

Summary of Santa Clara County's Child Welfare Services Quarterly Data Report July 2006

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 include the five outcomes measures selected for inclusion into the System Improvement Plan (SIP), which are:

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

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) in July 2006 released the data collected from July 2000 to January 2006 analyzed in this 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. This report also provides a summary of performance on Federal and State measures. 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 and may not be meaningful. Therefore, caution is required when interpreting data related to Native Americans.

Across-the-board SCC continued to perform well over the State average on most of Federal and State indicators with exception to Immediate Response Investigations (although, performance is at 94.5% compliance rate), Placement Stability, Foster Care Reentries, and Placements with all Siblings. In addition, due to issues identified with last quarter's data extracts methodologies have been refined and previously reported data has been revised. The revised data has significantly affected SCC's performance particularly in the area of placement stability. Last quarter's data report indicated 52.9% of children experience no more than two placements within 12 months, however, revised data indicates 47.4%. The significant decrease has prompted SCC to confirm the revised data to ensure accuracy in performance.

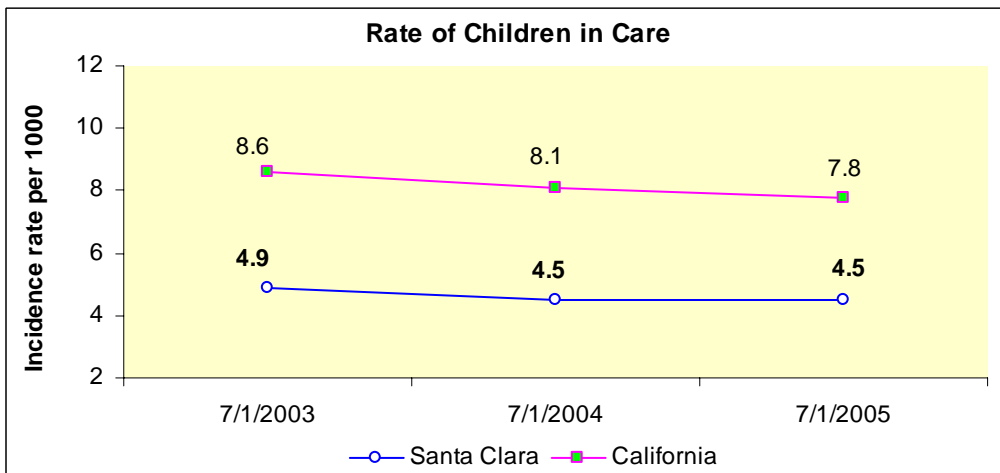
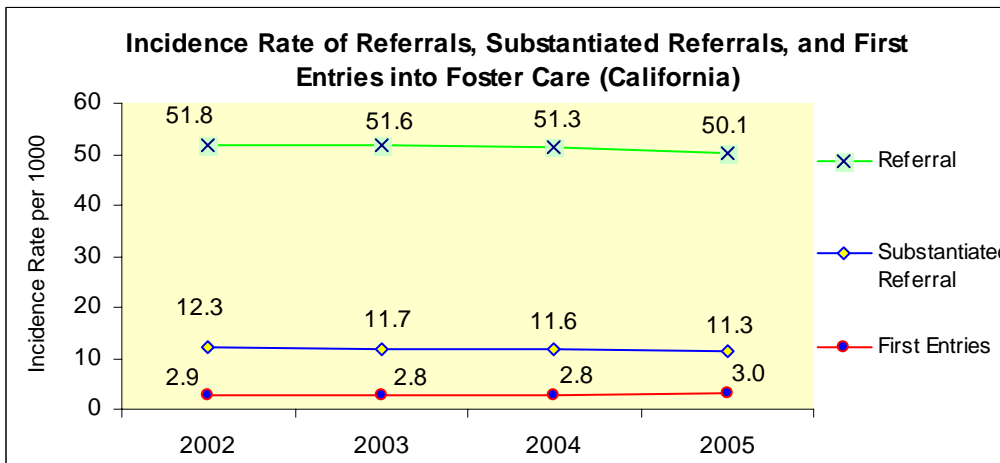
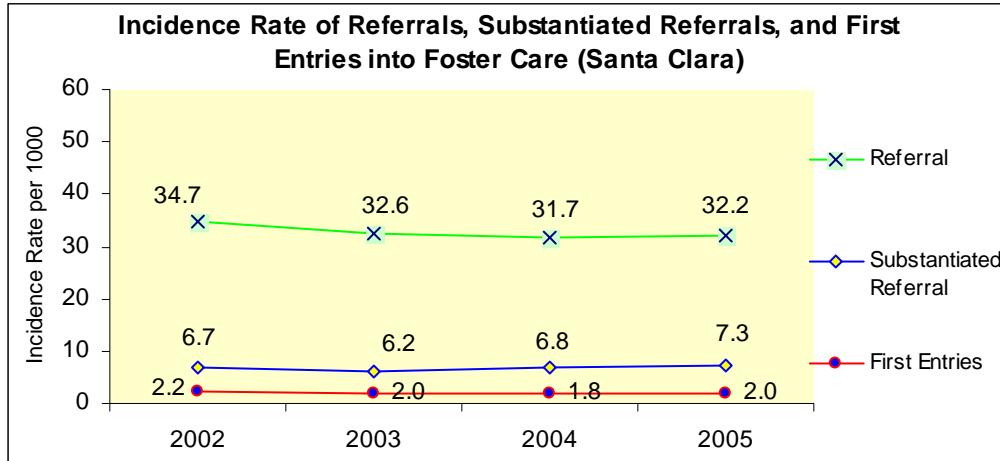
Substantial and consistent improvements are evident in ten-day response investigations and social worker visits. Timely social worker visits exceeded the State average consistently for the last four reporting period ending this quarter with an average of 92.1%. In addition, the rate of abuse of children in care (exclusively a Federal measure with new methodology) is at 0.03%. Recurrence of Maltreatment dropped consecutively to 10.7%, better than State average. Adoptions finalized within 24 months remained steady at 8.5%, performing above the State average.

Although performance in reunifying children within 12 months decreased slightly in recent reporting periods, performance improved slightly this quarter to 41.2%, and performance remains above the State average. Placement Stability decreased to 47.4% and Foster Care Reentries increased to a high of 17.2%, and performance for both measures remain below the State average.

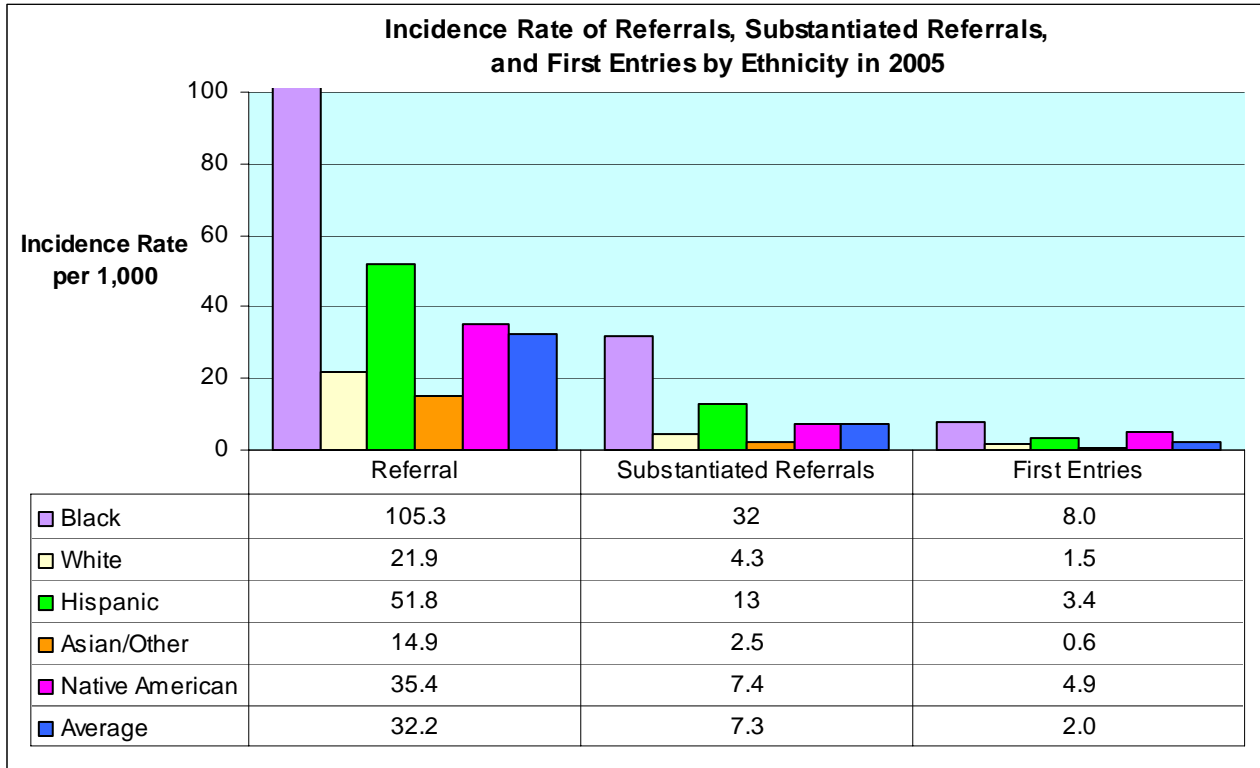
¹ Measurement periods vary for outcome measures based on methodology. Data sources are California Child Welfare Services Outcome and Accountability Data Reports for Santa Clara County and California, July 2006.

