

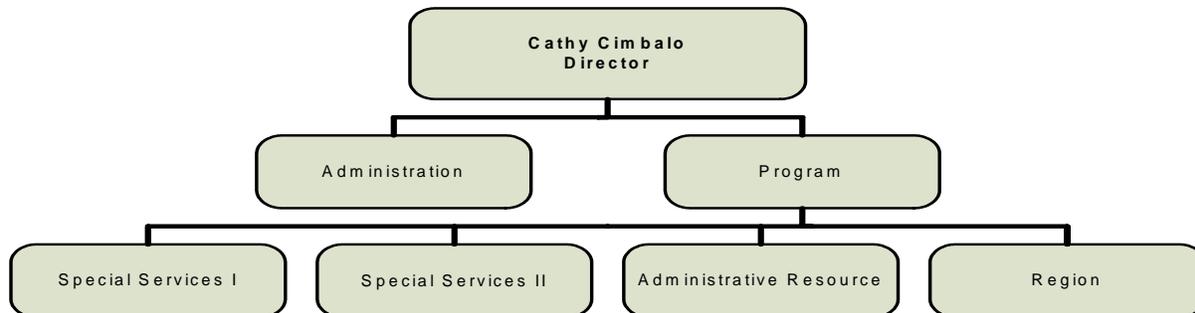
CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Cathy Cimbalo

I. MISSION STATEMENT

To protect endangered children, preserve and strengthen their families, and develop alternative family settings. Services, as mandated by law and regulation, will be provided in the least intrusive manner with a family-centered focus. This mission is accomplished in collaboration with the family, a wide variety of public and private agencies, and members of the community.

II. ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



III. DESCRIPTION OF MAJOR SERVICES

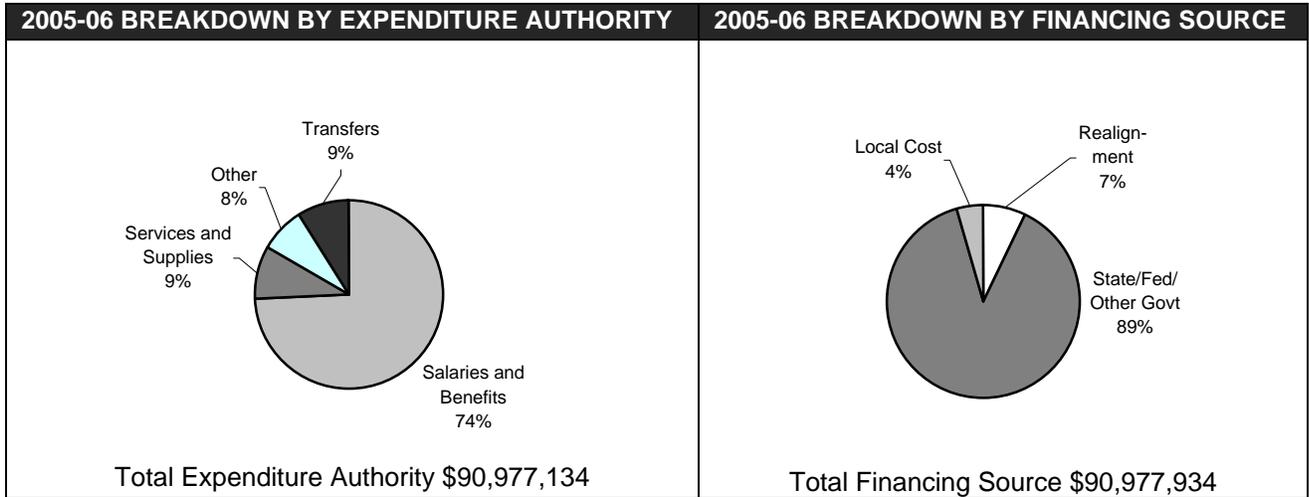
The Department of Children's Services (DCS) is a collection of programs aimed at reducing the occurrence of child abuse and neglect in San Bernardino County. The primary goal of these programs is maintaining families whenever possible. When not possible, the secondary goal is to provide the best permanent plan for the child removed from his or her caretaker. To accomplish the mission of DCS, a wide variety of services are offered. Child Protective Services is the program with the highest visibility, with the goal of prevention of abuse to minors and the protection of those abused.

