

# California - Child and Family Services Review

## System Improvement Plan

December 20, 2024



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## Acronym List

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**ACF** = Administration for Children and Families  
**AFDC** = Aid to Families with Dependent Children  
**BFH** = Bringing Families Home  
**CAP** = Corrective Action Plan  
**CAPC** = Child Abuse Prevention Council  
**CAPIT** = Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention, and Treatment  
**CANS** = Child & Adolescent Needs and Strengths  
**CBCAP** = Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Program  
**CCR** = Continuum of Care Reform  
**C-CFSR** = California-Child and Family Services Review  
**CDSS** = California Department of Social Services  
**CFE** = Center for Excellence  
**CFSR** = Federal Child and Family Services Reviews  
**CFT** = Child and Family Team  
**CPOC** = Chief Probation Officers of California  
**CQI** = Continuous Quality Improvement  
**CSA** = County Self-Assessment  
**CSEC** = Commercially Sexually Exploited Children  
**CW** = Child Welfare  
**CWS** = Child Welfare Services  
**CWS/CMS** = Child Welfare Services/Case Management System  
**EFC** = Extended Foster Care  
**EPSDT** = Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment  
**ER** = Emergency Response  
**ETO** = Efforts to Outcomes  
**FCS** = Family and Children's Services Department  
**FFE** = Family Finding and Engagement  
**FFPSA** = Family First Prevention Services Act  
**FURS** = Family Urgent Response System  
**ICC** = Intensive Care Coordination  
**IHBS** = Intensive Home-Based Services  
**MAOF** = Mexican American Opportunity Foundation  
**MHP** = Mental Health Plan  
**NREFM** = Non-Related Extended Family Member  
**OCAP** = Office of Child Abuse Prevention  
**PSSF** = Promoting Safe and Stable Families  
**RFA** = Resource Family Approval  
**SCP** = Social Change Partners, LLC  
**SDM** = Structured Decision Making  
**SIP** = System Improvement Plan  
**SOP** = Safety Organized Practice  
**STRTP** = Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Program  
**TFC** = Therapeutic Foster Care

## Introduction

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The California-Child and Family Services Review (C-CFSR) was designed to improve outcomes for children in out-of-home placement in the categories of child safety, permanency, and well-being. The C-CFSR process includes the Peer Review, County Self-Assessment (CSA), five-year System Improvement Plan (SIP), and annual System Improvement Plan Progress Reports. The County of Monterey 2024-2029 SIP is the third component of the C-CFSR. It is the operational agreement between the County Child Welfare (CW) and Probation Departments and the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and outlines how the County of Monterey will improve the system of care for children and families.

The County of Monterey SIP Planning Team utilized information gathered through both the CSA and SIP development processes to develop this SIP. Both processes were a collaboration between the County of Monterey Family and Children's Services Department (FCS) and the County of Monterey Probation Department (Probation), in partnership with CDSS. The County of Monterey contracted with Social Change Partners, LLC (SCP) to help facilitate the development of both the CSA and SIP and to conduct the Peer Review.

During the CSA process, the County of Monterey analyzed data, conducted case reviews, held a January 2024 Peer Review, and conducted extensive community engagement. More specifically, the County of Monterey conducted ten focus groups with required stakeholders between December 2023 and April 2024 and organized a February 2024 Stakeholder Meeting that was attended by over 20 representatives. During focus groups and the stakeholder meeting, stakeholders elevated a variety of areas for potential growth, such as strengthening engagement of family and natural supports and increasing the number of homes that cater to the increasingly complex needs of children in care, including by identifying and supporting kin placements. Similar themes arose during the Peer Review process related to family finding and engagement and placement matching for both FCS and Probation cases. Additionally, peers specifically noted a lack of progression of parent-child visitation in child welfare cases reviewed and recommended additional guidance and training on this topic.

The CSA also identified unmet needs, service gaps, and other challenges. Some of the most significant unmet service needs and gaps in the County of Monterey related to housing, mental health services and supports, substance abuse treatment, and culturally responsive services. As noted in the CSA, the County of Monterey faces a significant shortage of affordable housing units, particularly for low-income families. There is also a shortage of affordable and culturally competent substance use disorder treatment services in the County of Monterey, particularly for families. Additionally, both adults and children experience challenges accessing needed mental health services and supports due to limited capacity/waitlists, geographic disparities, and gaps in service availability in languages other than English. Moreover, the rise in acuity/complexity of cases, even as the number of youth in foster care has declined, along with substantial workforce challenges over the past few years have created additional barriers to meeting the needs of children, youth, and families. These challenges have led to revamped recruitment, hiring, and onboarding processes, as well as implementation of various continuous quality improvement (CQI) efforts to enhance the system's responsiveness and effectiveness.

In addition to reviewing CSA findings, the County of Monterey engaged in collaborative discussions with a SIP Planning Team that included relevant subject matter experts to develop each SIP strategy. Ultimately, FCS developed three SIP strategies, and Probation developed one SIP strategy.

The SIP includes specific action steps, timeframes, and improvement targets that reflect the County of Monterey's commitment to strengthening family relationships and continuing to build on CQI efforts. It also includes a plan developed in partnership with the SIP Planning Team and partners, including Aspiranet and Seneca Family of Agencies, for how the County will utilize prevention, early intervention, and treatment funds (CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF) to strengthen and preserve families.

## C-CFSR Team and Core Representatives

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The C-CFSR Team includes the leaders of the C-CFSR process. The Team is comprised of staff from Family and Children’s Services, Probation, and CDSS, as well as key consultants. The County of Monterey C-CFSR Team began meeting in August 2023 and continued meeting regularly to plan the C-CFSR process. The SIP Planning Committee included representatives from the CSA C-CFSR Team, as well as other relevant staff and stakeholders with specific expertise in strategy focus areas. This Committee met frequently beginning in May 2024 to identify the outcome measures and strategies to be implemented through the five-year SIP plan. The chart below includes individuals who participated in the SIP Planning Committee.

Agency	Name	Title
Family and Children’s Services	Eva Jeronimo	Deputy Director
	Edward Juarez-Lefevre	Management Analyst III
	Sara Sturtevant	Management Analyst II
	Melissa Alejandre	Program Manager II
	Chelsea Chacon	Management Analyst III
	Jacqueline Chavez	Program Manager II
	Ana Cerda	Social Work Supervisor II
	Raquel Avila	Social Work Supervisor II
	Hugo Camacho	Social Work Supervisor I
Juvenile Probation	Gregory Glazzard	Probation Division Manager – Juvenile Division
	Elizabeth Balcazar	Management Analyst II
	Marlo Mendoza	Probation Services Manager – Special Services Unit
California Department of Social Services	Erica Magee	PPIB, County Consultant
	Elizabeth Johnson	OCAP, County Consultant
Social Change Partners	Reed Connell	Consultant

Agency	Name	Title
	Jessica Haspel	Consultant
	Ashley De Alba	Consultant
Aspiranet	Adam Weiner	Program Director
Wayfinder Family Services	Sarah Sims	Program Director

## SIP Narrative

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### Summary of FCS/Probation Outcome Data Measures

For the following section, all data is based on the Quarter 4, 2023 Berkeley Data Extract.

#### The County of Monterey C-CFSR Outcome Measures Summary Table FCS, Q4 2023

	Measure Number	Measure Description	FCS Performance	National Performance Standard	Performance Met/Not Met
<b>Safety</b>	4-S1	Maltreatment In Foster Care	1.99	No more than 9.07 victimizations per 100,000 days in care	<b>Met</b>
	4-S2	Recurrence Of Maltreatment	12.8%	No more than 9.7%	<b>Not Met</b>
<b>Permanency</b>	4-P1	Permanency In 12 Months (Entering Foster Care)	5.7%	At or above 35.2%	<b>Not Met</b>
	4-P2	Permanency In 12 Months (In Care 12-23 Months)	52.0%	At or above 43.8%	<b>Met</b>
	4-P3	Permanency In 12 Months (In Care 24 Months Or More)	33.3%	At or above 37.3%	<b>Not Met</b>
	4-P4	Re-Entry To Foster Care In 12 Months	2.6%	At or below 5.6%	<b>Met</b>
	4-P5	Placement Stability	2.48	No more than 4.48 moves per 1,000 days in foster care	<b>Met</b>
<b>Timely Response</b>	2B	Timely Response (Immediate Response Compliance)	78.4%	At or above 90%	<b>Not Met</b>
	2B	Timely Response (10-Day Response Compliance)	65.3%	At or above 90%	<b>Not Met</b>
<b>Monthly Visits</b>	2F	Monthly Visits (Out of Home)	92.7%	At least 95%	<b>Not Met</b>



	2F	Monthly Visits in Residence (Out of Home)	88.0%	At least 50%	<b>Met</b>
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**The County of Monterey C-CFSR Outcome Measures Summary Table Probation, Q4 2023**

	Measure Number	Measure Description	Probation Performance	National Performance	Performance Met/Not Met
<b>Safety</b>	4-S1	Maltreatment In Foster Care	0.00	No more than 9.07 victimizations per 100,000 days in care	<b>Met</b>
<b>Permanency</b>	4-P1	Permanency In 12 Months (Entering Foster Care)	11.1%	At or above 35.2%	<b>Not Met</b>
	4-P2	Permanency In 12 Months (In Care 12-23 Months)	–	At or above 43.8%	–
	4-P3	Permanency In 12 Months (In Care 24 Months Or More)	–	At or above 37.3%	–
	4-P4	Re-Entry To Foster Care In 12 Months	20.0%	At or below 5.6%	<b>Not Met</b>
	4-P5	Placement Stability	1.08	No more than 4.48 moves per 1,000 days in foster care	<b>Met</b>
<b>Monthly Visits</b>	2F	Monthly Visits (Out of Home)	100.0%	At least 95%	<b>Met</b>
	2F	Monthly Visits in Residence (Out of Home)	91.5%	At least 50%	<b>Met</b>

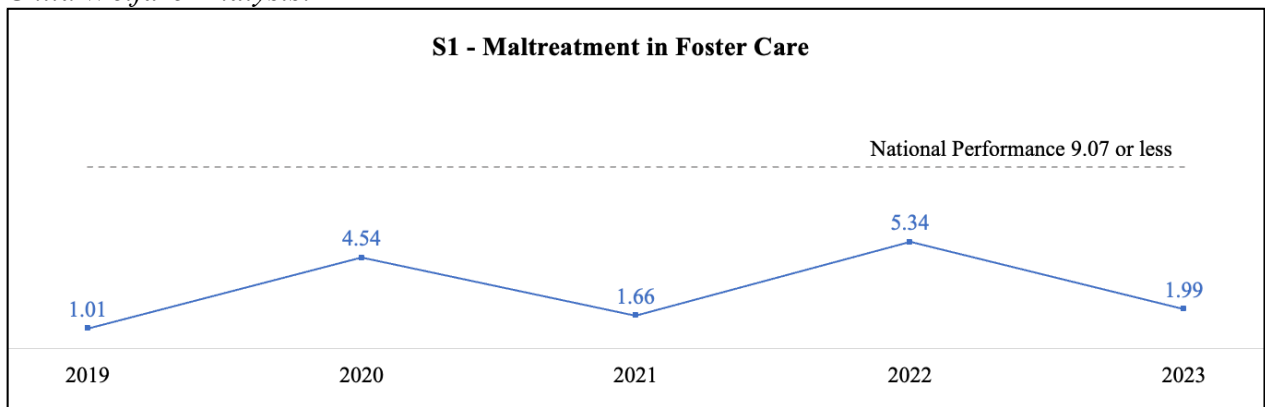
The County of Monterey used Quarter 4 Outcomes for the five-year trend analysis below. While the County of Monterey used the Q4 2023 report for this analysis, it should be noted that for some measures (S2, P1, and P4) the most recent year of data reflected in the narrative, tables, or graphs is from 2022 rather than 2023. This is because the data included in the quarterly reports for these measures is based on the cohort year rather than the reporting year. In the tables below,

asterisks represent data masked for confidentiality purposes. Data is masked if the number is 10 or below. It's important to note that the relatively small number of Child Welfare and Probation cases means that one sibling set, or one or two youth can impact the County of Monterey's ability to meet the national performance of some measures discussed below.

**Measure 4-S1: Maltreatment in Foster Care**

This is a Federal Outcome Measure reporting the rate of victimization per day of foster care for all children in foster care during a 12-month period. The national performance for this measure is less than or equal to 9.07 substantiated instances of maltreatment per 100,000 days in foster care. This measure includes all types of maltreatment by any perpetrator, accounts for all days in foster care during the year (across episodes) and considers multiple incidents of substantiated maltreatment for the same child in the numerator.

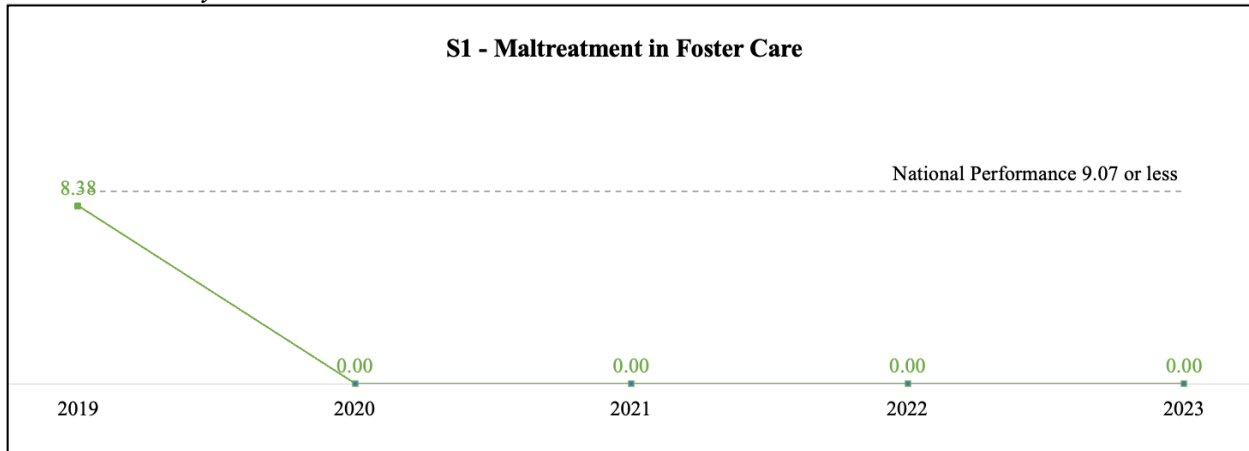
*Child Welfare Analysis:*



<b>S1 Maltreatment in Foster Care</b> (National Performance $\leq 9.07/100k$ Days)	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Instances of substantiated maltreatment	*	*	*	*	*
Foster care days	*	*	*	*	*
<b>Monterey FCS - Q4 Point-in-Time</b>	1.01	4.54	1.66	5.34	1.99

The County of Monterey consistently performs well on this measure. The rate of victimization has consistently fallen below the national performance of 9.07 per 100,000 days. This measure will continue to be monitored, especially regarding children and youth of color in care who experience more maltreatment and then as a consequence more placement disruptions.

*Probation Analysis:*



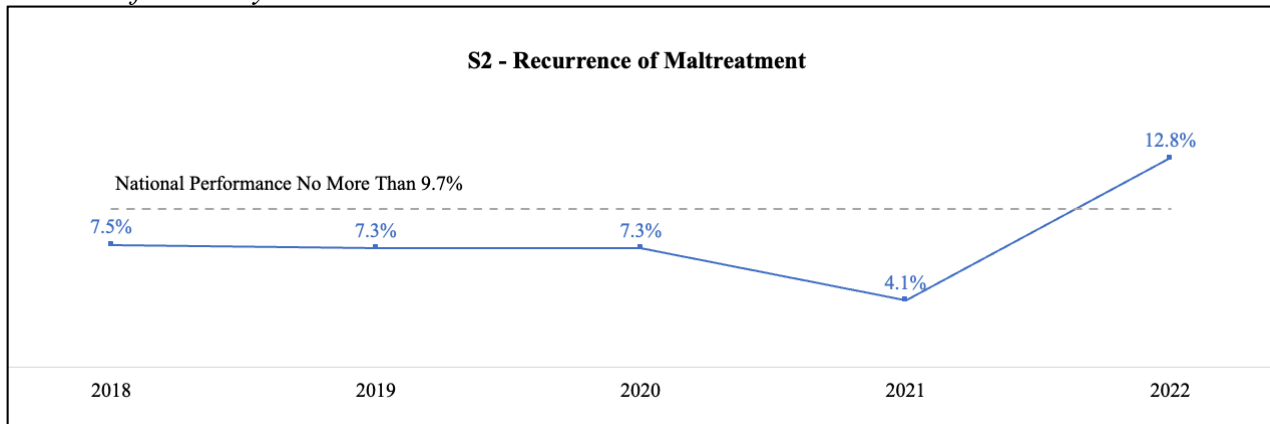
S1 Maltreatment in Foster Care (National Performance $\leq 9.07/100k$ Days)	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Instances of substantiated maltreatment	*	*	*	*	*
Foster care days	*	*	*	*	*
<b>Monterey Probation - Q4 Point-in-Time</b>	8.38	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

The Probation Department consistently meets the national performance for the S1 measure. From 2020 to 2023, there were zero instances of maltreatment recorded in Q4. Since there are few probation youth in foster care, even one instance of maltreatment can significantly impact performance.

**Measure 4-S2: Recurrence of Maltreatment (CW Only)**

This is a Federal Outcome Measure that reports of all children who were victims of a substantiated maltreatment allegation during a 12-month reporting period, what percent were victims of another substantiated maltreatment allegation within 12 months of their initial report. The national performance for this measure is less than or equal to 9.7%.

