California - Child and Family Services Review
Peer Quality Case Review (PQCR)
Santa Clara County

2011

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Acknowledgements

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Introduction

In an effort to ensure continuous quality improvement for outcomes for children, youth and families in the child welfare and probation systems, Santa Clara County conducted their Peer Quality Case Review (PQCR) June 6 - 10, 2011.

Throughout the planning and the PQCR event itself, Santa Clara County was committed to the principle that the PQCR is an invaluable process that drills deeply into practice areas that address the needs of the children, youth and families that they serve.

In an effort to glean as much information as possible from peer counties, Santa Clara invited the counties of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, Alameda, San Francisco, San Benito, San Mateo and Stanislaus to participate on the interview teams and to provide peer county insights and recommendations. These counties were selected due to their excellent outcomes in these areas or because of promising practices that had been observed by staff.

A literature review for Child Welfare revealed that there are several predictors for long term foster care stays, including: age, ethnicity, child behavioral/mental health issues, poverty, parental mental health/substance abuse issues and type of placement. A literature review for Probation revealed that in order to promote positive family reunification, child, family and agency factors should be considered. The primary factor positively correlated with family reunification is children and families living in close proximity of each other.

This report is divided into five sections: Section 1) the background and introduction to the PQCR process, Section 2) the methodology for choosing the focus area and how the process was conducted, Section 3) the summary of practice and recommendations, Section 4) peer sharing and Section 5) executive summary. Within each section, Child Welfare and Probation are addressed separately.

Several trends were found in the PQCR process and have been clustered under the headings identified in the literature review. The summary of findings breaks them down further in to the areas of strengths, challenges, resources, systemic factors, state technical assistance and documentation.
Section I: Background

In January 2004, the implementation of Assembly Bill 636 brought a new CWS Outcome and Accountability System to California. This new Outcomes and Accountability System, also known as the California Child and Family Services Review (C-CFSR) focuses primarily on measuring outcomes in the areas of safety, permanency and child and family well-being. The new system operates on a philosophy of continuous quality improvement, interagency partnerships, community involvement, and public reporting of program outcomes. The C-CFSR includes several processes that, taken together, offer a comprehensive picture of county child welfare practices. The principal components of the system include: quarterly data reports published by the CDSS; County Peer Quality Case Reviews (PQCR); County Self Assessments (CSA); System Improvement Plans (SIP) and annual updates; and state technical assistance and monitoring.

- **Quarterly Outcome and Accountability Data Reports**
  CDSS issues quarterly data reports that include key safety, permanency and well being outcomes for each county. These quarterly reports provide summary level federal and state program measures that serve as the basis for the C-CFSR and are used to track state and county performance over time. Data is used to inform and guide both the assessment and planning processes, and is used to analyze policies and procedures. This level of evaluation allows for a systematic assessment of program strengths and limitations in order to improve service delivery. Linking program processes or performance with federal and state outcomes helps staff to evaluate their progress and modify the program or practice as appropriate. Information obtained can be used by program managers to make decisions about future program goals, strategies, and options. In addition, this reporting cycle is consistent with the perspective that data analysis of this type is best viewed as a continuous process as opposed to a one-time activity for the purpose of quality improvement.

- **PQCR**
  The PQCR is the first component in the cyclical C-CFSR process. The purpose of the PQCR is to learn, through intensive examination of county practice, how to improve child welfare and probation services in a specific focus area. To do so, the PQCR focuses on one specific outcome, analyzes specific practice areas, and identifies key patterns of agency strengths and concerns. The process uses peers from other counties to promote the exchange of best practice ideas between the host county and peer reviewers. Peer county involvement and the exchange of promising practices also help to illuminate specific practice changes that may advance performance.

- **CSA**
  The CSA is the next process in the cycle. The CSA is driven by a focused analysis of child welfare data. This process also incorporates input from various child welfare constituents and reviews the full scope of child welfare and probation services provided within the county. The CSA is developed every
three years by the lead agencies in coordination with their local community and prevention partners.

The CSA includes a multidisciplinary needs assessment to be conducted once every three years and requires BOS approval.

Along with the qualitative information gleaned from the PQCR and the quantitative information contained in the quarterly data reports, the CSA provides the foundation and context for the development of the county three year SIP.

• SIP
The SIP is the next step in the cycle. The SIP is a culmination of the first two processes and serves as the operational agreement between the County and the State. It outlines how the county will remodel its system to improve outcomes for children, youth and families. The SIP is developed every three years by the lead agencies in collaboration with their local community and prevention partners. The SIP includes specific milestones, timeframes, and improvement targets and is approved by the County BOS and CDSS. The plan is a commitment to specific measurable improvements in performance outcomes that the county will achieve within a defined timeframe including prevention strategies. Counties, in partnership with the State, utilize quarterly data reports to track progress. The process is a continuous cycle and the county systematically attempts to improve outcomes.

Santa Clara County completed its PQCR June 10, 2011; the CSA is due February 10, 2012, and the SIP is due June 10, 2012.

In reviewing our quarterly data reports and discussing an area to focus on, it was very clear that child welfare wanted to focus on foster youth in care at least 18 months at the time of emancipation. Probation chose to focus on Family Reunification.

Section 2: Methodology and Process

2A. Methodology

Child Welfare

In February 2011, there were approximately 1,000 children living in out-of-home placement. Of these children, 563 of them resided in Long Term Foster Care (LTFC) as defined by 18 months or longer in care. This means that 56% of Santa Clara youth living in out-of-home placement have been in LTFC for 18 months or longer. Due to this high percentage of youth in LTFC, Santa Clara County used this PQCR to focus on this population since the County aims to secure permanency by 18 months. Further, at the present time, African American youth comprise 15.51% of the foster care system and the Hispanic/Latino population makes up 51.02%, an overrepresentation related to their percentages in the county, therefore these two populations were oversampled.

On March 25, 2011, there were 245 youths aged 16 and older in out of home placement in Santa Clara County. Of those, 70% had 3 or more placement moves. Thirty-nine percent (39%) have had 3-5 social workers during their tenure in foster care with 35%
experiencing between 6-18 social workers over the course of their time in care. Only 25% of the youth had permanency case plan goals of adoption, reunification or guardianship. The remaining 75% had plans of self-maintenance and long term foster care.

According to the Center for Social Service Research, 22% of 11-15 year olds in Santa Clara County exited to permanency between October 2009 and September 2010. That is nearly 50% less than children aged 6-10 years old who exited to permanency (36.8%). Youth 16 and older exited to permanency at an even lesser extent (2.4%) than both cohorts listed above. Clearly permanency decreases significantly with each passing year of a child’s life.

On March 22, 2011 there were 471 youth who had been in care for more than 18 months, excluding those residing in group homes. An analysis by placement type indicates that the majority of the youth in care reside with relatives/non-relative extended family members (45%). The second largest percentage resides in Foster Family Agencies (34%) and Foster Homes (14%). Those residing in an FFA had a higher likelihood to have a case plan goal of long term foster care (53%) versus those residing with relatives/Non relative extended family members (35%).

An analysis of African American youth who exited care in 2010 revealed that after being in foster care for more than 3 years, African American youth spent more time in foster care as measured by their last placement episode, they experienced fewer placement changes and were placed with relatives slightly more often than other youth. At any time during a placement episode, Latino (82%) and African American (77%) youth were more likely to have experienced at least one placement with relatives than Caucasian (52%) or Asian/ Pacific Islander (0%) youths.

During the reporting period July 2009 to June 2010, more children exited the Child Welfare System to permanent homes after being in care for at least 24 months (C3.1); however, a declining trend was observed for children exiting care whose placement episode lasted 3 years or more (C3.3). Santa Clara County chose this PQCR focus to better understand how we support families and caregivers in achieving permanency and the barriers and supports that may impact these outcomes.

The focus area will be Permanency as it relates to children and youth in care 18 months or longer and with a specific focus on a child or youth’s placement type (Relative/NREFM, Licensed Foster Home, FFA home). Permanency is defined as a successful Family Reunification and case dismissal, Guardianship with a closed placement episode, or Adoption.

There is a need to examine best practices to understand the barriers and supports necessary to ensure permanency for children and youth. There appears to be a difference in achieving permanency dependent upon a child’s placement. This PQCR will provide a specific focus on children in care 18 months or longer with regards to their placement type (Relative/NREFM, Licensed Foster Home, FFA home). In addition, an over-sampling for Children of Color and youth ages 11 and older was also included.

DFCS and JPD jointly decided to include a sub-focus on the issue of dual status youth within the PQCR process and therefore included two focus groups with both staff and stakeholders.
Probation

Santa Clara Probation is below the state standard in the area of Family Reunification. Analyzing the data, it is noteworthy that Santa Clara has a lower rate of reunification than the state of California. Reunification with the child’s family of origin is the most common permanency outcome, with 49% of children placed in foster care ultimately reunifying (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), 2008). In 2010, 21% of Santa Clara probation youth reunified within 12 months of entering placement. This is lower than the state’s rate of reunification (34%). The median time to reunification was 27.2 months (CSSR 09/10). This is much greater than the California median time of 9.1 months (CSSR 09/10). It is for these reasons that Santa Clara selected family reunification as the topic of exploration.

