



HIGHLIGHTS OF CALIFORNIA FAMILY TO FAMILY COUNTIES (JUNE 2005)

INTRODUCTION:

This report provides a highlight of the activities of the California Family to Family (F2F) counties. The Highlights report is issued annually and includes team decisionmaking data that ended December 2004.

Twenty-four (24) of the 58 California counties participate in the F2F Initiative. About 88% of the 85,286 children in child welfare supervised foster care in California live in a F2F county.ⁱ

The F2F Initiative was developed by the Annie E. Casey Foundation in 1992 to address the growing challenges in the nation's child welfare system. It is a nationwide child welfare and foster care reform initiative that provides principles, strategies, and tools designed to help States and local child welfare agencies achieve better outcomes for children and families. The F2F Initiative is currently located in eighteen (18) States. The California F2F Initiative is a dynamic public-private partnership between national and state foundations and the State of California. Partners include the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Stuart Foundation, the Walter S. Johnson Foundation, and the California Department of Social Services.

The four core strategies of F2F are:

1. Recruitment, Development, and Support of Resource Families (RDS).
2. Building Community Partnerships (BCP).
3. Team Decisionmaking (TDM).
4. Self Evaluation (SE).

The California F2F counties, with the exception of Los Angeles, are divided into four cluster groups based on the implementation status of their initiative. Los Angeles County is divided into three cluster groups based on their Service Planning Areas (SPA). There are eleven counties holding Team Decisionmaking meetings (TDM).ⁱⁱ The remaining thirteen countiesⁱⁱⁱ are in the process of planning to begin TDM implementation in 2005 – 2007.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

Each cluster meets twice a year for a “convening” and are assigned technical assistance (TA) consultants hired by the Annie E Casey Foundation for each of the four core F2F strategies. Counties are also invited to the annual National and Statewide F2F convening.

The convenings are staffed with F2F TAs and other invited speakers. In Jan – Dec 2004, there were nine (9) cluster trainings and five (5) TDM facilitator trainings. California site leader and Annie E. Casey Foundation consultant, Bill Bettencourt, provide overall supervision of the CA F2F Initiative. In addition, sites receive on-site TDM technical assistance from TA consultant, Jana Rickerson. For the Self-Evaluation strategy, technical assistance is provided by Senior Research Specialist Barbara Needell and the staff at the Center for Social Services Research at the University of California at Berkeley. There are also periodic site reviews by the California site leader and TA consultants.

In addition to the four core strategies, workshops on other relevant areas in child welfare have been added to the convenings based on the needs of the sites. Through a Stuart Foundation grant, Mental Health Advocates (a nonprofit agency), and California State University Los Angeles have partnered to provide TA and training on educational issues in foster care. The Stuart Foundation has also provided a grant to Children and Family Futures for TA on alcohol and other drugs issues in child welfare. The Stuart Foundation has recently funded two counties to serve as mentor sites for the following strategies – Contra Costa for Building Community Partnerships and San Luis Obispo for TDM.

CALIFORNIA F2F TDM DATABASE:

In December 2004, the California F2F TDM Quarterly Report form was distributed to all Cluster I and II counties. Developed by Jana Rickerson, the Self Evaluation staff at UC Berkeley and national Casey TAs, the new form summarized and standardized California TDM reporting process. The new reporting format integrated California's TDM efforts with the national data collection by the Annie E Casey Foundation. Preliminary data self-reported by ten of the twelve sites holding TDMs for January 2003 – December 2004 showed a total of 3,192 TDMs were conducted.¹ Approximately 1,276 (40%) were in “imminent risk and emergency placement,” 1,784 (56%) were in “placement moves,” and 132 (4%) were in “exit from placement.”

¹ The ten counties who submitted TDM data were Alameda, Contra Costa, Fresno, Monterey, Orange, San Francisco, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Stanislaus. Los Angeles counties' preliminary data is not included in this summary. This preliminary data reported by the counties will be adjusted after review by UC Berkeley staff and Jana Rickerson.

FOSTER YOUTH TRANSITION INITIATIVE:

The Foster Youth Transition Initiative is a collaborative project funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Stuart Foundation, and the Walter S. Johnson Foundation. A major goal of Child Welfare Redesign is to ensure that youth emancipating from foster care are prepared for transition to adulthood. The Initiative brings together experts in K-12 education, employment, training, postsecondary education, housing, workforce development, and personal/social asset development in dialogue with key county staff to identify practices and programs which counties can implement to support foster youth. The outcome of these dialogues will be the development of a California strategy on youth development that will be implemented by four F2F counties (Fresno, San Francisco, Santa Clara, and Stanislaus). A self-assessment tool was developed to assist counties in identifying strengths and challenges within existing foster youth transition services and programs. A pool of technical assistance has been developed from the focus group experts.

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VISIT F2F WEBSITE AT:

<http://www.aecf.org/initiatives/familytofamily/>
<http://www.f2f.ca.gov>
<http://cssr.berkeley.edu/cwscmsreports>

COUNTY ACTIVITIES – ORGANIZED BY CLUSTER GROUPS

CLUSTER 1 (7 Counties – Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Stanislaus)

ALAMEDA COUNTY:

F2F FUNDING BEGAN IN 2003

- RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT (RDS) OF RESOURCE FAMILIES: Using data from the self-evaluation workgroup, Alameda County focused on developing support mechanisms in the target community. In an effort to improve communication between staff and resource families, a series of social and informational meetings were held this year. There is a “Resource Parents” article in the department’s quarterly newsletter. The RDS workgroup and the Community Partnership workgroup worked on a Recruitment, Support, and Resource Expo at a high school in the targeted area. Information booths about becoming resource families were also held at local community festivals.
- BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS (CP): The CP workgroup was developed to help recruit resource families and distribute F2F materials at community fairs and events. The CP workgroup is reviewing ways to engage the community to find shared TDM space. Alameda County has partnered with Parents Anonymous to train parent advocates that can help other biological parents new to the child welfare system. The CP workgroup has also developed a youth focus group (*Lift Every Voice*). The focus group is facilitated by an emancipated foster youth and under the leadership of one of the CP workgroup co-chairs. The youth focus group works in partnership with

Alameda County has been working successfully with the California Permanency for Youth Project to present a series of trainings led by former foster youth. The Youth presented digital stories about their foster care experience. The former foster youth and the child welfare staff are currently developing the curriculum for training new resource families.

