Goal: Increase Permanency in 12 months (entering foster care) to 38.9 by the end of the five-year SIP cycle.

Year 3: increase by four children which is 25.4%

Year 4: increase by four children which is 32.2%

Year 5: increase by four children which is 38.9%

Priority Outcome Measure or Systemic Factor: P2 Permanency in 12 months (in care 12-23 months).

National Standard: 43.6%

CSA Baseline Performance: Probation's baseline performance in P2 Permanency in 12 months (in care 12-23 months) from Q4 2018 was 14.3%.

Target Improvement Goal: Increase Permanency in 12 months (in care 12-23 months) to 42.8% by the end of the five-year SIP cycle.

Year 3: increase by two children which is 23.8%

Year 4: increase by two children which is 33.3%

Year 5: increase by two children which is 42.8%

Strategy 1: Improve Family Finding Efforts 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): 3-P1 Permanency in 12 Months (entering foster care) and 3-P2 Permanency in 12 months (in care 12-23 months)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP		
	<input type="checkbox"/> PSSF	<input type="checkbox"/> Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A		
Action Steps:	Implementation Date:	Completion Date:	Person Responsible:
A. Coordinate with Child Welfare to provide training to Probation Officers regarding family finding resources available through our collaborative partnership.	June 2020	June 2021	Probation Services Manager
B. Develop Protocol to ensure Family Finding is a continuous process.	June 2021	December 2021	Probation Services Manager
D. Develop system to evaluate and monitor family finding efforts	June 2021	June 2022	Probation Services Manager Juvenile Division Director IT Manager

	January 2020	December 2025	Probation Services Manager Placement Probation Officers
E. Placement Probation Officers and Support Staff receive CWS/CMS training.	June 2020	June 2021	Probation Services Manager

Strategy 2: Provide Parental Support Implement services to parents to improve reunification efforts.	<input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT	Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s): 3-P1 Permanency in 12 Months (entering foster care) and 3-P2 Permanency in 12 months (in care 12-23 months)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP		
	<input type="checkbox"/> PSSF	<input type="checkbox"/> Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A		
Action Steps:	Implementation Date:	Completion Date:	Person Responsible:
A. Develop contract with Focus Forward to provide the Nurturing Parenting Program.	January 2021	January 2022	Probation Services Manager Juvenile Division Director Administrative Director
B. Provide training to probation officers regarding the Nurturing Parenting Program.	January 2022	June 2022	Probation Services Manager
C. Identify and refer reunifying families to the Nurturing Parenting Program	June 2022	June 2023	Probation Officers
D. Develop system to evaluate and monitor referrals/outcomes of Nurturing Parent Program participants.	March 2022	June 2023	Probation Services Manager Juvenile Division Director Administrative Director

CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF PROGRAM AND EVALUATION DESCRIPTION

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

PROGRAM NAME

Supervised Visitation

SERVICE PROVIDER

Comprehensive Youth Services

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Comprehensive Youth Services (CYS) provides visitation services for children and their parents and siblings. Services consists of two levels, Supervised Visitation (SV) and Intensive Supervised Visitation (ISV). SV is provided to lower risk families that the Juvenile Dependency Court orders to be supervised. ISV is provided to higher risk families that have significant issues such as untreated mental health needs, emotional abuse that includes a severe disconnect between the parent and child, severe physical abuse, and families with high conflict or those who are at risk of domestic violence.

The following characteristics are applicable to both SV and ISV. Visitation services are provided as often as two times per week or as few as one time per month. The frequency of visits is determined by the Juvenile Dependency Court or is at the discretion of DSS. One visit is defined as 60 minutes, though visits may be extended longer. Services are intended to keep a child safe, supported and free from unnecessary stress during their family visit. A “visitation monitor” supervises the visits and is present at all times. In addition to ensuring child safety, the visitation monitor may actively direct or “coach” the parents, as deemed appropriate, to enhance parenting skills. This may include the provision of input on the following topics and concepts: infant care; day-to-day activities of motherhood/fatherhood; approaches to raising children; understanding the source of a child's behavior; helping children build healthy self-esteem; and resolving family conflicts to promote reunification.