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

- The incidence rate of referrals increased from 31.7 per 1,000 in 2004, to 32.2 in 2005.
- The incidence rate of substantiated referrals increased from 6.8 per 1,000 in 2004 to 7.3 in 2005.
- The incidence rate of first entries into care (stayed five days or more) increased from 1.8 per 1,000 in 2004 to 2.0 in 2005.
- The incidence rate of children in care remained the same at 4.5 per 1,000 on 7/1/2004 and 7/1/2005.



- There is significant overrepresentation of Black and Hispanic children in referrals, substantiated referrals and first entries into foster care. In 2005, the incidence rate of first entries into care for Black children are 8.0 per 1,000 and for Hispanic children are 3.4 per 1,000, compared to the County's average rate of 2.0 per 1,000.²



² Child Welfare Reports for California, retrieved on 08/08/2006 from the University of California at Berkeley Center for Social Services Research website: <URL://http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports>

SAFETY OUTCOMES

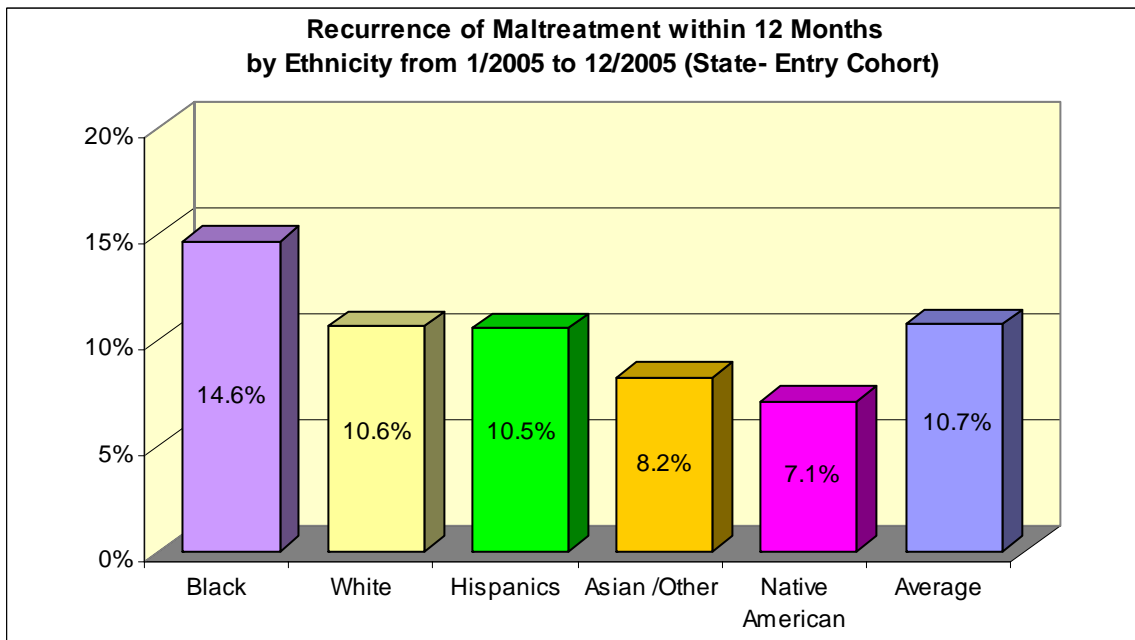
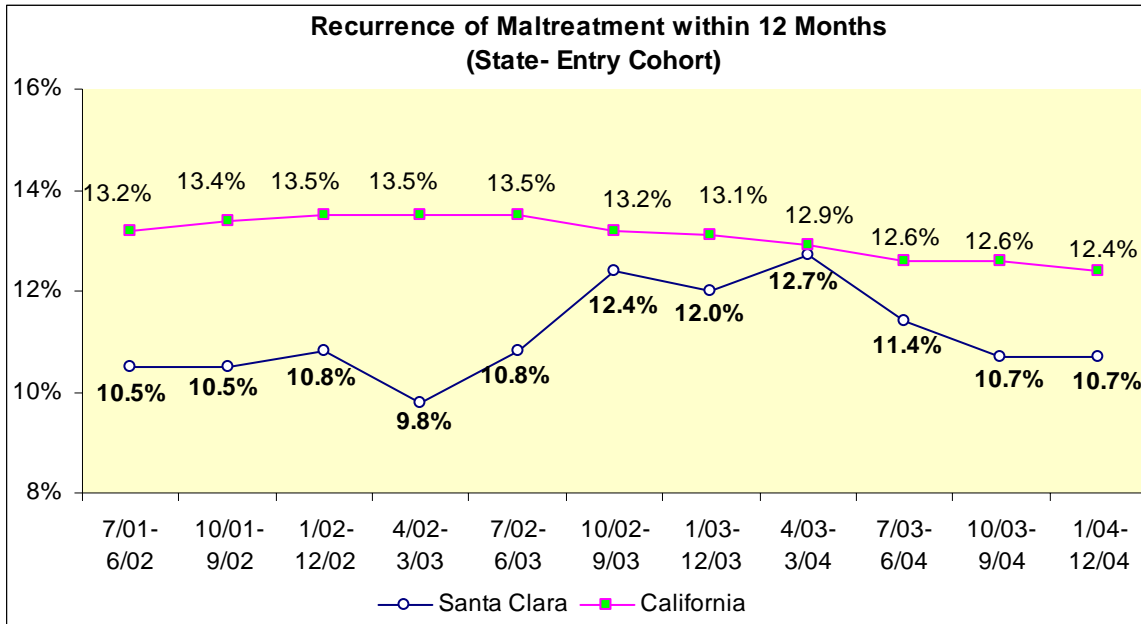
These measures are designed to reflect the effectiveness of efforts to protect children from abuse/neglect by reporting instances of abuse and neglect at various stages of child welfare services, which reflect the frequency of social worker contact with children and the timeliness of face-to-face investigation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

Recurrence of Maltreatment

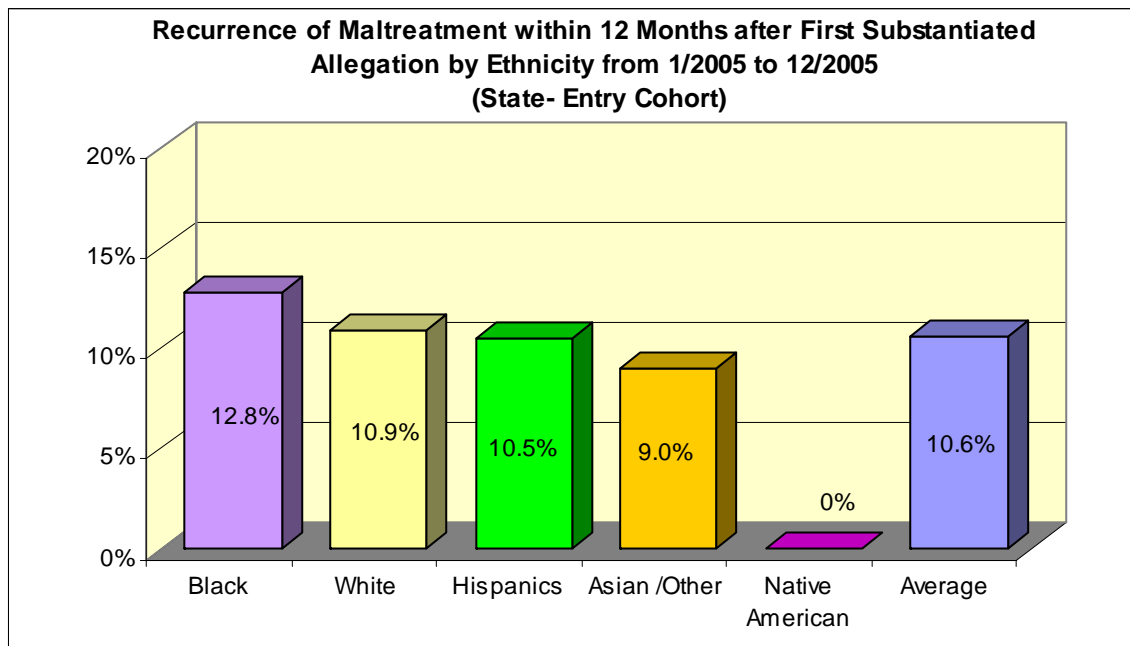
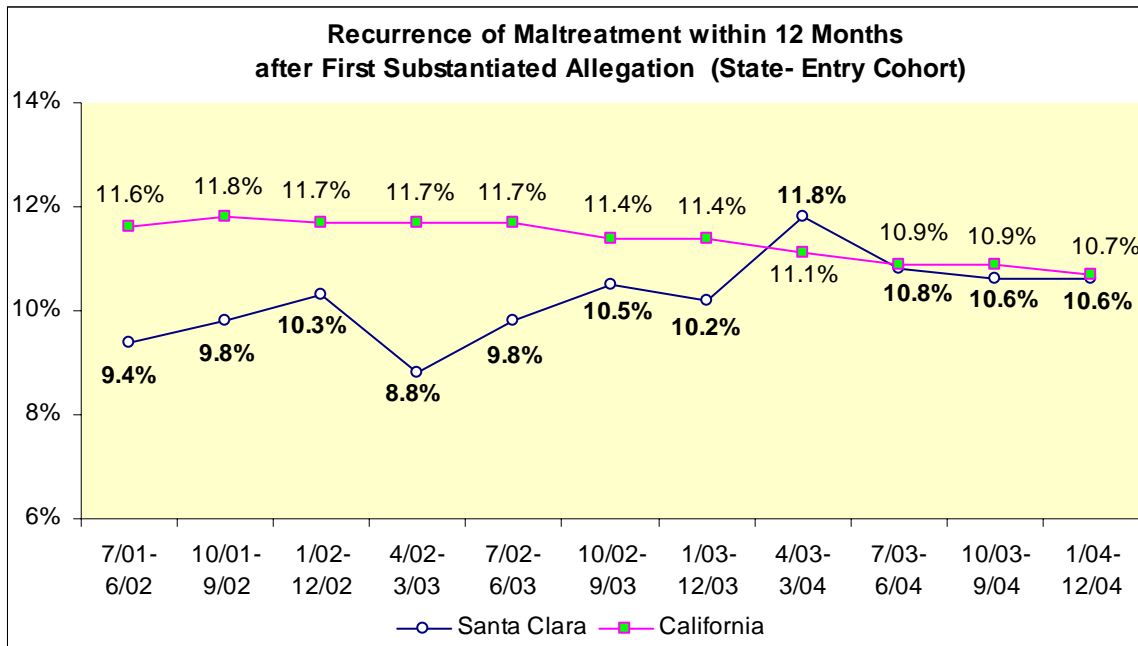
(This measure reflects the percent of children who were victims of child abuse/neglect with a subsequent substantiated report of abuse/neglect within specific time-periods.)

