Santa Barbara County Self-Assessment

January – May 2009

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INTRODUCTION

Assembly Bill 636 (Steinberg) established a new Child Welfare Outcome and Accountability System replacing the former Child Welfare Services (CWS) Oversight System which had focused exclusively on regulatory compliance. Pursuant to AB 636, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) developed the California – Child and Family Services Review (C-CFSR). The C-CFSR brings California into alignment with the Federal Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) by establishing a new review system designed to promote improved Child Welfare Services (CWS) outcomes for children and families in each county in California. The vision created by the C-CFSR is that every child in California would live in a safe, stable, permanent home nurtured by healthy families and strong communities. Thus, "the purpose of the C-CFSR system is to significantly strengthen the accountability system used in California to monitor and assess the quality of services provided on behalf of maltreated children."[1]

The basis of the C-CFSR improvement and accountability system lies in a philosophy of continuous quality improvement, interagency partnerships, and community involvement with an overall focus on improving outcomes for children and families. The Outcomes and Accountability System is a four part system of continuous quality improvement incorporating a Peer Quality Case Review (PQCR), County Self-Assessment (CSA), System Improvement Plan (SIP), and Quarterly Data Reports reflecting the County performance on Federal and State Measures. The CDSS, in conjunction with the University of California at Berkeley (UCB), developed Outcome Measures that indicate how each county Child Welfare system in California is performing. Santa Barbara County conducted the PQCR in September 2008 in partnership with San Luis Obispo and Ventura County, as well as a few of our community partners. The focus area for the CWS/Probation PQCR was Placement Stability and the information obtained will be used to further inform this self-assessment. The CSA is a macro analysis of how local programs, systems and factors impact performance on the Federal and State Outcome Measures in three major areas: Safety, Permanency, Well-being. The information and subsequent analysis included in the CSA form the basis for developing a System Improvement Plan. The following report is the third Santa Barbara County CWS and Probation County Self Assessment. The initial self-assessment was developed in June of 2004 and the second CSA was completed in October 2006. Therefore, the following report covers information over a two and a half year period, incorporates information from the recent PQCR, and is in the format prescribed by CDSS.

The C-CFSR designates the County Probation Department as an equal partner with CWS and our County Probation partners were participants in the self-assessment process, as well as actively involved in many of the collaboratives that support improved outcomes for children in Santa Barbara County. Outcome

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[1] All County Information Notice 1-50-06

Measure data is improving for Probation, but does not yet fully align with the existing Federal and State Measures. Therefore, the majority of the data references in the Self Assessment are focused primarily on CWS performance, unless otherwise indicated. The area of greatest relevance to both agencies is in improving outcomes for youth while in foster care or when emancipating from the foster care system.

Santa Barbara County CWS conducted its Self-Assessment from January - May 2009. The reports provided by CDSS combined with Safe Measures reports and internal data analysis sources provided sufficient data to inform the Self-Assessment process. As in the previous Self-Assessments, Santa Barbara County focused on obtaining extensive input from our many public and private partners, believing that their knowledge of and experience with CWS and Probation were critical in identifying the strengths, needs, and gaps in our service delivery system. The process focused on completing a gaps analysis with several existing groups who are integrally involved in promoting the safety and well-being of children and families such as KIDS Network, the Child Abuse Prevention Council; CWS Team meeting targeting all CWS supervisors/managers, and the Juvenile Court "Brown Bag" obtaining input from key stakeholders in the legal process. In addition, focus groups were arranged to solicit input from all CWS/Probation line staff and all service providers, including an invitation to the Foster Parent Association and several foster parents. CWS also extended an opportunity to our foster youth to provide feedback regarding the CWS/Probation service delivery system. In total, more than 150 people representing the public, private, and consumer sectors participated in the gaps analysis process, which was used to inform this Self-Assessment. Santa Barbara County CWS and Probation extends our deep appreciation to the many people and agencies that devoted considerable time and effort to this process.

I. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE AND OUTCOME DATA

A. Demographic Profile

1. Demographics of General Population	Santa Barbara County January 2009 population was 431,312, reflecting an annual growth rate of 1.1%, the same as the State of California as a whole. The county maintained its position as the 20th most populous county in the state. California Department of Finance estimates from U.S. Census Bureau data show that the largest single source of growth in the county population is live births, with annual births representing more than twice the net annual gain in population.[2]
	The county's net population growth of 1.1 % (1/1/2008 to 1/1/2009) occurred largely outside the cities, with 46% of the growth in the unincorporated area. The major exception was the City of Santa Maria, whose increase was the equivalent of 38% of the net increase in total population; thus, the net share of population increase in most of the other cities was under 6%, leaving most population growth outside the cities as previously stated. During this same time period, the State of California as a whole grew in population by 1.1%.[3] Growth in the City of Santa Maria may have important implications, because the City of Santa Maria is currently estimated to have an unemployment rate of 13.8%, compared with the county's unemployment rate of 8.5% (the same as the U.S. average for the time period, which is very unusual). Both Santa Maria (13.8% unemployed) and the City of Lompoc (15% unemployed) have maintained high unemployment rates over a long period which qualify them as target investment areas for the Immigrant Investment provisions of the Immigration Reform Act of 1990, under which a foreign citizen may obtain a guaranteed green card within two years by investing at least $500,000 to create at least 10 jobs for U.S. citizens, leading to personal U.S. citizenship in 5 years.[4] These two cities also account for the greatest concentrations of very poor children under 6 within Santa Barbara County, and the entire North County (both Lompoc and Santa Maria CWS Regions) currently accounts for 75% of the children in open CWS cases. North County (Lompoc/Santa Maria) also accounts for 80% of CalWORKs recipients in Santa Barbara County, of whom about 80% are children. Santa Barbara County has a child-only CalWORKs caseload exceeding

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[2] California Department of Finance Demographic Research Unit data, <http://www.dof.ca.gov/research/demographic/reports/estimates/e-2/2000-08/>
[3] California Department of Finance Demographic Research Unit data,< http://www.dof.ca.gov/research/demographic/reports/estimates/e-1/2008-09/>
[4] California Employment Development Department, Labor-Management Information System data, < http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/?pageid=1006>

40% of all cases, resulting from a high proportion of cases in which parents are immigration-ineligible for benefits and are only claiming aid for their U.S. citizen-born children.

Changes in population by ethnicity have been dramatic during this decade, perhaps even more dramatic than changes for the State of California as a whole as described by the Demographic Research Unit of the California Department of Finance. These changes may be highly significant now and in the long run because the child poverty rates by ethnic group for the county mirror significant differences in the educational levels of adults by ethnicity. The county anticipates future significant increases in the number of children in the county in households below the poverty level. Child poverty rates are generally correlated with child welfare services activity. The largest increase in population has been in the ethnic groups with the highest rates of poverty among children. Non-Hispanic Whites (low child poverty rates) were down to 50% of the county population in 2007, the last year for which components of population change are available, having been at 57% of the population as recently as 2000, with an annual average decline of over 2,000 a year, almost all of which was out-migration. Hispanics (higher child poverty) rose to 41% of the population from 34% in 2000, with an average annual increase of 5300 primarily from births in-county, but also from an annual 2000 person average net migration into the county. Blacks and Multiracial numbers declined in small amounts every year, and Native Americans, Asians and Pacific Islanders experienced tiny average annual increases.[5]

The significant population growth in the City of Santa Maria mirrors the rapid growth of low-wage, intermittent or seasonal agriculture jobs in the area (north of the Santa Ynez Mountains), as this industry has been experiencing growth rates of up to 30% for the past few years. Although the number of workers employed in agriculture has grown over the past decade in an industry which locally exceeds $1.2 billion in aggregate marketing, the absolute aggregate dollar amount of wages paid to agricultural workers has declined since the beginning of the decade, according to the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis.[6] In the south, where the high cost of housing and living seems to be exacerbating already tight living conditions "a large percentage of the low paying jobs are within the Leisure and Hospitality Services and Retail Trade sectors." Countywide, three of the five largest job sectors – Leisure and Hospitality, Retail Trade, and Agriculture, are low paying and "combine to represent

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[5] California Department of Finance Demographic Research Unit, < http://www.dof.ca.gov/research/demographic/reports/estimates/e-3/by_year_2000-04/
[6] U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, county estimates by industry, < http://www.bea.gov/regional/remdchart/default.cfm#chart_top
[7] California Employment Development Department, Labor-Management Information System data, < http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/?pageid=1006

	about 33% of all County jobs." These categories of jobs all have job multiplier coefficients below 1.00, meaning that one new job in these industries does not create even one additional job in either upstream or downstream venues - - unlike manufacturing, construction, or chemical processing jobs, for example, which produce many ancillary net new jobs.[7] For additional general demographic information please see the U.S. Census Bureau, Children Now, or the Santa Barbara County Children's Scorecard.

| 2. Education system profile including performance of schools and educational outcomes for students | A review from the 2000 U.S. Census, of the educational levels of adults in Santa Barbara County (age 25 and older), revealed that 29.4 percent of the adult population has an educational level of a bachelor's degree or higher and 20.8 percent of the adult population has less than a high school diploma. Point-in-time California figures are roughly similar with 26.6 percent having a bachelor's or graduate degree and 23.2 percent having no high school diploma.[8]

Changes in human capital inputs to the child population as a result of the demographic changes noted earlier are rapid and likely to have great significance. According to the Center for Immigration Studies, annual births to immigrant mothers are 46% percent of all births in Santa Barbara County, and 28% percent of all Santa Barbara County births are to undocumented mothers, largely of Mexican/Hispanic origin.[9] The proportion of births to immigrant mothers in this county is significant because the poverty rate in this county for children living in a household with at least one immigrant parent is 42%, compared with 33% for California as a whole.[10] This translates to higher child poverty rates among newly-born children than are found in the existing child population. According to this calculation, just the children born to immigrants would account for a birth child poverty rate of 16%, without considering the poverty status of any other groups of children. Early in this decade, Hispanic children became the largest ethnic group among children, with an aggregate poverty rate (immigrant and native households) which is a multiple of the non-Hispanic White poverty rate (the former plurality leader in gross population).

In terms of future economic and social outcomes, it is significant that in 2009 the cohort group of children entering first grade in Santa Barbara County will come from mothers with widely disparate educational levels. Fully 35% will have mothers who did not graduate from high school (about half of whom with levels far below high school entrance as a result of immigration from countries with poorer educational access for women), which is about the California average and vastly higher than the proportions of these groups in the U.S. school population.[11] Santa Barbara County also has an enclave of about 25,000 Mixtecs, an indigenous ethnic group originally from Oaxaca State in Mexico that resides in the City of Santa Maria. There are over 40 largely mutually |

[8] U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, data from Census 2000 through the Census Data Factfinder query engine, at < http://www.census.gov/main/www/cen2000.html>

[9] Center for Immigration Studies, <http://www.cis.org/articles/2005/back805data.xls>

[10] U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, American Community Survey data>

[11] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control, Natality data (Wonder System), < http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/datawh/vitalstats/VitalStatsbirths.htm>

unintelligible Mixtec dialects, and many Mixtecs do not speak Spanish or English, since it is often the custom to discourage women from learning Spanish to avoid cultural contact with non-Mixtec adults.[12] Providing services to this group is very difficult given the language challenges. Furthermore, in Mexico, anthropologists have described that it is frequently the custom of indigenous Mixtecs in villages to begin child-bearing under the age of 15 for a period of child-bearing which ends at menopause. It is customary for the teen-age woman to form a relationship with a young man 10 or more years older and leave her family, pregnant, to cohabit with him, including migrating to the United States to accompany him in his work if that is the case. A comparable situation in the United States could give rise to a charge of statutory rape/child sexual abuse.   Many such women have had no formal education at all in Mexico or anywhere else. Completed family size is larger for this population group than for many other groups whose origins are also in Mexico.[13] [14]

Mothers' level of education at birth of a child is the most significant predictor of education outcome.[15] According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress outcomes data, it can be expected that 52% of children with mothers who have not graduated high school will not be able to read at a level which constitutes the minimum satisfactory performance for 8th graders on national norms.[16] Unless substantial progress is made in educating children from low educational level families, approximately 40% of young adults in this county will have sub-optimal levels of academic performance, and will be at considerable risk of being unable to support their families when they reach adulthood. Since children from low income families with low educational performance start having children earlier than other groups, it is possible that teen pregnancy may rise, as well as out of wedlock births. Currently it is estimated that about 48 percent of births to U.S.-born Hispanic mothers in Santa Barbara County are out of wedlock, and this is the fastest growing demographic group in Santa Barbara County. Very early childbearing and out of wedlock births are correlated with lack of parental economic self-sufficiency and unstable parental cohabitation patterns which adversely

[12] Ethnologue, Languages of the World (SIL International), < http://www.ethnologue.org/language_index.asp?letter=M> and < http://www.sil.org/mexico/mixteca/00i-mixteca.htm>

[13] Pennsylvania State University Department of Anthropology, GUTIERREZ, Gerardo - Ph.D. 2002
The Expanding Polity: Patterns of the Territorial Expansion of the Post-Classic Senorio of Tlapa-Tlachinollan in the Mixteca-Nahuatl-Tlapaneca Region of Guerrero (K. Hirth)

[14] Stephen, Lynn, Transborder Lives: Indigenous Oaxacans in Mexico, California, and Oregon (Paperback), Duke University Press; 2 edition (May 30, 2007)

[15] Jencks, Christopher, and Phillips, Meredith, The Black-White Test Score Gap, Brookings Institution Press, 1998

[16] U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics, at < http://nces.ed.gov/datatools/index.asp?DataToolSectionID=4>

[17] Center for Immigration Studies, data files at < http://www.cis.org/articles/2007/illegitimacy.xls>

	affect child-rearing security.[17] For more specific educational performance figures, please refer to the following resources: California Department of Education-Demographics, or for specific API and STAR plus other Data and Statistics; also see Scorecard Children's Scorecard.

3. CWS Participation Rates	Number of children under 18 years of age:
	Santa Barbara County population 105,091
	State population 10,007,591
	Number and rate of children with referrals:
	SB County 4,666 44.4 per 1,000
	State 492,571 49.2 per 1,000
	Santa Barbara experienced an increase in referral rates as did the State compared with the previous self assessment period.
	Number and rate of children with substantiated referrals:
	SB County 1,143 10.9 per 1,000
	State 107,464 10.7 per 1,000
	Santa Barbara CWS substantiation rate was up over the previous self assessment data compared to the State rate which showed a decline. Santa Barbara's substantiation rate is now equivalent to the State's aggregate rate.
	Number and rate of first entries:
	SB County 286 2.7 per 1,000

State   36,113   3.6   per 1,000

Santa Barbara CWS continues to trend below the State aggregate rate. Although CWS has experienced an increase in children entering care over the past few years, it is important to note that Santa Barbara County appeared to be artificially low in earlier reporting periods.

Number and rate of children in care:

SB County   570   5.4 per 1,000

State   65,396   6.5 per 1,000[18]

The rate of first entries has increased slightly in Santa Barbara County from the previous self assessment. Comparably, the State saw a slightly larger, but still small, increase during this same time period. However, the number of children in care and the rate of children in care declined over the previous assessment period, in spite of higher upstream rates of substantiation. The addition of a high-risk diversion Family Preservation Program in 2006, plus an almost four-fold increase in the number of children adopted each year, has stabilized the number of children in care at any one time under CWS supervision. These changes were a high priority issue as the rate of growth in the foster care population until these practice changes were made was exceeding available resources. These changes have resulted in substantial cost avoidance for foster care expense since initiation, estimated between $1.9 and $2.6 million to date, while they increased the number of initial high-risk families who successfully reduced their high risk status and maintained their children safely in their own homes, accomplished through highly-intensive case management services. In addition, substantially more children exited foster care to stable adoption.[19]

Source is UC Berkeley CWS/CMS Reports   Additional details are also available in the attached CWS Outcomes System Summary for Santa Barbara County. (*Please see Appendix, Figure 1.*)

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[18] University of California at Berkeley, Center for Social Services Research, Barbara Needell, Ph.D., Principal Investigator, Child Welfare Dynamic Report System, at < http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb%5Fchildwelfare/
[19] Santa Barbara County Social Services internal program effects/fiscal report, using data from CMS/CWS through Business Objects reporting.

CWS Outcomes and Indicators	
1. County Data Report	Please see attached as Appendix, Figure 1 the CWS Outcomes System Summary for Santa Barbara County. The attached data report provides the performance information regarding the multiple Federal and State Outcome Measures. An analysis of the Outcome Data, trends that may be influencing the data, and strategies used to improve outcomes can be found in the Summary section of this report, as it provides context to the needs assessment information within that section. Additional detail regarding some of the outcome measures can also be found in the community presentation PowerPoint attached as Appendix, Figure 4 entitled Santa Barbara County Outcomes and Accountability System.

II. AGENCY CHARACTERISTICS	
A. Size and Structure of Agency – Base Year = Fiscal Year (FY) 2005/06	
1. County operated shelter(s)	Santa Barbara County CWS contracted with 3 licensed foster parents for a total of 14 beds, one Foster Family Agency for a total of 13 beds, and one group home with 2 beds for emergency shelter care during FY 07/08. Children experiencing significant emotional and/or behavioral needs that could not be supported in a traditional Emergency Shelter Care home are placed in residential treatment at Casa Pacifica in Ventura County.
2. County Licensing	SB County Department of Social Services (DSS) operates its own Foster Care Licensing program under an MOU with Community Care Licensing (CCL).
3. County Adoptions	The County Department of Social Services (DSS) is licensed to provide Adoption Services.
B. County Governance Structure	
1.Child Welfare Services	The County has a five member Board of Supervisors (BOS) and a County Executive Officer (CEO). The Director of Social Services reports to the CEO and the BOS. CWS is directly managed by one Deputy Director (reporting to the Director) and three Division Chiefs reporting to the Deputy. Each Division Chief is based in one of our 3 primary regions (Lompoc, Santa Barbara, and Santa Maria) and generally manages a range of programs/projects and two to five Social Service Supervisors each. In addition the Social Services Operations and Support Division provides multifaceted program support from fiscal oversight to data analysis. The Division Chief responsible for the Operations Division reports directly to the CWS Deputy Director.
2. Probation	The Chief Probation Officer directs the activities of the Probation Department. There are presently two Deputy Chief Probation Officers that oversee the Department's Adult, Juvenile, and Institutions Divisions. There are two Probation Managers in the Juvenile Division that have regional responsibilities for the North (Santa Maria) and South (Santa Barbara and Lompoc) County area offices. Each of these area offices have three (3) Supervising Probation Officers assigned to them (three in Santa Maria, two in Santa Barbara, and one in Lompoc). The Department's foster care activities are centralized in the North County office and are

	included in a special programs unit under one supervisor.

