

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

Background

This quarterly report summarizes Santa Clara County's (SCC) progress toward achieving improvements on the state-mandated California Child and Family Services Review (C-CFSR) outcomes.

The C-CFSR measures discussed in the report include the five outcomes measures selected for inclusion into the System Improvement Plan (SIP), which are:

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

The data analyzed in this report was released by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) in January 2006 and accounts for the data collected from July 2000 to July 2005.¹ Reference to progress made on the Federal measures is also provided on page 16 of this report. (To learn more about California performance data, visit <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports>.)

Summary of Outcome Measure Performance

SCC is utilizing the State measures to track progress pertaining to the five SIP target areas.

This report also provides a summary of performance on Federal and State measures. Ethnicity data is cited for outcome measures when available. Due to the statistically small number of Native Americans represented, the percentage changes in performance measures may appear drastic. Therefore, caution is required when interpreting data related to Native Americans.

In general, SCC experienced consistent improved performance across most measures and performs better than the State average for many outcome measures. As reported last quarter, SCC performed better than the State average on the incidence rates of referrals, substantiated referrals, first entries into care, the rate in care, and placements with some or all siblings. Substantial and consistent improvements are evident in timely immediate and ten-day response investigations, and social worker visits. Timely social worker visits exceeded the State average consistently for the last two reporting periods ending this quarter with an average of 92.8%. In addition, the rate of abuse of children in care (exclusively a Federal measure) decreased to 0.14%, better than the Federal standard for a consecutive quarter. Although performance in reunifying children decreased slightly in recent reporting periods, performance remains well above the State threshold. Finalizing adoptions improved slightly from last quarter, exceeding the State average.

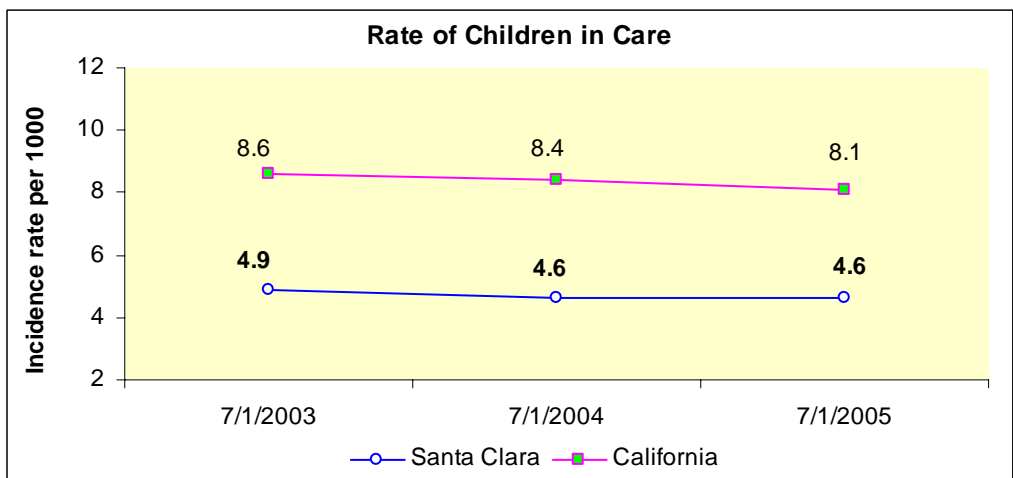
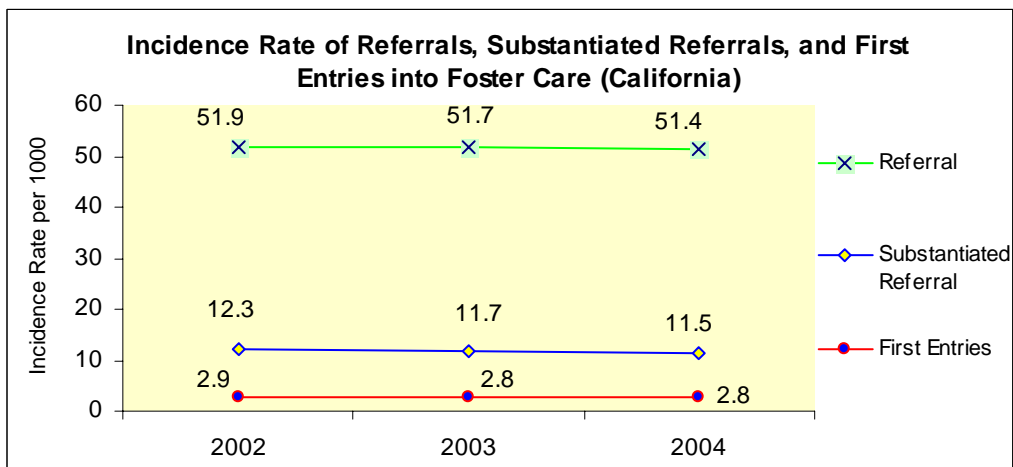
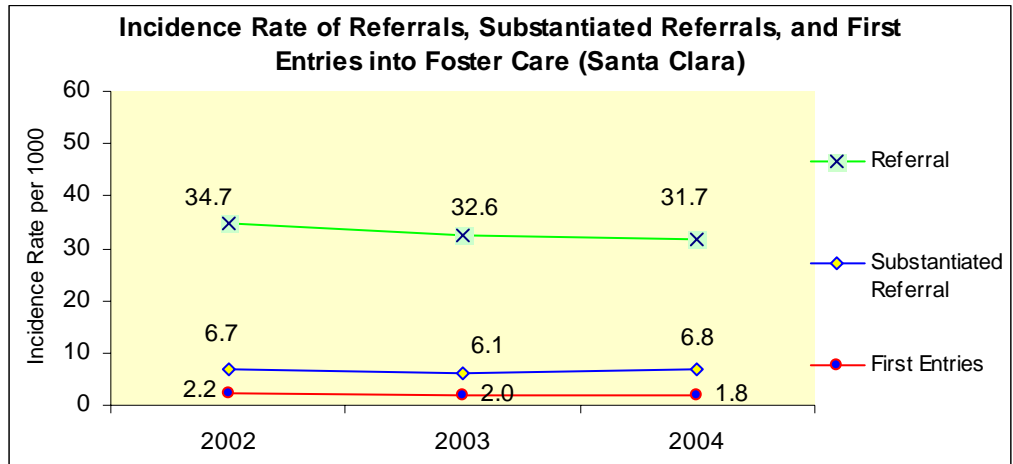
Placement stability decreased slightly and remains below the State average. Foster care reentries increased, although performing below the State average. Recurrence of maltreatment declined, exceeding the State average, although performance on the Federal measure remains below standard.

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

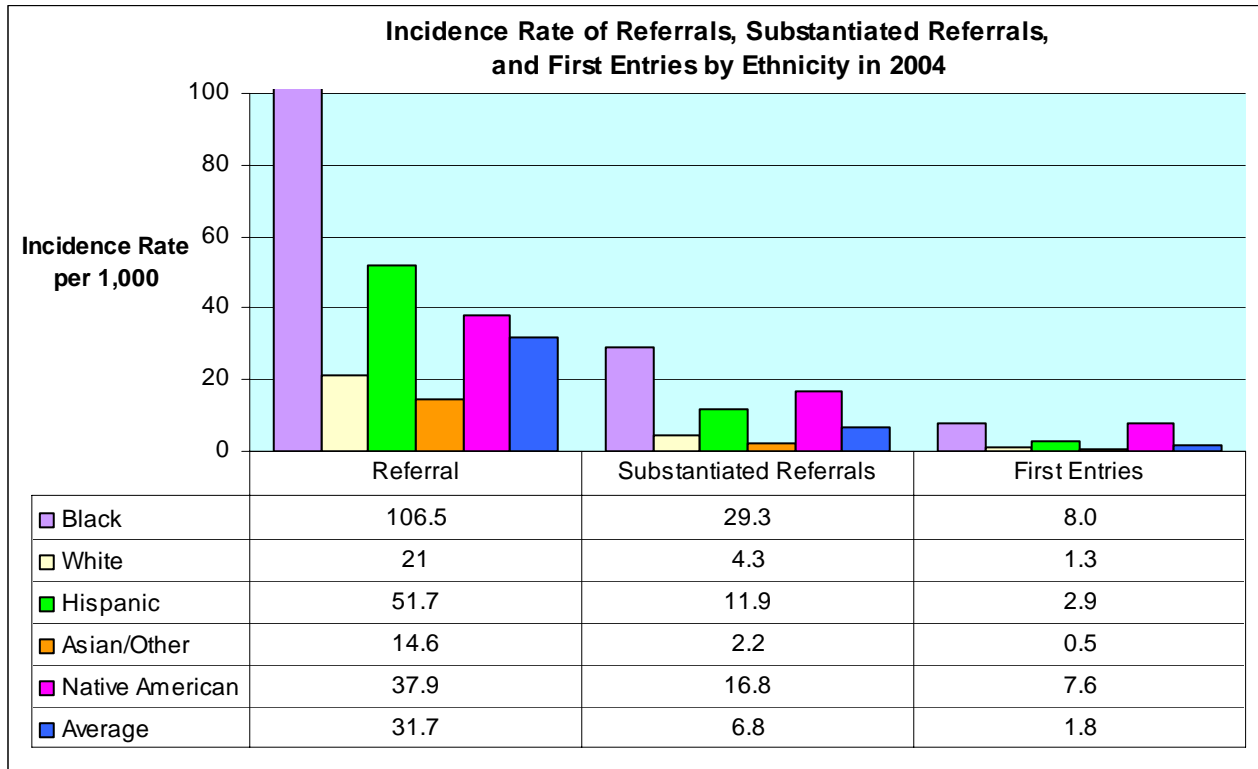
Rate of Referrals, Substantiated Referrals, First Entries into Foster Care, and Children in Care

