



**2006 HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE NORTHERN COUNTIES**  
CALIFORNIA FAMILY TO FAMILY INITIATIVE

**NORTHERN CALIFORNIA FAMILY TO FAMILY COUNTIES (7):** Glenn, Humboldt, Placer, Sacramento, Solano, Tehama, and Trinity

**GLENN COUNTY HUMAN RESOURCE AGENCY**

*F2F Funding Began: 2004*

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**RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT OF RESOURCE FAMILIES (RDS)**

In 2006, two resource family appreciation events were held – a RDS team sponsored a luau at a local park and a holiday event in appreciation of the resource families. Glenn County has four AmeriCorps members who have brought energy and new ideas to the RDS team. One of the AmeriCorps members was hired as the new Glenn County Licensing social worker in the Fall.

**BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS (BCP)**

The Glenn County Children’s Interagency Coordinating Council (CICC) functions as the Child Abuse Prevention Council and oversees children’s services within the county. The executive body consists of the department heads from social services, probation, education, health, and the courts. The Child and Family Resource Network, which consists of all the community partners involved in children’s services, operates as a subgroup of CICC and reports to that body. Glenn County has two Family Resource Centers and is instrumental in providing community based services that support F2F strategies.

**TEAM DECISIONMAKING (TDM)**

TDMs were implemented in July 2005 at the front end (i.e. risk of removals and emergency removals prior to detention hearing). They are mandatory meetings without exception. Front end TDM’s are challenging because of the short timeframes. Staff has to immediately make phone calls to invite the TDM participants. A community services staff arranges the TDMs and makes many of the participant phone calls. Front-end TDMs have helped meet the objectives of: early assessment for child safety, awareness of placement options (including remaining in the home) and early family involvement with community services. This early intervention strategy has reduced the number of juvenile court petitions and kept many children at home with supportive services. There was been 100% participation of at least one parent at all the emergency placement TDMs in 2006. TDMs were held at the Glenn County jail on those necessary occasions, and also at the Grindstone Rancheria. The TDM location is determined by the need of the family. Glenn County is a Comprehensive Assessment Tool (CAT) county. Social workers are encouraged to bring the CAT form to the TDM to use as a guideline to ensure that safety and risk issues are thoroughly addressed during the TDM. It is not yet a mandated practice, but it is being considered a complimentary tool to the TDM process.

**SELF EVALUATION (SE)**

Glenn County uses Business Objects, UC Berkeley website quarterly data reports, and CWS/CMS Program Reports as the primary sources of statistical information for self-evaluation.

The TDM quarterly reports are helpful in practice review, such as the effectiveness of TDMs held at the local jail.

#### **IMMIGRATION**

In 2006, immigration issues surfaced with one young man transitioning from foster care. He was a late entry into the juvenile court system and there was not adequate time to complete the immigration process for legal status prior to emancipation. ILP and AmeriCorps staff is working with him to obtain legal status. There have been at least two occasions that necessitated such an arrangement.

#### **HUMBOLDT COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

*F2F Funding Began: 2004*

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#### **RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT OF RESOURCE FAMILIES (RDS)**

Humboldt County hosts an annual Foster Parent Appreciation luncheon and Winter Holiday Dinner party. At the Holiday party, volunteers sew handmade Christmas stockings for each foster/kinship child and youth, and stuff them with age-appropriate gifts. During 2006, Humboldt County recruited nine new resource families, seven of whom received their foster family home licenses by the end of the year. The relative specialists approved 37 relative/non-related extended family member homes in 2006. AmeriCorps volunteers work with the RDD coordinator on recruitment activities. Child Welfare and Probation staff worked together to design a new interagency recruitment brochure, with AmericCorp staff assisting in mass distribution. The local community college has a coordinator, a former foster youth and current adoptive parent, who staff the Foster and Kinship Care Education Program. The child welfare agency renewed its annual agreement with a nonprofit, New Directions, to fund their RDS activities through AB2129 funding. The agency's foster parent coordinators served as the liaison between staff, foster parents, and foster care eligibility staff. Respite was provided to 32 resource families on an as-needed basis. The funding sources were Specialized Care Incentive and Assistance Program, (S.C.I.A.P.), the County-only Respite Account and the Wraparound Fund, Title IVE/SB163. Higher rates were paid for medically fragile infants at the Regional Center rates for children who qualified for their services. Staff provided after-hours transportation and supervision of visits of children with their families.

