



# Contra Costa County, Children & Family Services

## System Improvement Plan 2012

Dec. 3, 2012  
Family & Human Services Committee  
Valerie Earley, Director, Children & Family  
Services

# Background

- Assembly Bill 636 known as the Child Welfare System Improvement and Accountability Act of 2001, is also known as the California Child And Family Services Review (C-CFSR).
- The legislation directed counties to undergo a process of self-assessment and system improvement in order to improve performance on key child welfare outcome indicators.
- Modeled after the Federal Child and Family Services Review process which was designed to assess state-level performance on child welfare outcomes, the C-CFSR process consists of three components.



# Components of C-CFSR

- **Peer Quality Case Review (PQCR)**

This collaborative process between Children & Family Services (CFS), Juvenile Probation, Bay Area Academy and California Department of Social Services and is designed to highlight a practice area on which CFS and Probation would like to focus to better understand each agency's performance and to plan how to improve services.

- **County Self-Assessment (CSA)**

The self-assessment process presents an opportunity to learn what is and what is not working in the delivery of child welfare services within that county. The self-assessment process is conducted by the county with input from stakeholders that include parents, youth, child welfare staff, and partners from other child-serving departments such as probation, education, mental health, public health, and prevention network partners.

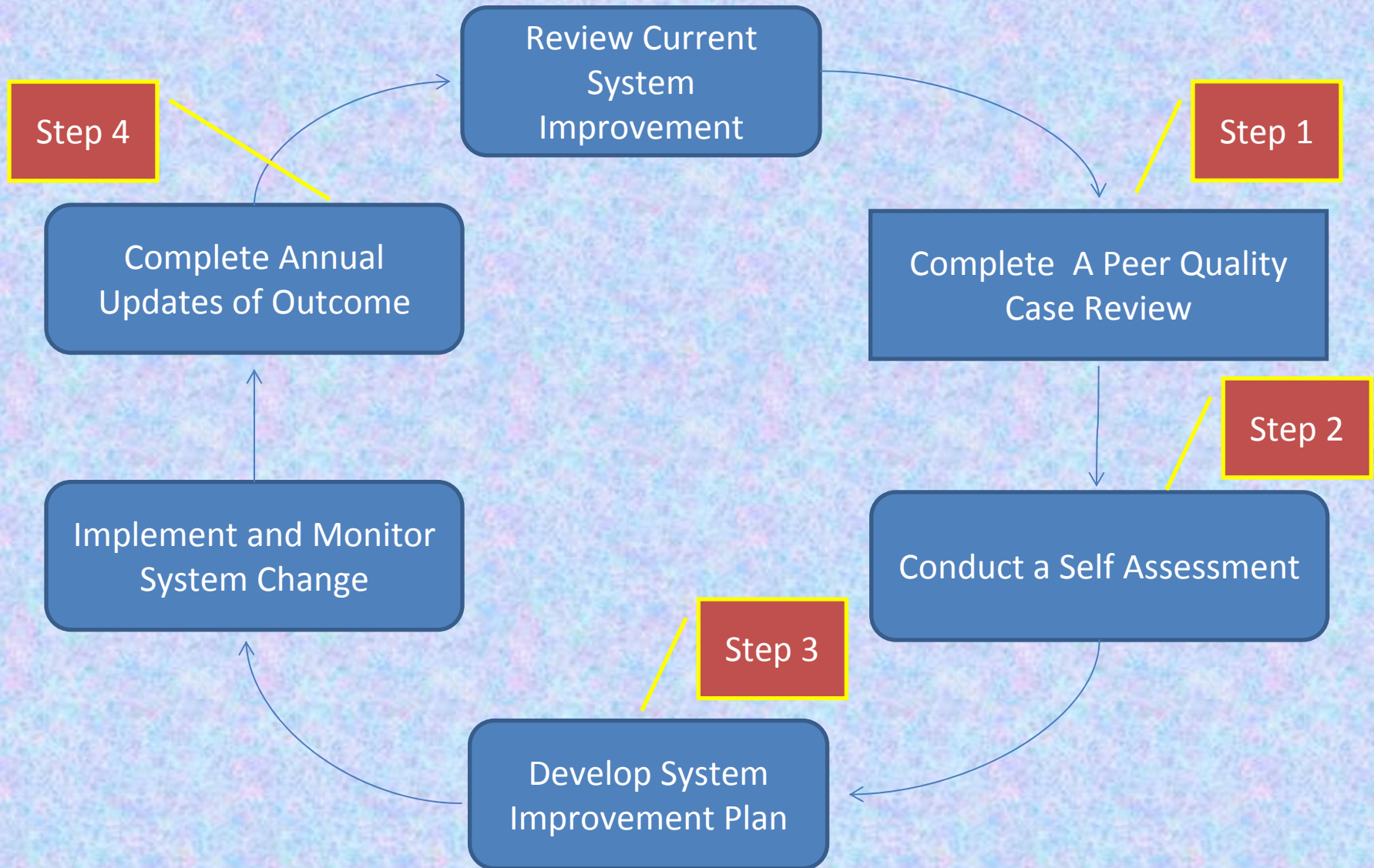
- **System Improvement Plan (SIP)**

This is the plan developed as a result of the self-assessment and PQCR process. Each SIP component looks much like a case plan or an action plan; encompassing an identified area for improvement, an improvement goal, strategies and rationales for each strategy and a list of milestones to be attained in completion of the strategy.