The Probation Department conducted an analysis of out of county/state travel and found that its staff travels on average 330,000 miles per year. Proximity between children and parents is a factor in reunification. When parents/caregivers can maintain consistent and frequent visits and when services are directed at enhancing and/or improving the parent child relationship, reunification is more probable (Kimberlin et al., 2009). According to California Social Services Research Center (CSSR), as of October 2010, there were 117 youth placed in care by Santa Clara County Probation. 100% of probation youth were placed in group homes. The majority of those youth were placed out of state. Of all probation youth (n=245), 66% were placed out of state.

The County needs to review what resources are lacking to effectively reunify families, and what we do have that is helpful. Upon this local analysis of local resources, the County could improve its reunification outcomes.


2B. PQCR related research

Once the focus area was determined, a literature review was conducted to ascertain the current thinking about what is needed to improve permanency outcomes and increase rates of family reunification. The literature review was also used to inform the development of the questions that were asked in the interviews and focus groups.

A copy of the full Literature Review can be found in Appendix A. The following provides a brief review of research that is relevant to the PQCR.

Child Welfare

Ryan D. Honomichl, Ph.D. and Susan Brooks, MSW outline six predictors that are related to long term stays in foster care: 1) age, 2) ethnicity, 3) children’s behavioral/mental health issues, 4) poverty, 5) parental mental health/substance abuse and 6) type of placement.
Age: Previous studies have found an inverse relationship between length of stay in foster care and child's age at the time of placement (Barth, 1997; Rushton & Dance, 2003; Simmel, Brooks, Barth, & Hinshaw, 2001).

Ethnicity: Several studies have found that African American children are less likely to be reunified or adopted than Caucasian children and therefore more likely to remain in foster care (Barth, 1997; Becker et al., 2002; Wells & Guo, 1999).

Children's behavioral/mental health issues: Children who exhibit severe behavioral issues can be especially challenging and overwhelming to their birth parents and potential adoptive parents contributing to failed permanency attempts, multiple foster care placements and re-entry into foster care after reunification (Kimberlin et al., 2009).

Poverty: Poverty can be a strong predictor for not achieving permanency. Wells and Guo (2003) found that loss of income, either from work or welfare, led to slower rates of reunification and thus lengthier periods in foster care.

Parental mental health/substance abuse: Parental mental health problems have been correlated with decreased probability of achieving permanence (Grella et al., 2009). In regard to substance abuse, it is estimated that 60 to 75 percent of foster care cases involve substance abuse in some way (Young, Gardner, & Dennis, 1998). This may impact time in foster care because the timelines needed to address substance issues may be incompatible with permanency guidelines in the ASFA.

Type of Placement: One influential factor related to the length of time in foster care is the nature of the placement itself. Out-of-home placements include kinship care, residential treatment centers, group homes and traditional foster care homes.

Probation

The literature review outlines a number of factors that impact family reunification. Much of the research has been conducted with foster youth in child welfare, but the basic tenants hold true for probation youth as well. To impact positive family reunification, child, family and agency factors should be considered. Every factor from age of the child to ambivalence of the parent should be considered and assessed. The main factor positively correlated with family reunification is children and families living in close proximity. This is important as many times youth are sent out of county, which presents transportation challenges that may impact timely reunification. Considering the promising practices of family engagement, participatory case planning, parent education and parent child visitation will help improve the probation agency's likelihood of positive reunifications.

2C. Case Selections

Child Welfare

The PQCR randomly sampled 32 youth in care for 18 months or longer, with 16 having case plan goals reflecting permanency and 16 with case plan goals of LTFC, over sampling for African American and Latino/Hispanic youth. The sample included youth of all ages, but the majority aged 11 or older, and a representative sample of all three
types of placement—Relative/NREFM, licensed county foster homes and FFA's. In addition, ensuring only one social worker’s case in the sample and no more than 2 cases per unit was implanted in the random selection of cases.

Probation

Santa Clara County Probation reviewed all cases meeting the criteria of the focus area and then used relevant cases as they related to reunification. From there, cases were identified that fell within the scope of the focus area and believed to produce good information for the review process. Of the nine (9) cases that were selected, three (3) were successfully reunified less than twelve months and six cases were not. The type of offenses that the youth committed prior to being committed into placement ranges from a Violation of Probation to Assault with a Deadly Weapon. The youth were placed in a range of settings from county group homes to out of county or out of state programs.

2D. Development of PQCR tools

There are four PQCR tools (interview, focus group, case summary, debrief) that the Planning Committee developed and customized to gather pertinent information from the PQCR.

i. The interview tools take into account the information gleaned from the literature review and tools that other counties have used regarding the same focus area. Despite child welfare and probation having the same focus area, separate interview tools were developed to ensure that the maximum information would be obtained from both systems. The mock interviews conducted by both the child welfare and probation agencies formed a key component of the development of the tools. The mock interviews allowed for the interview tools to be tested for content, timing and flow. Changes were made to the tools after the mock interview to further enhance the interview process. See Appendices B and C.

Under the Santa Clara County’s Department of Operation and Planning, the Quality Improvement and Enhancement Team (QIET) provided technical support to the Department of Family and Children’s Services that included support for the development of the PQCR Social Worker Interview Tool. At the conclusion of the PQCR, QIET collected aggregate data in the form of the narratives from the Social Work Interview Tool to be used for further analysis. Examples of this analysis may include but is not limited to comparing variables such as, comparing the average number of social workers for the children in both sub-groups, across ethnicities and across placement types, as well as, identifying any trends in the Non-Permanency sub-group across all placement types. The findings from this analysis will be separate from the PQCR Final Report and will be used for Santa Clara County’s CSA Report which is due in February 2012.
ii. The Focus Group interview tools take into account the information gleaned from the literature review and the information that the county hoped to obtain from the different groups. See Appendices D-N.

iii. The Case Summary tool was developed with the purpose of framing the youth’s case in a concise way for the interview panel. Additionally, it provided a structure for reviewing the case for the social worker or probation officer to be interviewed. Care was taken to ensure that the tool was user friendly to the social worker or probation officer. See Appendix O

iv. The Debrief tool was developed to flow along the areas identified in the PQCR Guide. See Appendices P

2E. Selection of the Interview Teams

Fully embracing the “peer” component of the PQCR process and to ensure that the maximum amount of information was obtained, numerous peer counties were selected to attend. Peer counties were chosen for their innovative programming, performance in focus area outcomes, and location.

2F. Process used for the review

A newsletter was put in the mail box of each probation officer and child welfare staff to inform them of the PQCR and explain the process and a DFCS bulletin was sent out via email to all staff.

The completed tools were given to the CDSS consultant for review and were used to form the information given to the interview panels prior to the interview to provide them with information regarding the youth’s case.

The Planning Committee determined that thirteen focus groups would be conducted as part of the PQCR process. The focus groups were conducted during the week prior to the PQCR event and during the actual PQCR week.

Focus Groups were conducted with
• Stakeholders, including the county and children’s attorneys, Child Advocates Office, group home providers and additional community based organizations
• County Licensed Foster Homes
• Supervisors & Managers from Child Welfare
• Supervisors & Managers from Probation
• Social Workers
• Parents
• Probation Officers
• Youth
• Relatives/NREFM
• Foster Family Agency (FFA) foster parents
• Dual Status supervisors & Managers
• Dual Status social workers & probation officers
The focus groups were conducted as a “conversation,” ensuring that specific information was obtained in a safe, comfortable and confidential environment. County staff were instrumental in securing participants for the focus group, arranging for transportation, day care and refreshments.

The PQCR event was held at the Wyndam Hotel in San Jose from June 6-10, 2011. Interviewers came from Alameda, Orange, Riverside, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Stanislaus, San Benito, and San Mateo Counties to assist in the process.

2G. Review Team Composition

Santa Clara County’s Peer Review team consisted of 15 peer members from both child welfare and probation systems. Peer counties were selected with the following criteria in mind: innovative programming, performance in focus area outcomes, and geographical location. In total, there were four child welfare teams and one probation team consisting of three peer interviewers. Upon arriving at the hotel, each interviewer was given a “bag” of information to welcome them to Santa Clara, orient them to where they were and provide information about the different local attractions and restaurant information.

2H. Review Process

The first day of the two and a half day review event consisted of orientation to the county and training for review team members. Training goals were as follows:

- To provide information to the PQCR Review Teams on tasks and responsibilities during the PQCR event
- To provide an orientation on the PQCR process to those being interviewed
- To develop a common understanding of the purpose and desired outcomes of the PQCR process
- To develop effective working teams
- To practice the interview process
- To develop a plan for creating a safe and supportive interview environment

Interviews were scheduled for Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday both in the morning and the afternoon. Teams were given fifteen minutes prior to the interview to review the case summary, an hour for the interview and fifteen minutes to finish filling out the interview tools.

All teams met together each afternoon for a debrief session that consisted of summarizing daily trends in practice around seven areas (documentation trends, strengths and promising practices, challenges and barriers in practice, systemic and policy changes, training needs, resource issues and state technical assistance).

2I. Data Collection

Social workers’ individual responses to interview questions were captured on the social worker or probation officer interview tool developed in Excel. At the end of each interview, the review team either entered that information on a laptop provided in the interview rooms, or had the hand-written debrief form transcribed. A Microsoft Word document was developed for capturing the debrief trend data after each
interview. To protect confidentiality, no case or staff names were identified in the documents. To ensure that all information from the interviews was collected onto the spreadsheet, a quality assurance process of review was employed at the end of each day.