C. Number/Composition of Employees

| 1. Staffing Characteristics/Issues | In FY 08/09 there were approximately 685 total positions in the Department of Social Services distributed throughout three distinct regions over a 100 mile geographic spread –- South County (Santa Barbara, Carpinteria, Goleta), West County and the Valley (Lompoc, Buellton, Santa Ynez), and North County (Santa Maria, Guadalupe, Los Alamos, Cuyama). Caseloads and the corresponding staffing are showing an increased trend in the West and North County regions. A point-in-time report for May 2009 showed 32 staff on leave of absence and 64 vacant positions department wide, some of these positions have bee approved to fill and others are under a hiring freeze. Ethnicity for the entire department shows staff at 62% Hispanic, 32% Caucasian, 2% Asian, and 1% Black. The vacancy rate for the whole department was 9%.[20]

During FY 08/09, there were 103 full-time and 3 part-time positions in the CWS Branch (managers, administrative support, and line staff) with approximate equal distribution in each of the three regions.[21] Of our current CWS supervisory and social worker/practitioner workforce, approximately 40% have a Masters and 44% have a Bachelors education in social work, psychology, or a related field. During this time, approximately 40% of the line staff (Social Service Workers and Social Service Practitioners) have less than 2 years experience, while 28% have more than 7 years experience. The remaining 32% have more than 2 years, but less than 7 years of experience with Santa Barbara County CWS. The caseloads and the increasing demands placed on social workers by state and federal regulations have resulted in difficulties hiring and retaining staff. (*Please see our Organizational Chart - Appendix, Figure 2).*

The Probation Department currently has 123 employees in the Deputy Probation Officer and Deputy Probation Officer, Senior classifications. The Juvenile Division contains 47 of them. The Department dedicates two officers to the supervision and case management of probation cases in foster care. Those cases average from 55-60 at any time and are evenly divided between the two officers. The two officers presently assigned to these duties have over 15 years of experience each in the probation field and |

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[20] Biweekly Staffing by Department Report, County of Santa Barbara May 2009
[21] Proposed 2008/2009 Organizational Chart

	together about 10 years of direct involvement with foster care caseloads. There is administrative support in the form of one Probation Assistant and a pool of office professionals. Prior to recent budget reductions the Probation Department had dedicated three officers to the supervision of foster care cases, with each regional office having one officer in it for that purpose. The foster care activities associated with Lompoc cases are now handled in the Santa Maria office. *(Please see Probation Department Juvenile Division Organization Chart – Appendix, Figure 3).*
a. Turnover Ratio	During the 2008 calendar year, separations from CWS totaled 7, including 6 Social Workers/Practitioners and 1 Administrative Office Professional. These separations resulted in a 7% turnover ratio during 2008. The Probation Department has realized some personnel losses because of budget reductions but these losses have been mostly absorbed in other areas with the exception that, as noted, there are now two officers dedicated to foster care caseloads instead of three.
b. Private/Public Contractors	SB County CWS has over 34 contracts with vendors for services including Emergency Shelter Care, Differential Response, substance abuse treatment, mental health services, Home Connections Finders, Pride Resource Family Assessor, tutoring, transportation, Independent Living Skills provider, and Transitional Housing for emancipated youth.
c. Worker Caseload	In 2008, 5,970 unduplicated children coming from 4,138 families were referred to Santa Barbara County Child Welfare Services for investigation of abuse or neglect. Of those referred, 3,620 children received an investigation. The investigations resulted in the substantiation of 693 family referrals and 820 children being opened to CWS services for case management. The remaining children may have received limited supportive services through Child Welfare and/or were referred to an array of community resources/supports. In 2008, the Probation Department supervised 111 distinct youth who were in a foster care environment, the vast majority of them in group home settings. (These cases do not include those youth who were receiving SB 163 Wraparound services which are traditionally supervised by the Placement Unit as well.)

Assessment & Investigations	**Referral Investigations** (Calendar Year 2008)[22]
	Please note that the average number of workers in each of these units is based on total FTEs for the unit and does not reflect vacancy rates when averaging the number of referrals per worker. Understandably when vacancies arise, the number of referrals investigated by the remaining staff increases.

Lompoc Office (LM AIU)
Avg. Monthly Referrals *Investigated*   66
Avg. # of Workers   3
Avg. Monthly Referrals per Worker   22

Santa Barbara Office (SB AIU)
Avg. Monthly Referrals Investigated   90
Avg. # of Workers   4
Avg. Monthly Referrals per Worker   23

Santa Maria Office (SM AIU)
Avg. Monthly Referrals Investigated   125
Avg. # of Workers   5
Avg. Monthly Referrals per Worker   25

Worker Caseloads in March 2009 continued to reach challenging numbers, particularly in the Santa Maria region, given the multiple demands for social worker time in completing assessments; developing case plans; writing legally sound court reports; brokering services for children and families; locating suitable placements for children, participating in team meetings; and maintaining timely monthly contacts with children, parents, and substitute care providers. As a result of the continued increased workload in the Santa Maria region and the disbanding of the Children's System of Care program, as we have known it, a mini reorganization of responsibilities was implemented in May 2009 to provide relief to social work staff and to distribute work more equitably.

[22] https://www.safemeasures.org/ca/safemeasures.aspx

Case Management	**Caseload Averages – January 2009**
	Please note that the average number of workers in each of these units is based on total FTEs for the unit and does not reflect vacancy rates when averaging the number of cases per worker. Understandably when vacancies arise, the number of cases managed by the remaining staff increases.

January 2009 Average Caseload   by Function and Current Staffing

	Referrals	FTEs	Avg. Caseload
SM	181	5	36
LO	76	3	25
SB	67	3	22

	Ongoing Cases		FTEs	Avg. Caseload
SM*	446	13.5	33
LO	129	4	32
SB	101	4	25

	Ongoing Cases		FTEs	Avg. Caseload
Court	96	4	24

2. Bargaining Unit Issues	County CWS maintains positive working relations with Service Employees International Union (SEIU), Local 620 (which represents clerical and technical classifications) and Local 721 (which represents services and eligibility classifications). SEIU members have been involved in our county Self-Assessment focus groups. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between SEIU Local 721 and the County of Santa Barbara expires October 2010. The two primary issues presently under review are pay equity adjustments for Social Service Worker/Practitioner classifications and the Clerical Classification and Compensation Study. As union members will be entering into negotiations again next year issues that will most likely be revisited include:

	• CWS Induction Training • Caseload Standards • Beeper Duty • Health & Safety in field (e.g., home visits) • "Flex schedule" Options (add 4/10 & 9/80 on Mon / Wed / Fri)

3. Financial/Material Resources

a. Source and Expenditure of Funds	Child Welfare Services are funded from a variety of sources, including Title IV-B, Title IV-E of the Social Security Act of 1935, as amended, Title XIX, Title XX and TANF. These federal funds are matched by the State of California and by local county proceeds of taxes to draw funds for services rendered to eligible children and families. The chart below indicates the basic allocations available to support program operations:

FY 2008-09

	State Allocation	One-Time Special Revenue		Line Worker Total	FTE's
CWS	$10,823,798		$10,823,798	55.73	
SCIAP	$34,532		$34,532	0.00	
Adoptions	$ 543,730		$ 543,730	5.54	
Licensing	$ 234,346		$ 234,346	1.05	
CWSOIP	$ 286,206		$ 286,206	0.00	
PSSF	$ 285,830	$27,082	$312,912	0.00	
STOP	$100,660		$100,660	0.00	
ILP	$231,739		$231,739	0.00	
Emancipated Youth Stipends	$ 19,838		$ 19,838	0.00	
County Only Childcare		$ 8,260	$ 8,260	0.00	
County Only CWS Direct		$38,940	$ 38,940	0.00	
	$12,560,679	$74,282	$ 12,634,961	62.32	

4. Political Jurisdictions	
a. School Districts/Local Education Agencies	There are 22 K-12 school districts and two community college districts in Santa Barbara County. Individual schools are listed on the public schools and private schools pages. (http://www.sbceo.k12.ca.us/districts/Welcome.html and http://www.sbceo.k12.ca.us/schools/private.html) As a whole, county schools have difficulty meeting the needs of foster and probationary youth. A lack of coordination between the 22 public school districts, and over 150 public and private schools, with differing contacts, policies, procedures, and information systems (or lack thereof), have created a challenge for CWS and Probation in obtaining Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs), Special Education Services, and academic records for foster youth. During the Peer Quality Case Review in September 2008, there was substantial concern from Probation that many of their minors are placed on independent study, which often amounts to a virtual expulsion for those youth. Foster Youth Services through the County Education Office and County CWS have formed a partnership working diligently on the issues impacting foster youth related to ensuring educational continuity and success (AB490). Through this partnership, strategies for improving educational outcomes for foster youth continue to be developed/expanded and corresponding protocols established to solidify the working relationships between Foster Youth Services and CWS. Foster Youth Services recently applied for and was awarded a grant to further extend the services available to support foster youth. As a result of this grant, new protocols have been developed to support social work staff in having ready access to educational provider and records information for all children in foster care and the Independent Living Program youth. ***County CWS and Probation recognize that there remains significant area for improvement in meeting the educational needs of the youth served by our agencies; thus this remains a high priority area to ensure better outcomes for our foster youth.***
b. Law Enforcement Agencies	The following five agencies represent the bulk of law enforcement efforts in the county: • Santa Barbara County Sheriff, Sheriff Bill Brown, 4434 Calle Real, Santa Barbara, CA 93110 (includes all unincorporated areas of the county and cities of Carpinteria, Goleta, and the various Santa Ynez Valley jurisdictions.

	• City of Lompoc Police, Chief Timothy L. Dabney, 107 Civic Center Plaza, Lompoc, CA 93436
	• City of Santa Barbara Police, Chief Cam Sanchez, 215 East Figueroa Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101
	• City of Santa Maria Police, Chief Dan Macagni, 222 East Cook Street, Santa Maria, CA 93454
	• City of Guadalupe, Chief George Mitchell, 4490 10th Street, Guadalupe, CA 93434
	County CWS has a written agreement with each jurisdiction to assist CWS with "after-hours" responses by utilizing Sheriff's Dispatch and "on-call" Social Workers. CWS also has several joint ventures with law enforcement, and community based organizations (CBOs) to include the Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) and three SART examination facilities in the primary regions of the county. Other law enforcement based endeavors include the Drug Endangered Children (DEC) committee that developed a response protocol with CWS, law enforcement, and the local hospitals. The DEC protocol was implemented in the February of 2006.
c. Tribes	Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians, PO Box 517, Santa Ynez, CA 93460 is the only recognized tribe and reservation in the county. County CWS refers all possible ICWA eligible children via letters to the identified Tribe and Bureau of Indian Affairs and records this in CWS/CMS. When the child in question may be Chumash, a phone referral is also made. In the case that a child is or might be eligible Chumash, the Tribe reviews the request and requests CWS assistance when needed. Significantly, the Chumash Tribal Health Clinic is a new and well-funded facility that offers a wide array of medical, dental, behavioral (AOD and mental health), community health, and nutrition programs.
d. Cities	All cities in Santa Barbara County have populations under 100,000 and the interface between the cities and CWS generally takes place with the appropriate law enforcement jurisdiction in the context of child abuse and neglect investigations. In addition, CWS participates in the City of Santa Maria collaborative entitled Families for the First Decade (FFD) which focuses on improving the lives of children by offering resources and support for all family members. FFD project is a collaborative of over 100 local community based organizations, public agencies, faith communities, educational institutions, and businesses that strive to offer enhanced services and integrated services/support for families.[23]

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[23] http://www.ci.santa-maria.ca.us/recreation/HelpfulInformation.pdf

5. Technology Level	
a. Laptops used by field staff	After-hours social workers have on-line access to the statewide Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) and other office applications.
b. Capacity to use SAS, SPSS, Business Objects or other software	DSS has two analysts who are skilled at utilizing Business Objects and Excel for data mining and presentation of the data. In addition, one of these analysts is capable of utilizing SPSS and MS MapPoint to chart data. It is the primary responsibility of the Social Services Operations and Support Division to develop and analyze regular reports to provide program oversight and ongoing needs assessment for presentation to department heads and managers. In addition, all managers, supervisors, and line staff have the ability to access Safe Measures to keep apprised of their respective division, unit, or caseload status regarding performance on outcome measures.
c. Desktop Hardware	During FY 2008/09, CWS was able to upgrade our CWS/CMS "co-existent" desktop computers to new Pentium 4 PCs running Windows XP operating system. The county infrastructure has expanded fiber optic bandwidth to enhance cross-WAN performance. In preparation for document imaging, all workstations have been outfitted with dual monitors for ease of use.

III. SYSTEMIC FACTORS

A. Relevant Management Information Systems	The Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) is the principal information system for County CWS. Santa Barbara County went "live" in July 1997 using all facets of the application and is considered a "full-utilization" county. All CWS staff is trained in the utilization of CWS/CMS. However given the relative inexperience of our line staff and the multiple demands on their caseloads, the CWS/CMS system continues to present a challenge for ensuring data entry timeliness and integrity. CWS continues to place an emphasis on the utilization of CMS as a case management tool to enhance line staff usage. All supervisors and managers began use of the Safe Measures tool in November of 2005 and continue to utilize the tool regularly to monitor staff responsibilities and performance on various outcome measures. In August 2006, all Social Workers/Practitioners were given access to their caseload in Safe Measures in order to afford the line staff an opportunity to better understand the link between their data entry and the outcome measures as well as to promote self-monitoring of data integrity.
	The Operations and Support Division continues to provide oversight regarding data integrity and shares relevant information with managers and supervisors to enhance the completion and accuracy of key fields in the CWS/CMS system. Training and new policies/procedures often result as the data integrity issues are identified and strategies to improve accuracy are developed.
	In March 2006, CWS implemented the California Structured Decision Making (SDM) tool in order to improve assessments, increase consistency and accuracy in decisions related to safety/risk, and to provide clearer oversight of the decision making process. The use of Structured Decision Making Safety Assessment is monitored monthly in order to promote the consistent use of the tool. With Safe Measures, supervisors, managers and social workers have the ability to review their own caseloads to evaluate whether SDM is being used in the case management process.
	Foster Care Eligibility workers have been utilizing the state's CalWIN program to process all foster care and adoption assistance payments since March of 2006. The CalWIN system was not fully designed for the foster care program and its specific

	requirements. New policies and procedures for Foster Care Eligibility Workers and CWS Social Work staff were implemented to ensure timeliness and accuracy of corresponding entry of placement information in CWS/CMS, which have been successful.

All case management information for Probation cases is maintained in a single Department-wide computer system developed by a private vendor for use by probation agencies in managing documentation and data. There is no independent system for managing cases and information related to foster care youth, and the system is not integrated with those of other departments or agencies. It provides some basic overview and statistical information with various permission levels. The Department will provide required foster care related information to Child Welfare Services utilizing methods and formats created locally or in use Statewide for that purpose. Probation foster care cases are not entered locally in the State CWS case management system. The limited Probation foster youth data available in CWS/CMS for analysis has been entered by the State. |

B. Case Review System

1. Court structure/relationship:	The Juvenile Court of Santa Barbara County is operated by the Superior Court holding hearings in both Santa Maria and Santa Barbara. The Santa Maria location calendars all cases from the north and west county regions, while Santa Barbara calendars those cases from all south county regions. The majority of CWS and Probation cases are heard in the Santa Maria Juvenile Court by the Assistant Presiding Superior Court Judge Herman. County CWS and Probation managers meet monthly with the presiding Juvenile Court Judge to review process related issues and to keep the courts appraised of various systemic issues impacting CWS and Probation in delivering services to the client population. In addition, less formal Brown Bags meetings are held with the respective Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court and the South County judge which includes all court stakeholders. Topics of discussion during this review period have included the development and implementation of Family Drug Treatment Court, the use of electronic transmissions for court material, access to mental health services, and discussions related to noticing and continuances.
a. Use of Continuances	Use of Continuances: The Juvenile Court "brown bag" discussions continue to focus on the role of continuances and their impact on delaying permanency for youth in placement. CWS/CMS data shows that in Santa Barbara County during the current fiscal year, there were 277 hearings continued and 2473 which were not. Of those that were continued, 102 instances were at the request of the parents' attorney. The second most frequent reason, with 46 instances, was as a result of the social worker's

	request. An additional 36 continuances were as a result of the court's own motion. Since the second quarter of 2007 Santa Barbara County's median time to reunification (using the exit cohort as a base) has been 13 months compared with national federal goal of 5.4 months. There are multiple complex factors contributing to a 13-month average for local reunifications. Among them is the high rate (78%) of substantiated allegations of Neglect or Caretaker Absence/Incapacity. This type of maltreatment usually involves chronic parental problems which are not readily resolved, particularly substance abuse/addiction and chronic mental illness.
b. Termination of Parental Rights	Termination of Parental Rights (TPR): Santa Barbara County's April 2009 Adoption Composite of 116.2 exceeds the National Standard of 109.4. There were 59 children with a TPR date occurring during 2007 FY, of whom 48 were adopted and the remainder were children who were either not yet adopted or the adoption process failed. Similarly, there were 16 children with a TPR date in 2008 FY recorded, of whom 12 were adopted and 3 were not. Timely entry of TPR information into the CMS/CWS database continues to be a data quality issue needing attention, and data quality has an effect on applicable measures of efficacy and timeliness. In FY 2007/08 there were 92 adoptions and thus far in FY 2008/09 there have been 84 adoptions (at about three quarters of the year concluded).
c. Facilities Available for Parents and Children	The Juvenile Court facilities: The Santa Barbara Courthouse is located in an historic building constructed in the 1930's with limited accommodations for patrons. The Santa Maria Juvenile Court is in a new, more spacious building attached to the juvenile hall. There is a significantly larger waiting area, more seating, and a pleasant, partially enclosed room with a table and small chairs for children. In addition, there are meeting rooms for counsel and CWS on the premises.
d. Use of Alternative Dispute Resolution	Alternative Dispute Resolution or family mediation is not currently being utilized, but has been explored in the past. County CWS is not aware of any current plans to implement alternative dispute resolution.
2. CWS Process for Notification of Hearings	SB County CWS continues to utilize CWS/CMS to guide staff in sending timely hearing notices. Office Professionals in each unit are responsible for sending out hearing notices based on CMS, the Social Worker's requests, and Court hearing notes that are distributed to all Social Workers and Office Professionals shortly after the last hearing.
3. Process for parent-child	Santa Barbara County CWS integrates fairness and equity towards racial and ethnic groups into case planning decisions by

