

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

303



FROM: DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES

SUBMITTAL DATE:
March 23, 2010

SUBJECT: Annual Update: 2009-2012 Riverside County Integrated System Improvement Plan (SIP)

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors receive and file the Annual Update for the 2009-2012 Riverside County Integrated SIP and authorize the Department of Public Social Services to submit the annual update to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) as required by the State.

BACKGROUND:

The 2009-2012 SIP received approval by the Board on March 17, 2009 (Agenda # 3.54), and a revision was submitted on September 15, 2009 (Agenda #3.36). The attached annual update is due to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) by March 30, 2010.

It has been one (1) year since the implementation of the Riverside County Integrated SIP. The 2009-2012 Riverside County Integrated SIP focuses on improving successful reunification of children and families and reducing child reentry to foster care. Riverside County continues to put forth efforts to prevent children and families from coming into contact with the child welfare system.

(CONTINUED – 2 PAGES IN TOTAL)

Susan Loew

Susan Loew, Director

FINANCIAL DATA	Current F.Y. Total Cost:	\$0	In Current Year Budget:	N/A
	Current F.Y. Net County Cost:	\$0	Budget Adjustment:	N/A
	Annual Net County Cost:	\$0	For Fiscal Year:	2009/2012

SOURCE OF FUNDS:

Positions To Be Deleted Per A-30	<input type="checkbox"/>
Requires 4/5 Vote	<input type="checkbox"/>

C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE

Debra Courmoyer
Debra Courmoyer

County Executive Office Signature

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

On motion of Supervisor Stone, seconded by Supervisor Buster and duly carried by unanimous vote, IT WAS ORDERED that the above matter is approved as recommended.

Ayes: Buster, Tavaglione, Stone, Benoit and Ashley
Nays: None
Absent: None
Date: March 23, 2010
xc: DPSS, Probation

Kecia Harper-Ihem
Clerk of the Board
By: *[Signature]*
Deputy

Prev. Agn. Ref. : 9/15/09 (3.36); 3/17/09 (3.54) | **District:** All | **Agenda Number:**

ATTACHMENTS FILED WITH THE CLERK OF THE BOARD

3.33

Dep't Recomm.:
 Per Exec. Ofc.:
 Consent:
 Policy:
 Alan M. Crogan, Chief Probation Officer
 Mar. A. Kuhn for

Departmental Concurrence

TO: BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

DATE: 3/23/10

Page: 2

SUBJECT: Annual Update: 2009-2012 Riverside County Integrated SIP

BACKGROUND:

The following five (5) strategies were identified as areas needing improvement in order to improve outcomes related to successful reunification of families and reduction in reentry to foster care:

1. Improving relevant management information systems (MIS)
2. Improving foster/relative caregiver training, recruitment and retention
3. Improving quality assurance systems
4. Improving staff and provider training, and
5. Improving agency collaboration

The attached annual update for the Riverside County Integrated System Improvement Plan contains a matrix that provides an overall outline for each goal, strategy rationale and milestone. The matrix also includes new goals/strategies for Riverside County's 2009-2012 SIP to enhance the County's progress in achieving positive outcomes for children and families.

Shared responsibility for outcomes in the prevention of abuse and neglect remain central to the goal of improving overall performance on each of the stated outcomes. Riverside County Department of Social Services Children's Services Division (CSD) and the Probation Department continue to promote open communication with community partners and local agencies. CSD and Probation continue to provide joint services with the community to promote efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery to children and families. Collaborative efforts over the past year are best illustrated through the community's active participation in ongoing SIP efforts, including participation in bi-annual Community Partners Forums.

On October 29, 2009, Riverside County Children's Services Division, the Probation Department and Prevent Child Abuse Riverside County (PCARC) hosted the first bi-annual Community Partners Forum of this SIP cycle. An update was provided regarding the activities and progress from Riverside County's SIP. All participants celebrated Riverside County's shared success in reducing child reentry to foster care from 15.3% (Q1 2004) to 8.7% (Q1 2009) and reviewed the factors that have contributed to the reduction in child reentry. The next Community Partners Forum is scheduled for April 29, 2010 at which we plan to discuss Fairness and Equity including Racial Disproportionality and Disparity (RDD).

The Department will continue to provide annual reports on our progress in implementing these strategies and the impacts to the children and families we serve.

California Child and Family Services Review 2009-2012 Riverside County Integrated System Improvement Plan

ANNUAL UPDATE

MARCH 2010



**Susan Loew, Director
Riverside County Department of Public Social Services**

**Alan M. Crogan, Chief Probation Officer
Riverside County Probation Department**



"Critical to our success are people at the State, County, community and neighborhood levels joining together in a comprehensive effort to ensure every child in California will live in a safe, stable, permanent home, nurtured by healthy families and strong communities."

--Child Welfare Services Redesign, Stakeholders Group Final Report (September, 2003)

MAR 23 2010

3.33


California's Child and Family Services Review System Improvement Plan Annual Update


County:	Riverside County
Responsible County Child Welfare Agency:	Riverside County Department of Public Social Services, Children's Services Division
Period of Plan:	March 2009 – March 2012
Period of Update:	March 2009-March 2010
Period of Outcomes Data:	Quarter Ending: October 2009 (Q1 09)
Date Submitted:	March 26, 2010

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Submitted by each agency for the children under its care

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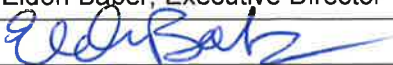
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CWS / Probation Narrative

Executive Summary

Background

In 2001, the California Legislature passed Assembly Bill (AB) 636, the Child Welfare System Improvement and Accountability Act as a means to improve outcomes for children in California's child welfare system. This ground breaking legislation mandated the establishment of the California Outcomes and Accountability System (COAS), designed to expand on existing Federal oversight systems and set the stage for a statewide performance monitoring and accountability system. The COAS focuses on critical child safety, permanency and well being factors and is geared to improve the experience of children and families entering the child welfare system. Two (2) primary components of the COAS are the County Self Assessment and System Improvement Plan processes which help to track and measure program outcomes, processes and services provided to children and families. The goals of AB 636 include the following:

- Protect children from abuse and neglect
- Maintain children in their own homes whenever safe and appropriate
- Provide children permanency and stability in their living situations
- Preserve the continuity of family relationships and connections for children
- Enhance families' capacity to provide for their own children's needs
- Ensure children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs
- Ensure children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs and
- Prepare youth emancipating from foster care to transition to adulthood.

In 2005, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) issued guidelines requiring counties to coordinate efforts in the development of a three (3) year plan that would address the following funded program areas:

- Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention and Treatment (CAPIT)
- Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) and
- Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF).

In 2008, CDSS in collaboration with the Child Welfare Directions Association, issued guidelines setting the stage for integration of the CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF Three (3) Year Plan with the County Self Assessment and System Improvement Plan cycle.

Now integrated with the CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF Three (3) Year Plan, the 2009-2012 County System Improvement Plan (SIP) continues to be a principle component of the COAS. Development of the SIP was guided by findings from the Needs Assessment, a review of Outcome Measure performance, the Peer Quality Case Review (PQCR) and the County Self Assessment (CSA) processes. As a means of increasing transparency and alleviating misnomers about child welfare services provision, each of these processes involved significant partnership with the community to assess services for both programmatic strengths and areas needing improvement.

Continued on next page

Executive Summary, Continued

Introduction

It has been one (1) year since the implementation of the Riverside County Integrated System Improvement Plan (SIP). Shared responsibility for outcomes in the prevention of abuse and neglect remains central to the goal of improving overall performance on each of the stated outcomes. Riverside County Department of Social Services Children's Services Division (CSD) and the Probation Department continue to promote open communication with community partners and local agencies. CSD and Probation continue to provide joint services with those already in the community to promote efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery to children and families. Collaborative efforts over the past year are best illustrated through the community's active participation in ongoing SIP efforts, including participation in bi-annual Community Partners Forums.

On October 29, 2009, Riverside County Children's Services Division, the Probation Department and Prevent Child Abuse Riverside County (PCARC) hosted the first bi-annual Community Partners Forum of this SIP cycle. The forum theme was, "Collaboration Creates Success," and was attended by 84 individuals including county staff, community partners/stakeholders, foster youth and service providers. An update was provided from First 5 Riverside County, now housed under the Riverside County Department of Public Social Services umbrella. In addition, PCARC provided an update and a call to action for participants to get involved by volunteering/participating in activities that support Riverside County children and families.

An update was provided regarding the activities and progress from Riverside County's SIP. All participants celebrated Riverside County's shared success in reducing child reentry to foster care from 15.3% (Q1 2004) to 8.7% (Q1 2009) and reviewed the factors that have contributed to the reduction in child reentry.

