



**County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES**

425 Shatto Place, Los Angeles, California 90020
(213) 351-5602

PATRICIA S. PLOEHN, LCSW
Director

December 19, 2008

To: Supervisor Don Knabe, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: Patricia S. Ploehn, LCSW
Director

Robert B. Taylor *siisk*
Robert Taylor
Chief Probation Officer

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TITLE IV-E CHILD WELFARE WAIVER CAPPED ALLOCATION DEMONSTRATION PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN: PROGRESS/ACTIVITY REPORT TO CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

On June 26, 2007, your Board approved the *Title IV-E Waiver Capped Allocation Demonstration Project (CADP) Implementation Plan, Edition 1, June 21, 2007*, permitting the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and Probation Department (Probation) to make critical changes in the way child welfare services are provided to children and families in Los Angeles County. As part of the CADP and subsequent Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the State, we are to provide semi-annual Progress/Activity Reports to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS). Our first update to CDSS was provided to you on March 5, 2008 with a cover letter describing progress on our Waiver implementation plans.

This is to provide you with an update on our progress in the demonstration project and with the second Title IV-E Waiver Project Progress/Activity Report provided to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) (Attachment I). The first year in the demonstration project was successful as we continued to safely return children to their families more quickly and to shorten timeframes to permanency. We were able to reduce the number of children in out of home care, improve safety and provide better outcomes for the children and families we serve. We were able to generate \$28.9 million in reinvestment funds at the end of FY 2007-08. This success was accomplished even as the nation began experiencing one of the worst financial crises in

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decades and families started feeling the effects of the year-long recession which continues today.

Concern has mounted that this economic downturn could result in increased maltreatment and larger caseloads for DCFS family maintenance and out of home care. The good news is that both of these caseloads at DCFS have continued to decrease. On November 30, 2008, the temporary out of home care placement caseload was 17,025. During the first year of the CADP, the average monthly population for Probation youth residing in group homes decreased by 15% from the previous fiscal year. Trend data for the past seven years shows that the DCFS foster care census has not increased or decreased in correlation to the unemployment rate in Los Angeles County (Attachment II). This is important to note, since the unemployment rate has grown from 5 percent to over 8 percent in the last year.

There is still much cause for concern about the impact of the recession on families. This economic downturn is more severe than any in recent years and potential repercussions are difficult to predict. We view this as a critical time to increase the support the County can offer vulnerable families. A proactive opportunity exists now to use the flexible funding reinvestment to infuse local communities in Los Angeles with more community-based services to help families before crises overwhelm their ability to parent safely. In January 2009, we will recommend to your Board the second sequence of reinvestment, in which we propose to invest over 80 percent of the funds available in community-based services and supports. This investment will allow us to address needs that emerge as the recession continues and is necessary to continue our progress in improving outcomes for children and families. Investing now in more community resources is a crucial part of keeping our momentum going.

DCFS has continued to implement its three first sequence priorities: Expansion of Family Team Decision-Making (FTDM) conferences; focused family finding and engagement through Pilot Specialized Permanency Units at three Regional Offices; and Upfront Assessments on High-risk Cases for Domestic Violence, Substance Abuse and Mental Health issues. As outlined in the attached Progress/Activity Report, DCFS' first sequence priorities are moving our children and families toward desired outcomes.

Expansion of Family Team Decision-Making (FTDM)

DCFS increased the number of FTDM facilitators so that regular multidisciplinary team conferences could be held for children placed in group homes, or in foster care for two years or longer with no identified permanency resource. By June 30, 2008, 222 youth in group home placements had a permanency planning conference to focus on their permanency plan. These conferences resulted in identified plans for 120 children to move to the home of parent or relative (61 youth) or to a reduced level of placement, including foster family agencies, licensed foster homes, or specialized foster homes (59 youth).

Focused Family Finding and Engagement

Specialized Youth Permanency (YP) Units have been established in the Metro North and Pomona Offices to target older DCFS youth most at risk of aging out of foster care without permanent connections. These youth are commonly characterized by: no or limited family connections, multiple runaways, heavy substance abuse, recent psychiatric hospitalization, and repeat runaways. Children's Social Workers (CSWs) in the YP Units carry reduced caseloads and utilize family finding and engagement strategies to identify and connect youth with extended family members. They receive additional training and high level support, as well as consultation with experts in working with older youth.

The Metro North Office existed as a pilot office prior to Waiver implementation staffed by CSWs who did not have reduced caseloads but had special interest and training in working with older youth. Since October 2005, this unit has served 159 high needs youth; over half of these youth have exited the system with connections, including 23 through family reunification, 7 through adoption, 19 through legal guardianship, and 31 through emancipation with lifelong connections. Since May 2008, when the Metro North Unit became a YP Unit under the Waiver and CSW caseloads were reduced to 15–20 youth as planned, 75 youth have been served; of these 75, 11 have returned home, 4 are under legal guardianship, 13 have been placed with relatives, 17 have been placed in lower levels of care, 22 have plans of adoption, and 4 have plans of guardianship. Fifty-three of the youth currently being served who were previously identified as having no or limited connections with family now have visits with siblings or other family members.

The Pomona YP Unit reports that it has served 72 youth. Six youth have successfully exited the system, including 2 through adoption, one through legal guardianship, and three through emancipation with lifelong connections. In addition, 16 youth have moved into lower levels of care, including 7 children placed with relatives, one youth being reunified with parents, 23 youth with plans of adoption, and 13 youth with plans of guardianship. Sixty youth are currently served by the Pomona YP Unit; 55 of these youth who were previously identified as having no or limited connections with family now have ongoing visits with siblings and other family members.

Upfront Assessments on High Risk Cases

Since October 1, 2007, DCFS has contracted with Shields for Families to provide upfront assessments for the Compton Office. Comprehensive upfront assessments are provided by expert contractors for families with referrals involving substance abuse, domestic violence and/or mental health issues. As appropriate, families are connected to treatment and ancillary services in the community, and in many cases, children are allowed to remain safely in their homes. Two additional offices, Metro North and

Wateridge, have been implementing and utilizing upfront assessments since May 2008. Preliminary data indicate that 400 assessments were completed by June 30, 2008.

As also detailed in the Progress/Activity Report, Probation has continued to implement its two first sequence implementation priorities: Enhanced Cross-Systems Case Assessment and Case Planning; and Expansion of Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST) and Functional Family Therapy (FFT).