- **Annual Update on SIP Progress (\*\*\*)**

This annual progress report documents Contra Costa's performance for the Systems Improvement Plan submitted to California Department of Social Services in April 2010. The Systems Improvement Plan was originally slated as a tri-annual plan, however in May 2012, CDSS revised the schedule and extended all existing plans to five years. Thus this current Systems Improvement Plan will now end in December 2014

# C-CFSR Overview





# Guiding Principles of the Systems Improvement Plan

The goal of the child welfare system is to improve outcomes for children and families in the areas of safety, permanency, and well-being. The entire community is responsible for the child, youth and family welfare, not just the child welfare agency. The child welfare agency has the primary responsibility to intervene when a child's safety is endangered.

- To be effective, the child welfare system must embrace the entire continuum of child welfare services, from prevention through after care services.
- Engagement with consumers and community is vital to promoting safety, permanency and well-being.
- Fiscal strategies must be considered that meet the needs identified in the County Self-Assessment (CSA) and included in the SIP.
- Transforming the child welfare system is a process that involves removing traditional barriers within programs, within the child welfare system, and within other systems.



# **2010-2014**

## ***System Improvement Measures***

**Increasing Timely Social Worker Visits (Safety)**

**Exit to Permanency (24 Months in Care) Increasing the percentage of youth who have been in care at least 2 years who exit to permanency (Permanency)**

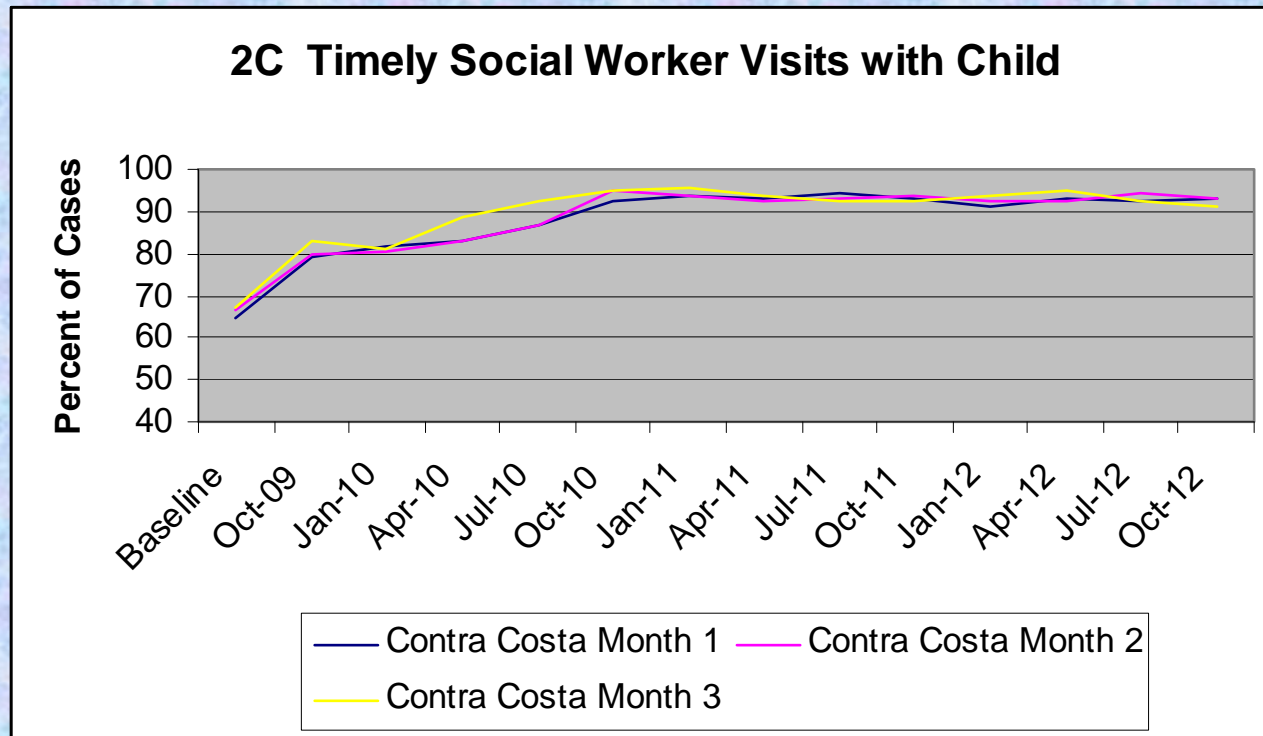
**Decreasing the disproportionate number of African American children who enter foster care (Systemic Factors)**



