



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
Administration on Children, Youth and Families
1250 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20024

NOV 09 2007

Ann Silverberg Williamson, Secretary
Louisiana Department of Social Services
627 North 4th Street
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70821

Dear Ms. Williamson:

This correspondence serves to inform you that the Children's Bureau (CB) has reviewed and approved the Louisiana Office of Community Services Federal Fiscal Year 2007 Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR).

This correspondence also serves to transmit the signed CFS-101 form, Part I and Part III, which approve the Office of Community Services funding request for Federal Fiscal Year 2008. In addition, copies of this letter and the approved CFS-101 forms have been sent to the Office of Grants Management (OGM), Administration for Children and Families (ACF).

We appreciate the collaboration and responsiveness that Bridget Clark and other Office of Community Services staff have demonstrated by providing timely clarifications and additional information needed to approve the APSR. We look forward to continuing to work with you, Assistant Secretary Marketa Gautreau and Office of Community Services staff to improve the lives of vulnerable children and families in the State of Louisiana. If you have questions, please contact Amy Grissom, Program Specialist, at 214-767-4958, or June Lloyd, Child Welfare Program Manager, at 214-767-8466.

Sincerely,

Joseph Bock
Acting Associate Commissioner
Children's Bureau

Enclosures:
CFS-101, Parts I and III

cc:
Marketa Gautreau, Assistant Secretary; Office of Community Services; Baton Rouge, LA
Joel McLain, Acting Division Director; Office of Community Services; Baton Rouge, LA
Gail Collins, Director; Division of Program Implementation; ACF, CB; Washington, DC
Deborah Bell, Financial Management Specialist; ACF, OA, OGM; Washington, DC



State of Louisiana
Department of Social Services
OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
627 NORTH 4TH STREET
P. O. BOX 3318 – PHONE – 225/342-2297
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70821
www.dss.state.la.us



KATHLEEN BABINEAUX BLANCO
GOVERNOR

ANN SILVERBERG WILLIAMSON
SECRETARY

September 5, 2007

Ms. June Lloyd
Region VI, Administration for Children and Families
1301 Young Street, Suite 914
Dallas, Texas 75202

Dear Ms. Lloyd:

RE: Louisiana's 2007 Annual Progress and Service Report Revised

Thank you for the opportunity to clarify information contained in Louisiana's 2007 Annual Progress and Service Report and to submit additional information that demonstrates the vast amount of work our agency has undertaken to achieve safety, permanency and well-being for the children and families served. Please find attached a revised copy of Louisiana's 2007 APSR that includes the items identified in the 2007 checklist that was sent to OCS in late August, 2007. The following information is attached:

- New CFS 101 (part 1) - CFS 101 submitted previously had the incorrect FY date. The new one contains the correct FY 2008 date. After discussion with Amy Grissom, it was agreed that the revised budget for FY 2007 did not require any further action.
- Since the initial submission of the 2007 APSR, additional information has become available with regard to disaster planning and the department's help line; therefore, that information has been added.
- Information on the agency's strong collaboration with CIP, CBCAP and foster/adoptive parent recruitment was repeated in the Community Consultation and Collaboration section; however, little additional information was available to add to the section on Tribal Coordination.

- As per APSR comments and discussion with Amy Grissom, the APSR has been changed to read Child Welfare Services rather than Child Welfare Continuum. Already contained in the initial submission of the APSR was child welfare services information (child protection, prevention and family services, foster care and adoption) on the service, population served, methods to measure/outcomes data, reports on the progress and accomplishments and plans for the coming fiscal year; however, areas needing improvement from LA's CFSR PIP and IV-E PIP have been noted in child welfare services. With regard to payment limitations, we have included in the figures for Title IV-B subpart 1 funds the State expended in FY 2004 and FY 2005 on foster care maintenance. No funds were used to pay for child care or adoption assistance payments. The amount of non-federal funds expended by the State for foster care payments is also included.
- Additional information regarding case worker visits is included in this submission of the APSR. Information on the actual planned use of additional funds to facilitate monthly caseworker visits and plans for addressing staff training/development and staff recruitment/retention is also included.
- Louisiana will submit the Foster/Adoptive Parent Recruitment and Retention Plan on Sept. 30, 2007.
- Non-supplantation requirement - the PSSF section contains figures on the State expenditure amount for Title IV-B, subpart 2 for FY 2005.
- The CAPTA section was reworked to include an overall description as well as information on each service, population served, reports on the progress and accomplishments and plans for the coming fiscal year. Additionally, areas needing improvement as identified in LA's CFSR have been identified. EIC and criminal records checks are now located in that section. With this submission of the 2007 APSR we are also submitting the final report for 2006 for the CRPs. The CRP report contains additional information that was not available at the time of the initial submission of the APSR.
- The Chafee and ETV portion was reworked to highlight the required information already contain in the APSR and to include additional information on the outcomes/plans for the independent living program.

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Ms. June Lloyd
September 5, 2007

If you have any questions or comments about this information please feel free to contact Bridget S. Clark at (225) 342-2416.

Thank you,

Handwritten signature of Joel M. McLain in cursive script, followed by the letters "BASC" in a similar style.

Joel M. McLain
Acting Division Director
Division of Policy, Planning & Accreditation

JMM/BSC/gw

Enclosures

C: Amy Grissom, Children and Family Program Specialist
ACF Regional Office VI



State of Louisiana
Department of Social Services
OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
627 NORTH 4TH STREET
P. O. BOX 3318 – PHONE – 225/342-2297
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70821
www.dss.state.la.us

KATHLEEN BABINEAUX BLANCO
GOVERNOR

ANN SILVERBERG WILLIAMSON
SECRETARY

June 28, 2007

Mr. Leon R. McCowan
Hub Director
Region VI
Administration for Children and Families
1301 Young Street
Suite 914
Dallas, Texas 75202

Dear Mr. McCowan:

RE: 2007 Annual Progress and Services Report, Revised/Renegotiated Program
Improvement Plan CFS-101, Parts I and II, Annual Budget Request

REF: Log No: ACYF-CB-PI-07-05

The Louisiana Department of Social Services (DSS), Office of Community Services (OCS), is pleased to submit the above referenced document. With the electronic submission of the 2007 Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR), the Department complies with applicable federal regulations and instructions and applies for federal revenue available under the provision of Title IV-B, subparts 1 and 2; Title IV-E of the Social Security Act; Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program and the Educational and Training Vouchers Program. The CFS 101 is also being sent in hard copy.

The plan reflects the services and programs supporting the child welfare continuum in Louisiana and contains reports on ongoing efforts and progress in achieving the goals of safety, permanency and well-being. DSS/OCS continued to make progress and reach achievements over the past year along with ongoing recovery from the hurricanes of 2005. DSS/OCS has worked with the Children's Bureau, the Administration for Children and Families and the National Resource Centers in realizing both short-term and long-term goals for the agency

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June 28, 2007

The plan contains the following:

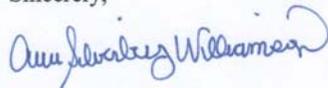
- Updated DSS/OCS organizational charts;
- Louisiana Department of Social Services and Office of Community Services (DSS/OCS) disaster plans;
- Baseline data/performance measures ;
- Ongoing collaboration with community members such as prevention groups and American Indian Tribes;
- Child Abuse Prevention Treatment Act initiatives along with an area that has been selected for improvement;
- The 2006 Annual Citizen Review Panel Report that contains new recommendations as well as updates on 2005 recommendations;
- The 2006 Louisiana Children's Trust Fund and a report on the Court Improvement Program;
- Information on the child welfare continuum including program descriptions, populations served, updates on achievements/progress, measurement of outcomes and plans for state fiscal year 2007-2008;
- The State's plan to obtain baseline information on caseworker visit data and the State's standard for the content and frequency of caseworker visits;
- Agency policy on consultation with physicians;
- Information on the specific accomplishments and planned activities for the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program and Educational Training Voucher Program are included.
- The revised/renegotiated PIP and a summary of achievements to date;
- The Department's use of National Child Welfare Resource Center's expertise in our efforts to implement the agency's short-term and long-term goals and;
- The CFS 101 budget request, assurances, certifications and signature pages.
- There is no information included in the plan regarding demonstration projects because the State is not engaged in one at this time.

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Mr. McCown
June 28, 2007

Child welfare services remain a high priority in Louisiana. The children of this State continue to be our most precious resource and DSS/OCS continues to strive to deliver the services described in our plan and to strengthen those services whenever possible.

We appreciate the assistance of Ms. Amy Grissom, Children and Families Program Specialist. Her knowledge and support were helpful in the development of this document. We look forward to continuing this close working relationship and would also like to extend our appreciation to the Dallas Regional ACF office staff that has worked on joint planning and policy clarifications during development of this document. Thank you and your staff for your time and cooperation. If you have any questions or need clarification on any portion of this document, please contact Bridget S. Clark, Acting Section Administrator, at (225) 342-2416. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Ann Silverberg Williamson
Secretary

ASW:BSC

Attachment (1)

C: Marketa G. Gautreau, Assistant Secretary
Office of Community Services

Amy Grissom, Children and Family Program Specialist
ACF Regional Office VI

STATE OF LOUISIANA
2007 Annual Progress and Service Report



2007

Annual Progress

And

Service Report

Louisiana Department of Social Services

Office of Community Services



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Introduction

The Department of Social Services (DSS) is the single state agency designated in Louisiana to administer and supervise the administration of child welfare services delivered under Title IV-B subparts 1 and 2, and Title IV-E of the Social Security Act. In addition, the Department is designated to administer the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program and the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (P.L. 104-235). The mandate of DSS is for the development and provision of social services and the improvement of social conditions for the citizens of Louisiana.

DSS administers the State's child and family services programs through a single organizational unit, the Office of Community Services (OCS). OCS provides comprehensive social services and child welfare programs that include protective services, protective childcare, family services, child abuse/neglect prevention, intervention and treatment, foster care and adoption. These services are administered statewide within a centralized organizational framework.

This report updates, profiles and summarizes the progress and achievements made by DSS/OCS in its implementation of the 2005-2009 Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP). During this reporting period, Louisiana continued to recover from the devastation of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and implemented numerous initiatives to reduce risk to children, prevent removal from the child's home and to facilitate return home or to relatives.

This report contains information on the following areas:

1. **Organizational Charts** – Charts have been updated to include recent organizational changes.
2. **Disaster Plans** – This section includes information on the Department's policies for emergency preparedness, DSS/OCS' Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) and other emergency planning guides.
3. **Quality Improvement** – This portion of the plan summarizes Continuous Quality Improvement and Quality Assurance efforts.
4. **Baseline Data/Performance Measures** – This section provides data sets the agency gathered with the assistance of the NRC for Child Protective Services to access whether or not certain variables had an effect on foster care entries. Additionally, baseline data on safety, permanency and well-being indicators is provided as well as a brief summary of the program improvement plan.
5. **Community Consultation and Collaboration** – This section provides information on the progress made on ongoing community collaboration efforts.
6. **Louisiana Children's Trust Fund 2006 Annual Report** – Trust fund and Community Based Family Resource and Support (CBCAP) activities are outlined in this section.

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7. **Indian Child Welfare Act and Tribal Collaboration** – Information provided describes infrastructure allowing for networking, agreements, cross training, and communication between American Indian tribal representatives and agency staff at parish, regional, and state levels. Agency compliance with the five major components of ICWA is also provided.
8. **Court Improvement Project** - This section provides an update on various initiatives to improve the relationship between the agency and the judiciary.
9. **Children’s Justice Act (CJA)** – A listing of activities and accomplishments of the CJA is listed in this section.
10. **Technical Assistance** – Training and technical assistance (TA) utilized from the Administration for Children and Families is contained in this section as well as TA from National Resource Centers.
11. **Research and Evaluation** – This portion of the plan summarizes efforts with regard to identified needs for research and evaluation.
12. **Information Management System** –Updates are provided on the status of the A Comprehensive Enterprise Social Services System (ACCESS) Louisiana’s SACWIS system.
13. **Louisiana’s Long-Term Goals** - This section contains an update on objectives and action steps and includes information on accomplishments in SFY 2006 – 2007, methods to measure/outcomes data and activities planned for SFY 2007 – 2008.
14. **Child Welfare Services**– This section describes child welfare services supported by Title IV-B, subpart 1 funds. The agency’s child welfare services include Child Protection Investigations, Prevention and Family Services, Foster Care and Adoption Services that are outlined in this section.
15. **Chafee Foster Care Independence Program Report for 2007 and Application For FFY 2008** – This section profiles the efforts to reach adolescents who are in foster care and to prepare youth for young adulthood.
16. **Promoting Safe and Stable Families** – The agency’s implementation of the Social Security Act, Title IV-B, Subpart 2 is described in this section.
17. **Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA)** – This section contains information on agency initiatives funded by the CAPTA grant as well as an area identified for improvement.
18. **Citizen Review Panels** – The 2006 Citizen Review Panel Annual Report and updates to 2005 Citizen Review Panel recommendations are provided in this section.

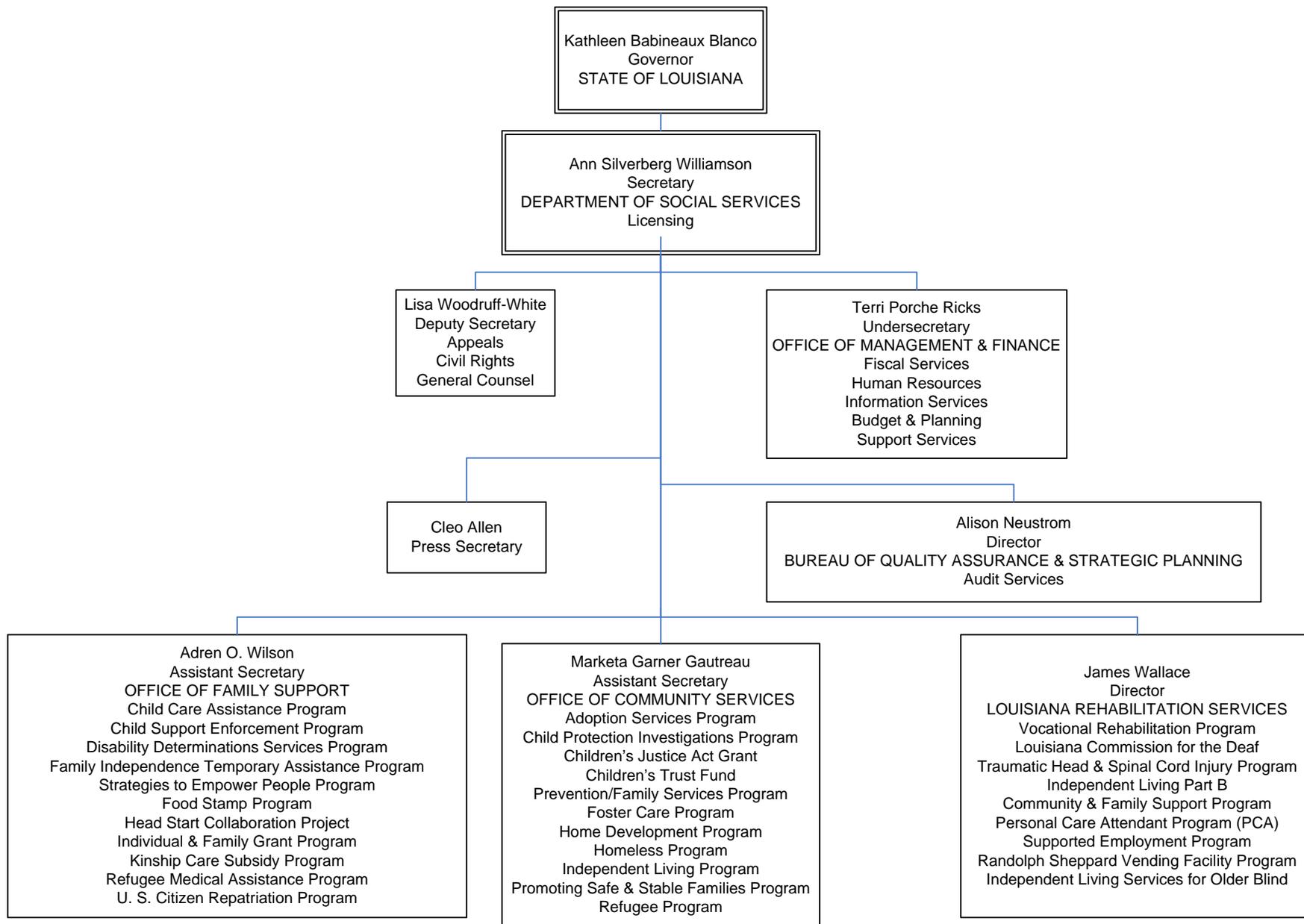
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19. **Training** – This section contains information on training delivered in SFY 2006 – 2007 and new training planned for SFY 2007 – 2008. Additionally, training delivered with Title IV-E funds are included in terms of courses offered, numbers and general positions of prospective trainees as well as estimated costs for 2008.

20. **Child and Family Services Review/Louisiana’s Revised/Renegotiated PIP** – Louisiana’s PIP was renegotiated due to impact of hurricanes Katrina and Rita on the State. This renegotiated PIP focuses on the agency’s short-term recovery. This section contains the agency’s renegotiated PIP and summary of the achievement of the PIP.

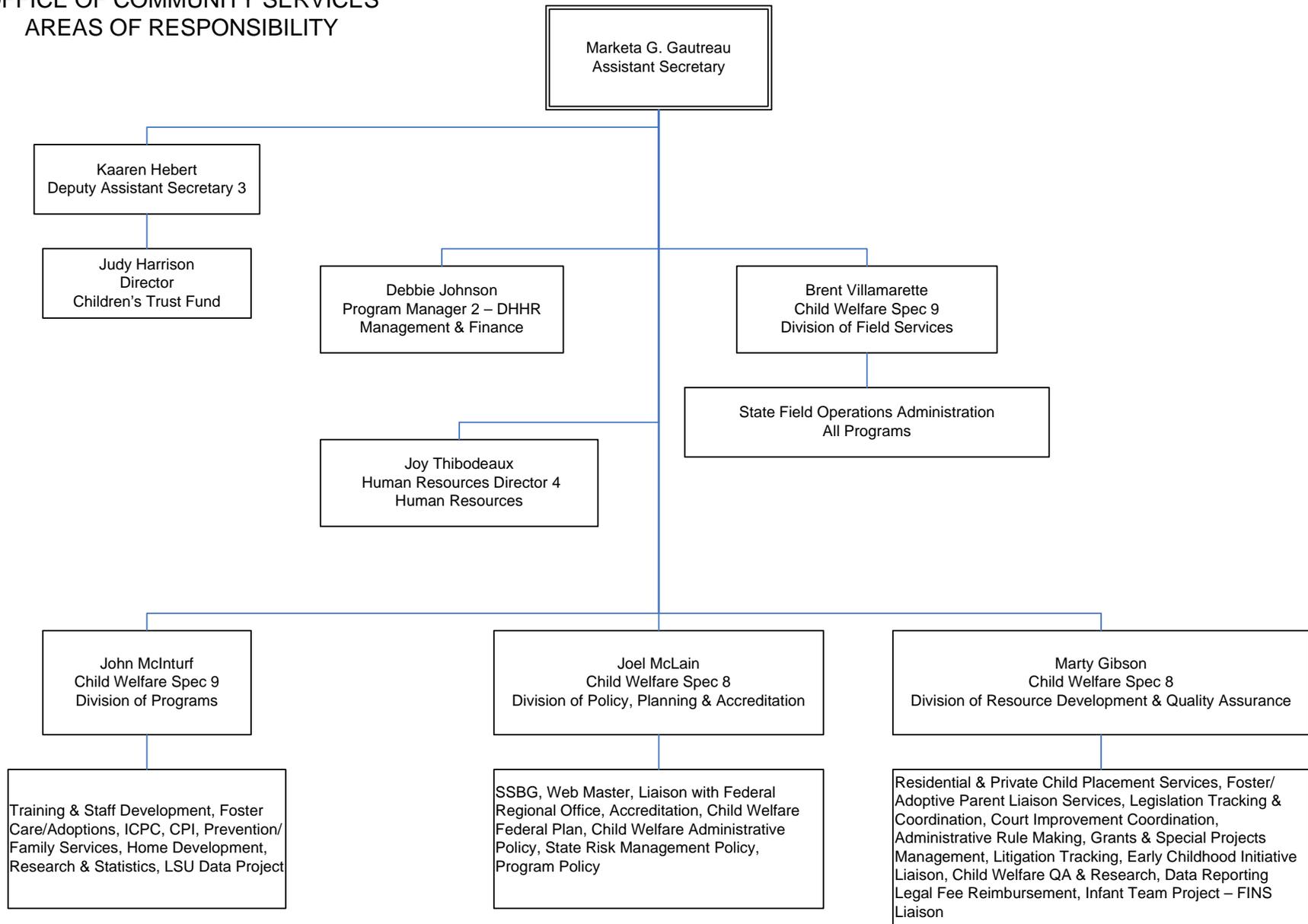
21. **Annual Budget Request for 2007 – 2008** – This portion of the plan contains the estimated expenditures for delivery of Title IV-B, Subpart 2 services, as well as Assurances, Certifications for the CFCIP and ETV program and signature pages. The request for funding (CFS-101) is also contained in this section.

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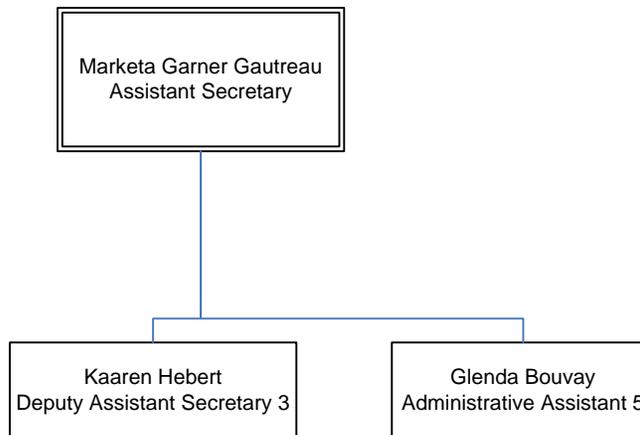
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OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY



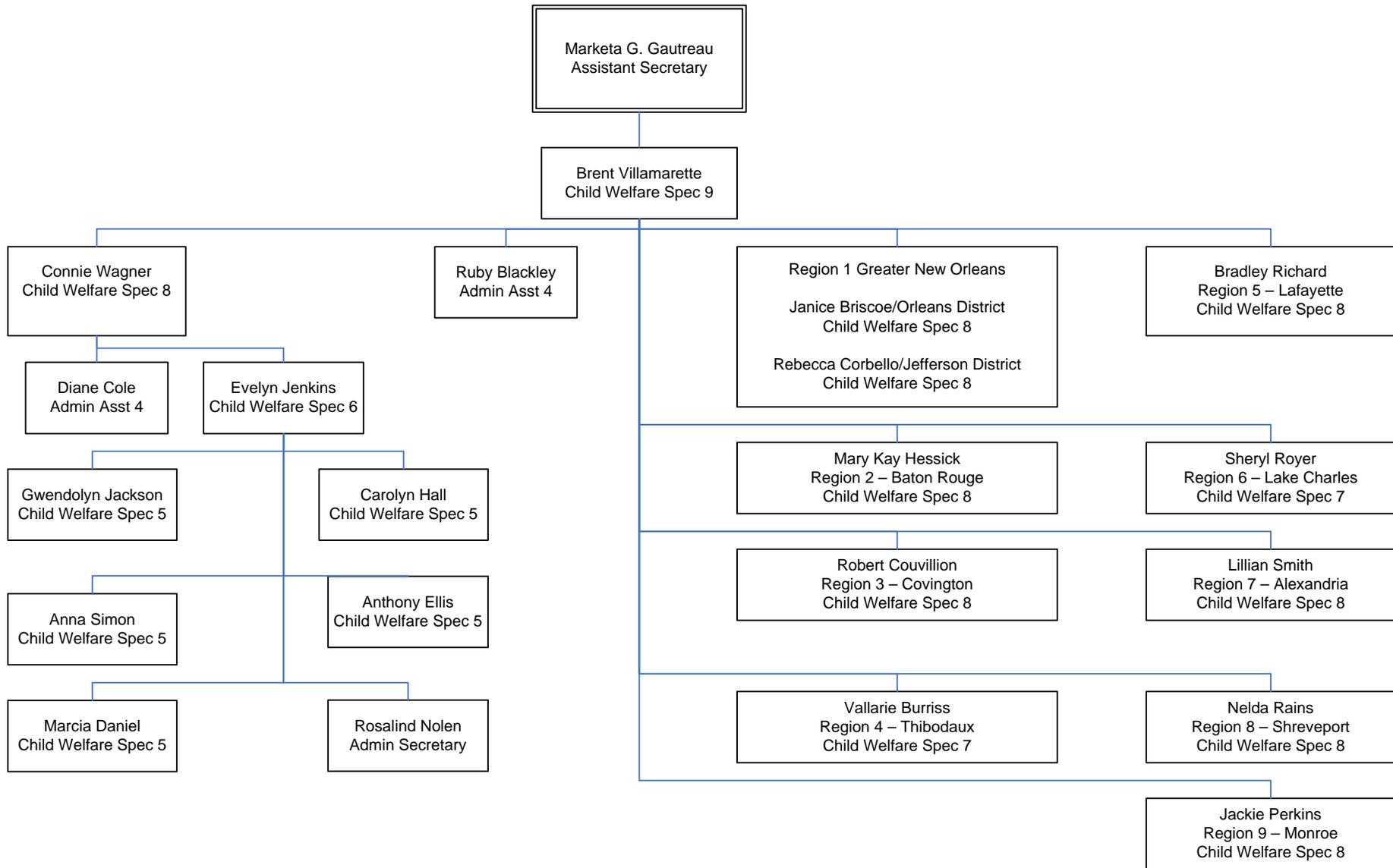
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ASSISTANT SECRETARY'S OFFICE



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OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
DIVISION OF FIELD SERVICES



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2.0 Disaster Plans

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina Louisiana, and other states, experienced circumstances that had never before been experienced in such magnitude and with such far-reaching impact. While disasters had been experienced before, no single prior disaster had the impact of this experience. This event has awakened Louisiana and the child welfare field to the need for more extensive planning for the future. While everyone hopes that there will never again be a disaster with the impact of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, the reality exists that disasters will occur in the future and planning now can lessen the impact such disasters could have on child welfare programs across the country.

As a result of such planning, the State of Louisiana created an executive order (KBB 06-32) directing that the State and its departments must be prepared to respond in a coordinated, effective and efficient manner to all emergencies and disasters. The Department of Social Services (DSS) has contracted with Innovative Emergency Management, Inc., a consulting firm experienced in emergency planning for large organizations to develop a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) to assure continuation of services in the event of a natural or man-made disaster.

The COOP identifies for the department as a whole and for each agency within the Department essential functions of operation, orders of succession, roster of key employees statewide, delegation of authority in areas of child protection investigations and foster care case management, devolution to regional leadership if state office is inaccessible for 24 hours or more. Alternative work facilities, essential functions and supporting dependencies such as unaccompanied children and foster care case management, ways to support personnel, supplies, and other necessities so that work can be carried on, and alternative providers and modes of communication are also addressed. (Draft of the COOP is submitted as an attachment with the 2007 APSR.)

DSS policy was also developed to address emergency preparedness. Administrative/Fiscal policy on Emergency Preparedness was issued on May 22, 2007 and details the Department's responsibilities for emergency preparedness and the continuation of services. The policy is as follows:

I. Introduction

A. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to affirm that DSS supports the emergency preparedness goals of the State to ensure the safety and welfare of Louisiana citizens during emergencies and disasters. In addition, the policy defines the Department's role and responsibilities in carrying out the emergency functions of mass care, housing, and human services when people are forced to leave their homes in actual or threatened emergencies and disasters. DSS and the Department of Public Safety and Corrections (DOC) are the two primary responsible agencies for Emergency Support Function (ESF) 6. DSS has the primary responsibility for coordinating mass care, housing, and human services; and DOC has the primary responsibility for coordinating mass feeding.

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B. Scope

There are many types of events that may result in the implementation of this policy. Large-scale natural and technological disasters include such events as hurricanes, flooding, tornadoes, and hazardous material accidents. Local government has overall responsibility to protect Louisiana citizens during emergencies and disasters. However, some events, whether natural or technological, are of such severity or magnitude as to exceed or overwhelm the capability of local authorities to respond. In such events many state departments and agencies at the state level will supplement local response and recovery efforts.

When an emergency is declared, an evacuation order may be issued for the population of the affected area. Evacuation is defined as the orderly removal of people from an area threatened by disaster to a place of safety. Hurricane is a likely reason for mass evacuation and presents the most intense evacuation scenario. The number of people requiring evacuation fluctuates with the size of the event and other factors such as weather. When people are evacuated from their homes, temporary shelters are provided through the coordinated efforts of many state and local agencies and voluntary organizations. At the state level, DSS is responsible for managing, staffing, and coordinating mass care, housing, and human services as set forth in this policy.

II. Statutory Authority

A. Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP)

The GOHSEP has statutory authority under Louisiana R.S. 29:721 et seq. to exercise overall direction and control of emergency and disaster operations for the State of Louisiana. In this role the GOHSEP develops the State's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) which outlines the concept of operations, direction and control, and responsibilities of all agencies and resources mobilized by the State to assist in responding to and recovering from a disaster. GOHSEP is responsible for implementation of the EOP when the situation warrants. Should the governor declare a state of emergency, the plan will automatically be activated.

B. Executive Order KBB 2005-18

Executive Order KBB 2005-18, signed by Kathleen Babineaux Blanco on July 11, 2005, reaffirms GOHSEP's statutory responsibilities regarding emergency management and assigns primary and supporting functional responsibilities to state departments and agencies. Each state department assigned a primary emergency function is responsible for coordinating the planning and response activities of the support agencies under that emergency function. DSS has been assigned the primary emergency function of Mass Care, Housing, and Human Services during emergencies and disasters (Emergency Support Function ESF-6.).

C. Departmental Conformance

DSS will adhere to the requirements of the State Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) and Executive Order KBB 2005-18 in implementing and fulfilling its emergency support function responsibilities during emergencies and disasters. As the primary state agency assigned mass care, housing, and human services coordination responsibilities, the Department has developed the DSS ESF-6 Mass Care, Housing, and Human Services Annex which is an Annex to the State EOP. The Annex contains the Department's concept of operations and the assignment of responsibilities in the mass care, housing, and human services function. The Department is responsible for fulfilling its obligations as presented in the State EOP and the Department's

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Annex. Each department assigned an emergency function must coordinate its efforts through the GOHSEP Emergency Operations Center (EOC) during an emergency/disaster. The EOC is the command and communications center for response operations, located at the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, 7667 Independence Blvd., Baton Rouge, Louisiana. During an emergency/disaster, the DSS Emergency Coordinator or a member of the DSS EOC team will be located at the EOC around the clock.

III. Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities

DSS will accomplish its primary emergency responsibility for mass care, housing, and human services through assignment of DSS employees in the major operating units of the Department to work in shelters. These major operating units and their responsibilities are as follows.

A. Louisiana Rehabilitation Services (LRS)

In normal operations, LRS, in the Office of the Secretary (OS), assists persons with disabilities to obtain or maintain employment and/or achieve independence in their communities by providing rehabilitation services and working cooperatively with business and other community resources. In emergencies/disasters, LRS employees will be assigned locations as needed. In addition, LRS and its employees and/or contracted facilities/programs are responsible for routine and emergency services for LRS clients/families during and following an emergency/disaster.

B. Office of Community Services (OCS)

In normal operations, OCS provides the public child welfare functions of the state and administers the federal grants for services directed at meeting the special needs of Louisiana's most vulnerable citizens. In emergencies/disasters, OCS employees will be assigned locations as needed. In addition, OCS will be responsible for routine and emergency social services to its clients.

C. Office of Family Support (OFS)

In normal operations, OFS plans, develops, and administers the food stamp program and all cash assistance programs in DSS. In emergencies/disasters, OFS employees will be assigned locations as needed. In addition, OFS will provide routine and emergency services to its clients. OFS also provides special services during and following emergencies and disasters including dispensing of federal and state financial assistance and administering an amplified Food Stamp program.

D. Office of Management and Finance/Office of the Secretary (OMF/OS)

In normal operations, OMF/OS provide the management support system for the Department. In emergencies/disasters, OMF/OS staff will be assigned locations as needed. In addition, OMF will provide, upon direction of the Secretary, the procurement and logistical support required for operations and maintain a record of manpower and equipment used to cope with an emergency/disaster incident. This information may be requested by the GOHSEP to help determine the state's contribution in the event a request is made by the Governor for federal assistance.

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1. OS/DSS General Counsel

The DSS General Counsel provides legal counsel to DSS executive staff as needed during a state emergency/disaster and foresees areas of potential legal liability.

2. OS/DSS Press Secretary

The DSS Press Secretary maintains ongoing public information programs concerning the policies and programs of the Department. During emergencies/disasters, the public information programs will be coordinated with the GOHSEP Public Information Office. (Refer to DSS Policy 1-17, DSS Media Relations.) The GOHSEP EOP and Executive Order KBB 2005-18 also assign the Department support responsibilities for communication and warning, damage assessment, donated goods, emergency direction and control, information management, mass feeding, and public information. DSS will respond as required to carry out support responsibilities.

IV. Departmental Direction and Control

A. Departmental Level

The Secretary of the Department has overall responsibility for the emergency responsibilities assigned to DSS. Departmental emergency preparedness responsibilities are under the authority of the Undersecretary. The Undersecretary shall appoint and supervise the DSS Emergency Preparedness Coordinator and the DSS Assistant Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, as well as a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) Coordinator, who will prepare and maintain plans, procedures, arrangements, and agreements to ensure that the organization will continue to carry out its mission in an emergency or disaster. The DSS Emergency Coordinator and State EOC Team will be responsible for compiling and maintaining a statewide shelter directory and tracking available shelters and the evacuees sheltered in them during an emergency/disaster.

In an emergency when Louisiana citizens are evacuated from their homes, the DSS Emergency Preparedness Coordinator will mobilize Departmental resources and personnel, reassigning them to address critical needs related to mass care, housing, and human services. The Department has established readiness procedures that ensure proper training, availability and notification of DSS employees and availability of necessary materials and equipment in an emergency.

The DSS Emergency Preparedness Coordinator shall organize the emergency response activities of all DSS Offices before, during, and after the emergency/disaster and make decisions related to overall staff deployment. During an emergency/disaster, the DSS Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, or a member of the DSS EOC team, will be at the EOC to provide updates and guidance to the Regional Managers/Regional Administrators regarding the activation and operation of the Regional Special Needs Shelters as well as address staffing issues for parish and other local general population shelters.

B. Departmental Employees

Many DSS employees will be assigned tasks not routinely encountered in their usual job responsibilities but which are within the realm of their responsibilities as employees of the department for management and coordination of mass care, housing, and human services

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operations. These tasks relate to the emergency function of the Department of Social Services engaged as Emergency Support Function ESF-6.

- 1.) DSS, as ESF-6 Mass Care Operations, Housing, and Human Services, is responsible for all DSS employees which are subject to assignments working in shelters and assigned locations during emergencies and disasters; however, DSS employees who evidence a desire to work in shelters will be assigned first. Many DSS employees may be required to cross parish lines in fulfilling the Department's mass care, housing, and human services responsibility, if necessary. DSS shall make this policy available to all employees and shall document receipt of the policy by each employee. Upon receipt, each employee will be asked to sign the Emergency Preparedness Policy Acknowledgement Form, which includes the following statement: I hereby acknowledge that I have received a copy of the DSS Emergency Preparedness Policy, 1-2; and as a DSS employee, I understand that unless specifically granted an exemption, if needed, I will be required to work at an assigned location and/or on assigned disaster operations tasks. Such work will be performed in accordance with DSS Policy and Procedure relating to emergency preparedness. The signed copy shall be retained in the employee's personnel file, in accordance with Office guidelines.
- 2.) 24-Hour Activation of Shelters and Other Designated Locations Once activated, and ordered to stand up, shelters and other designated locations shall be staffed around the clock until deactivated, closed, ordered to stand down, or the need no longer exists.
- 3.) Notification and Recall Procedures -Regional Managers/Regional Administrators (RM/RAs) shall implement the department's notification and recall system to notify DSS employees when they are assigned to work under ESF-6 Mass Care, Housing, and Human Services. Procedures shall be developed which include the use of telephone tree listings and standby notification, on duty notification, stand up and stand down notification when the shelters are initiated and deactivated. All DSS employees are responsible for keeping their home phone numbers, pager numbers, cell phone numbers, etc. current with their supervisors. DSS employees will respond to requests to duty assignments as such requests are channeled through the DSS "calling tree" for the region in question. Employees reporting for duty other than for a duty assignment through the DSS "calling tree" are considered to be volunteers and are not eligible for compensation under DSS Policy 4-10, Human Resources Procedures for Disaster Operations or any other DSS payment plan.
- 4.) The Personal Disaster Emergency Preparedness Plan training presentation must be added to the new employee orientation packet. The DSS Safety Officers train all employees on developing their personal plans annually. If a DSS employee is unable to comply with this policy due to a lack of preparedness, they may be subject to disciplinary action.
- 5.) Exemption Policy -DSS recognizes its responsibilities during emergencies and disasters and also recognizes that certain employees may have circumstances that would limit their ability to be of service and has created procedures for employee exemptions.

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6.) Human Resources Procedures for Disaster Operations - Refer to DSS Policy 4-10, Human Resources Procedures for Disaster Operations for policy and procedures relating to overtime compensation for DSS employees who are designated to work in an emergency preparedness, response or recovery activity.

Case Planning After a Disaster

In addition to the COOP and development of DSS policy, the Office of Community Services asked AdoptUsKids to prepare a reference guide for their staff who might face future situations where children in care are displaced from the State or their parish of jurisdiction, from their birth parents, from their case workers and/or from the courts that held jurisdiction. Continuing efforts to achieve permanency for children in care becomes a greater challenge in the wake of such calamity.

The Case Planning Desk Reference for Emergency Situations that was developed is to assist the worker in developing a well-informed recommendation to the court based upon thoughtful planning and sufficient information. It is not intended to make individual case decisions but rather to ensure critical elements are considered. While there may not be answers to every question, using these questions as a guide will assist in providing documentation to support and inform a caseworker's recommendations.

This guide is based upon two basic assumptions: 1) Safety of the child is first and foremost, and 2) Obtaining permanency that affords a sense of belonging is first and foremost in a child's or youth's case plan. While it is recognized that the ultimate decision maker will be the court of jurisdiction, the agency has an obligation to provide the court with critical information and the rationale considered leading to any recommendation they may make to the court. (The Case Planning Desk Reference for Emergency Situations is submitted as an attachment with the 2007 APSR.)

Emergency Preparedness

Additional ways in which OCS has prepared for a disaster include: the development of policy for emergency preparedness for foster and adoptive parents (Chapter 9-210, 220); mandatory coverage of emergency preparedness in orientation of foster adoptive parents (Chapter 9-435); and the Department's 1-888-LAHELPU (1-888-524-3578) phone line developed as a point of contact for staff, foster/adoptive parents, children in foster care and biological parents where they can obtain the most recent news about DSS operations and office closures.

The toll-free 1-888-LAHELPU phone line includes four options and provides DSS consumers with the ability to make requests for services and update their case information as needed.

When calling 1-888-LAHELPU during emergencies, four automated options will be available:

- **Option 1** – Allows OCS clients, foster parents, children in state custody and relatives caring for children in state custody to provide DSS with information about their evacuations, destinations and needs.

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- **Option 2** – Allows LRS consumers to provide DSS with information about their evacuations, destinations and needs.
- **Option 3** – Allows OFS family-assistance consumers to provide DSS with information about their evacuations, destinations and needs and offers the automated services.
- **Option 4** – Allows DSS staff members to obtain current information on DSS operations and office closures and emergency responsibilities.

Also, the agency recognized the need to preserve essential program records especially after the loss of legal documents and historical documents such as Life Books during hurricane Katrina. To this end, the agency is exploring a Document Imaging System that would allow DSS to maintain a digital image of critical legal documents. Our prioritization would be digitally capturing information in offices south of I-10 first. This project is also viewed as critical due to the mass displacement of DSS clients to other parts of the State and nation and the heightened need to rapidly access/share information and documentation. It is hoped that the pre-planning the agency has engaged in since Hurricane's Katrina and Rita will somehow lessen the impact of any disaster, natural or otherwise.

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3.0 Quality Improvement

DSS/OCS engages in quality improvement efforts through a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process and a traditional quality assurance (QA) system. CQI meetings are held on a regular basis statewide and involve staff and community partners that focus on issues affecting the organization and service delivery.

A major component of the CQI process involves case record reviews achieved through the implementation of a multi-tiered peer case review process. The first tier involves case record reviews using a QA 1 instrument. These reviews are conducted on a monthly basis. Tier two involves the annual review of 25 case records in all program areas in each region. The Peer Case Review (PCR) process for the 2005-2006 SFY was completed in two regions, but those reviews occurred prior to the storms. Due to staff time and travel costs involved in the PCR process, the agency made the decision to cancel the remainder of scheduled reviews for the 2005-2006 state fiscal year (SFY). The traditional QA reviews (tier two of the agency's peer case review process) continued in most of the State without cessation and reviews resumed in the Greater New Orleans Region, Orleans and Jefferson Districts in January, 2007. The agency has revised the PCR process and those reviews will resume in October, 2007. The PCR process has been revised to measure the agency's effectiveness in achieving new goals and objectives. The goal was to create a seamless QI process that gathers useable data to inform decision-making and practice.

Ad Hoc Case Reviews

In the 2006 APSR a number of ad hoc case reviews were cited. The current status of each review is as follows:

- The Family Services/Prevention case record reviews continue to occur as state office staff visits the regions, with immediate feedback to local staff.
- The Independent Living and Young Adult Program case review data analysis has been compiled and provided to the Foster Care staff. Those record reviews, along with input from national child welfare resource centers and focus groups have resulted in the increased efforts to assure more positive outcomes for our older youth in care and those who have aged out.
- The results of foster care case record reviews for special board rate information revealed a considerable inconsistency and lack of compliance with agency policy throughout the State. In light of the changes that are being made in home development, no action has been taken on the results of this review.
- The results of individual reviews of Katrina Class cases have been used primarily for funding issues, with flags having been inserted into our Tracking Information and Payment System (TIPS), and will be used to examine retrospective outcomes of children in foster care and their care providers. Additionally, staff is comparing Orleans Parish

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children in foster care (based on original court of jurisdiction) with children in foster care from other parishes to compare length of stay in foster care, days of restrictive care, etc.

- The review of 100% of residential cases including interviews with each child in residential placement continues.
- Based on the analysis of data related to increased foster care entries, a review of CPI cases was initiated in May 2007.

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4.0 Baseline Data/Performance Measures

In order to understand changes that occurred during the time of the increases in foster care entries, Louisiana has had several consults with Anna Stone of the National Resource Center for Child Protective Services (NRCCPS) and sent numerous data sets to Joe Murray of the NRC for Child Welfare Data and Technology (NRCCWDT). Mr. Murray converted the data into a more readily understandable summary table format. The following is a discussion of the data sets and whether the variables appear to have had an effect on foster care entries.

- I. Number of children who entered OCS custody during State Fiscal Years (SFY), 2000, 2001, 2003, 2004, 2005, and 2006.

Entries into Care (increases)

SFY02	SFY03	<i>increase 03/02</i>	SFY04	<i>increase 04/03</i>	SFY05	<i>increase 05/04</i>	SFY06	<i>increase 06/05</i>	<i>increase 06/05</i>
2,355	2,450	4%	2,638	8%	2,845	8%	3,644	28%	799

Data drawn from CPI-FCpopValRateSLloyd.xls

Table 1 shows the percentage increases between fiscal years starting with SFY 2002. The number of children coming into care in 2002, SFY was 2,355 children and the number coming into care in 2003 was 2,450, so the percentage increase between those SFY's was 4%. The next two years increases were 8%, then 8%, which could be described as general increases in foster care entries.

Then there is a large increase of entries into care in SFY 2006 from the preceding year. From SFY 2005 to SFY 2006 the foster care entries increased by 799 children, 28%. This is obviously a very concerning number for many reasons. Twenty eight percent increase from one year to the next mandates careful analysis of the possible reasons.

The general increases in foster care entries through this decade are also occurring on a national level, which helps to explain the general increases.

The increase between July 2005 and June 2006 of 28% is significant. There were a number of events that were likely related to these increases, including Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and two legislative acts that went into effect for part of that year. OCS predicted those Acts would increase significantly our foster care entries.

The fiscal impact statements that inform the Louisiana Legislature on the Voluntary Placement Act (Act 148) and the Substance Exposed Infants Act (Act 338), predicted that OCS would have 774 new cases opened in the Foster Care and Family Services programs. The agency had predicted the majority of these families would be served by our Family Services Program. There have been some explanations that suggest that judges are not willing to give relatives custody, without the Department's supervision, which means custody will be given to the Department. In some instances the Department is ordered to provide supervision and reunification services for

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an indeterminate period of time, as well as provide services like tutoring, basic clothing allowances, etc.

II. Age and race of children at the time of foster care entry.

RACE

Entries into Care (race)

Race	SFY 03 N=2445	SFY 04 N=2595	SFY 05 N=2835	SFY 06 N=3639
White	45.5%	45.9%	51.6%	53.5%
Black	53.0%	52.7%	46.9%	44.5%
Unable to Determine	0.9%	0.7%	1.1%	1.5%

Data drawn from SpFCdataJohn, Race

Race data did not seem to contribute to the increase in entries. OCS expected a decrease in African American children coming into Care in SFY 2006, since a probable significant percentage of New Orleans residents evacuated out of state due to Katrina. Estimates are that approximately 1/3 of New Orleans residents have not returned, however, a sizable proportion of those residents are still in Louisiana.

The majority (67%) of New Orleans Pre-Katrina residents were African American and 40% of all families with children in New Orleans, Pre-Katrina, were living below the poverty line. Poverty is a risk factor for abuse and neglect. OCS knows that at least 156 evacuee children were taken into care in other states between September 2005 and August 2006. One would expect that this population of children (evacuees who came into care in other states) would have reduced Louisiana's African American foster care entries for SFY 2006.

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AGE

Entries into Care (age)

Age	SFY 03 N = 2,447		SFY 04 N = 2,595		SFY 05 N = 2,835		SFY 06 N = 3,640	
	#	% Entries						
0-1Mo	78	3.2%	89	3.4%	110	3.9%	156	4.3%
>1Mo-11Mo	258	10.5%	249	9.6%	329	11.6%	387	10.6%
1-2	363	14.8%	376	14.5%	419	14.8%	581	16.0%
3-4	303	12.4%	309	11.9%	321	11.3%	441	12.1%
5-7	363	14.8%	382	14.7%	425	15.0%	585	16.1%
8-10	322	13.2%	307	11.8%	344	12.1%	465	12.8%
11-14	480	19.6%	564	21.7%	573	20.0%	675	18.5%
15-18	280	11.4%	319	12.3%	314	11.1%	350	9.6%

Data drawn from SpFCdataJohn, Age Ranges – *italicized data re-calculated*

Age	SFY 03 N = 2,447		SFY 04 N = 2,595		SFY 05 N = 2,835		SFY 06 N = 3,640	
	#	% Entries						
<3	699	28.6%	714	27.5%	858	30.3%	1124	30.9%
3-7	666	27.2%	691	26.6%	746	26.3%	1026	28.2%
8-14	802	32.8%	871	33.6%	917	32.3%	1140	31.3%
15-18	280	11.4%	319	12.3%	314	11.1%	350	9.6%

Age	SFY 03 N = 2,447		SFY 04 N = 2,595		SFY 05 N = 2,835		SFY 06 N = 3,640	
	#	% Entries						
<8	1365	55.8%	1405	54.1%	1604	56.6%	2150	59.1%
8-18	1082	44.2%	1190	45.9%	1231	43.4%	1490	40.9%

Proportionately, children appear to be younger in the foster care entries in Louisiana. One of OCS' hypotheses was that the Juvenile Justice reforms of this decade would increase the numbers of older foster care entries, since this population is usually teenagers. One of the major impetuses of the Juvenile Justice reforms was to reduce the number of youths in facilities and return them to the local communities. OCS expected that a large number of these youths would end up in foster Care. The "age" data does not support that hypothesis. The foster care entry cohort is younger with the % increase of those children less than 8 years of age from SFY 2003 to SFY 2006 increased from 55.8% to 59.1% of the entries.

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III. Reason for Placement

Table 4 Foster Care Open Reason

FC Open Reason	SFY 03 N=2446	SFY 04 N=2595	SFY 05 N=2835	SFY 06 N=3640
Abandonment	3.4%	3.1%	3.3%	2.4%
Physical Abuse	10.0%	11.0%	11.3%	10.7%
Maltreatment	1.6%	1.1%	0.9%	0.9%
Neglect	79.4%	80.6%	79.1%	81.2%
Other	0.0%	0.3%	0.7%	0.5%
Sexual Abuse	4.6%	3.0%	4.2%	3.8%
Surrender by Parent	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	0.1%
Voluntary Placement	0.7%	0.7%	0.4%	0.5%

Data drawn from SpFCdataJohn, Open Reason

There appears to be very little change in foster care open reason over the past four fiscal years. Data on foster care open reasons does not contribute to understanding the increase in entries.

IV. Type of initial placement - Payable or non-payable

Family Settings Vs Facilities Date of New Foster Care Entry

	SFY 03		SFY 04		SFY 05		SFY 06	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Family Settings	1,987	90.2%	2,078	87.8%	2,358	92.0%	3,140	95.4%
Facility Settings	215	9.8%	289	12.2%	205	8.0%	153	4.6%
Total	2,202		2,367		2,563		3,293	

Placement in Family Settings Date of New Foster Care Entry

	SFY 03		SFY 04		SFY 05		SFY 06	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Family Settings Total	1,987		2,078		2,358		3,140	
Certified HB Relative	43	2.2%	36	1.7%	54	2.3%	59	1.9%
Non-Payable Relative	489	24.6%	558	26.9%	628	26.6%	962	30.6%
Non-Payable Parent	64	3.2%	62	3.0%	58	2.5%	54	1.7%
Non-Payable NonRelative	64	3.2%	39	1.9%	106	4.5%	91	2.9%
Certified HB Non-Relative	1,327	66.8%	1,383	66.6%	1,512	64.1%	1,974	62.9%

Data drawn from SpfCdataJohn, Closure Outcomes by Placement I

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Relative Placements

	SFY 03		SFY 04		SFY 05		SFY06	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
*Entries	2,450		2,638		2,845		3,644	
**Family & Facility Settings	2,202	90%	2,367	90%	2,563	90%	3,293	90%
**Certified HB Relative	43	2.2%	36	1.7%	54	2.3%	59	2.2%
**Non-Payable Relative	489	24.7%	558	27.1%	628	26.8%	962	35.8%
***Total Relative	532	24%	594	25%	682	27%	1,021	31%

The non-payable relative placements increased from 628 to 962, from SFY 2005 to SFY 2006, which reflected an increase in relative placements in SFY 2006 – in terms of both numbers (334) and percent of all placements in family and facility settings. Also, family settings placements increased from 2358 to 3140, from SFY 2005 to SFY 2006, which reflected an increase in foster home placements in SFY 2006—in terms of both numbers (782) and percent of all placements in family and facility settings.

V. Population

One possible explanation for the recent increases is that Louisiana’s general population has increased and the rate of entry per thousand children (under 18 years of age) has remained stable. The table below uses U.S. Census Bureau Population Estimates to calculate the entry rate.

Entries into Care (per thousand children)

	00	01	02	03	04	05	06
*Population	1,216,220	1,198,030	1,185,879	1,174,984	1,160,282	1,147,651	1,147,651
**Entries	2,450	2,473	2,355	2,450	2,638	2,845	3,644
Entries/1K	2.0	2.1	2.0	2.1	2.3	2.5	3.2

* Population under 18 is drawn from U.S. Census Bureau Population Estimates. The Census data does not include a population estimate for 2006. The 2005 population estimate is used for 2006.

** Data drawn from CPI-FCpopValRateSLloyd

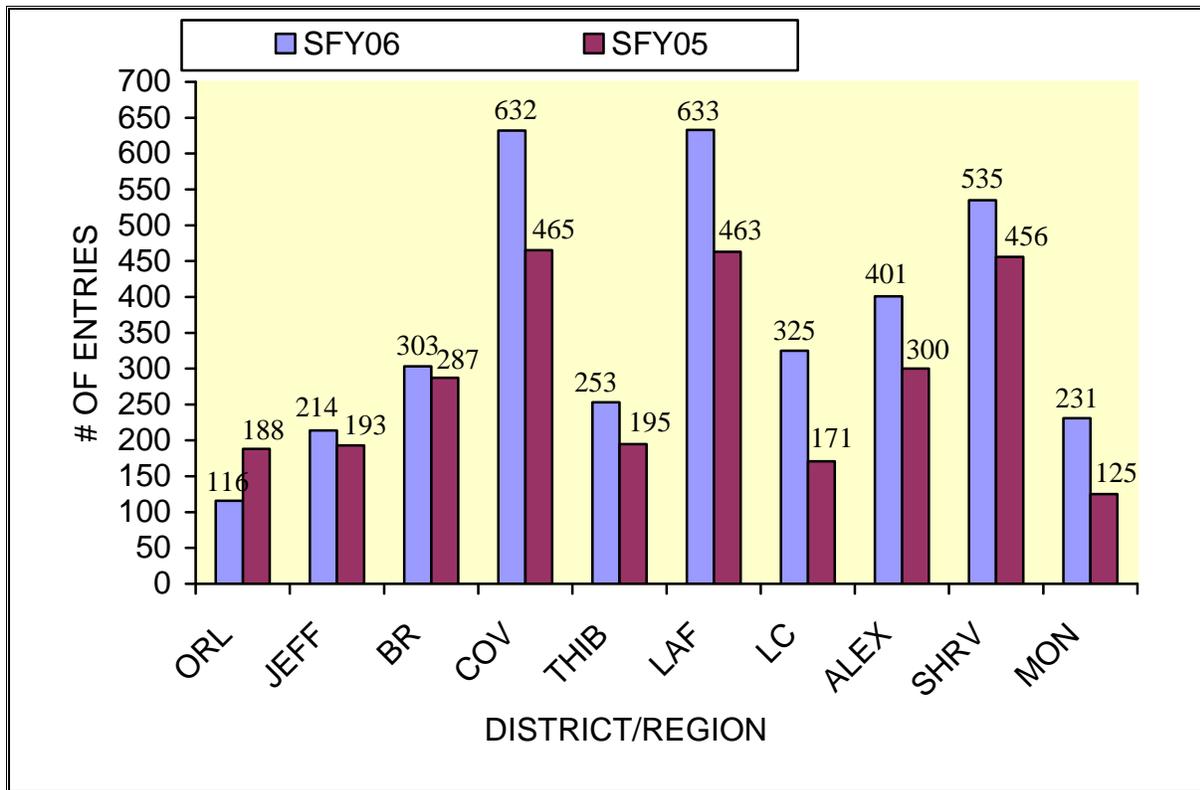
No increase in population is indicated and the rate of entry per thousand children reflects the same trend as the number of total entries – a general increase from SFY 2001 through SFY 2005 with a relatively large increase in SFY 2006 from the preceding year. For purposes of comparison OCS estimated the 2006 population with 2005’s census data, even though with Hurricane Katrina evacuees in other states, Louisiana’s population has likely significantly decreased.