*Child Welfare Analysis:*



<b>S2 Recurrence of Maltreatment - within 12 Months of Substantiation</b> (National Standard $\leq 9.7\%$ )	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>
Children with recurrence	31	29	21	10	28
Children with substantiated allegations	415	395	286	245	218
<b>Monterey FCS - Q4 Point-in-Time</b>	7.5%	7.3%	7.3%	4.1%	12.8%

FCS met the national performance for this measure during Q4 in four out of five years. FCS did not meet the national performance in Q4 2022. The increase in recurrence may be tied to the increase in acuity of the reports made to the hotline, resulting in substantiated referrals. High acuity in families increases the risk of recurrent reports within 12 months. This measure will continue to be monitored to assess whether 2022 is an aberration or the beginning of a pattern.

Nationally, there is an identified need to reform child welfare policy to enhance support services to keep children safely in their homes. As a part of the Bipartisan Budget Act, the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) was enacted to begin to turn the focus of child welfare towards preventing children from entering foster care by keeping them safely home with their families, when possible, through support and prevention services. An increased focus on prevention could positively impact this measure. Given the current restrictions on child welfare’s ability to intervene with families where the incident does not meet the standards in the Welfare and Institutions Code, FFPSA at least expands Title IV-E reimbursement to include families who are at risk of their children coming into care. As California shifts from “mandated reporting to community supporting” in its approach to responding to reports of neglect and abuse an accompanying change in prevention funding will be necessary. These two shifts in policy will allow child welfare to provide prevention support to families who under current policy could not receive services, and in turn may reduce the number of subsequent recurrence of maltreatment reports.

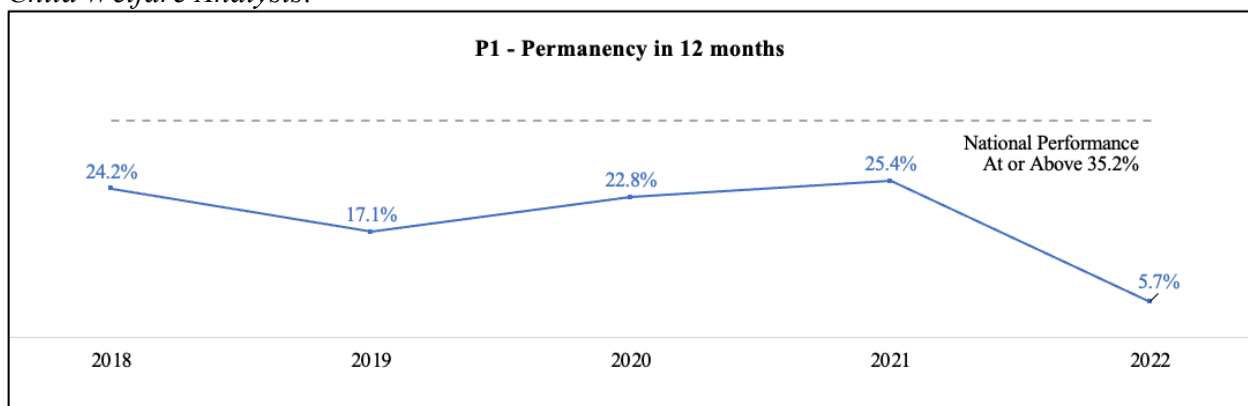
Locally, FCS also recognizes the need for greater prevention support. At the end of August 2024, it completed an analysis of the gaps in prevention services in the County. The County of Monterey is now in the planning stages of releasing the gap analysis to partners and the public. This is part of a larger statewide effort to shift child welfare to investing in child abuse prevention initiatives to reduce the number of children and youth at risk of coming into care. The County of Monterey is in the pre-planning stages of developing a Comprehensive Prevention Plan with its System of Care Partners to invest state block grant money into prevention.

*Probation Analysis:* This measure is not applicable to Probation.

**Measure 4-P1: Permanency In 12 Months for Children Entering Foster Care**

This is a Federal Outcomes Measure that reports on all children who enter foster care in a 12-month period and the percentage discharged to permanency within 12 months of entering foster care. The national performance for this measure is greater than or equal to 35.2%.

*Child Welfare Analysis:*



<b>P1 Permanency in 12 Months for Children Entering Foster Care (National Standard <math>\geq 35.2\%</math>)</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>
Children with exit to permanency	40	20	21	15	*
Children with entries	165	117	92	59	*
<b>Monterey FCS - Q4 Point-in-Time</b>	24.2	17.1	22.8	25.4	5.7%

FCS has persistently struggled with its performance on P1, which was the priority outcome performance measure chosen for the Peer Review during the CSA. Only 5.7% of children were discharged to permanency within 12 months of entering care in Q4 2022, which represents FCS’ lowest performance on this measure. A recent look at SafeMeasures shows that FCS’ performance for July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023, was 15.8%, showing improvement from Q4 2022. During this period, the most common type of permanency was guardianship, followed by reunification and then adoption.

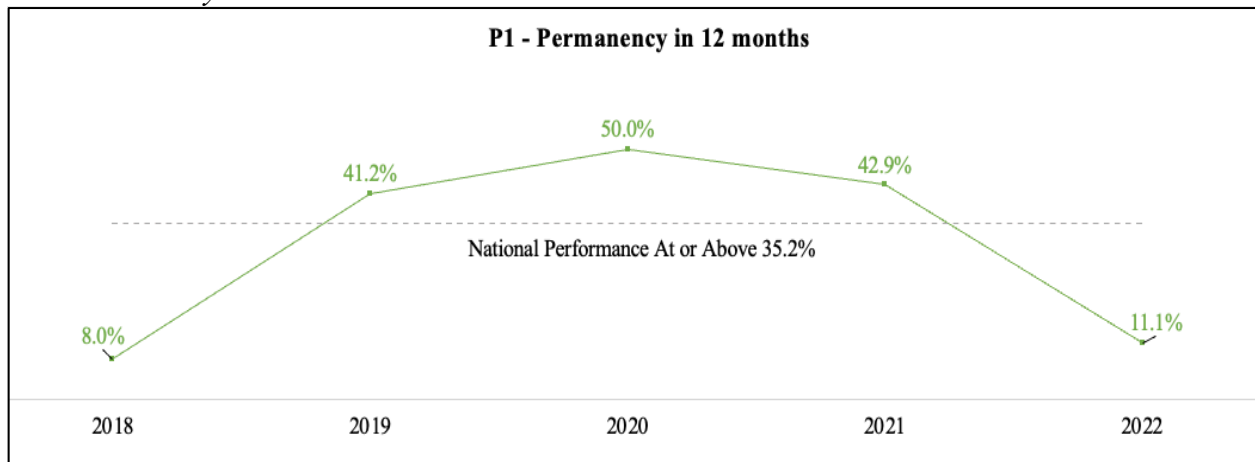
FCS has experienced a significant decrease in the number of children entering foster care, which has been accompanied by a rise in the complexity of new cases. It has been observed that youth coming into care are experiencing challenges with their mental health and substance use at a younger age. Some engage in high-risk behaviors, such as running away and abusing drugs and alcohol at higher rates than before due to their accessibility. Additionally, some youth are refusing to engage in mental health services. This rise in complexity makes it more difficult to achieve permanency within 12 months.

Moreover, other factors impacting this measure include, but are not limited to, a lack of progression of visitation between parents and children, a temporary reduction in family finding efforts, staff turnover, and extensions of court deadlines. Co-occurring parental mental health and substance abuse needs have been an ongoing issue. While this is not necessarily a new concern playing a larger role in impacting P1, it remains one of a multitude of factors impacting performance on this measure. Additional information about the factors impacting this performance measure is further detailed in the County of Monterey’s current County Self-Assessment.

FCS has identified this as a priority measure for improvement during this SIP for the reasons further detailed in the prioritization of outcome measures section below.

In Round 3 of the C-CFSR the national standard was 40.5%, however in Round 4 of the C-CFSR the national standard is 35.2%. The SIP goal will be to meet 20.7% by the end of this five-year SIP cycle.

*Probation Analysis:*



<b>P1 Permanency in 12 Months for Children Entering Foster Care (National Performance <math>\geq</math>35.2%)</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>
Children with exit to permanency	*	*	*	*	*
Children with entries	*	*	*	*	*
<b>Monterey Probation - Q4 Point-in-Time</b>	8.0%	41.2%	50.0%	42.9%	11.1%

Probation exceeded the national performance of 35.2% in three out of the last five years, which was attributed to a variety of factors, including the following:

- Efforts from the prior SIP cycle.
- Removal of the placement order for Wraparound services in December 2019.
- Reduced caseloads.
- Implementation and increase of Child and Family Team (CFT) Meetings and Pre-CFTs to encourage more family involvement and address dependency issues earlier in the life of a case.
- Increased prevention efforts for youth at imminent risk of removal and their families.
- Training officers on family finding processes and all resources available to families.
- Integration of the Wraparound Leadership Team to provide support amongst system partners for challenging cases.

However, Probation did not meet the national performance in 2018 or in 2022, which is the most recent year for which Q4 data is available. Persistent obstacles to achieving permanency within 12 months include youth with complex needs experiencing multiple placements, absconding

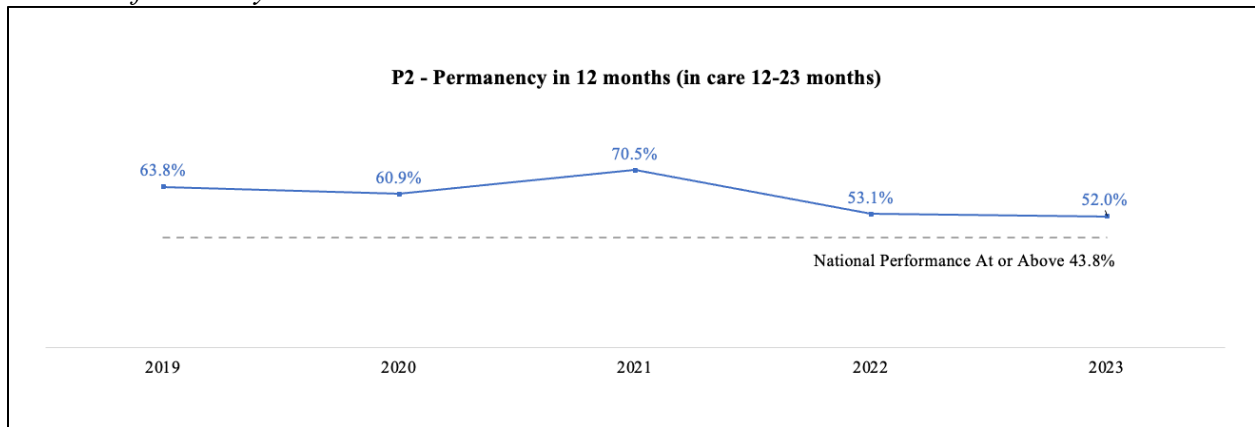
from placement, being discharged due to negative behavior, or becoming involved in new probation or law violations. Additionally, the nature of offenses, including sex offenses, poses significant barriers to timely permanency outcomes. Probation's population also comprises youth nearing the age 18 who are eligible for Extended Foster Care (EFC) services under AB12; many of these youth may opt to stay in care to access EFC rather than exit to permanency. Moreover, performance on this measure is affected by the small numbers of probation youth in care as reflected in the masked data in the table above. As a result, performance on this measure can be significantly influenced by the experiences of one or two youth.

Probation has identified P1 as a priority measure for this SIP given its ongoing struggle to consistently meet the national performance and for the reasons further detailed in the prioritization of outcome measures section below.

**Measure 4-P2: Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 12-23 months**

This is a Federal Outcomes Measure that reports the percentage of all children in foster care on the first day of the 12-month period, who had been in foster care (in that episode) for 12 to 23 months and were discharged from foster care to permanency within 12 months of the first day of the 12-month period. The national performance for this measure is at or above 43.8%.

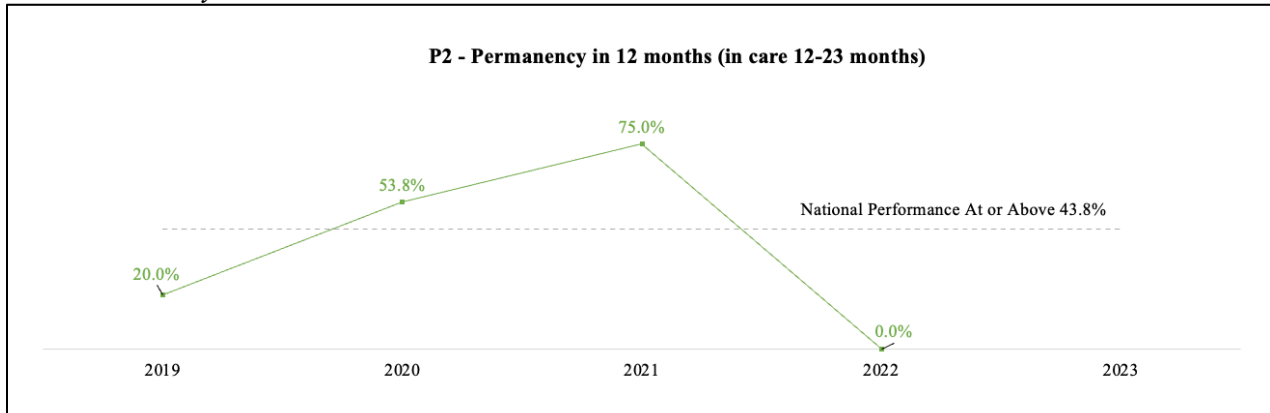
*Child Welfare Analysis:*



<b>P2 Permanency in 12 Months for Children in Foster Care 12-23 Months (National Performance <math>\geq</math>43.8%)</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Children with exit to permanency	44	56	43	17	13
In care 12-23 months	69	92	61	32	25
<b>Monterey FCS - Q4 Point-in-Time</b>	<b>63.8%</b>	<b>60.9%</b>	<b>70.5%</b>	<b>53.1%</b>	<b>52.0%</b>

FCS consistently surpasses the national performance of 43.8% for this measure.

*Probation Analysis:*



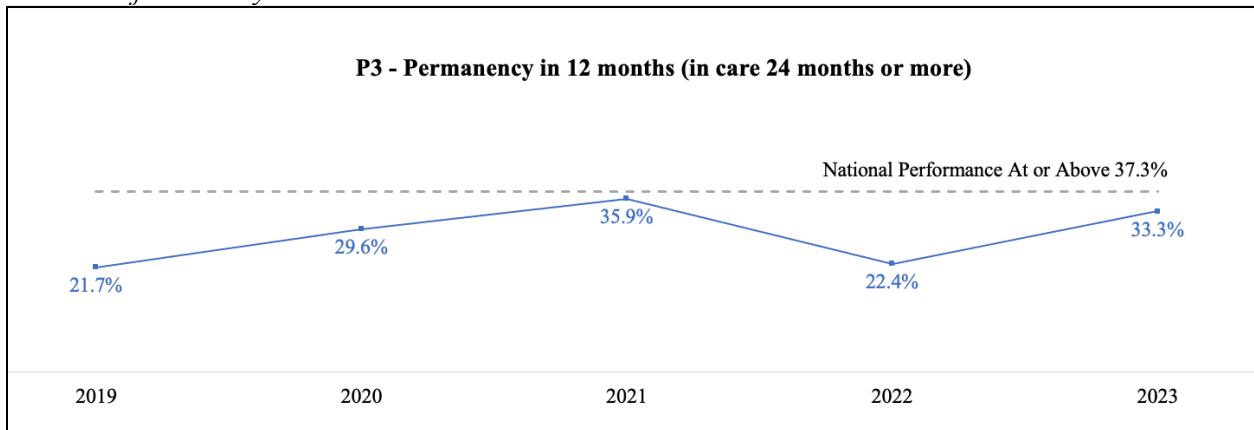
<b>P2 Permanency in 12 Months for Children in Foster Care 12-23 Months (National Performance <math>\geq</math>43.8%)</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Children with exit to permanency	*	*	*	*	-
In care 12-23 months	*	*	*	*	-
<b>Monterey Probation - Q4 Point-in-Time</b>	20.0%	53.8%	75.0%	0.0%	N/A

This measure was not applicable during Q4 2023. Probation’s performance fluctuated for this measure during the remaining four years in this five-year trend analysis. It is important to note that the Probation Department oversees a relatively small number of youth in care, so even one case can significantly impact the percentage of youth achieving permanency.

**Measure 4-P3: Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 24 months or more**

This Federal Outcomes Measure reports the percentage of children in foster care on the first day of a 12-month period, who had been in foster care (in that episode) for 24 months or more and were discharged to permanency within 12 months of the first day of the 12-month period. The national performance for this measure is greater than or equal to 37.3%.

*Child Welfare Analysis:*





<b>P3 Permanency in 12 Months for Children in Foster Care 24 Months or More</b> (National Performance $\geq$ 37.3%)	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Children with exit to permanency	13	16	23	11	14
In care 24 months or more	60	54	64	49	42
<b>Monterey FCS - Q4 Point-in-Time</b>	21.7%	29.6%	35.9%	22.4%	33.3%

FCS has not met the national performance of 37.3% or more in the five most recent Q4 periods. The largest two age groups in care for more than 24 months are youth aged 11-15 and 16-17.<sup>1</sup> As the number of children in care has decreased over time, the complexity of cases has increased, impacting permanency timeliness. As noted above, it has been observed that youth coming into care are experiencing challenges with their mental health and substance use at a younger age. Some engage in high-risk behaviors, such as running away and/or abusing drugs and alcohol at higher rates than before due to their accessibility. Additionally, some youth are refusing to engage in mental health services. Moreover, delays in adoptions, particularly those involving complications related to immigration issues, can negatively impact performance on this measure.