# Timely Social Worker Visits with Child (Safety)

Measure	2C Timely Social Worker Visits with Child
Methodology	The percent of children who received a monthly visit.
National Standard	Timeliness of Social Work Contacts is not a national measure and therefore a National Standard is not set.
Target Improvement Goal (as stated in the 2010 SIP)	“Though Contra Costa ultimately seeks to have 100% compliance in Social Worker contacts, the goal set for this Improvement Plan period is a sustained 90% or greater compliance for the at the final year of the SIP.”
Current Performance	Month 1: 92.8% Month 2: 93.0% Month 3: 90.9%  This performance meets the Target Improvement goal as stated in the 2010 Systems Improvement Plan. It’s important to note that at the time the SIP was written, performance was at 78.7%, thus the performance improvement is significant.

# Timely Social Worker Visits (Safety)





# Timely Social Worker Visits Improvement Strategies

Enhance use of Safe Measures by staff to manage visits; provide ongoing training to staff and supervisors

- Assess ongoing use of Safe Measures by SW's and Supervisors.
- Retrain all staff in the use of Safe Measures to ensure they have a full understanding of the way the tool can assist in managing their caseload.

Continue Geographical assignment of cases and/or explore ways of reducing travel while increasing contact compliance.

- Provide caseload data with location of families/children to staff.
- Assess ability to manage visits for out of county placements which ensures primary assigned worker completes 75% visits.
- Monitor/refine geographic assignment considering workflow and different needs based on geographic area and strategy (i.e. TDM, DR, etc).



# Timely Social Worker Visits

## Improvement Strategies

Train Staff to policy changes regarding face to face contacts and waivers/exceptions and implement changes

- Assess training needs for social worker contacts.
- Develop and train staff on regulations & policies related to timely SW contacts.
- Provide visit exception report for mgrs and sups.

Develop Quality Assurance program for timeliness and quality of contacts and develop a recognition program for staff and supervisors demonstrating excellence in performance.

- Recognize staff for compliance in timeliness of contacts
- Evaluate quality of contacts.
- Develop strategies for supervisors to monitor and increase quality of SW visits.
- Determine criteria for ongoing staff recognition that incorporates timeliness, quality of visits, and acknowledges appropriate staff for performance