#### **BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS (BCP)**

Bi-monthly Foster/Kinship Care Community Partners meetings are held. As a result of a survey conducted, on-site childcare is provided, as well as evening meetings. Child Welfare Services (CWS) has strengthened an existing partnership with the Humboldt County Office of Education (HCOE). Last fall, HCOE's new AB490/Homeless Education coordinator reconvened the Focus Group's Education/AB 490 subcommittee. The AB 490 desk guide is in its final draft, and a list of each school's AB 490 liaison was distributed to the Community Partners. The partnership with the Probation Department has been strengthened, due to the collaboration between placement specialists and TDM facilitators. There is also a strengthened relationship with the Family Resource Centers through Differential Response and TDMs. The Family Resource Centers are becoming trained partners in the evidence-based Incredible Years program, piloted in select target areas of the county. AmeriCorp staff has assisted with foster family recruitment

efforts. There has been successful recruitment of a new Spanish speaking resource family. Relationship with local Tribes continued to improve, due to ongoing collaboration between the Tribes and CWS placement and relative specialists. Tribal representatives participated in relevant TDMs.

#### **TEAM DECISIONMAKING (TDM)**

Over the past year, Humboldt County has seen a marked increase in the use of TDMs, both in ongoing units of Family Reunification, Family Maintenance, and Permanency Planning, as well as Emergency Response. At the end of 2006, TDMs were being held for Imminent Risk of Removal, Emergency Placement, and Exit from Placement. Placement Change and Exit from Placement (Reunification) TDMs are mandatory. Entry into Care was the last area in which TDMs were implemented. A pilot began in January 2006. During the report period, within the pilot, all youth who enter out-of-home care from Thursday evenings through Monday mornings had a TDM. The current firewall set up is for the TDM facilitator to request a list of all youth who entered into care, changed placements, or exited care for each month at the end of the month. Then, the facilitator checks to determine whether a TDM was held. Another informal firewall involves the Placement Unit. Because TDM facilitators are part of the placement unit, and most social workers will work with the placement unit if there is a placement need (e.g., entries into care and placement changes), placement unit staff will often direct a social worker to request a TDM as part of the placement search process. The two main focus areas on recruiting community representatives for TDMs have been the geographically based Family Resource Centers and local Indian Tribes.

#### **SELF EVALUATION (SE)**

The SE Leadership Team met several times this past year. A F2F multi-agency recruitment subcommittee provides regular updates to the SE Leadership group. The assigned analyst worked with placement specialist to develop a way to track children's removal and placements to guide recruitment efforts. Although most children reside in the greater Humboldt Bay area, there was an identified need for additional recruitment efforts in the more rural, isolated areas of the county. Beginning in 2006, the AmeriCorps staff in Family Resource Centers was utilized to assist with recruitment and support of resource families. Data is especially volatile in counties such as Humboldt, where populations are low and data snapshots can be misleading, because periods of good performance may be lost. Humboldt County now has learned to drill down to determine the why and how behind the data.

#### **FOSTER YOUTH PERMANENCE AND YOUTH TRANSITIONS AND INVOLVEMENT**

There was a substantial increase in youth participation in TDMs in 2006. Humboldt County continued to work with the California Permanency for Youth Project (CPYP) on the HOPE (Humboldt Offers Permanency for Everyone) project. Of the 15-targeted youth, 11 of them have made permanent connections. The HOPE program was one of five programs that received recognition from the State of California legislators during a rally in Sacramento in May 2006. HOPE also received national recognition in September 2006 at the California Permanency for Youth Project presentation in Washington, DC. Former foster youth leaders are being hired as part of the Independent Living Skills Program. Humboldt County's Youth Transition Action Teams (YTAT), including members from Social Services Branch and its Employment Services division, are working on a comprehensive local youth-serving system. YTAT created a formal

process for a youth employment services system, and developed a resource guide for youth at the one-stop Job Market at the Employment Development Department. Other joint projects to promote successful transitions for youth included working on an AB 490 desk guide and conducting a survey of youth exiting the child welfare system. Youth are included in the Department's Office of Cultural Diversity, attend TDM sessions, and are involved in placement conferences. Humboldt County implemented a new Transitional Housing Placement Program (THPP+) as of July 1, 2006.

