



Court Appointed Special Advocates for Children
FRESNO AND MADERA COUNTIES

cc: Clerk
CAO

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Nathan Lee

Saturday, September 10, 2016

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Maureen Lewis
President

Supervisor Brian Pacheco
2281 Tulare Street, #301
Fresno, CA 93721

Ben Torchia
Vice President

Dear Supervisor Pacheco,

Robert Shaffer
Treasurer

I am writing to express our concern related to agenda item #14 on the Board of Supervisors Agenda for Tuesday, September 13th, "Receive Presentation by the Department of Social Services on Child Abuse Prevention Services."

Jeff Dal Cerro
Secretary

Andrea Benson

This item corresponds with item #50 on the Board of Supervisors Agenda on Tuesday, June 7th, "Approve and authorize the Chairman to execute the California – Child and Family Services Review Fresno County System Improvement Plan to the California Department of Social Services Outcomes and Accountability Bureau for the period of March 28, 2016 through December 26, 2019." This item was part of the consent agenda and was adopted by the board.

Gerald Chooljian

Ivonne Der Torosian

Dr. Daniel Griffin

Vincent Harris

The "System Improvement Plan" directs the use of CAPIT (Child Abuse Prevention Intervention and Treatment) and PSSF (Preserving Safe and Stable Families) funding away from the types of services traditionally funded in Fresno County to provide for Family Resource Centers and Differential Response Services, both of which are designed to reduce risk among families that "do not meet the legal threshold" for intervention by the Department of Social Services. In short, child abuse prevention.

Wilma Hashimoto

Jennifer McDougal

Greg Miskulin

As an organization, CASA supports child abuse prevention. Our concern is that there appears to be no plan in place to mitigate what would be a reduction of over \$194,000, or 23% of CASA's revenue.

Mary Ann Orloff

Robert Poythress

Karen Strauman

CASA's mission has a single purpose. We are the only organization in Fresno County working under statutory guidance of the Welfare and Institutions Code, the California Rule of Court and the Fresno County Rule of Court to advocate for foster children under the care of the Department of Social Services. Our volunteers are sworn officers of the court with court-appointed authority to have access to children's confidential information. We are in a government-private partnership serving as the "eyes and ears" of the court, ensuring the system is acting in the best interests of children.

Peter Y. Vang

Factors Related to our Concern

- The \$194,000 from CAPIT/PSSF provides for the position of Advocate Supervisor (2.11 FTE). If lost, this represents a loss of capacity to supervise 74 volunteer advocates who would be advocating for 118 foster children.
- Lost also would be funding for recruiting new advocates (.31 FTE) and funding for training and supporting new advocates and current advocates (.88 FTE).
- CASA has received CAPIT/PSSF funding since at least 2002 through successful competitive grant awards.
- In 2013 we approached the Fresno County Dependency Court with the question, "How many children should we be prepared to advocate for in the future?" The Court gave two clear responses. First, "The mission of CASA works. There is a profound difference in a child when there is an advocate assigned." Second, "Build the capacity to advocate for the 200 foster children currently on the waitlist."

With the waitlist of 200 children in mind, and the fact that at that time we were advocating for 160 foster children, we understand the Court to be identifying the need as providing advocates for 360 children in foster care.

- About that same time CASA experienced a 15% revenue reduction largely from government budget cuts for services. We responded to this by cutting our budget mainly by eliminating support staff, but we also had to cut positions related to recruiting and supervision of advocates.

We also took steps to begin developing a Resource Development program to increase the recruitment of advocates, promote CASA and raise money through private donations.

- The Resource Development program is succeeding in recruiting new advocates as evidenced by the fact that we trained 29 new advocates in the spring of 2016 compared to 13 in spring 2015 (123% increase). There is also a 73% increase in individuals attending pre-training information sessions this fall compared to one year ago (85 compared to 49).
- The Resource Development program has also succeeded in increasing private donations.

Summary

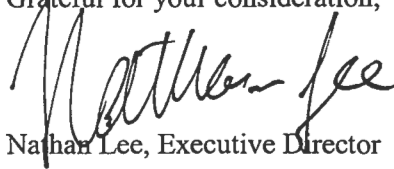
We wish to restate our support for child abuse prevention efforts.

We acknowledge the Court's expectation of providing advocates for 360 foster children in the future.