- 10.7% of all children with a substantiated allegation in 1/2004-12/2004 had another substantiated allegation within 12 months. There was no change from the last reporting period.

URL: <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/Referrals/recurrence.asp>



- 10.6% of all children with a first substantiated allegation in 1/2004-12/2004 had a subsequent substantiated allegation within 12 months. There was no change from the last reporting period.
URL: <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/Referrals/recurrence.asp>

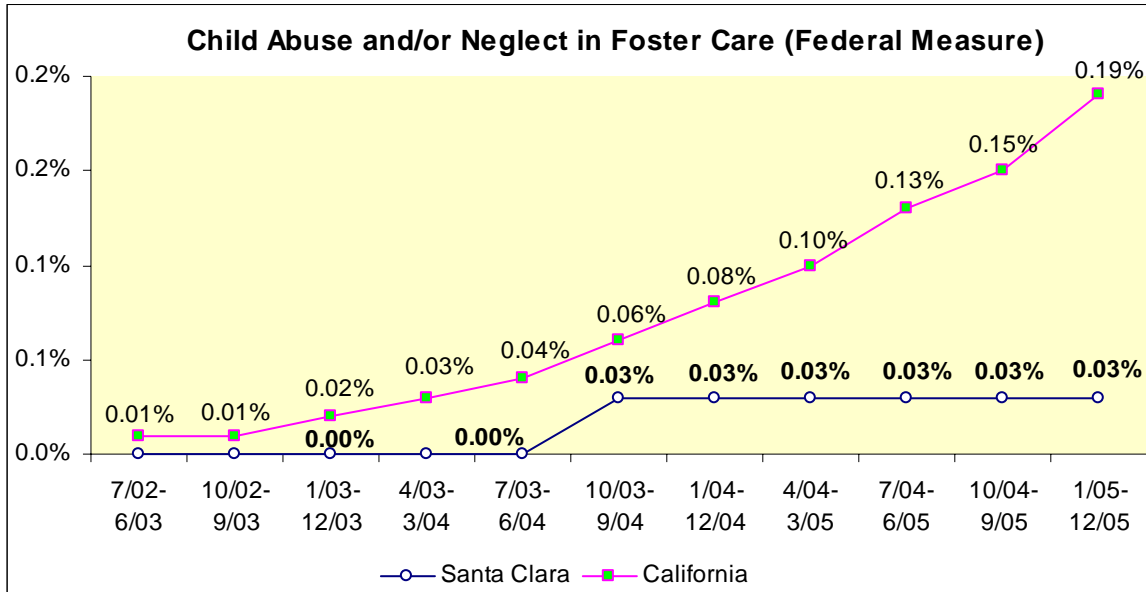


Rate of Child Abuse and/or Neglect in Foster Care

*(This measure reflects the percent of children in foster care who are abused or neglected while in foster care placements. Note: the methodology for this measure has been revised to include **most placement types within 12 months.**)*

- 0.03% of children had a substantiated allegation in a foster care placement in 1/2005-12/2005. There is no change from the last reporting period.

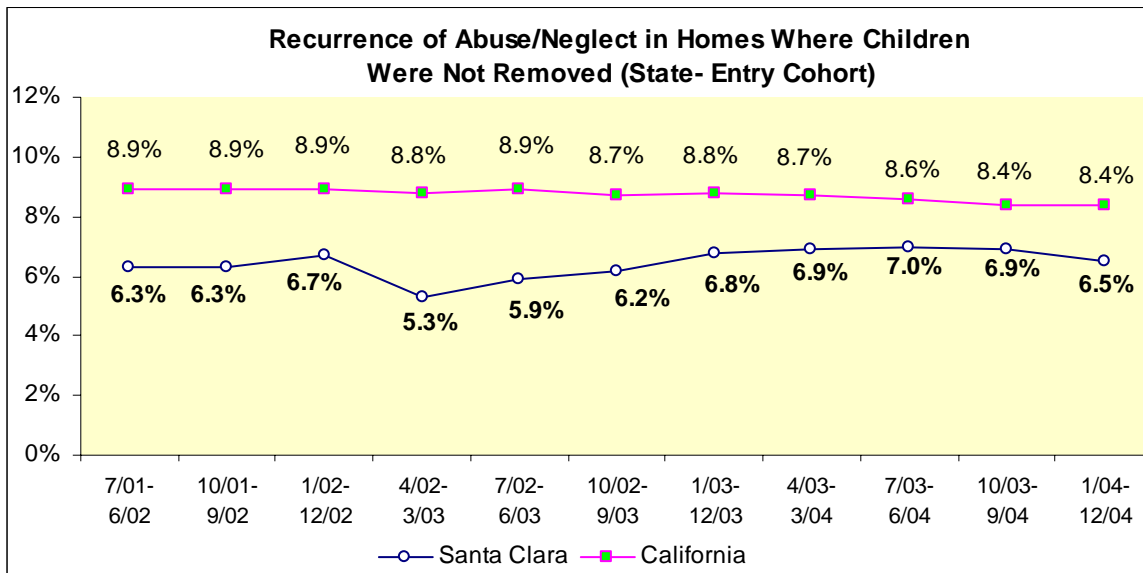
URL: http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/cfsrdata/standards/cfsr_abuse.asp



(Ethnicity data is not available.)

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.)

- 6.5% of children, who had an inconclusive or substantiated allegation in 1/2004-12/2004 and were not removed, had a subsequent substantiated allegation within 12 months, as compared to 6.9% in 10/2003-9/2004. URL: <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/Ccfsr.asp#2A>

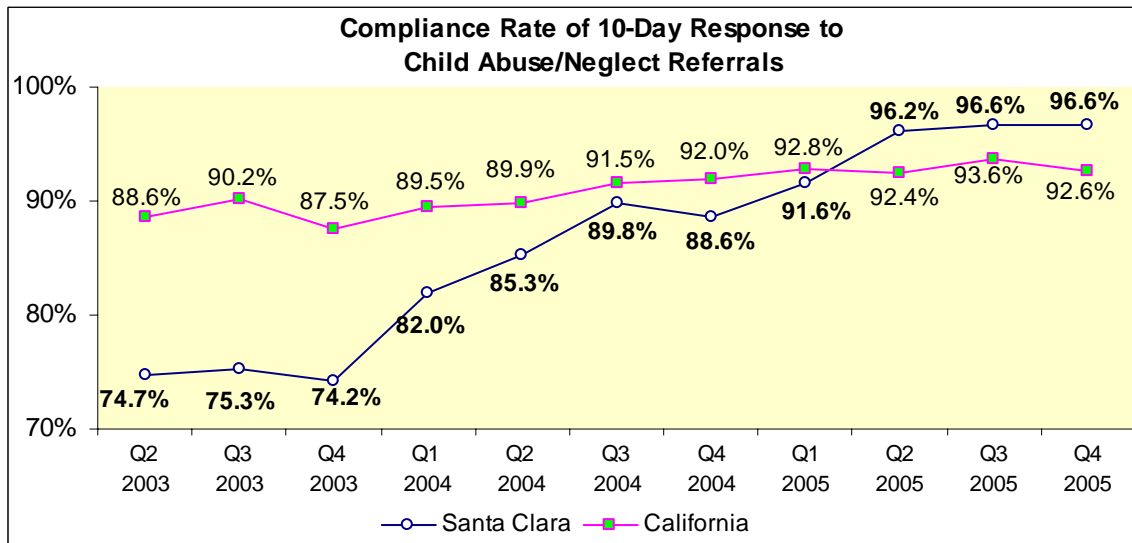
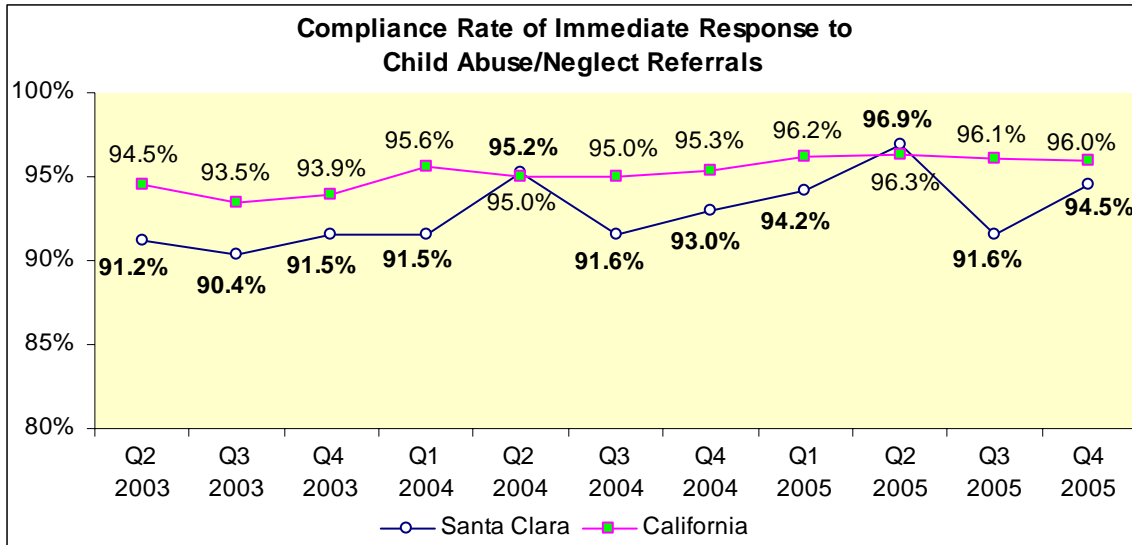


