

**CALIFORNIA CHILD WELFARE COUNCIL**  
**Discussion Highlights**  
**December 9, 2015**

---

**I. Call to Order and Introductions**

Secretary Dooley and Justice Raye extended a personal welcome to Council members. Secretary Dooley welcomed new members Senator Hannah-Beth Jackson (California State Senate, representing the 19th District) and Lisa Bates (Deputy Director of the California Department of Housing and Community Development). Justice Raye then asked Council members to introduce themselves.

Secretary Dooley announced that the Child Welfare Services – New System (CWS-NS) development will now proceed on a phased-in approach of its various segments as they become ready rather than waiting until the whole system is developed before implementing several years from now. She called on California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Director Will Lightbourne to provide details. Will explained that, while the scope of work remains the same, the plan now calls for an agile, iterative approach starts delivery in Fiscal Year 2016-17 versus pre-existing path delivering an entire system in Fiscal Year 2020-21 through:

- Early and frequent delivery of business value.
- Strong Federal support and partnership for being a model State.
- Building long term service delivery skills and capabilities in government.
- Beginning the transition to vendor/government partnership capability.

Therefore, the original plan for a single procurement will now be subdivided into smaller pieces in order to accelerate delivering value to the counties and state; validate that users’ needs are being met; and reduce the risk of large system failure. The goal is to deliver a set of information services that does everything its users need to assure the safety, permanency, and well-being of children at risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

**II. Approval of the September 2, 2015 Discussion Highlights (Action Item)**

Secretary Dooley asked for comments or suggested revisions to the September 2, 2015 Child Welfare Council Discussion Highlights. There being none, they were approved on a consensus vote.

**III. CDSYT Committee/Work Group on Supporting Healthy Sexual Development of Youth in Foster Care**

Justice Raye called on Rochelle Trochtenberg to introduce the topic and panelists.

**PRESENTATION**

Rochelle reminded Council members and the public that the Work Group had held a convening in February where 75 people – representing current and former foster youth, foster parents, youth advocates, mental health clinicians, county social workers, state community care licensing managers and evaluators, state children and family services managers, and state education managers – gathered together and then formed small groups to contribute their thoughts, experiences, discoveries, and ideas related to 35 topics they had identified relating to supporting the healthy sexual development of youth in foster care. The findings and recommendations from the convening were presented to the Council in on June 3, 2015. In furtherance of a recommendation to create guidance on how the intent of the “Responsible and Prudent Parenting Standard” can be used in promoting the healthy sexual development of youth in foster care, the Work Group members presented a work shop at the 2015 California Foster Parent Conference on October 23, 2015. The following presentation provides information about what was learned at that workshop and next steps for the Work Group.

To set the stage, Rochelle played a U-tube video in which a youth told his struggles as a teenager after he revealed that he was gay and in a relationship to his foster mother and social worker.

Rochelle then called on Sylvia Pizzini to speak on behalf of Fernando Sandoval, CDSS Community Care Licensing Division, and share information regarding how the Department will be implementing the newly revised statute

**CALIFORNIA CHILD WELFARE COUNCIL**  
**Discussion Highlights**  
**December 9, 2015**

---

regarding the Responsible and Prudent Parenting Standard through revised Regulations and the opportunities available for the Work Group to give input as part of the stakeholder involvement process, as follows:

**Background**

- Senate Bill 794 (Chapter 425, Statutes of 2015), added new training and staffing requirements pertaining to the Reasonable and Prudent Parent Standard (RPPS) and amended the definition of RPPS to include the encouragement of emotional and developmental growth of the child, thus bringing the California Welfare and Intuitions Code in alignment with federal standards.
- The Intent of RPPS supports the empowerment of a caregiver to exercise common sense and good judgment to assess circumstances and events in which a foster child may participate.