Other DCS programs include:

- Emergency Response (ER): investigates allegations of child abuse and neglect and makes immediate plans to ensure the safety of endangered children. This is often the "front door" for clients entering the Child Welfare System.
- Family Maintenance (FM): builds on families' strengths and helps to remove barriers so children can remain safely at home.
- Family Reunification (FR): works to make the family environment a safe one so children can return home.
- Permanency Planning (PP): ensures that children who are unable to live safely with their birth families can grow up in a safe and secure permanent living arrangement.
- Foster Parent Recruitment and Training, along with Foster Home Licensing: maintains and creates out-of-home placement resource options throughout the county.
- Adoptions: performs assessments of adoptive families and matches children with permanent families when their birth families are no longer an option.
- Independent Living Program: assists youth in successfully transitioning out of the foster care system.



IV. 2005-06 BUDGET



V. GOALS & 2006-07 OBJECTIVES AT CURRENT FUNDING LEVELS

GOALS	2006-07 OBJECTIVES
1. Increase the number of adoptions.	A. Increase number of home studies completed to expedite adoptive placements.
2. Increase the number of foster children in the Independent Living Skills Program that earned a High School Diploma or G.E.D.	<p>A. Establish system to identify and track the performance of child welfare dependents on the High School Proficiency (Exit) Exam.</p> <p>B. Secure/implement customized tutoring programs designed to address needs of exiting youth.</p> <p>C. Refer and ensure linkage to tutoring services for Juniors and Seniors experiencing difficulty passing the Proficiency exam.</p>

DCS is committed to safety, well-being, and permanency in keeping with the agency’s long standing mission and values and new legislation (AB 636, Outcomes and Accountability Act). AB 636 requires that DCS monitor and improve outcomes for the children and families served. Adoption, a focal point for improvement, is one of the permanency options available to children who are not able to safely reunify with their families of origin. An analysis of local Child Welfare data, input from stakeholders and recommendations of the Self Assessment Team indicated a need for continued focus on increasing the number of children who are adopted. Therefore, establishing a goal of increasing the number of adoptions for the HS Business Plan is in keeping with DCS’s 2004-2007 Self Improvement Plan submitted to as a requirement of AB 636.

Foster Children exiting the Child Welfare system have received much attention at the national and state level. According to the Pew Commission on Foster Care, Child Welfare League of America, and California Youth Connection, 20,000 teens per year age out of foster care. Forty-six (46%) of foster youth do not complete high school, compared to 16% in the general population. Of those exiting or aging out, 33% are below grade level in reading, writing and Math; 26% have a history of repeating a grade in Middle or High School; 60% have failed at least one class in the previous year; and 25%-33% become homeless after aging out of care. Many are found in the Juvenile Justice system. Concern exists as to how foster youth will perform on a structured High School Exit exam. Therefore, the department is taking steps to provide maximum support to foster youth to enhance their chances of succeeding on the examination and enhancing



the likelihood of further successful endeavors. The goal of increasing the number of youth graduating from high school is consistent with department's overall goal of improving outcomes for youth.

VI. PERFORMANCE MEASURES AT CURRENT FUNDING LEVELS

OBJT.	MEASUREMENT	2006-07 (Projected)
1A.	Children adopted.	3.2% Increase (Total of 490 children)
2A.	Foster youth graduating with a high school diploma over 2004-05 statistics.	2% Increase

If there are questions about this business plan, please contact Veronica Hilton, Deputy Director, at (909) 383-9784.