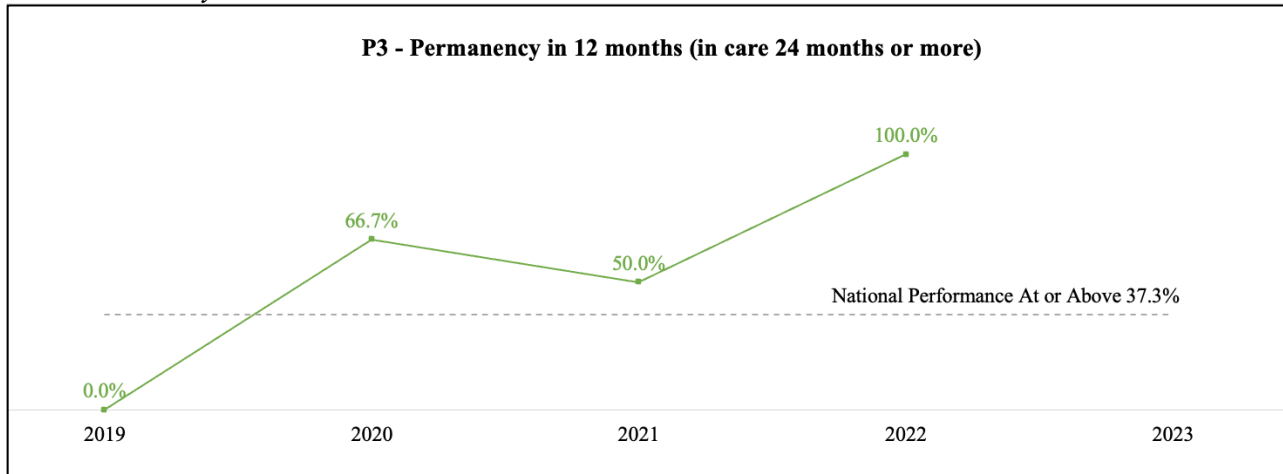
To increase permanency, FCS is focused on improving family finding efforts. More specifically, the County of Monterey is using both 30 Days to Family (EBP) and Wayfinders to improve family finding efforts. While efforts are made to locate relatives for initial placement, these two programs connect and then nurture family connections even if a family member cannot take placement of a child. This efforts are critical as many youth are coming into care after extended family members have attempted to care for them and decided they cannot continue to do so because the youth's behaviors were too disruptive. Thus, finding family members willing to take placement of these youth is particularly challenging. FCS continues to support youth in building their natural connections in an effort to establish permanency for them even when they have been in care more than 24 months.

As noted in the CSA, FCS has also implemented several strategies focused on improving permanency for older youth, including Case Permanency Plan Review (CPPR) Meetings and Child and Family Team Meetings with a focus on permanency planning and continuous family finding efforts, among others. CPPR's are held three months before a scheduled court hearing, with the purpose of reviewing the youth's permanency plan, including their contacts with their siblings and other natural supports. These strategies focused on permanency for older youth are critical given that youth aged 11-15 and 16-17 are the two largest age groups in care for more than 24 months, as noted above.

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<sup>1</sup> The exact number is not included because it would potentially identify specific youth in care.

Probation Analysis:



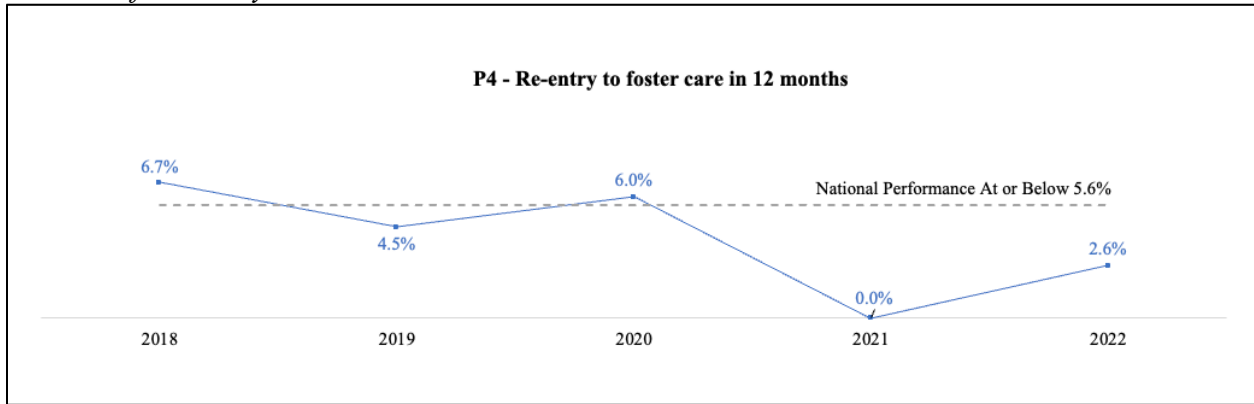
<b>P3 Permanency in 12 Months for Children in Foster Care 24 Months or More (National Performance <math>\geq</math>37.3%)</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Children with exit to permanency	*	*	*	*	-
In care 24 months or more	*	*	*	*	-
<b>Monterey Probation - Q4 Point-in-Time</b>	0.0%	66.7%	50.0%	100.0%	N/A

Probation performed above the national performance for three out of four years in which the measure applied. This measure was not applicable during this Q4 2023 reporting period. The number of youth in care 24 months or more is consistently low. As a result, performance on this measure can be significantly influenced by the experiences of one or two youth, as is reflected in performance fluctuating between 0.0% and 100.0%.

**Measure 4-P4: Re-entry to foster care**

This Federal Outcomes Measure reports the percentage of children discharged from foster care to permanency (reunification or guardianship) during the year who reentered foster care in less than 12 months from the date of the earliest discharge to reunification or guardianship during the year. The national performance for this measure is less than or equal to 5.6%.

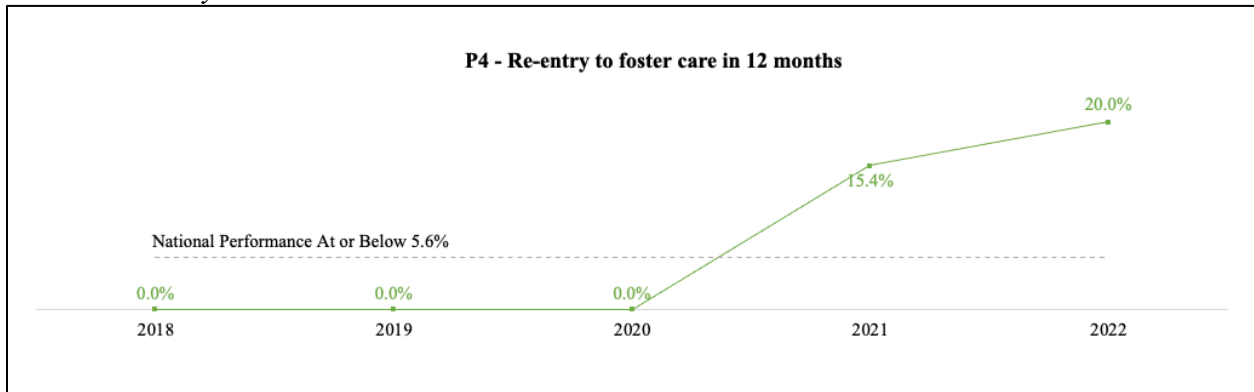
*Child Welfare Analysis:*



<b>P4 Re-Entry to Foster Care in 12 Months (National Performance ≤5.6%)</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>
Children with re-entries	*	*	*	*	*
Children with exits to reunification or guardianship	*	*	*	*	*
<b>Monterey FCS - Q4 Point-in-Time</b>	6.7%	4.5%	6.0%	0.0%	2.6%

FCS has shown improvement on this measure over the past five years during Q4, performing significantly below 5.6% in 2022 and 2023. FCS consistently performs well in this measure because it bases the length of time children and youth are in out-of-home care on the needs of the child and their families, even if that results in a longer time in out-of-home care.

*Probation Analysis:*



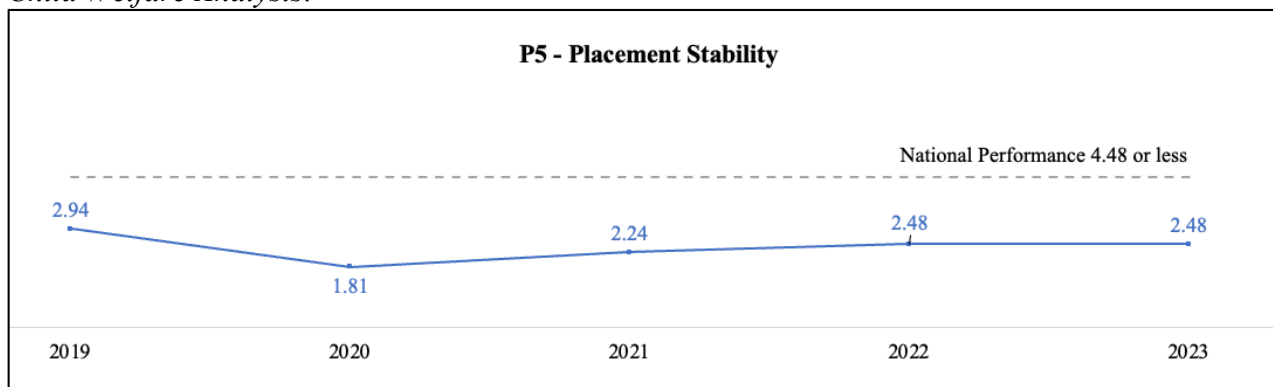
<b>P4 Re-Entry to Foster Care in 12 Months (National Performance ≤5.6%)</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>
Children with re-entries	*	*	*	*	*
Children with exits to reunification or guardianship	*	*	*	*	*
<b>Monterey Probation - Q4 Point-in-Time</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	15.4%	20.0%

Probation met the national performance for this measure in 2018, 2019 and 2020, but did not meet it in 2021 and 2022. During 2022, 20% of youth re-entered care in 12 months following exits to reunification or guardianship. This was due to the challenging behavior of one youth with complex needs that led to a disruption. Given the small numbers of youth encompassed within this measure, Probation’s performance can be significantly influenced by the experiences of one or two youth.

**Measure 4-P5: Placement stability (moves per 1,000 days)**

This Federal Outcomes Measure reports the rate of placement moves per day of foster care for all children who enter foster care in a 12-month period. The national performance for this measure is less than or equal to 4.48 per 1,000 days.

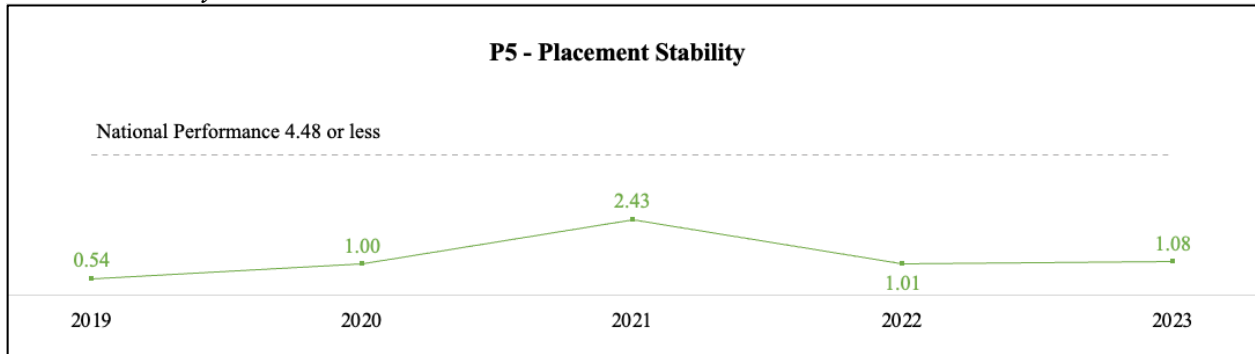
*Child Welfare Analysis:*



<b>P5 Placement Stability</b> (National Performance ≤4.48 Rate of Placement Moves per 1,000 Days)	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Placement moves	56	32	17	48	25
Foster care days	19,067	17,641	7,605	19,379	10,088
<b>Monterey FCS - Q4 Point-in-Time</b>	2.94	1.81	2.24	2.48	2.48

FCS consistently performs well on this measure with placement moves well below 4.48 per 1,000 days during Q4 over the past five years, as well as during other reporting periods as further detailed in the CSA. FCS uses Placement Stability Child and Family Team meetings for every placement move and makes concerted efforts to preserve a placement whenever possible.

*Probation Analysis:*



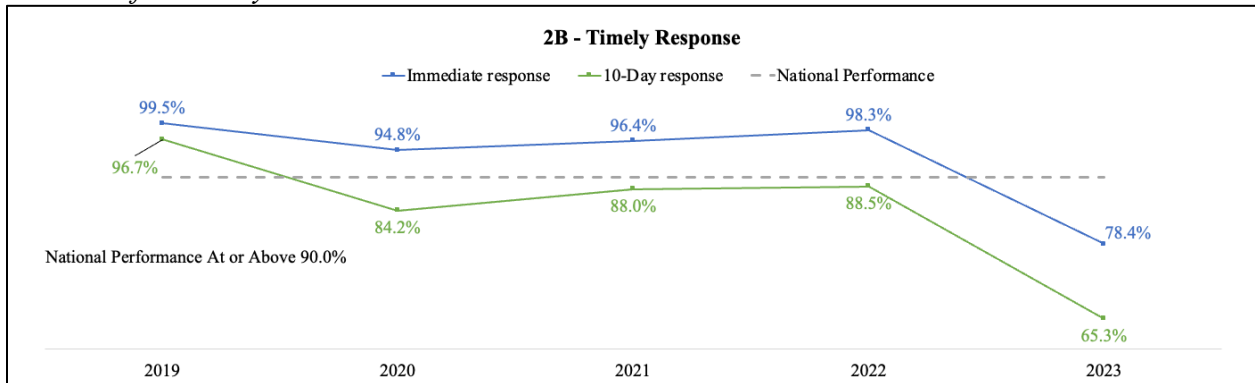
<b>P5 Placement Stability</b> (National Performance $\leq 4.48$ Rate of Placement Moves per 1,000 Days)	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Placement moves	*	*	*	*	*
Foster care days	*	*	*	*	*
<b>Monterey Probation - Q4 Point-in-Time</b>	0.54	1.00	2.43	1.01	1.08

Probation effectively minimizes the number of placement moves for youth in care and has consistently performed well on this measure over the most recent five years during Q4. When they occur, placement changes are often necessitated by youth with significant mental health needs requiring a move to access appropriate services.

**Measure 2B: Percent of Child Abuse/Neglect Referrals with a Timely Response (FCS Only)**

These reports count both the number of child abuse and neglect referrals that require, and then receive, an in-person investigation within the time frame specified by the referral response type. Referrals with status “attempted” or “completed” are included in the numerator. Referrals are classified as either immediate response (within 24 hours) or 10-day response. The national performance for this measure is at or above 90.0%.

*Child Welfare Analysis:*



<b>2B Referrals by Time to Investigation - Immediate (Compliance Rate: 90%)</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Seen by social worker within 24 hrs.	212	182	162	119	145
Immediate response cases	213	192	168	121	185
<b>Monterey FCS - Q4 Point-in-Time</b>	<b>99.5%</b>	<b>94.8%</b>	<b>96.4%</b>	<b>98.3%</b>	<b>78.4%</b>

<b>2B Referrals by Time to Investigation - 10-Day (Compliance Rate: 90%)</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Seen by social worker within 10 days	380	282	307	200	186
10 days or less response cases	393	335	349	226	285
<b>Monterey FCS - Q4 Point-in-Time</b>	<b>96.7%</b>	<b>84.2%</b>	<b>88.0%</b>	<b>88.5%</b>	<b>65.3%</b>

FCS generally meets the national performance for the immediate timely response measure, demonstrating the County's ability to promptly address child abuse and neglect referrals and conduct investigations within a 24-hour timeframe. However, in 2023, FCS' performance dipped below the national performance for timely response to immediate referrals. Between 2020 and 2022, FCS performed just below the national performance for addressing referrals within a 10-day response window. Performance fell further for 10-day referrals in 2023, indicating room for improvement in promptly addressing such referrals. High caseloads/staffing challenges and lack of timely data entry are factors that have been identified as impacting performance on timely response rates for both immediate and 10-day referrals in 2023, and for 10-day referrals beginning in 2020.