**How RPPS may be used to address Healthy Sexual Development of youth in foster care**

- RPPS supports foster parents in making decisions regarding participation in age appropriate activities, which may include dating in either a group setting or individually if appropriate.
- RPPS allows for ongoing, open, age appropriate discussions between foster parents and foster youth about sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, and reproduction.
- RPPS encourages foster parents to provide accessible and reliable information to foster youth about sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, and reproduction.
- RPPS promotes positive exchanges that will affect adolescents' overall wellbeing and potentially their health throughout their lives.

**Process for the development of new regulations**

- The Community Care Licensing (CCL) Division within the Department of Social Services begins drafting regulations, working with the Legal Division to confirm accuracy.
- Stakeholder's comments are included to validate that the regulations are suitable.
- After the regulations are written they are submitted to Office of Regulations Development (ORD).
- ORD will approve the regulation and submit them to the Office of Administrative Law (OAL) and finally to the Secretary of State for publication.

**Timeline for the regulations**

- The anticipated date for CCL submission to ORD is early 2016.
- ORD has one year to complete the necessary steps before submitting to OAL for final approval.
- Upon approval by OAL, the regulations are submitted to the Secretary of State and become effective quarterly.

**Next Steps**

- CCL will begin working with the Legal Division on developing regulations to help guide foster parents, resource parents and Short-Term Residential Treatment Center providers to allow greater flexibility around the prudent parent standard in supporting the healthy sexual development of youth in foster care.
- CCL looks forward to working with stakeholders, including the Child Welfare Council's Work Group on Supporting the Healthy Sexual Development of Youth in Foster Care, to produce regulations that are both thoughtful and helpful for providers and youth.

Sylvia then introduced Vanessa Hernandez to share findings from the Foster Parent Conference. Vanessa reported that the highly experienced foster parents told the Work Group that they:

- Welcomed the opportunity to discuss the topic openly and wanted more information on how to support the healthy sexual development of youth in their care
- Experienced discomfort with the topic and would appreciate help in how to best engage in conversations with youth in their care

Vanessa then asked Andrea Cammann to report on the work plan going forward. Andrea stated that taking the cue from what youth and foster parents had told the Work Group, the plan was now to identify several areas

**CALIFORNIA CHILD WELFARE COUNCIL**  
**Discussion Highlights**  
**December 9, 2015**

---

relating to the broad topic, e.g., dealing with past trauma, forming sexual and gender identity, safe sex, best practices)and focus on one at a time. The first area of focus will be LGBT Youth.

Andrea then turned the presentation over to Marsha Lewis-Akeem who outlined next steps as follows:

- Promote training for Foster Parents on supporting healthy sexual development of LGBTQ foster youth.
- Incorporating the Foster Youth Bill of Rights into training materials.
- Prepare issue brief including problem statement, literature review, current policies, and best practices.
- Work with representatives from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office to review opportunities for enhancing Resource Parent training curricula.

DISCUSSION

Council members pointed out that the topic of supporting healthy sexual development is one that most parents struggle with, not just foster parents. The additional complexity of trauma experience by many foster children adds a new dimension to the level of support needed. The range of topics –safe sex, pregnancy prevention, dating guidance, sexual orientation and gender identity – also adds to the challenges. On this latter point, Council members asked about why the initial focus was on LGBTQ youth in foster care, and Work Group members responded that they selected that topic as a place to start, with the other areas to be studied over time.

**IV. CSEC Action Team Report on 2015 Accomplishments**

Secretary Dooley introduced the topic by acknowledging the extraordinary leadership of Leslie Heimov as Co-Chair of the CSEC Action Team, in bringing California's efforts to develop resources and establish protocols for serving child trafficking victims. Secretary Dooley stated that while she serves as the other Co-Chair and fully supports the work, she has relied on Leslie for getting the job done.