(No new data for referrals, substantial referrals, and first entries since the last October 2005 report)

- The incidence rate of referrals decreased from 32.6 per 1,000 in 2003, to 31.7 in 2004.
- The incidence rate of substantiated referrals increased from 6.1 per 1,000 in 2003 to 6.8 in 2004.
- The incidence rate of first entries into care (stayed five days or more) decreased from 2.0 per 1,000 in 2003 to 1.8 in 2004.
- The incidence rate of children in care remained the same at 4.6 on 7/1/2004 and 7/1/2005.



- Although there is improvement in rate of referrals and first entries into care (and stayed at least five days), there continues to be significant overrepresentation of Black and Hispanic children. In 2004, the incidence rate of first entries into care for Black children are 8.0 per 1,000 and for Hispanic children are 2.9 per 1,000, compared to the County's average rate of 1.8 per 1,000.²



² Child Welfare Reports for California, retrieved on 11/04/2005 from the University of California at Berkeley Center for Social Services Research website: <URL://http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports>

SAFETY OUTCOMES

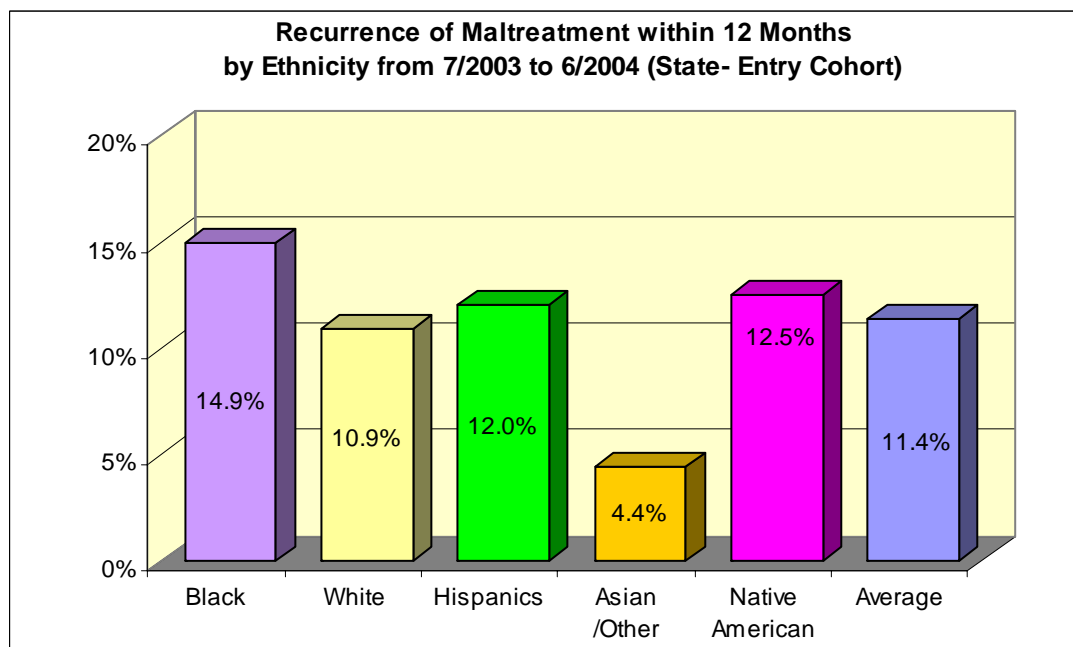
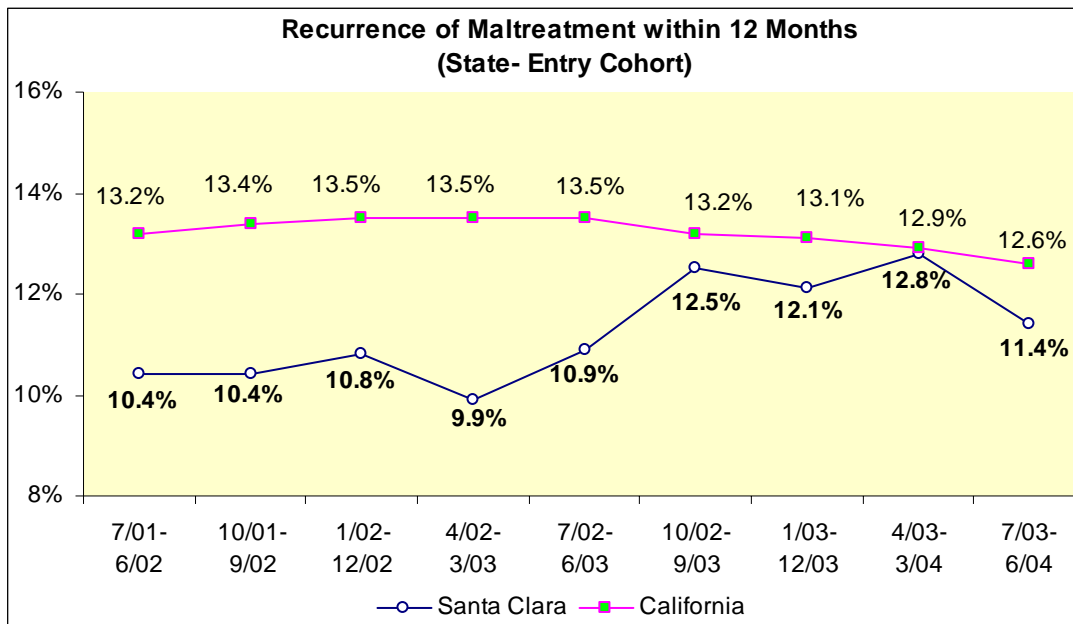
These measures are designed to reflect the effectiveness of efforts to protect children from abuse/neglect by reporting instances of abuse and neglect at various stages of child welfare services, which reflect the frequency of social worker contact with children and the timeliness of face-to-face investigation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