#### **BIRTH PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

During 2006, Humboldt County started planning for a Parent Partner Program. Child welfare and the Child Abuse Prevention Coordinating Council co-hosted technical assistance sessions provided by the Office of Child Abuse Prevention and began planning on determining job responsibilities and funding for the positions.

#### **EDUCATION**

Last fall, the Humboldt County Office of Education's new AB490/Homeless Education coordinator reconvened the Focus Group's Education/AB 490 subcommittee. The AB 490 desk guide is in its final draft, and a list of each school's AB 490 liaison was distributed to the Community Partners. College of the Redwoods and Humboldt State University has educational liaisons to help foster youth enroll and succeed in college. College of the Redwood has an ongoing support group for former foster youth who attend classes there.

#### **PLACER COUNTY CHILDREN'S SYSTEM OF CARE DIVISION**

*F2F Funding Began: 2004*

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#### **RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT OF RESOURCE FAMILIES (RDS)**

Since implementing F2F activities to recruit, train and support resource parents, the Children's System of Care (CSOC) program has increased both the overall number of families participating in orientation and initial training, and the number of families willing to foster and adopt older children. CSOC has increased the percentage of children with two or fewer placements, as well as the percentage of children placed with siblings. The percentage of children placed in group home has also been reduced. A foster parent liaison housed at CSOC facilitates interaction with staff and efforts are in place to ensure effective and prompt communication between caseworkers and resource families. The number of resource parents participating in family support groups has increased, due to improved outreach and meeting planning. An annual picnic recognizes caregivers and each month, a resource family is recognized as the Family of the Month. As part of the honor, they are featured in the local newspaper and receive gift certificates donated by the community. Resource families regularly participate in TDMs for placement changes and reunification.

#### **BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS (BCP)**

The county's Family Resource Centers participate in F2F work groups, employ the county's Foster Family Recruiter and TDM scheduler, provide space for TDMs, and offer services to resource families. Sierra Adoption Services works with CSOC through a unique public-private collaboration to recruit, train, and support resource parents. The agency assists resource parents

to prepare for TDMs, and participates in the various F2F workgroups. Koinonia Family Services works closely with CSOC and Sierra Adoption Services to plan and oversee resource family placements. They also recruit, train and support resource families. During the past year, CSOC has strengthened relationships with two agencies providing services to families affected by domestic violence.

#### **TEAM DECISIONMAKING (TDM)**

During 2006, CSOC implemented mandatory TDMs for all placement changes and some permanency placements. Family reunification TDMs were implemented countywide in 2005. Specific protocols will be written for initial removal, and technical assistance will be provided to staff. Safety/Action Plans are completed for all TDMs. To ensure that caseworkers schedule and convene TDMs, a TDM database and tracking system have been implemented. Currently, the child welfare manager responsible for TDMs receives monthly CWS/CMS data on all children who have reunified with parents/guardians and compares it to the list of TDMs that have been held or scheduled. The manager also reviews court notes and places phone calls to social workers to remind them to schedule a TDM prior to reunification or placement changes.

#### **SELF EVALUATION (SE)**

F2F self evaluation is handled by the Child Welfare System Improvement Accountability Team. At each bi-monthly meeting, the Accountability Team reviews county progress on the federal and state outcomes, as well as Placer's System Improvement Plan (SIP). The F2F activities are included in the system improvement plan. Until recently, very limited data was available to measure the impact of changes in practice. With more data now available, managers and staff frequently use the data to justify changes in practices, such as convening TDMs or working with birth parents to reduce placement changes and reunify children more quickly.

