

Summary of Santa Clara County's Child Welfare Services Quarterly Data Report July 2005

Background

This quarterly report summarizes Santa Clara County's (SCC) progress toward achieving improvements on the state-mandated California Child and Family Services Review (C-CFSR) outcomes.

The C-CFSR measures discussed in the report includes the five outcomes measures selected for inclusion into the System Improvement Plan (SIP), which are:

- Overrepresentation of Children of Color upon 1st Entry into Foster Care
- Referrals with a Timely Response
- Timely Social Worker Visits
- Multiple Foster Care Placements
- Foster Care Re-Entries

The data analyzed in this report accounts for data from July 2000 to January 2005 as reported by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Quarterly Data Report.¹ Reference to progress made on the federal measures is also provided on page 16 of this report. (To learn more about California performance data, visit <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports>.)

Summary of Outcome Measure Performance

SCC is utilizing the State measures to track progress pertaining to the five SIP target areas.

Ethnicity data is cited for outcome measures when available. Due to the statistically small number of Native Americans represented, the percentage changes in performance measures may appear drastic. Therefore, caution is required when interpreting data. In addition, this report will provide a summary of Federal and State performance.

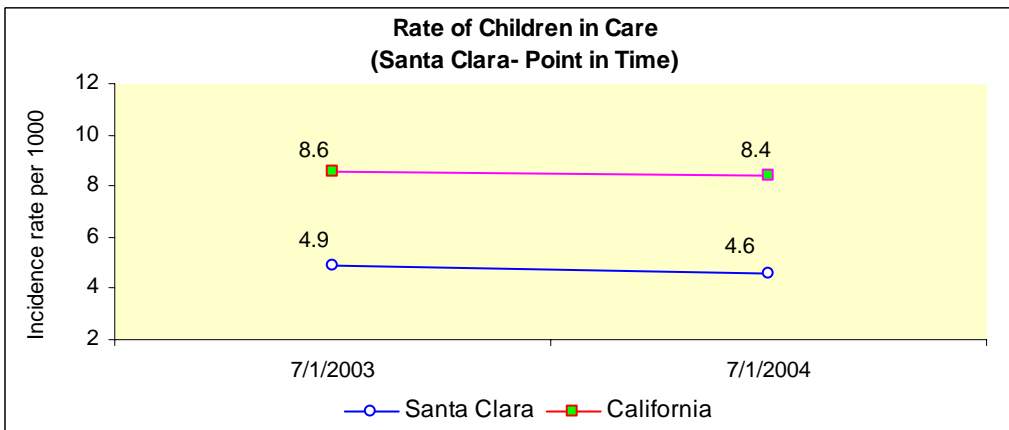
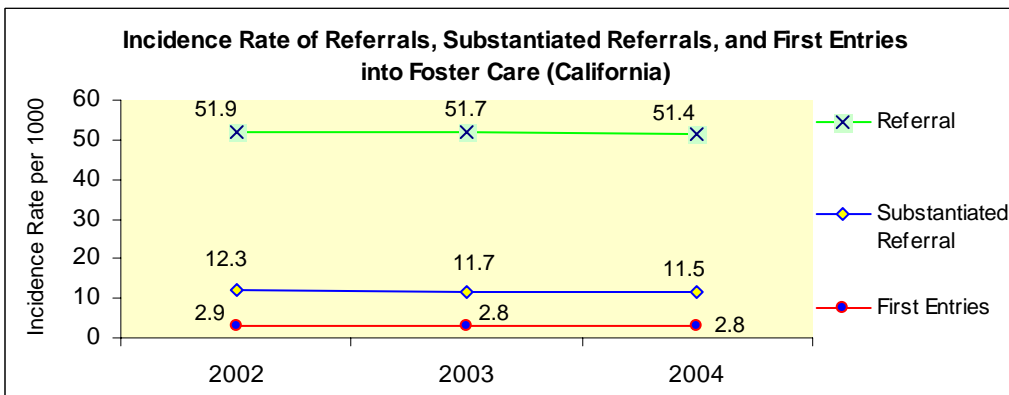
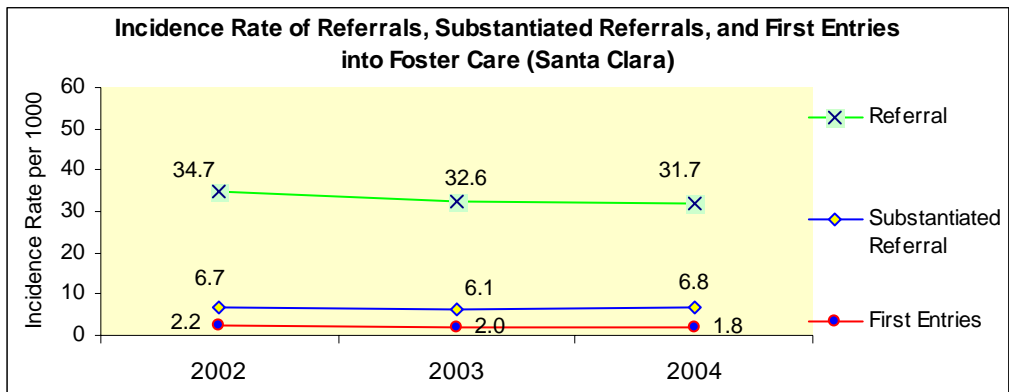
In general, SCC experienced consistent improved performance across most measures and is considered a high-performing county on many of the outcome measures. In the incidence rate of referrals and first entries into care, there is greater decrease than the State. Substantial improvements are evident in timely immediate response investigations, social worker visits, multiple placements, and re-entries; however, performance is below the State average. It is important to mention performance for immediate and ten-day response, and social worker visits is above or close to the compliance threshold. Although, performance in reunifying children and finalizing adoptions declined, performance remains above the State average. Also SCC has a higher ratio than the State in placing children with relatives and keeping siblings together.

SCC has made improvements to the proportion of abuse referrals of Black and Hispanic children and first entries, although disproportional to their county population. Effort is being made to analyze abuse reports data to address the overrepresentation of reports for Black and Hispanic children. There is relatively no change in decreasing the recurrence of maltreatment; however, recurrence of abuse where children not removed continues to increase. The rate of abuse of children in care (exclusively a federal measure) increased 0.6% since baseline period fell below the federal standard, however remains below the State average.