Enhanced Cross-Systems Case Assessment and Case Planning

The goal of the cross-system assessment process is to provide information regarding mental health needs of youth in Los Angeles County. Probation placement youth are a subset of this population. Preliminary analysis of characteristics indicates that placement youth:

- are slightly younger, with an average age of 15;
- average 3 incarcerations;
- average 1.8 placements, with 59% in first placement;
- exhibit a slightly lower incidence of disruptive behavior disorders than the overall population (this is the strongest predictor of length of time in placement);
- exhibit a similar incidence of mood disorders; and
- have the highest risk score relative to all youth under juvenile supervision.

This profile of youth entering care will help our staff tailor treatment plans and match youth with the most appropriate group home provider.

Expansion of Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST) and Functional Family Therapy (FFT)

Probation leveraged grant resources and Medi-Cal in an effort to expand FFT services targeting Probation foster care youth and their families. County contracted vendors, Shields for Families and Starview Adolescent Center, provided FFT services to approximately 132 foster care youth and their families. Program participants were required to have Medi-Cal and reside in the contractors' service areas. In June 2008, 16 Deputy Probation Officers (DPO) were trained and certified in FFT to serve foster care youth that were ineligible to receive services from the contracted providers due to their Medi-Cal status and/or residence outside the contracted providers' catchments areas. The average length of stay in care for these youth was approximately five months, reducing the average length of stay in congregate care by approximately seven months.

During the first year, additional efforts by Probation included the implementation of a Restructure of Placement Services and Utilization of Aftercare Support Services.

Restructure of Placement Services

Probation has begun to restructure its Placement Services and has developed a Steering Committee comprised of relevant County Departments and community stakeholders. Since the submission of the attached Progress/Activity Report to CDSS, Probation has been working closely with Casey Family Programs (CFP) to enhance service delivery. CFP is providing consultant services in an effort to assist in the development of a Probation Practice Model focusing on Probation's foster care youth population. This Practice Model addresses service needs, as identified by the Placement Restructure Steering Committee, and will be vetted through the Steering Committee prior to full implementation.

Utilization of Aftercare Support Services

Probation's Placement Services Bureau has established the Placement Aftercare Community Transition Services (PACTS) operation. PACTS Deputy Probation Officers (DPO) carry reduced caseloads and work in concert with MST and FFT providers. These officers will be trained in Functional Family Probation (FFP), an evidence based supervision model based on FFT principles. In June 2008, Placement Title IV-E managers and impacted Supervising DPOs received FFP orientation training. In June 2008, 16 Aftercare DPOs were trained in FFT and began servicing cases in July 2008.

The Title IV-E Waiver Teams, established by DCFS and Probation and their respective Waiver Coordinators, continue to partner with one another. The Teams participate in bi-weekly meetings for project coordination, updates and planning; and convene monthly meetings with a County Steering Committee and Casey Family Programs. Both Departments are involved in additional joint and individual planning and oversight efforts with the State, Alameda County and other stakeholders. In July 2008, DCFS, Probation and the Juvenile Court began participation in the newly implemented Georgetown University Breakthrough Series Collaboration (BSC), which supports the goals and outcomes of the Waiver. The purpose of the BSC is to reduce the number of youth crossing over from the dependency system to the juvenile justice system. The focus of the BSC is also continuous quality improvement and systems change.

Both Departments also continue to work closely with the State evaluator, Charlie Ferguson, Ph.D., on data which will be used to determine whether changes in the funding structure and service delivery system for foster care will result in improved outcomes for dependent and delinquent children and their families. Attached is the University of California Berkeley's Child Welfare Services (CWS) Outcomes Systems Summary for DCFS for data extracted at the end of the first quarter FY 2008 (Attachment III). The baseline performance levels on the federal measures of safety, permanence and well-being established on July 1, 2007 are the outcomes on which DCFS improvement will be measured and will determine the success of the CADP. Since the establishment of baseline data, DCFS has increased the rate of reunification by 1.5% (61.2% to 62.1%); decreased reentry into out of home placement by 2.9%

(10.2% to 9.9%); decreased median time to adoption by 3.6% (33.6 months to 32.4 months); and, increased exits to permanency when a youth has been in care 24 months or more by 14.2% (19.0% to 21.7%).

Based on the evaluation of implementation efforts underway since CADP commencement on July 1, 2007, DCFS and Probation are working closely together to determine if first sequence priorities appear to be successful and should be continued and/or expanded. Each Department will submit a request to your Board for your approval of spending for second sequence Waiver initiatives in early 2009.

In the current deteriorating economic environment, both Departments believe it is critically important that child welfare reinvestment is made in services available for vulnerable families in their communities. To accomplish this, we expect that over two-thirds of our proposed reinvestment will be allocated for community-based services to vulnerable children and their families. Use of these reinvestment funds is subject to the provisions in the federal Terms and Conditions and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the California Department of Social Services and the County of Los Angeles (see Attachment IV). Section 2.1 of the Terms and Conditions requires participating counties to utilize their annual allotments of Title IV-E funds to expand and strengthen child welfare practice, programs and system improvements. Section G of the MOU requires that any savings realized as a result of the Demonstration Project be reallocated into the provision of child welfare services. The County is permitted to carry over its unexpended federal and State funds to the subsequent year to be reallocated into its child welfare system program.

In addition to the request for Board approval, the Departments will submit another update to your Board in approximately six months. If you have any questions, please call us or your staff may contact Armand Montiel, Manager, DCFS Board Relations Section, at (213) 351-5530.

PSP:TM
LP:pws

Attachments

c: Chief Executive Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors

Los Angeles County
Department of Children and Family Services and Probation Department
Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Capped Allocation Demonstration Project
Progress/Activity Report
January 1, 2008 through June 30, 2008

Project Overview and Status

The Title IV-E Child Welfare Waiver Capped Allocation Demonstration Project (CADP) provides Los Angeles County with the financial flexibility necessary to make strategic investments in structural and programmatic reforms needed to better serve children and families. These reforms build upon and compliment ongoing systemic improvements underway among County Departments and their community partners in Los Angeles County. This progress report provides an update on the status of the first sequence of the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and Probation Department (Probation) implementation priorities between January 1, 2008 and June 30, 2008.