PRESENTATION

Leslie reminded Council members that the CSEC Action Team was established in 2013 as a special workgroup of the California Child Welfare Council and includes over 50 members who serve in multidisciplinary and geographically diverse work groups. She explained that the Action Team works with other efforts on behalf of CSEC, including the federal Preventing and Addressing Child Trafficking (PACT) Grant, Alameda County's Human Exploitation and Trafficking (H.E.A.T.) project, and CDSS's Child Trafficking Response Unit

Leslie reviewed the Action Team's 2015 Milestones

- January - CSEC 101 training begins following AT feedback on learning objectives.
- April - CDSS issues ACIN No. I-23-15 with AT Model Framework Toolkit.
- May - CDSS issues ACL No. 15-48 with AT CSEC Practice Guidance Toolkit.
- June - 35 counties submit county plans to CDSS in order to opt-into CSEC Program.
- September - CA Community Colleges Chancellor's Office begins to deliver CSEC 101 training for foster parents, FFA parents and group home staff.
- October - 15 CSEC Program counties selected for Tier I baseline funding while 20 are selected for enhanced Tier II funding and are required to submit interagency CSEC protocols for review.
- November - 2 more Tier I counties selected for enhanced Tier II funding (22 total).
- December - Action Team hosts CSEC Convening for 21 Tier II county MDTs at Beyond the Bench with over 210 participants; 21 Tier II Counties; over 12 organization types; more than 25 Community Based service providers.
- December - Publishes: *Improving California's Multi-System Response to CSEC: Resources for Counties.*

The convening included the following segments:

**CALIFORNIA CHILD WELFARE COUNCIL**  
**Discussion Highlights**  
**December 9, 2015**

---

- Answering the Knock at the Door – Two survivors tell their story.
- Responding to the Federal Call to Action – Panel .
- Safety Planning in Practice – Interactive Simulation.
- Applying New Knowledge to Policy - County Table Talk.
- 300(b) Who? – Activity and Panel .
- Mandates & MDTs: What’s My Role? – Agency Activity.
- Placements: Fostering Environments and Policies that Support Well-Being – Panel.
- County Next Steps: Where Do We Go From Here? – County Table Talk.

Leslie then announced that the CSEC Action Team will be forming a Survivor’s Advisory Board who will provide vital reality checks on all its work products and convenings. There will be compensation for the survivors’ participation as well as support for any “triggers” that may occur as the survivors recount experience in the interest of educating Action Team members about what life as a CSEC involves. The selection process will be announced early next year.

Leslie concluded by outlining the plan for moving forward in 2016:

- Report on CSEC Program Year I
- Support for CSEC Program Year II
- Survivor Advisory Board
- SB 794 implementation
- Ongoing collaboration with CDSS, H.E.A.T., & PACT
- Training and education of members and their networks through quarterly meetings

More information may be obtained by contacting Kate Walker Brown ([kwalker@youthlaw.org](mailto:kwalker@youthlaw.org)) or Elizabeth (Lizzy) Laferriere ([elaferriere@youthlaw.org](mailto:elaferriere@youthlaw.org)) or @NCYL\_CSEC. Materials are also available on the CSEC Program app:



**DISCUSSION**

Council members expressed appreciation for the outstanding work of the CSEC Action Team. Recognition was given to Team members Kate Walker for her expertise and to Lizzy Larerriere for her impressive organizational skills that allow the many moving parts of the project to proceed smoothly.

**V. Supporting Family Reunification – A Report from Three Committees**

Justice Raye called on Sylvia Pizzini to introduce the topic. Sylvia explained that the Council had two projects focused on Family Reunification – the Permanency Committee and the Priority Access to Services and Supports (PASS) Task Force, and had joined with the Data Integration and Information Sharing Committee in developing this presentation on Family Reunification.