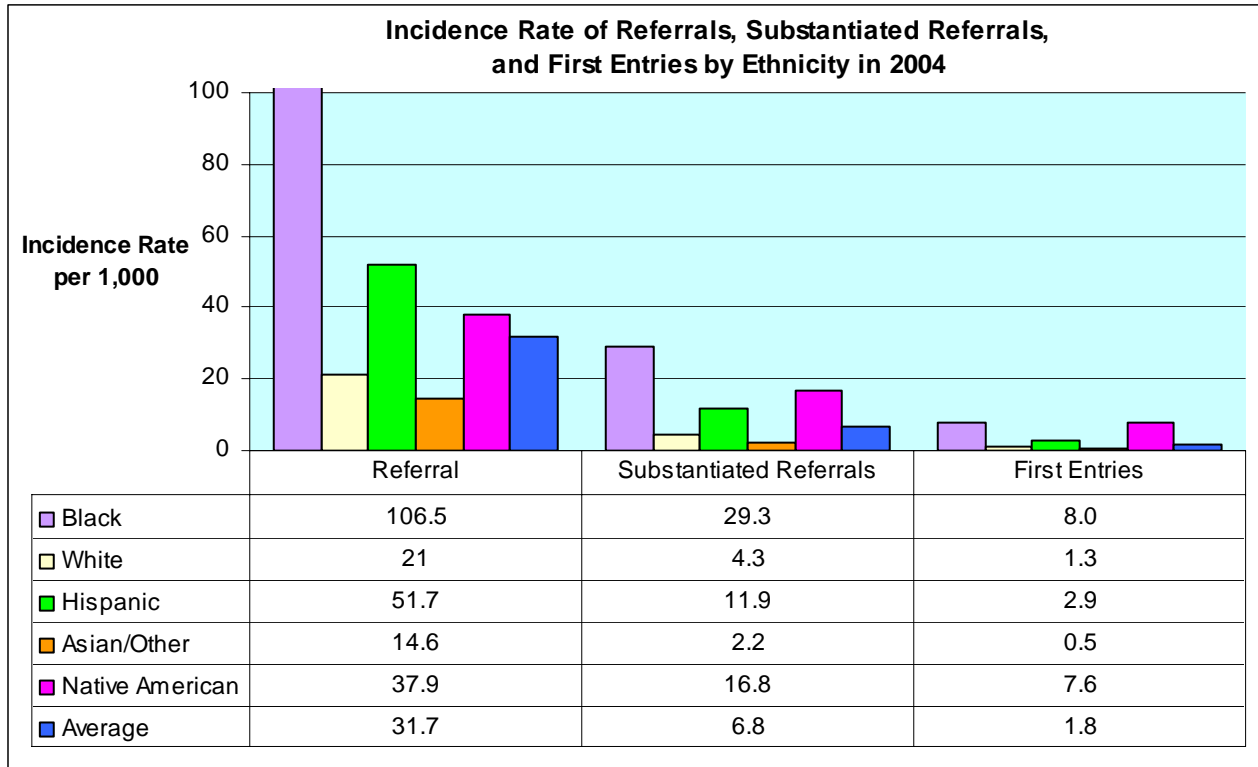
¹ Measurement periods vary for outcome measures based on methodology. Data sources are California Child Welfare Services Outcome and Accountability Data Reports for Santa Clara County and California, July 2005.

Rate of Referrals, Substantiated Referrals, First Entries into Foster Care, and Children in Care

- The incidence rate of referrals decreased from 32.6 per 1,000 in 2003, to 31.7 in 2004.
- The incidence rate of substantiated referrals increased from 6.1 per 1,000 in 2003 to 6.8 in 2004.
- The incidence rate of first entries into care (and stayed at least five days) decreased from 2.0 per 1,000 in 2003 to 1.8 in 2004.
- The incidence rate of children in care decreased from 4.9 per 1,000 on 7/1/2003 to 4.6 on 7/1/2004.



- Although there is improvement in rate of referrals and first entries into care (and stayed at least five days), there continues to be significant overrepresentation of Blacks and Hispanic children. In 2004, the incidence rate of first entries into care for Black children is 8.0 per 1,000 and for Hispanic children are 2.9 per 1,000, compared to the County's average rate of 1.8 per 1,000.²



² Child Welfare Reports for California, retrieved on 7/20/2005 from the University of California at Berkeley Center for Social Services Research website: <URL://http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports>

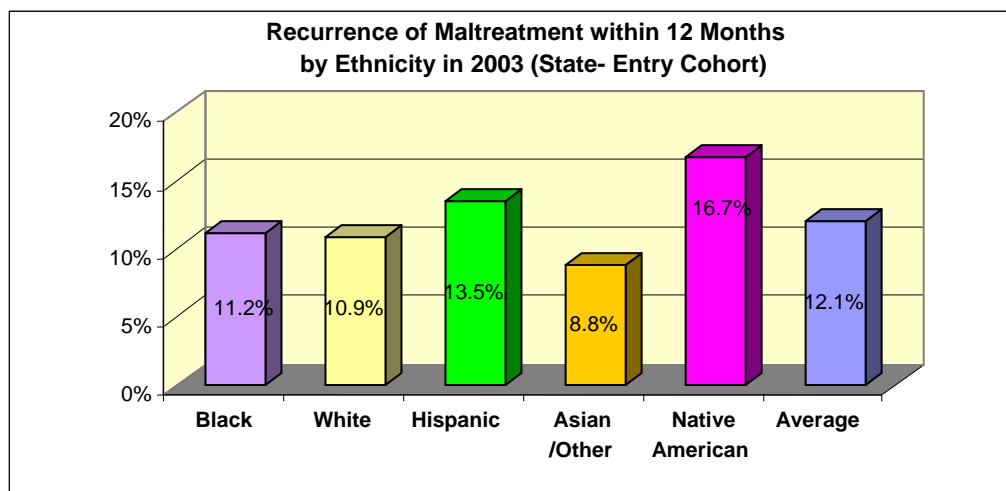
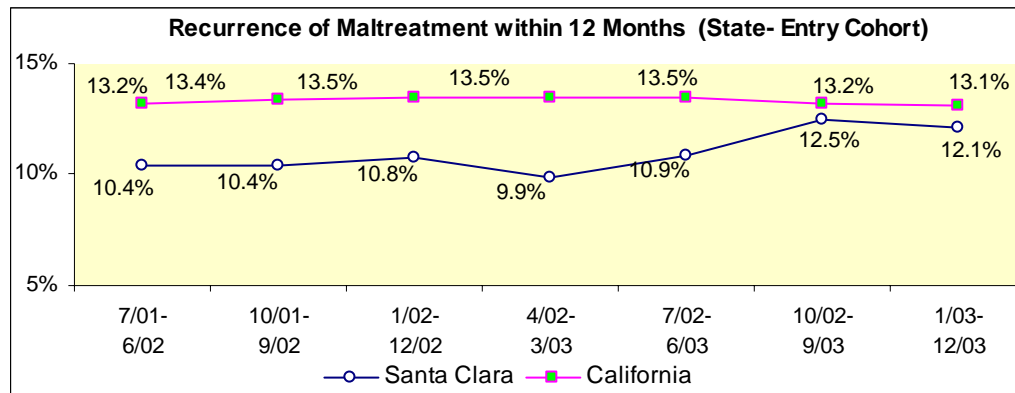
SAFETY OUTCOMES

These measures are designed to reflect the effectiveness of efforts to protect children from abuse/neglect by reporting instances of abuse and neglect at various stages of child welfare services, which reflect the frequency of social worker contact with children and the timeliness of face-to-face investigation of abuse/neglect allegations.

