CCR Messaging

This is the 12th edition of the CCR Newsflash brought to you by the Continuum of Care Reform Branch providing up-to-date information about CCR implementation, promising innovations, and learning opportunities. We encourage you to share your best practices in implementing the CCR and welcome your suggestions and questions. Please send your contributions via email to the CCR inbox at ccr@dss.ca.gov.

Please help us ensure that this information is passed on to stakeholders at the local level by widely forwarding this communication to staff, colleagues, care providers, social workers, probation officers, youth and any other interested stakeholders. Consider providing a copy of the newsletter at any meetings that include child welfare stakeholders. In addition, if you were forwarded this newsletter, you may have your name added to the distribution list by emailing the CCR inbox.

Claudia Cortez,
Youth Engagement Program Ambassadors
Ventura County

“Coming into foster care makes youth feel like they don’t have a choice, they don’t matter, they’re unloved, and have no voice. I think CCR is a really good thing for foster youth because making sure they live in a family setting and maintain permanent connections will help youth feel that what they think and how they feel is important; CCR gives youth a voice.”
Edward Miller’s career in the criminal justice field began over 33 years ago. The past 29 years have been spent at the Shasta County Probation Department where he has worked his way through the ranks and is now the Assistant Chief Probation Officer. Previously as a Deputy Probation Officer (DPO), his assignments included the Juvenile Assessment Center, sex offender caseloads, mental health caseloads (both juvenile and adult), high risk caseloads (both juvenile and adult), Driving Under the Influence (DUI) caseloads, and gang caseloads. As a Deputy Probation Officer III, he was assigned to Crystal Creek Boys Camp overseeing intake and out-of-county cadets.

While a Supervising Probation Officer, Edward was assigned to the Adult Special Services Unit and later to the Juvenile Facility. After promoting to a Division Director he was assigned to the Juvenile Hall. During this time the Shasta County Probation Department broke ground on their Juvenile Rehabilitation Facility and Edward supervised the construction project and the transition workgroup. He currently serves the Department as the Assistant Chief Probation Officer and oversees Juvenile Services and general employee issues.

Edward’s career has enabled him to become an expert in all areas of community corrections. His passion, however, is with juvenile community corrections – specifically juvenile institutions and rehabilitative programs both in and out of custody. He consistently promotes “What Works” with the department, other criminal justice partners and the community. After becoming involved in the Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) at the state and county level, he has embraced the goals of the initiative and is a champion of CCR.

Edward is committed to improving the lives of young people in the community and volunteers his time to work with nonprofits supporting his vision of healthy youth including workgroups and organizations combating human trafficking and commercially sexually exploited children.

“Ed has been committed to the concept of CCR since the beginning. He believes in the concept and doing what’s best for youth. Ed has served on a number of CCR workgroups and has become the probation expert in the North State on CCR. His hard work and dedication to CCR has allowed Shasta Probation the opportunity to engage community members and collaborate with our local placements to ensure a smooth CCR transition.”

.....Tracie Neal, Chief Probation Officer, Shasta County

“Ed has been a tireless advocate in his efforts to implement CCR within Shasta County. Having been a placement officer, Ed has first-hand knowledge of how difficult it is to recruit and maintain connections for Probation youth. Ed is a positive force who actively seeks solutions and sees CCR as a process and not an event. His commitment, enthusiasm, and positivity serve as an example to all within the department who work with Probation youth.”

.....Donna Nachreiner, Shasta County Probation Department, Juvenile Division, Shasta County

“Ed Miller has been a committed collaborative partner as we have worked out CCR here in Shasta County. He has worked to bring both Safety Organized Practice and Trauma Informed practice to the deputy probation officers under his command by connecting them to trainings with Child Welfare Staff and through our RTA. This has increased our shared understanding of the important work being done to serve families here in Shasta County.”

.....Dianna Wagner, Health & Human Services Agency Children’s Services Branch Director, Shasta County
California Youth Connection (CYC) is so grateful to have been invited by the Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) Branch to help develop the Youth Satisfaction Survey, which was a component of AB 403. This dream started years earlier, though, for CYC members. Our youth advocated for several years to create a way for youth voice to directly evaluate their foster care placements. Our advocacy led to CDSS including our dream in its recommendations to the legislature for CCR. CYC member Sabrina (Stanislaus County) really puts it in perspective, “CCR is an amazing bill. However, it is a great work in process.” CYC youth know that it takes sustained effort and on the ground practical tools to realize this dream!

