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**County Child Welfare Agency Director**

**Name**

Chevon Kothari, MSW, Director, Human Services Department

**Signature**

Chevon Kothari

**Phone Number**

(209) 742-0892

**Mailing Address**

P.O. Box 99 Mariposa, CA 95338

**County Chief Probation Officer**

**Name**

Pete Judy

**Signature**

Pete Judy

**Phone Number**

(209) 966-3612

**Mailing Address**

P.O. Box 76 Mariposa, CA 95338

**Public Agency Designated to Administer CAPIT and CBCAP**

**Name**

Chevon Kothari, MSW, Director, Human Services Department

**Signature**

Chevon Kothari

**Phone Number**

(209) 742-0892

**Mailing Address**

P.O. Box 99 Mariposa, CA 95338

**Board of Supervisors (BOS) Signature**

**Name**

Rosemarie Smallcombe

**Signature**
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Child Welfare Agency</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Baljit Hundal, MSW</th>
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<td>Mariposa County Human Services Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phone &amp; E-mail</td>
<td>(209) 742-0919 <a href="mailto:bhundal@mariposahsc.org">bhundal@mariposahsc.org</a></td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Phone &amp; E-mail</td>
<td>(209) 742-0919 <a href="mailto:bhundal@mariposahsc.org">bhundal@mariposahsc.org</a></td>
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-CFSR PLANNING TEAM &amp; CORE REPRESENTATIVES</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PUBLIC AGENCY CHARACTERISTICS</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STATE AND FEDERALLY MANDATED CHILD WELFARE/PROBATION INITIATIVES</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOARD OF SUPERVISORS DESIGNATED COMMISSION, BOARD OR BODIES</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYSTEMIC FACTORS</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRITICAL INCIDENT REVIEW PROCESS</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER (NRC) TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEER REVIEW SUMMARY</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OUTCOME DATA MEASURES</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUMMARY OF FINDINGS</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATTACHMENTS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATTACHMENT A: FOCUS GROUPS</td>
<td>156</td>
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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the County Self-Assessment (CSA) is to provide an opportunity for each county, in collaboration with community partners, to perform an in-depth assessment of Child Welfare Services (CWS) and Juvenile Probation programs. This analysis includes both qualitative and quantitative data and guides the county in planning for program enhancements and continuous quality improvement. The CSA is the first of three major components that constitute California’s Child and Family Services Review (C-CFSR) process. The second component is the System Improvement Plan (SIP), which documents the County’s plan to enhance, improve or establish services to better care for children in the CWS or Probation systems. The County then reports annually on the status of the Action Steps included in the SIP, which is the third component of the C-CFSR process. In addition, the County has access to findings from the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) Case Review, to include in the analysis of the annual reports regarding how the County is performing.

The C-CFSR strengthens the accountability system used by California to monitor and assess the quality of services provided on behalf of maltreated children. California Department of Social Services (CDSS) All County Information Notice (ACIN):1-50-06. The C-CFSR brings California into alignment with the Federal CFSR and maximizes compliance with the federal regulations for the receipt of Title IV-E and Title IV-B funds.

Data to assess the County’s performance on federal and state required measures are provided quarterly by the California Child Welfare Indicators Project (CCWIP) located at the University of California Berkeley. While the outcome data is important, it is also important to note that Mariposa has a small population in both CWS and Probation, resulting in small denominators in the calculation of performance. With these small denominators, a minor change in the numerator, possibly as small as one case, can make an exaggerated impact on the performance. For that reason, careful attention is given to details and trends in the data.
In October 2017 Mariposa CWS and Probation began the C-CFSR process by convening a team to plan the CSA process. The Planning Team consisted of representatives from CWS, the Probation Department, the Outcomes and Accountability Section (OAS), and the Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP) with CDSS and various community stakeholders. The team, which met weekly by teleconference, determined that the focus area of the Peer Review would be CFSR3 Measure P-1: Permanency in 12 Months for Children Entering Foster Care for both CWS and Probation.

**The team planned and executed three methods of obtaining stakeholder feedback:**

An informational community stakeholder meeting, a Peer Review and nine focus groups. To develop a complete picture of the milieu in which CWS and Probation operate, information about the demographics, prevalence of child maltreatment indicators, and available resources were included in the assessment. The infrastructure of the two agencies and their relationship to other agencies were also examined.

Feedback from the focus groups and the Peer Review constitute the qualitative component of the CSA. Data to assess the County’s performance on federal and state required measures are the quantitative component. This CSA is based on the October 2017 release of Quarter 2 data.

Data from both quantitative and qualitative sources, supported by information about the County’s demographics, current services, and agency structure and operations provide a complete assessment of Mariposa County’s readiness and ability to serve children and families involved with CWS or Probation. The CSA provides a foundation on which to build the next component, the System Improvement Plan.
C-CFSR Team

The planning of the CSA process was a cooperative effort among the Mariposa Human Services Department, the Probation Department, and the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Outcomes and Accountability Section (OAS) and Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP).

Deputy Director Baljit Hundal convened the Core Planning Team in September 2017. The team members were:

California Department of Social Services, Children and Family Services Division, Outcomes and Accountability Section and Office of Child Abuse Prevention Representatives:
- Stevie Rodgers, OAS Consultant
- Hillary Konrad, OCAP Consultant
- Shahla Craggs, OAS Section Chief

Human Services Department Representatives:
- Chevon Kothari, Director
- Baljit Hundal, Deputy Director of Social Services
- Susan Arlington, Social Services Analyst
- Kati Baker, Social Worker Supervisor II
- Sarah Higgs, Office Assistant
- Misty Freeman, Senior Administrative Analyst
- Jillian Rodriquez, CWS Support Unit Supervisor II

Probation Representatives:
- Pete Judy, Chief Probation Officer
- Connie Pearce, Deputy Probation Officer III

Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Representatives:
- Caroline Fruth, Executive Director
- Izzi Stalder, CASA Program Manager
Consultants to Mariposa County Human Services

Patricia Poulsen
Jane Norwood

CORE REPRESENTATIVES

County Child Welfare

Chevon Kothari, Director, Human Services Department
Baljit Gill, Deputy Director for Social Services
Kati Baker, Child Welfare Supervisor
Susan Arlington, Social Services Analyst

Probation

Pete Judy, Chief Probation Officer
Connie Pearce, Deputy Probation Officer III

Native American Tribes

Oriana Walker, Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Representative, Chukchansi Tribe

Service Recipients

Cheryl and Alan Wright, Foster Parents

County Agency Partners

Margarita King, Health Department, Public Health Nurse
Christine Doss, Behavioral Health and Recovery Deputy Director
Mariah Lord, Mariposa Safe Families, Program Director
Caroline Fruth, Court Appointed Special Advocates: Executive Director

THE CSA PLANNING PROCESS

The planning of the CSA was a cooperative effort among the Mariposa Human Services Department, the Probation Department, and the CDSS OAS and OCAP. The team met every week via conference call. Stevie Rodgers, OAS consultant, set the agenda for the weekly calls and then she provided notes after the calls. The initial focus of the team meetings was ensuring that everyone on the team understood the process. Since this was
Mariposa’s second time through the five-year C-CSFR cycle, most members of the team were familiar with it.

In the previous SIP, Mariposa County attempted to address multiple measures. The consensus was that, while focusing on multiple measures was an ambitious goal, it had an unintended consequence of lack of focus. For this cycle, the team decided to concentrate on one measure for the Peer Review, specifically 3-P1: Permanency in 12 Months (entry cohort). With this critical decision made, the team could move onto the next step.

Beginning in October 2017, the team’s attention turned to planning for the Peer Review. A challenge that the team encountered was identifying a sufficient number of peers. An ideal peer reviewer for Mariposa County would be from a small county, which performs well on the chosen target. However, small counties find it difficult for Social Workers, Supervisors and Probation Officers to be away and fires in the northern counties rendered them unable to provide peers. Although many invitations were turned down for workload reasons, the team was pleased to have a full team of six peers made up of four Social Workers and two Probation Officers from Calaveras, Madera, Merced, San Diego, Tuolumne and Ventura Counties.

The team decided that additional resources were needed for the Peer Review and the research and writing of the CSA. Contracts for services were awarded to two consultants, one to facilitate the Peer Review and the focus groups and one to research and assist in the writing of the CSA. Both participated in the weekly team meetings. A temporary Office Assistant was added to the Human Services Department (HSD) staff to manage logistics for the Peer Review. She also participated in the team meetings.

The team suspended meetings for the weeks following the Peer Review and a smaller group continued to oversee the development of the CSA.

**PARTICIPATION OF CORE REPRESENTATIVES**

On October 27, 2017, 28 stakeholders attended an informational meeting in Mariposa. The attendees included foster parents, clergy, Native American tribe members, health care professionals, Probation and Social Services employees, Court Appointed Special Advocates, and interested community members. The Human Services Department
Director, Chevon Kothari, and Chief Probation Officer, Pete Judy, welcomed the attendees and thanked them for their interest in attending the meeting.

The meeting opened with a short video illustrating the experience of a child who had experienced domestic violence and removal from her home.

The agenda covered:

- Video “We Believe”
- CFSR History, Goals, and Process
- Review of Mariposa County participation, and CFSR3 outcome data
- Discussion of CFSR3 Systemic Factors
- Review of Continuum of Care AB 403
- The Importance of Prevention
- Next Steps: Volunteer

Presenters were:

- Baljit Hundal, Deputy Director Social Services Division
- Connie Pearce, Deputy Probation Officer III
- Wendy Wiegmann, UC Berkeley, California Child Welfare Indicators Project (CCWIP)
- Stevie Rodgers, Outcomes and Accountability, California Department of Social Services
- Hillary Konrad, Office of Child Abuse Prevention, California Department of Social Services

Participants were offered an opportunity to ask questions and sign up for volunteer opportunities with Child Welfare Services, Probation, Mariposa Safe Families, Inc. and Court Appointed Special Advocates.

The focus groups were an important vehicle for input from stakeholders. A total of 64 people attended nine focus groups. All focus groups were led by the same facilitator. When possible, focus groups were held during regular meeting times for groups of stakeholders such as the Nourish meeting for foster parents. Participation was encouraging with two exceptions. The tribal focus group only had one participant and the biological
parents’ focus group had three interested community parents in attendance, but none of the three had a child removed from the home and placed in foster care.

**STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK**

The team planned and executed three methods of obtaining stakeholder feedback including:

- Community Informational Meeting in October 2017
- Peer Review December 4th, 5th and 6th, 2017
- Nine focus groups

The Peer Review examined six cases, four CWS and two Probation. Peer reviewers for CWS came from Calaveras, Madera, Merced and Ventura Counties. Peer reviewers for Probation came from San Diego and Tuolumne Counties. Strengths and challenges were identified in service provision.

**Strengths**

- Social Workers/Probation Officers had experience in their fields
- Probation Officers/Social Workers were assigned for the duration of the entire case (minimal change in case assignment)
- Low caseload (all cases)
- Low number of placements (Probation & CWS)
- Support from management (Probation & CWS)
- Resources were offered/provided from very beginning (Probation & CWS)
- Probation Officers/Social Workers were able to develop strong professional relationships with the youth and communicated often
- Child and Family Team (CFT) meetings (Probation & CWS)
- Case Planning (CWS)

**Challenges**

- Parental Substance Abuse (CWS)
- Resistance from biological parents to engage in services (Probation)
- Many changes (4+) in Social Worker assignments, lack of knowledge of case history, no warm hand off (CWS)
• Absent Without Leave (AWOL) tendencies in the youth (Probation)
• Lack of placement stability, lots of moves (CWS)

A more detailed description of the Peer Review findings is found in Section 11: Peer Review Results.

The focus groups represented a good cross section of the community with an investment in the well-being of children. Focus groups represented:

• CWS Social Workers
• Probation Officers
• Care providers
• Independent Living Program (ILP) youth
• Native American tribes
• Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)
• Sheriff’s Office
• Biological parents and interested community members
• Service providers
• North County

Major themes that emerged from the focus groups were:

• If reunification is the goal, the foster care stay should be as short as possible
• Visits are important but can be stressful for some children
• Foster parents would like to be involved in planning visits and mentoring parents
• Poverty is a barrier to reunification
• Lack of housing is a barrier to reunification
• Parent involvement with addiction is not likely to resolve in 12 months
• Consistent contact with the Social Worker is important
• Children and youth want to be listened to and heard

The County’s goal in creating this assessment was to reach as many stakeholders as possible, identify the best available information from multiple sources, and lay the groundwork for planning for the next five years.
Demographic Profile

Introduction

Mariposa County is a small, rural and mountainous region located in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains and extends into the peaks of Yosemite National Park. Elevation ranges from 300 to 12,966 feet above sea level. Nearly half of the 1,449 square miles of the County is owned by the federal government, in the form of Yosemite National Park, Sierra National Forest, Stanislaus National Forest, and the U. S. Department of Land Management. Much of the County is mountainous with winding, narrow roads. The County has great scenic beauty with open rangeland giving way to forested areas and mountain peaks. Because of the unique topography, the County is vulnerable to rockslides, forest fires, and roads closed due to weather conditions.

Mariposa has a small population relative to the geographical size, resulting in a low population per square mile, 12.6. Of the total population of 17,645, the largest concentration is in the town of Mariposa (Mariposa Census Designated Place) with 2,173 residents. Services are primarily available in the town of Mariposa although a few agencies offer services in remote areas. The regional transportation in the County is the Yosemite Area Regional Transit System (YARTS), which is primarily designed to service tourists coming to Yosemite from neighboring counties. While some Mariposa County residents use YARTS to commute to work, the schedule and routes are not conducive to easily moving around the County. Mariposa County Transit (MCT) provides Mari-Go, a general public dial-a-ride with curb-to-curb service. MCT also provides Medi-Trans, a medical transportation service for seniors (60+). Medi-Trans provide transportation to local clinics and medical appointments in neighboring counties.

Mariposa County has three weekly newspapers: the Mariposa Gazette, Foothill Express and Yosemite Highway Herald. The community radio station, KRYZ, is publicly supported. Cell phone service is spotty and only two carriers serve the County. In most of

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3 County of Mariposa. www.mariposacounty.org Retrieved March 2, 2018
the County, there are one or no internet service providers. The average download speed in Mariposa is 9.38Mbps, 473.2% slower than the average in California and 352.9% slower than the national average.\(^5\)

As the data in this section reveals, Mariposa County has an older than average population, few job opportunities, and high rates of poverty. Although the County faces many challenges, there are many opportunities in the spirit of cooperation of its people.

In this section, it should be noted that the most recent United States Census Bureau data is eight years old. Where it is available, this report will use data from the American Community Survey (ACS) 2012 – 2016 5-Year Public Use Microdata Sample files.

**GENERAL COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS**

Like many rural, small population counties, the population is scattered in clusters around the county. The largest concentration of people is in the town of Mariposa with approximately 2,000 people. Providing services to such dispersed groups is a challenge. The graphic below illustrates the population distribution throughout the county. In the County, the area of Greely Hill, Coulterville and Don Pedro are referred to as “North County”. Although this graphic is based on the 2010 census, 2010 is the most recent census report that provides information at the level of detail required for a population density map. The Census Bureau reports that the 2017 population was 17,645 (estimate) and the 2010 population was 18,251 (count). That change represents a loss of 606 people. Six hundred and six people equate to 121 dots or less than 1% of the dots. The map can be updated when the 2020 Census report is released.

Population Stratified by Age, Ethnicity and Language Spoken

Mariposa County has an aging population. The median age has increased by 2.7 years since the 2013 CSA. The 2013 CSA reported that the median age increased over 1.9% since 2010. In contrast, the median age in California is 35.2. California’s percentage of children under five is 6.8%, compared to Mariposa County’s 4.1%. 24.9% of County residents are 65 or older. In addition to the permanent residents, Yosemite National Park has 1,200 summer employees and the contractor who operates the hotels, food stores and snack bars in the park has 1,700 summer employees.6

The County’s population appears level, but the historical trend has been slow but steady growth. The population has tripled over the last 50 years. The population is expected to grow to over 21,000 by 2030.7 The population per square mile is 12.6, compared to California’s 239.1. While Mariposa County is arguably one of the most scenically beautiful locations in the country and millions of visitors come through from all over the world on their way to the park and the forests, it is not to everyone’s taste as a place to live. As noted in Section 5, it is challenging to recruit staff, especially younger people recently graduated, to come to a small rural area. On the positive side, the employees who are native to the County or choose to reside here tend to stay, as the tenure information in Section 5 demonstrates.

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## Ethnicity

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<tbody>
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<td>White Alone</td>
<td>89.8%</td>
<td>90.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American Alone</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian and Alaska Native Alone</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian Alone</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander Alone</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>Not reported</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two or More Races</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>White Alone, not Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>80.6%</td>
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### AGE

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<th>2013 CSA(^9)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total population</td>
<td>17,645</td>
<td>17,905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>8,881 (50.3%)</td>
<td>50.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>8,764 (49.7%)</td>
<td>49.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 5 years</td>
<td>731 (4.1%)</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 to 9 years</td>
<td>770 (4.4%)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 to 14 years</td>
<td>804 (4.4%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 to 19 years</td>
<td>978 (5.5%)</td>
<td>Not reported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 to 24 years</td>
<td>822 (4.7%)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 34 years</td>
<td>1,748 (9.9%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>35 to 44 years</td>
<td>1,640 (9.3%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>45 to 54 years</td>
<td>2,531 (14.3%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>55 to 59 years</td>
<td>1,547 (8.8%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>60 to 64 years</td>
<td>1,693 (9.6%)</td>
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<td>65 to 74 years</td>
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<td>75 to 84 years</td>
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<td>85 years and over</td>
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<tr>
<td>Median Age</td>
<td>50.6</td>
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Although the changes are small, the categories of African American, American Indian, Alaska Native, Asian and Two or More Races are increasing; the White Alone category is decreasing. The most obvious contrasts with California are in the categories of White Alone, 61.3%, Black or African American, 5.9%, and Hispanic or Latino, 38.6%. Mariposa County is less diverse than the whole of California, but it is slowly trending in the direction of diversity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Number of Speakers</th>
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<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>1,192</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Hindi</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scandinavian</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Slavic</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other West Germanic</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The United States Census reports that 7% of Mariposa County residents are foreign born and 10.4% of persons five or older live in a household where a language other than English is spoken. The Mariposa County Unified School District reports that 65 students who are English learners speak Spanish. The implication for Child Welfare Services and Probation is that, as the population continues to trend toward diversity, bilingual staff and cultural awareness training will be increasingly needed.

