



Monterey County

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Board Report

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- a. Approve the Tri-County Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) Program Memorandum of Understanding (MOU); and
- b. Authorize the following County representatives to sign the Tri-County Commercially Sexually Exploited Children Program (CSEC) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU): Robert Taniguchi, Deputy Director of Social Services for the Family and Children's Services Branch; Marcia Parsons, Chief Probation Officer; and Ray Bullick, Director of Health.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors:

- a. Approve the Tri-County Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) Program Memorandum of Understanding (MOU); and
- b. Authorize the following County representatives to sign the Tri-County Commercially Sexually Exploited Children Program (CSEC) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU): Robert Taniguchi, Deputy Director of Social Services for the Family and Children's Services Branch; Marcia Parsons, Chief Probation Officer; and Ray Bullick, Director of Health

SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:

This report provides background on the Tri-County Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) Project, and presents the memorandum of understanding (MOU) and model protocol, which was developed in partnership between Monterey, Santa Cruz, and San Benito Counties. In June, 2014, the California Legislature passed Senate Bill (SB) 855, which clarifies that commercially sexually exploited children may be served through the Child Welfare System as victims of child abuse and neglect under Welfare and Institutions Code (W&IC) §300. Additionally, SB 855 established the CSEC Program, which appropriates \$5 Million in Fiscal Year 14-15, for counties to develop and build training for protocols to identify and serve CSEC through a multidisciplinary (MDT) approach. The legislation appropriates \$14 Million annually in future years for services and program maintenance.

History of the Tri-County CSEC Program and Tri County CSEC MOU:

In April, 2015, a Tri County CSEC Agreement (#A-12669) was approved and signed, with a goal in mind of establishing a regional effort between Monterey, Santa Cruz, and San Benito Counties, to develop a model CSEC MOU and Protocol. The partnership between Monterey, Santa Cruz, and San Benito Counties aims to address common barriers within the tri-counties, including: limited funding allocated to the counties for protocol development, and limited resources for

CSEC in the region. The Tri-County MOU and model protocol was developed to not only to maximize shared resources, but also to ensure consistency in identifying and serving the

specialized needs of CSEC within and across the Tri-County region.

The efforts to development a regional MOU and model protocol began with a kickoff event on April 21, 2015, which was attended by stakeholders from all three counties, including county agencies (DSS Child Welfare, Probation, Behavioral and Public Health, County Counsel, District Attorney's Office, Office of Education, and Judges from the Juvenile Courts), and community partners (Monterey County Rape Crisis Center, Monarch Services of Santa Cruz County, Community Solutions of San Benito County, the Catholic Diocese, CASA, The Epicenter, and the Coalition to End Human Trafficking in Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties). The kickoff event introduced the CSEC Program to the tri county agencies and community partners in the form of an informational presentation by the Tri-County CSEC Program Consultants from the National Center for Youth Law, and an introduction of the project leadership (the Child Welfare Deputy Directors from all three counties).

The first meeting of the Tri County CSEC Steering Committee was held following the kickoff event. The steering committee includes representation from all three county agencies listed above, as well as community partners from all three counties to include: Monterey County Rape Crisis Center, Monarch Services, Community Solutions, The Epicenter, and the Coalition to End Human Trafficking in Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties. The steering committee continued to meet on a monthly basis to develop the Tri County CSEC MOU/Protocol, as well as an implementation timeline, and plan for project longevity.

Advantages of a Regional Approach:

Early on, the Deputy Directors of the Child Welfare branches in each of the tri-counties saw the advantages of utilizing a regional approach to developing a CSEC Program. Our counties are close in proximity and share many of the risk factors that lend themselves to prevalence of commercial sexual exploitation of youth. Some of these risk factors include: gangs, large sporting events, tourism and migrant seasonal workers. In working together, our counties have been able to maximize the funding allocated to our counties in FY 14-15 (\$43,503 for Monterey County, \$41,577 for Santa Cruz County, and \$20,203 for San Benito County). Combining these allocations allowed for the counties to consult with attorneys from the National Center for Youth Law (NCYL), through the Monterey County Contract with Bay Area Academy. The chosen consultants are not only experts in this field, but also played a major role in the development of the CSEC Program at the State level. This expert consultation has allowed for the counties to develop a more comprehensive protocol and implementation plan. Additionally, the regional approach has gained recognition and praise from counties throughout the state, and earned the tri counties enhanced funding for FY 15-16 for further research into the prevalence of CSEC in the tri county region and further development of a regional approach. For FY 15-16 each of the tri counties received a base funding of \$25,000, and each county received an additional enhanced funding of \$27,763. The enhanced funding also puts our three counties into a "Tier II" funding level, which enables each of our counties to send representatives to a Tier II County Convening addressing best practices for program implementation and collaboration in working with CSEC. Aside from the noted fiscal advantages, the regional approach has allowed our agencies and community partners in each county to become familiar with one another, as well as with one another practices, which will inevitably lead to greater opportunities for open communication and cooperation in serving CSEC in years to come.

A Victim Centered Approach:

Aside from simply developing a protocol which addresses how counties will identify and serve this population of youth, the CSEC Program calls on counties to utilize a victim centered approach to serving youth who traditionally have been criminalized. This victim centered approach follows the guiding principle that youth who have been commercially sexually exploited are victims of abuse, and should be viewed, and treated as such. The CSEC Program is strengths based and trauma informed, as well as culturally and linguistically competent, meaning that counties will be committed to supporting and engaging youth in a way that meaningfully involves the youth, and will work together with the youth, their families when appropriate, and community partners to develop safety plans and provided the youth with the myriad of services they may need, including, though not limited to: medical, mental health, substance abuse, education, etc.