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VI. Location of entry into Foster Care

Foster Care Entries By Region/District for SFY 2005 and SFY 2006

Region/District	Total Entries SFY 04-05	Total Entries SFY 05-06	% Change
Orleans District	188	116	-38.3%
Jefferson District	193	214	10.9%
Baton Rouge	287	303	5.5%
Covington	465	632	35.9%
Thibodaux	195	253	29.7%
Lafayette	463	633	36.7%
Lake Charles	171	325	90%
Alexandria	300	401	33.7%
Shreveport	456	535	17.3%
Monroe	125	231	84.8%
Unknown	40	7	
STATE TOTAL			28%



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VII. Child Protection Investigations

CPI (investigations, validations & entries)

STATE	SFY00	SFY01	increase 01/00	SFY02	increase 02/01	SFY03	increase 03/02	SFY04	increase 04/03	SFY05	increase 05/04	SFY06	increase 06/05
# CPI Reports	26,265	25,092	-4%	25,596	2%	26,245	3%	26,705	2%	27,204	2%	24,651	-9%
# Validated	7,829	7,749	-1%	7,647	-1%	8,401	10%	8,000	-5%	8,579	7%	7,714	-10%
% Validated	30%	31%		30%		32%		30%		32%		31%	
# Entries into Care	2,450	2,473	1%	2,355	-5%	2,450	4%	2,638	8%	2,845	8%	3,644	28%
Entries / Valid Reports	0.31	0.32		0.31		0.29		0.33		0.33		0.47	

Data drawn from CPI-FCpopValRateSLloyd

CPI (reports, validations, victims & entries)

	SFY00	SFY01	increase 01/00	SFY02	increase 02/01	SFY03	increase 03/02	SFY04	increase 04/03	SFY05	increase 05/04	SFY06	increase 06/05
*# Investigations Compl	27,251	26,901	-1%	28,570	6%	30,883	8%	29,114	-6%	30,809	6%	27,532	-11%
*# Validated	7,829	7,749	-1%	7,647	-1%	8,401	10%	8,000	-5%	8,579	7%	7,713	-10%
% Validated	29%	29%		27%		27%		27%		28%		28%	
**# Valid Victims (Unduplicated)	10,585	9,963	-6%	10,139	2%	11,074	9%	10,585	-4%	11,580	9%	9,473	
Valid Victims / Validations	1.4	1.3		1.3		1.3		1.3		1.3		1.2	
***# Entries into Care	2,450	2,473	1%	2,355	-5%	2,450	4%	2,638	8%	2,845	8%	3,644	28%
Entries / Valid Reports	0.31	0.32		0.31		0.29		0.33		0.33		0.47	
% Valid Victims Entering	23%	25%		23%		22%		25%		25%		38%	

The number of completed investigations in SFY 2006 decreased from SFY 2005 as did the number validated (the percentage of completed investigations which were validated remained constant). It appears that when investigations are validated, a higher percentage of the children involved are entering care.

VIII. Foster Care Exits

STATEWIDE	FY00	FY01	increase 01/00	FY02	increase 02/01	FY03	increase 03/02	FY04	increase 04/03	FY05	increase 05/04	FY06	increase 06/05
*Entries	2,450	2,473	23	2,355	-118	2,450	95	2,638	188	2,845	207	3,644	799
**Exits		2,798		2,446		2,614		2,601		2,688		3,070	
**Avg. Months in FC (Exits)		27.1		26.4		23.6		23.0		21.4		19.3	
Entries - Exits		-325		-91		-164		37		157		574	
***FC Pop Last Day	4,988	4,622	-366	4,504	-118	4,341	-163	4,285	-56	4,433	148	5,050	617

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ORLEANS DISTRICT (01)			increase			increase			increase			increase	incr
	FY00	FY01	e 01/00	FY02	02/01	FY03	03/02	FY04	04/03	FY05	05/04	FY06	ease 06/05
*# Entries into Care	216	184	-32	223	39	226	3	265	39	188	-77	116	-72
**Exits		275		266		255		250		227		171	
**Avg. Months in FC (Exits)		38.3		33.9		28.7		28.6		26.2		37.3	
<i>Entries - Exits</i>		-91		-43		-29		15		-39		-55	

BATON ROUGE REGION (02)			increase			increase			increase			increase	incr
	FY00	FY01	e 01/00	FY02	02/01	FY03	03/02	FY04	04/03	FY05	05/04	FY06	ease 06/05
*# Entries into Care	186	190	4	216	26	238	22	244	6	287	43	303	16
**Exits		238		195		222		230		229		302	
**Avg. Months in FC (Exits)		32.8		31.7		18.6		17.4		19.4		20.1	
<i>Entries - Exits</i>		-48		21		16		14		58		1	

THIBODAU X REGION (03)			increase			increase			increase			increase	incr
	FY00	FY01	e 01/00	FY02	02/01	FY03	03/02	FY04	04/03	FY05	05/04	FY06	ease 06/05
*# Entries into Care	198	176	-22	138	-38	119	-19	142	23	195	53	253	58
**Exits		270		162		171		148		169		231	
**Avg. Months in FC (Exits)		20.5		24.2		21.3		27.2		17.6		14.2	
<i>Entries - Exits</i>		-94		-24		-52		-6		26		22	

LAFAYETTE REGION (04)			increase			increase			increase			increase	incr
	FY00	FY01	e 01/00	FY02	02/01	FY03	03/02	FY04	04/03	FY05	05/04	FY06	ease 06/05
*# Entries into Care	456	387	-69	341	-46	350	9	332	-18	463	131	633	170
**Exits		383		360		388		317		396		400	
**Avg. Months in FC (Exits)		23.2		23.0		21.1		21.8		24.8		17.5	
<i>Entries - Exits</i>		4		-19		-38		15		67		233	

LAKE CHARLES REGION (05)			increase			increase			increase			increase	incr
	FY00	FY01	e 01/00	FY02	02/01	FY03	03/02	FY04	04/03	FY05	05/04	FY06	ease 06/05
*# Entries into Care	159	177	18	133	-44	160	27	187	27	171	-16	325	154
**Exits		192		145		130		149		186		222	
**Avg. Months in FC (Exits)		27.1		23.6		21.8		17.2		20.2		16.0	
<i>Entries - Exits</i>		-15		-12		30		38		-15		103	

ALEXANDRIA REGION (06)			increase			increase			increase			increase	incr
	FY00	FY01	e 01/00	FY02	02/01	FY03	03/02	FY04	04/03	FY05	05/04	FY06	ease 06/05
*# Entries into Care	305	321	16	260	-61	288	28	325	37	300	-25	401	101
**Exits		297		299		294		324		326		354	
**Avg. Months in FC (Exits)		20.2		23.5		25.3		19.7		18.1		19.0	
<i>Entries - Exits</i>		24		-39		-6		1		-26		47	

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SHREVEPORT REGION (07)			increase			increase			increase			increase	increase 06/05
	FY00	FY01	e 01/00	FY02	increase 02/01	FY03	increase 03/02	FY04	increase 04/03	FY05	increase 05/04	FY06	
*# Entries into Care	275	285	10	325	40	385	60	396	11	456	60	535	79
**Exits		403		311		415		439		444		532	
**Avg. Months in FC (Exits)		28.6		25.7		23.7		23.6		16.8		15.8	
<i>Entries - Exits</i>		-118		14		-30		-43		12		3	

MONROE REGION (08)			increase			increase			increase			increase	increase 06/05
	FY00	FY01	e 01/00	FY02	increase 02/01	FY03	increase 03/02	FY04	increase 04/03	FY05	increase 05/04	FY06	
*# Entries into Care	187	212	25	143	-69	102	-41	140	38	125	-15	231	106
**Exits		184		173		160		113		153		157	
**Avg. Months in FC (Exits)		26.4		31.9		25.5		30.0		26.1		19.2	
<i>Entries - Exits</i>		28		-30		-58		27		-28		74	

COVINGTON REGION (09)			increase			increase			increase			increase	increase 06/05
	FY00	FY01	e 01/00	FY02	increase 02/01	FY03	increase 03/02	FY04	increase 04/03	FY05	increase 05/04	FY06	
*# Entries into Care	240	288	48	355	67	382	27	379	-3	465	86	632	167
**Exits		271		276		339		400		361		516	
**Avg. Months in FC (Exits)		30.1		25.1		23.6		22.3		23.5		18.8	
<i>Entries - Exits</i>		17		79		43		-21		104		116	

JEFFERSON DISTRICT(10)			increase			increase			increase			increase	increase 06/05
	FY00	FY01	e 01/00	FY02	increase 02/01	FY03	increase 03/02	FY04	increase 04/03	FY05	increase 05/04	FY06	
*# Entries into Care	227	253	26	221	-32	197	-24	225	28	193	-32	214	21
**Exits		285		259		240		231		197		185	
**Avg. Months in FC (Exits)		26.0		24.5		25.9		26.0		23.6		27.0	
<i>Entries - Exits</i>		-32		-38		-43		-6		-4		29	

*Data drawn from CPI-FCpopValRateSLloyd

**Data drawn from NewExitCals

***Data drawn from EndOfMonthFCLongitudinal

It appears that Louisiana foster care exits are also increasing, so even though foster care entries are increasing, the total number of foster children is remaining fairly constant, due to the steady decrease in the average number of months in foster care. Due to the realignment of regions that went into effect September, 2005, some of the increases and decreases in the four affected regions will need to be taken into consideration in the data analysis.

IX. OCS reviewed changes in law that could affect entries. Two Acts – 148 and 338, both effective in FY06 – were identified.

ACT 148

In the course of investigations, many children are placed with relatives. Prior to Act 148, these relative placements were viewed as voluntary parental arrangements. Act 148 terminated such arrangements, defining them as removals requiring a court order. Act 148 did not lend itself to TIPS coding to track the number of foster care entries. The only measure was a survey that was conducted immediately after implementation, to determine how many children came into care as

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a result of the Act. Field staff reported a total of 478 that came into care as a result of Act 148 during the six month period from October, 2005, through March, 2006. Three months remained in the SFY 2006 after the six month survey period. If 478 children came into care as a result of Act 148 during the prior 6 months, it is projected that half that many (i.e., 239) came into care during these last three months. A total of 717, then, would have come into care during SFY 2006 as a result of Act 148. This 717 would account for 90% of the increases in entries between SFY 2005 and SFY 2006.

ACT 338

During the last third of SFY 2006, 29 substance exposed infants entered care due to Act 338, which would account for 4% of the 799 increase over SFY 2005.

Conclusions:

Initially, OCS thought a case record review would be the course of action to take to develop an understanding of the increases in foster care entries. With the consult of NRCCPS OCS decided that there was adequate information in the data to explain the increase in foster care entries.

Except for a decrease in SFY 2002, the numbers of entries in SFY 2000 through SFY 2003 are consistent. While there were general increases in entries into care from SFY 2004 and SFY 2005, there was a large increase of entries into care in SFY 2006 from SFY 2005.

We ruled out population increases and report increases as the causes of increased entries based on the following:

- OCS does not have Census data available for 2006, however, Louisiana's population has been on a steady decline since 2000, according to Census estimates. Also, probably less than half of New Orleans' 465,000 residents have returned to date, resulting in Louisiana's population likely significantly decreased post-Katrina.
- The number of investigations completed is essentially the same in 2000 as in 2006, so increased abuse and neglect reports as the reason for increased foster care entries was ruled out.
- The agency also examined type of placements, including relative placements, which also supports Act 148 as a source of the major increase in foster care entries in SFY 2006. The non-payable relative placements increased from 628 to 962, from SFY 2005 to SFY 2006, which reflected an increase in relative placements in SFY 2006 – in terms of both numbers (334) and percent of all placements in family and facility settings. Also, family settings placements increased from 2358 to 3140, from SFY 2005 to SFY 2006, which reflected an increase in foster home placements in SFY 2006—in terms of both numbers (782) and percent of all placements in family and facility settings. One would expect that children who came into care as a result of Act148 would be more likely to be placed in a family setting, not a facility setting.

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One of the agency's hypotheses was that Acts 148 (Voluntary Placements Discontinued) and Act 338 (Substance Exposed Infants) were the primary causes of the increase in foster care entries, and after an analysis of the data determined that the data supports that hypothesis.

Over the last four fiscal years, an average of 47.4% of the total entries for the fiscal year have entered during the first six months. During the first six months of SFY 2007, data shows that 1,722 children have entered foster care. Cause to question the reliability of the data for the 2007 fiscal year due to integration problems between ACCESS and TIPS exists. However, assuming the data is correct; OCS is on track to not have an increase of foster care entries for the current fiscal year.

Recommendations:

- Continue closely monitoring the data to determine if the number of foster care entries has in fact stabilized
- Since the age of foster children continues to get younger, develop the service array to address issues of that younger population, e.g., interagency support at the Legislature of the increase of funding for the Early Steps Program through OPH
- The increases in IHBS services statewide should have an effect on our foster care entries. Advocate legislatively for this to be an on-going service, not time-limited by Katrina-related resources
- Due to the implementation of Act 148, state office will provide guidance about standards for best serving that new population, e.g., timelines for case plans.
- Since our foster care exits are increasing—are those children coming back into care—continue studying recidivism.
- Request legislative funding for services for Act 338 families. The Department needs funding for specialized services for the substance exposed infants, including specialized training for foster parents and relative caregivers, and specialized treatment services to ensure that the mothers do not use illegal drugs during subsequent pregnancies.

*This information has Ascension parish with Thibodaux Region whereas QA data includes Ascension Parish with the Baton Rouge Region (as it was prior to realignment).

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Peer Case Review

The agency measures its performance through a Quality Improvement process that includes a multi-tiered Peer Case Review (PCR) process. This process provides an opportunity for self-analysis and an in-depth examination of caseworker practice and child and family outcomes.

The following chart provides baseline data on performance/outcome measures for safety, permanency and well being measured through the PCR process in SFY 2003 – 2004, 2004 – 2005 and 2005 – 2006. A total of 60 cases were reviewed in SFY 2005 - 2006.

NOTE: The agency will resume the Peer Case Review process in October 2007 and a minimum of 25 cases will be reviewed using the new Child and Family Service Review instrument.

Analysis of Baseline Data/Performance Measures

In the 2005 and 2006 APSR, OCS reported baseline data/performance measures on safety, permanency and well-being outcomes. Prior to the hurricanes, approximately 300 cases were reviewed statewide annually. In 2003 - 2004, the process involved case record reviews using a CFSR-like review instrument, staff and stakeholder interviews and stakeholder focus groups. In 2004 - 2005 and 2005 – 2006, the review process was revised by eliminating staff and stakeholder interviews and by focusing on areas needing improvement as determined by results from previous case reviews. The chart below compares data elements from SFY 2003 – 2004, 2004 – 2005 and 2005 – 2006. Due to changes in the review process/instruments, some data elements have been combined in an attempt to measure progress against baseline figures. When items have been combined, the compliance percentage and the percentage of cases with areas rated as a strength have been averaged. The items used to obtain the figures are noted in the corresponding column.

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Outcome/Item Measured	2003-2004 compliance percentage	2004-2005 percentage of cases with areas rated as a strength	2005-2006 **Percentage of cases with areas rated as a strength
Timeliness of initiating an investigation	68.6% (S2 & S3)	60.9% (Item 1)	68.2% (Item 1)
Repeat maltreatment	82.1% (S10)	90.5% (Item 2)	87.9% (Item 2)
Children have permanency and stability in their living situation	77.0% (P5, P7, P8, P11)	80.9% (Item 6 & 7)	84.7% (Item 6 & 7)
Continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children	82.8% (P2, P3, P4, P5, P5, P14, P15)	81.8% (Item 15)	77.8% (Item 15)
Needs and services of child, parents, foster parents	83.6% (WB13, WB14, WB15 & WB 16)	88.3 % (Item 17)	81.0% (Item 17)
Child & family involvement in case planning	78.3% (WB5, WB6, WB7 & WB8)	78.6% (Item 18)	71.4% (Item 18)
Worker visits with child	70.0% (WB9)	81.3% (Item 19)	82.1% (Item 19)
Worker visits with parent(s)	43.4% (WB10, WB11)	72.9% (Item 20)	71.2% (Item 20)
Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs	77.9% (WB17, WB18, WB19, WB20)	85.0% (Item 21)	81.1% (Item 21)

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Outcome/Item Measured	2003-2004 compliance percentage	2004-2005 percentage of cases with areas rated as a strength	2005-2006 **Percentage of cases with areas rated as a strength
Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs	87.1% (WB21, WB22, WB23, WB24, WB25, WB26, WB27, WB28, WB29 & WB 30)	86.8% (Item 23)	74.4% (Item 23)

**Cases were reviewed in only two regions in SFY 2005 – 2006 due to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and the aftermath of the storms.

Based on the data presented above, the agency increased compliance in three areas of service delivery. In the area of worker visits with child the agency shows steady improvement. Seven items indicate a decrease in compliance; however there were only 60 cases reviewed in the 2005 – 2006 SFY and 207 reviewed in the previous state fiscal year.

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Title IV-E Eligibility Review and Program Improvement Plan

Following the Federal review of July 26–30, 2004, Louisiana developed and implemented a PIP. Many changes were made to licensing procedures, including extensions of certifications periods, elimination of the use of provisional licenses, and rewriting the licensing standards. The Bureau of Licensing is in the process of implementing the new standards. Both OCS and OYD are making frequent onsite visits to residential facilities to assure compliance with safety standards. Residential facilities have implemented safety plans in addition to criminal records clearances of all employees. Foster homes may be recertified for up to three years when the homes are found to remain in compliance with certification standards.

During the week of September 17, 2007, Louisiana will undergo a secondary review of the Title IV-E Foster Care Program. The period under review is October 1, 2006 – March 31, 2007. During the secondary review, 150 cases will be reviewed to determine compliance with the Title IV-E program. In order to be found in substantial compliance for this review, there must be less than a 10% error rate in both number of cases (15) and amount of financial claims.

During the primary review, the financial disallowance was limited to the amount of claims for only the cases found to be in error. The penalties for failing the secondary review are substantially higher. An extrapolated disallowance will be assessed the State based on the universe of financial claims made during the period under review.

Due to the critical nature of the secondary review, the impact of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita on the State, and changes in Title IV-E regulations, the State has taken several steps to assure substantial compliance. Originally, OCS requested a waiver to the random sampling process that would exclude the parishes most affected by the storms. OCS reassessed the request and determined that the best course of action would be to immediately begin reviewing 100% of the cases that would be subject to review.

The 100% mock review began March 5, 2007. With the assistance of our Federal partners in Dallas, OCS conducted a training session for the roving team that would review cases throughout the State. Utilizing the Federal Title IV-E review instrument, the teams reviewed cases in every regional office in the following weeks, finishing the review the week of May 21, 2007. Approximately 2500 cases were reviewed during this process.

The review identified cases that were determined to have ineligible or improper payments. Processes were followed to rescind these payments prior to the submittal of the ACF-IV-E-1. Due to the timing of the review period, the date for AFCARS submission, and TIPS financial processes, an early submittal of the IV-E-1 is being made to ACF.

Preparation for the Federal review will continue through the actual onsite review. OCS will participate in conference calls with our Federal partners to discuss the review. Selection of the State's review team will be made and training provided to team members. Policies and procedures for foster care program, home development program, eligibility program and licensing standards will be provided to the ACF. All necessary documentation will be provided for elimination of sample cases that should not be included in the review. Records will be gathered and brought to State Office for the review.

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Following the review, the OCS eligibility unit will be involved in rewriting the Eligibility manual. There have been numerous federal changes that need to be incorporated in the manual. It is anticipated that ACCESS will require ongoing participation of the Eligibility unit as business rules are defined for Phase 2.

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5.0 Community Consultation and Collaboration

The agency continues to seek input from stakeholders for development of the plan and improvement of agency services. The following information details actions taken to obtain and use input from stakeholders:

- The Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR) is available for review on-line on the DSS Intranet and Internet.
- The John H. Chafee Independence Program was reviewed by stakeholders along with the APSR. No comments were received nor were recommendations made for improvement.
- Federal stakeholder consultation on April 11, 2007 to discuss plan development.
- A public hearing was held on June 4, 2007. Notice of the hearing was published in seven newspapers statewide.
- Social Service Directors of the four federally recognized tribes were contacted and asked to participate in APSR development/review.
- The agency continues work with the Court Improvement Project (refer to pages 47 – 51 for more information).
- Since Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, the agency has received technical assistance to address the agency's recovery and long term initiatives (for more information refer to pages 58 – 68).
- Customer satisfaction surveys continue to be administered in OCS offices statewide.
- Foster and adoptive parents are critical to the delivery of child welfare services. The agency has identified staff to serve foster and adoptive parents on both the Louisiana Foster Parent Association and the Louisiana Adoption Advisory Board. (For more information on foster/adoptive parent collaboration and recruitment refer to pages 109 – 110)
- Citizen Review Panels are established in 5 areas of the State and panels continue to meet.
- Collaboration with the Louisiana Children's Trust Fund/Community Based Family Resource and Support continues with the agency and community providers. (Refer to pages 38 – 43 for additional information.)
- Consumer and Community/Stakeholder Committee meetings continue to be held on a quarterly basis.

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A. Update on Community/Stakeholder Committee

Attendance was a concern for the Community and Consumer/Stakeholder Committee this past fiscal year. The committee meets quarterly. It is proposed that more statewide participation is needed for the committee, as most of the participants have been from Baton Rouge area. Options/results discussed regarding this issue were:

1. Statewide participation – *Disposition*: The chairs attend regional CQI team meeting and or stakeholder meetings rather than make this committee statewide. This can incorporate the work of the various committees without placing too much of a burden on our community stakeholders.
2. Reimburse mileage costs for members to attend from around the State. *Disposition*: There was no funding for this issue due to budgetary constraints.
3. Incorporate Citizen Review Panels or merge the two, as some of the focus is similar.

Disposition: A position paper has been development regarding this option and is still being reviewed by the State CQI team and Stakeholders Committees.

4. CQI Team/Stakeholders Committee members to submit names of others who could participate locally.

A survey was sent to all committee members in December of 2006 asking for feedback regarding the committee and possible improvements. The feedback was positive and results were reviewed in the committee meeting of March 17, 2007. All of the respondents felt that the committee was a viable benefit to them personally and the agency and wanted to see it continue.

The committee addressed the following issues and referred these issues to the state level CQI team:

Staff turnover: the committee recommended attention to this issue due to noted staff turnover in the organization. There appeared to be no level between certain classifications of staff, which was thought to lead to turnover. The OCS Human Resources (HR) Director presented to the committee stats on staff turnover and discussed the ranges of turnover that occur, retirements, promotions, resignations, staff disciplinary actions, and other actions all were discussed. The exit interview process was addressed by the HR director as well. The exit interview process is reviewed by the HR director, if any trends are identified the issues are brought forward to the Director of Field Services or the Assistant Secretary. Corrective actions did result from these changes. The exit interview form has been used by other states as a model form. A different level of Child Welfare Specialist 3, levels A and B is proposed, but is on hold due to budget issues. It will be implemented in the future if funding can be secured.

Disproportionality in foster care placement: Post Hurricanes 2005, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) offered to assist the State in addressing this issue. A meeting was held in February 2006 to enlist their help. Out of the meeting came a short-term recovery and long-term work plan. OCS has made a commitment to work with the

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national resource centers on short-term and long-term goals to include cultural issues. On February 28, 2007, the National Resource Center provided consultation with the agency regarding the impact that diversity has on policy, program development, resource development, and human resources. State Office staff met on May 4, 2007 to begin to develop a plan of action from the consultation.

B. Effectiveness of Community Consultation and Collaboration

The past effectiveness of the committee has been measured by meetings, participation, and referrals submitted for review and consideration by the agency. There were no predetermined performance measures for this committee.

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Activities planned for the 2006-2007 SFY:

1. Specific presentation of the new initiatives known as LIFTS (Leading Innovations for Family Transformations and Safety) with discussion. Committee members supported all aspects of LIFTS especially those impacting residential placements and use of shelters. There was discussion of case specific placements and procedures used by front line staff in communicating with residential and emergency shelter resource providers.
2. Review of the Council on Accreditation Standards that relate to the work of the committee. In addition, there will be a review of the Strategic Plan for DSS, OCS and the mission statement included in the Strategic Plan.
3. The committee will work on the goals for the year in the following areas:

Strategy 1 Identify Players (recruitment of membership)

Objective: Recruit foster parents, foster children (youth), front line workers, mid-level managers, representative from Department of Education

Objective: Enable Stakeholder Participation – mileage, honorarium, etc.

Strategy 2 Continuum of Service Issues

Objective: Examine front end prevention procedures

Objective: Examine exit points, transitioning out of youth who are in care

Strategy 3 Examine Residential Services and Process

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6.0 Louisiana Children's Trust Fund 2006 Annual Report

The impact of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita are still being felt by grass-roots, non-profits and the families they serve. The non-profits are trying to start providing services again, while also taking care of their own families. Parents are still trying to rebuild in totally new locations, while children have been transplanted to new schools across the State. The population shift has caused an overload of needed services in areas not directly impacted by the hurricanes and the lack of much needed services to populations impacted by the storms.

Parenting support groups (ex. Circle of Parents, Parent University) and parenting classes (ex. Active Parenting, Nurturing Program) are greatly needed. After-school programs (ex. Big Brothers/Big Sisters Mentoring, Camp Fire Self Reliance) for the children are also in demand. These programs often address the mental health needs of these populations. Post-traumatic stress has become apparent with this population. Community Based Child Abuse Prevention Grant (CBCAP) funds through the Children's Trust Fund (CTF) were used to provide these much needed services.

Statewide Network, Outreach and Special Population

The CBCAP funds continued to be used for the expansion and maintenance of the statewide network of child abuse and neglect prevention programs. Collaboration with Prevent Child Abuse Louisiana (PCAL), Southern University (SU) and Louisiana State University (LSU) Cooperative Extension Services programs were offered statewide with outreach to rural and underserved populations. Parenting classes (The Nurturing Program) and support groups (Circle of Parents) were offered through PCAL, while the Extension Services offered a variety of programs that included Every Touch Counts, Right From Birth, Children in the Middle and the Active Parenting series. The Extension Programs also included training of Head Start and child care professionals statewide.

Statewide respite, crisis care and safe visitation centers continued to be supported with CBCAP funds. Programs continued to be delivered to parents and children in domestic violence and homeless shelters. Family Resource Centers continued to provide literacy and strengthening families programs. These continued to be a lifeline of services for families impacted by the hurricanes, whether living in FEMA trailer communities or their old neighborhoods. Parenting support, after-school programs, and resource and referral services continued to be provided at these centers.

Support of the school-based health centers and school-based FAST programs was continued. A new program this year was KIDS SMARTZ, a computer safety program for parents and children, offered by Boys and Girls Clubs. Some other new programs included programs targeted for special needs population.

The development of Louisiana Relatives as Parents Program (LA RAPP) was through a collaboration of the CTF, Louisiana DSS, State Office of Elderly Services, and A.A.R.P. Through a grant with Brookdale Foundation the Grandparents as Parents Program was able to expand to include all relatives as parents. The expansion included the formation of support

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groups statewide as well as a statewide network for legislative and other needs. Respite care and family activities were offered throughout the year as well.

Special needs grandparents were also targeted for Nurturing and Family Strengthening programs through Families Helping Families and the Extra Mile agencies. Other programs offered to parents with disabilities or parents with special needs children were Families First, Babies Can't Wait, Family Resource Centers and the PROMPT programs. A life-skills program, PASSED, was offered to special needs children. A new special needs population program included parenting training for adoptive parents of special needs children. Another new population was served by the Autism Support Program. Support groups for the parents and activities for the children were provided through this program. The Nurtured Approach was a new program offered for families with ADD and ADHD children.

Some other special population outreach programs were provided through faith-based programs. Way Maker Ministries targeted incarcerated adults with the Best Dads program, and Hope Ministries targeted incarcerated teen moms (those with alcohol and/or drug abuse problems) with parenting and life skills classes. Both programs involved the children and parents.

The Archdiocese of New Orleans offered life skills classes to the Independent Living Program (foster care children about to age out of the foster care system). Another new program was provided by Jewish Family Services. Teen Life Counts was a teenage suicide prevention program that was offered through the Orleans and Jefferson public and private school systems. There was feedback from one school that this program prevented a Katrina impacted teenager from committing suicide.

The numbers in the 2005 Annual Report were as follows:

Children taught life skills and safety	60,311
Parents provided education and support	16,443
Families furnished hospital and/or home visitation	154,789
Adults given public awareness and education	201,482
Professionals and volunteers trained	15,001

There were a total of 272 programs funded at a total cost of \$1,034,311.58 with a total population served of 1,176,637 at a cost of \$.88 per person/family

Parent Leadership and Peer Review

The Circle of Parents program continued to assist in the expansion of parent leaders throughout the State. With each "circle," parent facilitators and group leaders were developed. The need for parent support groups provided by the Circle of Parents program continues with the relocation of parents to trailer villages statewide. This need included developing parent leaders to represent the needs of others in obtaining services and resources for parents and families in the trailer villages.

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In addition to the Circle of Parents program, this year the Louisiana Children's Trust Fund (LCTF) participated in the Parents As Leaders training offered by FRIENDS. The Executive Director along with the parent representative to the CTF Board participated in the training. Kay Kay Warner, the parent representative, is from Bogalusa, Louisiana, a rural area that was critically impacted by Hurricane Katrina. Ms. Warner has used the training to further empower the parents in the area in rebuilding and in acquiring the needed services and resources for their families and children. There has been a high number of teen moms in the area, so they were the targeted population.

These parents as well as those involved with the Circle of Parents and other services statewide were an added population of the peer review process. The process continued to be operated with PCAL and the Citizen Review panels statewide. As in the past, the three tiers of service providers, stakeholders and consumers were incorporated in the peer review procedure. Peer review provided input into needs assessment and program planning; program implementation; what works and what doesn't work; as well as program evaluation.

The primary goal of the peer review process was determination of consumer satisfaction and strengths/weaknesses of services provided. As previously mentioned, a parent serves ex-officio on the CTF Board of Directors. Parents as well as others who participated in the peer review process participated in the grant review process and determination of how to expend the CTF funds.

Another group of parent leadership that has been expanded and strengthened throughout the State is the Grandparents As Parents and Relatives As Parents population. As mentioned earlier in this report, through foundation support and collaborative assistance of the CTF, Department of Social Services, AARP, and Office of Elderly Affairs, a strong legislative and service support group was formed- LA RAPP.

Advocacy, Systematic Change and Federal Initiatives

The CTF's Executive Director continued to serve in leadership positions on several statewide advocacy and statewide initiatives for systematic change. These positions included Secretary and Member of the Governor's Children's Cabinet Advisory Board, Board Member of Louisiana Partnership for Children and Families, and Chairman of the Parent Education Committee of the Bright Start Initiative (formerly Early Childhood Comprehensive System). The Executive Director also served on the Legislative Policy Committees of Louisiana Association of Non-profit Organizations and the Children's Cabinet Advisory Board. In these positions, legislative agendas to improve the quality of life for children and families in the State were advanced.

The Children's Trust Fund continued to actively participate with the Louisiana Recovery Corp, an entity developed after the hurricanes with the purpose of addressing needs of children and families impacted by the storm. The "How Are the Children" legislative awareness campaign and children's march and rally organized by the CTF in collaboration with several statewide partners will be further discussed in this report under public awareness and child abuse prevention month activities.

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As a means of continuing to educate those around the country of the continued needs of Louisiana children and families, the CTF Executive Director was a guest lecturer at Bradley University, discussing the “The Impact of the Hurricanes on Children and Families”. Major areas of concern are health care (mental and physical); child care (early care and after-school care) and housing and basic needs. Louisiana will be looking at these problems for many years to come. Recovery is a long-term process.

The CTF has actively been involved in the Juvenile Justice Systems Reform in Louisiana. This initiative began pre-storms and has continued in the years to follow. This system reform included removal of the Juvenile Justice program from the Adult Prison System, and the development of a new Office of Youth Development.

Another system change that the CTF currently has been actively involved in is the development of a Quality Rating System for early childcare in the State. Through the National Alliance of Children’s Trust Fund Strengthening Families Early Childhood Initiative, Louisiana has served as a learning community. The team of Executive Director of the CTF, Executive Director of PCAL, State Director of Early Childcare and Early Learning, and a Doctorate of Psychology from Tulane Institute of Early Infant Mental Health Institute attended the original learning summit sponsored by the National Alliance. This team has continued to work on its goal of implementing the principles of the Strengthening Family Initiative and the Protective Factors into the framework of the new Quality Rating System. The CTF Executive Director served on the Quality Rating System Implementation Advisory Board.

The CTF continued its involvement with several federal initiatives involving families and children in the State. Input from the CTF was given to both the PIP and IV-B Plans. In particular, the Children’s Trust Fund participated in development of the Children and Family Service Reviews/Program Improvement Plans/ Statewide Assessment; the Child and Family Service Plan; Child Protective Services/Alternate Response System; and Continuum of Care.

Collaboration continued with the Promoting Safe and Stable Families (P.S.S.F.) and Adoption and Safe Families Act (A.S.F.A.) initiatives. The CTF’s Executive Director was also an invited participant in the Federal Review of Lessons Learned from the hurricanes and also presented “Counseling for Traumatized Children in the Child Welfare System” at the National Adoption and Foster Care Summit- *Answering the Call*.

Training, Technical Assistance, Evaluation and Assessment

A new addition to the technical assistance offered to CTF grantees this year was the implementation of the OMB Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART). Technical assistance included help with reporting of goals, benchmarks and performance measures as well as the new PART reporting system. Grant writing workshops were also offered to all potential grantees prior to the grant due dates.

At the annual grantee meeting and quarterly regional meetings, trainings were offered throughout the year. Grantees were provided technical assistance as well as instruction of on-line reporting of CTF activities. The CTF continued to underwrite training opportunities for its grantee agencies in Non-Profits Standards of Excellence. These training are provided by Louisiana

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Association of Non-Profits and include such topics as fiscal management, board development, marketing and fund-raising development.

The CTF continued its annual support of several professional trainings and conferences statewide. Support included underwriting of key-note speakers as well as providing stipends or scholarships for those who otherwise would not be able to afford to attend. This allowed extended educational opportunities for providers and clients (including parent leaders) of CTF programs.

Other new areas of trainings included the Strengthening Families Initiative, implementation of the Quality Rating System, Protective Factors and outcome based/evidence based practices. The CTF required of its grant applicants that the programs target at-risk and/or rural populations; evidence based models; and community collaboration. The CTF also played a key role in the development of regional community assessments.

Public Awareness, Child Abuse Prevention Month and Innovative Funding

The most exciting public awareness and child abuse prevention month activity was the culmination of the “How are the Children” Campaign with a children’s march and rally on the steps of the state capitol. The march and rally was spearheaded by the CTF in collaboration with Louisiana Association of Education of Young Children; LA Chapter of NASW; Louisiana Association of Non-profits Association; Louisiana Partnership of Families and Children; Baton Rouge Children’s Coalition; and Louisiana Children’s Defense Fund. Based on the Masai Warrior’s *How are the Children?* story, campaign materials as well as talking points for legislative action were developed. The highlight of the day was guest speaker, Marian Wright Edelman, CEO of the Children’s Defense Fund. In addition to speaking at the rally, Ms. Edelman addressed the Senate Select Committee on Women and Children.

A new form of innovative funding has been the selling of “How are the Children?” campaign merchandise. At the CTF web-site one can order everything from sports caps, to polo shirts and canvas briefcases in a variety of colors all with the campaign logo. As stated on the order form: “All proceeds from sales benefit public relations programming for the LCTF.” The Safe Kids License plates continued as a form of raising funds for the CTF and LA Safe Kids Coalition child safety programs statewide.

As mentioned earlier in this report a new funding source for CTF programs was the Brookdale Foundation. The Brookdale Foundation grant allowed for the expansion of the Children’s Trust Fund Grandparents Raising Grandchildren program into the development of the LA RAPP. The grant was a collaborative effort of the CTF and DSS/OCS. The CTF’s Executive Director participated in the Brookdale Foundation grant training meeting. The grant funds were used for the development of a statewide advisory board; expansion of regional support groups; public awareness and education campaign and a yearly legislative awareness campaign. The grant funding was for two years, and future support from Brookdale Foundation will be developed.

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A cooperative relationship has continued with the LCTF and Clear Channel Communications. The CTF radio program the “Kid-formation Hour” Prime Time for Parents continued broadcasting on Sunday afternoons on the Clear Channel network. This was the radio programs tenth year of production, and its popularity continued to grow among parents and providers. Clear Channel also continued its Kids Fest during the summer with the proceeds benefiting the CTF. The CTF re-invested the proceeds into the radio program production. The Clear Channel Communications and CTF’s business relationship continued to be beneficial to both parties.

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7.0 Indian Child Welfare Act and Tribal Collaboration

Louisiana has four federally recognized American Indian Tribes. The American Indian population of these tribes is 0.57% of the total population of Louisiana.

Federal Tribes

Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana
(St. Mary Parish)
P.O. Box 661
Charenton, LA 70523
(337) 923-7215
Al Leblanc, Chairman
Karen Matthews, S.S. Director

Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana
(Allen Parish)
P.O. Box 967
Elton, LA 70532
(337) 584-2261
Burley Sylestine, S.S. Director

Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana
(Avoyelles Parish)
P.O. Box 331
Marksville, LA 71351
(318) 253-9767
Earl Barbry, Chairman
Jean Allen-Wilson, S.S. Director

Jena Band of Choctaw of Louisiana
(Grant, Rapides, & Lasalle Parishes)
P.O. Box 14
Jena, LA 71342
(318) 992-2717
Christine Norris, Chairman
Mona Maxwell, S.S. Director

On-Going Collaboration/Coordination with American Indian Tribes

- OCS has policies and practices governing the identification of American Indian children, case planning, service delivery, family preservation and family support services. Policy also addresses tribal notifications, tribal jurisdiction, and foster care placement, termination of parental rights, pre-adoptive placement and adoptive placement.
- Respect for and protection of the cultural heritage and best interest of American Indians.
- Ongoing staff training on the exclusive rights of American Indian Tribes such as notices of state proceedings and special preference for the placement of American Indian children.
- Formal and informal working agreements with American Indian Tribes.
- Tribal participation in regional Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) processes in Lafayette (Chitimacha Tribe), Lake Charles (Coushatta Tribe) and Alexandria (Tunica-Biloxi Tribe).
- Request for participation in the development of the 2007 APSR. Positive feedback received from Karen Matthews with Chitimacha tribe.

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- Inclusion of American Indian Tribal staff in regularly scheduled OCS training.

- On May 31, 2007 OCS staff participated in a conference call offered by the NRC for Organizational Improvement. The teleconference titled, "Building and Maintaining State-Tribal Partnerships to Improve Child Welfare Programs," highlighted critical steps to building partnerships between states and tribes. The call featured tribes from South Dakota, and Oregon and each state discussed key techniques aimed at providing native children a safe and stable home. These techniques centered around collaboration between states and tribes, service array and committees aimed at monitoring current laws and progress of the Tribal and State Partnership.

Louisiana's policies and procedures cover the basic provisions of ICWA. They are as follows as follows:

First, OCS policy requires that staff identifies children who are American Indian. The agency prioritized the need to identify American Indian children early on and stresses that communication be open throughout the child's involvement with the agency.

Second, OCS continues to build relationships with American Indian tribes via the CQI process. Hopefully, by extending the relationship between the agency and tribes to this area of agency functioning, the agency will improve communication with tribes on important matters such as notification of family team conferences and court hearings. Tribal participation in the CQI process also provides an opportunity for OCS staff and tribal representatives to meet and develop relationships.

Third, OCS policy recognizes the special placement preferences for American Indian children. Nonetheless, problems have arisen over foster parent and kinship placements with American Indian families. One problem is described as dual certification; that is, both OCS and a tribe have certified a family to foster. OCS has shown a hesitation to place children in dually certified homes. Another issue has been that some American Indian families have been denied certification to foster or adopt based on their inability to meet some licensing standards

Fourth, the Agency seeks to provide services to prevent the breakup of American Indian families. Limitations exist in the availability of services, particularly since the tribes are located in rural areas. Overall, the agency is working toward building a continuum of services that focuses on prevention and the preservation of the family unit.

Fifth, OCS recognizes in policy the right of tribal courts and their jurisdiction. Tribal directors noted that normally the tribal courts allow the local state courts to proceed. However, it was noted that they feel OCS needs to provide their courts with more information for them to make informed decisions. Further, there are situations where the tribal court has decided a child needs to be in care and there are no available American Indian foster parents. Tribes would like to retain jurisdiction while the child is placed in an OCS foster home. It is hoped that through the ongoing participation of tribal representatives on regional CQI teams that these types of issues

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can be discussed and resolved in a manner that is satisfactory to tribes and the agency while serving the best interest of the children and families.

As OCS works to carry out ICWA policy and provide comprehensive child welfare services that meet the needs of all families including the needs of American Indian families. Additionally, the agency assures the maintenance of a statewide information system (currently Tracking Information Payment System [TIPS]) that contains demographic data and case information for every child in foster care (including American Indian children) as well as a case review system, and a service program designed to improve the safety, permanency and well being of children served by the child welfare system.

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8.0 Court Improvement Project

The information below details efforts of the Court Improvement Project (CIP) in SFY 2006 – 2007 and provides updates on the implementation of the recommendations developed from the Child and Family Service Review (CFSR) site visits and the final report.

Beyond the CFSR initiatives, CIP is collaborating with DSS/OCS in a demonstration project utilizing the “Family Finders” model in establishing permanent connections for youth in the Katrina/Rita class. The Louisiana demonstration is called, “Connections for Permanency.”

Other CIP efforts include the following:

1. Court delays and ensuring adequacy of hearings

Update on Progress/Specific Accomplishments: With respect to reducing delays and ensuring the adequacy of hearings and court orders, the CIP, with the advice and counsel of its Advisory Committee, continues the work of drafting uniform court rules for child in need of care cases. These model rules have been drafted and are made available to all local courts for modification and voluntary adoption in the form of local rules.

Louisiana Task Force on Legal Representation

Update on Progress/Specific Accomplishments in SFY 2006 - 2007: The Louisiana Task Force on Legal Representation in child protection proceedings is addressing access to qualified, competent legal counsel for children. This group, created by state legislation in 2003 and later re-authorized, consists of representatives from the CIP, the state child welfare agency, the Louisiana Bar Association, Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA), Louisiana law schools, and other child welfare stakeholders. The Task Force has completed work on a set of attorney standards for attorneys representing children. These standards were presented to the Louisiana Supreme Court, which adopted them in the form of a rule, which became effective July 1, 2005.

Currently, CIP is providing funding to pilot a staff model for children’s attorneys in the 16th Judicial District Court and the 14th Judicial District Court. CIP, through its Task Force representation, has also supported the move in Louisiana toward having parents’ representation in CINC cases. This legal representation is to be provided by the Louisiana Indigent Defender Assistance Board.

Activities Planned for the 2007-2008 SFY:

- Involvement of District Attorneys in a collaborative fashion on a court by court basis. CIP will participate in training/education events sponsored by the Louisiana District Attorneys Association in an effort to increase the level of competence of those attorneys who participate in CINC proceedings.

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Collaboration with CASA

Update on Progress/Specific Accomplishments in SFY 2006 - 2007: The CIP continues to partner and collaborate with CASA to provide regional training opportunities statewide for child welfare stakeholders, attorneys, CASA, agency staff, foster parents, judges and others. The curriculum includes state and federal law and regulations, early childhood and adolescent development and training on relevant court rules and procedures. To date, 6 interdisciplinary cross-trainings have been held with over 400 total participants, including CASAs, attorneys, judges, OCS staff, court administration/staff and other child welfare stakeholders.

- An expansion of CASA is in its planning stages.
- Court Improvement Project training grants include training with child welfare stakeholders to address professionalism, dynamics of abuse and neglect, roles and responsibilities of CINC stakeholders, child development, ethics and federal and state law.
- Online video training available for judges, attorneys and other parties. Thus far, 7 training videos have been completed (ASFA 101 Parts I & II), Foster Parents: Notice & Opportunity to Be Heard, Ethics, including the new attorney standards of practice and Professionalism. Videos may be viewed at childrenslawla.org.

Activities Planned for the 2007-2008 SFY:

- Obtain technical assistance to get more judges to participate in training/education events.
- Obtain technical assistance to do a strategic plan and a specialized training for CASA volunteers around issues involving older youth, especially those with a plan of Alternate Planning Living Arrangement (APLA).
- Steering committee working to ensure presentations speak to all participants (i.e. social workers, judges and attorneys).

Child Advocacy Resource Efforts (CARE)

Update on Progress/Specific Accomplishments in SFY 2006 - 2007: The CARE Advisory Committee consists of representatives from DSS/OCS, CASA, Child Advocacy Centers, Office of Indian Affairs, foster parents, attorneys (public and private) and judges. Issues still being considered by the Child Advocacy Resource Efforts (CARE) Advisory Committee include:

- Improving Permanency Options for Older Youth
- Disproportionate Representation of Minorities in Child Welfare Cases
- “Benchmark Hearings”

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- CASA support to expand programs into unserved areas and to increase volunteers in existing programs
- CIP Judicial Fellow
- “Connections for Permanency” Demonstration
- Children’s Attorney Pilot
- “Together We Can” Conference
- Linkage to CFSR and Title IV-E Review Processes

2. Attorney standards

Update on Progress/Specific Accomplishments in SFY 2006 - 2007: The attorney standards for representation of children were adopted by rule of the Louisiana Supreme Court, effective July 1, 2005. CIP is providing training and education, through its training grant, to attorneys so that they can meet the mandatory annual requirement of 6 hours of specialized continuing legal education in this area of practice. Program evaluations are conducted after each session.

3. Status of the Integrated Juvenile Justice Information System (IJJIS)

Update on Progress/Specific Accomplishments in SFY 2006 - 2007: The CIP has contracted with Integrated Information Systems to write the software for the new web-based Child in Need of Care module of the Integrated Juvenile Justice Information System. The design specifications are available for review. Pilot testing is in progress at Orleans Parish Juvenile Court. A second pilot site, 14th Judicial District Court, in Lake Charles should be online by June 30, 2007.

Activities Planned for the 2007-2008 SFY:

- Development of strategy to link the IV-E review with the judicial process. CIP would like to engage judges more actively in the process.
- Database for activities and implementations to be put on the DSS website, through a link to the CIP website, “Children’s Law Advocacy Resource Online,” which can be found at childrenslawla.org.
- Diligent search component to be developed to assist with problems in maintaining contact information for families in CINC cases. This feature will be derived from best practices learned in the “Connections for Permanency” pilot.

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4. Curriculum for continuing education of judges

Update on Progress/Specific Accomplishments in SFY 2006 - 2007: Various training opportunities for the continuing education of judges will include state and federal law and regulations, early and/or adolescent childhood development, information on the new standards for attorneys representing children, best practices for improved court performance regarding Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) implementation, introduction to the Bench Cards for Essential Judicial Functions and other topics as indicated. Four trainings were offered to the judiciary, in addition to the online opportunities. CIP staff present at most judicial conferences, including the spring and fall judges conferences. In addition, judges will be invited and encouraged to attend the 2007 “Together We Can” conference. Judicial participation at this conference has been lower than expected in the past. The conference steering committee is working diligently to increase participation by soliciting more judges to speak, present and/or moderate sessions.

Activities Planned for the 2007-2008 SFY:

- The judicial system has needs to be educated on the LIFT initiatives.
- The data collect includes outcomes based data on each initiative, synthesized reports for each region, composite for federal outcomes which have drill down capabilities for each region.

5. Mediation Pilot Program

Update on Progress/Specific Accomplishments in SFY 2006 - 2007: Major grant funding for the Mediation Pilot ended June 30, 2005. The CIP is working with the two pilot sites to ensure continuation of the programs. To date, the program has served over 100 children and families and has met or exceeded all of its initial goals. Both Orleans and Jefferson Parish Juvenile Courts have agreed to provide continued support beyond the pilot period. The CIP is working to expand the program into other state courts. East Baton Rouge Juvenile Court, 14th JDC, 4th JDC and 9th JDC have all expressed an interest in mediation and are looking at ways to implement. The evaluation was successfully completed and is available for review. Of particular note is one finding that showed that in cases sent to mediation prior to disposition, 73% of cases achieved permanency within one year, as opposed to only 44% of cases that followed the traditional litigation route. No other statistics are available at this point, but a copy of the program evaluation is available for review upon request.

Activities Planned for the 2007-2008 SFY:

- Orleans and Jefferson has committed to ongoing support of mediation project
- Explore Alexandria, Monroe, East Baton Rouge and Lake Charles Regions’ interest in Mediation.

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- Monitor the mediation project developed based on pro-bono attorneys to determine if it accelerates permanency for children involved in the Juvenile Court process.

6. Child and Family Services Review (CFSR)/Program Improvement Plan (PIP)

Update on Progress/Specific Accomplishments in SFY 2006 - 2007: The CIP is responsible for two elements of Louisiana's first PIP. The first, the promulgation and implementation of practice standards for attorneys representing children, has been successfully completed. The other, the development of a training and education package for judges, lawyers and other child welfare stakeholders, is in process and going smoothly. Out of this effort has come the Children's Law Advocacy Resource Online (CLARO), which is a collaborative effort of many stakeholders, including OCS and Loyola University School of Law, which as agreed to host the website on its system. For more information, please see www.childrenslawla.org.

Activities Planned for the 2007-2008 SFY:

- Develop and implement a staff model system for children's attorneys
- Develop a demonstration of children's attorneys that were devastated by Hurricane Katrina.
- Staff attorneys provided by Mental Health Advocacy and Social Work Advocates.

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9.0 Children's Justice Act

Program Description: The Louisiana Children's Justice Task Force is a multi-disciplinary group of professionals and community level representatives with knowledge and experience related to the criminal justice system and the issues of child abuse and neglect. The purpose of the Children's Justice Act (CJA) Task Force is to coordinate the functions and activities of the Children's Justice Act in the State of Louisiana and ensure compliance with CJA Grant requirements. The recommendations of the Task Force for expenditure of grant funds are designed to improve the handling of child abuse and neglect cases, particularly cases of child sexual abuse and exploitation, in a manner which limits additional trauma to the child victim. Grants are also awarded to improve the investigation and prosecution of cases of child abuse and neglect and the handling of suspected child abuse and neglect related fatalities.

During the past year, the Task Force finalized the three year recommendations resulting from the three year goals and strategies developed last year. The Task Force refined and prioritized the following areas: Training/Resources, Programs to Improve Process, Collaboration, Laws & Protocols and Child Victims with Disabilities. Objectives were developed and committee leads were appointed. Members of the Task Force were assigned to committees on each of the prioritized areas. These committees have met and reported to the full Task Force membership throughout the year. The plan for the 2007 contracts was finalized by the Task Force. The Task Force also developed annual performance report outcomes, and these will continue to be updated. The 2007 grant application was also finalized.

During 2007-2008, the Task Force plans to continue working on committee objectives. They will also continue to update performance report outcome measures and plan to incorporate this into the CJA monitoring instrument. The Task Force began working on a CJA Task Force mission statement. This will be finalized during 2007-2008. Contracts for 2008 will also be finalized during this time period.

Task Force Programs and Activities for SFY 2006 – 2007:

- The Task Force will help sponsor the "Together We Can" child welfare conference on September 27-28, 2007. This year's conference will focus on Evidence-Based Practices, Systematic Roots of Poverty and Racism, and When It Is Safe to Return Children. The conference will provide seminar tracks for lawyers, social workers, educators, Children's Advocacy Centers, other children disciplines and volunteer advocates, and Hispanic Outreach.

The CJA Chair and Program Coordinator meet with representatives of all disciplines involved in the conference on a monthly basis for conference planning. As a result of input from CJA, an education component that will include a segment on child victims with disabilities has been added to the conference agenda. It is anticipated that 550 persons will attend the conference. The committee will develop an evaluation instrument to assess outcomes by participants.