participation in case planning	utilizing Team Decision Making (TDM) meetings for case planning and placement decisions. The meetings involve the parents, any support resources, including community partners, parent advocates, relatives, friends, foster parents, attorneys, and service providers. Youth 10 years and older are present in case planning sessions and present at placement TDMs in accordance with the TDM protocol for youth participation.
	The Probation Department does not employ a TDM model as described above in its decision-making process for foster care cases. Generally, a case will have been supervised in the community for some time before a need for out-of-home removal arises. In some instances, this need is identified early during an initial investigation period. In any case, the Department utilizes a Placement Review Committee (PRC) to determine issues surrounding foster care consideration. Principally, the PRC will determine that there is a need for placement, recommend a specific program or type of placement, and highlight the needs of a youth. The assigned DPO will present the case at the PRC and discuss the history of it, previous or current attempts at community-based interventions, and his or her recommendation. The assigned DPO will have captured the wishes or views of the youth, the parent or guardian, and others when making their recommendation. The PRC consists of representation from various levels and areas of the Department's Juvenile Division, the youth's school, and mental health workers with knowledge of the case. Reports or comments from others involved with the case are also included for consideration. PRC meetings are held on a weekly basis as needed in each of the three Department offices.
	When TDMs are not held for case planning, Social Workers confer with parents, children, and service providers in case planning activities discussing risks, strengths, needs, services, and available resources. Children, depending on age, are also involved in the case planning process and are generally required to attend Court. SB County has private attorneys who are contracted with the State to represent our children in dependency hearings. These attorneys are very involved with the children and have regular contact with them and the social worker regarding case concerns and progress.
	ILP training was held for CWS and Probation staff in 2009. The training focused on the revised TILP and the requirement of collaboration between the youth and the social worker/probation officer. The individualized nature was stressed and that the TILP

	was a "working document" that would be reviewed on an ongoing basis, but no less than once every six months. The ILP Youth Advisory Board is in the process of being finalized to allow for the voice of youth to be instrumental in the Independent Living Program. The Santa Barbara County Independent Living Program has been providing individualized service delivery, as opposed to classroom settings, since 2007, which is also when direct ILP case management and services were contracted out to a local community based organization. Emancipation conferences continue to be held to assist youth with preparing for their emancipation/exit from foster care.
4. General Case Planning and Review	
a. Written Case Plan	Santa Barbara County CWS staff has used CMS to generate case plans since July 1997. Case plans are written by the majority of our social worker/practitioner staff and utilize the Structured Decision Making's Family Strengths and Needs Assessment to target focused intervention services. The majority of the case plans written are completed in conjunction with the court report for the upcoming Family Maintenance, Family Reunification, or Permanent Planning court hearings and correspond to the mandatory judicial reviews. Case plans that are not prompted by the need for judicial review for updates include the initial (60 day) case plan, family preservation case plans, and guardianship services only cases. In these instances, the reminder section in CWS/CMS and Safe Measures are utilized to assist staff in maintaining current case plans for all clients. Safe Measures indicates that SB County CWS compliance in approved case plans has been consistent since March 2008 due to our efforts to improve data integrity and the use of Safe Measures to monitor our compliance. An analysis of the information reveals that Case Plans are typically developed in a timely manner, as they are routinely filed in Juvenile Court with the corresponding court reports within the legally mandated time frames. Throughout 2008, Safe Measures reflected a range from 93% to 99.87% compliance rate for case plans. This shows there has been a substantial improvement in both case plans being completed and approved by supervisors in a timely manner. The assigned DPO is responsible for preparing a case plan for any Probation youth entering foster care. The plans are completed in accordance with Federal and State requirements. They are formulated with input from the youth involved and the parent or

	guardian. They are completed in a format approved of by the Chief Probation Officers of California (CPOC) and which contain all necessary language regarding out-of-home removal.
b. Concurrent Planning	Since July of 2006, County CWS implemented a mini-reorganization of responsibilities to provide increased support to our Ongoing units by reducing caseload/responsibilities and distributing workload more equitably between the case managing units. The mini-reorganization resulted in the Adoptions/Concurrent Planning Unit being renamed the Permanency Unit. The Permanency Unit has been responsible for managing all cases post a Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) 366.26 hearing in order to continue to emphasize seeking permanence through adoptions/guardianship for all youth, regardless of age. The tasks of concurrent planning were re-assigned to the primary assigned worker. During the 2007/2008 fiscal year, 92 children received a family for life through the adoption process. To enhance the concurrent planning process and the identification of possible connections for children in foster care, CWS sought Child Welfare System Outcome Improvement Project (CWSOIP) funds in 2005/2006 to implement a new program referred to as the Home Connection Finders. In an effort to maximize early identification and location of relatives for possible placements, SB County CWS initiated and has maintained a contract with a community based organization to serve as the home connection finders. This service sought relatives and connections for children in CWS and Probation care with the goal of providing relative placements, long-term connections, and permanency for the children. The information obtained through contact with biological families, non-related extended family members, and the youth was then provided to the primary assigned caseworker/probation officer for follow up or referral to the Licensing/Relative Approval Unit. The project was very successful in identifying connections for CWS and Probation youth and is reflected in that currently 36.9% of SB County's children are in relative or non-related extended family placements.[24]

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[24] CWS/CMS CAD extract for children in placement on April 24, 2009

C. Foster/Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment and Retention	
1. General licensing, recruitment and retention	County CWS does its own Licensing and provides enhanced CWS funding to the Licensing program allowing for 2.5 full-time licensing/relative approval social workers. There is a formal approval process that is initiated by all social work staff with the relative/non-related extended family member. Once the application for consideration is completed, the licensing/relative approval worker completes all additional requirements and advises the placing worker when/if the home is approved for placement.
	A Foster Parent Recruiter position was added to the department in early 2006 to provide a concentrated effort on expanding and retaining the pool of available foster parents. Given the limited resources currently, recruitment efforts have been more generalized focusing on increasing the total pool of available placements. The Foster Parent Recruiter also serves as a liaison between the Department and resource families to assist in supporting their needs and improving retention.
	All potential foster parents attend an Orientation conducted by a County Licensing Worker. In collaboration with the community colleges, caregivers interested in pursuing licensure participate in the Parents Resources Information Development Education (PRIDE) training program. CWS moved to train our caregiver candidates using the PRIDE model in FY03/04. The candidates attend 6 meetings covering 9 training modules. Schedules for training vary depending on the location and to better meet the pressing schedules of prospective foster parents. Prospective candidates also participate in the PRIDE assessment, wherein a contracted assessor attends the classes and evaluates candidates in their homes, working with them to continue through the program or assess themselves out as candidates. The assessment component allows the trainers and licensing staff to better evaluate candidates' readiness for licensure. Pride Assessments are conducted in both English and Spanish, as needed.
	In 2006, the HOPE program was expanded to provide supportive therapeutic services to all substitute providers as a means to provide additional stability to youth in placement. Additionally, SB County CWS has been collaborating with ADMHS, Probation, and CBOs to provide SB163 wraparound services in to children in order to reduce the overall number of youth in group home care, and return them to their communities. As of March 31, 2009, 17 CWS and Probation youth were receiving SB 163 wrap around services.

2. Placement Resources	Placement resources continue to be one of the **biggest challenges** for Santa Barbara County CWS and are a **top priority**. SB County CWS has initiated several efforts including hiring a Foster Parent Recruiter and working with our community partners to expand our placement resources. SB County continues to face challenges in placing the growing population of children with significant emotional and behavioral needs as well as adolescents. These children are considered to be "hard-to-place" and at one point or another, are placed in a group home. On July 1, 2008, 66 children were in group home placements with only 28.8% of those children being placed in Santa Barbara County.[25] Of those youth in group home care placed out of County, 44 were placed in our neighboring Counties of San Luis Obispo and Ventura. Of those youth placed in group home placements, 23.6% are between the ages of 11-15, while 7.6% of the youth are between the ages of 6-10[26]: the latter is a significant decline from the previous year.
	The SB163 Wraparound program was implemented in May of 2007, as a means of mitigating the need for group home placements. The program targets youth either currently in high level group home placement (Rate Class Level 10-14) or at risk of such placement and allows counties to utilize the fiscal resources that would have been required to pay for these placements flexibly to support the youth in remaining at home or in a foster/relative home with wraparound services. The March 2009 census for group home placements appears to be approximately 44; thereby indicating that SB163 has had the intended impact on reducing the number of children in group home care. Recently, the Inter-Agency Policy Council (IAPC), which serves as the executive oversight committee for SB163 Wraparound approved the expansion of the program from 18 to the full 25 State approved slots. In May of 2009, there were 19 youth in the SB163 Wraparound program with the following breakdown by agency: CWS – 12; Probation – 5; and ADMHS – 2.
	In 2008, County CWS developed a new supportive function for identifying/locating placement matches for children entering or moving within the foster care system. The Placement Search Assistant (PSA) role was developed and is a service provided to the

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[25] http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/Pointintime/fostercare/childwel/grids/data/grid_sXrGrp_jul2008_0.html; http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb%5Fchildwelfare/PIT.aspx;
http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/Pointintime/fostercare/childwel/grids/data/grid_sXrGrp_jan2006_0.html
[26] http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/Pointintime/fostercare/childwel/frequencies/data/CWf_PA0_jan2006_42.html

children via a contract with a local Community Based Organization (CBO). The PSA assists social work staff in identifying a possible placement match for a child by communicating with potential caregivers in the placement search process. The PSA has been funded through CWSOIP dollars. During the PQCR in September 2008, it was evident that not only was the work of the PSA seen as a significant support to our social work staff, but the services provided also support the outcome of placement stability for children in foster care. Moreover during the CSA process, we heard that the role of the PSA has also been viewed as a source of support to the caregivers.

In an effort to serve children who could be diverted from out of home placement, SB County CWS reorganized in July 2007 to maximize the use of staff that provide Voluntary Family Maintenance services. The Countywide Family Services Unit was centralized and comprised of 3 CWS social workers providing Voluntary Family Maintenance Services. In FY 07/08, 285 children were served by the program.

In addition to County CWS efforts to recruit foster parents, CWS has supported the expansion of Foster Family Agencies (FFA) in Santa Barbara County and the addition of new resource homes. County CWS has currently established contracts with a local FFA to provide shelter care in the North and West County regions. The high cost of housing appears to be the predominant factor limiting participation by families overall, but particularly in the Santa Barbara region. For the FFA and group home agencies the impact of housing on administrative overhead also appears to play a critical role. For those affluent families in the county, where housing costs do not seem to impact the size of their homes, there appears to be a range of psychological and sociological factors that limit their willingness to open their homes to troubled children and their families.

Also, in February, 2008, SB County CWS contracted with a community based organization to provide transportation and visitation supervision services for children placed in out of home care in order to increase the frequency of visitation with their families and consequently promote the successful and timely reunification of families.

D. Quality Assurance (QA)

1. Description of existing County QA System	The Social Services Operations and Support Division was created to support a continual quality assurance monitoring system within the CWS branch, provide a unifying business approach to the three regional CWS offices, and support the development of policy/programs for outcome improvement. CWS/CMS data integrity remains a priority issue to ensure accuracy in our data management system and confidence that reports generated are providing an accurate account of our performance. Regional information is gathered, analyzed, and presented in various reports/formats to support the decision-making of the Department's Executive Officers Team, the CWS Team, and CWS Operations Group (CWS OPS). The CWS "Team" meets monthly to confer over policy, outcomes, major program redesign/restructuring, and quality assurance issues. CWS Team is comprised of executive, managerial, supervisory, and analytic/administrative support. CWS OPS is comprised of managers and supervisors who meet and confer monthly for implementation of procedural changes, standardization of practices, and updates on operational functioning of the various units countywide. Supervisors, managers, and analytic support are then charged with writing Policies and Procedures to ensure countywide uniformity in the delivery of services and the corresponding data entry components. These Policies and Procedures are then presented at Regional meetings and reviewed by each worker for discussion in unit meetings. Training is provided by unit supervisors, analytical staff, and/or staff development for the more complex Policies and Procedures. There are also multiple other quality assurance measures in place to support the integrity of the work being performed by County CWS staff and those community partners with whom we contract to provide direct services to children and families. Contract monitoring and analysis of efficacy is a key element. Moreover, the newly developed Ipso Facto group meets monthly to discuss data elements to support a more comprehensive understanding of the quantitative picture provided by the data. In preparation for the Federal Foster Care Audit, CWS implemented a number of specific quality assurance procedures to ready our eligibility files for this review. Aside from monthly unit training for our foster care eligibility staff to support compliance and understanding of the regulations associated with the program, new procedures were implemented to enhance the review of court minute orders to ensure that proper findings in support of the eligibility determination our made. In November 2008, CWS

implemented the use of new Findings and Orders that are in compliance with the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) to

ensure the required findings and orders were made at all Juvenile Court hearings. Eligibility workers completed a 100% self audit of their cases and analytical program staff are currently in the process of completing a 100% audit of all federal cases utilizing the federal audit tool.

Because of the relatively few probation cases in foster care, the Probation Department is able to address Quality Assurance needs informally at the unit level. The Placement Supervisor is tasked with remaining current with Federal and State requirements and with incorporating changes into any process or format. That person also responds to inquiries from CWS and the Juvenile Court regarding foster care related issues as they might pertain to probation cases. The Placement Unit (manager, supervisor, DPOs, assistant, and clerical pool) will meet periodically to review practices and modify them as needed. The Unit supervisor has also begun reviewing probation cases for the upcoming Federal audit by using the identified tool for that purpose. The Department also works collaboratively with CWS in compliance matters and oversight responsibilities. The Department will conduct training sessions at the unit or division level when needed to review requirements for placement cases.

E. Service Array (composition/issues of service delivery system)

1. Substance abuse and mental health services	Santa Barbara County continues to be facing a growing population of adults and youth using/abusing substances. In 2006, the data overwhelmingly indicated that methamphetamine use in our county was resulting in high numbers of children entering the foster care system. During that time, roughly 83% of the cases being served by CWS had a substance abuse component. Multiple community efforts were in place at the time to combat this issue. Key stakeholders from both public agencies and the community were brought together in December 2006 for a Methamphetamine Summit to present the scope of the problem and gather information about mitigating the resultant impacts to our county. From this summit, the Methamphetamine Prevention Network was developed to continue the collaborative efforts at reducing the use of meth in SB County. Since that time, we have seen a specific decline in the use of meth and an overall decline in the number of cases requiring substance abuse treatment to mitigate abuse and neglect concerns. At present, approximately 55% of all new cases opened to CWS for case management have a substance abuse component. Given the decline in meth use, the Methamphetamine Prevention Network continues the collaboration under the new title of Substance Abuse Coordinating Council (SACC).

Furthering our collaboration with the Juvenile Court, County Alcohol and Drug Programs, and our substance abuse treatment partners, a Family Drug Treatment Court (FDTC) was implemented in February 2008. The model of service delivery is being piloted in the Santa Maria Juvenile Court and one full-time social worker has been dedicated to the program. Given that there is no specific funding for the FDTC, our collaborations with both the stakeholders and service providers have been key in implementing this program and maximizing both current contracts and recently obtained SAMSHA grant dollars for mother and child residential treatment in the Lompoc region.

Children and families are generally referred to the "Provider Network" for mental health treatment services, which is a list of community service providers operating under a Memorandum of Understanding with ADMHS. There are currently significant capacity issues regarding treatment services, particularly with the recent disbanding of the Children's System of Care (CSOC) program. The limited availability of providers, particularly bilingual/bicultural counselors, is resulting in extensive waiting lists and significant delays in service delivery impacting safety and reunification outcomes for children. Moreover, there is considerable disparity in the availability of these services in northern Santa Barbara County, where there appears to be the greatest need given the rise in referrals and caseloads, particularly in the Santa Maria region.

Substance Abuse Services:
- Advisory Board on Alcohol and Drug Problems-CNTY, Santa Barbara
- Alcoholics Anonymous-Lompoc, Lompoc
- Alcoholics Anonymous-S.B, Santa Barbara
- Alcoholics Anonymous-S.M., Santa Maria
- Alcoholics Anonymous-Solvang, Santa Ynez
- American Indian Health & Services-S.B., Santa Barbara
- Casa Esperanza–Santa Barbara
- Casa Serena Residential Recovery Services for Women-S.B, Santa Barbara
- Catholic Psychological Services-N.CNTY, Santa Maria
- Chemical Dependency Program - Cottage Health System-S.B, Santa Barbara
- Cliff Drive Christian Counseling Center-S.B, Santa Barbara
- Community Sobering Center-S.B., Santa Barbara
- Cottage Outpatient Center of Santa Maria, Santa Maria
- Daniel Bryant Youth and Family Treatment Center –Santa Barbara

- Drinking Driver Program, Lompoc
- Drinkers' Choice-S.B, Santa Barbara
- Drop-In Center-S.B, Santa Barbara
- Eastside Neighborhood Clinic-S.B., Santa Barbara
- Emergency Psychiatric Services-S.B, Santa Barbara
- Exploring Teen Issues-S.B, Santa Barbara
- Family Treatment Center – Santa Maria
- First Steps Perinatal Program-S.M., Santa Maria
- Friday Night Live-S.B, Santa Barbara
- Girls Incorporated Counseling Programs-S.B, Santa Barbara
- Homeless Health Care-CNTY, Santa Barbara
- Isla Vista Neighborhood Clinic, Santa Barbara
- Isla Vista/UCSB Community Services Center, Santa Barbara
- Mission House-S.B, Santa Barbara
- Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD)-S.M, Santa Maria
- Narcotics Anonymous-N.CNTY, Santa Maria
- Narcotics Anonymous-S.B, Santa Barbara
- New House II-S.B., Santa Barbara
- New House III-S.B, Santa Barbara
- New House IV-S.B., Santa Barbara
- Noah's Anchorage Channel Islands YMCA Youth Shelter-S.B, Santa Barbara
- Parent Education and Support Programs-S.B., Santa Barbara
- Perinatal Day Treatment Program-S.B, Santa Barbara
- Phoenix of Santa Barbara, Inc., Santa Barbara
- Project PREMIE-S.M, Santa Maria
- Project Recovery-S.B., Santa Barbara
- Recovery Point-S.M., Santa Maria
- Santa Barbara Center for Change, Santa Barbara
- Santa Barbara Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse-S.B,
- Sanctuary Psychiatric Centers of Santa Barbara-CNTY, Santa Barbara
- Sansum Santa Barbara Medical Foundation Clinic-Carpinteria, Santa Barbara
- Sansum Santa Barbara Medical Foundation Clinic-Goleta, Santa Barbara
- Sansum Santa Barbara Medical Foundation Clinic-Hitchcock, Santa Barbara
- Sansum Santa Barbara Medical Foundation Clinic-Lompoc, Lompoc
- Sansum Santa Barbara Medical Foundation Clinic-Main Clinic-S.B, Santa Barbara
- Santa Barbara Cottage Hospital, Santa Barbara
- Santa Barbara Neighborhood Clinics, Santa Barbara
- Santa Barbara Rescue Mission-S.B., Santa Barbara