In addition, a call to action was made in the form of an individual pledge which asked participants to commit to continued support of the changes still needed related to education of youth in the child welfare system. This focus was selected as a result of the continued commitment of Riverside County to assure that all children involved in the child welfare system, regardless of age, leave with the educational tools necessary to be successful. This call to action becomes even more imperative for those youth who emancipate from the child welfare system to ensure they have the supports needed to accomplish their educational aspirations.

Below is a listing of some of the activities participants were asked to make a commitment to in an effort to support education for foster youth:

- assisting youth in locating and applying for college and financial aid;
 - talking with youth throughout their educational careers about school and its importance for their future;
 - mentoring and tutoring youth; and
 - facilitating/coordinating support groups for foster youth.
-

Summary of Data Trends

Overview of Outcome Measures

The 2009-2012 Riverside County Integrated System Improvement Plan focused on improving successful reunification of children and families and reducing child reentry to foster care. In conjunction with this focus for child welfare improvements, Riverside continues to put forth effort to prevent children and families from coming into contact with the child welfare system. As part of its commitment to children and families in Riverside, the Riverside County Children’s Services Division (CSD) is piloting Differential Response Path 1, known as the Pathways Program, in the Rubidoux Family Resource Center located in Western Riverside County. The Pathways Program provides preventative services to children and families prior to them coming into contact with the child welfare system. Pathways works with families to identify their strengths and their needs. Referrals are then provided to community based services and resources designed to strengthen and support families in an attempt to improve their overall stability and well being. The program is funded through Child Welfare Services Outcome Improvement Project (CWSOIP) funds. This program is complimented by the County’s Path 2 Differential Response program which provides services to over 3,800 clients annually, countywide.

For those families involved in the Riverside County child welfare system, Riverside continues to focus its efforts to improve performance in child safety, permanency and well being. The following data trends reflect Riverside County Children’s Services Division’s progress toward achieving improved results for children and families involved in child welfare services.

Measure S1.1 - No Recurrence of Maltreatment (Data Set: Q1 2009 - 04/01/08 through 09/30/08)

Riverside County	CA State Average	National Standard
94.3%	93.1%	94.6%

Current performance of 94.3% on this measure shows a .02% improvement in performance when compared to the same quarter data last year (94.1%). Our current rate exceeds the State average by 1.2% and falls .3% below the National Standard.

Continued improvement on this measure is anticipated based on the continued use of countywide core services such as Parenting Education, Anger Management, Domestic Violence, Counseling and the expansion of Family to Family Team Decision Making and Ice Breaker meetings. In addition, the continued availability of the CWSOIP supported Differential Response Program and the Family Preservation Court Program will support continued improvement on this measure.

Family to Family Team Decision Making (TDM) meetings focus on actively involving birth families, community members, resource families, service providers and agency staff in placement decisions to ensure a network of support for both children in out-of-home care and for the adults who care for them. Since the implementation of the 2009-2012 SIP 1,156 TDM meetings have been held in Riverside County. This number brings the total number of TDMs held in Riverside County to 3,636 since the implementation of the Family-to-Family Initiative in Riverside in 2006.

Continued on next page

Summary of Data Trends, Continued

Measure S1.1
- No
Recurrence of
Maltreatment
(continued)

Family-to-Family Ice Breaker meetings are held for caregivers to learn important information about the child/children's lives in their care. Birth parents are asked to share information ranging from the child's favorite food, to any known allergies or medical conditions. Birth parents and caregivers share information about themselves and their parenting practices. Since the implementation of the 2009-2012 SIP, 109 Ice Breaker meetings have been held in Riverside County.

The Differential Response (DR) Program, implemented countywide in January of 2007, offers community based services to families referred to child welfare when the allegations or investigative findings do not warrant an open child welfare case. DR works to support families and reduce recidivism in child welfare services. Riverside County's DR program is contracted out to two providers, one in the Western County and one in Eastern County. Both families and County staff report satisfaction with the outcomes and the rate of subsequent reports to CSD has decreased. The DR program saves money over time through reduction in first entry and reentry rates.

Family Preservation Court (FPC) is a collaborative effort among many agencies in Riverside County with a focus on providing services to families to prevent the occurrence or reoccurrence of abuse/neglect as a result of parental substance abuse and/or domestic violence. The goal of the FPC is to prevent the unnecessary separation of children from their families and to ensure permanency by maintaining or reuniting children with their parents, adoptive parents, kinship providers, or legal guardians. FPC Program objectives include:

- 1) reducing the rate of abuse and/or neglect in foster care
- 2) reducing the rate of recurrence of abuse/neglect in homes where children were not removed subsequent to a child abuse investigation and
- 3) reducing the rate of foster care reentry. FPC currently provides services to 244 parents with substance abuse issues.

FPC services include direct substance abuse treatment, drug testing, life skills, parenting education, recovery support, education/employment services, primary health care/mental health referrals, a Family Reunification (FR) Support group and an Aftercare program.

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Summary of Data Trends, Continued

Measure S1.1
- No
Recurrence of
Maltreatment
(continued)

The FR Support group is designed for parents who have had their children removed and placed in out of home care. The group is a parent led, peer support group, which is co-led by a counselor. Parents are able to come together to discuss their fears and anxieties regarding upcoming reunification; discuss issues that have arisen since reunification and problem solve with their peers. Parent participation and engagement has exceeded our expectations and parents consistently report satisfaction with the group and find the process very rewarding.

The FPC Aftercare Program is designed to assist parents in maintaining connections with other parents and to continue their development in the FPC program. The Aftercare Program is designed to enhance the support and commitment to the parents' continued recovery. Parents raise funds and utilize the funds to engage newcomers. The goal is for all parents to have and maintain the ongoing support of the FPC program as well as their peers.

DPSS supports the involvement of parents in the planning, design and implementation of the FPC program. The purpose is to draw upon the strengths of families and engage families and communities in program planning. Parent Alumni are invited to participate in monthly steering committee meetings to provide input from a parent's perspective as to how to better serve families.

FPC has proven highly successful in permanently diverting its graduates from substance abuse dependency. To date, less than 2% of the children reunified to FPC graduates have reentered the child welfare system. The average reentry rate in California is 10%. As a team, FPC provides additional oversight to families served. When families can remain together or quickly reunify in a safe and stable environment, our communities benefit.

California State Association of Counties (CSAC) recognized the FPC Program through receipt of a merit award as an innovative program in 2007. The program was also featured on Fox News in May of 2007 highlighting a graduation ceremony and successful reunification of one mother and her children following her graduation. In December of 2007, Fox News ran a four-part segment featuring Riverside County's FPC program and its innovative approaches to dealing with the impact of substance abuse on the child welfare system.

DPSS supports FPC by hosting monthly Steering Committee Meetings, bi-annual administrative substance abuse joint operational meetings, quarterly regional substance abuse joint operational meetings and annual monitoring. A DPSS liaison has been assigned to FPC as a single point of contact to address program issues, questions, contracts compliance, etc. In addition, DPSS and FPC have and continue to receive technical assistance from various state and federal entities with the goal of improving the program and desired outcomes.

Continued on next page

Summary of Data Trends, Continued

Measure S2.1
- No
Maltreatment
in Foster Care
 (Data Set: Q1
 2009- 04/01/08
 through
 03/31/09)

Riverside County
99.35%

CA State Average
 99.61%

National Standard
 99.68%

Current performance of 99.35% on this measure shows a .26% decline in performance when compared to the same quarter data last year (99.61%). Our current rate falls below the State average by .26% and falls .33% below the National Standard. This decline in performance represents a total of 11 more children being maltreated in out-of-home care in comparison to the same time frame in 2008:

Efforts to improve performance on this measure include 33 hours of mandatory PRIDE training for all out-of-home caregivers, the establishment of Foster Parent Mentors and the continued utilization of an Out-of-Home Investigations (OHI) unit to investigate all allegations of abuse in out-of-home care.

PRIDE is a model for the development and support of resource families. It is designed to strengthen the quality of foster family parenting and adoption services by providing a standardized framework for recruiting, preparing and selecting foster and adoptive parents. DPSS has eight (8) Resource Family Trainers providing countywide caregiver training and support. Additional caregiver education opportunities are available through a contract with a local college and DPSS now offers on-line caregiver training opportunities through its affiliation with "FosterParent.com."

Foster Parent Mentors provide resource information, help foster parents navigate the foster care system and serve as understanding listeners/ problem solvers.

The Out-of-home Investigations (OHI) unit was developed to:

- complete high quality investigations on allegations of abuse and neglect involving Riverside County's relative caregivers, small family homes, group homes, non-related extended family members (NREFMs) and licensed/certified foster homes in a timely and consistent manner. This may include homes located in Riverside County with any dependent child in placement and homes located outside of Riverside County with Riverside dependents in placement.
- collaborate with Community Care Licensing (CCL), law enforcement, the assigned region and the Placement region in completing a comprehensive investigation and corrective response on reports of abuse.