Members presented their youth developed Youth Satisfaction Survey at the CCR Quarterly Stakeholder Implementation Advisory Meeting on July 18. There was an overwhelmingly positive response and support provided by other stakeholder organizations about the youth-created questionnaire. Clear evidence of how CCR brings the care of young people to the forefront was when the resource parents and STRTP staff present at the meeting unanimously agreed that the youth-developed tool could help them provide better homes for foster youth. That’s exactly what we had hoped for: a shared vision for improving foster care placements.

CYC members and staff, working with our allies and partners, used a deliberate process to make sure that the questionnaire for youth satisfaction was closely linked to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights. CYC members paid special attention to concerns that they knew foster youth throughout California had been affected by or cared about. After all, this current effort is an extension of CYC’s work on the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

CYC members are excited about the next stage of the process, where we will be working side by side with CDSS staff and other stakeholder feedback from July 18. Next, we are working with the Ombudsperson for Foster Care and the CCR Branch to create an implementation plan for the survey. This will include translating the paper questionnaire into an online format, pre-testing and validating the questionnaire, and then releasing it in a way that maximizes youth participation. CYC members will be participating throughout the process. Sabrina sums it up best: “This process wouldn’t be where it’s at today without the engagement of the youth.”

CYC members are very encouraged to know that the Ombudsperson for Foster Care will play a key role in this process. The survey will be a way for foster youth to communicate their concerns directly to her about their placements. This project will also directly help CCR and CYC reach the goal they both share: to improve the experience of young people through more youth-centered practices and higher quality foster care placements!

Permanency IS Possible!

...Joe Ford, Senior Vice President, Hathaway-Sycamores

There are so many stories to share of youth obtaining permanency. A recent one that comes to mind involves a youth in Transitional Shelter Care (3-day program) that had overstayed by 30 days. As a consequence of big negative behaviors there was no one willing to take him. There were no openings in the Residentially Based Services (RBS) program but as soon as an opening did become available he was moved into RBS. Through a family search and engagement, staff learned that he had not seen his mom in 11 years. In less than 30 days his mom was located in Florida and subsequently brought out for the weekend to stay in one of the family cottages on campus. As a result of a successful visit, she became his primary discharge plan. Now nearly all of his big behaviors are managed and he is going to school every morning. The resources in RBS will enable a warm transition for this youth to his mom in Florida. If all goes well...that will be what happens.

How cool is that? Putting youth on a path to permanency IS the goal!
Over 4,500 community members visited the *Lost Childhoods* exhibit on opening night at the Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History (SCMAH) last month. This is the nation’s largest collection of art, artifacts, and video portraits about youth experiences in foster care. This is not just a display, though. The exhibit is a call to action.

The exhibition is a culmination of a six-month collaborative process between the Foster Youth Museum and more than 100 current and former foster youth, artists, and advocates. *Lost Childhoods* features personal belongings of foster youth, photography by Ray Bussolari, and four art installations created by California foster youth in collaboration with artists Bridget Henry, Melody Overstreet, Elliott Taylor, and Nada Miljkovic.

Foster youth conceived of this project and were empowered to determine the look and feel of the exhibit, which was based on their stories.

“The Foster Youth Museum was developed while writing curriculum on how to train social work supervisors to do more successful social work with teenagers. What we kept hearing...was, ‘I have this object that I can bring in and it will help tell the story.’ And from hearing these stories over and over again, I thought, we should make a collection,” explains Jamie Lee Evans, director of Foster Youth Museum.

“I originally joined because I had seen many cases of organizations attempting to represent and support foster youth...and again and again I saw youth being sidelined, being spoken over, being patronized, and tokenized and left out of the very projects meant for them,” said Jess Prudit, a recent graduate of UCSC and Smith Renaissance Society Community Fellow.

“We want to provide a very clear way to take action,” said Museum of Art Curator, Stacey Garcia, to the Santa Cruz Sentinel. “It’s an amazing thing for someone to volunteer to take a big step like becoming a foster parent. But not everyone can take that kind of big step. There are a lot of little things that make a huge difference in the life of a foster youth-making a birthday cake for a foster youth, donating some school supplies. The smaller things really add up to make a big impact. We try to make it as easy as possible for people to be active.”

Assembly Member Mark Stone agrees. The author of AB 403, a bill that dramatically changed the foster care system in California, said, “Through art, we can communicate much more effectively about what it is we’re trying to do and what it is we need to do.”

“We cannot do system change without [youth] voice,” Stone explains. “The exhibit is one of the most incredible ways to explain to decision makers what you’ve gone through. And I challenge anyone who’s had contact with this system to go look in the eyes of those pictures and go look at the words and not be moved.”