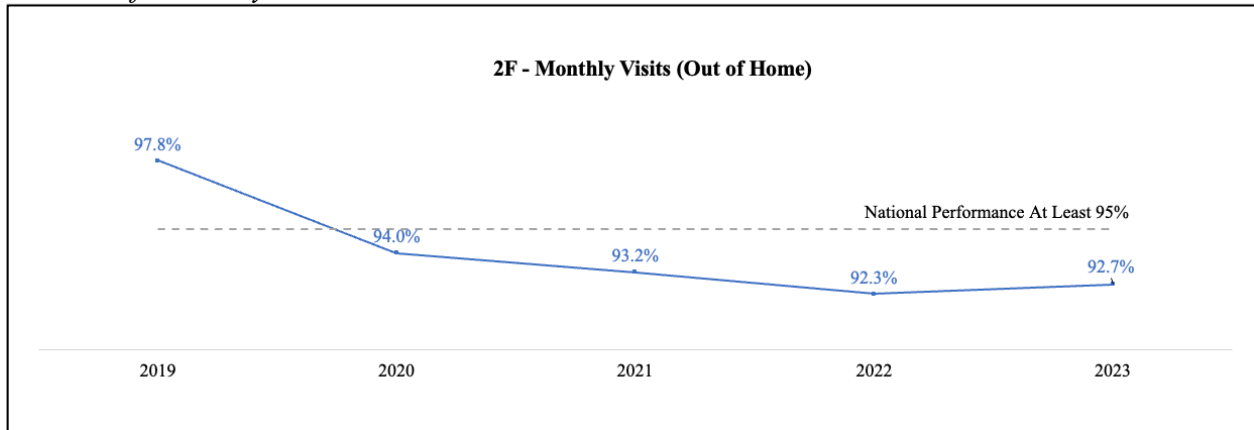
FCS has chosen to prioritize a systemic factor of Quality Assurance within this SIP to support Continuous Quality Improvement of timely closure of referrals resulting from Child Protective Services hotline calls.

*Probation Analysis:* This measure is not applicable to Probation.

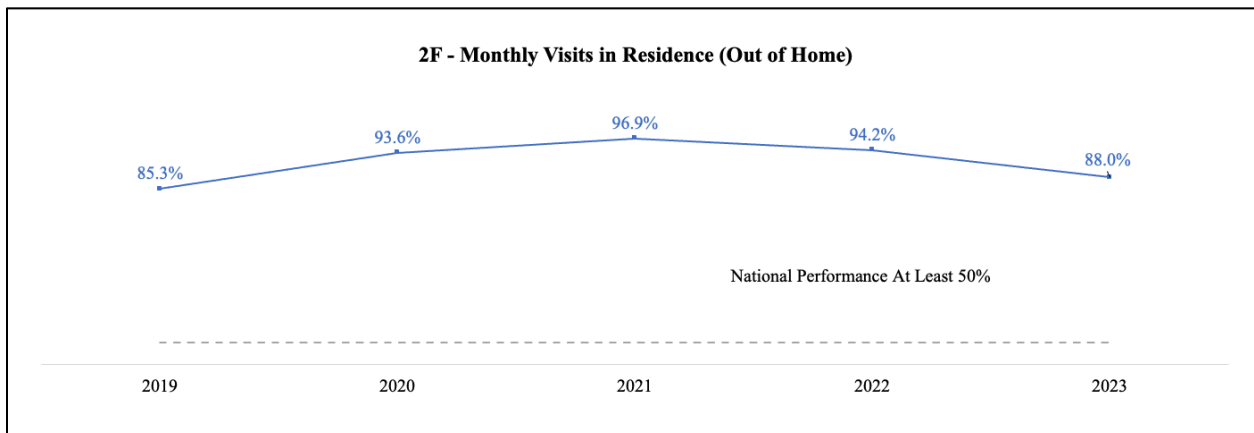
### **Measure 2F: Timely Caseworker Visits with Children**

This Federal Outcomes Measure reports the percentage of children in foster care for an entire specific month who received an in-person visit from a child welfare worker during that month. It also examines the percentage of these in-person visits that occurred at the child's residence. The standard for timely monthly caseworker visits is set at 95.0%, where higher percentages reflect better success in meeting this measure. The national performance for timely monthly caseworker visits within the residence is set at 50%.

*Child Welfare Analysis:*



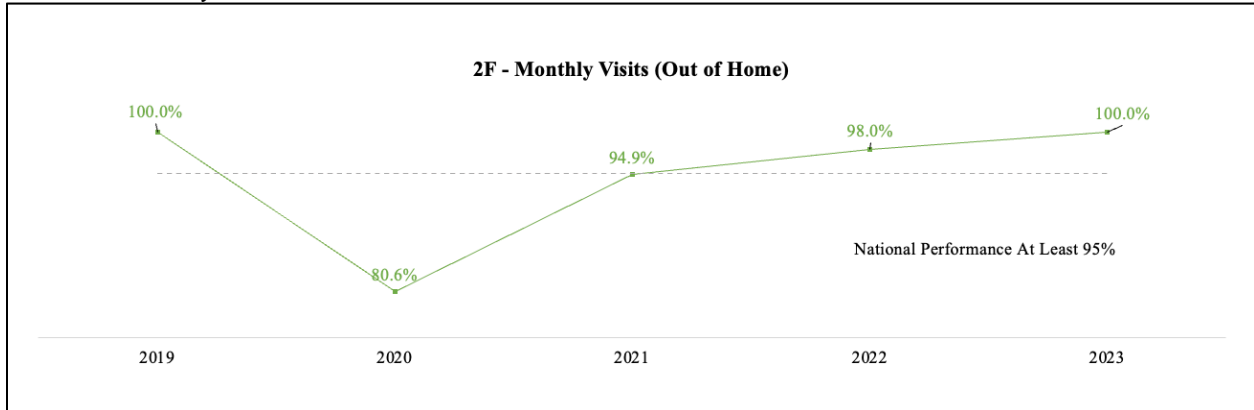
<b>2F Timely Monthly Caseworker Out-of-Home Visits (Compliance Rate: 95%)</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Months with visits	2994	2590	1765	1612	1428
Months open	3062	2755	1893	1747	1541
<b>Monterey FCS - Q4 Point-in-Time</b>	<b>97.8%</b>	<b>94.0%</b>	<b>93.2%</b>	<b>92.3%</b>	<b>92.7%</b>



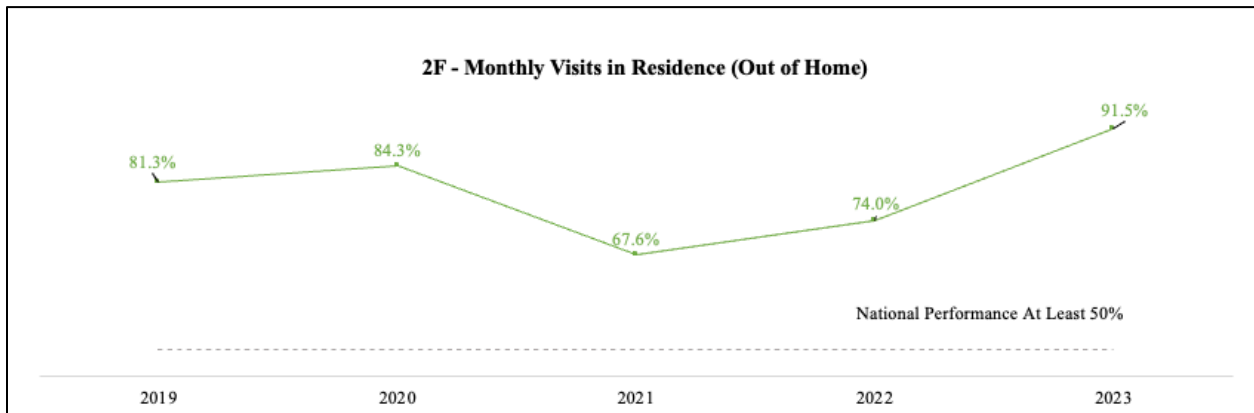
<b>2F Timely Monthly Caseworker Out-of-Home Visits in Residence (Compliance Rate: 50%)</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Months with visits in residence	2553	2423	1711	1519	1256
Months with visits	2994	2590	1765	1612	1428
<b>Monterey FCS - Q4 Point-in-Time</b>	<b>85.3%</b>	<b>93.6%</b>	<b>96.9%</b>	<b>94.2%</b>	<b>88.0%</b>

FCS generally performs well on these measures. Overall, FCS monthly visit performance hovers around the national performance but sometimes dips just below it. FCS attributes these fluctuations to staffing shortages, which results in contact notes not being entered into CWS/CMS within the 72-hour timeframe. Social workers are expected to make timely visits to children in their placements and do make those visits in placement and on time. Some youth are absent from their placement (runaway status), which impacts this outcome measure as well.

*Probation Analysis:*



<b>2F Timely Monthly Caseworker Out-of-Home Visits (Compliance Rate: 95%)</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Months with visits	358	216	74	50	47
Months open	358	268	78	51	47
<b>Monterey Probation - Q4 Point-in-Time</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>80.6%</b>	<b>94.9%</b>	<b>98.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



<b>2F Timely Monthly Caseworker Out-of-Home Visits in Residence (Compliance Rate: 50%)</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Months with visits in residence	291	182	50	37	43
Months with visits	358	216	74	50	47
<b>Monterey Probation - Q4 Point-in-Time</b>	<b>81.3%</b>	<b>84.3%</b>	<b>67.6%</b>	<b>74.0%</b>	<b>91.5%</b>

Probation consistently exceeds performance standards for monthly and in-residence visits. In 2020, during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, video conferencing virtual visits were authorized by the California Department of Social Services. However, such visits were not recognized by the methodology for this measure. Probation’s performance improved once the data reflected video conferencing visits were no longer being conducted.



## Prioritization of Outcome Data Measures/Systemic Factors and Strategy Rationale

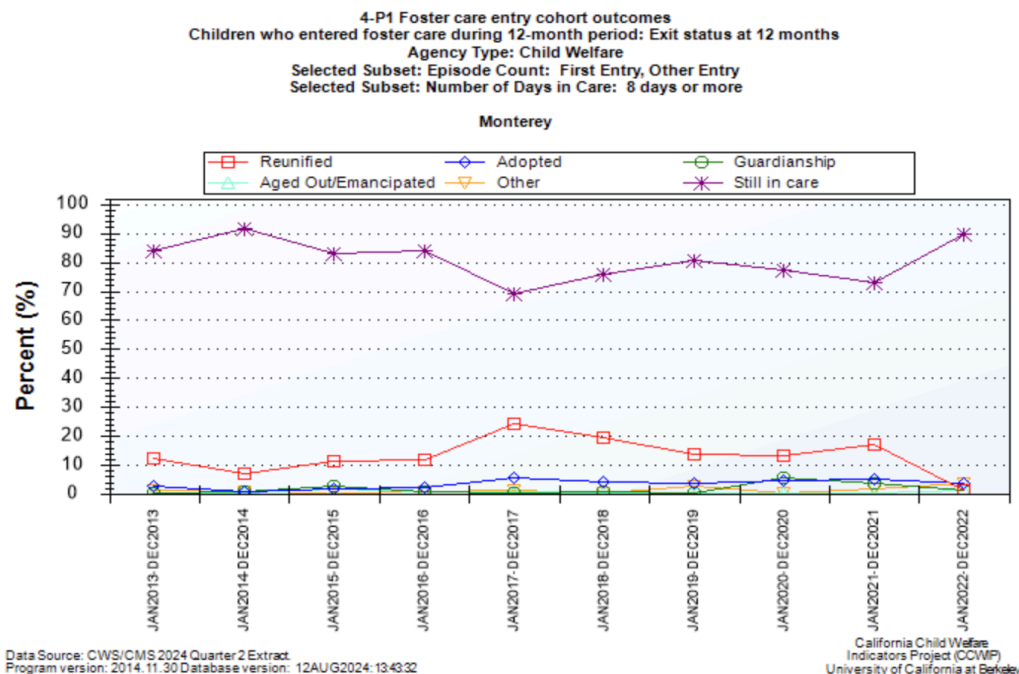
Based on an analysis of data collected through the CSA development process, including feedback from the Peer Review, Focus Groups, and a Stakeholder Meeting, the County of Monterey has identified the following outcomes as the focus for this next five-year SIP. These outcomes were selected through a collaborative effort between FCS, Probation, the Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP), and CDSS:

Focus Area	CW	Probation
<b>4-P1: Permanency in 12 Months for Children Entering Foster Care</b>	√	√
<b>Systemic Factor: Quality Assurance/Continuous Quality Improvement</b>	√	

### *FCS Priority - Permanency in 12 months for Children Entering Foster Care (P1)*

FCS has chosen to prioritize Permanency in 12 months for Children Entering Foster Care (P1) because, as noted above, FCS has historically struggled with its performance on this measure. The trend for this measure continued to decline during the last CSA/SIP cycle despite P1 being the chosen Outcome Data Measure. Thus, continued focus on P1 during this SIP is warranted. Further details on FCS' performance on P1, including a five-year trend analysis and description of factors impacting performance, is provided above within the Summary of FCS/Probation Outcome Data Measures section of the SIP.

While permanency is defined as reunification, adoption, or guardianship, data shows that within 12 months of entering care it is most common for children to exit to reunification than to other forms of permanency.



Although there are many factors that contribute to timely permanency, the research shows a correlation between maintaining or strengthening the parent-child relationship and timely reunification.<sup>2</sup> This can be done through quality visitation, parent-child therapy when needed, and parent participation in the child's activities such as school events, extracurricular activities, and medical or dental visits. When parents are engaged and encouraged through a strengths-based and solution-focused approach, successful permanency outcomes can be achieved.

When selecting and prioritizing strategies to improve P1 during this SIP cycle, FCS considered stakeholder feedback obtained through CSA focus groups and a convening of community partners. Stakeholders included system-involved youth, parents, and caregivers. Additionally, the Peer Review provided valuable guidance on best and promising practices that could help improve P1. Stakeholder feedback ultimately led FCS to develop strategies, further described below, focused on improving the quality and frequency of visitation between parents and children and using family finding and engagement during the entire life cycle of case. In developing these two strategies, the County of Monterey's leadership team conducted additional reviews of evidence-based practices shown to support quality visitation and family finding efforts.

#### *FCS Priority – Quality Assurance*

FCS has also chosen to prioritize Quality Assurance as a systemic factor to build on work already underway in the County of Monterey to strengthen Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) processes. During the previous SIP, FCS established a CQI Unit to structure agencywide CQI efforts. Since its inception, the unit has held quarterly meetings with senior management to present data relevant to federal performance measures, case reviews, and county objectives. Additionally, the CQI unit conducted staff training in 2023 and subsequently implemented a comprehensive CQI policy. FCS will leverage this momentum to create a lasting Quality Assurance structure over the course of this five-year SIP cycle to ensure timely closure of child abuse and neglect referrals, as further described below in FCS Strategy #3.

#### *Probation Priority – Permanency in 12 months for Children Entering Foster Care (P1)*

Probation focused on P1 in the last SIP cycle and has chosen to continue to prioritize it during this SIP cycle as obstacles to achieving permanency within 12 months persist and performance on this measure has fluctuated. A five-year trend analysis using Q4 data and a description of factors impacting performance on this measure is provided above within the Summary of FCS/Probation Outcome Data Measures section of the SIP.

Probation also focused on P1 in the Peer Review, resulting in valuable input from peers on areas for growth. As further described below, this feedback led Probation to develop strategies focused on enhancing family finding and engagement efforts to reduce youth's time in foster care.

Probation chose to prioritize P1 over P4 as performance on P4 in 2021 and 2022 was significantly influenced by the experience of a single youth given the small number of Probation youth in care; it does not reflect a consistent trend over time.

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<sup>2</sup> Trahan, M.H., Kim, J., Bellamy, J., & Hall, J. (June 2020). Parenting Engagement in Foster Care Placement Stability and Permanency. *Journal of Social Work and Research*, 11(2), 211-236 <https://doi.org/10.1086/709536>

## Strategies

Below, the County of Monterey FCS and Probation describe their respective improvement strategies, including their justification rationales, action steps, systemic changes, training needs, roles of other partners, and evaluating and monitoring techniques for each strategy chosen.

<b>FCS Strategy #1</b>
<b>Outcome Measure:</b> 4-P1: Permanency in 12 Months for Children Entering Foster Care (Child Welfare)
<b>Strategy:</b> Implement an individualized progressive visitation plan that aligns with Safety Organized Practice (SOP).
<b>Justification Rationale:</b>  FCS has chosen to focus on implementing an individualized progressive visitation plan that aligns with SOP as a key mechanism for improving P1 because this focus is supported by feedback obtained during the CSA and SIP development processes and by research, as further described below.  During the CSA process, local stakeholders consistently recommended that frequent and effective parent-child visitation should be a high priority for this SIP cycle. Peers elevated a lack of progression of visitation as a barrier to reunification within 12 months in the cases reviewed during the Peer Review. More specifically, they identified a need for more guidance and training around progressive visitation as a lack of knowledge about how and when to make changes to visits hampered progress towards unsupervised visitation, and thus towards reunification.  Additional stakeholder feedback on parent-child visitation gathered during the CSA development process included, but was not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Utilize family or non-related extended family members (NREFMs) identified through family finding efforts to support visitation even when these individuals are not a placement option for the child(ren). Relatives and NREFMs could support the family by supervising visits either on a consistent schedule or for important family events like holidays, birthdays, church, school events, etc. These individuals could also assist by transporting a parent or child to/from visits.</li><li>• Provide a visitation setting where the parent can parent and not simply have fun visits. Too often a parent visits their child(ren) in a visitation room or a park, which limits the parent's ability to do parenting activities, such as homework or preparing for bedtime. Opportunities for parents to attend doctor's appointments, participate in family therapy, and attend school activities should also be provided to parents.</li><li>• Reassess visitation every 30 days and explore more opportunities to progress visitation. For example, offer modified unsupervised visitation where the parent can be alone in a visitation room, and the social worker or monitor can be down the hall to pop in as needed.</li></ul> As noted earlier, FCS has also chosen this strategy because data shows that reunification is the

most common way to achieve permanency within 12 months of entering foster care, and research has demonstrated that frequent and regular visits between children in out-of-home care and their parents are associated with timely reunification<sup>3</sup>. Removing children from their primary caregiver(s) impacts their relationship. Supporting and strengthening this relationship while a child is in out-of-home care leads to improved outcomes, including quicker reunification.