The OHI Unit conducts investigations on child abuse referrals involving foster caregivers based on a dual focus: child abuse criteria (as specified in section 11165 of the Penal Code) and "best interest of the child" criteria. The dual criteria assessment is intended to:

- provide a broad focus to identify deficiencies in a child's out-of-home placement
- focus the investigation on the provision of services to address safety deficiencies in the absence of child abuse based on the legal definition and
- identify and address necessary intervention services to avoid potential negative effects or future harm to the child.

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Summary of Data Trends, Continued

**Measure S2.1
- No
Maltreatment
in Foster Care
(continued)**

To improve communication with caregivers, Riverside County recently created an investigation outcomes letter which is provided to the caregiver upon the conclusion of the investigation on their home. This letter provides the caregiver documentation regarding the outcome of the investigation and provides the caregiver due process information needed to request an Administrative Review of the investigation.

In addition, Riverside County is making every effort to ensure that children are matched with the best possible placement upon initial placement in order to reduce placement changes and further loss and separation trauma for children. As part of this process, Riverside has begun piloting a Substitute Care Provider Structured Decision Making assessment tool and is implementing contracts for Foster Family Agency and Group Home vendors providing services to Riverside children in out-of-home care. Using outcome performance language as a basis for these contracts, Riverside County has implemented an ongoing data evaluation and audit system to monitor the ongoing performance of contracted agencies. As part of this improved process, Riverside County is making a proactive effort to enhance its monitoring and tracking of initial placements, placement changes and delays in placement.

**Composite C1
-Reunification
(Data Set: Q1
2009- 04/01/08
through
03/31/09)**

Riverside County

120.8%

CA State Average

115.1%

National Standard

122.6%

Current performance of 120.8% on this composite shows a .1% decline in overall performance when compared to the same quarter data last year (120.9%). Our current rate exceeds the State average by 5.7% and falls 1.8% below the National Standard. Despite a small overall decline on this composite, Measure C1.4 Reentry Following Reunification, the main focus on Riverside's 2009-2012 SIP has significantly improved from 13.7% (Q1 08) to 8.7% (Q109). Continued improvement on this composite and more specifically on Measure C1.4 is anticipated based on Riverside County's continued reduction in child detentions and use of specific programs that address family needs.

Detention rates in Riverside County have continued to drop over the past three years. In Q108, 3,674 children entered out-of-home care in Riverside County. In Q1 09, 2,297 children in Riverside County entered out-of-home care. This represents a reduction in child entry of 1,377 children or over 35%. This reduction in entry is attributed to Riverside's use of:

- Team Decision Making (TDM) meetings to locate the best placement for the child and create safety plans to reduce the need to detain children in out-of-home care and
- Improved staff training on safety and risk assessment, which has resulted in the detention of more severe cases of abuse/neglect and less children returning home at detention.

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Summary of Data Trends, Continued

Composite C1 -Reunification (continued)

Assess All is a partnership between the Riverside County Children's Services Division (CSD) and the Department of Mental Health (DMH). Assess All was developed to assure mental health services are provided to children to reduce mental health symptoms and to assist in the stabilization of the child's behaviors. The goal of the Assess All program is to ensure that all children between the ages of 5-17 who have been placed in out-of-home care receive a mental health assessment immediately upon entry. DMH conducts a clinical assessment on all referred children and makes a recommendation regarding the need for mental health services and authorizes treatment services. This program has been piloted in three of our regions. To date, over 240 children have been served through the pilot program and there has been approximately a 30% increase in the number of children participating in mental health services in those regions in which the program has piloted. DPSS is currently planning to implement the program countywide with the belief that as the mental health needs of children are being met, they will more successfully transition home.

The RePreve or Reentry Prevention program is a **voluntary** program that provides case management services to clients after reunification and termination of the dependency. RePreve was developed to minimize reentry into the child welfare system by linking families to needed community resources upon case closure. Riverside County's Self Assessment identified the need to provide transitional services to families whose child welfare cases were closing. The goal of RePreve is to provide support services to transitioning families in an effort to maintain the family's safety, stability and well-being. RePreve is currently a pilot program in Riverside County that serves the Eastern region of the County. RePreve is funded through a \$150,000 two - year grant provided by the Marguerite Casey Foundation which covers December 1, 2008 through November 30, 2010. Since February 5, 2009 33 families (37 parents and 81 children) have been referred to RePreve, of those, 21 families (23 parents and 57 children) have engaged in RePreve services for a 66% engagement rate. None of the families who have engaged in, or completed RePreve services have experienced a child welfare reentry. In the near future, Riverside County plans to expand the RePreve program to serve the entire county.

Continued on next page

Summary of Data Trends, Continued

**Composite C2
- Adoption**
(Data Set: Q1
2009- 04/01/08
through
03/31/09)

Riverside County

126.3%

CA State Average

101.7%

National Standard

106.4%

Current performance of 126.3% on this composite shows a 6.9 % improvement when compared to the same quarter data last year (119.4%). Our current rate exceeds the State average by 24.6% and exceeds the National Standard by 19.9%. Current and ongoing successful performance on this composite is supported in part by Riverside's use of the Heart Gallery, Adoptions Finalization Ceremonies, Annual Adoptions Celebration Events, Adoptions Support Contracts and an ongoing agreement with Family Builders by Adoption, California Kids Connection.

The Heart Gallery has served a vital role in attracting families who are already approved to adopt, therefore shortening the length of time children wait for their "forever family." Since its inception in 2006, the Heart Gallery has located 71 adoptive homes or "forever families" for children who have traditionally been a challenge to match due to being part of a large sibling set, being older or having a disability. On July 13, 2009, Riverside County hosted its Fourth Annual Heart Gallery opening. This opening was challenging due to Riverside County staff's increased adeptness in recruiting adoptive homes for children. Many of the children geared to be featured in the Gallery were already matched by the time their pictures were taken and framed for the Gallery opening. Also included in this year's Gallery was a "Wall of Success" which highlighted children currently placed in adoptive homes. The ongoing success of the Heart Gallery is due to collaborative efforts between Riverside County's Children's Services Division, the Juvenile Court, a host of Photographers who volunteer their time and expertise to create Gallery photos of children awaiting adoptive placement and Resource Families who facilitate the child's participation in the Heart Gallery process.

On November 14, 2009, Riverside County hosted its Annual Adoptions Celebration Event to celebrate the children who were adopted during the year and to honor the families who adopted them. During the morning, parents attended an adoption training presentation while the children participated in fun games and activities. A full buffet lunch was provided and families were able to enjoy free admission to the amusement park for the day. Approximately 225 participants attended this event.

On November 21, 2009, Riverside County Children's Services Division and the Riverside County Superior Court hosted the Second Annual Adoption Finalization Day. On this day, 50 families took part in the adoption of 90 children at Riverside County's three (3) Juvenile Court locations. Refreshments were provided, along with gifts for the children being adopted.

Adoptions Support Contracts were developed to support and maintain adoptive connections for children and their adoptive parents. Contractors help teach adoptive parents how to cope with child behaviors. They provide specific services such as adoption mediation, post-adoption support groups, Family/Parent-Child conflict resolution and community services access assistance. In addition, they assist adoptive parents to navigate Adoptions Assistance Program (AAP) funding.

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Summary of Data Trends, Continued

**Composite C2
- Adoption
(continued)**

Family Builders by Adoption, California Kids Connection (CKC) is a secure, searchable database listing of children in California who are available for adoption. In addition to utilizing this website to expand adoptive opportunities for children awaiting permanency, Riverside County coordinates a Southern County annual Co-op Picnic with CKC and three (3) other neighboring counties.

The purpose of the annual Southern California Co-op Picnic, which is held every October, is to provide a relaxed setting for children who are waiting to be adopted with pre-approved adoptive parents. This event is in collaboration with three (3) other neighboring counties. The picnic is held in Riverside County and is attended by approximately 75 children and 75-100 families each year.

By engaging in activities that support, advocate for and recruit adoptive homes, Riverside County is better able to quickly locate and place children and youth awaiting permanency in "Forever Families." Families participating in these events feel supported, valued and may choose to expand their family more than originally intended.

**Composite C3
- Long Term
Care**

(Data Set: Q1
2009- 04/01/08
through
03/31/09)

Riverside County

131.6%

CA State Average

104.2%

National Standard

121.7%

Current performance of 131.6% on this composite shows a 2.4% improvement when compared to the same quarter data last year (129.2%). Our current rate exceeds the State average by 27.4% and exceeds the National Standard by 9.9%. Current and ongoing successful performance on this composite is attributed to Riverside's continued partnership with local schools and school districts, to include an onsite Educational Liaison and the ongoing development of the Foster Youth Services Information System (FYSIS). Riverside County also has Wraparound services, Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care (MTFC), staffings for youth over the age of 17, Independent Living Program services, for both in care and after care, and Team Decision Making (TDM) meetings to support children in long-term care.

A Foster Youth Educational Liaison is co-located in one region of the Children's Services Division. This liaison, obtained through a partnership between CSD and the Riverside County Office on Education, advocates for the educational needs of children placed in out-of-home care. The Educational Liaison serves children who are considered medically fragile, are in a group home placement and/or are eligible for the Independent Living Program (ILP).

