



## **2006 HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE BAY AREA F2F COUNTIES** CALIFORNIA FAMILY TO FAMILY INITIATIVE

**BAY AREA CALIFORNIA FAMILY TO FAMILY COUNTIES (7):** Alameda, Contra Costa, Monterey, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Santa Cruz<sup>1</sup>

### **ALAMEDA COUNTY CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES**

*F2F Funding Began: 2003*

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### **RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT OF RESOURCE FAMILIES (RDS)**

A faith-based recruitment effort has been initiated to recruit foster homes. A speaker's bureau was developed to attend events in the local faith based organizations and churches. There was also attendance at community events, a media campaign that includes a DVD with former foster youth, adoptive parents, foster parents and department staff as well as billboard ads. PRIDE trainings have been held at local churches and one of the four monthly orientations is regularly held at a church in South Hayward. There has been an increase in both the number of licensed resource parents and adoption-only families since F2F has started. Foster parent socials are held regularly and a program manager attend foster parent association meetings on a regular basis. Emergency foster parents and foster parents who have been certified to care for drug/alcohol exposed infants and medically fragile infants receive 48 hours of respite each month. Family Support Services of the Bay Area has a contract to provide respite care for all licensed resource parents. Resource parents are regularly involved in all PRIDE trainings for new foster parents as co-trainers alongside a CWW. Resource parents regularly attend RDS workgroups. New resource parents are informed about TDMs.

### **BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS (BCP)**

The BCP workgroup has evolved into three (3) sub-committees: Parent Engagement, Youth Engagement, and Community Engagement. The Differential Response program has been the catalyst for the Community Engagement Workgroup. A partnership with community-based organizations has been formed in the three target areas that experience the highest rates of referrals that provide services to low risk referrals. Training is provided to the contracted community-based agency for professional development. Early data returns show a low rate of recidivism for clients that were served by the Differential Response program.

### **TEAM DECISION-MAKING (TDM)**

TDMs were implemented in September 2004 and are mandatory for all new intake cases, change of placements, and reunification TDMs. The majority of TDMs are held in county sites, however when requested, TDMs are held in the community. As a result of

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<sup>1</sup> Santa Cruz County did not begin their project until 2007 so their county update is not included.

the Linkages initiative, there is a partnership with the Workforce Benefits and Administration (WBA) by staffing TDMs with a CalWORKS employment counselor. CalWORKS staff provides resources and referrals to eligible families. Due to the success of the Parent Advocate program, there is a pilot that has Parent Advocates attend new intake TDMs.

#### **SELF EVALUATION (SE)**

The SE workgroup provides requested “data byte” reports that go out to staff by email with information related to outcome measures. The Quality Assurance unit provides regular reports to staff as requested. There is a Business Objects Users group - a sub workgroup that meets to share Business Object (BO) reports and has created a method in a drive in the Agency's network where all BO reports are contained and can be assessed by users. They have created a naming convention so that everyone, including non-BO users can assess data reports in this drive. The Quality Assurance unit created Business Objects reports, which are sent to staff monthly to assist them with data entry in CWS/CMS and to provide reminders of when compliance items are due. The reports are 1) relative placements sorted by CWW with Reassessment Due Date, 2) children 15 ½ years old who need a TILP completed, 3) licensed foster homes with openings is sent to the Placement Units and 4) School letter - youth turning 18 report. In addition to the monthly Business Objects reports, QA has been providing Group Home staff with ad hoc reports to help with the step down project.

#### **FOSTER YOUTH PERMANENCE AND YOUTH TRANSITIONS AND INVOLVEMENT**

The Youth Engagement Workgroup hired a former foster youth as an advisory to work one-on-one with youth who will serve on a youth advisory council. A group of seven former and current foster youth met with the County's Youth Engagement coordinator for a weekend retreat, in preparation for the work ahead. The F2F Youth Engagement workgroup and these youth had their first meeting to define how the voice of youth consumers can play a stronger and more formal role. After a successful pilot, the Group Home Step Up effort has now been institutionalized as a full unit of eight (8) child welfare workers. This unit, named Group Home Family Preservation, is committed to securing permanent connections for youth residing in Group Home care.