- the California Youth Connection of East Bay and Youth Led Evaluation Project.
- TEAM DECISION MAKING (TDM): Alameda County began TDM implementation in September 2004. TDMs are currently conducted for all new intake cases in the South Hayward target area. In 2005, TDMs will roll out in a larger targeted area for all new intake cases.
- SELF EVALUATION (SE): The self-evaluation team (SET) began by assessing the Department’s baseline data to present to line staff during unit meetings. Quarterly charts or “data bytes” are shared with staff, community, and resource partners in the County’s quarterly newsletter. A data request form has been developed and is being used by the other three strategic workgroup to request information for special reports (i.e. # removals from a special geographic areas, etc.).

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY:

F2F FUNDING BEGAN IN 2001

- **RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT OF RESOURCE FAMILIES:** Contra Costa County has adopted many recruitment strategies (i.e. contracting with foster parents, hiring community liaisons, supporting monthly support groups for resource families, and using former foster youth for foster parent recruitment and outreach). In March 2003, Contra Costa County received a System of Care grant to further its efforts to address permanency and youth services. As a result, the Permanence and Youth Transition Workgroup was formed to address efforts to engage those youth who traditionally have not participated in the Independent Living Skills Program. Partnering 4 Permanency, one of the System of Care grant components, involve efforts to increase successful permanency outcomes and minimize placement disruption for youth. These efforts include enhanced services and TDM for youth experiencing multiple placements or at-risk of multiple placements, multi-jurisdictional youth and emancipating youth in need of exit planning. F2F has been incorporated into the PRIDE curriculum.
- **BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS:** The County hired community liaisons to work closely with local faith-based leaders and will be establishing contracts with small neighborhood churches. In collaboration with its community partners, the County provides transitional housing opportunities for youth emancipating from the system as well as to dependent youth age 16 and over. There is a youth Speaker's Bureau that is comprised of emancipated foster youth. These youth regularly outreach to foster youth, speak to community groups, and participate in the County's workgroups and committees.

Contra Costa County offers on-site childcare to resource families to increase their participation at TDM meetings and other key community meetings.

- **TEAM DECISION MAKING (TDM):** Contra Costa County implemented TDM in January 2003. TDMs are currently conducted for all children at imminent risk of removal and for children who have been removed in the targeted geographic areas. In order to address racial disproportionality, TDM meetings are held for all African American children 0-1 year of age throughout the county. By mid-2005, TDM meetings will be expanded to include children and youth who have multiple placement changes.
- **SELF EVALUATION:** Contra Costa County has used their federal System of Care grant to hire a data specialist to run more in-depth reports. A team representing a wide array of stakeholders (i.e. community, parent partners, foster youth, Health, Mental Health, Education, AOD, Court, Labor and child welfare staff) met twice monthly to prepare a Self-Assessment document. The team brought the issue of racial disproportionality to the forefront as a major focus for intervention in the System Improvement Plan (SIP). The process is well integrated at the top management level. The data team includes a District Manager as well as a data specialist and data reports are reviewed at monthly County Leadership Team meetings. The county is reviewing current status of participants of early TDM meetings and will compare those outcomes to outcomes of the overall child welfare population in Contra Costa.

SAN FRANCISCO COUNTY:
F2F FUNDING BEGAN IN 2001

- **RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT (RDS) OF RESOURCE FAMILIES:** San Francisco County is specifically recruiting foster homes for teens, monolingual Spanish speaking, and Cantonese speaking children. There have been over 90 foster home orientations held between January - June 2004. There is a series of bi-monthly “brown bag” meetings to discuss licensing issues with foster parents from the targeted community. Two support workers have been added to the licensing unit to assist foster parents in getting information, help in negotiating the child welfare system, and assistance with paperwork and transportation. A joint “Bridging Professional Cultures” training was conducted with child welfare workers and foster parents. The County uses the PRIDE/F2F curriculum and all of the trainers have been to the updated PRIDE/F2F trainings. Youth have been involved in Foster Parent training for several years and in this past year, a birth parent has been added to the last session of training.
- **BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS:** Through the development of the TDM-Community Partner pilot, San Francisco has extensive involvement with two family resource centers in participating and hosting TDMs. A Task Force was formed to focus attention on the disproportionality of African American children in San Francisco’s child welfare system. A report was produced that addressed specific needs and provided detailed recommendations. At their December 2004 meeting, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors recommended a citywide task force to address the issues in the report.

*This San Francisco Disproportionality Task Force report is available on the California Family to Family website.
(<http://www.f2f.ca.gov/res/DisprReport.pdf>)*

- **TEAM DECISION MAKING (TDM):** San Francisco County began their first TDM in February 2003 for out-of-home placement changes. TDMs have been held for placement changes. Since mid-August, emergency response staff is required to do TDMs for removals. Effective January 2005, all staff will be required to conduct TDMs for removals. Foster Parents are invited to TDM meetings if they are involved in the case.
- **SELF EVALUATION:** Over the summer 2004, the Self Evaluation Committee has been analyzing data for their system improvement plan (SIP). A survey of foster care providers who had children with emancipating youth was conducted to provide insight on the needs of this specific population. A key goal of the committee is to disseminate data and encourage its use more widely in the Department. In recent months, the Department purchased the Safe Measures service, which allows staff to directly view caseload data, including data related to AB636 outcomes.