How it Works: The Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) Response:

In order to meet the approach discussed above, the tri counties will utilize the Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) approach, which is a three-tiered response to address the needs of exploited youth from immediate identification through ongoing stabilization. The MDT Response includes agency staff and community partners who are trained in the prevention, identification, and/or treatment of child abuse and neglect cases, and who are qualified to provide a broad range of services related to abuse. The MDT will work to identify and address the immediate and continuing needs of exploited youth. The three tiers are as follows:

Immediate Crisis:

Immediate Crisis MDTs will address the immediate health and safety needs of newly identified or suspected CSEC, where there is an immediate safety concern. The response time will be within 120 minutes from identification, with immediate supports and services to continue through the first 72 hours. Generally these youth will have been identified via a report to the child protection hotline. The Immediate Crisis MDT will include: Child Welfare or Probation (whichever has jurisdiction over the youth), the county's Sexual Assault and or Child Abuse Response Team (SART and/or CART), a CSEC Advocate (who will be a certified sexual assault counselor), the youth, and their family whenever appropriate. The coordinated response will include addressing the youth's basic needs (food, shelter, and clothing), appropriate placement, and safety concerns.

Non-Emergent:

Non-Emergent MDTs will address the needs of identified CSEC where there is not an immediate safety risk or threat to the youth. One example of this would include youth who are already in protective custody who are identified as having previously been commercially sexually exploited. The MDT Response will occur within 10 days of identification, and will include at least 4 of the following: Child Welfare or Probation, a CSEC Advocate, Public Health, Behavioral Health, Education, Children's Dependency Attorney, the youth, and the parent/guardian when appropriate. The coordinated response will include addressing any needed follow up on health and wellness needs of the youth, education needs, and an ongoing safety plan with the parent/guardian or caregiver.

Ongoing:

Ongoing MDTs will be held as a standing monthly meeting in each county to review and discuss that county's identified CSEC cases, and ensure the continued needs of all identified CSEC are being adequately met, as well as addressing any newly identified issues or safety concerns. This

MDT will not include participation from the youth or their families. Examples of new issues or safety concerns may include: the exploiter being released from incarceration, the youth receiving threats, or the youth displaying new risky behavior. The Ongoing MDT will include: Child Welfare, Probation, CSEC Advocates, Public Health, Behavioral Health, and Education. The advantage the youth gains through the MDT approach is a swift and coordinated response to addressing a variety of needs the youth may have, and a team of trained professionals engaging the youth to ensure those needs are met. The MDT approach is a "no wrong door" ideology, where agencies are working together to serve the youth no matter where the need arises, without the youth having to tell and re-tell their experience to each agency, thereby reducing re-traumatization.

The Tri County Commitment:

In the development of a regional approach, the counties are committed to maintaining a steering committee which will meet once quarterly, to provide oversight and leadership over the program, and to ensure the agencies and partners are able to use the model protocol to effectively identify and serve this population of youth. The Tri County CSEC Steering Committee will also be responsible for reviewing the success and barriers of MOU/Protocol, including gaps in training and services, and amending the MOU/Protocol as needed. Lastly, the Steering Committee will be responsible for collecting and analyzing aggregate data related to identification and services, and to provide an annual report to CDSS regarding identification and services each year, which will be used to determine the allocated funding for the following fiscal year.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The Tri-County CSEC Program is a partnership between the Social Services Departments, Health Departments, Probation Offices, and Juvenile Courts in Monterey, Santa Cruz, and San Benito Counties. The development of the CSEC model protocol included participation from County Counsel, the District Attorney's Office in Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties; the Sheriff's Office and Office of Education in Monterey County; and local community advocates in the Tri-County Region, including Monterey County Rape Crisis Center, Monarch Services of Santa Cruz County, Community Solutions of San Benito County, and the Coalition to End Human Trafficking in Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties. This program serves as a model of interdepartmental and regional cooperation and collaboration. County Counsel has reviewed the Memorandum of Understanding, and has approved it as to form.

FINANCING:

No appropriation is needed for the Tri-County CSEC Program memorandum of understanding. The memorandum of understanding and model protocol provide a framework for each agency to work together to identify and serve victims of commercial exploitation, and promote regional consistency. In this regard, the protocol promotes collaborative service delivery and prevents duplication of effort. There is no impact to County General Fund contributions. As mentioned above, for FY 15-16, each of the counties will receive a base funding of \$25,000, and an enhanced funding of \$27,763, for a total of \$52,763 per county. This funding (not yet received) will be spent on continued implementation efforts, training, supporting community partners in their increased workloads, outreach to the community including youth and foster families, conducting further research as to the prevalence of CSEC in the tri-county region, and expert consulting with regard to information sharing and the development of confidentiality waivers which meet state and federal information sharing mandates, and will allow for the agencies and counties to collaborate to serve youth.

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Approved by: Elliott Robinson, Director Social Services, x4434

Approved by: Marcia Parsons, Chief Probation Officer, x3913

Approved by: Ray Bullick, Health Director, x4526

Attachments: Tri County CSEC MOU

Proposed MOU is on file with the Clerk of the Board as an attachment to this Board Report.