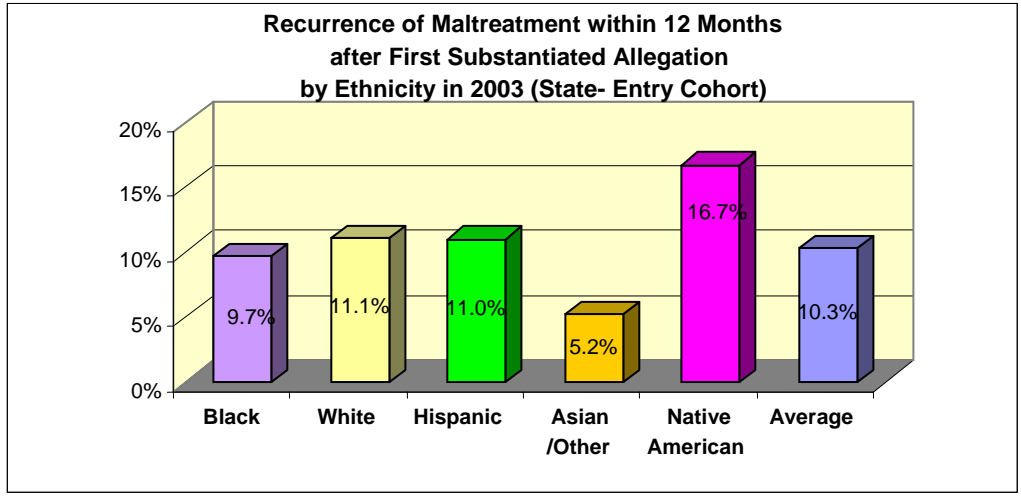
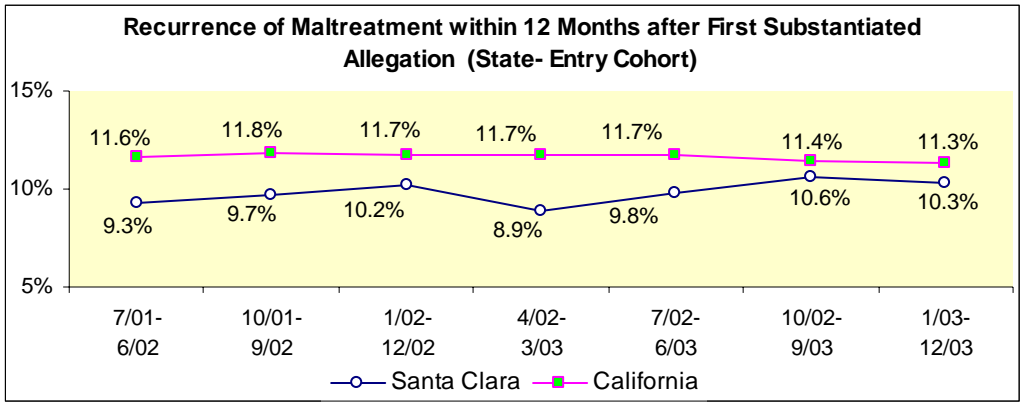
Recurrence of Maltreatment

(This measure reflects the percent of children who were victims of child abuse/neglect with a subsequent substantiated report of abuse/neglect within specific time-periods.)

- 12.1% of all children with a substantiated allegation in 1/2003-12/2003, had another substantiated allegation within 12 months, compared to 12.5% in 10/2002-9/2003.
URL: <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/Referrals/recurrence.asp>



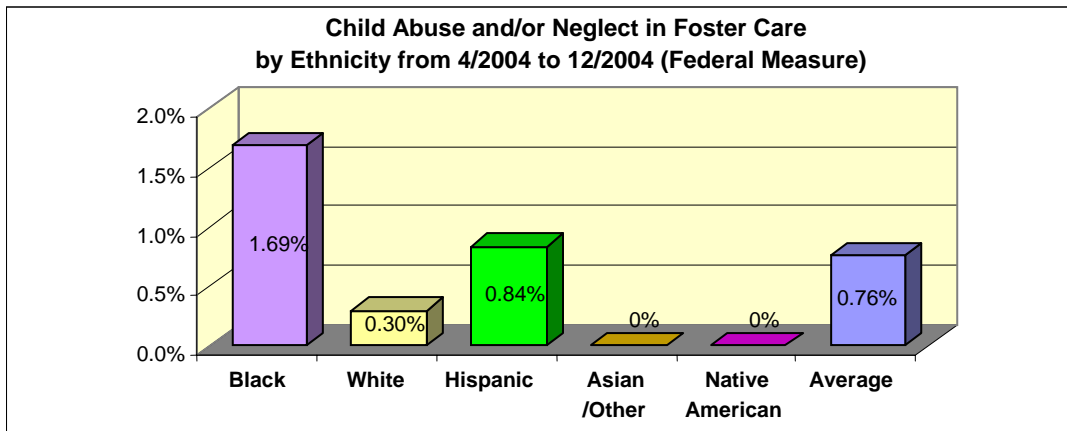
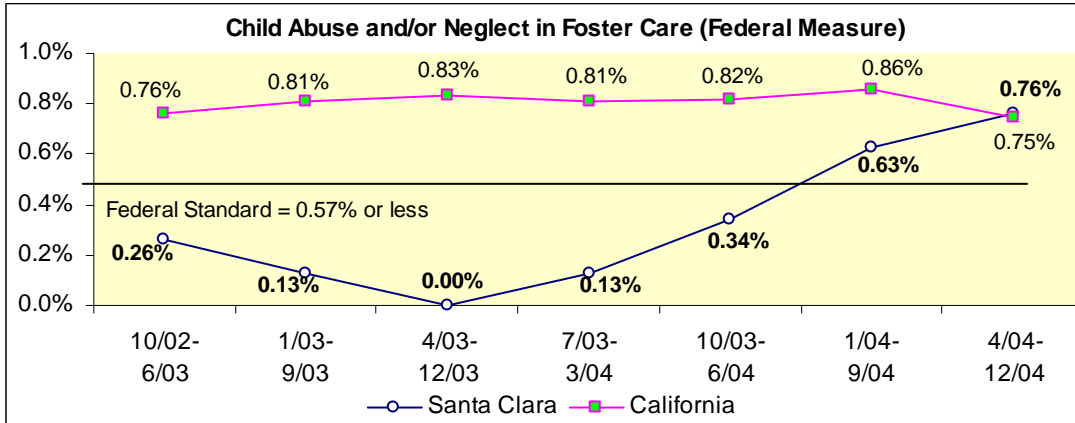
- 10.3% of all children with a first substantiated allegation in 1/2003-12/2003, had a subsequent substantiated allegation within 12 months, compared to 10.6 % in 10/2002-9/2003.
 URL: <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/Referrals/recurrence.asp>



Rate of Child Abuse and/or Neglect in Foster Care

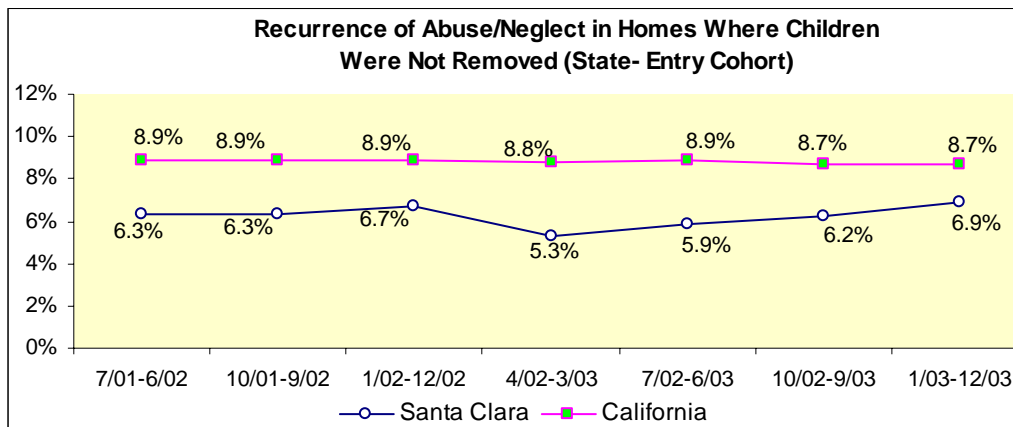
(This measure reflects the percent of children in foster care who are abused or neglected while in foster care placement (limited to children in foster or FFA homes)).