Services are available in English and Spanish.

FUNDING SOURCES

SOURCE	LIST FUNDED ACTIVITIES
PSSF Family Reunification	Parent/Sibling Visitation
OTHER Source(s):	

IDENTIFY PRIORITY NEED OUTLINED IN CSA

Feedback from various groups convened as part of the CSA process (focus groups, stakeholder meeting, and the Peer Review process) identified visitation as an important component of successful reunification and essential to the facilitation of a successful reunification (CSA Page 16 and 175).

TARGET POPULATION

Children, youth, and family members involved in the Child Welfare System.

TARGET GEOGRAPHIC AREA

CYS provides services to families who reside in Fresno County.

TIMELINE

Contracted services are fully implemented.

PROGRAM OUTCOME(S) AND MEASUREMENT & QUALITY ASSURANCE (QA) MONITORING

Desired Outcome	Indicator	Source of Measure	Frequency
Transition parents toward less restrictive or unsupervised visits with their child(ren)	90% of families in visitation services for over one month will demonstrate improved parent-child interaction.	Visitation form and/or parent self-report questionnaire	Monthly
	80% of families receiving services will be ready to move to a lower level of visitation within 3-6 months.	Visitation Form	Monthly

Quality Assurance (QA) Monitoring

Services and activities are delivered as contractually required.	Program will be evaluated for efficacy of delivered services and successful accomplishment of program outcomes	Monitoring through any combination of on-site visits, desk reviews, meetings, and provider self-monitoring	Ongoing activities conducted throughout the year.
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CLIENT SATISFACTION

Method or Tool	Frequency	Utilization	Action
Survey developed by CYS	Completed by participants after service delivery or separation from program.	Surveys are reviewed by CYS after completion or separation from program.	Any issues identified are reviewed, and can serve to inform programmatic changes

CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF PROGRAM AND EVALUATION DESCRIPTION

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

PROGRAM NAME

Specialized Co-Occurring Disorder Treatment

SERVICE PROVIDER

Exceptional Parents Unlimited

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

EPU provides Specialized Co-Occurring Disorder Treatment Services using the Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) treatment model to address substance abuse and mental health needs of parents reunifying with their children. DBT is a 6 to 12 month program that includes skills training group, individual therapy, and phone coaching outside of office visits. The goals are to teach participants skills and techniques to manage emotions, thoughts, and behavior. This specialized program is intended for families involved in Child Welfare Services where other agency mental health/substance abuse treatment services have not been successful. The model is replicated from another County where use of DBT has been successful for families in reunification. EPU does not provide client transportation, however, services are accessible via public transportation.

FUNDING SOURCES

SOURCE	LIST FUNDED ACTIVITIES
PSSF Family Reunification	Co-Occurring Disorder treatment services through Group and/or Individual Therapy
OTHER Source(s):	

IDENTIFY PRIORITY NEED OUTLINED IN CSA

Results from the CSA stakeholder meeting and focus groups identified challenges with mental health and substance abuse services, the need for timely assistance, and the availability of more of these services for families (CSA Page 9 and 14).

TARGET POPULATION

CWS families in the reunification process identified as needing both mental health and substance abuse services/treatment, particularly where prior treatment services have been unsuccessful.

TARGET GEOGRAPHIC AREA

County-wide.

TIMELINE

Contracted services are fully implemented through 2022.

EVALUATION

PROGRAM OUTCOME(S) AND MEASUREMENT & QUALITY ASSURANCE (QA) MONITORING

Desired Outcome	Indicator	Source of Measure	Frequency
Improve parent functioning in targeted behaviors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mindfulness • Interpersonal Effectiveness • Emotion regulation • Distress tolerance 	70% of clients in the 6-month cycle will demonstrate improvement in managing one or more targeted behaviors 80% of clients in the 12-month cycle will demonstrate improvement in managing their one or more targeted behaviors	DBT Difficulties in Emotional Regulation Scale (DERS); and Parenting Stress Index (PS-4) DBT Difficulties in Emotional Regulation Scale (DERS); and Parenting Stress Index (PS-4)	DERS and the PS-4 are completed pre and post services
Quality Assurance (QA) Monitoring			
Services and activities are delivered as contractually required.	Program will be evaluated for efficacy of delivered services and successful accomplishment of program outcomes	Monitoring through any combination of on-site visits, desk reviews, meetings, and provider self-monitoring	Ongoing activities conducted throughout the year.