Recurrence of Maltreatment

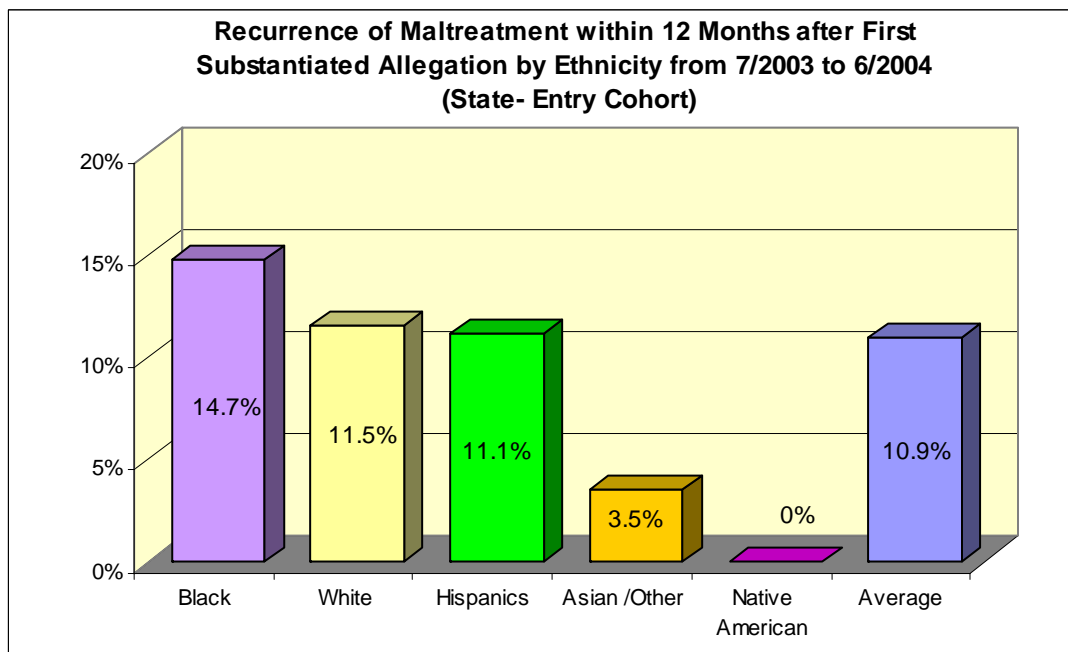
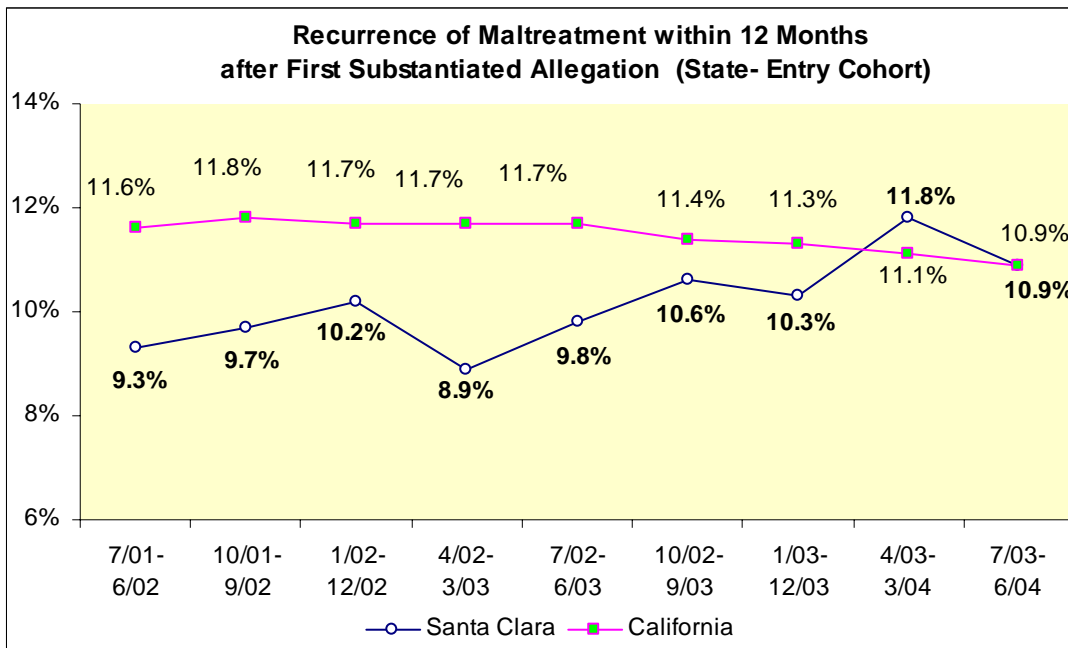
(This measure reflects the percent of children who were victims of child abuse/neglect with a subsequent substantiated report of abuse/neglect within specific time-periods.

- 11.4% of all children with a substantiated allegation in 7/2003-6/2004 had another substantiated allegation within 12 months, compared to 12.8% in 4/2003-3/2004.

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



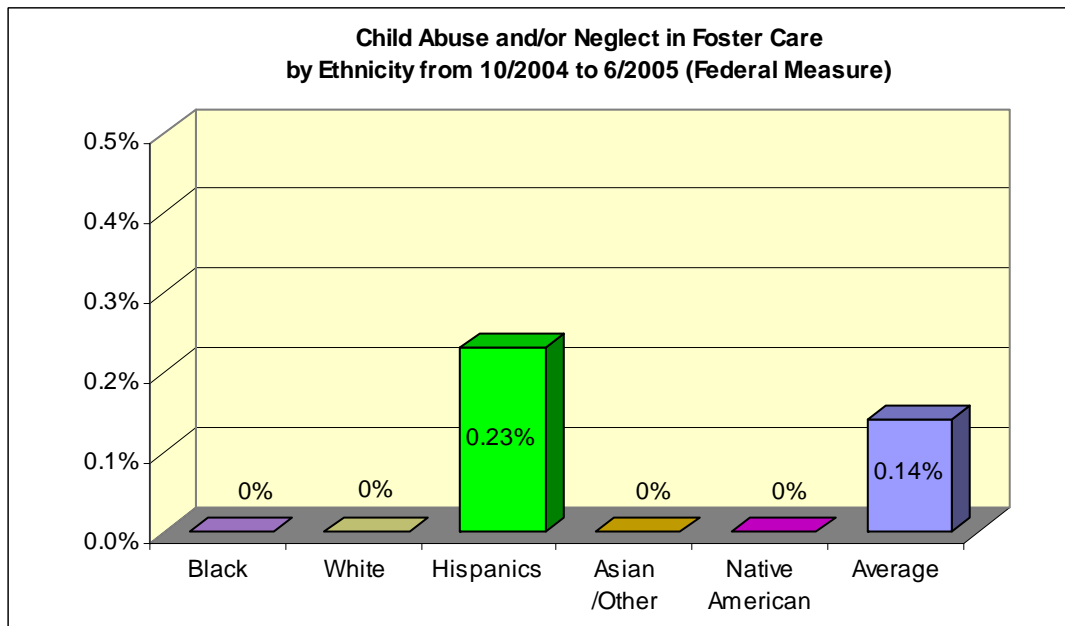
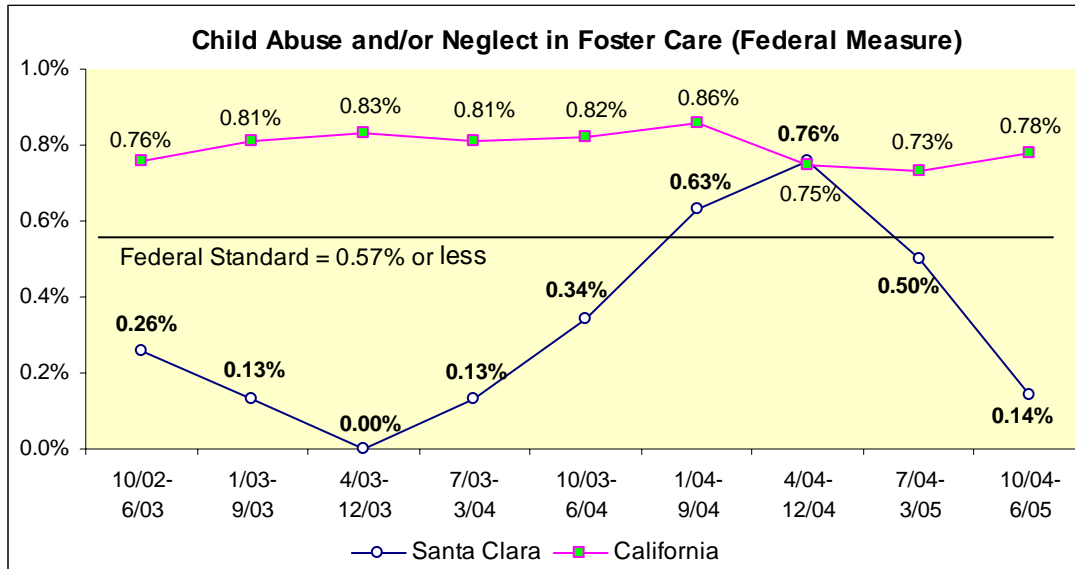
- 10.9% of all children with a first substantiated allegation in 7/2003-6/2004, had a subsequent substantiated allegation within 12 months, compared to 11.8 % in 4/2003-3/2004.
 URL: <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/Referrals/recurrence.asp>



Rate of Child Abuse and/or Neglect in Foster Care

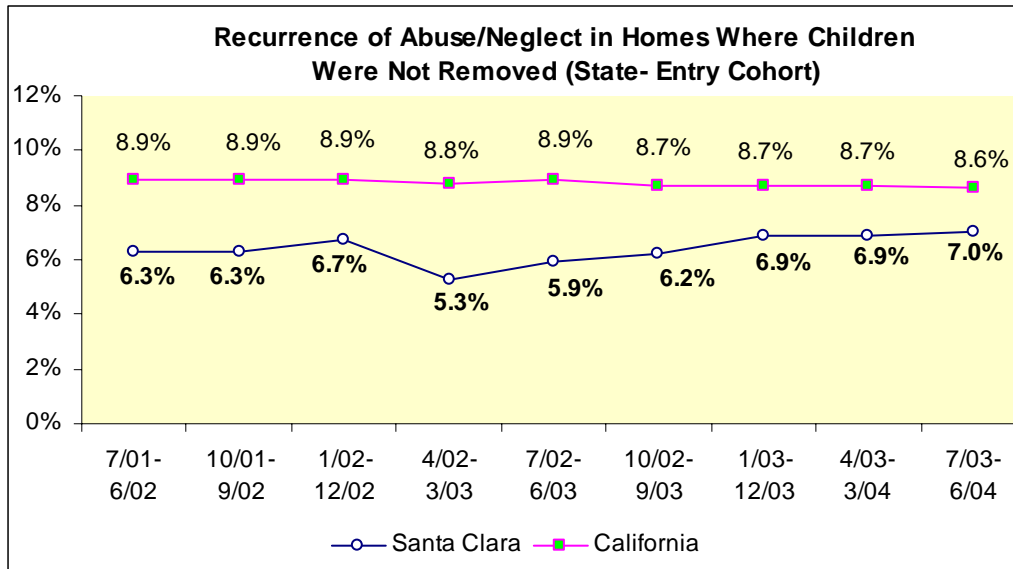
(This measure reflects the percent of children in foster care who are abused or neglected while in foster care placement (limited to children in foster or FFA homes)).