**CALIFORNIA CHILD WELFARE COUNCIL**  
**Discussion Highlights**  
**December 9, 2015**

---

**PRESENTATION**

Daniel Webster, Co-Chair of the Data Committee presented an update of information previously reported by the PASS Taskforce and CDSS based on initial findings of an exploratory analysis of reunification outcomes in California in 2012. The data now being presented were from the Child Welfare System/Case Management System (CWS/CMS), updated by the California Child Welfare Indicators Project (CCWIP) in November 2015. The project goals were to:

1. Provide baseline data on the **number of children served in the Family Maintenance** service component of the Child Welfare System, provided either before or after Family Reunification. As illustrated later, families may receive any combination of Family Maintenance and Family Reunification services.
2. Provide baseline data on the **number of children served** in foster care under the **Family Reunification** service component of the system
3. Understand which populations achieve better **reunification outcomes** within the system.

The data in the above figures were extracted from the publically accessible **California Child Welfare Indicators Project** website that is maintained through a partnership between CDSS and UC Berkeley (observations with missing voluntary status [less than 1%] excluded from calculations). These data represent approximately **51,678 children who were served on July 1, 2015 through the Family Maintenance and Family Reunification service components** of the Child Welfare System. With the exception of Pre-Placement Family Maintenance, the majority of children receive these services through a court-ordered case plan. Of those children whose families were receiving Pre-Placement Family Maintenance Services, less than half (40.6%) received services through a court-order. Demographic differences in these data reveal that:

- Children 0-5 years represent between 42% - 47% of services, with the greatest proportion of those children in Family Reunification.
- There were no differences between males and females.

The following further describes how Family Maintenance Services can be provided before or after children are removed from their parents and placed in foster care with Family Reunification as the goal:

- **Family Maintenance (FM):** provides services to families in crisis to prevent or remedy abuse or neglect with parents and children together in the home. Services are provided based on a *case plan* and can include but are not limited to: mental health counseling, emergency shelter care, respite care, emergency in-home caretakers, substance abuse treatment, domestic violence services, and parenting education. Families may receive any of these services with or without court involvement.
- **Pre-Placement Family Maintenance** services are provided to families who are at risk for abuse or neglect for the purpose of preventing separation of the children from their families. Children remain at home under specific conditions while parents complete a time-limited case plan. For the purposes of this analysis, pre-placement family maintenance services were provided to families whose situations intensified to requiring children to be removed from the home.
- **Post-Placement Family Maintenance:** Services are provided to families following reunification with the goal of monitoring and stabilizing families in order to prevent future removals and re-entries into foster care.

Of the children (0-17 years old) who were removed from their home and placed in foster care for the first time (and remained in care at least 8 days) in 2012 (22,032) and 2013 (23,654):

- 20 percent (9,022) reunified within six months.
- 36 percent (16,409) reunified within one year.

Based on earlier year's information, we would expect that approximately:

**CALIFORNIA CHILD WELFARE COUNCIL**  
**Discussion Highlights**  
**December 9, 2015**

---

- 56 percent of children will reunify with their families within two years (based on 2011, 2012 cohorts).
- 60 percent will reunify within three years (based on 2010, 2011 cohorts).

Regarding re-entries to foster care after reunification:

- Using data from the website, 11.7% of children who reunified with their families in State Fiscal Year 2013 (July 2012-June 2013) experienced a failed reunification, as measured by re-entry into foster care within twelve months.
- In general, infants were more likely to re-enter foster care than other age groups (14%).
- Children exiting from group care (25%) and county foster homes (16%) were more likely to re-enter care than children placed in any other type of home.
- Children last placed with relatives were least likely to re-enter the system (8.6%).
- 11-15 year olds exiting from group care were most at-risk for re-entering foster care -- 29% of those who reunified experienced a subsequent removal within 12 months.