CLIENT SATISFACTION

Method or Tool	Frequency	Utilization	Action
Survey developed by EPU	Completed by participants after service delivery or separation from program.	Surveys reviewed after completion or separation from program.	Any issues identified are reviewed and can serve to inform programmatic changes.

CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF PROGRAM AND EVALUATION DESCRIPTION

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

PROGRAM NAME

Post-Adoption Support Services

SERVICE PROVIDER

Aspiranet

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Aspiranet provides post-adoption support services to families that have finalized adoption through the County of Fresno Department of Social Services (DSS). The program, called REACH (Resources, Education, Advocacy, Crisis Counseling and Hope), is designed to empower and strengthen families who are experiencing current issues or challenges with regard to their adoption. Services focus on providing families a variety of supportive services to navigate the unique challenges of adoptive parenting and to improve family functioning and stability. The goal is to stabilize a family and reduce the likelihood of re-entry into foster care. Core services include: information and referral, support groups/educational classes, mental health screening, assessment and intervention, quarterly newsletter/adoption website, resource library/directory, and community outreach and advocacy. Services can also be home-based to meet the needs of families with no transportation.

FUNDING SOURCES

SOURCE	LIST FUNDED ACTIVITIES
PSSF Adoption Promotion and Support	Post-Adoption Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual/Family Counseling • Information and Referrals • Support Groups and Education Classes • Advocacy
OTHER Source(s):	

IDENTIFY PRIORITY NEED OUTLINED IN CSA

Lack of mental health and aftercare services were identified during the CSA stakeholder meeting (CSA Page 173). Post-permanency support services are critical to encourage the adoption of children and youth who have special needs and to keep them safe and stable in their new families after adoption completion.

TARGET POPULATION

Fresno County families who have finalized adoptions through DSS. Families can be referred by Child Welfare staff or access services on their own.

TARGET GEOGRAPHIC AREA

County-wide. Any family that resides in Fresno County and has finalized an adoption through DSS.

TIMELINE

Fully implemented contracted services through 2022.

PROGRAM OUTCOME(S) AND MEASUREMENT & QUALITY ASSURANCE (QA) MONITORING			
Desired Outcome	Indicator	Source of Measure	Frequency
Decrease the likelihood of post-adoption placement disruption and reduce/prevent re-entry into foster care	90% of families children served will not will not re-enter the foster care system	Aspiranet's database	Monthly
Post-adoptive families receiving services will show an increase in emotional wellness and attachment to their adopted child(ren)	80% of families parents will report an overall increase in emotional wellness and attachment with their adopted child(ren)	Parent Stress Index	Administered at time of intake and upon completion of program
Quality Assurance (QA) Monitoring			
Services and activities are delivered as contractually required.	Program will be evaluated for efficacy of delivered services and successful accomplishment of program outcomes	Monitoring through any combination of on-site visits, desk reviews, meetings, and provider self-monitoring	Ongoing activities conducted throughout the year.
CLIENT SATISFACTION			
Method or Tool	Frequency	Utilization	Action
Client satisfaction questionnaire	Provided to each actively participating family every 6 months. Survey is also accessible via Aspiranet's website	Questionnaires are reviewed as received.	Any issues identified are reviewed and can serve to inform programmatic changes.

CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF PROGRAM AND EVALUATION DESCRIPTION

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

PROGRAM NAME

Adoption Support Services

SERVICE PROVIDER

Fresno County Department of Social Services

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Services are designed to encourage and support adoptions out of the foster care system, when adoption is in the best interest of the child. Staff work to match children in care with the most appropriate adoptive parents who can meet their needs for safety, permanence and well-being. Services may include Adoption Assistance Program, pre-placement preparation, placement stability activities, post placement/finalization services, and conducting home study evaluations of prospective adoptive parents.