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY:
F2F FUNDING BEGAN IN 2001

- **RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT OF RESOURCE FAMILIES:** As a result of F2F, recruitment and approval of relative/non-relative extended family member homes has increased significantly over the past three years. San Luis Obispo County is analyzing and assessing the unique needs of every child currently in Permanency Placement (e.g., removal address, age, ethnicity, sibling groups, etc.). Improved

support to resource families include: a “warmline” through the Foster Parent Association (co-located within the child welfare agency); a live staff person who monitors the phone line during business hours; and the development of a “Child Binder” that profiles children who are currently in the County’s foster care system. The County utilizes the PRIDE training through a local college and is currently testing “Icebreakers” between birth and resource families. Fourth

quarter data reflects an increase in finalized adoptions.

- **BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS (CP):** The County has convened nearly 100 community partner representatives in focus groups to learn more about

F2F and other strategies. A fulltime, Spanish bilingual community liaison was hired through a community partner who works closely with the F2F Coordinator. The community liaison conducts community presentations and assessments; TDM orientations; neighborhood targeted recruitment efforts; and targeted community awareness of data and self-evaluation through existing organizations such as the SAFE school sites and local youth task forces.

- **TEAM DECISION MAKING (TDM):** San Luis Obispo County conducts TDMs for imminent risk of placement, emergency placement, placement move, and exits from placement. San Luis Obispo is currently testing TDMs at placement exits/reunification. Resource parents and supervisors have been present at 100% of

San Mateo County's enhanced effort in specific child recruitment has resulted in an increase of families contacting the agency via telephone or email regarding foster care, foster/adopt, or adoption. There were approximately 256 families that inquired via telephone or e-mail last year; of these families, 138 attended a foster parent orientation meeting.

all TDMs. The TDM database and quarterly reports have been established. Because of their successful implementation of TDMs, the Stuart Foundation has funded San Luis Obispo County to be a “mentor county” for other F2F sites.

- **SELF-EVALUATION:** In February 2004, the Automation Information Reporting Team was reorganized to support the needs of F2F and AB636 by forming a dedicated

Automation manager and team of staff who provide an important link to measuring and analyzing F2F/AB636 outcomes. A quarterly Child Welfare Services and Linkages report has been established as well as a variety of standard and ad hoc

reports that are shared with managers, supervisors, staff, and community partners.

**SAN MATEO COUNTY:
F2F FUNDING BEGAN IN 2001**

- **RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT OF RESOURCE FAMILIES:** San Mateo County uses a variety of recruitment efforts including ads in local movie theatres, public transportation buses, attend school PTA meetings, and host brown bag information luncheons at local hospitals in partnership with resource parents.
- **BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS:** The four Regional Community Partnership Teams (RCPT) are composed of child welfare staff, Regional Community Partners, and other stakeholders. RCPTs have been instrumental in developing

marketing strategies to recruit new foster parents, which include advertising in local non-profit radio and television media and providing on-site information sessions on fostering at faith-based organizations. The RCPTs have also partnered with a local community college to offer monthly training sessions to new and seasoned foster parents. RCPTs have hosted a number of community events and forums that bring together community partners, resource families, kin families, and HSA staff.

- **TEAM DECISION MAKING:** TDMs were implemented in March 2003. As of August 2004, TDM meetings are mandatory practice for every placement decision, including imminent risk of removal, initial removals, exits/reunification, placement changes and exiting the system. San Mateo County is part of the Stuart Foundation's pilot counties for the Permanency for Youth Initiative and has implemented an Adolescent Services program that includes, Independent Living Skills, After Care Services, Employment Services, Alcohol and Drug Services.
- **SELF EVALUATION:** The Self Evaluation Strategy Team, is composed of program staff from child welfare, the Agency Director, Regional Directors, Alcohol and Other Drug services, Planning and Evaluation, and Business Systems staff. The group creates F2F reports requested by community partners and staff, and AB636 reports to replicate those distributed by UC Berkeley's Center for Social Services Research.

There has been a dramatic reduction in the Children's Shelter population in Santa Clara County (now consistently under 20 children daily). The shelter has now been renamed the Children's Center and its primary function is an intake and assessment Center for children for less than 24 hours.

**SANTA CLARA COUNTY:
F2F FUNDING BEGAN IN 2001**

- **RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT OF RESOURCE FAMILIES:** The workgroup has helped shift recruitment efforts from internal and centralized to community-based and regional. The Resource Family Support Team was developed to provide additional support for the county's

licensed resource home providers. The team is comprised of former or current foster parents. Each resource home advocate is assigned to a specific family and participates in TDMs whenever a placement change occurs. Santa Clara also has a Foster/Adoptive

Parent Resource Center. Relative finding is a key strategy in Santa Clara. Data has shown a higher proportion of children are placed with relatives, increasing the chances of achieving permanence.

California Youth Connection (CYC) is an active participant on the Foster Parent Advisory Board. Santa Clara County uses the PRIDE/F2F curriculum and both birth parents and former foster youth from CYC are included in the training.

- **BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS (CP):** Santa Clara County has coordinated their work through the development of six community action teams. Four teams are defined by region. Two teams are defined by culture and ethnicity. Each community action team (CAT) is co-chaired by a community member and department staff. The county has created a joint response with law enforcement to reduce the number of children coming into care, with a major emphasis on children of color.

Each respective CAT has representatives who are available to participate in TDMs on an as-needed basis.

- **TEAM DECISION MAKING (TDM):** Santa Clara County began TDMs in July 2003. Meetings were initially requested for children who were in protective custody but had a strong risk of being diverted to the Juvenile Court System. It was then expanded to all diversion cases and offered for those social workers that wanted to voluntarily refer families for a TDM. The next major rollout occurred in July 2004 for all placement changes and transitions. The final roll out for all removals occurred in February 2005.
- **SELF EVALUATION:** The Self Evaluation Committee has evolved into the county's SIP data team and provides data to other SIP workgroups. The chair of the SIP data team participates in monthly implementation meetings with top agency management.

A teen panel was developed in Stanislaus County to present to potential resource parents. The panel helped alleviate the fears and myths associated with "those teens." Using statistics, personal stories, and targeted recruitment strategies, Stanislaus has been able to improve their recruitment efforts and increase homes, especially for older youth.