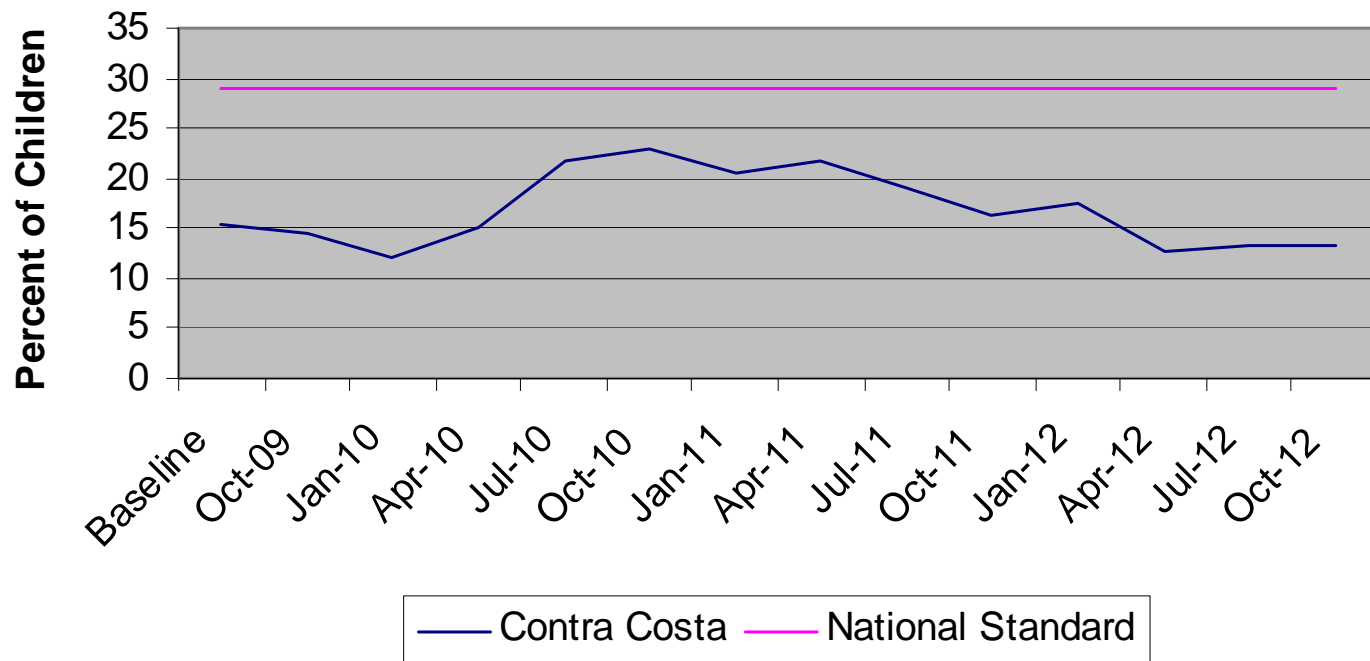


# Exits to Permanency

Measure	C3.1 Exits to Permanency after 24 months in Care
Methodology	The percentage of children who have been in Foster Care for the 24 months or longer who are discharged to a permanent home prior to turning 18 and by the last day of the year before the child's 18 <sup>th</sup> birthday. A home is considered permanent when the child reunifies with parents or primary caretakers, establishes a guardianship, or adoption.
National Standard	29.1%
Contra Costa Target Improvement Goal (as stated in the 2010 SIP)	"Increase the percentage of youth reaching permanency by 5% the first year and 10% the following years. At the end of year 3, performance would be 18.1%."
Current Performance	Contra Costa's performance when the SIP was written was 14.2%; the October 2012 quarter report shows current performance at 13.3%. This is below the National Standard of 29.1% and below the state average of 24.2% for the same year .

# Exits to Permanency

## C3.1 Exits to Permanency (24 Months in Care)





# Strategies to Improve Exits to Permanency (24 Months in Care)

Enhance family and caregiver engagement activities to support reunification and facilitate discussions about permanency options should reunification not be effective.

- Develop staff training/education focusing on permanency options and conversations about permanency with parents and caregivers.
- Increase use of team meetings to enhance permanency
- Implement visitation policy including transition from supervised to unsupervised for enhanced family reunification.

Improve individualized, culturally competent reunification services with multi-agency case coordination

- Continue Linkages; develop partnerships for streamlining services for families preparing to reunify.
- Increase use of wrap around services.
- Continue work on cultural awareness through use of Parent Partners.

Identify at least one relative and send Notification of Relative information.

- Develop and train staff team responsible for family finding activities.
- Maintain contract with internet database search engine to search for relatives and absent parents.
- Train staff on how to have permanency discussions with located families.



# Strategies to Improve Exits to Permanency (24 Months in Care)

Develop strategies and practice expertise in early and continuous Concurrent Planning.

- Maintain continuous focus on permanency & concurrent planning process
- Identify challenges and delays in concurrent planning and address issues.
- Measure performance in concurrent planning and Permanency Outcomes

Engage fathers and extended families of fathers.

- Develop and implement fatherhood initiative survey.
- Using survey results, plan strategies and train staff to engagement of fathers and families of fathers.
- Measure contacts and listings of father relationships in CWS/CMS to evaluate effectiveness of strategy.
- Provide education/training to Bench and Bar on Father involvement

Provide transition planning meetings for youth including assessment of educational needs.

- Develop coordinated data exchange to sups and staff regarding youth age 17 or older.
- Hold life planning/transition meeting with youth within 6 months of emancipation.
- Utilize CWS/CMS to track accurate educational outcomes for youth.



# Strategies to Improve Exits to Permanency (24 Months in Care)

Increase recruitment of families that can offer permanence

- Complete a demographic profile and data analysis for children currently in care for 24 months or longer to support recruitment planning.
- Increase use of community partners and regional offices in recruiting families to offer permanence.