The 2013 revenue cut of 15% resulted in lower capacity for recruiting, training and supervising advocates. It has taken several years to return to the growing momentum we are now experiencing.

We are asking the Fresno County Board of Supervisors to ensure a funding plan is in place to offset this reduction in order to sustain and grow our capacity to recruit, train and supervise volunteers to advocate for foster children.

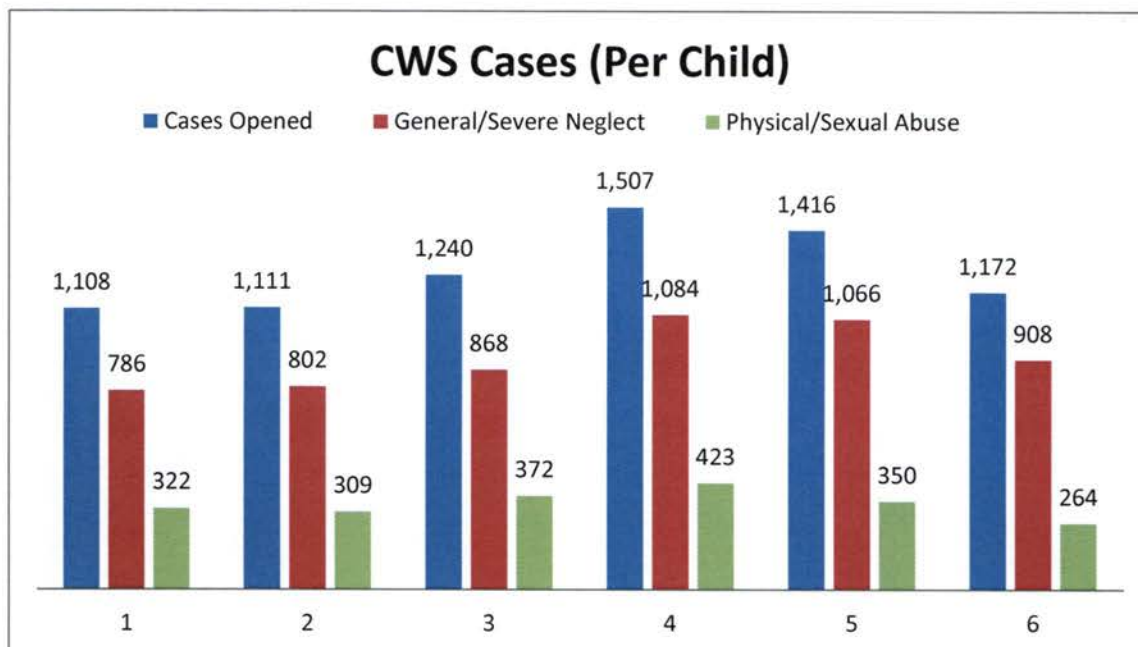
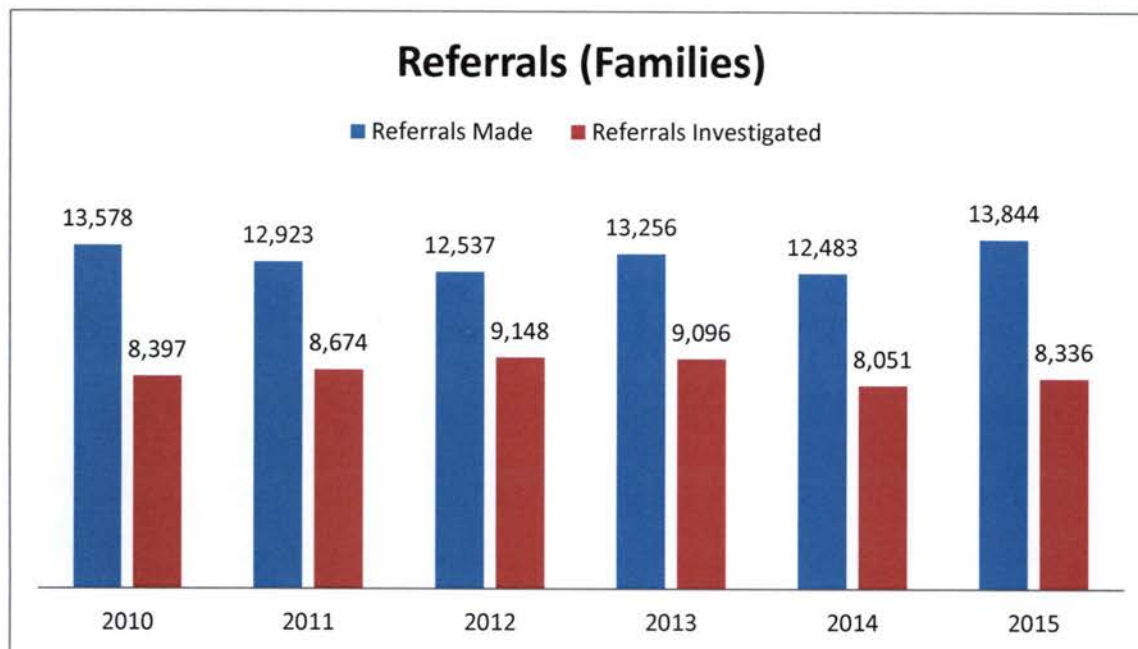
Grateful for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nathan Lee". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Nathan" being more prominent than the last name "Lee".