Thanks to a generous grant from National Endowment for the Arts and the California Arts Council, the exhibit will run from July 7 - December 31, 2017. To learn more visit [www.fosteryouthmuseum.org](http://www.fosteryouthmuseum.org).
The Key to Collaboration: CCR Workgroups
Committed stakeholders from across California join state staff to develop the essential elements of CCR.
Here are the highlights of our work:

Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) State/County Implementation Team
The CCR State/County Team meets monthly to collaboratively discuss solutions to emerging challenges and barriers related to the implementation of CCR. Examples of follow up actions may include the development of tools, changes to legislation, or development of technical assistance opportunities. The next meeting is scheduled for September 21, 2017. The main agenda topic will be placement strategies for youth with complex needs. Attendance is by invitation only. Past meeting agendas and minutes can be found on the website at Continuum of Care Reform. Questions can be directed to Tracy.Urban@dss.ca.gov.

CCR Education Workgroup
The CCR Education Workgroup is a sub-workgroup of the CCR State/County Implementation Team. This workgroup has been developing multiple deliverables including: guidelines for public school staff participation in Child and Family Team (CFT) meetings, CCR Education Toolkit, and the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Child and Family Team (CFT) requirements and process. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 12, 2017. The agenda will include an update on the deliverables and a report out on the out of home care funding formula proposal. This sub-workgroup is open for advocates and providers to attend. For more information, contact Ahmed.Nemr@dss.ca.gov. Previous meeting agendas and notes are available on the CCR website.

CCR Stakeholder Implementation Advisory Committee
The next quarterly meeting of the CCR Stakeholder Implementation Advisory Committee will be held on November 29, 2017, from 10:00-3:00. All stakeholders are welcome to attend these meetings in person or via a webinar. Participants can expect:
• Updates regarding CCR implementation
• Educational/informational sessions
• Networking possibilities
• Opportunities to provide recommendations on policy, best practices, and other aspects of CCR
For more information, please contact Tracy.Urban@dss.ca.gov.

Resource Family Approval (RFA)
• Annual reviews for early implementing counties will be finished by the end of August 2017.
• The current review tool is being revised and will be shared with counties for feedback later this year for use in 2018.
• The RFA forms continue to be finalized and are available on: http://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/Forms-Brochures/Forms-Alphabetic-List/Q-T. Draft forms are still located on the RFA webpage.
• The Out-of-County Approval protocol is posted on the RFA webpage and an ACIN is in development regarding the protocol and its usage with anticipated release at the beginning of September.
• The Out of County Referral form has been posted on the CDSS RFA webpage under the Out of County Protocol. This form is to be used when making a referral to a host county for RFA approval of a relative or NREFM.
• The CDSS continues to host a monthly RFA technical assistance call on the first Wednesdays of the month from 1:30 – 2:30 p.m. The meeting notes from these can be found on the CDSS RFA webpage under RFA Resources.
• CDSS is hosting regional trainings on Due Process and the Background Assessment Guide (BAG).
• If your RFA Point of Contact for CDSS has changed, please notify us to ensure your county continues to receive important RFA related information. For additional information or questions, please contact rfa@dss.ca.gov.

Program Statement reviews for STRTPs and FFAs
The CCR Policy Unit is working closely with Community Care Licensing Division (CCL), Regional Offices, and Providers regarding the Program Statement review process for both FFAs and STRTPs. Currently, the majority of the updated FFA program statements have been submitted and have been reviewed by CCR and CCL staff. A list of FFAs with an approved RFA Implementation Plan is located on the CCR FFA website.

The STRTP program statements continue to be received for review. Meetings are being held to discuss STRTP program reviews, to solicit feedback, and to provide technical assistance to providers. To date, five providers have been licensed as a STRTP. Please see the CCR STRTP website for a list. All FFA/RFA program statement review process questions or comments can be directed to maiyer.vang@dss.ca.gov and any STRTP/RFA licensing questions, to the CCL Policy Development Manager Marisa.Sanchez@dss.ca.gov.

Continued on back page
Q: Can you please explain the recent Resource Family Approval (RFA) modification for two-parent families when one parent’s work schedule makes completion of the RFA requirements difficult?

A: Each prospective Resource Family (parent) applicant is required to complete all of the approval requirements outlined in the RFA Written Directives. The Written Directives do not require both parents to apply to be a Resource Family, though this would be the preferred method since usually both parents are caring for children placed in their home. However, if only one parent applies to be a Resource Family, the other parent would be treated as another adult in the home and would follow the requirements related to adults residing in the home. During the psychosocial assessment, it should be thoroughly assessed to determine if the one parent being approved would be appropriate. The RFA worker should also explain to both parents the potential impacts and limitations to only one person being approved, especially as it relates to permanency.