The County identified universal and specific service needs and requirements for dependent and delinquent youth. Efforts made to improve outcomes have targeted specific foster care populations. Since the implementation of the CADP on July 1, 2007, the out-of-home caseload for DCFS has decreased by 10.0% (from 23,561 to 21,294) and the total AFDC-FC caseload has decreased by 9.5% (from 18,304 to 16,561) through May 31, 2008 and has decreased 3.8% (from 17,211 to 16,561) since the last reporting period ending December 31, 2007. The following table details AFDC-FC caseloads numbers by federal and non-federal and placement type:

DCFS AFDC-FC Caseloads

	Children in FFH			Children in FFA			Children in Group Home			Total		
	Non-Fed	Fed	Total	Non-Fed	Fed	Total	Non-Fed	Fed	Total	Non-Fed	Fed	Total
Jun-07	2,821	7,603	10,424	1,325	4,097	5,422	1,018	1,440	2,458	5,164	13,140	18,304
Dec-07	2,691	7,112	9,803	1,373	3,971	5,344	879	1,185	2,064	4,943	12,268	17,211
May-08	2,594	6,860	9,454	1,348	3,785	5,133	831	1,143	1,974	4,773	11,788	16,561
% of Change 6/07 to 5/08	-8.0%	-9.8%	-9.3%	1.7%	-7.6%	-5.3%	-18.4%	-20.6%	-19.7%	-7.6%	-10.3%	-9.5%
% of Change 12/07 to 5/08	-3.6%	-3.5%	-3.6%	-1.8%	-4.7%	-3.9%	-5.5%	-3.5%	-4.4%	-3.4%	-3.9%	-3.8%

*Actual data for June 2008 will not be available until the end of July 2008

During the first year of the CADP, the average monthly population for Probation youth residing in group homes decreased over 15% from the previous fiscal year.

Probation Youth In Group Home Placements

	FY 05/06	FY 06/07	FY 07/08
YEARLY TOTAL	15,716	15,983	13,476
AVERAGE/MONTH	1,304	1,332	1,123

Department of Children and Family Services

After considering the target populations, ease and speed of implementation efforts, and breadth of impact on the desired CADP outcomes, DCFS identified three first sequence priorities:

1. Expansion of Family Team Decision-Making (FTDM) Conferences;
2. Focused Family Finding and Engagement through Pilot Specialized Permanency Units at 3 Regional Offices; and,
3. Up-front Assessments on High-Risk Cases for Domestic Violence, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Issues.

Expansion of Family Team Decision-Making (FTDM) Conferences

As outlined in the Waiver Implementation Plan, DCFS increased the number of FTDM facilitators so that regular multidisciplinary team conferences could be held for children placed in group homes, or in foster care for two years or longer with no identified permanency resource. FTDM facilitators were selected for fourteen specialized positions and became operational in DCFS regional offices between January and April 2008. The addition of the fourteen facilitators allows for regular Permanency Planning Conferences (PPCs) modeled on team decision-making meetings (TDMs) to ensure that a multi-disciplinary team of professionals, family members and caregivers meets regularly to focus on the urgent permanency needs of these youth. Selecting, hiring and training these facilitators constituted an extensive process. In January 2008, specialized facilitators received an intensive five day training provided by the DCFS Training Section in collaboration with California State University, Long Beach. Additional training on facilitation is ongoing for all the FTDM facilitators, and DCFS receives technical assistance on this from the Annie E. Casey Foundation's California Family-to-Family consultants.

By June 30, 2008, 222 youth in group home placements had a PPC held to focus on their permanency plan. These conferences have resulted in identified plans for 120 children to move to the home of a parent or relative (61 children) or to a reduced level of placement, including foster family agencies, licensed foster homes, or specialized foster homes (59 children). These outcomes are encouraging, and the specialized facilitators will continue to convene PPCs quarterly for these youth to ensure all appropriate actions are taken. There are approximately 1,200 DCFS youth in group home placements in Los Angeles, and the goal is to hold a PPC with all of them.

Focused Family Finding and Engagement through Pilot Specialized Permanency Units at 3 Regional Offices

Specialized Youth Permanency (YP) units have been established to target DCFS' older youth most at risk of aging out of foster care with no permanent connections and who may have the following characteristics: no or limited family connections, multiple recent runaways, heavy substance abuse, recent psychiatric hospitalization, and repeat runaways.

CSWs in the YP units carry reduced caseloads of 15:1 and utilize family finding and engagement strategies, including case mining and internet search technologies, to identify and connect youth with extended family members. They receive additional training and support on youth permanence, as well as expert case consultation and high-level support. Expert consultants continue to train all the staff in these offices to provide a framework of tools on reconciling loss, rebuilding relationships, and supporting belonging. All staff in these offices is being trained on permanency for older youth so the focus of the YP units does not exist in a silo, and so everyone in the office understands and can support the work of the YP units.

The YP Implementation Workgroup created formal written policy and protocols for the YP Units, and meets bi-monthly to discuss ongoing policy issues, case criteria, training, and data collection. As of April 2008, two regional offices, Metro North and Pomona, have been operational and fully staffed with Children's Social Workers (CSWs) and Supervising Children's Social Workers (SCSWs) at the reduced caseload of fifteen (which is flexible up to 24:1 including siblings and cases close to achieving permanency). The Santa Clarita Office, identified as the third regional office for this pilot, recently identified a SCSW and five CSWs to staff their YP unit, which is currently planned to be operational in August 2008.

Surveys have been conducted in all three offices to identify those youth who meet YP criteria. Survey results indicate that 221 youth met YP criteria in the two operational offices and 129 are currently being served by their YP Units. These 129 youth represent approximately 8% of the offices' permanency planning caseload. Office-wide surveys will be conducted at least every six months to continue to assess youth who may benefit from the specialization of a YP unit.

Up-Front Assessments on High Risk Cases for Domestic Violence, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Issues

This priority initiative seeks to prevent unnecessary foster care placements through more thorough investigation and assessment of Child Protection Hotline (Hotline) referrals of alleged child abuse and neglect that require special expertise involving substance abuse, domestic violence and/or mental health

issues. These assessments are conducted on the target population of families with high-risk Hotline referrals in the Compton Office service area. Experts in substance abuse, domestic violence and mental health services provide immediate, comprehensive assessments, and connect families to treatment and ancillary services in the community. These services allow Emergency Response social workers to make more informed case decisions, and in many cases, allow children to remain safely in their homes.

Since October 1, 2007, DCFS has contracted with Shields for Families to provide up-front assessments for the Compton Office. Preliminary data indicate that 400 such assessments have been completed as of June 30, 2008. The outcomes of these assessments are still being evaluated. We are in the process of planning to identify funds to expand up-front assessments for the Department's Emergency Response Command Post (ERCP), and believe this will be accomplished in the next six months. Two additional regional offices, Metro North and Wateridge, have been implementing and utilizing up-front assessments as of May 2008. Due to recent implementation, data from these offices will be available in the next progress report.