(Ethnicity data for current reporting period is not available.)

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 2005, 94.5% of Immediate Response referrals received a timely response, compared to 91.6% in Q3 2005. Also in Q4 2005, 96.6% of ten-day referrals received a timely response. There is no change from Q3 2005. URL: <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/Ccfsr.asp#2B>

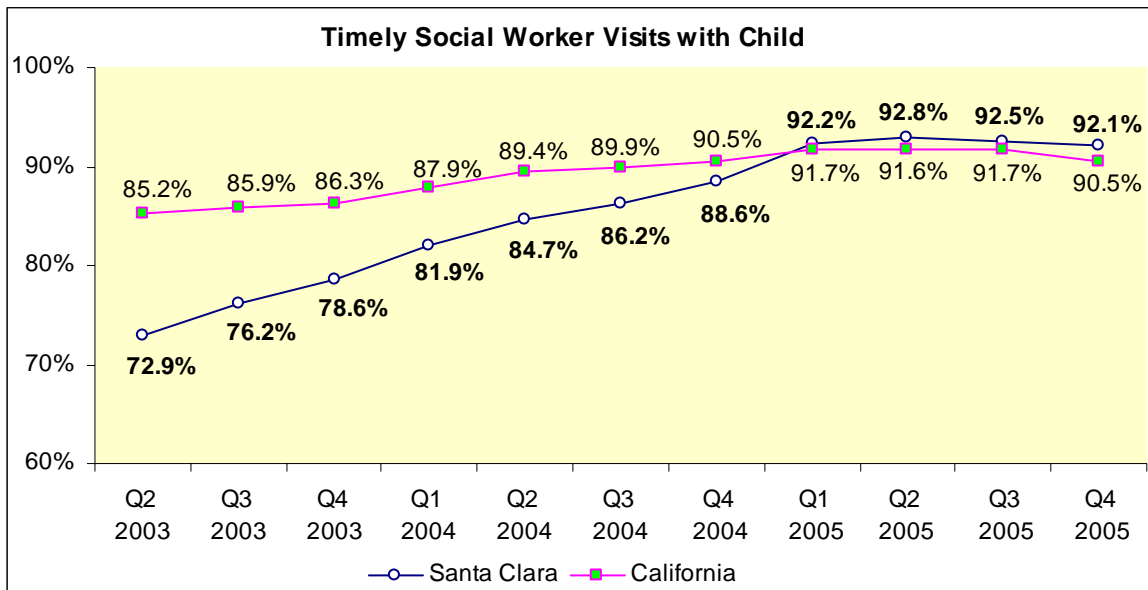


(Ethnicity data for current reporting period is not available.)

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, 2005, on average, 92.1% of all children who required a monthly visit, received a visit, compared to 92.5% in Q3, 2005. (Averages cited here are calculated based on quarterly percentages.) URL: <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/Ccfsr.asp#2C>



(Ethnicity data for current reporting period is not available.)

PERMANENCY OUTCOMES

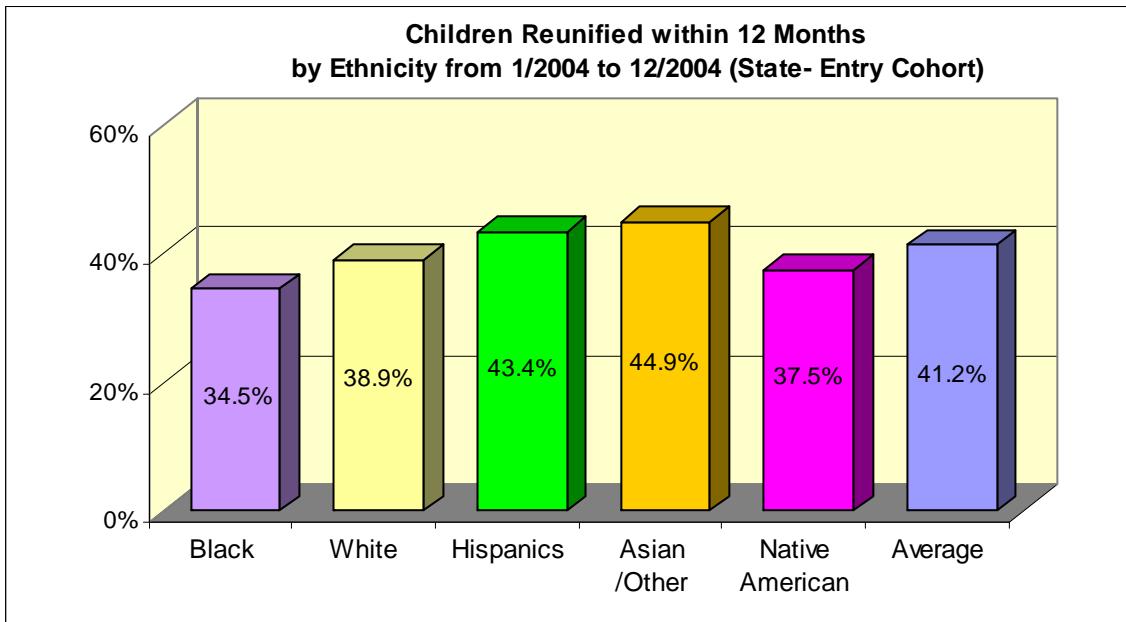
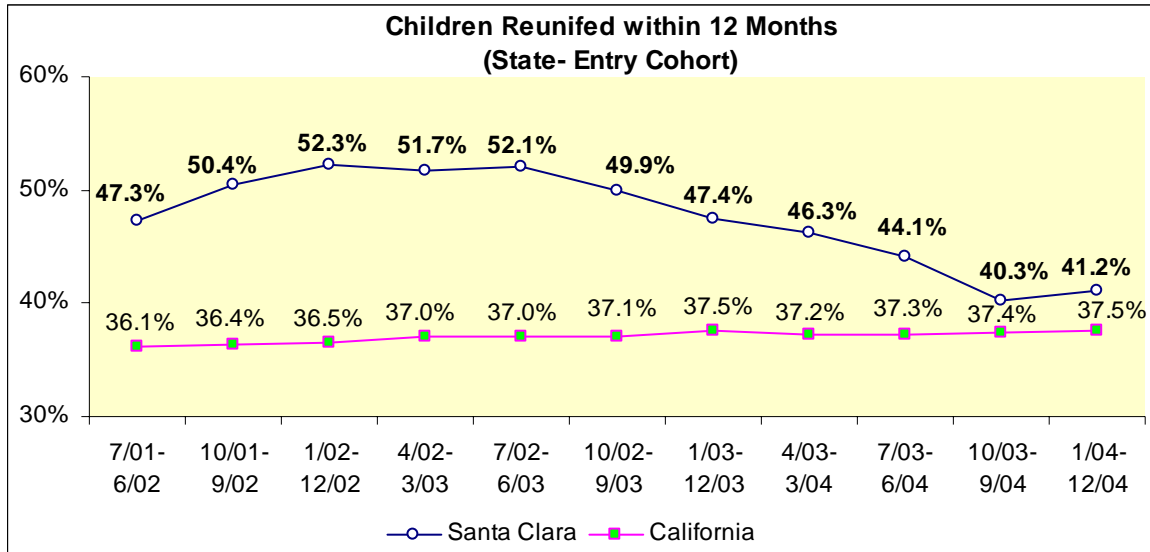
These measures are designed to reflect the number of foster care placements for each child (who entered care and stayed five days or more), the length of time a child is in foster care, and the rate that children re-enter foster care after they have returned home or other permanent care arrangements 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.)