- 0.14% of children had a substantiated allegation by a foster parent in 10/2004-6/2005, compared to 0.50% in 7/2004-3/2005. (Federal standard = 0.57% or less)
 URL: http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/cfsrdata/standards/cfsr_abuse.asp



Rate of Recurrence of Abuse and/or Neglect in Homes Where Children Were Not Removed
(This measure reflects the recurrence of abuse and/or neglect of children who remain in their own homes.)

- 7.0% of children, who had an inconclusive or substantiated allegation in 7/2003-6/2004 and were not removed, had a subsequent substantiated allegation within 12 months, as compared to 6.9 % in 4/2003-3/2004. URL: <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/Ccfsr.asp#2A>

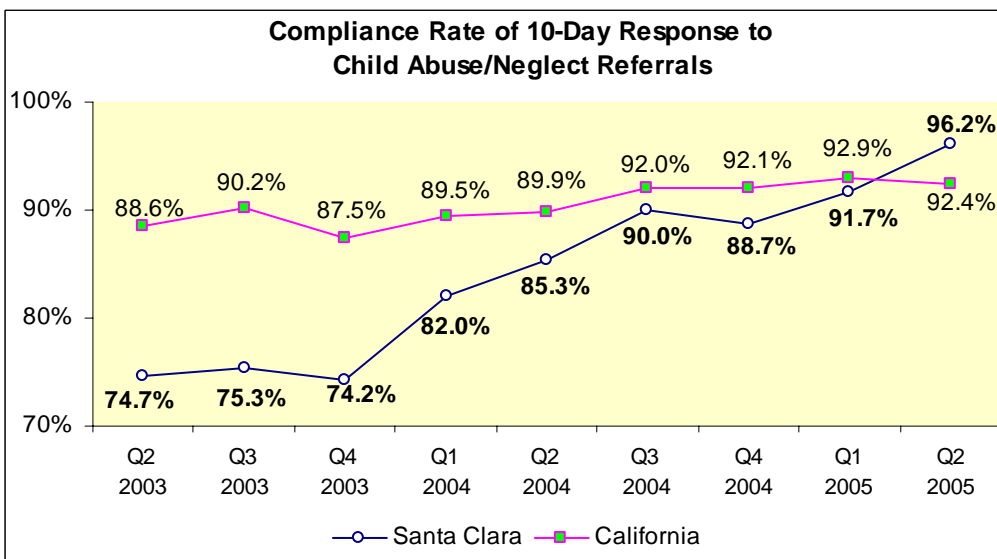
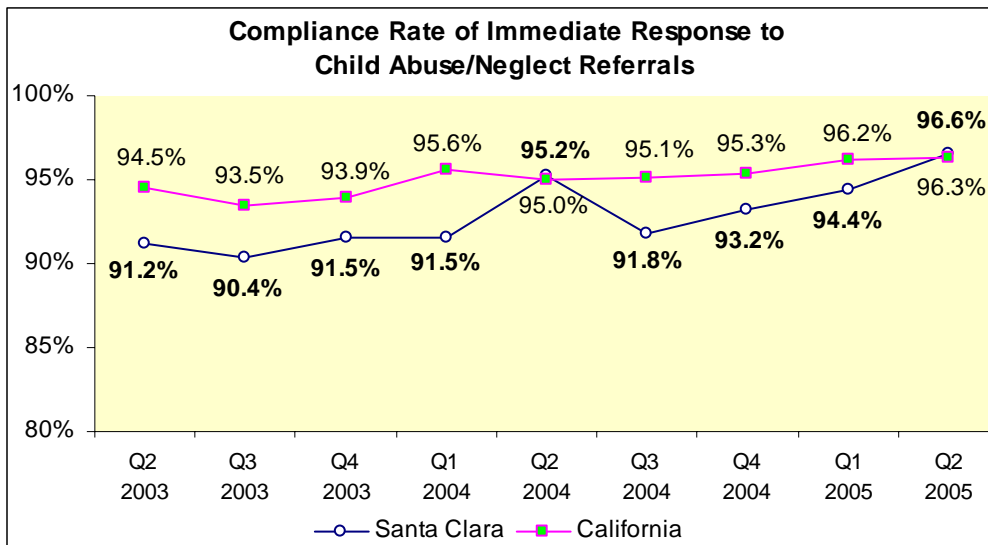


(No ethnicity data available for this measure.)

Referrals with a Timely Response

(This measure determines the percent of referrals that resulted in a face-to-face investigation with a child that occurs, or is attempted, within required time-frames in situations in which allegations indicate significant danger to the child, stratified by immediate response and ten-day referrals, for both planned and actual visits.)

- In Q2 2005, 96.6% of Immediate Response referrals received a timely response, compared to 94.4% in Q1 2005. Also in Q2 2005, 96.2% of ten-day referrals received a timely response, compared to 91.7% in Q1 2005. URL: <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/Ccfsr.asp#2B>

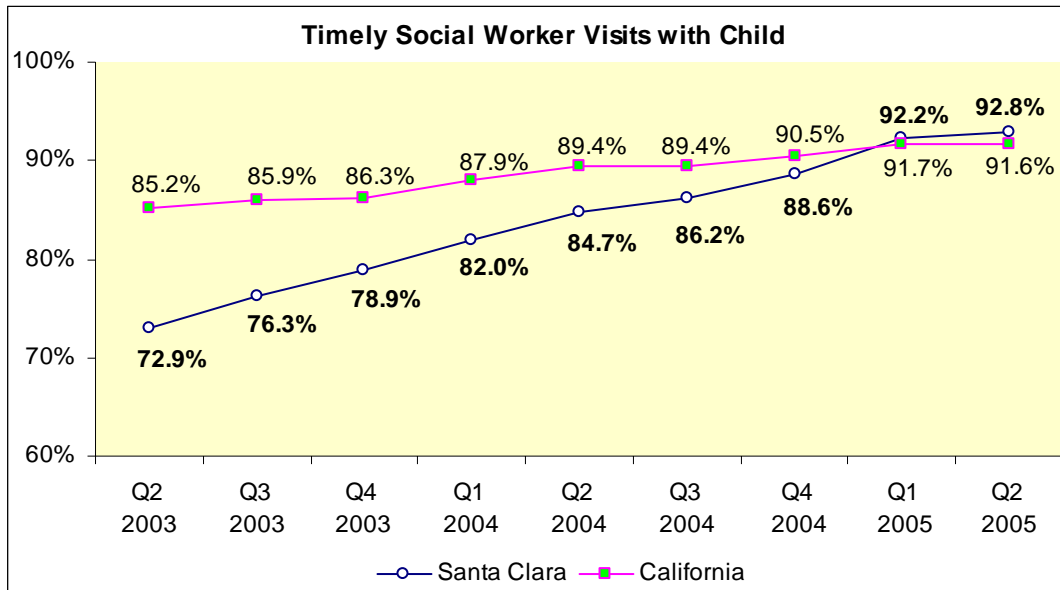


(No ethnicity data available for this measure.)

Timely Social Worker Visits with Child

(This measure determines if social workers are visiting children on a monthly basis when that is required. Children for whom a determination is made that monthly visits are not necessary (e.g. valid visits exception) are not included in this measure.)