2J. Unique Factors of the Santa Clara County PQCR

- The Santa Clara County Social Services Agency is one of the largest public agencies in Santa Clara County.
- Santa Clara County is part of the California Partnership for Permanency federal grant and conducted an Institutional Analysis two weeks prior to the PQCR with a focus on systemic barriers impacting permanency specifically for African-American children and youth. It took considerable management for both processes to appear streamlined to staff and stakeholders. The planning committee did not want to “market” the PQCR until the Institutional Analysis was complete. This analysis draws from many of the same stakeholders that the PQCR draws from and could have impacted attendance at the focus groups and other events.
- Numerous peer counties were selected to attend, ensuring the maximum amount of information was obtained and fully embracing the “peer” component of the PQCR process.
- Santa Clara Child Welfare had four review teams of three peers and probation had one team. The teams represented multiple counties and many cases were reviewed, requiring considerable logistical support.
- Santa Clara County had an administrative assistant in each room to assist each review team and to ensure that all information was documented during the interviews and focus groups.

Section 3. Summary of Practice

The PQCR is a process that produces a large quantity of data that have been synthesized and organized in this report. Learning occurred throughout the stages of the PQCR process and promising practices were identified or reinforced and in some instances quickly implemented. The planning committee obtained information from the following sources:

- The Literature Review
- Raw notes of the focus groups
- The notes taken from each interview put into one matrix format and scrambled to ensure confidentiality
- The reflections session on the last day of the PQCR
- Recommendations offered by each county
- Peer sharing
This section provides a summary of the practice that was found and is presented in a manner that concisely explains the trends found throughout the focus groups, interviews and process debriefs. Appendix B provides a matrix that demonstrates the number of participants in each focus group and the alignment of permanency definitions.

3A. Child Welfare

Strengths and Promising Practices

- Wrap Around services
- TDMs and Family Group Conferencing
- Promoting ongoing relationships with family members, including those who live out of the county, state or country
- Focus on permanency and ongoing assessment of permanency planning
- Receipt of culturally appropriate and culturally sensitive services and placements
- Securing placements with or near relatives, NREFMs and/or siblings
- Father engagement
- Including youth’s voice in permanency planning
- Social worker connection and engagement with child, family and placement
- Family finding
- Consistency of placement and/or social worker

Barriers and Challenges in Practice

- Distance of family members
- Multiple social workers and multiple placements
- Caregiver reluctance to move towards permanency
- Lack of concurrent planning from the beginning of the case
- Youth resistance to social worker and permanency plan, particularly associated with permanency plans that work towards foster parent adoption or legal guardianship
- Failure of potential kinship placements due to substance abuse issues, unhealthy family dynamics and caregivers changing their minds about legal guardianship or adoption
- Parent substance abuse and/or mental health issues
- Lack of social worker and/or family understanding of how to move towards adoption. More training on how to have the sometimes difficult discussions about adoption with family members and foster parents would be helpful as would guidelines detailing specific steps for the parents and social workers to take during the adoption process
- Supervision of a case in another state or county
- Challenges and compliance issues with parent, family members and/or care givers. These challenges include parental lack of compliance with case plan involving visitation and sobriety; foster parent and biological parent aggressiveness towards social worker; biological parent making promises to
youth that interferes with existing permanency goals; behavioral issues and criminal activity of family members and family caregivers; and disagreements within family about case plan

- Cultural differences

**Training Needs**

- Social worker cultural sensitivity and cultural competency
- Trauma informed training for social workers to better support parents
- Social worker and caregiver training on how to approach permanency, concurrent planning and adoption
- Father finding and father engagement
- Foster parent/caregiver training on youth development and parenting
- Foster parent/caregiver training on trauma and its effects on youth
- Ongoing social worker training on policies and procedures, availability of resources, roles and responsibilities

**Resource Issues**

- Lack of family finding options
- Not enough foster care and permanent homes for youth
- Few placements for teenage youth
- Not enough ethnically diverse and culturally sensitive services and placements
- Difficult to access resources for out-of-county placements
- Lack of resources (financial, housing and transportation) for parent
- Lack of desired resources for youth (male therapists, extra-curricular activities)

**Documentation**

- Evidence of conversations about permanency discussions or concurrent planning not always in case file
- Documentation in CWS/CMS does not always tell the whole story
- Paperwork and CWS/CMS is time consuming and burdensome

**Systemic and Policy Changes**

- Family finding from the beginning of the case
- Shift in thinking that adoption or legal guardianship is the only answer
- Allow transfer of cases across counties and states
- Develop programming for engaging fathers and hard-to-reach parents
- Improve communication across departments
- Provide training and services to relatives prior to placement

**State Technical Assistance**

- Develop guidelines for family finding
- Streamline the ICPC process
Focus Group Aggregate Findings

- Reasons that youth stay in FC for so long include the youth’s age, the youth’s behaviors, difficulty finding homes, lack of committed foster parents, lack of needed services, lack of resources and lack of training
- Social workers sometimes miss family dynamics with relative caregiver, particularly in regards to unhealthy dynamics among family members, criminal activity and substance abuse. Better training on how to assess potential family placements would be beneficial
- Social workers need more training on trauma so that they can more effectively work with the youth and understand their issues
- More training for all caregivers. Family caregivers should go through the same training as foster parents, especially trauma training
- Length of stay in FC associated with more systemic issues (lack of training, lack of resources, lack of placements, etc.) than with the children
- Language barriers are a concern. Bilingual workers often do not have the right skills to work with families. For example, a bilingual worker who has minimal conversational Spanish skills may not be able to fully understand contextual factors shared during communication
- Wraparound Services can cause disruption with biological kids and some WRAP teams are better than others. Issues identified with WRAP teams include the facilitator not explaining things clearly enough for the family members, the facilitator not including everyone’s voice in the discussion, there being a disconnect between the views of the WRAP team and the care provider, and there being a disconnect between the parenting strategies promoted for the youth in care and the parenting strategies used with the caregiver’s biological children
- Family frustrations with WRAP when the facilitator does not explain things clearly enough to families. They do not understand what is happening. There may be disconnect between the WRAP team and the care provider
- Caregivers need to be provided information about what to expect and training on how to handle the behaviors that the child exhibits
- When a youth emancipates from the system, the system should prepare him/her to become independent. This preparation should be tailored to meet the individual needs of the youth, not be cookie cutter
- Stakeholders can help improve the system by promoting collaboration and cooperation among agencies & making sure that everyone knows about all of the resources available to children in care
- The “snowball effect” is what damages permanency. The more social workers and placements that are involved, the harder it is to achieve permanency

3B. Probation

Strengths and Promising Practices

- Programs engage families by using the phone, Skype, phone therapy and visits
- Out of state programs fly parents out for weekend visits
- Increased use of wraparound services
- Face to face with parents at monthly/home checks
• The court generally follows the recommendations of probation officers
• Probation officers informally case conference and provide support
• Just started placing in Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care Services
• Screening aimed at looking for local placements and relatives

Barriers and Challenges in Practice

• Parents living in the same community when the children return to their care
  return to the same friends, gang affiliations and behaviors
• Children act out when they return home and parents call and ask for child to be placed again
• A need to evaluate a range of successful programs
• Many families are undocumented, which impacts the services available to them and visitation due to the parents being unable to fly
• Lack of accountability for youth - they can refuse to go to a program and keep getting sent to the same program (e.g., Juvenile Hall or Ranch because it is “easier”)
• Parents do not visit out of state
• Continued delinquent behavior impacts reunification
• Families are reluctant to take kids back and sometimes abandon them
• Generational gang involvement in families and communities
• Families are not ready and are unstable even though youth is no longer a risk

Training Needs

• Mandate Placement Core for all new probation officers
• Juvenile training for probation officers new to juvenile probation
• Training about wraparound services

Resource Issues

• Appropriate program to step down youth from out of state before returning them home
• Transportation
• Gas cards
• Identification for undocumented parents
• Lack of a process for getting green cards for undocumented youth

Documentation

• None identified

Systemic and Policy Changes

• Agency goal is keeping children with families and locally but sometimes the problem lies in the locality and within the family/community
• Inability to get kids in school once they return home. It is not the right time of year or the school district requires re-evaluating probation youth
State Technical Assistance

- None identified

Focus Group Aggregate Findings

- Permanency is establishing appropriate behaviors in the community, stable living environment, get them away from the behaviors that got them placed and return them home with tools they need to be successful
- Agency is engaged in reunifying youth with their families through monthly home visits
- Referring youth and families to wraparound
- The closer that they are to home, the more they want to run which interrupts their program
- Only half the families visit on a regular basis
- Challenges serving undocumented youth as there are not many services for them
- Minimizing length of stay in group homes, trying to de-institutionalize them and bring them home with wraparound services
- Time is an issue - shouldn’t put a time limit on the treatment - drug issues, trauma, abuse, mental health. There are too many issues to be treated in twelve months. Programs may be set up for six months and they are there for eighteen months.