Q: What is the process for STRTP’s to apply to counties for contracts and funding to provide aftercare services?

A: W&IC 18987.71 (2) (D) states “Follow-up post discharge support and services, consistent with the child’s case plan, provided as needed after children or youth have exited the residential component and returned to their own family or to another family living situation, in order to ensure the stability and success of the connection or reconnection with home, school, and community.”

Informal guidance has been given to providers to contact their local county to contract for aftercare services. Aftercare funding was not taken into consideration with AB 403 and AB 1997.

ACINs/ACLs

The CDSS has recently released the following All County Letters (ACLs) and All County Information Notice (ACIN). To view all letters and notices follow the link to: CDSS Letters and Notices.

ACL 17-67 [7/5/17] Clarification on the “Supplement to the Rate Questionnaire”, SOC 837 Form, for Dual Agency Aid to Families with Dependent Children-Foster Care (AFDC-FC), Adoption Assistance Program (AAP), and Kinship Guardianship Assistance Payment (Kin-Gap) Children.


ACL 17-75 [July 13, 2017] Aid to Families with Dependent Children-Foster Care (AFDC-FC) California Necessities Index (CNI) Increases and Other Rate Increases

ACL 17-77 [July 14, 2017] Implementation of Presumptive Transfer for Foster Children Placed Out of County.


The Importance of Collaboration with Community Care Licensing

Tina Cowan, Foster Care Services, Youth for Change Program Manager

All across our state, foster family and group home agencies are in the midst of implementing Continuum of Care Reform. Youth for Change (YFC), a non-profit social service agency based in Butte County, is one of those agencies that is actively transitioning foster homes to Resource Families, reviewing best practices for Therapeutic Foster Care (TFC) and moving towards Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Program (STRTP) licensure. Like most agencies, YFC has participated in state workgroups, anxiously attended CCR trainings and conferences, and remained up-to-date on the myriad of articles, All County Letters (ACL), All County Information Notices (ACIN), newsletters, webinars, and Interim Licensing Standards releases.

Established in 1991, the Youth for Change team has continually developed community partnerships for the purpose of championing the well-being of children and families. Our programs are dynamic and respond flexibly to community and family needs. The wide array of services we provide demonstrates our commitment to helping families become more resilient. By doing so, it is our intention to increase the health and security of our community’s children. With the mission “enhancing the well-being of children, families, individuals and communities”, YFC is supportive of CCR’s fundamental principles of emotional safety, individualized services, child and family voice, and permanency.

Through this CCR transition, YFC has found an essential and willing partner in our local Community Care Licensing (CCL) office. CCL serves the most vulnerable people of California with a mission to promote the health, safety, and quality of life of each person in community care through the administration of an effective and collaborative regulatory enforcement system. The Compliance division ensures community care facilities operate according to applicable laws and regulations (and of the California Code of Regulations).

As the state moves through new and shifting regulations for Resource Family Approval (RFA) and STRTP, and agencies remain flexible and knowledgeable in the process, YFC has learned of the importance of open communication with our Licensing Program Analyst (LPA) and local office Licensing Program Manager (LPM). YFC has struggled with program policies related to some of the shifting regulations, such as cell phone policies and best practices for our Lesbian Gay Bi-sexual Transgender Questioning (LGBTQ) youth population, and have reached out to our LPA and LPM to discuss these regulations and interpretations for compliance.

This open dialogue has assisted YFC to continue to provide dynamic and responsive services within state regulations. The collaboration has also given CCL the insight into the difficult work of programs and frontline staff as they navigate the changes in the system while honoring the needs of the youth, families and communities that we serve.
Developmental research is clear that responsive, nurturing parenting is the most powerful intervention and protective force to help cultivate the resiliency and skills youth need to have a happy and healthy childhood and adulthood. California’s Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI)—a partnership between Youth Law Center (YLC), the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), and the County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA)—focuses on turning this research into practice and policy by strengthening foster care to refocus on excellent parenting as the most important goal for all children in the child welfare system.

QPI is an effort to rebrand foster care, not simply by changing a logo or an advertisement, but by changing the system. The key elements of the process are: defining the expectations of caregivers, clearly articulating these expectations, and then aligning the system so that youth and caregivers are supported and those goals can become a reality. California began implementing QPI in 2009, and the QPI values and lessons learned from county leaders, families, and youth formed the foundation for CCR. California is now one of ten states across the country involved in the QPI movement to ensure that all youth removed from home, whether for a day or a decade, receive the nurturing and skilled parenting they deserve.

QPI’s work to build the capacity of county and state systems to support quality parenting underlies CCR and is an important part of California’s CCR efforts to develop a culture that truly prizes and supports parenting. With that synergy in mind, each CCR Newsflash going forward will feature an article about QPI and its role in supporting and strengthening CCR implementation.