**Median Income**

In 2016, the median income in dollars was $49,266, significantly lower than the California median of $63,783. The per capita income is $27,832. The population living in poverty is 17.9%, 3.6% higher than California’s 14.3%. Mariposa County Unified School District reports that 962 of its 1,806 students are eligible for free or reduced-price meals. While the median income is interesting, it does not provide insight into the presence or absence of poverty. In Mariposa and the surrounding counties, the Central Valley and Sierra

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Region, persons in the 10th percentile of income have $10,000 in annual income while persons in the 90th percentile have $147,000.\textsuperscript{17}

Benefit programs are an important source of income for many Mariposa County families. The table below compares the percentage and amounts of income from earnings and other sources.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Households receiving income from</th>
<th>Mariposa</th>
<th>California</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Earnings</td>
<td>Percentage 62.9%</td>
<td>80.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amount $65,542</td>
<td>$85,703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Security</td>
<td>Percentage 43.5%</td>
<td>25.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amount $17,223</td>
<td>$16,777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retirement Income</td>
<td>Percentage 28%</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amount $24,600</td>
<td>$28,083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplemental Security Income</td>
<td>Percentage 6.9%</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amount $8,502</td>
<td>$9,791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash Public Assistance</td>
<td>Percentage 3.2%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amount $3,720</td>
<td>$5,489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CalFresh (Food Stamps)</td>
<td>Percentage 9.7%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amount -</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source of the family income aside, in 2016, 18.3% of children under five years old and 19.6% of five to 17-year-olds lived in poverty.\textsuperscript{18} Within the county, over 40% of the population of the Coulterville-Greeley Hill area was below 200% of the poverty level during the period of 2009-2013 (US Census Bureau, American Community Survey data). The communities of Mariposa, Bootjack, Midpines and Cathey’s Valley had over one-third of the population below 200% of the poverty level during the same period. The communities of El Portal and Yosemite had fewer than 26% of the population below 200% of the poverty level.

\textsuperscript{17} Public Policy Institute of California. \url{http://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/report/R_51658R.pdf}. Retrieved February 7, 2018.

\textsuperscript{18} United States Census Bureau. \url{https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_16_5YR_S1701&prodType=table} Retrieved February 10, 2018.
**Food Insecurity**

Food security is a federal measure of a household’s ability to provide enough food for every person in the household to have an active, healthy life. Food insecurity is one way to measure the risk of hunger.

In 2016, Feeding America estimated the number of food insecure individuals in the County at 2,750 representing 16% of the population. Of those individuals experiencing food insecurity, 64% have an income below 200% of the federal poverty guideline and are presumably eligible for federal food assistance such as Women Infants and Children (WIC) benefits, CalFresh (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance, SNAP) and free school meals. The remaining 36% are dependent on food banks or similar volunteer or no-for-profit organizations. The average cost of a meal is $3.03. It would require $1,425,000 to fill the unmet food needs of Mariposa residents.  

In calendar year 2017, the number of households in the County receiving CalFresh benefits was 1,016.

This analysis is based only on the cost, not the quality, of food. The availability of nutritious food is another question. People’s choices about what to eat are severely limited by the options available to them and what they can afford. The United States Department of Agriculture definition of a food desert includes areas that have a relatively high number of households without a vehicle that are more than one-half mile from a supermarket. Many residents of food deserts depend on processed foods (such as snack cakes, chips and soda) typically sold by corner delis, convenience stores, and liquor stores. Mariposa County has one supermarket in the town of Mariposa and a smaller food store in the northern part of the County. The western/southern portions of the County, including the town of Mariposa, fits this criterion with 102 households out of 1,729 that do not have transportation and live more than a half mile from a supermarket. This data is based on 2015 numbers. The same area did not show any indicators of lack of food availability in 2010.

Mariposa County has limited resources for food from organizations that are either charitable or a public/private partnership. Mana House offers emergency food assistance

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provided by volunteers. The Senior Center provides a Commodities Brown Bag Program that provides seniors and disabled persons with two bags of groceries a week for $30 a year. The Senior Center also provides hot lunches Monday through Friday. A donation is requested, but not required. St. Andrews Parish Hall provides a free dinner once a month.\(^{23}\)

**Unemployment**

In December 2017, of the 7,060 persons in the labor force, 6,620 were employed and 440 were unemployed, yielding a 6.2% unemployment rate. The unemployment rate for California in the same month was 4.2%.\(^{24}\) Less than 3% of the County population received CalWORKs benefits in 2017.\(^{25}\) Mariposa County has a unique employment environment due to the nature of its main industry, tourism. Nearly four million people visit Yosemite National Park every year and a large portion of them travel through or stay in the County. The County has 344 employers. Of the twenty-five largest, seven are in Yosemite, eight are governmental agencies and the remainder is in the hospitality industry. Government jobs tend to require higher levels of education. 89% of County residents twenty-five and older graduated from high school and 22.6% have a Bachelor’s degree or higher. California has a high school graduation rate of 82.1% and a Bachelor’s degree rate of 32.0%. The high unemployment rate could be partially attributed to lack of the required education for available jobs. Lack of public transportation could be another factor. The Mariposa County 2017-2020 Mental Health Services Act 3 Year Plan states that “Coupled with a lack of opportunity, the isolation of the County’s residents creates an environment ripe for depression, anxiety, and other mental and behavioral health disorders.”

The Economic Development Corporation of Mariposa County has focused economic development strategies on tourism, retirement, the arts and emphasizing the quality of life that rural living offers. The arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services account for 21.5% of the industries in the County. Educational services, health care and social assistance are the next most common industries, accounting for 17.4% of the County’s industry. 13.4% of the County’s industry is in public administration.\(^{26}\)

The data shows that unemployment rates in Mariposa County are trending downward; at the point in time April 2018 rates were counted, the county’s unemployment rate was about half of the annual average measured in 2013. The unemployment rate for the three census designated places (CDPs) identified by the California Employment Development Department indicate downward trends for the annual averages of Mariposa CDP (Mariposa town area) and Yosemite Valley CDP. Bootjack CDP saw a spike in the annual average for 2017, but April 2018 rates show a reduction in unemployment in that geographic area. Yosemite Valley CDP has a much lower and more stable unemployment rate than the other areas, which is likely because nearly all of the residents in that area have a member of the household working for Yosemite National Park or a vendor. However, many of these employees do experience cyclical unemployment, as national park work is seasonal in nature. Mariposa CDP has the highest unemployment rate of all the areas measured, over twice the unemployment rate of Mariposa County as a whole.²⁷

Average Housing Costs

Mariposa County has 10,372 housing units with a 69.6% owner-occupancy rate. The median value of owner-occupied homes is $250,800. The median monthly rent is $820. An internet search for “homes for sale in Mariposa County” yielded 59 homes for sale, ranging in price from $185,000 to $4,850,000. A search for rental housing yielded only three options ranging in price from $1,395/month to $1,650/month. Applying the 30% rule to the median income, families should spend no more than $1231.65 on housing, including all costs. The Housing Choice Voucher (formerly Section 8) wait list is lengthy. Mariposa County is serviced by the Stanislaus County Housing Authority.

In 2017, the County commissioned a study of housing availability and affordability. The report, entitled The Initial Evaluation of Mariposa County Housing Conditions, concluded that the County is facing a housing shortage that affects all income levels. Rent is unaffordable for low-income families, and middle-income professional workers cannot find an appropriate home to purchase within their budget. This lack of housing is a result of many factors. After the collapse of the housing finance industry in 2008-2009, developers stopped initiating new projects and land use laws limit the available space for building.

The report recommends a series of actions that need to be prioritized and implemented over time. The premise of the report is that regardless of the population segment to be targeted, the strategies for developing housing, rental or for-sale, are the same: identifying development sites, recruiting appropriate development partners and securing financing. These are the main actions necessary to implement any housing development strategy in the County. One of the key issues for the County will be identifying appropriate sites for development and providing a regulatory environment (zoning) that supports denser development in the Mariposa Town Planning Area where there is access to infrastructure. The report suggests updating local land use regulations to stay current with recent laws adopted by the State of California.

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29 Trulia. [https://www.trulia.com/for_sale/Mariposa,CA/APARTMENT,CONDO,COOP,MOBILE|MANUFACTURED,MULTI-FAMILY,SINGLE-FAMILY_HOME,TOWNHOUSE,UNKNOWN_type/price;d_sort/?cid=sem%7Cgoogle%7Ctbw_nb_stategeo_ca_fs_nat_cities_exact%7CMariposa-HomesForSale-Exact_104213444_50991534677_lkw-404315405242_246433775441](https://www.trulia.com/for_sale/Mariposa,CA/APARTMENT,CONDO,COOP,MOBILE|MANUFACTURED,MULTI-FAMILY,SINGLE-FAMILY_HOME,TOWNHOUSE,UNKNOWN_type/price;d_sort/?cid=sem%7Cgoogle%7Ctbw_nb_stategeo_ca_fs_nat_cities_exact%7CMariposa-HomesForSale-Exact_104213444_50991534677_lkw-404315405242_246433775441). Retrieved February 7, 2018.
The Detwiler Fire in July 2017 destroyed or damaged 540 buildings, including 39 mobile homes and 49 single-family homes. The community came together to assist families who lost their homes. A team from the Human Services Department worked with families to assess their needs and provide immediate assistance. In September, the Alliance for Community Transformations assumed responsibility for working with families who lost their homes to the fire. All families were settled in an appropriate temporary setting, primarily travel trailers, but rebuilding the lost homes will be challenging.

The lack of affordable housing especially impacts low-income families. Mariposa County does not use its allotment of Housing Choice Vouchers because eligible families cannot find property owners who will rent to them. Many workers in Mariposa County live in Merced or Madera Counties and commute, a situation that is less than optimal for families. Comfortable, adequate housing is foundational for child safety. Lack of housing options in the County could potentially impact the outcome for 3-P1 Permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care. Lack of suitable, affordable housing was cited repeatedly in focus groups as a barrier to reunification.

Additional information on housing is available in Section 4B, Child Maltreatment Indicators.

**Homelessness**

In order to receive funding from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), communities are required to conduct a census of people who are homeless on a single day during the last ten days of January. In 2017, the survey found 55 persons, 46 adults and 9 children with the following characteristics:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Number (46 respondents)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-24</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>10.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-59</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
<td>65.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

31 Freeman, Misty. A Preliminary Overview of Community Members Impacted by Detwiler Fire. Mariposa County Department of Human Services. Unpublished draft report. Obtained from author February 17, 2018

32 Unpublished information from Mariposa COC annual homelessness survey. Retrieved February 17, 2018
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>49.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other/no response</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity and Race</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>89.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian or Alaska Native</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>90.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other/No Response</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of Time Homeless</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 4 years</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>56.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 years +</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average time homeless in months</td>
<td>43 responses</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disability Status</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reporting one or more disabilities</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporting physical disability</td>
<td>5 of 10 responses</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporting mental health disability</td>
<td>5 of 10 responses</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domestic Violence</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Victim of domestic violence</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fleeing domestic violence</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where People Were Staying on Day of Count</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outside</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abandoned building</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woods or camping</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>34.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couch-surfing</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>30.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitional housing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motel paid by others</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motel paid by self</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jail, hospital, treatment facility</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own house or apartment*</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This category captured people who were still at home but at high risk of becoming homeless due to pending eviction or foreclosure.*
Mariposa County Unified School District has 50 to 75 students who have experienced homelessness in each of the past several years. Native American/Alaska Native persons are overrepresented in the homeless population, compared to the general population.

On June 12, 2015, the Board of Supervisors (BOS) approved the Strategic Plan to Address Homelessness in Mariposa County. The Human Services Department participates in the Strategic Plan. The strategies are:

- Priority One: Build a Community Framework to Address Homelessness
- Priority Two: Engage Street Homeless Population in Services to Address Immediate Needs
- Priority Three: Establish Temporary Rental Assistance Project for Lower-Need Households
- Priority Four: Develop Sustainable Emergency Housing Support System
- Priority Five: Develop and Coordinate Sustainable Homeless Prevention Support System
- Priority Six: Leverage Medi-Cal Expansion to Provide Supportive Services to the Homeless.
- Priority Seven: Establish Supportive Housing for High-Need Households
- Priority Eight: Improve Employment Opportunities for People Who Are Homeless or Recently Housed
- Priority Nine: Evaluate Community Progress.  

In 2018, the County released a draft of the Comprehensive Housing Program Implementation Study. The study contains ten action steps, which are largely administrative in nature. They are:

1) Establish Housing Division
2) Secure Article 34 Authority
3) Reduce Development Cost with Zoning/Land Use Regulations, Infrastructure improvements

4) Update Zoning Code to Reflect Recent Changes to State Law and Promote Development of Accessory Development Units
5) Develop a Package of Local and Access State Resources
6) Build Development Capacity
7) Enhance Homeownership Opportunities
8) Build Partnership to Address Housing Needs of Seasonal Workers
9) Harness Resources for Rental Assistance
10) Adopt Housing Preservation and Anti-Displacement Strategies

These Action Steps are scheduled for implementation between 3 and 36 months from publication of the final version.34

The 2013 CSA reported 64 people in domestic violence shelter beds and an unknown number of others believed to be camping beside the Merced River. The known numbers of homeless persons has not changed significantly since the previous CSA.

List of federally recognized active tribes

Mariposa County has no federally recognized tribes.35 However, the Southern Sierra Mi-Wuk Nation has members in the County. There are seven recognized tribes in the surrounding counties of Alpine, Amador, Calaveras and Tuolumne. On October 1, 2017, Mariposa had two children with primary or mixed (multi) ethnicity of American Indian; one girl in the 11 to 15-age range in a group home and one boy in the 3 to 5 age range in another setting. Both are court dependents.36 Two federally recognized tribes, the Chukchansi tribe, headquartered in Fresno County and the North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians tribe from Madera County, do have tribal members residing in Mariposa County, including children who are in placement. Child Welfare Services (CWS) has forged working relationships with tribes in which a child is eligible for enrollment or is enrolled.

REGIONAL DIFFERENCES

Mariposa County is divided into two major sections, North County, which includes Coulterville and Greely Hill. The southern section includes the town of Mariposa, Bootjack, Midpines and Cathey’s Valley. Locally the term “North County” is used to designate the

34 Draft Comprehensive Housing Program Implementation Study – 2018 Retrieved February 8, 2018
area, but there is no term for the rest of the County. North County has higher rates of poverty, although the rest of the County is only slightly better.

Distinct differences exist among the areas of the County in the number of referrals and substantiations. The table below shows the distribution of referrals and substantiations by zip code.\(^{37}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0–24(^{th}) Percentile</th>
<th>25(^{th}) - 9(^{th}) Percentile</th>
<th>50-74(^{th}) Percentile</th>
<th>75(^{th})-99(^{th}) Percentile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>95623 Fish Camp</td>
<td>95318 El Portal</td>
<td>95306 Cathey’s Valley</td>
<td>95345 Midpines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95389 Yosemite</td>
<td>95329 La Grange</td>
<td>95338 Mariposa</td>
<td>95311 Coulterville</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The ZIP codes below the 50th Percentile, with the exception of La Grange, are in or adjacent to Yosemite National Park. La Grange is actually in Stanislaus County but the ZIP code encompasses part of Mariposa County.

The American City Business Journal (ACBJ) calculates affluence ratings for 22,568 ZIP code territories across the nation. The database includes ZIP codes that had populations of 1,000 or more as of 2015.

The 2017 affluence ratings are based on ACBJ’s 12-part formula, which used statistics from the five-year version of the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2015 American Community Survey. The formula’s components are:

- Per capita income
- Median household income
- Households with incomes of $150,000 or more
- Households with interest, dividends or net rental income
- Poverty rate
- Upper quartile (75th percentile) house value
- Median (50th percentile) house value
- Housing units with nine or more rooms
- Workers with earnings of $100,000 or more
- Workers with management, business, science or arts occupations
- Adults (age 25 and older) with bachelor’s degrees
- Adults (age 25 and older) with advanced degrees

\(^{37}\) Information provided by Wendy Wiegmann, MSW, PhD, Project Director of the Child Welfare Indicators Project. Derived from data unavailable on the public website.
The table below shows the affluence rank, affluence score and affluence percentile by ZIP Code. The percentile is the percentage of the other 22,567 territories that the given territory outranks. As an example, Coulterville is more affluent than 58.798% of the 22,568 ZIP codes in the database. The ZIP codes with no data presumably fall below the 1,000 resident threshold.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zip Code</th>
<th>Post Office</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Percentile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>95306</td>
<td>Cathey’s Valley</td>
<td>No Data</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93623</td>
<td>Fish Camp</td>
<td>No Data</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95311</td>
<td>Coulterville</td>
<td>1,301</td>
<td>-6.516</td>
<td>58.789%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95318</td>
<td>El Portal</td>
<td>No Data</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95325</td>
<td>Hornitos</td>
<td>No Data</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95338</td>
<td>Mariposa</td>
<td>11,273</td>
<td>-19.090</td>
<td>50.51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95345</td>
<td>Mid Pines</td>
<td>No Data</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95389</td>
<td>Tuolumne, Wawona, Yosemite National</td>
<td>No Data</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This chart reveals that Coulterville is more affluent than Mariposa. Unfortunately, the small populations in the other ZIP codes do not allow comparison of the remaining six ZIP Codes.

In 2016, the poverty rate in Mariposa County was 3.5 percentage points higher than that of the state of California, and nearly 4 percentage points higher than the US as a whole. Over time, Mariposa County poverty rates have trended roughly with both California and the US, spiking in 2012 above state and national poverty rates, and again in 2016 (US Census Bureau data). Within the county, over 40% of the population of the Coulterville-Greeley Hill area was below 200% of the poverty level during the period of 2009-2013 (US Census Bureau, American Community Survey data). The communities of Mariposa, Bootjack, Midpines and Cathey’s Valley had over 1/3 of the population below 200% of the poverty level during the same period. The communities of El Portal and Yosemite had fewer than 26% of the population below 200% of the poverty level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Poverty</th>
<th>Number in Poverty</th>
<th>Percent in Poverty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>United States</td>
<td>315,165,470</td>
<td>44,268,996</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>California</td>
<td>38,513,333</td>
<td>5,527,621</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Mariposa County</td>
<td>17,212</td>
<td>3,077</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Combining poverty rates, unemployment data and information from the child welfare population, the child most at risk of abuse and/or neglect is a white child 10 and under living in a high poverty area and likely to live in the Mariposa (town)/Mid Pines/Boojack/Cathey’s Valley area or in the Coulterville area.