3C. Dual Status Youth

During the PQCR week of June 6th, two focus groups were held to discuss the Dual Status issues facing the Probation Department and the Department of Family and Children’s Services (DFCS). While both departments are committed to the welfare of youth served by their systems, there are significant challenges to the current way that the two departments interact and serve Dual Status youth. As both departments are examining the outcomes of Family Reunification (Probation) and permanency for youth over 11 (DFCS), there is need to examine these issues and develop a more effective system.

The focus groups were made up of probation officers, social workers, supervisors and managers from both departments, and important stakeholders from the County Counsel office, Sheriff’s Department and LACY.

Focus Group Aggregate Findings

- Neither the social workers nor the probation officers feel as if they have leverage with the youth with which they work
- Neither system feels they are the appropriate system to work with some challenging youth
- The systems do not communicate or collaborate well
- Systemically, there are no repercussions for foster youth; the DA will not file charges and law enforcement will not investigate
• Youth behaviors and crimes escalate without intervention from either system. Then when they turn eighteen and have adult consequences, they end up going to prison, since they have not had earlier intervention
• There is a perception of top down management starting with the DA’s office
• There is a lack of experienced group home providers in county for both DFCS and Probation youth
• There is a lack of understanding of each other’s systems
• The MDT facilitator is hired by DFCS, there is a need for a neutral party to facilitate the meetings
• There are mixed feelings about effectiveness of the Wraparound program
• Prostitution, Gangs and AOD issues are the biggest challenges for both systems

Ideas/Recommendations:

• Provide cross training between DFCS and Probation
• Intervene early with youth and provide extracurricular activities, community resources, etc.
• Develop a forum for DFCS and Probation supervisors to come together and conference cases
• Develop an internal committee to promote better communication
• Create a neutral facilitator for MDT

Section 4: Peer County Sharing

The Peer Counties offered input on the process and findings during the reflection session on the final day of the PQCR. The following comments were made by the Peer Counties in order to provide information and recommendations to Santa Clara County on what may or may not work to improve the outcomes for Transitioning Aged Youth based on their own county practices. These are intended to be supportive and helpful.

Riverside County

• Commitment to concurrent planning reviews for each youth in care
• The adoption worker attends every TDM

Los Angeles County

• Each regional office has its own Permanency Partners/Family Finding Unit
• The County hosts Permanency Planning Conferences that focus on youth 0-12 living in group homes. Their cases are reviewed every six months until permanency is achieved

Stanislaus County

• A voluntary unit works towards preventing children from coming into the system
• A County employee built a comprehensive family finding database called “youth connections”
• Each case file has a Concurrent Planning section that is a placeholder for all concurrent planning activities
• The start of place worker and the court worker attend joint assessment meetings

Orange County
• TDMs are held to determine pursuing the case in court, for determining the needs of the child and for doing relative searches at every placement change
• The County has a great working relationship with the Mexican Consulate Office, which is helpful with family finding

Alameda County
• The County developed a Family Finding and Engagement Permanency Guide for Families and Youth

San Francisco County
• Provides wrap around services and encourages relative visits

San Benito County Probation
• Placement education workshops
• Webcam to facilitate parent visits
• Family counseling for youth placed out of county
• Provides transportation for parent visits

San Mateo County Probation
• Wrap around services for level 14 kids
• 90 day transition plan for youth who are emancipating

Los Angeles County Probation
• Onsite regional DPOs
• Family nights for kids and their caregivers
• Works closely with youth before they become a placement
• Provision of in-home services - weekly CBOs and PO meetings

Section 5: Executive Summary

In an effort to ensure continuous quality improvement for outcomes for children, youth and families in the child welfare and probation systems, Santa Clara County conducted their Peer Quality Case Review (PQCR) June 6 - 10, 2011. Child Welfare selected the topic of permanency as it relates to youth in care 18 months or longer with a specific focus on youth placement type to explore in this PQCR. This topic was selected after a review of county data indicated that over half of youth in out-of-home placement have been in care for 18 months or longer. Santa Clara County sought to better understand how families and caregivers are supported in achieving permanency and what barriers and challenges exist to undermine permanency efforts.
Probation selected family reunification as the topic to explore in this PQCR. A review of county data indicated that 21% of Santa Clara probation youth are reunified within 12 months of entering placement. This is much lower than the state’s average rate of 34%. Additionally, the median time for reunification was 27 months, which is much greater than the California median time of 9 months. For these reasons, Probation sought to explore the strengths of their department and the challenges that affect timely family reunification.

In order to delve into these issues, 32 Child Welfare and 9 Probation cases were selected for deep exploration. These cases were chosen in line with criteria set by the PQCR Planning Committee. Data was gathered through Individual interviews with 32 social workers and 9 probation officers. Additionally, 13 focus groups were held with stakeholders, foster homes, Child Welfare supervisors and managers, Probation supervisors and managers, social workers, parents, probation officers, youth, relative/NREFMs, FFAs, dual status supervisors and managers, and dual status social workers and probation officers.

In an effort to glean as much information as possible from peer counties, Santa Clara invited the counties of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, Alameda, San Francisco, San Benito, San Mateo and Stanislaus to participate on the interview teams and to provide peer county insights and recommendations.

The PQCR Planning Committee, peer county interviewers, youth, CDSS and BAA found the Santa Clara County PQCR to be a successful process. We believe the effort and thought put into planning the PQCR paid off with our obtaining what we had hoped for: new information about how our current program and services are working; ideas for improvement and information on best practices and/or evidence based practices that we can plan to implement; and direct input from foster caregivers and our youth.

The Focus Groups were very well attended and rich information was obtained in those settings. Reaching out to Santa Clara community in the form of focus groups paves the way for their inclusion in the County Self Assessment, the next component of the triennial cycle of continuous quality improvement of outcomes for children, youth and families in Santa Clara County.

It is also important to note that line and supervisory staffs from both Probation and Child Welfare were enthusiastic and involved throughout the PQCR process. They saw the PQCR as a true opportunity to learn. They also volunteered to be on each of the subcommittees that developed necessary documents such as interview tools, focus group questions and templates for case summaries. Line staff came to interviews prepared. They had carefully reviewed the cases they were presenting and clearly had given thought in advance into what they personally saw as areas where we could improve outcomes for our youth.

The PQCR informed Santa Clara County of many important factors influencing permanency and family reunification. For Child Welfare, the child’s family appears to play an important role in the successful outcomes of a case. Family finding efforts, securing placements with or near family, and encouraging ongoing relationships between the child and his/her family members no matter the distance reportedly contribute to successful child welfare practice. Barriers to successful permanency include, but are not limited to, the distance of relatives and caregiver and youth reluctance to move towards permanency. We learned that the Child Welfare Department would like more resources for formal family finding activities, increased
training activities for social workers as well as caregivers and clearer guidelines on how to approach permanency and concurrent planning.

The PQCR illuminated the strengths of the Santa Clara County Probation Department. These strengths include a commitment to facilitating family reunification by ensuring family visits by using different forms of technology to ensure family visits (e.g., Skype, etc.) and providing transportation services along with the informal support that the probation officers provide to each other. Challenges in practice include parents continuing to live in the same neighborhood and exhibiting maladaptive patterns of behavior, which ultimately contributes to the youth exhibiting their prior patterns of behavior once they return home. The Probation Department would like more resources to better serve their youth and more training on juvenile justice. It may also be helpful to learn how to develop reunification plans keeping in mind the many community and family challenges that face youth when they return to their prior environments.

The focus groups for Dual Status youth illuminated several difficulties that Child Welfare and Probation face when working together on a dual status case. Lack of understanding of the other department and its role can contribute to communication barriers that inhibit the work. These barriers include feeling uncertain of which department should take the lead on a case and who should intervene when a youth does not comply with his/her service plan.

Focus groups with foster youth, foster homes, parents, NREFMs, supervisors and other stakeholders mirrored the information learned from the Child Welfare and Probation Interviews. Specifically, that social workers, probation officers, parents and caregivers need more training on issues such as trauma, parenting, adolescent development and cultural competency. A better understanding of what permanency means and what supports are available before, during and after permanency is achieved is something that would help all youth, families, workers and placements.
Appendix A

"Changing children's lives one hand at a time."

To: Santa Clara County
   PQCR Planning Committee

Re: Foster youth in care at least 18 months at the time of emancipation

From: Shared Vision Consultants

Date: April 25, 2011

Impact of foster care on children

On July 1, 2010 in California, 62,233 children were in out of home placement and of those 11,725 had been in care for over 5 years (includes both child welfare and probation youth). Children in long-term foster-care experience a range of early adversities which can affect their self-esteem, self-efficacy and capacity to cope with developmental challenges. (Beek, M., Schofield, G.) Additionally, youth aging out of foster care after living in long term foster care for numerous years face many challenges. They are more likely to experience homelessness, have contact with the legal system and are less likely to finish high school. Ryan D. Honomichl, Ph.D. and Susan Brooks, MSW outline a number of predictors for long term foster care stays in their literature review: Age, ethnicity, children's behavioral/mental health issues, poverty, parental mental health/substance abuse and type of placement.

Age: Previous studies have found an inverse relationship between length of stay in foster care and child's age at the time of placement (Barth, 1997; Rushton & Dance, 2003; Simmel, Brooks, Barth, & Hinshaw, 2001).

Ethnicity: Several studies have found that African American children are less likely to be reunified or adopted than Caucasian children and therefore more likely to remain in foster care (Barth, 1997; Becker et al., 2002; Wells & Guo, 1999).