Probation Department

In the County's June, 2007 Implementation Plan, Probation identified two first sequence implementation priorities:

1. Enhanced Cross-Systems Case Assessment and Case Planning
2. Expansion of Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST) and Functional Family Therapy (FFT)

Two additional efforts identified in Probation's overall five-year plan are also underway:

3. Restructure of Placement Services
4. Utilization of Aftercare Support Services

Enhanced Cross-Systems Case Assessment and Case Planning

Probation and the Department of Mental Health (DMH) implemented the first phase of this initiative by identifying and developing the tools to be used in the Cross-Systems Case Assessment. During the initial phase of implementation, one DMH staff was identified and co-located with Probation staff to lift the operational components of this initiative. Within the next 90 days, both Probation and DMH will have the necessary staff in place, trained and conducting assessments. This initiative will promote appropriate placement decisions and collaboration; enhance case planning efforts; increase placement stability and decrease delays in critical treatment during the transition from detention to out-of-home care.

Expansion of Multi-Systemic Therapy and Functional Family Therapy

Probation has adopted MST and FFT as first line treatment approaches to serve youth at risk of removal from home and youth returning from congregate care. These services are delivered in the home rather than in a clinic or residential treatment setting. Probation has leveraged existing MST and FFT resources and is utilizing a blended funding stream strategy (grant funds, IV-E reinvestment dollars, and Medi-Cal) to provide the expansion of MST and FFT services to Probation placement youth.

Since the implementation of the CADP, Probation has provided MST and FFT services to approximately 132 youth and families. Youth identified for program participation were Probation Placement youth previously residing in congregate care who were released to the care and custody of their parents with MST or FFT services. The average length of stay in care for these youth was approximately five months. It has been projected that the average length of stay in congregate care for Probation Placement youth prior to the CADP was twelve months. It is premature to provide baseline projections as the program is in an early stage.

In June 2008, Probation entered into a contract with the California Institute of Mental Health (CIMH) to obtain certification for three in-house Probation FFT Teams. Sixteen Deputy Probation Officers (DPO) were trained and certified in FFT to serve foster care youth transitioning from group home care back to their homes, support relative/non-relative placements, and support youth transitioning from camp who are identified as high-risk for group home placement. Additionally, CIMH is scheduled to train approximately forty DPOs in Functional Family Probation/Parole (FFPP). In community settings, youth are monitored under FFPP. The treatment and intervention focus shifts to creating a more functional environment within the family with whom the child resides. Research on maintaining and supporting behavior change for troubled adolescents indicates intervention is most effective if promoted within a family context.

Using the FFPP model, DPOs work with families to address the role each member has in generating, and ultimately resolving, "problem behavior." Functional Family DPOs work to engage and motivate all family members by creating a balanced alliance with each, and creating a family focus for treatment. Early interventions reduce blame and negativity among family members and instill hope for change. Families are also referred to needed services in the community that match family interaction styles and provide continued support for the family once the youth is no longer on probation.

Restructure of Placement Services

Probation has begun to restructure its Placement Services Operation and has developed a Steering Committee comprised of relevant County Departments and various community stakeholders. The Steering Committee has established three workgroups, corresponding to the CADP first sequence initiatives and efforts: Cross-Systems/Case Assessment Planning; Residential Based Services Treatment (RBS); and Transition and Aftercare. The Cross-Systems Case Assessment and Planning Work Group has drafted a protocol and process for assessing youth coming into group home care. The assessment process will include and emphasize parental input and involvement. In addition, Probation and DMH staff will be cross-trained in the assessment protocol and process as well as the multidisciplinary assessment tools. Similarly, the RBS Work Group has completed a draft report on standardizing RBS services, enhancing family engagement and involvement, and standardizing intake and assessment for group home providers. The Transition and Aftercare Work Group has drafted a standardized protocol for youth transitioning from group homes which will include a Team Decision Making-like process. Closely related to this, youth leaving group homes will have an aftercare plan and services.

Utilization of Aftercare Support Services

To improve the quality of aftercare supervision provided to Probation youth, provide critical overall support to the youth and families that are enrolled in FFT and MST, and ensure that youth have a seamless transition from the group home to the home and community, the Placement Services Bureau has established the Placement Aftercare Community Transition Services (PACTS) operation. PACTS Deputy Probation Officers (DPO) carry reduced caseloads and work in concert with MST and FFT providers. As of June, 2008, sixteen Aftercare DPOs have been trained in FFT and will begin taking cases in July, 2008. In addition, a Group Home Liaison position was developed to assure a seamless feedback mechanism with Residential-Based (Placement) DPOs, treatment service providers, group home providers and DCFS specifically in the areas of transition and transition/discharge planning.

Project Administration/Fiscal Management/Implementation Activities

Planning/Oversight Efforts – As previously reported, both DCFS and Probation have established Title IV-E Waiver Teams led by Waiver Coordinators. The Teams work in concert with one another and continue to participate in bi-weekly Waiver Management Team meetings to provide project coordination and updates and discuss next steps. Both Departments attend monthly implementation meetings with Casey Family Programs and monthly County Steering Committee meetings with the Chief Executive Office (CEO) and have made numerous presentations to the Board of Supervisors, Board of Supervisors Justice and

Children's Deputies, Children's Commission and CEO. The Departments have collaborated to jointly sponsor a community stakeholder meeting on July 14, 2008, providing staff, other County participants, and community partners and stakeholders with a CADP update. Scheduled presenters included CDSS Director John Wagner on the State Perspective, and State Waiver Evaluator, Dr. Charlie Ferguson, on the Statewide Evaluation.