	• Santa Maria Center for Change, Santa Maria • Santa Maria Valley Youth and Family Center, Santa Maria • Santa Maria Valley Youth and Family Center-Guadalupe, Santa Maria • Save a Valuable Employee-S.M., Santa Maria • Save a Valuable Employee-S.B., Santa Barbara • Transitional Center for Women and Children-S.M, Santa Maria • Victory Outreach Christian Recovery Home, Inc.-Lompoc, Lompoc • Victory Outreach-S.M., Santa Maria • Westside Neighborhood Clinic-S.B., Santa Barbara • Women's Addiction Recovery Group-S.B, Santa Barbara • Zona Seca, Inc.-S.B., Santa Barbara • Zona Seca, Inc.- Lompoc (CRIS Directory)[27]
2. Child care and transportation services	Child care programs available: • Afterschool and Summer Enrichment Program-I.V., Santa Barbara • Alternative Payment Program-Lompoc, Lompoc • Allan Hancock College Children's Center-S.M., Santa Maria • California Alternative Payment Program-S.B. Main Office, Santa Barbara • California School Age Families Education-S.B., Santa Barbara • California School Age Families Education-S.M., Santa Maria • Centro Infantil-S.B., Santa Barbara • Child Care Facilities Financing-S.M., Santa Maria • Child Care Services Program-Stage 2 & 3-S.B., Santa Barbara • Child Care Services Program-Stage 2 & 3-S.M., Santa Maria • Child Development Center-S.M., Santa Maria • Child Development Programs-Lompoc, Lompoc • Child Development Programs-S.B., Santa Barbara • Child Development Programs-S.M., Santa Maria • Childcare Alternative Payment Program-S.B., Santa Barbara • Childcare Alternative Payment Program-S.M., Santa Maria • Childcare CalWORKs Program Stage 2 and 3-S.B., Santa Barbara • Childcare CalWORKs Program Stage 2 and 3-S.M., Santa Maria • Children's Centers-S.B.S.D. Child Development-S.B., Santa Barbara • Children's Montessori School-Lompoc

[27] On-line CRIS directory http://www.fsacares.org/key357.htm

	- Children's Resource and Referral Program-S.B., Santa Barbara - Children's Resource and Referral Program-S.M., Santa Maria - Christian Life Preschool-S.M., Santa Maria - Circle of Friends Children's Center-S.B., Santa Barbara - Cliff Drive Care Center Preschool-S.B, Santa Barbara - Community Care Licensing-S.B., Santa Barbara - Congregation B'Nai Brith Preschool-S.B, Santa Barbara - Early Start Program-S.B., Santa Barbara - Early Start Program-S.M., Santa Maria - Goleta Valley Nursery School, Santa Barbara - Grace Lutheran Nursery School-S.M, Santa Maria - Happy Hollow Preschool-S.M, Santa Maria - Head Start/Child Development Program-Carpinteria I - Head Start/Child Development Program-Carpinteria II - Head Start/Child Development Program-Cuyama - Head Start/Child Development Program-Goleta I & II - Head Start/Child Development Program-Guadalupe I, II, III - Head Start/Child Development Program-Lompoc/Chestnut II, Lompoc - Head Start/Child Development Program-Lompoc/Fillmore, Lompoc - Head Start/Child Development Program-Lompoc/Maple, Lompoc - Head Start/Child Development Program-Regional/C. CNTY, Santa Maria - Head Start/Child Development Program-Regional/N. CNTY, Santa Maria - Head Start/Child Development Program-Regional/S. CNTY, Santa Barbara - Head Start/Child Development Program-S.B./Coronel, Santa Barbara - Head Start/Child Development Program-S.B./Los Ninos, Santa Barbara - Head Start/Child Development Program-S.M./Adam, Santa Maria - Head Start/Child Development Program-S.M./Alvin, Santa Maria - Head Start/Child Development Program-S.M./Buena Vista, Santa Maria - Head Start/Child Development Program-S.M./Chapel, Santa Maria - Head Start/Child Development Program-S.M./JC Washington, Santa Maria - Head Start/Child Development Program-S.M./Los Adobes de Maria, Santa - Head Start/Child Development Program-S.M./Los Padres, Santa Maria - Head Start/Child Development Program-S.M./Meridian, Santa Maria

[28] Online CRIS Directory, http://www.fsacares.org/key61.htm
[29] Online CRIS Directory, http://www.fsacares.org/key371.htm
[30] Online CRIS Directory, http://www.fsacares.org/key372.htm

	- Head Start/Child Development Program-S.M./Oakley, Santa Maria - Head Start/Child Development Program-S.M./Sierra Madre, Santa Maria - Head Start/Child Development Program-S.M./Tanglewood, Santa Maria - Head Start/Child Development Program-S.Y. Valley, Santa Ynez - Isla Vista Children's Center, Santa Barbara - Isla Vista Youth Projects Family Resource Center, Santa Barbara - Kinderkirk Preschool and Childcare Center-Carp., Carpinteria - Kinko's Early Learning Center-SBCC, Santa Barbara - Little Angels Preschool-S.B., Santa Barbara - Lompoc Schools Family Center – Dorothy Jackson Resource Center, Lompoc - Orfalea Family Children's Center-S.B, Santa Barbara - Parent/Child Workshops-Lou Grant, Carpinteria - Parent/Child Workshops-San Marcos-S.B., Santa Barbara - Parent/Child Workshops-Starr King-S.B., Santa Barbara - Parent/Child Workshops-The Oaks-S.B., Santa Barbara - People Helping People-S.Y., Santa Ynez - Perinatal Day Treatment Program-S.B, Santa Barbara - Saint Vincent's Casa Alegria Children's Center-S.B., Santa Barbara - Salvation Army Childcare Center-S.B., Santa Barbara - Santa Barbara City College CalWORKs Program-S.B, Santa Barbara - Santa Barbara Family Care Center, Santa Barbara - Santa Barbara Family Child Care Association-S.B., Santa Barbara - Santa Ynez Valley Family Pre-School, Santa Ynez - SBA Microloan-S.B., Santa Barbara - School Age Child Care-Adams School-S.B., Santa Barbara - School Age Child Care-Cleveland School-S.B., Santa Barbara - School Age Child Care-Franklin School-S.B., Santa Barbara - School Age Child Care-Harding School-S.B., Santa Barbara - School Age Child Care-McKinley School-S.B., Santa Barbara - School Age Child Care-Monroe School-S.B., Santa Barbara - School Age Child Care-Peabody School-S.B., Santa Barbara - School Age Child Care-Roosevelt School-S.B., Santa Barbara - School Age Child Care-Washington School-S.B., Santa Barbara - Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Preschool-S.Y, Santa Ynez - St. Andrews Preschool School-S.B, Santa Barbara - St. Mark Pre-School, Santa Barbara - State Preschools-Adams School-S.B, Santa Barbara - State Preschools-Bonita District-S.M., Santa Maria

- State Preschools, Carpinteria
- State Preschools-Centro Familiar-S.B, Santa Barbara
- State Preschools-Cleveland School-S.B., Santa Barbara
- State Preschools-College School-S.Y, Santa Ynez
- State Preschools-De Colores-Lompoc, Lompoc
- State Preschools-Franklin School-S.B, Santa Barbara
- State Preschools-Harding School-S.B, Santa Barbara
- State Preschools-La Honda-Lompoc, Lompoc
- State Preschools-Las Flores-S.B., Santa Barbara
- State Preschools-McKinley School-S.B., Santa Barbara
- State Preschools-Monroe School-S.B, Santa Barbara
- State Preschools-Peabody School-S.B., Santa Barbara
- Storyteller Children's Center-S.B., Santa Barbara
- Stuart C. Gilred Family Afterschool Program-S.Y, Santa Ynez
- University of California, Santa Barbara Community Housing, Santa Barbara
- Waldorf School of Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara
- Wee Kare Preschool-Goleta, Santa Barbara
- YMCA Afterschool Program-Lompoc, Lompoc
- YMCA Preschool/Afterschool Program-S.M, Santa Maria
- YMCA-S.B, Santa Barbara

(CRIS Directory)[28]

Affordable child care resources are limited in Santa Barbara County, particularly for the infant toddler population. Given the population expansion due to live births, the childcare resources have been unable to keep pace with the demand. Prohibitive costs also significantly limit the number of families able to utilize the available resources.

Public Mass Transportation
- The Breeze Bus, Santa Maria-Vandenberg Air Force Base-Lompoc
- Carpinteria Area Rapid Transit
- City of Lompoc Transit-Lompoc
- Lompoc Easy Lift Transportation-S.B.
- Santa Barbara Metropolitan Transit District (MTD) -S.B.
- Santa Barbara Santa Maria Area Transit-SMOOTH/SMAT
- Santa Maria Santa Ynez Valley Transit-S.Y.
- Santa Ynez Traffic Solutions-CNTY

(CRIS Directory) [29]

Public transportation services are limited to small geographic areas and divided by city jurisdictions. This has created *a*

	significant problem for low-income residents as SB County has a significant geographic spread of 100 miles with many jobs being located on the south coast and less expensive housing in the west and north county regions. Specialized and Private Transportation providers: • American Cancer Society-Lompoc Valley Unit • American Cancer Society-S.B, Santa Barbara • American Cancer Society-Santa Maria Valley Unit • American Medical Response-CNTY, Santa Ynez • Bridgehouse Shelter-Lompoc • Casa Juana Maria-S.B, Santa Barbara. • City of Lompoc Transit-Lompoc, Lompoc • Community Home Health, Inc.-S.B. • Community Partners in Caring-S.M., Santa Maria • Easy Lift Transportation -Carpinteria • Easy Lift Transportation-S.B., Santa Barbara • Fellowship Club-S.B., Santa Barbara • Guadalupe Area Senior Citizen's Center, Guadalupe • Help of Carpinteria, Inc, Santa Barbara • Lyon's House-S.B., Santa Barbara • Marian Residence-S.M., Santa Maria • Metropolitan Transit District-S.B, Santa Barbara • Parking Lots-S.B., Santa Barbara • Peoples' Self-Help Housing Corporation-S.B., Santa Barbara • Santa Ynez Valley Transit-S.Y, Santa Ynez • Traffic Solutions-CNTY, Santa Barbara • Visiting Care and Companions-S.B., Santa Barbara (CRIS Directory) [30]
3. Domestic Violence Services	Domestic Violence Services: • Adult Protective Services-S.B., Santa Barbara • Advocates for Domestic and Child Abuse Prevention – Santa Ynez, Solvang • CALM –S.B., Santa Barbara • Domestic Violence Restraining Order Clinic-S.B., Santa Barbara • Domestic Violence Solutions for S.B. County-Admin.-S.B., Santa Barbara • Domestic Violence Solutions for S.B. County-Lompoc, Lompoc • Domestic Violence Solutions for S.B. County-S.B., Santa Barbara • Domestic Violence Solutions for S.B. County-S.M., Santa Maria • Domestic Violence Solutions for S.B. County-Second Stage-S.B., Santa Barbara

	• Domestic Violence Solutions for S.B. County-Teen Services-S.B., • Healthy Start-Guadalupe, Family Services Center, Santa Maria • HelpLine—Countywide Dealing with Sexual Violence-S.B, Santa Barbara • Family Violence Group-Solvang, Santa Ynez • People Helping People-S.Y., Solvang • Women's Group-CNTY, Santa Barbara • Spanish Speaking Families Project-S.B., Santa Barbara • Valley Community Counseling-S.Y, Santa Ynez • Victim Witness Assistance-Lompoc • Victim Witness Assistance-S.B., Santa Barbara (CRIS Directory)[31] There are several lead CBOs involved in serving children and families that are victims of domestic/family violence including Domestic Violence Solutions, Shelter Services for Women, and the North County Rape Crisis and Child Protection Center. These agencies provide specialized coordinated case management with law enforcement and provide shelter services, counseling, and legal assistance. ADCAP = Advocates for Domestic & Child Abuse Prevention (SY Valley) DVCC = Domestic Violence Coordinating Council (South County) EDAAPC = Elder/Dependent Adult Abuse Prevention Council FVPC = Family Violence Prevention Council (Lompoc/SY Valley) LVCHO = Lompoc Valley Community Healthcare Organization (Lompoc Valley) Additionally, many of the CBOs that form these regional coalitions are also part of our KIDS Network and coordinate service delivery through KIDS. (Please see G. Agency Collaborations)
4. Education Services including Special Education and Developmental Services	Early Childhood Education: • Alpha Resource Center of Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara • Autism Society of America-Santa Barbara Chapter • California School Age Families Education-S.B., Santa Barbara • California School Age Families Education-S.M., Santa Maria • California School Age Families Education-VAFB, Lompoc • Children's Neurobiological Solutions Foundation, Inc.-S.B., Santa Barbara • Disabled Student Programs and Services-SBCC-S. CNTY

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[31] Online CRIS Directory, http://www.fsacares.org/key431.htm

	- Dyslexia Awareness and Resource Center-S.B., Santa Barbara - Family First –S.B, Santa Barbara - Family First – S.M., Santa Maria - First 5 School Readiness Initiative Program –CNTY - Great Beginnings-S.B., Santa Barbara - Head Start/Child Development Program-Carpinteria I, Santa Barbara - Head Start/Child Development Program-Carpinteria II, Santa Barbara - Head Start/Child Development Program-Cuyama, Santa Maria - Head Start/Child Development Program-Goleta I & ll, Santa Barbara - Head Start/Child Development Program-Guadalupe l, ll, lll, Santa - Head Start/Child Development Program-Lompoc/Chestnut ll, Lompoc - Head Start/Child Development Program-Lompoc/Fillmore, Lompoc - Head Start/Child Development Program-Lompoc/Maple, Lompoc - Head Start/Child Development Program-Lompoc/Toddler, Lompoc - Head Start/Child Development Program-Regional/C. CNTY, Santa Maria - Head Start/Child Development Program-Regional/N. CNTY, Santa Maria - Head Start/Child Development Program-Regional/S. CNTY, Santa Barbara - Head Start/Child Development Program-S.B./Coronel, Santa Barbara - Head Start/Child Development Program-S.B./Los Ninos, Santa Barbara - Head Start/Child Development Program-S.M./Adam, Santa Maria - Head Start/Child Development Program-S.M./Alvin, Santa Maria - Head Start/Child Development Program-S.M./Buena Vista, Santa Maria - Head Start/Child Development Program-S.M./JC Washington, Santa Maria - Head Start/Child Development Program-S.M./Los Adobes de Maria, Santa - Head Start/Child Development Program-S.M./Los Padres, Santa Maria - Head Start/Child Development Program-S.M./Meridian, Santa Maria - Head Start/Child Development Program-S.M./Oakley, Santa Maria - Head Start/Child Development Program-S.M./Sierra Madre, Santa Maria - Head Start/Child Development Program-S.M./Tanglewood, Santa Maria - Head Start/Child Development Program-S.Y. Valley, Santa Ynez - Healthy Start-McKinley School Family Resource Center-S.B., Santa Barbara - Healthy Start-Adams School Family Resource Center-S.B, Santa Barbara - Healthy Start-Canalino-Carpinteria, Santa Barbara

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[32] Online CRIS Directory, http://www.fsacares.org/key618.htm
[33] http://www.sbceo.k12.ca.us/schools/public.html
[34] http://www.sbceo.k12.ca.us/schools/private.html

	- Healthy Start-Cleveland School Family Resource Center-S.B, Santa Barbara - Healthy Start-Dorothy Jackson Resource Center-Lompoc, Lompoc - Healthy Start-Franklin Children's Center-S.B., Santa Barbara - Healthy Start-Franklin School Family Resource Center-S.B., Santa Barbara - Healthy Start-Goleta Union School District-S.B., Santa Barbara - Healthy Start-Guadalupe, Family Services Center, Santa Maria - Healthy Start-Harding School Family Resource Center-S.B, Santa Barbara - Healthy Start-Jonata School FRC-S.Y, Santa Ynez - Healthy Start-La Cumbre Junior High Resource/Outreach Center, Santa Barbara - Healthy Start-Lompoc School Family Center, Lompoc - Healthy Start-Los Alamos FRC, Santa Ynez - Healthy Start-Los Olivos School FRC, Santa Ynez - Healthy Start-Main Office Santa Ynez, Santa Ynez - Healthy Start-Solvang School FRC, Santa Ynez - New directions, Inc., S.B., Santa Barbara - Path Point-S.B., Santa Barbara - Sojourn Services, Inc., Early Intervention Program-S.B, Santa Barbara - Sojourn Services, Inc., Early Intervention Program-S.M, Santa Maria - SPARK Enrichment Center-S.B., Santa Barbara - Special Education Support Services, Administration, Santa Barbara - Special Education Support Services-N. CNTY - State Preschools-Adams School-S.B, Santa Barbara - State Preschools-Bonita District-S.M, Santa Maria - State Preschools-Carpinteria, Santa Barbara - State Preschools-Centro Familiar-S.B, Santa Barbara - State Preschools-Cleveland School-S.B., Santa Barbara - State Preschools-College School-S.Y, Santa Ynez - State Preschools-De Colores-Lompoc, Lompoc - State Preschools-Franklin School-S.B, Santa Barbara - State Preschools-Harding School-S.B, Santa Barbara - State Preschools-La Honda-Lompoc, Lompoc - State Preschools-Las Flores-S.B., Santa Barbara - State Preschools-Lompoc/Crestview, Lompoc - State Preschools-McKinley School-S.B., Santa Barbara - State Preschools-Monroe School-S.B, Santa Barbara - State Preschools-Peabody School-S.B., Santa Barbara - Tri-Counties Regional Center-S.B., Santa Barbara - Tri-Counties Regional Center-S.M., Santa Maria

- United Cerebral Palsy/Work, Inc. Assoc. of Santa Barbara County
- VTC Enterprises, Santa Maria
- Waldorf School of Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara
- Welcome Every Baby Newborn Home Visiting Program, Santa Barbara
- Welcome Every Baby Newborn Home Visiting Program, Santa Maria
- Work Training Programs, Inc.-Lompoc

(CRIS Directory) [32]

Public school districts in Santa Barbara County

There are 22 K-12 school districts (over 100 public and 40 private schools) and two community college districts in Santa Barbara County. Individual schools are listed on the public schools and private schools pages.