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- The CJA Task Force annually helps sponsor the Louisiana Foundation against Sexual Assault (LAFASA) Conference and the Family Focus Conference. This year's LAFASA Conference entitled "Where is the Outrage?" was conducted December 6-8, 2006 in Baton Rouge. The agenda was mostly child-focused. Specific topics included: Katrina, Rita and Sexual Assault; Internet Crimes Against Children; Human Trafficking; Medical Evaluation of Child Sexual Abuse; Developing a Sexual Assault Response Team (geared toward Children's Advocacy Center, CASA Program and Rape Crisis Center staff); Club Drugs and Sexual Assault; Ritualistic Child Sexual Abuse; Investigating Sexual Assault and Understanding the Necessity, Benefits and Limitations of the (child) Medical Evaluation and Testimony; and Teens NOT Gone Wild. Performance evaluations from the conference indicated "excellent" ratings of speakers meeting attendees' expectations, and that the information received would be helpful in their daily work.

The Family Focus Conference was a two-day conference to build competency of professionals and practitioners working with children, youth and their families. The conference provided a forum for learning, networking and discussing subjects relevant to one's work with children and families. The conference focused on: Excellent Professional Practice, Effective Partnership for Children and Families, and Executive Leadership Development. Sessions that directly related to the Task Force functions were: Maternal Depression: The Impact on Children; Prosecuting Cases with Developmentally Delayed Victims or Witnesses; Juvenile Sex Offenders; A Legislative Forecast; Investigating and Prosecuting Authority Figures; Effective Treatment of Sex Disorders. . Does it Exist?; Trends and Developments in Louisiana Law that Affect the Family; Internet Safety: A Guide for Parents, Grandparents & Teachers; and Guess What Happened at School Today: A Look at Extreme School Violence. Performance evaluations from the conference indicated that the conference met the expectation of the participants, and ninety-seven percent of those attending indicated the content met their expectations and the complexity of the sessions was appropriate.

- Assisted the Children's Advocacy Centers (CAC) of Louisiana in providing training and assistance to local CACs. There are currently fourteen (14) operating Child Advocacy Centers in Louisiana. As of January, 2007, twenty-seven (27) judicial districts currently have operating multi-disciplinary teams. This represents approximately 66% of the total 41 judicial districts. An additional fifteen judicial districts have the capacity to conduct videotaped forensic interviews in child sexual abuse cases. The Task Force continually funds CACs because they are an ideal project for CJA funding since they rely on a multidisciplinary team approach to investigation and prosecution of child abuse. The CAC of Louisiana provided support, promoted the use of and provided awareness for Child Advocacy Centers in the State. Outcome evaluations revealed that CACs provided forensic interviews for 3,518 children in the State. The outcomes of the CJA grant are to support the state coordinator and participate in the Together We Can Conference (along with conference planning). The state coordinator participated in the Southern Regional CAC State Chapter Meeting to develop a training and technical assistance agreement between CAC of Louisiana and SRCAC. This will include a five year growth plan for CAC of Louisiana. CAC of Louisiana also researched and implemented the

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development of a public awareness campaign and participated in the Sex Offender Management Program being created by the Office of Youth Development. They also participated in the La. Sexual Assault Task Force and provided a summary of the CACLA report that will be incorporated into the report to the legislature. They continue to work with the Louisiana Victims Assistance Academy Project to develop curriculum and student guidelines. In the coming year, the CAC of Louisiana will work closely with the CJA Task Force on medical training opportunities and multi-disciplinary training.

The CJA Task Force currently funds one CAC start up program, three expansion programs and the Louisiana CAC special hurricane grant. They are as follows:

Wellspring Alliance for Children and Families – This is the second year of funding for this program that serves children who are victims of abuse due to the impact of domestic violence on their lives. In 2006, this program served 114 children, exceeding their goal by 64%. Support groups were provided for residential and non-residential children. The children’s advocates worked diligently to provide group and individual sessions to children. They provided 152 case management sessions. The children’s advocates also conducted 58 individual assessments with children. Wellspring is eligible for one more year of CJA funding as a start-up program.

Stuller Place Children’s Advocacy Center – This CAC was funded to expand services into New Iberia. In 2006, the Case Tracker maintained case contact with 396 children. Of the 396 interviewed, the Case Tracker monitored 100% of the cases and reported the status of the 396 cases to the multi-disciplinary team. Of the 396 cases, 125 cases were closed. The remaining 271 cases are still open and will continue to be tracked in 2007. Case tracking helps ensure that children reporting crimes sexual in nature do not fall through the cracks while waiting for their cases to go to trial.

Baton Rouge Children’s Advocacy Center – This CAC was funded to expand services to all of East Baton Rouge Parish. During 2006, they provided the site for 117 interviews. They provided in-person information and service referral for 95 children and/or their families. They have also provided therapy for 26 child victims for a total of 156 sessions. To assist and educate non-offending care-givers with the challenges of child abuse, BRCAC facilitated support groups that served seven non-offending caregivers. All caregivers who returned their surveys reported a high level of satisfaction. The BRCAC will continue to do the following: provide forensic interview training for the Office of Community Services investigators and law enforcement detectives; utilize a closed circuit monitoring system for the observation of interview; videotape interviews when requested by the investigating law enforcement agencies; facilitate information-sharing among the agencies that respond to abuse; provide therapy to child victims by a contract therapist; support non-offending caregivers via the CAC’s Family Advocate Program; and track information pertaining to the children and families served by CAC.

Family and Youth Counseling Agency, Inc. – This CAC was funded to expand services to Beauregard Parish. This is a new contract that provides start-up cost for service to the new area.

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Louisiana Children's Advocacy Center – The CJA Task Force has contracted with LA CAC to fund eight CAC programs that were impacted by the hurricanes of 2005. Each program was required to document how they were affected and how the CJA funds would help address those particular needs. This contract was just approved.

- Assisted the Louisiana Court Appointed Special Advocate Program (LCASA) by encouraging continued growth of this program which uses community volunteers to advocate for children caught in the judicial system. The CJA Task Force continues to offer financial support and training to judges and advocates who wish to continue a program or start-up a new one. In 2006, LACASA provided technical assistance, service, and support to thirteen (13) local CASA programs. A total of 1,284 cases were closed during this same time, and the value of contributions made by volunteers was \$15,052. CASA provided statewide training on best practices with a total of 67 participants from local programs. They provided individual program technical assistance through on-site meetings with each program. They also provided support for ten CASA staff persons to attend Strategic Volunteer Retention Training in Jackson, Mississippi provided by the National CASA. The Louisiana CASA continued the development of the LACASA Association. They hired a new Executive Director and initiated a strategic planning process. They distributed 400 copies of "Standing Up for Children," an informational and educational booklet on CASA in Louisiana. Also, CASA will participate this year in the Together We Can Conference.

The CJA Task Force currently funds one CASA start up program and the Louisiana CASA special hurricane grant. They are as follows:

Youth Service Bureau of St. Tammany – This was the first year of CJA funding for the Youth Service Bureau of St. Tammany. With vital program assistance by the two program positions partially funded by CJA, CASA volunteers monitored the cases of abused/neglected children for the Court, advocated for quality treatment and services, helping to ensure the State's plan met the needs of the children. During the first six months of the grant (grant was only in operation for six months of the 2006 evaluation period), the program served 264 abused and neglected children. During this same time period, 148 written CASA reports were prepared and submitted by the Court. In a survey of judges served by this program, 100% of the judges indicated that they were able to make a more informed or better decision regarding abuse and neglect cases when CASA was involved.

Louisiana Court Appointed Special Advocate – The CJA Task Force has contracted with LACASA to fund eight CASA programs that were impacted by the hurricanes of 2005. Each program was required to document how they were affected and how the CJA funds would help address those particular needs. This contract was just approved.

- CJA contracted with the Judicial Branch of Louisiana during 2006 for the Mediation Pilot Project in the Orleans and Jefferson Parish Juvenile Courts to demonstrate the efficacy of this form of alternative dispute resolution in reducing the average length of

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stay of children in foster care. However, none of these funds were expended due to the fact that they were unable to hire a mediator. These funds were carried over to 2007, and a mediator has been hired. The following data will be collected and reported: number of cases referred, number of abused/neglected children served, length of mediation, outcome of mediation, date child entered care, date of all case events referred for mediation and date permanency is achieved. In addition, evaluations will be collected from all participants, and this information will be assimilated to determine if there has been a significant change in knowledge, attitudes and/or behaviors concerning the mediation process and overall compliance with the case plan.

- CJA continued providing funding to coordinate the Louisiana Child Death Review Panels in North Louisiana. During the 2006 calendar year, the Northwest Child Death Review Panel completed the review of twenty deaths of children in their region. Due to the program coordinator experiencing significant delays in retrieving key documents necessary to complete many of the cases, the panel focused the balance of their time on increasing public awareness regarding safe sleeping conditions for children. The panel developed and implemented a program to address a broad spectrum approach to bringing a “Safe Sleep” message to the community. This included (1) the distribution of onesies with the “ABCs of Safe Sleep” to all newborns in Caddo, Bossier and Webster Parishes through a cooperative effort with local healthcare systems, (2) television and radio public service announcements, (3) outdoor advertisements (billboards), and (4) printed materials.
- The CJA Program Coordinator monitored eleven (11) CJA funded contracts and conducted on-site reviews to ensure compliance with grant guidelines, provide technical assistance and promote quality services. All programs were found to be in compliance with grant and contractual requirements.

Activities Planned for SFY 2007-2008:

In addition to continuation of the above programs, the following activities are planned for 2007-2008:

- Development of Effective Multi-Disciplinary Learning Models – The Training Committee and the full Task Force have discussed means of furthering effective multi-disciplinary learning that advances coordination, collaboration, and optimal intervention in child abuse and neglect. We have had a conversation with the National Resource Center on Organizational Improvement exploring potential models and sources of information. We plan to consult with the evidence based implementation group regarding recommendations. The development of the learning models and overall CJA training goals will be coordinated with the Strategic Plan for Training being developed by the Louisiana Court Improvement Program. The CJA Chair and Coordinator participate on the Court Improvement Advisory Committee, and the Court Improvement Coordinator is a member of the CJA Task Force.

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- Expansion of Program Resources for Child Victims with Disabilities and Training with Respect to Effective Interviewing of Child Victims with Disabilities – The Child Victims with Disabilities Committee has been working on expanding resources and training with respect to effective interviewing of child victims with disabilities. A training program has been located through Safe Place Disability Services in Austin, Texas, and plans are underway to schedule a training at the Foster Parents Conference and possibly the Homeless Conference and the Hands and Hearts Conference.

- Increased Training and Education of Medical Professionals Relative to Child Abuse Exams – CAC of Louisiana has identified medical professionals in various locations of the state willing to commit to being trained and available to conduct medical exams. CJA will fund these professionals participation in medical exam training being provided at the national level.

- CJA funds will also be utilized for the Child Death Review Coordinator to conduct research on the organization and operation of the State Child Death Review Panels. This research shall include a review of other states' Child Death Review Models for potential future practice of the Louisiana Child Death Review process.

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10.0 Technical Assistance

The Federal Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families (ACF), makes available to states an array of national child welfare resource centers whose purpose is to provide states with training and technical assistance (T/TA) and to implement PIP related projects.

Post hurricanes Katrina and Rita the agency worked with the Federal Children's Bureau, ACF and NRCs to develop a technical assistance plan. The charts on the following pages provide information on T.A. used in the 2006 – 2007 SFY and planned in SFY 2007 - 2008.

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LOUISIANA DSS/OCS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PLAN

LAST EDIT: 4/18/07 version,
revisions: 4/23/07; 4/26/07, **UPDATE** 6/1/07

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PLAN
Recovery (Short Term)

OUTCOME	ACTIVITY (TA)	NRC LEAD	LA LEAD	STATUS
Office of Community Services				
1. Safety*	Analyze current CPS Re: Increase in children entering care	NRC for Child Protective Services NRC for Data and Technology	Cindy Phillips	Report Completed and Submitted to Administration; Review in 6/07 in Lake Charles (at the request of the RA to look at increased foster care entries) ONGOING
2. Permanency	Family finding work to locate familial resources and permanent connections with a special focus on youth in residential care and youth aging out of care	NRC for Family Centered Practice and Permanency Planning NRC Legal and Judicial Issues	Celeste Skinner	-Training on family finding in: Greater New Orleans in 3/07, Covington, planned 4/30-5/2, Baton Rouge/Thibodaux/Lake Charles planned 5/23-25, Lafayette/Monroe planned 6/18-20, Shreveport/Alexandria NYD -Assisting staff integrate training into case planning and core training.
3. Permanency	Assist in the development of a plan for re-certification of families	Adopt Us Kids	Joe Bruno	Completed

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OUTCOME	ACTIVITY (TA)	NRC LEAD	LA LEAD	STATUS
4. Permanency*	Develop training on disaster trauma and its effect on staff Assess the needs of displaced foster children and families	NRC for Family Centered Practice and Permanency Planning	Kaaren Hebert	-ONGOING -Providing one day-long training in 4/07 and 5/07 <i>In Lake Charles, Baton Rouge, New Orleans/Jefferson; planned again in 5/07 and 6/07 for Lake Charles</i>
5. Permanency	Revise licensing policy (consultation)	NRC for Family Centered Practice and Permanency Planning	Marty Gibson	-Licensing workgroup to review OYD recommendations –NO ONSITE TA UTILIZED AS OF 6/1/07
6. Permanency	Research sound placement practices around interjurisdictional placements during a disaster Develop ICPC protocols Develop desk-top matrix for decision-making	Adopt Us Kids	Rhenda Hodnett	Completed
7. Permanency Well-Being*	Maintain/expand service continuum for youth Create a strategy for supplemental services	NRC for Youth Development, (Kathy Sutter)	Celeste Skinner	-Report completed -Integrating Ansell-Casey into training and practice -Coordinating with OYD, CASA and residential providers -Developing a strategy to revise service array -Piloted training on Ansell-Casey in 3/07 in Baton Rouge -Piloting in Baton Rouge this summer, planned for 6/097 and 7/07 -Review of RFP content for possible RFP for

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OUTCOME	ACTIVITY (TA)	NRC LEAD	LA LEAD	STATUS
				independent living providers in 5/07-ONGOING
8. Permanency*	Provide curricula and training on cultural competency	NRC for Adoption NRC for Youth Development	Patsy Johnson, Connie Wagner & John McInturf	-Completed caseworker training –Not yet completed; meeting planned with OCS RA’s in 6/07 in Baton Rouge; caseworker training will ensue after 6/07 -Developing supervisory curricula -OCS senior managers to review organizational assessment report -- will be the RA meeting in 6-07-ONGOING
9. Quality Assurance	Clarify what is to be measured Redefine roles and responsibilities of QA staff (efficiency) Expand use of QA information with staff	NRC for Organizational Improvement	Marty Gibson	-ONGOING -Case reviewer training in September
Court Improvement Project				
Safety Permanency Well-Being	Develop general online video training 1) Curriculum on Legal and Judicial Processes for lawyers, judges, OCS administrators, supervisors, and stakeholders (foster parents, CASA) 2) Develop video training on 148	NRC on Legal and Judicial Issues NRC for Organizational Improvement NRC for Data and Information Technology	Mark Harris, Jan Byland, Karen Hallstrom	Completed Video training on 148 and APPLA in process
Safety Permanency Well-Being	Develop and distribute “Emergency Preparedness Guide for Dependency Courts” Produce video to accompany guide	NRC on Legal and Judicial Issues	Mark Harris	Completed
Safety and Permanency	Legal research Re: interjurisdictional issues, including ICPC & UCCJEA	NRC on Legal and Judicial Issues	Mark Harris & Rhenda Hodnett	Completed

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OUTCOME	ACTIVITY (TA)	NRC LEAD	LA LEAD	STATUS
Safety Permanency And Well-Being	Communication among affected regions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up list serves (forums) for affected regions 	NRC on Legal and Judicial Issues	Mark Harris	Completed
Safety Permanency And Well-Being	Together We Can Conference <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take the lead on coordinating RC support for statewide conference (financial support & coordinating speakers) 	NRC on Legal and Judicial Issues	Susan Delle	Completed
Permanency	La. Act 271 (2006) Implementation/Task Force on improving legal representation of children and indigent parents: recommended data collection, methodology for using resources, and study of reasonable caseloads for attorneys representing this population of cases. Strategic planning on standards and activities	NRC on Legal and Judicial Issues	Jan Byland, Karen Hallstrom, Kevin Robshaw, Mark Harris	Recommendations formulated Funding sought NRCLJI will assist with evaluation plans and process

REFORM (Long-Term)

OUTCOME	ACTIVITY (TA)	NRC LEAD	LA LEAD	STATUS
Safety	CPI Intake Re-design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structured Decision-making Assessment Model Specialized Intake 	NRC for Child Protective Services	Cindy Phillips John McInturf	-Structured Decision-making is on hold in CPS, but is moved to Family Services and Foster Care with John McInturf as Lead <i>Preliminary meeting 5/07 in Baton Rouge</i> -Alternative response rolled out to: <i>Baton Rouge, Covington, and Jefferson District (Jefferson, St. Bernard, Plaquemines Parishes) of Grater New</i>

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OUTCOME	ACTIVITY (TA)	NRC LEAD	LA LEAD	STATUS
				<i>Orleans Region in 9/07; -Specialized Intake: Budget proposal to be developed / submitted for inclusion in budget, increase proposal for SFY 08-09.- ONGOING</i>
Safety Permanency and Well-Being Service Array *	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluate current family assessments re: needs - Analyze assessment data (agency & parish) - Analyze service array - Review System of Care Models - Design continuum of services 	NRC for Organization Improvement w/ NRC for Family Centered Practice and Permanency Planning and NRC for Data and Technology NRC for Children's Mental Health Friends NRC	Rhenda Hodnett	Training on new assessment process <i>-Expect software by 7/1/07 with training to be done in phases -ONGOING</i>
Safety Permanency and Well-Being	Assist in development of service continuum	NRC for Organizational Improvement NRC for Family Centered Practice and NRC for Protective Service	Rhenda Hodnett	On Hold (but considering one pilot in a Region)

***T.A. OUTLINED IN FOLLOWING CHART**

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Technical Assistance Utilized in SFY 2006 – 2007 and Planned in SFY 2007 - 2008

National Resource Center	Days Requested	Date/Days T.A. Used	Contacts/ Leads	Activity
NRC for Adoption	3	3 days, March 2007, cultural diversity training consult	Patsy Johnson & John Levesque	To improve the agency's cultural sensitivity
NRC for Youth Services	1	July 11, 2006 mtg. w/ ILP providers	Celeste Skinner, Kathy Sutter & Thomas Chapmond	To review and restructure of Independent Living Program
NRC for Youth Services	2	August 21 & 22, 2006 – focus groups held w/ youth, staff and residential providers in Alexandria, Shreveport & Monroe Regions	Celeste Skinner, Kathy Sutter & Thomas Chapmond	To review and restructure of Independent Living Program
NRC for Youth Services	2	August 23 & 24, 2006 focus groups held w/ youth, staff and foster parents in Lafayette, Lake Charles and Thibodaux Regions	Celeste Skinner, Kathy Sutter & Thomas Chapmond	To review and restructure of Independent Living Program
NRC for Youth Services	2	August 28 & 29, 2006 focus groups held w/ youth, staff and foster parents in Baton Rouge, Covington and Greater New Orleans Regions	Celeste Skinner, Kathy Sutter & Thomas Chapmond	To review and restructure of Independent Living Program
NRC for Youth Services	1	August 30, 2006 focus groups with ILP providers & review of information gathered in focus groups	Celeste Skinner & Thomas Chapmond	To review and restructure of Independent Living Program
NRC for Youth Services	2	November 14 & 15, 2006 Prioritization of recommendations; development of Katrina/Rita class; presentation to Regional Administrators.	Celeste Skinner, Kathy Sutter & Thomas Chapmond	To review and restructure of Independent Living Program
NRC for Youth Services	6	3 days used as of March 19, 20 & 21, 2007 Ansell-Casey trainer the trainer.	Celeste Skinner, Kathy	To review and restructure of Independent

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National Resource Center	Days Requested	Date/Days T.A. Used	Contacts/ Leads	Activity
			Sutter & Thomas Chapmond	Living Program
NRC for Youth Services	2	May 29 & 30, 2007, Ansell-Casey Assessment Instrument; meeting with Judge Gray (CIP benchmark hearings)	Celeste Skinner, Kathy Sutter & Thomas Chapmond	To review and restructure of Independent Living Program
NRC for Youth Services	2	June 2007 assistance planned with RFP process; work on youth leadership group	Celeste Skinner, Kathy Sutter & Thomas Chapmond	To review and restructure of Independent Living Program
NRC for Youth Services	3	3 days, March 2007, cultural diversity training consult	Patsy Johnson & John Levesque	To improve the agency's cultural sensitivity
NRC for Family Centered Practice & Permanency Planning	4	TA planned for July 17,18,19, & 20, 2007	Kaaren Hebert & Stephanie Boyd Serafin	To train the trainer on Trauma Training
NRC for Family Centered Practice & Permanency Planning	2	2 days in August 2006	Rhenda Hodnett & Lorrie Lutz	To assist with development and implementation of the Family Assessment Instrument
NRC for Family Centered Practice & Permanency Planning	3	3 days-Jan. 24, 25, & 26, 2007. Western Wash. State Catholic Community Services training on family finding and engagement – over 100 attendees	Celeste Skinner & Gary Mallon	To assist with family finding and engagement
NRC for Family Centered	1	1 day-March 13, 2007 meeting regarding older youth and FGDM	Celeste Skinner & Gary	Reunification Efforts

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National Resource Center	Days Requested	Date/Days T.A. Used	Contacts/ Leads	Activity
Practice & Permanency Planning			Mallon	
NRC for Family Centered Practice & Permanency Planning	3	3 days-March 26, 27, & 28, 2007. Western Wash. State Catholic Community Services training on family finding and engagement – 100 attendees	Celeste Skinner & Gary Mallon	To assist with family finding and engagement
NRC for Family Centered Practice & Permanency Planning	3	3 days-April 30, May 1 & 2, 2007 Western Wash. State Catholic Community Services training on family finding and engagement – 100 staff	Celeste Skinner & Gary Mallon	To assist with family finding and engagement
NRC for Family Centered Practice & Permanency Planning	3	3 days- May 23, 24 & 25, 2007 Western Wash. State Catholic Community Services training on family finding and engagement – 120 staff	Celeste Skinner & Gary Mallon	To assist with family finding and engagement
NRC for Family Centered Practice & Permanency Planning	1	1 day-June 7, 2007 meeting regarding older youth and FGDM & CIP	Celeste Skinner & Gary Mallon	Reunification Efforts
NRC for Family Centered Practice & Permanency Planning	3	3 days- June 19,20 & 21 2007 Western Wash. State Catholic Community Services training on family finding and engagement –	Celeste Skinner & Gary Mallon	To assist with family finding and engagement
NRC for Child Protective Services	3	3 days scheduled for July 2007	Cindy Phillips & Anna Stone	To review of increase in foster care entries
NRC for Child Protective Services	8	5 days in 2006 3 days in 2007	Cindy Phillips & Anna Stone	To review of increase in foster care entries

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National Resource Center	Days Requested	Date/Days T.A. Used	Contacts/ Leads	Activity
NRC for Data and Technology	3	1 day in 2006 2 days in 2007	Cindy Phillips & Joe Murray	To analyze data regarding increase in foster care entries
NRC for Data and Technology	2	2 days	Joseph Keegan, Julie Chang & Jeff Johnson	To help map and proof technical design documents for all 15 foster care related CFSR outcomes; assisted in installing and running the SPSS federal syntax on two computers and run the outcomes on prior yr AFCARS submissions
NRC for Data and Technology	General Request Submitted /number of days unknown at this time		Sherry White, Debbie Milner	To assist with state's SACWIS system, ACCESS
NRC for Data and Technology	General Request Submitted /number of days unknown at this time		Rhenda Hodnett	To review data sets on new LA LIFTS initiatives

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National Resource Center	Days Requested	Date/Days T.A. Used	Contacts/ Leads	Activity
NRC for Org. Improvement	3	March 28, 29 & 30, 2007, review of PCR process and QA process, attendance at statewide CQI meeting	Marty Gibson, Jan Byland, Bill Vincent & Peter Watson	To work on QA, CQI and PCR processes
NRC for Org. Improvement	General Request Submitted /number of days unknown at this time		John McInturf	To assist state with documentation issues

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11.0 Research and Evaluation

OCS has identified several needs that are in the process of being addressed in the area of research and evaluation. These are summarized as follows:

Coordination with Other Agencies-Data Matching/Exchange:

1. Data was obtained from the Office of Youth Development in order to identify youth served in juvenile corrections and in foster care. The initial data match allowed the two agencies to identify a subgroup of youth that have been served by both agencies and to determine the frequency with which each agency is the first point of entry into a state system. The absence of a common identification number in both data systems limits the match process and will continue to be a barrier to comprehensive cross-systems analysis. However, future data matches are anticipated. Data derived from this process can be used by executives and managers in both agencies to better understand and plan services for clients that overlap systems.
2. A dataset on foster care youth was provided to the Department of Education to obtain education information, including standardized test scores. The data will be used by the foster care program to improve policies and services for youth in foster care.

Quality Assurance Process:

1. A comprehensive review of the ongoing monthly quality assurance case review process was undertaken. Areas that no longer need regular review were identified for removal from the process and new items are being added. Revisions are in progress for the foster care and adoption program with implementation slated for October 2007. Family Service and Child Protection Investigation programs QA processes will be revised when implementation is finalized for new agency initiatives.
2. The agency is re-instituting Peer Case Reviews, which will begin in October 2007. To support the PCR process, data from various sources will be collected and synthesized to provide preliminary analysis for each region's preparation for PCR. The data reports are intended to support regional managers in interpreting practice and outcome processes which will then contribute to action plans focused on program improvement. This is a new approach in the use of data for the PCR process.

New Initiatives and Disaster Recovery

1. The agency modified its case tracking system to include a data indicator or 'disaster flag' for clients and providers who were in areas most damaged by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The disaster code is currently used to help identify cases for special services. It is anticipated that the code will also be used in future analysis to evaluate outcomes for clients and providers.
2. Following the hurricanes, the agency undertook several major initiatives to improve services and services delivery. Data reports are prepared ad hoc to support these

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initiatives by aiding in targeting specific groups and to help track outcomes. Ad hoc data reports are being used to support the re-tooling of home development, residential placement services, services to teens and young adults, and prevention initiatives.

Updates to Information Systems

1. A geo-mapping tool is being developed to provide state, regional, and local staff with mapped data to aid their work. Planned mapping layers include placement resources, schools, daycare providers, psychosocial service providers, foster children, and biological parents. It is anticipated that staff will use the geo-mapping tool to locate placements in proximity to home of origin and/or school, identify day care centers in proximity to home or work of biological parents and foster parents, and better understand the geographic distribution of their cases. The tool can also be used to track the distribution of cases by court of jurisdiction and by office.
2. Optimization of agency data and expansion of WebFocus reporting tools is underway. This reporting environment provides comprehensive tools for data manipulation and reporting. A 'dashboard' is planned that will provide users with a 'friendlier' method of accessing agency reports, such as CFSR outcome reports. The improvement of the WebFocus environment will also support integration of external data sources, which will support evaluation of new initiatives.

Research and Evaluation

1. A preliminary analysis is currently underway to assess the impact of Hurricane Katrina on youth who entered foster care in New Orleans and were in foster care at the time of Hurricane Katrina. The hurricane temporarily shut down all local systems that serve youth in foster care. The primary focus of this project is length of stay in foster care, number of placements, and type of placements. A report is expected by mid-July.
2. An assessment of Family Services cases was completed and results were used to help finalize the Family Assessment form prior to piloting the form. The Family Assessment is intended to replace current case plan forms and is designed to capture detailed information about services needed by families served in the Family Services and Foster Care programs.
3. A review of Young Adult Program participants was completed. The results indicated that many youth who were admitted to the program did not meet the agency criteria for the program. The information is being used in conjunction with NRC consultants to revamp services to teens, aging out youth and young adults served by the agency.

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12.0 Information Management System

In the fall of 2000, the DSS/OCS undertook the endeavor to design a federally prescribed Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS). The new system (known as LAKIDS) was approached as a stand-alone system with numerous interfaces to other DSS systems. While engaged in the LAKIDS project, DSS consolidated its information technology (IT) operations under its Office of Management and Finance (OM&F). During the summer of 2001, IT units of OCS and the DSS Office of Family Support (OFS) were brought into the DSS OM&F Information Systems Group. This reorganization revealed the need for DSS Information Services to move toward systems work with a broader perspective and led to a commitment to an enterprise approach.

The detailed design for LAKIDS as a stand-alone system was completed by American Management Systems (AMS) via a competitive Request For Proposal (RFP) procurement process. Although accepted in January 2002, DSS decided to revisit the design in light of instituting an enterprise approach to system development. To validate the concept of an enterprise approach, DSS analyzed and categorized the common components of the LAKIDS design that could be built and shared in an enterprise framework. DSS concluded that separating common and administrative components from program specific components was not only feasible, but also cost effective if approached in an enterprise manner; thus, the ACESS Project was formed and subsumed the staff and responsibilities of the LAKIDS Project.

DSS is committed to responsibly manage the federal and state financial funding it has been granted to deliver a quality information system that meets the mutual missions of ACF and DSS to better serve Louisiana's children and families in need. Towards this end DSS, after completing the LAKIDS initial design phase, transitioned systems development to be geared in the direction of an enterprise approach using a Commercial-Off-The-Shelf (COTS) development framework. DSS issued an RFP August 4, 2003; announced IBM as the winning vendor on November 5, 2003; yet due to lengthy contract negotiations, the contract start occurred May 1, 2004. Following several amendments the ACESS work plan was set to consist of two increments. Increment One functional components include: Screening, 211 Resource Directory and Management; Intake (Common and Child Protection) Child Protection Investigations, Case Management Checklists and Activity Logs; Tasks, Alerts and Work Queues; Search, Organization and Security; Child Protection Investigations (CPI) related Communications and Reports. Increment Two functional components include program specific functionality associated with TANF, Child Care, Foster Care, Adoption, Family Services, and other miscellaneous Child Welfare programs as well as functionality related to Provider Management, Financial Management, Case Management and various administrative components such as Expungement and Purging.

Progress occurred in designing and developing child welfare components along with child care and TANF functionality using the Curam Framework product and the State was ready to enter User Acceptance Testing on Increment One functionality and validation of Increment Two requirements design deliverables when Hurricane Katrina struck August 29, 2005. With Project staff diverted to relief and recovery work, an alternative plan to deal with this adversity became necessary. Work on Increment Two functionality ceased and eventually was removed from the IBM contract. An extended Increment One User Acceptance Testing process and development

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of Increment One training materials occurred through May 2006. Training end users statewide and piloting the system in Tangipahoa Parish occurred during the summer of 2006. Following statewide rollout on September, 5, 2006, DSS focused work efforts on implementation of change orders and migration to Curam Version 4.5.

Code migration will be completed by June 2007 and the Department will then focus resources on enhancements to Increment One functionality while reviewing and updating the Increment Two requirements documents for use in preparation of an RFP is to procure the consulting services of a skilled contractor, proficient in the Curam software package, and who have experience in design, development and deployment of structured web based social service oriented frameworks in a standard, common and shared manner across an enterprise. This RFP will call for a contractor to configure, modify, extend, develop, test, train, pilot, install and support the Increment Two functionality within a single enterprise system accommodating child welfare, child care and TANF requirements, using the Curam framework.

DSS will again contract for consulting services to reassess and validate or revise existing detail designs related to all system functions across the aforementioned DSS programs then code, test and implement common, shared and program specific components that are practical to deploy in an incremental manner. For DSS Providers, the earliest and most visible components will be an interactive Web access to their own demographic data and the ability to invoice for services rendered, check payment status and receive payments electronically. Contractors are expected to build a sufficient set of system functionalities that allow for the capturing of provider specific information within the system; allowing the provider to access and update their account in the system through a web transaction; to invoice the department for services rendered; and to provide progress or service reports for the clients served. Providers are any third party who provides authorized services to a client or recipient of DSS services. Examples of providers include child care providers, foster homes, residential facilities, training providers, and other entities with whom DSS engages to provide services for fee or by contract. The Department plans to provide payment to providers through direct deposit whenever possible.

For the application delivered, the contractor will be responsible for the following:

- Review and validate system architecture, capacity analysis and current designs;
- Conduct efforts to define and identify gaps in the Curam out of the box functionality with the requested requirements to more accurately and thoroughly estimate the scope of work for development and implementation of program specific and unique components;
- Design/develop/code/construct/test/deploy components and systems;
- Implement, to the degree possible, all framework components with out-of-the-box functionality;
- Specify all necessary infrastructure software (operating systems, data base management systems; development tools, etc) not currently used by DSS, yet necessary to implement and operate the proposed solution;
- Provide and maintain multiple development, test, training, sandbox, prototyping, staging and production environments;
- Prepare all necessary user, operations, system and technical documentation;
- Provide and maintain help desk procedures;

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- Assist state staff in the development of acceptance test plans;
- Prepare all necessary user and technical training materials;
- Conduct user and technical training;
- Develop where necessary automated data conversion/translation routines;
- Develop data purification strategy, processes and procedures;
- Develop processes and procedures to capture and populate non-automated data elements;
- Provide for the initial extraction, transformation and loading of any conversion data;
- Conduct separate pilot tests per release or rollout of scheduled functionality;
- Implement system functionality incrementally, statewide;
- Provide statewide implementation support from implementation date through contract end date;
- Maintain application for a minimum one year warranty period or through contract termination date whichever is more;
- Provide for the transfer and warranty associated with any COTS supplied products;
- Staff a level two help desk beginning with the pilot testing task and continuing through the end of the mandatory post-implementation support task; and
- Provide appropriate documentation to secure federal acceptance of system as SACWIS compliant.

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13. Louisiana's Long-Term Child Welfare Service Goals

Louisiana's long-term goals are directed at achieving the six child welfare outcomes. These outcomes look at the safety, permanency and well-being of children. (Refer to Child Welfare Services beginning on page 81 for updates on objectives and strategies to achieve goals of safety, permanency and well-being.

- Safety 1: Children are first and foremost protected from abuse and neglect.

- Safety 2: Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible.

- Permanency 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.

- Permanency 2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children (passed by Louisiana).

- Well-Being 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.

- Well-Being 2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.

- Well-being 3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.

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Objectives, Strategies and Action Plans

Objective 1: Work with the National Resource Center for Child Protective Services (NRCCPS) to evaluate current functioning of the CPI program, to identify possible elements for redesign and to evaluate the feasibility of changes to front-end services. (Completion Date: June 30, 2009)

Strategy 1:1 Review and, as necessary, revise the proposal from NRCCPS regarding the differential response model to assess feasibility for implementation. (Lead: CPI Section Administrator; Completion date: August 31, 2006) Refer to pages 83 - 85 for an update on this strategy and the corresponding action steps.

Action Plan

Step 1 Refine policies and procedures on the implementation of the differential response model in Louisiana within budgetary constraints and the framework of Louisiana's SACWIS project ACCESS.

Lead: CPI Section Administrator
Completion date: June 30, 2007

Step 2 Develop training to support a differential response model.

Lead: CPI Section Administrator & Training Section Administrator
Completion Date: December 31, 2007

Step 3 Implement differential response model in one additional region in Louisiana.

Lead: CPI Section Administrator
Completion date: February 28, 2008

Step 4 Establish and implement quality assurance methods to measure the differential response process.

Lead: CPI Section Administrator and QA Section Administrator
Completion date: February 28, 2008

Strategy 1:2 Review and, as necessary, revise the proposal from NRCCPS regarding the development of a centralized intake system. (Lead: CPI Section Administrator; Completion date: August 31, 2008) Refer to pages 85 - 86 for an update on this strategy and the corresponding action steps.

Action Plan

Step 1 Develop a work group to create guidelines for a pilot on centralized intake in one region while working within the framework of ACCESS.

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Lead: CPI Section Administrator
Completion Date: August 31, 2006

Step 2 Determine financial feasibility of implementation of centralized intake.

Lead: CPI Section Administrator
Completion Date: September 30, 2006

Step 3 Establish additional positions for intake staff in pilot region.

Lead: Director of Field Services
Completion date: September 30, 2007

Step 5 Develop policies and procedures for the implementation of a centralized intake system.

Lead: CPI Section Administrator & Policy Section Administrator
Completion date: October 31, 2007

Step 6 Develop training to support a centralized intake model.

Lead: CPI Section Administrator & Training Section Administrator
Completion Date: December 31, 2007

Step 7 Establish and implement quality assurance methods to measure the centralized intake process.

Lead: CPI Section Administrator and QA Section Administrator
Completion date: December 31, 2007

Strategy 1:3 Identify issues facing children and families involved in Louisiana's child welfare system that threaten their safety, permanency and well-being. (Completion Date: June 30, 2006) Refer to pages 92 - 96 for an update on this strategy and the corresponding action steps.

Action Plan

Step 1 Develop an instrument and survey statewide a representative sample of Prevention/Family Service (P/FS) staff on issues relating to safety and well-being of the children and families currently involved in the P/FS program

Lead: Assistant Director, Programs
Completion date: March 31, 2006

Step 2 Work with the NRCs for Organizational Improvement and Family Centered Practice and Permanency Planning to evaluate and modify current family assessments with regard to client's needs.

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Lead – Assistant Director, Programs
Completion date: June 30, 2006

Step 3 Through training, build workers' skill level in conducting comprehensive assessments and in directly connecting appropriate intervention to the client's case plan.

Lead – Assistant Director, Programs
Completion Date: December 30, 2006

Strategy 1:4 Analyze statewide representative data collected in Prevention/Family Services' survey as well as data collected in revised family assessment to better understand the issues facing the families being served in the child welfare system. Refer to pages 95 - 96 for an update on this strategy and the corresponding action steps.

Action Plan

Step 1 Work with NRC's Organizational Improvement and Family Centered Practice and Permanency Planning and Data and Technology to compile and analyze data.

Lead – Assistant Director, Programs
Completion Date: On-going beginning March 31, 2006

Strategy 1:5 Develop a service array to meet the needs that threaten the safety and well-being of children and their families who are involved in the child welfare system. Refer to pages 87 - 96 for an update on this strategy and the corresponding action steps.

Action Plan

Step 1 Evaluate current array of services available to meet the needs of families being served in the child welfare system

Lead – Assistant Director, Programs
Completion Date: Ongoing beginning June 30, 2006

Step 2 Compare identified needs to current service array to expose gaps or duplication in needed services and begin to realign services as appropriate

Lead –Assistant Director, Programs
Completion Date: Ongoing, beginning

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Objective 2: Develop a model of practice and intervention directed at assuring the least restrictive placement for children in residential and emergency care facilities. (Completion Date: June 30, 2009)

Strategy 2:1 Decrease the number of children in residential and emergency care facilities. (Completion Date: June 30, 2009) Refer to pages 103 - 105 for an update on this strategy and the corresponding action steps.

Action Plan

Step 1: *Continue to* collaborate with Annie E. Casey Foundation, Casey Strategic Consulting Group to develop techniques and procedures for reduction of numbers of foster children in congregate care settings.

Lead – Resource Development & QA Division Director
Completion Date: ~~July 31, 2006~~ July 31, 2008

Step 2: Review placements of children in residential settings and emergency care facilities in accordance with a triage schedule that facilitates alternative options for least restrictive and most appropriate placement.

Lead – Residential Program Section Administrator
Completion Date: ~~March 31, 2008~~ July 31, 2008

Strategy 2:2 Increase alternative options available for foster children in most appropriate and least restrictive placements. (Completion Date: June 30, 2009) Refer to page 106 for an update on this strategy and the corresponding action steps.

Action Plan

Step 1: Collaborate with Annie E. Casey Foundation, Casey Strategic Consulting Group and National Resource Centers to pilot increased community placement options through expanded private foster care services and/or support transitions to relative placements and/or foster care services.

Lead – Residential & Private Foster Care Section Administrator & Foster Care/Home Development Section Administrator
Completion Date: March 31, 2009

Objective 3: Continue to partner with the courts and judiciary to improve permanency outcomes for children and families. (Completion Date: June 30, 2009)

Strategy 3:1 Develop general training curricula on legal and judicial processes for lawyers, judges and stakeholders (foster parents, CASA). Completion Date: June 30, 2009. Refer to page 47 for an update on the agency's partnership with the courts and judiciary.

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Action Plan

Step 1 Collaborate with the CARE/Court Improvement Advisory Committee and the Legislative Task Force on Legal Representation in Child Protection Proceedings, to identify core curriculum competencies and evaluate opportunities for CLE training for attorneys.

Lead – Resource Development & QA Division Director
Completion Date: January 31, 2007

Update on Activities for 2006 – 2007 SFY: Core curriculum competencies for attorneys have been developed and opportunities for CLE training for attorneys are being evaluated through development of the strategic plan for the 5 year CIP training grant.

Strategy 3.1.A *Implement training goals identified in the Court Improvement Program Strategic Plan for training.*

Action Plan

Step 1 *Implement year 2 of the strategic plan for training in SFY 2007 – 2008.*

Lead – CIP Project Director
Completion Date: September 30, 2011

Strategy 3:2 Implement legislative changes recommended by the Task Force on Legal Representation in Child Protection Cases for improving the representation of children and indigent parents. (Completion Date: January 30, 2009) Refer to page 47 for an update on the Court Improvement project.

Action Plan

Step 1 Work with the NRC on Legal and Judicial Issues to develop a child law center for the Greater New Orleans area. (Completion Date: June 30, 2009)

Lead – Court Improvement Project Coordinator
Completion Date: October 31, 2006

Step 2 Design identify potential funding sources, and start-up implementation of a child law center.

Lead – Court Improvement Project Coordinator
Completion Date: June 30, 2008

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Update on Activities in 2006 – 2007 SFY: Act 271 of 2006 was passed providing for the creation of a specialized child Advocacy Program (CAP) within the existing statewide Mental Health Advocacy Service (MHAS). House Bill (HB) 393, introduced in the 2007 Louisiana Legislative Session providing for the creation of an Indigent Parent Representation Program within the existing Louisiana Indigent Defense Assistance Board (or successor), has passed the House on a unanimous vote. Funding for one attorney is included in the SFY 2007 – 2008 budget for the Child Advocacy Program to represent children in the Orleans Parish Juvenile Court. The MHAS has also submitted a grant application to the Baptist Community Ministries Foundation for funding for an additional attorney to represent children in the Orleans Parish Juvenile Court. The grant application to the U. S. Administration of Children and Families, Children’s Bureau submitted in the summer of 2006 for a child law center for the Greater New Orleans area was not accepted.

Strategy 3.3 Implement recommendations of the Task Force on Legal Representation in Child Protection Cases for improving the legal representation system for children and indigent parents. Refer to page 47 for an update on the Court Improvement project.

Step 1 Continue incrementally implementing the new transformed system of representation in select judicial districts in state fiscal year 2007 – 2008.

*Lead – Child Welfare Legal Coordination Section Administrator
Completion date: June 30, 2012*

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14. Child Welfare Services

Child welfare service components of the Louisiana Child and Family Service System are focused on both short and long-term goals as they relate to an effective and accountable child welfare system. Services are provided statewide in 9 regional and 48 parish offices. Major service components include Child Protection Services, Prevention and Family Services, Foster Care Services and Adoption Services. In Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2004 and FFY 2005 the State expended \$1,300,614.00 for foster care maintenance, but did not utilize Title IV-B, subpart 1 funds for child care or Adoption assistance payments. Non-federal funds expended by the State for foster care maintenance payments for FFY 2005 is \$4,333,539.00.

Prior to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita OCS began to shift it's focus to prevention and early intervention first by securing legislative changes to the agency's mission. Then, in the summer of 2005 the State experienced two devastating hurricanes. Plans for restructuring the service array fell to the side while the agency focused on locating children, parents (foster, adoptive and biological) and staff.

Once the crisis had somewhat stabilized, the agency refocused efforts and was fortunate enough to receive supplemental Social Services Block Grant funds, unlimited federal technical assistance and an 18 month commitment from the Casey Strategic Consulting Group to help the agency recover and realize it's goals.

After an assessment of the service array, the agency developed and enhanced services throughout the child welfare continuum to address the needs of children and families in order to prevent entry to foster care, to facilitate early return home and to maintain a long-term, stable foster or adoptive placement.

To achieve these ends, the agency has focused on major initiatives to improve the service array to children and families by initiating Louisiana LIFTS. Louisiana Leading Innovations for Family Transformation and Safety (LIFTS) is a series of initiatives to strengthen families and to ensure children safe, permanent solutions. Louisiana LIFTS reflects OCS' unyielding goal of reaching higher to ensure a family-focused and community-based system of care for Louisiana's most vulnerable children. Louisiana LIFTS works through agency staff with technical assistance from national partners.

For SFY 2007 – 2008, OCS has defined six key elements for implementation to enhance/improve outcomes for children and families:

- **Improving Our Intake Decisions** – The new OCS approach will utilize more uniform assessment and decision-making criteria to ensure more consistent response to the 25,000+ reports of child abuse/neglect which OCS receives each year.
- **Meeting Family Needs** – With new, better and more uniform assessment and case planning tools, along with valued community partners, OCS is focusing on keeping families together in a safe and secure environment. With “family-centered” evaluations,

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we will continue to build relationships with our partners, focusing on the goal of keeping more households intact and fewer children in need of our-of-home care.

- **Community-Based Services** – To be more family-focused and community-based, services must exist in the children’s own communities. OCS is enhancing its commitment to working with prevention-oriented community partners to offer services to at-risk families. OCS will develop a comprehensive continuum of services of intensive home-based programs to build on the family’s strengths and needs.
- **Foster/Adoptive Parenting** – Recruitment and staff partnerships are being augmented to better support foster/adoptive families and to benefit children so that several placement options are provided within their communities. Some enhancements include standardized training and internal policy and procedures, more foster/adoptive parental involvement, and better, stronger links between foster parents and birth families.
- **Residential Treatment** – OCS is evaluating the current residential placement process and decision-making to ensure that these facilities are used as short-term intervention only for children whose emotional, physical or mental health needs cannot be met in a family setting.
- **Transitioning Youth** – Hundreds of Louisiana children “age-out” of foster care each year. Better opportunities are needed for young adults to find permanent family connections and to take advantage of vocational, housing, and educational support to enable them to become successful adults. OCS is developing initiatives to ensure that all aging out youth have a smooth transition into the “real world.”

The following pages provide additional details on child welfare services (i.e. child protection services, prevention and family services, foster care and adoption) and the agency’s progress in meeting the goals of safety, permanency and well-being.

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CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES

Program Description: – include skilled, prompt and sensitive intake services to reports of abuse and neglect in families, foster homes, day care centers and restrictive childcare facilities. After an assessment, reports may be directed toward brief service provision when time limited problem solving may be helpful and appropriate. Reports may also be directed toward investigation and crisis intervention. Investigations may identify children who have been or are at serious risk of being harmed by a parent or caretaker. Social services that may be provided during an investigation include safety and risk assessment, coordination of emergency medical care and related services and emergency removal and placement.

Population served: Children and families in which there have been reports of abuse and/or neglect.

Statistics: The total number of investigations for SFY 2006-2007 through April is 18,764. The cumulative number of new Child Protection Investigations through April 2007 is 7.2% lower than April SFY 2006 and 16.4% lower than that of April SFY 2005. This suggests that the number of new Child Protection Investigations has been declining over the last three years. However, the end of month case count for April 2007 is 7.3 % higher than April 2006. (These figures may not be accurate due to ACCESS implementation.)

Long Term Goals, Strategy 1.1: Review and as necessary, revise the proposal from NRCCPS regarding the differential response model to assess feasibility for implementation.

Action Plan

Step 1: Refine policies and procedures on the implementation of the differential response model in Louisiana within budgetary constraints and framework of Louisiana's SACWIS project ACCESS.

Step 2 Develop training to support a differential response model.

Step 3 Implement differential response model in one additional region in Louisiana.

Step 4 Establish and implement quality assurance methods to measure the differential response process.

Alternative Response

Program Description: Alternate Response is a family focused approach to child protection in which the child welfare professional conduct assessments of families with low risk of child abuse and/or neglect. These assessments assist the family in connecting to resources that promote child safety and well being.

Population Served: Families with low risk abuse/neglect reports in which the assessment focuses on establishing a non-adversarial relationship with the family in order to identify issues, service needs, strengths and solutions to enhance family functioning.

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Update on Specific Accomplishments/Progress for SFY 2006 – 2007: In March 2006 the Child Protection workgroup began meeting to discuss ways to improve the front end child welfare services. Initially, three streams of work were identified. They included review and analysis of data on foster care entries, exploration of a centralized intake process and implementation of an alternative response to child abuse and neglect reports.

In December 2006, an analysis was begun to explore CPI data, practice and external factors as they relate to the current rise in foster care placements. The data ranged from collecting data on children that entered care via legislative Act 148 and Act 338 (Substance Exposed Infants), the aftermath of hurricane Katrina and Rita and study of the differences in removal decisions in each parish. The study was conducted relative to the increase in foster care the agency has experienced since 2005. The results of the study have been presented to Louisiana's child welfare and administrative staff and recommendations have been drafted to address issues raised by the review. Statistics also indicated that Louisiana has conducted a total of 387 investigations as result of Act 338 from July 2006 –April 2007.

In January 2007 the initial sub-committee meeting for planning for the alternative response approach was held. This approach allows child protective services to respond differently to accepted reports of child abuse and neglect, based on such factors as type and severity of the alleged maltreatment, number and sources of previous reports, and willingness of family to participate in the services. The agency initially developed a task force in 1996 to look into development of a dual track/alternative response to traditional child protection investigations and it became an OCS pilot in Orleans and Jefferson Regions. The agency then sought guidance in the redevelopment of the "alternative" response within OCS based on the lessons learned from the initial pilot program. The basic components were the referral of low risk cases that met the criteria of a report, contacting parents/caretakers for a family interview; focus on need and service delivery, permission for collateral contacts, an "assessment" to refer for services and not an investigation.

The lessons learned included a need to commit to maintaining staff allocated to the Alternative Response program, a clear distinction between the Alternate Response, Child Protection Investigations and Family Services Program, and the importance of community collaboration, and development of specific ongoing skills-based training.

It has been determined that Alternative Response will initially begin in three Regions (Baton Rouge, Covington and Greater New Orleans/Jefferson District) in October 2007. The process of identification/selection of the workers in each region has begun through discussions with the Regional Administrators in the identified areas. A focus group has been identified to develop a family focused assessment instrument for Alternative Response.

Draft policy for the Alternate Response program is being developed with the assistance of the Alternative Response workgroup. Additionally a brochure is also being developed to provide an overview of Alternate Response to mandated reporters and stakeholders. Other implementation planning includes training for staff and educational sessions to inform the community about Alternative Response.

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Methods to Measure/Outcomes Data: Alternate Response outcomes will be initially tracked through the OCS TIPS system. The codes will be as follows:

- 1) ASC – Services Completed
- 2) AFS – Referral to Family Service Program
- 3) APT – Preliminary Assessment Terminated
- 4) AIN – Referral for Child Protection Investigation

The preliminary plans are to measure recidivism, assess types of cases referred to Alternate Response and assess services needed and provided. The measurement of the baseline data will begin during the 2007-2008 SFY as implementation will not begin until August 2007.

Planned Activities for SFY 2007 – 2008: Alternate Response will be implemented in Covington, Baton Rouge and Jefferson District in October 2007. Additionally, Alternate Response will be implemented in three additional regions in January 2008 with statewide implementation set to begin in the summer of 2008. Baton Rouge will use a contract provider to do 20 Alternate Response cases per month to assist with the increased workload for staff. Brochures will be developed for community partners and community kickoffs by September 2007. The caseload standard for Alternate Response has been identified as 10 cases for the maximum benefit of the program for children and families. It will create a shift in cases that are handled by Child Protection Investigation staff as these cases may require a quicker response time. The agency will work to refine these processes.

The initial training will be provided by a contracted provider agency prior to the October 2007 implementation. The Regional Administrators and field services staff will make the initial selection of staff who will be the initial Alternate Response Specialists in the initial regions. The staff will be selected based on the job specifications and ability to meet job requirements identified for the initial implementation. The ongoing training will be incorporated into the Child Protection Services core curriculum.

Long Term Goals, Strategy 1:2: Review and, as necessary, revise the proposal from NRCCPS regarding the development of a centralized intake system. (Lead: CPI Section Administrator; Completion date: August 31, 2008) (This was identified as an area needing improvement in Louisiana's PIP, Item 1, Timeliness of initiating an investigation.)

Action Plan

Step 1 Develop a work group to create guidelines for a pilot on centralized intake in one region while working within the framework of ACCESS.

Step 2 Determine financial feasibility of implementation of centralized intake.

Step 3 Establish additional positions for intake staff in pilot region.

Step 4 Develop policies and procedures for the implementation of a centralized intake system.

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Step 5 Develop training to support a centralized intake model.

Step 6 Establish and implement quality assurance methods to measure the centralized intake process.

Regionalized Intake Program Description: An intake system that involves a centralized intake whereby calls from reporters are routed to a regional location in each of the nine regions throughout the State.

Population served: Statewide callers making reports of child abuse and/or neglect.

Update on Specific Accomplishments/Progress for SFY 2006 – 2007: Currently, the intake function is handled on a rotational basis in most parishes and there is not enough positions to support the function. In exploring the feasibility of statewide implementation of centralized intake, many concerns were raised by the administrative staff including budgetary issues. Data was collected to determine the cost of implementation. The decision was made to explore a regionalized intake function rather than a centralized function.

The cost of the centralized intake was an estimated increase of \$1,386,562 for the FY 2006-2007 with a 4% increase for salaries and operating expenses for each year thereafter. The amount was not financially feasible for the Department.

It was determined that 44 additional positions were needed for centralized intake. The total includes one (1) supervisor for every 5 professional workers, one (1) clerical for every professional worker. Staff allocation data is based on data from ACCESS for the months of September and October 2006.