In addition to these joint efforts, **DCFS** is involved in the following planning/oversight efforts specific to its project priorities:

- **Monthly Waiver Coordinator Check-In Call with CDSS** – The DCFS Waiver Coordinator participates in monthly conference calls with Alameda County's Waiver Coordinator and CDSS Waiver Managers.
- **DCFS Executive Team**, led by the Director, meets on a weekly basis; the Waiver Coordinator provides an update, and upper level administration discusses CADP activities, status and challenges.
- **DCFS Waiver Team** meets on a regular basis to discuss progress of CADP initiatives and day-to-day operations.
- **State/County IV-E Fiscal Workgroup** - Periodic conference calls led by CDSS with Los Angeles and Alameda Counties are held to discuss fiscal issues related to Waiver implementation.
- **State/County IV-E Evaluation Workgroup** - Periodic conference calls led by CDSS with Los Angeles and Alameda Counties as well as stakeholders are held to discuss evaluation issues related to Waiver implementation.
- **Family Team Decision Making Roundtable** – The TDM Manager meets on a monthly basis with TDM facilitators countywide to address policy, practice and operational issues and may use the process as a vehicle to address the implementation of permanency planning conferences.
- **PPC/TDM Facilitators** meet bi-weekly to address implementation of PPC/TDMs and outcomes related to PPCs held for youth in group homes.
- **Youth Permanency Implementation Workgroup** meets bi-weekly to address policy and practice issues and expedite implementation of the Youth Permanency Units. A subcommittee, addressing Data Outcomes specific to the Permanency Units, also meets on a regular basis.
- **Up-front Assessment** meetings take place with the Compton Office and Shields for Families to address the implementation of up-front assessments, data collection and outcomes evaluation. Similar meetings have taken place with the addition of the Metro North and Wateridge Offices and their contracted up-front assessment providers.
- **Residentially-Based Services (RBS) Workgroup** meets monthly to discuss reform of residential care, including efforts to reduce the length of stay, for DCFS and Probation youth. A subgroup, the RBS Collaborative, meets semi-monthly to create a redesign proposal for residential care for DCFS and Probation youth. These efforts provide an opportunity to update RBS providers and receive feedback on barriers, successes and opportunities.

- **Other Meetings** are ongoing with the Children's Commissioners, Board Offices, and CEO budget analysts specific to DCFS project components.

Probation has facilitated the following project planning/oversight meetings specific to its project priorities:

- **Weekly Probation Title IV-E Management Meetings** to help guide implementation of the CADP Plan and ensure fidelity to the Plan.
- **Monthly Group Home Provider Meetings** are held to address communication needs under the Waiver environment, facilitate communication of the CADP Plan to Probation's group home providers and provide feedback on barriers, successes and opportunities.
- **Quarterly Group Homes Administrators Meetings** are held to increase communication during the Waiver project period.
- **Bench Officers Meetings** are convened to inform Delinquency Bench Officers of the progress of Probation Waiver efforts and to receive feedback from the bench that could be included in ongoing efforts to improve services and move system improvements forward.
- **CADP Stakeholder's Steering Committee (Probation-Specific)**, consisting of representatives from group home providers, Children's Commission, bench officers, school districts, Public Defender's Office, Department of Mental Health and Probation, has been charged with assisting Probation's efforts to align its foster care Placement Operation with the CADP plan and planning and implementation of CADP programs and services.
- **Other Meetings** are ongoing with the Children's and Probation Commissioners, Board Offices, and CEO budget analysts specific to the Probation project components.

Specific Program and Policy Changes – **DCFS** has existing policy on TDM, and written policy has been developed to address the use of Permanency Planning Conferences in each of the Department's 18 offices. Formal policy has been written and disseminated to staff regarding the implementation of the Youth Permanency Units in three regional DCFS offices. Up-front assessments for DCFS Regional offices have not required a program change at this time as they are a continuation of a previous program; however, expansion of up-front assessments to Emergency Response Command Post staff will require program changes which are currently being addressed by the Executive Team, Program Manager and Up-front Assessment Committee.

For **Probation**, program changes included the targeting of placement youth for FFT and MST services and the development of the placement aftercare operation, PACTS. Probation implemented two evidence-based programs, FFT and FFPP, into the Department to serve youth that are impacted by the Waiver.

Challenges and/or Technical Assistance Needs

DCFS has experienced the following challenges in implementing the CADP:

- Difficulty in the timely hiring and reporting of allocated staff for expanded Family Team Decision Making and Youth Permanency Units due to County budgeting and hiring requirements.
- Shortage of staff required to monitor and oversee all aspects of up-front assessment implementation.
- The need to develop an automated system to track expenditures and revenue in more detail; presently DCFS must create manual spreadsheets to accurately identify and manually track data and different funding sources.

Probation has experienced the following challenges in implementing the CADP:

- Probation's Placement Administrative Services Division employed strategies that would address timely reconciliation of Probation records and CWS/CMS data. This was a large undertaking that required researching hundreds of cases and developing needed packets that would initiate the opening and/or closing of placement cases to maintain accurate records. These efforts will require a significant ongoing workforce effort due to Probation's inability to access CWS/CMS and electronically access Delinquency Court minute orders.
- Inability to warehouse and access foster care data for the mandatory State evaluation. Probation cannot readily access foster care data with its current technology.
- Lack of an automated system to track Probation Placement expenditures. Probation must create separate spreadsheets to accurately identify and manually track data for each Placement case and all case activity to identify projected assistance payment costs and/or reductions as well as numerous trend data.

New Initiatives and/or State Waiver Related Program Activities

DCFS

Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project (PIDP) – DCFS' \$5 million PIDP was approved by the Board of Supervisors on February 26, 2008. Eight contracts were approved to establish lead agencies in each of the Service Planning Areas (SPAs). Initially, the PIDP was a 12-month project, but DCFS will be pursuing an additional four months of time for the lead agencies and their DCFS regional partners to fully implement their prevention strategies and initiatives. The end date of the PIDP is projected to be June 30, 2009. The evaluation of PIDP will be conducted through a collaborative consisting of Casey Family Programs, First 5 LA, and Professor Jacquelyn McCroskey from the University of Southern

California. The goals of the evaluation are threefold: (1) identify best practices which can be replicated countywide; (2) identify successful leveraging strategies between and within the Community Based Organizations (CBOs), County agencies and private business; and (3) provide DCFS with results to be used to restructure its current contracting process to become more client delivery focused.

Intensive Treatment Foster Care (ITFC)/Multi-dimensional Treatment Foster Care (MTFC) – Working closely with CDSS over the summer of 2007, DCFS received approval for Los Angeles to begin to develop ITFC beds for 72 children, and MTFC beds for 60 children, as alternatives to placing children in group homes. The Los Angeles Board of Supervisors approved contracts for three ITFC providers for 24 beds each and two other providers for 60 beds of Multi-Dimensional Treatment Foster Care (MTFC), a highly structured model of treatment foster care which DCFS got state approval to fund at the ITFC payment rate. All five providers signed their contracts in early January 2008. These five contracts are for a total of 132 beds for the two program types. The training requirements for staff and for treatment foster parents have been one factor that has slowed down implementation. DCFS worked very closely with DMH to provide training opportunities for staff on treatment models. At this point 8 of 11 available beds have had children placed in them. Sixteen more beds are in the process of being certified.