In an opening plenary speech at the California QPI conference in March 2017, the CDSS Director Will Lightbourne shared how the seeds of CCR grew from early implementation of QPI in California. In his speech, Director Lightbourne highlights quality parenting as the most important intervention in successful CCR implementation, describes challenges we face as we move forward together with implementation, and affirms his commitment to doing the real work of not simply changing words on paper but actually changing values and behaviors. The leadership, vision, and actions of Director Lightbourne and the county child welfare directors participating in QPI have resulted in beginning some of the most important (and hardest) changes in child welfare. Below are portions of his California QPI conference speech:

“Simply stated, the mission statement of CCR is: all children deserve to live with a committed, nurturing and permanent family. That’s it. How? The core is move services that children need to where they are; don’t move children to services, is first. And secondly, have quality parenting. That’s all of CCR; the rest is details…. We are embarked on resource family approval systems not as a better process but rather because quality parenting isn’t about health and safety, quality parenting is about the people who are going to be the parent and there being a good fit and match for a child in need. We are requiring foster family agencies and short-term therapeutic residential programs to be accredited not because we are trying to be a nuisance or annoying to them but because we want assurances about the quality of care they are able to provide, and we have to recognize there are real, significant challenges that have kept this from happening in the past and that we have to deal with as we go forward in this moment.

There is no shortage of those challenges but I want to highlight and acknowledge four. The first is actually having the quality parents. That is at the core starting place of CCR. Everything in state parlance has to have a name or a phrase so the foster parent retention and recruitment support effort was chartered and funded in the state budget. But very importantly the first word in that sequence is retention not recruitment because it is the core understanding that if we can’t have a satisfying relationship with the people who are already the parents in the system, we will not reach others.

The second is actually getting the services to the child. It’s one thing to say that you have them; it’s another to know what they need to be and have a means and a path to it. Several pieces are underway towards this effort. One is the move to a statewide assessment tool. And we are piloting two tools, with the goal of settling on one by the end of the summer. And what we’ve been working on with the department of health care services, and the mental health division within that department, is to develop a roadmap for caregivers and staff to know how to access specialty mental health services, which are an entitlement under the Medicaid program.

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The third big challenge and it is the core of your conference today, that we have to acknowledge is that a lot of the focus of CCR is on teens. We are part of a system that has historically conceived of family care as being what we do for younger kids and then a mix of family based care and group care for older kids. And we adamantly refuse to say that that is a compromise we can live with. The goal for all children is family care.

As we have more information about what are the service needs that will best meet children’s needs which are, in most cases, age and developmentally appropriate but are compounded by prior trauma that they have experienced, we think that the mix of good assessment, the attachment to services, and quality parenting, provides the path that we want to follow for teens.

And then the fourth challenge we’ve got is that we are a rules-based universe, and rules-based universes tend to distort relationships. I say this because I know that from a lot of my contacts with the QPI process and some of the webinars, the issues of licensing and rules-based interaction are a significant feature in what we have to be working on as a challenge as we make CCR real and as we make QPI a reality across the state.

Ultimately, all of these can be summed up in one concept, which is—and it’s the toughest challenge of all—culture change. And it’s a process. You don’t do it by passing legislation; you don’t do it by issuing regulations; you don’t do it by issuing interim licensing standards, you do it gradually and very intentionally by talking about what the issues are, by talking about where we’ve been and where we’re trying to go.”

...Director Will Lightbourne

We at YLC are proud to work in close partnership with the state and with QPI counties to support the culture change Director Lightbourne describes as necessary to implement CCR and to ensure that our foster children get the parenting they need. We hope you will support and join us in our QPI work!


## Level of Care Rate Protocol (LOC)

The CDSS in collaboration with the UC Davis Resource Center for Family-Focused Practice and LOC County Small Workgroup are set to begin the Statewide Regional LOC Trainings for Trainers (T4T). Below are the scheduled dates and locations. This training is designed for County Social Worker and Probation Officers which is by invitation only.

1. August 30, 2017 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.  Sacramento
2. August 31, 2017 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.  Bay Area
3. September 6, 2017 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.  Redding
4. September 12, 2017 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.  Fresno
5. September 27, 2017 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.  Los Angeles
6. September 28, 2017 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.  Los Angeles

The LOC Rate Protocol Overview Webinar is available on the Continuum of Care Reform website. For more information or questions, please contact [CCR@dss.ca.gov](mailto:CCR@dss.ca.gov).
California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse (CEBC) and the Continuum of Care Reform

- The CEBC has a new handout, *Using the CEBC to Identify & Support California’s Continuum of Care Reform*. Click [here](#) to take a look!