Through this SIP strategy, FCS aims to improve and increase visitation by updating visitation policies based on the most recent best practice literature, providing training and coaching around visitation, conducting regular case reviews by supervisors and workers, better preparing families for their children returning home, expanding visits in home-like settings, and incorporating Safety Organized Practice tools and framework into visitation practices, among other actions mentioned below.

To gather critical information to inform later action steps, FCS will first review data to assess current visitation usage patterns at the FCS office and at Cherish Too, the County of Monterey's Visitation Center managed by Aspiranet. This will help FCS to determine if there are certain days or times of day when more visitation is taking place. Then FCS will map current visitation practices at the FCS office and Cherish Too to understand processes step by step, such as processes for booking and monitoring visitation. FCS anticipates that its assessment of current usage patterns will inform the agency where there is capacity to increase community and in-home/placement visitation using staff from Aspiranet or from the County of Monterey.

To improve consistency in parent-child visitation practices across cases, FCS will create a visitation note template and mandate its use by social service aides, community partners, and social workers. Presently, visit supervisors use notetaking templates, but they are not standardized. The standardization will make notes more useful for the different parties that use them as an information tool about the quality of visits between parents and children. The template will have required information elements so that the visit supervisors are able to focus their notes on what observations are most relevant. Once it is developed, social service aides, community partners, and social workers will receive training on the template, and its use will be monitored through staff coaching.

Updating policies is a crucial action step as currently FCS' written guidance on visitation lacks sufficient details to help social workers make decisions on how and when to progress visits and assess safety. Additionally, this guidance has not been updated in the last 10 years. The implementation of an individualized progressive visitation policy for all parents and caregivers means that social workers will have more confidence in deciding to increase visitation and/or change the location of visits to be in the home or community. The policy will also encourage parents to attend school meetings, medical appointments, and other special events.

This increased visitation can improve the parent-child relationship, leading to timelier reunification. At present, social workers are permitted to change visitation schedules in

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<sup>3</sup> Trahan, M.H., Kim, J., Bellamy, J., & Hall, J. (June 2020). Parenting Engagement in Foster Care Placement Stability and Permanency. *Journal of Social Work and Research*, 11(2), 211-236 <https://doi.org/10.1086/709536>

accordance with the best interest of the child but are often reticent to do so. By providing a structure to support the social worker's decision-making around visitation, social workers will be able to make individualized visitation plans instead of sticking to a standard visitation plan that does not take a family's needs into account.

The new progressive visitation policy will also eliminate the de facto practice by social workers of tying visitation to a parent's completion of case plan goals. Visitation should be independent of case plan goals since visits are such a key element in successful reunification efforts.

To ensure understanding of the new visitation policy and effective implementation, FCS will ensure social workers, supervisors, and social service aides receive training on the policy and then mandatory group and individual coaching monthly with a facilitator from the County of Monterey's regional training program to promote utilization of skills learned. Coaching will provide an opportunity for feedback loops to make sure staff understand progressive visitation, are feeling comfortable with how to implement the guidance, and have an opportunity to workshop when issues or questions arise. Providing coaching is also critical given that FCS has a lot of new social workers. For cases in which there are concerns or barriers, social workers are able to consult with their supervisors and discuss ways they can support parents with progressing in their visitation.

FCS will also work with existing and new partners to expand the location options for visits to include community settings, in-home visits, and visits supervised by foster parents. This will be done, in part, by reviewing current visitation contract deliverables for areas of potential growth, such as exploring opportunities to add community visitation or home visitation into contracts. Additionally, FCS will update contracts with external providers to incorporate new visitation policies and practices to ensure consistent implementation across internal staff and external providers.

Moreover, early in the SIP cycle, FCS will develop data collection methods to enable it to assess the quality and frequency of visits. This action step will support later evaluation and monitoring, as further described below under evaluation and monitoring.

**Action Steps:**

- A. Assess current visitation usage patterns and practices at both the FCS office and Cherish Too managed by Aspiranet.
- B. Identify and/or develop data collection methods to assess the impact of progressive visitation policies.
- C. Evaluate and monitor strategy implementation and performance at quarterly management meetings.
- D. Draft new progressive visitation policy aligned with Safety Organized Practice (SOP) principles and current best practices.
- E. Create visitation note template and mandate use by social service aides, community partners and social workers.
- F. Develop visitation training curriculum with the support of county partners and the regional training academies.

- G. Review current visitation contract deliverables for areas of potential growth.
- H. Train social service aides, community partners and social workers to use template.
- I. Update contracts with external providers to incorporate new visitation policies and practices.
- J. Train social workers, social work supervisors and social service aides using the new visitation curriculum.
- K. Report the results of the data collection to staff and partners each quarter.
- L. Monitor template use through coaching of social service aides, community partners and social workers.
- M. Coach social workers, social work supervisors, and social service aides to promote utilization of skills learned from visitation training.

**Systemic Changes:**

Develop program theory and key outcomes for progressive visitation to promote consistent implementation and fidelity to process.

**Educational/Training Needs to Achieve this Strategy:**

Staff will need training on best practices to promote, support, and maintain positive relationships between child(ren) in foster care and their parent or other primary caregiver by using Safety Organized Practice (SOP) principles to increase the quality of visitation while children are out-of-home care. SOP emphasizes skills in family engagement, rigorous assessment, and critical thinking to create sustained safety, permanency, and well-being for children and their families. SOP is an umbrella term for the blending of various solution-focused techniques, including:

- Safety Mapping
- Networks of Support
- Structured Decision Making (SDM)©
- Signs of Safety
- Appreciative Inquiry
- Solution-Focused Interviewing
- Motivational Interviewing
- Cultural Humility
- Group Supervision
- Reflective Supervision
- The Consultation and Information Sharing Framework® (Sue Lohrbach, 1999)
- The Three Houses and Safety House
- Review, Evaluate, Direct (RED) Teams
- Trauma-Informed Practice

**Roles of Other Partners in Achieving this Strategy:**

FCS will collaborate with service providers, including (1) Aspiranet, the contracted provider that manages Cherish Too, the County’s Visitation Center; (2) Evident Change for research and evaluation support; and (3) Bay Area Academy, the County’s regional training partner.

**Evaluation and Monitoring:**

At present, FCS does not have an established data collection process to assess the quality and frequency of visitation. Data collection and reporting methods will be developed as a part of the SIP. The data to be collected can be identified early in the SIP cycle, but it will not be available for reporting until the practice changes are implemented. The SIP timeline is structured with this in mind.

Additionally, the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Unit will monitor this strategy by each quarter reviewing performance on Items 4 (Stability of Foster Care Placement), 8 (visitation with parents' sub items), 11 (relationship of child in care with parents) and 12B (needs assessment and services to parents) of the Onsite Review Instrument and Instructions tool used in the Child and Family Services case reviews. During the case reviews, the CQI Unit will pay special attention to the quality of visitation plans contained within documented case plans and/or case files. Case reviews will also identify obstacles and barriers to moving visitation to the home or community, transportation, etc. FCS will further monitor this strategy by reviewing performance on Measure 4B Least Restrictive (Entries First Placement: Relative/NREFM) and 4B Least Restrictive (Entries Predominant Placement: Relative/NREFM).

**FCS Strategy #2**

**Outcome Measure:** 4-P1: Permanency in 12 Months for Children Entering Foster Care (Child Welfare)

**Strategy:** Provide Family Finding and Engagement (FFE) Services from the initial accepted referral to case closure to increase relative and near-kin placement.

**Justification Rationale:**

FCS has chosen to prioritize this strategy based on stakeholder feedback and research indicating the positive impact of kin placements on timely permanency. Specifically, research shows that kin placements often lead to faster permanency through reunification, adoption, and/or guardianship. Research further shows that children placed with kin experience increased placement stability, which can also directly impact P1.<sup>4</sup> Thus, providing family finding and engagement services throughout the life of a case to increase kin placements is a critical strategy intended to help FCS improve its performance on P1.

Local stakeholders have repeatedly stressed the importance of increasing permanency connections and safety and support networks by finding and engaging more family members who can provide support to the family now and in the future. Feedback gathered during the CSA development process that supports this strategy focus includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Stakeholders recommended FCS continually engage and reassess the support network available to the child and family, including by increasing the consistency of

<sup>4</sup> Trahan, M.H., Kim, J., Bellamy, J., & Hall, J. (June 2020). Parenting Engagement in Foster Care Placement Stability and Permanency. *Journal of Social Work and Research*, 11(2), 211-236 <https://doi.org/10.1086/709536>

engagement efforts post-initial contact.

- Stakeholders recommended FCS address barriers to kin involvement and strengthen efforts to include diverse family members and supportive individuals in long-term planning. For example, stakeholders raised that family members may feel ashamed or embarrassed about the family's child welfare involvement, and thus sensitive approaches should be taken to engage them without stigma. Stakeholders also noted that extensive background checks and confidentiality concerns can intimidate or deter potential supports from engaging.
- During the Peer Review, peers identified challenges with family engagement in cases reviewed and a need to increase social worker knowledge/support about how to proceed with family finding, especially if kin live out of state/country.

FCS' family finding and engagement strategy will build upon efforts already underway. FCS previously contracted with Seneca Family of Agencies to provide family finding efforts, mostly on the back end for youth in permanent placement. That contract ended during the previous SIP cycle. As noted in the CSA, a temporary suspension of family finding efforts hindered the identification of supportive relatives or significant connections for a period of time and was a factor that impacted FCS' performance on P1. Despite this challenge, FCS has recently made great strides in identifying and implementing family finding and engagement practices that seek to integrate family finding throughout the life of the case and increase permanent connections. For example, FCS opted into the Excellence and Family Finding and Engagement program and recently had its plan approved. Additionally, FCS has hired staff for new two family specialist positions in the Placement Unit; recently started working with the Institute for Child Welfare Innovation to implement 30 Days to Family® and train social workers on intensive family finding and engagement during the first 30 days after a child enters foster care; and recently started working with Wayfinder Family Services to provide kinship supportive services to relative/near-kin caregivers as soon as a child is placed in their care.

The Wayfinder Kinship Support Services Program (KSSP) is a voluntary program. Relative/near-kin caregivers can either refer themselves to the program or they can be referred by a social worker who is working with them. All relatives/near-kin who are caregivers of foster children in the County of Monterey are eligible to receive services; however, Wayfinder can only provide ongoing case management to approximately 2-3 families at a time. The services offered through KSSP include system navigation, training/education, support groups, mentorship, basic emergency needs, case management, respite, advocacy, and family activities. In addition, relatives/near-kin caregivers who are not involved in child welfare or probation may participate in the support groups, family activities, basic emergency needs, and training opportunities as needed.

This strategy will build on these efforts described above to strengthen family finding and engagement and increase the number of children that attain permanency by integrating new ideas identified during the CSA, Peer Review, and SIP processes. Identified action steps include revising internal Family Finding and Engagement policies and procedures to ensure clarity of roles and responsibilities of internal staff; implementing evidence-based programs that will support this work, such as 30 Days to Family; providing training and coaching of



staff as further described below in the section entitled Educational/Training Needs to Achieve this Strategy; and evaluating and monitoring progress as further described below. Kin attendance at Child and Family Team meetings will also be monitored to gauge FCS' success in engaging families throughout the life of the case.

Implementing these action steps will put FCS in an excellent position to improve performance on P1 and achieve better outcomes for children and families.

**Action Steps:**

- A. Track specified outcomes and report to CDSS and staff, including children placed with a relative or Non-Related Extended Family Members (NREFMs), children placed in a family setting, placement stability, time to permanency, racial disproportionality for children in congregate care and placement disruptions, and children placed with relatives or NREFMs after being in a non-relative placement for 24 months or longer who then received FFE services.
- B. Revise policies and procedures to include changes to FFE that outline the responsibilities of each social worker and service provider, such as Wayfinder and 30 Days to Family Specialist, in continuing to engage family networks throughout the life of a case.
- C. Evaluate and monitor strategy implementation and performance at quarterly management meetings.
- D. Train all social work supervisors, social workers, and social service aides on internal FFE policies and procedures and how to use Safety Organized Practice (SOP) tools to engage and team with families.
- E. Implement ongoing coaching for CWS staff on revised policies and procedures for FFE, focusing on collaboration between units and with the two designated family specialists.

**Systemic Changes:**

This strategy will center placing children with families and keeping families involved beyond placement.

**Educational/Training Needs to Achieve this Strategy:**

Informing and training social workers about the new resources and policies, as well as ongoing training for staff on utilizing SOP tools (e.g. solution focused questions, appreciative inquiry, and motivational interviewing), genograms, ecomaps, circles of safety and support, and family centered meetings.

**Roles of Other Partners in Achieving this Strategy:**

FCS partner agencies play a crucial role in helping FCS identify and engage relatives. When community partners are providing services to children and families involved in the child welfare system, they can assist by having conversations with their clients about the people who are important to them and ensuring those identified individuals are included in the family's team. In addition, FCS has started working with the Institute for Child Welfare Innovation to implement 30 Days to Family® in the County of Monterey and train social workers on intensive family finding and engagement during the first 30 days that a child enters

foster care. Finally, the County of Monterey has started working with Wayfinder Family Services to provide kinship supportive services to relative/near-kin caregivers as soon as a child is placed in their care.

**Evaluation and Monitoring:**

Relative and near-kin placements will be evaluated and monitored based on data entered into CWS/CMS. Relative engagement, including that of non-placement family members, will be evaluated and monitored based on data entered into Efforts to Outcomes (ETO), which documents Child and Family Team meeting participation. Social worker-family/kin engagement will be monitored by examining social worker’s use of SOP tools uploaded to CWS/CMS. Social workers and staff will receive training on their roles and responsibilities delineated in the program directive regarding Family Finding and Engagement, and compliance will be monitored through supervisor-social worker supervision.

**FCS Strategy #3**

**Outcome Measure:** Systemic Factor: Quality Assurance

**Strategy:** Use continuous quality improvement processes to monitor timely closure of all referrals (immediate, 10-day and evaluate out) generated by reports to the hotline.

**Justification Rationale:**

Having implemented a robust Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) policy as part of the prior SIP, FCS will focus CQI implementation efforts on items related to referral closure from the agency’s December 2022 Corrective Action Plan (CAP). This strategy will provide two opportunities for FCS. First, it will provide FCS an active test case to monitor and adjust or improve the effectiveness of the CQI process implemented in the previous SIP cycle. Second, it will provide FCS the opportunity to continue to monitor the changes to intake and emergency response practices completed in the CAP.

One of the items in FCS’ CAP, established in cooperation with CDSS, is developing processes for timely closure of referrals (immediate, 10-day, evaluate out) in order to reduce the number of referrals open for over 30 days. FCS has completed various activities and instituted policy and process changes to promote the timely closure of referrals, including the following:

- FCS completed emergency response (ER) process mapping to develop and document a clear understanding of current processes.
- Based on the results of the process mapping, FCS updated existing policies and procedures, as well as implemented ongoing monitoring.
- FCS developed and implemented a process to close referrals open for more than 30 days.
- FCS reviewed and modified steps for closing referrals open for over 30 days.
- FCS identified staff to work on closing referrals open for over 30 days.
- FCS identified and worked with a regional training partner to train all ER staff in using SafeMeasures and Structured Decision Making (SDM).
- FCS issued a memorandum to staff outlining the procedures and expectations for

reassigning emergency response social worker referrals during extended leaves of absences or following separation from FCS employment to address the impact of staffing challenges on timely closure of referrals.

Moreover, recently staffing levels have permitted FCS to dedicate four new social workers to closing referrals open for more than 30 days. These social workers have closed 1,094 referrals open for more than 30 days since April 1, 2024.

While each SIP strategy usually involves action steps covering all four stages of the Plan-Do-Study-Act method for solving a problem, FCS has already completed the Plan and Do stages through its work in the CAP (as reflected in the bullets above). As a result, the action steps for this strategy focus on the Study and Act stages to leverage the momentum and Plan and Do work already completed. Each of the items in the bulleted list above have CQI processes embedded within the language of the policy and procedure. Since Study and Act are the focus of these action steps the County of Monterey will be able to make course corrections as needed with this constant monitoring. The results of this monitoring will allow the County of Monterey to prevent mission creep and keep isolated problems from becoming systemic problems.

In order to maintain the success started with the steps taken in the CAP, FCS will use the systemic factor of quality assurance to monitor and improve performance related to timely closure of reports for the next five years.

**Action Steps:**

- A. Identify/Create a report that tracks the annual content reviews of program directives, handbooks, and memoranda by management and completed updates, if needed.
- B. Identify/Create monthly report from Guru to track how often staff use Guru as a reference tool to review policies and procedures changed by the Emergency Response and intake mapping process.
- C. Report on referrals (received, investigated, promoted, closed) at quarterly all-staff meetings until December 2029.
- D. Monitor and evaluate the use of the Emergency Response Review Tool by social workers and social work supervisors for closing referrals by performing monthly spot checks on at least four closed referrals randomly selected and reviewed by the management team.
- E. Utilize the case load summary report to track referral assignments and their disposition monthly.
- F. Review monthly Structured Decision Making (SDM) reporting in SafeMeasures to assess completion rates of the SDM's Safety Assessment in closed referrals.
- G. During program manager's monthly supervision with social work supervisors review social worker conference forms to assess the use of SafeMeasures.
- H. Annually review attendance rates for mandatory trainings, including Structured Decision Making and SafeMeasures, for social workers and social work supervisors with training supervisor and Bay Area Academy, the regional training partner.
- I. During monthly Emergency Response Social Work Supervisors meetings, review referrals open for more than 30 days to examine barriers to referral closure and brainstorm solutions.