Children’s behavioral/mental health issues: Children who exhibit severe behavioral issues can be especially challenging and overwhelming to their birth parents and potential adoptive parents contributing to failed permanency attempts, multiple foster care placements and re-entry into foster care after reunification (Kimberlin et al, 2009).

Poverty: Poverty can be a strong predictor for not achieving permanency. Wells and Guo (2003) found that loss of income, either from work or welfare, led to slower rates of reunification and thus lengthier periods in foster care.
Parental mental health/substance abuse: Parental mental health problems have been correlated with decreased probability of achieving permanence (Grella et al., 2009).

In regard to substance abuse, it is estimated that 60 to 75 percent of foster care cases involve substance abuse in some way (Young, Gardner, & Dennis, 1998). This may impact time in foster care because the timelines needed to address substance issues may be incompatible with permanency guidelines in the ASFA.

Type of Placement: One influential factor related to the length of time in foster care is the nature of the placement itself. Out-of-home placements include kinship care, residential treatment centers, group homes and traditional foster care homes.

Impact of Foster Care on youth 11-18

According to the Academy of Adolescent and Child Psychiatry, about 30% of children in foster care have severe emotional, behavioral, or developmental problems. Physical health problems are also common. Most children, however, show remarkable resiliency and determination to go on with their lives. Children in foster care often struggle with the following issues:

1. blaming themselves and feeling guilty about removal from their birth parents
2. wishing to return to birth parents even if they were abused by them
3. feeling unwanted if awaiting adoption for a long time
4. feeling helpless about multiple changes in foster parents over time
5. having mixed emotions about attaching to foster parents
6. feeling insecure and uncertain about their future
7. reluctantly acknowledging positive feelings for foster parents

In a study of 12- and 13-year-olds from Illinois, Leathers (2006) found a relationship between number of placements and the existence and severity of behavioral problems. That is, youths with a greater number of placements were more likely to have problems.

As in the case of behavior problems, there appears to be a potential protective effect for the sense of “belonging” that the child feels with his/her foster home and family. Fernandez (2008) found that the degree to which children felt that they got along with their foster family and felt comfortable with their living situation, academic progress was possible. She interpreted this as evidence of resilience on the part of the child.
Outcomes of youth emancipating from foster care

The outcomes for youth exiting foster care are concerning to child welfare professionals. The problem of “aging out” is of gigantic proportions. About 6,000 children end up homeless each year.

1. Housing - In any given year, foster children comprise less than 0.3% of the state’s population, and yet 40% of persons living in homeless shelters are former foster children.
2. Education - Educational needs must be met prior to emancipation so youth are prepared for college or vocational programs. Only 40% of foster youth complete high school compared to 84% of the general population.
3. Employment - Statistics show that 60% of former foster youth earn incomes at or below $6,000 per year, which is substantially below the federal poverty level of $7,890 for a single individual.
4. Mental and behavioral health - When young people with Severe Emotional Disturbance (SED) or Serious Mental Illness (SMI) reach their 18th or 21st birthdays, they face arbitrary disruptions in their care. Because of their age, they often lose eligibility for continuing care in the child mental health system that has served them, ending ongoing caseworker and therapeutic relationships.
5. Permanency - Emancipating youth face challenges finding caring, supportive relationships that will be long term. According to Courtney, 41% of emancipated foster youth say they wish they had been adopted.

Recommendations:

The first objective is to reduce the length of stay in foster care. To achieve this goal, the use of concurrent planning may be helpful in ensuring permanency in a timely manner. The second objective is to find ways to lessen the effects of foster care on the youth. First, the use of family finding techniques can help youth have a sense of connection and improve their well-being. Family finding is a strategy used to identify people who can provide physical, relational and legal permanency for youth. Second, involving the youth in their case planning is critical to improving placement stability and improving developmental outcomes for the youth. Third, the use of reintegration strategies, which are most commonly associated with juvenile probation youths, are techniques to have youth transition back into their family homes after being in care, thus improving their chances for permanency. Finally, the involvement in independent living skills programs can be beneficial for youth in long term foster care. Similarly, Lindsey and Ahmed (1999) found that youth participating in an independent living program were more likely, after a period of three years, to still be living independently and managing their expenses than those who had not.

In their study of foster care alumni, Casey Family Programs reports the following factors were found to be some of the major predictors associated with adult success:

1. Completion of high school while youth were in care
2. Life skills/independent living training
3. Participation in clubs or organizations while in care
4. Access to post-secondary educational opportunities such as college or vocational training
Questions to Consider:
1. What predictive factors (age, ethnicity, etc.) seem to be contributing to children remaining in foster care in Santa Clara County?

2. Concurrent planning is associated with increased chances of permanency and potentially reducing length of stay in foster care. What strategies does Santa Clara have regarding reducing the length of stay in foster care?

3. What family finding strategies are in place for youth in long-term foster care?

4. In what ways are youth included in their permanency planning and case planning?

5. When youth are returned to the home, what ways can the agency assist the youth in his or her return to the home?

6. How can the Independent Living Skills Program impact the length of stay of youth in foster care?
References

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (May 2005) Foster Care No. 64


Brooks, S & Hominchil, R. Predictors and outcomes of long term foster care (February 2010).


Delgado, M., Fellmeth, R., Packard, T., Prosek, K., Weichel, E. (January 2007) Expanding Transitional Services for Emancipated Foster Youth


Rushton, A., Dance, C., & Argent, H. Adoption support services for families in difficulty: A


Focus Group Permanency Matrix

This matrix demonstrates the number of participants in the Focus Groups and the alignment of all of the definitions of permanency that were provided by the focus group participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Stable Place</th>
<th>Adoption</th>
<th>Reunification</th>
<th>Divert from Care</th>
<th>Not Directly Answered</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Workers</strong> (14 Participants)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Relative/NREFM</strong> (2 Participants)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Parents</strong> (2 Participants)</td>
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<td><strong>County Foster Homes</strong> (10 Participants)</td>
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<td><strong>Stakeholders</strong> (13 Participants)</td>
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<td><strong>Supervisors/Managers</strong> (14 Participants)</td>
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<td><strong>Youth/Young Adult</strong> (15 Participants)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Foster Family Agency Foster Parent</strong> (1 Participant)</td>
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Appendix C

FINAL
CALIFORNIA CHILD WELFARE OUTCOMES AND ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM
SANTA CLARA COUNTY
PEER QUALITY CASE REVIEW INTERVIEW TOOL FOR PERMANENCY

Introduction and Background

- Interviewer Team: Briefly introduce yourselves including County and position. Explain each interviewer’s role (time keeper, recorder, and lead interviewer).

- Briefly remind of purpose of the interview.
  - Confidentiality
  - No right or wrong responses
  - Qualitative information about practice
  - Data is collected/presented in the aggregate
  - Concentrate responses on the focus topic:
    (Permanency and the factors impacting permanency, specifically concentrating on type of placement and resources and support and the age of the child/youth)

Social Worker Background

Ask Interviewee, Child Welfare Case Managing Social Worker, to summarize their work experience, length of time with Santa Clara County, current assignment, length of time in their current assignment? How
Remind: Anonymity, no right or wrong responses, qualitative information, about practice and to concentrate responses on the focus topic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment of Needs and Services</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Please share your impressions of this family? Describe the unique strengths of this child/youth and his/her biological parents, please include both the mother and the father?</td>
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<td>2. Please describe the needs of this child/youth and his/her mother and father?</td>
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<td>3. How was the child/youth’s needs identified &amp; assessed? What efforts were there to include both the mother and the father in the case plan development? -please talk specifically about each parent. If the youth is age 10 or older, what was his/her involvement in the case plan development?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. What were the **services provided**, and did they match the needs of the child/youth, and for the family? Were the services that you needed **accessible** (location, schedule, cost) and **available** for the child/youth and/or caretakers?

5. How often do you evaluate and make changes to the case plan?

6. How were the child/youth’s, and the mother and father’s culture, religious affiliation and language taken into consideration in the case planning and support for this family?

7. What is the child/youth’s **educational status**?
   - □ ATTENDING SCHOOL  □ HIGH SCHOOL GRAD  □ GED, IN PROGRESS  □ GED
   - □ INDEPENDENT STUDY  □ COLLEGE  □ TRADE/VOCATIONAL SCHOOL
   - □ CURRENT IEP on file  □ NPS  □ SPECIAL EDUCATION
   - □ NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL (REASON)________________________________________________________

8. What is the youth’s **employment status**?
   - □ FULL TIME  □ PART TIME  □ VOLUNTEER WORK  □ INTERNSHIP  □ UNEMPLOYED
   - □ NOT APPLICABLE
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<td>9.</td>
<td>What is the child/youth’s <strong>mental health status</strong>: Does she/he have a current diagnosis? Is she/he prescribed psychotropic medication?</td>
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| 10. | **Engagement in Permanency Planning**  
Who was engaged in the permanency planning for this child/youth? How did you work with both mother/father/child/youth/caregivers/others for placement decisions for this child/youth?  
What techniques did you use to engage these persons in the permanency planning for the youth?  
What did you note, hear, and/or observe that made you think that each person was engaged? |
| 11. | What steps did you take towards achieving permanency for this child/youth? |
| 12. | When was the concurrent plan identified? If the concurrent plan changed, when did it change and why? Did you take the child’s cultural and ethnic identity into consideration in development of the concurrent plan? Please explain. |
| 13. | What activities took place and services utilized to plan for and promote permanency (Adoption and Legal Guardianship)? For example: Team Decision Making (TDM), Family Group Decision Making Meeting (FGDM), Family Conference, Family Finding |
### Placement Stability

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<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>How were original and subsequent placement decisions made? What were the <strong>reasons for any of the placement changes</strong> that occurred? Was this move the best placement for the child/youth? If not, why?</td>
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<td>15.</td>
<td>When making placement decisions for the child/youth, did the Agency give consideration to age, ethnicity, medical condition, language and placement with siblings or relatives, etc.?</td>
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</table>
16. Are there other factors or people who have impacted (positive/negative) the child/youth's placement stability (please address all that apply)?