In June 2007 the Agency implemented statewide procedures for night call in order to develop consistency and uniformity in practice procedures. Each region was responsible for having 24/7 night call procedures in place by June 4, 2007. Statewide OCS offices are expected to compensate designated staff for overtime when conducting night call, develop an after hours contact procedure which includes a toll free number for each region, update working agreements with local law enforcement, develop staff management procedures for night call to prevent staff burnout and post/disseminate on-call schedules in advance to allow arrangements for personal matters.

Activities Planned for SFY 2007 – 2008: Additional data is being collected and analyzed to determine the cost and viability of regionalized intake. Several options will be developed and the cost itemized for each option to include regionalized 24 hour 7 days a week on call for intake and responses to a low cost option of dedicated intake staff. Information will be used to request additional staff and resources to handle the intake function in child welfare for SFY 2007-2008. The request for additional funding will be submitted in the agency's SFY 2007 – 2008 budget.

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PREVENTION AND FAMILY SERVICES

Program Description: (child abuse/neglect prevention, intervention and treatment services) includes intensive, preventive family services arranged for or offered to families statewide who, without such services would be unable to provide a safe environment for their child at high risk of removal. Services are provided with the child remaining in the home. The goal is directed at protecting the child from further harm while maintaining the family unit.

Population Served: Family services are provided to families in which an allegation of child neglect and/or abuse has been validated, and the family is thought to need more long term services. In some limited situations, families can voluntarily elect to participate in these services when child abuse or neglect has not been validated.

Prevention and Family Services are provided on a statewide basis through 9 regional and 50 parish offices. From July 1, 2006 through April 30, 2007, OCS provided services to 3,488 (cumulative) families in the Family Services Program. The cumulative number of families served by the FS program declined in April SFY 2007 compared to the previous two years. There was a 1.4% decline for April SFY 2007 when compared to April SFY 2006 (cumulative cases – 3,538) and a 6.2% decline when compared to April SFY 2005 (cumulative cases – 3,719).

Long Term Goals, Strategy 1:5 Develop a service array to meet the needs that threaten the safety and well-being of children and their families who are involved in the child welfare system (p. 64, 2006 APSR)

Action Plan

Step 1: Evaluate current array of services available to meet the needs of families being served in the child welfare system (p. 64, 2006 APSR)

Step 2: Compare identified needs to current service array to expose gaps or duplication in needed services and begin to realign services as appropriate (p. 64, 2006 APSR).

Update on Specific Accomplishments/Progress for SFY 2006 – 2007: In August 2006 a service delivery committee was set up to evaluate the current service array and identify gaps in service delivery. Committee members and our partners with the National Resource Center for Organizational Improvement and the Casey Strategic Consulting Group conducted focus groups with staff throughout the state to identify gaps in the service array. Prior to the focus groups, a survey was developed and administered to evaluate the current service array. Staff planning to participate in the focus groups was asked to complete the survey with input from all staff in their region and present the information in the focus groups. Focus groups were held on August 25, 2006 (included staff from the Alexandria, Shreveport and Monroe Regions), September 6, 2006 (included staff from the Thibodaux, Orleans & Jefferson Districts, and the Covington Regions) and September 12, 2006 (included staff from the Lafayette, Lake Charles and Baton Rouge Regions).

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Focus groups helped to identify and prioritize three major areas of service delivery needed to serve children and families in the child welfare system. They included intensive home based services (IHBS), substance abuse assessment, referral and treatment services and transportation for clients.

Intensive Home Based Services

Program Description: Intensive home-based services included intensive, in-home crisis intervention, counseling, and life-skills education for families who have children at imminent risk of placement foster care. Homebuilders, the oldest and best-documented Intensive Family Preservation Service program in the United States, is the model the OCS has implemented. The goal is to prevent the unnecessary out-of-home placement of children through intensive, on-site intervention, and to teach families new problem-solving skills to prevent future crises. Essentially the agency is using three models of IHBS. They include in-house agency staffed IHBS units, contracts with providers who provide IHBS and a combination of service delivery that includes in-house IHBS units who serves cases at imminent risk of removal and providers who work with families when the goal is reunification and stabilization. (This program/service addresses an area identified as needing improvement in Louisiana's PIP, Item 17, Needs and Services of child, parents, foster parents.)

Population Served: To prevent the removal of children ages 0-18 at imminent risk of removal due to abuse/neglect; to facilitate early return home of a child in foster care; to prevent the disruption of a stable foster care, relative or adoptive placement and when a child is returning home within 7 days.

Update on Specific Accomplishments/Progress for SFY 2006 – 2007: After review of IHBS models used nationwide, the agency chose to use the Homebuilders Model and contracted with The Institute for Family Development to train and support staff and providers in statewide implementation. A total of 36 caseworkers, supervisors, therapists and contractors were trained on January 3-5, 2007 and a total of 22 participants were trained on February 13-14, 2007 bringing the total to 58. Efforts to develop in-house IHBS units, locate providers in areas of the state where services were not provided and redefine provider contracts were also underway. OCS first assessed providers' ability and willingness to serve the needs of clients at high risk for removal. Three areas of the state did not have IHBS contracts when the agency began this effort. They included the Lake Charles, Lafayette and Monroe Regions. Contract providers were solicited in all three regions and ultimately both the Lake Charles (start-up in March 2007) and Lafayette Regions (start-up on April 9, 2007) worked to create in-house IHBS units. Both Lafayette and Monroe Regions were able to find contractors to provide the service. There are a total of 34 full-time therapists and 13 part-time therapists trained on the Homebuilders Model to provide intensive home-based services statewide.

Methods to Measure/Outcome Data: A reporting structure has been set up for oversight of the efficacy of the implementation of this model. In 2006-2007 approximately 125 clients were served with a projection to serve 500 clients statewide in the 2007-2008 SFY (in-house and by contractor). Additionally, clients participating in IHBS services will be asked to complete a customer satisfaction survey. As of April 30, only one satisfaction survey was received by the Lake Charles in-house IHBS unit.

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A baseline will be developed by obtaining the number of children identified/referred for services, the number served and of the number served the number that came into foster care and the number maintained in the home. There will be an underlying assumption that all the cases would have come into foster care or would have remained in foster care.

Data from 2002, 2003 and 2004 identifying the number of reports and determining from that number, how many were investigated and of the number investigated how many were valid or invalid or of the number of investigations how many cases were opened in family services and how many opened in foster care.

The data/reports the agency plan's to use to measure and track the implementation of intensive home-based services include the following information: reason for referral; how long the case was open; disposition at time of closure; family well-being measured by the North Carolina Family Assessment Instrument (NCFAS) and repeat maltreatment at 6 months and 12 months post-intervention.

Substance Abuse Services

Population Served: Substance abusing parents and their children who are at risk of abuse and neglect or who have been abused or neglected.

Update on Specific Accomplishments/Progress for SFY 2006 – 2007 and Activities Planned for SFY 2007 – 2008: The OCS entered into two separate Memoranda Of Understanding (MOU) with the OAD. The first MOU signed on July 1, 2006, allowed for the placement of OAD counselors in each OCS regional office. The counselors complete substance abuse assessments and make referrals for clients served. The OAD counselors are shared with the Office of Family Support (OFS). Currently counselors are in 8 of 10 regions. These counselors are housed in the OCS Regional Office. Plans are to have a counselor in each region by June 2007. A second MOU was signed in March 2007 with OAD to create 28 additional beds for women and children in substance abuse treatment facilities. Additionally, the MOU provided for intensive outpatient substance abuse treatment for women statewide. OCS clients are receiving first priority on these services/beds.

This MOU relative to the programs that will be identified as meeting maintenance of effort requirements as per TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) regulations. The programs that have been identified for purposes of establishing maintenance of effort are relative to drug screening, assessment, referral and treatment for eligible needy families/FITAP recipients and provide Residential Prevention and Treatment Programs for Women and Children. The total maintenance of effort generated by implementation of these programs will be \$1,027,220.00 as long as funding is appropriated by the Legislature for these programs.

The program descriptions are as follows:

- A. Component #1 Inpatient Treatment and Referral

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This program is designed to provide six (6) short term inpatient treatment beds to pregnant women and women with dependent children that meet TANF eligibility. This program provides 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, intensive treatment. By providing these services, clients will be assisted in maintaining self-sufficiency, employment, and family stability. The agency has ongoing collaborations with the Department of Labor, Department of Corrections, Offices of Mental Health and Public Health, and Families in Need of Services.

B. Component #2 Women and Dependent Children's Residential Prevention and Treatment Program

This is a program to address the needs of women with dependent children through residential treatment to women eighteen (18) years of age and older with their dependent children ages birth to twelve (12) years.

Residential substance abuse treatment services are also offered to women eighteen (18) years of age and older whose children cannot enter treatment with her.

If funding permits, this program will also address the needs of women with dependent children ages birth to seventeen (17) years who do not reside at the treatment facility but do receive therapeutic services at the facility. Services are to include: direct contact – to provide individual counseling, group counseling and prevention services, family sessions, educational sessions, in conjunction with tutorial services and transportation, and additionally, to serve as liaison or advocate for the child. Services must be provided and documented by credentialed staff on the date which they are provided in order to receive reimbursement. All services must also reflect the plan of care.

Residential substance abuse treatment services are also offered to pregnant women eighteen (18) years of age and older.

Required and appropriate medical supportive services will be provided to all clients; however, these services will not be included in the TANF billing process to DSS/OCS. Services to be provided include: comprehensive assessment and individualized treatment planning for women and children; care coordination; individual, group, and family therapy; parenting classes; life skills training; exposure to AA/NA groups; child care; job readiness training; relapse prevention; family reunification; and advocacy. By providing these services, clients will be assisted in maintaining self-sufficiency, employment, and family stability.

OAD will maintain contractual agreements with providers throughout the State to provide residential treatment services. Through these contractual agreements, several collaborations exist:

- New Orleans Public School System
- Children's Bureau

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- Tulane/Xavier Welfare to Work
- BIZ LIINK—Job Placement
- Goodwill Industries—Job Placement
- Southeast Louisiana Area Health Education Center
- LSU Medical Center

In addition, OAD has ongoing collaborations with the Department of Labor, Department of Corrections, Offices of Public Health and Mental Health, and Families in Need of Services.

C. Component #3 – Intensive Outpatient Treatment for Pregnant Women and Women with Dependent Children.

This is a program to address the needs of women with dependent children through intensive outpatient treatment to women eighteen (18) years of age and older with dependent children,

This program will provide gender specific intensive outpatient treatment services in nine regions/districts of the State. Services for outpatient treatment include a psychosocial assessment, group therapy, didactic groups and family therapy. Outpatient services are delivered by Licensed Clinical Social Workers, Licensed Professional Counselors, and Licensed or Certified Substance Abuse Counselors, and those who are under supervision for certification and licensure. Any medical services provided in this treatment setting will be at no cost to OCS.

Methods to Measure/Outcome Data: OCS will track by region and parish the number of clients referred for assessment, of that number that show up, how many are identified as needing treatment. The agency will track the type of treatment recommended and the number of clients who make it to and through treatment.

Additional Activities Planned for 2007-2008 SFY: Explore the use of TANF funds to serve TANF eligible women. Monitor and develop a gender-specific outpatient treatment program.

Louisiana Relatives as Parents Program (LA-RAPP)

As a direct result of our agency's prevention efforts, OCS received a grant through the Brookdale Foundation to implement a program called LA-RAPP. This program encourages and promotes the creation or expansion of services for grandparents and other relatives who have assumed the responsibility of surrogate parenting.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, Louisiana ranks as one of the top five states in the nation for grandparents raising their grandchildren. The Census Bureau reports that more than 67,000 Louisiana grandparents are responsible for meeting the basic needs of their grandchildren. Recognizing that many relatives may not know where to go for help, this program has been developed for the purpose of providing support for the relative caregivers and the children they are raising. Our mission is to identify ongoing issues and needs of kinship caregivers, and to advocate

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for the development of a meaningful array of services to meet these needs in each community throughout Louisiana.

In partnership with the Children's Trust Fund and Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, OCS will fund the development of support groups in five communities over the next two years. Additionally, LA-RAPP will produce and distribute public awareness and educational materials and will sponsor a legislative awareness campaign.

In addition to this grant from the Brookdale Foundation, OCS allocated a portion of one-time, Social Services Block Grant Supplemental Funds to assist relative caregivers in ways that may not have been previously allowed. These funds have been used for concrete, supportive, or therapeutic services to facilitate the permanent placement of a child with a relative caregiver. The funds have been used to prevent entrance into the foster care system at the CPI or FS level, to support a child moving from the foster care system to a permanent relative placement and/or to prevent a disruption of a relative placement. The funds have also been used to assist fictive kin.

Methods to Measure/ Outcome Data: Over 500 relatives have been served using these funding sources. The agency will collect TIPS data on the number of clients receiving services in SFY 2007 – 2008.

Activities Planned for 2007 – 2008 SFY: A total of \$50,000 has been requested in next year's budget for relative caregivers. Additionally, OCS is slated to receive \$4,000 from the Brookdale Foundation for the next fiscal year. After 2008, the agency will reapply for the grant.

Transportation Services

Population Served: Clients who are referred to family resource centers.

Update on Specific Accomplishments/Progress for SFY 2006 – 2007 and Planned Activities for 2007 - 2008: The agency allocated additional Social Services Block Grant Supplemental Funds to Family Resource Centers so they could provide additional transportation services. Four thousand dollars (\$4,000.00) was made available to each center to assist families with transportation to access services. The process to amend the contract to include these funds began December 1, 2006. The majority of the contract amendments were approved in late April 2007. Centers will use the funds to assist clients with transportation by having their staff to provide, paying for public transportation, and paying friends and relatives. It is unknown how many additional clients will be served, but the funds will help to assure consistency in accessing services by clients referred, especially those attending the multiple sessions Nurturing Parenting Program.

Nurturing Parenting Program

Program Description: Nurturing the Families of Louisiana™, developed by Dr. Stephen Bavolek, is a validated approach to working with families to reduce dysfunction and build healthy, positive relationships. It is a 16-week parenting class offered by eleven Family Resource Centers throughout

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Louisiana for families with children between the ages of birth to five with an in home component offered after every group session. The goals, objectives and activities of the Nurturing Parenting Program® were developed from years of extensive clinical and empirical research in identifying the parenting and nurturing needs of families exhibiting abusive behaviors. (1) Inappropriate Parental Expectations; (2) Parental Lack of an Empathic Awareness of Children's Needs; (3) Strong Belief in the Use and Value of Corporal Punishment; (4) Parent-Child Role Reversal; (5) Oppressing Children's Power and Independence are the basic constructs upon which the program training and implementation of activities are based. Upon completion of the skill based program, families consistently attending the sessions should demonstrate a significant decrease in risk for practicing abusive behaviors. Risk is measured by using the Adult Adolescent Parenting Inventory (AAPI-2), the program's pre/post test evaluation tool that examines parenting attitudes.

Population Served: OCS families in Foster Care or Family Services that have a need for parenting class and have a child between the ages of birth to five years.

Update on Specific Accomplishments/Progress in SFY 2006 - 2007: In August 2006, Dr. Bavolek conducted a two-day facilitator training for Family Resource Center staff that covered the content of all sixteen sessions and had presentations from each Resource Center as to how they were implementing certain sessions in their centers. All Resource Centers were represented. In March 2007, Dr. Bavolek came back to Louisiana to three geographically diverse areas of the State to train OCS staff from all nine regions on the philosophy of the Nurturing Parenting Program and what to expect when referring a client to the program. At two of the trainings parents who were either currently in the program or had completed it, spoke about what they had learned and how they had benefited from the program. Although OCS did not have any structured trainings, Dr. Bavolek made himself available to facilitators at the resource centers via phone and email on an as needed basis throughout the year. In an effort to get a clear picture of how the Nurturing Parenting program was being implemented throughout the State, staff along with the agency's partner from PCAL went to all of the Family Resource Centers to highlight good practice and address areas that needed improvement. OCS is posting all of the positive highlights on PCAL's message board for all resource centers to view and is focusing training in areas that need improvement.

Methods to Measure & Outcome Data: A massive effort is underway to collect meaningful data on all of the Nurturing Groups to measure the effectiveness of the program. PCAL has contracted with OCS to help with the quality assurance piece and to assist OCS in data collection. Until recently, each resource center was submitting their group's information in different formats, causing some confusion as to whether people completed the group or had in-home sessions. Initially OCS began trying to capture this data in a word document, however with such varied data, it was too difficult to achieve. In site visits to all of the resource centers, anecdotal information was gathered on all of the groups conducted thus far, and Family Resource Centers have been asked to use a new attendance sheet to capture consistent data from each center on their future groups. With this new format, the agency will be able to capture the number of adults, children and families that completed the program, the dates of attendance, whether or not a home visit has occurred after each session, and whether they have successfully completed the program. It will also be able to provide the end date of a group so the agency can begin to look at repeat maltreatment rates at 6 month intervals following the group's termination to determine help determine effectiveness. OCS recently created a database to capture all of this information, the failure reason if a person drops out and their pre and

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post test scores. No information has been entered into the database as of yet, however this will occur as information is gathered from the resource centers.

Activities Planned for 2007-2008 SFY: Plans are to train two staff persons in each region on the Nurturing Parenting Program. The main reason for training two staff as experts is to increase the number of referrals to Nurturing Parenting (that is administered in the resource centers) and to also aid in the consistent implementation of the program. OCS is entering into a contract with Dr. Bavolek to come to 6 of the Resource Centers with the greatest need (determined by OCS), to have two days of one-on-one technical assistance in any area needed. Some ideas include working on problems with retention and attendance, problems with timeliness of inputting data, assistance in developing nurturing activities for either their children's groups or for Family Nurturing time, structuring home visits, and others. OCS is purchasing 300 Nurturing Parenting Easy Reader Handbooks for OCS workers in the Family Services Program to use in doing some one-on-one work with their clients. OCS is also purchasing 16 CDs that is a 10 session community based parenting education series designed as a preventive tool to strengthen families and prevent incidences of abuse or neglect. There will be a CD in every regional OCS office and every regional PCAL office.

Multisystemic Therapy (MST)

Program Description: MST is a pragmatic and goal-oriented treatment that specifically targets those factors in each youth's social network that contributes to his or her antisocial behavior. MST interventions typically aim to improve caregiver discipline practices, enhance family relationships, decrease youth association with deviant peers, increase youth association with pro social peers, improve youth school or vocational performance, engage youth in pro social recreational outlets, and develop an indigenous support network of extended family, neighbors and friends to help caregivers achieve and maintain such changes. Specific treatment techniques used to facilitate these gains are integrated from those therapies (ex. Functional Family Therapy) that have the most empirical support, including cognitive behavioral, behavioral and the pragmatic family therapies.

Population Served: Youth, ages 10-17 years of age, who are at risk of out-of-home placement due to delinquency/child welfare needs, youth adjudicated delinquent or CINC youth returning from out-of-home placement, chronic or violent juvenile offenders in the child welfare system, substance abusing youth in child welfare system and in some instances, non-adjudicated children, age 10-17, identified as at risk for out-of-home placement due to violent behavior, truancy, substance abuse or other maladaptive behaviors.

Update on Specific Accomplishments/Progress in SFY 2006 - 2007: MST has been instituted in the Monroe, Shreveport, Greater New Orleans, and Lake Charles Regions. Therapists carry caseloads of 5 – 6 cases. In year one in Greater New Orleans the agency expects to provide MST to 45 youth and in year two 50 youth. In Lake Charles it is expected that 24 youth will be served in year one and 35 youth will be served in year two.

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Methods to Measure/Outcome Measures:

A baseline will be developed by obtaining the number of children identified/referred for services, the number served and of the number served the number that came into foster care and the number maintained in the home. There will be an underlying assumption that all the cases would have come into foster care or would have remained in foster care.

Data from 2002, 2003 and 2004 identifying the number of reports and determining from that number, how many were investigated and of the number investigated how many were valid or invalid or of the number of investigations how many cases were opened in family services and how many opened in foster care.

The data/reports the agency plans to use to measure and track the implementation of intensive home-based services include the following information: reason for referral; how long the case was open; disposition at time of closure.

Activities Planned for SFY 2007 – 2008: Continue to monitor implementation of MST. Develop baseline and create reports to measure MST effectiveness.

Long Term Goals, Strategy 1:3 Identify issues facing children and families involved in Louisiana's child welfare system that threaten their safety, permanency and well-being (p.63, 2006 APSR).

Action Plan

Step 1 - Develop an instrument and survey statewide a representative sample of Prevention/Family Service (P/FS) staff on issues relating to safety and well-being of the children and families currently involved in the P/FS program.

Step 2 - Work with National Resource Centers for Organizational Improvement and Family Centered practice to evaluate and modify current family assessments with regard to client's needs.

Step 3 –Through training build workers' skill level in conducting comprehensive assessments and in directly connecting appropriate intervention to the client's case plan.

Long Term Goals Plan, Strategy 1:4 Analyze statewide representative data collected in Preservation/Family Services' survey as well as data collected in revised family assessment to better understand the issues facing the families being served in the child welfare system

Action Plan

Step 1 Work with NRCs for Organizational Improvement and Family Centered Practice and Permanency Planning and Data and Technology to compile and analyze data.

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Prevention/Family Service (P/FS) Staff Survey

All P/FS staff received the survey and of the 300 surveys sent out, 90% were completed and returned. The data indicated that P/FS staff needed more IHBS services, transportation for clients and substance abuse and mental health assessment, referral and treatment resources. As a follow-up to this program survey, the agency conducted an agency wide assessment of the entire service array. The assessment revealed the same top issues identified in the P/FS staff survey.

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Family Centered Assessment and Case Planning Instrument: The Family Assessment/Case Plan Instrument is designed to replace the Social History (Form 60) currently used in Family Services and Foster Care. It was designed to assist in case planning by focusing on issues relevant to the family and putting only the issues that were rated as a problem (less than adequate) on the case plan.

Update on Specific Accomplishments/Progress in SFY 2006 - 2007: With the assistance of the NRC's, OCS developed and is currently piloting the Family Assessment Instrument in the Lafayette Region. Baton Rouge piloted the instrument in the Family Services program from August to December 2006. Lafayette is piloting the instrument in the Family Services and Foster Care Programs.

Lori Lutz, from the National Resource Center for Foster Care and Permanency Planning, is a consultant with a Masters in Public Policy and 30 years of child welfare experience. She has extensive experience in developing family centered assessment standards and provided technical assistance to OCS staff in development and implementation of the family assessment instrument. Between June 14, 2005 and August 20, 2006, she came to Louisiana three times and participated in numerous conference calls to help develop this family centered assessment and case plan instrument. Prior to the kick off of the pilot, she trained the workers in the Baton Rouge and Lafayette regions on how to use the form by going out with a worker and completing an assessment with the worker. She came back to the group and explained the decisions they made. Alyson McCain, PhD in Psychology was contracted to work with the Baton Rouge Region and to provide ongoing support by assisting workers in doing a more functional assessment using the new instrument. Workers in Baton Rouge had recently lost a lot of staff and were overwhelmed; therefore they each only completed one assessment in the Family Services program. Lafayette foster care workers are still piloting the form. They find it very burdensome based on the number of pages, but like the information it provides and appreciate how the assessment guides case planning. Once this form is on-line in Web Focus, it will be much more user friendly and will produce reports as needed.

Methods to Measure/Outcome Data: OCS has not yet determined the number of cases reviewed in the pilot. In Baton Rouge, most workers completed one assessment prior discontinuing their involvement in the pilot. Lafayette is still participating in the Foster Care section, and met with staff to review a few instruments and discuss how the new form was working. Workers reported the things they liked about the new instrument as compared to the old social history assessment (Form 60) were:

- Client telling their story- they said it is very empowering and makes the client feel like they are in control; helps with engaging client
- Assessment is directly linked to case plan. If a person is assessed as less than adequate in any category, it gets addressed on the case plan.
- Once completed, the assessment makes the case easier to work
- Questions are more relevant than the old Social History (Form 60)
- Assessment topics focus on high risk issues that impact families

After a few years of reviewing numerous records throughout the regions during the Peer Case Review process, OCS noticed that there was inconsistency across the State with the amount of

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detail in the social assessment. Furthermore, although the assessment was usually completed within thirty days of a child coming into care, there was rarely a second assessment, even if the circumstances have changed. A third issue was that even in the most detailed assessment, some issues that were identified in the social summary never made it onto the case plan. The agency developed the Family Centered Assessment and Case Plan so that workers could do a thorough, ongoing assessment of the family. It was designed so that any issue that is rated below satisfactory has to be addressed on the case plan (unless they have documentation justifying why that did not occur). OCS will be looking at peer case review data in the future to see anecdotally if the assessments appear more thorough and guide case planning.

Activities Planned in SFY 2007-2008: Plans are to implement use of the family assessment instrument statewide by September 2008. Additionally, the agency is working with Information Services/Technology (IS/IT) to make the Family Assessment instrument available for completion on-line in web focus.

The plan for training staff is under development. It depends on other decisions, such as when the agency plans on implementing structured decision making.

The chart below details major initiatives of the Prevention and Family Services program most of which have been discussed in the proceeding pages of this document; however, this chart also provides additional details on the current status and challenges affecting implementation.

Name of Initiative	Main Purpose	Current Status and Implementation Plan	Coordination Needs (Other areas this initiative impacts or is impacted by)	Challenges
Family Centered Functional Assessment and Case Plan	To assess the functioning of a family (this particular parent, with these particular children, in this particular environment) and to develop a case plan that is a direct result of the assessment; Also, to gather data on client needs in order to build partnerships and allocate resources accordingly	Pilot tested in Baton Rouge and Lafayette in paper version; contract submitted for the building of an automated system; expect system to be complete by July 07. Field test July/August then begin training and phased roll-out across the state	Structured Decision Making (SDM) Alternate Response – Trying to be consistent in domains assessed and consistent in language used Potentially many other areas	A major statewide initiative; Coordinating training with SDM so it is a seamless process for staff; What should training plan look like? Who should train staff? What should we QA? What kind of follow-up is needed? Developing questions for reports.
Homebuilders Intensive Home Based Services	To prevent children from coming into care when safety can be reasonably expected; to facilitate the movement of a child from foster care back home earlier than would otherwise be possible	Available in all regions; expect to serve close to 500 families by 9/30/07	FS Re-design; SDM; Assessment; Residential initiatives; relative placements	Requires labor intensive oversight to assure model fidelity

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Name of Initiative	Main Purpose	Current Status and Implementation Plan	Coordination Needs (Other areas this initiative impacts or is impacted by)	Challenges
	without intensive, wrap around services; to step down a child to a less restrictive placement; to stabilize a foster or relative placement in limited situations			
Substance Abuse Services	Placement of OAD clinician in each OCS region to assess and refer for treatment as needed; Allocation of funds for treatment, residential, and IOP groups in each region	Clinicians placed in all but one region; IOP started in only 2 regions so far		Staffing; transportation; assessing our data and current research to be sure we are using resources on interventions that have the best evidence of success
LaRapp (Louisiana Relatives as Parents)	To explore the needs of and support relative caregivers (concrete services, training, support groups, etc.)	Support groups established in three regions; two additional ones next year; limited funds allocated for services; in process of identifying training and on-going supportive needs	Home development initiatives	Labor intensive community outreach needed to start and maintain program
MST	To prevent placement of adolescents in foster care or to step-down adolescents to a more permanent family like setting	Available in GNO, Monroe, Shreveport; Coming soon to BR; OYD contract in Alex and Lake Charles	Residential initiatives; IHBS; Substance Abuse services;	Modifications needed for child welfare population; on-going funding
Nurturing Parenting	Intensive, "Promising" program of parent education and training	Available through Resource Center in all regions; reviewing data and making modifications as needed	Assessment; Alt. Response; Redesign of FS;	Developing enough capacity to fill the need;
Re-design of Family Services	To serve moderate to high risk families where one or more children remain in the home; Goal is to provide more	Current policy requires 1 x month visit; avg. duration 6-12 months; caseload standard	Alt. Response SDM IHBS MST	Designing a program that is responsive to the need yet within our means to implement; Extensive training needed for

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Name of Initiative	Main Purpose	Current Status and Implementation Plan	Coordination Needs (Other areas this initiative impacts or is impacted by)	Challenges
	<p>direct service by OCS-FSW rather than FSW simply acting as a broker of services and monitor;</p>	<p>15 families; primarily brokering of services through Resource Centers and monitoring for safety/risk</p> <p>Exploring a model that would be more intensive (2-3 x per week avg.) for shorter duration (90-120 days); smaller caseload (5-7 cases)</p>		<p>FSW in more direct interventions;</p> <p>Coordinating with other initiatives</p>

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FOSTER CARE/HOME DEVELOPMENT

Program Description – include substitute, temporary care (e.g. foster family home, residential care facility, kinship care) that is utilized when the child’s health and safety is at risk if the child remains in the home. The State is awarded legal custody of the child by the court of jurisdiction. The foster parents and private agency foster care providers work with agency staff and parents toward achieving permanency. Intensive work and case management services are offered to families to help them reach a point where the child can be safely returned home, if return home is appropriate. For children who age out of foster care at 18, the agency provides the opportunity for the young adult to contract to continue receiving supportive services through age 21 in the Young Adult Program.

Population Served: Foster care services are provided on a statewide basis through 9 regional and 48 parish offices. The program provides services for a planned period of time when an abused or neglected child must be separated from his parents or family, and when the state has been awarded legal custody of the child through the court of jurisdiction. As of March 2007, OCS provided foster care services to an average of 5065 children monthly. In 2006, an average of 5050 children were in foster care. The average number is higher than the averages for the 2003, 2004 and 2005 state fiscal years (SFY). In SFY 2003, the agency had an average of 4341 children in care, in SFY 2004 OCS had an average of 4285 children in care and in SFY 2005 the agency had an average of 4433 children in care. (Data obtained from Foster Care Trends Report and Assistant Secretary’s Report.)

Thus far, the average number of children in Foster Care is approximately 14% higher in 2007 as compared to SFY 2003.

Goals: Safety, Permanency, Well-being

Activities Planned in SFY 2006-2007: OCS planned to work with numerous National Resource Centers (NRC) to develop and implement a protocol for case management and decision-making for displaced foster children and their biological parents.

Update on Specific Accomplishments/Progress in SFY 2006 - 2007: Safety of and service provision to children and foster parents: At this point, only 26 children in foster care remain out of state as a result of the hurricanes. Twenty-four of the children are from the Greater New Orleans Region and two are from the Covington Region. Nineteen of these children have a permanency goal of adoption; and, seven have a goal of Alternate Planned Living Arrangement. Seven children are living in Texas, nine in Mississippi; four in Georgia; two in Alabama; and one in each of the following states: Florida, Maryland, Illinois, and Arkansas. OCS continues to have two staff persons who focus their activities on the special “Katrina Class” children, one to monitor progress toward goal achievement, and one to approve special travel. All of the children who are out of state have been referred to the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) to request service provision by the State in which they are residing. Visitation between these children and their biological families is ongoing, although the frequency varies.

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OCS partnered with the Louisiana Supreme Court to locate and reconnect youth in foster care, impacted by Hurricane Katrina, with extended family by arranging for specialized training for staff. This involved the National Resource Center for Family Centered Practice and Permanency Planning (NRCFCPPP). Training by Catholic Charities of the State of Washington helped to demonstrate to staff the utilization of available search engines to locate extended family and other significant individuals in the child's past. This training to establish connections for children and aid in establishing permanency is being provided statewide.

A structured decision making model has been purchased from Children's Research Council, a subsidiary of the National Council on Crime and Delinquency. This model provides a menu of assessment tools for use in case management decision making. The model will aid agency staff in more consistent and logic based planning for families. It will be available statewide for staff use by October 2007. The model is computer based and has inherent reporting functions which will demonstrate effectiveness.

Activities Planned in 2007-2008 SFY: Now that most children in foster care and their foster families have returned to Louisiana, the focus for assuring safety and service provision is on development of a continuum of care to assure that needed services are available, enhancing foster/adoptive parent recruitment and retention, and assuring that children are placed in the least restrictive possible placement. Services now offered in the service array include Intensive Home Based Services, MultiSystemic Therapy, Nurturing Families of Louisiana Program, in-house substance abuse counselors, and enhanced transportation through additional monies provided to the regional resource centers. (Refer to page 87 for more information on the development of child welfare services/service array.)

Activities Planned in SFY 2006-2007: The foster care program planned to conduct case record reviews like the special board rate assessment to insure consistency in provision of these services statewide and identify problematic issues, if any.

Update on Specific Accomplishments/Progress in SFY 2006 - 2007: The results of the Special Board Rate assessment are still being compiled. Other foster care case record reviews conducted include: The results of individual reviews of Katrina Class cases have been used primarily for funding issues, with flags having been inserted into our Tracking Information and Payment System (TIPS).

Methods to Measure/Outcome Data: The data collected through TIPS will be used to examine retrospective outcomes of children in foster care and their care providers. Additionally, Quality Assurance staff is comparing Orleans Parish children in foster care (based on original court of jurisdiction) with children in foster care from other parishes to compare length of stay in foster care, days of restrictive care, etc. The agency evaluated current procedures and policies related to the Young Adult Program and Independent Living Services in collaboration with the National Resource Center for Youth Services. (For more on the YAP/ILP initiatives refer to the Chafee portion of the APSR that begins on page 120.

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Long Term Goals, Strategy 2:1 Decrease the number of children in residential and emergency care facilities. (This area was an area needing improvement in Louisiana's IV-E Review with regard to restructuring work with and requirements of residential facilities.)

Action Plan

Step 1: Collaborate with Annie E. Casey Foundation, Casey Strategic Consulting Group to develop techniques and procedures for reduction of numbers of foster children in congregate care settings.

Step 2: Review placements of children in residential settings and emergency care facilities in accordance with a triage schedule that facilitates alternative options for least restrictive and most appropriate placement.

Update on Activities for 2006 – 2007 SFY: A Residential Care Subcommittee was created from a diversified staff including Regional Administrators (RA), Regional Program Specialists (RPS), District Managers (DM), first line supervisors, State Office staff, and workers from all parts of the State to develop a process to decrease the number of children in residential and emergency care. Subcommittee meetings were held twice monthly through December 2006, and less frequently in 2007 in accordance with need.

Methods to Measure/Outcome Data: A residential care review process framework was developed and piloted. First, children were identified from TIPS then pre-review instruments were completed by assigned caseworkers. Children were then interviewed by a review team. Next, the review team gathered information from providers and other relevant sources. Follow-up staffings were held and tasks were assigned. Later, follow-up was conducted by the review team and results were sent to the project manager.

The charge of the subcommittee is to complete interviews and staffing of all youth in residential and group home care on a statewide basis (approximately 700 children). For this task, the subcommittee developed a pre-review instrument for completion by the assigned foster care worker for the youth; an interview guide for use in documentation by the interviewers; and a staffing form for utilization in staffing of cases.

In November and December 2006, OCS conducted a residential care review pilot to test the process. Interviews were conducted by targeting the oldest children in the Katrina class. All interviewers involved in the pilot project were volunteers from the subcommittee who were paired, one to interview the child and one to observe and take notes.

Children and youth were interviewed with a focus on family connections, transitioning out of foster care, step down and usage of hurricane class funds where appropriate.

A staffing was held for each youth interviewed with district managers, supervisors, workers, facility representatives, and most importantly the youth present and participating in the process.

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The staffing forms completed provided documentation of persons in attendance, decisions made, tasks, due dates for specific tasks, and name of person responsible for completion of the task. Copies were provided for case record documentation.

Follow up reports were both elicited from and provided by OCS staff. Outcome findings were that the majority of identified existing family connections (many not recognized in agency records), were eager, receptive and important to the decision making process, and in these cases, youth were able to step down into a less restrictive setting.

Placement Plan	#	%
Planned or completed reunification	7	28%
Independent Living	5	20%
OCDD facility	2	8%
YAP (either in a FH or going to college dormitory)	2	8%
Foster Home (FH)	2	8%
Step Down to Group Home	3	12%
Still exploring family and former foster parents	3	12%
Aged out with no current supports of services	1	4%

Lessons learned included the following:

Practice: involve children and families throughout the case; encourage staff to take risks to support reunification; listen to youth's voice in case planning towards permanency; if reunification is inevitable, reunify sooner with supports and provide more oversight and review of residential cases.

Process: participation of supervisors and district managers was essential; communication with OCS and residential providers necessary; more clarity about authority required to avoid post-staffing changes; reduction of time between interviews and staffings important and with sufficient buy-in, staff applied learnings to other cases.

Children and families: children usually identified their own resources and their needs; children fostered their own connections despite system interference; families are not kept up to date on case progress and families could participate in solutions if given the opportunity.

Overall, the review resulted in less restrictive and more appropriate placements for children.

When supplemental monies became available for the Katrina/Rita YAP Class youth in March 2007, it was necessary for the interviews and staffing of an additional 18 youth across the State due to the deadline for money availability. These groups of youth were interviewed and cases were staffed in March and April 2007. The findings were very similar to that of the first pilot group, but only one of the 18 had existing or workable

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transitional plans. Although all youth except one were identified as eligible for supplemental funds, only two requests have been made in their behalf as of May 18, 2007. Follow up data on this grouping is pending.

For the task of interviews and staffing of the remainder of the residential population, the State has been divided into 5 regional clusters.

Regional Roll-out

	Regions	# of Children	Target Start Date	Target End Date
1	Thibodaux, Lafayette, Lake Charles	123	June 11, 2007	August 17, 2007
2	Orleans/Jefferson Districts	155	July 23, 2007	September 30, 2007
3	Covington & Baton Rouge	160	August 20, 2007	October 31, 2007
4	Monroe	142	September 17, 2007	November 19, 2007
5	Alexandria & Shreveport	120	October 15, 2007	December 31, 2007

Before beginning the actual interviews and staffing in each cluster, initiative leads and Casey consultants will hold informational meetings in each region with OCS staff and providers. A team of 12 (6 retirees and 6 current OCS staff) have been identified with Regional Administrator input. All interviews and staffings are projected to be complete by the end of 2007. An assistant to the lead began work on May 28, 2007, to assist in coordinating, tracking, and follow up information related to the regional cluster work.

A policy work group was formed in February 2007, with draft policy revisions completed pertaining to alignment with the initiative and was circulated in May, 2007. Policy revisions focused upon criteria for children under age 11 as well as referral packet information and practice changes for referral of children into residential care. Other future planning includes the development of a referral form for Home Development Units for child specific recruitment on behalf of youth who are ready for step down and no immediate family resource is available. Another form to be developed is a residential child case planning form.

Activities Planned for 2007 – 2008 SFY: The Residential subcommittee will continue examination of placement procedures and current use of residential care; execute the process to review all the children currently in residential care and revise policies to align with new residential policies and procedures. As part of the residential reviews, talk with every child and youth in residential care in Louisiana to find and step down to life-long, family connections; assist caseworkers in creating a viable permanency plan for each child and youth and reduce the system's dependence on inappropriate residential placements.

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Long Term Goals, Strategy 2:2 Increase alternative options available for foster children in most appropriate and least restrictive placements.

Action Plan

Step 1: Collaborate with Annie E. Casey Foundation, Casey Strategic Consulting Group and National Resource Centers to pilot increase community placement options through expanded private foster care services and/or support transitions to relative placements and/or foster care services.

Update on Activities for SFY 2006 – 2007: One-time payment for recruitment, training and certification of 20 TFC/PFC families is being offered to private providers. For each family who is recruited, trained and certified the provider will receive \$3500. This one-time payment will be offered until September 1, 2007, or until all monies have been dispersed. Targeted staff are receiving training to learn and utilize Family Search and Engagement Techniques. Searching and locating relatives via internet sources facilitates transitions of children to relative placements.

CASE WORKER VISITS: The actual planned use of additional IV-B, subpart 2 funds received by OCS will be used to support caseworker visits through the purchase of additional vehicles and the reimbursement of mileage for workers visiting children.

The State offers the following plan to comply with P. L. 109-288:

Goal: By October 1, 2011, the agency meets the 90 percent goal of children in foster care being visited by their caseworkers monthly with a majority of the visits occurring in the residence of the child.

Objective 1: Develop baseline data for establishing annual targets successfully approaching the goal.

Strategy 1: Quality Assurance (QA) data will be used to develop the baseline by which OCS will measure achievement in measuring our targets and ultimately in ensuring that 90% of children in foster care are visited on a monthly basis, and that the majority of the visits occur in the residence of the child.

Strategy 2: Use QA data to track initial and ongoing compliance with visitation requirements and report monthly caseworker visit data.

The agency will use data gathered from Quality Assurance foster care review instruments (i.e. the Foster Care QA 1 (FC QA 1) and the Case Compliance QA 1 (CC QA 1) to measure caseworker visits. The QA 1 has been revised to capture whether at least four of the monthly visits in a six month reporting period occurred within the child's place of residence. The FC QA 1 is administered on a 25% sample of cases due for administrative review in a specified month and the CC QA1 is used on 100% of cases up for administrative review each month.

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Objective 2: The agency will implement new policy regarding caseworker visits on a monthly basis.

Strategy 1: The policy (Chapter 6-905), was updated effective July 2007 to require child's assigned case worker complete at least four of the monthly visits with the child per 6 month reporting period in the child's place of residence.

DSS/OCS policy currently defines the child's caseworker as the worker assigned to the case. The agency's definition of monthly visits is in alignment with the federal definition as one visit per calendar month. Current OCS policy (6-905) defines the term visit as any face-to-face contact between the worker and child which provides for free and private communication. Visits are focused on assessing and monitoring the care the child receives, including safety, clothing, physical environment, education and health needs, to observe foster parent/child interaction, listen to both foster child and foster parent concerns, lend support, provide ongoing clarification regarding the reason for foster care placement, review the case plan, solicit information needed in revising the case plan and to provide recent information about the child's parents, especially if reunification is the goal.

Federal regulations require that caseworker visits for children in out-of-state placements must be visited at least every six months either by state staff or a private agency under contract with the State. OCS policy states children placed out of state should be visited in accordance with policy.

Objective 3: The agency will utilize available technical assistance/consultation from the National Child Welfare Resource Center for Data and Technology to enhance data tracking and reporting.

Strategy 1: Within federal fiscal year 2007/2008, the agency will schedule consultation dates with this resource center for guidance in developing a plan for enhancing staff access to appropriate technology for documentation of assigned caseworker visits with children, location of these visits, and content of these visits. The agency will also explore with the resource center data compilation procedures for reporting progress in reaching 2011 target of 90% of children in foster care visited by their workers monthly with a majority of the visits occurring in the child's place of residence. The number of technical assistance days requested/used will be based on the needs/assessment plan negotiated.

Objective 4: Explore staff recruitment and retention issues and where possible, address issues considered key to successful implementation of caseworker visits.

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Strategy 1: In order to improve services to children and families and ensure quality services, such as monthly caseworker visits with children, the agency will utilize a work group to explore and identify issues impacting retention of current staff and recruitment of new staff.

The staff turnover/retention workgroup, comprised of Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) team members, administrative, programmatic and field staff, will begin meeting in October 2008. The group will identify and prioritize problems and root causes that lead to staff turnover and retention issues and develop and implement a plan to address these issues to support ongoing establishment of a sufficient and stable workforce of child welfare professionals in the State.

Strategy 2: Work with Louisiana State University (LSU) to develop a Child Welfare Training Institute.

Collaboration with LSU for the development of a child welfare institute is in its initial planning stages. The goal is to adequately prepare staff to provide child welfare services. The first area that LSU will focus on as part of the institute is an adoption curriculum that will provide staff with an opportunity to earn an adoption certification. Other areas in child welfare will be addressed through the contract with LSU and the agency will work with other universities to provide specialized training to staff and foster and adoptive parents.

Strategy 3: Continuing implementation of the supervisory coaching project with 20 supervisors.

In the past OCS, has offered the supervisory coaching project for approximately 20 staff. This SFY, the agency is again contracting with Marsha Salus to coach 20 supervisors. The rationale for implementation of this project is that better prepared supervisors will garner better trained staff and better trained staff will have the necessary tools to provide quality services to children and families.

Objective 5: Provide consistent on-going professional development/training regarding caseworker contacts with children.

Strategy 1: Introduce all new agency staff to contact expectations for assigned caseworkers with children in mandated agency training for new workers prior to staff receiving a caseload.

Strategy 2: Orient key staff to agency expectations and policy changes (Regional Administrators and Regional Program Specialists with state office liaison function).

Strategy 3: Require Regional Program Specialists to provide regional forum to discuss agency expectations and policy changes, as well as remaining available within the region for consultation on an ongoing basis regarding this issue.

Strategy 4: Encourage on a state and regional level that local supervisory discussion of caseworker contacts with assigned child clients occur with the caseworkers on a monthly basis in the child's place of residence.

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Statewide Recruitment/Retention Plan

The agency has experienced a decline in the number of certified foster/adoptive families over the years and an increase in the number of children entering care. This decline was amplified by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Agency statistics show a loss of 1435 certified foster homes and an increase of 801 children entering foster care statewide between January 2004 and January 2007. As of January 2007, statistics reveal that the ratio of certified foster homes to children in foster care is 50%.

The children in foster care in the State are 49% Caucasian, 49% African American, 1% Hispanic, and 1% other. A breakdown of the ages 0-6 is 38%, ages 7-12 is 24%, and 13-18 is 38%.

The number of new certifications per region is as follows: Baton Rouge 46; Alexandria 23; Thibodaux 26; Covington 103; Lake Charles 27, Shreveport 62; Lafayette 100; Greater New Orleans 48, and Monroe 33.

In order to address the needs of the State, all regions have continued recruitment/retention efforts in their local communities. (The area of foster/adoptive parent recruitment/retention was identified in Louisiana's PIP as an area needing improvement for both Item 2b, repeat maltreatment and Item 6, stability of foster care placement.) Staff has participated in speaking engagements with community and civic organizations, attended community festivals and fairs, and met with local businesses and organizations. Recruitment information has been placed in local community businesses, libraries, schools, medical facilities, and non-profit organizations. Community volunteers have also assisted in recruitment efforts.

The media has been utilized for recruitment purposes in the following ways: television and radio interviews, print ads (newspapers, billboards, and phone books), public service announcements and press releases, internet and direct mail outs. Child specific fliers have been developed and distributed throughout local communities. In April 2005, the agency was featured in USA Today highlighting the need for foster/adoptive homes post hurricane.

The faith-based communities have been engaged by staff through speaking engagements and meetings with local pastors and ministerial alliances. Information has been distributed to church members through fliers and bulletin inserts.

The agency has continued to offer foster/adoptive families on-going in-service training annually. Foster parents are required to complete 15 hours of training per year to maintain certification. The trainings offered focus on issues pertinent to working with the children and their unique needs.

Each region has honored their certified families with an appreciation banquet. This banquet is one opportunity for staff to thank our families for the care they provide the children of this state.

Although the agency has continued recruitment efforts, it is apparent that more attention is needed in this area. The agency recognizes the critical need for increased recruitment and retention efforts.

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Future Directions for Recruitment/Retention

The agency is currently in the process of revamping the entire Home Development process. The decision was made to review recruitment, certification and retention processes to determine ways to recruit more families, move them through the certification process timely, and to retain them once they become certified. OCS is currently working with the Annie E. Casey Foundation in restructuring the program.

One of the major areas of focus in OCS efforts is in the area of recruitment. In the past, recruitment has been the responsibility of Home Development staff but it has never been given the attention it deserves in order to be effective due to the increasing workload of staff. To address this issue, nine foster/adoptive home recruiters and one supervisor have been hired statewide. The role of these staff is full time recruitment – general, targeted and child specific. With these new recruiters, the agency is also working to expand our definition of recruitment. In the past, recruitment efforts have been focused on attracting certifiable homes, but new efforts will also include efforts to attract families that can assist children and families in other ways such as respite, offering assistance to a family, or assisting the agency in recruitment. The recruiters have been in place for 2 months and are already increasing the number of intake calls in several regions. One of the tasks that the recruiters will be charged with is the development of the regional recruitment/retention plans. In the past, each regional Home Development unit was responsible for development of a region-specific plan, but the plans have not been as effective as needed. With the recruiters in place, the plans will be utilized to drive recruitment activities for the upcoming year and evaluate the effectiveness of each activity. The agency is in the process now of pulling together a workgroup to begin defining the new format for the annual plan.

In addition to the recruiter positions, OCS is planning to launch a statewide media campaign in July or August 2007. Staff are working with a marketing consultant, Daniel Stein of True Insight Marketing, on this activity. The campaign, along with the efforts of the recruiters, should increase the number of inquires.

A second major focus of work is the area of retention of certified homes. One of the major changes to this area is the increase in visits/phone contact with certified families by the Home Development worker. OCS will also be implementing support workgroups in each region to focus on supporting families. Every staff member will have a role in supporting our families.

The recruitment/retention plan for 2007-2008 will be submitted to the ACF office by September 30, 2007.

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Transfers of Custody from State Child Protection System to State Department of Corrections (DOC), Office of Youth Development (OYD)

DSS/OCS data shows the following children who were in the care (custody) of OCS and were transferred to the supervision (custody) of the state juvenile justice system (DOC). Context information about the source of this information and how the reporting population is defined is provided below.

Regional Analysis of Children Transferred from OCS to DOC:

Region of Child's Domicile	SFY 2004-2005 # Children Custody Transferred	SFY 2005-2006 # Children Custody Transferred	SFY 2006-2007 (through 3/31/07) # Children Custody Transferred	SFY 2007-2008 # Children Custody Transferred	SFY 2008-2009 # Children Custody Transferred
Orleans (1) (Orleans District effective 9/05)	1	1	1		
Baton Rouge (2)	4	6	2		
Covington (3)	1	2	3		
Thibodaux (4)	3	3	1		
Lafayette (5)	3	2	1		
Lake Charles (6)	0	1	0		
Alexandria (7)	3	0	0		
Shreveport (8)	2	1	0		
Monroe (9)	1	1	1		
Jefferson (10) (Jefferson District effective 9/05)	1	2	0		
TOTAL	19	19	9		

The statistics reflect OCS database information on children who changed custody by region and by year. The data is on children whose case was opened in the State's foster care system and who had their custody transferred to the DOC. DOC has responsibility for children adjudicated to the OYD, the State's juvenile justice system. The information presented in the chart above was obtained through a Web-focus Report. The data for SFY 2004-2005 and 2005 – 2006 has been updated to include all four quarters and the data for SFY 2006-2007 includes transfers of custody from July 2006 - March 31, 2007.

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ADOPTION

Service Description: a permanency option for children who cannot safely return to their biological families. The goal of adoption is pursued as a permanent plan when the court of jurisdiction determines the child's family is either unable or unwilling to resume care of the child, and the child's needs of safety, permanency and well being are best achieved through adoption. Pre-adoptive services provided by the foster care worker for a child with a goal of adoption include helping the parents voluntarily relinquish parental rights, preparing the judicial termination of parental rights packet in the event the parents are unwilling to surrender, and preparing the child for the adoptive process. Services delivered by the adoption worker include completing the child evaluation/assessment process, preparing the child for adoption, recruiting an adoptive home as needed, selection and placement of the child with an adoptive family, providing services in support of that placement, processing any adoption subsidy application and participating in the legal adoption finalization process.

Post-adoption services and adoption subsidies are typically provided to eligible families until the child's 18th birthday. Adoption subsidization is provided through the State's adoption subsidy program and funded with federal and state funds. While all families who adopt may apply for an adoption subsidy, and irrespective of the type of adoption, most private, private agency and international adoptive families do not meet the strict IV-E federal subsidy requirements designed to help move special needs children out of foster care and into permanent homes via adoption. Post-adoption services are provided within budgetary constraints, to any adopted child and his or her adoptive family to include families who have adopted internationally. Our regionally based Family Resource Centers provide supportive post adoptive services and our parish based offices can provide family services on a voluntary basis to adoptive families seeking assistance post finalization.

Population served: Children placed by OCS because of abuse and/or neglect are typically made available for adoption through the legal processes of involuntary termination of parental rights or an act of voluntary surrender of parental rights. The majority of the children with a goal of adoption and in need of adoptive placement are older, special needs children and or member of sibling groups who should not be separated.

The goal of the adoption program is to provide permanency for children. In the 2006 APSR, the following action steps were developed to realize the goal of permanency:

- Identification and remediation of delays in the termination of parental rights process.
- Early and ongoing assessment of children's special needs.
- Simplifying the adoption subsidy approval process.
- Improving timeliness of case record transfer from foster care staff to adoption staff.
- Increased focus on and documentation of search, assessment and reassessment of suitable relative resources throughout the life of a case.

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Update on Specific Accomplishments/Progress in SFY 2006 – 2007: The agency continues to work on addressing issues and barriers impacting foster care adoptions. There have been positive steps in addressing these barriers as evidenced by the number of finalized adoptions (see chart on following page). Of the 5,196 children in care, 444 are available for adoption and in need of adoptive placement. Of these children, 213 are registered and photo listed on Louisiana Adoption Resource Exchange and with AdoptUSkids at www.adoptuskids.org/states/la. Of these 213 children, 137 are males and 76 are females; 63 are white, 148 are African American and 2 are listed as other race; 28 are members of a sibling group; and 170 or approximately 79% are deemed physically, emotionally or intellectually challenged.

In addressing issues and barriers impacting foster care adoptions, the agency has embarked on various efforts. Initial efforts centered on the improvement of timelines in order to address the identification and remediation of delays in the termination of parental right process. With the implementation of the timelines, children are being freed for adoption at a rate of less than 24 months. There is also an online training available for judges and court personnel which discuss ASFA requirements. (Efforts in the adoption program are focused to address an area needing improvement identified in Louisiana's PIP, Item 9, Adoption within 24 months.)

Secondly, assessing the ongoing special needs of children is key. The agency is currently developing an automated assessment instrument that will assist in conducting ongoing assessment of children. (For more on the Family Assessment Instrument see pages 97 – 98) This instrument is developed to continuously assess the needs of the child once they begin receiving services with the agency and throughout the life of the case.