**Systemic Changes:**

Displacing agency entropy around closing referrals within 30 days.

**Educational/Training Needs to Achieve this Strategy:**

Teaching quality assurance processes, staffing support protocol, and techniques to close referrals in less than 30 days. Deploying Guru, a Wiki for FCS program directives, memorandum, and handbooks.

**Roles of Other Partners in Achieving this Strategy:**

The County of Monterey Child Abuse Prevention Council (CAPC) is committed to aligning with the statewide shift towards community-based support and away from reliance solely on mandated reporting. This includes advocating for increased primary prevention services and support for families who may not meet the threshold for child welfare intervention but still require assistance.

**Evaluation and Monitoring:**

FCS will use SafeMeasures reports (e.g. Investigation Time Open (monthly or weekly), Timely Referral Closure) to assess the current performance on this measure and then continuously to assess whether the quality assurance interventions are effective. The Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Unit will monitor by each quarter reviewing performance on Item 1 (timeliness of response) of the Onsite Review Instrument and Instructions tool used in the Child and Family Services case reviews.

**Probation Strategy 1**

**Outcome Measure:** 4-P1: Permanency in 12 Months for Children Entering Foster Care (Probation)

**Strategy:** Enhance family finding efforts for all Probation placement cases to reduce the time in foster care.

**Justification Rationale:**

As noted above, achieving permanency within 12 months of entering care (P1) continues to be a challenge for Probation, despite all efforts. This is due, in part, to the low number of probation youth in care and their complex needs. According to various child welfare studies, including those cited by the Center for Excellence in Family Finding, California Department of Social Services, and American Bar Association, family finding and engagement efforts can help children in foster care find kinship placements and potential permanent connections that can then reduce the time they spend in foster care.<sup>5</sup> For these and other reasons described

<sup>5</sup> See Koh, Eun & Testa, Mark. (2011). Children discharged from kin and non-kin foster homes: Do the risks of foster care re-entry differ? Children and Youth Services Review. 33. 1497-1505. 10.1016/j.childyouth.2011.03.009. (Concluded that kin children “are more likely to stay in out-of-home care for a shorter period of time than non-kin

below, Probation has chosen to prioritize this strategy to improve its P1 performance.

Stakeholders elevated family finding and engagement as a key area for growth during the CSA development process, which also strongly informed Probation's decision to prioritize this strategy. For example, CSA and Peer Review stakeholders noted the following challenges and/or recommendations related to family finding and engagement.

*Challenges:*

- The family was not always honest about the availability of other family members.
- A deceased parent, an absent parent in another country, and/or youth not wanting one of their parents in their life were barriers to family finding and engagement.
- Gang involvement of family members posed challenges.
- Lots of trauma related to the circumstances of system involvement created barriers.

*Recommendations:*

- It would be beneficial to provide additional training to Probation staff around family finding and engagement to enhance skills and to ensure effective utilization of the CLEAR system.
- Continued engagement with family should occur regardless of future placement potential. It should be noted that Probation already has a strong process established for this, which is part of the Child and Family Team (CFT) meetings. The barrier is that family and supports are not always identified early enough in the process to establish connections sooner.
- Adopt child welfare's family-finding processes.
- Enhance family involvement in permanency planning, including more inclusive concurrent planning, mentorship programs, and better orientation for families navigating the system.

This family finding and engagement strategy builds on efforts from the last SIP while also differing in key respects (e.g., focus and target population). During the last SIP cycle, Probation's strategy was to, "Strengthen the process for youth who are at imminent risk of removal, to evaluate and identify Family Finding, Placement supports, and services in order to promote timely permanency." The focus of that strategy was primarily on enhancement of resources and services for youth who were at immediate risk of removal (but had not entered care yet) and increased CFT meetings. This prior strategy was successful as the number of Pre-

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children in the samples of reunified and guardianship children."); Winokur, M. A., Crawford, G. A., Longobardi, R. C., & Valentine, D. P. (2008). Matched Comparison of Children in Kinship Care and Foster Care on Child Welfare Outcomes. *Families in Society*, 89(3), 338-346. <https://doi.org/10.1606/1044-3894.3759> ("After controlling for demographic and placement characteristics, children in kinship care had significantly fewer placements than did children in foster care, and they were less likely to still be in care, have a new allegation of institutional abuse or neglect, be involved with the juvenile justice system, and achieve reunification.") See also American Bar Association, Benefits of Kin Placement (2022) (citing various studies) and Squires, C., Lemus, M., Carter, K., Jackson, R., & Allen, A. (2023). Family Finding: Data and Practice Review of the Literature. UC Davis, Center for Excellence, and California Department of Social Services. (Provides research findings of various family finding and engagement models).

CFTs increased significantly from the baseline of 13 to 60; the number of youth identified as at imminent risk decreased from the baseline of 120 to 53; and the number of youth ordered into placement decreased from 14 to 5, which is a record low.

This SIP strategy focuses on enhancing family finding and engagement for placement cases, which is particularly important because circumstances have changed since the last SIP cycle began. More specifically, Seneca Family of Agencies, a contractor, is no longer conducting family finding for either Probation or Child Welfare cases due to a contract change during the last SIP cycle. As a result, Probation has been responsible for conducting its own family finding internally and recognizes there is a need to strengthen its current efforts in order to support youth in achieving permanency more quickly.

The goal of this family finding and engagement strategy is to locate long-term, caring, permanent connections and relationships for youth in care. The plan is to continue to initiate family finding efforts when a youth is determined to be at-risk of removal from the home to locate and build stronger supports early in the process, while also ensuring efforts are ongoing. Early engagement allows kin to participate in Pre-CFTs to avoid out-of-home placements when possible and/or to shorten the youth's length of time in foster care when removal is necessary.

Over this five-year SIP cycle, Probation will expand tools to assist with family finding efforts, revise policies and procedures, utilize a more consistent technique for tracking family finding efforts, offer more trainings to staff, and monitor all efforts for compliance. Probation identified the need to revise policies and procedures in order to strengthen internal capacity to conduct initial and ongoing family finding and engagement for placement cases. Probation currently utilizes the CLEAR system to locate family members and supports, and it plans to expand tools to assist with these efforts. Revisions to procedures will include updates on the existing CLEAR system protocol, internal training, and establishment and expansion of new people finder tools, such as Wayfinder.

In addition to strengthening internal staff capacity around family finding and engagement, Probation will collaborate with Child Welfare on a contract for a new service provider that will also conduct family finding efforts. The referral process, internal capacity, flyers, trainings, and procedures will need to be implemented in conjunction with Child Welfare to ensure the contract is used to full capacity. While contracted services will support family finding efforts, it is still imperative to strengthen the capacity of Probation staff to conduct family finding internally as the contractor will likely not be able to conduct family finding for all cases and in all circumstances. Additionally, ensuring Probation staff have enhanced skills and training to conduct family finding efforts internally will protect against impacts should the contract change or terminate in the future (as did the prior contract with Seneca).

Probation recognizes that ensuring adequate training of Probation Officers on family finding and engagement is critical to the success of this strategy. As noted in the Peer Review, staff themselves requested additional training on family finding efforts. To address this need, Probation will collaborate with Child Welfare, the Chief Probation Officers of California (CPOC), and Judicial Council on training opportunities and resources related to family finding and engagement. The goal is to increase training opportunities for Probation Officers that are

offered by various agencies. This action step will be ongoing, starting at the beginning of the SIP cycle and going until the end. While Probation plans to establish a new contract with a service provider to support it in conducting family finding, it will manage its own internal trainings to prevent any setbacks in case the contract with the service provider ends. Probation will also create a form to track family finding efforts and outreach to include ongoing work with established supports. This action step is crucial as Probation does not currently have a consistent process in place for tracking family finding efforts. More specifically, Probation plans to create a form with a checklist that will be kept in case files for tracking and auditing purposes. This form/checklist will capture information about family members and supports, interview dates, and methods and timelines used for searching for family members, including through Wayfinder, CLEAR, Social Media, Letters, Internet, etc. The Probation Services Manager assigned to the Placement Unit will review the form on a quarterly basis to confirm that family finding efforts are occurring on an ongoing basis and ensure compliance.

In addition to creating a form that will be part of the individual case file, Probation will develop a process to track family finding efforts in the new Tyler Probation Case Management System to facilitate system-level monitoring of efforts, including for leadership monitoring. The Tyler system, which Probation transitioned to in January 2024, includes functionality that can be activated and used for tracking family finding efforts. More specifically, Probation plans to add a check box for family finding to the list of actions under the “Contacts” note, so that detailed information can be recorded under Notes. A report then can be generated to reflect how many youth in placement had family finding efforts completed; this will provide a separate method for tracking those efforts systemwide. In addition to implementing the functionality in the Tyler system, Probation will identify who is responsible for entering the information to be tracked and how it will be recorded. Once the functionality is implemented in Tyler, a report will be retrieved on a quarterly basis and provided to the Probation Services Manager assigned to the Placement Unit for review and monitoring of compliance. The effectiveness of the strategy will also be measured by performance on P1.

**Action Steps:**

- A. Update policies and procedures for family finding efforts for placement cases.
- B. Collaborate with Child Welfare on contract(s) with local service provider(s) to enhance family finding efforts.
- C. Collaborate with Child Welfare, Chief Probation Officers of California (CPOC), and Judicial Council on training opportunities and resources related to family finding and engagement.
- D. Create a form to track family finding efforts and outreach to include ongoing work with established supports.
- E. Develop a process to track family finding efforts in the new Tyler Probation Case Management System.
- F. Monitor family finding and engagement efforts through quality assurance measures, to include case reviews.

**Systemic Changes:**

Develop policies and procedures. Develop tracking processes.

**Educational/Training Needs to Achieve this Strategy:**

Probation will collaborate with Child Welfare, CPOC, and Judicial Council on training opportunities and resources related to family finding and engagement. The goal is to increase training opportunities for Probation Officers that are offered by various agencies so that Probation officers participate in an initial training and then annual training thereafter. This action step will be ongoing, starting at the beginning of the SIP cycle and going until the end.

**Roles of Other Partners in Achieving this Strategy:**

Probation will collaborate with Child Welfare, CPOC, and Judicial Council on training opportunities and resources related to family finding and engagement. Probation will collaborate with Child Welfare on a contract for a new service provider that will conduct family finding efforts. The referral process, internal capacity, flyers, trainings, and procedures will need to be implemented in conjunction with Child Welfare to ensure the contract is used to full capacity.

**Evaluation and Monitoring:**

As noted above, Probation currently does not have a clear mechanism to identify and track family finding efforts. To address this, Probation will be adding functionality into the Tyler Case Management System, as well as creating a family finding and engagement form/checklist to be completed by Probation staff and included in individual case files. This form/checklist will capture information about family members and supports, interview dates, and methods and timelines used for searching for family members, including through Wayfinder, CLEAR, Social Media, Letters, Internet, etc.

Once the Tyler functionality and case file form/checklist for tracking family finding efforts are implemented, a baseline will be identified to track how efforts change. More specifically, quality assurance efforts will include Probation leadership (1) conducting internal case reviews in which they review the form/checklists in individual cases, and (2) retrieving and reviewing reports generated on a quarterly basis from the Tyler Case Management System. These Tyler reports will be provided to the Probation Services Manager assigned to the Placement Unit for review and monitoring of compliance. The effectiveness of the strategy will also be measured by performance on P1.



## Child Welfare/Probation Placement Initiatives

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The County of Monterey continues to participate fully in current federal and state initiatives, including the following:

### **Bringing Families Home:**

Initiated in 2016, the Bringing Families Home (BFH) Program aims to reduce homelessness among families involved in the child welfare system, facilitate family reunification, and prevent foster care placements. BFH offers financial assistance and housing-related supportive services, including rental assistance, housing navigation, case management, security deposits, utility payments, moving costs, interim shelter assistance, legal services, and credit repair.

### **Kin-First Culture – Excellence in Family Finding and Engagement:**

The Center for Excellence in Family Finding, Engagement, and Support (CFE), established through a contract between the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and UC Davis, offers multi-tiered, culturally appropriate training and technical assistance. This initiative targets county child welfare and probation departments, participating tribes, and foster care providers, aiming to improve their practices, policies, and family finding, support, and engagement efforts. The County of Monterey has been receiving technical assistance from CFE since 2022 in regard to the development of internal policies and procedures and the creation of the county plan for use of the Excellence in Family Finding and Engagement allocation. The county plans on using the allocation to fund a full-time FFE Specialist position whose work is guided by the 30 Days to Family® Model. Finally, the county plans on registering staff to attend ongoing trainings offered through the CFE to enhance their practice.

### **FFPSA Part IV including WRAP Aftercare:**

This initiative strengthens support for children to remain with their families and out of institutional settings by enhancing prevention services, improving oversight, and setting higher standards for congregate care. It supports kinship caregivers, boosts the quality and supervision of intensive and trauma-informed services, and mandates six months of aftercare services. Implemented on October 1, 2021, it revised case planning and legal procedures, introduced stricter accreditation and nursing criteria, required independent clinical assessments by a Qualified Individual, and established aftercare services for youths moving from a Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Program (STRTP) or a Qualified Residential Treatment Program to a family environment.

### **Housing Navigator Program/Transitional Housing Program:**

Enhanced by an amendment to AB128 in 2021, the California Department of Housing and Community Development allocated funds to counties for housing navigators. These navigators assist young adults, aged 18-21, in securing and maintaining housing, with priority given to those in the foster care system.

### **Family Urgent Response System:**

The Family Urgent Response System (FURS), established by Senate Bill 80 (Statutes of 2019) and later amended by Assembly Bill 79 (Statutes of 2020), offers a statewide coordinated

response system. It provides immediate, trauma-informed support for current and former foster youth and their caregivers. This support includes state and county-level phone-based assistance and county-level in-person, mobile response services during instances of instability, aiming to preserve the caregiver-child relationship.

### **Therapeutic Foster Care Homes:**

Following the *Katie A. v. Bontá* class action Settlement Agreement in December 2011, California undertook significant reforms to enhance the accessibility and quality of mental health services for children and youth in, or at risk of entering, the foster care system. These reforms aimed to ensure services were provided in clinically appropriate, community-based settings. Starting in 2013, the state began implementing Intensive Care Coordination (ICC) and Intensive Home-Based Services (IHBS) for eligible children and youth. The agreement also led to the development of a Therapeutic Foster Care (TFC) service model to enrich the array of services available. Further advancing these reforms, Assembly Bill 403, passed on September 11, 2015 (also known as the Continuum of Care Reform, CCR), focused on reducing dependency on congregate care by promoting home-based placements and addressing the mental health needs of children and youth through a collaborative effort of county child welfare, probation departments, and Mental Health Plans (MHPs). The CCR aimed to integrate specific components of Medi-Cal Specialty Mental Health Services, accessible through Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT), into the TFC service model where appropriate.

### **Child Welfare Core Practice Model:**

The Child Welfare Core Practice Model offers a comprehensive framework designed to enhance the efficacy of Child Welfare professionals. It aims to guide practice, service delivery, and decision-making processes, fostering a supportive environment for engaging and serving families more effectively. This model builds on existing efforts to improve family engagement and outcomes within Child Welfare. Details on the successes achieved through the Core Practice Model over the past year is highlighted in the sections discussing current promising practices and successes.

### **Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC):**

Since its inception in 2015, the County of Monterey has been dedicated to enhancing its CSEC program, focusing on improving the identification and support for youth who are victims or at risk of sexual exploitation and trafficking. Over the past year, significant updates have been made to the protocol allowing Social Workers to initiate CSEC interventions. Continued training efforts aim to deepen the understanding and expertise on this issue among Probation, Child Welfare staff, and partner agencies. Collaborations with three local nonprofits have expanded the program's reach through ongoing education, targeted public outreach, and specialized training for local first responders. Efforts are also underway to develop an updated tracking system to efficiently monitor and support the growing number of identified CSEC cases, ensuring the availability of necessary resources to assist this vulnerable population.

### **Child Abuse Prevention Council's SafeTech Program**

The County of Monterey CAPC has worked the last two years on the Safe Tech program, educating middle and high school children and their parents on how technology is used for trafficking and distribution of child pornography. Provided through our Door to Hope partner,

the program began as a pilot in partnership with Juvenile Probation JSORT (Juvenile Sex Offender response and Treatment) team. It has now grown into several middle and high schools within the County of Monterey.

**Continuum of Care Reform (CCR):**

Initiated by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) in collaboration with the Child Welfare Directors Association, the Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) represents a pivotal shift in the approach to foster care and child welfare services. Authorized by Senate Bill (SB) 1013, CCR aims to overhaul the state's rate setting system and enhance services and programs for children and families within the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) – Foster Care (FC) spectrum. Integral to this reform, Assembly Bill (AB) 403 focuses on fulfilling the comprehensive needs of youth in foster care, promoting permanent, supportive homes, and fostering self-sufficiency and success in adulthood.

**Child and Adolescent Needs and Strength Assessment (CANS):**

In alignment with the Continuum of Care Reform (CCR), county child welfare agencies across California are adopting the Integrated Practice Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) Assessment tool. This versatile instrument facilitates informed decision-making in determining the appropriate level of care, service planning, and tracking service outcomes. Within the Child and Family Team (CFT) process, the CANS Assessment enhances discussions about the well-being of children and youth, helping to pinpoint their strengths and needs. It supports care coordination, enriches case planning, and guides placement decisions, thereby playing a crucial role in the comprehensive care of children and youth in the child welfare system.