The Foster Youth Educational Liaison works with all districts and school personnel, county schools, group home providers, foster parents and youth to ensure appropriate and timely admissions, transitions and discharges to and from schools in Riverside County. The educational liaison assists with issues related to education/special education, due process for student discipline and programs/services offered in alternative education, IEP/SST/504 meetings for foster youth, and records transfer.

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Summary of Data Trends, Continued

Composite C3 - Long Term Care (continued)

Additionally, the Educational Liaison oversees an Educational Representative Program, which is a program that secures volunteers from the community who are then trained on Educational Advocacy and Special Education Protocol. For those children under the jurisdiction of the Riverside County Juvenile Court, these volunteers are available to be appointed by the Court as a child's educational representative.

FYSIS is a secure Web based application that provides a single point of reference for information on Riverside County foster youth enrolled in the Riverside County public school system. Both the CSD and the Probation Department have an active Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Riverside County Office of Education (RCOE) detailing their partnership and collaborative efforts with FYSIS. As part of the continued collaboration on this application, the CSD, the Probation Department, RCOE, the Juvenile Courts, representatives from Administration and Information Technology divisions attend and participate in monthly work groups to coordinate the countywide implementation of FYSIS.

Riverside County's school partnerships help coordinate timely and appropriate educational supports and improve educational outcomes for children/youth in foster care.

Wraparound is a collaborative between the Department of Mental Health (DMH), the Children's Services Division (CSD), the Department of Public Health, a contracted service provider and the Probation Department. This program provides intensive, comprehensive, integrated and creative treatment, intervention and support services in a home-like environment, (through DMH and/or the contracted provider) to youth in or at risk of being placed in group home placement. The goal of the Wraparound program is to help stabilize children/youth and to facilitate their return to their birth family or placement with a relative caregiver. The Wraparound program provides services which support the placement of children in the least restrictive environment suitable to meet their needs.

Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care (MTFC) homes specialize in caring for children who have mental health issues and are in counseling through the Department of Mental Health (DMH). Resource Families providing care for these children attend additional training and work collaboratively with the DMH and the Children's Services Division (CSD) and/or the Probation Department to assure that the children placed in their care receive appropriate, ongoing, individualized mental health treatment aimed at improving the child's stability, wellness and ability to function within their environment.

17+ Staffings are conducted for all youth in out-of-home care who are age 17 or older. The youth's case carrying social worker, assigned Independent Living Program worker, assigned Eligibility Technician, Children's Services Management staff, and others meet to collaboratively discuss the youth's progress toward independence, timeframe for high school graduation, plans for emancipation and additional supports or referrals needed. These staffings were developed to assure that every youth emancipating from the child welfare system would have a:

- place to live after emancipation
- high school diploma or equivalent upon emancipation
- at least one caring adult connection and
- plan for their future such as attending college, obtaining employment, etc.

Continued on next page

Summary of Data Trends, Continued

Composite C3
- Long Term
Care
 (continued)

Independent Living Program services work to transition youth from foster care to emancipation by providing an array of support services to foster youth ages 16-18. A contracted vendor provides training, advocacy, mentoring and other support services to aid foster youth while still in care to develop competencies in areas of Education, Career Development, Health and Safety, Daily Living and Financial Resources.

Independent Living Program Aftercare Services provide services for former foster youth through the age of 21. Former foster youth are linked to one (1) of six (6) Youth Opportunity Centers, housing programs, employment and education opportunities and other support services to assist them in improving their skills and ability to live independently.

The Transitional Housing Program Plus is a two (2) year subsidized housing program for post-emancipation youth that includes fifteen (15) additional support services designed to assist youth in becoming self-sufficient by graduation. In addition to the aforementioned activities, Riverside County also has an ongoing Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Advocacy Program through which all foster children's records are reviewed and applications are submitted for those children considered potentially eligible for SSI. Through this program, Riverside County has achieved a 100% compliance rating for AB 1331 legislation which was developed to supply a safety net to children in foster care with disabilities who are emancipating from the child welfare system.

Composite C4
- Placement
Stability

(Data Set: Q1
 2009- 04/01/08
 through
 03/31/09)

Riverside County

94.5%

CA State Average

94.3%

National Standard

101.5%

Current performance of 94.5% on this measure shows a 2.1% improvement when compared to the same quarter data last year (92.4%). Our current rate exceeds the State average by .2% and falls 7% below the National Standard. In reviewing overall performance on this composite, Riverside County has opted to add this composite to its 2009-2012 SIP due to an increasing recognition that placement stability is imperative to support a child's development of secure, meaningful relationships and to their overall social/emotional development.

As a state, California has recognized the need to improve placement stability for children in out-of-home care. In 2003, the California Child Welfare Services Stakeholders Group developed a vision for children involved in the child welfare system. This vision of ensuring that "every child in California will live in a safe, stable, permanent home, nurtured by healthy families and strong communities" continues to provide a foundation for efforts to improve outcomes for children in Riverside County. Riverside County has spent the past few years focusing on front end child abuse/neglect prevention services. Outcomes in these areas continue to improve and as previously discussed under Measure S2.1 No Maltreatment in Foster Care, Riverside is now poised to focus on improving placement stability and outcomes for children placed in out-of-home care.

Collaborative Partnerships

Local Partners

Individuals from the following groups met on October 29, 2009 to review progress on the Riverside County Integrate SIP. Updates were provided by First 5 and Prevent Child Abuse Riverside County and data on outcome measure performance was reviewed. Team members shared successes and challenges as part of an ongoing effort to improve child welfare outcomes. Team members were asked to commit to participating in/supporting activities such as Team Decision Making meetings and Youth Mentoring to continue SIP progress and positive child welfare system change.

The following represents a list of team members who actively participated in the bi-annual Community Partners Forum that was held on October 29, 2009.

Note: The list below is not exhaustive of all persons who continue to actively participate in the SIP process through their participation in other meetings and activities.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Agency</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Agency</u>
Al Albanez	DPSS - Children's Services	Eldon Baber	Prevent Child Abuse
Tammy Bakewell	Carolyn E. Wylie Center	Martin Baxter	Public Health
Todd Bellanca	DPSS - Children's Services	Garrett Bethel	DPSS - Children's Services
Tracy Bobertz	Girls Scouts Council	Phil Breitenbucher	DPSS - Children's Services
Lonetta Bryan	DPSS - Children's Services	Michelle Burroughs	1 st Five
Barry Busch	Board of Supervisors District 5	Jose Bustos	Office on Education
Marisel Cantu	DPSS - Children's Services	Anna Casteneda	Community Partner
Katherine Chavez	DPSS - Children's Services	Karen Christensen	Board of Supervisors District 2
Anne Coleman	JFK Foundation	Sandra Davalos	Prevent Child Abuse-Riverside
Leticia De Lara	Board of Supervisors District 4	Sylvia Deporto	DPSS - Children's Services
Allison Donahoe-Beggs	DPSS - Children's Services	Melissa Duffield	DPSS - Children's Services
Pam Elie	California Family Life Center	Kristie Ermer	Community Partner
Chaka Ferrell	Riverside Code Enforcement	Susan Francis	JFK Foundation
Patricia Franks	Community Partner	Harry Freedman	1 st Five
Dona Gaje	Indian Child and Family Services	Elsa Garcia	Family Resource Center
Eveline Garbin	Ninos Latinos Unidos, Inc	Art Gonzalez	Riverside Sheriff Department
Luci Green	Happy Faces Foster Family Agency	Gail Gustafson	Optimist Community Services

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Collaborative Partnerships, Continued

Mark Hake	Riverside County Probation	Monah Hanson	DPSS - Children's Services
Dave Harper	Olive Crest	Jesus Haro	DPSS - Children's Services
Guillermo Henry	DPSS - Children's Services	Bridgette Hernandez	DPSS - Children's Services
Yvonne Hill	Little Peoples' World	Bryce Hulstrom	Riverside County Probation
Diane Jamerson	DPSS - Children's Services	Mary Ellen Johnson	Children's Services
Pastor Felix Jones III	Faith Based Community Partner	Daniene Khanmanivanh	Little Peoples' World
Mark Kisselburg	DPSS - Children's Services	Jim Knabb	DHS Police Department
Nick Kumar	California Family Life Center	Maricela Legaretta	DPSS - Children's Services
Lisa Lehouillier	DPSS - Children's Services	Renita Lewis	DPSS - Children's Services
Teri Lippert	Girl Scouts Council	Susan Loew	DPSS - Children's Services
Maria Machuca	Family Resource Center	Susan Mahoney	DPSS - Children's Services
Mary Martinez-Zayas	Lake Elsinore Unified School District	Mary Beth McClintock	California Family Life Center
Gary McMane	Catholic Charities	Felix Minjarez	Family Resource Center
Neda Movahed	Public Health	Azucena Olivera	Girl Scouts Council
Tammy Palmer	DPSS - Children's Services	Vanessa Passero	DPSS - Children's Services
Michael Patterson	Office on Education	Zavda Patton	DPSS - Children's Services
Jim Powell	Substance Abuse	Mary Jo Ramirez	California Family Life Center
Xochitl Razal	DPSS - Children's Services	Robert Reedy	Happy Faces Foster Family Agency
Alisa Sandifer	Verizon Wireless	Crystal Shackelford	DPSS - Children's Services
Rabya Shenghur	DPSS - Children's Services	Lucy Sloan	DPSS - Children's Services
Lisa Shiner	DPSS- Children's Services	Lisa Smith	DPSS - Children's Services
Mary Snow	Kin Care	Kali Sorrels-Goode	DPSS - Children's Services
Sheila Stephenson	California Family Life Center	Lyn Thomas	DPSS - Children's Services
Silvia Velasco	Optimist Community Services	Nicole Walker	DPSS - Children's Services
Rodney Walker	California Family Life Center	Okeese Wilcotts	Probation

CWS / Probation System Improvement Plan Matrix

Matrix Summary

Summary

Priorities identified in collaboration with partners and stakeholders were consolidated into the following five (5) overarching strategies designed to help families successfully reunify and reduce child reentry to foster care.