Residentially-Based Services (RBS) Reform – Under the authority of AB 1453 to pilot alternative program designs and funding models, DCFS is working on an RBS demonstration project design. DCFS submitted a letter of intent proposal to CDSS on April 4, 2008, and was subsequently selected to be a participant county. The model is designed to provide concurrent wraparound services to youth and their families while youth are placed in selected RCL 12 and 14 care group homes for reduced lengths of stay, and ongoing wraparound and community-based care after the youth exit residential care. Funding for concurrent wraparound services will come from savings realized from reduced lengths of stay, and a risk pool will set aside funding for youth with extended stays and unanticipated costs.

While Probation has elected not to participate in initial RBS reform pilots, a placeholder was inserted into DCFS' letter of intent to allow Probation's subsequent participation during the pilot period. CDSS has met with participant counties, including Los Angeles, to address the State's required process and timelines and provide technical support. DCFS will be submitting its program design, including system description and alternative funding model, voluntary agreements and waiver requests, to CDSS by October 17, 2008.

DCFS will determine if first sequence priorities appear to be successful and should be continued and/or expanded, and if one of the other previously identified initiatives should be implemented. This assessment will include input generated by a large convening of DCFS, Probation and its community partners and stakeholders at the July 14, 2008 Waiver Learning Organization Group (LOG).

Probation, in partnership with CIMH, will implement FFPP training to approximately forty DPOs during the next twelve months. The Probation Steering Committee, Probation managers and various stakeholder groups will be developing and implementing a communication plan that best addresses the needs of the Waiver. This body will conduct and review analysis on the outcome data for Probation's second initiative to determine the level of its success and whether there is a need to further expand this initiative in the second year. Additionally, the Steering Committee will be reviewing other identified initiatives and possible supervision models in an effort to determine which initiatives and supervision modifications will be implemented next. It has been agreed that implementation will occur as resources are available to support system improvements and administrative infrastructure needs, and in a manner that will build on supporting current programs while providing enhanced services.

Direct Services Activities

As detailed in earlier sections of this report, during the past six months **DCFS** has provided direct services to children and families under its three first sequence priority initiatives. FTDM has been expanded to provide Permanency Planning Conferences (PPC) to youth in group home care in an effort to expedite permanency for these youth; over 200 FTDM PPCs have been conducted for identified group home youth. Youth Permanency Units have been staffed, and social workers in these units are carrying reduced caseloads of high-need youth with no identified permanency resources, in an effort to locate and connect these youth with permanency resources. Approximately 400 up-front assessments have been conducted in the DCFS Compton Office, and up-front assessments began in two additional regional offices, Metro North and Wateridge, since May 2008.

Probation has identified two evidence-based practices, FFT and MST, as a program priority and has already expanded their population to include Placement youth. To date, these programs have been working with 132 Placement youth and their families. PACTS has been implemented and is serving these same youth and families to further support reunification efforts. Probation has entered into a contract with CIMH and received formal FFT training for sixteen DPOs. Additionally, placement supervision and aftercare DPOs will be trained in the promising practice of FFP within the next twelve months to support the transition from congregate care to the home and community.

Evaluation Activities

The primary purpose of the CADP evaluation designed by Charlie Ferguson, PhD, is to determine whether the changes in the funding structure for foster care will result in changes in the functioning of County child welfare systems that lead to improved outcomes for dependent and delinquent children and their families. As reported in the previous Progress Activity Report, Dr. Ferguson's evaluation has three CADP evaluation components: Process, Fiscal, and Outcome.

During the week of April 28, 2008, Dr. Ferguson conducted the second round of Los Angeles County focus groups and key informant interviews for DCFS and Probation in an effort to identify ongoing CADP supervision efforts and overall CADP project understanding.

While Dr. Ferguson is evaluating the CADP on a statewide and countywide basis, DCFS has begun working closely with Casey Family Programs and Dr. Jacquelyn McCroskey of the University of Southern California to implement another local evaluation study of the Point of Engagement strategy, and will build on the design of Dr. McCroskey's initial Point of Engagement (POE) evaluation from 2006. The findings from this previous POE evaluation suggest a set of key measures for further process evaluations of service delivery systems that will be utilized in the new local evaluation design. The local evaluation will be closely aligned with another key effort already underway in Los Angeles County, the Los Angeles Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project (PIDP).

As outlined earlier in this report, the PIDP is a 12-month child abuse and neglect prevention demonstration project intended to create a comprehensive, strength-based, prevention system extending beyond County government and beyond the jurisdiction of any one County department by enhancing existing community based networking systems. The goal of the PIDP is to keep children safe from harm and prevent families from entering, re-entering, and/or experiencing extended stays in the County's health and human services system.

The evaluations of POE and the PIDP are similar enough that many data collection tasks can be merged – especially since prevention evaluation planning built on the original POE evaluation. Because “prevention” has been defined as including families not known to the child welfare system as well as families referred to the Child Protection Hotline and families with open DCFS cases, the broad view of the PIDP also encompasses Waiver related activities.