- 41.2% of all children who entered care for the first time (stayed five days or more) during 1/2004-12/2004 were reunified within 12 months, compared to 40.3% in 10/2003-9/2004.

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

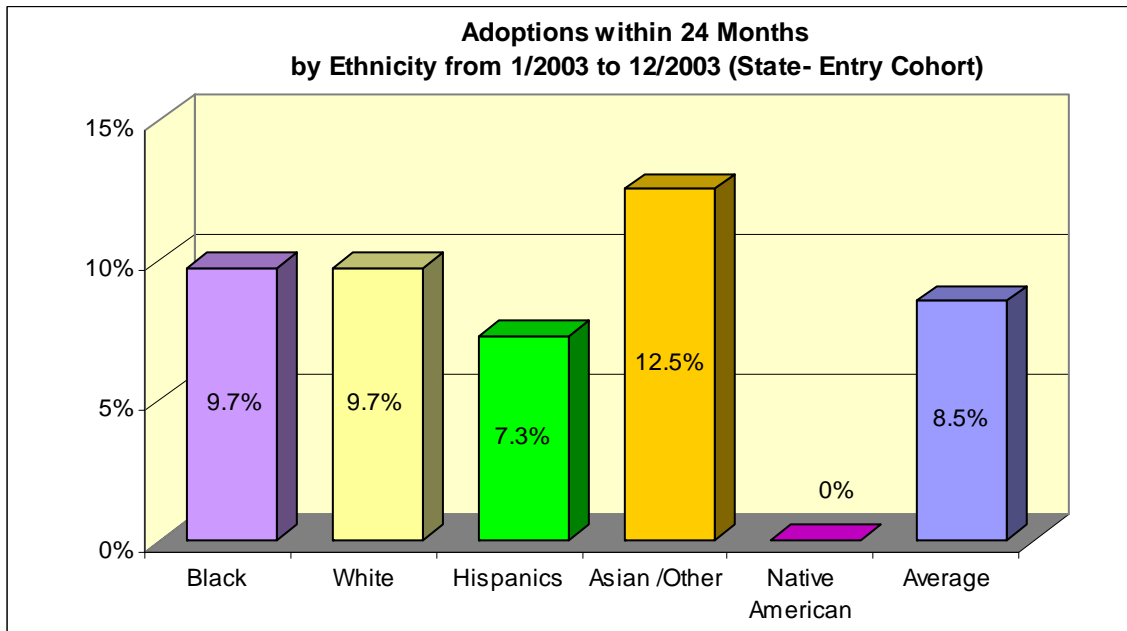
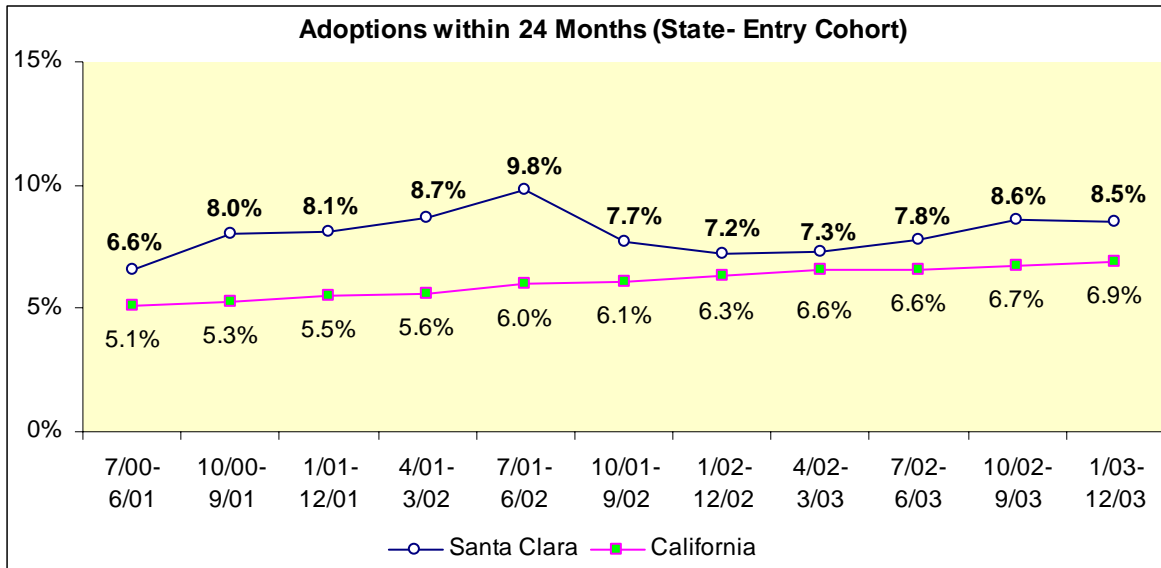


Length of Time to Exit Foster Care to Adoption

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

- 8.5 % of all children who entered care for the first time (stayed five days or more) during 1/2003-12/2003 were adopted within 24 months, compared to 8.6% in 10/2002-9/2003.

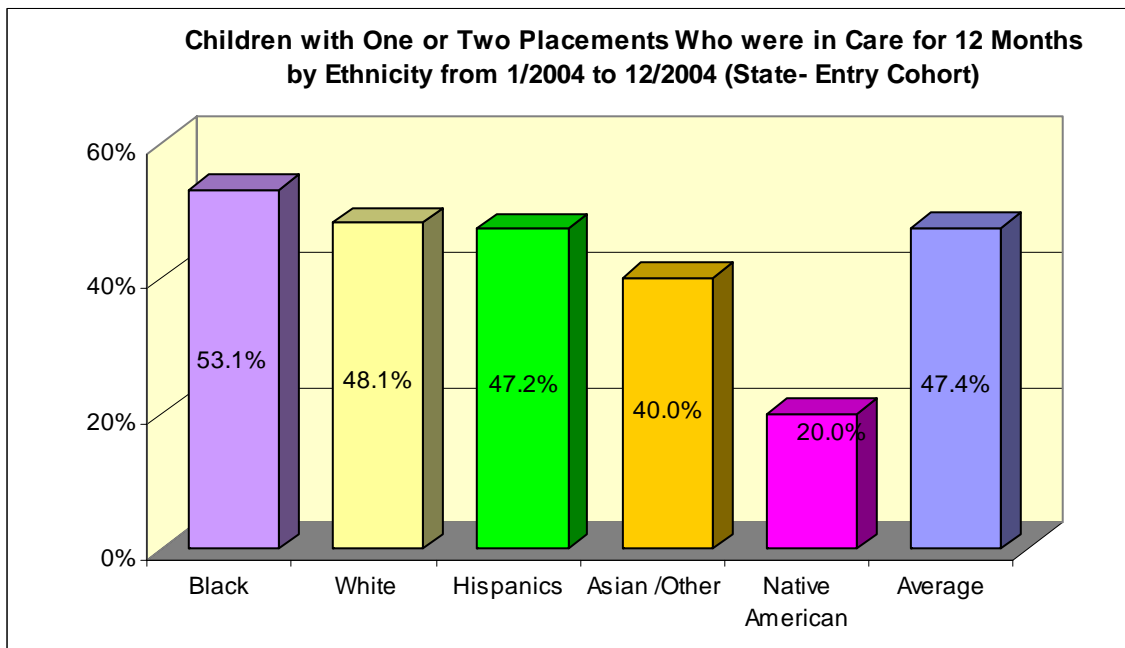
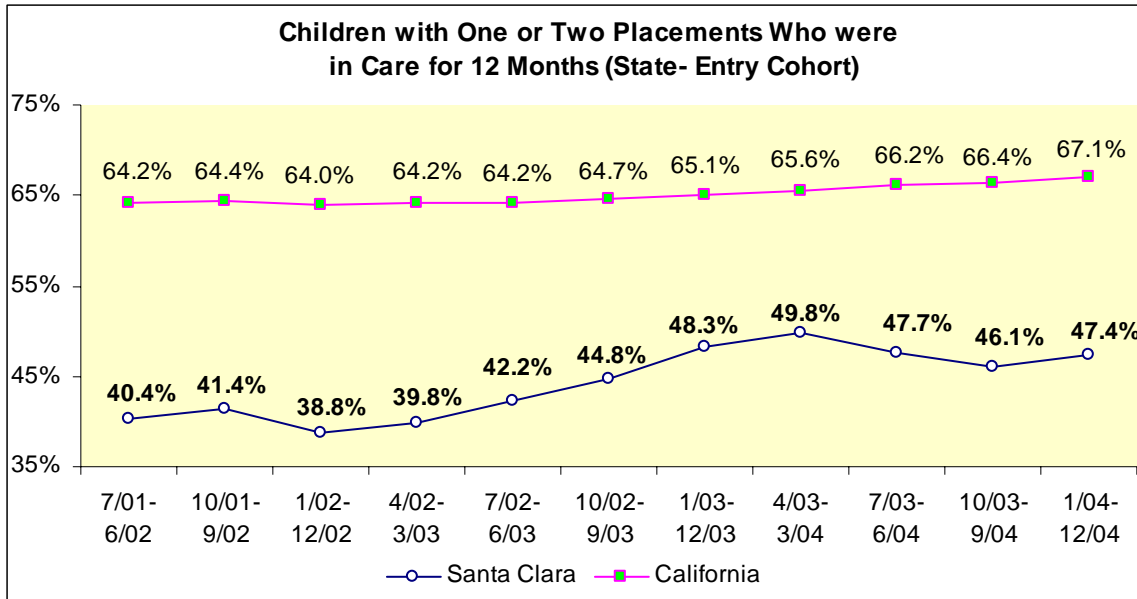
URL: <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/Cohorts/exits/>



Multiple Foster Care Placements

(These measures reflect the number of children with no more than two placements during 12 months of placement. Placement stability data have been revised and showed a decline of about 5.5% in all reporting periods. Request for data validation will be submitted to the State.)