- In Q2, 2005, on average, 92.8% of all children who required a monthly visit, received a visit, compared to 92.2% in Q1, 2005. (Averages cited here are calculated based on quarterly percentages.) URL: <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/Ccfsr.asp#2C>



PERMANENCY OUTCOMES

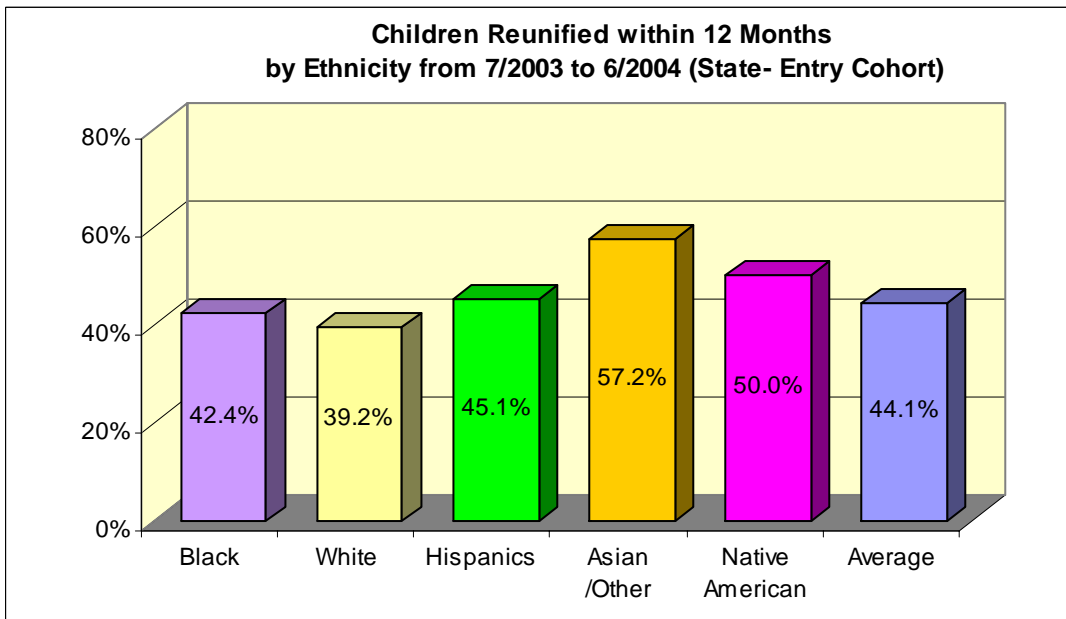
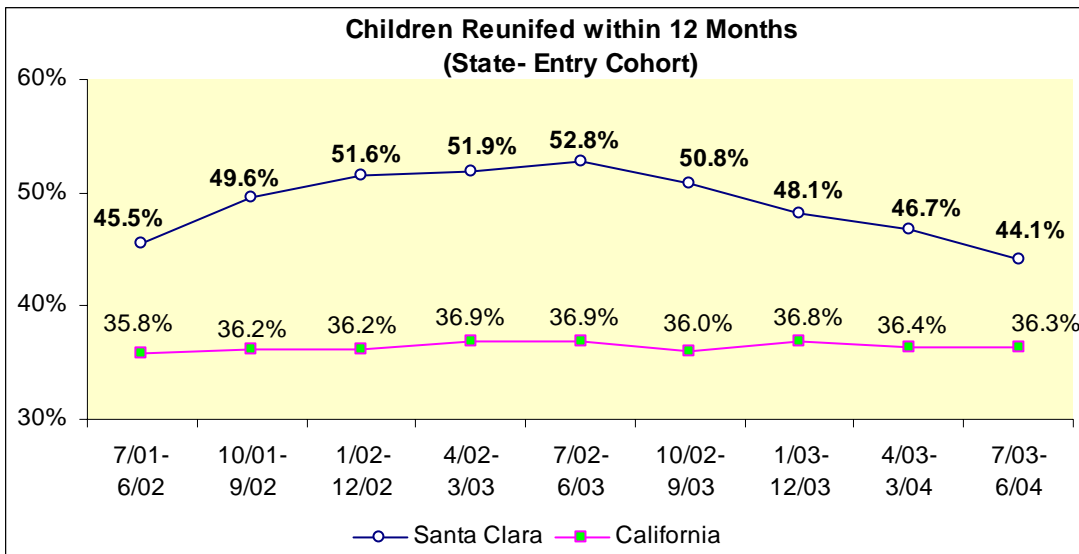
These measures are designed to reflect the number of foster care placements for each child (who entered care and stayed five days or more), the length of time a child is in foster care, and the rate that children re-enter foster care after they have returned home or other permanent care arrangements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

Length of Time to Exit Foster Care to Reunification

(This outcome measure reflects the percentage of children reunified within 12 months of removal from the home.)

- 44.1% of all children who entered care for the first time (stayed five days or more) during 7/2003-6/2004 were reunified within 12 months, compared to 46.7% in 4/2003-3/2004.

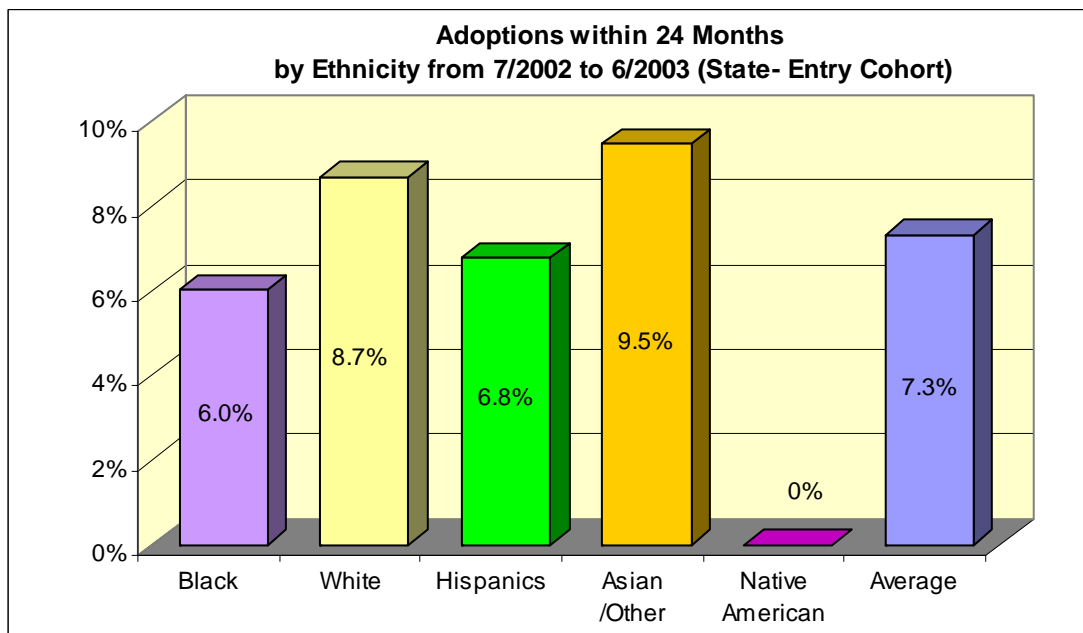
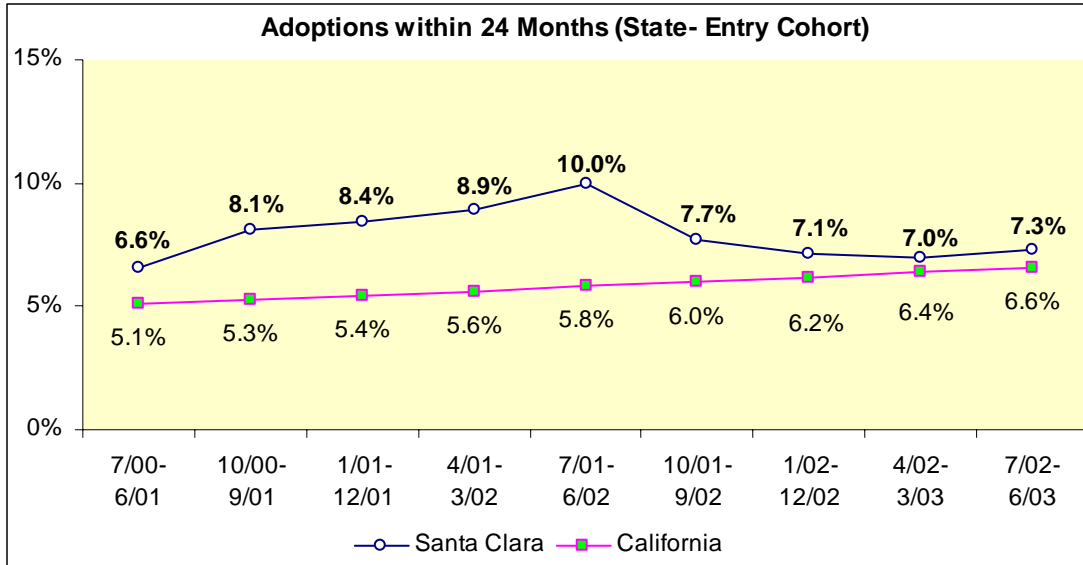
URL: <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/Cohorts/exits/>