#### **CALIFORNIA CONNECTED BY 25 INITIATIVE (CC25I)**

A major focus of Alameda's CC25I is to expand the network of after-care support services, and to ensure that these activities are linked with in-care training program. There has been an expansion in the type of and number of housing services through the THP+ funding vehicle. The project is working closely with the employment and educational systems. Health and Mental health services are made available through on-site teen health clinic and EPSDT funded services.

#### **BIRTH PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

Ten to twelve parents participate in the monthly meeting of the Birth Parent Involvement group and receive ongoing training in parent leadership skills. Parent Orientations

continue to be held twice each month for all parents whose children are detained. All parents who go through detention are invited to participate in these Orientations. The Orientation consists of a series of three meetings, co-facilitated by a child welfare staff and a parent leader. To date, 369 parents have graduated from the Parent Orientation series. Parent leaders have developed and delivered training to existing child welfare staff that focuses on the experience of birth parents in the child welfare system. They have also made a presentation at a community based substance abuse treatment program. The Parent Advocate Program was implemented in July, 2006 and has four parent advocates. The advocates work on a referral basis in the Family Reunification program, working with parents involved in the child welfare system for the first time who have children 3 years of age and under in out of home care. They have worked with 40 birth parents to date.

**CONTRA COSTA COUNTY EMPLOYEE AND HUMAN SERVICES – CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES (CFS)**

*F2F Funding Began: 2001*

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**RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT OF RESOURCE FAMILIES (RDS)**

Two Community Engagement Specialists were hired to commit 10% of their time to recruitment activities, especially in the targeted F2F areas. Data on the numbers of removals and resource homes in the targeted F2F areas are reviewed on a quarterly basis to measure the progress of the targeted recruitment. Monthly orientations are held across the county, with additional orientations held in the F2F targeted areas. An experienced foster parent has been contracted to attend orientations and provide follow-up calls to prospective resource families. Monthly “Coffee Klatches” (support training/networking) are held in the targeted areas. There has been significant increases in the number of families willing to provide respite care to support Resource Families. Contra Costa County continues to implement informal “Icebreakers” between the caregiver and birth parent with mostly positive results.

**BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS (BCP)**

Statistical and outcomes data are shared with the community at Redesign Partnership meetings. TDM trainings are offered on a regular basis and are open to community partners as well as foster parents. A new community needs survey was conducted, utilizing the survey tool created in collaboration with community members and foster parents. Local community and faith-based organizations were hired to administer the survey. The Redesign Partnerships are closely involved in disseminating information from the survey and the seventeen min-grant funding available to the community to address identified service gaps. As part of Differential Response, a substantial portion of State Redesign funds are utilized to fund 14 community-based case management positions in the F2F phase-in areas with a capacity to serve approximately 200 families. Community Engagement Specialists link families to Differential Response services. There is increased collaboration with schools and County Office of Education in providing educational liaison positions co-located at the child welfare and education

offices. There is a contract with the local Domestic Violence agency to ensure staff attendance to TDMs involving domestic violence issues. A full time Early Intervention and Outreach Specialist were hired to link TDM families with substance abuse treatment services when needed.

#### **TEAM DECISIONMAKING (TDM)**

TDMs are held at Imminent Risk, Emergency Placement, Placement Change, and Exit. The Imminent Risk and Emergency Placement TDMs are mandatory for certain zip codes and for African American families with children under 5 years old countywide. The Placement Change and Exit TDMs are still in the development stages and currently target children and youth with the highest level of need who are experiencing multiple placements as well as transitional-aged youth who have not been served by traditional ILSP services. Community Representatives are recruited by contracting with a local community-based agency. Providing support as well as recognition of the Community Representatives is an ongoing process. In Contra Costa, RDS is primarily responsible for implementing Icebreaker meetings that were implemented in January 2006. The most important change in Contra Costa's child welfare practice as a result of holding TDMs is providing Exit TDMs for youth as they transition into adulthood. A Young Adult Preparation Process (YAPP) which encompasses Early Transition Preparation of young teens, Formal Transition planning called "e-conferences", and Enhanced Discharge planning or Exit TDMs was developed. The vision of the YAPP is to develop comprehensive permanency and transition plans for all foster youth.