Nathan Lee, Executive Director

Item #14
9-13-16

Emergency Response Referral Data (Families)							
Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Average
Referrals Made	13,578	12,923	12,537	13,256	12,483	13,844	13,104
Referrals Investigated	8,397	8,674	9,148	9,096	8,051	8,336	8,617
% Investigated	62%	67%	73%	69%	64%	60%	66%
Cases Opened (per child)	1,108	1,111	1,240	1,507	1,416	1,172	1,259
General/Severe Neglect	786	802	868	1,084	1,066	908	919
Physical/Sexual Abuse	322	309	372	423	350	264	340



**Sources: Fresno County IT Report and Emergency Response Referrals Spreadsheet

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UC Berkeley (Fresno County Data)							
Year	2010	2,011	2,012	2,013	2,014	2,015	Averages
Total Child Population	277,228	275,994	275,721	275,674	276,554	278,332	276,584
Children with Allegations	19,542	19,151	19,066	19,899	19,877	20,040	19,596
Children with Substantiations	2,277	2314	2327	2430	2540	2332	2,370
% Allegations	12%	12%	12%	12%	13%	12%	12%
Children with Entries	954	946	1,026	1,249	1,233	1,078	1,081

Children with Entries (Removal Reasons)									
Year	Neglect	% Total	Physical	% Total	Sexual	% Total	Other	% Total	Total
2010	809	85%	104	11%	27	3%	14	1%	954
2011	818	86%	86	9%	20	2%	22	2%	946
2012	874	85%	101	10%	21	2%	30	3%	1,026
2013	1093	88%	84	7%	34	3%	38	3%	1,249
2014	1088	88%	86	7%	34	3%	25	2%	1,233
2015	920	85%	92	9%	39	4%	27	3%	1078

Source: UC Berkeley Report

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Current DSS Funded Family Resource Center Services

Description

Comprehensive Youth Services – Sanger Family Resource Center (FRC)

The Sanger FRC helps families to become more resilient and aids in bridging the gap between school and home by providing resources and engaging parents to support the well-being and success of their children. The Sanger Parent University, a program of the Sanger FRC, engages parents in educational opportunities designed to increase their awareness of child development and family safety, how to navigate the school system, and how to support their child from cradle to career, while encouraging parents to become leaders, giving back to their children's schools and the community through volunteerism. The services offered by the Sanger FRC not only comprise a strong parent engagement strategy, but provide a valuable link to transforming and empowering parents, families and future generations.

CYS leverages resources from the following to help run the FRC: Sanger Unified School District, parent volunteers, other funding sources

Westside Family Preservation Services Network – Huron Family Resource Center (FRC)

According to U.S. Census numbers, Huron is among the poorest cities in the state of California. Majority of the community consist of the working poor, tribal population, and immigrant families. Most of the population, who live in extreme poverty and are unemployed, look to the FRC for support and assistance. The FRC provides a wide variety of key services to all residents of the City of Huron and the surrounding rural area. The focus of these services is to support high-risk families in the prevention and mitigation of child abuse and neglect.