Daniel then presented information from a Case Analysis of the data, with the goal of placing Family Reunification in context with other child welfare services - especially Family Maintenance and Permanent Placement. *Caveats to the analysis are that these data look at child welfare services through the lens of the child welfare case, not the placement episode; a child welfare case may have more than one placement episode. These data do not include child welfare cases where the only service program was Emergency Response. With one exception, data for cases opened in 2012 were used. These data look at child welfare services through the lens of the child welfare case, not the placement episode. A child welfare case may have more than one placement episode. Family Reunification Services can be provided for 24 months, so the 2012 cohort was chosen to allow sufficient follow time to observe returns to service.*

- For about half (52% - 26,003 children in 2012) the first service is Family Maintenance, i.e., in home services focused on keeping the family together without the use of out-of-home placement. For somewhat less than half (44% - 22,026 children in 2012) the first service is Family Reunification, i.e., the child was removed from the home at, or shortly after, the referral that led to the case opening. The remaining children (4% - 1,752 children in 2012) begin with either Permanent Placement or Supportive Transition services.
- Focusing on the 26,003 children who start with Family Maintenance: Most of the children who receive Family Maintenance Services return home. Their median service days are 234. But, about 13% of the children who start with Family Maintenance move on to Family Reunification because efforts to maintain the child in the home with services were not successful [or the agency learned more about the level of risk in the home]. These children received a median of 119 days of Family Maintenance services before transitioning to Family Reunification.
- Thus, we have two groups of children receiving Family Reunification Services - those who began their case with Family Reunification – 22,026 children in 2012, 87% of Family Reunification cases - and those who received other services - almost always Family Maintenance Services - first. Thus slightly over half (51% in 2012, 53% in 2013) who have a case opened in the year will experience Family Reunification services at some point during the case opening. These 25,387 children who received Family Reunification services come from about 14,843 families [based on common mothers].
- What is the outcome of Family Reunification services? About 40% transition to Permanent Placement Services, i.e., the child welfare agency/court concludes that reunification is not possible (or desirable) - 10,104 (39.8% in 2012). This is after a median of 398 days of Family Reunification Services [i.e., a good, long serious try at reunification] Another 47% (11,934 in 2012) return home to Family Maintenance Services after a median of 278 days of services. For some children the services case is closed when Family Reunification Services are terminated – 2,771 - 10.9% in 2012 after a median of 289 service days. A few exit in other ways - Supportive Transition or back to Emergency Response or a new Family Reunification



**CALIFORNIA CHILD WELFARE COUNCIL**  
**Discussion Highlights**  
**December 9, 2015**

service episode [after a gap in services programs]. A few were still in their initial 2012 Family Reunification episode at our 10/1/15 data cutoff.

- What about the children who return to Family Maintenance Services or whose case is closed when they leave Family Reunification services? Using a 2010 cohort we find that 6.1% of those who exited to Family Maintenance services and 7.4% of those who exited to no services have a new service case within a year of their service case being closed. [Note, that isn't within a year of exiting Family Reunification for those who went to post-FR Family Maintenance, but within a year of the end of the post- Family Reunification/ Family Maintenance services] This is an encouraging trend given that the post-Family Reunification family maintenance cases are a group at much higher risk of reentry (which is why Family Maintenance services are provided). Even though the absolute difference in reentry percent is not striking, the “No Service” group has a reentry rate that is 21% higher than the “Post-FR FM” cases (i.e.,  $7.4/6.1=1.213$ , or 21.3% greater)
- What about the children who return to Family Maintenance Services or whose case is closed when they leave Family Reunification services? Using a 2010 cohort we find that 6.1% of those who exited to Family Maintenance services and 7.4% of those who exited to no services have a new service case within a year of their service case being closed. [Note, that isn't within a year of exiting Family Reunification for those who went to post-FR Family Maintenance, but within a year of the end of the post- Family Reunification/ Family Maintenance services] This is an encouraging trend given that the post- Family Reunification /Family Maintenance cases are a group at much higher risk of reentry (which is why Family Maintenance services are provided). Even though the absolute difference in reentry percent is not striking, the “No Service” group has a reentry rate that is 21% higher than the “Post- Family Reunification/Family Maintenance” cases (i.e.,  $7.4/6.1=1.213$ , or 21.3% greater).
- The 39.8% move from Family Reunification to Permanent Placement, meaning Reunification is no longer an options, underscores critical need for receipt of appropriate services during Family Reunification (though median days of 398 appears to indicate that there was a long amount of time spent attempting Family Reunification, perhaps additional, different, or better services were warranted).