#### **SELF EVALUATION (SE)**

The self evaluation team consists of two evaluators with clerical support, guided by a Children and Family Services Division Manager. Data reports include monthly caseloads, quarterly on referrals and removals at the district level and outcome reports on specific projects that are completed as needed (e.g. effectiveness of Parent Partners on speed of reunification and recidivism). A comprehensive self-assessment, as a part of a countywide self-improvement plan, was also recently completed.

#### **FOSTER YOUTH PERMANENCE AND YOUTH TRANSITIONS AND INVOLVEMENT**

Contra Costa County has developed both the Young Adult Preparation Process (YAPP) and has become a California Permanency for Youth Project County. There is a strong California Youth Connection chapter and a youth Speakers Bureau. The youth also participate on various committees and workgroups. The Young Adult Preparation Process (YAPP) program which utilizes TDMs to provide a venue for infusing CPYP values, plan for transition and build life skills, and address permanency options on an ongoing basis.

#### **BIRTH PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

The Parent Partner Program is staffed by a Coordinator, two full-time Parent Partners and twelve part-time Parent Partners. The Parent Partners assist parents by providing advocacy and support as they navigate the child welfare system. There is a Parent

Partner handbook, Parent Orientation, brochure, and digital stories. The Parent Partners are involved in the self-assessment process, County Leadership Teams, numerous committees and panels. They also provide input to foster parent training, staff training, and the development of Ice Breakers.

**MONTEREY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES**

*F2F Funding Began: 2003*

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**RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT OF RESOURCE FAMILIES (RDS)**

A partnership has been formed with the local media so that PSAs recruiting foster parents are regularly broadcasted in English and Spanish on local television and radio. Prior to Family to Family, recruitment efforts consisted largely of tabling opportunities at a few key events, coordinated by an in-house recruiter and a small number of foster parent peer recruiters. Utilizing the slogan *Recruitment is Everyone's Business*, Monterey County has broader involvement now with staff, caregivers, and community members. There has been an increase in child welfare staff that volunteers for events, as well as foster parents who apply to be peer recruiters. In several coalition areas, members are walking door-to-door to provide information. Local businesses have been willing to distribute information on pizza boxes, car repair bills, and to post information in windows or on bulletin boards. With information provided by the self-evaluation team, the recruitment subcommittee has begun to plan for the largest growing first placement population of children and youth over the age of 11. After establishing a goal of a new home in each high school and middle school area, the committee has begun to formulate recruitment strategies that are area specific and to identify potential school and community resources in each of these areas. Current and former foster youth, as well as a community youth theatre company, produced a PSA in English and Spanish on "The 5 Top Reasons to Foster a Teenager." Children are being placed closer to their home, and even though sibling placements are often still difficult to accommodate, every effort is being made to maintain children in their local community and schools. Phone calls to foster families living in the child's school district are now the norm. The results of these efforts were 34 new licensed foster family home in 2006. A community college partner provides advanced and specialized classes for resource families. Respite is fully available to all licensed, relative and near kin caregivers, largely funded through PSA/HIV funding. Respite is introduced during the pre-service training, and seen as a key component of our resource family retention efforts. Resource parents who have completed SPARK (specialized care training) are eligible for additional hours of respite per month. The majority of the current licensed families have completed SPARK training.

**BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS (BCP)**

The local area coalition meetings serve to educate and inform community partnerships about the need for resource families, as well as the needs of birth families, caregivers, children and youth at risk of abuse and neglect. Quarterly countywide partnership

meetings, with simultaneous translations, were held throughout the county, bringing together representatives of all the coalitions. Increased outreach to all the cities in South Monterey County has resulted in local sites being made available in each of the cities for TDMs. Connections are being made with the Oaxacan service provider networks which has increased capacity to respond to families who speak in the indigenous dialects. Members of the Alisal/East Salinas Coalition assisted by walking the local neighborhoods to provide information and reaching out to local businesses for support. Increased resources to build partnerships for Salinas, which has the highest removal rates, were realized by restructuring of the Monterey Peninsula liaison duties. All F2F community liaisons speak English and Spanish. The key community partnerships have been key to Differential Response planning and implementation.