Length of Time to Exit Foster Care to Adoption

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

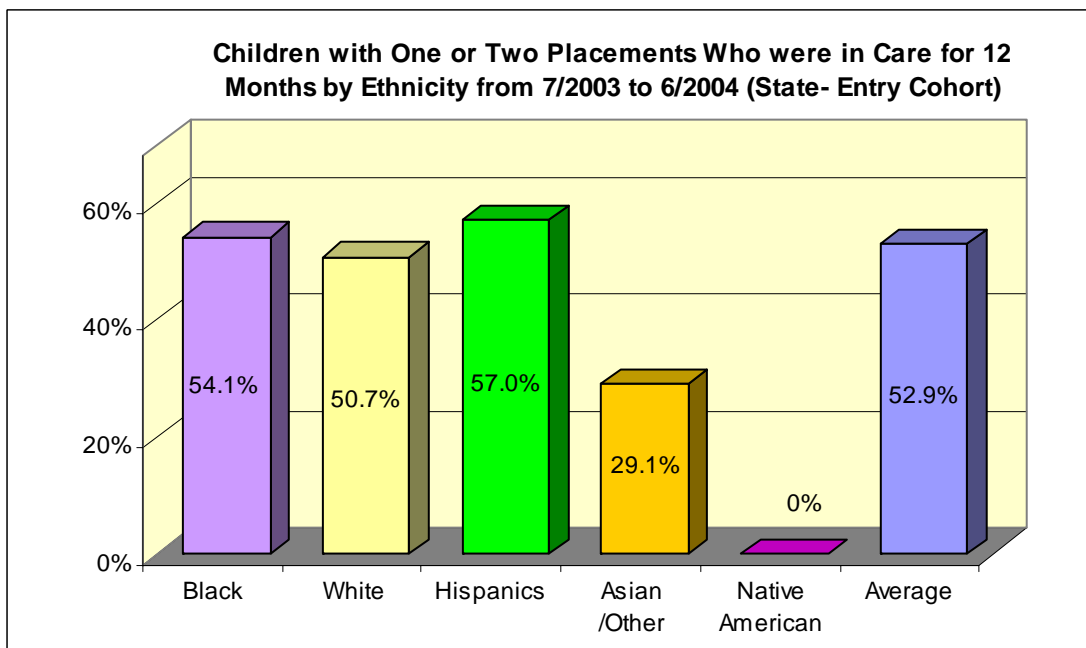
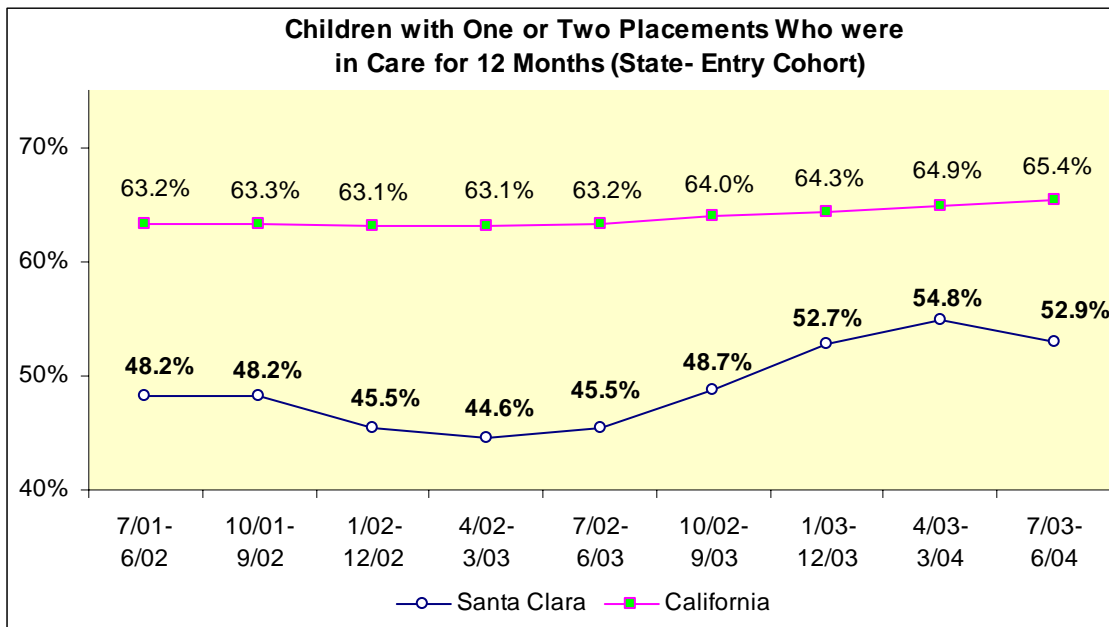
- 7.3% of all children who entered care for the first time (stayed five days or more) during 7/2002-6/2003 were adopted within 24 months, compared to 7.0% in 4/2002-3/2003.
 URL: <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/Cohorts/exits/>



Multiple Foster Care Placements

(These measures reflect the number of children with no more than two placements during 12 months of placement.)

- 52.9% of all children who entered care for the first time (stayed five days or more) during 7/2003-6/2004, and were in care for 12 months had no more than two placements, compared to 54.8% in 4/2003-3/2004. URL: <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/cohorts/stability/>

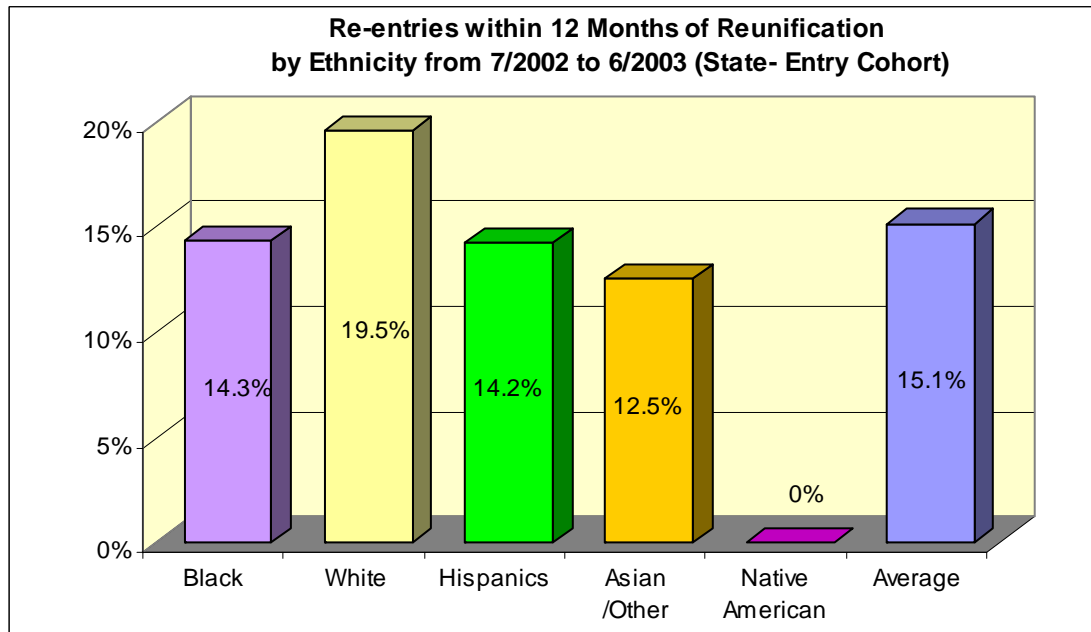
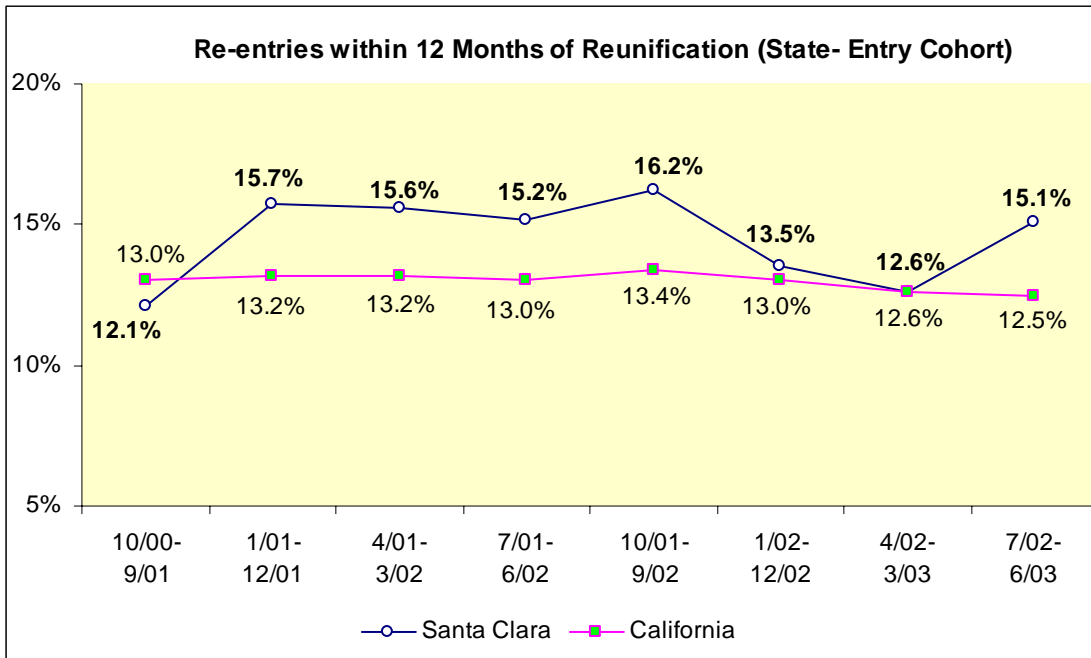


Rate of Foster Care Re-entry into Child Welfare System

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

- 15.1% of all children who entered care for the first time (stayed five days or more) during 7/2002-6/2003 and were reunified within 12 months of entry, re-entered care within 12 months of reunification, compared to 12.6% in 4/2002-3/2003.