Huron leverages resources from the following to help run the FRC: Low-rent community center, community support

Comparison of Services

Services	FRC Location	
	Sanger	Huron
School-based Location	X	
Case Management	X	X
Child Abuse / Neglect Treatment Services	X	X
Parent Education	X	X
Peer-to-Peer Support	X	X
Leadership Groups	X	
Transportation		X
Resource and Referral	X	X
Community Development Activities	X	X
Supports for Families	X	X
<i>Child Development Activities</i>		
<i>Life Skills Advocacy</i>		
<i>Family Health and Wellness</i>		
<i>Family Economics and Self Sufficiency</i>		
<i>Substance Abuse Treatment</i>		
Youth Development	X	
Leverage Resources	X	X

Planned NRC/DR Provider Locations

Both charts are sorted by child population from largest to smallest. Identified Neighborhood Resource Center (NRC) locations are highlighted in yellow. Zip codes which have been identified to have an NRC and Differential Response provider are highlighted in green. Identified NRC and DR providers are expected to serve those within their zip code and surrounding areas.

Note: For the metro zip codes, 93702/93703 will only have one NRC and one DR provider within the two zip codes. Similarly, 93706/93722 will also have one NRC and one DR provider.

NRC Locations: Fresno (93702/93703), Fresno (93706/93722), Coalinga, Huron, Kerman, Sanger, Selma

DR Locations: Fresno (93702/93703), Fresno (93706/93722), Coalinga, Selma

Rural Zip Codes				
Zip Code	City	Child Pop.	Children w/ Alleg.	Incidence per 1000
93657	Sanger	10,673	637	59.7
93654	Reedley	9,480	395	41.7
93662	Selma	9,477	469	49.5
93630	Kerman	7,014	289	41.2
93648	Parlier	5,717	324	56.7
93631	Kingsburg	4,967	154	31
93640	Mendota	4,391	143	32.6
93210	Coalinga	4,126	240	58.2
93646	Orange Cove	3,962	108	27.3
93622	Firebaugh	3,400	137	40.3
93234	Huron	2,893	103	35.6
93625	Fowler	2,240	117	52.2
93656	Riverdale	2,141	68	31.8
93609	Caruthers	1,751	82	46.8
93660	San Joaquin	1,735	49	28.2
93242	Laton	1,149	53	46.1
93616	Del Rey	895	71	79.3
93675	Squaw Valley	805	67	83.2
93602	Auberry	792	48	60.6
93667	Tollhouse	535	30	56.1
93668	Tranquillity	373	7	18.8
93608	Cantua Creek	372	22	59.1
93651	Prather	304	11	36.2
93626	Friant	296	13	43.9
93664	Shaver Lake	172	4	23.3
93652	Raisin City	134	9	67.2
93641	Miramonte	124	7	56.5
93621	Dunlap	73	15	205.5
93628	Hume	68	0	0
93627	Helm	21	1	47.6

Metro Zip Codes				
Zip Code	City	Child Pop.	Children w/ Alleg.	Incidence per 1000
93722	Fresno	25,029	1,651	66
93727	Fresno	21,822	1,587	72.7
93702	Fresno	17,136	1,759	102.6
93706	Fresno	13,791	1,470	106.6
93726	Fresno	11,888	1,239	104.2
93611	Clovis	11,793	431	36.5
93705	Fresno	11,624	1,302	112
93720	Fresno	11,250	394	35
93703	Fresno	10,258	1,096	106.8
93612	Clovis	9,606	625	65.1
93619	Clovis	9,545	196	20.5
93725	Fresno	8,577	559	65.2
93711	Fresno	7,328	267	36.4
93710	Fresno	6,953	445	64
93704	Fresno	6,344	509	80.2
93701	Fresno	4,152	675	162.6
93728	Fresno	4,088	532	130.1
93723	Fresno	2,933	134	45.7
93730	Fresno	2,745	45	16.4
93721	Fresno	1,397	220	157.5
93737	Fresno	1,248	0	0
93650	Fresno	1,054	127	120.5
93741	Fresno	9	0	0

Source: UC Berkeley Report - 2015 Child Maltreatment Allegations and Incidents by Zip Code

Child Abuse / Neglect Effects on Children's Education

Did You Know?