#### **TEAM DECISIONMAKING (TDM)**

Monterey County is currently holding TDM's for initial entries, imminent risk, reunification and placement changes. For first entries and imminent risk, TDMs are mandatory in areas that have rolled out geographically. Once a family has had a TDM, then subsequent moves and exit decisions are made through TDM ("once a TDM, always a TDM"). There are only a few situations in which a TDM would be waived and must be reviewed and approved at the supervisor and manager level. For example, when there is an active wraparound team, the wrap process and structure may be utilized to deal with placement issues. All cases records for which there is a TDM have neon green stickers, which serve as a reminder to staff and supervisors. The F2F community liaisons employed by the county's lead agencies are present at TDMs in their geographic areas. Having birth parents be part of the decision-making and identifying relative or near kin as placement options at the TDM are two of the most significant practice changes. There are now have 10-12 community sites that have committed space for TDMs, so the need to have a meeting at Family and Children's Services is now more an exception. TDMs are usually held at the child welfare agency only when more than one TDM is scheduled at the same time, or when there is a safety concern, such a domestic violence.

#### **SELF EVALUATION (SE)**

The Self Evaluation team meets monthly or more. All participants sit on other interagency and intra-agency evaluation workgroups and participate in state evaluation sub-committees. Within the Department, the following reports are generated: AB636 outcome based reports, referral based reports, case reports, adoption reports, SIP reports, comparison reports with matching between the TDM Data base both by client and zip code. Regular coalition specific reports are provided to community partners on rates of referrals, placement first entry, foster care, relative and near-kin, as well as the numbers of foster families.

#### **FOSTER YOUTH PERMANENCE AND YOUTH TRANSITIONS AND INVOLVEMENT**

Monterey County is involved with CPYP (California Permanency for Youth Project) and participates in the task force. All long-term court reports address permanency and permanent connections. In November 2006, Monterey County implemented Permanency Conferences countywide (previously, this was done on a case-by-case basis). In October 2006, Monterey County completed a well-received, follow-up training for CASA

volunteers, group home providers and mental health providers. New social workers are trained from the beginning on concurrent planning and how case decisions impact permanency outcomes. Monterey County recently purchased a search engine tool to help locate permanent connections for foster youth. The ILP program is managed in-house with the support of Office of Employment and Training and Hartnell Community College. Youth have also been taken to various college preparatory classes through Renaissance Scholars. In March, Monterey County ILP youth will be included in a public forum co-sponsored by the Community Action Partnership to discuss transitional services needs. In April 2007 a focus group will be held for emancipated youth, facilitated by AECF Consultant, Denise Goodman. Family and Children's Services continued to be the lead agency in Young Adult Resource Collaborative, a public private partnership of professionals who have an interest in service provision of youth ages 14 to 24. Members of this group are developing leadership training in public speaking. Monterey County has been approved to increase bed capacity for the THPP program from 6 to 12 beds. All ILP classes have been moved to the Hartnell campus as a strategy to familiarize youth with the college environment.

#### **BIRTH PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

Mentor Moms and Dads, a birth parent mentoring program, operates under the direction of Door-to-Hope, a local substance abuse provider that also has McSTART, a comprehensive multi-dimensional screening, treatment, and assessment program for substance exposed children, their parents and caregivers. This year, the first Mentor Dad/Mentor Moms joint meeting with resource parent peer mentors was held. Mentors participate in TDMs, provide trainings for staff and foster parents, attend staffing meetings, and participate in planning for major initiatives such as Differential Response.

#### **EDUCATION**

With the assistance of the Educational TA consultation provided through the Stuart Foundation to select F2F sites, Monterey County has been able to enhance coordination efforts with the County Office of Education and 26 local school districts, Probation, CASA, and Behavioral Health. An education committee meets bi-monthly and an Educational Summit was held to improve educational outcomes for foster children in Monterey County. Both the Dependency and Delinquency Court judges attended, along with representatives for Family and Children's Services, Behavioral Health, Probation, CASA, attorneys, a number of school districts and Foster Youth Services.