- Improving relevant management information systems (MIS)
- Improving foster/relative caregiver training, recruitment and retention
- Improving quality assurance systems
- Improving staff and provider training and
- Improving agency collaboration.

The following System Improvement Plan matrix will provide an overall outline for each goal, strategy, strategy rationale and milestone. This outline will include the following, as applicable:

- status of each improvement goal
- status of each strategy, how it has been evaluated/monitored and its effectiveness in achieving the overall goal
- status of each milestone and the county's efforts to complete each milestone within the designated timeframe
- how strategies will continue to build on progress
- systemic changes needed to further support improvement goals
- education, training and technical assistance needed and
- role of partners in achieving SIP goals.

Further, the following matrix will provide information on new goals/strategies being added to Riverside County's 2009-2012 SIP in an effort to continue the County's progress in achieving positive outcomes for children and families.

System Improvement Plan Components

Outcome/Systemic Factor: Measure C1.4 Rate of Foster Care Reentry			
County's Current Performance: Riverside 8.7% (Current State Average – 11.3%) ¹			
Improvement Goal 1.0 (Revised) Reduce Reentry to Foster Care from 9.8% ² to 7% by 03/2012			
Strategy 1.1 IMPROVE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS (MIS)	CAPIT	CBCAP	Strategy Rationale³ Improving relevant management information systems (MIS) will support successful reunification and assist in the reduction of reentry through the development of comprehensive, integrated data systems that track client outcomes through services provided.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1.1.1 Develop a monitoring system to ensure that Team Decision Making meetings are being held for all children in targeted community areas prior to initial placement and prior to all placement changes.	06/2009 to 03/2012		<p>The Family to Family (F2F) Team Decision Making (TDM) Subcommittee meets quarterly to discuss TDM utilization in Riverside County. The subcommittee, comprised of County Staff, Community Partners/Stakeholders and Service Providers reviews countywide TDM utilization data and makes recommendations to the F2F Steering Committee to enhance TDM processes and utilization. During this reporting period, the Subcommittee has:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) developed minimum and maximum caseload levels for TDM Facilitators and Back Up TDM Facilitators 2) recommended and reviewed the implementation of safeguards, such as monthly tracking and placement reports, to ensure TDMs are happening for all children in targeted communities 3) implemented and expanded Riverside's existing TDM data collection model to facilitate easier, more accurate tracking of TDM utilization and results, and 4) recommended the use of "Exit TDMs" to be held for all families in target communities at the time of case closure. This TDM's purpose is to assure that families obtain services and supports to help them transition to life after case termination. <p>All F2F TDM Facilitators meet quarterly to discuss the provision of TDM services in their assigned regions. As part of this meeting, TDM Facilitators act as a support network of co-mentors for new/newly assigned Back Up Facilitators. This mentoring system helps to foster better regional collaboration and builds capacity to ensure that timely TDM meetings are conducted. TDM Facilitators frequently assist each other by facilitating emergency TDMs or by providing additional coverage and assistance when needed.</p> <p><i>Continued work on this milestone will include monitoring/assessing the countywide implementation and use of the established TDM safeguard processes, along with assessing additional compliance needs.</i></p>
Milestone	Timeframe		Activities and Results to Date

¹ County and State current performances based on Q109 data for period 4/07-3/08

² County baseline performance based on Q408 data for period 01/07-12/07

³ Describe how the strategy will build on progress and improve this program/outcome area.

System Improvement Plan Components, (cont.)

Milestone	Timeframe	Activities and Results to Date
<p>1.1.2 Expand the use of the Safe Measures web based application so that supervisory staff and line staff have access to the application.</p>	<p>06/2009 to 03/2012</p>	<p>Riverside County established a Safe Measures workgroup which developed a pilot for the expanded use of the Safe Measures application. The workgroup tracked the pilot's progress and made recommendations to management regarding application use. The Safe Measures application was piloted for supervisory and line staff in two (2) of eight (8) service regions from October 2008 through June 2009. Reports on "face to face contact" data entry and "10 day referral investigations" were reviewed to determine pilot success.</p> <p>In both regions where Safe Measures was piloted, an overall improvement of ~10% was seen in entering face to face contacts in CWS/CMS within 7 days of contact, despite heavy case/workloads. When surveyed, 66% of staff reported that the Safe Measures application is a beneficial case management tool.</p> <p>Based on the positive results of the pilot, the Safe Measures workgroup has recommended the application be made available to all supervisory and line staff. Countywide training sessions are currently scheduled and will continue until all staff are trained on the application.</p> <p><i>Continued work on this milestone will include ongoing staff training along with continuous monitoring of usage and compliance to assess for additional training needed.</i></p>
<p>1.1.3 Develop a monitoring system to ensure accurate demographic information is consistently entered into the Child Welfare Services Case Management System (CWS/CMS) and the Juvenile and Adult Management System (JAMS).</p>	<p>07/2010 to 03/2012</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>1.1.4 Develop a monitoring system to ensure accurate use of Structured Decision Making Assessment tools.</p>	<p>06/2009 to 03/2012</p>	<p>In March 2009, Riverside County developed a Structured Decision Making (SDM) Steering Committee. The Steering Committee goal was to assess SDM usage, develop strategies to increase/improve usage, market new strategies to improve compliance and to develop a quality improvement process supported by ongoing assessment and monitoring of SDM.</p> <p>In addition to the SDM Steering Committee, three (3) subcommittees were established, whose objectives were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Quality Assurance Subcommittee</i> –will develop an ongoing process to review, analyze and develop strategies to increase overall SDM compliance/usage. ▪ <i>New Tools Subcommittee</i> – will review new SDM assessment tools and changes to current SDM tools. This committee also makes recommendations for training or retraining needed to facilitate increased compliance, usage and/or understanding of the SDM application. ▪ <i>Training, Marketing and Transparency Subcommittee</i> – will review recommendations for other subcommittees and develop marketing strategies to increase SDM compliance/usage. This subcommittee also develops SDM trainings and coordinates with the other subcommittees on SDM compliance reporting.

¹ County and State current performances based on Q109 data for period 4/07-3/08

² County baseline performance based on Q408 data for period 01/07-12/07

³ Describe how the strategy will build on progress and improve this program/outcome area.

System Improvement Plan Components, (cont.)

Milestone	Timeframe	Activities and Results to Date
<p>1.1.4 Develop a monitoring system to ensure accurate use of Structured Decision Making Assessment tools. (continued)</p>	<p>06/2009 to 03/2012</p>	<p>Significant progress has been made on this milestone and Riverside County's SDM continuous quality improvement process is still in development. Baseline data on SDM compliance has been developed for all child welfare service regions in the County. Data reviewed shows a high rate of overall compliance with tools being completed for referrals/cases, however, a lower rate of compliance for tools being completed timely or accurately.</p> <p>As such, our goals and objectives for increasing overall SDM compliance are in development and it is anticipated that the continuous quality assurance process also being developed will be piloted in the first quarter of 2010.</p> <p><i>Continued work on this milestone will include ongoing staff training to increase SDM tool usage and compliance, along with continuous monitoring to assess for additional training needed.</i></p>
<p>1.1.5 Increase partnership with Riverside County Office of Education to further implement the use of the Foster Youth Services Information System (FYSIS) to track/ monitor children's educational status.</p>	<p>06/2009 to 03/2012</p>	<p>The Riverside County Children's Services Division (CSD) and the Probation Department continue their ongoing support and participation in the implementation of the Foster Youth Services Information System (FYSIS). FYSIS is a secure Web based application that provides a single point of reference for information on Riverside County foster youth enrolled in the Riverside County public school system. Both the CSD and the Probation Department have an active Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Riverside County Office of Education (RCOE) detailing their partnership and collaborative efforts with FYSIS. As part of the continued collaboration on this application, the CSD, the Probation Department, RCOE, the Juvenile Courts, representatives from Administration and Information Technology divisions attend and participate in monthly work groups to coordinate the countywide implementation of FYSIS.</p> <p>Riverside County began piloting FYSIS in its Independent Living Region in the first (1st) quarter of 2009. Work continues on streamlining the upload of educational data from the last few school districts into FYSIS. Data reliability continues to be a concern; therefore, two (2) users are dedicated to "testing" the application, while remaining individuals are simply "using" the application.</p> <p><i>Continued work on this milestone will include ongoing collaboration with FYSIS partners to support the development of the FYSIS application, along with continuous data monitoring to assess for data validity.</i></p>

¹ County and State current performances based on Q109 data for period 4/07-3/08

² County baseline performance based on Q408 data for period 01/07-12/07

³ Describe how the strategy will build on progress and improve this program/outcome area.