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



CHILD AND FAMILY WELL-BEING OUTCOMES

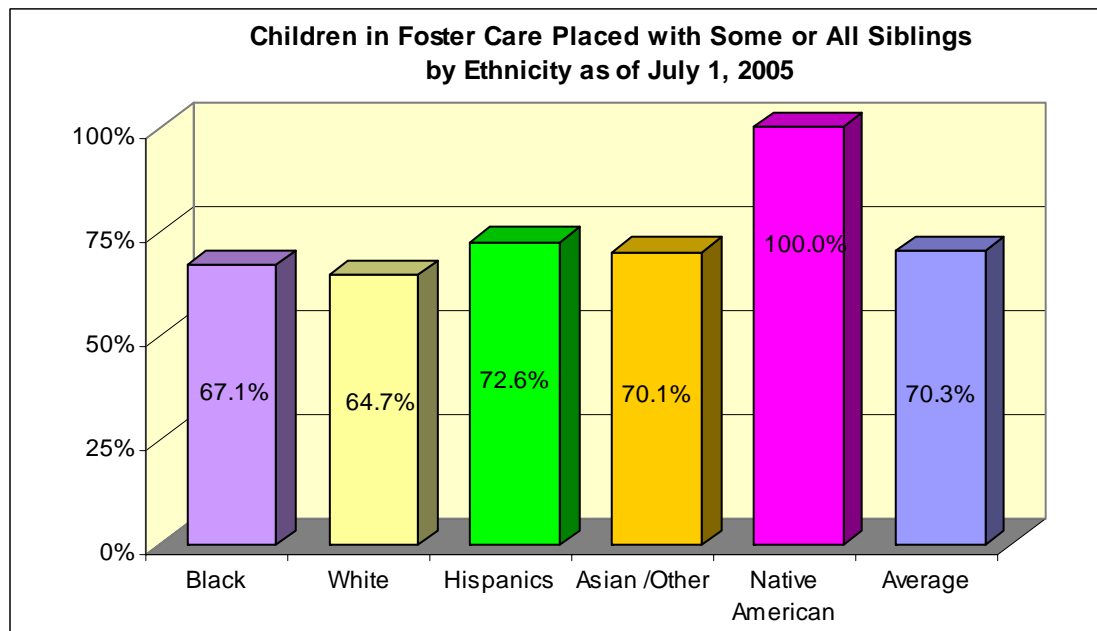
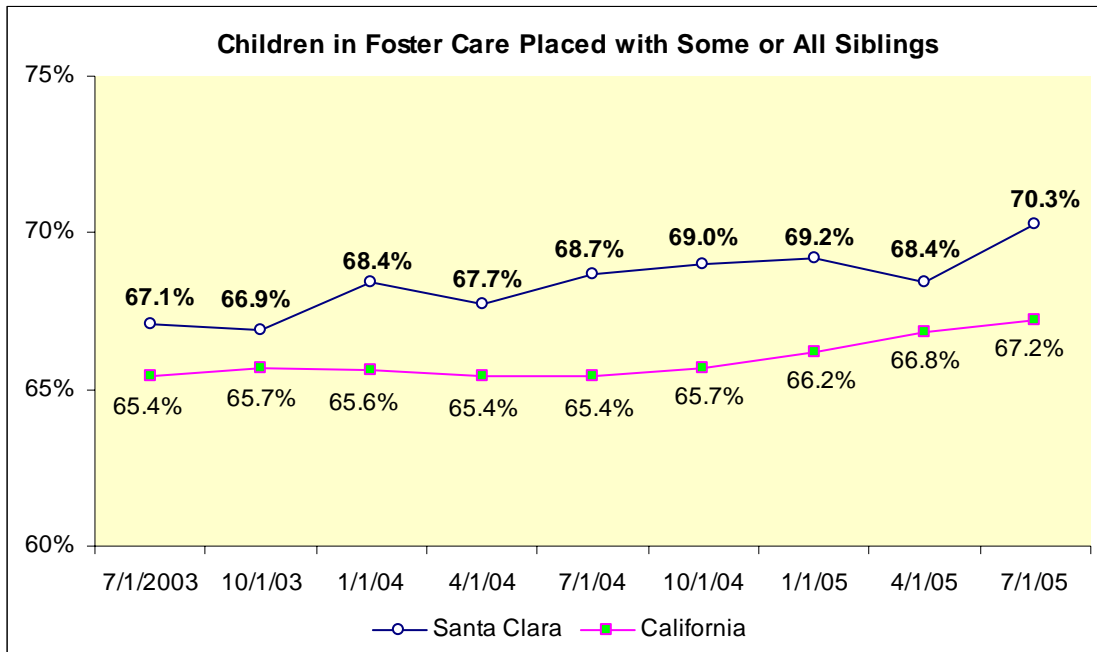
These measures reflect the degree to which children in foster care retain relationships with their family and extended communities with whom they are associated at the time of removal from their parents.

Siblings Placed Together

(These measures reflect the number of children placed with all or some of their siblings in foster care.)

- Of all children in care on 7/1/2005, 70.3% of siblings were placed with some or all siblings, compared to 68.4% on 4/1/2005.

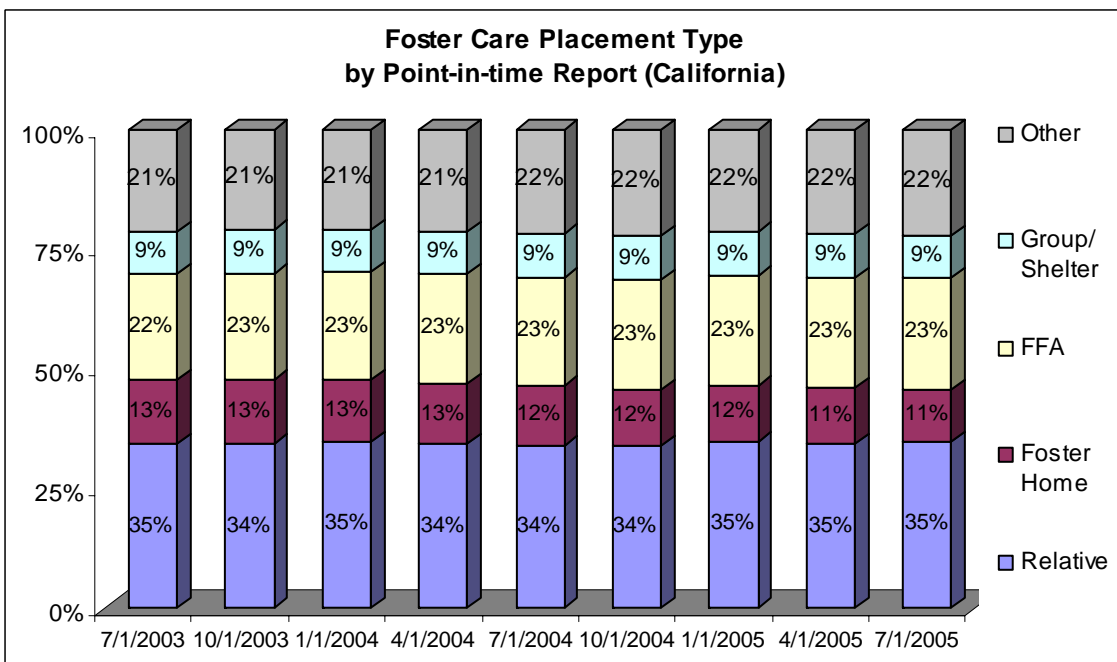
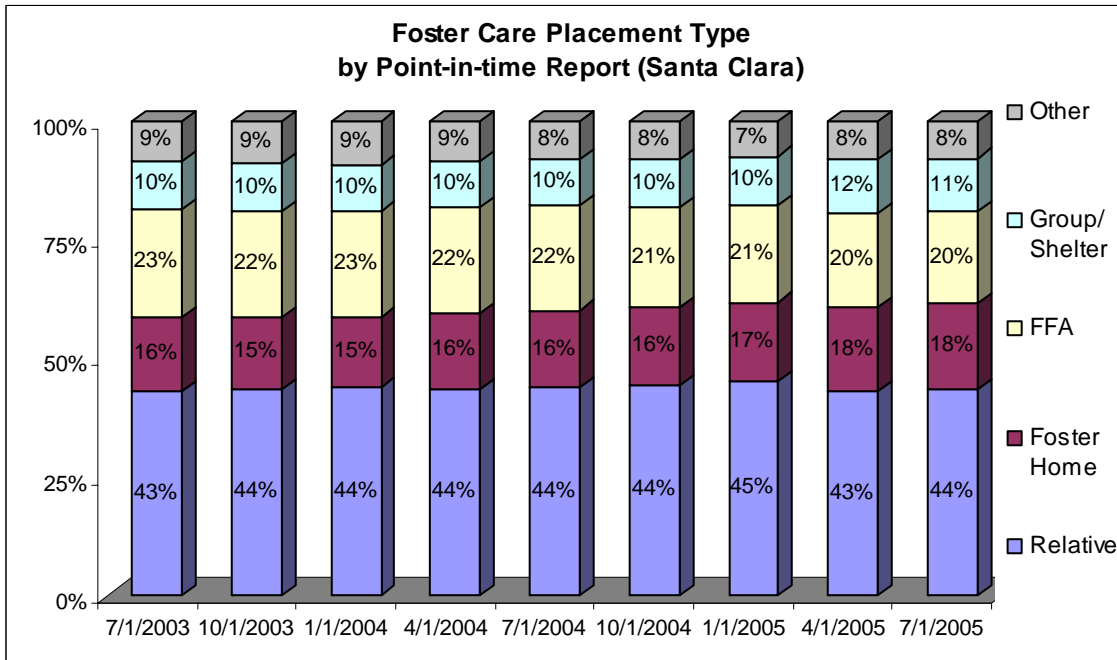
URL: <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/pointintime/fostercare/childwel/siblings.asp>