In an effort to render the adoption subsidy process less burdensome and to free up staff time better spent on delivering services and securing permanent placement for children awaiting adoptive placement, the third effort has lengthened the subsidy renewal procedure by changing the guidelines from re-determining or renewing IV-E adoption subsidies annually to renewing them every four years instead. The agency also tried to increase the number of staff allocated to handle the subsidy process, however this attempt was unsuccessful due to other agency priorities and budgetary considerations.

Also, in order to assist staff in improving the timeliness of case record transfers from Foster Care staff to Adoption staff a practice pointer memo was sent to staff in August 2006 regarding the timely transfer of cases. Additionally, training regarding timely transfers is an ongoing agenda item and is discussed continuously during contact with Adoption workers. The agency is exploring the use of Regional Program Specialist to assist in improving the timeliness of case record transfers and maintaining caseload standards.

Lastly, the agency remains dedicated to enhancing its documentation of search, assessment and reassessment of suitable relative resources throughout the life of a case. In order to assist in the effort, Family Connections research is encouraged throughout the life of the case to connect child with family resources. The launch date of Family Connections was February 2007. As part of the effort, Adoption workers review historical case record information to determine if there were any relatives listed that can be contacted or who may have a current interest in connecting with the child. Ongoing monthly evaluations are provided to determine the effectiveness of the program via discussions and evaluations provided to staff.

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Activities planned for the 2007-2008 SFY: The agency is seeking to develop (in conjunction with Louisiana State University and Associated Catholic Charities) a post graduate adoption certification program in Adoption Therapy. The objective is to increase the number of adoption competent clinical community providers and public child welfare staff to better support adopted children, youth and their families, to improve the quality of adoption related services and mitigate the risk of adoption disruptions and dissolutions.

Methods to Measure/Outcome Data: The agency will measure the number of adoption clinical providers in communities who have a post graduate certification in adoption therapy.

Additional outcome data for the adoption program is provided in the following pages.

Agency and Court System Capacity to Process Termination of Parental Rights (TPR)

The chart below contains information on the number of TPRs the agency has filed.

Region	2004 - 2005 SFY 7/04-6/05	2005 - 2006 SFY 7/05-6/06	2006 - 2007 SFY** 7/06-3/07	2007 – 2008 SFY	2005-2009 Final Report Totals
Orleans (Orleans District effective 9/05)	31	9	19		
Baton Rouge	23	18	16		
Thibodaux	2	12	24		
Lafayette	66	70	71		
Lake Charles	55	28	42		
Alexandria	24	45	42		
Shreveport	24	10	18		
Monroe	8	10	0		
Covington*	85	71	85		
Jefferson (Jefferson District effective 9/05)	28	28	35		
Statewide	346	301	352		

*Covington region is divided into two courts (21st and 22nd JDC).

**Data provided represents three quarters for SFY 2006 – 2007.

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Finalized Adoptions

Region	Adoptions SFY 2004-2005 (7/04-6/05)	Adoptions SFY 2005-2006 (7/05-6/06)	*Adoptions SFY 2006- 2007 7/1/06-3/31/07	Adoptions SFY 2007-2008	2005-2009 Final Report Totals
Orleans District	58	24	20		
Baton Rouge	19	32	19		
Thibodaux	10	18	16		
Lafayette	118	101	61		
Lake Charles	37	50	34		
Alexandria	49	78	47		
Shreveport	18	46	25		
Monroe	23	14	3		
Covington	108	96	57		
Jefferson District	32	16	21		
Statewide Total	472	482	303		

*Data submitted represents three quarters for SFY 2006-2007.

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Adoption Finalization Data:

Categories	SFY 2004-2005 (7/1/04 - 6/30/05)	SFY 2005-2006 (7/1/05 - 6/30/06)	SFY 2006-2007 *7/1/06 - 3/31/07	SFY 2007-2008	2005- 2009 Final Report Totals
# Children Finalized	472	482	303		
Average Time to Free (TPR)	1.76	1.85	1.8		
Average Time to Sign 427	.95	.73	.56		
Average Time to Finalization	.31	.47	.46		
Average Time of Length of Time in Care	3.02	3.06	2.81		
Average Age of Children Finalized	6.66	6.4	6.03		

*Data submitted represents three quarters of SFY 2006-2007.

NOTE: Average time expressed in months.

Average Time to Free- Time period from the date the child entered care and the date the child became legally free for adoption.

Average Time to Sign 427-B: Time period from the date the child is legally available for adoption to the date the child enters a formal adoptive placement.

Average Time to Finalization: Time period from signing of 427B (adoption placement agreement) to date finalized.

Average Time in Care: Time period between the child entering care and time of finalization.

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Adoption Incentive Awards

Federal Fiscal Year	Foster Child Adoption	Special Needs	Older Child	Amount Awarded
2005 Baseline	497	253	156	
FFY 2005	453	216	123	No Award
2006 Baseline	497	253	156	
FFY 2006*	437	232	109	No Award
2007 Baseline	497	253	156	
FFY 2007				
2008 Baseline				
FFY 2008				
2009 Baseline				
FFY 2009				

*Data submitted represents three quarters of SFY 2006-2007.)

While Louisiana was unable to increase foster care adoptions in FFY 2006 - 2007, FFY 2005 adoptions exceeded the State's PIP goal of 21.8% of adoptions completed within 24 months. According to FFY 05 data, 24.5% of finalized adoptions occurred within 24 months, up from 18.9% for a 5.6% overall increase. In FFY 2006 data revealed *25.4% of adoptions occurred within 24 months.

An adoption incentive award was not received by the agency again this year. The agency, comparatively speaking, has a high baseline in proportion to our current overall foster care population. This is believed attributable to our timely and diligent implementation of ASFA requirements, and also the significant backlog of termination of parental right type cases that were much more rapidly processed following the passage of that important legislation. Until as recently as last year, Louisiana's total foster care population was on the decline. Cases involving these children, kids who entered state custody within the last year, and who remain in care, have not yet been subject to the required permanency planning hearings. For this reason, we anticipate that the number of children with a goal of adoption will increase substantially within the next 12 months or so as these permanency planning hearings are held.

It deserves noting that certified foster parents are by far the agency's best adoptive placement resource. Regrettably, Louisiana lost a good many foster/prospective adoptive families as the result of the 2005 hurricanes. For a host of reasons, these resources have not been adequately replaced. OCS is optimistic new Home Development recruitment initiatives, discussed in some detail elsewhere in this plan, will aide in replenishing the supply of available placements.

Inter-Country Adoption

Louisiana had no new international adoption disruptions or dissolutions that resulted in foster care entry to report this year. Therefore, the following information is provided to report the progress on the two children previously reported on, who remain in state custody at this time. Originally from Romania, both these children entered state custody as a result of the adoptive

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parents' difficulty in accepting these children unconditionally. The families had unrealistic expectations regarding these children's needs and their ability to quickly adjust to a new life. In both instances, supportive services were offered to no avail prior to the adoption disruption and in an effort to maintain these adoptions.

Child 1- Luke was originally adopted from Romania through Bethany Adoption Services of Michigan. Luke's case is handled in East Baton Rouge Parish and his current goal is Independent Living. Although Luke will be 18 in six months time, he has agreed to voluntarily enroll in the Young Adult Program after his 18th birthday in order to be better prepared for independence. And though he has struggled academically, primarily due to behavioral issues with school authority figures, he is a bright young man who is quite capable intellectually. Luke remains in a stable therapeutic foster home where he continues to receive individualized attention to help meet his needs. Luke plans to enroll in Delgado Community College, in New Orleans, LA. and to one day go into law enforcement. His current foster family has agreed to maintain Luke in placement and continue to support him while he is enrolled in the Young Adult Program.

Child 2 - John was adopted from Bucharest Children's Home in Romania through Adoption Services Associates of San Antonio, Texas. John is reportedly doing well. When he arrived in Louisiana from Texas, he was on thirteen different medications. Currently he is only taking one prescribed medication. Moreover, his behavior has greatly improved over the last couple of years. Although he is still a little immature for his age, he has made good strides in the area of emotional maturation. John is currently in the eighth grade. His 15 month placement, in a single parent foster home, continues to remain a very stable one. His case plan goal is adoption. His foster parent has signed an adoptive placement agreement and the local office in Covington LA. is awaiting the court to schedule the adoption finalization hearing. While John is very much looking forward to being adopted, given his history he is a naturally a little nervous about this event. However, the unconditional love and acceptance he has received from the foster/prospective adoptive parent as well as from the prospective adoptive parent's entire extended family has gone a long way in alleviating John's anxiety.

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Inter-country Adoption Data

State Fiscal Year	Number of Children With "Out of Country Birth Location"
1983-84	0
1984-85	1
1985-86	35
1986-87	49
1987-88	29
1988-89	40
1989-90	39
1990-91	27
1991-92	29
1992-93	28
1993-94	10
1994-95	13
1995-96	7
1996-97	8
1997-98	15
1998-99	22
1999-00	37
2000-01	60
2001-02	45
2002-03	118
2003-04	69
2004-05	84
2005-06	59
2006-07 (through 3/31/07)	58
2007-08	
2008-09	
TOTAL	882

The data was derived from the TIPS download files for the Adoption Petition Program. All cases reported above were closed in the Adoption Petition Program. Cases are counted in the year in which the adoption petition program case was closed. There may be instances in which an adoption is completed judicially in one year and not recorded as closed in the adoption petition program until the following year. This could contribute to an over-count for some years and an undercount for other years. NOTE: If a family does not seek to have their international adoption recognized in Louisiana, by going through the adoptions petition process, they remain unknown to the agency.

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15. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program Report for Fiscal Year 2006 and Application for Federal Fiscal Year 2007

Program Description:

The State of Louisiana, as part of child welfare's recovery from the hurricanes of 2005, through an offer of technical assistance from the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), recently invited a full review of its aging-out program by the National Resource Center for Youth Development (NRCYD). A comprehensive plan to realign and redesign services, policies, and practice implementation to better serve these youth is continuing with technical assistance from the NRCYD.

The National Resource Center for Family-Centered Practice and Permanency Planning (NRCFCPPP) has provided and will continue to provide training on permanent connections which we have named: Louisiana Connections for Permanency.

Louisiana continues to deliver services to achieve the six purposes of Chafee Foster care Independence Program while redesigning its services to maximize effectiveness. The recommendations of the NRCYD report, (attached) have been accepted by OCS management. This redesign is mandated as a key initiative. The recommendations of the NRCYD report have also been endorsed by the House and Senate Health and Welfare Committees to study issues related to the status and well-being of children in foster care in the State authorized by House Concurrent Resolution (HCR) 281.

While the State looks towards the redesign of its programs to serve older youth, a review of the accomplishments and progress during the redesign, on each of the six purposes of CFCIP are as follows:

Population Served

In FFY 2004 – 2005 a total of 1650 youth were served in the CFCIP program. In FFY 2005 – 2006 a total of 1391 youth were served by the ten contract providers within 48 parishes, located throughout Louisiana. These totals are an unduplicated total of youth served. With the CFCIP funding, OCS served eligible youth 15 years old and older up to age 18 who were likely to remain in foster care until age 18. Former foster care youth in the Young Adult Program (YAP) who are 18 years up to age 21 and have aged out of foster care are also served. YAP is a voluntary program; to continue participation the young adults in YAP must attend college, high school to obtain a high school diploma, GED classes or vocational training. In 2007 – 2008 the Agency expects to serve 1749 youth.

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Goal 1: Helping youth make the transition to self-sufficiency

Action Plan:

Step 1- Provide Independent Living Skills Training to assist youth with budgeting/money management, housing, career, planning, employment preparation, education, communication, personal care, human sexuality, consumer awareness, safety and community resources.

Step 2- Retrain all independent living skills providers, community partners and juvenile justice agencies on the Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment.

Update on Specific Accomplishments/Progress in SFY 2006-2007

Outreach efforts to attract eligible youth to the CFCIP programs continued to be a key element in the delivery of services. CFCIP providers continued to send flyers to group homes, tribes, residential treatment facilities, schools and other community based sources for possible referrals for CFCIP services. Providers were also given information on how to contact all eligible youth to individually offer CFCIP services to the youth. CFCIP providers have also met with school social workers to help identify the foster children in school.

The CFCIP provides many different types of services to transition youth into independence. Independent living skills training is one of the most important services. Independent living skills' training encompasses assistance with budgeting/money management, housing, career planning, employment preparation, education, communication, personal care, human sexuality, consumer awareness, safety and community resources.

In an effort to involve youth in program planning, ten focus groups were held in groupings of three regions of the state. Youth, foster/adoptive parents, independent living providers, residential providers and OCS staff helped to review the independent living program and provided input into the restructuring of the program. (This area needing improvement in Louisiana's PIP relates to item 18, involvement in case planning).

Assessment of the youth's independent living skills before and after the independent living skills training is another component of the CFCIP services.

Two virtual cities were created in the Northern and Southern parts of the State. Approximately 200 youth attended and learned budgeting, prioritizing needs and daily living skills.

While previously one CFCIP provider had specific focus on the vocational aspects of independent living, OCS' collaboration with Louisiana's Department of Labor (DOL), has resulted with increased utilization of services for vocational assessment, job preparation, job placement and continuing vocational support services.

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All contracted CFCIP providers offered counseling services for youth in the program. Counseling on an individual and group basis with the youth was a critical part of the CFCIP programs, and increased the clients' ability to utilize the independent living skills taught. Some providers also offered parenting assessments and group training on parenting, when needed.

The providers of CFCIP services integrated and coordinated services to youth in their programs by their community networking efforts. Information about and referral to any other needed source of community service was an essential component provided by the CFCIP programs. As a result of receiving donations from the community, some CFCIP providers continue to provide household items, furniture, and personal items for youth in their programs. The CFCIP providers also provided home visits to the living arrangements of the youth in the programs. The home visits offered unique opportunities to coordinate services with the foster parents to reinforce the independent living skills taught in the programs.

Several former foster care youth were members of a legislative committee reviewing the foster care system mentioned above. The perspectives of former foster care youth proved to be an invaluable asset to the committee.

With technical assistance from the ACF through the NRCYS, Louisiana recently completed retraining all Independent Living Skill Providers, community partners and juvenile justice agencies on the Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment. The Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment will be a major component of our redesign of services for older youth, incorporating the advantages of involvement of foster care providers and child welfare staff in the preparation for independence. It is planned that residential providers, foster parents and CASA will be offered Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment training in an effort to coordinate youths' independent living skills in a collaborative effort to help the youth reach and sustain self-sufficiency and permanency.

Methods to Measure/Outcome Data

Youth entering the independent living skills program completed an initial assessment of their independent living skills using the Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment. The assessment allows for an individual evaluation of the youth's skill levels and the services needed to improve his or her skills. A written individual independent living plan of services was developed based on the initial needs assessment. The plan addressed the identified needs and the plan was incorporated into the case plan for the youth. At the conclusion of the program, youth completed another assessment using the Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment. The second assessment documents the increase in the youth's independent living skills. A transition plan is also developed for each youth detailing services needed to transition to independent living at age 18. The plan identifies the assistance needed by the young adult and coordinates the needed services. CFCIP providers also participated in Family Team Conferences (FTC) and discharge planning conferences when requested to provide information and assist in the planning for youth.

A second way used to measure the outcomes of the CFCIP programs was the follow-up surveys administered to the clients after they successfully finished the independent living program. The surveys are opportunities for the youth to give feedback on services to the service providers.

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Each CFCIP provider reviews the data tabulated from the surveys from the youth attending that provider's program. That data indicates the overall educational progress of the youth, living arrangements, level of independence, and other data and assists the provider in planning for service provision and delivery in the future.

Another manner in which involved partners in reviewing and restructuring the ILSP was to administer surveys to independent living providers regarding their input on their teaching style, i.e, open/closed groups, number of attendants, etc. The survey results, as tabulated by the NRCYS, are located in the attached document, the Final Recommendation Report.

The NRCFCPPP will continue to train staff in Family Finding and Engagement. By August, 2007 the entire Foster Care/Adoption first line workers, supervisors, and district managers will have been trained. On-going consultation and training will take place with the Resource Center in problem solving and measuring outcomes for the success of the program. This program will assist staff and youth in developing and maintaining permanent connections.

Goal 2: Helping youth receive the education, training and services necessary to obtain employment

Action Plan:

Step 1- Assist youth with costs of room and board, education/training program costs and any other needed support services

Step 2- Assist youth with obtaining vocations of interest

Update on Specific Accomplishments/Progress in SFY 2006-2007

For foster children under 18 who are attending education or training programs, OCS continued to pay room and board costs, education/training program costs and any other needed support services. The cost of education for foster children were paid by Title XX, Title IV-B, Title IV-E and state general funds.

For young adults in YAP and attending secondary education, state general funds paid for room and board costs, while Title XX funds and other funds paid for educational/vocational costs. For young adults in post secondary education, Education and Training Vouchers (ETV) were used to supplement the additional cost of education not covered by other sources.

CFCIP providers also utilize a Self Directed Search vocational interest instrument in the independent living skills training to direct youth to vocations of interest. The independent living skills curriculum also teaches the necessary skills for obtaining employment and remaining employed.

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Youth attended educational and employment forums sponsored by the CFCIP providers. Youth considered employment options from local businesses and educational opportunities presented by representatives from educational and vocational schools. The young adults obtained information on admission and had their questions answered about a particular school.

Through OCS' collaboration with the DOL, youth continue to be referred to career centers for job services and participation in summer employment. OCS partnered with DOL in order to refer foster children and former foster children to DOL for services. Youth were eligible to receive job readiness services, employment assistance, job placement, tutoring, mentoring and support services. By interagency agreement, a joint policy for both OCS and DOL eliminated any barriers in the referral of foster children and former foster children for services and simplified the referral process.

OCS' Human Resources' Division has created a brochure on state employment opportunities (attached) CPPP for current and former foster youth which is currently being distributed to the CFCIP providers and our older youth.

Methods to Measure/Outcome Data

The agency plans to obtain the actual number of youth assisted with costs of room and board, education/training program costs and any other needed support services and the number of youth referred to career centers for job services and number of participants in summer employment. Data will be obtained through ILP and ETV providers as well as through LDOL for information on referrals to career centers.

Goal 3: Helping youth prepare for and enter post secondary training and education institutions

Action Plan:

Step 1- Provide educational/vocational services including tutoring, costs of education or vocational training, books, supplies, fees, GED tests, college admission tests, and any other service needed to gain admission for post secondary education or training.

Step 2: Continue to give youth insight into what type of educational or vocational training is available and the curriculum involved with each type of program.

Update on Specific Accomplishments/Progress in SFY 2006-2007

Foster children and young adults are provided educational/vocational services including tutoring, costs of education or vocational training, books, supplies, fees, GED tests, college admission tests, and any other service needed to gain admission for post secondary education or training. Educational and vocational forums sponsored by the CFCIP providers continue to give youth insight into what type of educational or vocational training was available and the curriculum involved with each type of program.

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OCS staff and the CFCIP contractors continue to provide assistance to youth in completing the federal financial aid application and other applications needed to attend college or vocational training programs. CFCIP providers also coordinated with post secondary institutions in the State to coordinate admission, funding and the ETV grants.

As described in the previous section, funding from various sources pays for the cost of education for this post secondary education and training. More detailed information can be found in the section dealing with the ETV. An educational plan is also in place to assist the youth in determining an educational or vocational goal and an action plan for achieving it.

Additionally, HCR 228 of the 2006 Louisiana legislative session established a working coalition between OCS and the Department of Education (DOE) to provide a plan for improved educational outcomes for students in the foster care system. The house committee wants the creation of a participation census to track the educational success of foster care students including standardized test scores, high school and college graduation rates, and university and technical college acceptance rates and graduation rates. It is hoped that increased collaboration and coordination between child welfare and education will improve outcomes for all foster children.

Methods to Measure/Outcome Data

Obtain the number of foster children and young adults that are provided educational/vocational services including tutoring, costs of education or vocational training, books, supplies, fees, GED tests, college admission tests, and any other service needed to gain admission for post secondary education or training. Obtain the number of foster children and youth that attend Educational and vocational forums. Obtain the number of educational and vocational forums provided by the CFCIP providers.

Goal 4: Providing personal and emotional support to youth through mentors and the promotion of interactions with dedicated adults

Action Plan:

Step 1- Through case planning, OCS staff attempt to identify a permanent lifetime connection and support for each child.

Step 2- CFCIP providers continue to offer aftercare services to youth in handling emotional crises, which may occur while transitioning into independence after leaving foster care.

Update on Specific Accomplishments/Progress in SFY 2006-2007

After completing the independent living skills training, many young adults stayed in contact with the CFCIP providers indicating that supportive relationships have been established with the clients. Moreover, it appears that aftercare services provided by the CFCIP providers continue to be supportive to the youth in handling emotional crises, which may occur while transitioning into independence after leaving foster care.

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OCS staff are also a direct source of support for youth while in foster care and for young adults in YAP. While in placement, foster parents, childcare workers, and teachers are also providing personal and emotional support to youth. In case planning for youth, OCS staff is identifying a permanent lifetime connection and support for each child.

Methods to Measure/Outcome Data

The search for a permanent connection for our youth has become paramount in our redesign of services for older youth. Through an offer of technical assistance from ACF, Louisiana is currently working with the NRCFCPPP and the Court Improvement Program to incorporate family finding and engagement strategy to establish connections for permanency. Older foster youth have been prioritized for this initiative and Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) has been included in the training for this initiative.

The agency will conduct a utilization review on connections to permanency that measures the personal and emotional support to youth transitioning out of care. Through the use of a control group of staff, the agency will track the success of locating permanent connections to stability, well being, safety and permanency of youth.

The agency is also drafting policy on the implementation of searching for permanent connections.

Goal 5: Providing financial, housing, counseling, employment, education, and other appropriate support and services to former foster care recipients between 18 and 21 years of age

Action Plan:

Step 1- Provide services such as room and board, educational or vocational services, clothing and other support services to former foster care youth ages 18 years up to 21 years old in YAP

Update on Specific Accomplishments/Progress in SFY 2006-2007

OCS provided services such as, room and board, educational or vocational services, clothing and other support services to former foster care youth ages 18 years up to 21 years old in YAP. State general funds primarily pay for the room and board for YAP clients. CFCIP funds are used to supplement YAP funding for room and board for youth 18 years and older in YAP, when the YAP budget of state general funds is depleted. In this fiscal year, \$155,560 of the CFCIP funds or 11 % of the total amount of CFCIP funds were used to provide funding for supervised apartment living for youth over the age of 18 years old.

In YAP, the types of living arrangements included foster family homes, supervised apartments, college dormitories and independent apartment living. In YAP, room and board included housing, food, rent, rental deposits, and utilities. In addition to room and board in various types of living arrangements, youth were provided with clothing, transportation, educational, vocational, mental health or employment assistance.

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Additionally, OCS is working with public and private non-profit community partners in Louisiana's recovery from the hurricanes of 2005 and foster care youth have been established as one of three priorities for permanent supportive housing.

OCS continues to provide Medicaid services for youth ages 18 up to the age of 21 in YAP as well as covers any needed medical care not covered by Medicaid or other community resources. OCS staff provided case management services, supervised living arrangements and coordinated services and supports.

Methods to Measure/Outcome Data

The agency plans to use data/TIPS reports to measure services provided to the number of youth who have utilized services such as room and board, educational or vocational services, clothing and other support services to former foster care youth ages 18 years up to 21 years old in YAP.

Goal 6: Providing vouchers for education and training, including post secondary education to youth who have aged out of foster care

Action Plan:

Step 1- Determine eligibility of present or previous foster care status

Step 2- Issue request for information from Independent Living Providers and every Independent Living Coordinator in the U.S regarding how they use ETV funds.

Update on Specific Accomplishments/Progress in SFY 2006-2007

This year there continued to be eight CFCIP providers delivering ETV services in the State. Eligibility of present foster care status or previous foster care status was determined by a check of the computerized data system. Eligible youth received ETV assistance in the amount of the student's need, which did not exceed the smaller of \$5,000 per year or the actual cost of attendance. The ETV coordinator reported the amount of the ETV assistance to the post secondary institution that the student attended to avoid duplication of benefits.

If the young adult was not in YAP, then ETV was the basic source of funding for their cost of education in addition to any federal grants and other scholarships. For young adults in YAP up to age 21, state general funds and some CFCIP funds paid for room and board costs, while Title XX funds and other funds paid for their educational costs. For young adults in YAP, ETV was used to supplement the additional costs of education not covered by other sources.

In order to develop a successful plan for completion of secondary education, the youth in the ETV program participated in a planning conference with the ETV coordinator. The youth could invite other significant persons such as the foster care worker, foster parent, childcare provider, or educational counselors. The focus of the conference was to assess the youth's strengths, needs, set educational goals and develop a plan to achieve the goals. The plan was youth centered and youth driven.

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Methods to Measure/Outcome Data

Periodic case reviews of the youth's progress assures that the youth will receive the services to meet their educational or training needs and achieve their educational goals. The young adult submitted his or her grades each semester or each quarter for the ETV coordinator and case and program managers to evaluate the young adult's progress and performance. This documentation justified the continued expenditure of funds for the education or training program.

The agency also plans to gather and review information received from the request for information to determine the next step in creating an ETV process that can be easily measured.

Outcomes of the ETV Program

For the youth in ETV, 136 of the 159 or 85% of the youth had a good outcome because they graduated or continued in college or vocational training with satisfactory progress. Some of the youth served with ETV funds have continued their education and are obtaining Master Degrees.

Ninety percent of the ETV funds were spent on the vouchers and ten percent spent on staff salaries, travel, supplies and expenses, etc. to operate the program. The voucher expenses for youth included college or vocational tuition, books and supplies, dormitory costs, meal tickets, off campus living expenses, computers required for college or vocational training, tutoring, and child care. The vouchers did not exceed the smallest of \$5,000 per year or the total cost of attendance.

Activities planned for ETV in SFY 2007-2008

The plan for the next fiscal year is to continue to improve service delivery. In order to strengthen the program in the next fiscal year, providers and OCS staff will intensify efforts to market the ETV program. One of the recommendations of the NRCYD is to explore centralization of the ETV program function. This recommendation will be addressed in the redesign of transitional services and may impact the delivery of ETV funds in 2008.

Younger youth will continue to be targeted to encourage completion of high school or a GED and make youth aware of their eligibility for ETV upon completion of high school or a GED.

Another priority is outreach to foster parents and childcare providers to market the ETV program. ETV providers will continue to educate these groups about ETV and the need to emphasize post secondary education and training for foster youth.

Additionally, ETV providers will continue to increase coordination with post secondary institutions. OCS will work with Information Technology in developing the new automated data information and tracking program to include data on youth's educational status for automated tabulation of youth eligible and needing referral to the ETV program.

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Data On Youth Served in ETV

The data on youth served is based on the SFY and not the FFY. In the 2005 – 2006 SFY, there were 159 youth served by the ETV program in 48 parishes throughout the State of Louisiana. There were 25 more youth served this year than last year. At the present time, OCS' information system does not collect information on foster children or YAP clients' educational levels or when they complete an educational or vocational program.

Supplemental Data on Youth Eligible/Served in the CFCIP and ETV Programs and Outcome of the Programs

During some part or all of the fiscal year (October 1, 2005 through September 30, 2006), there were 2,595 foster care children and young adult clients who were age eligible for CFCIP services. In the 2005 – 2006 fiscal year, there were 1,650 clients served by the CFCIP programs.

Collaboration with other Federal and State Programs

OCS and the CFCIP providers continue to collaborate with community agencies, community groups, businesses, universities, churches, community professionals, youth and individual supporters of the CFCIP programs throughout the State. The community support has continued to be enthusiastic. Local school districts, public libraries, churches and vocational schools continued to donate their facilities for CFCIP classes so the location of the classes can be as convenient as possible for the youth.

CFCIP programs continue to collaborate with local mental health centers, hospitals, the United Way, Boys and Girls Clubs, Juvenile Courts, Goodwill Industries, National Park Services, IRS, YWCA, vocational schools, Job Corps, the National Guard Youth Challenge and the Salvation Army.

OCS' continued partnership with the DOL, DOE and other state departments to coordinate services for foster children and youth aging out of care has proved to be invaluable for our youth. We continue to participate in DOL's Shared Vision for Youth through the Interagency Youth Work Group and attended the regional forum in Dallas in June, 2007. The forum focuses attention and resources on Louisiana's youth including foster children and former foster children. In addition to OCS, DOL and other officials with the Louisiana Workforce Commission, Job Corps, local workforce investment representatives, DOE, Children's Cabinet and the Governor's Office are all members of the work group. The DOL sponsored a meeting with the Workforce Investment regions, Office of Youth Development (OYD) and OCS to develop plans on referrals and meeting the needs of Louisiana's youth.

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OCS continues to coordinate with other state agencies, such as the Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH), Office of Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) and Bureau of Community Supports and Services to identify foster children and former foster children who may be eligible for services for developmentally delayed youth. The coordination continues to result in access to federally funded Medicaid Waiver services and other community based services. Interagency staffings are the mechanism used to coordinate and access services from these agencies. Collaboration with this agency will continue in the next fiscal year.

Likewise, the agency has coordinated with the DHH, Office of Mental Health (OMH) and Office of Addictive Disorders (OAD) to identify foster children and former foster children who may be eligible for federally funded services such as community outpatient, inpatient, and Mental Health Rehabilitation Option services. Interagency staffing was the mechanism used to coordinate and access services from these agencies. Collaboration with this agency will continue in the next fiscal year.

CFCIP providers continued to coordinate with transitional living programs and various housing alternatives to explore new ways to meet the housing needs of the independent living participants. Additionally, coordination with local parish housing authorities has continued. Collaboration with these agencies will continue in the next fiscal year.

OCS continued to partner with Youth Oasis in Baton Rouge in supporting the operation of a transition living program funded under Part B of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 to provide housing and other services to homeless youth and former foster care youth. This program continued to provide housing and other support services to youth. Collaboration with these agencies will continue in the next fiscal year.

Educational Training Voucher providers continued to partner with post secondary institutions in coordinating the ETV program. Brochures on the ETV program are provided to the post secondary institutions. The institutions were also asked to refer any youth to ETV if the youth indicated on the federal financial aid application that they were previously in foster care. The ETV providers' coordination with other agencies included the DOE, the DOL's Workforce Investment Programs, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, and the Orphan Foundation of America to access additional services for foster care youth. Coordination with these agencies will continue next year.

The Louisiana Coalition of Independent Living Skills Providers continues to be composed of OCS' program staff and representatives of the CFCIP providers. The coalition meets quarterly as a group to exchange information on services, service delivery and provide training to the participants. Additional purposes are to define barriers and problems in service delivery and develop a unified approach to solving problems common to all members.

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Training in the Fiscal Year 2007

Because of Louisiana's continued recovery from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, infrastructure, coordination and collaboration necessary for a single Statewide Youth Independent Living Conference was not possible and therefore, two separate Youth Independent Living Conferences are scheduled for the summer of 2007. There will be one conference in North Louisiana and one in New Orleans. With the assistance of the Youth Advisory Board, CFCIP providers will offer youth many educational/vocational and employment forums as well as a Reality City. These forums are opportunities to obtain information to make informed decisions for their future. The importance of completing secondary education, and going on to post secondary educational/vocational training will continue to be emphasized. Both conferences are expected to have approximately 200 participants and the total of \$13,000.00 is budgeted for payment with CFCIP funds.

In all training initiatives youth will be invited to attend and provide leadership in the development of the redesign.

CFCIP providers continued to offer youth many educational/vocational and employment forums. These forums were opportunities to obtain information to make informed decisions for their future. The importance of completing secondary education, and going on to post secondary educational/vocational training was emphasized. CFCIP providers also presented specialized training and consultation for foster parents and other child care providers to build skills in working with this specific population of foster children.

In conjunction with the NRCYD youth leadership groups will be developed and the youth will be trained so that they can be a vital part of their program.

In partnership with the NRCYD, 32 more participants will be attending the Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment Train the Trainer. The participants will include CASA, OYD, foster parents, residential providers and staff.

The NRCFCPPP will continue to train staff in Family Finding and Engagement. By August, 2007 the entire Foster Care/Adoption first line workers, supervisors, and district managers will have been trained. On-going consultation and training will take place with the Resource Center in problem solving and measuring outcomes for the success of the program. This program will assist staff and youth in developing and maintaining permanent connections.

Efforts are being made to develop training with the NRCFPPP concerning reunification of older transitioning youth with their family, especially those who have Alternative Plan Living Arrangements (APLA). This will involve the Court Improvement Project, OYD, and the courts. Also in conjunction with the NRCFPPP training will be developed for Family Group Decision Making and how to include it in case planning for youth transitioning out of care. These trainings will continue into 2008.

Some CFCIP providers attended the Pathways to Adulthood National Independent/Transitional Living Conference and Independent Living Forum in Portland, Oregon as well as National

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Independent Living Association/Daniel Memorial Conference in Florida. All Independent Living Skills providers were retrained in the Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment.

Training Planned for Fiscal Year 2008

Currently, Louisiana plans to return to a single Statewide Youth Independent Living Conference in 2008. With the assistance of the Youth Advisory Boards, CFCIP providers will offer youth many educational/vocational and employment forums as well as a Reality City. These forums will be opportunities to obtain information to make informed decisions for their future. The importance of completing secondary education, and going on to post secondary educational/vocational training will continue to be emphasized.

Other trainings planned for 2008 will center on implementation of all the recommendations of the NRCYD report. The NRCYD detailed eleven (11) recommendations to improve services and promote better outcomes for youth leaving the State's care. Training will be needed for OCS staff, CFCIP providers, youth and foster parents to effectively deploy the NRC recommendations. Additionally, to realistically plan for the discharge of youth from foster care, continued training will be needed in FY 2008 for Family Finding and Engagement techniques to assure that all Louisiana youth exiting foster care have permanent positive connections.

Training with the NRCFPPP concerning reunification of older transitioning youth with their family, especially those who have Alternative Plan Living Arrangements (APLA) will continue in 2008. This will involve the Court Improvement Project, OYD, and the courts. Also in conjunction with the NRCFPPP training will continue for Family Group Decision Making and how to include it in case planning for youth transitioning out of care.

CFCIP providers will continue to provide specialized training and consultation for foster parents and other child care providers to build skills in working with this specific population of foster children during the year. The Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment will be used to involve foster parents and residential providers in the independent living skills training our youth receive.

OCS' central office has dedicated another program manager position to concentrate on the needs of older foster care youth who will work with the ILP manager in the redesign of transition services and identify additional staff training needs.

OCS has requested additional technical assistance through the NRCYD to help with the development of new Requests for Proposals for independent living services and for assistance in determining the best practices for the management of ETV funds.

It is expected that the OCS CFCIP Specialist and other program managers will attend national independent living conferences with some Louisiana CFCIP providers. Also youth will be invited to attend a national youth conference.

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Financial and Statistical Information Reporting

The actual final expenditure of the CFCIP allocation of \$1,358,131 for the federal fiscal year (FFY) 2005 is \$1,358,131. The amount spent on room and board in this time period was \$155,560 or 11%. The funds were used to pay for supervised apartment living for youth who are 18 years old up to 21 years old. In FFY 2006 to March, 2007, \$606,879 of the allocation has been expended. The plan for the room and board portion will be to fund supervised apartment living for youth over the age of 18.

The actual final expenditure of the ETV allocation for the FFY 2005 is \$400,401. In FFY 2006 to March, 2007, \$247,198 of the allocation has been expended.

In FFY 2004 – 2005 there were 114 youth awarded vouchers and of that number, 66 were new vouchers. In FFY 2005-2006 there were 139 youth served. Of the 139 youth, there were 79 youth receiving vouchers for the first time. By the end of FFY 2006 – 2007 OCS anticipates having served 147 youth in the ETV program with 84 of those youth receiving vouchers for the first time.

In FFY 2006-2007, 93 youth have received vouchers thus far this year. Of this number, there were 25 youth receiving vouchers for the first time. However, the Agency anticipates by the end of the FFY to have increased the number of youth overall and the number of new youth receiving vouchers.

ETV services will continue to be available in every region in the State in the FFY 2008. For 2008, the estimated number of eligible youth to be served is 156 with an estimated 89 youth receiving new vouchers.

Activities planned in SFY 2007-2008

The NRCYD provided a comprehensive report recommending comprehensive changes to realign and redesign services, policies, and practice to better serve youth exiting foster care. Louisiana intends to implement all eleven (11) recommendations of the National Child Welfare Resource Center for Youth Development. The eleven recommendations are as follows:

- Improve Independent Living Services
- Improve Accessibility to Independent Living Services
- Improve Coordination of Independent Living Services with Foster parents, Residential Child Care Providers, and Caseworkers
- Establish a Communication Plan for the Independent Living Program and the Young Adult Program

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- Develop a Plan to Utilize Faith-Based and Civic Groups to Access Resources Not Readily Available to Transitioning Youth
- Expand Options for Transitional Living
- Establish an Interagency Work Group (Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, Disabilities, Labor, etc) to Establish a State Approach for all Youth Transitioning Out of Care with Specific Attention Paid to “Non College Track” Youth
- Improve Youth Involvement in Case Planning (Relates to item 18 of Louisiana’s PIP)
- Improvements to the Young Adult Program (YAP)
- Review the Current Administration of the Education and Training Voucher Program
- General Recommendations

NOTE: For detailed information regarding each recommendation, please refer to the DSS/OCS, Independent Living and Young Adult Program Review, Performed by: University of Oklahoma National Child Welfare Resource Center for Youth Development. In addition, the Louisiana Legislature reviewed the final recommendations report of the Task Force on Foster Care in response to HCR 281 and included the eleven recommendations of the National Resource Center for Youth Services.

While Celeste Skinner remains the lead in Independent Living Services, the CFCIP and ETV programs, all program managers are becoming knowledgeable of necessary services for older youth and are actively involved in the redesign of our youth transition program. The administration of the program will remain at the central office level, while program managers assigned responsibility for particular regions of the State will insure adequate training for staff and monitoring of the IL services provided through contractors.

The opportunities identified in OCS’ collaborative assessment of the current CFCIP and young adult programs will continue to be implemented in the redesign. The NRCYD in Tulsa, Oklahoma will continue to provide consultation and technical assistance. OCS staff, current CFCIP providers, foster youth and community partners will play an important role in the development of appropriate transition plans for foster children. Emphasis will be placed on transition planning at an early stage in order to develop the most appropriate plan at the earliest possible date. The perspective used in developing the case plans for youth and families and transition plans will continue to be a Positive Youth Development approach. The NRCFCPPP will also be a major player in the case plan integrating transition planning earlier in the youth’s life and in developing a permanent plan for the youth.

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A key strategy in developing permanency for older youth is the identification of permanent contacts and having the permanent contacts involved in the case planning process. CFCIP providers will continue to work closely with OCS staff, CASA and others in identifying permanent contacts, listing the permanent contacts on the CFCIP plan, and involving the permanent contacts in the planning.

Expanding opportunities statewide for vocational testing and counseling regarding higher education and employment for foster children is also a priority this year. OCS will create these opportunities by partnering with the DOL and the DOE under their Shared Vision for Youth strategy.

OCS has been utilizing the Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment as a pre and post assessment of independent living skills for youth. OCS will continue to partner with Casey Family Programs in the testing and implementation of the Chafee Assessment.

Continued emphasis will be placed on collaboration with community organizations in order to maximize services and new funding streams for those services. The CFCIP providers will play a key role in developing these connections statewide.

Services Available to American Indians

The four federally recognized American Indian tribes in Louisiana have been consulted regarding state's CFCIP and ETV five-year plan and for the APSR. The Social Service Directors of these American Indian tribes in Louisiana were asked for their input and suggestions regarding the plans.

In Louisiana, American Indian children in foster care are eligible for benefits and received the same foster care services as other children in care. Any American Indian foster child of the appropriate age group is eligible for any needed services from the CFCIP, ETV and YAP. American Indian foster children have received these services.

Trust Funds

Louisiana does not place CFCIP funds in trust funds for youth.

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16. PROMOTING SAFE AND STABLE FAMILIES

In FFY 2005, \$3,812,690 of state general funds were spent to match federal Title IV-B, subpart 2 federal funds of \$11,438,069. The agency assures that significant portions of expenditures will be made in these four areas and is proposing to use the following percentages for Title IV-B, subpart 2 funding:

- Prevention and Support Services (PSS) – 22.5% - Community-based services that promote the well-being of children and families and are designed to increase the strength and stability of families.
- Crisis Intervention (CI) – 22.5% - Services for children and families designed to help families at risk or in crisis.
- Time Limited Reunification Services (TLR) – 22.5% - Services and activities that are provided to a child who is removed from the child's home and placed in a foster family or a child care institution, and to the parents or primary caregiver of such a child, in order to facilitate the reunification of the child safely and in a timely fashion.
- Adoption Promotion and Support Services (APSS) – 22.5% - Services and activities designed to encourage more adoptions out of foster care as well as pre and post-adoptive services and activities.

NOTE: PSSF services listed on the following pages have been identified by PSS, CI, TLR and/or APSS.

The agency has taken a number of actions steps to meet the goals of safety, permanency and well being through the use of Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) resources. Services provided for prevention and family support, family preservation, time-limited reunification and adoption promotion and support include the following:

Service/Program Description: In-home services and post-adoption case management services are offered through Resource Centers in order to assist families with permanency. Major services provided include therapy, parenting, mentoring, respite and information, referral and advocacy services. The agency continues to receive some assistance from Volunteers of America and Wendy's Wonderful Kids in the recruitment of adoptive families. (PSS, APSS)

Service/Program Description: Louisiana Advocacy Support Team (LAST) provides support to foster and adoptive parents who are dealing with allegations of abuse and neglect. This service is operated out of the Monroe Region Family Resource Center. The contract has been extended for three additional years. The LAST volunteer can be a mentor, teacher helper and friend to foster and adoptive parents should the need exist. (CI & PSS)

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Service/Program Description: Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) process continues in the following regions: Shreveport, Baton Rouge and Lafayette. This process engages extended family and other persons closely connected to the family in assuring safety, permanency, and well being of foster children in placement, independent living and/or upon return home. (For more on FGDM refer to the CAPTA section of this document.) (PSS, CI, TLR)

Service/Program Description: Legal Contracts to Assist with TPR Backlog. The agency has contracted with attorneys in Lafayette, Shreveport, Monroe, Thibodaux, Covington and New Orleans Regions to assist with this process. The total amount of contract attorneys for the aforementioned regions is 15. (APSS)

Service/Program Description: Healthy Start Services provides parenting skills for first time parents. This service is offered in Shreveport Region. The Shreveport utilizes the Family Resource Centers for 95% of parenting referrals, yet, Healthy Start Services are still available to assist OCS clients. (PSS)

Service/Program Description: Preventive Assistance (PAF) and Reunification Assistance Funds (RAF) are funds to provide “basics of living” needs and assistance to prevent out of home placement and to families being prepared for reunification. (PSS & TLR)

Infant Team Program/Service Description: Specialized, multi-disciplinary assessment and treatment targeted to the needs of very young abused and neglected children and their immediate caregivers. (PSS & TLR)

Population Served: The target population is very young abused and neglected children 0-60 months and their immediate caregivers in Jefferson and Orleans Parishes. Approximately 95 young children and their immediate caregivers (including their parents and foster parents) are served by these programs each year. These programs are specifically designed to meet multiple complex needs of young abused and neglected children and their caregivers.

Update on Specific Accomplishments/Progress for SFY 2006 - 2007: Currently, two programs provide specialized assessment and treatment for very young abused and neglected children and their immediate caregivers in Jefferson Parish (The Tulane/JPHSA Infant Team) and Orleans Parish (The Permanency Infant and Preschool Program in New Orleans). The Jefferson Parish program is led by Dr. Charley Zeanah and the Tulane University School of Medicine’s Department of Psychiatry and Neurology and administered through the Jefferson Parish Human Services Authority. The Orleans Parish program is led by Dr. Joy Osofsky and Dr. Amy Dickson and the LSU Health Sciences Center’s Division of Infant, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry which also administers the program. The Tulane/JPHSA Infant Team has received a large increase in referrals of very young abused and neglected children which has been attributed to the convergence of at least three factors: (1) a 2005 law that mandates drug testing in newborn infants suspected of perinatal substance exposure; (2) a 2005 law mandating court intervention for the removal of a child from a biological parent's home, even if the child is being placed in the home of a relative; and (3) ongoing stressors related to Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath. The Orleans Permanency Infant and Preschool Program continues to receive referrals however they have not experienced the same large increase seen by Jefferson. Many

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individuals dislocated from Orleans have yet to return given the widespread and devastating destruction of homes and community.

Specialized treatment includes individual treatment with the child to address the abuse and related emotional and behavioral issues; relationship-based treatment with the parents and the child to improve their interactions; and individual or group therapy with parents. Additional specialized services are provided according to the individual needs of the child and family e.g. psychiatric treatment (psychotropic medication for the parents), substance abuse counseling, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy or other specialized services for the child.

Mental health needs of infants and families served by the child welfare system, outreach processes, and extent of specialized services

At the end of SFY 2005-2006, thirty-two percent (32%) of the children in foster care statewide in Louisiana were ages 0-4 years and thirty-seven percent (37 %) were ages 0-5 years. Of the new entries into foster care during SFY 2005-2006, forty-three percent (43%) of the children were ages 4 and under and forty-nine percent (49%) were ages 5 and under. Over 90% of young foster children ages 0-4 entering foster care in SFY 2005-2006 lived outside Orleans and Jefferson parishes and thus most likely did not have access to specialized infant team services. A few very young abused and neglected children outside Orleans and Jefferson may access specialized infant mental health services through the Early Childhood Supports and Services program but the vast majority are not receiving specialized assessment and treatment services.

Very young foster children typically have been seriously abused and/or neglected by their parents. They have been removed from their homes and placed in a new home, with individuals they may or may not know, during a critical period of typically incredible growth and development in the human life cycle. They often are disproportionately developmentally delayed and also have greater emotional and cognitive problems than children generally. Such difficulties may relate to the abuse and/or neglect, attachment and loss issues arising from removal and placement in a new home, as well as biological factors and environmental conditions present in the child's life generally. In sum, very young foster children typically have multiple needs, some of which (such as the relationship between them and their parents which led to the abuse and/or neglect in the first place) are very complex.

Children come to the attention of the child welfare system through a reporting system whereby individuals concerned about a child's safety and well-being call the DSS/OCS to report their concerns. If the report contains sufficient evidence of potential abuse or neglect, an investigation is initiated. Recent federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act amendments have expanded the expected intervention purview of DSS/OCS to include substance affected infants. These infants and their families may have mental health needs as well. DSS/OCS in partnership with medical providers will be implementing these new expectations this fiscal year.

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Methods to Measure/Outcomes Data: The Infant Team was profiled by Child Welfare League of America as an emerging practice in 2003 based on research completed in 2001. Research regarding longer term salutary effects of infant team intervention is continuing. The Child Behavior Study, initiated in 2000, is comparing the developmental outcomes of maltreated young children served by the infant team to non-maltreated children matched on age, race, and gender. The study is also comparing the outcomes of infant team children to a comparison group of maltreated children not receiving infant team services. The study is expected to be complete in SFY 2007-2008.

Activities Planned for SFY 2007-2008: DSS actively participates on the Children's Cabinet and Children's Cabinet Advisory Board. State policy has been put in place for referring children under age 3 validated (substantiated) as being abused or neglected to the Early Steps program. State law mandating the reporting of infants exposed to controlled dangerous substances also has been enacted, with proposed revisions adding children exposed to severe and chronic

Healthy Marriage Program Description: Programs to Strengthen Marriage: The Louisiana Healthy Marriage "Knapsack Project" was a three year demonstration grant targeting the national "Healthy Marriage" initiative. The Knapsack Project sought to enhance and stabilize the environment in which children live by training their caregivers in skills that enhance their relationship. The project work from the premise that with improved communication, understanding and negotiation, caregiver stress may be reduced and mutual support may be increased, thereby reducing the risk of child maltreatment. The project has enjoyed tremendous success both statewide and nationally. (PSS)

Update on Specific Accomplishments/Progress in SFY 2006 - 2007: The project served 2659 families from October 2003 through September 2006. On July 11, 12 & 13 2006, PREP, Inc. trained 30 Family Resource Centers staff and 17 OCS staff on the usage of the PREP curriculum. Funding for these initiatives ended on September 30, 2006.

Methods to Measure/Outcome Data: Post test scores indicated that participants grasped the concepts needed for healthy marriages and relationships. Materials that the participants most often cited as being helpful were communication skills, anger management, and steps to build relationships. Use of the Marital Satisfaction Inventory and Parenting Stress Index was administered pre and post intervention. The paired t-tests were used to measure the differences between the pre and post test scores for adult caregivers and the adolescents receiving this intervention. A comparison of the scale score before and after participation revealed that the increases in the scores were significant. A second component of the evaluation was to assess whether "at-risk" adolescents receiving the intervention are less likely to be adjudicated and that adult caregivers receiving the intervention would experience fewer disruptions in couple relationships and greater reunification of children. However, because of the limited time dedicated to this project and the coordination needed to obtain information, the researcher did not complete this aspect of the evaluation.

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Activities Planned in SFY 2007-2008: Prep and Knapsack are on the standard menu of services offered by the family resource centers. All centers have staff trained in both programs. Services will continue to be available until centers experience staff turnover and no longer have trained staff to provide the services. OCS staff may continue to refer families for these services, although specific funding is no longer available for continued training and supplies.

Resource Center Program Description: Family resource centers provide services such as respite, supervised family visitation, information and referral, advocacy, parenting classes, psychotherapy, support groups and training to families served by OCS. (PSS, CI, TLR & APSS)

There are 12 contracted resource center providers operating statewide through multi-year contracts. OCS monitored contracts and provided assistance to resource center providers/contractors through regional liaisons, state office staff. Monthly monitoring reports were also completed for each provider.

Update on Specific Accomplishments/Progress in SFY 2006 - 2007: Regional liaisons review, process, approve, and sign invoices, assist in addressing budget matters, facilitate regular meetings between OCS local staff and family resource center staff, discuss pertinent OCS policy with family resource center staff, invite family resource center staff to some OCS training & meetings, address issues identified by family resource center staff and/or OCS staff.

Update on Specific Accomplishments/Progress in 2006 - 2007: Services are being provided to address the four targeted areas of PSSF funding. Family Services and foster care cases are the primary referrals and recipients of services. The most frequently cited reason for referral is maintenance of placement. Foster parents and adoptive parents' utilization of the services vary from region to region. The majority of these parents make use of the respite services but most often do not avail themselves to other services offered by the center. There are some parishes in each region that make few referrals of any nature to the centers. The majority of the families referred are served within the month of referral. A few centers have waiting lists from time to time. The reports also indicate that the most frequently provided services are mentoring (consists of one to one coaching with parents, children and entire family, teaching and modeling essential skills for improved family functioning), parenting classes, respite, information, referral and advocacy, and resource library. (PSS, CI, TLR & APSS) Numerous PSSF services are offered via resource centers. In addition to those mentioned above, they include child care, educational services, family visits, financial assistance, marriage / relationship education, legal service, psychotherapy, support groups, telephone support, transportation and training on various topics.

During this planning cycle, the agency monitored the implementation of policies and procedures on referrals to resource centers as well as the use of the resource centers. The goal was to increase the community-based continuum of family support and family preservation services available/provided to children and families. Policies and procedures for referrals have always been in place and monitored by the Regional Program Specialists. The Monthly Monitoring Report Form revised in August 2005 included a section for centers to indicate the number of referrals received from each parish in its region. Regional Program Specialists have monitored these numbers and discussed them with regional management and local office as applicable. The numbers vary from month to month and region to region, but overall it is believed that the

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families who needed the services offered by the centers received the services. Most centers functioned at or near capacity in caseloads. Family resource centers staff reported carrying between 15 and 25 cases per month.

Transportation has been an ongoing issue for families accessing services through the resource centers. During the 2006-2007 SFY the agency allocated additional Social Services Block Grant Supplemental Funds to Family Resource Centers so they could provide additional transportation services. Four thousand dollars (\$4,000.00) was made available to each center to assist families with transportation to access services. The process to amend the contract to include these funds began December 1, 2006. The majority of the contract amendments were approved in late April 2007. Centers will use the funds to assist clients with transportation by having their staff to provide, paying for public transportation, and paying friends and relatives. It is unknown how many additional clients will be served but the funds will help to assure consistency in accessing services by clients referred, especially those attending the multiple sessions Nurturing Parenting Program. Additionally, NRCs worked in consultation with the agency to provide more qualified legal representation for children and/or parents involved with the agency.

Methods to Measure/Outcome Data: The agency continues to track referrals through the DSS in-house web-based system that has been operable since March 16, 2006. The DSS system has not functioned properly since implemented. This has been brought to the attention of OCS executive management as well as DSS IT management. The primary instrument to evaluate outcome is the Family Assessment Form. As of this date, the form has not been properly installed on the site to allow centers staff to enter the data. Also, the pre-test data entered on cases in the old data system has not yet been converted in this system.

Data is gathered from the resource center database and is provided in the charts below. Statistics obtained from the resource centers indicate that the resource centers served at total of 2746 unduplicated individuals from April 1, 2006 through March 31, 2007. The numbers for this year may appear to have decreased, however, this is not necessarily so as we have worked diligently with centers to obtain unduplicated numbers when counting actual individuals served. In the past some may have counted an individual twice if the individual was referred for additional services. Also, we no longer separate out the centers. All centers except VOA-BR provide services to all families referred.