#### **SAN FRANCISCO COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY (SFHSA)**

*F2F Funding Began: 2001*

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#### **RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT OF RESOURCE FAMILIES (RDS):**

In FY 05/06, SFHSA licensed a total of 16 homes and since June 2006, 15 homes have been licensed, primarily in the targeted zip code. Targeted areas include homes for older youth (ages 13-18), bilingual youth (including two Asian homes), and targeted neighborhoods. Some identified supports include Icebreakers, which are in the planning

stage, and regular management meetings with Group Home, FFA, and foster parent providers. SFHSA is expanding supports to Spanish-speaking foster parents by providing monthly meeting space and logistical supports at one of the family resource centers that serve Spanish-speaking clients. San Francisco also plans to expand recruitment through partnership with the school district.

#### **BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS (BCP)**

Some of the community partners with the department include SafeStart, Greenbook, Courts, Mental Health, and community-based agency. Community partnership has been particularly successful in the implementation of the Differential Response program. SFHSA continues to contract with two family resource centers in targeted communities to attend TDMs and provide support to families. There is a citywide Foster Care Improvement Task Force, which focuses on reducing disproportionality and a Core Team Meeting, which provides input into SIP development and implementation.

#### **TEAM DECISIONMAKING (TDM)**

SFHSA currently holds mandatory TDMs for all placement changes and initial removals from a child's family of origin. SFHSA has developed protocol for the final implementation stage of TDM Permanency/Reunification, and holds these as requested. SFHSA instituted a new firewall for TDM in 2006 that resulted in an increase in TDMs. The TDM Scheduler receives a weekly census of the placement moves for that particular week and compares it to which TDMs occurred. A report is developed identifying which moves did or did not have TDMs; this is distributed to all management and supervisory staff for follow-up as needed. SFHSA continues to contract with two family resource centers in the targeted communities, Intercity and Instituto, to have designated staff present as community partners in the TDM meetings. A school district staff attends the TDM and helps to identify educational information to be considered in the TDM process.

#### **SELF EVALUATION (SE)**

The Self-Evaluation Team (SET) has been meeting on a regular basis since SFHSA first began F2F in 2001. The SET was instrumental in developing a youth survey to better identify outcomes of San Francisco foster youth. Research indicates that emancipating foster youth are at high risk for negative outcomes, including homelessness, unemployment, and school dropout. It is difficult to obtain information about these youth after they emancipate. By trying different methods, SFHSA was able to successfully survey a random sample of emancipated youth and found that 78% were still attending school six months after emancipation. One third had not graduated from high school prior to emancipation, but almost all of them were trying to get their GED or otherwise continue their education. According to the survey, 64% of the youth were working, but SFHSA also conducted a match with state payroll tax data and found that emancipated youth tended to work sporadically and that their average earnings were well below the federal poverty line. According to the survey, 8% of the youth were homeless.

#### **FOSTER YOUTH PERMANENCE AND YOUTH TRANSITIONS AND INVOLVEMENT**

SFHSA has developed a Youth Permanence Workgroup to identify ways to promote and sustain permanency and self-sufficiency for youth. The Workgroup members include foster youth, Honoring Emancipated Youth (HEY), California Youth Permanency



Connection, and Independent Living Skills Program. The workgroup members provide presentations at new foster parent orientations and homes for youth have increased. The Family Finding Pilot is targeting establishing family connections for 20 youth older than 13. San Francisco is contributing general fund dollars to assist with the adoption of older children and youth. When a child has mental health needs that require placement in an acute or sub-acute facility, San Francisco has one acute care facility (Seneca) that is located at San Francisco General Hospital. In the past, when acute care is not available, SFHSA funded “shadows,” staff that provides individual attention to child throughout the day so that children can safely remain in a lower level of care. Through contracts established this year with Seneca Center, the Agency has moved away from the use of shadows to provide more focused, intensive intervention. The Short-Term Seneca Connections program provides crisis intervention and intensive case management services for children and youth at risk of losing their placement and moving to a new placement, including higher-level placements. Seneca was also awarded the SB163 Wraparound contract in August, 2006, and is serving youth placed in group homes levels 10 and above in an effort to step them down to family-like settings and community placements. Through the Seneca programs, the Agency has nearly eliminated the use of shadows and expects to see increased placement stability and permanency for the children involved in the program.