STANISLAUS COUNTY:

F2F FUNDING BEGAN IN 2001

- **RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT OF RESOURCE FAMILIES:** Family to Family helped Stanislaus County direct their recruitment efforts in a more focused manner by using data and geo mapping to determine target areas in need of Resource Families. There is a 24-hour hotline for resource parents to receive support from a social worker. The Activity Planning Committee coordinates fun events, such as the kite derby, an Easter Egg Hunt,

quarterly Coffee Connection, etc.

Resource parents are invited to attend all TDMs and any training that social workers attend, including the Social Work Academy provided by the Central Valley Academy. Stanislaus County is currently involved with several initiatives to improve permanency for youth which includes being a Cohort 1 Child Welfare Redesign county, California Permanency for Youth Project, and Foster Youth Transition Initiative. There is a process for age 14 and older youth in Permanent Placement to be assigned to two social

workers that have reduced caseloads. There is a position created called a Permanency Specialist social worker that addresses lifelong connections for older foster youth. The County has been working for the past year with the Youth

Permanency Workgroup comprised of current and former foster youth. This group, which meets monthly, focuses on issues related to identifying lifelong connections and are developing Connected For Life Meetings. They have also been involved with each step of the Permanency Project and the FFA/Group Home site visits. These are quarterly site visits with each of the FFA and Group Home agencies to discuss permanency issues and share the agency's philosophical beliefs about their role in helping youth achieve permanency. There is a Foster Youth Advisory Board. A foster youth participates in PRIDE trainings for new resource families.

- **BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS:** Stanislaus County contracted with a faith-based agency for a "Community

Ambassador” to develop recruitment, training, and support strategies for a targeted area, which will be expanded to three more communities within the next few months. A total of four grassroots communities have contracts for Community Ambassadors. The Community Ambassador recruits resource parents and offers support after the parents have children in their home. The Community Ambassador also attends TDMs if the meeting involves a family from their neighborhood. An experienced community member was hired to fill a new position as a Community Builder who will work on engaging more grassroots organizations in the F2F service delivery model. Community partners participate in all core F2F workgroups.

Fresno County developed a strategic recruitment plan which include a “tracking system” to monitor each resource family’s progress once they attended an orientation meeting. A “Warm Line” is now available for all foster parents and is staffed by a social worker during business hours.

- **TEAM DECISION MAKING (TDM):** Stanislaus County held its first TDM in November 2002. TDMs are held for emergency placements or imminent risk of removal, placement changes, and exits/reunifications. Resource parents are invited to attend all relevant TDM meetings.
- **SELF EVALUATION:** Through the hard work of the self-evaluation team, the agency can now easily retrieve data to assist management in making decisions. There are twice monthly meetings to discuss or present data as they relate to outcomes. There are representatives from the community as well as agency members in this workgroup.

CLUSTER 2 (4 Counties - Fresno, Monterey, Orange, and Santa Barbara)

FRESNO COUNTY:

F2F FUNDING BEGAN IN 2003

- **RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT OF RESOURCE FAMILIES:** Fresno has identified six zip code areas for targeted recruitment and has hired a recruitment

coordinator. Foster family agencies have partnered with the County to achieve less restrictive placement and are participating in neighborhood recruitment efforts. Fresno County is a F2F Youth Transitions Initiative site. Over the past year, Fresno County has doubled

the number of youth served through ILP classes. Former foster youth are available to mentor youth in the system. There is an “Explorer’s Post program” which provides opportunities for youth to strengthen their leadership skills and exposed them to possible career options. Fresno County has a strong California Youth Connection chapter. Fresno County utilizes the PRIDE/F2F curriculum and birth parents and youth are frequently present at trainings.

- **BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS:** Fresno County is establishing three neighborhood networks. Working with community leaders, several neighborhood forums were held in these targeted communities. Over 40 community partners, residents, youth resource families and staff currently participated in this recruitment collaboration. Resource family outreach events were held in each of the targeted communities.

- TEAM DECISION MAKING (TDM): TDMs were implemented in September 2004 for all 7-day notice/placement disruptions occurring in the Permanency Planning Division. In November, Fresno tested TDMs in the Reunification/ Concurrent Planning Division and Emergency Response unit. The goal is to be fully implemented for all placement disruptions by April 2005.
- SELF EVALUATION: The Self-Evaluation Team (SET) is comprised of program managers, Social Work Supervisors, DCFS Information Services managers SIP/Data staff person and California State Fresno University. The team meets twice monthly and supports the other three strategic teams. The SET has created neighborhood data sheets and made presentations at F2F trainings. Monthly data sheets are distributed to staff to remind them of the important role of data outcome indicators.

WOW, our first TDM was like a sample from a social work textbook, a progressive one that is. I am guessing that in the past, children in similar situation most likely would not have been returned home so quickly. Having all the stakeholders, particularly the parents' own support system at the meeting was very advantageous to finding an acceptable, though complex safety plan. If a social worker had to try to patch together such a complex plan by contacting individuals, agencies, etc., it would have been very time-consuming and I'm not sure if the social worker would have known all the possibilities without having the folks at the table."

- Director of a Community-Based Organization and lead agency of Monterey County's TDM team

their local community college, the RDS subcommittee produced a Resource Family Tip Sheet with important phone numbers and instructions. New ideas include an incentive program for foster

parents to recruit new families with rewards or gift cards and fosterware information "parties" hosted by current foster parents. Foster care eligibility workers and finance staffs are invited to attend the annual Caregiver Picnic and coffee. The County has conducted their first respite and support training for resource families in collaboration with

the local community college. Monterey County is conducting a survey on the type of respite that would be most valuable to their licensed foster families. The County has an active California Permanency for Youth Project (CPYP) work group that is currently utilizing technical assistance to help establish lifelong connections for foster youth. Staff from all units attends these trainings. There is also active Youth Council. Monterey County uses its own curriculum for foster parent and relative care training, called TEAM and ROOTS (Relative Offering Ongoing Ties and Support), based on MAPP.