Sylvia then introduced a documentary called “Tough Love” in which two families tell of their experiences in the Family Reunification Program. An overview of the film was provided as follows:

ELEMENTS OF FAMILY REUNIFICATION	HANNAH AND PHILLY NEW YORK CITY	PATRICK SEATTLE
Family members	Hasna “Hannah” – mother of of Ezno “A.J.,” Nia, and Maria “Mia”. Philly – Hannah’s husband and father of Mia, who was born after Hannah’s other two children were removed from her care. Sammy – Hannah’s former boyfriend and father of A.J. and Nia.	Patrick – father of Natalya.
Who reported to the child abuse/neglect hotline?	Hannah called the police because of Domestic Violence by Sammy; child welfare case opened; A.J. and Nia remained in care of Hannah who went to live at her mother’s house. Hannah’s mother called the hotline because Hannah left A.J. and Nia in her care for several days at a time while she went out partying with friends.	Patrick called the child abuse hotline when he was going to jail for 20 days and Natalya’s mother was not able to care for her due to her methamphetamine use. When Patrick got out of jail he started using methamphetamine again after two years of sobriety.

**CALIFORNIA CHILD WELFARE COUNCIL**  
**Discussion Highlights**  
**December 9, 2015**

ELEMENTS OF FAMILY REUNIFICATION	HANNAH AND PHILLY NEW YORK CITY	PATRICK SEATTLE
Why were children removed?	Neglect due to abandonment.	Neglect due to methamphetamine use and gambling as well as being incarcerated at the time of removal.
Where were the children placed?	With the paternal grandmother, Sammy's mother.	With foster parents.
What was the service plan for reunification?	Housing and scheduled visitation with children.	Drug Court/Substance abuse treatment program including UAs; maintain employment; scheduled visitation with child; forming positive support system.
What is the parents' background?	Hannah born in Bangladesh, came to U.S. at age two with parents and siblings; her father was angry, violent person; mother left with children when Hannah was 13 and went to live in a shelter. Hannah began hanging out with friends and met Sammy; had an abortion at age 15; subsequently gave birth to A.J. and Nia. Hannah states she had no support from adults in helping her learn about family planning.	Patrick is the youngest of eight children; father was a police officer; father was an alcoholic; parents divorced when he was in fourth grade; mother worked three jobs to support her children; at age 14 Patrick quit school to work and help his mother; he states he began "self-medicating with drugs, never facing my problems."
What were the struggles and successes in meeting the goals of the service plan?	Struggles: Poverty; logistical demands of the service plan; housing; transportation. Successes: Maintaining visitation schedule; positive, loving interactions with A.J. and Nia during visitation; pre-natal care for Mia; Philly's employment; Hannah's employment.	Struggles: Relapse again – drank wine; gambled away rent money. Successes: Maintaining visitation schedule; positive, loving interactions with Natalya during visitation; employment; completed treatment program.
How were the cases resolved?	Paternal grandmother given custody of A.J. and Nia, with visitation rights to Hannah and Philly. At birth, Mia was under the supervision of child welfare in Hannah and Philly's home; case dismissed at same time the paternal grandmother was given custody of A.J. and Nia.	Patrick and Natalya reunified.

**DISCUSSION**

Council members expressed concern regarding the approach to services, particularly with Hannah and Philly, who did not appear to put their child in any danger and therefore Mia should not have been made a dependent. Further, the parents, especially Hannah and Philly, were required to spend an inordinate amount of time on activities required by their case plan and did not receive a lot of support from the child welfare agency. It was also noted that there are a large number of professionals involved with families in Reunification. The families seemed to succeed in spite of the system designed to help them, not because of it.