Engage incarcerated parents to support case planning and permanency.

- Establish working relationship with detention facilities to facilitate engagement of incarcerated parents
- Provide training and support for incarcerated parents.
- Support staff communication with incarcerated parents.

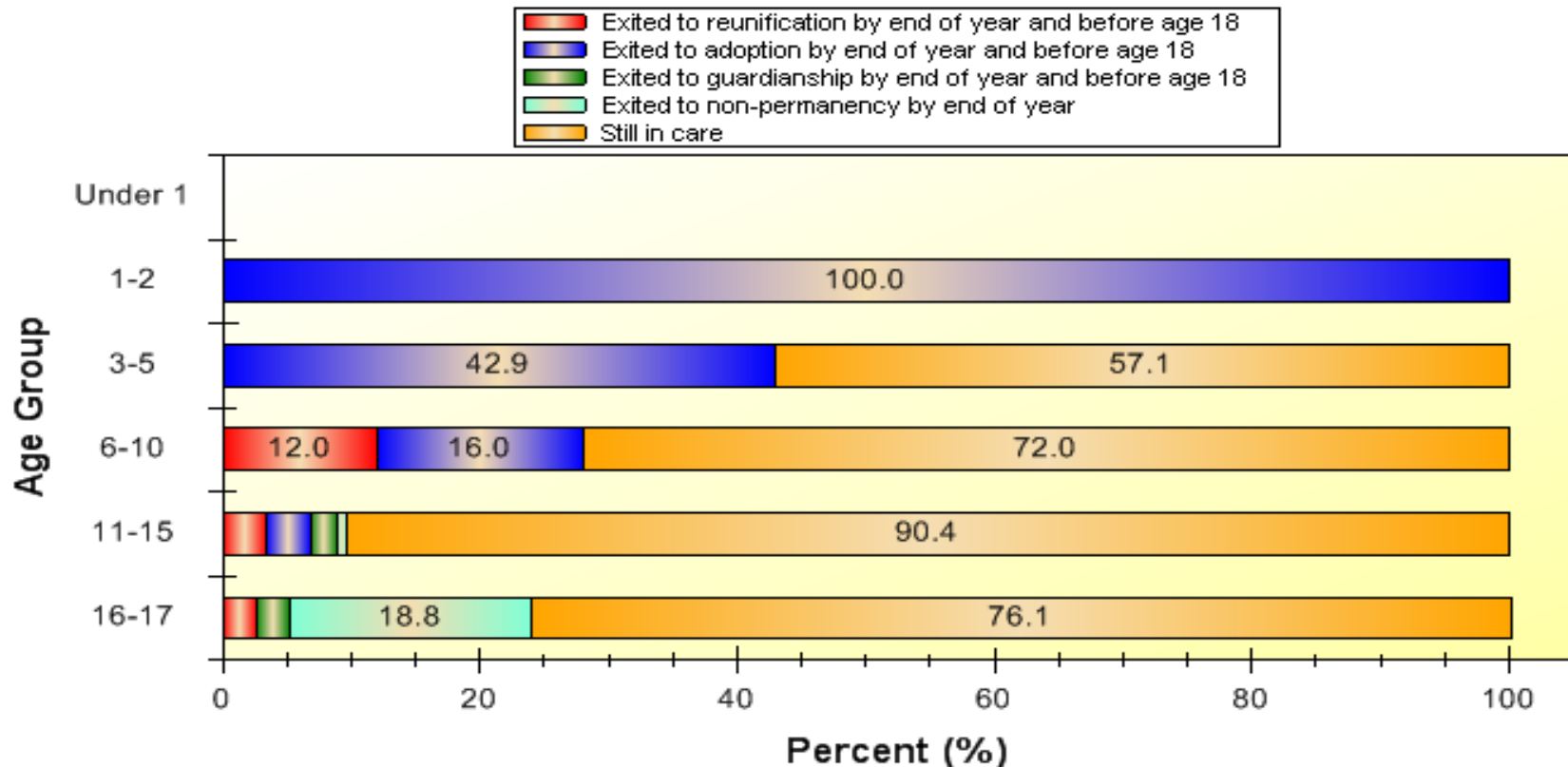
Establish Learning Community environment to facilitate staff discussions relevant to family engagement and permanency (*new*)

- Implement ongoing Learning Community meetings; plan conversations to support best practice, family engagement, and permanency.