Foster Care Placement in Least Restrictive Settings

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

- Of all children in supervised foster care on 7/1/2005 (point-in-time reporting), 44% were placed with kin/relatives, 18% were in foster home placement, 20% were in placement with Foster Family Agencies, 11% were in Group/Shelter care, and 8% were in other types of placements.
 URL: <http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/pointintime/fostercare/childwel/ageandethnic.asp>



FEDERAL AND STATE PERFORMANCE

The table below provides a summary of Federal and State *quarterly* performance. For evaluation purposes, performance changes less than 0.5% are rated as “relatively unchanged” except for Abuse in Care that has a small threshold.

Federal and State Performance at a Glance			
SCC's Five SIP Target Areas	Measures Contained in this Data Report	Federal Measures	State Measures
Reduce First Entries of Children of Color	Background data- Incidence Rates		Referral- No new data Sub Ref- No new data 1 st Entries- No new data Rate in Care- No change
	Recurrence of Maltreatment	(Below Standard) ³ Declined	By any substantiation- Improved By 1 st substantiation- Improved
	Abuse in Care	(Above Standard) Improved	NA
	Recurrence of Abuse in Homes where Children were not Removed	NA	Relatively unchanged
Timely Response	Timely Response	NA	IR- Improved. 10-Day- Improved
Timely Visits	Timely Visits	NA	Improved
	Reunification	(Above Standard) ⁴ Declined	Declined
	Adoption	(Above Standard) Improved	Relatively unchanged
Reduce Multiple Placement	Placement Stability	(Below Standard) ⁵ Improved	Declined
Reduce Re-entries	Re-entries	(Below Standard) ⁶ Improved	Declined
	Sibling Placement	NA	All Siblings- Declined Some/All Siblings- Improved
	Foster Care Placement by Initial Placement	NA	Initial placement at group home/shelter decreased by 1% to 60%; county home placement increased 2% to 27%.
	Foster Care Placement by predominant Placement	NA	Predominant placement at group home/shelter decreased by 2% to 21%; relative placement increased by 1% to 36%.
	Foster Care Placement by Point-in-time Placement	NA	Relative placement increased by 1% to 44%; group home/shelter placements decreased by 1% to 11%.
	Children Transitioning to Self-Sufficient Adulthood	NA	No new data.

³ Performance declined in the most recent quarter report, however performing better than the State average for most other reporting periods.

⁴ Performance far exceeds State average.

⁵ Performance improved 1.3% over the baseline measurement period.

⁶ Performance improved 1.6% over the baseline measurement period.

Milestones Achieved and Next Steps

The Department of Family and Children's Services (DFCS) has created a detailed implementation plan and improvement strategies. Eight SIP Implementation Workgroups were formed by specific function or strategy to implement a number of improvement strategies. The following are the workgroups milestones achieved by workgroup since the last report, as well as the strategies and tasks for next steps.

1. Children of Color:

Data

Milestones Achieved

- ✓ Retreat held with the SIP Children of Color group and Child Abuse Council to combine efforts and form a work plan
- ✓ Analyzed data on referrals, evaluated out referrals, allegation type, and removals by ethnicity and zip code. Looked at overrepresentation from the perspective of family size.

Risk/Safety Assessment (RSA)

Milestones Achieved

- ✓ Consultant RSA decision-making tool modifications completed. RSA decision-making tool implementation projected to occur in Spring 2006
- ✓ RSA Tool Selected – Comprehensive Assessment Tool (CAT)

Next Steps

- Conducted focus groups on cultural competence of tool
- Develop RSA policies and procedures
- Refine tool based on cultural competence focus group findings
- Continue to receive technical assistance on new tool
- Train staff
- Pilot new decision-making tool
- Evaluate new RSA decision-making tool

Differential Response (DR)

Milestones Achieved

- ✓ Funding Secured
- ✓ Promoting Safe and Stable Families contract awarded
- ✓ Hiring for Differential Response Coordinator in process
- ✓ Recruitment of community members initiated
- ✓ Personnel infrastructure developed
- ✓ Roles defined
- ✓ Referral process developed
- ✓ Training needs identified
- ✓ Outcome measures drafted

Next Steps

- Select database
- Finalize data elements, outcome measures and training plans
- Finalize service delivery plans

2. SIP Data Team:

Milestones Achieved

- ✓ Two research projects conducted an examination of practices and patterns relating to children experiencing multiple placements and relating to re-entry into care within 12 months of child's return home.
- ✓ Reviewed and analyzed results of research projects referenced above

Next Steps

- Obtain data on additional factors related to multiple placements
- Refine timely visits and response data

3. Joint Decision Making:

Milestone Achieved

- ✓ Since July 2003 over 1800 Team Decisions meetings have occurred

Next Step

- Standardize utilization of Emancipation Conferences throughout DFCS

4. Timely Visits and Response:

Milestones Achieved

- ✓ Consistent improvement made in this area, both timeliness on Emergency Response and timeliness on Ten-Day Responses reached 96%
- ✓ Timely Visits with children compliance rate reached 93%, exceeding State average

Next Steps

- Develop Cheat Sheet for contact waivers
- Analyze out-of-county placement data
- Track performance on Safe Measures
- Refine data on timely visits for out of county placements

5. Resource Development and Utilization:

Milestone Achieved

- ✓ Two surveys to identify barriers and resource utilization conducted, which included social worker staff and Foster Family Agencies

Next Steps

- Identify service needs and gaps.
- Develop protocol for Resource Families in Crisis.
- Train staff on crisis protocol.

6. Quality Assurance and CWS/CMS Data Entry:

Milestones Achieved

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

Next Steps

- Develop standardized referral policies and procedures
- Conduct CWS/CMS data entry training for new supervisors and social workers
- Refresher course for existing staff is scheduled
- Perform staff training on new policies

7. Family Finding:

Milestones Achieved

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

Next Steps

- Complete Family Finding manual
- Continue to increase identification and placement with relatives by integrating Family-to-Family principles into practice
- Develop policy to establish timelines for Family Finding process from referral to transfer of responsibility of the family to the pre-disposition social worker
- Develop protocols to define roles and responsibilities of the DI worker, relative worker and pre-disposition worker
- Develop procedure with court systems to ensure early identification of relatives
- Develop Authorization protocol for all SW staff reference

8. **Peer Quality Case Review (PQRC):**

Milestones Achieved

- ✓ Assessed current practices regarding individualized case planning
- ✓ Created recommendations to improve individualized case planning

Next Steps

- Review PQCR report and recommendations for case planning.
- Develop policies and procedures to increase individualized case planning.
- Select additional strategies for implementation.

The SIP Data Team with the support of Information Systems is assisting workgroups with data collection to provide ample information to achieve milestones. Additionally, the SIP Implementation Team (IT) meets on a monthly basis to monitor progress, identify data needs, discuss crossover issues and address any barriers to achieving SIP goals. The IT is composed of workgroup chairs, SSA and DFCS management and staff, union representatives, Mental Health, and community stakeholders. Ongoing monitoring will take place through Quarterly County Data Reports and internal tracking and monitoring processes. Stakeholders will be convened to assure community involvement in monitoring improvements and to provide input into annual updates to the System Improvement Plan.

SSA's Office of Governmental Relations and Planning will provide and distribute a summary of Santa Clara County's Data Report to stakeholders, community partners, and staff on a quarterly basis to track and monitor progress in meeting self improvement goals. If you have questions pertaining to this report, please contact Lydia Romeo, Project Manager at (408) 491-6738 or by e-mail at lydia.romeo@ssa.sccgov.org.