System Improvement Plan Components, (cont.)

Strategy 1.2 IMPROVE FOSTER/RELATIVE CAREGIVER TRAINING, RECRUITMENT & RETENTION	CAPIT		Strategy Rationale ³ Improving foster/relative caregiver training will support successful reunification and help reduce reentry by encouraging mentoring relationships between caregivers and biological parents through TDM meetings and Ice Breakers. Improving foster/relative caregiver recruitment and retention will support successful reunification and help reduce reentry by having foster parents who are familiar with local resources, willing to facilitate visitation and who are willing to support biological parent and child relationships after dependency has been terminated.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Milestone	Timeframe	Activities and Results to Date	
1.2.1. Expand the Family to Family Initiative in Riverside by initiating the use of Ice Breaker meetings to foster mentoring relationships between biological parents and out-of-home caregivers.	06/2009 to 03/2012	<p>The Family to Family Team Decision Making (TDM) Subcommittee meets quarterly to discuss TDM utilization in child welfare practice. In addition, the TDM subcommittee has developed a countywide process for Ice Breaker meeting utilization, tracking and assessment. The Subcommittee oversees regional audits on Ice Breakers usage and has reviewed data and made recommendations to facilitate increased usage. Along with monthly TDM usage reports, TDM Facilitators provide the management team with an Ice Breaker usage report. Facilitators have taken action in their respective regions to foster increased Ice Breaker usage and to bring issues or barriers to utilization to the TDM Subcommittee meeting for open discussion.</p> <p>Riverside County has conducted 109 Ice Breaker meetings countywide since the initiation of SIP in March 2009. Barriers still being addressed that impact Ice Breaker utilization include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parental incarceration ▪ Case transfer process that may delay implementation of Ice Breaker and ▪ Social worker schedules/caseloads impacting increased use of Ice Breakers. <p><i>Continued work on this milestone will include ongoing staff training to increase Ice Breaker meeting usage, along with continuous monitoring to assess for additional training needed.</i></p>	
1.2.2 Enhance Foster Parent Recruitment and Retention efforts by collaborating with community partners, such as faith based and tribal organizations.	06/2009 to 03/2012	<p>Riverside County remains actively engaged in efforts to recruit/retain quality foster homes for children in out-of-home care. As such, Riverside County has initiated a monthly Faith Based Collaborative meeting, attended by Riverside County staff, Community Partners/Stakeholders, Service Providers, Faith Based and Tribal Organizations. The Collaborative works to increase community and organizational involvement in meeting the needs of children and families in the child welfare system. The Collaborative discusses/ addresses the following topics in its monthly meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Common Goals and Strategies – fosters a roundtable discussion about the focus and purpose of the Faith Based Collaborative. This discussion supports the growth and direction of the Collaborative and provides an understanding of the overarching mission to new members. 	

¹ County and State current performances based on Q109 data for period 4/07-3/08

² County baseline performance based on Q408 data for period 01/07-12/07

³ Describe how the strategy will build on progress and improve this program/outcome area.

System Improvement Plan Components, (cont.)

Milestone	Timeframe	Activities and Results to Date
<p>1.2.2 Enhance Foster Parent Recruitment and Retention efforts by collaborating with community partners, such as faith based and tribal organizations. (continued)</p>	<p>06/2009 to 03/2012</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Walk the Talk Walk – the 5th Annual Walk Your Talk Walk held on April 18, 2009 was hosted by Riverside County and Cal Baptist University. This fundraising event was held to increase awareness of the needs of children in the foster care system and the organizations that support them. All monies raised benefit local programs that focus on meeting the needs of children in or emancipating from foster care. The event also raises awareness in the community regarding the need for foster and adoptive homes. ▪ Regional Updates on Faith Based Efforts – regional faith based collaborative activities are discussed. Regional representatives have an opportunity to share specific activities that faith based partners have done that have supported efforts to safely reunify children or to find permanent homes for children who are unable to safely return home. ▪ Adoption Efforts – at each Faith Based Collaborative meeting, a child or children who may be lingering in foster care while awaiting a permanent home are presented to the group. This collaborative supported Riverside County’s Second Annual Adoption Finalization Day during which 90 total adoptions were finalized in one day in Riverside’s three (3) Juvenile Courts. ▪ Foster Parent Recruitment Efforts – allows for open discussion of continued efforts and needs as seen by both County staff and Community Partners. As part of this meeting, increased efforts were made to support collaborative recruitment efforts for Indian foster homes in Riverside County. As such, Indian Child and Family Services, (ICFS), a Foster Family Agency specializing in placement of Indian children has partnered with Riverside County in its recruitment efforts. If individuals seeking to become foster parents identify themselves as having Indian heritage, they are asked if they would like to receive information on ICFS services. If they request to receive this information, they are provided an ICFS brochure and their information is forwarded to ICFS for follow up by their staff. ▪ Family Assistance Efforts – through this venue, additional supports for families trying to reunify are provided through donations from local faith based organizations. Social workers are provided opportunities to request specific assistance for their client(s). Assistance requested is often for school supplies, back packs, furniture, etc. Those items that Riverside County may be unable to provide to assist the family can now be provided through this resource. As such, this collaborative has increased the potential for families to reunify more quickly, as tangible items needed to foster reunification can now be obtained. <p>In addition, Riverside County continues to work conjointly with local tribes on the placement of children in tribally approved foster homes. Tribal partners actively participate in Team Decision Making (TDM) meetings held regarding Indian children and families. This collaboration enhances Riverside County’s ability to provide appropriate, culturally relevant services and appropriate out-of-home placement options to Indian families.</p>

¹ County and State current performances based on Q109 data for period 4/07-3/08

² County baseline performance based on Q408 data for period 01/07-12/07

³ Describe how the strategy will build on progress and improve this program/outcome area.

System Improvement Plan Components, (cont.)

Milestone	Timeframe	Activities and Results to Date
<p>1.2.2 Enhance Foster Parent Recruitment and Retention efforts by collaborating with community partners, such as faith based and tribal organizations. (continued)</p>	06/2009 to 03/2012	<p>Further, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been developed with Indian Child and Family Services (ICFS), a Foster Family Agency (FFA) representing a consortium of seven local Indian tribes. The MOU includes a provision for staff training and provides for the joint recruitment of tribally approved foster homes. Training developed via this partnership provides social workers information and resources for child welfare work with Indian children and families, including an understanding of the importance of providing culturally appropriate and sensitive case management services.</p> <p>Riverside County is in the process of developing a similar MOU with the Torrez-Martinez tribe which will not only address training and foster home recruitment, but will also establish joint child welfare investigation protocols. The establishment of this MOU will further enhance Riverside County's ability to provide culturally sensitive child welfare services and meet the needs of Indian families in the local community.</p> <p>Moreover, Riverside County continues its efforts to comply with both the letter and the spirit of Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) legislation. Riverside County has reached out to the tribal community and the local tribal council for assistance in identifying individuals within their community who can serve as Expert Witnesses, as required by ICWA. The Expert Witnesses will assist the court and child welfare services in making recommendations and decisions that take into account tribal culture and child rearing practices. Riverside County currently utilizes one individual, who is recognized by several tribes, to serve as an Expert Witness in child welfare cases involving Indian children or families. Riverside County, with the assistance of the local tribal community, is working to expand its current Expert Witness list to include identified individuals from each of the local tribes.</p> <p><i>Continued work on this milestone will include ongoing collaboration on the recruitment of quality foster homes and monitoring to assess for additional needs.</i></p>

¹ County and State current performances based on Q109 data for period 4/07-3/08

² County baseline performance based on Q408 data for period 01/07-12/07

³ Describe how the strategy will build on progress and improve this program/outcome area.

System Improvement Plan Components, (cont.)