**CALIFORNIA CHILD WELFARE COUNCIL**  
**Discussion Highlights**  
**December 9, 2015**

---

A question was also raised regarding the applicability of experiences of families served in other states to California.

Lori Clarke, consultant on the PASS Project noted that the documentary provided excellent examples of the need for parents to have priority access to housing, substance use disorder treatment, and mental health services, which are three of the resource areas under study by the PASS project, at the time they are needed so that parents can meet their case plan goals within the time limits set by law,

Carroll Schroeder concluded that the video was useful in portraying what family reunification cases really look like, not what we'd like them to look like in that it showed:

1. The complexity of challenges facing families.
2. The vulnerability of parents and children.
3. The enormous number of people involved in these cases and the problems inherent in trying to coordinate efforts.
4. The desire on everybody's part to get things right.
5. That there is no silver bullet that will fix everything right now.

**VI. 2015 Enacted Legislation**

Justice Raye called on Gail Gronnert, Special Assistant to Assembly Speaker Toni Atkins, to review legislation that was enacted in 2015.

**PRESENTATION**

Gail provided context for her presentation by informing Council members that child welfare and foster care are major areas of interest by the Legislature and there are more bills introduced on this topic than any other. A list and description of the bills she reviewed may be found in the meeting materials provided at: [www.chhs.ca.gov/Pages/MeetingInformation.aspx](http://www.chhs.ca.gov/Pages/MeetingInformation.aspx) . The full text, history, and analyses of any bill may be found at: <http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billSearchClient.xhtml> by using the Bill Information button to locate the bill.

**DISCUSSION**

Council members expressed appreciation for the comprehensive review of new statutes, and Justice Raye thanked Gail for taking the time to keep the Council up-to-date.

**VII. Status Reports from Committees and Task Forces**

Justice Raye reminded Council members that, at the suggestion of the Steering Committee, Committees and Task Forces have the option of submitting a written status report summarizing activities and noted that three Committees had used this option. He then called on the Co-Chairs.

▪ **Prevention/Early Intervention Committee-Statewide Citizen Review Panel (PEI/CRP)**

Dr. Kathryn Icenhower reported that Committee members are encouraged by the new federal Family First Act and advocacy for family-centered treatment. They are working with the CDSS Office of Child Abuse Prevention to follow up on recommendations made to the Department in their role as the Citizens Review Panel, with a goal of achieving uniform prevention practices throughout the state.

**CALIFORNIA CHILD WELFARE COUNCIL**  
**Discussion Highlights**  
**December 9, 2015**

---

▪ **Permanency Committee**

Carroll Schroeder and Bob Friend submitted a written report highlighting the following activities underway:

- ✓ Planning for a Research Convening is underway. The next steps include finalizing a 2016 date with Judicial Council, establishing a site, inviting key researchers, constructing an agenda and process, inviting participants, and conducting the convening.
- ✓ Continuing to support growth and expansion of Dependency Drug Treatment Courts as determined by an assessment of updated information from the courts and identification of sites that are interested in expansion or developing a Dependency Drug Treatment Court.
- ✓ Promoting Child and Family Teams by providing guidance to the Core Practice Model that is under development by CDSS as part of the Katie A Settlement.
- ✓ Monitoring implementation of the newly enacted Continuum of Care Reform to ensure focus on and support for permanency for children and youth of all ages.