Extended Family:

Child Advocates:

Non-Relative Caregivers/Foster Parents/Group Home /Residential Staff:

Juvenile Dependency Court Process/ Juvenile Delinquency Court Process/ Child’s Attorney:

Other:
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<th>Description</th>
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<td>17.</td>
<td>Describe the relationship and connectedness (if any that the child/youth has with their mother and/or father)?</td>
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<td>18.</td>
<td>What efforts were made to maintain the child/youth’s connections with the mother and father, siblings, and other important relationships? How has this supported or hindered permanency? What was the initial and current visitation plan between the child/youth and his/her mother and father?</td>
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<td>19.</td>
<td>How has the current placement supported and assisted in permanency planning for the child/youth and promote the youth’s achievement of his/her case plan goals?</td>
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<td>20.</td>
<td>If the child/youth had a supportive, potentially lifelong relationship, what steps were taken to continue and support the relationship? Were there any barriers?</td>
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<td>21.</td>
<td>What <strong>family finding efforts</strong> were utilized for this case? Please describe the Family Finding activities both formal family finding by the family finding unit or other and any efforts by the social worker.</td>
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</table>
22. How did the **placement location** support important family and community (e.g. school, friends, neighbors, sports, after school activities, clubs, or religious affiliations) connections?

23. How were relatives/NREFMs searched, contacted and assessed for placement? At what points in the case were they addressed? Do you know who the youth feels connected to, and how do you know?

24. What efforts were made to place sibling(s) together? If not, what were the reason(s) sibling(s) were not placed together?

### Placement and Visitation with Siblings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Sibling (First Name Only)</th>
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- [ ] IN CONTACT WITH FOCUS YOUTH
- [ ] IN PLACEMENT WITH YOUTH
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<tr>
<td><strong>25.</strong></td>
<td>What influenced any changes in visitation? How did this impact efforts toward permanency?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Permanency Goal for Child/Youth</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>26.</strong></td>
<td><strong>What is the youth’s permanent plan (Adoption, LG, PPLA) and was family reunification (FR) services extended at the 12-month hearing? Why was this identified permanent plan considered the best for this child/youth?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>27.</strong></td>
<td><strong>How do you continue to re-assess parents as potential placement? Please explain.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>28.</strong></td>
<td><strong>How was the child/youth’s identified cultural heritage taken into consideration in development of the permanent plan?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>29.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Was there a compelling reason documented as to why adoption was not considered or why termination of parental rights (TPR) was not ordered? What was the compelling reason(s)?</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Social Worker Reflections and Insight</td>
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<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>What <strong>has been most helpful</strong> as you have proceeded with establishing permanency for this child/youth? (Please discuss all that are applicable, for example: departmental supports, services, procedures, systemic barriers, social work skills and techniques, personal style and/or attributes, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>What <strong>has not worked</strong> as you have proceeded with establishing permanency for this child/youth? (Please discuss all that are applicable, for example: departmental supports, services, procedures, social work skills and techniques, personal style and/or attributes, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>In your opinion, what Agency wide improvements/changes would be useful to help all children/youth achieve a permanent plan? Training, systemic changes (policy &amp; procedures) availability of resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>Was there anything about this case that you found especially difficult or challenging? Identify existing barriers that affect your ability to accomplish what is needed in cases like this?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>Are there any departmental policies/procedures that are <strong>contradictory</strong> or <strong>create barriers to developing connections</strong> for your child/youth? (Including CWS/CMS or other documentation issues)</td>
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<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>Is there anything else you would like to add with regards to impact to achieve permanency for this child/youth?</td>
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Appendix D

Insert PQCR Probation Interview Tool

OUTCOMES & ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM
PEER QUALITY CASE REVIEW

PROBATION
PROBATION OFFICER INTERVIEW TOOL

INTRODUCTIONS & BACKGROUND

Probation Officer Background

Introductions:

- Interviewer Team: Briefly identify interviewers. Explain each interviewer’s role (time keeper, recorder, and lead interviewer).

- Briefly explain purpose of the interview.
  - Anonymity
  - No right or wrong responses
  - Qualitative information about practice
  - Concentrate responses on the focus topic: Family Reunification

- Ask probation officer for a brief summary of his or her experience, length of time with the county, and length of time in the foster care placement program.
**Assessment of Needs and Services**

1. Describe the attributes of this youth and family.
   - **Strengths**
   - **Needs**

Tell us about **how and when you assessed** this youth and family for needs and services.

- Needs identified?
- Services identified?
- **Process** used to identify needs and services?
  - What kinds of previous assessments were made available to you? Who or what agency did them, DFCS, Mental health, etc.? Were they helpful and consistent with each other and your assessment?

2. What is the youth’s **educational status**?

- Does the youth have an IEP? Please describe how the youth’s educational needs were met or unmet during the life of the case.
3. Describe the youth’s mental health status.

- Do they have a current diagnosis?
- Are they taking any psychotropic medication?
- Is the youth compliant with taking the prescribed medication?

4. Describe the youth’s behavioral issues, if any. Did they impact the youth’s relationship with their family?

---

**Case Planning and Service Delivery**

5. What was the parents and/or caregivers involvement in the development of the case plan and their support of the case planning activities?

6. Describe your regular monthly face to face contact with the parents and/or caregivers and what steps were taken to prepare for that visit?

- What were the case plan activities? For the youth? For the family?

7. What was the role of the youth in the development of the case plan?
8. What were the specific services/support the minor and family have received that helped the reunification process?

9. What are the specific services/support the minor and family have not received that you believe would have helped the reunification process?

10. What specific services/support that the minor and family received that were not effective in the reunification process?

**Family-Youth Interaction**

11. How often did the parents have contact with the minor? Describe those contacts, phone, personal, etc. How did those contacts affect the reunification process?

12. What barriers/challenges do the parents encounter in having regular contact with the minor?

**Family Engagement Activities**

13. What types of family engagement strategies were utilized with the family? Were they successful?

14. Was the family engaged in a team based planning or decision making meeting at any point in the case? Was it useful? What would have made it more useful?

**Family Reunification**

15. What was the family’s attitude and feelings towards the youth returning home after placement out of home? Was there ambivalence?
- What services/support was provided to the family to support the transition home?

- What services/support were needed to support the family but were not available?

16. Did the family engage in any formal parent education training? If so, was it helpful to the reunification process?
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Question</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How does the Probation Department enhance or inhibit your efforts</td>
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<tr>
<td>regarding the reunification process?</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. How does the Court enhance or inhibit your efforts regarding the</td>
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<tr>
<td>reunification process?</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Was there anything about this case that you found especially</td>
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<tr>
<td>difficult or challenging?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. What improvements or changes would be useful to help you do your job</td>
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<td>more effectively? (training, resources, procedures...)</td>
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<td>5. What are the kinds of things you do as a probation officer that you</td>
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<tr>
<td>are especially proud of, or that others can learn from?</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Is there anything you would like to add?</td>
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</table>
## SOCIAL WORKER FOCUS GROUP INFORMATION

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<th>Date of Focus Group:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Facilitators:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Participants:</td>
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### Focus Group Instructions

**Introductions:**

- Briefly identify team members and their title/affiliation. Explain each facilitator's role (recorder and lead facilitator).
- Briefly have attendees introduce themselves

**Purpose**

- Explain general process
  - 90 minutes total
  - No right or wrong answers
  - Group discussion in response to questions from the facilitators
- What is the reason for doing focus groups?
  - Briefly explain PQCR process
  - Focus Area statement - Children and youth in placement more than 18 months
  - Need staff and partner input to improve how we do our job
  - Information will be shared confidentially with managers and staff to improve our services.
- Choose guidelines and ground rules in addition to the following:
  - Confidentiality - don’t share what you hear outside this room
  - Facilitators will write down comments (not names of who gave the comment) and share all comments with staff
  - No right or wrong responses
Focus Group Questions

1. What does Permanency mean to you or how has Permanency been defined or explained to you? And by whom?

Permanency as we will be referring to it in this focus group will be defined as successful reunification with one or both parents, legal guardianship and the case closed with the Court or Adoption. Or a child/youth finding a “forever home”.

2. Please tell us what office you work out of and your current position.

3. What do you see as the biggest reasons children and youth stay in foster care for long periods of time?

4. What three most influential permanency practices or programs have resulted in positive outcomes for our youth and their families? For those returning to their parents and for those with a permanent plan of adoption or legal guardianship?
5. What are some systemic or practice changes that you would like to see Santa Clara do to reduce the barriers and ensure children do not remain in foster care for long periods of time?