# Exits to Permanency

**Exits To Permanency**  
**In care on the first day of the year (24 months or longer): Exit to permanency by the end of the year and before age 18**  
**Agency Type=Child Welfare**  
**Jul 1, 2011 to Jun 30, 2012**

**Contra Costa**

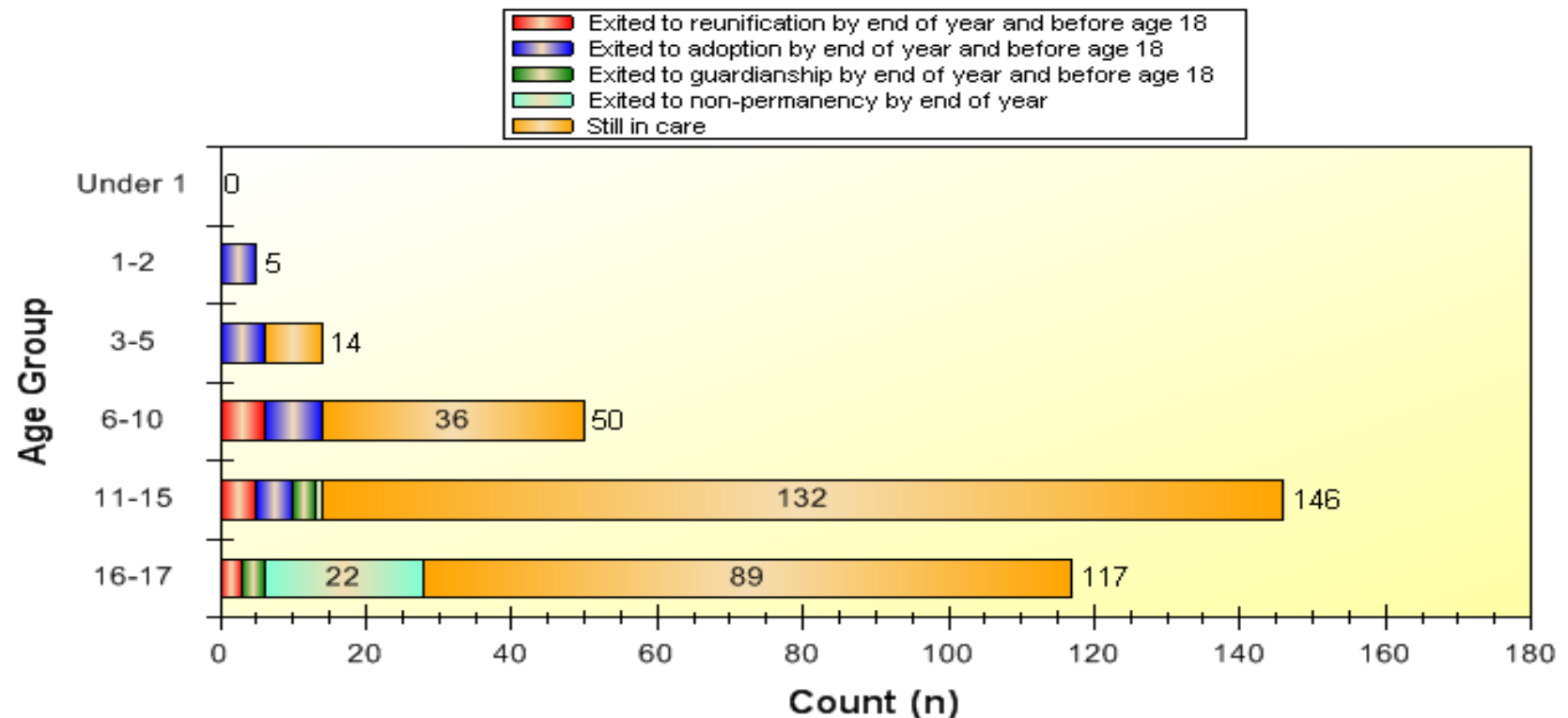




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Data Source: CWS/CMS 2012 Quarter 2 Extract.  
 Program version: 2.00 Database version: 62F91C33