MONTEREY COUNTY:

F2F FUNDING BEGAN IN 2003

- RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT OF RESOURCE FAMILIES (RDS): Working with

- BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS:** Monterey County has a broad base of community support with an average of 35 participants and 15 community agencies consistently participating in their Steering Committee and planning sessions. There are four (4) community coalitions in Monterey County. Plans are underway to expand to a fifth priority area. The coalitions are developing community sites for TDMs, conducting outreach and education throughout the community, some with a focus on the faith-based community. Working with the marketing department at KION TV, a variety of marketing tools have been developed including brochures in English/Spanish, banners, tri-fold presentation board, marketing videos, eye openers, and giveaway products.
- TEAM DECISION MAKING (TDM):** Monterey County has now implemented TDMs in three of the four coalition communities. The first TDM was held on March 10, 2004 in the Salinas area. Monterey County is conducting TDMs in emergency placement and/or imminent risk of removal.
- SELF EVALUATION:** Monterey County's self-evaluation team is integrated with the SIP evaluation team and is generating quarterly reports on data related to the F2F outcomes.

There is a recruitment campaign in Santa Ana (Orange County), involving the city government; a One Child, One Church campaign; use of a culturally appropriate Vista volunteer recruiter who is supervised by a community foundation; and support of a grassroots group of forty (40) Santa Ana mothers who are engaged in a door-to-door recruitment campaign. Licensing orientation and PRIDE training sessions are all held in the target area. All recruitment staff is Spanish speaking.

**ORANGE COUNTY:
F2F FUNDING BEGAN IN 2003**

- RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT OF RESOURCE FAMILIES:** Through data analysis, Orange County has targeted the central area of Santa Ana as the greatest area of need for placement resources.

The data showed that sibling groups and children with emotional and behavioral challenges were most in need of homes. The Foster and Adoptive Recruitment Team enlisted an outside consultant and engaged in a 6-month strategic planning process to develop specific strategies and measurable goals to recruit homes for

these children. There is a specialized orientation for relative and "non-related extended family member" caregivers. Orange County has a contract with a community-based organization to provide in-home support services for relative caregivers. There is a foster care liaison position and three support social workers dedicated to providing support for resource families. Youth are invited to all of the strategy teams and two youth sit on the F2F Child Welfare Redesign and F2F Planning Council. There is a strong, well-established California Youth Connection (CYC) chapter in Orange County that is supported by the agency and utilized in an advisory role. PRIDE training was being implemented in January 2005 and foster youth will participate in all PRIDE groups. Former foster youth have

participated in Strength-Based Practice Forums for social workers.

- **BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS (CP):** The Child Welfare Redesign and F2F Planning Council meet monthly and draw a wide-range of community participation. In 2000, Orange County created its Emancipation Services Program (ESP), a countywide effort, involving multiple community partners and headed by a child welfare manager. ESP, in partnership with non-profits and other county agencies, continues to assist exiting Orange County foster youth and has significantly improved outcomes. The County is also partnering with a residential care provider to pilot Creating Connections, a powerful permanency activity for youth that focuses on finding lost relatives or other important people in a youth's life who are willing to make a life-long commitment to the youth.
- **TEAM DECISION MAKING (TDM):** In March 2004, Orange County began implementation of TDM in their day-to-day practice for the targeted F2F region – first on a voluntary basis and then mandated. TDMs are now mandated for every child removed from their home with child welfare involvement during onsite business hours. In order to implement TDMs at the front end of their system, Orange County has redesigned the system to integrate the emergency response and court intake processes into one function. TDMs are also mandated for every child

Santa Barbara County's recruitment workgroup established twice monthly "a taking care of business" day to eliminate barriers to licensing. The purpose of "taking care of business day" is to help potential resource parents with the licensing process. The applicants are fingerprinted, TB tested and can complete any of the licensing requirements in a "one stop event" to expedite and streamline the licensing process.

at risk of placement change, or who has had an emergency placement change. Effective January 2005, TDMs will be mandated for all children reunifying with their families. Orange County has developed a foster youth peer-mentoring program and is exploring having emancipated foster youth serve as child

advocates for children in TDM meetings.

- **SELF EVALUATION:** A subgroup of the self-evaluation team (SET) was established to focus on the most technical aspects of data collection and evaluation. The SET is co-chaired by a Deputy Director and Assistant to the

Director. Several methods of sharing data with staff and community partners have been developed. Data is shared at the Child Welfare Redesign and F2F Planning Council, at community forums, in county offices, and is posted on the County F2F web site.

**SANTA BARBARA COUNTY:
F2F FUNDING BEGAN IN 2001**

- **RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT OF RESOURCE FAMILIES:** Since implementing F2F, data shows that Santa Barbara has slowed the rising trend of children placed away from their community and into congregate care and bolstered the time to permanency as measured by time to reunification and adoption. Santa Barbara County is holding "fosterware" parties and has begun a recruiting project in partnership with Channel Islands YMCA. Staff

regularly attends foster parent support groups and has hosted many foster parent events including a children's party to provide respite for foster parents. Santa Barbara has also initiated PRIDE/F2F Training.

- **BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS:** Santa Barbara conducted over 105 presentations countywide, including many in Spanish, to a variety of county agencies, community based organizations, and informal entities, including faith-based communities. Santa Barbara has strengthened their relationships with System of Care partners such as Alcohol and Other Drugs, Mental Health, Probation, Education, CalWORKS/Linkages etc.
- **TEAM DECISION MAKING (TDM):** There has been great support for TDM from Santa Barbara County's judicial partners especially the attorneys representing parents. Santa Barbara County has fully implemented all phases of TDM in all regions as of November 2003 and is now in the third year of implementation. There were 30 TDM facilitators identified and trained this year and 24 TDM sites established in Santa Barbara County. The judicial system adopted TDMs as the 2003 Santa Barbara County Juvenile Court Dependency Improvement Project.
- **SELF EVALUATION:** The disproportion of African American children in care is a major concern and area of focus for Santa Barbara County. With the development of a specialized and focused information and data team (IDT), Santa Barbara has modified their practice and made organizational changes as a result of data analysis. Some changes include developing specialized program units (licensing, relative approval, concurrent planning, court services), establishing a more structured approach and network for families to Alcohol and Other Drug related services, and regionalizing their

recruitment and support efforts. In 2005, Santa Barbara plans to begin posting F2F reports and other CWS information on their departmental wide intranet.