- 47.4% of all children who entered care for the first time (stayed five days or more) during 1/2004-12/2004, and were in care for 12 months had no more than two placements, compared to 46.1% in 10/2003-9/2004. URL: <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/cohorts/stability/>

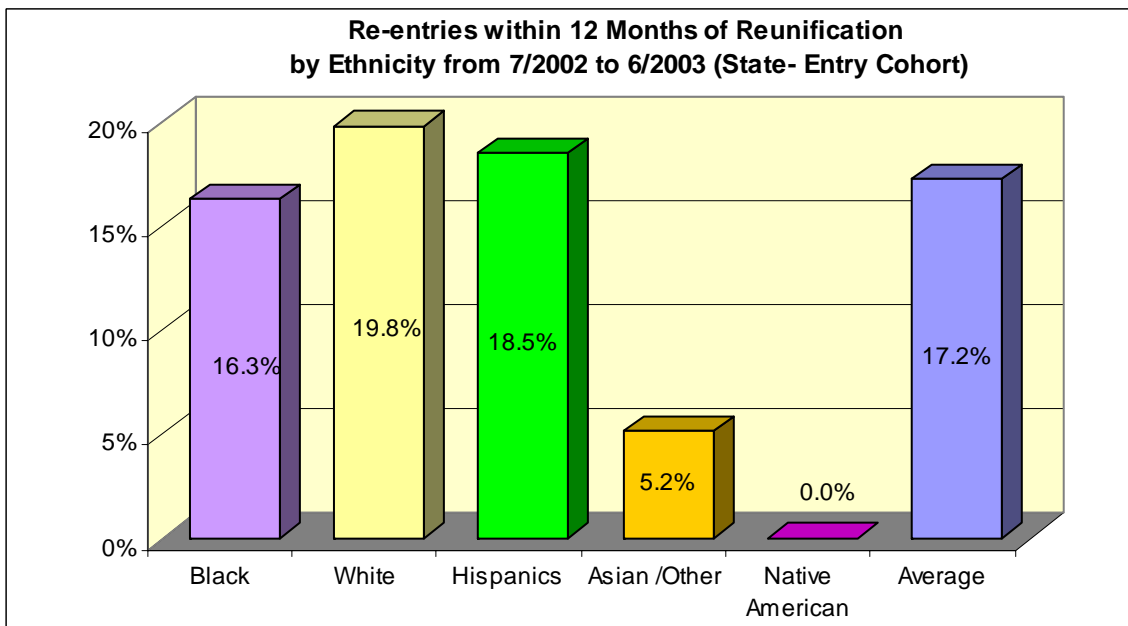
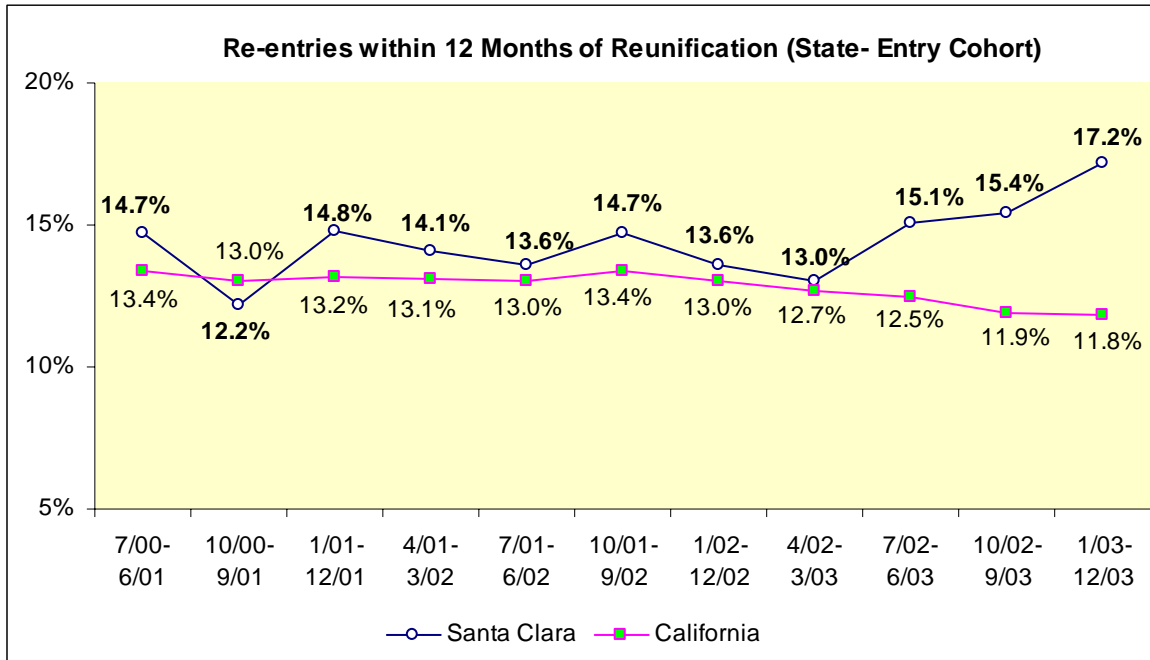


Rate of Foster Care Re-entry into Child Welfare System

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

- 17.2% of all children who entered care for the first time (stayed five days or more) during 1/2003-12/2003 and were reunified within 12 months of entry, re-entered care within 12 months of reunification, compared to 15.4% in 10/2002-9/2003.

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



(County data for 10/02-9/03 is not available)

CHILD AND FAMILY WELL-BEING OUTCOMES

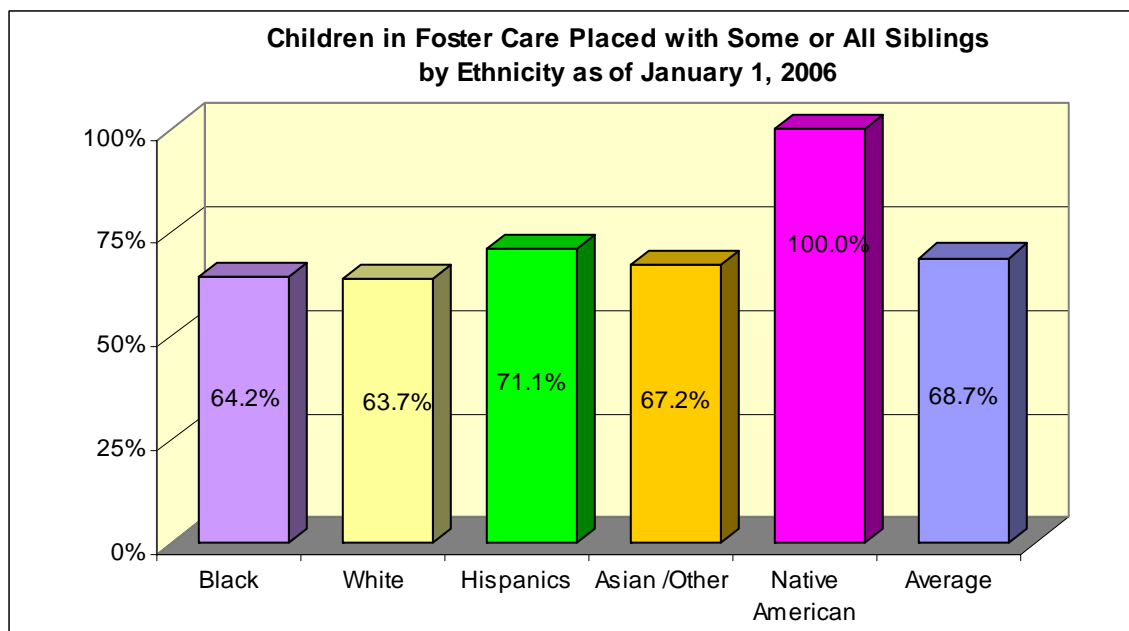
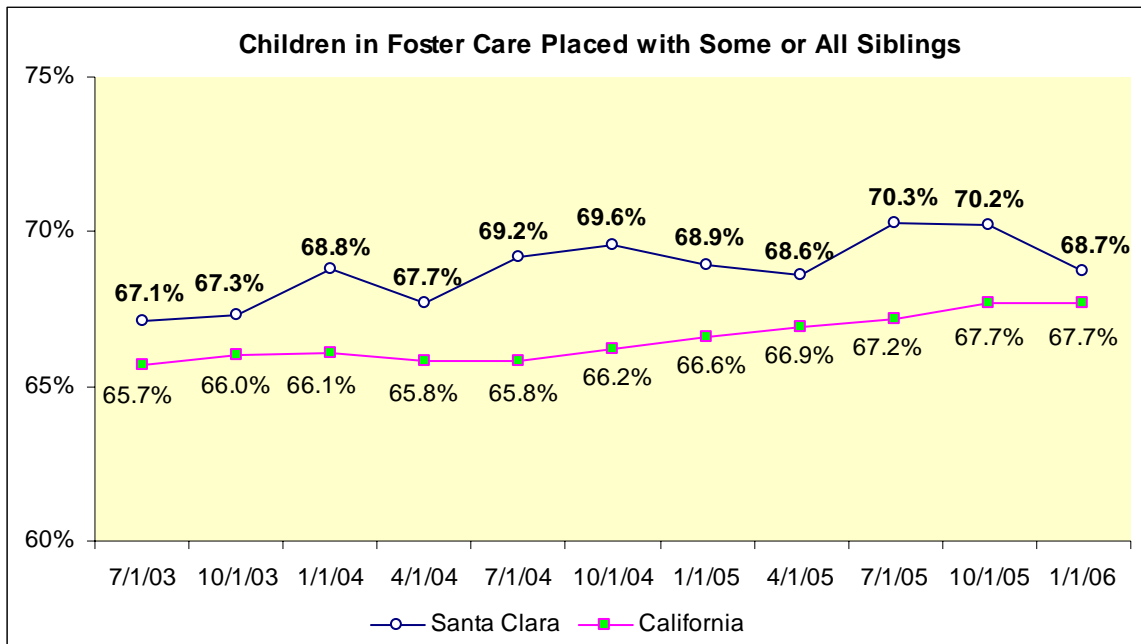
These measures reflect the degree to which children in foster care retain relationships with their family and extended communities with whom they are associated at the time of removal from their parents.