FUNDING SOURCES

SOURCE	LIST FUNDED ACTIVITIES
PSSF Adoption Promotion and Support	Pre and Post-Adoption Support Services for families
OTHER Source(s):	

IDENTIFY PRIORITY NEED OUTLINED IN CSA

Timely and successful adoptions are important to maintain a child’s wellbeing, however successful adoptions can be affected by the age of the child, families lacking knowledge of the court system and/or difficulty understanding of child behaviors. Adoption is the most common form of permanency for children in care for 24 months or more. (CSA Page 161).

TARGET POPULATION

Children and families involved in Child Welfare Services who are unable to reunify with their birth parent(s) and adoption is deemed the most appropriate permanent plan, and families who have finalized adoptions. In addition, targets families whose cases have originated in Fresno County, however, the adoptive families have moved out of county.

TARGET GEOGRAPHIC AREA

Fresno county and areas out of county consistent with adoptive parents’ residency.

TIMELINE

Services are implemented internally by DSS. Services will continue during SIP period 2019-24.

EVALUATION

PROGRAM OUTCOME(S) AND MEASUREMENT & QUALITY ASSURANCE (QA) MONITORING

Desired Outcome	Indicator	Source of Measure	Frequency
Increase timely and successful adoptions of children	Permanency rate reaches or exceeds the National Standard of 30.3%.	CWS/CMS data	Annually
Quality Assurance (QA) Monitoring			
Services and activities are delivered as required by Welfare and Institution Codes and DSS policies.	Supervisor must guide, direct, coach and mentor Social Worker staff on laws and regulations that govern the adoption process	Supervisor monitor staff work through reviews, evaluations, and inspection.	As needed

CLIENT SATISFACTION

Method or Tool	Frequency	Utilization	Action
Family satisfaction questionnaire	50% of families will be randomly surveyed at the time of adoption finalization.	Questionnaires are reviewed as received.	Any issues identified are reviewed and can serve to inform programmatic changes.

CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF PROGRAM AND EVALUATION DESCRIPTION

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION TEMPLATE

PROGRAM NAME

Neighborhood Resource Center/Differential Response Site 2 – Fresno 93706/93722

SERVICE PROVIDER

Centro La Familia Advocacy Services, Inc.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Differential Response (DR)

Centro La Familia Advocacy Services, Inc. provides voluntary home-based case management services to families with current risk factors of abuse/neglect to strengthen family functioning. Services may include access to Neighborhood Resource Center (NRC) or linkage/referrals to other community-based providers. Case plans are driven by the results of the evidence-based North Carolina Family Assessment Scale (NCFAS), which is administered by case management staff. Case managers work with families to achieve case plan goals. Services are provided in English, Spanish and Hmong and are focused in the Fresno metro 93706/93722 zip codes, areas identified by DSS as highest in child abuse/neglect referral rates.

Neighborhood Resource Center (NRC)

Contractor provides child abuse prevention and intervention services through a Neighborhood Resource Center (NRC) located at 302 Fresno Street, Ste. 102, Fresno CA 93706. NRCs are characterized by a commitment to work in partnership with local residents, including the beneficiaries of services, to strengthen families and build strong, healthy communities. NRC services include access to health insurance and services, case management, parent education, housing advocacy, family economic support, availability of healthy foods, resource and referrals, and other site-specific services. The NRC develops skills and knowledge so that families can prevent and address future family challenges. Services are available in Spanish, English and Hmong.

FUNDING SOURCES

SOURCE	LIST FUNDED ACTIVITIES
PSSF Family Preservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services may include, but not be limited to, family assessment, case management, basic life skills and advocacy, family health and wellness, etc.
PSSF Family Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services may include, but not be limited to, family assessment, case management, basic life skills and advocacy, family health and wellness, etc.
Other Source(s): (specify)	

IDENTIFY PRIORITY NEED OUTLINED IN CSA

Given a high rate of poverty and substantial economic hardship, families benefit from family support

services, advocacy, and concrete assistance (CSA page 26). The provision of primary/secondary prevention services in these areas can reduce the number of children entering or re-entering in foster care (CSA Page 48, 50 and 53).