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Foster and Adoptive Family Resource Centers	Region	SFY 04 – 05 Clients Served (7/04-4/1/05)	SFY 05-06 Clients Served	Total Clients Served 04-05 and 05-06
VOA – Greater New Orleans	Orleans	20	172	192
VOA – Greater Baton Rouge	Baton Rouge	313	434	747
Bayou Land Families Helping Families (Contract terminated 8/31/05)	Thibodaux	243	223	466
The Extra Mile, Inc. (Combined reports for all locations)	Lafayette	26	623	649
Educational & Treatment Council (REST) (Center's combined report)	Lake Charles	64	1126	1190
Community Support Programs (Center's combined report)	Shreveport	24	114	138
ULM – Family Connections (4/1/05 –8/31/05)	Monroe	240	271	511
New Horizons Youth Service Bureau (Positive Steps)	Covington	127	205	332
Family Services of Greater New Orleans (Family Matters)	Jefferson	11	10	21

Child Welfare Family Resource Centers	Region	SFY 04 – 05 Clients Served (7/04-4/1/05)	SFY 05-06 Clients Served 4/1/05-3/31/06	Total Clients Served in 04-05 and 05-06
VOA – Greater New Orleans (EB)	Orleans	25	50	75
VOA – Greater New Orleans (WB)	Orleans	14	99	113
Southeastern Louisiana University (Discovery)	Baton Rouge	400	1052	1452
Kingsley House	Thibodaux	133	104	237
Nicholls State University Dept. of Family & Consumer Science	Thibodaux	160	158	318
The Extra Mile, Inc. (Iberia)	Lafayette	32	See previous chart	32
The Extra Mile, Inc. (Opelousas)	Lafayette	62	See previous chart	62
Beauregard Community Action Association (Evolving Circles) (Contract terminated 8/31/05)	Lake Charles	211	105	316
VOA – North Louisiana (Alexandria/Pineville)	Alexandria	116	193	309
VOA – North Louisiana (Jena)	Alexandria	83	91	174
Community Support Programs	Shreveport	261	49	310
Project Celebration	Shreveport	184	202	386
ULM – Family Matters (4/1/05 –8/31/05) (Combined ULM report for 9/1/05-3/31/06)	Monroe	174	262 1254	1690

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Child Welfare Family Resource Centers	Region	SFY 04 – 05 Clients Served (7/04-4/1/05)	SFY 05-06 Clients Served (4/1/05-3/31/06)	Total Clients Served in 04-05 and 05-06
ULM – Family Ties (Delhi) (4/1/05 – 8/31/05)	Monroe	178	107	285
New Horizons Youth Service Bureau (Positive Steps)	Covington	220	317	537
Family Services of Greater New Orleans (Real Alternatives)	Jefferson	57	25	82
Family Services of Greater New Orleans (Horizons Unlimited)	Jefferson	133	60	193

**Since the agency no longer separates the resource centers in categories (i.e. Foster and Adoptive and Child Welfare) the above charts will no longer be utilized. The following chart will be used to track utilization of the resource centers.

Family Resource Centers	Region	SFY 06-07 6/1/06 – 5/31/07	SFY 07-08	Final Report Total 2005-2009
Volunteers of America	Orleans	240		
Southeastern Louisiana University -Discovery	Baton Rouge	277		
Volunteers of America	Baton Rouge	282		
Positive Steps	Covington	326		
Nichols State University	Thibodaux	145		
Kingsley House	Thibodaux	120		
The Extra Mile	Lafayette	269		
Education Treatment Council	Lake Charles	209		
Volunteers of America-Northeastern Louisiana University	Alexandria	173		
Community Support	Shreveport	207		
Project Celebration	Shreveport	168		
University of Louisiana Monroe -Family Matters/Family Ties	Monroe	333		

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17. Child Abuse and Prevention Treatment Act (CAPTA)

Under the 1996 amendments to the Child Abuse and Treatment Act Amendments, the State is required to adopt and implement certain legal and administrative procedures designated to protect children from abuse. This section profiles services provided and lists updates and accomplishments in OCS' administration of initiatives to prevent, identify and treat child abuse and neglect situations.

Critical Incident Stress Management:

Service Description: The Office of Community Services (OCS) by Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) team has as its paramount concern the development, implementation and administration of a system of interventions designed to prevent and mitigate debilitating stress. Members of the CISM team are selected through an application process that involves an interview and reference component.

Services Provided: The OCS CISM team provides 1) Pre-crisis Preparation - stress prevention education to help staff improve coping and stress management skills, 2) Crisis Management Briefing/Staff Consultation - stress management intervention used to inform and consult and allow psychological decompression, 3) Defusing – small group intervention provided within a short time frame after a traumatic event to reduce the level of harm to the people exposed to it, 4) Critical Incident Stress Debriefing – small group intervention which uses crisis intervention and educational processes to reduce psychological distress associated with a critical incident and 5) Individual Crisis Intervention – used when only one to three persons are affected by the traumatic incident with a goal to assist the individual in reestablishing pre-incident level of functioning.

Population Served: OCS CISM provides stress prevention education statewide to staff experiencing critical incidents, either directly or indirectly.

Goals and Objectives: The goal of the OCS CISM team is to provide stress prevention education to respond to staff experiencing critical incidents in a timely manner utilizing the most appropriate intervention that will assist staff in returning to their normal level of functioning.

Updates on Specific Accomplishments/Progress in 2006-2007 SFY - The Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) team is fully operational. However, the special resources for the staff that were made available in the aftermath of the Hurricane Katrina and Rita have ended. Ten new members have joined the team. The candidates completed applications and the interview/reference component of the process and were accepted onto the team. The first training for the new team members was held April 2007. The training was provided by, Terry Bias, a certified trainer through the Critical Incident Stress Foundation (CISM). Four members of the CISM team attended the 9th annual International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (ICISF) World Conference in Baltimore, MD in February 2007 and provided information/feedback at the CISM team meeting in May 2007. From January 2006 through April 2007, 7 interventions were conducted, some for individuals and some for groups. The reasons for the interventions varied: worker hit pedestrian on her way from a transport of a foster child, pedestrian later died, death of a supervisor, high incidents of infant fatalities, murder

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of a payroll clerk, death of a foster child and death of Louisiana Resource Center Regional Administrator.

Methods to Measure/Outcome Measures: A log of the services provided OCS CISM team is updated regularly which lists a date of referral, region summary of the event, reasons for services provided and interventions.

Activities planned for 2007 – 2008 SFY: The agency will continue to provide pre-crisis preparation, crisis management, defusing, critical incident stress debriefing and individual crisis intervention CISM services for the 2007-2008 SFY. The CISM team holds 2-3 meetings a year and the next meeting is scheduled in October 2007. The meetings have a training component in order to keep the skills current whereas “mock” debriefings are held with full participation from the CISM team.

Prevent Child Abuse Louisiana (PCAL)

The agency works with PCAL on a number of different initiatives. They include the Nurturing Parent Program, Safe Haven, the annual “Kids are Worth It” Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect, media campaigns and community education.

Nurturing Parent Program

Service Description: Nurturing the Families of Louisiana (NFL) is a family based parenting program with a proven record of preventing and treating child abuse and neglect. It is a 16 week parenting program that both parents and children attend simultaneously so they can learn similar skills. Nurturing Parent groups are offered by the Family Resource Centers (FRC) located in every region of the state. (This service relates to an area needing improvement as identified in Item 2a in Louisiana’s PIP)

Services Provided: The Nurturing Parent Program provides 16 weeks for 2 ½ hours per session. Parents and children attend different groups for two hours with 30 minutes of family nurturing time between the first and second hour. Each group is followed by a weekly home visit to work one-on-one with the parent to assure the parent is able to demonstrate what they have learned. Parent groups consist of discussion, role-play, lecture, skill building, nurturing activities, and the assignment of home practice exercises. Children’s group activities consist of age-appropriate activities including role-play, music, arts, puppets, reading, infant massage and modeling of parents.

Population Served: This statewide program serves parents with children ages birth to five that have parenting determined as a need in their service/case plan. A family can consist of single parent, two parents, step-parent or paramours. The families referred should be at risk of child abuse/neglect or have experienced child abuse/neglect. The families should be intact or reunification families. Families should not be actively using substances or in recovery.

Goals and Objectives: To help both parents and children increase their self-esteem and develop positive self concepts and to break the generational cycle of child maltreatment and family dysfunction.

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Updates on Specific Accomplishments/Progress in 2006-2007 SFY: The agency coordinates preventive services with private organizations, particularly with PCAL to support NFL throughout the State. PCAL assisted the agency with resource center staff training and are helping with data collection and entry to aid in assessing the effectiveness of the program. PCAL staff, accompanied by OCS staff, visited the Resource Centers to get a clearer picture of the program and to assist in gathering consistent information from the centers in the future. PCAL is providing the quality assurance piece, as well as assisting in leading the children's groups at several resource centers throughout the State. Additionally, OCS and PCAL are in the process of trying to gather information to determine the effectiveness of the Nurturing program. PCAL is assisting some of the resource centers by inputting testing data on-line and by gathering group information from the resource centers for OCS to look at repeat maltreatment.

Nurturing Parenting training was held throughout the state March 20-23, 2007 with Dr. Bavolek, author of The Nurturing Program. Staff became familiar with the attitudes of empathetic parenting, the concept that parents want to take care of their children, and with some knowledge of the principle of re-parenting. Staff was assisted in understanding the basic concepts of the program in order to make informed decisions regarding which families to refer to the local Family Resource Centers.

Methods to Measure/Outcome Measures: A database is being updated regularly regarding the NFL that tracks the number of families referred and whether they completed the program. Updated measurements haven't been obtained from the database to date as it was recently implemented. PCAL facilitates the quality assurance process for each Nurturing the Families of Louisiana group with the Family Resource Centers by providing technical assistance and submitting their findings to the OCS.

Activities Planned for 2007-2008 SFY: The agency will continue to offer Nurturing Parenting through the Family Resource Centers located in each region of the State. PCAL continues to support the NFL programs offered by OCS Family Resource Centers by co-facilitating the children's group, supporting Family Resource Centers to ensure adequate staffing for children's group, facilitating the quality assurance process, establishing and maintaining a web based message board for statewide communication between OCS, PCAL and NFL coordinators and conducting quarterly networking meetings, PCAL will also offer at least one statewide facilitator training and provide public education to promote NFL.

Safe Haven

Service Description: Louisiana Children's Code Title XI, Chapter 13, Safe Haven Relinquishments, Articles 1149-1160 permit a parent to safely and anonymously relinquish the care of his or her newborn infant to the State without fear of prosecution when the circumstances meet the criteria of "safe haven relinquishment". The infant must be less than (30) days old with no signs of abuse or neglect and left in the care of an employee at a designated emergency care facility without a statement of an intention that someone will return for the child. A designated emergency facility is defined in the law as any hospital licensed in the State of Louisiana, public health unit, emergency medical service provider, medical clinic, fire station, police station, pregnancy crisis facility, or child advocacy center. If the infant is left unattended, for instance on

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a doorstep or in a bathroom, the abandonment criteria for safe haven relinquishment and appropriate abuse/neglect investigation process would be initiated.

Population Served: Infants less than thirty (30) days old who meet the criteria for “safe haven relinquishment” as stated in Title XI of the Louisiana Children’s Code.

Goals and Objectives: The goal is to promote awareness of safe haven legislation and prevent infant deaths as a result of an abandonment or homicide by providing a means by which an infant may be left in safe circumstances and the parent may anonymously abandon their responsibility for the infant with criminal consequences.

Services Provided: PCAL works with OCS to promote the awareness of the Safe Haven Legislation.

Updates on Specific Accomplishments/Progress in 2006-2007 SFY: Legislature removed the line item from the budget that supported the Safe Haven initiative in the wake of Hurricane Katrina; therefore we no longer have a contract with PCAL to promote the awareness of the Safe Haven legislation. When the contract was active and OCS was promoting the Safe Haven legislation with the assistance of PCAL, OCS had four Safe Haven relinquishments. Since the contract has ended, there have been none. Hopefully this contract can be renewed with some additional funding in the near future.

Activities Planned for 2007-2008 SFY: The agency will continue to promote awareness of Safe Haven Legislation.

PCAL’s Annual “Kids Are Worth It” Conference

OCS was on the planning committee for PCAL’s annual “Kids Are Worth It!” Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect that was held in Baton Rouge on May 9 - 11, 2007. The conference is held annually and offers various training workshops regarding child abuse and neglect. The topics cater to various disciplines in the child welfare arena. A total of 88 OCS staff and 17 OCS attorneys attended the conference. The conference for the 2007-2008 SFY is scheduled February 27, 2008. OCS remains on the planning committee. OCS and PCAL are still in the planning phase of the Child Abuse/Prevention Council that will consist of some key leaders/businesses who meet quarterly. The plan is to have a special meeting for their “Blue Ribbon Society” members possibly including the Governor, at their annual conference in 2008.

Media Campaigns/Community Education

The agency continues to provide information to communities statewide by distributing brochures. OCS continues to participate in a “Blue Ribbon Campaign” to create awareness of child abuse prevention in the community. The various OCS regions throughout the State partner with PCAL to conduct events during Child Abuse Prevention month in April. The OCS prevention website includes child abuse prevention tips and an announcement regarding Child Abuse Prevention month.

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Each year the agency prints and distributes hundreds of its brochures on “Mandated Reporters of Child Abuse or Neglect” and “Understanding Child Protection in Louisiana.” The public, including school children working on school projects, frequently ask the agency for these materials. These brochures are used by the school system during teacher orientation at the beginning of each school year. Also, staff across the State distributes them as they make presentations to community organizations. These materials are also distributed at state and national conferences such as the Prevent Child Abuse Louisiana (PCAL) Conference.

Family Advocacy, Care and Education Services (FACES)

Service Description: The Family Advocacy, Care and Education Services (FACES) program provides intensive case management to a caseload of HIV-positive mothers whose children are at risk of involvement with child protective services. The program assists families with infants and children who are at risk of abandonment due to maternal HIV/AIDS, developmental delays, poor parenting skill and/or substance abuse. All families are provided with core services in an effort to secure the family unit and prevent abandonment of minor children or required interventions from the OCS.

Services Provided: FACES include 1) intensive case management services for a maximum of 25 families with infants and young children at risk of abandonment due to parents’ HIV status or substance use, 2) one-on-one parenting to support to HIV-positive women who are first time mothers, 3) one-on-one support for HIV-mothers to enhance their abilities to recognize and react appropriately to the following: developmental milestones; indicators of medical follow-up; immunization schedules; and proper dietary/nutritional support for newborns/infants and 4) determine the impact of HIV, developmental delays, age, and/or substance use on child placement/child protection services involvement through monitoring of medical outcomes, family stability/residents patterns, incarceration rates, and use of support services.

Population Served: High-risk families that include HIV exposed infants with developmental delays, HIV-infected mothers who have prior involvement with OCS or whose child(ren) age five or younger has been deemed “in need of care”, HIV-infected pregnant women or mother age 19 or younger, HIV-infected women or post-partum women who have developmental delays and HIV-infected women who have HIV-infected children. Families served are in the New Orleans area.

Goals and Objectives: The goal of the FACES program is to prevent HIV-positive clients with children who are at risk of involvement with OCS child protective services.

Updates on Specific Accomplishments/Progress in 2006-2007 SFY: In August 2005, the OCS funded social worker for the FACES program resigned. Before the initial steps to seek a replacement, New Orleans was struck by Hurricane Katrina and the program closed until late October 2006. OCS suspended the contract until it expired to assure that they were able to hire another social worker after Hurricane Katrina. The agency renewed the contract for three years and it was approved on October 16, 2006. A new social worker was hired and began providing services to clients in January 2007.

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Methods to Measure/Outcome Measures: FACES submits quarterly reports that show the number of clients served and the services offered. It is a prevention program that works intensely with HIV affected clients with children to prevent them from coming into OCS custody. OCS has not yet received any of their reports. OCS will review quarterly reports and conduct a site visit, as stated in the contract.

Activities Planned for 2007-2008 SFY: FACES will continue to provide case management services to HIV- positive mothers whose children are at risk of involvement with child protective services. The agency will continue to receive quarterly reports from the provider and conduct a site visit.

Citizens Review Panel (CRP)

Service Description: Panels examine the policies, procedures, and where appropriate, specific cases, handled by the State and local agencies providing child protective services. In particular, the panels must evaluate 1)The State CAPTA plan and specific areas of the child protective system which are addressed therein, 2) The State’s compliance with federal child protection standards and assurances set forth in the CAPTA legislation and 3) Any other criteria, which the panels consider important to ensure the protection of children, including the coordination of child protection with foster care and adoption services and the State’s review process for child fatalities and near fatalities.

The federal statute indicates that the purpose of the panels is to “evaluate the extent to which the agencies (state and local) are effectively discharging their child protection responsibilities.” Although the statute provides general guidelines for the panels, the functions of the CRPs are generally and broadly defined. This best suits the ability to address the issues of the local communities in which they are located. The CRP’s are composed of volunteer members who are: Broadly representative of the community in which they operate and are experienced in the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect.

Services Provided: Panels meets at least every 3 months to examine policies and procedures and, where applicable, specific cases of both state and local agencies and prepare an annual report.

Population Served: Louisiana has five (5) Citizen Review Panels located in various areas of the state. Two of the panels are parish based; Beauregard (located in the south eastern quadrant of the State within the Lake Charles Region) and Rapides (located in the center of the State within the Alexandria Region). The additional three (3) panels are regionally based and are made up of a number of parishes. These panels are the Covington Region, Monroe Region, and Shreveport Region.

Goals and Objectives: The goal of the panel is to provide new opportunities to play an integral role in ensuring that States are meeting their goals of protecting children from abuse and neglect.

Updates on Specific Accomplishments/Progress in 2006-2007 SFY: Louisiana has five Citizen Review Panels (CRP) located in various areas of the State. Two of the panels are parish based; Beauregard (located in the southwestern corner of the State within the Lake Charles

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Region) and Rapides (located in central Louisiana within the Alexandria Region). The additional three panels are regionally based and are made up of a number of parishes. These panels are the Covington Region, Monroe Region, and Shreveport Region.

The Monroe Region, Covington Region and the Rapides Parish CRP met during the 2005-2006 SFY. However Shreveport Region and Beauregard Parish CRP's did not meet. The panels struggled with membership and attendance issues.

Methods to Measure/Outcome Measurements: The CRP's provide annual reports and the State must respond to panel's recommendations no later than six months after recommendations are submitted.

Activities Planned for 2007-2008 SFY: The agency is in the process of restructuring the CRP and providing technical assistance on recruitment. The agency will continue to evaluate how the state and local agency adhere to their responsibility of the protection of children from abuse and/or neglect through the CRP process.

Family Group Decision Making (FGDM)

Service Description: FGDM process engages extended family and other persons closely connected to the family in assuring safety, permanency, and well being of foster children in placement, independent living and/or up in on return home. (This service relates to an area needing improvement as identified in Item 2a, Item 8 and Item 18 in Louisiana's PIP)

Population served: Active cases in the Child Protection Investigations, Family Services, or Foster Care program in which the family has had complications in engagement and problem solving for a child or children in the household where there is a concern safety while placed in the family home setting.

Goals and Objectives: To involve family, including extended family and community members, in the planning for the safety and stability of children.

Services Provided: FGDM is currently offered in Baton Rouge, Lafayette and Shreveport through the Resource Centers in those areas. This unique practice invites family, its extended family and community to come together and plan for the welfare of the children.

Update on Specific Accomplishments/Progress in 2006-2007: The agency has contracted with El Paso Human Services Inc. (EPHSI) to provide training in Baton Rouge and Shreveport. There is also a training scheduled in June 2007 with EPHSI in Lafayette. The training presents the foundations of FGDM, the values and beliefs about children, families, and helping. It describes the process, how participants prepare for FGDM, the steps of the meeting and the follow-up after the meeting. It shows the advantages FGDM offers caseworkers, children, and their families in planning for safety and stability. The training also teaches the entire practice of FGDM and prepares participants to serve as coordinators and facilitators of a FGDM process.

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Methods to Measure/Outcomes Measures: The agency has implemented a database that incorporates information regarding the FGDM process where the information is quantified and feedback is obtained from participants on the effectiveness of the program.

Activities planned for 2007-2008 SFY: The agency plans to continue offering FGDM in Baton Rouge, Lafayette and Shreveport Regions through the OCS Family Resource Centers in an effort to effectively plan for the welfare of children and FGDM will be expanded to the Monroe Region. The agency will contract with El Paso Human Services, Inc. for 2.5 days of training in September, 2007. As with other regions, the agency will expand the contract with the family resource center, located in the Monroe region, to include facilitation and coordination of FGDM conferences.

Early Intervention Services

Service Description: When a child under age three (3) has been abused or neglected, the family must be referred to the early intervention program for cases with a valid or substantiated final finding, unless the child is already participating in such program. The early intervention services available on a statewide basis are provided by Early Steps. Early Steps is administered by the Department of Health and Hospitals through local providers called System Point of Entry (SPOE).

Services Provided: Once the child is referred to the SPOE, the child will be assessed to determine if there is a developmental delay in one or more of the domains covered by the Early Steps Program. The domains include: physical (vision and hearing), cognitive, social or emotional, communication and adaptive. Once the assessment is completed and the child is determined to be eligible for services, the SPOE is responsible to develop an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) and coordinate the services for the child and family. These may include services in the areas of health, nutrition, vision, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech language therapy, social work, family training, counseling, home visits and transportation.

Population Served: Children from birth to three years of age who have been abused or neglected, have a known or suspected developmental delay, have a medical condition which can result in a developmental delay, or a disability and are not already participating in a DHH early intervention program. Case circumstances with non-abuse/neglect, low birth weight, premature birth, exposure to domestic violence, family break-up, prenatal exposure to drugs or alcohol, and/or risk factors are some circumstances which place a child at risk of developmental delay can also be referred with parent/caretaker consent. Referral procedures are implemented statewide.

Goals and Objectives: The goal of Early Intervention Services is to provide services to children in circumstances that place him/her at risk for a developmental delay and to assess for needed intervention services prior to age three (3).

Update on Specific Accomplishments: While the agency requires that all children under the age of three (3) be referred to early intervention services, the agency does not track the number of children referred and therefore cannot provide outcome data.

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Activities Planned for 2007-2008 SFY: As per OCS Child Protection Investigation Policy 4-800 (2) the agency will continue to refer children under age three (3) to early intervention services.

Criminal Record Clearances/Assurance

Service Description: Foster/adoptive home applicants and all necessary household members complete the fingerprinting process to obtain criminal record clearances through the Louisiana State Police (LSP) and the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI). Section 9-210 of OCS Home Development policy requires that a criminal record clearance on foster and adoptive home applicants and all other members of the household 18 years of age or older shall be conducted prior to certifying a family to foster or adopt in accordance with R.S. 46:51.2 C.

The preceding policy description fully complies with the Child Abuse Prevention Treatment Act (CAPTA) Grant requirement. CAPTA is Public Law 108-36, and among other provisions, Section 106(b)(2)(A)(xxii) requires provisions and procedures for requiring criminal background checks for prospective foster and adoptive parents and other adult relatives and non-relatives residing in the household.

Population Served: Prospective foster/adoptive applicants and all household members 18 years or older; non-certified caregivers, child placing agency staff; and private foster/adoptive applicants; and other potential caregivers.

Goals and Objectives: The goal is go provide a fluent system to obtain criminal record clearance on potential caregivers to determine if disqualifying convictions are a factor.

Service Provided: Fingerprint-based national record clearances shall be completed statewide on all potential caregivers by using the PRINTRACK Livescan equipment. Arrangements for the person(s) to have fingerprints submitted to the State Police and Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) via PRINTRAK are made through each OCS Regional Office. The Regional Office identifies a staff person in the region to conduct the clearances.

In some limited, case specific circumstances, the agency may not be able to: 1) obtain individual's fingerprints as a result of the individual's disability; or 2) obtain legible fingerprints due to low quality fingerprints, as a result of age, occupation or otherwise, thereby making it impossible to obtain results from national criminal information databases. In the aforementioned instances, the manual fingerprinting process for is used for prospective caregivers who are incapable of coming to the office to use the PRINTRAK equipment and name clearances are requested if legible fingerprints cannot be obtained.

Additionally, foster/adoptive parents are required to notify the agency if at any time an adult moves into the foster home or when any member of the household has been involved in adult criminal behavior. In these instances, a criminal records check is conducted. If at any time there is reason to believe any foster parent or household member has been involved in adult criminal behavior since the certification and initial criminal record clearance, a criminal record clearance is completed to confirm that the home continues to meet certification requirements. This

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includes a minor who is a member of the household if there is reason to believe criminal behavior occurred which resulted in the minor being convicted as an adult.

If the worker has personal knowledge of behavior that would place the foster child at risk of harm such as a newspaper report or the foster parent or household member reports criminal behavior, it may not be necessary to obtain a criminal record clearance to confirm the behavior in order for the worker to deny or revoke certification.

Updates on Specific Accomplishments/Progress in 2006-2007 SFY: The agency shall obtain criminal record clearances per OCS Administrative Policy 1-1000 Background Check Process in accordance with R.S. 46.51.2.

Methods to Measure/Outcome Measures: Number of potential caregivers for which the agency obtains criminal record clearances and of that number what percentage is disqualified based on a PRINTRAK criminal record clearance.

Activities planned for 2007-2008 SFY: The agency plans to distribute PRINTRAK Livescan equipment to each region of the State by August 2007.

Consultation with Physicians

Service Description: The agency continuously consulted with physicians or other appropriate medical professionals in assessing the health and well being of foster children and determining medical treatment. Annual medical examinations are required for all foster children as are dental exams for all foster children over age three. Other medical needs are addressed as they arise. Medical choice is limited to licensed physicians and facilities who participate in the Medicaid programs or providers who agree to bill and accept payment from DSS.

Ultimately the worker is responsible for 1) initiating plans for medical care 2) making direct referrals when indicated; and 3) maintaining current medical information in the child's case record. Responsibility for securing routine medical care is delegated to foster parents or other caretakers. Examinations shall be obtained according to the physician's recommendations for children up to one year.

Population Served: Children and youth in the OCS Foster Care Program statewide.

Goals and Objectives: The goal of OCS is to restore clients referred for outpatient mental health treatment to an acceptable level of functioning in the family and/or community in accordance with the case plan goal. Also to assess the health and well being of foster children and determining appropriate medical treatment.

Services Provided: Treatment for resolution of emotional, behavioral or psychiatric problems is available for foster children when indicated based on an assessment/diagnosis from the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) by licensed mental health professionals (LCSW, LPC LMFT, Psychologist or Psychiatrist). The foster child may be referred to an approved agency when indicated. Referrals for treatment are made on the basis of medical necessity, treatment needs of the child and reduction of risk.

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Medical necessity refers to those services required to identify and/or treat a client's psychiatric/behavioral disorder. The goal of OCS is to restore clients referred for outpatient mental health treatment to an acceptable level of functioning in the family and/or community in accordance with the case plan goal. All treatment provided to OCS clients, is to be addressed in the case plan for the family and child.

Recommendations by medical professionals in assessing the well being of foster children are often times essential to the development of a case plan to work with the child and the family. In some cases, it is used to assess the progress of the case plan or prepare for court involvement. All treatment provided to OCS clients, is to be addressed in the case plan for the family and child.

Updates on Specific Accomplishments/Progress in 2006-2007: The agency continuously utilized medical professionals in assessing the health and well being of foster children and in determining appropriate medical or mental health treatment.

Methods to Measure/Outcome Measures: The case compliance Quality Assurance (QA) – 1 randomly evaluates whether the child is seen by a medical provider in accordance with agency policy. Other medical or mental health issues are addressed when the need is recognized through consultation with the medical professional or as they arise.

Activities planned for 2007-2008 SFY: The agency will continue to utilize appropriate medical professionals in order to assess the health and well being of foster children in order to determine the appropriate medical and mental health treatment

Substance Exposed Infants

In response to the federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act 338 of the 2005 Louisiana Legislature revised Children's Code, Article 603 (14) definition of neglect to include reports from health care providers involved in delivery or care of newborns identified as affected by illegal use of controlled dangerous substances or withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal illegal drug exposure when the report is made within 30 days of birth. OCS began accepting reports by prenatal illegal drug exposure or experiencing withdrawal for investigations of child neglect beginning March 1, 2006. **(THIS ITEM HAS BEEN SELECTED AS AN AREA OF IMPROVEMENT.)**

Population Served: Newborns under the age of 30 days identified by a health care provider or practitioner involved in the delivery or care of the newborn as adversely affected by prenatal exposure to the illegal use of a controlled dangerous substance, or as having experienced withdrawal symptoms from prenatal illegal drug exposure caused by the parent.

Goals and Objectives: Provide for an early determination that there is a plan for safe care of the newborn or that intervention will be necessary in order to assure their safety.

Services Provided: This statewide process consists of an assessment of safety to assist in assessing the safety of the children in the home. When the safety assessment decision is safe or conditionally safe with an in home plan that appears sufficient to reasonably assure the safety of

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the newborn. Services to meet the child's needs are determined by the child's physician. The newborn must be referred to an early intervention program. When the safety decision is that the newborn is unsafe, staff are expected to seek court action to assure the child's safety. If service needs are identified, the worker is expected to refer the family to community and/or DSS services that may be available to meet the child's needs. Families should also be referred for emergency services with the OCS Family Services Program or Family Resource Centers as needed.

Updates on Specific Accomplishments/Progress in 2006-2007: In December 2005, DSS/OCS completed its collaborative work with health care providers in order to promulgate the rules for implementation of legislation that expanded the definition of neglect to include newborns affected by prenatal illegal drug exposure caused by the parent. A brochure was developed for dissemination to hospitals about the new law. Then in January 2006 an emergency rule and notice of intent on neglect of newborns identified as affected by illegal use of a controlled dangerous substance was submitted and subsequently published. By February 2006, policy was issued to OCS staff with instructions for working with the medical community in their areas. Also in 2006, a new law changed the definition of prenatal neglect from "symptoms" to "exposure" (based on medical verification that prenatal drug exposure was a result of illegal drug use by the mother). Also brochures explaining the new law and duty to report were distributed by the DSS/OCS to OB/GYNs, pediatricians, and family practitioners and hospitals.

Dr. Chasnoff conducted a training in Alexandria Region regarding community wide prenatal screening of pregnant mothers by OB/GYNs and directing mothers to services before the baby is born. He also conducted training in the Baton Rouge Region, Capital City Area in April 2007 regarding the aforementioned. The training focuses on the four P's of alcohol/substance abuse (Pregnancy, Past, Partner and Parent). It aims to assist pregnant mothers in determining the risk factors that may be taken into consideration such as; use of drugs/alcohol during pregnancy, past drug/alcohol use, whether your partner has a drug/alcohol problem and whether a parent used drugs/alcohol. Also, Dr. Stewart Gordon presented at the "Together We Can Conference" regarding Drug Exposed Infants which was telecasted statewide.

Methods to Measure/Outcome Measures: Codes are added in TIPS and ACESS to track referrals for substance exposed infants. The information is being tracked to determine implications for staffing needs.

Activities planned for 2007-2008 SFY: Proposed new legislation in 2007 is written to add chronic or severe alcohol exposure. The agency will continue to accept reports regarding prenatal illegal drug exposure or experiencing withdrawal for investigations of child neglect in an effort to determine a plan of safe care.

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Conferences attended by staff in SFY 2006-2007:

- In 2006 – 2007, staff attended or planned to attend the following major conferences and meetings:
 - The Domestic Violence Coalition conference is scheduled for September 2007. This is the first conference since 2005 the conference had to be postponed due to Hurricane Katrina.
 - The “Together We Can Conference”, sponsored by OCS, the Louisiana Supreme Court - Court Improvement Program and other Louisiana sponsors, was rescheduled and held June 29 - 30, 2006 in Alexandria and Port Allen. A total of 88 OCS staff and 17 OCS attorneys attended the conference. The conference is scheduled in Lafayette on September 27 - 28, 2007. The conference will be telecast statewide.
 - One staff member attended the NCCAN liaison officer meeting in April 2007 in Portland, Oregon. The meeting is sponsored by the Children’s Bureau of CAPTA state grantees. Topics included new legislation such as the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act, Alternate Response and federally required disaster planning.
 - Regional staff is planning to attend the annual conference of the Louisiana Foundation against Sexual Assault. The conference was held December 6 - 8, 2006, in Baton Rouge. Information and training on the victims of sexual assault will be useful to staff. The next conference is scheduled for December 2007.
 - Staff attended a conference on Differential Response in Child Welfare in San Diego, California November 12-14, 2006. A total of six OCS staff attended. The conference discussed building knowledge, disseminating ongoing practices, and provided a platform for the exchange of information related to implementing differential response in child welfare. The next conference is scheduled November 14-16, 2007 in Long Beach, California.
 - Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) is currently offered in Baton Rouge, Lafayette and Shreveport through the Resource Centers in those areas. This unique practice invites family, extended family and community partners to come together and plan for the welfare of the children. The agency contracted with El Paso Human Services Inc. (EPHSI) to provide training in Baton Rouge on February 5 - 8, 2007. Fifteen OCS staff and community partners participated. EPHSI also conducted training in Shreveport on February 27 - 28, 2007 and March 1 - 2, 2007 and Lafayette in June 2007. The trainings include a one day orientation with staff and community partners and a two day training that includes co-facilitators and community partners.

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18. 2005 Annual Citizens Review Panel Report

Louisiana has five Citizen Review Panels (CRP) located in various areas of the State. Two of the panels are parish based; Beauregard (located in the southwestern corner of the State within the Lake Charles Region) and Rapides (located in central Louisiana within the Alexandria Region). The additional three panels are regionally based and are made up of a number of parishes. These panels are the Covington Region, Monroe Region, and Shreveport Region. (Additional information in the 2006 CRP report was sent under separate cover.)

Shreveport Region CRP

Membership includes: Nadalie Thomas, Richard Rodgers, Margaret Basco, Judi Christian, Sgt. Larry Nunnery, Jill Welsh, Charles Beckhan, James Smith, Lucy Becken, Rep. Lydia Jackson, Fayrine Gilbert, Trudie Abner, Rebecca Evans-Kelly and Representative Cedric Glover.

2006 Activities:

The Shreveport CRP did not meet this state fiscal year.

Monroe Region CRP

Membership includes: Sylvia Rugg, Melody Breland, Randy Evans, Ray Owens, Bernadine Adams, Stephanie Herrmann, Patty Newman, Judith Mower, Pat Melton, Greg Guthrie, Dan Bounds, John Washington, James Turner, Caroline Cascio and Jackie Perkins.

2006 Activities:

During 2006, Monroe Region CRP experienced its busiest and most productive year to date. Unfortunately, the panel also experienced a tragic loss with the passing of Mrs. Linda Christmas, chairperson, original panel member, and true champion for children. It was Mrs. Christmas who challenged the panel to apply for a grant from the Louisiana Children's Trust Fund to provide education on reporting child abuse, especially for mandated reporters. The grant was awarded and the panel dedicated the new "Be A Hero - Report Child Abuse" campaign to the memory of Mrs. Linda Christmas.

The panel met six times as a complete group and conducted mandatory reporter training sessions. Several other meetings were held with the grant steering committee and OCS staff (including Assistant Secretary Marketa Gautreau). The highlight of the year was the \$10,000 grant awarded from the Louisiana Children's Trust Fund. Stephanie Herrmann, N. E. Regional Director of Prevent Child Abuse (PCAL), served as the grant's project director and fiscal agent. With Mrs. Herrmann's assistance, the panel began developing the project by choosing designs, preparing brochures, purchasing signs and a billboard, etc. to get the campaign's message out to the community. A very successful "kick-off" campaign and press conference was held on February 14, 2007. This event was scheduled in conjunction with the regional meeting of the LA Partnership for Children and Families and received excellent community and legislative support as well as radio and television coverage.

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Update: We are currently reviewing this panel's 2006 recommendations, as we just recently received their report.

2005 Monroe CRP Recommendations/Agency Responses

CRP Recommendation: OCS needs to replace outdated technology in parish offices (i.e. phone systems with no voice mail capability) to improve access by clients, providers, and other agencies.

Agency Response: Technology, such as the one mentioned, is allocated in the OCS yearly budget. The agency works hard at ensuring that the allocation for new equipment is strategically utilized. To this end, new equipment is prioritized. There are many factors that determine which office gets what technology. Those factors include age of existing equipment, volume of service, location, and the administrator's preference. However, we try to ensure our clients and stakeholder access is not compromised in the process.

Update: Technology continues to be driven by the yearly budget and strategically allocated.

CRP Recommendation: OCS should consider new strategies and policies related to emergencies and disasters that relate to children in state custody, as follows:

- a. Foster parents should be mandated to evacuate. It should not be an option if the children are at risk.
- b. If parents decide not to evacuate (if this remains an option), make evacuation arrangements for foster child (with the child's worker).
- c. Train foster parents on how to respond during emergencies and place a plan in the placement agreements.
- d. Have an evacuation site already planned ahead of time (and make sure workers have this information on file).
- e. Provide sufficient counseling and supportive assistance to the victims.
- f. Establish a policy on how to get emergency funds, such as transportation vouchers at the bus or train stations or gas vouchers for foster parents who may need to leave quickly.
- g. Put foster parents on alert status when emergencies arise. They may need to have evacuation protocol that specifies when they should automatically begin evacuation procedures.
- h. Have special needs accommodations planned out in advance so parents with special needs children will know where to go.
- i. Have foster parents submit an evacuation plan.

Agency Response: The recent disasters caused by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005 prompted OCS to draft guidelines for OCS staff and resource families to assist in managing the care of the children in the agency's custody during a disaster. Your suggestions were sent to our Program Section to be assessed along with the guidelines that were being drafted. This guideline is currently in circulation and will become OCS policy prior to the next hurricane season. It also addresses the many lessons learned and how to better provide supportive assistance to our resource families before, during, and after a disaster. A copy of the policy will be sent to all of

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the panels once it is approved. It will also be available on the DSS website at www.dss.state.la.us.

Update: The panel recommendations regarding these issues were reviewed and used accordingly in the development of the agency's Hurricane Preparedness and Mandatory Evacuation Plan. The plan has now become agency policy.

Beauregard Parish CRP

Membership includes: John Marcello, City Savings Bank, Ron Hebert, Beauregard Parish School Board, Don Wells, CASA, Reverend Alan Knuckles, Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, Jeanne Faciane, Robert McCullough, Beauregard Parish Sheriffs Office, Monya Gott, Kid's Company Daycare, Terri O'Hara, Beaucare, Tanya Craig, Big Brothers/Big Sisters and Lisa Guillet, Prevent Child Abuse.

2006 Activities:

The panel did not meet.

Rapides Parish CRP

Membership:

Sara Alford	Stacy Bender	Jay Barber
Linda Bordelon	Marian Brian	Arthur Johnson
Martha Kendrick	Michael Johnson	David Sikes
Charlie Liberto	Keith McLain	Rita Jackson

2006 Activities:

The Rapides panel met quarterly in 2006. During those meetings, the panel reviewed a child fatality case and participated in subsequent discussions of the agency's investigation process and case disposition. The panel's discussion centered on the following issues this past year:

- Coordination of services for Katrina/Rita survivors;
- Safe Haven Project, the State's initiative for legally abandoning infants, and the improvement of communication between, law enforcement, the local hospital staff, and the Office of Community Service (OCS);
- Coordination of services between the Rapides Parish drug court, probation and parole, and the agency;
- A process for the gradual return of OCS children back to the agency after having been in the custody of OYD;
- Discussion of ways to regularly report the numbers of investigations/children in the State's custody in an effort to increase public awareness and;
- Development of legislative liaison to assist in advocating for fewer budget cuts/elimination of services for children.

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The panel did not have any recommendations for the agency.

Covington Region CRP

Membership includes: Terrie Martin, R.N., Livingston Parish Health Unit, Cindy Richard, Washington Parish School board, Sarah Kent, LCSW, Retiree/St. Helena Parish School Board, Pupil Appraisal, Reverend and Mrs. H. Gene Richard, foster parents, Hillcrest Baptist Church, Ila Dietrich, CASA Director, Youth Service Bureau of St. Tammany Parish, Martha Green, Panel Chair, Junior League of Greater Covington, Dawn Mabry, M.D., North Oaks Hospital and, Mr. And Mrs. Martin Klier, foster parents, Cindy Martens, Tanya Garrene, Livingston Parish Sheriff's Department, Judy Wold, SSD#1 Teacher, Don Cox, 22nd Judicial District Court, Det. Reginald Bryant, Tangipahoa Parish Sheriff's Dept., Maurice Badon, SLU School of Social Work, Ann Nevers, Patsy Ritchie, Asst. Chief Effie Clayton, Bogalusa City Police Dept., Jackie Badon, Dr. Robert Allanch, Youth Services Bureau, Pat Schexnayder, CASA and Michelle Hazelett.

2006 Activities

The Covington CRP met a total of three times this past year. They resubmitted their 2005 recommendations for the 2006 year. There are no plans to act on or change the agency's response to the 2005 recommendations.

Covington CRP Recommendations/Agency Responses

CRP Recommendation: We would recommend that there be no further consideration given to consolidation of the Covington Region and St. Tammany Parish OCS offices, as this will be detrimental to the functioning of both offices as well as the clients served by the agency. Additional rationale for this recommendation is in the letter to Senator Jody Amadee dated April 19, 2005.

Agency Response: Decisions regarding consolidation of offices are based on multiple factors, including service delivery to clients, availability of space, and the budget for the agency. In 2005, budget reductions of our agency forced us to identify ways in which we could identify cost savings. Several options were considered, some enacted, including office consolidation/co-housing of regional and parish offices. Based on the specific needs and upcoming activities in the Covington Region, we determined that we would not proceed with consolidation/co-housing of those regional and parish offices at that time. We also want to clearly articulate that DSS is fully committed to improving service delivery through our "No Wrong Door" philosophy. This philosophy seeks to streamline services and increase efficiency in our work with children and families. As OCS continues to identify ways to achieve these goals, consolidation/co-housing of offices is a viable action to be considered to improve service delivery to children and families. The agency deeply appreciates the advocacy and support the panel provides our agency in the Covington Region and the recommendations to assist in providing quality child welfare services.

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Update: As the agency's current budget climate is stable, there are no further plans to consolidate offices at this time.

CRP Recommendation: We would recommend that state office explore difficulties in the working relationship between OCS and coroner's offices and reach memorandums of understanding regarding cooperation and sharing of information. The current working agreements called for in policy are ineffective in promoting positive and productive relationships due to resistance in adhering to the agreement by various parish coroners.

Agency Response: We would like to consider this recommendation and would request more details regarding specific problems and resistance cited.

Update: We understand the difficulty that many regions have incurred in working with local coroner's offices. Unfortunately there is not a state entity that provides over site over the local corner's offices. They are independent to their local municipalities. Currently all of the regions have or should have agreements with their local coroner's office. This is usually managed by the District Manager. One suggestion may lie in your alliance/agreement with local law enforcement, as they usually received these reports in a timelier manner and may be willing to share their report(s) with staff in investigative situations where it is warranted.

CRP Recommendation: We would recommend that state office develop a protocol for responding to negative media publicity concerning OCS. A failure to address this type of publicity causes the agency to appear incompetent or "guilty" to the public and insensitive or uncaring to agency staff.

Agency Response: This recommendation is currently under review by the Assistant Secretary.

Update: All publicity relating to responding to adverse press is coordinated through the DSS Press Secretary and the Assistant Secretary. Act 128, passed in last year's legislative session, allows for increased information sharing during these instances without breaching the child/family's confidentiality.

Update on Agency Plan to Assist Panels in SFY 2006 - 2007

The panels continued to review OCS cases, policy, and procedures during the last calendar year. Panel members were encouraged to participate in other regional committees, (i.e. CQI and Community and Consumer Stakeholder Committees) to provide further input into issues that affect the families served by the agency. The agency plans to increase technical assistance to all of the panels this upcoming year.

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Activities Planned for SFY 2007 - 2008

As many of the panels struggled last year, we are currently assessing the following to assist them this coming year:

- Consolidation the panels with some of the agency's other committees, as the memberships appear to be the same.
- Visiting each panel to assess their individual needs/barriers to functioning
- Utilizing assistance from the National Resource Center to provide TA around identified needs.
- Convening a statewide meeting of all the panels to discuss/plan for the coming year.

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19. Training

This section contains information on training with Title IV-E funds. The Louisiana Department of Social Services (DSS/OCS) did not utilize Title IV-B funds for training or administrative costs for training.

The DSS/OCS training section worked to maintain, develop and strengthen the training curriculum. Training sessions are open to various levels of agency staff, foster and adoptive parents, providers and community partners including American Indian tribal representatives. All courses are directed at enhancing the knowledge and skills of participants to perform jobs in child welfare and serve children and families in the child welfare system.

As reported in the 2006 APSR, the agency's training data system currently does not capture information regarding positions of trainees, evaluations of all trainings, and course descriptions; however, the agency is working with the provider, Flying Fish, to develop and manage a training data system that will incorporate these data elements. One of the barriers identified in developing the data management system is the high cost for data entry. At this time, the project is on hold as the agency develops a plan on how to address the data entry issue.

When functional, the database will gather numerous data elements including positions of participants, course descriptions, and course evaluation information. In the 2008 Annual Progress and Service Report, the agency expects to provide some information regarding IV-E training.

The following chart which provides broad categories of training, the number of participants, broad categories of trainees and hours of training for SFY 2005 -2006 and for July 1, 2006 and through June 29, 2007. (As per the request of the regional office, the information on training was separated into broad categories; however, the full report containing each training course/session is also provided as an attachment.) The agency is unable to provide evaluation information regarding each course or training, but the new database will maintain information on course evaluations.

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Broad Training Category	Actual Number of Training Participants	Categories of Trainees/Participants	Total Number of Training Hours/Category (includes both long & short term trainings*)
**Child Welfare/General	260	Staff and Foster Parents	1,397
*Technical	114	Staff and Foster Parents	1,407
**Clinical	11	Staff and Foster Parents	70.5
**Safety & Health	121	Staff and Foster Parents	395.5
**Core Curriculum	1,129	Staff and Foster Parents	18,618
**Ethics	266	Staff and Foster Parents	842.5

*The agency considers short-term training to be 1-8 hours in duration and long-term training to be 9-32 hours in duration.

The categories in the preceding chart include the following:

Technical Assistance– includes training on ACESS (A Comprehensive Enterprise Social Services System), MEPA/ICWA

Clinical Training – includes training on Differential Response, Working with Challenging Children

Core Curriculum – includes training on case planning, caseworker skill areas, child protection investigation fundamentals, family service fundamentals, introductory courses to the child welfare series, physical indicators, safety training

Health and Safety -- includes training on CPR, safety training

Ethics – includes training on ethical dilemmas, ethics, boundaries and burnout

General – includes training on staff performance, child specific recruitment, cultural diversity, emergency planning, MAPP/GPS Overview, coaching of supervisors, positive parenting

The highest average of hours per participant was spent in courses categorized as Technical Assistance, Core Curriculum, and Clinical while the lowest average of hours per participant was spent in courses categorized as Health and Safety, Ethics, and Child Welfare/General.

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In the 2007-2008 SFY, the agency will continue to offer trainings in the core curriculum. For additional information on ongoing training in the core curriculum, please refer to the OCS Training and Staff Development Catalog. Courses in the core curriculum are described in detail in the catalog and the duration of each course/training is listed as well as the individuals targeted as participants. Courses are provided for an estimated 25 participants per session; however, the number of participants for courses for new hires may vary depending on the number of new hires.

In the 2007 – 2008 SFY the training section will be working to develop training on the LIFTS initiatives and/or incorporating the resultant changes into the Core curriculum.

The following chart details courses provided on an ongoing basis that have not yet been incorporated into the OCS Training and Staff Development Catalog.

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Training & Brief Training Description	Estimated # of Training Participants	Positions of Trainees	Estimated Duration of Training (Includes long & short term trainings*)
<u>Cultural Diversity</u> - training to address the changing face of child welfare in Louisiana since Hurricanes Katrina and Rita	25 per session	Child Welfare Specialists 4-8 (supervisors)	3-4 Hours per session (Short - term)
<u>Multi Ethnic Placement Act</u> – update to existing training	25 per session	Child Welfare Specialists 1-6	3-4 Hours (short-term)
<u>Indian Child Welfare Act</u> – update to existing training	25 per session	Child Welfare Specialists 1-6	3-4 Hours (short-term)
<u>Mentoring and Supervision Training</u> – focused on strengthening the supervisory skills in supporting staff in decision making and safety interventions	25 per session	Supervisors-Child Welfare Specialists 4-8	12 Hours (long-term)
<u>Abbreviated Home Studies/Family Assessments</u> – This course was developed (after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita) for response to special situations demanding the quick placement of children. The model procedure allows for a speedier process without compromising the integrity of a strong family assessment that assures a safe family and environment for children. This course is being provided to all home development staff.	25 per session	Child Welfare Specialists 1-5 (Home Development workers & supervisors)	5 Hours (short-term)
<u>Emergency Planning</u> –This course was developed in order to give our staff and family resources essential information needed to prepare for a future disaster, (i.e., hurricanes, etc).	25 per session	Child Welfare Specialists 1-8 & Foster Parents as indicated	3 Hours (short-term)

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Training & Brief Training Description	Estimated # of Training Participants	Positions of Trainees	Estimated Duration of Training (Includes long & short term trainings*)
<u>Coaching Supervisors Project</u> – project designed to provide needed skill development for supervisors through monthly meetings, ongoing consultation training and periodic observations	30 slots per time period of training	Child Welfare Specialists 4 (first line supervisors)	Long-term (over the course of several months)

* Short-term training = 1-8 hours in duration and long-term training = 9-32 hours in duration.

Estimated Total Cost/Indication of allowable Title IV-E Administration

1. The training costs allocated to Title IV-E are based on Random Moment Sampling (RMS) procedures and “stat sheets” prepared by training staff. “Stat sheets” serve to document and track training activities. RMS procedures capture the levels and types of staff activities that may be claimed as Title IV-E allowable expenditures.
2. As of March 2007, OCS expended \$7,495,539 (amount includes federal funds and state general funds) in allowable Title IV-E cost during FFY 2006 - 2007. These costs were funded with 75% federal and 25% state general funds. For the 2008 FFY, (based on Title IV-E 1) \$11,775,701 (amount includes state general funds and federal funds) is the projected cost of Title IV-E foster care training. State general funds, in the amount of \$1,988,622, are allocated for foster care training. For adoption training, \$455,303. RMS data is used to determine the percentage of IV-E funding to be used for foster care and adoption training. RMS is used to determine the percentage of IV-E funding to be allocated to foster care training and adoption training.
3. The agency utilized a random moment sampling process to identify training activities. Depending on the function being trained, the appropriate federal fund is claimed. Costs deemed matchable as training expenditures include: travel, per diem, tuition, books and registration fees for trainers; salaries, fringe benefits, travel and per diem for staff development personnel assigned to training functions to the extent of time spent performing such functions; costs of space, postage, training supplies and purchase or development of training material.

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Category of Expenditure	Actual SFY 2005-2006	Proposed SFY 2006-2007	Projected SFY 2007 - 2008
Salaries	\$3,436,796	\$4,213,502	\$4,561,329
Travel	\$10,147	\$12,575	\$13,613
Operation Services	\$83,711	\$68,711	\$74,384
Supplies	\$5,171	\$7,735	\$8,373
Acquisitions	\$206	\$173	\$187
Interagency Transfers	\$2,402,922	\$2,374,117	\$2,570,101
Other Charges	\$1,149,003	\$1,481,491	\$1,603,789
Total	\$7,087,956	\$8,158,304	\$8,831,776

*Other changes include the contracts with the universities.

Cost Allocation Methodology

1. Louisiana is entitled to federal matching funds for the proper and efficient administration of the state plan. The State's federally approved Cost Allocation Plan (CAP) identifies which costs are allocated and claimed under Title IV-E and other benefiting programs. This approved CAP is in compliance with 45 CFR 1356.60.

2. The agency has exercised the provisions of the Social Security Act, Sections 474(a)(3)(A) and (B); 45 CFR 1356.60(b) and (c), 235.63-235.66(a) to make claims under Title IV-E at the 75% rate for training (including both short-term training and long-term training at educational institutions, through state grants to the public institutions or by direct financial assistance to students enrolled in such institution) of personnel employed or preparing for employment by the state agency. The amount deemed claimable is specified in individual contracts with the institutions and individuals.

3. Under section 474(a)(3)(B) of the Social Security Act, the state agency makes claim for available federal financial participation at the 75% rate for the short-term training of current or prospective foster or adoptive parents and the members of the staff of state-licensed or state approved child care institutions providing care to foster and adopted children receiving assistance under this part, in ways that increase the ability of such current or prospective parents, staff members, and institutions to provide support and assistance to foster and adoptive children, whether incurred directly by the state or by contract. These costs are isolated in expense forms submitted for processing and contracts with trainer

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Title IV-E Stipends:

Educational Stipends are awarded to non-employees with the expectation that the individual agrees to work for OCS after graduation. The stipend amount for the BSW student is \$5000 for all universities with the exception of Northwestern State University (NSU) which is \$4500.00 and the stipend for the MSW student is \$7000. The entire amount of each contract is charged to IV-E.

In FY 2005-2006, 26 BSW stipends were awarded, totaling \$137,000. and 20 MSW stipends were awarded, totaling \$140,000.

FY 2005 -2006
Educational Stipends of Non Employees

University	BSW (\$4500 to \$5000)	Total Stipends BSW	MSW (\$7000)	Total Stipends MSW
Southern University at New Orleans (SUNO)	2	\$10,000	9	\$63,000
Grambling State University (GSU)	4	\$20,000	5	\$35,000
Southern University at Baton Rouge (SUBR)	6	\$30,000	0	
University of Louisiana at Monroe (ULM)	4	\$20,000	0	
Northwestern State University (NSU)	6 @ \$4500	\$27,000	0	
Southeastern Louisiana University (SLU)	6	\$30,000	0	
Louisiana State University (LSU)	0		6	\$42,000
Totals for Year	28	\$137,000	20	\$140,000

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In FY 2006-2007, 20 BSW stipends were awarded, totaling \$97,000 and 20 MSW stipends were awarded, totaling \$140,000.