- Ballard School District - Enrollment: 115
- Blochman Union School District - Enrollment: 90
- Buellton Union School District - Enrollment: 680
- Carpinteria Unified School District – Enrollment: 2,500
- Cold Spring School District - Enrollment: 197
- College School District - Enrollment: 425
- Cuyama Joint Unified School District – Enrollment: 321
- Goleta Union School District - Enrollment: 3.600
- Guadalupe Union School District - Enrollment: 1,088
- Hope School District - Enrollment: 1,025
- Lompoc Unified School District – Enrollment: 10,181
- Los Alamos School District – Enrollment: 240
- Los Olivos School District - Enrollment: 680
- Montecito Union School District – Enrollment: 420
- Orcutt Union School District - Enrollment: 4,740
- Santa Barbara Elementary School District - Enrollment: 6,024
- Santa Barbara High School District - Enrollment: 10,598
- Santa Maria-Bonita School District - Enrollment: 12,933
- Santa Maria Joint Union High School District - Enrollment: 7,114
- Santa Ynez Valley Union High School District - Enrollment: 1,200
- Solvang School District – Enrollment: 581
- Vista del Mar Union School District - Enrollment: 104

Community college districts
- Allan Hancock Joint Community College District - Enrollment: 11,341
- Santa Barbara Community College District - Enrollment: 18,562

(Source: Santa Barbara County Office of Education website)[33]

<u>Private schools in Santa Barbara County</u>

- Anacapa School, 7-12
- Bishop Garcia Diego High School, 9-12
- Cate School, 9-12
- Children's House Montessori, K-8
- Children's Montessori School, K-8
- Christian Life, K-6
- Coastline Christian Academy, K-8
- Country Day School, K-8
- Crossroads Christian Junior High School, 7-8
- Cuyama Christian Academy, K-8
- Devereux Foundation, ungraded
- Dunn School, 6-12
- El Montecito Early School, K-6
- Faith Academy, K-12
- The Family, K-5
- Howard School, K-7
- La Purisima Concepcion Elementary School, K-8
- Laguna Blanca School, K-12
- Lion of Judah Christian School, 1-12
- Los Osos, 7-12
- Marymount of Santa Barbara, K-8
- Midland School,9-12
- Montessori Center School of Santa Barbara, K-6
- New Life Christian Academy, K-12
- Notre Dame School, K-8
- Oak Tree Christian School, K-12
- Orca, 4-6
- Our Lady of Mount Carmel Elementary School, K-8
- Pacific Christian School, K-8
- San Roque Elementary School, K-8
- Santa Barbara Adventist, K-8
- Santa Barbara Christian School, K-8
- Santa Barbara Middle School, 6-9
- Santa Barbara Montessori School, 18 mos.-8
- Santa Ynez Valley Christian Academy, K-8

	• St. John of Damascus Academy, K-8 • St. Joseph High School, 9-12 • St. Louis de Montfort Elementary School, K-8 • St. Mary of the Assumption School, K-8 • St. Raphael Elementary School, K-8 • Valley Christian Academy, K-12 • Waldorf School of Santa Barbara, K-8 (Source: Santa Barbara County Office of Education website) [34] As an adjunct to services provided by County Schools, Foster Youth Services has been attending KIDS Network and CWS Regional Meetings to advance the understanding of the services available for youth. (Please refer to Section G. Agency Collaboration for description of these collaboratives). Tri-Counties Regional center provides services to eligible youth and adults and also attends KIDS Network meetings. Agency representatives have been key players in helping to develop the Early Childhood Mental Health Collaborative.
5. Employment development/School-to-work	• California Student Opportunity And Access Program, Santa Barbara • CalWORKs-Welfare-to-Work- County-Wide • Candelaria American Indian Council, Inc., Santa Barbara • Career Advancement Center – S.B.C.C., Santa Barbara • Career Education Programs-CNTY, Santa Barbara • Cate School - Carpinteria • Center for Employment Training-S.M, Santa Maria • Cornerstone House of Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara • Counseling and Career Services-S.B, Santa Barbara • Department of Rehabilitation-S.B., Santa Barbara • Department of Rehabilitation-S.M., Santa Maria • Elings Park Foundation-S.B., Santa Barbara • Employment Development Department, Job Service – CNTY • Extended Opportunity Program and Services , Santa Barbara • General Relief-Lompoc, Lompoc • General Relief-S.B., Santa Barbara • General Relief-S.M., Santa Maria • Girls Inc. of Carpinteria, Santa Barbara • Girls Inc. of Greater Santa Barbara-Goleta, Santa Barbara • Girls Inc. of Greater Santa Barbara-S.B., Santa Barbara • Integrated Work Services, Santa Maria • Internship Program, Santa Barbara • Jobs to Career, Foursquare Youth Programs-S.M., Santa Maria • Life Options Vocational and Resource Center – Lompoc

	- Lompoc Adult School, Lompoc - Lompoc Quality of Life and Integrated Services - Lompoc - Path Point-S.B., Santa Barbara - Peter B. FitzGerald Community School, Santa Maria - Regional Occupational Program-N.CNTY, Santa Maria - Regional Occupational Program-S.CNTY, Santa Barbara - Saint Vincent's PATH-S.B., Santa Barbara - Santa Barbara County Education Office-S.CNTY, Santa Barbara - Santa Barbara County Human Resources Department-CNTY, Santa Barbara - UCP/Work, Inc.-S.B., Santa Barbara - Vet Center-Veterans Memorial Building, Santa Barbara - Veterans Employment Services-S.CNTY - VTC Enterprises-S.M., Santa Maria - Welfare-to-Work-CalWORKs-S.B., Santa Barbara - Westside Community Center, Santa Barbara - Work Training Programs, Inc.-Lompoc - Workforce Investment Act-S.B., Santa Barbara - Workforce Investment Act-S.M., Santa Maria - Workforce Resource Center, Santa Barbara - Workforce Resource Center-S.M., Santa Maria (CRIS Directory)[35]
7. Assessment of needs and provision of services to children, parents, and foster parents	In March of 2006, CWS implemented the Structured Decision Making Assessment tool to enhance the assessment process. Aside from the Safety and Risks assessments, social workers complete the Family Strengths and Needs Assessment (FSNA) on all cases. The FSNA serves as the basis for the case plan and assists staff in customizing a service delivery plan to the child and family's identified needs. In addition, the Team Decision Making process is utilized as an additional strengths and needs assessment linking services and supports to the children, family, and caregiver to provide safety and stability. SB County CWS also utilizes an assessment tool and criteria for the Aid to Families of Dependent Children – Foster Care (AFDC-FC) Supplemental Care Increment (SCI) to better correspond with the psycho-social and developmental needs of foster youth. Aside from the SCI which provides additional foster care funds to caregivers who are actively involved in the delivery of services to the child, the

[35]Online CRIS Directory, http://www.fsacares.org/key141.htm

	HOPE program provides supportive, therapeutic services to all substitute care providers 24/7 to provide additional stability to youth in placement.
	CWS continues the collaboration with ADMHS for the 3 regional Children's Services Screeners who are collocated in our regional Assessment and Investigations Units. The screeners conduct an initial psycho-social assessment for children/parents recommending additional psychological evaluation, if warranted by their initial assessment. The screener then provides a written report to the social worker and assists in linking children and parents to the resources available to support their identified needs.
	Results of the many discussions held to analyze County CWS and Probation's performance in meeting the service delivery needs of youth, parents, and caregivers will be addressed in the Summary section with further details listed in the Appendix, Figures 5-12.
8. Services to Indian Children	For the current reporting period SB County CWS has 4 identified ICWA eligible children. County CWS works to identify and refer all children that possibly fall under ICWA requirements. SB CWS defers to the Chumash Tribe on ICWA children and assists with investigations, detentions and placements when requested. Service to Indian children falls to the Chumash Tribal Health Clinic which is a relatively new and well-funded facility that offers a wide array of medical, dental, behavioral (AOD and mental health), community health, and nutrition programs.

F. Staff/Provider Training

1. Training requirements for social work staff	In 2008, CWS in collaboration with Local 721 union members and the regional training academy developed a CWS Curriculum Workgroup to revise the timeframe and curriculum for CWS Induction Training. The new Induction training model sought to provide a shorter initial classroom based training and move into more hands-on mentoring training by week 5 of employment. Additional training required includes, but is not limited to: • New Employee Orientation • Departmental CWS Induction Training • California State University Fresno (CSUF) Regional Training Academy

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- Forensic Interviewing

- Annual Legal Training

- CWS/CMS Training

- Safety Training

- Team Decision Making Facilitator training

Additional training provided to staff includes information related to the California Outcomes and Accountability System, CalWORKs/CWS Linkages Partnership, Alcohol and Other Drugs, Mental Health Issues, and Forensic Interviewing.

Santa Barbara CWS has formed a close partnership with the Central California Training Academy for basic and specialized training needs. CWS recently revised our Induction Training schedule to support staff obtaining all necessary information, including most of the core Academy courses within the first 5 weeks of employment as a social worker/practitioner. In collaboration with the Academy training schedules were coordinated to support the new Induction schedule. Furthermore, the Academy continues to provide CWS with a part-time mentor to enhance the transfer of learning for line staff and provide specialized training as requested. Given our close working relationship with our Coastal Region Coordinator, the Training Academy is often able to respond to special requests and provide training specifically relevant to SB County CWS. Additionally, the Training Academy provides a wide range of CWS/CMS training in our CWS/CMS computer-training facility.

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2. Training for Foster Parents and Relative Caregivers

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SB County CWS provides regular Foster Care Orientations to provide prospective foster parents an overview of CWS and foster parenting. SB County CWS has partnered with local community colleges to provide a Foster Care and Kinship Education Program. Utilizing the PRIDE (Parents Resources Information Development Education) Curriculum, foster and relative caregivers receive 9 modules of training covering a broad range of material including the CWS system, working with birth parents, and meeting the developmental needs of youth. In 2007/08, 12 PRIDE training sessions were held countywide including opportunities to attend in both north and south county regions. Moreover, an orientation and PRIDE training session was conducted solely in Spanish for our monolingual prospective caregivers. Caregivers are also provided opportunities to attend additional training

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	offered within the community. The Foster Parent Recruiter, social workers, and the Foster Parent Newsletter provide caregivers with training information as available. In fiscal year 2007/08, 19 new foster parents were licensed and approximately 60 relative homes were approved for placement. There are approximately 240 Relative/Non Related Extended Family Member homes approved and this number has remained fairly constant through the past year. One significant challenge in recruiting foster parents continues to be the high cost of housing in Santa Barbara County.

G. Agency Collaborations

1. Collaboration with Public and Private Agencies	SB County CWS has been involved in a variety of collaborative efforts since 1996. *Current collaborative efforts include, but are not limited to the following*: • CalWORKs / CWS Linkages Partnership: County CWS has received a small grant and is working with the California Center for Research on Women and Families (CCRWF) to provide CalWorks/CWS Linkages services, which aim to provide more coordinated case planning and service delivery to our common DSS/CWS clientele. Goals for the program are: - Reduce conflict between CWS and CalWORKs case plans - CWS and CalWORKs will become a resource for each other - CWS and CalWORKs will be staffing mutual cases - Develop relationships between CWS and CalWORKs Current Target populations: Mutual open cases, AB429 (recently off aid due to a child coming into CWS.) The process begins when a CWS referral is promoted to case. CWS will identify that there is an open or recently closed CalWORKs case. CWS and CalWORKs will exchange information regarding service providers and staff the case to coordinate the two case plans to avoid conflict and duplication. CalWORKs will notify the Resource Support Team (RST) that there is a shared case so that coordination of their support services can begin. • Early Childhood Mental Health (ECMH) is a local initiative to extend mental health and developmental services to children birth to 5 years of age. Under ECMH – Special Needs a Postpartum Depression/Attachment Workgroup was formed and has met regularly for almost two years to address community resources and unmet needs for the identification, prevention, and treatment of Postpartum Depression countywide.

- Inter-agency Policy Council (IAPC), is a monthly meeting of the Directors of DSS, ADMHS, Public Health, Probation, Child Support, and Housing & Development to initiate, approve and oversee inter-agency collaborations and initiatives impacting service delivery countywide.

- Inter-Agency Program and Fiscal (IAPF) meeting is a monthly meeting of the Program Deputies and Fiscal Officers from DSS, ADMHS, Public Health and Probation to operationalize the collaborations and initiatives.

- Juvenile Court "Brown Bag" is a SB County CWS and Court initiative to facilitate communication between judges, attorneys, CWS, CASA, ADMHS, and various service providers.

- The Court Managers Meeting is a monthly meeting to facilitate communication and establish priorities involving the Presiding Juvenile Court Judge, CWS, and Probation.

- Santa Ynez Multi-Disciplinary Team – This team has representatives from local CBO service providers, CWS, Public Health, and the Chumash Tribe to confer and coordinate service delivery for clients in the Santa Ynez and Lompoc Valleys. Referrals are also made for all possible ICWA eligible children.

- School Attendance Review Board (SARB) – CWS participates in truancy hearings of Foster Care youth.

- SELPA: The County Office of Education representative for SELPA participates in both the KIDS Network and the Children's System of Care collaboratives and has been a key player in helping to develop our Early Childhood Mental Health Collaborative.

- Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) is a County/CBO collaboration between CWS, law enforcement, District Attorney, Health Care Services, and the Community Based Organization "CALM" to provide coordinated investigation of sexual assault, which involves regional case reviews and one countywide review team.

- HOPE (Helping Others in Parenting Environments), which was formerly referred to as the Therapeutic Foster Care Program had been expanded under the CSOC collaborative to support the caregivers of all children in out-of-home care. Services are provided to caregivers of youth with challenging emotional, behavioral, developmental and medical problems to support them in providing stability for the children in their care.

- Vandenberg Air Force Base (VAFB), Family Advocacy Office (FAO) sponsors a monthly multi-disciplinary family case management team (FCMT) meeting of human services personnel, which meets, confers, and recommends treatment for domestic and child abuse/neglect incidents that occur with active service personnel and their families. In 2002, CWS

Supervisors were recruited to be a voting member of this team.

- Workforce Investment Board (WIB): SB County DSS now houses the Workforce Investment Board Director and is developing a more knowledgeable understanding of program and funding capabilities to better meet the needs of foster youth. Furthermore, foster youth have been identified as one of the target populations. The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Youth component supports the youth of our community and their transition to working adulthood by addressing the development of the entire youth through services such as mentoring, community service, leadership and team-building skills. To ensure individualized program support, the funding is divided into in-school and out-of-school funding streams. Funds are awarded on a competitive basis and are geared to youth ages 14-21.

- SB 163-Wraparound Steering Committee is a collaboration of CWS, Probation, and ADMHS. A SB 163 plan was submitted and approved by the State during the summer of 2006. The focus of SB163 has been to reduce the number of children being placed in high level group homes in and out of Santa Barbara County by using placement dollars in a creative, flexible manner to provide services/supports to youth and their families. The provision of Wraparound services went out for proposal and a contract was awarded in April of 2007. DSS is currently in the process of renewing the existing contract for an additional year, as indicated in the current Board approved contract with Casa Pacifica. The Wraparound Implementation Team (WIT) which consists of CWS, Probation, ADMHS, the contractor, County Education Office, a community based organization (CBO) and a Parent Partner serve as the gatekeepers of the SB163 Wraparound program. In addition, the WIT team is responsible for monitoring service delivery and approving family budgets for expenditure of funds to support those they have entered into the program.

- Substance Abuse Coordinating Council (SACC, which was formerly known as the Methamphetamine Prevention Network) is a leadership collaborative between community coalitions (Santa Maria Valley Fighting Back, Lompoc Recovery Task Force, Santa Ynez Valley Coalition, Santa Barbara Fighting Back, and Carpinteria Cares for Youth) and county partners (DSS, Probation, ADMHS, Public Health, Sheriff's Office-CLEC/SBRNET, Superior Court, and the 1st District Board Member, Supervisor Carbajal). The purpose of SACC is to serve as a coordinating body of the multiple efforts occurring countywide to reduce the use/abuse of substances in our county. Some of the initiatives before SACC include a Media Project, a Database Project, Brochure Outreach, Medical Presentations Project, Operation Pipeline, and Treatment Program/Grant Updates.

- Santa Maria Valley Fighting Back is focused on battling substance abuse issues in the Santa Maria region and is a

collaborative involving City Council, the Courts, Law Enforcement, CWS, Probation, the schools, community members, service providers, and the hospital.

- Sober Women and Healthy Families is a collaborative between ADMHS, Public Health, and CWS to build a stronger service delivery system to mothers and their children.
- Marian Hospital Health Collaborative focuses on providing healthcare to the community. CWS participates in this collaborative with hospital staff, services providers, and concerned community members.
- Good Samaritan Services Collaborative monitors the delivery of services through the SAMHSA grant, addresses the needs of the homeless population, and strives for improved coordinated service delivery. Participants in this collaborative include the Good Samaritan Services, ADMHS, CWS, and several CBOs.
- Families for the First Decade (FFD) is the City of Santa Maria collaborative of over 100 local community based organizations, public agencies, faith communities, educational institutions, and businesses that strive to offer enhanced, integrated services to families. The FFD project focuses on improving the lives of children by offering resources and supports for all family members.

The most prominent collaborative effort for children and families in Santa Barbara County has been our Children's System of Care (CSOC) Program, which was formerly known as the Multi-Agency Integrated System of Care program.

Unfortunately, the CSOC program as we have known it was recently disbanded and the collocation of staff that had been the signature of the collaborative effort has ended. Presently, the main public agencies (CWS, Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services, and Probation) involved in the CSOC are in the process of redefining our working relationships and the future of the CSOC program. Aside from the close collaboration between the four public agencies (CWS, ADMHS, Probation, and Public Health), there are a number of Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and representatives from our Local Education Agencies, who have participated in this collaborative effort since 1996. The CSOC program formerly served high-risk youth and their families countywide, which assisted overall in minimizing the number of children placed in out-of-home care (particularly for Probation minors) or provided therapeutic services to those children while in placement. Services may have included medical or mental health services, respite care, in-home behavior specialists, in-school support, crisis services through SAFTY, parent mentoring, or other "wrap-around" services. One of the greatest challenges facing the collaborative is ensuring that the needs of the children (and their families), who are legally entitled to services have access to those services.

Other C-CFSR "Focus Group" forums:

The process for obtaining focus group input was fairly standardized throughout the self-assessment. Each of the groups were provided with information regarding the Outcomes and Accountability System and the associated components. Information was shared regarding County CWS performance on the AB636 Outcome Measures; what we learned from the Peer Quality Case Review (PQCR), and the progress made on the current System Improvement Plan (SIP). In addition, participants were educated to viewing data with an informed eye with consideration given to economies of scale, interaction and contradiction of the measures, and individual measure considerations. Participants were then asked to consider the data and utilizing their expertise to help define the strengths or our community and service delivery systems in providing for the safety, permanence, and well-being of children and families, as well as what might be needed to improve those outcomes. Participants, in most focus groups, were divided into small groups to discuss the areas of safety, permanence, and wellbeing for children and families. Participants were then provided an opportunity to review and prioritize the top strengths and needs identified by each of the groups.