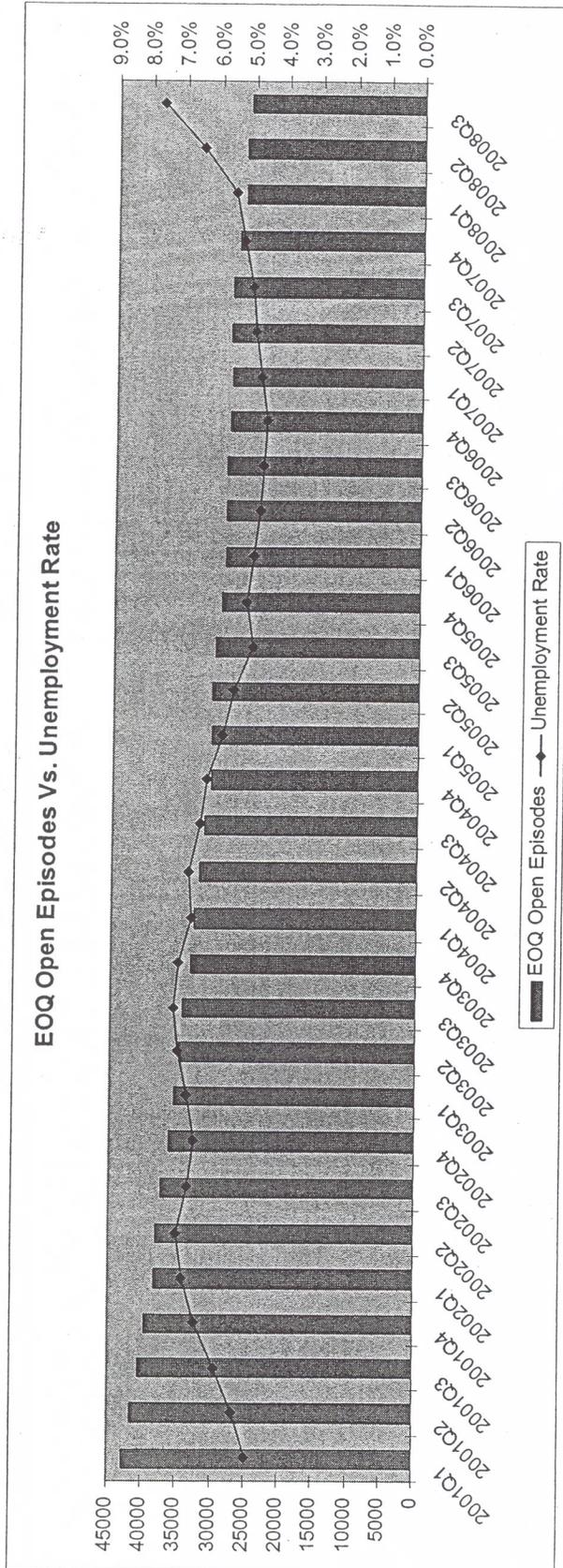
As a result of Probation's inability to access CWS/CMS and because juvenile justice systems have not historically warehoused needed project evaluation data, technological system enhancements are necessary and will promote the ability to draw down baseline and outcome data. Probation has incorporated many of the

Waiver data needs into the automated system that will be implemented in FY 2008/2009. Additionally, Probation has continued to work with DCFS and the State Evaluator in identifying data that is currently available and needed data enhancements. Probation has been working with the State Evaluator in conducting both internal focus groups and survey to identify baseline data for the evaluation.

Expenditure Narrative Based on Claiming Submissions

DCFS expanded the following initiatives/strategies utilizing available flexible funds under the Waiver: Family Team Decision Making, Up-front Assessments and Family Finding and Engagement. As of June 30, 2008, the total amount of expenditures incurred for these initiatives/strategies is \$1,439,562. This amount includes salaries and employee benefits in the amount of \$1,027,737, Indirect Costs in the amount of \$298,044, and services and supplies in the amount of \$113,781. These expenditures will be reflected in our revised third quarter claim for fiscal year 2007/2008, and appropriate costs will also be included in the fourth quarter claim.

End of Quarter Episode Population – Seven Year Trend



The overall effect of exits exceeding continually placements is the net reduction in active episodes at any point in time. For each of the past 30 quarters, (with one exception) the number of children with out-of-home episodes on the last day of each quarter has declined, regardless of the unemployment rate.

Data Sources:

Unemployment - Employment Development Department Labor Market Information Division, (916) 262-2162 <http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov>.
11/21/2008

Placement: Query of active episodes in LA County on last day of quarter (excludes: < 8 day episode, probationers, mental health and kinship) - AWOLs and others who may not be in continuous placement are included) - CWS/CMS Data - CRC Data Warehouse 12-09-08

COUNTY DCFS CWS OUTCOMES SYSTEM SUMMARY
Q1 2008

Measure description	Q2 2007 Baseline Performance	Q3 2007 Performance	Q4 2007 Performance	Q1 2008 start date	Q1 2008 end date	Q1 2008 numerator	Q1 2008 denominator	Q1 2008 performance	National Standard or Goal	Comparison to the National Standard
S1.1 No Recurrence Of Maltreatment	93.4	94.6	94.2	04/01/07	03/31/08	9,315	9,980	93.3	94.6	-1.4%
S2.1 No Maltreatment In Foster Care	99.81	99.77	99.72	04/01/07	03/31/08	33,831	33,944	99.67	99.68	0.0%
C1.1 Reunification Within 12 Months (Exit Cohort)	61.2	61.6	62.0	04/01/07	03/31/08	3,987	6,280	62.1	75.2	-17.4%
C1.2 Median Time To Reunification (Exit Cohort) in Months	8.2	8.2	8.2	04/01/07	03/31/08	N.A.	6,280	8.2	5.2	57.7%
C1.3 Reunification Within 12 Months (Entry Cohort)	39.4	40.8	40.4	04/01/07	03/31/08	1,660	4,052	41.0	48.4	-15.3%
C1.4 Reentry Following Reunification (Exit Cohort)	10.2	10.1	9.8	04/01/06	03/31/07	615	6,185	9.9	9.9	0.0%
C2.1 Adoption Within 24 Months (Exit Cohort)	24.5	25.2	23.9	04/01/07	03/31/08	519	2,137	24.3	36.6	-33.6%
C2.2 Median Time To Adoption (Exit Cohort) in Months	33.6	33.4	32.7	04/01/07	03/31/08	N.A.	2,137	32.4	27.3	18.7%
C2.3 Adoption Within 12 Months (17 Months In Care)	14.3	14.6	15.0	04/01/07	03/31/08	1,674	10,890	15.4	22.7	-32.2%
C2.4 Legally Free Within 6 Months (17 Months In Care)	5.1	5.1	6.0	04/01/07	03/31/08	641	9,119	7.0	10.9	-35.8%
C2.5 Adoption Within 12 Months (Legally Free)	59.3	59.7	59.9	04/01/06	03/31/07	1,261	1,610	61.3	53.7	14.2%
C3.1 Exits To Permanency (24 Months In Care)	19.0	19.8	20.9	04/01/07	03/31/08	2,186	10,067	21.7	29.1	-25.4%
C3.2 Exits To Permanency (Legally Free At Exit)	96.7	96.8	96.6	04/01/07	03/31/08	2,187	2,280	95.9	98.0	-2.1%
C3.3 In Care 3 Years Or Longer (Emancipated/Age 18)	66.6	66.8	65.1	04/01/07	03/31/08	1,029	1,610	63.9	37.5	70.4%
C4.1 Placement Stability (8 Days To 12 Months In Care)	87.4	86.5	86.3	04/01/07	03/31/08	9,765	11,353	86.0	86.0	0.0%
C4.2 Placement Stability (12 To 24 Months In Care)	72.2	71.4	71.0	04/01/07	03/31/08	5,087	7,158	71.1	65.4	8.7%
C4.3 Placement Stability (At Least 24 Months In Care)	39.0	39.3	39.6	04/01/07	03/31/08	5,180	13,039	39.7	41.8	-5.0%

Data source: CWS Outcomes Systems Summary for Los Angeles County, October 2008 Report (Data Extract Q1 2008). UC Berkeley's Center for Social Services Research.
All performance data is measured by percentage with the exception of Median Time to Reunification and Median Time to Adoption, which is measured by months.