#### **CALIFORNIA CONNECTED BY 25 INITIATIVE (CC25I)**

In 2005, the Stuart Foundation awarded SFHSA the Connected by 25 Initiative grant to build a comprehensive continuum of services for transitioning foster youth ages 14 through 24. This is a three-year grant and SFHSA has just completed the first year of implementation. SFHSA is partnering across agency divisions and working closely with Workforce Development staff to accomplish project goals. There has been the installation of three informational kiosks for youth in the three One Stop Centers in San Francisco and the assignment of a Workforce Development staff to coordinate employment services for foster youth. There was the creation of a “Friends of ILSP” non-profit fundraising organization, which has raised over \$22,000 in 2006. Twenty-seven additional housing units were created through the LEASE program, First Place Funds, and THP+. Thirty new mentors were recruited for ILSP youth and a resource guide for youth and caregivers placed out of county was developed.

#### **BIRTH PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

SFHSA has made good progress in expanding efforts at parent engagement. This includes contracted services which provide for peer parent mentors and support groups for parents, as well as the Parent Advisory Council (“PAC”). The Parent Advisory Council has provided a structured way to work with parents to address systems issues, and has mushroomed into further parent involvement in other F2F committees. SFHSA has identified the expansion of parent engagement as one of its priorities as an F2F anchor site.

#### **DISPROPORTIONALITY AND DISPARITY**

SFHSA is analyzing outcome data for entries and reentries for African American children to address issues of disproportionality and disparate child welfare outcomes in San Francisco. Action Steps in this area include: 1) the development of the San Francisco

Foster Care Improvement Task Force, a city-wide task force convened to implement the recommendations of the 2004 Disproportionality Project. 2) the February 2006 roll-out of Structured Decision Making (SDM) standardized risk assessment which should help reduce disproportionality and ensure equity. 3) the increase number of TDMs for removals in particular units or sections as well as overall throughout the City. Through citywide collaborations, such as the Communities of Opportunity, which focuses on targeted neighborhoods, SFHSA may be able to further impact the disproportion in the child welfare system.

#### **EDUCATION**

The Stuart Foundation funded the City's Educational TA Team, which includes staff from SFHSA, San Francisco Unified School District, Community Behavioral Health Services, and Juvenile Probation. The goal of the Team is to improve educational outcomes for foster children and youth and prepare them for higher education. Presentations about TDM have been made to all the school district principals in 2006. Since May 2005, SFHSA has worked with Mental Health Advocacy through the Educational TA committee. This committee meets regularly to integrate educational issues into SFHSA's Family-to-Family efforts.

#### **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (DV)**

SFHSA is engaged with a number of partners to further outcome improvement efforts including SafeStart, Greenbook, Courts, Mental Health, and community-based organizations to address domestic violence issues in service delivery and collaboration between agencies. SFHSA was recently awarded a technical assistance grant from the Family Violence Prevention Fund to more fully address issues of domestic violence in TDMs, which builds on the work of the Greenbook project. Local providers of services to battered women are requested to be at virtually every system and community table involving violence against women and children. A key strategy is to increase the number and diversity of F2F community partner agencies who can support women and children experiencing violence at the six Family Resource Centers (FRCs) currently in partnership with SFHSA.

<b>SAN MATEO COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY – CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES</b>
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<i>F2F Funding Began: 2001</i>
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#### **RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT OF RESOURCE FAMILIES (RDS)**

San Mateo County is utilizing TDM in some adoption cases to improve success of permanent placement. Two African-American staff was hired in the Adolescent Services unit to provide representation and cultural support to clients of African-American descent. The Family Self Sufficiency Team liaison attends TDMs for Family Reunification and Family Maintenance cases.