- We also have the recording of the CEBC-hosted webinar, *Implementation of California’s Continuum of Care Reform: Using the California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse to Identify & Support New Core Service Programs* on the CEBC. Click [here](#) to view it!

California's Probation Teams Rock!

...Richard Knecht, CDSS Transformation Manager

As implementation of the long planned for reform continues, some of the early benefits and challenges are obvious. Considering CCR implementation thus far from a positive viewpoint, I have been particularly heartened by the work Probation Departments are doing in support of Katie A and CCR implementation. Earlier this spring, during a series of training opportunities, I got to meet more than 200 of California’s Juvenile Probation Officers, their supervisors, managers and other senior staff. These interactions were inspiring to me on a number of fronts, and I share these here with some hope that others may be likewise moved by the energy of our probation partners.

**Openness to New Learning**

Probation Departments have been adapting rapidly in California over the last decade, building evidenced based interventions and assessment processes which better identify the needs and assets of young probationers. With the high demands inherent in CCR, it would have been easy to take a “low road” or seek to avoid implementing additional changes, but Probation professionals have demonstrated energy and commitment to embracing the challenges of CCR, and have demonstrated authentic desire to acquire new abilities and skills to best meet their family’s needs.

**Teamwork and Partnership**

Not only was this on display during the trainings mentioned above, where it was evident to me, that in many counties, welfare and mental health partners had been instrumental in helping probation staff learn and adjust, but in the related conversations leading up to completion of the Integrated Core Practice Model, the small but committed workgroup from Probation was open and appreciative of the work done by others to find common language and ground, upon which a shared model could be built. The workgroup genuinely valued the prior work of other partners, and seized the opportunity to merge their own perspective.

**Innovation**

Perhaps most impressive of all, there is present across the state, a clear commitment to working in ways that make a lasting impact on youth, caregivers and staff. Many probation departments have moved quickly to train staff to not only participate in Child and Family Teaming, but to facilitate meeting the needs of those in their care. This approach, as opposed to others, has the additional benefit of bringing new vision and perspective to the organizational culture within the department and supports the long term family centered framework that is at the center of CCR. Departments which have trained and supported this process deserve high praise for challenging themselves and their team members to see their jobs differently and to embrace the change with energy.

These organizational skills—being open to learning, teamwork and embracing innovation, will carry us far in our shared journey to better outcomes and being able to access the resources needed to serve our young people. **Kudos to Probation** teams across the state for modeling these and other practices in installing their CCR compliant systems.
A Spatial Analysis of Foster Care Recruitment in Sacramento County

Holly Thurston, Sacramento County
thurstonh@SacCounty.net

Children entering foster care in Sacramento County are often placed outside of their home school districts, which results in either a transfer of school or a long daily commute. Placing children in the same school district from which they were removed will allow for continuity of their daily school lives and support network, helping to mitigate the trauma of transitioning to foster care. The purpose of this project was to describe and analyze the spatial landscape of foster homes and ancillary supports in Sacramento County.

ESRI ArcGIS, a Geographic Information System (GIS) software, was used to map all foster homes and child removals during the 2015 calendar year. School districts with foster home shortage or foster home oversupply were identified. Information that could be used to aid recruitment efforts was added, such as the locations of mental health services and churches, as well as “Tapestry Segmentations” an ESRI product that compiles socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of neighborhood residents into a descriptive marketing profile.

An online “Storymap” was then created as a mobile tool for recruiters to use in their efforts. This tool allows users to drill down to neighborhood level information, identify priority areas, and tailor recruitment efforts. This tool is dynamic and will be adapted and updated with feedback from users. Ongoing analysis will evaluate the effectiveness of various recruitment efforts. The Storymap is available here: http://arcg.is/1VWQKLG

Sacramento County Recruitment Strategies

In addition to using the innovative Geographic Information System software to aid in identifying supports and providing information to assist in recruiting quality Resource families, Sacramento County has also implemented other strategies to increase recruitment efforts. These include:

- **Participation in community recruitment events** including: Black Expo, Fairytale Town Resource Fair, Kids Day in the Park, Living Well Expo, and the PRIDE event.
- **Targeted advertising** including: Distribution of RFA fliers to Sacramento’s north area businesses, an insert in Sacramento’s News and Review newspaper, creation of a slides to be shown on local movie theater screens (under development), screen display for Board of Supervisors Meetings (under development), and the updating of Sacramento County’s internet site with the most current Resource Family Approval information.
- **Engagement with the Faith Based Community** including: Distributing over 400 personal invitations to present at area churches and then subsequently delivering individual presentations to the congregations that responded to the invite.
- **Other efforts** include: Working collaboratively with partner agencies and supporting their recruitment efforts and scheduling weekly orientations to provide information to families with youth in care or those interested in becoming a resource family, and to answer incoming questions regarding the Geographic Information System.