- Between **one half and two thirds** of all school aged children **experience trauma**
- Children who have experienced trauma may find it **more challenging than their peers to pay attention and process new information**
- Abused children are more at risk of exhibiting **cognitive delays, lower IQ scores, language difficulties and academic abilities**
- Maltreated children are more likely to be **retained a grade, have irregular attendance**, and be placed in **special education** classes
- Maltreated children have higher rates of **absenteeism** from school than non-maltreated peers
- Children with higher exposure to violence have **lower grade point averages** and more absences than children with less exposure to violence
- Neglected children have **poorer academic performance** than physically maltreated children
- Children exposed to maltreatment are at increased risk of educational underachievement, including **lower verbal and math scores**
- Maltreated children are more likely than their peers to exhibit **poor social skills and classroom behavior problems**
- Children who have experienced trauma and adverse experiences may be at elevated risk for **mental and physical health problems, substance abuse, and criminal justice** involvement in adolescence and adulthood

Long-Term Consequences of Child Abuse and Neglect, Child Welfare Information Gateway Fact sheet, July 2013;
www.childwelfare.gov/pubpdfs/long_term_consequences.pdf

National Children's Advocacy Center, 2013; www.icmec.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Child-Maltreatment-and-Academic-Achievement.pdf

Unlocking the Door to Learning: Trauma-Informed Classrooms & Transformational Schools, December 2014;
www.elc-pa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Trauma-Informed-in-Schools-Classrooms-FINAL-December2014-2.pdf

California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs)
Welfare to Work (WTW)

CalWORKs is a welfare program that gives cash aid and services to eligible needy California families. Families that have a child(ren) in the home who is deprived of parental support or care because of disability or death of either parent. Also, families with a child(ren) where both parents are unemployed may receive CalWORKs services. Services include

The Welfare To Work (WTW) program provides employment-related services to CalWORKs clients to assist them in finding and retaining employment, obtaining training when necessary, and in upgrading to higher paying jobs that will lead to financial self-reliance. Supportive Services are provided to assist with the costs of childcare, transportation, work clothing, and other items needed for employment. Referral services are also available to address barriers that can prevent successful employment such as substance abuse, domestic violence, or legal and mental health issues.

EXEMPTIONS

Clients may be excused from taking part in WTW job readiness activities if clients have a disability or are the sole provider for an infant or young child. This is called an exemption. If clients are exempt, client's cash aid time limits may be stopped.

SANCTIONS

If clients receive cash aid, clients will be required to participate in WTW. Participation in WTW is required for all adults ages 18 to 59 and pregnant or parenting teens under 20 years old.

If clients are not in compliance WTW requirements, client's cash aid will be reduced. This is called a "financial sanction."

Differential Response (DR) Core Elements

Home Based Intensive Case Management

(Continuous Contact with Regularly Scheduled Visits)

Multi Track Screening Process in Reports of Child Abuse- CWS

(Preventative Approach)

CWS Uses Assessment Tool To Determine Level of Response Needed

(can be adjusted when new reports come in)

Referral and Services Offered

(voluntary and non-investigative as long as there are not any safety issues)

CalWORKs WTW Sanctions & Other Barriers Cured

No Formal Reporting with Participation

(No Reports to Department of Justice (DOJ) in Child Abuse Central Index)

Referrals Received Exclusively from DSS to DR Provider

Comprehensive Services

(community/need determined)

Intense Short-term Voluntary Services for At-Risk Families

Links to DSS & Community Resources

(home visits, education and social services linkages, advocacy & support, and transportation)

Provide Encouragement, Problem Solving Skills, Transportation,
Accompany to Appointments

Assist Parents with Actively Participating in their WTW Plan

Continuously Monitor Child Safety

Relies Heavily on Community Involvement

Neighborhood Resource Center Core Services (should be present)

Parent Education (such as classes, support groups, peer-to-peer)

Child Development Activities (such as Play & Grow, Mommy & Me)

Resource and Referral (links to community resources and services)

Drop-in Availability (a comfortable place for confidential conversations,
neighbor-to-neighbor meetings)

Peer-to-Peer Supports (such as support groups, mentoring)

Life Skills Advocacy (such as anger management classes,
communication skills, budgeting, cooking classes, etc.)

Comprehensive Services (community/need determined)

Case Management
(integrated multidisciplinary team approach)

Child Abuse/Neglect Treatment Services
(family support home visiting, emergency resources, counseling)

Family Health and Wellness
(health/dental, medical, onsite outreach, mental health programs, MediCal)

Family Economics and Self Sufficiency
(CalWORKS, job prep & search)

Family Literacy and Education Support
(ESL, tutoring, GED prep, technology center)

Substance Abuse Treatment
(counseling, self-help groups)

Youth Development
(mentoring, after school activities, community service, family fun events)

Community Development Activities
(advocacy, housing, employment, capacity building, community celebrations)