North County has fewer supportive services than the population center around Mariposa. Recognizing that North County residents feel, and are, underserved, the CSA planning committee elected to have a focus group specifically for that group. When asked “How can Mariposa County Human Services Agency better support this process (of finding permanency)” the group responded:

- More availability of the social workers
- More publicity about the whereabouts of the North County
- Community knowledge of services available
- More interagency collaboration knowledge of each other’s programs. Perhaps have staff training across disciplines
- Housing
- Services/counseling for child when reunification does not work

**Changes or Trends Since Last CSA**

The demography of Mariposa County has changed very little since the 2013 CSA. The median age of the population has increased slightly from 47.3% to 50.6%. The percentage of White Only persons has decreased slightly from 90.7% to 89.8%. The County is slowly becoming more diverse. Median income has remained virtually level. The percentage of people living in poverty has increased from 14.4% to 17.9%.

The small changes in demographics are not powerful enough to impact the delivery of services to families and children in either direction. The combination of high poverty rates and an aging population would not seem to point to the likelihood that community services will expand. Possibly the large retired population can be a source of volunteers, but it is not likely to be a major source of funding for not-for-profits. Mountain Crisis Services, for example, is at capacity in its temporary housing service and does not have the funds to expand to meet the need. Lack of temporary housing in a crisis could lead to homelessness or family violence. These conditions could result in an increase of children in
care, delays in reunification and an increase in repeated abuse/neglect. All of these factors figure into the Quality Outcome Measures and could impact the outcome.

The change in affordability and availability of housing has the potential for delaying reunification if families cannot find suitable housing. As of the most recent homeless count, there are no homeless children in the county. The increasing difficulty of finding affordable housing can lead to whole families becoming homeless and at risk of abuse and/or neglect.

The increases in numbers of the ethnic groups other than white are small but could change quickly. Unless the County is vigilant in training staff to be sensitive to cultural norms and includes members of all ethnic groups in needs assessment and service planning and delivery, this change could influence the Quality Outcome Indicators.

Also unfortunate is the rise in the percentage of people living in poverty, a well-known red flag for child abuse and neglect. Any of these changes (aging of the population, lack of appropriate housing, rising poverty, increased diversity) could lead to changes in workload for both CWS and Probation, which in turn could impact the County’s ability to serve at-risk families and performance on the Quality Outcome Indicators.

Other factors, unrelated to the demographics of the County, have a much greater influence on service design and delivery. Since the 2013 CSA was written, the Human Services Department has a new Director and a new Deputy Director of the Social Services Division and policy and practice are constantly evolving. Mariposa County does not expect any changes to the County’s performance on the Outcome Data measures as a result of the demography of the County.

**CHILD MALTREATMENT INDICATORS**

*Low Birth Weight Infants*

A low birth weight infant is one that weighs less than 5 pounds, 8 ounces at birth. Low-birth-weight babies can be healthy even though they are small but serious health problems can be associated with low birth weight. Premature birth can be a cause of low birth weight. About 7 out of 10 low birth weight babies are premature, meaning they were born before 37 weeks of gestation. Low birth weight can be caused by fetal growth restriction, meaning that the baby did not gain enough weight in the uterus. About 1 in 10 babies is growth-restricted. Medical risk factors for low birth weight include preterm labor,
chronic health conditions (such as high blood pressure, diabetes, and heart, lung, and/or kidney problems), infections, problems with the placenta, and not gaining enough weight during pregnancy. Life-style risk factors are smoking, drinking alcohol, using street drugs and abusing prescription drugs. Having little education, low income, or being unemployed correlates positively with low birth weight. Women younger than 17 and older than 35 are more likely to have a low birth weight baby than women between 18 and 34. In America, race/ethnicity can be a risk factor. African American women are more likely to have a low birth weight baby (13%) than Asian women (8.4%), Native American women (7.6%), Hispanic women (7%) or white women (7%). Low birth weight babies are more likely than other babies to have health problems as newborns including respiratory distress, bleeding in the brain, failure of the artery that allows blood to reach the lungs, intestinal problems and vision problems. Low birth weight babies can have health problems later in life including diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, metabolic syndrome and obesity.  

Mariposa County’s 3-year (2012 – 2015) average rate of low birth weight infants was 9.3/1,000 females age 15 - 19. However, that number is approximate because the total is fewer than twenty. The County has one hospital, John C. Fremont, but it does not have maternity or neo-natal services. Women living in the County generally go to Merced for delivery.

**Number of Children Born to Teen Parents**

Infants born to teenage mothers are at risk of health, emotional, and/or developmental problems not just in infancy but throughout their lives as well. Babies born to teenage mothers are more likely to have difficulty acquiring cognitive and language skills as well as social and emotional skills, such as self-control and self-confidence.

Consequences for the teen parents can be devastating. Most adolescent parents are not married and the pregnancy is not planned. Rarely does the relationship survive the pregnancy and birth.

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In the five-year span from 2012 to 2016, no women in the 15 to 19 age group gave birth.43

**Family Structure**

The average household size in Mariposa County is 2.29 and the average family size is 2.76.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Types and Size</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Households</td>
<td>7,255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Household Size</td>
<td>2.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Families</td>
<td>4,854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Family Size</td>
<td>2.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households with Own Children Under 18</td>
<td>1,498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 6 only</td>
<td>35.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 6 and 6 to 17</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 17 only</td>
<td>57.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With Related Children Under 18</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband/Wife with Own Children under 18</td>
<td>1,085</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Householder with Own Children under 18</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Householder with Own Children under 18</td>
<td>261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner Occupied</td>
<td>69.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renter Occupied</td>
<td>30.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children Living with Grandparents</td>
<td>268*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 6</td>
<td>88*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 11</td>
<td>104*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 to 16</td>
<td>76*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandparent Responsible for Grandchildren</td>
<td>186*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Present</td>
<td>45*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Parent Present</td>
<td>141*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These numbers are estimates with a large margin of error*

Between the 2010 Census and the 2016 American Community Survey the number of single men with children increased from 155 to 233 and the number of single women with children decreased from 295 to 261. Currently the County has no programs specifically for fathers. The need for preventive programming for men can be considered in the

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development of the SIP. Since 2013, the year of the previous CSA, the number of grandparents responsible for grandchildren with no parent present increased from 73 to 141. The increased number of grandparents with no parent present could potentially lead to referrals to Child Welfare Services in the event of the death or disabling illness of the grandparent. Currently Mariposa Safe Families (MSF) provides Grand & Kinship Families Coffee, where grand families and kinship relative caregivers meet to support, learn, exchange ideas and resources from their own life experiences with childcare, guardianship and/or adoption. It is an independent confidential group that provides the opportunity to network and exchange tips. The capacity of this group and the need to expand this preventative program or add others can be considered in the SIP planning process.

**Housing Costs and Availability**

The table below displays the basic description of housing costs for owner-occupied and rental homes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Costs(^{46})</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Housing Units</td>
<td>10,334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Occupied</td>
<td>70.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Vacant</td>
<td>29.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most frequent type of structure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 1 unit, detached</td>
<td>74.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mobile home</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 3 or 4 units</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most frequent year built</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 1970 – 1979</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 1980 – 1989</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 1990 – 1999</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 2000 – 2009</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner Occupied</td>
<td>69.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renter Occupied</td>
<td>30.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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\(^{44}\) United States Census. [https://factfinder.census.gov](https://factfinder.census.gov) Retrieved February 12, 2018

\(^{45}\) Mariposa Safe Families. [http://www.mariposasafefamilies.org/programs-.html](http://www.mariposasafefamilies.org/programs-.html) Retrieved February 12, 2018

Most frequent heating
- Bottle, tank, or LP Gas 35.4%
- Wood 33.9%
- Electricity 17.7%

Most frequent value of owner-occupied
- $200,000 - $299,999 29.4%
- $300,000 - $499,999 21.3%
- $150,000 - $199,999 13.0%
- $100,000 - $149,999 12.0%

Most frequent owner costs with mortgage
- $1,000 - $1,499 31.9%
- $1,500 - $1,999 21.4%
- $2,000 - $2,499 16.4%

Most frequent owner costs without mortgage
- $250 - $399 34.3%
- $400 - $599 29.9%
- Less than $250 16.8%

Most frequent gross rent
- $500 - $999 41.8%
- $1,000 - $1,499 28.9%
- Less than $500 22.1%

The data in the table speaks to the rural nature of the County. Mobile homes are the second most frequent type of housing and firewood is the second most frequent type of heating. Rent in the County is high compared to income. 43.8% of renters pay 35% of their household income for rent.

211 Calls
Mountain Valley 211 provides information on resources serving Merced and Mariposa Counties. The program is offered through United Way of Merced and is partnered with Mariposa Safe Families. In its first year of operation, October 2015 – October 2016, 211 received 36 calls and 268 web views from Mariposa. Services are available by phone or on the website. Services are completely free, confidential, 24/7/365, and available in over 150 different languages. Information resources include:
• Food pantries, free meals, and nutrition programs
• Homeless shelters, housing assistance, and home loan programs
• Emergency information and disaster relief
• Employment and education opportunities
• Health care, vaccination, and health epidemic information
• Substance abuse education and rehabilitation programs
• Support groups for individuals with mental illnesses or special needs
• A safe, confidential path out of physical and/or emotional domestic abuse
• The October 2015 – October 2016 Annual Report provides the following top five referrals by quarter:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quarter 1</th>
<th>Quarter 2</th>
<th>Quarter 3</th>
<th>Quarter 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Utility Payment Assistance (57)</td>
<td>Utility Payment Assistance (79)</td>
<td>Utility Payment Assistance (109)</td>
<td>Utility Payment Assistance (130)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Cost Home Rental Listings (38)</td>
<td>211 Systems (35)</td>
<td>211 Systems (53)</td>
<td>Low Cost Home Rental Listings (41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>211 Systems (36)</td>
<td>Low Income / Subsidized Private Rental Housing (33)</td>
<td>Rent Payment Assistance (38)</td>
<td>Utility Bill Payment Plan Negotiation Assistance (35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Pantries (31)</td>
<td>Food Pantries (30)</td>
<td>Low Income / Subsidized Private Rental Housing (26)</td>
<td>Rent Payment Assistance (27)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Housing and utilities emerge as important issues for 211 callers. Mariposa County residents made 35 calls to 211, suggesting that residents are not as aware of its availability and more marketing in Mariposa County is needed.

**Substance Abuse Data**

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, in 2014, two-thirds of people age 12 or older reported that they drank alcohol in the past 12 months with 6.4% meeting the criteria for an alcohol use disorder. 10.2% (27 million people) reported using illicit drugs in the past month. Of those, 7.1 million met the criteria for illicit drug use disorder. Each year, approximately 5,000 youth under age 21 die

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47 Mountain Valley 211. [http://mountainvalley211.org](http://mountainvalley211.org) Retrieved February 13, 2018

48 [https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/drugexposed.pdf](https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/drugexposed.pdf) Retrieved February 13, 2018
because of underage drinking. In Mariposa County, eleven people died of drug overdose between 2013 and 2015. Between 2013 and 2016, 205 people were arrested for a drug related offense. Prevention services are available from Behavioral Health and Recovery Services, a division of Human Services Department. Program descriptions are provided in the next section, Mental Health Data.

The Child Welfare Information Gateway indicates that abuse of alcohol or drugs by parents or caregivers can have effects on the health, safety and well-being of children. Two areas of concern are harm to the fetus from drug exposure and the harm to children of any age by exposure to illegal drug activity in their home. The link between drugs and alcohol and child abuse is so widely known that 34 states, including California, have made exposing a child to illegal drug activity a crime.

**Mental Health Data**

In Mariposa County, Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS) is a division of the Human Services Department. The division provides, either directly or through contractors, adult and youth outpatient services and prevention services for adults and youth. Programs include Friday Night Live (provided by Mariposa Safe Families), a Mentoring Youth Program, a Driving Under the Influence (DUI) Program, and Penal Code and Proposition 36 (diversion programs). The table below provides the number of adults and children who received services from BHRS. BHRS reports no waiting lists for services, implying that the decline in the number of adults and children receiving services is not attributed to lack of capacity to provide services.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Adults and Children Receiving Services from BHRS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to public services, six commercial Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) treatment centers advertise in the County.

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**Child Fatalities and Near Fatalities**

Mariposa County has a Child Death Review Team (CDRT) that investigates critical incidents such as a child fatality or near fatality; an incident involving severe trauma; or any incident that might likely generate media coverage (i.e. a child witness to a murder or an attempted or completed suicide); and when the critical incident is suspected to be or is attributed to abuse and/or neglect. See Section 9 for additional information on the Child Death Review Team.

The data in the tables below are not exclusively child welfare related. These data could be a slight undercount since they do not include child deaths or injury that did not involve an emergency room visit.

### Child Deaths

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - 9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - 14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 - 19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Self-Inflicted suicide

### Non-fatal Emergency Room Visit - Unintentional

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 4</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - 9</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - 14</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 - 19</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Non-fatal Emergency Department Visit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 - 14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 - 19</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Children with Disabilities

Kid’s Data reports the following numbers of children with disabilities by enrollment in 2016.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mariposa County</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autism</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaf</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaf-Blindness</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Disturbance</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard of Hearing</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual Disability</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Disability</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Disability</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthopedic Impairment</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Health Impairment</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech or Language Impairment</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traumatic Brain Injury</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Impairment</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The numbers in this table may be a slight undercount because they are drawn from enrollment data and would not include children under school age. Services for children with intellectual disabilities are available from the Regional Center in Merced. In November of every year, Mariposa Safe Families recognizes children with disabilities with an Art Ability Night led by a local art instructor. Additional information is included in Section 9, Service Array.

Domestic Violence

Violence in dating or marriage relationships can result in physical injury, psychological trauma and even death. Violence can include intimidation, physical assault, battery, sexual assault, emotional abuse, stalking and other abusive behavior. The negative effects of intimate partner violence can also extend beyond the direct victim. An estimated 10 million U.S. children are exposed to domestic violence each year, and research shows that children who witness such violence—even if they are not the targets—are at increased risk for mental, physical, behavioral, social, and developmental impairments. Child

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witnesses of family violence are also at higher risk of becoming abusers or victims themselves later in life.

An estimated 3 in 10 women and 1 in 10 men in the U.S. have experienced intimate partner violence. These figures are considered underestimates, as many victims do not report it. About 1 in 3 youth ages 14-20 reports experiencing dating violence and 1 in 10 U.S. high school students reported being physically victimized by a dating partner in the previous year. Adolescent victims of dating violence are more likely to abuse substances, show symptoms of depression/anxiety and engage in antisocial, suicidal, or risky sexual behavior.

Women who experience relationship violence during pregnancy are less likely to access prenatal care and are more likely to have insufficient weight gain, miscarry, give birth prematurely and/or have infants with low birth weight or injuries. Women who experience relationship violence during pregnancy also have elevated stress levels, increased rates of smoking, and are at an increased risk for substance use, which are associated with poor maternal and infant health and well-being.57

Mariposa County has a domestic violence calls for assistance rate of 13.0 per 1,000 residents. The California average is 6.0 per 1,000 residents. Mariposa’s rate is the seventh highest in the state. In 2017, the Mariposa County Sheriff’s office received 111 domestic violence calls.58 Services to victims of domestic violence are available through Mountain Crisis Services, which is the provider of emergency services for victims. Services include a 24-hour hotline, counseling and support groups, legal advocacy, emergency shelter and transitional housing. From January 1, 2017 through December 31, 2017 Mountain Crisis Services assisted 141 survivors/victims of domestic violence and answered 70 hotline calls from survivors/victims of domestic violence.59 Mountain Crisis offers Transitional Housing, but currently the facility is full and has been for 8 months. Several families need Transitional Housing and unfortunately will not be accommodated. With length of stay extended for some people, because they have nowhere to go, Mountain Crisis’ effectiveness

in providing temporary shelter is reduced. Lack of adequate, affordable housing extends the time families need to stay in Transitional Housing.

Mountain Crisis has nine staff positions: Legal Advocate, Peer Counselor, Prevention Specialist, Receptionist, Program Specialist and four Safe House Advocates. A future goal is to have 24 hours staffing at the safe house, which would require hiring two additional advocates. At this time, those positions cannot be filled due to lack of funding.\(^{60}\) Mountain Crisis is a private, not-for-profit agency with a volunteer board. No formal evaluation of the effectiveness of services is available.

A growing concern is the prevalence of violent and abusive relationships among teenagers and pre-teens. Although only a small percentage of youth report experiencing dating violence, even a small number is too large.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Yes %</th>
<th>No%</th>
<th>Did not have a boyfriend/girlfriend during past 12 months%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7th</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>46.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>63.7</td>
<td>32.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11th</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>34.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>57.6</td>
<td>37.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Alliance for Community Transformations (ACT) began an effort to engage the community of Mariposa, CA, and specifically the Mariposa County Unified School District in promoting healthy teen relationships and preventing dating abuse in 2013.\(^{61}\) Mariposa County Project Respect provides Steps to Respect, a bullying prevention program for elementary schools designed to decrease bullying and help children build more respectful, caring peer relationships. Staff development and support services are provided to Mariposa County Schools through a cooperative Memorandum of Understanding.\(^{62}\)

**Analysis**

Considering areas of poverty, geographical source of allegation and the child welfare population data, the at-risk profile is a white child, under five years old, living in a sparsely

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\(^{60}\) Email from Kristen Fiester, Program Director, Mountain Crisis Services. Received May 21, 2018.


populated area. Coulterville and the surrounding area meet this description. The North County focus group expressed their wishes and desires for services aimed at short stays and early exits from foster care with these suggestions:

- More availability of the social workers
- More publicity about the whereabouts of the North County
- Community knowledge of services available
- More interagency collaboration/knowledge of each other’s programs. Perhaps have staff training across disciplines
- Housing
- Services/counseling for children when reunification does not work

North County lacks transportation and residents must travel to a population center where services are available.

Mariposa County is stable and the community has not changed markedly in the five intervening years since the last CSA, with one notable exception, housing. The lack of adequate, affordable housing could be a factor contributing to child abuse and/or neglect and a barrier to reunification. Lack of housing combined with a high rate of domestic violence impacts the ability to move families into a stable home situation. If the biological parent(s) cannot find suitable housing, the child(ren)'s time in foster care can be extended. If this situation results in more children in care, all the federal and state measures could be negatively affected unless the County provides a commiserate change in CWS and Probation staff. The County is well aware of the housing situation. There is an active group working on developing more housing options, but the plans are long-term and not a solution for families that need housing today. The Peer Review and eight focus groups mentioned housing as a barrier to reunification.

The geography of the County will not change. People living in locations far from the population center will still need services. North County is far from services in either Mariposa County or Tuolumne County. Yosemite Village is a predominately self-contained area with its own services through the National Park Services. The population centers have the best access to services but also the highest rates of allegations. The population will
continue to change slowly toward more diversity but it is not likely to move toward a younger median age given the housing situation.