CLUSTER 3 (4 Counties - San Bernardino, San Diego, Riverside, and Ventura)

SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY:

F2F FUNDING BEGAN IN 2004

- **RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT OF RESOURCE FAMILIES:** This workgroup has four foster parents and three foster youths as members in addition to social workers. The committee is exploring the establishment of a foster parent "Warm line", staffed by existing foster parents. San Bernardino County is working with existing foster parents to provide mentorship and support to new foster parents. The County will begin using the new PRIDE in the training of both foster and adoptive parents in February 2005. A F2F outreach presentation was given to the Foster Parent Advisory Boards. San Bernardino County is developing quarterly dinner meeting for foster parents titled an "Evening with F2F" in the various regions of the county to provide foster parents an avenue to discuss issues, make suggestions, and recommendations with County staff.
- **BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS:** This workgroup has developed F2F brochures and power point messages that are presented to management, line staff, and clerical staff. Traditional, non-traditional, and faith-based partners have been identified as potential partners. A "Letter from the Director" has been sent to over 200 community partners inviting everyone to a "kick off" event in April 2005. The Agency Director has made presentations to the Rialto City Council and the Rialto School Board about the importance of

F2F. San Bernardino County has joined the Rialto Chamber of Commerce. San Bernardino County is identifying youth, community partners, and other stakeholders to be involved with the development of the Foster Youth Advisory Board.

- **TEAM DECISION-MAKING (TDM):** San Bernardino County is committed to begin TDMs at intake in the implementation area of Rialto beginning July 2005 and will implement TDMs at placement changes in the other two service regions beginning July 2005.
- **SELF-EVALUATION:** San Bernardino used existing data to help in the selection of the target community of Rialto. Data was used to determine the next implementation community and to determine how many TDM facilitators would be needed. The data committee assisted with an analyst on the issue of disproportionality. Membership on this committee will be combined with the AB636 data group.

SAN DIEGO COUNTY:

F2F FUNDING BEGAN IN 2004

- **RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT OF RESOURCE FAMILIES:** San Diego is the sixth largest county in the Country. The county developed an internal infrastructure with a F2F Agency coordinator and six Regional Coordinators with defined roles. The faith community has been active in helping with recruitment and support efforts by offering their church facilities for speaking engagement and for foster parent support group meetings. Regional staff provide foster parents respite at local events. San Diego has contracted with Community Services for Families (CSF) to provide more services to clients, including recruitment, retention, and participation in

TDM meetings. Foster Parent PRIDE training is provided through the Community College System. Foster youth and adoptive parents are able to share their experiences at these trainings. Former foster youth also assist in the Independent Living Skills training for new social workers classes.

- **BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS:** The six Regional Coordinators actively participates in recruitment activities such as community street fairs, speaking engagements at local churches and community events. The Foster Friends Outreach Committee created the “8 Great Ways to Help” poster, flier, and power point presentation for a coordinated recruitment efforts. The Coordinators have developed “Way Station” foster homes in all six county regions. Way Station homes allow children to remain in their own communities; thereby diverting children from the emergency shelter care facility. Transitional housing resources are available with referrals from the ILS program and through community agencies such as the YMCA and San Diego Youth and Community Services. A supported housing program provides assistance to young adults transitioning from the Children’s mental health system to the Adult mental health system with a focus on successful community living. The Fostering Community Connections program housed at San Diego State University paired up foster youth interested in college with social work interns as mentors throughout the college application process. The foster youth receive college credits and become involved in community service through the program. Partnerships with schools have developed that assign a social worker to handle referrals from particular schools. Other examples of community activities include Kiwanis Club members providing

respite for foster parents with space and activities in the East region.

- **TEAM DECISION MAKING (TDM):** A TDM workgroup has completed the evaluation process of the County's current conferencing/consultation meetings. A TDM Protocol Committee is being formed to develop TDM policy and procedure. The goal is to begin TDMs by Fall 2005.
- **SELF EVALUATION (SE):** The Quality Assurance (QA) Unit provides necessary data for the F2F outcomes per the requests by the F2F agency coordinator and regional coordinators. Quality Assurance has designed a data package that covers all the outcomes. QA staff attends the F2F Guiding Group meetings and F2F conferences.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY:
F2F FUNDING BEGAN IN 2004

- **RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT OF RESOURCE FAMILIES:** Over the next several years, Riverside County will gradually implement the F2F Initiative in six focus communities. In response to the low number of foster homes in communities where there is a high rate of removal, Riverside has developed two new approaches to recruit and retain quality resource families. The **Foster Parent Recruitment Program** focuses on increasing the number of foster homes available for placement by actively recruiting resource families in targeted

communities. In addition, the **Parent Partner Program** serves to improve the retention of resource families through the provision of supportive and mentoring services to newly licensed foster parents. Parent Partner Mentors are now available on a 24/7 basis to provide in-person and/or telephone response to caretakers

In November 2004, a F2F Forum was held in Riverside County for Children's Services supervisors, administrators and management staff with approximately 100 to 120 attendees to provide an overview of the F2F Initiative. Written comments from attendees expressed how motivated and inspired they were about the opportunities to return to "real social work" and to "keep more families together."

when a request for placement change (7-day notice) is received by the Department. The goal is to provide new foster parents and caretakers with more timely support to any request for

assistance; to address any questions/difficulties as they navigate the foster care system; and most importantly, to ensure that manageable concerns do not escalate into "crises" that could potentially result in a placement change. Riverside is in the planning stages to re-screen foster youth residing in planned permanent living arrangements, in an effort to identify possible relatives and/or other responsible adults who would be willing to accept guardianship.