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- KIDS Network: Kids Interagency Delivery System is a countywide network of children's service agencies sponsored by County DSS/CWS and the County Board of Supervisors. This network regularly has over 50 participants. On March 4, 2009, CWS and Probation were invited to the KIDS Network meeting to engage members in the County Self Assessment. Please see Appendix, Figure 6 for discussion results.
- Child Abuse Prevention Council (CAPC): The CAPC is a community council with the primary purpose of coordinating Santa Barbara County's efforts to prevent and respond to child abuse and neglect. On March 19, 2009, CWS was invited to the CAPC meeting to engage members in the County Self Assessment focusing on the continuum of services to children and families from prevention to intervention. *(Please see Appendix, Figure 5 for discussion results.)*
- CWS and Probation CSA Meeting – CWS and Probation hosted 2 countywide CSA meetings (one in March and one in April) to engage social workers, probation officers, office professionals, and case aides in the self-assessment. These focus groups were conducted in the same format as the other groups and allowed us to gather information directly from our staff. Discussion results are attached as Appendix, Figure 7 and 9 for review.
- CWS Team meeting in March 2009 was utilized to share with supervisors and managers the information that was

	presented in the staff CSA meetings and to solicit participants' input regarding the gaps analysis process as part of the self assessment. *(Please see Appendix, Figure 8).* • <u>Caregivers & Community Stakeholders CSA Focus Group</u>: Invitees to this session including all county contractors/service providers, foster parents, Foster Family Agencies (FFA), Foster Youth Services, partner agencies, and those who may have missed any of the other sessions. Discussion results are attached as Appendix, Figure 10 for review. • <u>Juvenile Court Brown Bag/CWS Self-Assessment</u> "Focus Group" was conducted during the monthly Juvenile Court Brown Bag in April 2009. A modified version of the CSA presentation was given focused on providing Outcome Measure information and soliciting information from the court stakeholders regarding the strengths of our system and the areas needing improvement. *(Please see Appendix, Figure 11).* • <u>Independent Living Program Youth</u>: Information regarding what/who has helped them most during their time in foster care and recommendations for improving the "experience" for others was solicited from approximately 27 youth participating in the third and final session of a Financial Literacy series. *(Please see Appendix, Figure 12 for the information obtained.)*
2. Interaction with Local Tribe	As mentioned in previous sections, SB CWS defers to the Chumash Tribe on ICWA children and assists with investigations, detentions and placements when requested. Service to Indian children falls to the Chumash Tribal Health Clinic which is a relatively new and well-funded facility that offers a wide array of medical, dental, behavioral (AOD and mental health), community health, and nutrition programs.
H. Local Systemic Factors	Santa Barbara County is essentially comprised of two distinct regions. The Santa Maria, Lompoc, and Santa Ynez Valleys (collectively referred to as "North County") and the Santa Barbara coastal region ("South County") are geographically separated and have divergent priorities. There are distinct economic, cultural and political differences between "North" county and "South" county. These differences have impacted the organizational culture within CWS in terms of attitudes toward government intervention. There is a significant difference in the array of services available to children and families in the various communities and regions. However, given the distances and lack of transportation between communities, families in need of services are in large part limited

to accessing local resources, which may have long waiting lists. This becomes further problematic for children and families when drug treatment services are required as part of the case plan. Santa Barbara County continues to be challenged by substance abuse issues within our communities, but particularly in the north county regions. There are limited resources in the north to address the volume of substance abuse cases impacting CWS and Probation clients. In addition, bilingual and bicultural services in the north county are dwindling, presently resulting in unacceptable wait times for services.

The high cost of housing continues to be a countywide concern. Although home prices have seen a significant decline over the last two years, the majority of the county population is priced out of the housing market – particularly in south county. The major growth in housing – and thus population - has been in the Santa Maria and Lompoc regions. The high cost of housing in Santa Barbara County also creates serious challenges to recruiting foster homes, recruiting and retaining staff, and developing transitional housing for all former foster youth, in need.

It is within this context that CWS looks to improve outcomes for children and families.

IV. COUNTY-WIDE PREVENTION ACTIVITIES AND STRATEGIES

A. COUNTY-WIDE PRIMARY PREVENTION EFFORTS	The **KIDS Network** under the Department of Social Services continues to be the collaborative oversight body for PSSF funds. The **Human Services Commission** continues to be the commission designated to provide recommendations to the Board for CAPIT, CBCAP and CTF funding. Both collaborative bodies work closely with the CAPC and designate members to participate as regular members in the Child Abuse Prevention Council. With the start of Fiscal Year 09/10, the Department of Social Services will be the fiscal agent for Children's Trust Fund (CTF), Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention and Treatment (CAPIT), and Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Funding (CBCAP) funding. Social Services accounting departments will maintain complete financial records for all costs and operating expenses. The Child Abuse Prevention Council, the KIDS Network and members of the Human Services Commission were active participants in the CSA process. In preparation for the CSA, the **KIDS Network** formed a committee from its membership to discuss and set priorities specific to PSSF funding. The committee's minutes are attached. *(Please see Appendix, Figure 13).* The **Human Services Commission** held a joint meeting with **the Child Abuse Prevention Council** to determine child abuse and neglect prevention priorities for the community. A list of generated priorities is below. PRIMARY PREVENTION - Family Resource Centers that improve family access to formal and informal resources, including early health and development services, and that promote meaningful parent leadership - Comprehensive parent support services including prenatal services (e.g., anger management, support for single parents, treatment for maternal/post partum depression, parenting classes that promote attachment and nurturing skills, parenting classes that promote knowledge of parenting and child development, parental resilience & social connections) - Programs for at-risk families (e.g., new parents, families with issues such as domestic violence, substance abuse, teenage parents, isolated families--particularly those with children five (5) years of age or younger, homelessness,

parents or children with disabilities or mental illness)

- Targeted high quality home visitation programs based on research-based models of best practice for programs for families at high-risk for abuse and neglect

- Subsidized childcare programs that require parent participation

- Childcare that provides respite for parents/foster parents/caregivers

- After-school programs for at-risk children 6-14 years old—especially those with an educational component

Secondary Prevention and Treatment Programs

- Abuse prevention programs for children

- Programs that provide assessment of risk for violence and neglect, referral, and/or case management

- Programs that provide services to children who are being served by the County welfare departments for being abused and neglected and other children who are referred for services by legal, medical, or social services agencies

- Individual and/or family counseling related to child abuse

- Programs that support schools taking an active role in child abuse prevention and intervention.

During the CSA process, one entire KIDS Network General Meeting and a Child Abuse Prevention Council meeting were dedicated to collecting input from the community (see attached agendas and weighted priority lists). At these two meetings, after a presentation by Child Welfare Services that included updates from the last process and current data trends, members engaged in facilitated discussions focusing on **safety outcomes**, which the group considered most pertinent to prevention.

In all of the CSA prevention strategy sessions, as well as the committee and priority setting meetings, Family Resource Centers ranked high as an effective service delivery model for prevention services. Expanding services to cover more neighborhoods or to provide more services to a larger number of families, as well as utilizing them more fully as partners in prevention through Differential Response or other prevention programs ranked high on participants' suggestions, as did funding for mental health

services and parenting education.

In addition, per the PSSF committee's suggestion and in keeping with the findings of the task force, the KIDS Network strongly reinforced the importance of maintaining and expanding on Santa Barbara County's Differential Response Model, <u>Front Porch</u>.

The Child Abuse Prevention Council, the KIDS Network, and the Human Services Commission will continue to be active in the System Improvement Process workgroup that will develop strategies for funding, which will include PSSF, CAPIT, CBCAP and CTF funds. Strategies and funding priorities will be developed to meet Federal **safety** outcomes by meeting the above identified high priority needs. The Pathways to Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention will be used as a planning aid during this process to ensure that the process remains evidence-informed.

Based on the strategies that will be developed in the workgroups, the Department of Social Services will engage in a competitive bid process for the above funding sources once approval for the System Improvement Plan has been obtain by the Board of Supervisors and the State. Santa Barbara County uses a competitive "outcome funding" model for its grants, and agencies competing for these grants must state in their applications the service outcomes they intend to achieve. Staff works throughout the grant period with grantees to refine their outcomes and create specific performance measures that will tie to the federal safety outcomes. A written client satisfaction process will be in place for all programs.

During the transition period, to ensure continued prevention services, the following contracts funded through CAPIT/ CBCAP / PSSF **have been extended through June 30, 2010.**

Agency and Program

> *CALM*, <u>Great Beginnings</u>-Targeted Case Management—Intense home visitation, therapy, parenting skills training and support services for at-risk families

> *Channel Islands YMCA*—Noah's Anchorage Youth Crisis Shelter—24-hour access to food and shelter for abused, runaway, troubled and homeless youth age 10 to 17; crisis intervention, medical services, counseling, educational and therapeutic activities and referrals, family reconnection.

	Community Action Commission of Santa Barbara County, <u>Family Resource Center</u> (Guadalupe)-parenting classes and case management for at-risk families ***Family Service Agency***, <u>Family Resource Center</u> (Lompoc & Santa Barbara) - parenting classes and case management for at-risk families ***Girls, Inc. of Carpinteria—***<u>*KidAbility*</u>—School-based, age-appropriate curriculum that teaches children how to respond to dangerous or unhealthy situations, including safe and unsafe touches, and how to identify and talk to trusted adults. ***Girls, Inc. of Greater Santa Barbara***—<u>Project BOLD</u>--Center-based, age-appropriate curriculum that teaches girls how to respond to dangerous or unhealthy situations, including safe and unsafe touches, and how to identify and talk to trusted adults. ***Isla Vista Youth Projects***, <u>Isla Vista Children's Center & At-Risk & Multicultural Component</u>—subsidized, culturally appropriate, high-quality childcare with parent education component, parent support services, respite care ***St. Vincent's Institution***, <u>Program of Affordable Housing & Services</u> (PATHS)—two year housing program fro single mothers and their children; case management, therapy, mandatory parent education ***Santa Maria Valley Youth & Family Center***, <u>Child Abuse Prevention</u> - Project I & Project II—parent education and support to high-risk families; curriculum includes anger management and alternative discipline techniques ***Santa Maria Bonita School District***, Family Resource Center - parenting classes and case management for at-risk families ***Santa Ynez Valley People Helping People***, <u>Child Abuse Prevention</u>—targeted home visits, case management, subsidized childcare and child-focused abuse prevention training; school-based FRCs in seven locations

Court Appointed Special Advocates, CASA of Santa Barbara County-one-on-one support and advocacy in court by trained volunteers to children in foster care

CALM, Bilingual, Multicultural Child Abuse Treatment & Prevention—intensive and culturally sensitive crisis intervention, therapy, education, outreach and prevention services for children and low-income families that have experienced abuse or are at-risk.

Domestic Violence Solutions, Emergency Shelters Children's Program—intervention and prevention services for children who have experienced domestic violence and/or abuse, through safe housing, individual and group, and recreational activities.

Domestic Violence Solutions, Teen Parent/Intimate Partner Abuse Prevention Program—ongoing workshops for pregnant and parenting teens; curriculum includes healthy relationships, effects of violence on children, non-violent parenting, communication.

Good Samaritan Shelters, Inc., After School Program—academic assistance and socialization for homeless and at-risk children; services include clothing assistance, food, and transportation

Good Samaritan Shelters, Inc., Family Transitional Shelter—Transitional and support services for homeless families and those in recovery, including parenting education and case management.

Good Samaritan Shelters, Inc., Project PREMIE—Transitional and supportive services for perinatal women in substance abuse recovery including drug and alcohol treatment, parenting skills, life skills, domestic violence education, reunification with their children.

*No. County Rape Crisis & Child Protection Cen*ter, Child Abuse Prevention/Intervention Program--School based ChildSAFE program and personal safety trainings.

Santa Barbara Rape Crisis Center, Teen Sexual Assault Prevention Program—group support for survivors of sexual

assault, self-defense, community education and rape prevention presentations.

Storyteller, Inc: <u>Children's Center</u>—High-quality subsidized child care and early childhood education to homeless or at-risk children, and comprehensive family support services, including parenting education.

Based on the taskforce findings, as well as the identified need, PSSF Family Preservation Funds will continue to be allocated to **Front Porch** Services. PSSF Family Reunification funds will continue to cover services deemed necessary by CWS case workers for families in the reunification period.

<u>Front Porch</u> is the collaboration among the Department of Social Services – KIDS Network, community based organizations, and Child Welfare Services to provide Differential Response services to the community. The Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Taskforce has produced a formal document with recommendations for further expansion and implementation of Front Porch. Results of the taskforce's strategic planning process have been incorporated into County CWS' continual self-assessment and quality improvement system. First 5 has joined with Child Welfare Services to allow for an expansion of the model to include at-risk families accessing family resource centers.

B. PREVENTION **PARTNERSHIPS**	**Santa Barbara County Child Abuse Prevention Council (CAPC)** Membership includes the following groups: • Child Welfare Services • Human Services Commission • Armed Forces Family Advocacy Program • Community Action Commission • Public Health Department • Maternal Child and Adolescent Health • County Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services • Family Resource Center Network (Santa Maria, Lompoc, Guadalupe, St. Ynez, New Cuyama, Santa Barbara, Isla Vista, Carpinteria) • First 5 Santa Barbara County • Clergy Representative • Community volunteers • Developmental Disability Services • Early Care and Education Providers and Organizations • Parent Consumers • Child Abuse Prevention and Intervention Agencies Staffing is provided in-kind by the Department of Social Services through the KIDS Network. The County Board of Supervisors has authorized an annual contribution from the Children's Trust Fund for public awareness and outreach activities of the CAPC. **Coastal Tri-Counties Child Abuse Prevention Coalition** The Santa Barbara Child Abuse Prevention Council participates in a regional coalition with San Luis Obispo and Ventura Counties. The regions meet monthly to share resources and plan joint activities. The Santa Barbara Child Abuse Prevention Council chair serves as the liaison to the regional coalition, and support staff attends the meetings as well. Joint prevention

activities included a Parent Leadership Conference, producing Mandated Reporter resources and cross-county support of local activities.

KIDS Network

The KIDS Network, an advisory and coordinating body created by the Board of Supervisors and administratively managed by the County Department of Social Services, has been designated to provide Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) oversight; the Network also serves as the PSSF Collaborative. The KIDS Network has a fourteen-year history of collaborative planning and program development in Santa Barbara County. Participation is broad-based, including over 120 members from public agencies, the courts, law enforcement, education, community-based organizations, school-linked programs and parent groups. A strategic planning process is underway to determine community outcomes and to ensure that the KIDS Network structure remains representative of all stakeholders in the Santa Barbara County community.

Human Services Commission

The Human Services Commission is a volunteer commission designated by the County Board of Supervisors to provide recommendations on the allocation of the CAPIT and CBCAP funds (and also the County Children's Trust Fund). The Human Services Commission is administratively managed by Public Health.

C. PREVENTION STRATEGIES FOR THE FUTURE	The Santa Barbara County Child Abuse Prevention Council embraces and promotes a family strengthening approach to prevention. In the past year, to help to shape its prevention strategies, the CAPC started to learn about and utilize Harvard's *Pathways to Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention* and materials from the *Family Strengthening through Early Care and Education* initiative produced by the Center for Social Policy to shape its prevention strategies. Initial efforts included a collaboration with the Santa Barbara County Child Care Planning Council as well as the First 5 funded Family Strengthening Initiative.

The Child Abuse Prevention Council in collaboration with Child Welfare Services and the District Attorney's Office held a North County Child Abuse Prevention Summit in April 2009 to solicit community prevention strategies for the future. Over 100 |

	community and agency partners participated in the event. The results will be compiled into a "blueprint" for the County's prevention activities, which will be presented to the Board and the public.
	The Child Abuse Prevention Council has formed a North County Summit Work Group that will oversee the implementation of the recommended strategies, will ensure close coordination with the County's SIP and will continue to monitor progress over the next year. A copy of the document and progress report will be included in the annual update.

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V. SUMMARY

A. DEMOGRAPHICS AND PARTICIPATION RATES

As noted in the body of the Self-Assessment, CA Department of Finance Demographic Research Unit figures show that population growth in Santa Barbara County is primarily due to live births with most of the population increase in the North County, especially Santa Maria. Relatively little of recent job growth has been in higher-skilled, more highly-paid employment. Most of recent job growth has been in low-skilled, low-paid, intermittent jobs which do not provide stable family income. In recent years there has been rapid growth in the number of low-wage agricultural jobs. The agricultural sector has experienced growth rates of up to 30% a year in market value in some of the past few years, with a market-yield value exceeding $1.2 billion a year. In spite of the growth in crop value and the total labor force, aggregate wages to field workers have declined in the last decade. No more than half the jobs in agriculture provide year-round work; the rest are seasonal, and reflect the crop pattern of crops like strawberries, which are not only highly seasonal but also have short, critical pick-times for harvesting, after which the fields are plowed under and lie fallow until planting again.

By contrast, our southern region, the "South Coast" (Santa Barbara, Goleta, and Carpinteria) has much more highly paid work and better educated adults, with low unemployment but a very high cost of housing and living. In this area, many of the low-paying jobs are in the Leisure and Hospitality Services and Retail Trade sectors, where employment is not as intermittent as in agriculture, but wages are still very, very low and make it difficult to support a family with children.[36] The South Coast also has a thriving cut flower and potted plant nursery business, also employing agricultural workers at relatively low wages, but not as many as in the north. Rapid demographic changes and conditions present current and future challenges to CWS and Probation and must be taken into consideration as we develop services for children and families especially in northern Santa Barbara County.

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[36]http://www.countyofsb.org/cao/pdf/budget/0607/Sectionb.pdf

Participation Rates for referrals and foster care have changed since the last CSA reporting period, as shown in the following tables:

Participation Rates - Child Counts

	Children Under 18	
CSA Period	Santa Barbara	California
2006	100,852	9,620,511
2009	105,091	10,007,591
Net Change	4,239	387,080
Pct Change	4%	4%

Children With Referrals

	CSA Period	Santa Barbara	California
	2006	4,031	482,462
	2009	4,666	492,571
Children	Net Change	635	10,109
		16%	2%
Rates per thousand children	2006	40.0	50.1
	2009	44.4	49.2
	Pct Change	11%	-2%

Children with Substantiated Referrals

	CSA Period	Santa Barbara	California
Children	2006	865	108,562
	2009	1,143	107,464
	Net Change	278	(1,098)
		32%	-1%
Rates per thousand children	2006	8.6	11.3
	2009	10.9	10.7
	Pct Change	27%	-5%

Number and Rate of First Entries to Care

	CSA Period	Santa Barbara	California
Children	2006	238	28,999
	2009	286	36,113
	Net Change	48	7,114
		20%	25%
Rates per thousand children	2006	2.4	3.0
	2009	2.7	3.6
	Pct Change	15%	20%

Number and Rate of Children IN Care

	CSA Period	Santa Barbara	California
Children	2006	588	78,960
	2009	570	65,396
	Net Change	(18)	(13,564)
		-3%	-17%
Rates per thousand children	2006	5.8	8.2
	2009	5.4	6.5
	Pct Change	-7%	-20%

Although CWS is serving more children, recurrence of maltreatment continues to be slightly higher than the State average, suggesting a need for service enhancement to "at risk" children. With the implementation of Structured Decision Making as a safety/risk assessment tool and the addition of three staff to provide Voluntary Family Maintenance Services countywide, we anticipate that CWS will be able to identify children at high risk of additional maltreatment and provide time-limited services to those families to reduce the re-substantiation rate.