FY 2006-2007
Educational Stipends of Non Employees

University	BSW (\$4500 to \$5000)	Total Stipends BSW	MSW (\$7000)	Total Stipends MSW
Southern University at New Orleans (SUNO)	0	0	7	\$49,000
Grambling State University (GSU)	0	0	8	\$56,000
Southern University at Baton Rouge (SUBR)	4	\$20,000	0	
University of Louisiana at Monroe (ULM)	4	\$20,000	0	
Northwestern State University (NSU)	6 @ \$4500	\$27,000	0	
Southeastern Louisiana University (SLU)	6	\$30,000	0	
Louisiana State University (LSU)	0	0	5	\$35,000
Totals for Year	20	\$ 97,000	20	\$140,000

The agency is currently unable to estimate the number of educational stipends of non-employees for the 2007 – 2008 SFY. An administrative decision must be made on the selection processes since the State’s IV-E saturation rate has fallen so low and the agency will be unable to offer the number of stipends previously offered.

University Contracts

For the 2007 – 2008 SFY the agency is planning to contract with Louisiana State University (LSU) to offer a Child Welfare Institute. It is possible that the other universities will sub-contract with LSU to provide training.

The agency is working with Louisiana State University to train staff on the use of ACCESS.

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20. Child and Family Services Review/Louisiana's Revised/Renegotiated PIP

A comprehensive review of the child welfare system in Louisiana, which included statewide assessment, the Federal Child and Family Service On Site Review, and the State Data Profile on child welfare data from 1999 through 2001, culminated in the publication of the Final Report, Louisiana Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) on February 5, 2004. The review of the child welfare system examined seven systemic factors and seven child welfare outcome factors.

The Louisiana child welfare system was found to be in substantial compliance with all seven systemic factors. The system was also found to be in substantial compliance with one of the seven child welfare outcome factors, Permanency Outcome 2 regarding preservation of the continuity of family relationships and connections for children.

The remaining six child welfare outcomes were identified in the CFSR as areas needing improvement and presented opportunities for Louisiana to further examine its practices, policies and resources, and to develop strategies to improve services to children and their families. As a result, the Louisiana Department of Social Services/Office of Community Services (DSS/OCS) developed a Program Improvement Plan (PIP) focusing on the remaining six outcomes:

- **Safety 1:** Children are first and foremost protected from abuse and neglect.
- **Safety 2:** Children are safely maintained in their own homes whenever possible.
- **Permanency 1:** Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.
- **Well Being 1:** Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.
- **Well Being 2:** Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.
- **Well Being 3:** Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.

The importance of involvement, collaboration, and participation of stakeholders (local/community stakeholders; parish, regional and state child welfare and juvenile justice system staff; representatives from the judicial system; tribal representatives; and others) was recognized throughout the review process and continued in the development of the PIP. Stakeholders were included in workgroup meetings, in the PIP Steering Committee, in collaboration via teleconferences and consultations, and in review and request for comments on the proposed PIP. More than eighty participants were involved in the extensive and comprehensive process of developing the PIP.

The collaborative group designed a PIP based on the outcomes needing improvement as noted above. Forty Action Steps were identified as having the potential to improve performance on the child welfare outcomes. Each of the Action Steps was further elaborated with a total of 186 Benchmarks to be completed within specific quarters by identified responsible parties. The Benchmarks built upon one another throughout the planned eight quarters of PIP

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implementation, and many of them reflected the necessity of stakeholder involvement in the overall improvement of child welfare services in Louisiana.

Implementation began in October 2004 with a planned completion date of September 30, 2007. In August 2005, during the fourth quarter of PIP implementation, Hurricane Katrina, followed closely by Hurricane Rita, devastated southern Louisiana, disseminated the population of the state's largest urban area throughout the country, and disrupted all normal operations of the Office of Community Services, including PIP progress. Substantial progress had been made on PIP Benchmark achievement prior to the hurricanes. Of the 157 Benchmarks scheduled for completion during PIP Quarters 1 through 5, 82% were fully achieved and 94% were fully, substantially, or partially completed.

With the cooperation and assistance of our Federal partners, a renegotiated/revised PIP was submitted on June 14, 2006 and approved on June 19, 2006, with an extended completion date of September 30, 2007. The Benchmark achievement and relationship of Action Steps and their attendant Benchmarks to areas needing improvement during implementation of the original PIP is reflected in recognition that Louisiana has achieved all Data Goals.

The renegotiated/revised PIP included achievement of three national Data Goals:

Reunification: Of all children who were reunified with their parents or caretakers at the time of discharge from foster care, what percentage was reunified in less than twelve months from the time of the latest removal from home?

National Standard:	76.2% or more
Louisiana Baseline:	68.5%
PIP Goal (original):	72.3%
PIP Goal (renegotiated):	70.92% (based on 2.42% sampling error)
Federal FY 05 Data:	71.10% (goal met)

Adoption in Twenty-Four Months: Of all children who exited care to a finalized adoption, what percentage exited care in less than twenty-four months from the time of the latest removal from home?

National Standard:	32% or more
Louisiana Baseline:	18.9%
PIP Goal (original):	21.8%
Federal FY 05 Data:	24.5% (goal met)

Placement Stability: Of all children served who have been in foster care less than twelve months from the time of the latest removal from home, what percentage have had no more than two placement settings?

National Standard:	86.7% or more
Louisiana Baseline:	80.9%
PIP Goal (original):	85%

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PIP Goal (renegotiated): 81.9% (based on 1% or ½ sampling error, rounded up)
Federal FY 05 Data: 82% (goal met)

During a conference call on November 2, 2006, the state, ACF Regional Office and Children's Bureau agreed that Louisiana had met another data goal:

Recurrence of Maltreatment: Of all children associated with a substantiated, indicated, or alternative response victim finding of maltreatment during the first six months of the reporting period, what percentage had another substantiated, indicated, or alternative response victim finding of maltreatment within a six-month period?

National Standard: 6.1% or less
Louisiana Baseline: 8.7%
PIP Goal (original): 7.8%
Federal FY 05 Data: 6.6% (goal met)

On February 6, 2007, Louisiana was informed that the final outstanding federal data indicator was considered met as of December 2006:

Incidence of Child Abuse and/or Neglect in Foster Care: Of all children who were served in foster care during the reporting period, what percentage were found to be victims of maltreatment? A child is counted as having been maltreated in foster care if the perpetrator of the maltreatment was identified as a foster parent or residential facility staff.

National Standard: .57% or less
Louisiana Baseline: 1.78%
PIP Goal (original): 1.64%
PIP Goal (renegotiated): 1.64%
Federal FY 05 Data: 0.32% (goal met)

This revised/renegotiated PIP focuses on short-term recovery efforts to assure safety, permanency and well-being for Louisiana's children, including those who were displaced to other states as a result of the hurricanes. The PIP was developed with the assistance and involvement of federal partners including the National Child Welfare Resource Centers. It emphasizes the six child welfare outcomes that had been identified in the CFSR as areas needing improvement. Because of the magnitude of the recovery effort faced by the child welfare system, the revised/renegotiated PIP was designed in a more manageable format than the original PIP. It contains three major Objectives, each tied to specific outcomes:

1. The State will work in consultation with the National Resource Center for Child Protective Services to analyze current CPI data, practice and external factors as they relate to the current rise in foster care placements. (Outcome: Safety 2)
2. The State will work in consultation with the National Resource Center for Family Centered Practice and Permanency Planning to develop and implement a protocol for

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- case management and decision-making for displaced foster children and their biological parents. (Outcomes: Safety 1, Permanency 1, Well Being 1, 2, and 3)
3. The State will work in consultation with the National Resource Center for Organizational Improvement and the National Resource Center for Legal and Judicial Issues to provide more qualified legal representation for children and/or parents in the child welfare system. (Outcomes: Permanency 1 and Well Being 1)

Each Objective is comprised of Strategies which, in turn, are comprised of Action Plan Steps for achievement:

Objective 1 is made up of three Strategies, each of which deals with a different aspect of factors that could contribute to the increasing number of children in foster care (demographic data; changes in law and local practices; and external factors). The Action Steps for each of these strategies involving identification of factors and analysis of the factors to determine possible causative relationships with foster care entries have been completed. The final Action Step of each of these strategies relates to dissemination of the analyses to appropriate OCS staff and agency stakeholders and this step is underway and slated for completion by May 31, 2007. The data analysis is available for review in the Baseline Performance Measures section of this report.

Objective 2 is comprised of four Strategies and 10 attendant Action Steps. Each of the Action Steps has been achieved. Guidelines were developed for worker contacts to assure safety and well being of foster children in foster homes or relative placements displaced due to the storms; plans were developed to find missing biological parents after the storms; broad guidelines were developed for visitation and maintaining contact between foster children and their biological parents who remain separated due to the storms; and a case decision-making model was developed in conjunction with the courts to assist workers in making placement decisions for children in foster care who were evacuated and continue to live out of state due to the storms. At this point, fewer than 30 children in foster care remain out of state as a result of the hurricanes. None of those children has a goal of reunification, and all have been referred for services through the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children. The number of biological parents whose whereabouts is unknown is consistent with the number prior to the storms, and no biological parents' whereabouts are unknown as a result of the storms. In consultation with the Courts, CASA and other stakeholders, the decision was made to continue with the agency's normal practice of making placement decisions for all children based on the best interests of the child with close court oversight. Thus, Objective 2 has been completed and rolled off of the PIP.

Objective 3 is comprised of two Strategies, each comprised of two Action Steps. The first Action Step of each Strategy has been completed: (1) development of a plan for recruiting and training qualified legal representation for storm impacted families and children, and (2) development of training on how to advocate for children and families in the context of hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The Louisiana Court Improvement Program has worked with the National Resource Centers to develop seven on-line Continuing Legal Education (CLE) courses, available at no charge to attorneys throughout the state. These CLEs are posted on the Louisiana Children's Legal Advocacy Resource Online (CLARO) and are expected to generate interest and train attorneys to provide qualified legal representation for children and families involved with

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the child welfare system. The available courses include: ASFA 101, Parts I and II; Permanency Options, Parts I and II; Foster Parents: Notice and Opportunity; Professionalism (legal v. social work); and Ethics (legal v. social work). Live trainings, including ethics and professionalism, on advocacy for children and families in the context of hurricanes Katrina and Rita have been provided in New Iberia, Leesville, New Orleans, Monroe, and Alexandria. The Court Improvement Program is also involved in other important training activities. In January 2007, training was provided in Baton Rouge for agency staff and others involved with the child welfare judicial system on mediation in Child in Need of Care proceedings. This mediation training is expected to result in creating an environment that allows and encourages communication among all parties, enhance communication and problem solving skills and provide staff with an opportunity to collaborate and work in partnership with other professionals. Progress is underway on the two remaining Action Steps: implementing the recruitment and training plan and monitoring its effectiveness; and delivering training on legal representation to OCS staff, qualified attorneys and service providers. They are slated for completion by June 30, 2007.

An adjunct to the short-term recovery efforts addressed in the revised/renegotiated PIP, Louisiana is taking advantage of the opportunities brought about by the storms to assess and plan for long-term systemic change. These change efforts were originally referred to as reforms, and are now designated as **Louisiana Leading Innovations for Family Transformation and Safety (LIFTS)**. With technical assistance from federal and foundation partners, OCS has defined six key elements to enhance outcomes for children and families: improving intake decisions; meeting family needs to prevent the need for out-of-home care; increasing available community-based services; improving recruitment, training and services for foster/adoptive parents; assuring that residential treatment is used only when a less restrictive placement cannot meet the child's needs; and enhancing services and opportunities for youth transitioning out of foster care. These activities are underway with the support of the National Resource Centers and the Casey Family Foundation. Detailed information concerning Louisiana LIFTS is found in the Child Welfare Continuum section of this report.

State Of Louisiana

CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES REVIEW PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT PLAN



September 28, 2004
Renegotiated – June 2, 2005

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Appendices

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INTRODUCTION

Federal Regulation 45CFS 1355 promulgated in January, 2000 in response to the provisions to the Social Security Act authorized the Department of Health and Human Services to review State child and family service programs in order to assure compliance with the State plan requirement of titles IV-B and IV-E of the Act. The Child and Family Service Reviews (CFSR) cover child protective services, foster care, adoption, family preservation, family support, and independent living services. Each review is a multiphase process designed to help individual states improve child welfare services and the outcomes for families and children by identifying the strengths and needs of the various programs administered by the state. Through the identification of a state's strengths and needs, the goals of improved outcomes and systemic changes are defined. From this, each state must develop a comprehensive Program Improvement Plan (PIP) designed to address each outcome and systemic factor identified as needing improvement. Systemic change must focus on the day to day practice, leadership, strategic planning, and continued commitment necessary to effect meaningful improvement for children and their families.

The Louisiana Department of Social Services through the Office of Community Services is the agency designated to administer the Title IV-B and IV-E programs. As such, in 2002 the agency implemented its plan in preparation for the Child and Family Service Review. Preparation began with a statewide assessment, followed by the Child and Family Services On Site Review held in September 2003. The development of this document, Louisiana's Program Improvement Plan, is based upon the findings of those review processes. While the next step in this process is the immediate implementation of the strategies and actions identified in this Program Improvement Plan, it is the ongoing implementation and review of the system and the support and commitment of resources necessary to effect lasting, meaningful change that will assure an effective quality service delivery system to the children and families of Louisiana.

STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT

The Louisiana Statewide Assessment, published July 21, 2003, reflected a comprehensive assessment that examined the statewide network of children's and family services. This network includes services administered by the Department of Social Services, Office of Community Services and the services provided to the juvenile justice population through the Office of Youth Development. This first stage of the Child and Family Services Review process was multifaceted and sought to educate staff, clients, and stakeholders as to the Child and Family Services Review process, gather evaluative material on Louisiana's service delivery system, and seek input on strategies for improvement. This was accomplished through case reviews, interviews, focus groups, quality assurance data, and management reports from the statewide information systems, Tracking Information Payment System (TIPS) and Juvenile Information Records Management System (JIRMS). This comprehensive assessment identified strengths and needs within the system, provided an evaluation of performance on the six national indicators, and as required, identified the three geographic areas of the state which were to be the locations for the onsite review.

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CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES REVIEW PROCESS

The Child and Family Service On Site Review sought information on how well Louisiana provides services based on an assessment conducted in three separate areas of the state. Federal guidelines require these reviews to be held in the largest metropolitan area of the state and in two other sites as determined during the statewide assessment process. The reviews were conducted September 8-12, 2003 in the New Orleans, St. Tammany and the Natchitoches-DeSoto parish areas and consisted of case record reviews, client and stakeholder interviews, and focus groups. The process sought to examine how well Louisiana achieves the outcomes of safety, permanence, and well being for children and families served, in addition to evaluating the capacity of Louisiana to achieve positive outcomes for children served by the child welfare system. Outcomes addressed include:

- How well children are first and foremost protected from abuse and neglect;
- How well children are safely maintained in their own homes whenever possible and appropriate;
- The level of permanency and stability in the living situation of children;
- How well is the continuity of family relationships and connections preserved;
- Whether families have an enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs;
- Whether children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs; and,
- Whether children are receiving adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.

In addition to examining the State's level of achievement on the above identified outcome measures, the review also evaluated the following seven systemic factors:

- The Statewide Information System
- Case Review System
- Quality Assurance System
- Training
- Service Array
- Agency Responsiveness to the Community
- Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention

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Finally, the State was evaluated on its' performance on the six outcome measures for which national standards are established. The national data indicators include:

- Of all children who were victims of a substantiated or indicated maltreatment report in the first six months of calendar year 2001, what percent were victims of another substantiated or indicated report within a six month period?

National standard - 6.1% or less

- Of all children who were in foster care in the first nine months of calendar year 2001, what percent experienced maltreatment from foster parents or facility staff members?

National standard - .57% or less

- Of all children who entered foster care in fiscal year 2001, what percent were re-entering care within twelve months of a prior foster care episode?

National standard – 8.6% or less

- Of all children reunified from foster care in fiscal year 2001, what percent were reunified within twelve months of entry into foster care?

National standard – 76.2% or more

- Of all children who were adopted from foster care in fiscal year 2001, what percent were adopted within twenty-four months of their entry into foster care?

National standard – 32% or more

- Of all children in foster care during fiscal year 2001 for less than twelve months, what percent experienced no more than two placement settings?

National standard – 86.7% or more

CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES REVIEW FINDINGS

In order to fully examine Louisiana's child welfare system, data from the statewide assessment, the Federal Child and Family Service On Site Review, and the State Data Profile on child welfare data from 1999 through 2001 were utilized to formulate a comprehensive review of the child welfare system in Louisiana. The results of the comprehensive review process were published in the Final Report, Louisiana Child and Family Services Review, February 5, 2004. The findings are based on ratings of substantial conformity or as areas needing improvement. In order to achieve a rating of substantial conformity on any of the seven major outcomes, the review process had to determine that at least 90% of the cases reviewed had achieved the

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outcome and for those outcomes with a related national data indicator, the national standard for that specific data indicator also had to be met.

Louisiana was found to be in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 2; the continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children. This was accomplished having achieved a rating of 90% during the on site case review process. As stated in the Final Report, “OCS/DSS was found to make concerted efforts to ensure that children in foster care are placed, when appropriate, in close proximity to their parents or close relatives and with their siblings. DSS/OCS also was found to (1) promote frequent visitation between children in foster care and their parents and siblings, (2) preserve children’s connections to their communities and extended families, (3) seek relatives as potential placement resources, and (4) support the bond between children and parents while children are in foster care.”

The other six child welfare outcomes present opportunities for Louisiana to further examine its’ practices, policies, and resources and develop strategies to improve services to children and their families. Louisiana received the following ratings for these six outcomes:

Safety Outcome 1: Children are first and foremost protected from abuse and neglect – 87.2%.

This outcome examines the timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment and also takes into consideration two of the national data indicators addressing repeat maltreatment which are based on the state data profile. The data profile indicated that with a rating of 6.8%, Louisiana did not meet the national standard of 6.1% or less for the percentage of children experiencing more that one substantiated report of abuse/neglect within six months. Additionally, the national standard of .57 % or less for children maltreated while in foster care was not met.

Safety Outcome 2: Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible – 83.3%.

This outcome focuses on the services provided to families to protect their children and prevent removal and services provided or efforts made to reduce the risk of harm to children.

Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations – 63.3%.

This outcome takes into consideration four national data indicators based upon the state data profiles. Foster Care Re-entries examines the percentage of children who re-enter foster care within twelve months. With a rating of 7.8%, Louisiana met the national standard of 8.6% or less. The next standard, Length of Time to Achieve Reunification presents an opportunity for Louisiana to work toward reducing the amount of time needed to safely re-unify children with their families. Louisiana received a rating of 65% with the national standard at 76.2%. Length of Time to Achieve Adoption is the next standard. This national data indicator examines how quickly adoptions are finalized by looking at all children adopted and determining the percentage who were adopted within twenty-four months of their entry into foster care. This indicator presents Louisiana with a significant rating of nonconformity, receiving a rating of 11.6% against the national standard of 32.0% or more. The fourth national data indicator addressing permanency issues looks at the stability of foster care placements by calculating the percentage of children in foster care for twelve months or less who experienced no more than two placement settings. Louisiana at 83.3% did not meet the national standard (86.7% or more).

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Well Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs – 68%. This outcome examines whether the State has adequately assessed the needs of children, parents, and foster parents and provided services necessary to meet those needs. It also focuses on efforts to involve children and families in the case planning process, the frequency and quality of worker and child visitation and worker and parent visitation.

Well Being Outcome 2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs – 78%. This outcome addresses whether children's educational needs are adequately assessed and appropriate services provided.

Well Being Outcome 3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs – 72.9%. While the assessment and provision of services related to children's physical health needs was found to be a strength in Louisiana, it was determined that children's mental health needs were not consistently being met, particularly as related to difficulty in accessing services, delays in psychiatric evaluations, poor quality psychiatric evaluations, and inadequate on-going assessments and services.

In examination of the seven systemic factors, Louisiana was found to be in substantial conformity with all seven factors. Twenty-two items comprised these seven systemic factors, with nineteen items rated as strengths and only three areas rated needing improvement.

During development and negotiation of the Program Improvement Plan (May 2004), it was mutually agreed upon, that since more recent data had become available since the 2001 Data Profiles utilized in the state's CFSR, the more recent data, the 2003 Data Profiles would be utilized for the five outcome measures not meeting established national standards. Those revised date profiles reflect the re-established baselines as follows:

- Of all children who were reunified with their parents or caretakers at the time of discharge from foster care, what percentage was reunified in less than twelve months from the time of the latest removal from home?

Standard – 76.2% or more; Louisiana baseline – 68.5%.

- Of all children who exited care to a finalized adoption, what percentage exited care in less than twenty-four months from the time of the latest removal from home?

Standard – 32% or more; Louisiana baseline – 18.9%.

- Of all children served who have been in foster care less than twelve months from the time of the latest removal from home, what percentage have had no more than two placement settings?

Standard – 86.7% or more; Louisiana baseline – 80.9%

- Recurrence of Maltreatment: Of all children associated with a “substantiated,” “indicated,” or “alternative response victim” finding of maltreatment during the first six

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months of the reporting period, what percentage had another “substantiate,” “indicated,” or “alternative response victim” finding of maltreatment within a six-month period.

Standard – 6.1% or less; Louisiana baseline – 8.7%

- Incidence of Child Abuse and/or Neglect in Foster Care: Of all children who were served in foster care during the reporting period, what percentage were found to be victims of maltreatment. A child is counted as having been maltreated in foster care if the perpetrator of the maltreatment was identified as a foster parent or residential facility staff.

Standard - .57% or less; Louisiana baseline – 1.78%

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PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The Child and Family Services Review serves as an assessment of Louisiana's child welfare system, identifying strengths and needs of the entire service delivery system within the state. The Program Improvement Plan seeks to address those areas of the system wherein lie opportunities for improved service delivery and increased safety, permanence, and well-being of children. While the Department of Social Services, Office of Community Services (DSS/OCS) has been designated to develop the Program Improvement Plan, it is intended to be a plan of improvement for the entire state, not individual agencies or programs.

The message of commitment to systemic improvement resonated throughout the Child and Family Services Review process with the involvement, collaboration, and participation of local/community stakeholders; parish, regional and state child welfare and juvenile justice system staff; representatives from the judicial system; tribal representatives; and many others. It was deemed absolutely critical that in order for positive changes to occur, all stakeholders had to be involved in the development of the Program Improvement Plan. Stakeholders were included in workgroup meetings (Safety, Permanence, Continuity and Relationships, and Well Being), on the Program Improvement Plan Steering Committee, in collaboration via teleconferences and consultations, and in review and request for comments of the proposed plan. A list of stakeholders and participants is included in Appendix B.

The development of the Program Improvement Plan was an extensive and comprehensive process involving over eighty participants and over forty committee meetings. Four workgroups were charged with the responsibility of developing strategies that included measurable goals of improvement, action steps, and timeframes to address each outcome found not to be in substantial conformity. More specifically, the workgroups addressed each item, as well as the statewide aggregate data that contributed to the nonconformity of each outcome. While some identified strategies and action steps unique to specific outcomes, it was readily apparent that each workgroup identified issues that are overarching and could not be easily addressed within or by any one workgroup.

During the course of their examination of issues related to the child welfare service delivery system and subsequent strategies for improvement, each workgroup was faced with issues focusing on workload, staffing needs, and technological resources. While most action steps included within the Program Improvement Plan focus on practice and policy issues, the need for additional qualified staff and/or improved resources arose in relation to each and every outcome. It is noteworthy to mention that each workgroup found these issues to be critical to the achievement of any sustainable degree of success. Due to the magnitude of these issues and the budgetary considerations involved, it was determined that system wide goals, strategies and action steps would be developed and incorporated into Louisiana's FFY 2005-2009 Child and Family Services Plan. As in all program areas, these system wide goals will address identified multiple concerns and seek improvements needed to enhance performance of staff.

As action steps and benchmarks were developed, it was also necessary for the workgroups to identify and examine existing reports, instruments and reviews that would serve as methods of measure for each activity. For many strategies, in order to monitor progress in an accurate and timely manner, new methods of measure are being developed. The three major methods of

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measure utilized in this Program Improvement Plan are the use of the Peer Case Review Process (PCR), Quality Assurance System (QA), and the Tracking Information Payment System (TIPS).

Peer Case Review (PCR): During preparation for accreditation by the Council on Accreditation, Louisiana developed a comprehensive Peer Case Review system as part of its' Continuous Quality Improvement process. While the process previously in existence assisted in identifying many of the strengths and opportunities for improvement within the system, it was recognized that the internal Peer Case Review process would be more effective if it were to more closely align with the federal process. Louisiana modified its' Peer Case Review process that is now comprised of on-site peer reviews, which include case record reviews, focus groups and data reviews. The Peer Case Review instrument addresses those specific items included in the Program Improvement Plan, mirroring the questions and areas examined in the federal CFSR Case Review instrument.

The Peer Case Review process is comprised of an annual onsite visit to each of the ten regions. Reviewers are peer caseworkers, supervisors, management staff, and stakeholders. Within each region a sample of thirty cases is pulled, including nine foster care cases, three child protection investigation cases, nine in-home family services cases, and nine adoption cases. This results in three hundred cases reviewed annually across the state. Within each region a focus group is held with one of the following stakeholder groups: foster/adoptive parents, biological parents, law enforcement, legal system, children ages 9-13 years, youth ages 13-18 years, child advocates, mental health, educational, medical providers, DSS/OCS staff, and administrative review bodies. Each region selects a different group annually.

This revised Peer Case Review process will help to avoid multiple review processes that unnecessarily and negatively impact staff time and will also provide uniformity in reviewing data that more closely addresses the outcomes and standards as determined by the Administration for Children and Families.

Quality Assurance (QA): The second primary method of measure utilized by Louisiana to monitor progress is its' quality assurance system. With this review process, data is gathered in a consistent manner, on a monthly basis, providing accurate and reliable information on which to assess improvement. The quality assurance system includes a case record review of a sampling of cases within each program in every region of the state. The quality assurance system has the capacity to generate parish-level, regional office-level and statewide aggregate data reports.

The sample represents a review of:

- 10% of child protection investigation cases;
- 100% of foster care cases for ASFA protections;
- 25% of foster care cases for OCS policy compliance; and
- 8 to 9% of in home family services cases.

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Tracking Information Payment System (TIPS): TIPS will be utilized as a method of measure for some items. The system provides aggregate data, which will be validated with the Louisiana Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) official semi-annual reports. Any determination as to whether or not the goals associated with the statewide aggregate data and the national standards has been achieved will be based on results derived using the same methodology and parameters ACF utilizes in generating the statewide aggregate data indicators found in a State's data profile.

Use of PCR and QA for Achievement Measurement: The agency will receive comprehensive and accurate data for measuring progress on achievement of PIP action steps and goals using the PCR and QA case review processes. Any determination as to whether or not the goals associated with the cases reviewed utilizing these processes has been achieved will be based on three consecutive months (quarterly) of statewide aggregate case review findings for the relevant items.

DSS/OCS Reporting to ACF Regional Office: During the PIP, DSS/OCS will submit quarterly progress reports to the Administration for Children and Families Region VI Office. The reports are due not later than forty-five (45) days after the end of each quarter. The Planning and Accreditation Section Administrator will coordinate the preparation and submittal of such reports. The DSS/OCS Program Division Director will serve as the Louisiana PIP Implementation Lead during the PIP period.

The collaborative effort, investment and commitment of stakeholders and individuals concerned about the children of Louisiana has resulted in a comprehensive, outcome oriented approach addressing the needs of Louisiana's child welfare system with the goal of improving the quality of services provided to children and their families. It is felt that implementation of this plan, foremost, will have a positive impact on the child welfare service delivery system and its clients. Secondly, implementation will support the achievement of the federally established outcomes and standards, thereby avoiding the potential for significant financial penalty to the State of Louisiana and further reduction of the revenue available to support this most vulnerable population.

In submitting this document, the State of Louisiana commits to supporting the goals of this plan, continuing the collaborative efforts among stakeholders, and advocating for the support and resources necessary to assure adequate and quality services for the children and families in Louisiana.

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OUTCOMES, ITEMS, GOALS AND ACTION STEPS

Safety

Safety Outcome 1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.

Item 1: Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment.

CFSR Case Review Finding (Baseline):	69%
Louisiana Data Annual Goal:	70%
Louisiana PIP Data Goal:	70.5%
Achievement Date:	7 th Quarter
Method Of Measure:	Quality Assurance and Peer Case Review Data

The State of Louisiana's CFSR reviewed sixteen applicable cases, measuring performance of investigation timeliness at 69%. In order to improve performance in this area, several action steps are proposed to concentrate on the collection and distribution of data to first line staff to assist in regional corrective action planning including data on timely initial contact, case closure within sixty days and cases open over six months. In order to clear out the backlog of cases, a monthly report will be sent to each region with a parish-by-parish breakdown of cases open over six months and a quarterly report on case closure within sixty days will be submitted to each region. A monthly report will be developed and submitted to first line staff providing a monthly tracking of initiation of investigations within the policy prescribed time frame. The rationale behind the development of these three reports and the tracking procedure for monitoring compliance is that by clearing up the backlog of cases in the child protection program, staff time will be freed up to initiate investigations in a timelier manner. However, based on preliminary assessment, it appears that as backlogged cases are cleared, the resulting rate of timeliness may actually fall below the baseline. For that reason, it is estimated that the rate of improvement as measured from the CFSR baseline will not appear as a significant increase.

In order to streamline documentation and, thereby, increase the availability of staff to respond timely on new cases, a paperwork reduction project has been initiated and will continue with the goal of statewide implementation of an improved method of documentation. It is anticipated that this will free up worker time to initiate and complete investigations in a more timely manner, increasing the state's compliance on this outcome.

Additionally, quality of intake practice is perceived as a barrier to timeliness of investigation initiation. In order to address deficits in practice, agency policy, practice and training focused on intake will be reviewed and revised. The methods of measurement used to determine the level of improvement will be the ongoing quality assurance reviews and the annual peer case reviews in each region.

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Finally, staff issues will be studied to enhance child protection practice as it relates to timely initial contact. As in all program areas, the agency will address the identified concerns and seek improvements needed to enhance the performance of staff.

Action Step 1: Reduce the paper work demands for CPI staff.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Convene paperwork reduction workgroup.	1 st quarter	CPI/FS Section Administrator	Workgroup Report
2. Develop evaluative measures of paperwork reduction workgroup product.	1 st quarter	CPI/FS Section Administrator	Evaluation Report
3. Select 3 pilot sites.	1 st quarter	CPI/FS Section Administrator	Workgroup Report
4. Conduct staff training in the pilot sites.	2 nd quarter	CPI/FS Section Administrator	Training Curriculum Training Report
5. Implement paperwork reduction pilot in three designated sites.	2 nd quarter	CPI/FS Section Administrator	Memo
6. Evaluate pilot effectiveness and interface with ACESS.	3 rd quarter	CPI/FS Section Administrator	Evaluation Summary
7. Implement statewide if evaluation demonstrates effectiveness and ACESS compatibility in pilot sites.	4 th quarter	CPI/FS Section Administrator	Policy

Action Step 2: Develop an oversight and tracking system for initial contact to provide feedback on timeliness of investigation initiation.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Work with DSS Information Technology to develop a report that provides information on response time compliance policy concerning time limits on emergency, high priority and non-emergency cases.	2 nd quarter	CW Quality Assurance and Research Section Administrator	Report
2. Provide monthly response time reports to Regional Administrators by region, parish and worker.	3 rd quarter	DSS TIPS Customer Relations Manager	Report Distribution Log
3. Each region below the state performance standard of 85% will develop a corrective action plan within 60 days to improve the rate of timely contact.	4 th quarter	Regional Administrator	Corrective Action Plans
4. Evaluate effectiveness of corrective action plans.	6 th quarter	Regional Administrator	Report

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Action Step 3: Seek funds and positions to establish the intake program in support of emerging integrated service delivery and to support implementation of new CAPTA regulations.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Submit CAPTA compliance assurances.	1 st quarter	Planning & Accreditation Section Administrator	State Plan
2. Submit request through budgetary process.	1 st quarter	Assistant Secretary	Budget Request
3. Upon receipt of appropriations for this purpose, establish positions.	5 th quarter	Field Services Division Director	Budget Appropriation
4. Train staff and implement program.	7 th quarter	Field Services Division Director	Policy Training Report

Action Step 4: Strengthen practice and policy related to the intake process.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Assess need and available staffing resources for intake positions.	1 st quarter	Field Services Division Director	Staff Utilization Report
2. Research and identify methods to improve the intake process.	2 nd quarter	CPI/FS Section Administrator	Report
3. Review and revise policy as necessary to improve intake process.	3 rd quarter	Policy Section Administrator	Policy
4. Implement new intake process.	4 th quarter	CPI/FS Section Administrator	Training Report
5. Evaluate implementation of new intake process.	6 th quarter	CPI/FS Section Administrator	Evaluation Report
6. Enhance professional skills in performing intake functions by providing training in the areas of safety and interviewing.	4 th quarter	Training Section Administrator	Training Report

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Action Step 5: Develop monitoring process for case closure within 60 days.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Develop and implement a tracking procedure of the percentage of cases closed within 60 days of CPI open date.	1 st quarter	CW Quality Assurance and Research Section Administrator	Tracking Report
2. Provide a monthly report by region, parish and worker to regional administrators of the cases not closed within 60 days.	2 nd quarter	CW Quality Assurance and Research Section Administrator	Report Distribution Log
3. Each region below the state performance standard of 85% will develop a corrective action plan.	3 rd quarter.	Regional Administrators	Corrective Action Plans
4. Evaluate effectiveness of corrective action plans.	6 th quarter	Regional Administrator	Report

Action Step 6: Develop a monitoring process for cases open over 6 months.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Develop and implement a tracking procedure of cases open over six months.	1 st quarter	CW Quality Assurance and Research Section Administrator	Tracking Report
2. Provide monthly reports by region, parish, and worker to regional administrators of the number of cases open over six months.	1 st quarter	CW Quality Assurance and Research Section Administrator	Report Distribution Log
3. Each region with over 50 cases open over 6 months will develop a corrective action plan with staff to reduce the number of cases in their caseload open over 6 months.	3 rd quarter	Regional Administrators	Corrective Action Plans
4. Evaluate effectiveness of corrective action plans.	6 th quarter	Regional Administrator	Report

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Item 2a: Repeat maltreatment (Recurrence)

CFSR Case Review Finding:	94%
Data Profile (Baseline):	8.7% (2003)
Louisiana Data Annual Goal:	8.3%
Louisiana PIP Data Goal:	7.8%
Achievement Date:	7 th Quarter
Method Of Measure:	Tracking Information Payment System (TIPS) Quarterly Report and NCANDS Data

Repeat maltreatment was rated as a strength in 94% of the cases reviewed during the CFSR on site review. Forty-seven of the fifty cases were applicable to this item. On the data indicator, recurrence of maltreatment, "Of all children who were victims of a substantiated or indicated maltreatment report in the first six months of calendar year 2003, what percent were victims of another substantiated or indicated report within a 6 month period," the national standard for this outcome is 6.1% or less. Louisiana did not meet this standard with the 2001 data and will utilize 2003 data to establish a new baseline of 8.7%.

In order to reduce the rate of maltreatment recurrence, Louisiana will undertake three action steps. A report will be developed to identify characteristics of cases in which recurrence occurs and will be utilized in developing strategies to reduce the maltreatment rate. The State will seek additional funding to expand promising practices such as Family Group Decision Making and Project LASAFE, in order to improve the effectiveness of its interventions in child welfare cases. Thirdly, the agency has proposed legislative change to the Children's Code, which will allow child welfare staff access to invalid child protection reports. This will enhance staff's ability to conduct risk assessments and plan more effective family interventions.

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Action Step 1: Generate reports that provide demographic and geographic data on repeat maltreatment to identify trends and target populations, and develop and implement a screening protocol to identify families at high risk of repeat maltreatment.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Define cases at risk for repeat maltreatment through the use of technical assistance from NCANDS team on Louisiana NCANDS data file and DSS/OCS analysis of state data.	1 st quarter	Child Welfare Quality Assurance and Research Section Administrator	Reports
2. Define reports for potential repeat maltreatment cases.	1 st quarter	Child Welfare Quality Assurance and Research Section Administrator	Report
3. Develop screening protocol for potential repeat maltreatment cases.	2 nd quarter	CPI Section Administrator	Screening Protocol
4. Develop and disseminate screening protocol for use by staff in development of intervention/case recommendations.	3 rd quarter	CPI Section Administrator	Policy
5. Conduct review of new screening protocol with supervisory staff.	4 th quarter	CPI District Supervisors	Review Report
6. Implement protocol in case practice.	4 th quarter	Supervisors	Data Reports
7. Evaluate effectiveness of screening protocol on identifying cases at high risk for repeat maltreatment.	7 th quarter	CPI Section Administrator	Data Reports

Action Step 2: Propose legislation changing the Louisiana Children's Code to allow access to invalid reports to aid more comprehensive assessment.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Draft legislation for introduction during legislative session.	1 st quarter	DSS Bureau of General Counsel	Proposed Legislation
2. Upon passage of legislation, draft and implement policy authorizing maintenance, access and intake screening procedures for prior invalid reports.	2 nd quarter	Policy Section Administrator	Policy
3. Evaluate compliance with revised policy and effectiveness in reducing repeat maltreatment.	6 th quarter	CPI Section Administrator	Data Report

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Item 2b: Repeat Maltreatment (Maltreatment of children in foster care)

Data Profile (Baseline):	1.78% (2003 Data)
Louisiana Data Annual Goal:	1.71%
Louisiana PIP Data Goal:	1.64%
Achievement Date:	7 th Quarter
Method Of Measure:	Tracking Information Payment System (TIPS) Quarterly Report, NCANDS and AFCARS Data

At the time of Louisiana's CFSR Final Report, utilizing 2001 data, Louisiana received a rating of .58% on this outcome measure for which the national standard is .57% or less. During review of this data, it was determined that the Louisiana incidence of maltreatment in foster care was higher than reported by the data set sent to the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS). The cause for under reporting lies with the 20-year old mainframe system in which the links to/from child to perpetrator relationships are in non-mandatory fields which cannot be changed to mandatory. These links are problematic and confusing for field staff. In response to this problem, Louisiana developed an alternate approach that resulted in a more accurate data set of the children who are maltreated while in foster care. In consultation with the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Children's Bureau and Walter R. McDonald, Inc., it was agreed to use the alternate data to set the baseline for the PIP. Louisiana will utilize technical assistance from Walter R. McDonald, Inc. to improve the NCANDS dataset for this variable. If the two data sets are synchronized by the end of the first PIP year, then the NCANDS federal fiscal year 2004 and 2005 submissions will be used to measure the progress on the PIP. If the two datasets are not synchronized, then the NCANDS federal fiscal year 2004 submission will be used to set the baseline and Louisiana will only have to improve by one half of the sampling error by the end of the PIP.

Subsequent to issuance of Louisiana's CFSR Final Report, it was decided to utilize the most current data available to establish more accurate baselines. With the establishment of the new baseline (1.78%), action steps to improve performance will focus on multiple areas. The agency can be more effective in determining that a child is being abused or neglected or at risk of neglect or abuse by developing tools and training staff to better communicate with foster children. Training of agency and residential care staff, skill building of staff to conduct comprehensive assessments of foster children to include focus on safety and risk of abuse and/or neglect, and examination of ways to increase out-of-home care resources will improve the practice and provide adequate resources and supports to achieve reduction of maltreatment in foster care.

It was also determined that a lack of communication and understanding of each other's roles as foster parents and agency staff contributed to staff's lack of knowledge of the child's care in the home and inability to provide helpful services to prevent abuse and neglect by the foster parents. Many foster children present very challenging behaviors to foster parents and training of staff and foster parents to deal with these behaviors would be helpful in preventing abuse and neglect. Soliciting information on training needs from foster parents and the four federally-recognized tribes will further enhance communication between parties.

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A lack of appropriate foster homes results in overcrowding and overuse of existing homes that can then result in the maltreatment of foster children. By improving retention of existing homes and recruiting more homes, the pool of available choices for children would expand, reducing the stress on long serving foster parents. Strategies are identified for recruiting, supporting and retaining qualified foster families.

A significant percentage of abuse and neglect of foster children occurs in residential treatment settings. Increasing funding for these facilities and improving the skills of the providers through training would be helpful. Additionally, better training for child protection staff investigating reports within residential treatment settings would also increase the safety and reduce the risk of harm for children in these placements.

Action Step 1: Expand initial and ongoing assessment of children’s risk of abuse/neglect in foster care placements.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Modify Foster Parent Reassessment and Evaluation Form 604 to include safety concerns presented by the child.	1 st quarter	Policy Section Administrator	Form 604
2. Access technical assistance and consultation from national resource center to develop assessment of risk of harm to children in foster care placements.	2 nd quarter	Foster Care Section Administrator	Technical Assistance
3. Administer survey developed through collaboration with Louisiana State University that includes focus on safety issues and concerns.	3 rd quarter	LSU School of Social Work	Survey Report
4. Develop a procedure to assess risk of harm to children in foster care at the time of initial placement and on an ongoing basis.	4 th quarter	Foster Care Section Administrator	Policy Risk Assessment
5. Train 50% of staff on new procedure and implement risk of harm assessment process.	5 th quarter	Training Section Administrator	Training Report
6. Train 100% of staff on new procedure and implement risk of harm assessment process.	6 th quarter	Training Section Administrator	Training Report
7. Evaluate effectiveness of risk assessment and use of form 604 in assessing risk of abuse/neglect for children in foster care.	7 th quarter	Foster Care Section Administrator	Data Report

Action Step 2: Conduct joint in-service training for caseworkers, foster parents, and social service directors from the four federally-recognized American Indian tribes to promote safety of children in foster care.

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Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Invite and encourage foster parents and social service directors from the four federally-recognized tribes to participate in adoption exchange meetings with foster/adoptive parents, staff, and private adoption agencies.	1 st quarter	Adoption Section Administrator	Invitation
2. Develop procedures to solicit input on training needs and safety concerns from foster parents and representatives from the four federally-recognized American Indian tribes.	1 st quarter	Foster Care Section Administrator	Procedures
3. Conduct training for staff, foster parents and representatives from the four federally-recognized American Indian tribes in 50% of state regions on parenting challenging children and reducing risk of harm to children in foster care.	3 rd quarter	Training Section Administrator	Training Curriculum Training Report
4. Conduct training for staff, foster parents and representatives from the four federally-recognized American Indian tribes in 100% of state regions on parenting challenging children and reducing risk of harm to children in foster care.	4 th quarter	Training Section Administrator	Training Curriculum Training Report
5. Evaluate effectiveness of training in increasing safety of children in foster care.	5 th quarter	Foster Care Section Administrator	Training Evaluations Data Report

Action Step 3: Increase capacity in services continuum of out of home care resources.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Request additional funding for retention of qualified foster families by providing increased foster care board payments utilizing the urban south regional average for a medium family income.	1 st quarter	Assistant Secretary	Budget Request
2. Request increased funding for recruitment and retention of appropriately qualified staff in restrictive care facilities.	1 st quarter	Assistant Secretary	Budget Request
3. Implement increased rate of payment to providers.	2 nd quarter	Residential and Private Foster Care Section Administrator	Provider Agreement
4. Utilize technical assistance from the national resource centers to assess residential treatment resource needs and develop strategic plan to enhance provider skills.	3 rd quarter	Residential and Private Foster Care Section Administrator	Technical Assistance Strategic Plan

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Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
5. Implement strategies and evaluate effectiveness in increasing provider skill levels.	5 th quarter	Residential and Private Foster Care Section Administrator	Evaluations
6. Train staff on the use of faith based recruitment efforts to expand pool of foster/adoptive parents.	1 st quarter	Foster Care/Adoption Section Administrators	Conference Training Agenda
7. Implement faith based training initiatives to expand pool of foster/adoptive parents.	2 nd quarter	Foster Care/Adoption Section Administrators	Policy
8. Evaluate effectiveness of faith based initiatives in increasing foster/adoptive applicants.	7 th quarter	Foster Care/Adoption Section Administrators	Provider Enrollment Report

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Action Step 4: Collaborate with residential facilities to reduce maltreatment in restrictive care.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Develop data collection process and collect demographic and geographic reports on repeat maltreatment to identify trends and target populations.	2 nd quarter	Child Welfare Quality Assurance and Research Section Administrator	TIPS reports
2. Based upon review of data, assess training and technical assistance needs of CPI and residential staff.	4 th quarter	Residential and Private Foster Care Section Administrator	Needs Assessment
3. Develop and implement training and technical assistance as needed.	5 th quarter	Residential and Private Foster Care Section Administrator	Training Curriculum Training Report
4. Evaluate effectiveness of training in meeting needs of staff and in reducing maltreatment.	7 th quarter	Residential and Private Foster Care Section Administrator	Data Report

Safety Outcome 2: Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.

Item 3: Services to family to protect child(ren) in home and prevent removal.

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| CFSR Case Review Finding (Baseline): | 79% |
| Louisiana Data Annual Goal: | 81% |
| Louisiana PIP Data Goal: | 84% |
| Achievement Date: | 7th Quarter |
| Method Of Measure: | Peer Cases Review and Quality Assurance Data |

The State of Louisiana’s CFSR measured performance on services to prevent removal in twenty-eight of the fifty cases reviewed. In 79% of these applicable cases, services were provided to prevent removal, and/or the children were appropriately removed to ensure their safety, and/or services were provided while children were placed with a relative, and/or services were provided after reunification to prevent re-entry into foster care. In order to improve performance in this area there are four action steps that will be undertaken. Additionally, a review of policy and procedures to assess and increase, as appropriate, the involvement of non-custodial parents in Child Protection Investigation and in-home Family Service cases will be initiated. This will also require the enhancement of staff skills in dealing with cases involving domestic violence, substance abuse and/or parental mental health issues including strengthening comprehensive assessments in Family Services cases.

The agency will also initiate collaborative efforts with the Office of Public Health (OPH) to

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utilize nursing support services to families identified at risk of removal. The final strategies to be implemented will involve an assessment of services provided by the Family Resource Centers in Louisiana to determine their effectiveness in meeting client service needs. Based upon this finding, modifications to the menu of services being provided by the Resource Centers or method of delivery of these services will be implemented.

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Action Step 1: Enhance clinical knowledge of staff pertaining to risk and safety screening of substance abuse, mental health, and domestic violence.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Develop Substance Abuse, Mental Health, and Domestic Violence curriculum in collaboration with community experts and/or national resource centers.	2 nd quarter	CPI/FS Section Administrator	Technical Assistance Training Curriculums Policy
2. Review and revise policy and training curriculums with the assistance of national resource centers to include screening of substance abuse, mental health issues, and domestic violence as they pertain to risk and safety of children in their own homes.	2 nd quarter	CPI/FS Section Administrator	Policy Training Curriculum Revisions Technical Assistance
3. Train 50% of staff on inclusion of Domestic Violence, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse issues in safety and risk assessment process.	4 th quarter	Training Section Administrator	Training Curriculum Training Report
4. Train 100% of staff on inclusion of Domestic Violence, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse issues in safety and risk assessment process. Upon completion of training, implementation begins.	5 th quarter	Training Section Administrator	Training Curriculum Training Report
5. Evaluate staffs' increased knowledge of the role of mental health, domestic violence, and substance issues in safety and risk assessments, as evidenced by compliance with new policy and more comprehensive assessments.	7 th quarter	FS Section Administrator	Evaluation Report

Action Step 2: Develop a workgroup comprised of agency and state resource center staff to address effectiveness/accessibility of Louisiana family resource centers.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Convene workgroup to evaluate services provided through the Louisiana Family Resource Centers.	1 st quarter	Field Services Liaison Section Administrator	Meeting Notes/Report
2. Provide recommendations to improve services available to families through the Louisiana Family Resource Centers to prevent removal and protect children in their own homes.	2 nd quarter	Field Services Liaison Section Administrator	Report
3. Implement approved workgroup recommendations through modifications to service menu of Louisiana Family Resource Centers.	3 rd quarter	Field Services Liaison Section Administrator	Contract Revisions and/or Resource Center Brochure
4. Evaluate use of additional services by families.	7 th quarter	Field Services Liaison Section Administrator	Contract Monitoring Report

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Action Step 3: Strengthen policy and practice on the use of comprehensive assessments throughout the life of a case designed to reduce risk and increase safety.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Incorporate the safety assessment concepts, form, instructions, policy and protocol into the agency training for new workers.	2 nd quarter	Training Section Administrator	Basic Training Curriculum
2. Develop an assessment tool in consultation with a national resource center for use in the risk assessment, case decision-making process, and development of service plans.	3 rd quarter	Foster Care Section Administrator	Risk Assessment Instrument Technical Assistance
3. Training of staff and implementation of the risk assessment tool, policy, and practice guidelines.	4 th quarter	Training Section Administrator	Training Report Policy
4. Evaluate compliance on use of risk assessment tool and its effectiveness in reducing risk and increasing safety to children.	7 th quarter	Foster Care Section Administrator	Quality Assurance Peer Case Review

Action Step 4: Provide a more comprehensive assessment and service delivery through inclusion of nursing support services.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Initiate interagency meetings with Office of Public Health (OPH) to develop strategies to improve assessments and/or service delivery to clients in need of nursing support services.	1 st quarter	CPI/FS Section Administrator	Strategies
2. Develop Memorandum of Understanding with OPH addressing collaborative efforts of DSS/OCS and OPH staff to provide services to children and families at risk.	3 rd quarter	CPI/FS Section Administrator	Memorandum of Understanding
3. Develop policy to utilize Office of Public Health for nursing support services in families with medical needs.	4 th quarter	Policy Section Administrator	Policy
4. Train staff in 50% of regions on nursing support services.	5 th quarter	Field Services Division Director	Training Report
5. Train staff in 100% of regions on nursing support services.	6 th quarter	CPI/FS Section Administrator	Training Report
6. Implement policy utilizing nursing support services.	6 th quarter	Field Services Division Director	Peer Case Review
7. Evaluate use of and effectiveness of nursing services in preventing removal.	7 th quarter	CPI/FS Section Administrator	Evaluation Report

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PERMANENCY

Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situation.

Item 6: Stability of foster care placement.

CFSR Case Review Finding (Baseline):	90%
Data Profile (Baseline):	80.9% (National Standard 86.7%)
Louisiana Data Annual Goal:	82%
Louisiana PIP Data Goal:	85%
Achievement Date:	7 th quarter
Method Of Measure:	Tracking Information Payment System (TIPS) Quarterly Report and AFCARS Data

Stability of foster care placements was determined to be an area needing improvement in the Federal Review. All thirty foster care cases were applicable for this item and in 90% of those cases reviewed, children's placement stability was ensured. Data from the 2001 Data Profile found that only 83.3% of the cases met the national standard of 86.7% or more. Data from 2003 indicates there was a reduction in the stability of placements, with 80.9% of children experiencing no more than two placements in their first twelve months in foster care. Louisiana will utilize the most recent data available in establishing the baseline for this item. The problems that require attention in order to improve this issue are strengthening support to foster/adoptive families and improving internal communication in the agency.

There is an ongoing need to provide supportive services to certified foster families as the success of child welfare depends greatly on stable foster care placements. The agency plans to identify supportive models for foster parents by working with a national resource center. From this collaboration, training for certified families and DSS/OCS staff will be provided to focus on strengthening communication and skill development. Currently, the regional foster/adoptive resource centers offer a variety of supportive services, but all foster/adoptive families do not take advantage of the services, as they are not aware of them. The centers will develop brochures advertising services and DSS/OCS staff will distribute them to all certified families. Through use of the national and local resource centers, foster parents can obtain more supportive services and, as a result, placements should become more stable.

The agency has consulted with a national resource center to develop a Resource Family Home System. Efforts are being made to develop a procedure to move this initiative forward. This system will work to better prepare foster/adoptive parents to understand the permanency process and will dually certify all homes for foster care and adoption so that when a child becomes available for adoption, the goal can be achieved timely and not delayed waiting on adoption certification. This action will also assist in improving Item 9, Adoption within twenty-four months.

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Action Step 1: Increase support to foster parents.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Each Child Welfare Family Resource Center and Foster/Adoptive Resource Center will develop a brochure outlining services and DSS/OCS staff will provide to foster/adoptive parents and document distribution.	1 st quarter	Field Services Liaison Section Administrator	Brochures
2. Create and circulate to all staff policy regarding regional protocols to communicate information regarding certified homes.	2 nd quarter	Policy Section Administrator	Policy
3. Develop training package in consultation with a national resource center for foster parents and DSS/OCS staff to focus on strengthening partnership through communication techniques and support to reduce unplanned disruptions.	5 th quarter	Training Section Administrator	Training Curriculum Technical Assistance
4. Implement training statewide.	7 th quarter	Training Section Administrator	Training Report

Action Step 2: Develop and implement a Resource Family Home System.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Develop a Resource Family Home System and related policies and procedures.	2 nd quarter	FC Section Administrator	Policy
2. Conduct training for home development staff and implement statewide.	5 th quarter	FC Section Administrator	Training Curriculum Training Report Implementation Procedure
3. Evaluate effectiveness of Resource Family Home System.	7 th quarter	FC Section Administrator	Data Reports

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Item 7: Permanency goal for child.

CFSR Case Review Finding (Baseline):	80%
Louisiana Data Annual Goal:	82%
Louisiana PIP Data Goal:	84%
Achievement Date:	7th quarter
Method Of Measure:	Peer Case Review and Quality Assurance Data

Establishment of an appropriate permanency goal in a timely manner for child was determined to be an area needing improvement in the Federal Review. In the thirty foster care cases reviewed, this item was rated a strength in 80% of the cases. Concerns include delays in achieving permanency timely and reassessing the appropriateness of goals assigned to children on an on-going basis.

DSS/OCS, Office of Youth Development, and the court system all have their own procedures to achieve permanency, but the procedures are not always coordinated to meet the best interest of the child timely. Education for all parties regarding federal, state, and agency regulations relating to permanency for children and timely achievement will be implemented.

Regional monitoring will be utilized to improve practice in this area. Procedures will be developed and monitored to review permanency goals for all children not in permanent placement. The PCR will provide a qualitative review of the appropriateness of the goals and identification of delays in achievement of the goal. The QA review process will provide a quantitative review of the timeliness of establishing and achieving identified goals.