Sacramento County is working diligently on these efforts and continuing to develop creative strategies for the future. If you have questions about what was shared, please contact Cathi Johnson at johnscd@saccounty.net.
Signs of Trauma

The following information is provided by The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) and the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Association (SAMHSA)

More than **TWO THIRDS OF CHILDREN** reported at least 1 traumatic event by age 16.* Potentially traumatic events include:

- PSYCHOLOGICAL, PHYSICAL, OR SEXUAL ABUSE
- COMMUNITY OR SCHOOL VIOLENCE
- WITNESSING OR EXPERIENCING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
- NATURAL DISASTERS OR TERRORISM
- COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION
- SUDDEN OR VIOLENT LOSS OF A LOVED ONE
- REFUGEE OR WAR EXPERIENCES
- MILITARY FAMILY-RELATED STRESSORS (E.G., DEPLOYMENT, PARENTAL LOSS OR INJURY)
- PHYSICAL OR sexual assault
- NEGLECT
- SERIOUS ACCIDENTS OR LIFE-THREATENING ILLNESS


**PRESCHOOL CHILDREN**
- Fear being separated from their parent/caregiver
- Cry or scream a lot; eat poorly or lose weight; have nightmares

**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN**
- Become anxious or fearful; feel guilt or shame
- Have a hard time concentrating; have difficulty sleeping

**MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL CHILDREN**
- Feel depressed or alone; develop eating disorders or self-harming behaviors;
- Begin abusing alcohol or drugs; become involved in risky sexual behavior

**THE IMPACT OF TRAUMA**
The impact of child traumatic stress can last well beyond childhood. In fact, research has shown that child trauma survivors may experience learning problems, including lower grades and more suspensions and expulsions; increased use of health and mental health services; increased involvement with the child welfare and juvenile justice systems; and long-term health problems (e.g., diabetes and heart disease)

**TRAUMA** is a risk factor for nearly all behavioral health and substance use disorders.

**GET HELP NOW**
https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov
http://nctsn.org/resources/get-help-now
http://www.healthcaretoolbox.org
My name is Alice Washington, and I’m an associate at CIBHS, the California Institute for Behavioral Health Solutions. I’d like to take this opportunity to introduce you to a new CIBHS Blog, “Just saying …All About That Hope”. We hope to be unpredictable and innovative in our perspective. “All About That Hope” was created in 2004 when the Mental Health Services Act was passed. This is a space to talk about all topics related to persons with lived experiences and their family members, whether dealing with mental health or substance use and abuse issues.

Our topics will explore recovery, wellness, systems and policies, the dynamics of feedback, and in some instances, we will provide snippets of history for those who are new to working in Behavioral Health systems to help understand how important it is to listen and truly understand feedback. This is a place for sharing ideas, innovative thinking, testing these ideas with others, and getting people involved in a dialogue.

Because we want to involve you, in not only reading and commenting on our blog, we will accept suggestions for topics that you would like us to explore in future editions of the blog.

Our journey begins now! It's all about that hope! Click her to begin the journey.... CIBHS Blog

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**Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) Performance Outcomes System**

State law requires the DHCS to develop a performance outcomes system for EPSDT mental health services that will be used to improve outcomes at the individual and system levels, and inform fiscal decision-making related to the purchase of services. Data regarding child/youth functioning is a critical component of this system. The DHCS received input from county partners, providers, and stakeholders, and commissioned a study with UCLA to identify an appropriate functional assessment tool. Throughout 2016, UCLA conducted a comprehensive study, resulting in a recommendation for the DHCS to adopt the parent/caregiver version of the Pediatric Symptom Checklist – 35 (PSC-35). In addition to adopting the PSC-35, DHCS determined that it would also be beneficial to adopt a tool that represents the clinician’s perspective of child/youth functioning. Therefore, using the information gleaned from the UCLA study that 33 counties are already using the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS), along with stakeholder and county mental health program input, the DHCS selected the CANS to represent the clinician’s perspective. The DHCS is developing an implementation plan, and is preparing an information notice that will provide additional information to support counties, all of which will be released later this year.
**CCR Updates Continued**

**Therapeutic Foster Care (TFC) Committee Meetings**
The TFC Implementation Committee continues to meet to discuss the TFC service model and TFC parent qualifications. The next meetings will be held:
- September 13: NOTE: TFC Meeting Cancelled and an Expert Workgroup meeting will take place from 2-5 pm the same date
- December 7: NOTE: Time is changed to 2-4 pm
Contact kbitz@cbhs.org for additional information.