- 0.76% of children had a substantiated allegation by a foster parent in 4/2004-12/2004, compared to 0.63% in 1/2004-9/2004. (Federal standard = 0.57% or less)
 URL: http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/cfsrdata/standards/cfsr_abuse.asp



Rate of Recurrence of Abuse and/or Neglect in Homes Where Children Were Not Removed
(This measure reflects the recurrence of abuse and/or neglect of children who remain in their own homes.)

- 6.9% of children, who had an inconclusive or substantiated allegation in 1/2003-12/2003 and were not removed, had a subsequent substantiated allegation within 12 months, compared to 6.2% in 10/2002-9/2003. URL: <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/Ccfsr.asp#2A>

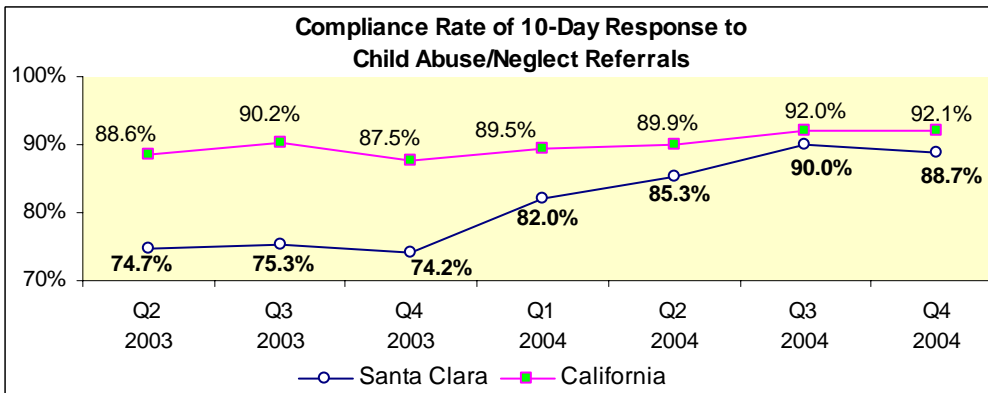
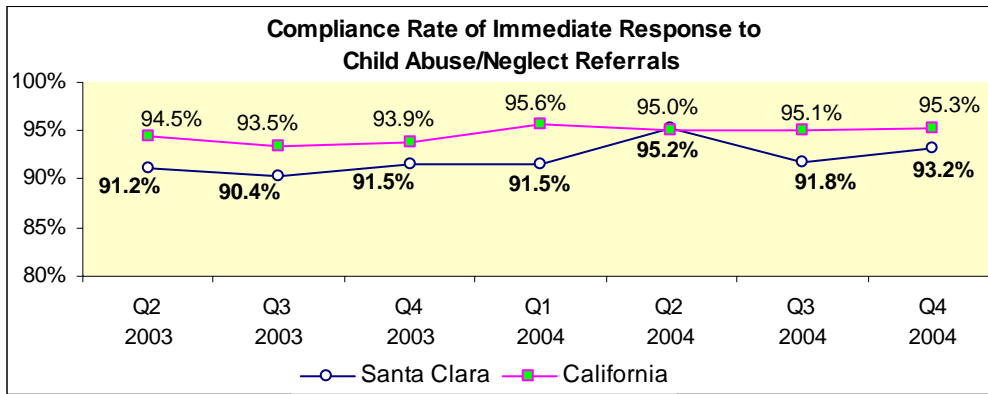


(No ethnicity data available for this measure.)

Referrals with a Timely Response

(This measure determines the percent of referrals that resulted in a face-to-face investigation with a child that occurs, or is attempted, within required time-frames in situations in which allegations indicate significant danger to the child, stratified by immediate response and ten-day referrals, for both planned and actual visits.)

- In Q4 2004, 93.2% of Immediate Response referrals received a timely response, compared to 91.8% in Q3 2004. Also in Q4 2004, 88.7% of ten-day referrals received a timely response, compared to 90.0% in Q3 2004. URL: <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/Ccfsr.asp#2B>

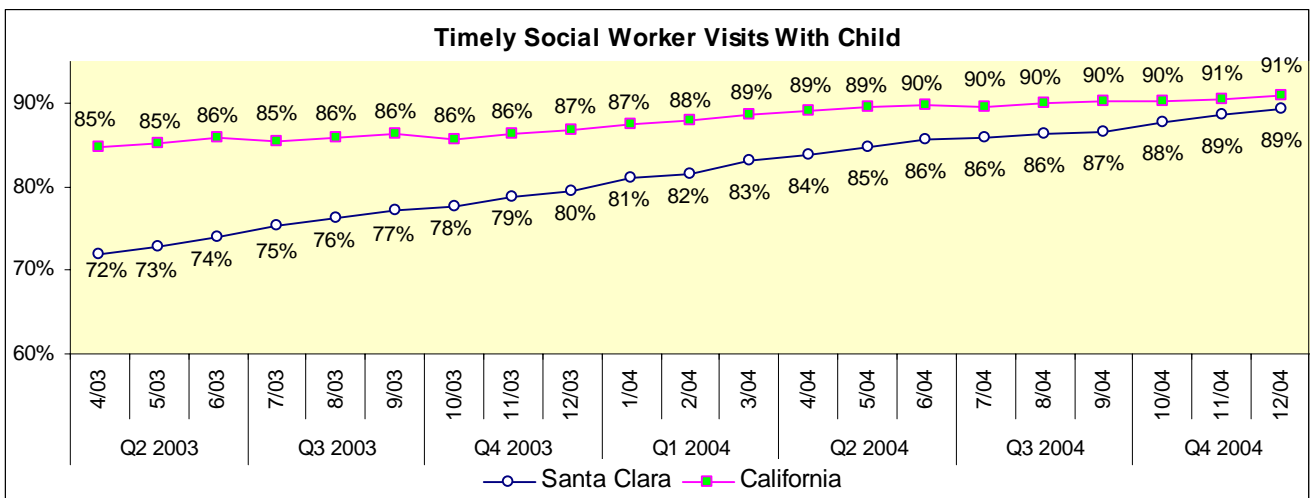


(No ethnicity data available for this measure.)

Timely Social Worker Visits with Child

(This measure determines if social workers are visiting children on a monthly basis when that is required. Children for whom a determination is made that monthly visits are not necessary (e.g. valid visits exception) are not included in this measure.)