- **BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS:** Riverside County began a concerted effort to share data with community partners through regular meetings and conferences focusing on AB 636 outcome measures. Community partners have included public, private/nonprofit providers, foster parents/grandparents, client families, foster youth, faith communities, court personnel, and elected officials.

- **TEAM DECISION MAKING (TDM):** TDM is scheduled to begin in one of the targeted communities, Indio, in October 2005. The TDM Subcommittee/Workgroup is being formed and will be composed of both traditional and non-traditional partners, including the district attorney's office and labor union representatives. In preparation for TDMs, one of the Reunification units has begun to include extended family members in meetings prior to placement changes.

Ventura County is developing a "Welcome to the Family to Family Building Community Partnership" packet and powerpoint presentation to acquaint the community with the goals of the Initiative. Two F2F community outreach events are planned – an Open House for a new school-based Family Resource Center and at a Parent Education meeting.

- **SELF EVALUATION:** Riverside County has expanded its data unit from four to seven full time employees, to include the quality review team. The Data unit in collaboration with the Management Team has provided data to define the F2F targeted communities and in tracking the recruitment and training of resource families. It is anticipated that Riverside County will have a self-evaluation team operating by June 2005 to review and analyze issues pertinent to communities with high levels of removal and disproportional representation of minorities in care.

VENTURA COUNTY:
F2F FUNDING BEGAN IN 2003

- **RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT OF RESOURCE FAMILIES:** This strategy workgroup is meeting regularly twice per month. The Foster Care Program Administrator is the chair with the assistance of a consultant. Recruitment

strategies and activities identified for implementation include a speaker's bureau, community integration, information dissemination, and media campaign. There is also a subgroup which meets consistently once per month to address gaps in support services and training needs of resource families.

- **BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS:** This strategy workgroup holds monthly meetings to identify the existing services available within the target areas for the initial F2F efforts. The Foster Home Services unit, a subgroup of the strategy group, is

working with the Recruitment, Training and Support strategy group, and the Self Evaluation strategy group to identify the number and location of resource families currently available for placements and the number needed in recruitment efforts.

- **TEAM DECISIONMAKING (TDM):** This strategy workgroup meets monthly. A TDM orientation will take place in February 2005 to provide training and information on TDM implementation to supervisors and administrative staff. The goal is to begin TDMs by October 2005 and to hold at least one TDM per regional office per month for any changes of placement or potential placement moves.
- **SELF EVALUATION:** The Self Evaluation committee is using data from the UC Berkeley Center for Social Services Research to identify census tracts where rates of first entries to foster care are the highest in the county. This data will be used to guide community-focused planning, foster parent recruitment strategies and assist Ventura County in

planning for TDM roll out. The Self Evaluation data will help the county plan for TDM implementation by updating information on entries to foster care, exits to reunification, adoption and guardianship and placement changes.

CLUSTER 4 (6 Counties – Glenn^{iv}, Humboldt, Placer, Sacramento, Tehama, and Trinity)

HUMBOLDT COUNTY:

F2F FUNDING BEGAN IN 2004

- **RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT OF RESOURCE FAMILIES:** Humboldt County is in the beginning phase of targeted recruitment using zip code data. The County is utilizing foster parents in recruitment efforts and making connections with family resource centers. Humboldt uses the PRIDE curriculum and emancipated youth and foster parents are invited to speak at these trainings. Humboldt County has an active Independent Living Skills program and California Youth Connections chapter.
- **BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS:** Humboldt County staff provided an orientation for F2F in October 2004 during the bimonthly meeting with Community Partners that included participants from Probation, Mental Health, Public Health, schools, and tribal representatives.
- **TEAM DECISIONMAKING:** Humboldt County is currently in the TDM planning phase.
- **SELF EVALUATION:** Humboldt County is in the initial phases of Self Assessment using the core leadership group.

PLACER COUNTY:

F2F FUNDING BEGAN IN 2004

- **RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT OF RESOURCE FAMILIES:** The first meeting of the workgroup was held in December

2004. The foster parent liaison has begun discussions on F2F with foster/adoptive parents during support group meetings. Placer County uses the PRIDE training and has included youth, foster parents, and birth parents in these trainings. Placer County collaborated with the family resource center in the target area in Fall 2004 to host a foster parent orientation. Placer County has a very active Independent Living Skills program and is committed to participating on the Permanency and Youth Transition

Workgroup. Feedback from foster youth was integral in the development of the new Placement Matching Protocol.

- **BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS:** Placer Collaborative Network has been a working model of community collaboration for many years. There is also an existing community partnership workgroup developed as part of Redesign. This workgroup will also serve as the community partnership workgroup for F2F. The group met in November 2004 to introduce F2F and discuss the role of community partners. The core F2F team is developing materials and orientations to present to both the staff and community members.
- **TEAM DECISIONMAKING (TDM):** The TDM workgroup had its first meeting in November 2004. Placer is developing a protocol to make decisions regarding implementation. Emancipated foster youth and a birth parent participate on this workgroup. Placer County is scheduled to implement TDM in a targeted area by June 2005.
- **SELF EVALUATION:** There is a self-evaluation team originally developed as a function of AB636. This team is a part of a larger accountability workgroup to monitor progress in achieving outcomes and collecting data for the SIP and F2F. The program chief participates on the

accountability workgroup.