TARGET POPULATION

Vulnerable families with children at risk of abuse or neglect, or families with one or more risk factors. DR target families that have come to the attention of CWS but do not meet the legal definition of child abuse. The NRCs target unserved and underserved, low to moderate income children and families in identified high-risk areas, primarily in zip code areas of 93706 and 93722.

TARGET GEOGRAPHIC AREA

Fresno County, with special focus on serving those families living in the metro communities (93706 and 93722 zip code areas), identified as areas with the high numbers of CWS referrals.

TIMELINE

Fully implemented contracted services.

EVALUATION

PROGRAM OUTCOME(S) AND MEASUREMENT & QUALITY ASSURANCE (QA) MONITORING

Desired Outcome	Indicator	Source of Measure	Frequency
All families receiving case management will demonstrate improved family functioning	67% of families parents who accept case management services will improve family functioning and complete their case plan goals	Results of the North Carolina Family Assessment Scale (NCFAS) assessment tool for DR case managed families and the Protective Factors Survey for NRC case managed families. Survey for NRC case managed families	NCFAS assessment and Protective Factors Survey are completed at entry and at exit. Completed at case management entry and at exit.
Families referred to CWS will not be re-referred.	80% of families' children that receive DR services will not have a recurrence of allegations within 12 months.	CWS/CMS	Annually
Quality Assurance (QA) Monitoring			
Services and activities are delivered as contractually required.	Program will be evaluated for efficacy of delivered services and successful accomplishment of program outcomes	Monitoring through any combination of on-site visits, desk reviews, meetings, and provider self-monitoring	Ongoing activities conducted throughout the year.

CLIENT SATISFACTION

Method or Tool	Frequency	Utilization	Action
Satisfaction Survey	Completed by participants mid-way and at the end of the program	Surveys reviewed after mid-way and at the end of the program	Problem areas addressed by staff, as appropriate to resolve issues

CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF PROGRAM AND EVALUATION DESCRIPTION

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION TEMPLATE

PROGRAM NAME

Neighborhood Resource Center/Differential Response Site 2 – Fresno 93702/93703

SERVICE PROVIDER

Exceptional Parents Unlimited, Inc.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Differential Response (DR)

Exceptional Parents Unlimited, Inc. provides voluntary home-based case management services to families with current risk factors of abuse/neglect to strengthen family functioning. Services may include access to Neighborhood Resource Center (NRC) services or linkage/referrals to other community-based providers. Case Plans are driven by the results of the evidence-based North Carolina Family Assessment Scale (NCFAS), which is administered by case management staff. Case managers work with families to achieve case plan goals. Services are provided in English, Spanish and Hmong and are focused in the Fresno metro 93702/93703 zip codes.

Neighborhood Resource Center (NRC)

Contractor provides child abuse prevention and intervention services through a Neighborhood Resource Center (NRC) located at 1835 North Winery, Fresno, CA 93703. NRCs are characterized by a commitment to work in partnership with local residents, including the beneficiaries of services, to strengthen families and build strong, healthy communities. NRC services include access to health insurance and services, case management, parent education, housing advocacy, family economic support, availability of healthy foods, resource and referrals, and other site-specific services. The NRC develops skills and knowledge so that families can prevent and address future family challenges. Services are available in Spanish and English.

FUNDING SOURCES

SOURCE	LIST FUNDED ACTIVITIES
PSSF Family Preservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services may include, but not be limited to, family assessment, case management, basic life skills and advocacy, family health and wellness, etc.
PSSF Family Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services may include, but not be limited to, family assessment, case management, basic life skills and advocacy, family health and wellness, etc.
CAPIT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parenting Education Nurturing Parenting Program
CBCAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incredible Years Program
Other Source(s): (specify)	

IDENTIFY PRIORITY NEED OUTLINED IN CSA

Given a high rate of poverty and substantial economic hardship, families benefit from family support

Attachment H

services, advocacy, and concrete assistance (CSA page 26). The provision of primary/secondary prevention services in these areas can reduce the number of children entering or re-entering in foster care (CSA Page 48, 50 and 53).