Combining information from the County population data and the Child Welfare population, the children most likely to be victims of abuse and/or neglect are white children of either gender under five. Using poverty as an estimator of likelihood of abuse and/or neglect, the communities at the greatest risk are Mariposa (town), Coulterville and Bootjack. The types of abuse and/or neglect are likely to be general neglect.

In Mariposa County, it may be the lack of change, rather than change, which can affect the operations of Child Welfare, Probation and the Outcome Indicators. Finding Resource Families is challenging in an environment where retirees represent a substantial portion of the population. Chronic unemployment and lack of housing can affect the County’s outcomes. The external factors are more of a concern than internal factors such as staff size, policy or training. While internal factors are important, the community environment is critical to child safety. Without a robust service array, reaching the federal and state goals would be difficult. Fortunately, the services exist in the county but the challenge is to extend services to the remote and currently underserved areas.

Changes within the Human Services Department, with connections to the California Department of Social Services and the federal Children’s Bureau, will potentially have more impact on services than external factors. Since 2013, the Human Services Department hired a new Director and a new Deputy Director of Social Services. In addition, many of the social worker staff members have joined the team in the intervening years. Programs such as Resource Family Approval (RFA), Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI) and the Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) are just a few of the changes that could not have been anticipated in 2013. In the time frame of this CSA, there will undoubtedly be changes to policy, practice and technology. Mariposa County Human Services Department remains dedicated to the welfare of the families and children in the County.

**CHILD WELFARE AND PROBATION POPULATION**

All child welfare data in this section comes from the California Child Welfare Indicators Project\(^63\) (CCWIP) at the University of California, Berkeley. These reports count

\(^{63}\) Webster, D., Lee, S., Dawson, W., Magruder, J., Exel, M., Cuccaro-Alamin, S., Putnam-Hornstein, E., Wiegmann, W., Saika, G., Eyre, M.,
each child receiving a child maltreatment allegation once for each analysis year. If a child has more than one allegation in each year, he or she is counted in the category considered to represent the most severe occurrence. It is possible for a child to appear twice or more if allegations were made in more than one year. The CCWIP website allows the user to select the periods of certain measures by the quarter. Other measures limit the selection to by the year and some measures are point in time. If the option to choose by the quarter was available, the option with the most recent data was chosen. Some measures provide the rate per 1,000 children living in the County, but others do not. Where the rate per thousand is available and relevant, it is included. Percentages are included where appropriate, but with the small numbers in the categories, percentages can be somewhat misleading. For that reason, it is important to look at the number in relation to the percentage.

**Allegations**

The number of allegations received by Mariposa dropped noticeably in years 2014 and 2015. For those two years, the rate per thousand was lower than or equal to the state rate. In the other three years of the last five, the Mariposa rate of allegations is substantially higher than the state rate. From this data alone, it is difficult to determine if the County has a higher incidence of abuse and/or neglect or if the County’s residents are well educated on their responsibility to report. Employees who have worked in the County attribute the high rate of allegations to community vigilance, mandated reporter training for the public provided by Mariposa Safe Families (MSP), and the small-town nature of the community. Online Mandated reporter training is available on the County website and CWS has a good working relationship with the Sheriff’s office. Mandated reporter training for the public is provided by Mariposa Safe Families. People know that a referral will help the families. Professionals are aware of their responsibility as mandated reporters. Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS) and Child Welfare Services (CWS) are both part of the Department of Human Services and are co-located in the same building. Behavioral Health frequently makes referrals to Child Welfare Services. Information on how and what to

The report is available on the County website. The table below provides information on the types of reporters and the frequency of reports by type. Law enforcement, educators and counselors/therapists emerge as important sources of referrals. All of these factors contribute to the community’s awareness of when and how to refer suspicious situations.

Although it is not a straight-line trend, the total number of allegations does appear to be declining. The 2012-2013 time frame had the highest number of allegations. The most recent period is the lowest number.

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*Guardian ad Litem*

**Allegations by Ethnic Group**

The child welfare population reflects the general population of the County. Most allegations are in the White Group, as would be expected from the population data described in the Demographic Profile. As a comparison, the White Group in Mariposa County is twice as large as the statewide percentage. Despite their low numbers, the

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African American, Latino and Native American groups are overrepresented. The disparity index for the African American Group is an alarming 1,400, but that number is partially a reflection of the low numbers in the calculation. However, as the County slowly increases in the number of non-whites, culturally appropriate services will be an important consideration. Currently some services are offered for Native Americans by the tribes. The need for services for other ethnic groups will grow as the population grows. A full list of existing services is provided in the Service Array section of this report.

The number of allegations by Ethnic Group varies little over the last five years. This consistency over time is reflective of the lack of change in the general population and stable relationships among the professional communities, as illustrated by the referral source data.

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**Allegations by Age Groups**

It is challenging to draw any conclusions from the age table because the age groupings are not equal in span. The under 1 group spans 1 year, the 1-2 group spans 2 years, the 3-5 group spans 3 years, the 6-10 and 11-15 groups each span 5 years and the 16-17 group spans 2 years. Using the most recent data, October 2016 through September 2017, and dividing each group by the number of years in its span, the 3 to 5 group has the highest annual number at 14, followed by the 16 to 17-year-old group at 12.5. The under one group is 12, the 1 to 2 group is 10, and the 11 to 15 group is 10.4. Using the most recent data as an example it appears that there are no large disparities in allegations based on age.
As with the ethnicity category, the age category is very consistent from year to year. There is no up or down trend from the 2013 CSA. This category also reflects the consistency over time in Mariposa County.

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**Allegations by Type**

General Neglect accounts for over half of the allegations in the County. Poverty, high unemployment, lack of adequate and affordable housing and involvement with drugs and alcohol all contribute to the high rate of allegations in that one category. The statewide percentage of General Neglect for the same period ranged between 46.1% and 46.9%.
Allegations of sexual abuse increased in the last two periods. The number of allegations of emotional abuse also increased in the 2015 to 2017 period. Severe Neglect suddenly increased to 9 in one year after having only four in the previous four years. The allegations of General Neglect are trending down, and the October 2016 - September 2017 number is almost half the number in the period of the previous CSA. The pattern over the five-year range is that general neglect allegations are going down and the more severe forms of abuse are increasing. The reason(s) for this change are not clear. Mariposa County has opted into the federally mandated Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) initiative. CWS, Probation and our community partners have participated in CSEC trainings and CWS social workers have an awareness of the fields in CWS/CMS that pertain to data entry for CSEC issues. There is an active CSEC Protocol and a CSEC Committee made up of CWS, Probation and community partners that meet monthly to provide education and prevention awareness to professionals in the community.

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|                              | OCT2012-   | OCT2013- | OCT2014- | OCT2015- | OCT2016-
|                              | OCT2013    | OCT2014| OCT2015 | OCT2016 | OCT2017 |
|                              | %          | %    | %    | %    | %    |
| Sexual Abuse                 | 3.0        | 5.4  | 3.9  | 7.6  | 7.8  |
| Physical Abuse               | 7.3        | 18.6 | 19.1 | 17.4 | 16.1 |
| Severe Neglect               | .          | 1.8  | .    | 0.4  | 4.4  |
| General Neglect              | 86.3       | 69.5 | 62.5 | 58.9 | 50.2 |
| Exploitation                 | .          | 0.6  | .    | 0.4  | .    |
| Emotional Abuse              | 1.7        | 1.2  | 4.6  | 6.7  | 7.3  |
| Caretaker Absence/Incapacity | 0.9        | 1.8  | 8.6  | 4.9  | 5.9  |
| At Risk - Sibling            | 0.9        | 1.2  | 1.3  | 3.6  | 8.3  |
| Substantial Risk             | .          | .    | .    | .    | .    |
| Missing                      | .          | .    | .    | .    | .    |
| Total                        | 100.0      | 100.0| 100.0| 100.0| 100.0|

**SUBSTANTIATIONS**

The number of children with substantiations has decreased dramatically between 2012 (101) and 2016 (33). It reached a low point in 2014 at 19 but rose to 31 in 2015 and 33 in 2016. The population in the County has not changed enough to account for the change in substantiations and the total number of allegations has not dropped proportionally. This combination of numbers presents an opportunity to examine policy and practice to determine the root causes of the change in the number of substantiations. There is no immediately apparent explanation for this change.

African American and Native American ethnic groups were overrepresented in substantiations in 2012 but not in the last 4 years. Based on the per 1,000 data, younger children (<1 through 5) are more likely to have a substantiated allegations than the older children.
### Children with Substantiations by Ethnic Group (Number)

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### Children with Substantiations as a Percent of Allegations by Ethnic Groups

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**Children with Substantiations as Percent of Allegations**

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**First and Subsequent Entries**

First entries were at their lowest in the October 2016 to September 2017 period; however, Mariposa County’s history has been erratic rather than following a steady trend. The total numbers for each of the last five years are up and down. Consequently, a low number in the most recent period is not predictive of future numbers. The percentage of substantiations has followed an overall downward direction, but it is not a consistent trend and does not explain the first entry numbers. Subsequent entries are higher in the two most recent time periods. Three of the Other Entry category is 18–20-year-olds returning to take advantage of their AB12 benefits, a very positive move. No children under 11 months have returned to care in the last five years, also a positive indicator. Reducing second entries was a goal in the previous SIP and the County met the federal standard by
the end of the five-year cycle. Close collaboration with partners like mental health and other service providers was credited with part of the success.

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**IN CARE**

The care provider focus group had much to say about the challenges for the care provider, the child’s family and the child. The care providers had many ideas and suggestions about their role and Child Welfare’s role. Care providers want to be involved in matching a child with a potential adoptive family. They also want to be more involved in planning and supporting visits with family and some foster parents would like to get to know and perhaps become a mentor to the child’s family. The ILP (youth) focus group was equally vocal, but with very different issues. Youth want more and longer visits, including awareness that visits to a family who lives far away or to a parent in prison can take a lot of time just to travel to the site. Children in care demographics follow the same pattern as the general population as did allegations and substantiations. The number of children in care was lower in 2014 and 2015.

In 2013 and again in 2017, the number of children in Family Reunification exceeded the number in Permanent Placement. Family Reunification was an important theme in the ILP focus group. Youth expressed the desire to return home as quickly as possible. Care providers suggested that an improvement to service from CWS would be a longer period of monitoring and support after a child has returned home. Currently the case is kept open in Family Maintenance status for six months after reunification. If the court closes the case at the end of six months, it moves to Voluntary Family Maintenance. If the parents have...
demonstrated that they can safely care for the child, the case is closed. The social worker assigned to the case will support the family in finding and accessing services based on their unique needs. Available services are listed in the Service Array Section.

The County selected Federal Outcome Measure 3-P1, Exits to Permanence within 12 months after entering care, to focus on during the Peer Review. The point-in-time chart shows that success on this measure is within reach. In two of the last five years, the number of children in care for <12 months was more than half of the in-care population. In 2013, 20 out of 34 children in care were in the <12-month group. In 2016, the number was 21 out of 38. In 2017, the relationship reversed and only 9 out of 25 were in the <12 group, but 11 were in the 12-23-month group. Long, multi-year stays in foster care are not the norm in Mariposa County.

The Service Component table reveals a slightly different story. The numbers of children in Permanent Placement are high relative to the other categories. Only in 2013 and 2017 did the number in Family Reunification exceed the number in Permanent Placement. One factor related to the number of permanent placements is related to adoptions. Adoptions for Mariposa County were being done by Madera County and a backlog developed. Mariposa County took Adoptions back in 2017 and eliminated the backlog, reducing the number of children in Permanent Placement.

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<td>6</td>
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### Children in Care by Time in Care

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<td>&lt; 12 months</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>12-23 months</td>
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<td>24-35 months</td>
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<td>36-47 months</td>
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<td>48-59 months</td>
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<td>60+ months</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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### Children in Care by Service Component

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<th>Jul 1, 2015</th>
<th>Jul 1, 2016</th>
<th>Jul 1, 2017</th>
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<td>Emergency Response</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>Family Reunification</td>
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<td>13</td>
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<td>Supportive Transition</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>46</td>
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CHILDREN IN CARE WITH TRIBAL AFFILIATIONS

There are no federally recognized tribes in Mariposa County. The local tribe is the Mi-Wuk tribe. Two federally recognized tribes, the Chukchansi tribe, emanating from Fresno County, and the North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians tribe, from Madera County, does have tribal members residing in Mariposa County, including children who are in placement. Child Welfare Services (CWS) has forged working relationships with tribes in which a child is eligible for enrollment or is enrolled.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Placement Status</th>
<th>Point In Time</th>
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<td>Relatives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Relatives, Indian SCPs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Relatives, Non-Indian SCPs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Relatives, SCP Ethnic Missing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Homes</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SILP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>Placement Status</td>
<td>Point In Time</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relatives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Relatives, Indian SCPs</td>
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<td>Non-Relatives, SCP Ethnic Missing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Homes</td>
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<td>SILP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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**SUMMARY**

Combining information from the County population data and the Child Welfare population, the children most likely to be victims of abuse and/or neglect are white children of either gender under five. Using poverty as estimator of the likelihood of abuse and neglect, the communities at greatest risk are Mariposa (town), Coulterville, and Bootjack. The type of abuse and neglect is likely to be general neglect.
Public Agency Characteristics

**Political Jurisdictions**

*Board of Supervisors*

Mariposa County is a general law county and the government structure is determined by the State Constitution and State General Law. The Board of Supervisors is the legislative and governing body of the County. It is composed of five members elected from the five districts of the County on a non-partisan basis, to serve four-year staggered terms. Within the limits prescribed by law, the Board's responsibilities include enacting ordinances and resolutions, determining county policy, adopting an annual budget, and fixing salaries.

The Board of Supervisors appoints the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), members of boards and commissions, and non-elected department heads. The Board of Supervisors is the county governance body, responsible for the budget of the Human Services Department and assigning responsibility for the administration of Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention, and Treatment (CAPIT), Community Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP), and Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) funds, as well as the Children's Trust Fund. By the Board approving these funding streams, children and families benefit from services provided by nonprofit agencies with whom the Human Services Department contracts. Additionally, the Board:

- Approves contracts for public improvement projects and other specialized services
- Conducts hearings on matters such as zoning appeals and planning issues
- Directs an annual audit of all county accounts, books, and records
- Provides policy direction to the CAO for the operation and administration of county departments
- Exercises executive authority for the provision of local government services to county residents; including:
  - Roads
Legislative and executive activities of the Board are performed at public meetings. These meetings are conducted in accordance with order and decorum standards. Certain personnel and legal matters are discussed in closed sessions.

The five members of the Board are elected on a non-partisan basis to serve four-year terms. Each is elected from one of the five supervisorial districts of the County.

**Tribes**

There are no federally recognized tribes in Mariposa County. The local tribe is the Mi-Wuk tribe. Two federally recognized tribes, the Chukchansi tribe, emanating from Fresno County, and the North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indian tribe, from Madera County, does have tribal members residing in Mariposa County, including children who are in placement. Child Welfare Services (CWS) has forged working relationships with tribes in which a child is eligible for enrollment or is enrolled. The Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) may also apply for court dependency cases.

**Mariposa Unified School District**

There is one school district within Mariposa County, excluding Yosemite National Park. The district includes eight schools throughout the County. In the town of Mariposa, there are two elementary schools, one high school and an alternative school. In the North County area, there are two elementary schools and a high school. There are also two elementary schools (one charter school) and one high school in Yosemite National Park. The total student population of the County is approximately 1,600.

CWS and Probation employees work well with the school district to better meet children’s needs and, therefore, enhance outcomes. Collaboration is essential in developing and updating children’s Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs) for those who have special educational needs. The School Attendance Review Board (SARB) is a multidisciplinary group that examines how to prevent school truancy. CWS and Probation representatives
regularly participate in SARB meetings. CWS and Probation also interact with the Foster Youth Liaisons assigned to schools in the district. This collaboration ensures that services are seamless when a child moves to a different school out of the district or moves back to Mariposa from another district. The culmination of collaboration with the school district has been the formulation of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among HSD, the Mariposa County Unified School District (MCUSD), Probation and the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program.

Children who have been assessed to have emotional, behavioral or learning disabilities may receive Special Education services. The development of an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) must occur for placement in special day classes, a Behavioral Intervention Class (BIC) or resource specialist services. It is incumbent on the school district to provide Special Education services in a child’s school of origin, unless the child has extraordinary needs that cannot be accommodated, in which case the school district must provide transportation to a school that can meet the child’s special needs.

**Law Enforcement Agencies**

There are two law enforcement agencies in Mariposa County. The primary agency, Mariposa County Sheriff’s Office (SO), serves the community outside of Yosemite National Park. Within the Park, the National Park Service (NPS) has domain over activities occurring therein. Both CWS and Probation have good working relationships with the SO and the NPS. There is much more interaction with the former; however, on occasion, emergency responses are made within the Park.

The small size of Mariposa County is conducive to close working relationships between SO and CWS and Probation. All these entities are frequently on a first name basis, which attests to the longstanding working relationships. Emergency Response by CWS is usually at the behest of a Sheriff’s Deputy in the field. Deputies are the persons who may detain a child and subsequently release the child to CWS. CWS and Probation also collaborate with the SO on Multidisciplinary Teams (MDTs). A strong working relationship between law enforcement, PO and CWS benefit children in care by helping to reduce the trauma associated with removal, especially if parents are arrested, and encourages cross-discipline communication about the child(ren)’s circumstances.
Health Department

CWS has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Mariposa County Health Department. This addresses the mutual responsibilities of both departments. There is also a MOU regarding the services of a Public Health Nurse (PHN), who is embedded within CWS two days per week. The PHN assists staff with expediting medical and dental appointments for foster children, monitors psychotropic medication paperwork and enters these data into the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) database. The PHN also provides the same services to probation youth in placement and works closely with the placement officer.