- In Q4, 2004, on average, 88.6% of all children who required a monthly visit, received a visit, compared to 86.2% in Q3, 2004. (Averages cited here are calculated based on quarterly percentages.) URL: <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/Ccfsr.asp#2C>



(No ethnicity data available for this measure.)

PERMANENCY OUTCOMES

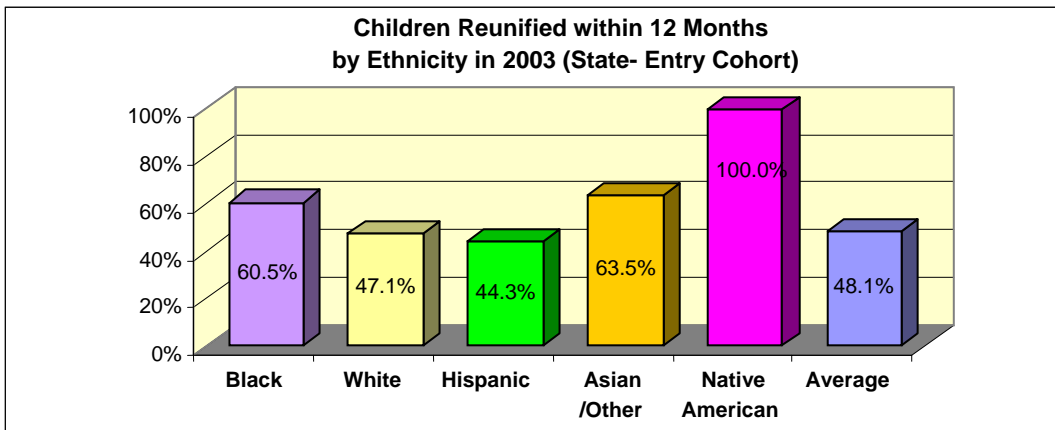
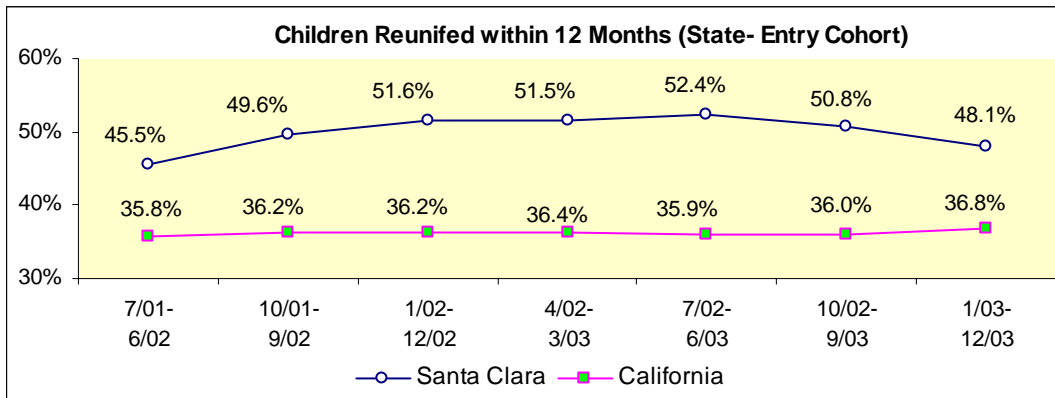
These measures are designed to reflect the number of foster care placements for each (not every child is accounted for) child, the length of time a child is in foster care, and the rate that children re-enter foster care after they have returned home or other permanent care arrangements have been made.

Length of Time to Exit Foster Care to Reunification

(This outcome measure reflects the percentage of children reunified within 12 months of removal from the home.)

- 48.1% of all children who entered care for the first time (and stayed at least five days) during 1/2003 -12/2003 were reunified within 12 months, compared to 50.8% in 10/2002 -9/2003.

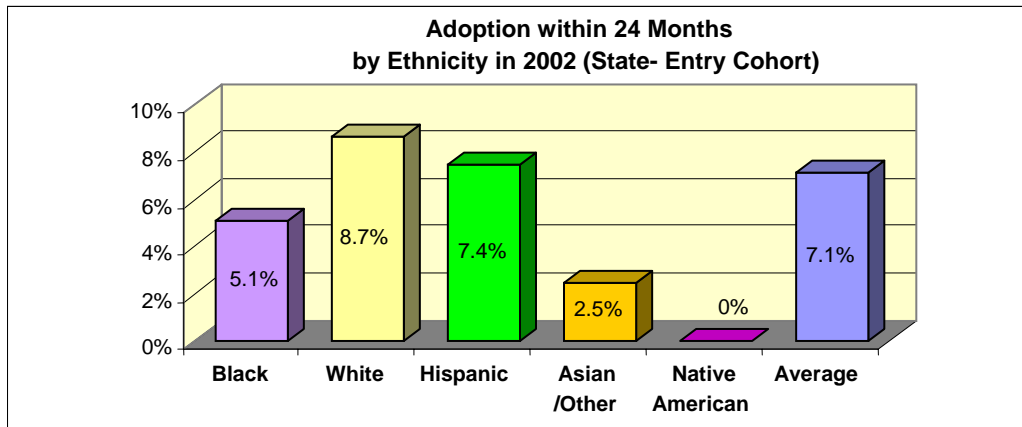
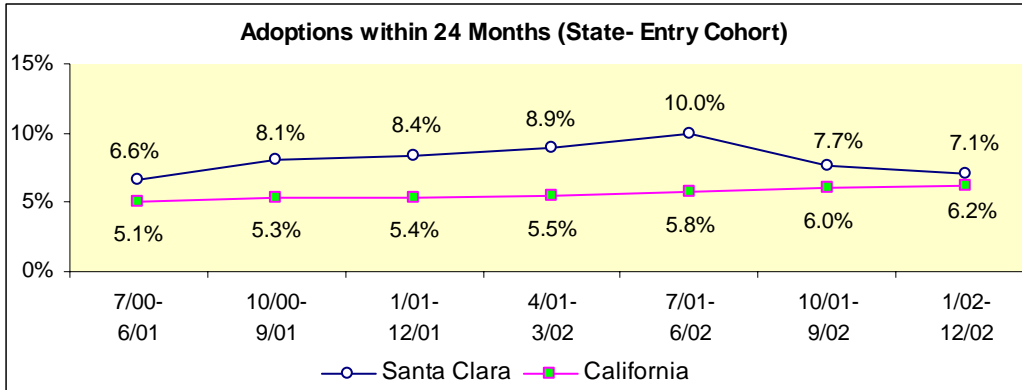
URL: <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/Cohorts/exits/>



Length of Time to Exit Foster Care to Adoption

(This outcome measure reflects the percentage of children adopted within 24 months of removal from the home.)