**National Adoption Training Initiative (NTI)**
The NTI has reached midpoint in Phase I of the pilot involving child welfare staff. As of August 15, over 900 people have enrolled in and started the NTI training for child welfare professionals. Of those, 63% have completed less than 3 modules. You are an important part of encouraging your users to complete the training. Click here for a tip sheet on encouraging user progression and completing the training.

Everyone should have started enrollment by now, however, there are about 45 agencies that have not begun. If you are one of those agencies you should have been contacted by the NTI implementation team to check-in. Now is the time to get started if you haven’t done so. It is recommended that users complete the training within four months of enrolling. All agencies will be contacted again in early November with completion data. For additional information or assistance, please contact CSNNTI@dss.ca.gov.


**CCR Regional Ideas and Transformation Exchange (RITE)**
The CDSS, Department of Health Care Services (DHCS), County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA), County Behavioral Health Directors Association (CBHDA), Chief Probation Officers of California (CPOC), California Institute for Behavioral Health Services (CIBHS), the Regional Training Academies (RTA), and Casey Family Programs are sponsoring the second set of CCR convenings in the Northern, Bay, Central, Southern regions, as well as Los Angeles, providing robust technical assistance at the local level. The next Bay and L.A. RITEs are scheduled for October 13 and 17, 2017 respectively. If you’d like more information contact Theresa.thurmond@dss.ca.gov.

The CDSS has written an All County Letter (ACL) that provides formal step-by-step instructions on how to record Child and Family Teams (CFT) in the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System, and will be presented in the context of the policy outlined in ACL 16-84. The ACL is currently in the stakeholder review process, and its anticipated release is later this summer. For more information, please contact Caroline Caton in the Integrated Services Unit at Caroline.Caton@dss.ca.gov.

**Integrated Services Update**
On July 31, 2017, the CDSS released County Fiscal Letter (CFL) 17/18-09, which provides claiming instructions to County Probation Departments for CFT activities for youth in detention. For questions regarding CFTs please contact the Integrated Services Unit at CWSScoordination@dss.ca.gov. For questions regarding the CFL please contact fiscal.systems@dss.ca.gov.

The CDSS has written a second CFT Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) letter, which provides answers to FAQs submitted by counties since the release of ACL 16-84 (October 2016). Questions and answers cover a range of CFT topics, including but not limited to, meeting timing and frequency, team roles, team-based case planning, and information sharing and confidentiality. The ACL has incorporated stakeholder feedback and is in final review. Anticipated release is summer 2017. For more information, please contact Lupe Grimaldi at Lupe.Grimaldi@dss.ca.gov.

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**CCR COMMUNICATION TOOLS**

**CCR Overview:**
CDSS has developed a webinar that is pre-recorded and available on the California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC) website. The webinar provides an overview of CCR and the provisions of AB 403, and the framework for implementation.
http://calswec.berkeley.edu/toolkits/continuum-care-reform-ccr/abcs-ccr

**CDSS Internet Webpage:**
This web-page provides a variety of information including the CCR Fact Sheets, links to Assembly Bill 403, and calendar of meetings and presentations.
http://www.cdss.ca.gov/foresources/Continuum-of-Care-Reform

**CCR Toolkit:**
The toolkit is designed to help navigate various components of the CCR initiative and is available on the CalSWEC website.
http://calswec.berkeley.edu/toolkits/continuum-care-reform-ccr

**CCR Email Box:**
This e-mail portal is available for stakeholders to ask questions, request information and to be connected with CCR workgroups at ccr@dss.ca.gov.

**CCR Tools for Youth:**
Tools are available on the CalSWEC website to assist stakeholders with messaging to youth.
http://calswec.berkeley.edu/toolkits/continuum-care-reform-ccr

**Children & Family Services Integrated Practice Technical Assistance Calls:**
The CDSS and the DHCS host a monthly call that provides open and timely communication between state teams and county staff in providing updates and discussion surrounding CCR planning and implementation, continued implementation of Pathways to Well-Being (Core Practice Model, Intensive Care Coordination, and Intensive Home Based Services), and planning and implementation of Therapeutic Foster Care services. A monthly bulletin of the Integrated Practice Technical Assistance Calls, including discussion points, Q&A, and resources to support counties and their partners in these program areas, is sent out to county and partner staff each month.

Email KatieA@dhcs.ca.gov to subscribe to the TA Call list for alerts, materials, and bulletins.

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**CCR Updates Continued**

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