COUNTY CHILD WELFARE AND PROBATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Child Welfare Services

CWS staff is recruited through the Merit Systems Services (MSS) website. Depending on the number of candidates for any given position, a panel interview (with a MSS Representative present) may precede an individual hiring interview. Weight is given for experience in CWS and CWS/CMS, as well as other related experience. Since the last CSA in 2013, there has been some turnover in CWS. Some workers left for personal reasons, one worker retired, one was promoted to Social Worker II (who currently supervises the CWS Support Unit), one relocated to another county, and the former CWS Supervisor II is currently the Analyst for the Social Services Division. During the past C-CFSR cycle, there were several promotional moves within CWS, which has impacted data entry into the CWS/CMS in a positive direction. The current Social Worker Supervisor II employees each have an extensive background in data entry, as line staff, and now they are also adept at mastering the CWS/CMS database on a supervisory level. The current Social Worker III has 10 years of experience with CWS/CMS data entry and now additionally navigates another database regarding the Resource Family Approval (RFA) initiative. The two Social Worker I employees, who were Social Services Aides prior to their respective promotions, supervise parent-child visits and facilitate the Independent Living Program (ILP) program. Both of these activities require data entry into CWS/CMS.
Type of degrees and certificates held by child welfare workers, probation officers, and other professionals responsible for the management of cases and demographic information on current staff, including the number and types of educational degrees held by child welfare workers and probation placement officers:

Mariposa County CWS is under the umbrella of Mariposa County Human Services Department (MCHSD) in the Social Services Division. CWS’ current infrastructure consists of a Social Services Deputy Director and two units, a Child Welfare Services (CWS) Unit and a CWS Support Unit. The CWS Unit has a Supervisor II, four master’s level Social Workers (Social Worker IV), one Social Worker I and one Legal Secretary II. Additionally, currently a Master of Social Work (MSW) Social Worker Intern works part-time in the CWS Unit. Within the last two years, the CWS Unit has seen many changes. A new Social Services Deputy Director came on board in January 2016. A new CWS Supervisor II was hired in April 2016 and the former CWS Supervisor II is now an Analyst for the Social Services Division. In June 2016, three new Social Worker IVs were hired. Two current Social Workers had previously been Social Services Aides for the CWS unit and the CWS Support unit.

The CWS Support Unit’s staffing consists of a Social Worker Supervisor II, whom oversees the Resource Family Approval (RFA) Social Worker III, who is currently obtaining her master’s degree; the Child and Family Team (CFT) master’s level Social Worker IV; a Social Worker I who oversees the Independent Living Program (ILP); and an extra-help Social Services Aide, who oversees the Transitional Housing Program (THP-Plus). The CWS Support Unit Supervisor II also has oversight of Adoptions, which returned to the County in March 2017 after it was contracted to Madera County Adoptions since July 2012. Prior to this, CDSS provided Adoptions services. This has changed the way that adoption referrals are made and seen through to fruition.

Average staffing caseload size among child welfare workers:

Assignment of CWS referrals and cases entails a balance of case complexity, distance to travel to conduct client contacts, and equitable caseloads among social workers. Mariposa County CWS utilizes a “vertical model”, meaning that, when a referral is assigned to a social worker, if the referral is elevated to a case, the social worker carries the case
throughout the life of the case. The vertical model is the antithesis of having discrete units, such as Emergency Response and Ongoing Cases. Mariposa County CWS has historically had low caseloads, compared to medium to large sized counties. Lower caseloads allow staff to provide intensive services to clients and enhance ability to be creative and innovative in casework. The average current caseload in the whole unit for the past year has been between 51 and 57, which encompasses Emergency Response, Family Maintenance, Family Reunification, Permanent Placement and Supportive Transition (services provided to Non-Minor Dependents). The CWS Supervisor II makes caseload assignment decisions on a case-by-case basis, balancing case complexity, number of children, worker predisposition and ability to relate to a given population, and geographical considerations.

**Probation**

Mariposa County Human Resources recruits for vacant positions in the local newspaper and other county newspapers selected by the Probation Department; the County website; the Chief Probation Officers of California (CPOC) website; and vacancies are posted on a bulletin that is distributed to all Mariposa County Departments.

Applications are screened by Human Resources and the applicants who meet the minimum qualifications are invited to take a written test. Applicants tested are ranked by their test score and placed on a hiring list. The top ten applicants on the list are interviewed by the Probation Department. If no one is selected for hire from the top-ten list, subsequent applicants on the list are interviewed until a selection is made or a new recruitment is requested. Applicants selected to proceed through the hiring process following an interview are then required to participate in a Background Investigation. When an applicant successfully passes a Background Investigation and is selected by the Chief Probation Officer to receive a Conditional Offer of Employment, that applicant must also pass a psychological evaluation and medical examination prior to employment.

The Mariposa County Probation Department consists of two divisions, the Juvenile Division and the Adult Division. The Juvenile Division typically provides prevention, intervention and supervision services to youth 17 years old and younger. The Adult Division provides supervision to adult probationers 18 years of age and older.
Deputy Probation Officers (DPOs) are required to have a high school diploma or General Education Development (GED) equivalency and graduation from an accredited college or university with a Bachelor’s degree in sociology, criminology, corrections, social services, psychology or closely related field or year for year work experience in a related field is preferred.

- One officer has a Ph.D. in Psychology
- Five officers have a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice, Social Work, Psychology or Bible/Intellectual History
- Two officers have an Associate’s Degree in Criminal Justice or Psychology
- One officer has a high school diploma
- One officer is currently working toward a Bachelor’s Degree in Business Administration/Public Administration

**Average years of experience and average salaries of child welfare workers and probation officers:**

The average years of CWS or other related experience is 10.5 years for the two Social Worker Supervisor IIs, 6 years for the five Social Worker IVs, 10 years for the (sole) Social Worker III, 2 years each for the two Social Worker Is, and 5 years for the Legal Secretary II. The annual salary ranges are $60,280.48 to $73,272.16 for Social Worker Supervisor II, $48,258.08 to $58,662.24 for Social Worker IV, $42,808.48 to $52,035.36 for Social Worker III, $23,149.92 to $42,721.12 for Social Worker I and $31,331.04 to $36,271.04 for Legal Secretary II.

A PHN is present two days per week to assist social workers with medical, dental and psychotropic medication issues. A recent development has been the contracting of a part time Resource Family Liaison, who assists in the support of resource families (foster parents, relative caretakers and non-relative caretakers). The Analyst for the Social Services Division develops policies and procedures for the CWS and CWS Support Units and generates annual reports related to CWS.

A Deputy Probation Officer III supervises the Juvenile Probation Division and has 20 years of experience working with juvenile offenders, including youth in placement. The Mariposa County Probation Department has been able to reduce or eliminate the need for
out-of-home placement over the past five years. Currently, there are no probation youth in placement.

One Deputy Probation Officer II is assigned to the Juvenile Division. This officer has three years of experience with the department. This officer has received Probation Placement Core training, but has not supervised any youth in placement to date.

Salary Range of Deputy Probation Officers:

- Deputy Probation Officer II: $53,189 – 64,650
- Deputy Probation Officer III: $59,953 – 72,881

**Special consideration of race and ethnicity and attention given to staff skill level to meet cultural needs of the population served:**

Special consideration is given to the skill level of staff in working with the population in a small rural county. As is indicated in the 2017 Mariposa County Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Needs Assessment, Mariposa County’s population is predominantly Caucasian (81%), with 3% Native American and a growing population of Hispanic residents (11%). CWS staff receives Regional Training Academy (RTA) Core training on multiethnic issues and on the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA). Resource families also receive pre-approval training on cultural sensitivity as part of RFA. Such training comes to fruition in hands on case management, to the benefit of children and families. An increasing number of the population experiencing homelessness or below adequate housing is noteworthy, especially after the devastating fires in the County in 2017. Moreover, Mariposa County’s homeless population is disproportionately Native American (12%), compared to 3% of the overall population (CSBG Needs Assessment). There is an increasing Hispanic population in Mariposa County. This sector currently stands at 10% of the total population, and it is projected that this figure will triple in Mariposa County in the next 50 years. This underscores the importance of training for CWS and Probation on Native American and Hispanic-related issues. It also indicates that bilingual staff will increasingly be needed. Staff also receives and is encouraged to continue to attend training on domestic violence, as the County has experienced an alarming rise in the number of domestic violence incidents involving weapons (CSBG Needs Assessment). When children are present, this places them at risk of abuse and/or neglect.
**How staff turnover and staffing structure impacts county operations, including county practice, service delivery and outcome data measures and the impact of turnover and efforts to recruit and retain staff:**

A challenge for CWS is to recruit and retain social workers who desire to work in a small rural county and who are willing to relocate to Mariposa or who are willing to commute from adjacent counties. Some social workers opt for working for larger counties with more job opportunities and higher pay. One strategic plan for social worker recruitment is the presence of the Social Services Deputy Director and/or one of the Social Worker Supervisor IIs at events such as at a local State University in Fresno to attract MSW students who are about to graduate and encourage them to consider working in Mariposa County.

Mariposa Probation has not experienced a lot of staff turnover. The newest Deputy Probation Officer employed was hired approximately three years ago. The current staffing structure allows for easy coverage when an officer is not at work for extended periods. The teamwork practiced by our employees ensures that client services are not interrupted when an officer is out of the office. The Probation Department currently employs eight Deputy Probation Officer II positions and two Deputy Probation Officer III positions. The Juvenile Division consists of one DPO II and one DPO III.

**Bargaining Units**

Mariposa County maintains two bargaining units. Service Employees International Union (SEIU), Local 521 represents line staff and Mariposa County Managerial and Confidential Organization (MCMCO) American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Local 2703 of the American Federation of Labor/ Congress of Industrial Organizations. (AFL/CIO) represents management and some supervisory staff. Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) are formulated for both unions and are updated every three years, entailing union-management negotiations. Additionally, the Deputy Sheriff's Association (DSA) includes deputy probation officers, probation correction officers, sheriff’s deputies and jail officers.
Financial/Material Resources

CWS manages funds from multiple sources, which include Title IV-B, Title IV-E, Title XIX and Title XX of the Social Security Act. Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF) is another federal funding stream. Federal funding is matched by the State of California to support program operations. The State Realignment of 2011 gave California counties greater flexibility in using state funds. This flexibility means that the specific needs of children and families can be met to ensure outcome data measures regarding Safety, Permanence and Well Being. Other programs within the MCHSD include Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS), which encompasses mental health and Substance Use Disorders (SUDS), Eligibility, CalWORKs/Welfare to Work, General Assistance (GA), Foster Care/Kinship Guardian Assistance Program (KinGAP)/Adoption Assistance Program (AAP), In Home Supportive Services (IHSS), Public Authority (PA), and Adult Protective Services (APS). Numerous other funding streams apply to CWS, including annual allocations for Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC), the Independent Living Program (ILP), Foster Parent Recruitment, Retention, and Support (FPRRS), Adoption Incentives, the Kinship/Foster Care Emergency Fund, and the state Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP) funds, which are contracted out to community agencies. CWS also receives funds for the Transitional Housing Program Plus (THP-Plus), which provides financial, social and emotional support to young adults as they transition to independent living. THP-Plus is a non-court voluntary program, which sets criteria for participants to continue to receive support. The THP-Plus allocation is not realigned. However, if expenditures were to exceed the allocation, such overages would be realigned.

These resources support the efforts and activities of CWS and Probation. Extended services, such as THP-Plus and Extended Foster Care (EFC) positively impact outcomes for youth and young adults. Adoption incentives, AAP and KinGAP increase the likelihood of permanency for children/youth, resulting in improved outcome measures. CWS staff is keenly aware of CSEC mandates and has undergone training on CSEC. Vigilance to protect child victims is taken seriously by CWS and Probation staff.

The Probation Juvenile Division receives two State grants: Youthful Offender Block Grant and the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act. These grants help support the salary...
and benefit costs associated with the retention of the officer assigned to the Juvenile Division and programs provided by the Department. General fund dollars are utilized to help support staff, programs and operational expenses associated with Juvenile Probation Services.

**CHILD WELFARE/PROBATION OPERATED SERVICES**

**Juvenile Hall**

Mariposa County has a Special Purpose Juvenile Hall. The juvenile hall is staffed with two full-time Probation Corrections Officers (PCOs) and four extra-help, on-call Probation Corrections Officers. One of the full-time officers has completed Juvenile Corrections CORE training; the other was recently hired and is scheduled to attend CORE training this year. Extra-help PCOs receive a minimum of 40 hours of orientation training prior to working in the juvenile hall. When feasible to do so, extra-help employees attend CORE training also. When a juvenile is in custody within our facility, each shift has one male and one female staff person on duty.

Mariposa County can hold youth in our facility for up to 96 hours. The facility can hold up to four youth. When a minor is brought to our facility by law enforcement, an assessment is completed to determine the need to detain, based on the risk to the community. If the minor does not require further detention, the youth is released to a parent or guardian. If a minor needs to be detained longer than 96 hours, or we cannot get enough on-call staff to cover the shifts, youth are transported to another County Juvenile Hall facility. Mariposa County Probation currently has housing contracts with Kern, Madera and Tuolumne County Juvenile Detention facilities. Madera and Tuolumne County facilities are used the most given their proximity to Mariposa County. The Tuolumne County facility is preferred for long-term commitments because their facility is smaller and the youth population is similar to Mariposa County.

Due to our “Special Purpose” designation, Mariposa County does not have to provide medical, mental health, or education services on site. Mariposa County Juvenile Hall utilizes Mariposa County Behavioral Health and John C. Fremont Hospital and Clinic to address the needs of our youth in custody when needed. Parents are encouraged to get educational
materials from the minor’s school for the minor to work on while detained. All mandated services are available and provided to youth who are held in other county facilities.

**County Operated Shelter**

CWS does not have a shelter within Mariposa County. Emergency placements for children entering care depend on the availability of the few families in the County who will accept children, especially a sibling group. Many times, placement must be made out of county through a Foster Family Agency (FFA). This option is not preferable, as it means removal of children from their familiar environments and either a change in schools or facilitation of transportation to schools of origin. Although emergency placements are, by definition, short term (24 hours to 30 days), thereby giving social workers time to conduct relative searches to secure potential relative placements, some of these placements turn out to be long-term options. Juvenile Probation enlists the help of Mariposa County Child Welfare Services when emergency placement services are needed for youth who cannot be detained in juvenile hall.

**County Licensing**

Per the RFA mandates, effective January 1, 2017, Mariposa County no longer licenses foster family homes with the County. Instead, new applications to care for foster children now entail the RFA process. This applies to both relatives and non-relatives; whose moniker is now Resource Families. Additionally, currently licensed foster family homes have until December 31, 2019, to convert to resource family homes. The RFA process entails a comprehensive assessment, a home environment assessment, criminal record exemptions (if applicable), a permanency assessment, a family evaluation (previously called the psychosocial assessment), pre-approval training (12 hours required), and a written report using the Structured Analysis Family Evaluation (SAFE) model home study. Mariposa County Social Services has entered into a MOU with CDSS for RFA legal consultation. RFA comes under the CWS Support Unit.

**County Adoptions**

Mariposa County brought Adoptions back to CWS in January 2017, which sits in the CWS Support Unit. The previous arrangement for adoption services was a contract with Madera County Adoptions. Before that, CWS received adoption services from the State
District Adoptions Office in Fresno. Adoptions are handled by the CWS Support Unit Supervisor. Between October 2013 and September 2017, seven children exited to adoption.65

**OTHER COUNTY PROGRAMS**

*CalWORKs*

The CalWORKs/Welfare to Work program is under the same umbrella as CWS, namely MCHSD. CalWORKs and other public assistance programs enable families to be more economically secure. Parents who have care and custody of their children and are income eligible can receive cash aid for a maximum of 48 months. For parents whose children have been removed, the parents had to be on cash aid at the time of removal. There is no cash grant subsequent to removal. The parents must participate in Welfare to Work and can receive supportive services as they seek to regain care of their children in a Family Reunification case. There is no cash aid during trial home visits because the case remains in Family Reunification mode. CalWORKs benefits children by providing their parents with temporary financial assistance while they work on getting a job.

*Public Health*

CWS collaboration with the Health Department is longstanding, and the presence of a PHN, embedded in CWS 2 days per week, is invaluable. MCHSD has forged MOUs with the Health Department for services to CWS. A PHN also makes home visits to monitor infants and young children with special medical needs.

*Alcohol and Drug Treatment*

CWS interfaces with the Substance Use Disorder Services (SUDS) program, as a substantial number of CWS clients have substance abuse issues. The colocation of CWS with SUDS is conducive to enhanced collaboration. Both individual and group counseling is available to clients. The Substance Use Disorder (SUD) program includes adolescent services, adult treatment services, residential referrals, perinatal services, Drug Court referrals, family therapy, and community outreach and support for 12-step recovery.

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**Mental Health**

Under the Human Services umbrella is Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS), which includes mental health and is its own division. Mental Health and CWS have a close collaborative relationship, as the programs invariably have common clients. CWS and Mental Health are currently collaborating to ensure that both programs meet the requirements of the Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) initiative. CCR entails Child and Family Team Meetings (CFTMs), less reliance on congregate care of Short Term Residential Therapeutic Programs (STRTPs), and provision of mental health services to children/youth placed out of county (Presumptive Transfer).

The need for mental health services for children and adults is articulated in the Mariposa County 2017-2020 Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Three Year Plan, dated June 20, 2017. It indicates that Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) programs not only save money associated with costlier interventions, but more importantly, they improve the lives of community members. Full Service Partnership (FSP) programs provide “whatever it takes” to provide those with severe mental illness or emotional disturbance with support, thereby seeing reductions in homelessness and psychiatric hospitalizations. The Plan also cites a concern voiced by the American Legion that there is a need for mental health services for veterans. Both the Local Child Care Planning Council and the Senior Services Coalition (now termed the Mariposa County Coalition for Elder Empowerment) have concerns about elders, including the need for older adult daycare and outreach to isolated seniors. Furthermore, the Area 12 Agency on Aging has expressed “a need for a friendly visitor type program, more outreach to elderly with the knowledge that there is stigma around mental health, but services for depression are needed, more FSP services, more case management for medications and transportation”.

**BHRS offers numerous programs, as follows:**

**Adult Services**, including individual and group counseling, education and support groups, Full Service Partnership, supportive case management to link clients with community supports, Adult Team Meetings (ATMs), psychiatric services, Lanterman-Petris-Short (LPS) conservatorship, and Restoration of Competency (ROC).
**Children's Services**, includes individual and group counseling, education and support groups, Full Service Partnership, supportive case management, psychiatric services, Prevention Early Intervention (PEI) and Pathways to Wellness program (formerly Katie A).

**TRAC Team**, the Triage Response Assessment of Crisis (TRAC) Team, responds to crises in the jail, schools, hospital and other areas in the Mariposa community. Services are provided 24 hours per day/7 days per week.

**SUDS**, the Substance Use Disorder Services program, provides a wide range of specific substance abuse prevention and treatment services, including individual and group counseling, PC 1000, Drug Court, Proposition 36 groups, and youth and adolescent prevention services.