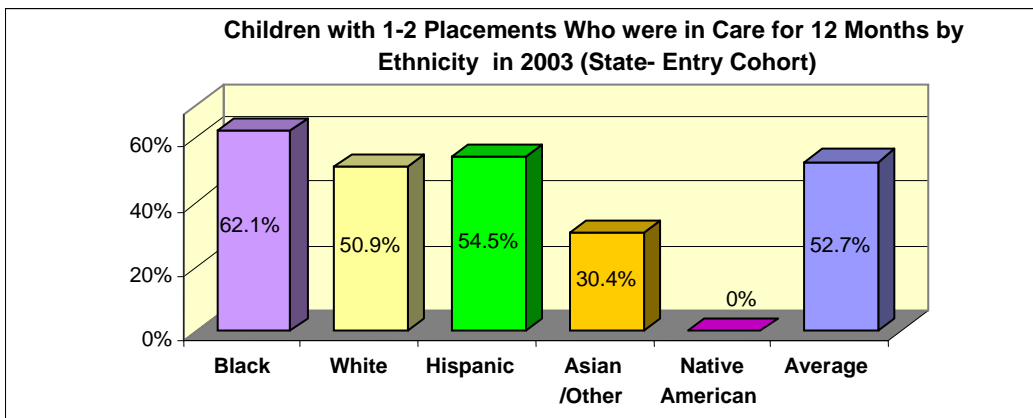
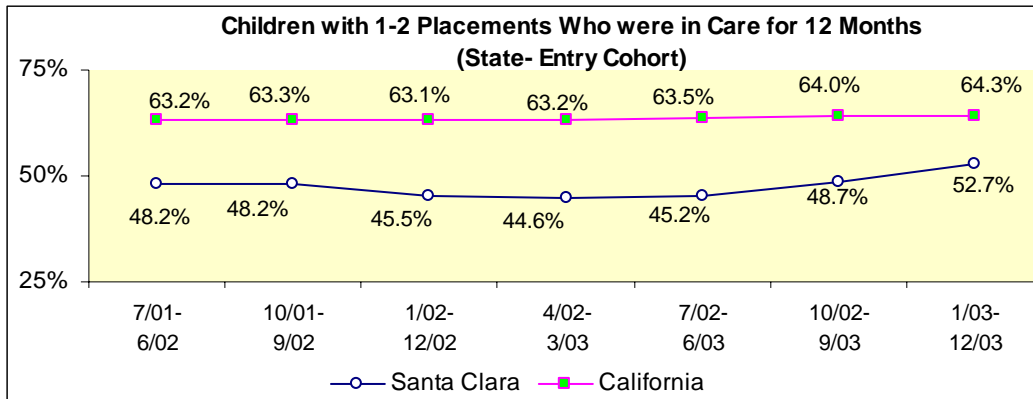
- 7.1% of all children who entered care for the first time (and stayed at least five days) during 1/2002-12/2002 were adopted within 24 months, compared to 7.7% in 10/2001-9/2002.
 URL: <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/Cohorts/exits/>



Multiple Foster Care Placements

(These measures reflect the number of children with no more than two placements during 12 months of placement.)

- 52.7% of all children who entered care for the first time (and stayed at least five days) during 1/2003-12/2003, and were in care for 12 months had no more than two placements, compared to 48.7% in 10/2002-9/2003. URL: <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/cohorts/stability/>

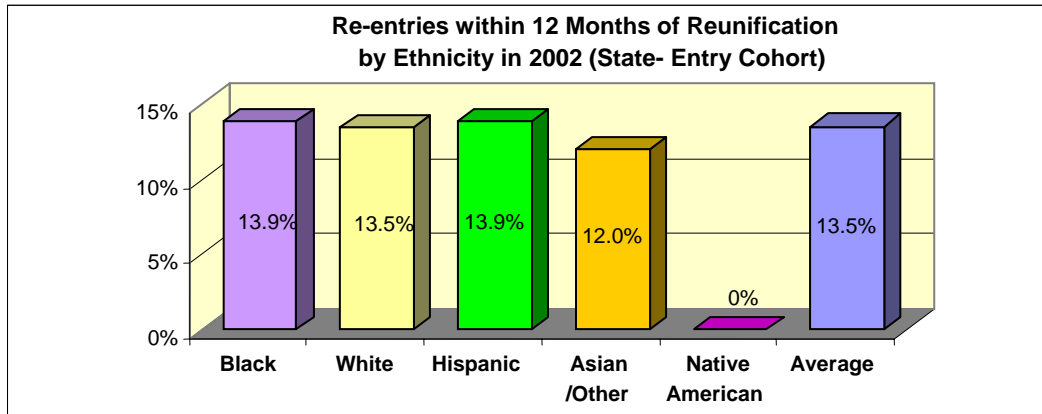
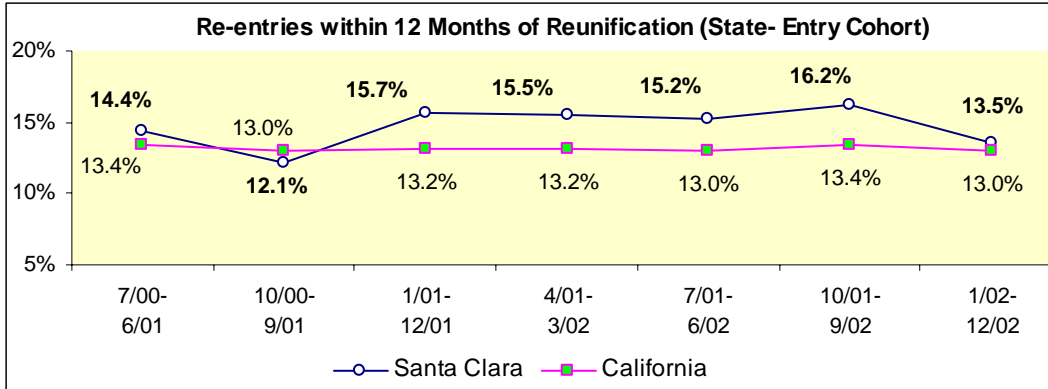


Rate of Foster Care Re-entry into Child Welfare System

(This measure reflects the number of children who re-enter foster care subsequent to reunification or guardianship.)

- 13.5% of all children who entered care for the first time (and stayed at least 5 days) during 1/2002-12/2002 and were reunified within 12 months of entry, re-entered care within 12 months of reunification, compared to 16.2% in 10/2001-9/2002.