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 1/1/2006, 68.7% of siblings were placed with some or all siblings, compared to 70.2% on 10/1/2005.

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

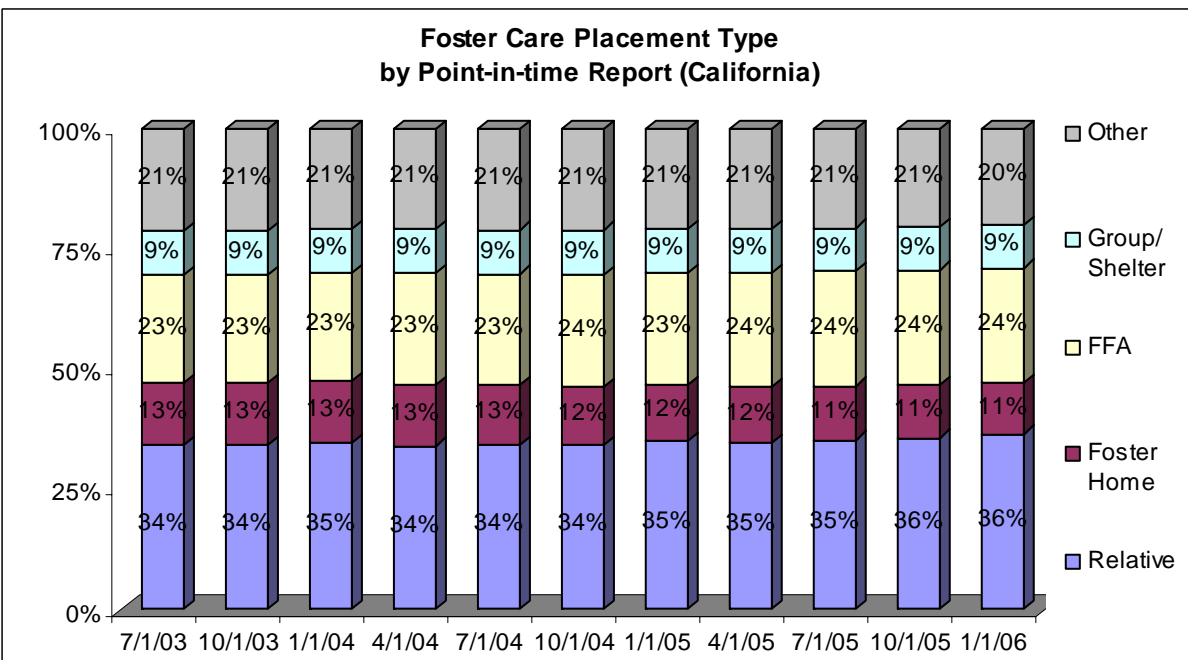
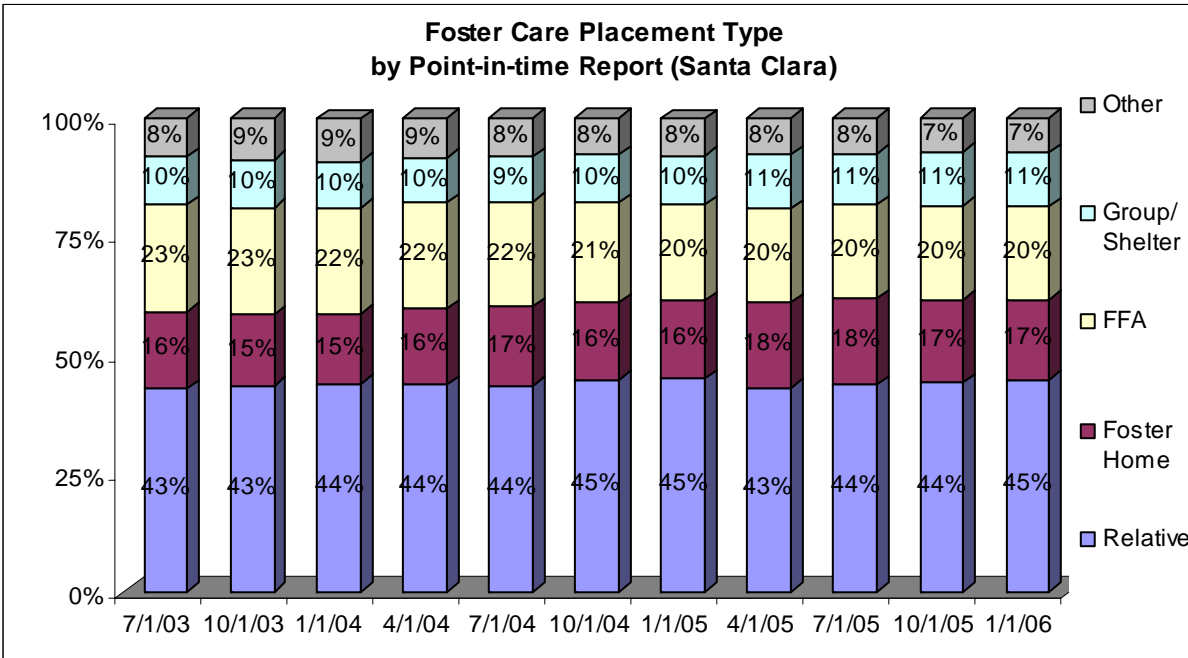


Foster Care Placement in Least Restrictive Settings

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

- Of all children in supervised foster care on 1/1/2006 (point-in-time reporting), 45% were placed with kin/relatives, 17% were in foster home placement, 20% were in placement with Foster Family Agencies, 11% 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” except for Abuse in Care that has a small threshold.

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-Declined* Sub Ref- Declined* 1 st Entries- Declined* Rate in care- No change*
	Recurrence of Maltreatment	(Below Standard) * Relatively unchanged	By any substantiation- No change* By 1 st substantiation- No change*
	Abuse in Care (New methodology)	No change*	NA
	Recurrence of Abuse in Homes where Children were not Removed	NA	Relatively unchanged*
Timely Response	Timely Response	NA	IR- Improved10-Day- No change*
Timely Visits	Timely Visits	NA	Relatively unchanged*
	Reunification	(Met Standard) * Improved	Improved*
	Adoption	(Met Standard) * Declined	Improved*
Reduce Multiple Placements	Placement Stability	(Below Standard) Declined	Improved
Reduce Re-entries	Re-entries	(Below Standard) Improved	Declined
	Sibling Placement	NA	All Siblings- Declined; Some/All Siblings- Declined*
	Foster Care Placement by <i>Initial</i> Placement	NA	Group Home/Shelter placements declined 2% to 70%; Foster Home placements increased 1% to 30%. Relative placements remained unchanged at 9%.
	Foster Care Placement by <i>Predominant</i> Placement	NA	Relative placements remained unchanged at 37%, Foster Home placements increased 1% to 30%; Group Home/Shelter placements stayed at 19%.
	Foster Care Placement by <i>Point-in-time</i> Placement	NA	Relative placements increased to 45%; Foster Home placements remained at 17%; Group Home/Shelter placements remained at 11%.
	Children Transitioning to Self-Sufficient Adulthood	NA	The number of youth receiving ILP services declined. The rate of youth completing vocational training or becoming employed or having other means of support increased while the rate of youth achieving high school diplomas declined.

* Performance exceeds State average.

Milestones Achieved and Next Steps

All new DFCS initiatives are conducted from a systemic perspective and will be integrated within the Department of Family and Children's Services (DFCS) existing infrastructure, policies, practices so that they may be sustained beyond the established grant periods, and become the way business is conducted.

The following are the milestones achieved by workgroup since the last report, as well as the strategies and tasks for next steps. The California Connected by 25 (CC25) strategies have been integrated into the existing workgroups and new workgroups have been established for certain CC25 strategies, as well.