#### **FOSTER YOUTH PERMANENCE AND YOUTH TRANSITIONS AND INVOLVEMENT**

CSOC, in conjunction with Sierra Adoption Services, has implemented Destination Family, a program designed to promote permanency for youth ages 11-18. Whole Person Learning, which administers Placer's Independent Living Program, has also helped prepare youth to transition to adulthood. Almost every eligible youth participates in the program, and rates of school attendance, high school graduation and other key indicators have been positive. Emancipated foster youth participating in the ILP program also speak at foster parent training (PRIDE) events.

#### **BIRTH PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

In partnership with Koinonia Family Services, Family Connections, and most recently, Sierra Adoption Services, CSOC has successfully implemented Icebreakers. A database for Icebreakers was implemented but has not yet provided adequate data for quantitative evaluation. Anecdotal qualitative data indicate that both foster and birth parents are pleased with the process, and that the program has strengthened and improved the relationships between birth and foster parents. A \$10 million, 5-year grant from SAMHSA to implement four strategies – parent partnerships, family conferencing, cultural competency and evidence-based practices - has allowed for expansion of the program.

#### **AOD/MENTAL HEALTH**

Unique among California counties, Placer County administers child welfare services as an integral part of the Children's System of Care (CSOC). CSOC is a fully integrated, full-scale

system, which provides a continuum of services. Because all the services are administered through integrated CSOC teams and funded through a unified budget, mental health and substance abuse services are more readily available to families involved in the child welfare system. Placer works closely with an extensive private provider network. All providers contracting with CSOC, as well as county agencies, are required to use the Placer County Outcome Screen to evaluate family strengths and service needs. The screen assesses family needs in a holistic fashion, measuring success in five outcome areas: keeping the family safe, healthy, together (at-home), in school or at work and out-of-trouble. Mental health and substance abuse issues are identified in the screen. Methamphetamine use is one of the primary reasons children are removed from their parents in Placer County. Placer County has recently started the Meth Project, a system wide pilot project to implement training and best work practices related to methamphetamine treatment and relapse prevention within family systems. Placer County has also launched a second, related initiative to improve training and implement best practices related to treatment of child welfare services clients with co-occurring disorders. A DVD, "It's A Fact: Meth Is Our Problem" was produced and distributed by Placer County.

**SACRAMENTO COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

*F2F Funding Began: 2004*

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**RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT OF RESOURCE FAMILIES (RDS)**

Recruitment efforts have focused on communities that have a high rate of removals but historically have had fewer resource homes available. Neighborhood orientations have taken place in these targeted communities. One area has seen a 25% increase in the number of resource homes available to serve children. Sacramento has also entered into an MOU agreement with Sacramento Unified School District. Children are now being placed closer to home and with their siblings. 80% of the children placed in care are placed with their siblings. Sacramento developed a Resource Family Liaison position. This position provides assistance to resource and relative caregivers when they experience difficulty navigating the Child Welfare System. A mentoring program has been developed to assist new resource parents by having a seasoned resource parent available to provide support. Support groups are offered in both English and Spanish. Foster Home Licensing sponsored the first F2F Resource and Kin Caregiver Convening in June 2006. The convening was two days, with F2F TA consultant Denise Goodman as the keynote presenter. Sacramento County offers respite care by utilizing state SCIAP funds (Specialized Care Incentives and Assistance Program). Resource families can receive a maximum of 72 hours of respite care when a child requires care and supervision due to health and/or behavioral problems. Resource families are allowed a maximum amount of \$200 dollars per respite episode.

**BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS (BCP)**

Sacramento has been working on strengthening partnerships with faith-based organizations using the Family Resource Centers. Sacramento is also working to strengthen partnerships with ethnic communities. In October, there was a convening held with Asian and Pacific Islander (API) service providers and community members to discuss strategies for serving API families. Faith based organizations have hosted foster parent recruitment presentations. Efforts are currently underway to begin two Community Service Networks within two zip code areas.

### **TEAM DECISIONMAKING (TDM)**

In Reunification, TDMs are held when the social worker requests a meeting for placement changes, imminent risk of removal, and for reunifications. Sacramento recently rolled out TDM in the Permanent Placement and Guardianship programs where recruitment efforts have begun. The use of a “communication sheet” has helped. TDM participants share their telephone numbers and email addresses and keep in contact regarding their tasks. Social worker feedback has shown that this is a helpful step for accountable.