URL: <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/Cohorts/reentries/>



CHILD AND FAMILY WELL-BEING OUTCOMES

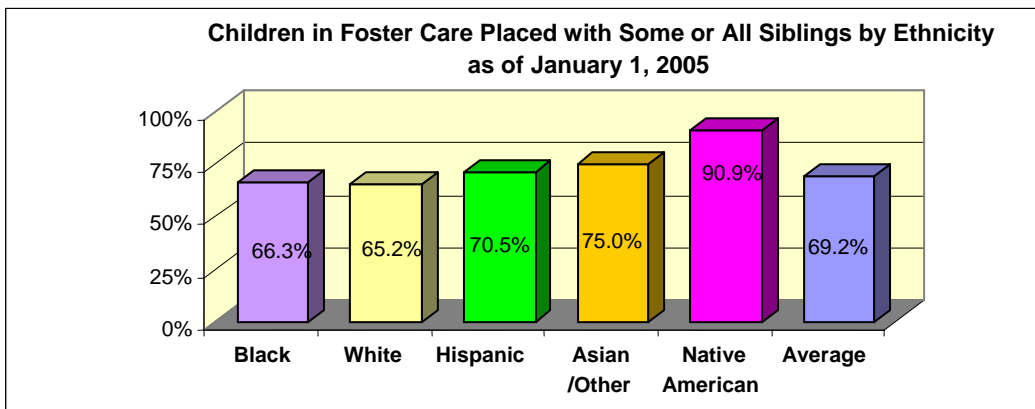
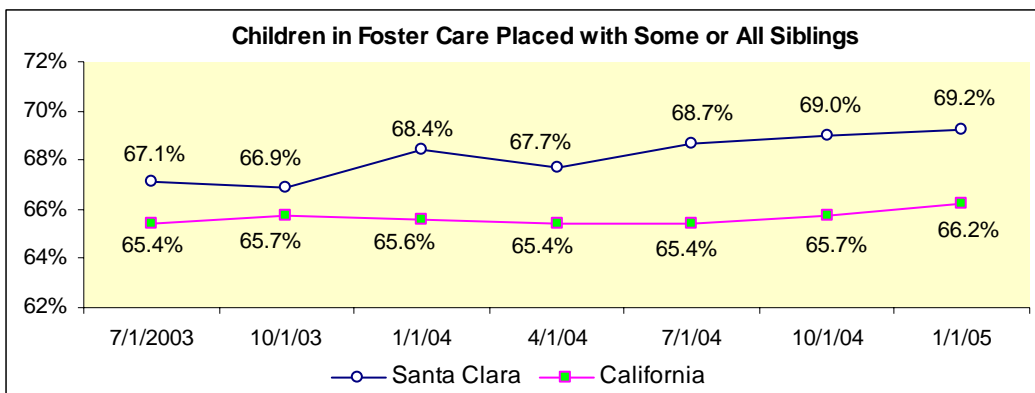
These measures reflect the degree to which children in foster care retain relationships with their family and extended communities with whom they are associated at the time of removal from their parents.

Siblings Placed Together

(These measures reflect the number of children placed with all or some of their siblings in foster care.)

- Of all children in care on 1/1/2005, 69.2% of siblings were placed with some or all siblings, compared to 69.0% on 10/1/2004.

URL: <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/pointintime/fostercare/childwel/siblings.asp>

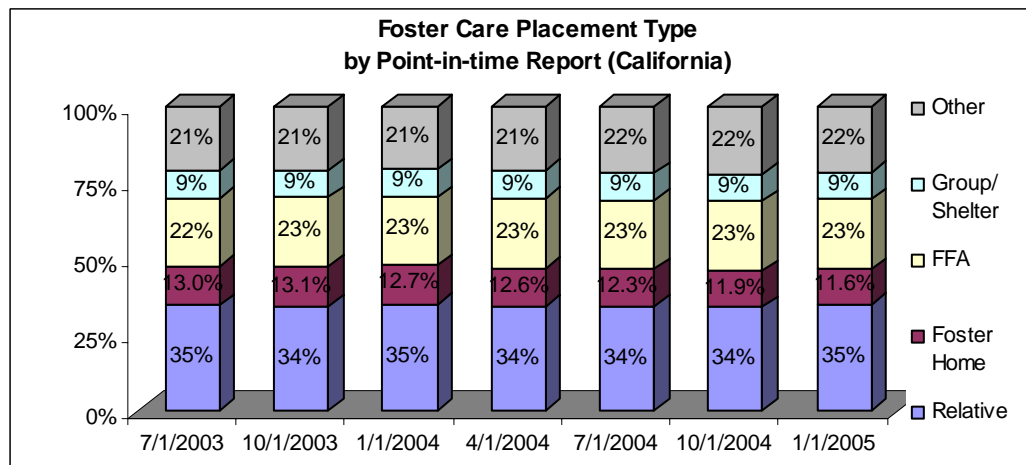
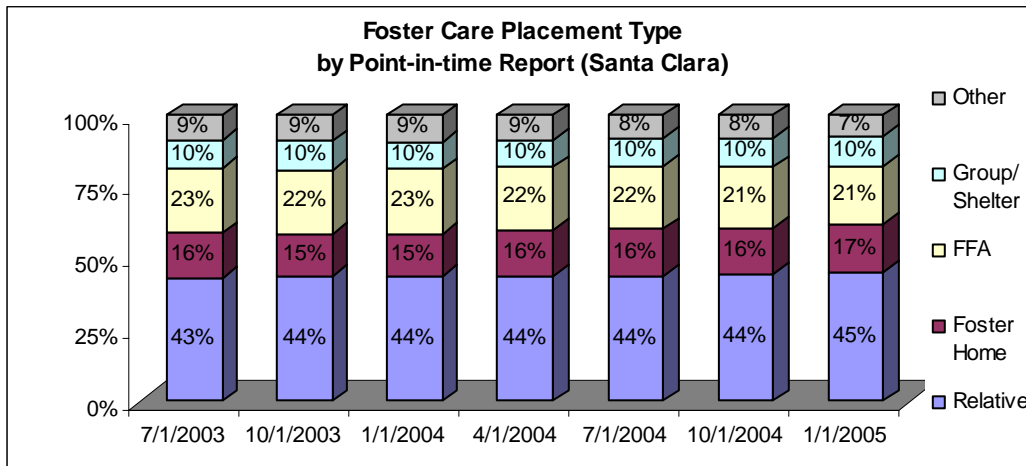


Foster Care Placement in Least Restrictive Settings

(This measure reflects the percentage of children placed in each type of foster care setting.)

- Of all children in supervised foster care on 1/1/2005 (point-in-time reporting), 45% were placed with kin/relatives, 17% were in foster home placement, 21% were in placement with Foster Family Agencies, 10% were in Group/Shelter care, and 7% were in other types of placements.

URL: <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/pointintime/fostercare/childwel/ageandethnic.asp>



FEDERAL AND STATE PERFORMANCE

The table below provides a summary of Federal and State *quarterly* performance. For evaluation purposes, performance changes less than 0.5% are rated as “relatively unchanged.”

Federal and State Performance at a Glance			
SCC's Five SIP Target Areas	Measures Contained in this Data Report	Federal Measures	State Measures
Reduce First Entries of Children of Color	Background data- Incidence Rates		Referral- Improved Sub Ref- Declined 1 st Entries- Improved Rate in Care- Improved
	Recurrence of Maltreatment	(Met Standard) Improved	Relatively Unchanged
	Abuse in Care	(Below Standard) Declined ³	NA
	Recurrence of Abuse in Homes where Children were not Removed	NA	Declined
Timely Response	Timely Response	NA	IR- Improved 10-Day- Declined
Timely Visits	Timely Visits	NA	Improved
	Reunification	(Above Standard) Declined	Declined
	Adoption	(Above Standard) Improved	Declined
Reduce Multiple Placement	Placement Stability	(Below Standard) Declined ⁴	Improved
Reduce Re-entries	Re-entries	(Below Standard) Declined ⁵	Improved
	Sibling Placement	NA	All Siblings- Improved Some/All Siblings- Relatively Unchanged
		NA	Initial placement at group home/ shelter increased by 1% to 65%.
		NA	Predominant placement at group home/shelter increased by 2% to 22%; relative placement decreased by 2% to 35%.
	Foster Care Placement by Point-in-time Placement	NA	Relative and county home placements increased by 1% to 45% and 17% respectively.
		NA	Children Transitioning to Self-Sufficiency Adulthood-SCC ILP youth exceeded State average in securing high school diploma, enrollment in higher education, and employment/ means of support.