Center for Social Services Research  
 University of California at Berkeley

# Systemic Factors

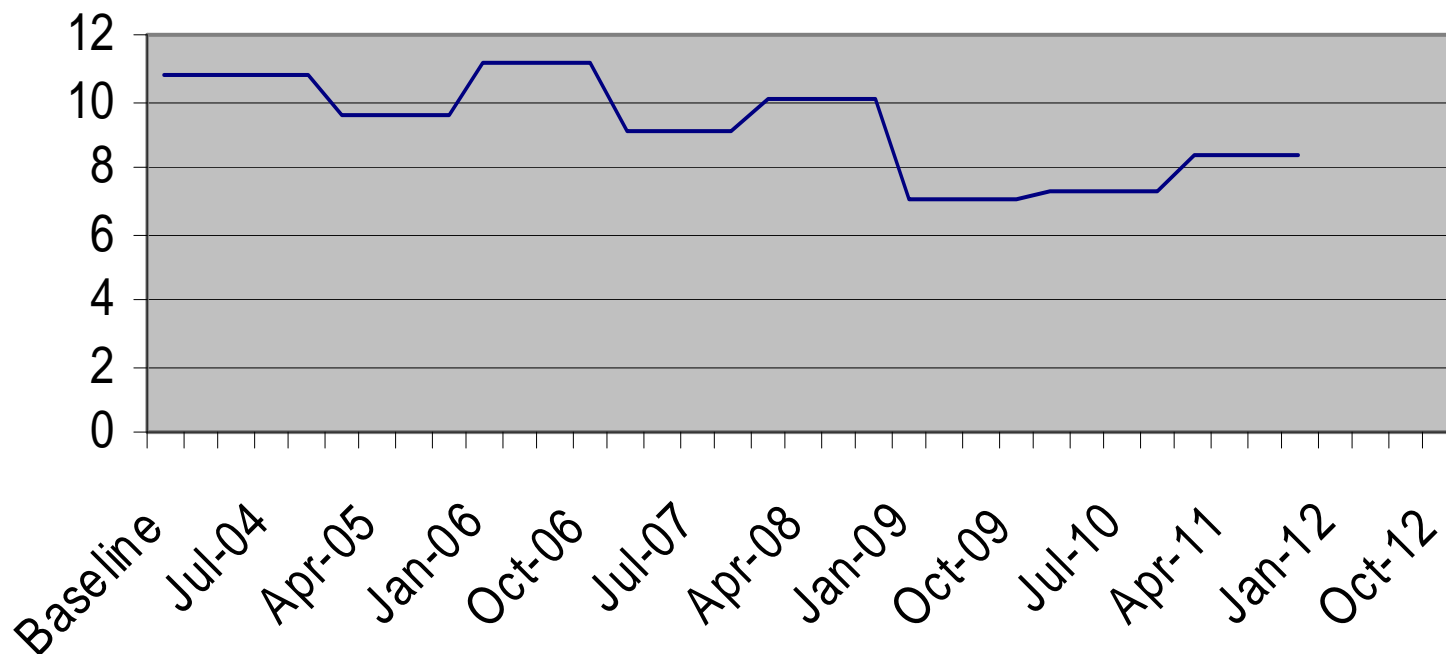
Measure	Reducing Disparity, Entries of African American Children to Foster Care
National Standard	A National Standard has not been set to track Disproportionality/Disparity.
Contra Costa Target Improvement Goal as stated in the 2010 SIP	“Reduce the incidence rate of removals for African American children by 5% per year. Performance when SIP created was 11.4/1000 children removed; goal at end of 3-year SIP is 10/1000.”
Current Performance	Reports for disparity/disproportionality are adjusted annually. For 2011, entries for black children entering care are at a rate of 8.42 per 1,000 children. This appears to be down from the performance at the beginning of the SIP but the 2011 Census shifted population counts. Current reports indicate a rate of 7.2 for 2010 so, disparity may, be increasing. Further analysis is needed to see if this shift upwards is similar to all ethnicities or if this is, in fact, an increase in disparity.