### **SELF EVALUATION (SE)**

The Self Evaluation team is integrated into each of the Redesign workgroups. The Redesign Steering Committee meets monthly, and information is shared and analyzed with this group. The members include both internal and external partners. There is also staff assigned internally who pull data reports for all programs on a monthly basis. A quarterly Data book is produced and shared with partners. The information in the Data Book is an overview of data from each of the programs, including the number of referrals each month, the number of families who reunified, the number of youth involved in ILP, etc.

### **FOSTER YOUTH PERMANENCE AND YOUTH TRANSITIONS AND INVOLVEMENT**

Sacramento has employed two Americorp Redesign Youth Leaders, who are former foster youth. The Youth Transitions Workgroup is chaired by a former foster youth. The Independent Living Program (ILP) has a youth advisory board named PAUSE (Paying Attention Using Self-Evaluation) in which a core group of six former foster youth facilitate a bimonthly support group. The PAUSE, California Youth Connection, and Youth Leaders actively engage foster youth as co-facilitators at all of the ILP classes and workshops. The Youth participate in the Resource Parent Orientations to recruit resource families for older youth. Sacramento and its partners planned and facilitated a regional Foster Youth Employment Summit. The Redesign Youth Transitions Workgroup began training child welfare staff and the community on utilization of the Ansell Casey Life Skills Assessment. Sacramento, Casey Family Programs, and the American Red Cross began a mentoring services and training. The Sacramento ILP program also began providing case mining and use of the U.S. Search computer program to locate family and permanent connections for its emancipated youth. Sacramento’s Permanency Partners team is assisting social workers in the Permanent Placement program to assist placement workers in understanding different permanency options available for youth. Sacramento’s permanency handbook, “There’s No Place Like Home: A Guide to Youth Permanency” has been published and is being distributed widely. The Youth Leaders initiated and developed a “Youth Permanency Talking Points” document. Sacramento is working with Sacramento State University on a permanency curriculum that will be used in the Social Work Department.

### **BIRTH PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

Celebrating four years, the Shared Leadership Task Force (i.e. a Parent Leader program) now has 15 parent members who work with child welfare management, staff, community, and families. The Shared Leadership Task Force was responsible for developing an educational/informational video “*A Families Journey-What you need to know about Child Protective Services*”, which is used for training staff, community partners and birth parents about our system. The Shared Leadership Task Force members assist in the hiring of new social workers and in the training of new social work hires.

## **EDUCATION**

Sacramento was recently selected as one of ten national jurisdictions to participate in the Casey Family Program Breakthrough Series on Improving Education Stability and Continuity For Youth in Out-of-Home Care. Sacramento has an Educational representative participate in all TDMs. Sacramento has also entered into a MOU agreement with Sacramento Unified School District. Sacramento and Casey Family Programs has begun a partnership with the Stuart Foundation and California State University, Sacramento, and the University of California, Davis, to implement the Guardian Scholars Program. Sacramento, Casey Family Programs, and several community partners facilitated a Educational Summit for Foster Youth in Sacramento this year.

## **ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS (AOD) AND MENTAL HEALTH**

Sacramento's voluntary programs are working closely with the County's AOD and mental health resources to streamline current referral processes and strengthen coordination of services. They have developed protocols for conducting joint visits when necessary, reduce wait time for assessments and appointments and increase frequency of consultation between caseworkers.

## **IMMIGRATION**

Sacramento County has an MOU with the Mexican Consulate's Office. The immigration liaison, a Special Skills Social Worker, was instrumental in developing this collaborative process several years ago, and has been recognized statewide for her efforts in this area. There are quarterly meetings held to discuss strengths and barriers in working with Mexican Nationals in Sacramento County. This MOU has strengthened Sacramento's ability to provide placement stability to children and families.