### **BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS (BCP)**

Support, training and resources about TDM are provided to court workers, community partners, families, facilitators, high-risk groups, Family Resource Centers and school workers. Asset Coaches for youth are being utilized in some of the TDM meetings through the Fostering the Future Initiative in an attempt to actively engage youth who do not have an assigned personal advocate to help determine their individual needs, services and goals. CASA volunteers are assigned to 75% of the clients participating in TDMs strengthening the relationship between the child welfare workers and the court workers. Holding TDM's for client placement facilities outside of San Mateo County increased community participation and helped relationship building and education about purpose and process of TDM. This year, there were 4 new and 10-15 total facilities and community partners, including juvenile hall.

### **TEAM DECISIONMAKING (TDM)**

TDMs provided to community increased by 16%. Parents are required to attend TDMs and support services are provided to youth who do not want their parents present at their TDM. TDMs are utilized in cases transitioning from Family Reunification status to Family Maintenance status with the attempt to improve re-entry rates by maintaining services and case management to families that are not showing stability after 3 months of placement. SPIN USA continues to provide training to facilitators of TDMs and their contract has been extended an additional 2 years to provide individual and group training to workers and FSST trainers. There is cross-training between TDM unit and adolescent service workers who are heaviest client base for TDM. Follow-up after TDMs review client outcomes in an attempt to hold the agency and practices accountable and reduce the number of placement changes experienced by youth. Collaboration with the A Domestic Violence coordinator; utilizing F2F principles, also cross-trains with TDM facilitators to improve the recognition, evaluation and treatment outcomes of clients experiencing domestic violence

### **SELF EVALUATION (SE)**

Data reports are produced monthly and quarterly and are used by regional managers and supervisors to monitor placement changes, the needs of the clients and increase the effectiveness of casework provided by workers and agencies. The F2F Coordinator facilitates quarterly meetings of program evaluation with the self-assessment policy team. A Citizen's Review Panel is completed and required every three years.

### **SANTA CLARA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES (DFCS)**

*F2F Funding Began: 2001*

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### **RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT OF RESOURCE FAMILIES (RDS)**

DFCS has shifted recruitment efforts from internal and centralized to community-based and regional. The Resource Family Support Team was developed to provide additional

support for the county's licensed resource home providers. The team is comprised of former or current foster parents. Each resource home advocate is assigned to a specific family and participates in TDMs whenever a placement change occurs. Santa Clara also has a Foster/Adoptive Parent Resource Center. Relative finding is a key strategy in Santa Clara. Data has shown a higher proportion of children are placed with relatives.

#### **BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS (BCP)**

Six community action teams were developed. Four teams are defined by region. Two teams are defined by culture and ethnicity. Each community action team (CAT) is co-chaired by a community member and department staff. The county has created a joint response with law enforcement to reduce the number of children coming into care, with a major emphasis on children of color. This joint response program has expanded beyond the San Jose Police to all jurisdictions within the County. Each respective CAT has representatives who are available to participate in TDMs on an as-needed basis.

#### **TEAM DECISIONMAKING (TDM)**

TDMs began in July 2003. Meetings have been conducted for children entering foster care, children changing homes within foster care, and children exiting foster care due to family reunification or aging out of the foster care system.

#### **SELF EVALUATION (SE)**

The SE Committee has evolved into the county's SIP data team and provides data to other SIP community stakeholders on county progress on SIP outcomes. .

#### **FOSTER YOUTH PERMANENCE AND YOUTH TRANSITIONS AND INVOLVEMENT**

California Youth Connection (CYC) is an active participant on the Foster Parent Advisory Board. Santa Clara County uses the PRIDE/F2F curriculum and both birth parents and former foster youth from CYC are included in the training. A Foster Youth Advisory Board was developed to review the gaps in foster youth education, housing, and employment services and recommend ways to bridge these gaps with services. This board has five elected officers and serves in an advisory/oversight role for the agency.

#### **CALIFORNIA CONNECTED BY 25 INITIATIVE (CC25I)**

Santa Clara is one of five CA counties participating in CC25I in building a comprehensive continuum of services that support foster youth who are transitioning to adulthood, ages 14-24. Santa Clara has engaged community support in developing viable training and employment programs and a continuum of housing options for emancipating foster youth.