6. If youth do stay in care and emancipate from the system, what can Santa Clara do to help youth have successful transitions? What role does Independent Living Skills Program play? What suggestions do you have for ILP?

7. If you have had youth return home, what supports are in place to help the youth transition smoothly home? What supports or interventions would you recommend?
8. What role can social workers play in improving this outcome of reducing length of stay in foster care and improving permanency?

9. What other suggestions do you have that would improve this outcome and decrease the length of time children spend in foster care and help children and youth either return home or find a permanent home?
## Focus Group Information

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<th>Date of Focus Group:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Facilitators:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Participants:</td>
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## Focus Group Instructions
Introductions:

Briefly identify team members and their title/affiliation. Explain each facilitator’s role (recorder and lead facilitator).

- Briefly have attendees introduce themselves

Purpose

- Explain general process
  - 90 minutes total
  - No right or wrong answers
  - Group discussion in response to questions from the facilitators
- What is the reason for doing focus groups?
  - Briefly explain PQCR Process
  - Focus Area Statement - children and youth in placement more than 18 months
  - Information will be shared confidentially with managers and staff to improve our services.

- Choose guidelines and ground rules in addition to the following:
  - Confidentiality - don’t share what you hear outside this room
  - Facilitators will write down comments (not names of who gave the comment) and share all comments with staff
  - No right or wrong responses

Focus Group Questions

1. Please tell us what office you work out of and your current position.

2. How do you define reunification for youth in the probation system? In what ways does your agency promote and support reunification for youth?
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>What strategies are in place to encourage positive family reunifications for probationary youth?</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Living proximity is highly correlated with positive reunification rates. What efforts are made to place probation youth within their families’ communities?</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>What are the visitation practices in place?</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Understanding that parents can be ambivalent about their parenting skills and ability to manage their youth, what ways does the agency provide parent education and support for families?</td>
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</table>
7. What do you see as the biggest obstacles that prevent probation youth from returning home in a timely manner?

8. What three most influential practices or programs have resulted in positive outcomes for our youth and their families? For those returning to their parents and for those with a permanent plan of adoption or legal guardianship? Do any of these practices include team based case planning and decision making?

9. What role can probation officers play in improving reunification? How can the Probation department assist this effort?
10. What other suggestions do you have that would improve this outcome and decrease the length of time children spend in foster care?
CALIFORNIA CHILD WELFARE
OUTCOMES AND ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM
PEER QUALITY CASE REVIEW
SUPERVISORS/MANAGERS FOCUS GROUP TOOL

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<th>SUPERVISOR/MANAGERS FOCUS GROUP INFORMATION</th>
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<tr>
<td>__ Supervisor</td>
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<td>__ Manager</td>
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Focus Group Instructions

Introductions:

Briefly identify team members and their title/affiliation. Explain each facilitator's role (recorder and lead facilitator).

- Briefly have attendees introduce themselves

Purpose

- Explain general process
  - 90 minutes total
  - No right or wrong answers
  - Group discussion in response to questions from the facilitators

- What is the reason for doing focus groups?
  - Briefly explain PQCR process
  - Focus Area statement - Children and youth in placement more than 18 months
  - Need staff and partner input to improve how we do our job
  - Information will be shared confidentially with managers and staff to improve our services.

- Choose guidelines and ground rules in addition to the following:
  - Confidentiality - don't share what you hear outside this room
  - Facilitators will write down comments (not names of who gave the comment) and share all comments with staff
  - No right or wrong responses
### Focus Group Questions

1. **What does Permanency mean to you or how has Permanency been defined or explained to you? And by whom?**

   Permanency as we will be referring to it in this focus group will be defined as successful reunification with one or both parents, legal guardianship and the case closed with the Court or Adoption. Or a child/youth finding a “forever home”.

2. **Please tell us what office you work out of and your current position.**

3. **How do you define permanency for youth in the child welfare and probation system?**

4. **What do you see as the biggest reasons children and youth stay in foster care for long periods of time?**
5. What three most influential permanency practices or programs have resulted in positive outcomes for our youth and their families? For those returning to their parents and for those with a permanent plan of adoption or legal guardianship?

6. What are some systemic or practice changes that you would like to see Santa Clara do to reduce the barriers and ensure children do not remain in foster care for long periods of time?

7. What Family Finding strategies does the agency utilize? What strategies do you think would be helpful to implement?
8. If youth return home, what does the agency do to help the youth transition smoothly into the home? What else could the agency do to assist in the transition?

9. If youth do stay in care and emancipate from the system, what can Santa Clara do to help youth have successful transitions? What role does the Independent Living Skills Program play? What suggestions do you have related to ILP?

10. What role can supervisors and managers play in improving this outcome?
11. What other suggestions do you have that would improve this outcome and decrease the length of time children spend in foster care and help children and youth either return home or find a permanent home?
Appendix H
CALIFORNIA CHILD WELFARE
OUTCOMES AND ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM
PEER QUALITY CASE REVIEW
PROBATION SUPERVISORS, MANAGERS FOCUS GROUP TOOL

PROBATION SUPERVISORS, MANAGERS FOCUS GROUP INFORMATION

| __ Probation Supervisor | __ Probation Manager | Date of Focus Group: |
| __ Probation Manager | Facilitators: |
| | Number of Participants: |

Focus Group Instructions

Introductions:
Briefly identify team members and their title/affiliation. Explain each facilitator's role (recorder and lead facilitator).

- Briefly have attendees introduce themselves

Purpose

- Explain general process
  - 90 minutes total
  - No right or wrong answers
  - Group discussion in response to questions from the facilitators
- What is the reason for doing focus groups?
  - Briefly explain PQCR Process
  - Focus Area Statement - children and youth in placement more than 18 months
  - Information will be shared confidentially with managers and staff to improve our services.

- Choose guidelines and ground rules in addition to the following:
  - Confidentiality - don’t share what you hear outside this room
  - Facilitators will write down comments (not names of who gave the comment) and share all comments with staff
  - No right or wrong responses
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<th>Focus Group Questions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Please tell us what office you work out of and your current position</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. How do you define reunification for youth in the probation system? In what ways does your agency promote and support reunification for youth?</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. What strategies are in place to encourage positive family reunifications for probationary youth?</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Living proximity is highly correlated with positive reunification rates. What efforts are made to place probation youth within their families’ communities?</td>
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9. What other suggestions do you have that would improve this outcome and decrease the length of time children spend in foster care?
Relative and NREFM Focus Group Tool

Relative and NREFM Focus Group Information

Date of Focus Group

Facilitators:

Number of Participants:

Focus Group Instructions

Introductions:

Briefly identify team members and their title/affiliation. Explain each facilitator’s role (recorder and lead facilitator).

- Briefly have attendees introduce themselves

Purpose

- Explain general process
  - 90 minutes total
  - No right or wrong answers
  - Group discussion in response to questions from the facilitators
- What is the reason for doing focus groups?
  - Briefly explain PQCR Process
  - Focus Area Statement - children and youth in placement more than 18 months
  - Information will be shared confidentially with managers and staff to improve our services.
- Choose guidelines and ground rules in addition to the following:
  - Confidentiality - don’t share what you hear outside this room
  - Facilitators will write down comments (not names of who gave the comment) and share all comments with staff
  - No right or wrong responses
## Focus Group Questions

1. **What does Permanency mean to you or how has Permanency been defined or explained to you? And by whom?**

Permanency as we will be referring to it in this focus group will be defined as successful reunification with one or both parents, legal guardianship and the case closed with the Court or Adoption. Or a child/youth finding a “forever home”.

2. **What do you think contributed to the child/youth in your care reunifying or not reunifying with one or more of his/her parent(s)?**

3. **What role should relatives and other important persons play in a child’s cases? How were you involved in your child/youth’s case?**

4. **Did your social worker fully explain to you what support families receive if they adopt a child/youth, compared to legal/guardianship or continuing in foster care? Why do you think some families chose foster care over permanency options?**
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<tr>
<th>Placement Stability Questions-</th>
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<tr>
<td>5. In what ways did the social worker or agency support the child or youth in your care?</td>
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<td>6. What kinds of support or services were provided to you through the child welfare system? Were they helpful? What kinds of support or services do you think would be helpful that were not provided?</td>
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<tr>
<th>Emancipation Questions-</th>
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<tr>
<td>7. What programs are the most helpful for youth when they are transitioning from foster care? What would you suggest to improve the transition process?</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. What role did Independent Living Skills Program plan for the youth in your care? Was it helpful? What suggestions do you have for ILP?</td>
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## Parent Focus Group Information

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<td><strong>Facilitators:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Number of Participants:</strong></td>
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**Focus Group Instructions**
Introductions:

Briefly identify team members and their title/affiliation. Explain each facilitator’s role (recorder and lead facilitator).

- Briefly have attendees introduce themselves

Purpose

- Explain general process
  - 90 minutes total
  - No right or wrong answers
  - Group discussion in response to questions from the facilitators
- What is the reason for doing focus groups?
  - Briefly explain PQCR process
  - Focus Area statement - Children and youth in placement more than 18 months
  - Need staff and partner input to improve how we do our job
  - Information will be shared confidentially with managers and staff to improve our services.