**Current Initiatives** include Behavioral Health Court, Whole Person Care and Peer Support.

Whole Person Care is managed in California by the California Department of Health Care Services. The overarching goal of the Whole Person Care (WPC) Pilot is the coordination of health, behavioral health and social services, as applicable, in a patient-centered manner with the goals of improved beneficiary health and wellbeing through more efficient and effective use of resources. WPC Pilots provide an option to a county, a city and county, a health or hospital authority, or a consortium of any of the above entities serving a county or region consisting of more than one county, or a health authority, to receive support to integrate care for a particularly vulnerable group of Medi-Cal beneficiaries who have been identified as high users of multiple systems and continue to have poor health outcomes. Through collaborative leadership and systematic coordination among public and private entities, WPC Pilot entities will identify target population progress – all with the goal of providing comprehensive coordinated care for the beneficiary resulting in better health outcomes. In June 2017, Mariposa County was approved by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to be a pilot site as a part of the Small County Whole Person Care Collaborative (SCWPCC), which includes San Benito, Plumas and Mariposa.66

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66 California Department of Health Care Services. [http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/Pages/WholePersonCarePilots.aspx](http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/Pages/WholePersonCarePilots.aspx) Retrieved July 20, 2018
Additionally, Heritage House offers a safe clean and sober support center for adults and their families. The Miwu Mati Healing Center offers counseling services for the Native American population. North County services are provided in Coulterville and include mental health and crisis services two days per week for children and adults; and psychiatric services one Friday per month. Mental health services are provided in Yosemite National Park three days a week.

**OTHER**

*CA$A/The Alliance*

Other agencies with which CWS has a relationship include CASA (for court cases) and Mountain Crisis Services, the domestic violence agency that comes under the auspices of The Alliance for Community Transformations (ACT), as does the CASA program. Also under TAFCT is Heritage House, a substance abuse support program and Ethos, a drop in center for youth, some of whom are homeless. Liaisons in both CWS and Probation attend meetings and planning sessions with the above entities. Frequently, liaisons collaborate in a number of venues to meet the needs of children and families. CASAs have routinely been assigned to dependency cases and are now starting to be assigned to delinquency cases. As of May 2018, a CASA was assigned to one WIC 600 case and there was one case awaiting a CASA assignment.
KATIE A. / PATHWAYS TO WELLNESS

Child Welfare Services (CWS) in Mariposa County currently utilizes the Mental Health Screening Tool (MHST) for appropriate age groups to supplement referrals to Behavioral Health’s Children’s Systems of Care (CSOC) to determine Katie A. /Pathways to Wellness eligibility. Once a referral is received by CSOC, an assessment is conducted by a mental health clinician to determine appropriate mental health services, including Katie A. /Pathways to Wellness or another mode of mental health services. Once a clinician is assigned to a case, he or she attempts to contact the family or caregiver within three business days of assignment of the referral to offer an assessment appointment within 10 business days after contact. Both CWS and CSOC employ an integrated Core Practice Model (CPM) approach when working with children and families/caregivers involved with CWS and CSOC. Semi-annual Progress Reports were submitted to the state as well. Mariposa County CWS has embraced the opportunity to collaborate with our Mental Health partners to improve outcomes for children and families. It is noteworthy that the CWS Quarter 3 2017 Berkeley statistical report indicates that Mariposa County is meeting all but one of the state and federal outcome measures. The one measure not meeting standard is measure 2F, social worker out of home visits. However, the Mariposa County performance of 94.8% is only .2% away from the state standard of 95%. These numbers speak to a significant contribution to the state goals of better outcomes for youth and young adults.

FOSTERING CONNECTIONS TO SUCCESS

Mariposa County CWS and Probation have implemented California Fostering Connections to Success, which became effective January 1, 2012, for Non-Minor Dependents (NMDs) between the ages of 18 and 21 to receive services to ease the transition to independence. Mariposa County has provided Extended Foster Care (EFC) to dependent and delinquent youth who have reached the age of majority (18). When delinquent youth satisfy their probationary requirements, Probation transfers these WIC 600 NMDs to CWS as WIC 300 NMDs. EFC entails an agreement to become a NMD,
requiring the meeting of certain criteria. Foster youth, dependents or wards, must meet one of five criteria. These criteria include: 1) attendance at a high school or enrollment in a General Education Development (GED) program, 2) enrollment part time in a college or trade school, 3) working at least 80 hours per month, 4) participating in a program to obtain gainful employment, or 5) having a medical condition that makes it impossible to meet the first four criteria. CWS and Probation staff are required to explain EFC to youth and all that is entailed in such. EFC enables CWS and Probation to offer additional services and support to young adults, as well as the support of the Juvenile Court. Mariposa County’s small size, the 6th smallest of 58 counties in the state, means that CWS and Probation are able to have close and collaborative relationships that benefit these youth and young adults. Our small numbers mean that there is little impact on contributing to California’s goals for outcomes for children and families, but our experience working on behalf of these individuals does lead to better outcomes.

**TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PLUS**

Mariposa County has maintained the Transitional Housing Plus (THP-Plus) program for many years. Mariposa County maintains five slots for young adults ages 18 to 26. Participants must meet certain criteria to receive monetary assistance and supportive services. Supportive services include the areas of housing, employment, health care, transportation, education, mental health and job readiness. Criteria to continue to participation include that the youth must be employed or in school and must maintain regular contact with the THP-Plus case manager. There is a cumulative amount of 24 months of assistance. It is not uncommon for NMDs to enroll in the THP-Plus program after reaching age 21. This relatively seamless transition increases the likelihood that we can successfully launch them into adulthood. Although this in and of itself is not a state or federal outcome measure, it nonetheless means better outcomes for Mariposa County and the state.

**CONTINUUM OF CARE REFORM**

Mariposa County has implemented the Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) initiative. Since January 1, 2017, the County has formed a CWS Support Unit that includes Resource Family Approval (RFA) and Child and Family Teaming (CFT). These components of CCR
have become standard practice in Mariposa County, even though challenges and the need for adaptation continue for staff as CCR unfolds. Mariposa County offers other components of CCR, such as the Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI), which creates new strategies and practices for the recruitment and retention of quality caregivers and supports biological parents with reunification efforts. A contract Resource Family Liaison in the Social Services Division also meets with and supports caregivers to maintain high quality foster care placement. The Liaison is also the lead for the Quality Parent Initiative (QPI) in the County.

Integral to CCR is Pathways to Wellness, formerly known as Katie A., to ensure that Mariposa County children/youth in foster care receive medically necessary mental health services from the Human Services Department’s Children’s Systems of Care (CSOC) in our Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS) Division. Collaboration between CWS and CSOC is enhanced due to the fact that we are housed in the same building.

Mariposa County has two group homes, one a 6-bed male facility and the other a 6-bed female home. Most of the youth placed in the boys’ facility are placed by Probation Departments in other counties. The girls’ home receives placements from other County CWS Departments. Occasionally, Mariposa County CWS places there. Fortunately, Mariposa County CWS has very few group home placements. Both of the group homes in the County have undergone review of their operational plans to convert to Short Term Residential Therapeutic Programs (STRTPs) and have submitted their packets to Community Care Licensing (CCL) with support letters from the County.

Overarching CCR is California’s integrated Core Practice Model (CPM), which is strength-based, needs driven, family focused, and individualized. Services are culturally relevant and trauma informed; and entails collaboration across systems. There is an agreement between CWS and CSOC to integrate the CPM into both areas under the guidance of the Social Services Deputy Director. This will take place over the next year.

**Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)/Quality Assurance (QA)**

CQI/QA seeks to strengthen CWS staff skills in decision making to improve outcomes. Analysis of key variables is critical to link them with outcome measures. CQI training has been an important activity for the Social Services Division Analyst. QA for the federal case review mandate is currently on hold. Initially, it was the domain of the Social
Services Deputy Director with the case reviews being conducted by a supervisor in the Program Integrity Unit to ensure objectivity in qualitative data collection. Mariposa County is currently asking the state to take back the case review/QA process. Providing for data analysis and striving for quality assurance points to current CWS themes and statistical research and exemplifies the efforts that Mariposa County makes toward California has improved outcome goals for all children, youth and families. The previously mentioned Quarter 3 2017 Berkeley statistical report certainly means that Continuous Quality Improvement is evidenced. To be meeting all state and federal outcome measures but one, and that one only .2% from the state standard is a feather in Mariposa’s cap.

**COMMERCIALY SEXUALLY Exploited Children (CSEC)**

Mariposa County has opted into the federally mandated CSEC initiative. CWS, Probation and our community partners have participated in CSEC training and CWS social workers have an awareness of the fields in CWS/CMS that pertain to data entry for CSEC issues. There is an active CSEC Protocol and a CSEC Committee made up of CWS, Probation and community partners that meets monthly to provide education and prevention awareness to professionals in the community. Mariposa County is fortunate in that human trafficking does not take place to the extent that it does in the Central Valley. However, it is plausible that such victims could escape to Mariposa County, in which case extreme sensitivity and delicate case management would occur. The exposure to CSEC issues and valuable training that social workers and probation officers have undergone means that outcomes for these children and youth are likely to be better. Being the sixth smallest county in the state, and small in CWS and Probation caseloads, Mariposa County is poised to meet the needs of CSEC. This could surely contribute to California’s goals for improved outcomes for children and their families.
Board of Supervisors (BOS) Designated Bodies

THE BOS-DESIGNATED PUBLIC AGENCY

Mariposa County Human Service Department (HSD)/Child Welfare Services (CWS) receive federal Community Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP), state Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention, and Treatment (CAPIT), and Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) funds. These funds are combined with Children’s Trust Fund (CTF) monies to create a network of community prevention and intervention services to help attain favorable outcomes for families. HSD is the BOS designated agency to administer and monitor the use of CBCAP, CAPIT and PSSF funds by subcontractors and to monitor data collection, program outcome evaluations and program fiscal compliance. HSD is also responsible for completing and submitting annual reports for all programs funded by CBCAP, CAPIT and PSSF.

Child Abuse Prevention Council (CAPC)

By order of the BOS on June 14, 2005, Mariposa Safe Families, Inc. (MSF), a 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization, serves as the CAPC. MSF’s role in coordination of the County’s prevention and early intervention efforts is to administer the Mariposa Family Enrichment Center (FEC), which is the County’s Family Resource Center. The FEC is located in the township of Mariposa. MSF facilitates monthly activities and events, in collaboration with other non-profit organizations and County agencies, which provide important information to parents on how to keep children safe and encourage positive family interactions. Educational events have included such topics as internet safety and CPR/First Aid. MSF provides child abuse prevention activities and mandated reporter training for the Mariposa community, as well as attendance at Mariposa Abuse Prevention Collaborative (MAPC) and Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) meetings, Safe At Home annual events, and monthly programs/ events relating to child safety; some of these events include a family engagement bingo night, a car safety event with child car seat checks with the California Highway Patrol (CHP), and family stress relief through a mommy and me yoga class. MSF also hosts an annual Halloween trunk or treat event and a Daddy Daughter Dance. MSF recognizes Child Abuse Prevention Month in April of each year by planting
pinwheel gardens at various locations in Mariposa and by attending the Board of Supervisors meeting to receive a proclamation. MSF hosted the first Children’s Memorial Flag Raising event in 2018 and has hosted The Lisa Project. MSF delivers the Child Protection Unit curriculum in Mariposa County elementary schools, grades TK-3. All activities sponsored by MSF are advertised in the local papers, Facebook and flyers are distributed throughout the community.

**County Children’s Trust Fund Commission, Board or Council**

The CAPC acts as the County Children’s Trust Fund (CTF) Council. The County typically receives a small amount from eligible funding sources, namely birth certificates and vehicle license plate fees, for the CTF. These fees go to the CAPC. The Fund’s maximum allocation is $20,000. To bring the CTF up to this amount, should the birth certificate and license plate fees not do so, HSD supplements the CTF with Community Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) dollars. MSF provides data on the CTF total dollar amounts, programs, activities and services for the annual reports to the Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP). Information on the CTF is published on the OCAP website.

**PSSF Collaborative**

The Human Services Department constitutes the PSSF Collaborative in Mariposa County. PSSF funds are contracted out to a local nonprofit Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program under the umbrella of Mariposa County's Alliance for Community Transformations.

PSSF is meant to develop a coordinated and integrated service system that builds on the strengths of families and communities. Emphasis is placed on collaborative approaches, early identification of issues and the delivery of prevention, intervention and support services to prevent child abuse and/or neglect. Furthermore, PSSF funds are meant to promote permanency for children within their own families or with kinship or adoptive families. Strengthening families will optimally remove barriers to child safety, permanency and well-being. CASA utilizes PSSF funds to provide peer support to parents, foster parents, kinship caretakers, legal guardians and adoptive parents through the Nourish program.
**Management Information Systems**

**Child Welfare Services**

**Hardware:**

The hardware provided for utilization by the Mariposa Child Welfare Staff either meets or exceeds the standards set by the California Office of Systems Integration/Child Welfare Digital Services. The County maintains five workstations that reside on the dedicated CWS/CMS network. These dedicated workstations have the state approved Windows 10 image installed. The remainder of the computers and laptops provided for Child Welfare Services staff has a county image that maintains security levels comparable to the state image. Staff assigned county workstations utilize Server Based Computing (SBC) tokens to establish a secure connection to state servers that then offer connectivity to the CWS/CMS software.

At this time, access to the CWS/CMS software is limited to dedicated workstations or employees who are assigned SBC tokens. Child Welfare Services employees are also equipped with iPhones. These cellular devices are strictly managed to ensure that client data are protected at all times. Compliance with Federal and State requirements related to securing confidential client information is always a consideration in changing or expanding technological equipment.

**Software:**

The most commonly identified software employed by Child Welfare Services staff is the statewide CWS/CMS. However, Structured Decision Making (SDM) and SafeMeasures are also key software for successful Child Welfare Services case management. In recent years, with expansion of the RFA requirements, Mariposa County is utilizing Efforts to Outcome (ETO) for the annual OCAP Report. All Mariposa County staff, including those in Child Welfare Services utilizes a cloud-based email and productivity suite. To meet state reporting requirements, users also have access to the Microsoft Office Suite services, but not necessarily at their own workstations/computers. (This is a cost savings measure)
Support:

Technical support is available to Child Welfare Services staff in a multitude of ways. Application support is provided by a combination of division supervisors, an onsite System Support staff member, the Central Valley Training Academy contact and use of the Boulder Help Desk. Technical support of the physical equipment is provided by onsite staff and is accessed via personal contact, phone or email. Response times rarely exceed an hour. Technical support of the network is accomplished via collaborative efforts of onsite staff, county IT staff and state staff.

Conclusion:

While change is constant for all government programs, with California Child Welfare Services focused on the implementation of a new database, Child Welfare Services-California Automated Response and Engagement System (CWS-CARES), the future is uncertain. With little concrete information available, projecting the impact that CWS-CARES will have on the department and Child Welfare Staff and their technological needs moving forward is difficult to predict. What has been shared from the California Office of Systems Integration/Child Welfare Digital Services is that some of the barriers, such as the use of CWS/CMS or (in the future) CWS-CARES, will be removed. When this comes to pass, technological equipment needs and the support of those technologies should be simplified, more direct, and result in improved outcomes for all involved.

Probation

The Probation Department uses two case management databases. Probation Officers use CaseLoadPro Database system to document client contacts, court related events and to generate court reports, letters, referral forms, agreements, etc. To track the financial obligations of the clients, the department uses the AS400-JALANS system. Probation also uses CWS/CMS to document activity on delinquents in out-of-home placement. Protocols have been established to ensure timely entries into this system.

Barriers in maintaining the systems and how the systems are utilized to measure county performance in the Outcome Data Measures:

All employees are trained to use the current case management systems. Performance, outcomes and data accuracy are assessed through case record reviews by
supervisors. It has been an ongoing struggle to get department employees to become consistent with data entry so that these reports accurately represent what the Department is doing. Additionally, CaseLoadPro is a relatively new case management system company. Changes to this database are ongoing as CaseLoadPro continues to update their system to meet the needs of several county probation departments.

Juvenile crime has steadily decreased over the past five years, locally and nationwide. Therefore, Probation has not had any youth in out-of-home placement since 2016. As a result, CWS/CMS data entry is difficult for the probation officers because they cannot become proficient in the use of this system. Therefore, Probation has an agreement with Mariposa County Child Welfare Services that assistance will be provided by a designated CWS employee when data needs to be entered into the CWS/CMS. This collaboration will further ensure accurate and timely data entry.

**Description of how the information gathered from these systems is utilized to evaluate operational activities in the agency:**

The Department uses CaseLoadPro to monitor the work that probation officers are doing with probation clients. The system notifies supervisors when officers are not completing tasks in a timely manner. Supervisors can generate a number of reports that help with the management of the department’s caseload. The system also generates statistical data reports that provide valuable information about which local service providers are utilized the most and what direct services are requested for our clients.

**Assessment of whether the system is underutilized and the barriers to full utilization:**

The Probation Department’s case management system is clearly underutilized, as evidenced by the data that are generated in relation to the number of clients served by the Department. When employees have to use multiple database systems to track department statistics, all of the systems suffer due to the time involved in inputting the desired information into multiple systems. Reducing the number of systems an employee has to document in would improve system utilization.
CASE REVIEW SYSTEM

Child Welfare Services

Mariposa County’s Juvenile Court system entails two judges, one of whom is designated as the presiding judge. The Court handles both dependency and delinquency matters. Child Welfare Services (CWS) is involved with the former and Probation deals with the latter. For CWS, the Supervisor II acts as the Court Officer and attends all dependency court hearings. Department representation consists of both County Counsel and a contract attorney. A CWS Legal Secretary II coordinates all court activities within the CWS office. The goal is to have a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) assigned to all dependents. Although this goal was achieved in the past, at times there is a shortage of CASA workers. The current CASA Executive Director actively seeks to recruit and train new volunteers. There continues to be an interest in providing CASAs for more Probation wards.

One challenge for CWS is the nature of court proceedings. It is not uncommon for a case to entail many continuances, which means multiple court appearances by CWS staff, parents, care providers, CASAs, attorneys, tribal representatives and sometimes children. These delays can affect timely outcome achievement for both CWS and families. Another barrier is the lack of a dual jurisdiction court. Dual jurisdiction means that minors can be served by the dependency and delinquency systems simultaneously. A Uniform Family Court is another progressive notion that has not come to fruition in the Mariposa County Superior Court. That said, it is noteworthy that CWS has a positive relationship with both judges of the Mariposa County Superior Court, by virtue of the fact that we are a small county with a close-knit community, including the Court and professionals. Social workers need to be sure to communicate to the Court the need to focus on improved outcomes for families. This can be achieved by articulating this in court reports.