## **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

There is a Domestic Violence Coordinating Council, a collaborative between community Domestic Violence service providers, law enforcement, Child Welfare, Mental Health, Public Health, Probation, all local hospitals. There is a Law Enforcement Collaborative, a Domestic Health Care Collaborative, and the Domestic Violence Death Review team, which provide inter-departmental support and oversight.

## **SOLANO COUNTY CHILD WELFARE SERVICES**

*F2F Funding Began: 2005*

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## **RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT OF RESOURCE FAMILIES (RDS)**

Solano County has partnered with the Foster Parent Association and the Foster and Kinship Care Education through Solano Community College to improve relationships between foster parents and social workers. Child welfare services worked closely with the Foster and Kinship Care Education program in designing this year's foster parent conference. Solano County is focusing foster parent recruitment efforts in the city of Vallejo and the foster parent pre-service training is now being offered in Vallejo three times per year. The RDS workgroup held a foster parent brunch in collaboration with Vallejo Family Resource Center, CASA Solano and the Foster Parent Association this year. The RDS workgroup is also a key support in the planning of the annual Foster Parent Appreciation event and the annual Foster Care Barbecue.

**BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS (BCP)**

Solano County is exploring ways to partner with community members, schools, families, youth, faith based organizations and others. In June of 2006, Solano County sponsored the first ever community resource event in Vallejo. This event showcased over 25 community resources from the Vallejo area including churches, youth activities, family support services and county agencies. The Foster and Kinship Care Education program sponsored a half-day resource fair that highlighted over 30 local service providers. Two main projects are to revitalize the county's youth advisory and advocacy boards and the development of a parent advisory and advocacy board consisting of birth parents that have successfully reunified.

**TEAM DECISIONMAKING (TDM)**

Solano County has begun the initial rollout phase of the TDM strategy. On December 1, 2006 all families from Vallejo whose children were at risk of being removed from their homes, participated in a TDM. In implementing emergency response and imminent risk TDM meetings, the TDM workgroup has met weekly to debrief the recent TDM meetings and further define the protocol specifically around the areas of domestic violence, safety factors and confidentiality.

**SELF EVALUATION (SE)**

The target community is quite large and made up of numerous smaller close-knit neighborhoods. The SE team created map of the first entries into foster care and other reports, which were shared on the intranet and with community partners. The group has identified a subcommittee (the Data Improvement Project or DIP) whose primary focus is cleaning up the data and reviewing standards for data entry. Solano County will hire a data consultant to specifically address integrating data into day-to-day child welfare practice.

**TEHAMA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

*F2F Funding Began: 2004*

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**RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT OF RESOURCE FAMILIES (RDS)**

Joint recruitment and support activities have been developed by the child welfare agency and key foster family agencies, state adoptions, child abuse council, foster/adoptive parent association, and a local adoption support agency. There is an increased focus on support for foster parents. Resource families and parents are regularly included in TDMs. Birth parents and youth are part of the PRIDE curriculum. There is an increased awareness of the importance towards permanency for each youth. Community awareness of this issue has been greatly increased through outreach to service clubs and newspaper articles. New partnerships with service clubs have emerged with a focus on support for transition-age youth. One local photographer began providing complimentary senior portrait sittings and basic photo packages for graduating foster youth.

**BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS (BCP)**

The collaboration amongst agencies, community partners and individuals around the community's children and families continues to grow and improve. Although no formal efforts have been launched for RDS through BCP, there continues to be a connection in the goal of the

two strategies and the increased awareness of BCP partners regarding the foster care system and the needs of the youth have allowed those partners to in turn help to spread the word throughout the community. Some community representatives are in attendance at TDMs.

#### **TEAM DECISIONMAKING (TDM)**

Tehama County currently has mandatory TDMs for placement disruptions and reunifications/exits from care, including permanency planning. Icebreakers were rolled out in mid-2006 and are not mandatory at the present time

#### **SELF EVALUATION (SE)**

Tehama County's SE team meets monthly and is connected to the other strategy groups by the F2F Coordinator and the overlap of staff participation on the different groups. Data has been shared with the community through newspaper articles as well as personal contacts and outreach events. Regular reports are created which include caseload statistics, such as number of cases by service component, children in out-of-home placement and their placement location, etc. Other reports are run as needed related to specific topics including referrals related to substance abuse and differential response referral assignments.