Growth in the number (and rate) of first entries to care taxed the County's already over-burdened foster care resources and created higher demands on social workers to find adequate, supportive placement resources for children. Our joint operations with County Alcohol Drug and Mental Health Services (ADMHS) Children's System of Care has been disbanded due to funding considerations. It is not clear what the system impacts will be, but we are already experiencing greater difficulty accessing Medi-Cal services for our children and families in CWS. At the same time we have had additional resources added in the form of SB 163, and Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) funds for additional wraparound programs which CWS and Probation are using to support the placement of children with significant behavioral and emotional issues within Santa Barbara County rather than outside it in group homes. We have substantially reduced the number of children placed in congregate care outside county lines. Since a large body of research shows outcomes for children in foster care are relatively poor, our strategy

has been to do as much as we possibly can to strengthen high risk families so that they can keep their children safely at home, and at the same time, expedite adoptions for as many children in foster care as possible in order to provide safe, permanent, nurturing homes with the best prospect for a good developmental child outcome.

The following information provides an overview of the various focus groups conducted both internally and with our community partners during the self-assessment process. The discussion focused on the primary goals of Safety, Permanence and Stability, and Child and Family Well-being. First and foremost, focus groups recognized the increasing complexity of family issues including substance abuse, mental health, domestic violence, poverty, gang participation, cultural differences, the presence of more children in our system of care with complex behavioral/emotional needs, and larger family sizes. These issues present challenges to the CWS service delivery system and provide contextual relevance to the outcome measures.

B. GAPS ANALYSIS DISCUSSION

SAFETY

Santa Barbara CWS and our community partners are committed to protecting children from abuse and neglect through a continuum of services from prevention to intervention. There is clear delineation in the definitions of abuse amongst most service providers, but the identification of what constitutes neglect and the definition of minimum sufficient level of care remains elusive. Over three-quarters of the referrals substantiated in 2008 were for some type of neglect. Issues of neglect often involve chronic behavioral patterns on the part of the caregiver that are not readily amenable to intervention and readily susceptible to relapse. As part of the CSA focus groups, community trends contributing to neglect and caretaker absence were identified. These trends include substance abuse, chronic mental illness, domestic violence, levels of assimilation, and the current challenging economic times. It is within this context that the data regarding the following safety outcome measures should be viewed:

- ♦ **No Recurrence of Maltreatment**

SB County CWS has achieved significant improvement in meeting the No Recurrence of Maltreatment measure. The national standard for this measure is 94.6, indicating that roughly 95% of children reported to CWS who have a substantiated instance of maltreatment will not be found to have an additional substantiated instance of maltreatment within six months. Thus, those children who have had two substantiated instances of maltreatment within six months should not exceed

5%. While Santa Barbara County's performance on this measure appears rather volatile, analysis of our performance must be viewed with consideration to economies of scale. Given that Santa Barbara County has relatively small numbers of children served, the small numbers create significant volatility in percentage based measures. When evaluating the raw data for children who have had a second substantiated instance of maltreatment overtime, Santa Barbara has been on a continual path of decline over the last 5 years. The volatility in the data presentation for the federal measures can actually be accounted for by the increased volume of referrals that have had no recurrence of maltreatment.

The past two Quarterly Outcome Reports (October 2008 and January 2009) indicate that SB County CWS is relatively close at 93.9 and 93.3 respectively in reaching the 94.6 national standard. While the data shows significant improvement on this measure since our implementation of Structured Decision Making (SDM) in 2006, we are not yet resting on our laurels, as CWS continues to see this as a medium priority issue. Business decisions and programs implemented such as Structured Decision Making, the dedicated Family Preservation staff, and expansion of Differential Response services appear to have had a positive influence on our performance. It is our hope that with continued diligence in use of SDM and prevention focused resources; SB County CWS will maintain this positive trend.

As part of the CSA process, focus group attendees were asked to respond to a statement regarding safety, as a mechanism for identifying community outcomes that can be used as a benchmark for knowing if we truly are making a difference for children and families. The following responses are reflective of the themes that appeared to emerge from the focus groups to the prompt, "I will know that we have improved the safety of children in my community when…

- Child Welfare does not equal Child Protective Services

- There is a Decrease in the rates of abuse and neglect

- The community takes responsibility for reporting suspected child abuse

- Children and families have ready access to resources including, but not limited to affordable healthcare, child/respite care, substance abuse treatment, mental health services, housing, etc.

- Prevention efforts (time spent with children/caregivers) reduces the need for crisis intervention

- Families can reach out for help and know where to go to get it

- Gang activity is a positive action to benefit the community"

Participants were also asked to vote on what they perceived to be the key areas of strength in achieving the goal of safety for children and families in SB County. There were multiple resources listed involving many of the community based organizations with whom CWS and Probation partner including, but not limited to CAC, CALM, FSA, SMVYFC. In addition, the following services/supports were indicated as being the most helpful:

- Differential Response – The Front Porch Program

- Family Resource Centers

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

- Sojourn Services' work with the 0-5 population and their families

County CWS, Probation, and our community partners identified the following barriers to safety for children in our communities and provided strategies to overcome these barriers; thereby identifying some of the gaps in service delivery. A cursory summary of the barriers and strategies are presented below. For greater detail regarding the outcomes of the focus groups please see the attached Appendix, Figures 5-12.

<u>**Needs Assessment**</u>

- ***Resources*** including housing, childcare, substance abuse treatment, in vivo parenting education, bilingual/bicultural services and informal community supports are limited, not readily accessible to families, or are generally unknown to the populations being served. Limited access to adult and children's mental health services was also identified as a major barrier to safety for children.

- ***Knowledge Gaps*** or misinformation regarding available resources; supports and services; child development issues; and general life management skills in the client population were indicated as barriers to safety. Furthermore, responses indicate the need for a better understanding and balance between prevention and intervention.

- ***Systemic Issues*** thought to inhibit child safety tended to focus on the role of prevention vs. intervention, earlier intervention, and a lack of agency awareness of both formal and informal resources. Vacant staff positions were also viewed as a barrier to improving safety for children. When

positions go unfilled, the workload has to shift to the remaining staff. Workload is not readily captured in caseload numbers and social workers have multiple demands on their time, which is resulting in a decreased amount of face-to-face time spent with children and families.

Gaps Analysis

- *Resources Gaps* were identified by participants as being an integral part of tackling the chronic familial issues that are contributing to child abuse and neglect. Service delivery options that provide intensive in-home services to include counseling, "in vivo" parenting education, Therapeutic Behavioral Services (TBS), and less traditional services like parent partners/mentors were viewed as highly desirable. Participants indicated that many of the community based organizations that provide services to children and families were a strength of our community response. However, participants also indicated that the lack of capacity in some of these integral services like substance abuse treatment; affordable, quality childcare; affordable housing; bilingual/bicultural services, and "in vivo" parenting education resulted in increased safety concerns for children and families. Easier access to mental health services for children and parents was also indicated, as an area needing attention to ensure children and families are having their complex emotional and behavioral needs addressed. The use of more Promatora Models like those in Public Housing were viewed as a means of improving safety for children and bears some additional investigation.

- *Education* centered upon the need to provide youth more Life Skills education in school and to provide parents more "in vivo" parenting education opportunities. Agency staff also expressed interest in receiving additional awareness of formal and informal resources for the children/families served. An improved understanding of the continuum of service delivery between prevention and intervention is needed between key stakeholders to improve the safety of children. The recent Child Abuse Prevention Summit was the beginning of such efforts to improve stakeholder knowledge. Moreover, additional education regarding the Promatora Models is needed to determine their ability to improve outcomes over time.

- *Systemic Issues* focused primarily upon the need for earlier intervention, staff awareness of all available resources, and the timely filling of staff vacancies. It was suggested that there needs to be more flexibility with services, like that we have obtained with SB163. The increased flexibility may need to result in criteria for early intervention changing to facilitate a true "early" intervention. Improving staff awareness of the available resources/supports to families would benefit those being served and reduce the many challenges of dwindling services in a time of significant need. Filling of staff vacancies is seen as a necessity in maintaining the quality of work that has led to improved performance over time. In order to meet federal and state mandates, when positions are left vacant the work is shifted to existing staff. While CWS has earned through the Hold Harmless funding of CWS additional staff positions given the significant rise in caseloads over the past 3 years, our current staffing pattern has remained

unchanged during this time. In other words, CWS continues to serve more children and families with the same number of staff or less, if vacancies are unfilled. While the filling of vacancies speaks to the need to reduce caseload numbers/workload for social work staff, at the heart of these discussions was the desire to have frequent contact with children, caregivers, and parents as a means of providing better quality service.

➢ **No Maltreatment in Foster Care**

Based on the Federal Standard and the current statistic for No Maltreatment in Foster Care, Santa Barbara CWS is performing well. However, the current statistic may be somewhat misleading. A previous survey of ILP youth indicated that they may be under-reporting to their social worker/probation officer instances of abuse in care. The survey participants were asked the reasoning for not reporting instances of abuse in care. All the responses indicated that they did not know they should report and how to do so. While youth are provided with their rights, it still appears that there may need to be additional education for youth in care on reporting concerns. Strategies to mitigate the rate of abuse/neglect in care should not be overlooked in light of the potential for underreporting. County CWS, Probation and Licensing have developed a coordinated plan for responding to referrals regarding children in care. There is a current policy decision in place that all referrals on out-of-home careproviders will require immediate response, even if the allegation of maltreatment does not rise to this level of concern. Moreover, additional services have been provided to caregivers through HOPE -in-home support to foster parents and relative/non-related extended family members in managing the behavioral/emotional issues of the children in their care, SAFTY - 24/7 mobile crisis unit, and the SB163 Wraparound program.

Gaps Analysis

While the outcome data currently looks good for Santa Barbara County, the ILP youth responses raises systemic issues regarding the content of contacts with youth, whether the youth are adequately informed of their rights, and whether youth can fully express those rights without concern for consequences such as a change in placement.

> **Timely Response and Visits by Social Worker**

Santa Barbara County has placed an increased emphasis over the last few years on ensuring compliance with these outcome measures commensurate with Division 31 regulations by increased monitoring of performance through Safe Measures. The April 2009 Systems Summary Report indicates that CWS has been performing at 96% or higher for these measures during Quarter 3 2008. Despite our performance, timely contacts and the corresponding data entry remain a high priority for County CWS.

Gaps Analysis

Competing workload demands on social worker time have a significant impact on the timely completion of the visits and corresponding data entry. While data shows that time to contact and time to data entry has been declining, there is still work to be done in the area to ensure integrity of the CWS/CMS data. The volume of work associated with this task is best illustrated by the sheer number of contacts required during the 3 month time span indicated on the CWS Outcomes System Summary for Jan 2009 (Q2 08). During this three month time period, CWS completed an in-person investigation for roughly 950 children, of which 200 required an immediate response. At the same time, ongoing case carrying staff were required to visit in-person on average 775 children per month. In addition, regulations require monthly mandated contacts with caregivers, parents, and service providers depending on the current service component. These mandatory contacts are a crucial element of service delivery for CWS; however, so too is the writing of court reports, the development of case plans, the coordination of services to meet case plan goals, the identification of a suitable placement, the managing of child/family crisis, and the documentation of all of this in the CWS/CMS database., indicating the need to fill staff vacancies in a timely manner.

PERMANENCY

In 2008, the Federal Measures were revised from four measures to four Permanency Composites. Each of the composites incorporates a number of individual measures for a new total of 15 permanency measures. In reviewing outcomes for children and families with regards to the measures, consideration must be given to the contradiction and interaction between some of the measures. The intent is to determine if permanency is occurring for children in the system within reasonable time frames. Both reunification and adoption are considered positive outcomes for a child's permanence; yet, these measures are contradictory as a child who reunifies with their family is not then eligible for adoption. Aside from contradiction between these measures, there are other factors such as availability of resources, new programs/strategies implemented to improve outcomes, and general business decisions to manage workload that impact the outcomes for children on these measures. Thus, consideration must be given to all these factors as a means of understanding the data. The composites are identified below with their requisite individual measures and a brief analysis of SB County's performance as an indication of the scope of practice associated with achieving

permanence for youth.

➤ **C1: Reunification Composite**

SB County continues to be challenged by achieving timely reunification for children and families, yet has made significant improvements in the measure on Reentry Following Reunification, as indicated by our exceeding the national standard on this measure over the past four CWS Outcomes System Summary reports. The data indicates for exit cohorts County CWS reunifies approximately 44% of children with their families in 12.8 months as the median time to reunification. County Probation reunifies approximately 60% of the minors with their families in a median time of 11.5 months. The following individual measures constitute the Reunification Composite:

- o   Reunification within 12 months (Exit Cohort)

- o   Median Time to Reunification (Exit Cohort)

- o   Reunification within 12 months (Entry Cohort)

- o   Reentry Following Reunification (Exit Cohort)

Multiple factors and stakeholders contribute to performance on this measure and must be given consideration to provide relevance to the data.   As mentioned in the discussion above related to Safety, approximately 78% of substantiated instances of child maltreatment were for caretaker absence or neglect. The complex familial issues such as substance abuse, mental illness, and domestic violence that are often present as the underlying issues in neglect are often chronic behavioral patterns that require extended treatment and are prone to relapse. The complex familial issues present in reunifications are not readily resolved within the 12 month mandatory timeframes, which in turns impacts the outcome data. For example, it is widely recognized that substance abuse recovery timeframes are often 18 months to 2 years. Should the parent not enter into treatment right away either due to waiting lists or their own choice, these time frames may be even longer thus failing the measure, even if the family eventually reunifies. The outcome for the family was positive in that reunification occurred as permanency for the child/children; yet for this family the measure was failed, as the reunification did not occur within 12 months. Furthermore, implementation of the Family Preservation program also appears to have resulted in longer timeframes for reunification, which makes sense if evaluated in context. Family Preservation cases by definition are those families that are willing to address their familial issues by accepting services offered voluntarily. By default, those cases entering into the Juvenile Court system are more challenging as the parents are often not initially willing to engage in services designed to remediate the concerns that originally

required CWS intervention. Probation experiences different challenges in achieving timely reunification that often results from either failed placements or re-offenses. In addition, the juvenile justice system tends to be youth-focused with service goals targeted toward them. One of the concerns addressed from the Probation perspective during the CSA process was that while the minor has made improvements the family continues to experience challenges that are not easily addressed through the juvenile justice system either delaying reunification or resulting in the development of an alternative permanent plan. Parents can voluntarily agree to participate in family-focused programs, but do not have the compulsory requirements often found in dependency cases. While SB County performance is understandable given the aforementioned factors, reunification remains a high priority measure and CWS/Probation remain committed to working with stakeholders to improve timely reunification.

➢ **C2: Adoptions Composite**

SB County continues to exceed the national standard for the Adoptions composite since the second quarter of 2006. In 2008, 92 children received a family for life through adoption. The CWS and Probation CSA Focus Group participants credit this success to the joint efforts of all staff in developing and working concurrent plans of reunification or adoption for these children. The following individual measures constitute the Adoption Composite:

o Adoption within 24 Months (Exit Cohort)

o Median Time to Adoption (Exit Cohort)

o Adoption within 12 Months (17 Months in Care)

o Legally Free Within 6 Months (17 Months in Care)

o Adoption Within 12 Months (Legally Free)

➢ **C3: Long Term Care Composite**

The Long Term Care Composite is essentially evaluating performance of achieving timely permanence through reunification, adoption, guardianship for youth under 18 or emancipation for youth 18 and over. SB County's performance on this measure has been rather fluid over time with the majority of the quarterly reports indicating success in exceeding the national standards for the composite. The following individual measures constitute the Long Term Care Composite:

- o Exits to Permanency (24 Months in Care)

- o Exits To Permanency (Legally Free at Exit)

- o In Care 3 Years or Longer (Emancipated/Age 18)

➢ **C4: Placement Stability Composite**

Placement Stability measures if youth in care have had two or fewer placement at three different time intervals: 8 days to 12 Months in Care, 12 to 24 Months in Care, and At least 24 months in Care. SB County continues to be challenged in meeting the national standard for these measures. While this measure is considering stability, it does not take into consideration that some placement moves may actually improve the overall outcome for children. For example, CWS brings a child into protective custody with severe emotional and behavioral concerns. In order to ensure the safety of the child, they are placed in a high level group home (placement #1). After about a year, the child's mental, emotional and behavioral concerns have stabilized and they are moved into a foster family agency home (placement #2). During this time, the child has been communicating with an aunt who has recently expressed interest in the child coming to live with her and pursuing guardianship. After completion of the relative approval process, the child is eventually moved to the aunt's home (placement #3) and guardianship is established within the year. The outcome is positive for the child in that permanence has been established for the youth. However, the County has failed the placement stability measure for this child.

Probation is equally challenged in achieving placement stability for minors placed in out of home care. While 80% of the minors in care 8 days to 12 months have had two or fewer placements, the longer the minors remain in care that percentage shifts to 80% of minors in care at least 24 months having three or more placement settings. Stability for probation youth is often challenged by many of these youth absconding from a placement shortly after arrival. Similarly, programs will discharge a youth for noncompliance with program rules or inappropriate behavior necessitating placement in another program. In many cases, a probation youth is detained in a secure setting until another program can be found. It is not unusual for this pattern to be repeated two or three times before a youth remains in a particular program long-term.

In order to fully understand County CWS and Probation performance relative to placement stability, this topic was investigated during the September 2008 Peer Quality Case Review. CWS and Probation partnered with Ventura and San Luis Obispo counties and 3 of our community partners to be interviewers for PQCR. Thirty staff (social workers/probation officers and their respective supervisors) were interviewed during the week. From those interviews, SB County learned that our contracted placement finder services have been highly beneficial to supporting staff in securing placements for youth. Other promising practices in our service delivery system that have been contributing to placement stability include the SB163 Wraparound program and placements with relatives/non-related extended family members. Some of the challenges identified involved business decisions in moving children from shelter care in a timely manner, the lack of information available to social workers/probation officers on caregivers when making placement decisions and the challenge of finding/making placements that may not necessarily be the best match for the child. Similar concerns appear to have arisen during the CSA process, as well.

Permanence and stability are crucial factors in "normal" child development and key to providing good outcomes for children. As part of the CSA process, focus group attendees were asked to respond to a statement regarding permanence, as a mechanism for identifying community outcomes that can be used as a benchmark for knowing if we truly are making a difference for children and families. The following responses are reflective of the themes that appeared to emerge from the focus groups to the prompt, "I will know that children have permanency/stability when…:

- Children live in a safe, consistent, and nurturing home.