▪ **Child Development and Successful Youth Transitions Committee**

Gordon Jackson and Rochelle Trochtenberg submitted a written report that described the work groups underway, as follows:

- ✓ Education Work Group: Focus on school stability issues and defining best practices for ensuring appropriate decision-making by foster youth's Education Rights Holders and the role of other stakeholders in making and implementing the Education Rights Holder's "best interest" determination.
- ✓ Housing Work Group: Exploration of federal, state and local housing resources that could be made available to youth formerly in foster care; partnering with the John Burton Foundation for Children Without Homes to learn about resources available through the state's Transitional Housing Programs administered by the California Department of Social Services.
- ✓ Supporting Healthy Sexual Development of Youth in Foster Care Work Group: Exploration of how child welfare systems can better support and promote healthy sexual development of foster youth, as detailed in the earlier presentation on this topic.
- ✓ Psychotropic Medications Work Group: Engaged in reviewing and monitoring the work of the Quality Improvement Project – a collaborative effort led by the California Department of Health Care Services in collaboration with providers, advocates and stakeholders – to ensure appropriate, timely, safe use of psychotropic medications by foster children.
- ✓ Priority Employment Work Group: Exploring how the Santa Clara County model for assigning priority status to former foster youth seeking employment with the County can be replicated in other jurisdictions.

▪ **Data Linkages and Information Sharing Committee**

Daniel Webster and Alicia Sandoval submitted a written report describing how the Committee is following the progress of the following state initiatives:

- ✓ Global Data Sharing Agreement: A three-way Memorandum of Understanding between CDSS, DHCS and counties allows for easy exchange of health and medication information for children with child welfare cases. At present, twelve counties have opted into the Global Data Sharing Agreement and other counties continue to show interest as they opt in on a flow basis. A webinar was offered in

**CALIFORNIA CHILD WELFARE COUNCIL**  
**Discussion Highlights**  
**December 9, 2015**

---

August 2015 describing psychotropic medication data sharing efforts which included details and benefits for counties opting into the agreement. The webinar was recorded and is available online at: <http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/Pages/qjp-webinar.aspx>.

- ✓ **California Child Welfare Services Case Management – New System:** As described at the beginning of the Council meeting, an alternative path for developing the new system will be pursued by the CDSS. The project will be divided into a series of modules that will be bid and developed separately.
- ✓ **New “Use of Psychotropic and Use of Antipsychotic Medication” measures** were developed and are posted on the California Child Welfare Indicators Project website at: [http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb\\_childwelfare/CDSS\\_5A.aspx](http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb_childwelfare/CDSS_5A.aspx)

In addition the Committee is identifying and scheduling presentations on (1) exemplary data tools and (2) important topics germane to linkages and sharing of data. At the afternoon meeting, there will be presentations on the Ventura County Foster Health Link and the Federal Child and Family Services Review, Round 3 Risk Adjustment, Targets, and Goals.

▪ **Priority Access to Services and Supports Task Force (PASS)**

Lori Clarke presented on behalf of the Co-Chairs Frank Mecca and Dana Blackwell and described progress in developing strategies for priority access with Behavior Health, under the leadership of Council member Karen Baylor; Corrections and Probation, under the leadership of Millicent Tidwell and Council member Mary Butler; and Housing, under the leadership of Council member Lisa Bates. The Corrections representative recently accepted another position, and the PASS team is following up to include her replacement.

▪ **Out-of-County Mental Health Task Force**

Karen Baylor reported that she has reconvened the Task Force and recommended processes for serving foster children residing outside the county of court jurisdiction are under development.

▪ **Ending Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) Action Team**

*Please see above report provided by Leslie Heimov as a regular agenda item.*

**VIII. Public Comment and Adjournment to Committee Meetings**

Secretary Dooley called for public comments.

Gail Johnson Vaughn, Executive Director of Families NOW, announced that the annual “Calling out of Names” event at the State Capitol recognized all of the 11,000 children who are waiting for a permanent family. She also reminded Council members that California law now requires that children whose parents have had their parental rights terminated can receive needed services to address issues related to the severance of the relationship with birth parents.

Lisa Pion-Berlin, Executive Director of Parents Anonymous, Inc., announced that December was National Parent Leadership Month. She also informed the Council that her organization provides services that address Adverse Childhood Experiences, or ACES.

There being no further public comment, Justice Raye and Secretary Dooley thanked everyone for their participation and adjourned the meeting.