Milestone	1.2.3	Timeframe	Activities and Results to Date
	<p>Expand education for out-of-home caregivers, to include instruction that will assist caregivers to develop strategies for parenting children exposed to abuse and neglect and instruction on how to utilize the JV 290 Caregiver Information Form.</p>	<p>06/2009 to 03/2012</p>	<p>Riverside County contracts with Riverside Community College (RCC) to provide Foster and Kinship Education. In the current schedule of classes provided, RCC offers a class entitled "Caregivers Rights and Responsibilities." This class includes information on the JV 290 Caregiver Information Form such as how to access and fill out the form. This class is being offered at seven separate locations throughout Riverside County, both in the morning and evening. Five of the classes are offered in English and two are offered in Spanish.</p> <p>Additionally, RCC offers classes on meeting the special needs of abused/neglected children in foster care. Classes focus on attachment, development and the impact of chronic trauma (in the form of abuse and/or neglect), the resulting behaviors and discipline. These classes are considered vital for caregivers due to the importance of understanding core dynamics and issues that make parenting children in the system so different from parenting birth children. Twelve hours are spent on teaching "Attachment Re-Parenting" which covers attachment, brain development, physical and socio-emotional development and behavior/discipline focused on children with trauma histories. Six hours are spent on teaching "Parenting from the Heart" which focuses on discipline for children with abuse/neglect histories. Additional classes are also offered which focus on lying, stealing, hoarding food, grief and the holidays. These classes focus on how these behaviors can be survival mechanisms and how children in the child welfare system experience separation, grief and loss.</p> <p><i>Continued work on this milestone will include ongoing caregiver training, along with continuous monitoring to assess for additional training needed</i></p>

¹ County and State current performances based on Q109 data for period 4/07-3/08

² County baseline performance based on Q408 data for period 01/07-12/07

³ Describe how the strategy will build on progress and improve this program/outcome area.

System Improvement Plan Components, (cont.)

Milestone	Timeframe	Activities and Results to Date
<p>1.2.4 Educate out-of-home caregivers on how to access available services to meet the needs of children in their care.</p>	<p>06/2009 to 03/2012</p>	<p>In addition to offering ongoing caregiver education classes, Riverside County produces a quarterly Resource Reader Newsletter that is distributed to out-of-home caregivers with their foster care payment checks. The Resource Reader provides caregivers with information such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Available services for both themselves and the children in their care ▪ Upcoming trainings, events and workshops ▪ Locations for free items, trainings or services ▪ Safety topics and safety reminders ▪ Locations to obtain CPR and First Aid Certifications ▪ Information on Foster Parent Associations and providers who specialize in providing culturally competent services to Indian children and families or who specialize in services for emancipating youth ▪ Contact information for the Riverside County Warmline which links families to support and services ▪ Child Abuse Reporting and After Hours Emergency Contact Numbers ▪ Children's Services Division Office Hours ▪ Contact information and procedures for transferring foster care licensing when moving ▪ Family Resource Center locations and contact information ▪ Available grants, and ▪ Programs and services to assist youth to access college and financial aid. <p><i>Continued work on this milestone will include ongoing caregiver training, along with continuous monitoring to assess for additional training needed</i></p>

¹ County and State current performances based on Q109 data for period 4/07-3/08

² County baseline performance based on Q408 data for period 01/07-12/07

³ Describe how the strategy will build on progress and improve this program/outcome area.

System Improvement Plan Components, (cont.)

Strategy 1.3 IMPROVE THE QUALITY ASSURANCE (QA) SYSTEM	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CAPIT <input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PSSF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER				Strategy Rationale ³ Improving quality assurance systems is a fundamental need in order to measure both quantitatively and qualitatively the effectiveness of programs and services.	
	06/2009 to 03/2012 06/2009 to 03/2012 07/2010 to 03/2012 07/2010 to 03/2012					
		Timeframe			Activities and Results to Date	
1.3.1 Develop a monitoring system to ensure that Team Decision Making (TDM) meetings are being held for all children in targeted communities prior to initial placement and prior to all placement changes.					(For information on progress for this milestone, please refer to the activities and results update for Milestone 1.1.1)	
1.3.2 Expand Quality Assurance activities to assess the proper use of Structured Decision Making (SDM) assessment tools on all cases.					(For information on progress for this milestone, please refer to the activities and results update for Milestone 1.1.4)	
1.3.3 Expand Quality Assurance activities to ensure that demographic data in the Child Welfare Services Case Management System (CWS/CMS) and the Juvenile and Adult Management System (JAMS) is accurate and routinely updated.					N/A	
1.3.4 Expand the tracking, monitoring and reporting of quality and effectiveness of services provided by both CAPIT/CBCAP/ PSSF and CWS funded service providers.					N/A	

¹ County and State current performances based on Q109 data for period 4/07-3/08

² County baseline performance based on Q408 data for period 01/07-12/07

³ Describe how the strategy will build on progress and improve this program/outcome area.

System Improvement Plan Components, (cont.)

Milestone		Timeframe	Activities and Results to Date
<p>1.3.5 (NEW) Increase quality of assessments and decision making on risk and safety as evidence by a decreased recurrence of abuse/neglect from 5.3% to 4%.</p>	07/2010 to 03/2012		N/A

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³ Describe how the strategy will build on progress and improve this program/outcome area.

System Improvement Plan Components, (cont.)

Strategy 1.4 IMPROVE STAFF/PROVIDER TRAINING	<input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CBCAP <input type="checkbox"/> PSSF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER	Strategy Rationale ³ Improving staff and provider training will support successful reunification and reduce reentry by ensuring consistent training of staff/providers thereby providing consistency in service delivery across the County and in the Courts.
Milestone 1.4.1 Increase staff cultural competence by enhancing cultural awareness training for staff.	01/2010 to 03/2012	<p>Riverside County Children's Services Division is committed to enhancing cultural competency in its provision of child welfare services. As such, Riverside has provided and/or participated in the following trainings since the implementation of the 2009-2012 SIP. These trainings have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tribal Star Summit – an opportunity for child welfare staff and local Native American tribes to meet and share cultures and experiences. The Summit opens the lines of communication and helps increase cultural competency in working with children and families with Indian decent. ▪ Morongo Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) – an opportunity for child welfare staff and local Native American tribes to meet and learn about the laws and its application to child welfare service provision. This training was purposed to increase knowledge of ICWA and its application when working with children and families of Indian decent. ▪ Understanding Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual and Transgender Youth – this training is designed to increase social worker competency in providing services to lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and/or transgender children involved in the child welfare system. <p>Riverside County Probation Department is committed to enhancing cultural awareness training for employees. For fiscal year 2009/10 the Probation Department Staff Development Unit doubled the amount of classes that address cultural awareness for employees. The new courses that were created include Gender Differences, Boomers: Generation X and Generation Y and Maintaining a Stable Environment Milieu. Each of these courses identifies the differences in culture of juvenile clients and their families. The courses listed are available to both institution and field employees. All training curricula offered to the employees of the Riverside County Probation Department are certified by the Standards and Training for Corrections (STC). STC is a function of the Corrections Standard Authority, a Division of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.</p> <p><i>Continued work on this milestone will include ongoing staff training, along with continuous monitoring to assess for additional training needed.</i></p>
Timeframe	Activities and Results to Date	

¹ County and State current performances based on Q109 data for period 4/07-3/08

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³ Describe how the strategy will build on progress and improve this program/outcome area.

System Improvement Plan Components, (cont.)

Milestone	Timeframe	Activities and Results to Date
<p>1.4.2 Enhance staff training on the Family to Family Initiative, Structured Decision Making, Safe Measures, Court Report writing, transition planning, the Child Welfare Services Case Management System (CWS/CMS) and Juvenile and Adult management System (JAMS), to further enhance the provision of effective child welfare services.</p>	01/2010 to 03/2012	<p>Riverside County is committed to ongoing staff training as a means to ensure continuous improvement in child welfare service provision. County Staff Development trainers provide staff training using a Child Welfare Service best practice model as a foundation for all its trainings. Staff Development trainers have provided 111 trainings to over 1,638 staff since the implementation of the 2009-2012 SIP. The trainings offered/attended were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Family to Family Initiative ▪ Court Report Writing ▪ Structured Decision Making ▪ Safe Measures and ▪ CWS/CMS. <p>In addition, Riverside County has expanded its Family to Family trainings to include transition planning and has implemented the use of case closure Team Decision Making (TDM) meetings as part of the transition process. Training in this area continues to be developed as Riverside maintains its focus on best practice service delivery for children and families.</p> <p>The Riverside County Probation continues to work to roll out use of its new JAMS system and has offered beginner training to all staff to aide in its use and implementation. As the need arises, the Probation Department will continue to provide more advanced training to facilitate the full utilization of the system by all staff.</p> <p><i>Continued work on this milestone will include ongoing staff training, along with continuous monitoring to assess for additional training needed</i></p>

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³ Describe how the strategy will build on progress and improve this program/outcome area.

System Improvement Plan Components, (cont.)

