



**DeAnna Avey-Motikeit**  
Director

**Mission Statement**  
*Children and Family Services protects 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.*



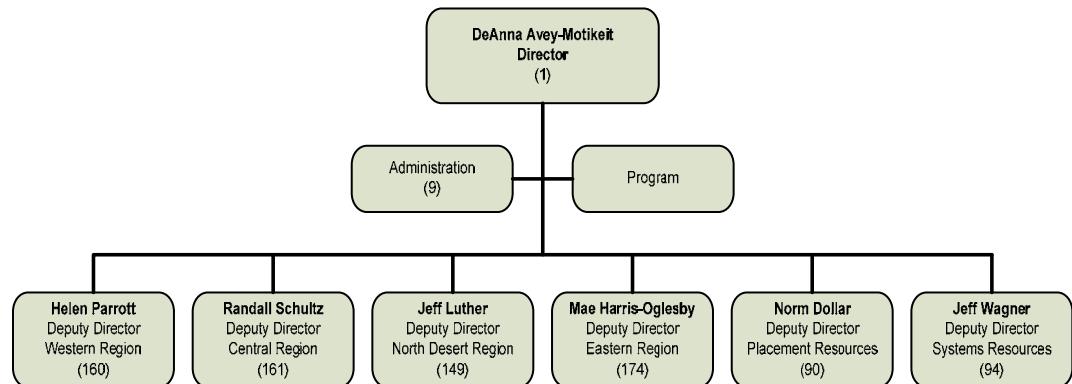
### GOALS

**REDUCE THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN WHO ENTER FOSTER CARE EACH YEAR**

**INCREASE THE NUMBER OF FOSTER YOUTH GRADUATING FROM HIGH SCHOOL OR EQUIVALENCY**

## CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

### ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



### DESCRIPTION OF MAJOR SERVICES

Children and Family Services (CFS) provides family-centered programs and services to ensure safe, permanent, nurturing families for San Bernardino County's children, while strengthening and attempting to preserve the family unit. 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 CFS 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 (ILP): assists youth in successfully transitioning out of the foster care system.

### 2009-10 SUMMARY OF BUDGET UNITS

	Appropriation	Revenue	Local Cost	Staffing
Children and Family Services	95,950,899	84,548,102	11,402,797	838

## GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

### GOAL 1: REDUCE THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN WHO ENTER FOSTER CARE EACH YEAR.

*Objective A. Continue implementation of Family-to-Family (F2F) and other practices that reduce the number of children who must enter foster care.*

MEASUREMENT	2007-08 Actual	2008-09 Actual	2009-10 Target	2009-10 Estimate	2010-11 Target
1A. Annual percentage reduction in the number of children entering foster care.	6%	20%	8%	6%	7%

#### Status

The department's child welfare services practice has evolved over the past few years. Previously, a "traditional" approach included removal of a significant number of children with substantiated abuse and severe neglect issues and placement in the foster care system. Practice has evolved to a "best practices" service delivery approach that values a family centered, strength-based and community-based approach to protecting children and strengthening families. This approach also encourages the reduction of the number and rate of children placed away from their birth families. It seeks to keep children in close proximity to their birth family, school, friends, community activities, and church if placement is required. Team Decision Making (TDM) is one of the F2F processes that encourage a reduction in the placement of children out of their home. It brings together family members, the community, and the social worker to look at alternatives to out of home placement and ensure a network of support for children and the people who support them. This shift in philosophy continues to show tangible results. For example, the number of children who enter foster care continues to decrease, reflecting the department's efforts to encourage alternative plans to protect children other than through placement in a foster home. This declining rate of out of home placement is anticipated to continue as the tenets of the new initiatives such as F2F become more in-grained in the department's culture and practices.