In CWS, notification of hearings is handled solely by the Legal Secretary II, with specific requirements for each court hearing. Parents, caregivers and tribal representatives, if applicable, are notified of all Juvenile Court hearings. The Legal Secretary also generates court orders after hearings, which are sent to the parties who received notice of the hearing. Each party is also sent notices of future hearings. The Legal Secretary handles Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) inquiries and notices tribes of court hearings. Tribal
placements occur and take precedence over traditional foster placements when ICWA applies. Ongoing cases entail court hearings and/or administrative reviews (the latter for stable Permanent Placement (PP) cases) every six months. Some cases, especially for small children and for whom the prognosis of reunification is dubious, entail Interim Review hearings (at 3 months). All hearings/reviews take place within required timeframes. CWS sets court dates a week or two early just to be safe. Termination of parental rights for children in care 15 of the last 22 months is partially a function of Adoptions. CWS had a contract with Madera County Adoptions prior to Mariposa County bringing Adoptions back to the Social Services Division in March 2017. Since then, adoption finalization has been timelier, routinely within 24 months.

Mariposa County CWS has enjoyed good collaboration with Probation, including meeting and conferring on Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) Section 241.1 protocols and the recommendations for either WIC 300 or 600 statuses.

**Probation**

The Juvenile Division’s Supervising Deputy Probation Officer is the designated Juvenile Court Officer. The officer interfaces with the Court, prosecuting attorneys, defense attorneys, and CASA Advocates on each case, as needed. The County’s strength is its relationship among Department employees involved in the juvenile justice system. These positive relationships allow juvenile court participants to work together to best serve the delinquent youth, while taking the protection of the community into consideration.

Juvenile Probation Officers are responsible for completing all court related documents generated by the Probation Department, including noticing all parties and completing ICWA orders and other court documents. During the investigative process, youth and their parent/guardian(s) are interviewed and their input on decisions or recommendations is included in the report to the Court. The Supervising Probation Officer reviews all court reports and documents prior to filing.

A CASA is now involved in Juvenile Delinquency cases, when deemed appropriate by the judge. When a CASA worker is assigned to a delinquent youth, the Probation Officer collaborates with the CASA, as needed, to ensure that the youth’s needs are being met. The role of the CASA is the same as it is for dependent youth. The advocate’s role is to become
familiar with the youth and assist in identifying appropriate services that may help the youth learn valuable skills that will lead to successful completion of probation and a successful future.

When the District Attorney’s Office files a criminal petition on a juvenile offender, a Probation Officer appears in court on these matters and makes a recommendation for disposition to the Court. Once the Court has made an order, a deputy probation officer is assigned to supervise the case to ensure the youth’s compliance with the court orders. When a juvenile is adjudged a ward of the Court and is ordered to be placed in a group home program or foster home, six-month review hearings are scheduled to review the youth and parent’s progress and compliance with the program and court orders. The Probation Officer makes appropriate recommendations regarding the need for continued placement of the youth. Placement review hearings are typically scheduled at five months of the six-month intervals to ensure timely review of the progress that the youth and parent/guardian(s) have made. It is not common practice for Mariposa County Probation to recommend termination of parental rights of a probation youth. In probation matters, it is typically not in the youth’s best interest to do so.

Mariposa County is not a dual jurisdiction county for handling Child Welfare Services and Juvenile Probation cases. Therefore, when a youth appears to be involved in both systems, representatives from each department meet and confer to determine which agency would be better suited to meet the needs of the youth, while protecting the community. In most cases, the two agencies can agree and make a joint recommendation to the Court. Typically, the agency who is not taking jurisdiction will write the report and submit it to the Court on behalf of both departments.

**CWS CASE PLANNING PROCESSES**

Since the last CSA, changes have occurred in how CWS engages children, youth and families. Prior to January 2017, CWS used Team Decision Making meetings (TDMs) for case planning with family members. With the Continuum of Care Reform (CCR), TDMs are no longer the venue for case planning. The current CWS practice entails Child and Family Team Meetings (CFTMs) to involve families in case plan development, which started on January 1, 2017. In this process, the family members are in the driver’s seat as they
formulate their own behaviorally based goals and objectives, which need to be reasonable, measurable and attainable within a six-month timeframe. Behavioral objectives are an important part of the case plan, as parents can attend services, yet fail to demonstrate what they learned in their interactions with their children. As the Safety Organized Practice (SOP) adage goes, “Services do not equal safety.” Children who are of an age and developmental level to formulate goals and objectives are active participants in the case planning process. One social worker shared that his engagement of parents in the case planning process entails him voicing that it consists of “strategies to help you succeed”, utilizing a strength-based approach. He also asks the parents, “What improvements do you want to see”, adding that the case plan “is not set in stone”, as it is a work in progress.

Case plans are reviewed and approved in the CWS/CMS database. Social workers receive regular supervision to address case plan goals and family progress regarding such. Monthly, at a minimum, contacts allow social workers to obtain information on case plan status for both children and parents. This means that the assigned social worker needs to be vigilant about when the case plan needs to be updated next. This can be accomplished by social workers attuning to the “reminder” page of things coming due in CWS/CMS and by logging on to SafeMeasures to be proactive in getting documents completed timely. SafeMeasures includes multiple factors that generate reports that are updated daily. To be useful to social workers in monitoring case plan compliance, they need to log on to SafeMeasures regularly. This is a challenge and seems to indicate a need for further hands on training for CWS staff.

Case plans are continually undergoing modification to reflect family members’ needs. This is also reflective of the appropriateness of the provision of services. The assigned social worker must interface with service providers throughout the life of a case to obtain information needed to facilitate family growth, functioning and case plan goal achievement. All these issues come into play at CFTMs, where service providers are often in attendance. At these meetings, parents, legal guardians and care providers are reminded of their right to participate in case planning and CFTM collaboration. When a case entails Native American affiliation, the appropriate tribe is also an integral partner in case planning and collaboration.
Social workers should initially communicate that family members have a right to participate in case planning. Engagement of family members is essential. Workers also need to be vigilant about the potential need to make modifications to the case plan at any time to reflect the family’s changing strengths and needs. Social workers should be mindful of collaborating with family members to ensure that appropriate services are put in place, with the caveat that compliance with services does not equate with appropriate parenting. Care providers need to be aware of case plan components so that the goals and objectives for a child can be facilitated by the care provider.

CWS utilizes the Structured Decision Making (SDM) tools. The Hotline Tool is completed upon the entering of a referral in the CWS/CMS database. The completion of this tool guides social workers regarding the nature of emergency response or the lack thereof. After conducting an emergency response, the social worker completes a Safety Assessment, which determines whether a child can remain safely in the home. If the child does remain in the home and the Safety Assessment indicates one or more safety factors, the social worker must develop a safety plan with the family. Before the referral is closed and/or elevated to an open case, the social worker completes the Risk Assessment, which indicates the likelihood of future danger. Ongoing cases may entail Reunification Assessments/Reassessments. As has been previously mentioned, visitation is an integral element of Family Reunification cases, and the Reunification Assessment tool includes that information. The Family Strengths and Needs Assessment (FSNA) should be completed before engaging the parents in the case planning process, as the FSNA informs the case plan. If a child is in a Permanent Plan service component, the Child Strengths and Needs Assessment are completed, usually in collaboration with the child.

**Visits between Parents and Children**

Visitation is an integral element of Family Reunification cases. As the social worker and parents develop the case plan, a visitation plan is included. The frequency and duration of visits is contingent upon the age of a child. Infants need more frequent visits of shorter duration than older children, who can better tolerate weekly visits for longer periods of time. When visits are supervised by CWS, they occur at the Human Service Department’s Family Service Center (FSC) or in the community. The FSC offers family-friendly rooms that
encourage family interaction and includes a kitchen area, to encourage mutual food preparation, and an outdoor play yard, utilized as weather permits. Either the assigned social worker or a Social Worker I supervises the visits at the FSC or at an alternate location. Visits can also be supervised in the North County area of Mariposa County. This serves to make visitation more convenient for residents of the North County area.

**CWS Collaboration with Mental Health**

CWS collaborates with our mental health counterpart in the Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS) Division’s Children’s Systems of Care (CSOC). This begins with the CWS screening tool and referral process for mental health services. CWS is now using the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) tool to address a child’s trauma history and any behavioral and/or emotional issues. Trauma informed practice by social workers is necessary to complete the tools with fidelity and validity. Once completed, the MHST is sent to CSOC, along with a referral form for a mental health assessment to determine the appropriate services needed for children. A mental health clinician, who is also trauma-informed, is subsequently assigned. Both CWS social workers and clinicians interface on an ongoing basis to update each other on any given case. Both also participate in CFTMs. In this process, social workers and clinicians endeavor to coordinate case plans and treatment plans to avoid duplication or conflicts in goals and objectives to best serve families. Although parents and children may be present for CFTMs, this venue is not in and of itself considered a visit between the parties. However, it is plausible and convenient for a visit to ensue after a CFTM.

**Probation**

The Probation Department utilizes the NOBLE Assessment Positive Achievement Change Tool (PACT) to identify the criminogenic risk factors and needs of juvenile offenders. The juvenile probation officers use motivational interviewing with the youth and their parents to complete the assessment tool. The tool assists the officers in identifying the appropriate level of supervision and services needed to address the youth’s delinquent behavior, while protecting the community. Demographic, health, education and family information are gathered, as well as information regarding prior criminal activity and trauma screening. The assessment is used to develop the youth’s case plan, which includes
behaviorally based goals and objectives. The case plan is provided to the Court at the time of disposition. The juveniles and their parents are engaged in the process of developing the case plan. The case plan is updated every six months or when circumstances or needs change.

The probation officer is required to have monthly face-to-face contact with the youth at the treatment facility and with the parent. Placement Officers have been consistent and timely with these monthly contacts. Minimum monthly contacts with probation youth and their parent or guardian is required by the department. In most juvenile cases supervised by the Probation Department, the contact is more frequent and as often as necessary to encourage compliant behavior and success. At the time of this report, there was only one youth under the supervision of the Probation Department and there were no youth in out-of-home placement. The last placement occurred in 2016.

Mariposa County Juvenile Probation Services maintains the position that out-of-home placement is the last resort, unless it involves a juvenile sex offender. All local resources are typically utilized in an attempt to modify the youth’s behavior, through court-ordered terms and conditions of probation, before out-of-home placement is recommended. The local resources utilized include Full Service Partnership through the County’s Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS) Division of the Human Services Department. These services are similar to support provided through the Wraparound Program, which is no longer available locally. The Juvenile Probation Officer participates in Child and Family Team Meetings (CFTMs). These meetings are instrumental in ensuring that the youth and family needs are identified, and an appropriate plan is developed to address those needs. As needs change or successes occur, the case plans are updated accordingly. Youth and their parents are actively encouraged to participate in this process. Previous case successes have been attributed to the support and services provided through the Wraparound Program.

The Probation Department’s Truancy Intervention Program, funded with Juvenile Justice Prevention Act Grant funds, helps to support the cost of the full-time Deputy Probation Officer assigned to the Juvenile Division. This officer works closely with the school sites and provides supportive services to high-risk youth identified by the school site administrators throughout the Mariposa County Unified School District (MCUSD). The
Probation Department is also an active member on the Student Attendance Review Board (SARB). The local reduction in the number of law enforcement referrals received by the Department can be attributed to the early intervention services.

Group home placement is only recommended when the youth fails to comply with his or her conditions of probation and the youth and/or parent/guardian(s) are not responsive to the intensive services provided through BHRS. Historically, delinquent youth have not been placed in foster homes because they required a higher level of supervision and services. There has been an occasional case when a youth was placed with a relative, but these types of placements have seldom been successful.

With the implementation of the Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) Resource Family Approval (RFA) process, it is anticipated that there will be more resource family homes available locally for Probation youth. The licensing and training requirements for relatives interested in providing a home for this population should improve relative placement success rates. Future group home placement for probation youth are likely to become less common, given the criteria that need to be met to place youth in this higher level of care under CCR.

Future decisions regarding placement will be made after the assigned probation officer has conferred with supervisors from Probation, CWS and BHRS. Placement decisions will be based upon the information gathered and presented by the probation officer. The youth and parent/guardian’s strengths and needs will be identified through the completion of an assessment and case plan. If the needs of the youth cannot be met with local resources and family support, out-of-home placement may be deemed appropriate. As previously practiced, Probation will continue to provide and make appropriate referrals for services that will support the youth in the home of his or her family.

**FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE PARENT LICENSING, RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION**

**General Licensing, Recruitment and Retention Processes**

Before January 2017, Mariposa County foster and adoptive parent recruitment and retention was under the auspices of Licensing. Effective January 1, 2017, the County has implemented the Resource Family Approval (RFA) program, when this initiative became mandatory for every county. RFA is included under the umbrella of the CWS Support Unit.
A Social Worker III currently serves as the RFA worker. This entails conducting a comprehensive assessment of resource families, which includes (new) foster parents, relatives and Non-Related Extended Family Members (NREFMs). Caregivers receive support from the Resource Family Liaison. They can also receive online training on various subjects to meet the specific needs of children/youth in their care. They can find peer support through the Nourish program, which CASA provides using PSSF funding. There are still existing foster parents within the County, who have until December 31, 2019, to convert to resource families. As of May 2018, three foster parents have already converted to become a resource family; and 12 have not converted. These current foster parents have routinely met monthly on an informal basis, which usually involves some sort of training and a dinner, both at no cost to the foster parents. The County maintains the standards for approving resource families, including relatives and NREFMs, who may receive Title IV E or Title IV B funding of the Social Security Act. Mariposa County ensures compliance with all RFA requirements regarding criminal clearances for resource families. In addition, RFA entails home visits (including a safety inspection), and a psychosocial assessment. All activities are commensurate with the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Written Directives 5, which sets the standards for the RFA process.

As time elapses, the RFA program can evaluate its effectiveness in meeting the needs of children and caregivers, including consideration of a “good match”. It is the responsibility of supervisors and managers to assess whether there is an improvement in resource family recruitment and retention. This can be achieved through individual supervision, case staffing, and analysis of retention numbers by the CWS Support Unit supervisor. There is also a need for more resource family support resources, especially for those caring for special needs children.

The Mariposa County RFA process, and previously Licensing, has provided for both CWS and Probation placements. RFA is an element of California’s Continuum of Care Reform (CCR), which seeks to reduce the number of children in congregate care by ensuring that these placements are short-term. CCR also fits with the state’s Core Practice Model (CPM).

Evaluation of the effectiveness of the RFA program could include both process and outcome measures. Process measures could include:
Does the number of homes increase?
Does the number of NREFM homes increase?
Does the ethnicity of homes match the population?
Are more children placed in NREFM homes?
Does the rate of placement moves decline?

Outcome measures could include:

- Are children moving to permanency more quickly?
- Does the rate of trauma induced symptoms decline?
- Does need for psychotropic medications reduce?
- Are children reaching developmental goals at a normal rate?
- Does the rate of reunification increase in proportion to adoption or conservatorship?

**Placement Resources**

Mariposa County collaborates with tribes for placement. When a child is a member of, or eligible for enrollment in, a tribe, efforts are made to provide placement in a tribally approved home. In this scenario, the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) could apply for court cases. Every effort is made to place children in ethnically appropriate homes, whether it is a tribally approved placement or a home with bilingual caregivers. If there is a dearth of placement options in Mariposa County, a child may need to be placed in another (usually adjacent) county, especially if an adoptive or other permanent placement can be located out of county. Utilization of Foster Family Agency (FFA) certified homes frequently occurs, especially if the foster parent is certified for Intensive Treatment Foster Care (ITFC) to meet the unique needs of children. Placements may also entail a Special Care Increment (SCI), which can be requested by a social worker to meet a child’s special needs, which may be physical, developmental or behavioral. Mariposa County has one FFA home and two 6-bed group homes. Fortunately, there are very few CWS group home placements. CWS occasionally places adolescents in the female group home, but rarely in the male group home. Almost all the residents in both group homes are Probation youth placed by other counties. Although Mariposa County Probation has historically utilized group home placements, there have not been Probation placements in at least 2 years. CWS has
historically refrained from placing minors with Probation youth. Evaluation of potential placement of WIC section 300 dependents with WIC section 600 wards is a function of specific need and safety factors.

Preserving sibling groups in a common placement is an important consideration. It is also not uncommon for approved relative or NREFM placements to be in other counties. Out of county placements may necessitate CWS social workers to travel to such locations for monthly child and care provider contacts. Alternatively, if a child placement is in a distant county, a request for courtesy supervision may be made to such county. It is also possible for the Mariposa County RFA program to request a RFA assessment from another county. In this manner the County has in place cross-jurisdictional processes and resources to assist in securing timely contacts with children and their, optimally permanent, care providers. For foster youth with non-dependent children, the County issues an Infant Care Supplement to assist with the care of such children.

Barriers to Mariposa County’s diligent efforts to recruit adoptive families reflecting the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the County include the dearth of placement homes within Mariposa County, the small percentages of minority populations in general, and the historically narrow parameters of foster families (i.e.: only adoptive or only specific age ranges). This can make it harder to place older children in county homes. The County does work with tribes to ensure appropriate, tribally approved, placements and, increasingly, endeavors to place with bilingual caregivers, as appropriate.

STAFF, CAREGIVER AND SERVICE PROVIDER TRAINING

Description and analysis of the County’s capacity to provide training to social workers and probation officers:

Child Welfare Services

Mariposa County contracts with the Central California Training Academy (CCTA), affiliated with California State University, Fresno for social worker Core Training and other specialized trainings. All new social workers receive Common Core 3.0, unless the new worker has previously worked in another county and completed the training. This series of trainings must be completed within two years of a social worker’s start in CWS. Each social worker is also required to complete 40 hours of training annually. CCTA also offers
Common Core for Supervisors, Common Core for Child Welfare Managers, and Advanced Leadership Development for Supervisors to ensure the competency of staff. CCTA offers training on other topics relevant to child welfare practice, such as Trauma Informed Practice, Gomez v. Saenz grievance hearings, CWS/CMS New User Training, Engagement and Interviewing, Child and Family Teams (CFTs) and Resource Family Approval (RFA).

CWS staff is not limited to CCTA as the only training provider. The Northern California Training Academy at the University of California, Davis also offers specialized training for child welfare professionals. It is also available for specialized training on topics not offered by CCTA, such as sexual assault and trauma associated with child maltreatment. CWS has also participated in trainings that are offered to the Mariposa community, such as Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) 101 and 102. CWS and Probation staff have also attended conferences on the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and the statewide biennial Beyond the Bench conference, which offers a variety of workshops on such subjects as dependency court issues, Continuum of Care Reform (CCR), Domestic Violence, Communication Skills for Working with Victims, Poverty, Safety Organized Practice (SOP), and Psychotropic Medication for Children in Foster Care.