**Resource Family Approval (RFA):**

Resource Family Approval (RFA) is a caregiver approval process aimed at rendering potential caregivers—including non-related foster families, relatives, Near-Kin, and adoptive families—eligible for consideration in the placement of a child, youth, or young adult. The County of Monterey was among the early implementer counties, having initiated RFA in early 2017. This process combines elements of current licensing relative approval, adoption, and guardianship processes to create a seamless pathway for all families wishing to provide care to foster children.

**Federal Case Review:**

Since August 2015, counties have been tasked with conducting qualitative case reviews for Child Welfare Services. Modeled after the Federal Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSR) conducted by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Children's Bureau, these reviews, along with existing qualitative data, contribute to ongoing quality improvement efforts. With the Round 4 changes case review has reduced its staffing levels. Instead of two case reviewers, FCS has one case reviewer. The County of Monterey was moved to a small county category with Round 4, which means that twenty cases are assigned for review annually, rather than seventy.

**Childcare Bridge:**

In late 2017, counties were offered the opportunity to participate in the State's Childcare Bridge

Program, providing funding for childcare services to families caring for foster children outside their homes. The aim is to eliminate barriers to in-home placements. The County of Monterey chose to participate and launched its Childcare Bridge Program in collaboration with the Mexican American Opportunity Foundation (MAOF), the local Resource and Referral agency. Since its inception, the program has experienced steady growth in the number of families served. In January 2019, in response to an identified unmet need, the County negotiated an amendment to the contract, allocating PSSF funds to expand MAOF's services to biological parents and voluntary cases, extending support beyond the scope of Childcare Bridge funding.

**Child and Family Teams:**

In March 2018, the County of Monterey initiated the phased implementation of the Child and Family Team meeting structure across all agency departments. This rollout has been conducted in collaboration with the Seneca Family of Agencies, contracted to provide support in organizing CFT Meetings. Their assistance includes coordinating meeting schedules, locations, facilitation, and managing specialty funds to aid families facing immediate needs and obstacles to success. The County of Monterey has fully transitioned the emergency response units to holding Pre-Custodial Child and Family Team meetings (CFT) prior to filing petitions to place children into foster care. For the month of January 2024, emergency response team held twenty-one Pre-custodial CFTs. The ongoing units held sixty-nine permanency CFTs and five placement CFTs.

**Placement Initiative Waivers:**

Currently, Family and Children’s Services is not participating in any placement initiative waivers offered by the state.

**Corrective Action Plan (CAP):**

In December 2022, following a State onsite visit, Family & Children’s Services entered into a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) with the California Department of Social Services. Concerns were noted during the State visit in March 2022, particularly regarding practices within the Intake and Emergency Response Program, specifically the processing of Suspected Child Abuse Reports from mandated reporters. The CAP was finalized with the California Department of Social Services – Children’s Services Operations Bureau and comprises 7 sections:

1. Record Remediation
2. Record Maintenance and Retention
3. Intake and Screening
4. Emergency Response and Investigations
5. Practice and Intervention
6. ICWA
7. Training

The CAP outlines a total of 27 corrective actions across these sections.

**Success Highlights:**

In the realm of child welfare and probation placement initiatives, the County of Monterey has achieved notable successes through strategic planning and collaborative efforts. These successes include the establishment of a Continuous Quality Improvement unit, the implementation of AB 2083, and additional efforts related to CFTs:

- **Continuous Quality Improvement Unit and Policy Implementation:** In response to the federally mandated Child and Family Services Review, the County of Monterey established a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) unit in 2019 to structure agencywide CQI efforts. Since its inception, the unit has held quarterly meetings with senior management to present data relevant to federal performance measures, case reviews, and county objectives. Additionally, the CQI unit conducted staff training in 2023 and subsequently implemented a comprehensive CQI policy.
- **Implementation of AB 2083 - Interagency Leadership Team (ILT):** Under the framework of the Continuum of Care Reform (CCR), AB 2083 mandates counties to develop and implement a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) establishing a unified System of Care. This system aims to coordinate timely and trauma-informed services for foster children and youth, along with other vulnerable youth and their caregivers, in a manner that is comprehensive, culturally competent, timely, integrated, community-based, individualized, and strength-based. The County of Monterey finalized a Memorandum of Understanding in 2021, involving collaboration among the County of Monterey Child Welfare, Probation, and Behavioral Health. The MOU also encompasses the County of Monterey Office of Education, San Andreas Regional Center, the County Court, and the County's First 5 program. Notably, as of present, the County of Monterey does not have any federally recognized tribes represented in the MOU.
- **Child and Family Teams:** In November 2020, FCS updated its CFT policy to enhance support for agency information tracking, social work staff, and the needs of families, making pre-placement CFTs mandatory when removing youth. Additionally, data entry and tracking requirements were established as part of ongoing CQI efforts. The phased implementation of CFT Meetings began in March 2018, involving a collaborative effort among various stakeholders including Child Welfare, Juvenile Probation, Behavioral Health, Community Partners, and Contracted Family Finding, Coordination, and Facilitation staff. Despite challenges in cross-agency communication, efforts to address issues have led to a successful rollout of CFTs within the agency.

## Five-Year SIP Chart

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**Child Welfare:** Priority Outcome Measure 4-P1: Permanency in 12 Months for Children Entering Foster Care

**National Standard:**  $\geq 35.2\%$  (greater than or equal to)

**CSA Baseline Performance:** 10.7% (Quarter 2, 2023)

**Current Performance:** 5.7% (Quarter 4, 2023)

**Target Improvement Goal:** 20.7%

Year 1: Increase P1 Performance to 13.2%

Year 2: Increase P1 Performance to 15.7%

Year 3: Increase P1 Performance to 18.2%

Year 4: Increase P1 Performance to 20.7%

**Child Welfare:** Priority Outcome Measure 4B Least Restrictive (Entries First Placement: Relative/NREFM) and 4B Least Restrictive (Entries Predominant Placement: Relative/NREFM)

**National Standard:** N/A

**CSA Baseline Performance:** 12.1 (Entries First Placement) (Quarter 2, 2023)

19.1 (Entries Predominant Placement)(Quarter 2, 2023)

**Current Performance:** 28.6 (Entries First Placement) (Quarter 4, 2023)

29.7 (Entries Predominant Placement) (Quarter 4, 2023)

**Target Improvement Goal:** N/A

**Child Welfare:** Systemic Factor: Quality Assurance

**National Standard:** N/A

**CSA Baseline Performance:** FCS established a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) unit in 2019 to structure agencywide CQI efforts. The CQI unit conducted staff training in 2023 and subsequently implemented a comprehensive CQI policy. FCS has completed various activities and instituted policy and process changes to promote the timely closure of referrals, which are further detailed in the justification rationale for FCS Strategy #3.

**Current Performance:** N/A

**Target Improvement Goal:** Referrals Closed within 30 days (percent of referrals closed timely)

Year 1: 30%

Year 2: 40%

Year 3: 50%

Year 4: 60%

**Probation:** Priority Outcome Measure 4-P1: Permanency in 12 Months for Children Entering Foster Care

**National Standard:**  $\geq 35.2\%$  (greater than or equal to)

**CSA Baseline Performance:** 0% (Quarter 2, 2023)

**Current Performance:** 11.1% (Quarter 4, 2023)

**Target Improvement Goal:**

Year 1: Increase P1 Performance to 13.1%

Year 2: Increase P1 Performance to 15.1%

Year 3: Increase P1 Performance to 18.1%

Year 4: Increase P1 Performance to 21.1%

<b>Child Welfare Strategy 1:</b> Use Safety Organized Practice (SOP) principles to design and implement an individualized progressive visitation policy.	<input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT	Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s): 4-P1: Permanency in 12 Months for Children Entering Foster Care	
	<input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PSSF	<input type="checkbox"/> Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project	
	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A		
Action Steps	Implementation Date	Completion Date	Person Responsible Ongoing Services
A. Assess current visitation usage patterns and practices at both the FCS office and Cherish Too managed by Aspiranet.	January 2025	September 2025	Program Manager II Management Analyst III Management Analyst II
B. Identify and/or develop data collection methods to assess the impact of progressive visitation policies.	March 2025	September 2026	Program Manager II Management Analyst III Management Analyst II
C. Evaluate and monitor strategy implementation and performance at quarterly management meetings.	April 2025	September 2029	Deputy Director Program Managers Management Analyst II Management Analyst III
D. Draft new progressive visitation policy aligned with Safety Organized Practice (SOP) principles and current best practices.	June 2025	December 2025	Program Manager II Management Analyst III Management Analyst II
E. Create visitation note template and mandate use by social service aides, community partners and social workers.	September 2025	March 2026	Program Manager II Management Analyst III Management Analyst II
F. Develop visitation training curriculum with the support of county partners and the regional training academies.	January 2026	June 2026	Program Manager II Management Analyst III Management Analyst II Training Supervisor
G. Review current visitation contract deliverables for areas of potential growth.	March 2026	September 2027	Program Manager II Management Analyst III Management Analyst II
H. Train social service aides, community partners and social workers to use template.	April 2026	October 2026	Program Manager II Management Analyst III Management Analyst II



I. Update contracts with external providers to incorporate new visitation policies and practices.	June 2026	September 2028	Program Manager II Management Analyst III Management Analyst II
J. Train social workers, social work supervisors and social service aides using the new visitation curriculum.	July 2026	December 2026	Program Manager II Management Analyst III Management Analyst II
K. Report the results of the data collection to staff and partners each quarter.	October 2026	September 2029	Program Manager II Management Analyst III Management Analyst II
L. Monitor template use through coaching of social service aides, community partners and social workers.	November 2026	September 2029	Program Manager II Management Analyst III Management Analyst II
M. Coach social workers, social work supervisors, and social service aides to promote utilization of skills learned from visitation training.	January 2027	September 2029	Program Manager II Management Analyst III Management Analyst II

<b>Child Welfare Strategy 2:</b> Provide Family Finding and Engagement (FFE) Services from the initial accepted referral to case closure to increase relative and near-kin placement.	<input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT	Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s): 4-P1: Permanency in 12 Months for Children Entering Foster Care; 4B Least Restrictive (Entries First Placement: Relative/NREFM); Measure 4B Least Restrictive (Entries Predominant Placement: Relative/NREFM); Case Review Item 4 (Stability In Foster Care)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP		
	<input type="checkbox"/> PSSF		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project	
Action Steps	Implementation Date	Completion Date	Person Responsible
A. Track specified outcomes and report to CDSS and staff, including children placed with a relative or Non-Related Extended Family Members (NREFMs), children placed in a family setting, placement stability, time to permanency, racial disproportionality for children in congregate care and placement disruptions, and children placed with relatives or NREFMs after being in a non-relative placement for 24 months or longer who then received FFE services.	January 2025	September 2029	Program Manager II Management Analyst III Management Analyst II

<b>B.</b> Revise policies and procedures to include changes to FFE that outline the responsibilities of each social worker and service provider, such as Wayfinder and 30 Days to Family Specialist, in continuing to engage family networks throughout the life of a case.	March 2025	September 2025	Program Manager II Management Analyst III Management Analyst II
<b>C.</b> Evaluate and monitor strategy implementation and performance at quarterly management meetings.	April 2025	September 2029	Deputy Director Program Managers Management Analyst II Management Analyst III
<b>D.</b> Train all social work supervisors, social workers, and social service aides on internal FFE policies and procedures and how to use Safety Organized Practice (SOP) tools to engage and team with families.	October 2025	April 2026	Program Manager II Management Analyst III Management Analyst II
<b>E.</b> Implement ongoing coaching for CWS staff on revised policies and procedures for FFE, focusing on collaboration between units and with the two designated family specialists.	May 2026	September 2029	Program Manager II Management Analyst III Management Analyst II

<b>Child Welfare Strategy 3:</b> Use continuous quality improvement processes to monitor timely closure of all referrals (immediate, 10-day and evaluate out) generated by reports to the hotline.	<input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT	Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s): Systemic Factor: Quality Assurance	
	<input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP		
	<input type="checkbox"/> PSSF		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project	
<b>Action Steps</b>	<b>Implementation Date</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>	<b>Person Responsible Front End Services</b>
A. Identify/Create a report that tracks the annual content reviews of program directives, handbooks, and memoranda by management and completed updates, if needed.	January 2025	June 2025	Program Manager II Management Analyst III Management Analyst II

B. Identify/Create monthly report from Guru to track how often staff use Guru as a reference tool to review policies and procedures changed by the Emergency Response and intake mapping process.	January 2025	September 2025	Program Manager II Management Analyst III Management Analyst II
C. Report on referrals (received, investigated, promoted, closed) at quarterly all-staff meetings until December 2029.	January 2025	September 2029	Program Manager II Management Analyst III Management Analyst II
D. Monitor and evaluate the use of the Emergency Response Review Tool by social workers and social work supervisors for closing referrals by performing monthly spot checks on at least four closed referrals randomly selected and reviewed by the management team.	March 2025	September 2029	Program Manager II Management Analyst III Management Analyst II
E. Utilize the case load summary report to track referral assignments and their disposition monthly.	June 2025	September 2029	Program Manager II Management Analyst III Management Analyst II
F. Review monthly Structured Decision Making (SDM) reporting in SafeMeasures to assess completion rates of the SDM's Safety Assessment in closed referrals.	September 2025	September 2029	Program Manager II Management Analyst III Management Analyst II
G. During program manager's monthly supervision with social work supervisors review social worker conference forms to assess the use of SafeMeasures.	December 2025	September 2029	Program Manager II Management Analyst III Management Analyst II
H. Annually review attendance rates for mandatory trainings, including Structured Decision Making and SafeMeasures, for social workers and social work supervisors with training supervisor and Bay Area Academy, the regional training partner.	December 2025	September 2029	Program Manager II Management Analyst III Management Analyst II

I. During monthly Emergency Response Social Work Supervisors meetings, review referrals open for more than 30 days to examine barriers to referral closure and brainstorm solutions.	January 2026	September 2029	Program Manager II Management Analyst III Management Analyst II
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<b>Probation Strategy 1:</b> Enhance family finding efforts for all Probation placement cases to reduce the time in foster care.	<input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT	Applicable Outcome Measure(s) and/or Systemic Factor(s): 4-P1: Permanency in 12 Months for Children Entering Foster Care	
	<input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP		
	<input type="checkbox"/> PSSF		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Demonstration Capped Allocation Project	
Action Steps	Implementation Date	Completion Date	Person Responsible
<b>A.</b> Update policies and procedures for family finding efforts for placement cases.	January 2025	September 2025	Probation Services Manager Deputy Probation Officer III Management Analyst
<b>B.</b> Collaborate with Child Welfare on contract(s) with local service provider(s) to enhance family finding efforts.	January 2025	June 2025	Probation Services Manager Probation Services Manager Deputy Probation Officer III
<b>C.</b> Collaborate with Child Welfare, CPOC, and Judicial Council on training opportunities and resources related to family finding and engagement.	January 2025	September 2029	Probation Services Manager Deputy Probation Officer III Management Analyst
<b>D.</b> Create a form to track family finding efforts and outreach to include ongoing work with established supports.	March 2025	September 2025	Probation Services Manager Deputy Probation Officer III Management Analyst
<b>E.</b> Develop a process to track family finding efforts in the new Tyler Probation Case Management System.	October 2025	March 2026	Probation Services Manager Deputy Probation Officer III Management Analyst
<b>F.</b> Monitor family finding and engagement efforts through quality assurance measures, to include case reviews.	September 2027	September 2029	Probation Services Manager Deputy Probation Officer III Management Analyst Placement Officer

## Prioritization of Direct Service Needs

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The Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention and Treatment (CAPIT), Community Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP), and Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) funding sources are designed to strengthen protective factors in families and prevent deeper involvement in the child welfare system. Secondary and tertiary prevention programs will be funded with PSSF dollars. Child and Family Team (CFT) meetings are both secondary and tertiary interventions that can connect families at risk for their children to enter out of home care and for families with open child welfare cases. Using pre-custodial CFTs to connect families with either voluntary family stabilization services or other community resources is an opportunity to prevent maltreatment or provide the resources a family might need for a general neglect referral. CFTs are a part of monitoring and assessing a families' needs when children are placed in out of home care and a space for families to identify what services will best serve reunification or other permanency solutions. Visitation is an essential component of reunifying parents and children. Though a tertiary prevention, an agency with robust visitation supports can shorten the time to reunification for families by helping parents build protective factors and reduce the risk of recurrence of maltreatment.

Focus groups conducted during the Community Needs Assessment (CSA) highlighted critical gaps in prevention services for vulnerable populations, including immigrant families, those with substance-abusing caregivers, Spanish-speaking families, and those experiencing housing instability. Additionally, stakeholders expressed a strong desire for increased crisis intervention services and enhanced/expanded support programs for parents. As the focus of the SIP is P1 Permanency in twelve months, the prevention services that are funded support efforts in improving this measure in Monterey County, both by decreasing the number of children entering and preventing re-entry into our system.

The Monterey County Child Abuse Prevention Council (CAPC) is dedicated to fostering the well-being of children and families, with the primary aim of preventing child abuse and neglect. In October 2024, the CAPC conducted a strategic planning session to define its goals and establish a macro-level framework for future initiatives.

A continued focus for funding from the Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) and Child Abuse Prevention and Intervention Treatment (CAPIT) programs will be parent education, delivered through both in-person and online platforms. The CAPC has developed a website, [www.capcmonterey.org](http://www.capcmonterey.org), serving as a central hub for educational resources, parenting links, mandated reporter information, and annual public service announcements associated with April's Child Abuse Prevention Month. Both CBCAP and CAPIT funds will support these endeavors.