1. Children of Color:

- ✓ Retreat held with the SIP Children of Color group and Child Abuse Council to combine efforts and form a work plan
- ✓ Reviewed and analyzed data at all child welfare decision points
- ✓ Assessed the scope of disparities at each decision point and prioritized for further assessment 1) Referrals 2) Substantiated referrals 3) First entries into foster care 4) Service component
- ✓ Reviewed risk assessment tool
- ✓ Reviewed process for substantiating referrals

Next Steps

- Perform case file review for substantiated referrals

Risk/Safety Assessment (RSA)

- ✓ Consultant RSA decision-making tool modifications completed. RSA decision-making tool implementation projected to occur in Spring 2006
- ✓ RSA Tool Selected – Comprehensive Assessment Tool (CAT)
- ✓ Conducted focus groups on cultural competence of tool
- ✓ Refined cultural competence tool

Next Steps

- Develop RSA policies and procedures
- Refine tool based on cultural competence focus group findings
- Continue to receive technical assistance on new tool
- Train development in process
- Pilot new decision-making tool
- Evaluate new RSA decision-making tool

Differential Response (DR)

- ✓ Funding Secured
- ✓ Promoting Safe and Stable Families contract awarded
- ✓ Differential Response Coordinator hired
- ✓ Personnel infrastructure developed
- ✓ Roles defined
- ✓ Referral process developed
- ✓ Training needs identified
- ✓ Outcome measures drafted
- ✓ Trained Family Partners and Engagement Specialists
- ✓ Completed Pre-pilot testing for Path 1 and 2
- ✓ Acquired Database
- ✓ Service delivery plans finalized

Next Steps

- Implement full pilot September 1, 2006
- Implement data-base and assess needs for data system modifications

2. CC25:

Continuum of Care Housing

Milestone Achieved

- ✓ Transitional Housing Program Plus (THP+) plan approved

Next Steps

- Establish linkages to the Foster Youth Housing Initiative providers for 20 youth.
- Develop housing needs assessment for 17-year olds
- Maximize appropriate utilization of new Transitional Housing Placement Program resources
- Implement a new transitional housing program for emancipated youth, as approved under our THP-Plus plan.
- Implement “host family” model where youth live within a supportive family environment.
- Prioritize the use of available housing subsidies and private set asides in meeting critical housing needs.
- Expand availability of permanent affordable housing (i.e. apartment rentals) for emancipating youth.
- Evaluate other local and state housing models and assess whether they can be adapted to our setting.
- Integrate other CC25 goals and objectives, such as financial literacy and education, into successful housing strategies.

Training and Employment

Next Steps

- Establish a Career Pathways Project to serve 40 youth served with an 80% completion rate
- Develop outreach strategies
- Develop a single training and employment assessment tool for foster youth that would be consistently administered by SVWIN and a pre-assessment screening process to identify youth with different training or employment needs are also under development
- Establish referral process for youth who are interested in participating in the Career Pathways Project, but do not qualify for the Project
- Launch Career Pathways with Mission College and San Jose City Community College. (Mission College cohort to start August 28 with 20 youth and San Jose City cohort to start Spring, 2007.)
- Launch new DFCS Employment Services unit to support job training and career development for current and former foster youth.

Partnerships

Next Steps

- Expand of County ESA Unclassified Program for Emancipating Youth (EFY)
- Develop partnership with Department of Child Support Services to provide employment opportunities for former foster youth

Financial Literacy

Milestone Achieved

- ✓ Completed Opportunity Passport technical assistance developed by Jim Casey Foundation

Next Steps

- Develop a youth mentor program
- Develop a financial literacy curriculum
- Establish partnerships with banks, youth and community boards
- Establish five initial “door opener” opportunities for youth (e.g., discounts, preferred access to services)
- Conduct survey to identify youth’s needs in regards to financial literacy. Ask members of the Youth Advisory Board to administer the survey and provide members with a stipend for their work.
- Apply for a grant in the amount of \$150,000 form the William and Flora Hewett Fountain 3 years (\$50,000 per year) to initially establish IDA accounts and to match participant’s deposits

**Continued-
Next Steps**

- Request Board of Supervisor approval to allocate \$30,000 (\$10,000 a year for 3 years) to match the grant previously approved by the Walter S. Johnson Foundation in the amount of \$30,000 (\$10,000 a year for 3 years) for Foster Youth Savings Accounts
- Develop Financial Education Curriculum
- Implement Individual Development Accounts program and create 30 accounts for youth
- Establish banking partnerships
- Establish Youth and Community Boards (presently partnering with DFCS Youth Advisory Board and Community Action Teams)

K-12 Education

Next Steps

- Develop partnerships with the Eastside Union High School District to assist 30 foster youth in a pilot program to improve math and reading skills
- Develop educational rights training
- Develop, test and implement youth educational needs assessments
- Develop a literacy and math skills plan
- Partner with School Linked Services to maximize services to foster youth
- Implement DFCS policies and procedures to improve CWS/CMS educational data for foster youth
- Request standing court orders and develop Memoranda of Understanding to address confidentiality issues and to facilitate communication about students between schools and DFCS
- Develop policies and procedures to facilitate the timely transfer of students' records when foster youth move and a student transfer notification system to ensure prompt enrollment of foster children and youth

3. SIP Data Team:

**Milestones
Achieved**

- ✓ 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.
- ✓ Reviewed and analyzed results of research projects referenced above

Next Steps

- Train staff on a new data system to be used by the five participating CC25 counties
- Start entering data in new system
- Include data needs identified by CC 25 partners, including the Board of Supervisors
- Implement new web-based data system to be used by the five participating CC25 counties to enter more comprehensive data concerning education, employment and housing on emancipated foster youth up to the age of 25
- Manage the data system and use data to drive decisions and improve outcomes

4. Joint Decision Making:

**Milestone
Achieved**

- ✓ Since July 2003 over 2300 Team Decisions meetings have occurred

Next Steps

- Standardize utilization of Emancipation Conferences throughout DFCS
- Require Emancipation Conference Plans for all foster youth ages 14-18 to ensure that all foster youth have periodic conferences to help the youth successfully acquire life skills required for productive adulthood.
- Creation of a Foster Youth Resource Center, which will provide practical assistance on becoming connected and self-sufficient
- Development of a support team of both current and former foster youth charged with supporting and advocating for youth presently working towards emancipation.

5. Timely Visits and Response:

Milestones Achieved

- ✓ Analyzed out-of-county placement data
- ✓ Refined data on timely visits for out of county placements

Next Steps

- Develop Cheat Sheet for contact waivers
- Analyze out-of-county placement data
- In process of tracking performance on Safe Measures

6. 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 Steps

- Develop an Early ILP Education and Outreach Program
- Strengthen integration of services between ILP service providers
- Develop education and training for caregivers
- Examine and modify as necessary the content of the current programs in the contract ILP service provider agencies; improve communication between youths' social workers and the ILP; and, improve communication between the ILP and the youth's caregivers and support systems, in order to increase youth's access and participation in the ILP.
- Identifying youth's needs and planning how best to ensure the availability of critical support services to enable youth to maximize their participation in educational, employment and housing opportunities (e.g., counseling, childcare, legal services, etc.).
- Insure that all eligible youth are connected to and participate in an Independent Living Program
- Strengthen integration of services and communication among present ILP providers, youth's social workers, and caregivers
- Develop education and training for caregivers and court advocates of existing foster youth ages 14 – 18 years old
- Provide access and services for 14 – 15 year olds that will help them develop independent living skills

6. Quality Assurance and CWS/CMS Data Entry:

Milestones Achieved

- ✓ Case management monitoring tool developed and provided to all continuing units (This pro-active tool provides deadlines to enable workers to achieve compliance)
- ✓ Caseload reduction plan implemented.
- ✓ Developed standardized referral policies and procedures

Next Steps

- CWS/CMS data entry training for new supervisors and social workers, including refresher courses for existing staff scheduled (on-going basis)
- Monthly staff training on new policies (on-going basis)

7. Family Finding:

Milestones Achieved

- ✓ Role and function of the relative finding unit defined.
- ✓ Authorization procedures for serving high-risk youth completed and implemented.
- ✓ Process maps to define roles for referral, assessment, and transfer of families completed.
- ✓ Outcomes for durability and permanency developed and measured.
- ✓ Developed procedure with court systems to ensure early identification of relatives

Next Steps

- Family Finding manual in development
- Continue to increase identification and placement with relatives by integrating Family-to-Family principles into practice (on-going)

**Continued-
Next Steps**

- Develop policy to establish timelines for Family Finding process from referral to transfer of responsibility of the family to the pre-disposition social worker (on-going)
- In process of developing protocols to define roles and responsibilities of the DI worker, relative worker and pre-disposition worker
- In process of developing Authorization protocol for all SW staff reference
- Identify best practices to ensure permanency for youth
- Link 40 foster youth ages 14-18 years old with caring committed adults
- Develop permanency and resiliency training for DFCS staff and other CC25 partners

With the **System Improvement Plan**, DFCS established a planning and implementation structure of workgroups that are responsible for identifying the gaps, strategies and outputs. The Leadership Team (comprised of the Agency and Department Directors, Deputy Director, and community representative, and project coordinator) and the Implementation Team (comprised of the Leadership Team, chairs of the workgroups, and community representatives) keep the teams apprised of the progress of the workgroups, engage them when appropriate to address challenges the workgroups are facing, and obtain guidance when necessary.

SSA's 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.