TARGET POPULATION

Vulnerable families with children at risk of abuse or neglect, or families with one or more risk factors. DR target families that have come to the attention of CWS but do not meet the legal definition of child abuse. The NRC target unserved and underserved, low to moderate income children and families in the 93702/9303 zip codes.

TARGET GEOGRAPHIC AREA

Fresno County, with focus on serving those living in the metro communities of Fresno that involve high numbers of CWS referrals (zip codes 93722/93706/93702 & 93703).

TIMELINE

Contract awarded July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2022. Fully implemented

EVALUATION

PROGRAM OUTCOME(S) AND MEASUREMENT & QUALITY ASSURANCE (QA) MONITORING

Desired Outcome	Indicator	Source of Measure	Frequency
All families receiving case management will demonstrate improved family functioning	67 % of families receiving case management services will improve family functioning and complete their case goals.	The North Carolina Family Assessment Scale (NCFAS) assessment tool for DR case managed families and the Protective Factors Survey for NRC case managed families. DR case Survey for NRC case managed families.	NCFAS assessment and Protective Factors Survey are completed by case manager at entry, 7-weeks and at exit. Surveys conducted at intake and at exit. Completed at case management entry and at exit.
Families referred to CWS will not be re-referred.	80% of families that receive DR services will not have a recurrence of allegations within 12 months.	CWS/CMS	Annually
Quality Assurance (QA) Monitoring			
Services and activities are delivered as contractually required.	Program will be evaluated for efficacy of delivered services and successful accomplishment of program outcomes	Monitoring through any combination of on-site visits, desk reviews, meetings, and provider self-monitoring	Ongoing activities conducted throughout the year.

CLIENT SATISFACTION

Method or Tool	Frequency	Utilization	Action
Satisfaction Survey	Completed by participants mid-way and at the end of the program	Surveys reviewed after mid-way and at the end of the program	Problem areas addressed by staff, as appropriate to resolve issues and ensure continuous quality improvement

(1) DATE SUBMITTED: 11/8/19

(2) DATES FOR THIS WORKBOOK thru

(3) DATE APPROVED BY OCAP

(4) COUNTY: Fresno

(5) PERIOD OF SIP: thru (6) YEARS: 5

Internal Use Only

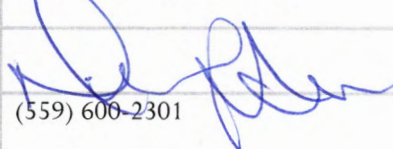
(7) ALLOCATION (Use the latest Fiscal or All County Information Notice for Allocation):					CAPIT: \$ 331,526	CBCAP: \$42,288	PSSF: \$1,185,703	PSSF & CBCAP FY 19-20									
No.	Program Name	Applies to CBCAP Programs Only	Name of Service Provider	Service Provider is Unknown, Date Revised Workbook to be Submitted to OCAP	CAPIT		CBCAP		PSSF						OTHER SOURCES	NAME OF OTHER	TOTAL
					Dollar amount to be spent on CAPIT Programs	CAPIT is used for Administration	Dollar amount to be spent on CBCAP Programs	CBCAP is used for Administration	Dollar amount to be spent on Family Preservation	Dollar amount to be spent on Family Support	Dollar amount to be spent on Time-Limited Reunification	Dollar amount to be spent on Adoption Promotion & Support	Dollar amount of PSSF allocation to be spent on PSSF activities (Sum of columns G1-G4)	PSSF is used for Administration	Dollar amount from other sources	List the name(s) of the other funding source(s)	Total dollar amount to be spent on this Program (Sum of Columns E, F, G5)
A	B	C	D1	D2	E1	E2	F1	F2	G1	G2	G3	G4	G5	G6	H1	H2	I
1	Supervised Visitation Services		Comprehensive Youth Services		\$0		\$0		\$0	\$0	\$12,140	\$0	\$12,140		\$0		\$12,140
2	Specialized Co-Occurring Disorder Treatment		Exceptional Parents Unlimited		\$0		\$0		\$0	\$0	\$225,000	\$0	\$225,000		\$0		\$225,000
3	Post Adoption Support Services		Aspiranet		\$0		\$0		\$0	\$0		\$225,000	\$225,000		\$0		\$225,000
4	Adoption Promotion and Support		County of Fresno Department of Social Services		\$0		\$0		\$0	\$0		\$12,139	\$12,139		\$0		\$12,139
5	Neighborhood Resource Center/Differential Response		Centro La Familia Advocacy Services		\$42,288		\$0		\$177,856	\$177,856	\$0	\$0	\$355,712		\$0		\$398,000
6	Neighborhood Resource Center/Differential Response	Direct Service	Exceptional Parents Unlimited		\$289,238		\$42,288		\$177,856	\$177,856	\$0	\$0	\$355,712		\$0		\$687,238
7					\$0		\$0		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0		\$0
Totals					\$331,526		\$42,288		\$355,712	\$355,712	\$237,140	\$237,139	\$1,185,703		\$0		\$1,559,517
									30%	30%	20%	20%	100%				