Top Row: Youth participate at "Independent City" (ILP Program)  
Bottom Row: Sportsfaire participants

### 2008-09 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ❖ Received and assessed 48,541 child abuse referrals, based on children involved
- ❖ Completed 941 Team Decision Making (TDM) meetings during the year, 14% increase from previous year
- ❖ Provided Wraparound services to 449 children countywide to decrease group home placements
- ❖ Served 84 youth in the transitional housing placement program (THPP)
- ❖ Served 50 youth in the transitional housing placement-plus program, THP+
- ❖ Organized and hosted 249 foster and kinship youth at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual CFS Sports fair
- ❖ Finalized 485 adoptions



There are a number of factors which are out of the department's control that affect the removal rate. Two of the most critical are the number and severity of referrals received and, the availability of family and community resources enabling children to remain safely in their home as an alternative to out of home care placement. Additionally the current economic climate can affect the quantity of referrals coming in the "front door". Predicting the rate of removals is difficult given these and other factors. Using just the number of children removed from their home during first 4 months this fiscal year suggests a very modest 0.5% reduction for 2009-10, rather than the target reduction of 8% indicated in the current Business Plan. However, referrals, and thus removals, are seasonal, i.e., a significant number of referrals are received with the resumption in September of the traditional school year and following the holidays, and, fewer during the summer. Given this history, experience suggests this modest reduction should be modified. Believing the reduction in removals of 20% in 2008-09 from the prior year to be an anomaly, a reduction of 6% is estimated for 2009-10 and a target reduction of 7% for 2010-11. The important point to remember is that the number of children removed from their home in the past few years has declined overall, due in large part to the change by the department to a "best practices" service delivery approach. While the reduction percentage may fluctuate from year to year and is difficult to predict, the unmistakable overall result is that more children are remaining safely in their home instead of being removed from their family and placed elsewhere.

**GOAL 2: INCREASE THE NUMBER OF FOSTER CHILDREN IN THE INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM THAT EARN A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA OR G.E.D.**

*Objective A: Continue identifying and tracking the performance of child welfare dependents on the High School Equivalency (Exit) exam.*

*Objective B: Secure/implement customized tutoring programs designed to address needs of exiting youth.*

*Objective C: Refer and ensure linkage to tutoring services for Juniors and Seniors experiencing difficulty passing the Proficiency exam.*

MEASUREMENT	2007-08 Actual	2008-09 Actual	2009-10 Target	2009-10 Estimate	2010-11 Target
2A. Percentage increase in foster youth graduating with a high school diploma or G.E.D.	18%	10%	6%	19%	20%

Status

Statistics indicate a larger percentage of foster youth do not complete high school when compared to the general population. Of these exiting the foster care system, a significant percentage are below grade level in reading, writing and math and have a history of repeating a grade in middle or high school. Obviously, concern also exists as to how foster youth will perform on a structured high school exit exam. Therefore, the department continues to focus on steps to provide maximum support to foster youth to enhance their chances of succeeding on the examination and improving the likelihood of further successful endeavors. Illustrative of this continuing focus, the department chose "engaging transitional age youth" as its focus topic for the Peer Quality Case Review completed last year. This review captured promising practices which will enhance a youth's success in the transition to adulthood.

There is additional concrete evidence of CFS' commitment to improving outcomes for youth who exit the Child Welfare Services System. Educational liaisons are responsible for assisting foster youth in successfully navigating their educational experience by working with both the student and the student's teachers to achieve improved academic performance. Also, six former foster youth were hired as PSEs during 2007-08 to enhance the ILP program and encourage foster youth and caregiver participation. These temporary positions have since become regular positions, reflecting a continuing departmental commitment to permanency for youth. These and other efforts such as 'Independent City' and "College is 4U" contribute to the percentage increase in youth who exited the system with a high school diploma or it's equivalency. Similar increases in this percentage are anticipated in the future as these and other resources are mobilized on behalf of youth. However, there are some potential factors that could negatively affect these continued increases. Foremost is the potential loss of state funding which could affect the continued existence of the Educational Liaison and Peer and Family Assistant positions. Additionally, the current economic climate could result in the department taking older children/youth into protective care; their educational status and achievements when they exit the system will impact this goal, potentially either positively or negatively.

Please be aware that due to the relatively small number of youth involved in this goal, the percentages are disproportionately affected, i.e., the relatively small number of youth in this population significantly affects percentage difference of youth who exit with their diploma/equivalency.

## **2010-11 REQUESTS FOR GENERAL FUND FINANCING**

The department is not requesting any additional general fund financing for 2010-11.

## **2010-11 PROPOSED FEE/RATE ADJUSTMENTS**

The department is not requesting any proposed fee/rate adjustments for 2010-11.

If there are questions about this business plan, please contact DeAnna Avey-Motikeit, Director, at (909) 388-0242.