- There are enough quality foster placements for every child in need.

- Children have "forever" families through adoption, a permanent home, or reunification.

- There is no need for foster homes.

- There are affordable and accessible community aftercare supports for families when CWS closes the case.

- Children (or former dependents and their children) do not come back to CWS's attention."

Participants were also asked to vote on what they perceived to be the key areas of strength in achieving the goal of permanence and stability for children and families in SB County. The responses indicated available resources and again spoke to the good work provided by our community based organizations, characteristics of service provision, and systemic issues. Childcare programs that provide a parenting education component such as those offered by CAC,

Storyteller, Isla Vista Youth Programs, and Healthy Start were indicated as strengths in this area. The countywide network of Family Resource Centers, functioning as an early intervention service, was also identified as a real strength of community support for families. Intensive in-home services to both parents and caregivers were viewed by participants to be the best method for service delivery in support of these goals. The systemic issues identified as strengths included the following:

- o Committed, conscientious social workers

- o Relative/Non-Related Extended Family Member placements

- o Utilizing Family as a Reunification support system

- o Maintaining regular contact with children, families, and service providers

Good case plans that reflect family involvement, are strength based, with realistic goals, and have increased contact between parents/children during reunification were viewed by participants to be the number one strength of our system in providing for permanence and stability for children.

County CWS, Probation and our community partners identified the following barriers to permanence and stability for children in our communities and provided strategies to overcome these barriers; thereby identifying some of the gaps in service delivery. A cursory summary of the barriers and strategies are presented below. For greater detail regarding the outcomes of the focus groups please see the attached Appendix, Figures 5-12.

<u>**Needs Assessment**</u>

- *Lack of Resources* identified included the limited number of foster homes/placements available for teens in general, which is further compounded if the teen is a probation minor. The lack of placement resources for children in general often results in placements that are not necessarily the best match for a child. In addition, there continues to be the need for additional supportive services for caregivers and caregivers who are willing to participate in the reunification process with children in their care including transportation to parental visits. There was a focus on the lack or in some instances absence of informal supports like parent partners, mentors, or family service advocates to assist parents in linking to community resources/supports. This trend continues for birth, adoptive, or Kin-Gap families having limited to no aftercare support. The demand for formal interventions has outpaced the timely availability of services including, but not limited to medical/dental care, counseling, substance abuse treatment, domestic violence, bilingual/bicultural services, and mental health services for children and families resulting often in waiting lists for services.

- *Knowledge Gaps* regarding the availability of community resources was seen as a need for both families and service providers. One of the areas that received significant attention was the present concern over access to children and adult mental health services, indicating both the need for easier access as well as information needed on how to obtain needed services. Concern over parental confusion regarding the Juvenile Court process and the CWS system were also presented as an opportunity to improve communication and understanding between the parties involved.

- *Systemic Issues* addressed included timely filling of staff vacancies and the need to reduce social worker/probation caseloads in order to afford staff additional time to spend with the children and families they are serving. Improved parental access to staff and better communication between all parties/providers involved with a family was also flagged as an area in need of some fine tuning. A review of departmental philosophies with staff regarding parent/child visitation; emancipation planning, placement with REL/NREFM, and the degree of parent participation in identifying family strengths/needs and subsequent involvement in case planning was indicated as a need in support of timely permanence and stability for children. Moreover, there was significant discussion in some of the groups regarding the delays in permanence that often result from the legal process, particularly regarding continuances as a potential barrier to timely reunification/adoption.

Gaps Analysis

- *Resources Gaps* focused primarily upon the lack of availability of foster homes and intervention services to support children and families in obtaining permanence and stability. The need for more foster homes is undeniable, particularly for teenagers. It was suggested that targeted recruitments could be done for the teen population utilizing current teen caregivers as the presenters to really educate others on the joys and challenges of fostering a teenager. The lack of capacity in existing services was a recurrent theme during the focus groups, with significant concern given to lengthy waiting lists. It was frequently mentioned that the current service providers were doing good work, but that more of those services were needed. There are presently some significant resource gaps in obtaining bilingual/bicultural services, dental care, and mental health services for both children and parents. Participants also indicated a strong need to increase capacity in informal supports such as parent partners, mentors, advocates, and support groups as a means of providing "in vivo" parenting, life skills, and educating families utilizing community supports to meet their needs. Extension of these kinds of services to birth, adoptive, relative caregivers, and foster parents were also suggested. The development of an After Care plan, as a means of linking children and families to the community was viewed as a significant stabilizing force for achieving and maintaining permanency.

- *Educating* families and service providers regarding community services and supports was suggested as a means of improving outcomes in this

measure, yet this extended beyond individual agencies suggesting that as a community the service needs of families could be met, but that no one person/agency could achieve this alone. Having a resource specialist who could maintain the collective knowledge of staff regarding formal and informal supports would be one way of improving this knowledge gap.   There was concern expressed over the confusion that parents/children experience with the Juvenile court process and CWS system, which is compounded by the language used in written reports and changes in social work staff. An information sheet explaining the processes could be given to parents at intake and again at disposition outlining next steps and providing worker/supervisor contact information.

- *Systemic Issues* presented revolved around three themes: More time to spend with children and families. Improved communication between all parties/stakeholders, and the need to revisit departmental philosophies. At the core of the desire to have more time to spend with families lies the challenges that staff face in assuming additional work when caseloads are high or vacancies go unfilled requiring those caseloads to shift to the remaining staff. One of the strengths mentioned above is conscientious, committed staff who are repeatedly challenged with balancing time spent with children and families providing crisis intervention, and the multitude of other tasks required of them including writing court reports, arranging/monitoring services, locating placements for children, etc. in lieu of time spent providing proactive supports to mitigate the need for reactionary intervention. The accessibility of staff would in turn support improved communication between staff and parents, Counsel, service providers, stakeholders, etc. It was suggested that more frequent contact would be the best mechanism for improving communication between the parties, which reinforces the staff desire to spend more time with children/families. Reviewing departmental philosophies with staff and assessing the corresponding action desired was presented as a means of redefining priorities in relation to practice decisions regarding parent/child visitation, emancipation planning, placement with REL/NREFMs, and the degree of parental involvement in case decisions. Such a review is hoped to produce a more common understanding of operating practices that may be influencing permanence and stability outcomes.

WELL-BEING

Well-being is more elusive in terms of measuring outcomes for children and considers such factors as ensuring that youth have their medical, dental, and educational needs met. Other considerations include measures related to placement in the least restrictive setting and children being placed with their siblings. SB CWS has been **performing on par** with the state of California on these measures. Approximately 70% of all children in foster care have been placed with some or all of their siblings. In some instances, this has been no easy task given the large sibling groups (4 to 6 or more children) entering care. Foster Care Placements in Least Restrictive Setting indicate that County CWS continues to have the majority (38%) of children in care placed with REL/NREFMs. The

majority of Probation minors in care are placed in a group home setting. Given the absence of adequate foster homes, necessity has resulted in the need to find additional placement resources for children. In addition under CWSOIP grant funds during FY 05/06, County CWS contracted with local CBOs to locate possible connections/mentors for youth that would either be willing to accept the child for placement or remain/establish a connection with the child for future support. Thankfully, the funds and this service to the children in care have continued since that time, as it a valuable resource to both placement staff and the children they serve.

Foster Care Youth Transitioning to Self-Sufficient Adulthood

During FY 07/08, 166 CWS and Probation foster youth received some level of Independent Living Program (ILP) services. County CWS implemented several changes to enhance the services/supports provided to youth participating in ILP by providing more one to one case management and targeted small group activities to expand knowledge related to the 7 skill areas: Education, Employment, Daily Living Skills, Survival Skills, Choices and Consequences, Interpersonal/Social Skills, and Computer/Internet Skills. County CWS contracts with a community based organization to provide ILP case managers in each of the 3 regions. The ILP case managers provide direct services to youth through additional training opportunities, one-to-one case management and group support, opportunities to develop leadership skills, assistance with planning for college, and the provision of resources/supports for emancipation. Additional partnerships have been developed involving local service organizations and other community resources to provide support to both CWS and Probation foster youth. Furthermore, the linking of Foster Youth Services through the County Education Office has provided much needed support for youth in achieving educational success.

As part of our current System Improvement Plan (SIP), County CWS implemented both the Transitional Housing Placement Program (THPP) and Transitional Housing Placement Plus (THP-Plus) program serving both CWS and Probation youth. The THPP offers CWS/Probation youth who are currently ages 16-18 an opportunity to live in a more independent environment, while being provided services/supports for understanding and preparing for the transition to independence. The goal of the program is to provide a safe living environment so that youth can practice skills necessary to live on their own upon leaving the foster care support system.   The THP-Plus Program provides affordable housing and comprehensive supportive services for up to 24 months to help former Santa Barbara County foster care and probation youth ages 18 to 24 make a successful transition from out-of-home placements to independent living. Per our agreement with the CDSS, there are 10 beds countywide, 2 utilizing an apartment setting in Santa Maria and 8 at La Morada in Santa Barbara.   County CWS is proud of the accomplishments of the Independent Living Program and the transitional housing programs in preparing youth for a successful transition into self-sufficient

adulthood.   Yet, there are capacity issues with the THPP and THP-Plus programs as available funding and resources to the County to support those programs are capped by State agreements/allocations.

 Based on the limited data available, Santa Barbara CWS, Probation, and the youth are *performing well.* More youth graduated from high school than in previous years and 77% of those were enrolled in college or higher education. In addition, more youth were employed or had other means of support when leaving the foster care system than in previous years. Yet, County CWS, Probation, and the community recognize, as the research indicates, that foster youth emancipating from care do not fare well in health, education, employment, and housing arenas. Therefore, improving the well-being of youth while in care and as they transition into self-sufficiency remains a *high priority* issue.

As part of the CSA process, focus group attendees were asked to respond to a statement regarding well-being, as a mechanism for identifying community outcomes that can be used as a benchmark for knowing if we truly are making a difference for children and families. The following responses are reflective of the themes that appeared to emerge from the focus groups to the prompt, "I will know that we have improved the well-being of children in my community when…:

- All children have ready access to the services they need including mental health, medical/dental care, substance abuse treatment, etc. no matter what the family income.

- More children actually graduate from high school, as opposed to receiving a GED.

- The number of children/probation minors entering placement has decreased.

- All agencies providing services to children communicate more effectively.

- Referrals and caseloads decline.

- Children are connected to a positive adult role model.

- When staff have the adequate time to spend with each child on their caseload to be more proactive in helping them achieve their goals and decrease the need for crisis response. "

Participants were also asked to vote on what they perceived to be the key areas of strength of our service delivery systems in enhancing well-being for youth.

One of the primary strengths identified was staff support to do their job including a team approach and networking for resources. In addition, the philosophy of removing risk from children, when feasible, as opposed to children from risk was viewed as the primary strength for improving child well-being. The following resources/programs were also identified as strengths of the service delivery system for improving well-being:

- o   SB 163 Wraparound Program

- o   Transitional Housing Placement Program (THPP)

- o   Transitional Housing Placement-Plus (THP-Plus) including La Morada

- o   Family Resource Centers

Needs Assessment

- **Lack of Resources** were identified in numerous areas speaking to the need for both capacity and quality of services. Concerns were expressed over the lack of sufficient, stable, nurturing foster homes and transitional housing programs for those in need of these services. There continues to be the need to have more substance abuse treatment centers with specific attention given to facilities that can take mothers and their children, teen programs, and adequate resources in the family's home community. In some instances, there may be no available services in the region where the family resides creating additional obstacles to achieving sobriety. Additionally, there was a strong message from participants about the need for children, families, and emancipating youth to have a sufficient support system through both formal and informal supports that will continue outside of their involvement with CWS/Probation.

- **Knowledge Gaps** identified included information needed for children, families, caregivers, and staff. Children, families, and caregivers were identified as needing more information around community supports, and the benefits of meaningful participation in community activities such as sports, volunteer programs, music, after-school activities, etc. Staff spoke of the need for additional education/training on engaging and motivating parents to participate in the reunification process.

- **Systemic Issues** presented were similar to those of the Safety and Permanency section with attention again brought to the timely filling of staff vacancies and philosophical understanding of what is important in our service delivery models. In line with that philosophy was the concept of keeping children connected to family and others who are important to them throughout their involvement in the foster care system as a means of building their network of support during and after their experience in foster care. Concerns were also raised about the limitations within the Probation

system of treating the minor who will return home to a family who has not received the resources needed to improve family functioning to support the minor upon return.

The information provided above is reflective of the responses from the focus groups, with the exception of the ILP youth. In order to ensure that the voice of our youth did not get lost in the overall information and to highlight their recommendations, their responses will be identified here. The ILP youth were asked to respond to the following two questions and themes in their responses are included accordingly.

- **What or who has helped me the most during my experience in foster care?** The common theme in all the responses from the youth centered not around a particular service, but around specific people who have been important to them and helped them in coping with their experiences as a foster child. The primary groups of people identified were family, friends, the ILP coordinator/case managers, group home staff, their wraparound team, social workers, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), and foster parents who kept them safe and respected them.

- **What recommendations would you make to improve the experience for others?** Three distinct themes emerged in the youth recommendations. The strongest theme in youth responses revolved around the desire for better communication (connection) with their social workers/probation officers. Some of their recommendations for achieving this included:

  - Asking how the youth feel about the decisions that are being made for them

  - Giving them a chance to talk and really be heard

  - Giving more time and attention to the child's needs

  - Having empathy for the youth and what they are experiencing

  - Being open-minded and not make assumptions that they don't want help

  - Show youth something concrete in their lives by not having their case passed from worker to worker

The second emergent theme focused on giving the youth more to do with respect to activities and programs. The consensus around this need seemed to stem from the point that if the youth were not engaged in some type of program/activity, they were more likely to be on the streets and/or get into trouble. It appears that the youth view idle time as a challenge to maintaining a positive direction. In addition, it was mentioned that time in between activities allowed youth to disengage from those supports they find helpful. The third theme that emerged focused on giving youth more freedom to be responsible young adults. Some additional recommendations presented by the youth included earlier intervention for abuse/neglect,

completing their high school education at a school (not through independent study), additional job training, and building placement rules around a home dynamic as opposed to building the home around rules.

Gaps Analysis

In providing an analysis of the gaps in achieving well-being for youth, it is challenging to go beyond the strong message that was given by our foster youth about what is truly important to them. Thus unlike the previous Gaps analysis section, the discussion for this section will center about the areas of overlap and dissonance between the information obtained in the focus group forum and that from our foster youth.

- *Resources Gaps* centered on placement options, aftercare supports, and availability of services. However, there was concern for more than just capacity in most of those resource gaps and qualifiers were placed on those needs. The participants indicated a need for more stable, nurturing foster homes and better, qualified staff in group homes to manage the complex needs of those being placed in care. Not only is more mental health, substance abuse treatment, medical/dental care, and informal supports needed; these services must provide quality treatment, be easily accessible, and sufficient follow through is needed to ensure the children's needs are being met. The issue of quality speaks to the need for use of more evidence-based or supported practices, in order to clearly identify if the services provided are having the intended outcomes for children. While the community stakeholders and staff clearly identified resource needs to be filled, the youth spoke very clearly about the importance of people in their lives. Some of those people were tied to formal resources like group homes, ILP, or the SB 163 Wraparound program. However, many of those people were not.

- *Educating* staff, caregivers, families, and service providers regarding the available resources/supports was viewed as a means of not only providing intervention services to improve well-being for youth, but also as a building block in the development of an after care plan. Specific training for staff on engaging and motivating parents/youth to become involved in the process and services available was suggested as a means of working more cooperatively to achieve positive outcomes. The information provided by the youth also lends itself to an educational opportunity with staff, as youth expressed a desire to have more consistency in their workers and the desire to be heard by those making decisions for them.

- **Systemic Issues** presented were similar in some respects between the focus groups and the youth with particular overlap between the need to keep youth connected to family and people who are important to them. The youth voice was heard very clearly on this issue, as it is their perception that people not necessarily services have helped them most during their foster care experience. We heard a similar message from our staff in the desire to spend more time with children and families. While the youth clearly desired a stronger connection with the social workers, it is important that a

broader network of support be developed for them that will continue to support them into emancipation. This is where use of informal resources becomes key in bridging the gap between intervention and after care.

C. Areas for further exploration through Peer Quality Case Review

Given our current performance on the outcome measures, one topic for Peer Quality Case Review consideration is the Reunification Composite. While our current analysis of the data has given some context to our performance on this measure, it bears some additional investigation. Timely reunification is compounded by so many challenging issues including parental motivation, timely availability of services, timely legal process, competing recommendations of key stakeholders, safety concerns vs. returning parents to a parental role, and so on. Moreover, our median time to reunification is double the national standard. Hearing from our staff through the PQCR process the promising practices and challenges they face in reunifying children with their families may provide some significant insight into improving performance on the measures.

D. Conclusion

The cornerstone in understanding CWS outcome measure baselines and service provision is access to consistently reliable information. Santa Barbara County CWS relies on the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) and Safe Measures for such information. County CWS has made some significant strides in improving "Data Diligence" in regards to placement, timely entry of referral investigation responses, monthly case contacts, case plan compliance, and some new supports regarding education, there is still significant work to be done. The increasing high priority demands on social worker time result in the absence of information in CWS/CMS, delayed data entry, and overall data integrity concerns. Maintaining a quality information system through CWS/CMS is a high priority issue and strategies for improvement continue to be designed and implemented. From our research, it is clear staff are doing the work and required activities for children are occurring as needed. However, the information may be recorded in CWS/CMS within the most recent court report, but was not entered into the correct field for inclusion in outcome measure information. The provision of Safe Measures to line staff has allowed them an opportunity to monitor there own data diligence efforts and provided a context for the practices implemented to improve data integrity. Focusing on full utilization of CWS/CMS through data completion, data integrity, and timely entry will provide better information to all levels of CWS personnel, State CDSS, and community partners.

The County Self-Assessment (CSA) process provides Santa Barbara County CWS and Probation an opportunity to engage existing partners, the community, youth, staff, and substitute caregivers in a process of open, honest communication regarding the challenges of providing good outcomes for the children and families served. The current CSA is Santa Barbara's third completed assessment. It is intriguing to review previous assessments and note the similarities and differences between them. Similar themes that have emerged in all the assessments include capacity issues in identified resources and the need for a more integrated service delivery system, County CWS and Probation have made significant strides in implementing new strategies to enhance child and family safety, permanence, and well-being and our performance on the outcome measures are indicative of those changes. Yet as the gaps analysis indicates, there is still much work to be done in order to achieve the outcomes in our community that would let all the stakeholders know we are truly providing for the safety, permanence, and well-being of children and families in our community.