Specific to CAPIT funds, ongoing CAPC discussions and extensive community input, gathered through the planning efforts of partners like the Monterey County Children's Council and the Monterey County Child Death Review Team, continue to inform and validate the Council's

work. A priority for CAPIT funds will be countywide engagement around safety and wellbeing of children, youth and families utilizing the [www.capcmonterey.org](http://www.capcmonterey.org) platform. In person engagement and education of Spanish-speaking caregivers is a prioritization for CAPC.

## Service Provision for CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF Programs

### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

**COUNTY: MONTEREY**

**DATE APPROVED BY OCAP: 02/28/2025**

#### **PROGRAM NAME**

Child and Family Team Meetings (Item 3 in Expenditure Workbook)

#### **SERVICE PROVIDER**

SENECA FAMILY OF AGENCIES

#### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

AB 403, commonly known as Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) signed in law in October 2015, establishes the requirement for child welfare agencies to utilize Child and Family Teams (CFTs) to deliver a child or youth, a family-centered approach in order to assess, plan, intervene, monitor, and refine services over the course of FCS' involvement with the family. W&IC §16501.1(c)-(d) requires that child welfare agencies convene a CFT Meeting as defined in §16501, to identify supports and services that are needed to achieve permanency, enable a child to live in the least restrictive family setting, and promote normal childhood experiences.

A CFT is a group of individuals that includes the child(ren), family members, professionals, natural community supports, and other individuals identified by the family who are invested in the family's success. In addition to the mandated participation of involved public service agency representatives, the composition of the team is family centered and driven by family choice. Successful CFTs should include persons with natural supportive relationships with the family so that the family's support system will continue to exist after formal services with the child welfare agency have ended.

The CFT's role is to engage family members in the decision-making process. The individuals on the team will work together to identify each family member's strengths and needs to develop a child, youth, and family-centered decision.

#### **FUNDING SOURCES**

SOURCE	LIST FUNDED ACTIVITIES
<b>CAPIT</b>	
<b>CBCAP</b>	
<b>PSSF Family Preservation</b>	Child and Family Team Meetings
<b>PSSF Family Support</b>	Child and Family Team Meetings
<b>PSSF Family Reunification</b>	
<b>PSSF Adoption Promotion and Support</b>	Child and Family Team Meetings
<b>OTHER Source(s):</b>	CDSS Allocation and Realignment Funds

**IDENTIFY PRIORITY NEED OUTLINED IN CSA**

County Self-Assessment (CSA), Peer Review beginning on page 126:

One of the CSA's consistently identified strengths is the County's robust collaborative relationships with other child-serving agencies and community-based organizations. These partnerships are evident in Child and Family Team meetings across all service components, from emergency response to adoption services. Stakeholders and focus groups, including those from the SIP convening, strongly encourage the agency to preserve, strengthen, and leverage these collaborations as it implements planned SIP strategies. This approach ensures that county policies and practices remain informed by community-based organizations and other child welfare disciplines, fostering fresh perspectives and ultimately enabling the County to better serve its most vulnerable families.

**TARGET POPULATION**

All families, parents, adoptive parents, caregivers, children, and youth who are served by the Child Welfare Agency through Child and Family Team meetings.

**TARGET GEOGRAPHIC AREA**

All 3300 square miles of Monterey County

**TIMELINE**

SIP Cycle September 9, 2024, to September 7, 2029; subject to change with notice and approval from CDSS/OCAP.

**EVALUATION**

**PROGRAM OUTCOME(S) AND MEASUREMENT & QUALITY ASSURANCE (QA) MONITORING**

Desired Outcome	Indicator	Source of Measure	Frequency
Improved time to permanency for families who are served through a Child and Family Team meetings. This includes Emergency Response (pre-custodial CFTs), Family Reunification, Voluntary Services, Placement, Permanency, and Adoptions.	P1	ETO Data CWS/CMS Safe Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ETO Data Reviewed Quarterly and Reported Annually via SIP Progress Report.</li> <li>ETO/Safe Measures/CWSCMS Data Reviewed quarterly through internal data review/tracking.</li> </ul>
<b>Quality Assurance (QA) Monitoring</b>			
Method or Tool	Frequency	Utilization	Action
Efforts to Outcomes	Monthly	<u>Quantitative Reports</u>	Monthly Meetings with Seneca Family of Agency Directors and Program Supervisor
CWS/CMS	Quarterly	Number of CFT Meetings CFT Type	
SafeMeasures	Monthly	Pre-custodial CFT Meeting Outcome	



		Permanency Decision CFT Meeting Outcome Placement Stability CFT Meeting Outcome Other Family Members at Pre-custodial CFT Meeting Other Family Members at Permanency Decision CFT Meeting	CFTs Standing Agenda Item for Monthly ILT Meetings CFT Data Shared monthly on Management's Teams files Case Review Items Item 2, Item 9, Item 10, 11, 12, and 13 Quarterly CFT Sharing with FCS Staff Quarterly Data Presentation to Monterey County's Board of Supervisors' 3H Committee
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**CLIENT SATISFACTION**

<b>Method or Tool</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Utilization</b>	<b>Action</b>
SurveyMonkey	Monthly	<u>Qualitative Reports</u> CFT Participant Surveys (what working well, needs improvement, other feedback)	Monthly Meetings with Seneca Family of Agency. CFT Facilitators CFTs Standing Agenda Item for Monthly ILT Meetings CFT Data Shared monthly on Management's Teams files Case Review Items Item 2, Item 9, Item 10, 11, 12, and 13 Quarterly CFT Sharing with FCS Staff Quarterly Data Presentation to Monterey County's Board of Supervisors' 3H Committee

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

**COUNTY: MONTEREY**  
**DATE APPROVED BY OCAP: 02/28/2025**

**PROGRAM NAME**

Visitation/Family Time (Item 4 in Expenditure Workbook)

**SERVICE PROVIDER**

COUNTY OF MONTEREY FAMILY AND CHILDREN’S SERVICES  
ASPIRANET’S CHERISH TOO VISITATION CENTER

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

Aspiranet provides visitation services for children and their parents and siblings at Cherish Too, a standalone visitation center that has comfortable “living rooms” for parents to spend time with their children. Visitation is also hosted at the Life Foundation Building where FCS’ offices are housed.

Services consist of Supervised Visitation (SV). SV is provided to all families that have significant issues such as untreated mental health needs, emotional abuse that includes a severe disconnect between the parent and child, severe physical abuse, and families with high conflict or those who are at risk of domestic violence.

Visitation services are provided as often as two times per week or as few as one time per month. The frequency of visits is determined by the Juvenile Dependency Court or is at the discretion of FCS. One visit is defined as 60 minutes, though visits may be extended longer. Services are intended to keep a child safe, supported and free from unnecessary stress during their family visit. A “visitation monitor” supervises the visits and is always present. In addition to ensuring child safety, the visitation monitor may actively direct or “coach” the parents, as deemed appropriate, to enhance parenting skills. This may include the provision of input on the following topics and concepts: infant care; day-to-day activities of motherhood/fatherhood; approaches to raising children; understanding the source of a child's behavior; helping children build healthy self-esteem; and resolving family conflicts to promote reunification. The visitation monitor carefully documents interactions between parents and children that can inform changes in visitation (e.g., increased parental capacity to understand child’s needs) and demonstrate readiness for the next stage of visitation.

Services are available in English and Spanish.

**FUNDING SOURCES**

<b>SOURCE</b>	<b>LIST FUNDED ACTIVITIES</b>
<b>CAPIT</b>	
<b>CBCAP</b>	
<b>PSSF Family Preservation</b>	
<b>PSSF Family Support</b>	
<b>PSSF Family Reunification</b>	Parent/Sibling Visitation
<b>PSSF Adoption Promotion and Support</b>	
<b>OTHER Source(s):</b>	All County Funds

**IDENTIFY PRIORITY NEED OUTLINED IN CSA**

Feedback from various groups convened as part of the CSA process (focus groups, stakeholder meeting, and the Peer Review process) identified visitation as essential to facilitate a successful reunification between parent and child. This supports the SIP strategies one and two based on the information gathered in the CSA.

**TARGET POPULATION**

Children and youth that are removed from their home and placed in a resource family home or short-term residential treatment program (STRTP).

Parents or primary caregiver of such a child, to facilitate the reunification of the child safely, appropriately and in a timely fashion.

Provide the child(ren) an opportunity to maintain other important connections in their extended family and near-kin.

For siblings not placed together, preserving and promoting the sibling relationship with visitation

**TARGET GEOGRAPHIC AREA**

All 3300 square miles of Monterey County

**TIMELINE**

SIP Cycle September 9, 2024, to September 7, 2029; subject to change with notice and approval from CDSS/OCAP.

**EVALUATION**

**PROGRAM OUTCOME(S) AND MEASUREMENT & QUALITY ASSURANCE (QA) MONITORING**

<b>Desired Outcome</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Source of Measure</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Parents show a reduction in parental stress relating to child behavior problems and improve overall parenting skills, which promotes improving P1 performance.	30% decrease in behavior problems and parental stress as determined by the PAFAs and CAPES questionnaires. 25% improvement in overall parenting skills as determined by the PAFAS questionnaire	Parent and Family Adjustment Scales (PAFAS), Child Adjustment and Parent Efficacy Scale (CAPES) administered at the beginning of visitation services, regular intervals during services and when exiting services.	Completed by parent at case beginning, regular intervals during the case and when the case closes.
<b>Quality Assurance (QA) Monitoring</b>			
<b>Method or Tool</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Utilization</b>	<b>Action</b>
Results of Parent and Family Adjustment Scales (PAFAS), Child Adjustment and Parent Efficacy Scale (CAPES) administered at the beginning of	Quarterly	Quarterly CQI Management Meetings	Monthly Meetings with Aspiranet Quarterly data meetings with Aspiranet Monthly SSA Unit Meetings

visitation services, regular intervals during services and when exiting services.			CFT Data Shared monthly on Management's Teams files Case Review Items Item 7, Item 8, Item 9, Item 12 and 13 Quarterly Visitation Practice Updates at all Staff Meetings Quarterly Data Presentation to Monterey County's Board of Supervisors' 3H Committee
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**CLIENT SATISFACTION**

Method or Tool	Frequency	Utilization	Action
Satisfaction survey	Completed by participants at quarterly intervals	Surveys reviewed quarterly	Problem areas reviewed by management team to identify issues with new visitation practice in Strategy 1 and adjusted as needed using CQI principles.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

**COUNTY: MONTEREY**

**DATE APPROVED BY OCAP: 02/28/2025**

**PROGRAM NAME**

CAPC Child Abuse Prevention Outreach Activities (Item 2 in Expenditure Workbook)

**SERVICE PROVIDERS**

CAPC DIRECTOR; LAURA VALDEZ CHAVEZ; TMD/TOVAR STRATEGIES

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The CAPC Director and its Council membership will provide a series of free events (school, community, fairs, etc.) to provide resources to the Monterey County community about how to prevent child abuse and keep children safe at home and thriving. These events will serve children, youth, and family throughout Monterey County with a focus on Spanish speaking families and the South County geographic region. These events will cover a variety of subjects relating to child abuse prevention including child development, parenting techniques, mandatory reporter responsibilities, intimate partner violence, internet safety, signs of substance abuse, and other topics as needed.

Outreach to promote these events will include the use of CAPC’s website, social media, news media, paid advertisements, publications, and by CAPC’s partner organizations in Monterey County.

**FUNDING SOURCES**

SOURCE	LIST FUNDED ACTIVITIES
<b>CAPIT</b>	Outreach
<b>CBCAP (ARPA)</b>	Outreach
<b>PSSF Family Preservation</b>	
<b>PSSF Family Support</b>	
<b>PSSF Time-Limited Family Reunification</b>	
<b>PSSF Adoption Promotion and Support</b>	
<b>OTHER Source(s): CCTF, KidsPlate</b>	Outreach

**IDENTIFY PRIORITY NEED OUTLINED IN CSA**

CSA, Child Maltreatment Indicators, page 20: The three zip codes (93905, 93906, and 93901) with 49% of all suspected child abuse reports are in predominately Latino neighborhoods in Salinas, Monterey County’s seat. Eighteen percent of suspected child abuse reports are from the zip codes in South Monterey County (93960, 93930, and 93927) an area that is also Spanish speaking and Latino.

**TARGET POPULATION**

All children and family at-risk of child abuse and neglect throughout Monterey County are the target population for CAPC activities.

**TARGET GEOGRAPHIC AREA**

All 3300 square miles of Monterey County

**TIMELINE**

SIP Cycle September 9, 2024, to September 7, 2029; subject to change with notice and approval from CDSS/OCAP.

**EVALUATION**

**PROGRAM OUTCOME(S) AND MEASUREMENT & QUALITY ASSURANCE (QA) MONITORING**

Desired Outcome	Indicator	Source of Measure	Frequency
These outreach events will be single events offered to the public. As an outreach event, the reporting provided to OCAP will reflect the type of event, the estimated number of participants and anonymous stories from event attendees, End of event surveys may be provided for feedback and information gained but will not include outcome measurements.			

<b>Quality Assurance (QA) Monitoring</b>				

The Child Abuse Prevention Council (CAPC) reviews and provides direction regarding the contracted and in-house Outreach efforts at its bi-monthly CAPC meetings. Participation data is reviewed and areas of focus identified regularly. The Child Welfare Director is an Executive Team member of CAPC who oversees expenditures to the contracted services.

**CLIENT SATISFACTION**

<b>Method or Tool</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Utilization</b>	<b>Action</b>
Surveys	During and after events	To receive feedback from participants about quality of the event to improve future events' content.	Use survey data to make adjustments to future events.

CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF Expenditure Workbook  
Proposed Expenditures  
Worksheet 1

(1) DATE SUBMITTED: 2/5/25

(2) DATES FOR THIS WORKBOOK 10/1/24 thru 9/30/29

(3) DATE APPROVED BY OCAP 2/28/25

(4) COUNTY: Monterey

(5) PERIOD OF SIP: \_\_\_\_\_ thru \_\_\_\_\_

(6) YEARS: 2024-2029

Internal Use Only

(7) ALLOCATION (Use the latest Fiscal or All County Information Notice for Allocation):

**CAPIT: \$ 143,327**

**CBCAP: \$41,337**

**PSSF: \$368,577**

No.	Program Name	Applies to CBCAP Programs Only	Name of Service Provider	Service Provider is Unknown, Date Revised Workbook to be Submitted to OCAP	CAPIT		CBCAP		PSSF						OTHER SOURCES	NAME OF OTHER	TOTAL
					Dollar amount to be spent on CAPIT Programs	CAPIT is used for Administration	Dollar amount to be spent on CBCAP Programs	CBCAP is used for Administration	Dollar amount to be spent on Family Preservation	Dollar amount to be spent on Family Support	Dollar amount to be spent on Time Limited Reunification	Dollar amount to be spent on Adoption Promotion & Support	Dollar amount of PSSF allocation to be spent on PSSF activities (Sum of columns G1-G4)	PSSF is used for Administration	Dollar amount from other sources	List the name(s) of the other funding source(s)	Total dollar amount to be spent on this Program (Sum of Columns E, F, G5)
A	B	C	D1	D2	E1	E2	F1	F2	G1	G2	G3	G4	G5	G6	H1	H2	I
1	Parent Education (CAPC)	Outreach	Laura Valdez Chavez		\$30,000		\$0		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$1,600	Kidsplate/Multiple funders	\$31,600
2	Community Based Education (CAPC)	Outreach	CAPC Director		\$60,527	X	\$42,319	X	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$97,971	CWS/CAPC	\$200,817
3	Child & Family Team Meetings	Direct Service	Seneca Family of Agencies		\$0		\$0		\$92,144	\$92,144	\$0	\$92,114	\$276,402		\$548,466	All County Dollars	\$824,868
4	Visitation/Family Time	Direct Service	Aspiranet		\$0		\$0		\$0	\$0	\$92,114	\$0	\$92,114		\$382,904	All County Dollars	\$475,018
5	Community Outreach	Outreach	Tovar Strategies		\$46,800		\$0		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0		\$46,800
6					\$0		\$0		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0		\$0
7					\$0		\$0		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0		\$0
8					\$0		\$0		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0		\$0
9					\$0		\$0		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0		\$0
10					\$0		\$0		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0		\$0
11					\$0		\$0		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0		\$0
12					\$0		\$0		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0		\$0
13					\$0		\$0		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0		\$0
14					\$0		\$0		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0		\$0
15					\$0		\$0		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0		\$0
<b>Totals</b>					<b>\$137,327</b>		<b>\$42,319</b>		<b>\$92,144</b>	<b>\$92,144</b>	<b>\$92,114</b>	<b>\$92,114</b>	<b>\$368,516</b>		<b>\$1,030,941</b>		<b>\$1,579,103</b>
									25%	25%	25%	25%	100%				

CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF Expenditure Workbook  
CBCAP Programs  
Worksheet 2

Appendix X

(1) COUNTY: \_\_\_\_\_

(2) YEARS: \_\_\_\_\_

No.	Program Name	Logic Model			EBP/EIP ONLY						Parent Involvement Activities		
		Logic Model Not Applicable	Logic Model Exists	Logic Model Will be Developed	EBP/EIP Level As determined by the EBP/EIP Checklist					EBP/EIP Checklist is on file or N/A	Planning	Implementation	Evaluation
					Program Lacking support (Level 0)	Emerging & Evidence Informed Programs & Practices (Level 1)	Promising Programs & Practices (Level 2)	Supported (Level 3)	Well Supported (Level 4)				
A	B	C1	C2	C3	D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	E1	E2	E3
c	CAPC			X									X
													X