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Action Step 1: Develop and implement a statewide education package for legal stakeholders, DSS/OCS staff, Office of Youth Development staff, and other relevant stakeholders on federal, state and agency regulations regarding permanency and explore establishing standards for legal representation in child welfare proceedings.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Draft and implement standards for legal representation.	3 rd quarter	LA Court Improvement Program Coordinator	Draft Standards
2. Convene workgroup.	3 rd quarter	LA Court Improvement Program Coordinator	Workgroup Agenda
3. Develop education package.	4 th Quarter	LA Court Improvement Program Coordinator	Education Package
4. Implement statewide.	5 th quarter	LA Court Improvement Program Coordinator	Education Report
5. Evaluate effectiveness of education package.	7 th quarter	LA Court Improvement Program Coordinator	Evaluation

Action Step 2: Review permanency goals for all children in foster care.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Implement regional procedures for review of permanency goals for all children in foster care.	2 nd quarter	Regional CQI Chairpersons	Report
2. Evaluate effectiveness of regional procedures.	6 th quarter	FC Section Administrator	Peer Case Review

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Item 8: Reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives.

CFSR Case Review Finding (Baseline):	100%
Data Profile (Baseline):	68.5% (National Standard 76.2%)
Louisiana Data Annual Goal:	70.5%
Louisiana PIP Data Goal:	72.3%
Achievement Date:	7 th Quarter
Methods Of Measure:	Tracking Information Payment System (TIPS) Quarterly Report and AFCARS Data

This item was applicable for eight of the thirty foster care cases reviewed in the CFSR with 100% of these cases achieving the goals of reunification or permanent placement with relatives in a timely manner or, if the goals had not been achieved, whether the State had made, or was in the process of making, diligent efforts to achieve the goals in a timely manner. Data from the 2001 Data Profiles established that Louisiana did not meet the national standard of 76.2% or more as in only 65% of the cases did reunification occur within twelve months of entry into foster care. In the most recent 2003 Data Profiles, reunification within twelve months is being achieved in 68.5% of all cases. This most recent figure will be utilized as the baseline.

It was determined that better use of existing resources could assist the agency in returning children to their parents or relatives on a more timely basis. The agency will explore the use of McKinley Vento Act funds for transportation services so that children can return home or be placed with a relative and not have to change schools as workers have traditionally waited until the end of the school term to move children to these placements to avoid their transferring to a new school. The agency will also explore the use of more community resources in order to support the parents and relatives, and specifically services to assist the parents who have substance abuse problems. Expansion of the pilots designed to assist in earlier, safer reunifications such as the Family Group Decision Making and/or Mediation models into other sites is being explored. These pilots, currently existing in two sites, are successful in involving and motivating parents and relatives to focus on the changes that need to be made for the children to safely return home. It was determined that staff did not consistently consider returning children home between the six month intervals between the court hearing and family team conferences. Through use of the Safety Assessment (Form 5), supervisors will be asked to explore, on a more frequent basis, the child's safety when they are returned home. The form documents review of the assessment of safety, shared decision-making and safety plans put into place for children identified at risk. Additionally, the agency identified the need for focusing more intensely on services to the parent during the first few months of the child's stay in foster care as there appears to be a disproportionate amount of staff time and attention focused on the child's needs during that time. This will be achieved by providing support staff to assist in meeting the needs of the child in order that the worker can meet with the parent more frequently. Contracting for intensive services to the parent in the first sixty days is also being explored.

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Action Step 1: Expanded utilization of currently available resources and services to achieve and support permanency.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Issue practice pointer to inform staff to contact the local school board to determine if foster children qualify to use McKinley Vento Act funds for the purpose of transportation to school and getting permission for the child to maintain current school placement.	1 st quarter	Policy, Planning & Accreditation Division Director	Practice Pointer
2. Incorporate in policy the review of the Form 5 at quarterly Foster Care supervisory staffings to assess safety throughout the life of the case.	1 st quarter	Policy Section Administrator	Policy
3. Evaluate compliance and effectiveness of practice pointer and revised policy in increasing and expediting permanency.	4 th quarter	FC Section Administrator	Data Report
4. Seek budget based increase for support staff to complete tasks required during the initial 30 days of a Foster Care case.	3 rd quarter	Assistant Secretary	Budget Request

Action Step 2: Explore expansion of resources and services for families to achieve timely permanency.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Develop the statewide 211 information system to enhance knowledge of community resources for information and referral.	1 st quarter	Deputy Assistant Secretary	Information System
2. Explore piloting a model through the request of additional funds to contract for individualized parent services during the first sixty days of placement.	2 nd quarter	Assistant Secretary	Budget Request
3. Request additional funding to support expansion of Family Group Decision Making and/or mediation project.	2 nd quarter	Assistant Secretary	Budget Request
4. Request additional funding to replicate successful substance abuse initiatives such as Project LA-Safe.	5 th quarter	Assistant Secretary	Budget Request

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Action Step 3: Clarify legal/court issues to reduce barriers to permanency within 12 months.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Develop strategies to engage the court as a resource to overcome barriers to permanency.	1 st quarter	SAFE Act Task Force Chairperson	Report
2. Issue practice pointer to staff on the federal performance measure relating to reunification within 12 months.	1 st quarter	Policy, Planning & Accreditation Division Director	Practice Pointer
3. Evaluate effectiveness of practice pointer in increasing reunification within 12 months.	4 th quarter	FC Section Administrator	Data Report

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Item 9: Adoption within 24 months.

CFSR Case Review Finding (Baseline):	33%
Louisiana Case Review Annual Goal:	36%
Louisiana Case Review PIP Goal:	39%
Data Profile (Baseline):	18.9% (National Standard >/=32%)
Louisiana Annual Data Goal:	20.35%
Louisiana PIP Data Goal:	21.8%
Achievement Date:	7 th quarter
Methods of Measure:	Tracking Information Payment System (TIPS) Quarterly Report, AFCARS and Peer Case Review Data

Adoption within twenty-four months was identified as an area needing improvement in the CFSR Review with six of the thirty foster cases applicable to item 9. Additionally, in evaluation of performance with the National Standards, 2001 data indicated that adoption was achieved within twenty-four months in 11.6% of all children adopted. Data from 2003 indicates that percentage rose to 18.9%. As with the other data indicators, the most recent data available will be utilized to establish the baseline.

Delays in finalizing adoption timely are affected by many factors including internal agency and court issues. In Item 7, action steps are listed to educate agency staff and the courts on federal, state, and agency regulations regarding achieving timely permanence and for regular review of goals. This action will also assist in improving Item 9.

In the CSFR and statewide case reviews, the need for on-going relative assessments was identified. The agency's practice has been to search for relatives when a case first comes to the attention of the agency or until relatives are identified. Standard practice has not been to reassess relatives on an on-going basis. This practice may contribute to delays in timely adoption finalization; therefore, it is imperative to strength practice in this area. By requesting the court's assistance in relative searches either through a search of court databases or court ordering parents to name relatives, and through agency assessment and reassessment at each Family Team Conference, this practice will be strengthened.

Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) packets are very detailed and time consuming. Delays have been noted in the agency's timely completion of the TPR packet and in the timely filing of the petition. By re-evaluating and prioritizing the items included in the packet, staff can complete the process timely. The education of legal stakeholders referred to in Item 7 will focus on decreasing filing delays.

In statewide case reviews, delays have been noted in foster care staff transferring cases to the adoption unit. Supervisory monitoring will be utilized to improve practice in this area.

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The agency will be collaborating with a national resource center to develop strategies to improve the recruitment/retention of foster/adoptive homes. Faith-based initiatives will also be implemented to assist in this area.

Action Step 1: Initial and ongoing search, assessment, and reassessment of relatives throughout the life of the case or until a permanent family is identified.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Submit request to Court Improvement Program to include in Judges' Bench book identification of parents and relatives at the 72 hour and adjudication hearings.	1 st quarter	Program Division Director	Written Request
2. Revise and implement policy to request the court's assistance in relative search efforts and require reassessment of relatives at each Family Team Conference.	3 rd quarter	FC Section Administrator	Policy Data Report
3. CPI policies and procedures to be revised and implemented to include relative search procedures.	3 rd quarter	CPI/FS Section Administrator	Revised Policy and Procedures

Action Step 2: Reduce delays in the Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) process.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Review the TPR packet to re-evaluate and prioritize the items to be included in the packet.	2 nd quarter	Regional Administrators	Revised TPR Packet Meeting Notes
2. Implement revised TPR packet.	3 rd quarter	Supervisors	Implementation Procedures
3. Supervisors to review compliance with policy in submission of TPR packet to attorney within 30 days of goal change.	4 th quarter	Supervisors	Quality Assurance
4. Develop strategies with the Bureau of General Counsel to identify barriers and strategies to expedite the filing of the TPR petition.	6 th quarter	Program Division Director	Identified Barriers and Strategies

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Action Step 3: Transfer cases from foster care to adoption timely.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Create and circulate to all staff a practice pointer regarding transferring cases from foster care to adoption within 30 days of the child being made available for adoption.	1 st quarter	Policy Section Administrator	Practice Pointer
2. Supervisors to review cases to be transferred to ensure that all information is included so that the transfer will not be delayed.	2 nd quarter	Supervisors	Quality Assurance

Action Step 4: Improve recruitment and retention of foster/adoptive families.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Each region will develop and implement a procedure to maintain contact with prospective foster/adoptive families between intake and MAPP/GPS training.	1 st quarter	Regional Administrator	Regional Procedures
2. Collaborate with national resource center and Adopt USKids regarding faith-based initiatives and other strategies for recruitment and retention of foster and adoptive families.	1 st quarter	FC Section Administrator	Technical Assistance Recruitment Strategies
3. Integrate faith-based initiatives and other strategies into regional recruitment/retention plans and update annually.	3 rd quarter	Regional Home Development Supervisor	Recruitment/Retention Plans
4. Utilize annual foster parent conference to provide training to foster/adoptive families on legal issues, barriers, and post placement services.	1 st and 5 th quarters	Foster Parent Liaison Section Administrator	Conference Agenda

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Item 10: Permanency goal of other planned permanent living arrangement.

CFSR Case Review Finding (Baseline):	69%
Louisiana Data Annual Goal:	72%
Louisiana PIP Data Goal:	74%
Achievement Date:	7 th quarter
Methods Of Measure:	Peer Case Review and Quality Assurance Data

Permanency goal of other planned permanent living arrangement was an identified area needing improvement in the Federal Review. An overall rating of 69% of the cases reviewed indicated that the child was either in a planned permanent living arrangement meeting his or her needs or that services were appropriate to assist the child's transition from foster care to independent living. Sixteen cases were reviewed for their applicability to this item. An issue of concern is that children are aging out of care without an identified permanent placement or contact. Permanency is necessary to assist the child in making a successful transition to independence. In implementing procedures to identify permanent contacts for children in facilities, close attention will have to be given to the location of the contacts as a child may have several workers and reside in different regions throughout their stay in foster care. Consistency will be important. The permanent contact should be available for a child throughout the case and be involved in the case planning process. The agency will work closely to promote visitation with permanent contacts for children in foster care placements and residential facilities. The agency will utilize current faith-based initiatives and Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) to recruit contacts for children as well as other recruitment strategies. Also, independent living provider contracts will be reviewed to ensure that delivery of transitional services is provided.

Action Step 1: Identify and support permanent placements and contacts for children.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Develop and circulate an interim practice pointer to focus on identification of permanent placement or contact for children and involvement of the person in case planning and visitation.	1 st quarter	Policy Section Administrator	Practice Pointer
2. Develop and implement policy to guide staff in the identification of permanent placement or contact and to require that agency and independent living provider case plans include this identification.	3 rd quarter	FC Section Administrator	Policy
3. National resource center to help develop training curriculum to train independent living providers and staff on individualizing case plans and transition plans for youth and permanent contacts.	2 nd quarter	Independent Living Program Manager	Technical Assistance Training Curriculum
4. Implement case and transition plan training statewide.	4 th quarter	FC Section Administrator	Training Report

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Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
5. Development of collaborative agreement or Memorandum of Understanding with state level CASA to assist in identification of permanent contacts or permanent placements for children without a permanent placement.	1 st quarter	Program Division Director	Memorandum of Understanding or Formal Agreement
6. Each regional office will develop protocol with local CASA to search for permanent contacts or placements for children without permanent placement.	3 rd quarter	Regional Administrators	Meeting Report
7. Assess effectiveness of utilization of CASA in search for permanent contacts and placements for children.	5 th quarter	Regional CQI Chairpersons	Report
8. Based upon assessment of effectiveness of CASA search for permanent contacts or relatives, make recommendations for revisions to process and/or continuation of CASA search process.	7 th quarter	Regional CQI Chairpersons	CQI Recommendations

Action Step 2: Strengthen services to assist children in the transition to independent living.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Collaborate with Youth Advisory Board and independent living providers to develop a handbook for adolescents in care, which would include independent living and transition to independent living information.	1 st quarter	Independent Living Program Manager	Handbook
2. Issue and discuss handbook with all adolescents (15 and older) in care and document distribution.	3 rd quarter	Supervisors	Supervisor Reports
3. Develop and implement policy regarding timely application for Medicaid waiver and referral of children to services through Office of Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD).	2 nd quarter	Policy Section Administrator	Policy
4. Review independent living provider contracts to ensure transitional services are provided.	4 th quarter	Independent Living Program Manager	Contract Review Report

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WELL BEING

Well Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.

Item 17: Needs and services of child, parents, foster parents.

CFSR Case Review Finding (Baseline):	72%
Louisiana Data Annual Goal:	74%
Louisiana PIP Data Goal:	76%
Achievement Date:	6 th quarter
Method Of Measure:	Peer Case Review and Quality Assurance Data

In the fifty cases reviewed during the on site phase of the CFSR, services provided to children, parents and foster parents were determined to be an area needing improvement. This item is applicable to all services delivered by the agency and it applies to all fifty cases in the review. The agency provides numerous services to children, parents, and foster parents and this was noted in the CFSR Final Report. Agency interventions, and Item 17 as an outcome indicator, are intended to assist families, working within their resources, to have enhanced capacities to provide for their children's needs. This broad item reflects that intent for children, their parents, and the foster parents who temporarily care for the children when in custody. The planned Action Steps seek to address working to strengthen the capacity of the Family Services program staff to perform assessments by lowering the caseload standard for this program area and by taking action to increase assessments through broadening the involvement of foster parents, staff, and American Indian Tribes in service assessments, service planning and service delivery. The service delivery assessment process is altered in the Action Steps, with dual data sources from Peer Case Review data and from quarterly sampled case records, reviewed through supervisory review in each Family Services unit statewide.

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Action Step 1: Strengthen Family Services program assessments to better target interventions¹

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Reduce Family Services caseload standard.	1 st quarter	Field Services Division Director	Case Standard Memo/Policy
2. In consultation with a National Resource Center, revise assessment process, case plan, and other relevant forms to include substance abuse and domestic violence.	2 nd quarter	CPI/FS Section Administrator	Technical Assistance Revised Forms and Policies
3. Train 50% of staff on inclusion of Domestic Violence, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse issues in safety and risk assessment process.	4 th quarter	Training Section Administrator	Training Curriculum Training Report
4. Train 100% of staff on inclusion of Domestic Violence, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse issues in safety and risk assessment process. Upon completion of training, implementation begins.	5 th quarter	Training Section Administrator	Training Curriculum Training Report
5. Evaluate the implementation of policy revisions on the identification of client needs and services.	7 th quarter	FS Section Administrator	Evaluation Report

Action Step 2: Assess and strengthen contracted in-home psychotherapy services to prevent foster care placement and to reduce time to reunify.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Assessment of contracted in-home services to identify service gaps.	2 nd quarter	Field Services Liaison Section Administrator	Contract Review Report
2. Based on assessment, modification of in-home services contracts to include specific performance outcomes.	3 rd quarter	Field Services Liaison Section Administrator	Revised Contracts
3. Assess skills and needs of contract monitors.	1 st quarter	Field Services Liaison Section Administrator	Skills Survey Report
4. Develop training to strengthen and expand skills of contract monitors.	3 rd quarter	Field Services Liaison Section Administrator	Training Curriculum
5. Train 100 % of contract monitors.	4 th quarter	Training Section Administrator	Training Report
6. Evaluate success of in-home services contracts in the prevention of foster care placement and early reunification.	7 th quarter	Field Services Liaison Section Administrator	Performance Outcomes Measures Report

¹ Intent is to structure increased supports to Family Service staff in acquiring quality assessments and strengthening links to the case plan to better target intervention and services.

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Action Step 3: Develop, conduct, and evaluate joint in-service training for caseworkers, foster parents, and the four federally-recognized American Indian Tribes.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Implement policy requiring participation by agency staff in MAPP/GPS.	1 st quarter	FC Section Administrator	Policy Training Report
2. Assess training needs of caseworkers, four federally-recognized American Indian Tribes, and foster parents.	2 nd quarter	Regional Administrators	Assessment Report
3. Deliver joint training for staff, foster parents, and the four federally-recognized American Indian Tribes, based on assessed needs.	4 th quarter	Regional Administrators	Training Curriculum Training Report
4. Evaluate training with staff, foster parents, and the four federally-recognized American Indian tribes.	5 th quarter	Regional Administrators	Evaluation Reports

Action Step 4: Include Social Service Directors of the four federally-recognized American Indian tribes in quarterly CQI Meetings.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Expand CQI Procedures Handbook to include inviting Social Service Directors of the four federally-recognized American Indian Tribes to participate in regional CQI meetings.	1 st quarter	Planning & Accreditation Section Administrator	CQI Handbook Revisions
2. Monitor participation of four federally-recognized American Indian Tribes in regional CQI quarterly meetings.	4 th quarter	Planning & Accreditation Section Administrator	CQI Sign-in Sheets
3. Follow up contacts with any Social Services Directors of the four federally-recognized American Indian tribes not attending to encourage their attendance and participation in the Regional CQI meetings.	5 th quarter	Planning & Accreditation Section Administrator	Reports

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Item 18: Child and family involvement in case planning.

CFSR Case Review Finding (Baseline):	67%
Louisiana Data Annual Goal:	71%
Louisiana PIP Data Goal:	74%
Achievement Date:	6 th Quarter
Methods Of Measure:	Peer Case Review and Quality Assurance Data

Item 18 was assessed in forty-nine of the fifty cases reviewed in the CFSR with 67% of the cases involving parents and children in the case planning process unless such was contrary to the child's best interest. Findings indicated that adolescents did not feel involved in their case planning. The agency plans to collaborate with the Youth Advisory Board and independent living providers to develop a handbook for youth, which will give them more information concerning foster care, and how they can more actively plan for their future. The expansion of the Family Group Decision Making pilot through its inherent involvement of family and children in its' model will increase results in this area.

It is also necessary to revise policy providing more specific guidance on involvement of parents and children and on better documentation of that involvement in the case records to help staff focus their attention to that issue.

The problem of involving resistant clients, specifically in the in-home Family Services cases, was also identified. These cases have no court involvement and frequently these families maintain levels of anger and hostility toward the state agency, which prevent them from participating in a plan for the safety of their child. The agency will utilize Family Resource Centers, whose staff may have greater success in quickly reducing the family's resistance and focusing on planning for their child in a more timely and constructive manner.

Action Step 1: Educate staff on strategies and policy to improve child and family involvement in case planning.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Collaborate with Youth Advisory Board, and independent living providers to develop handbook for adolescents in care in collaboration with Youth Advisory Board and Independent Living Providers, which would address and explain need for involvement in case planning.	1 st quarter	Independent Living Program Manager	Handbook
2. Explore expansion of Family Group Decision Making and/or mediation, including request for additional funding.	2 nd quarter	Assistant Secretary	Budget Request
3. Review and revise policies and/or issue practice pointers on promoting child and family involvement in case planning and documentation.	1 st quarter	Policy, Planning & Accreditation Division Director	Practice Pointers Policy

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Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
4. Implement policy changes or practice pointers.	3 rd quarter	Supervisors	Policy
5. Evaluate compliance with revised policy and/or practice pointers on family involvement in case planning.	5 th quarter	FC Section Administrator	Quality Assurance
6. Evaluate effectiveness of revised policy and/or practice pointers on increasing family involvement in case planning.	5 th quarter	FC Section Administrator	Peer Case Review

Action Step 2: Explore use of community resources via state family resource center staff in engaging resistant clients in Family Services cases.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Family resource center contract workgroup to develop recommendations for expansion of services to include outreach and/or services to engage resistant clients in involvement in case planning.	2 nd quarter	Field Services Liaison Section Administrator	Workgroup Recommendations
2. Modify contracts, if necessary, to include expanded services.	4 th quarter	Field Services Liaison Section Administrator	Revised Contracts
3. Educate staff on changes in Resource Center services.	4 th quarter	Field Services Liaison Section Administrator	Regional Administrator Memo
4. Revise policy to include referrals of resistive clients to family resource centers.	4 th quarter	Policy Section Administrator	Policy
5. Evaluate utilization and effectiveness of services provided by Resource Centers in each region.	7 th quarter	Regional Program Specialists	Contract Monitoring Report

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Item 20: Worker visits with parent(s).

CFSR Case Review Finding (Baseline):	80%
Louisiana Data Annual Goal:	82%
Louisiana PIP Data Goal:	85%
Achievement Date:	6 th Quarter
Methods Of Measure:	Peer Case Review and Quality Assurance Data

During the CFSR, forty-one of the fifty cases were assessed to determine whether the caseworker's visits with the children's mothers and fathers was of sufficient frequency and quality to promote attainment of case goals and/or ensure the children's safety and well being. In 80% of the cases reviewed, the visits were of sufficient frequency and quality to do so.

It has been determined that policy clarifications are needed as there are differing interpretations among staff as to the frequency of visitation required based upon the parent's involvement, absence, location, etc. Also, in light of the extensive time workers spend in searching for absent parents, the agency will collaborate with Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) in searching for absent parents and extended family members. The state level CASA association has agreed to partner with DSS/OCS in this effort and plans are being developed to implement this strategy on the local level as well. As the confusion and varying expectations related to the search for absent parents extends to the courts and attorneys, the agency will explore codifying search requirements.

Action Step 1: Clarify agency policy impacting worker visits with parents to support parental involvement.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Review and revise policy addressing location, frequency and focus of visits on case planning service delivery and goal attainment.	1 st quarter	Policy Section Administrator	Policy
2. Implement policy changes.	2 nd quarter	Supervisors	Policy Review
3. Evaluate compliance with policy changes.	4 th quarter	FC Section Administrator	Quality Assurance
4. Evaluate effectiveness of policy on improving parental involvement.	6 th quarter	FC Section Administrator	Quality Assurance

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Action Step 2: Provide consistent efforts statewide in locating absent parents.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Develop Memorandum of Understanding with state level CASA to assist in efforts to identify absent parents, and potential relative resources.	1 st quarter	Program Division Director	Memorandum of Understanding
2. Assist staff in completing more comprehensive and timely searches for absent parents via approved Internet searches.	1 st quarter	FC Section Administrator	Internet Search Policy
3. Develop local procedures for involvement of CASA in search for absent parents.	4 th quarter	Regional Administrator	Procedures Report
4. Request Children's Code Committee to establish a task force to look at implications of codifying search requirements.	2 nd quarter	DSS/OCS Children's Code Committee Representative	Legislative Task Force Request

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Well Being Outcome 2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.

Item 21: Educational needs of the child.

CFSR Case Review Finding (Baseline):	78%
Louisiana Data Annual Goal:	79.5%
Louisiana PIP Data Goal:	82%
Achievement Date:	7 th quarter
Methods of Measure:	Peer Case Review and Quality Assurance Data

This well-being item concerns whether children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs. It was applied to forty-one of the fifty cases reviewed. Cases considered not applicable were ones in which the children were not of school age or did not have needs pertaining to education related issues. Reviewers noted whether the children had their educational needs assessed and whether educational services were provided. The reviewers noted difficulties regarding coordinating and providing for the needs of children who required special education services. Provision of these services require caseworkers to collaborate with school representatives, Louisiana Department of Education staff, foster parents, parents, caregivers, regional special education coordinators, and the child. This was noted as an area needing improvement. With the implementation of the Resource Family System and the resulting reduction in placement changes, that strategy will also have a positive impact on reduction in school placement changes. The following proposed action steps outline expectations that involve stressing local level interventions through regional meetings.

Action Step 1: Identify and address critical educational problems and issues for children.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Identify critical educational problems and issues for children.	1 st quarter	FC Section Administrator	DSS/OCS and DPSC/OYD Staff Survey
2. Revise policy and forms to include obtaining educational data through existing assessment forms (include use of DSS referral form, DSS/OCS Form 98-B/Educational Records, Form 60/Family Services Social Assessment to identify educational services that are being provided) and implement policy as defined.	3 rd quarter	Policy Section Administrator	Policy
3. Evaluate effectiveness of policy and forms revisions in provision of educational services to family services clients and foster care children.	7 th quarter	Program Division Director	Peer Case Review

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Action Step 2: Improve communication across service delivery providers.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Identification and discussion of problematic issues between educational system, DPSC/OYD and DSS/OCS at state level.	2 nd quarter	Program Division Director	Report
2. Identification and discussion of problematic issues between educational system, DPSC/OYD and DSS/OCS at local level.	2 nd quarter	Regional CQI Chairpersons	Report
3. Development of strategies to improve communication between local school boards and child welfare agency.	3 rd quarter	Regional CQI Chairpersons	Report
4. Implementation of strategies.	4 th quarter	Regional Administrators	Memo Implementation Plan
5. Evaluation of effectiveness of strategies.	7 th quarter	Regional CQI Chairpersons	Survey Peer Case Review

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Well Being Outcome 3: **Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.**

Item 23: Mental health needs of the child.

CFSR Case Review Finding (Baseline):	74%
Louisiana Data Annual Goal:	76%
Louisiana PIP Data Goal:	78%
Achievement Date:	7 th quarter
Methods of Measurement:	Peer Case Review and Quality Assurance Data

The intent of this well-being item is for children to receive adequate services to meet their mental health needs. This item was applicable in forty-two of the fifty cases reviewed for the on site CFSR phase. In the review, cases were exempted when the child was considered too young or when mental health needs were not an issue in the case. The keys to review of this Item are (1) whether mental health needs had been appropriately assessed, and (2) whether appropriate services to address assessed needs have been offered or provided to the child and family. The CFSR Final Report indicates that there was a variance in consistency in meeting the mental health needs of children depending on whether the child is in foster care placement with the agency or whether the child remained with their family and the family was receiving in-home services, with the child in placement receiving better mental health assessment and services, according to the review results. It has subsequently been clarified with the Administration for Children and Families that the services provided in in-home cases do not have to be the same as in foster care cases. Innovative programs that are developed and implemented by the agency were noted: Infant Mental Health Team services assess children and their placement opportunities, ChildNet is coordinated with the Department of Education and Department of Health and Hospitals, and Early Periodic Screening Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) services are utilized by the agency. The following action step focuses on strategies designed to correct or improve areas needing improvement as noted in the state's CFSR Final Report.

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Action Step 1: Maximize service delivery to children to better meet their mental health needs.

Benchmarks	Projected Achievement Date	Lead	Measure
1. Seek additional budgetary support to expand mental health infant team models to additional regions of the state.	1 st quarter	Assistant Secretary	Budget Request
2. Revise tools, policies and procedures developed in Clinical Evaluation Program to make assessments and services more targeted to the needs of clients and to also improve management of evaluation and treatment purchases.	1 st quarter	Field Services Liaison Section Administrator	Mental Health Assessment and Treatment Policies
3. Line Supervisors/District Managers educate and train staff on changes in policy/forms expectations regarding assessments for mental health needs. (to be done either in groups at the regional level or in supervisory units)	1 st quarter	District Managers	Training Report
4. Monitor utilization of tools and compliance with policies.	4 th quarter	Program Division Director	Quality Assurance
5. Evaluate current mental health screening and assessment tools, policies, and practices in concert with National Resource Center.	4 th quarter	Foster Care Section Administrator	Evaluation Findings
6. Initiate meetings with Department of Health and Hospitals Secretary/Office of Mental Health Assistant Secretary and DPSC/OYD to develop joint agreements to improve mental health assessments and services to children.	2 nd quarter	Assistant Secretary	Meeting Minutes Agreements
7. Through assistance from a National Resource Center, develop and provide opportunities for cross-training of Mental Health, DPSC/OYD and DSS/OCS staff to promote better networking and information sharing.	3 rd quarter	Training Section Administrator	Technical Assistance Request Training report
8. Evaluate children's receipt of mental health assessment and services.	6 th quarter	Program Division Director	Peer Case Review

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21.0 Assurances, Certifications, Title IV-B, Subpart 2 Expenditures Annual Budget Request for 2006 – 2007 and Signature Pages

Title IV-B Child and Family Services Plan: Assurances

The assurances listed below are in 45 CFR 1357.15(c) and title IV-B sections 422(b)(10), 422(b)(12), section 422 (b) (14), section 432(a)(4), 432 (a)(7) and 432(a)(9). These assurances will remain in effect during the period of the current five-year CFSP.

1. The State assures that it will participate in any evaluations the Secretary of HHS may require.
2. The State assures that it will administer the CFSP in accordance with methods determined by the Secretary to be proper and efficient.
3. The State assures that it has a plan for the training and use of paid paraprofessional staff, with particular emphasis on the full-time or part-time employment of low-income persons, as community service aides; and a plan for the use of non-paid or partially paid volunteers in providing services and in assisting any advisory committees established by the State.
4. The State assures that standards and requirements imposed with respect to child care under title XX shall apply with respect to day care services, if provided under the CFSP, except insofar as eligibility for such services is involved.
5. The State assures that it is operating, to the satisfaction of the Secretary:
 - a statewide information system from which can be readily determined the status, demographic characteristics, location, and goals for the placement of every child who is (or, within the immediately preceding 12 months, has been) in foster care;
 - a case review system (as defined in section 475(5) for each child receiving foster care under the supervision of the State;
 - a service program designed to help children-where safe and appropriate, return to families from which they have been removed; or be placed for adoption, with a legal guardian, or, if adoption or legal guardianship is determined not to be appropriate for a child, in some other planned, permanent living arrangement; and
 - a preplacement preventive services program designed to help children at risk of foster care placement remain safely with their families; and
 - The State assures that it has implemented policies and administrative and judicial procedures for children abandoned at or shortly after birth that are necessary to enable permanent decisions to be made expeditiously with respect to the placement of such children.
6. The State assures that plans will be developed for the effective use of cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely adoptive or permanent placements for waiting children.
7. The State assures that it will collect and report information on children who are adopted from other countries and who enter State custody as a result of the disruption of an adoptive placement, or the dissolution of an adoption. Such information will include the reasons for disruption or dissolution, the agencies who handled the placement or adoption, the plans for the child, and the number of children to whom this pertains.

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8. The State assures that no more than 10 percent of expenditures under the plan for any fiscal year with respect to which the State is eligible for payment under section 434 of the Act for the fiscal year shall be for administrative costs and that the remaining expenditures shall be for programs of family preservation services, community-based family support services, time-limited reunification services and adoption promotion and support services, with significant portions of such expenditures for each such program.
9. The State assures that Federal funds provided to the State for title IV-B, Subpart 2 programs will not be used to supplant Federal or non-Federal funds for existing services and activities.
10. The State assures that, in administering and conducting service programs under this plan, the safety of the children to be served shall be of paramount concern.

Effective Date and State Officials Signature

I hereby certify that the State complies with the requirements of the above assurances.

Certified by: *Anne S. Leveaux Williamson*

Title: *Secretary*

Agency: *Department of Social Services*

Dated: *June 27, 2007*

Reviewed by: _____

(ACF Regional Representative)

Dated: _____

Transmittal Date June 30, 2007

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**STATE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S CERTIFICATIONS
FOR THE CHAFEE FOSTER CARE INDEPENDENCE PROGRAM**

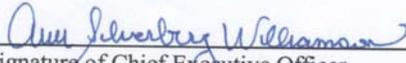
As Chief Executive Officer of the State of Louisiana, I certify that the State has in effect and is operating a statewide program relating to Foster Care Independent Living and that the following provisions to effectively implement the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program are in place:

1. The State will provide assistance and services to youth who have left foster care because they have attained 18 years of age, and have not attained 21 years of age [Section 477(b)(3)(A)];
2. Not more than 30 percent of the amounts paid to the State from its allotment for a fiscal year will be expended for room and board for youth who have left foster care because they have attained 18 years of age, and have not attained 21 years of age [Section 477(b)(3)(B)];
3. None of the amounts paid to the State from its allotment will be expended for room or board for any child who has not attained 18 years of age [Section 477(b)(3)(C)];
4. The State will use training funds provided under the program of Federal payments for foster care and adoption assistance to provide training to help foster parents, adoptive parents, workers in group homes, and case managers understand and address the issues confronting adolescents preparing for independent living, and will, to the extent possible, coordinate such training with the independent living program conducted for adolescents [Section 477(b)(3)(D)];
5. The State will adequately prepare prospective foster parents with the appropriate knowledge and skills to provide for the needs of the child before a child, under the supervision of the State, is placed with prospective foster parents and that such preparation will be continued, as necessary, after the placement of the child. [Section 471(a), as amended];
6. The State has consulted widely with public and private organizations in developing the plan and has given all interested members of the public at least 30 days to submit comments on the plan [Section 477(b)(3)(E)];
7. The State will make every effort to coordinate the State programs receiving funds provided from an allotment made to the State under subsection (c) with other Federal and State programs for youth (especially transitional living youth projects funded under Part B of Title III of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974); abstinence education programs, local housing programs, programs for disabled youth (especially sheltered workshops), and school-to-work programs offered by high schools or local workforce agencies [Section 477(b)(3)(F)];

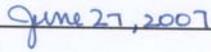
STATE OF LOUISIANA
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STATE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S CERTIFICATIONS – Continued

8. Each American Indian tribe in the State has been consulted about the programs to be carried out under the plan; there have been efforts to coordinate the programs with such tribes; and benefits and services available to American Indian youth in the State on the same basis as to other youth in the State [Section 477(b)(3)(G)];
9. Adolescents participating in the program under this section will participate directly in designing their own program activities that prepare them for independent living and the adolescents will be required to accept personal responsibility for living up to their part of the program [Section 477(b)(3)(H)]; and
10. The State has established and will enforce standards and procedures to prevent fraud and abuse in the programs carried out under the plan [Section 477(b)(3)(I)].



Signature of Chief Executive Officer



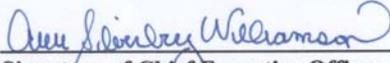
Date

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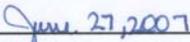
State Chief Executive Officer's Certification
for the
Education and Training Voucher Program
Chafee Foster Care Independence Program

As Chief Executive Officer of the State of Louisiana, I certify that the State has in effect and is operating a statewide program relating to Foster Care Independent Living and that the following provisions were implemented as of September 30, 2003:

1. The State will comply with the conditions specified in subsection 477(i).
2. The State has described methods it will use to:
 - ensure that the total amount of educational assistance to a youth under this and any other Federal assistance program does not exceed the total cost of attendance; and
 - avoid duplication of benefits under this and any other Federal assistance program, as defined in section 477(3)(b)(J).



Signature of Chief Executive Officer



Date

STATE OF LOUISIANA
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State Chief Executive Officer's Assurance Statement for
The Child Abuse and Neglect State Plan

As Chief Executive Officer of the State of Louisiana, I certify that the State has in effect and is enforcing a State law, or has in effect and is operating a statewide program, relating to child abuse and neglect which includes:

1. provisions or procedures for reporting known or suspected instances of child abuse and neglect (section 106(b)(2)(A)(i));
2. policies and procedures (including appropriate referrals to child protection service systems and for other appropriate services) to address the needs of infants born and identified as affected by illegal substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal drug exposure, including a requirement that health care providers involved in the delivery or care of such infants notify the child protective services system of the occurrence of such condition in such infants (section 106(b)(2)(A)(ii));
3. the development of a plan of safe care for the infant born and identified as being affected by illegal substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms (section 106(b)(2)(A)(iii));
4. procedures for the immediate screening, risk and safety assessment, and prompt investigation of such reports (section 106(b)(2)(A)(iv));
5. triage procedures for the appropriate referral of a child not at risk of imminent harm to a community organization or voluntary preventive service (section 106(b)(2)(A)(v));
6. procedures for immediate steps to be taken to ensure and protect the safety of the abused or neglected child, and of any other child under the same care who may also be in danger of abuse or neglect; and ensuring their placement in a safe environment (section 106(b)(2)(A)(vi));
7. provisions for immunity from prosecution under State and local laws and regulations for individuals making good faith reports of suspected or known instances of child abuse or neglect (section 106(b)(2)(A)(vii));
8. methods to preserve the confidentiality of all records in order to protect the rights of the child and of the child's parents or guardians, including requirements ensuring that reports and records made and maintained pursuant to the purposes of CAPTA shall only be made available to--
 - a. individuals who are the subject of the report;
 - b. Federal, State, or local government entities, or any agent of such entities, as described in number 9 below;
 - c. child abuse citizen review panels;
 - d. child fatality review panels;
 - e. a grand jury or court, upon a finding that information in the record is necessary for the determination of an issue before the court or grand jury; and

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- f. other entities or classes of individuals statutorily authorized by the State to receive such information pursuant to a legitimate State purpose (section 106(b)(2)(A)(viii));

- 9. provisions to require a State to disclose confidential information to any Federal, State, or local government entity, or any agent of such entity, that has a need for such information in order to carry out its responsibility under law to protect children from abuse and neglect (section 106(b)(2)(A)(ix));

- 10. provisions which allow for public disclosure of the findings or information about the case of child abuse or neglect which has resulted in a child fatality or near fatality (section 106(b)(2)(A)(x));

- 11. the cooperation of State law enforcement officials, court of competent jurisdiction, and appropriate State agencies providing human services in the investigation, assessment, prosecution, and treatment of child abuse or neglect (section 106(b)(2)(A)(xi));

- 12. provisions requiring, and procedures in place that facilitate the prompt expungement of any records that are accessible to the general public or are used for purposes of employment or other background checks in cases determined to be unsubstantiated or false, except that nothing in this section shall prevent State child protective services agencies from keeping information on unsubstantiated reports in their casework files to assist in future risk and safety assessment (section 106(b)(2)(A)(xii));

- 13. provisions and procedures requiring that in every case involving an abused or neglected child which results in a judicial proceeding, a guardian ad litem, who has received training appropriate to the role, and who may be an attorney or a court appointed special advocate who has received training appropriate to that role (or both), shall be appointed to represent the child in such proceedings-
 - a. to obtain firsthand, a clear understanding of the situation and needs of the child; and
 - b. to make recommendations to the court concerning the best interests of the child (section 106(b)(2)(A)(xiii));

- 14. the establishment of citizen review panels in accordance with subsection 106(c) (section 106(b)(2)(A)(xiv));

- 15. provisions, procedures, and mechanisms -
 - a. for the expedited termination of parental rights in the case of any infant determined to be abandoned under State law; and
 - b. by which individuals who disagree with an official finding of abuse or neglect can appeal such finding (section 106(b)(2)(A)(xv));

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16. provisions, procedures, and mechanisms that assure that the State does not require reunification of a surviving child with a parent who has been found by a court of competent jurisdiction--
 - a. to have committed a murder (which would have been an offense under section 1111(a) of title 18, United States Code, if the offense had occurred in the special maritime or territorial jurisdiction of the United States) of another child or such parent;
 - b. to have committed voluntary manslaughter (which would have been an offense under section 1112(a) of title 18, United States Code, if the offense had occurred in the special maritime or territorial jurisdiction of the United States) of another child or such parent;
 - c. to have aided or abetted, attempted, conspired, or solicited to commit such murder or voluntary manslaughter; or
 - d. to have committed a felony assault that results in the serious bodily injury to the surviving child or another child of such parent (section 106(b)(2)(A)(xvi));

17. provisions that assure that, upon the implementation by the State of the provisions, procedures, and mechanisms under number 16 above, conviction of any one of the felonies listed in number 16 above constitute grounds under State law for the termination of parental rights of the convicted parent as to the surviving children (section 106(b)(2)(A)(xvii));

18. provisions and procedures to require that a representative of the child protective services agency shall, at the initial time of contact with the individual subject to a child abuse and neglect investigation, advise the individual of the complaints or allegations made against the individual, in a manner that is consistent with laws protecting the rights of the reporter (section 106(b)(2)(A)(xviii));

19. provisions addressing the training of representatives of the child protective services system regarding the legal duties of the representatives, which may consist of various methods of informing such representatives of such duties, in order to protect the legal rights and safety of children and families from the initial time of contact during investigation through treatment (section 106(b)(2)(A)(xix));

20. provisions and procedures for improving the training, retention and supervision of caseworkers (section 106(b)(2)(A)(xx));

21. provisions and procedures for referral of a child under the age of 3 who is involved in a substantiated case of child abuse or neglect to early intervention services funded under part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (section 106(b)(2)(A)(xxi));

22. **not later than June 25, 2005 (2 years after the enactment of Public Law 108-36)**, provisions and procedures for requiring criminal background checks for prospective foster and adoptive parents and other adult relatives and non-relatives residing in the household (section 106(b)(2)(A)(xxii));

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23. procedures for responding to the reporting of medical neglect (including instances of withholding of medically indicated treatment from disabled infants with life-threatening conditions), procedures or programs, or both (within the State child protective services system), to provide for--
- a. coordination and consultation with individuals designated by and within appropriate health care facilities;
 - b. prompt notification by individuals designated by and within appropriate health-care facilities of cases of suspected medical neglect (including instances of withholding of medically indicated treatment from disabled infants with life-threatening conditions); and
 - c. authority, under State law, for the State child protective services system to pursue any legal remedies, including the authority to initiate legal proceedings in a court of competent jurisdiction, as may be necessary to prevent the withholding of medically indicated treatment from disabled infants with life-threatening conditions (section 106(b)(2)(B)); and
24. authority under State law to permit the child protective services system of the State to pursue any legal remedies, including the authority to initiate legal proceedings in a court of competent jurisdiction, to provide medical care or treatment for a child when such care or treatment is necessary to prevent or remedy serious harm to the child, or to prevent the withholding of medically indicated treatments from disabled infants with life-threatening conditions (section 113).

Signature of Chief Executive Officer:

Amy S. Williams

Date: June 27, 2007

Reviewed by: _____

(ACF Regional Representative)

Dated: _____

STATE OF LOUISIANA
2007 Annual Progress and Service Report

2008 Federal Fiscal Year CFCIP Funds Requested

CFCIP Federal Funds Requested: \$1,358,131.00.

Request for Re-allotted Funds, (if available); \$135,000.00.

We presently have ten private contractors who provide services in the CFCIP to the foster children and former foster children of Louisiana. The total amount of these contracts is \$1,278,131.00. The amount of CFCIP Federal funds to be used for room and board for youth aging out of foster care from 18 years old up to 21 years old is \$35,000.00. Administrative charges are budgeted for \$38,000.00.

The eligible population is expected to be approximately 2,600 in fiscal year 2008. The estimated number of eligible youth to be served is 1,700. The estimated number of youth 15 to 17 years old to be served will be 1,088 and youth 18 years up to 21 to be served will be 612.

State Match Amount: \$339,533.00

Sources of State Match:

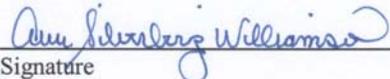
1. Private providers in kind or cash and may originate with a third party.
2. Expenditures for former foster children 18 years old up to 21 years old for services such as clothing, transportation, evaluations/therapy and room and board are paid with state funds.

I certify that I am authorized to submit CFCIP and CFCIP ETV applications for FY 2008 funds in the state of Louisiana.

Application submitted by:

Ann Silverberg Williamson
Name

Secretary, Louisiana Department of Social Services
Title


Signature

June 27, 2007
Date

Approval Date: _____

Signature ACF Regional Administrator or Hub Director

Transmittal Date June 30, 2007

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2008 Federal Fiscal Year CFCIP ETV Request for Funds

Federal Funds Requested: \$455,185

State Match Amount: \$113,796

Request for Re-allotted Funds, (if available): \$20,000

Sources: State General Funds paid for education and training related costs, such as room and board.

I certify that I am authorized to submit CFCIP and CFCIP ETV applications for FY 2008 funds in the state of Louisiana.

Application submitted by:

Ann Jelene Williams
Name

Secretary, Louisiana Department of Social Services
Title

Signature

Date

Approval Date: _____

Signature ACF Regional Administrator or Hub Director

Transmittal Date June 30, 2007

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Title IV-B, Subpart 2 expenditures for family preservation, community-based family support, time-limited family reunification, adoption promotion and support services and administrative costs are listed below.

FFY 2006 Expenditures by purpose		
Family Preservation		22.50%
Family Support Services		22.50%
Time-Limited Family Reunification Services		22.50%
Adoption Promotion and Support Services		22.50%
Administration		10.00%
TOTAL		100.00%

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2007 Annual Progress and Service Report

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families

OMB Approval #0980-0047
Approved through October 31, 2008

**CFS-101, PART I: Annual Budget Request for Title IV-B, Subpart 1 & 2 Funds, CAPTA, Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) and Education & Training Vouchers (ETV):
Fiscal Year 2008, October 1, 2007 through September 30, 2008**

1. State or ITO: Louisiana	2. EIN: 1-72-600-0800-A1
3. Address: DSS - Office of Community Services P. O. Box 3318 Baton Rouge, LA 70821	4. Submission: () New (X) Revision
5. Estimated Title IV-B, Subpart 1 Funds	\$5,230,811
6. Total Estimated Title IV-B Subpart 2 Funds (This amount should equal the sum of lines a-f.)	\$10,877,832
(a) Total Family Preservation Services	\$2,447,513
(b) Total Family Support Services	\$2,447,512
(c) Total Time-Limited Family Reunification Services	\$2,447,512
(d) Total Adoption Promotion and Support Services	\$2,447,512
(e) Total for Other Service Related Activities (e.g. planning)	\$0
(f) Total Administration (not to exceed 10% of estimated allotment)	\$1,087,783
7. Re-allotment of Title IV-B, Subpart 2 funds for State and Indian Tribal Organizations	
a) Indicate the amount of the State's/Tribe's allotment that will not be required to carry out the Promoting Safe and Stable Families program. \$ _____	
b) If additional funds become available to States and ITOs, specify the amount of additional funds the State or Tribes is requesting \$1,087,783	
8. Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), Basic State Grant (no State match required)	
Estimate BSG Amount \$422,230 plus additional allocation, as available.	
9. Estimated Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) funds.	\$1,358,131
10. Estimated Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Funds.	\$455,185
11. Re-allotment of CFCIP and ETV Funds:	
a) Indicate the amount of the State's allotment that will not be required to carry out CFCIP \$ _____	
b) Indicate the amount of the State's allotment that will not be required to carry out ETV \$ _____	
c) If additional funds become available to States, specify the amount of additional funds the State is requesting for CFCIP \$135,813 for ETV \$45,519	
12. Certification by State Agency and/or Indian Tribal Organization	
The State agency or Indian Tribe submits the above estimates and request for funds under Title IV-B, subpart 1 and/or 2, of the Social Security Act, CAPTA State Grant, CFCIP, ETV programs, and agrees that expenditures will be made in accordance with the Child and Family Services Plan, which has been jointly developed with and approved by, the ACF Regional Office, for the Fiscal Year ending September 30.	
Signature and Title of State/Tribal Agency Official	Signature and Title of Regional Office Official
<i>Cathy Williamson, Secretary</i>	<i>Joseph Boor</i>
Date 9/4/07	Date 11/9/07

STATE OF LOUISIANA 2007 Annual Progress and Service Report

CMB APPROVAL # 0980-0047
Approved through October 31, 2008

CFS-101, PART II, ANNUAL SUMMARY OF CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES
State or ITO Louisiana For FY October 1, 2007 TO September 30, 2008

SERVICES/ACTIVITIES	ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES BY PROGRAM (IN THOUSANDS)					(g) STATE LOCAL DONATED FUNDS	(h) NUMBER TO BE SERVED		(i) POPULATION TO BE SERVED	(j) GEOG. AREA TO BE SERVED (include both # and type of areas to be served)	
	(a) I-CWS	(b) TITLE IV-B IFPSF	(c) CAPTA*	(d) CFCID*	(e) ETV		(f) TITLE IV-E	Individuals			Families
1) PREVENTION & SUPPORT SERVICES (Family Support)	\$470,773	\$2,447,513	\$126,660			\$972,762	21,731	21,731	All eligible children & adults	Statewide	
2) PROTECTIVE SERVICES	\$1,412,319		\$295,561			\$470,773	23,003	23,003	Persons at risk of abuse or neglect	Statewide	
3) CRISIS INTERVENTION (Family Preservation)		\$2,447,512				\$815,837	16,461	8,559	Child/Family Visit Assignments	Statewide	
4) TIME-LIMITED FAMILY REUNIFICATION SERVICES		\$2,447,512				\$815,837	8,559	8,559	All Children in Foster Care	Statewide	
5) ADOPTION PROMOTION AND SUPPORT SERVICES		\$2,447,512				\$815,837	788	788	All children from Children in Foster Care	Statewide	
6) FOSTER CARE MAINTENANCE- FOSTER CARE	\$2,824,638					\$6,100,928	8,559	8,559	All children in Foster Care	Statewide	
7) GROUP/INSTITUTIONAL CARE						\$2,778,129	1,741	1,741	All eligible	Statewide	
8) ADOPTION SUBSIDY PMTS.						\$11,194,583	1,749	1,749	All eligible	Statewide	
9) INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES						\$331,885	156	156	All eligible	Statewide	
10) EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING VOUCHERS				\$1,327,538	\$455,185	\$113,796			All eligible	Statewide	
11) ADMINISTRATION & MANAGEMENT	\$523,081	\$957,249		\$30,993		\$29,892,376			All eligible	Statewide	
12) STAFF TRAINING	\$130,534					\$2,987,436			All eligible	Statewide	
13) FOSTER PARENT RECRUITMENT & TRAINING									All eligible	Statewide	
14) ADOPTIVE PARENT RECRUITMENT & TRAINING									All eligible	Statewide	
15) CHILD CARE RELATED TO EMPLOYMENT/TRAINING									All eligible	Statewide	
16) MONTHLY CASEWORKER VISITS									All eligible	Statewide	
17) TOTAL	\$5,230,811	\$12,077,523	\$422,220	\$1,358,131	\$455,185	\$70,813,446	41,100	41,100	All eligible	Statewide	
						\$66,351,174			8,559	All eligible	Statewide

States Only, Indian Tribes are not required to include information on these programs.

Ann Selberg Williams
Secretary

Signature and Title of State/Tribal Agency Official

June 27, 2007
Date

STATE OF LOUISIANA 2007 Annual Progress and Service Report

CFS-101, PART III, Annual Expenditures for Title IV-B, Subpart 1 & 2 Funds, Child Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) AND Education and Training Vouchers (ETV):
For FY October 1, 2004 TO September 30, 2005
3. Address: Department of Social Services, Office of Community Services
P. O. Box 3318, Baton Rouge, LA. 70821

1. State of Louisiana 4. Submission: 03 New Description of Funds	2. EIN: 1-72-600-0800-41	Estimated Expenditures	Number Served		Population served	Geographic area served
			Individuals	Families		
5. Federal Title IV-B, Subpart 1 Funds		\$1,300,614	27,383 27,280 7,122		All eligible children & adults Portion of adoptive All children in foster care	Statewide
a) Total Administrative Costs (not to exceed 10% of Federal allotment) **New Law Effective 10/1/06		\$4,244,321				Statewide
6. Total Federal Title IV-B, Subpart 2 Funds. (This amount should equal the sum of lines a - f).		\$11,436,070		13,623	Child family visit allegations All children in foster care	Statewide
a) Family Preservation Services		\$2,573,566	7,122		Child family visit allegations All children in foster care	Statewide
b) Family Support Services		\$2,573,566	7,122		Child family visit allegations All children in foster care	Statewide
c) Time-Limited Family Reunification Services		\$2,573,566	7,122		Child family visit allegations All children in foster care	Statewide
d) Adoption Promotion and Support Services		\$2,573,566	919		Foster children with goal of adoption	Statewide
e) Total for Other Service Related Activities (e.g. planning)		\$0				
f) Total Administrative Cost (not to exceed 10% of total allotment after October 1, 2007)		\$1,143,806				
7. Total Child Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) funds		\$1,356,131	1,650		All eligible	Statewide
a) Indicate the amount of State's allotment spent on room and board for eligible youth (Not to exceed 30% of CFCIP allotment).		\$26,654				
8. Total Education and Training Voucher (ETV) funds		\$396,282	139		All eligible	Statewide
9. Certification by State Agency or Indian Tribal Organization (ITO). The State agency or ITO agrees that expenditures were made in accordance with the Child and Family Services Plan, which has been jointly developed with, and approved by, the Children's Bureau, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2005.						
Signature and Title of State/Tribal Agency Official <i>Ann Sweeney Williams</i>	Date 9/12/07	Signature and Title of Regional Office Official <i>Joyd. Book</i>	Date 11/9/07			

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The State/Tribe assures that not more than 10 percent of each fiscal year's Title IV-B, Subpart 1 funds (including FY 2007) will be spent on administrative costs beginning October 1, 2007.

Ann Selinsky Williams

State Director of State Agency that administers Titles IV-E and IV-B of the Social Security Act

Or

Tribal Leader

June 27, 2007
Date

Transmittal Date June 30, 2007

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EFFECTIVE DATE AND SECRETARY'S SIGNATURE

I hereby certify that the State of Louisiana complies with the requirements of law listed in the Assurances and Certifications Section of the 2005-2009 Child and Family Services Plan. I have reviewed and approve the 2007 Annual Progress and Services Report submitted herein.

Date: June 27, 2007

Certified by Amy Silverberg Williams

Title Secretary

Agency: Department of Social Services/Office of Community Services

Transmittal Date June 30, 2007

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