³ The Federal standard for this measure is 0.57% or less. SCC is performing essentially equivalent to statewide average, although performance decreased from 0.26% baseline (10/02-6/03) to 0.75% (4/04-12/04).

⁴ Federal measure tracks *all children with 1-2 placements within 12 months by exit cohort*, compared to State measure, which tracks *first entries of 5 days or more, by entry cohort*. SCC improvement has been consistent on the State measure, although performance on the Federal measure decreased from 81.4% baseline (7/02-6/03) to 80.5% (1/04-12/04). The Federal standard for this measure is 86.7% or more.

⁵ Federal measure tracks *re-entries of all children within 12 months by exit cohort*, compared to State measure, which tracks *re-entries after reunification for first entries of 5 days or more, by entry cohort*. SCC performance improved on State measure, although performance on Federal measure decreased from 13.6% baseline (7/02-6/03) to 14.2% (1/04-12/04). The Federal standard is 8.6% or less.

Milestones Achieved and Next Steps

The Department of Family and Children's Services (DFCS) has created a detailed implementation plan and improvement strategies. Seven SIP Implementation Workgroups were formed by specific function or strategy to implement a number of improvement strategies. The following are the workgroups milestones achieved by workgroup since the last report, as well as the strategies and tasks for next steps:

1. Children of Color:

Data

Milestones Achieved

- ✓ Monthly data reports stratified by ethnicity on referrals, allegations, program component, and placement type implemented.
- ✓ Data developed for removals stratified by ethnicity, zip code, removal reason, age, and reporting party.
- ✓ Data by city, ethnicity and language analyzed.

Next Step

- Data on referrals stratified by ethnicity and zip code in development.

Decision Making

Milestones Achieved

- ✓ Ten standardized decision-making tools reviewed and evaluated.
- ✓ Four tools piloted.
- ✓ Tool selected.

Next Steps

- Consultant decision-making tool modifications to be completed by October 2005.
- Policies and procedures to be developed.
- Staff to be trained.
- Tool implementation projected to occur in Spring 2006.

Differential Response

Milestones Achieved

- ✓ Intake structure assessed.
- ✓ Differential Response (DR) paths defined.
- ✓ Differential Response SIP team formed.
- ✓ Application for funding in process.

Next Steps

- Community workgroup to be formed.
- Methodology for identifying families for diversion and DR (using new standardized assessment tool) to be developed.
- Needed services to be identified.
- Pilot testing criteria to be developed.

2. SIP Data Team:

Milestones Achieved

- ✓ Data collection tools developed for identified outcome measures.
- ✓ Other data collection tools developed and analysis is in progress.
- ✓ Two research projects conducted an examination of practices and patterns relating to children experiencing multiple placements and relating to re-entry into care within 12 months of child's return home.
- ✓ Monthly data reports stratified by ethnicity on referrals, allegations, program component and placement type implemented.
- ✓ Data developed for removals stratified by ethnicity, zip code, removal reason, age, and reporting party

- ✓ Data by city, ethnicity and language analyzed.

Next Steps

- Data on additional factors related to multiple placements in process.
- Review and analyze results of research projects referenced above.

3. Joint Decision Making:

- ✓ Frequency and outcomes for removal and placement decisions data was gathered and analyzed.
- ✓ From July 2003 to February 2005, 581 Team Decisions meetings occurred; 244 front-end (children entering system), 43% resulted in keeping the child at home or maintaining placement and 337 focused on stabilizing children's placements, the majority 51% resulted in either placement preservation or a move to a less restrictive placement.

Milestones Achieved

4. Timely Visits and Response:

- ✓ Significant improvement made in this area, with 93% timeliness on Emergency Response, 89% timeliness on Ten-Day Responses, and 89% Timely Visits with children.
- ✓ Twenty barriers affecting timely responses and referrals identified, and work is underway to eliminate or mitigate barriers.
- ✓ Contacts policies and procedures developed as specified below under Quality Assurance.

Milestones Achieved

5. Resource Development and Utilization:

Milestone Achieved

- ✓ Two surveys to identify barriers and resource utilization conducted, which included social worker staff and Foster Family Agencies.

Next Step

- Perform staff training on utilization of available resources.

6. Quality Assurance and CWS/CMS Data Entry:

- ✓ Quality Assurance training implemented for all social work supervisors.
- ✓ Implemented utilization of Safe Measures (a case management quality control monitoring and evaluation software tool).
- ✓ Contacts policy for voluntary maintenance and informal supervision cases developed.
- ✓ Comprehensive visitation/contacts policy to be finalized.
- ✓ Safe Measures case management monitoring software acquired.
- ✓ Supervisors trained on Safe Measures.
- ✓ Proactive internal case management tool developed and provided to all continuing units.
- ✓ Data clean-up group established.
- ✓ Contacts data entry policies updated.
- ✓ Nine data entry trainings performed.
- ✓ Assessment of staffing patterns and caseload reduction plan implemented.
- ✓ Finalization of CWS referrals training.

Milestones Achieved

Next Steps

- Development of standardized referral policies and procedures.
- CWS/CMS data entry training for new supervisors and social workers, and refresher course for existing staff is scheduled.

7. Family Finding:

**Milestones
Achieved**

- ✓ Role and function of the Relative Finding Unit defined.
- ✓ Family finding efforts resulted in creation of connections to family for 85 of the 91 children served between November 2003 and December 2004.
- ✓ Top five factors for relative/family placement disruptions identified.
- ✓ Outcome data generated on children or youth reunified and living with family and children and youth in the community with durable connections.
- ✓ Process maps completed for all current providers of Family Finding.
- ✓ Authorization procedures developed and implemented for programs serving high-risk youth.
- ✓ Process mapping draft completed by the Relative Unit with input from Continuing Service Bureaus and Dependent Intake (DI) staff.
- ✓ Progress made with the inclusion of DI staff in the Relative Unit process mapping to define roles and responsibilities for referral, assessment and transfer of families post-disposition.

Next Steps

- Efforts to increase identification and placement with relatives are underway by integrating Family-to-Family principles into practice.
- Policy decisions to establish timelines for Family Finding process from referral to transfer of responsibility of the family to the pre-disposition social worker.
- Protocols developed defining the communication, roles and responsibilities of the DI worker, relative worker and pre-disposition worker.

The SIP Data Team with the support of Information Systems is assisting workgroups with data collection to provide ample information to achieve milestones. Additionally, the SIP Implementation Team (IT) meets on a monthly basis to monitor progress, identify data needs, discuss crossover issues and address any barriers to achieving SIP goals. The IT is composed of workgroup chairs, SSA and DFCS management and staff, union representatives, Mental Health, and community stakeholders. Ongoing monitoring will take place through Quarterly County Data Reports and internal tracking and monitoring processes. Stakeholders will be convened to assure community involvement in monitoring improvements and to provide input into annual updates to the System Improvement Plan.

SSA Office of Governmental Relations and Planning will provide and distribute a summary of Santa Clara County's Data Report to stakeholders, community partners, and staff on a quarterly basis to track and monitor progress in meeting self improvement goals. If you have questions pertaining to this report, please contact Lydia Romeo, Project Manager at (408) 491-6738 or by e-mail at lydia.romeo@ssa.sccgov.org.