#### **BIRTH PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

Tehama County employs two full-time birth parents and one full-time AmeriCorps member as parent partners who have proven to be invaluable to engaging birth parents, especially around their substance abuse issues.

#### **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (DV)**

Tehama County has developed a DV program ("Healthy, Happy Home") designed by the primary DV agency in the county specifically to meet the needs of the child welfare clientele.

#### **EDUCATION**

The local department of education Foster and Homeless Youth Services Coordinator is one of the most active F2F partner. This relationship has improved education access and outcomes for the county's foster youth since the position was created. The department of education's Foster and Homeless Youth Services Coordinator successfully brought grant monies to the county to start a tutoring program for foster youth, especially those preparing to complete high school.

#### **TRINITY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

*F2F Funding Began: 2004*

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#### **RECRUITMENT, DEVELOPMENT, AND SUPPORT OF RESOURCE FAMILIES (RDS)**

In 2006 several appreciation and recruitment events for Resource Families were held, including distribution of free literature, weekly front page ads in the local free paper, open house, foster care appreciation dinner, pool party, and winter carnival. Foster Parents were presented with a certificate from Patty Berg, State Assembly Representative, in recognition of their dedication and service to the community and children. Each family was given a digital camera so they could take pictures of their foster children to share with the child's family and for the child's photo album. Due to the positive responses received from the families, the Foster Care Month, pool party and Winter Carnival will become annual events. It is often difficult for families to attend

training provided by the local community college located over an hour's drive away so Trinity county began sending each family a monthly letter with information about the department and training opportunities along with a monthly training module that they could read and return the answer sheet to earn hours toward their mandatory training requirements. Trinity County has found that the most effective recruitment technique in small communities is word-of-mouth. There are five AmeriCorps volunteers located in the Child Welfare Services Unit who are available to provide respite care for resource families. A protocol was also developed for families to be reimbursed through Title IVE funding for childcare when they attend classes, court or family meetings.

#### **BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS (BCP)**

In October of 2006, Trinity County Health and Human Services hosted a dinner in Weaverville, the county's largest population center, for the Faith Community, which included representatives from over 20 churches. Two members of our Board of Supervisors attended the event. The honored guest, Pastor Raymond Lankford, discussed his experience with the Foster Care System as a Child Welfare Worker and a Foster Parent and provided information on how all organizations could work together. An advisory committee was created as a result of this event. A survey was sent to gather ideas on how to best work together.

#### **TEAM DECISIONMAKING (TDM)**

TDMs were implemented for all placement moves in July of 2004. The Firewall in place is that the TDM action plan must be attached to the detention report or the judge will order the TDM to be held. The Safety/Action plans are attached to court hearing reports and the workers are including them in the case plans. Compliance with the plans is reported back to the court during reviews. Each meeting is scheduled based on individual needs of the case. One of the most important changes in Trinity's Child Welfare Services is by using the TDM tool, the process of placement is slowed down which allows the best decision to be made. Less time is spent justifying the decision to Agency partners since it was made in a collaborative manner.

#### **FOSTER YOUTH PERMANENCE AND YOUTH TRANSITIONS AND INVOLVEMENT**

In 2006, Trinity County contracted with the local Workforce Investment Act provider for employment assessment, evaluation and job shadowing opportunities for the Independent Living Skills youth. The youth are paid a stipend to attend the assessment and job shadow a professional so the youth can get a "hands on" experience on the job.

#### **BIRTH PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

Trinity County has a severe shortage of housing; especially in the lower price ranges and many of these homes are sub-standard. The department has contracted with a community-based agency to provide an emergency and transitional housing program. With augmented funding through CWS Redesign, Trinity has been able to procure an array of housing options ranging from hotel vouchers, short-term temporary housing, and long term transitional housing. The services provided through this contract include housing and other support services. AmeriCorps Volunteers were utilized to work individually with families to address the needs identified in their case plans. Volunteers are providing transportation, assistance with childcare and shopping, they even help families with moving from one house to another.