California – Child and Family Services Review Signature Sheet

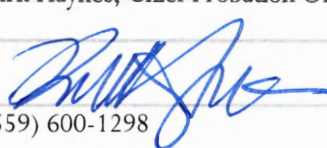
For submittal of: CSA SIP Progress Report

County	Fresno
SIP Period Dates	December 27, 2019 to December 26, 2024
Outcome Data Period	2018 Quarter 4

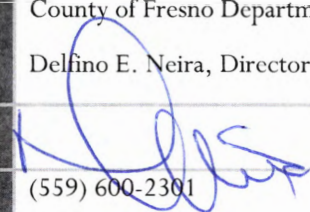
County Child Welfare Agency Director

Name	Delfino E. Neira, Director
Signature*	
Phone Number	(559) 600-2301
Mailing Address	205 W. Pontiac Way, Clovis, CA 93612

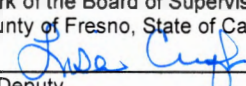

County Chief Probation Officer

Name	Kirk Haynes, Chief Probation Officer
Signature*	
Phone Number	(559) 600-1298
Mailing Address	3333 E. American Ave, Suite B Fresno, CA 93725

Public Agency Designated to Administer CAPIT and CBCAP

Name	County of Fresno Department of Social Services Delfino E. Neira, Director
Signature*	
Phone Number	(559) 600-2301
Mailing Address	205 W. Pontiac Way, Clovis, CA 93612

Board of Supervisors (BOS) Signature

BOS Approval Date	August 4, 2020	ATTEST: BERNICE E. SEIDEL Clerk of the Board of Supervisors County of Fresno, State of California By:  Deputy
Name	Ernest Buddy Mendes	
Signature*		

Mail the original Signature Sheet to:

*Signatures must be in blue ink

Children and Family Services Division
 Outcomes and Accountability Section
 California Department of Social Services
 744 P Street, MS 8-12-91
 Sacramento, CA 95814

Contact Information

Child Welfare Agency	Name	Tricia Gonzalez, Deputy Director
	Agency	Child Welfare Services
	Phone & E-mail	(559) 600-2306 gonzapd@fresnocountyca.gov
	Mailing Address	1404 L. Street Fresno, CA 93721
Probation Agency	Name	Vicki Passmore, Juvenile Division Director
	Agency	Fresno County Probation
	Phone & E-mail	(559) 600 – 4760 vpassmore@fresnocountyca.gov
	Mailing Address	3333 E. American Ave, Suite B Fresno CA 93725
Public Agency Administering CAPIT and CBCAP <small>(if other than Child Welfare)</small>	Name	
	Agency	Child Welfare
	Phone & E-mail	
	Mailing Address	
CAPIT Liaison	Name	Jeff Perkins
	Agency	County of Fresno Department of Social Services
	Phone & E-mail	(559) 600-2326 jeperkins@fresnocountyca.gov
	Mailing Address	205 W. Pontiac Way, Clovis, Ca 93612
CBCAP Liaison	Name	Jeff Perkins
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PSSF Liaison	Name	Jeff Perkins
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