**TITLE IV-E CHILD WELFARE WAIVER
CAPPED ALLOCATION DEMONSTRATION PROJECT
Requirements for Use of Available Child Welfare Reinvestment Funds
DCFS**

Background

The use of available child welfare reinvestment funds is subject to the provisions in the federal Terms and Conditions and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the California Department of Social Services and the County of Los Angeles.

The specific goals of the State's waiver demonstration are:

- To improve the array of service for children and families and engage families through more individualized approach that emphasizes family involvement;
- To increase child safety without an over-reliance on out-of-home care;
- To improve permanency outcomes and timelines; and
- To improve child and family well-being.

Under the Capped Allocation Demonstration Project, the federal government waived certain Title IV-E requirements to allow flexibility to reinvest in services in the community for children and their families without having to remove them from their homes, and for children who do not meet Title IV-E eligibility requirements.

Federal Terms and Conditions

Section 2.1 requires participating counties to utilize their annual allotments of Title IV-E funds to expand and strengthen the child welfare practice, programs, and system improvements throughout the State.

State MOU Provisions

Section A of the MOU states that implementation of this flexible funding strategy will support practice, programs, and system improvements intended to result in better outcomes for children and families, in part by reducing reliance on out-of-home placements by reducing the numbers of children placed in out-of-home placements and shortening the time to reunification or alternate permanency with families.

Section G of the MOU provides general fiscal provisions and states that any savings realized as a result of the Demonstration Project must be reallocated into the provision of child welfare services. The County will be allowed to carry over their unexpended federal and State funds to the next year to be reallocated into the CWS program.

Section J of the MOU provides County fiscal provisions and states that the County must maintain an annual level of funding based on County expenditures from FY 2005/06, therefore unexpended County General Fund is considered reinvestment funds and shall be used for further provisions of child welfare services based on the approved County Five Year Plan.

Reinvestments To Expand and Strengthen Child Welfare Practice

DCFS and Probation are currently working to reevaluate projected expenditures for the remaining years of the Waiver to determine how much funding is available in order to recommend additional Waiver investments. This evaluation is expected to be completed within the next three weeks. The following describes the DCFS Waiver initiatives currently funded and those that are being considered for FY 2008-09 by DCFS for submission for Board approval once the available reinvestment funds are calculated.

DCFS Implemented First Sequence Initiatives - FY 2007-2008

- Family Team Decision Making Expansion (FTDM) – 14 Supervising Children’s Social Workers (SCSWs) hold Permanency Planning Conferences for youth in Group Homes.
- Up Front Assessments and additional Family Preservation slots:
 - Implemented at Compton Office.
 - Piloted at Emergency Response Command Post, Metro North Office and Wateridge Office.
- Family Finding and Engagement through Youth Permanency Units with lowered caseloads (1:15) and specialized training and support:
 - Metro North Office
 - Pomona Office

DCFS Proposed Second Sequence Initiatives - FY 2008-2009

- Family Team Decision Making Expansion/Families for Life Conferencing Model and ERCP TDM Facilitators
- Up Front Assessments and additional Family Preservation slots:
 - Expanded to all Regional Offices.
- Family Finding and Engagement through Youth Permanency Units with lowered caseloads (1:15) and specialized training and support:
 - Metro North Office - 2 additional staff.
 - Pomona Office – 3 additional staff.
 - New Santa Clarita Office Unit – 7 staff
- Family Finding and Engagement at Front End
 - Increase US Search Contract.
- Aftercare Services
- Differential Response

Department of Children and Family Services
 WAIVER REINVESTMENT FUNDS FACT SHEET
 FY 2007-08

The first year of the Waiver has proven to be a success. An additional \$28.9 million in Waiver reinvestment funds was generated. These funds will be used to expand and enhance Waiver initiatives in order to further improve services to children and families.

Administration – Waiver Programs

Salaries & Employee Benefits	\$ 7,975,000 ⁽¹⁾
Services & Supplies	5,120,000 ⁽²⁾
Other Charges	1,653,000 ⁽³⁾
Fixed Assets	317,000 ⁽⁴⁾
Total Administration Waiver Reinvestment Funds	<u>\$15,065,000</u>

- (1) Salaries & Employee Benefits reinvestment funds are due to vacancies resulting from hiring delays.
- (2) Services & Supplies reinvestment funds are primarily due to lower than budgeted charges for services from CEO, DHR, and ISD, as well as lease costs.
- (3) Other Charges reinvestment funds are primarily due to lower than budgeted Capital Lease charges.
- (4) Fixed Assets reinvestment funds are primarily due to lower than budgeted expenditures for printers, switches and Cisco software.

Assistance – Waiver Programs*

Waiver – Probation Assistance Savings	2,230,000 ⁽⁵⁾
Waiver - Wraparound Flex Pool	11,584,000 ⁽⁶⁾
Total Assistance Waiver Reinvestment Funds	<u>\$13,814,000</u>

- (5) Waiver reinvestment funds generated by a reduction in Probation assistance costs based on a comparison of costs in FY 2006-07 to costs in FY 2007-08.
- (6) Waiver reinvestment funds of \$11.6 million due to the discontinuance of deposits in the Wraparound Flex Pool due to implementation of the Waiver. The funding for the deposits was included in the FY 2007-08 Adopted Budget and was not expended. Prior to implementation of the Waiver, DCFS could claim at a higher rate than the actual payments for federally eligible children and the surplus was deposited in the Flex Pool. Under the capped allocation, there are no additional funds to deposit in the Pool.

* Does not include \$15.2 million that shows in the closing numbers for FY 2007-08 that were budgeted for the Dual Agency rate increase payments that were delayed due to payment system programming delays. These funds will be carried over in the FY 2008-09 budget in order to issue retroactive payments due to providers for FY 2007-08.