# Systemic Factors

## Disparity Entries of Black Children to Foster Care

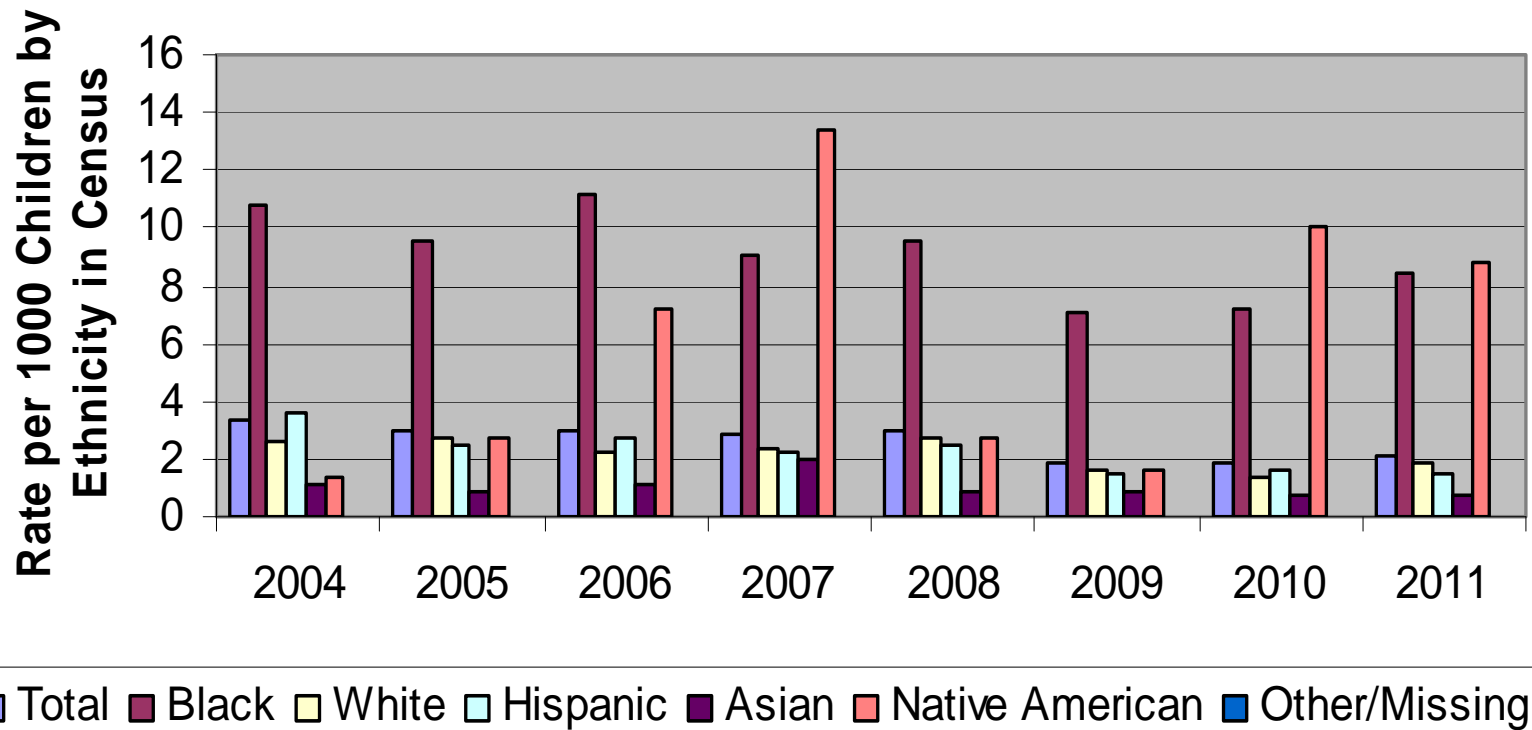
Rate per 1,000 Children



— Contra Costa

# Systemic Factors

## Disparity (Entries to Foster Care)





# Strategies to Reduce Disparity, Entries of African American Children to Foster Care

Continue to support staff in culturally and ethnically competent Family Engagement.

- Provide ongoing training for cultural knowledge and competence in communication and engagement of families, peers, and community partners including family culture not just ethnicity/race.
- Explore non-traditional resources and services relevant to case plan goals and support families in attaining goals in a manner that best matches the cultural values of the family.
- Develop conversation guides for supervisors to lead staff in discussions of disproportionality at all unit and review meetings every other month.

Utilize feedback from consumers (parents and youth) to assist in improving culturally informed services

- Develop feedback mechanism from parents and youth who have been in our system.
- Analyze consumer information and look for ways to improve service delivery and service gaps.



# Strategies to Reduce Disparity, Entries of African American Children to Foster Care

African American children ages 5 and under will receive a TDM prior to entering care or within 7 days of being in care.

- Continue TDM's for African American children under age 5 who are at risk of removal or immediately following removal.

- Review compliance with children eligible for TDM vs. those served.

- Explore reasons TDM's not held and address issues.

- Develop case review process for African American children who have been removed

Provide a forum for discussion cultural and ethnic issues. Raise disproportionality and disparity awareness of staff, community and agency partners, legal entities, and community members.

- Reconvene the Cultural Competency Oversight Committee

- Address issues of personal bias and support staff in strength based language in written case documentation.

- Present information to mandated reporters to enhance awareness of how bias may impact families reported within their own organizations.

- Present regular data reports to staff on topics of disproportionality.

- Re-establish regular training which addresses staff personal biases related to poverty vs. neglect and standards for adequate care of children.



# Questions?