- Choose guidelines and ground rules in addition to the following:
  - Confidentiality - don’t share what you hear outside this room
  - Facilitators will write down comments (not names of who gave the comment) and share all comments with staff
  - No right or wrong responses

Focus Group Questions

1. What does Permanency mean to you or how has Permanency been defined or explained to you? And by whom?

Permanency as we will be referring to it in this focus group will be defined as successful reunification with one or both parents, legal guardianship and the case closed with the Court or Adoption. Or a child/youth finding a “forever home”.

2. Why do you think children and youth remain in foster care for long periods of time and are not able to either return home or find a permanent home?
3. What role do you think social workers and the Agency play in helping or hindering this process?

4. What role did you play in your child’s case? Should parents be involved in identifying relatives and other important people in their child’s lives?

5. What do you think the agency can do to help youth be successful when they transition back into the parents home or if they transition to adulthood?
6. What other suggestions do you have that would improve this outcome and decrease the length of time children spend in foster care and help children and youth either return home or find a permanent home?
## FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY FOCUS GROUP INFORMATION

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<th>Date of Focus Group:</th>
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<tr>
<th>Facilitators:</th>
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**Focus Group Instructions**
Briefly identify team members and their title/affiliation. Explain each facilitator’s role (recorder and lead facilitator).

- Briefly have attendees introduce themselves

**Purpose**

- Explain general process
  - 90 minutes total
  - No right or wrong answers
  - Group discussion in response to questions from the facilitators
- What is the reason for doing focus groups?
  - Briefly explain PQCR Process
  - Focus Area Statement - children and youth in placement more than 18 months
  - Information will be shared confidentially with managers and staff to improve our services.

- Choose guidelines and ground rules in addition to the following:
  - Confidentiality - don’t share what you hear outside this room
  - Facilitators will write down comments (not names of who gave the comment) and share all comments with staff
  - No right or wrong responses

### FFA Focus Group Questions

1. What does Permanency mean to you or how has Permanency been defined or explained to you? And by whom?

Permanency as we will be referring to it in this focus group will be defined as successful reunification with one or both parents, legal guardianship and the case closed with the Court or Adoption. Or a child/youth finding a “forever home”.

2. What do you see as some of the promising practices that are occurring in Santa Clara that promotes permanency for youth? What resources, services or programs do you know of that are being utilized or not being utilized that
3. What do you see as the biggest reasons children and youth stay in foster care for long periods of time?

4. Did your social worker fully explain to you what support families receive if they adopt a child/youth, compared to legal/guardianship or continuing in foster care? Why do you think some families chose foster care over permanency options?

5. What are some systemic or practice changes that you would like to see Santa Clara do to reduce the barriers and ensure children do not remain in foster care for long periods of time?
6. If youth do stay in care and emancipate from the system, what can Santa Clara do to help youth have successful transitions? What role does the Independent Living Skills Program play? Do you have any suggestions for ILP?

7. In what ways can foster parents assist in improving outcomes for youth?

8. What other suggestions do you have that would improve this outcome and decrease the length of time children spend in foster care?
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<th>COUNTY FOSTER HOMES FOCUS GROUP INFORMATION</th>
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<td>Date of Focus Group:</td>
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<td>Facilitators:</td>
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Focus Group Instructions
Introductions:

Briefly identify team members and their title/affiliation. Explain each facilitator’s role (recorder and lead facilitator).

- Briefly have attendees introduce themselves

Purpose

- Explain general process
  - 90 minutes total
  - No right or wrong answers
  - Group discussion in response to questions from the facilitators
- What is the reason for doing focus groups?
  - Briefly explain PQCR process
  - Focus Area statement - Children and youth in placement more than 18 months
  - Need staff and partner input to improve how we do our job
  - Information will be shared confidentially with managers and staff to improve our services.

- Choose guidelines and ground rules in addition to the following:
  - Confidentiality - don’t share what you hear outside this room
  - Facilitators will write down comments (not names of who gave the comment) and share all comments with staff
  - No right or wrong responses

Focus Group Questions

1. What does Permanency mean to you for children and youth in the Child Welfare System or how has Permanency been defined or explained to you? And by whom?

   Permanency as we will be referring to it in this focus group will be defined as successful reunification with one or both parents, legal guardianship and the case closed with the Court or Adoption. Or a child/youth finding a “forever home”.

2. What do you see as some of the promising practices that are occurring in Santa Clara that promotes permanency for youth? What resources, services or programs do you know of that are being utilized or not being utilized that support and promote
3. What do you see as the biggest reasons children and youth stay in foster care for long periods of time?

4. Did your social worker fully explain to you what support families receive if they adopt a child/youth, compared to legal/guardianship or continuing in foster care? Why do you think some families chose foster care over permanency options?

5. Did your social worker fully explain to you what support families receive if they adopt a child/youth, compared to legal/guardianship or continuing in foster care? Why do you think some families chose foster care over permanency options?

6. If youth do stay in care and emancipate from the system, what can Santa Clara do to
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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<tr>
<td>help youth have successful transitions? What role does the Independent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Living Skills Program play? Do you have any suggestions for ILP?</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. In what ways can foster parents assist in improving outcomes for youth?</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. What other suggestions do you have that would improve this outcome</td>
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### STAKEHOLDERS FOCUS GROUP INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Focus Group:</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Facilitators:</th>
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**Focus Group Instructions**

**Introductions:**
- Briefly identify team members and their title/affiliation. Explain each facilitator’s role (recorder and lead facilitator).
  - Briefly have attendees introduce themselves

**Purpose**
- Explain general process
  - 90 minutes total
  - No right or wrong answers
  - Group discussion in response to questions from the facilitators
- What is the reason for doing focus groups?
  - Briefly explain PQCR process
  - Focus Area statement - Children and youth in placement more than 18 months
  - Need staff and partner input to improve how we do our job
  - Information will be shared confidentially with managers and staff to improve our services.
- Choose guidelines and ground rules in addition to the following:
  - Confidentiality - don’t share what you hear outside this room
  - Facilitators will write down comments (not names of who gave the comment) and share all comments with staff
  - No right or wrong responses
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<th>Stakeholders Focus Group Questions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How do you define permanency in your work with children and youth and families?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanency as we will be referring to it in this focus group will be defined as successful reunification with one or both parents, legal guardianship and the case closed with the Court or Adoption. Or a child/youth finding a “forever home”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What do you see as some of the promising practices that are occurring in Santa Clara that promotes permanency for children/youth? What resources, services or programs do you know of that are being utilized or not being utilized that support and promote permanency?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. What do you see as the biggest reasons children and youth stay in foster care for long periods of time?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. What are some systemic or practice changes that you would like to see Santa Clara do to reduce the barriers and ensure children do not remain in foster care for long periods of time?</td>
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</table>
Emancipation Question-

5. If youth do stay in care and emancipate from the system, what can Santa Clara do to help youth have successful transitions? What role does the Independent Living Skills Program play? Do you have any suggestions for ILP?

6. In what ways can stakeholders assist in improving outcomes for youth?

7. What other suggestions do you have that would improve this outcome and decrease the length of time children spend in foster care and help children and youth either return home or find a permanent home?
## DUAL STATUS FOCUS GROUP INFORMATION

<table>
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Briefly identify team members and their title/affiliation. Explain each facilitator’s role (recorder and lead facilitator).

- Briefly have attendees introduce themselves

Purpose

- Explain general process
  - 90 minutes total
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- What is the reason for doing focus groups?
  - Briefly explain PQCR process
  - Focus Area statement - dual status youth
  - Need staff input to improve how we do our job
  - Information will be shared confidentially with managers and staff to improve our services.

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Focus Group Questions

1. What is your role and responsibilities within either the Child Welfare or Juvenile Probation System?

2. What could DFCS do differently to stabilize youth who are beginning to be involved in criminal activity in placement and the community? What could deter entry into formal wardship?

3. What could JPD, law enforcement and/or the District Attorney’s office do
4. How could the juvenile justice system and child welfare work together to reduce the entry of foster youth into the juvenile justice system?

5. At what point, if any, should foster youth have consequences for criminal behavior in placement or in the community? At a first, second, third...etc, offence? Depending on age? Depending on type or crime (a property crime or crime against a person)?

6. What is working with the current Dual Status system of a hold status of either Dependency or Delinquency? What is not working with the current system?

7. Is there any other information you believe is relevant to this issue of Dual Status?
DUAL STATUS FOCUS GROUP INFORMATION

| __ Supervisor | _____ Child Welfare | Date of Focus Group: |
| __ Manager    | _____ Probation    | Facilitators: |

Number of Participants:

Focus Group Instructions
Introductions:
Briefly identify team members and their title/affiliation. Explain each facilitator’s role (recorder and lead facilitator).

- Briefly have attendees introduce themselves

Purpose

- Explain general process
  ✓ 90 minutes total
  ✓ No right or wrong answers
  ✓ Group discussion in response to questions from the facilitators

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  ✓ Focus Area statement - dual status youth
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Identify barriers and challenges

Identify training needs

Identify systemic/policy changes

Identify resource issues

Identify areas needing state technical assistance

Identify documentation trends
**FOCUS TOPIC:  Family Reunification**

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