SACRAMENTO COUNTY:

F2F FUNDING BEGAN IN 2004

- **RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT OF RESOURCE FAMILIES:** In addition to F2F, Sacramento County also participates in the Early Start to Emancipation Preparation Program and the Casey Great Start Young Adult Program. Sacramento County is in the process of developing a Youth Development Committee. Foster youth participate in all Redesign and F2F committees.
- **BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS:** A community partnership workgroup was established in August 2004. This group consists of community and consumer representatives, and county staff. Sacramento County is in the process of contracting with a community-based organization to help develop a Differential Response Model. This contract will bring additional prevention and early intervention services to a high-need community through a neighborhood based organization embedded in the community. Full-implementation of the Differential Response Model is targeted for July 1, 2005. Another example of partnering with the community is the development of neighborhood based family visitation occurring at various Family Resource Centers throughout Sacramento County. The agency is visible across the community through continued participation in school and community fairs.
- **TEAM DECISIONMAKING (TDM):** Based on a review of removal data and internal agency factors, the F2F Implementation Team selected Family Reunification 7-Day Notices for initial testing and implementation of TDM. The TDM subcommittee will develop the protocols

and TDM implementation strategy. The implementation strategy will utilize the Plan Do Study Act model of the Breakthrough Series Collaborative and target a sub-set of Family Reunification cases using social worker volunteers to test implementation. The TDM planning group consists of county staff including representatives from labor, community, and consumer representatives.

- **SELF EVALUATION (SE):** The Redesign Accountability Workgroup serves as the County's Self-Evaluation Team. Overall, the Workgroup monitors the County's Self-Improvement Plan and responds to the data needs of the other Redesign workgroups. The group is in the process of identifying baseline data and evaluation indicators for the Community Differential Response Pilot.

TEHAMA COUNTY:

F2F FUNDING BEGAN IN 2004

- **RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT OF RESOURCE FAMILIES:** The Tehama County's Placement Specialist, along with a FFA director is the co-chair for the Permanency and Youth workgroup. The Tehama County Foster Parent Liaison is working with community partners to provide bi-lingual outreach activities in the target area. Tehama County is analyzing placement bed capacity per city to develop its recruitment strategies.
- **BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS:** Tehama County has developed a Community Partnership Team that oversees the Community Capacity and Coordination Workgroup. This workgroup, co-chaired by CWS/SW Supervisor of the Family Preservation Unit and the Director of the Red Bluff and Corning Family Resource Center, will implement Redesign, using F2F strategies. Development and enhancement of the

community's Family Resource Centers is well underway. Tehama County has now begun to outstation social workers in the Corning Family Resource Center.

- **TEAM DECISION MAKING (TDM):** Tehama County is in the planning phase for TDM roll-out. Implementation dates have been determined for placement change and exit TDM, Facilitator training, and Community Readiness training.
- **SELF EVALUATION:** Tehama County's Accountability workgroup facilitates the F2F and Redesign efforts by compiling and analyzing data. This workgroup supports the F2F strategy workgroups by providing baseline data and self-assessment in order to reach desired outcomes and measures. The workgroup has held trainings by UC Davis to educate community members about CMS and AB 636 outcome measurements.

TRINITY COUNTY:

F2F FUNDING BEGAN IN 2004

- **RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT OF RESOURCE FAMILIES:** Trinity will be utilizing Americorps volunteers to address recruitment and support of Resource families and family visits. The ILP program is strong and an AmeriCorps worker has been assigned solely to ILP and youth services. Trinity is sending Foster Parents for training at another County that uses the PRIDE curriculum.
- **BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS (CP):** Trinity County formed the Mid-level Management Team consisting of child welfare, Probation, Alcohol and Other Drugs, Behavior Health, Schools and Human Response Network. This group met at the December 2004 F2F convening.
- **TEAM DECISIONMAKING (TDM):** TDMs are in the planning stages. Trinity County will

send staff to be trained as TDM Facilitators in 2005.

- **SELF EVALUATION:** Trinity County is in the planning phase for the self-evaluation strategy.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY:

F2F FUNDING BEGAN IN 1996

Under the new departmental leadership, the Los Angeles County recharged their F2F Initiative in 2003. Two full-time managers were hired in February 2005 to serve as F2F coordinators. Los Angeles County is divided into three F2F clusters. Each cluster includes at least three regional offices and is assigned a F2F Annie E. Casey Foundation TA to assist in implementing each of the four core F2F strategies.

- **RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT OF RESOURCE FAMILIES:** A Permanency Resource Division was established in March 2004. One of the primary goals of this division is to consolidate recruitment, orientation, pre-service training, and home study process for foster and adoptive parents. A long-range plan to increase the number of resource family was developed by Los Angeles County with the National Foster Parent Association and Annie E. Casey Foundation TAs. This collaboration is called the "Recruitment Partnership Forum" and included a comprehensive list of internal as well as external stakeholders for Los Angeles County. The group met in August 2004, December 2004, and March 2005. There are five workgroups in the Recruitment Partnership Forum to address recruitment issues in the following target populations: 1-Adoption (Child-Specific); 2-Cultural-Religion-Language; 3-Medically Fragile; 4-Siblings; and 5-Teens.
- **BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS:** Each regional office completed a self-

assessment on community partnering and then had an individual meeting with several Annie E. Casey Foundation TAs to prepare for a regional partner event held in each region in 2004.

- **TEAM DECISION MAKING (TDM):** In 2003, TDMs were implemented countywide on a voluntary basis. TDMs are primarily used for initial referrals as well as placement changes and transition. Two five-day TDM training sessions were conducted by Annie E Casey Foundation TAs to train facilitators as well as a ‘training for trainers’ for the County’s training division staff.
- **SELF EVALUATION:** Since 2003, the County has been working with their internal Information Technology Services (ITS) Division to create a centralized reporting structure for capturing TDM data. The ITS Division submits monthly reports to each regional administrator on the number of detentions and length of stay data. Each office is forming a self-evaluation team to analyze these monthly reports and how they address F2F outcomes.

ⁱ Based on July 1 2004 children in child welfare supervised foster care by placement type, from Child Welfare Research Center, UC Berkeley, http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/Pointintime/fostercare/childwel/data/CWf_P0_jul2004_s.html

ⁱⁱ The eleven counties holding TDMs are: Alameda, Contra Costa, Los Angeles, Monterey, Orange, San Francisco, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, and Stanislaus.

ⁱⁱⁱ The remaining counties who are in the planning phase of TDM are: Fresno, Glenn, Humboldt, Kern, Placer, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, Solano, Tehama, Trinity, and Ventura.

^{iv} Glenn County did not submit an annual report.