Milestone	Timeframe	Activities and Results to Date
<p>1.4.3 Hold Bi-Annual Meetings with Community Partners and Stakeholders, out-of-home caregivers, service providers, staff, parent partners and youth to review data on SIP progress and provide a forum for collaboration on continued quality improvement of child welfare service provision.</p>	<p>11/2009 to 03/2012</p>	<p>On October 29, 2009, Riverside County Children's Services Division, the Probation Department and Prevent Child Abuse Riverside County (PCARC) hosted the first bi-annual Community Partners Forum of this SIP cycle. The forum theme was, "Collaboration Creates Success," and was attended by 84 individuals including County staff, Community Partners/Stakeholders, foster youth and service providers. An update was provided from First 5 Riverside County, now housed under the Riverside County Department of Public Social Services umbrella. In addition, PCARC provided an update and a call to action for participants to get involved by volunteering/participating in activities that support Riverside County children and families.</p> <p>An update was provided regarding the activities and progress for Riverside County's SIP. All participants celebrated Riverside County's shared success in reducing child reentry to foster care from 15.3% (Q1 2004) to 8.7% (Q1 2009) and reviewed the factors that have contributed to the reduction in child reentry.</p> <p>In addition, a call to action was made in the form of an individual pledge which asked for participants to commit to continued support of changes still needed in the child welfare system. The focus for this commitment was on child education, which was selected as a result of the continued commitment of Riverside County to assure that all children involved in the child welfare system, regardless of age, leave with the educational tools necessary to be successful. This call to action becomes even more imperative for those youth who emancipate from the child welfare system to ensure they have the supports needed to accomplish their educational aspirations.</p> <p>Below is a listing of some of the activities participants were asked to make a commitment to in an effort to support education for foster youth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ assisting youth in locating and applying for college and financial aid ▪ talking with youth throughout their educational careers about school and its importance for their future ▪ mentoring and tutoring youth and ▪ facilitating/coordinating support groups for foster youth. <p><i>Continued work on this milestone will include the coordination of ongoing bi-annual meetings with the community to discuss SIP progress and to conjointly work on improving child welfare services.</i></p>

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³ Describe how the strategy will build on progress and improve this program/outcome area.

System Improvement Plan Components, (cont.)

Strategy 1.5 IMPROVE AGENCY COLLABORATIONS	Strategy Rationale ³ Improving agency collaboration will support successful reunification and reduce reentry by creating better communication which will assist clients by reducing barriers and providing more appropriate services in a timely manner.			
	<input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CBCAP	<input type="checkbox"/> PSSF	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER
<p>1.5.1 Increase communication with local schools and the Juvenile Court to enhance transition planning for families when children move between schools or school districts, or when children return to their parental home.</p>	<p>Activities and Results to Date</p> <p style="text-align: center;">N/A</p>			
<p>1.5.2 Continue to improve collaborative relationships with service providers to ensure services are available and accessible throughout the county.</p>	01/2010 to 03/2012	06/2009 to 03/2012	<p>Timeframe</p>	
Milestone	<p>The Children's Services Division's Contracts Administration Unit (CAU) and the Program Development and Support Region facilitate collaborative relationships with service providers to enhance the County's capacity to ensure that services are available and accessible throughout the County.</p> <p>CAU hosts a biannual Partners Conference for CAPIT/PSSF providers. This open forum conference provides the opportunity for the County and service providers to increase transparency in service provision by openly discussing staffing changes, victories and challenges experienced. It also provides an opportunity for service providers to get their questions answered and allows the County a forum to discuss changes in contracting processes or funding.</p> <p>Program liaisons assigned to the Program Development and Support Region employ a hands-on approach to working with service providers. This is done through a variety of means, including on-site monitoring visits, regular communication over the telephone and email and at community events/trainings. Ongoing monitoring visits allow liaisons to observe first hand many aspects of the service provider's compliance to contract requirements. As an example, if assessments are a contract requirement the liaison can determine if they are being done.</p>			

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³ Describe how the strategy will build on progress and improve this program/outcome area.

System Improvement Plan Components, (cont.)

Milestone	Timeframe	Activities and Progress to Date
<p>1.5.2 Continue to improve collaborative relationships with service providers to ensure services are available and accessible throughout the county. (continued)</p>	<p>06/2009 to 03/2012</p>	<p>Regular communication between the service provider and liaison strengthens relationships and creates an environment of trust between the agency and provider. It also allows problems or difficulties to be resolved in a timely manner. Attending community events/trainings gives the providers an opportunity to observe the agency's commitment to the community and ask liaisons questions about topics of interest or concern to the provider. Program liaisons also serve as points of contact for social workers and other internal staff to voice concerns or to address unmet service needs. Program liaisons meet with service providers to address specific concerns and provide management ongoing feedback and recommendations enabling the County to address unmet service needs or gaps in service provision.</p> <p>In addition, Program Liaisons host quarterly Joint Operational Meetings (JOMs) which provide an opportunity for service providers conducting like services to meet and discuss successes and challenges in their programs. JOMs allow providers and CSD to share information, give staffing and program updates, encourage peer mentoring, provide an open forum for addressing challenges and getting recommendations for change. In addition JOMs support the County's efforts for continuous quality improvements in child welfare service provision.</p> <p><i>Continued work on this milestone will include ongoing staff contract monitoring, provider support meetings, and regular communication to assess for additional needs.</i></p>
<p>1.5.3 Hold Bi-Annual Meetings with Community Partners and Stakeholders, out-of-home caregivers, service providers, staff, parent partners and youth to review data on SIP progress and provide a forum for collaboration on continued quality improvement of child welfare service provision.</p>	<p>11/2009 to 03/2012</p>	<p>(For information on progress for this milestone, please refer to the activities and results update for Milestone 1.4.3)</p>
<p>1.5.4 (NEW) Increase the number of aftercare programs in identified communities from 1 to 4 aftercare programs.</p>	<p>03/2010 to 03/2012</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>1.5.5 (NEW) Increase % of TDMs utilized at critical case decision points for all families in identified communities by 15%.</p>	<p>03/2010 to 03/2011</p>	<p>N/A</p>

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³ Describe how the strategy will build on progress and improve this program/outcome area.

System Improvement Plan Components, (cont.)

Outcome/Systemic Factor: (NEW) Composite C4 Placement Stability	
County's Current Performance: Riverside 94.5% (Current State Average -- 94.3%) ¹	
Improvement Goal 2.0 Increase Placement Stability for Children in Out-of-Home Care < 12 Months from 82.9% ² to 86% by 03/2012 Increase Placement Stability for Children in Out-of-Home Care 12-24 Months from 62.0% ² to 65.4% by 03/2012 Increase Placement Stability for Children in Out-of-Home Care > 24 Months from 30.6% ² to 33.6% by 03/2012	
Strategy 2.1 IMPROVE PLACEMENT STABILITY	<input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT <input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP <input type="checkbox"/> PSSF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER
	Strategy Rationale ³ Improving placement stability will assist in maintaining supportive social connections for children in out-of-home care and reduce additional trauma caused by severed social connections and frequent placement changes.
2.1.1 Improve best placement match as evidence by decreased placement moves.	01/2010 to 03/2012 N/A
2.1.2 Increase parent engagement by increasing the # of Ice Breaker meetings held countywide from 106 to 144.	01/2010 to 03/2011 N/A

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³ Describe how the strategy will build on progress and improve this program/outcome area.

System Improvement Plan Components, (cont.)

Outcome/Systemic Factor: (NEW) Measure 4 B Least Restrictive (PIT Placement: Group/Shelter)			
County's Current Performance: Riverside 6.2% (Current State Average – 7.1%) ¹			
Improvement Goal 3.0 Decrease the total number of kids in group homes from 6.5% ² to 5% by 03/2012			
Strategy 3.1 IMPROVE CHILD PLACEMENT IN LEAST RESTRICTIVE SETTING	<input type="checkbox"/>	CAPIT	Strategy Rationale³
	<input type="checkbox"/>	CBCAP	Improving child placement in the least restrictive setting appropriate to meet their needs will support a child's ability to maintain continuity in care and establish consistent, caring attachments to their caregivers.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	PSSF	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	OTHER	
		01/2010 to 03/2012	N/A
3.1.1 Enhance partnership with the Department of Mental Health through the development of customer service surveys to be completed by social workers and ACT clinicians.	Timeframe		
3.1.2 Enhance partnerships with Foster Family Agencies and Group Homes by execution of service agreements with 60 Foster Family Agencies and Group Homes.	01/2010 to 03/2012		N/A
3.1.3 Increase the number of children/youth in Multi-dimensional Treatment Foster Care (MTFC) from 1 to 10.	01/2010 to 03/2012		N/A
3.1.4 Increase the number of children/youth in Wraparound services from 50 to 125.	01/2010 to 03/2012		
Milestone			
Describe any additional systemic factors needing to be addressed that support the improvement plan goals.			
Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.			
Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.			
Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.			

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³ Describe how the strategy will build on progress and improve this program/outcome area.