CWS, at times, partners with Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS) for training on mutually relevant topics, such as Katie A., Continuum of Care Reform (CCR), Law and Ethics updates, protected information, Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), and Confidentiality. Mariposa County contracts with the law firm Liebert, Cassidy and Whitmore to provide training to managers on legal and administrative issues. Both CWS and Probation provide worker training on an as-needed basis for staff or individually if a work performance assessment indicates it is needed.

Mariposa Safe Families, the BOS designated CAPC takes the lead on providing prevention related training.

Probation

Newly hired Probation Officers receive the required Probation Officer CORE training within the first year of employment. Officers assigned to supervise youth in placement complete the required Placement CORE training. All probation Offices are required to
complete 40 hours of training each year. Other training is provided as needed or offered through collaborative efforts with the service-providing communities.

**How the County identifies ongoing and/or new training needs to ensure the competency of social workers, placement workers, supervisors, managers and administrators**

The need for training for all or some portion of staff can be generated by a change in policy or practice or a widespread performance issue. The recent change to Resource Family Approval (RFA) is an example of a policy change requiring training for staff to successfully transition to the new practice. The use of data tools assists managers and supervisors to identify training needs via SafeMeasures, individual supervision assessments and performance evaluations. The Social Services Analyst and Deputy Director utilize SafeMeasures to monitor CWS performance in a number of domains. Determination of the need for training for individuals is the responsibility of that person’s supervisor. This can be determined through regular supervision meetings, annual performance evaluations, and any stated needs by the social worker. Training can be prescribed for remediation of a performance deficit or to prepare the employee for a new role or career advancement.

**How the skill development of new and experienced staff is measured**

The employee’s ability to apply the knowledge, skills and abilities required to perform the job effectively is monitored and evaluated by the individual’s supervisor. The skill development of both new and experienced staff is measured by the supervisor providing regular individual supervision, assessing the quality of work products, and conducting annual performance evaluations (and an initial six-month evaluation for new, probationary workers). When there is a need for performance improvement, a supervisor may create a corrective action plan that may entail training in an area where there is a deficit. An issue about which a supervisor is vigilant is symptoms of secondary trauma in social workers. This is the result of working with children and families who have experienced trauma. SafeMeasures is a valuable tool in the process of continuous evaluation. Client, caregiver and community feedback is also considered, gleaned from community stakeholders at MAPC meetings and information from clients and caregivers.
during home visits. Feedback is used by supervisors to help determine professional development, coaching needs and evaluation of staff job performance.

**How staff and other providers are trained to identify and support the treatment of emotional trauma**

The CCTA Core training includes modules on trauma informed practice, including identification of trauma, evaluating the impact of trauma on a child’s social and emotional development, and consistent implementation of trauma informed practice. Supplemental training on trauma-related subjects is offered to staff when such comes to the attention of management. This may entail conferences sponsored by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) and Beyond the Bench.

**How the County addresses the training and supervision of county staff, foster parents and other providers with respect to hard to serve populations**

Specialized training is continuously offered to CWS staff. Effort is also made to bring trainers to the County, when feasible, so that foster parents and service providers can also attend the training. Resource families are required to complete pre-approval training and annual training thereafter, to include specialized training in subject matters to address serving difficult or special needs youth, which is monitored by the RFA supervisor and social worker. Resource families are encouraged to consider taking hard to serve youth into care. In some extreme cases, a Foster Family Agency (FFA) home that is certified as an Intensive Treatment Foster Care (ITFC) home may be an appropriate placement for hard to serve youth. The Nourish program offered by Mariposa County CASA provides caregivers with peer support, especially regarding problems in raising special needs children and youth who have experienced trauma.

**Description and analysis of the County’s capacity to provide training to service providers and other subcontractors, including those supported by CAPIT, CBCAP or PSSF funds**

Mariposa County is a small county (the sixth smallest in the state) with limited funds and ability to provide an abundance of formal training for service providers. Both CWS and Probation attend several monthly meetings with service providers, which create the opportunity to provide education/training on various topics, as appropriate. As has been
mentioned, whenever there is training in Mariposa that is open to the community, service providers are invited to attend.

**Training Available to Service Providers**

In 2016, CWS and Probation engaged community partners in a countywide Commercially and Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) training/implementation. An implementation team met twice per month working on CSEC 101 and 102 training. A countywide CSEC protocol is now in place, including resource development and prevention activities. This includes regular multidisciplinary meetings, development of a CSEC handbook, and trainings for the community, including hospitality members.

MSF provides both prevention activities and training for the community and service providers. MSF provides training on Mandated Reporter, Shaken Baby Syndrome and car seat safety. MSF also holds an annual Safe At Home fair with themes relating to child safety, monthly events on various topics, and the annual Father-Daughter Dance and Halloween trunk-or-treat events. Child Abuse Prevention Month is observed every April with pinwheel gardens planted in various locations in Mariposa. The Child Protective Unit (CPU) is an educational program administered by MSF in the schools, grades TK-3. MSF’s training programs are monitored by a Board of Directors and a Department administrator.

**Agency Representative and/or Program Responsible for Providing Technical Assistance to Service Providers**

Mariposa County Human Services Department’s Social Services Division staff is available to provide service providers with any technical assistance that they may need. If there are questions about policy or data issues, either the Social Services Deputy Director or the Social Services Analyst is available to address such questions.

**AGENCY COLLABORATION**

*How the county consults and coordinates with community partners and stakeholders*

**Collaboration between the child welfare and probation agencies to deliver foster care services**

Collaboration in Mariposa County has long been a strength; as interagency and intradepartmental relationships are close in such a small community. Protocols, Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) and multi-disciplinary meetings abound.
Community and peer input are valued, as it was during the Peer Review and Focus Group components of this C-CFSR cycle.

Child Welfare Services (CWS) and Probation partner in the C-CFSR process and the two collaborate on foster care placements; Probation provides some funding for such, and CWS assists Probation with potential placements and with data entry into the CWS/CMS system. The departments also collaborate when there is a client in common; this happens when there is a WIC Section 241.1 Protocol issue, meaning that there is a question of whether a child/youth is best served by CWS as a juvenile court dependent (WIC Section 300) or, alternatively, by Probation as a ward of the Court (WIC Section 600). The Human Services Department (HSD) and Probation have developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the departments.

Collaboration with Employment and Community Services Division

HSD’s Employment and Community Services (ECS) Division includes Eligibility, CalWORKs, Welfare to Work, Housing, and the Program Integrity Unit (PIU). Many families involved with CWS are eligible for benefits available through ECS, specifically Cash Assistance, CalFresh and CalWORKs. Foster care issues require continuous communication with the Foster Care Eligibility Social Worker to ensure seamless foster care payments and avoidance of overpayments.

Tribes/Tribal representatives and/or tribal service providers

A representative of the Mariposa Native American Tribal Council is a member of the Mariposa Abuse Prevention Collaborative (MAPC). The representative provides expert testimony to the Court when a Native American child is a court dependent. A representative of the Miwu Mati Healing Center and a representative from the Tuolumne Mi Wuk Healing Center also participate on MAPC. The BHRS division of HSD collaborates with tribal representatives on the delivery of services at the Miwu Mati Healing Center. The advice and counsel of the Tribal Council is sought by CWS and Probation when placement or case plans are needed for a Native American child.

A tribal focus group was offered as a part of the preparation for this CSA. The attendance was disappointing (one person) but valuable information was obtained. The attendee was a tribal representative from Fresno County, who has been active on ICWA
court cases. Details of the conversation are documented in Appendix A. The theme of the feedback received was that the representative believes that more Native American families could benefit from services than do presently. She would like to see more outreach to Native Americans. She would like ICWA training to be offered for the Native American communities. She expressed an opinion that Native Americans are accepted and honored in Mariposa County and she pointed out that the County has local medical and counseling services for Native Americans.

**Community Based Organizations**

Mental health and substance abuse services are provided by BHRS. As divisions of the same agency, CWS and BHRS are co-located. Staff from the two divisions meets frequently to discuss program or service needs, mutual client status and progress, and policy issues.

Data sharing among internal partners within HSD and with external agencies and community partners takes place on an ongoing basis. Data sharing is accomplished by way of Policies and Procedures, agreed upon protocols, MOUs, Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDTs). CWS, Probation and Mariposa County Unified School District (MCUSD) use a shared database, Foster Focus. Another multi-disciplinary team that is school-related is the School Attendance Review Board (SARB), which meets regularly to address student absences and truancy.

CWS interfaces with the Mariposa County Sheriff’s Office frequently. Many times Emergency Response referrals entail an immediate response, at the behest of a Sheriff’s Deputy.

CWS collaborates with the Mariposa County Health Department, J.C. Fremont Hospital, Mariposa Family Medicine and the Indian Health Clinic regarding medical issues for children/youth. A Public Health Nurse (PHN) is embedded in CWS two days per week to assist social workers with medical and dental appointments and provides oversight of children’s psychotropic medications.

Mariposa Safe Families, Inc. (MSF) provides prevention and early intervention services through OCAP funding. The OCAP consultant collaborates with the HSD Social Services Analyst to develop the OCAP annual report. Data from MSF are an integral part of
First Five is a major participant in the community for education and services for children zero to five. First Five, the Health Department and MSF collaborate to provide Early Start services in the community. First Five endeavors to create an integrated system of care that maximizes existing resources and minimizes duplication of services, improve transportation and other means for families to access support services. First Five works to improve families’ access to high quality, affordable childcare and resources that enable children 0-5 to develop optimally and begin kindergarten at readiness level. First Five also focuses on improving the overall physical and mental health of young children, and improve families’ access and participation in education, information, and services that help them create safe, nurturing environments for children.

Children who have developmental disabilities may be eligible for Regional Center services. CWS social workers are vigilant about referring these children for evaluation if such disabilities are evident.

Mountain Crisis Services (MCS) provides domestic violence services. The Sheriff’s Department and CWS have collaborated to develop a joint intervention approach specific to referrals to CWS in which domestic violence issues are present.

As part of the CSA process, interested community-parents were invited to a focus group. Three people attended, but none had been a consumer of CWS services.

Resource families have contact with CWS on an almost daily basis. The resource family focus group was well attended. They expressed an interest in taking a more active role in preparing the family and child for reunification.

An integral aspect of collaboration with children/youth and their families is Child and Family Team Meetings (CFTMs). CFTMs are essential in family engagement and case planning. Additionally, parents’ natural supports, caregivers, clergy, group home staff, and other relevant parties can attend CFTMs, as appropriate.

Sierra Quest provides a six-bed group home for boys and a counseling office.

Family Enrichment Center, a program of Mariposa Safe Families, provides a computer lab, workshops on nutrition, income tax preparation, computer skills and parenting skills. Classes on mandated reporting, shaken baby syndrome, parent
partnership are provided. Annual events include the Father/Daughter Dance, Trunk or Treat Night and Art Ability Night.

**Description and Analysis**

*The process used to ensure that the concerns of these stakeholders are taken into account*

In preparation for developing this CSA, HSD facilitated the scheduling of nine focus groups. Each one yielded valuable information. Although each group had a unique perspective, common themes emerged. There was nearly unanimous agreement that children should be returned home as quickly as possible and that stays in foster care should be as short as possible. Lack of transportation and affordable housing were cited multiple times as a barrier to reunification. A complete list of comments from the focus groups is in Section 11: Focus Groups.

It is the responsibility of the C-CSFR planning team to ensure that the feedback from stakeholders is considered when the System Improvement Plan (SIP) is developed. As a part of the SIP process, the team will consider whether focus groups or some other ongoing method of seeking stakeholder input should be included in the SIP.

Information gleaned during the CSA assessment process regarding the County’s ability to involve stakeholders in planning efforts was more about the process than the content. While the attendance at the focus groups was overall satisfactory, two important constituent groups, Native Americans and birth parents, were underrepresented. The CSA/SIP planning team can consider using other means to reach these two groups, perhaps in-home or telephone individual interviews.

**For Community-Based Organizations**

The Mariposa Abuse Prevention Collaborative (MAPC) meets monthly. CWS and Probation participate, as well as numerous local agencies and community members. There is also a monthly Community Partners meeting that is held at the high school. The MAPC meetings are multidisciplinary and collaborative efforts to maintain intact families, prevent abuse and neglect, ensure child, elder, and dependent adult safety and well-being, and share updates on various programs.
For the Tribes and Tribal Service Providers

Representatives from the Tribal Council participate in community planning by participating in MAPC. CWS seeks advice from tribal representatives during the intervention, placement and service planning for Native American children.

SERVICE ARRAY

Mental Health and Substance Abuse Disorder (SUD)

Mariposa County’s mental health and substance abuse entity is the Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS) Division of the Human Services Department. The array of programs is designed to meet the needs of Mariposa residents. The programs are diverse and are well attended, which speaks to the caliber of services offered in a small county. There are virtually no wait lists, as there were in the past. BHRS services are available to other programs in HSD and the community. The list of BHRS programs and the relevant services includes:

- **Adult Services** include: individual and group counseling, education and support groups, Full Service Partnership, supportive case management to link clients with community supports, Adult Team Meetings (ATMs), psychiatric services, LPS conservatorship, and Restoration of Competency (ROC).

- **Children’s Services** include: individual and group counseling, education and support groups, Full Service Partnership, supportive case management, psychiatric services, Prevention Early Intervention (PEI) and Pathways to Wellness program (formerly Katie A.).

- **TRAC Team**: the Triage Response Assessment of Crisis (TRAC) Team, which responds to crises in the jail, schools, hospitals, and other areas in the Mariposa community; services are provided 24 hours per day/7 days per week.

- **SUDS**: the Substance Use Disorder Services program provides a wide range of specific substance abuse prevention and treatment services, including individual and group counseling, PC 1000, Drug Court, Proposition 36 groups, and youth and adolescent prevention services. The Child Welfare Information Gateway indicates that abuse of alcohol or drugs by parents or caregivers can have effects on the health, safety and well-being of children. Two areas of concern are harm
to the fetus from drug exposure and the harm to children of any age by exposure to illegal drug activity in their home. The link between drugs and alcohol and child abuse is so widely known that 34 states, including California, have made exposing a child to illegal drug activity a crime.67

- **Current Initiatives:** include Behavioral Health Court, Whole Person Care and Peer Support.
- **Heritage House:** offers a safe, clean and sober support center for adults and their families.
- **Mi-Wu-Mati Healing Center:** offers counseling services for the Native American population.

Additionally, North County services in Coulterville provide mental health and crisis services two days per week for children and adults and one Friday per month for psychiatric services. There are also mental health services offered in Yosemite twice per month.

**Children’s Systems of Care (CSOC)**

CSOC services include individual counseling, group counseling, family counseling, supportive case management, Full Service Partnerships (FSPs), Child and Family Teaming (CFT), psychiatric services and medication management. Referrals are made by CWS social workers with the accompanying CANS screening tool.

**Adult Systems of Care (ASOC)**

Referrals are likely to be made by an Adult Protective Services (APS) or Public Guardian/Public Conservator (PG/PC) staff person. Individual counseling, group counseling, supportive case management, Full Service Partnerships (FSPs), Adult Team Meetings (ATMs), psychiatric services, Behavioral Health Court, and medication management. Services are also offered in North County. Offering services in North County, which is more sparsely populated than the town of Mariposa and is a considerable drive from town, means that North County residents need not drive to town for services. This is

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especially salient in that some residents do not have access to vehicles and there is a dearth of public transportation in Mariposa County.

**Substance Use Disorders**

Referrals can be made by CWS or APS staff. Adult and youth outpatient services are available for those experiencing problems associated with alcohol and other drug use, including individual and group counseling and relapse prevention. Referrals are to residential treatment facilities and sober living homes. As Mariposa County does not have residential treatment facilities, this means that these individuals must access such services out of county. This has long been a gap in services in the County. Referrals for inpatient treatment require contacting the facilities and requesting a bed. Most programs require at least six months of treatment. Some have transitional housing after that. This means that some parents who are in the transitional housing component and are receiving reunification services can have overnight visitation and trial home visits. The SUD program encompasses Adolescent Services, Adult Treatment Services, Perinatal Services for pregnant women, Drug Court referrals (which include Proposition 36 and PC 1000 referrals), and group counseling, which includes Process Groups and Co-occurring Groups for Adults Gender Specific. Family group counseling is offered to any client open to services and there is community outreach and support for 12 Step recovery.

**Additional BHRS Services**

There are additional independent licensed mental health practitioners in the County with whom BHRS contracts to provide community mental health services to higher functioning clients.

**Native American Resources**

Mariposa County has a local tribe, the Mi-Wuk tribe; however, it is not federally recognized, so the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) does not apply. Mariposa County Child Welfare Services (CWS) makes findings that ICWA applies to federally recognized tribes. The tribes with which CWS has dealt are the Chukchansi tribe out of Fresno County and the North Fork Mono Rancheria tribe out of Madera County. Mariposa County has a Native American counseling center, the Miwu Mati Healing Center just outside of the town of Mariposa. The Indian Health Clinic offers Native Americans with medical and dental
services. Mariposa County also hosts an annual Indian Pow Wow at the Mariposa County Fairgrounds. Mariposa County has embraced the Native American community with services designed to honor tribal values, traditions and history.

COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES

Mariposa Safe Families

Mariposa Safe Families (MSF) is the Mariposa County Child Abuse Prevention Council (CAPC) providing community child abuse prevention and awareness outreach activities. One of the largest events is the annual Safe at Home event in Mariposa. In addition to the big events, smaller events designed to be attractive to families are offered frequently. MSF provides training on Shaken Baby Syndrome and mandated reporting. MSF is the provider of the Family Enrichment Center (FEC) located in Mariposa with a satellite FEC in North County. The FEC locations offer referrals, workshops, and a computer lab. Services include assistance with Medi-Cal and CalFresh applications, linkage to daycare, transportation, mental health and substance abuse services, domestic violence referrals, early childhood education and screening, job search support, Section 8 housing assistance, Grand Families Coffee Group meetings with mentors available 24/7 and the Bridges Program for families living in poverty. The centers are also used for small training classes for basic computer skills and job searches. MSF provides both prevention activities and training for the community and service providers. In addition to providing the mandated reporter and Shaken Baby Syndrome training, MFS also provides training on car seat safety. MSF also holds an annual Safe At Home fair with themes relating to child safety, monthly events on various topics, and the annual Father-Daughter Dance and Halloween trunk-or-treat events. Child Abuse Prevention Month is observed every April with pinwheel gardens planted in various locations in Mariposa. The Child Protective Unit (CPU) is an educational program administered by MSF in the schools, grades TK-3. MSF receives Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention, and Treatment (CAPIT) and Community Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) funds from HSD and is accountable for using these funds according to the requirements of the state Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP). The MSF Program Director has increasingly demonstrated an appreciation of the importance of providing the programs, services and documentation to meet the OCAP requirements.
The Alliance for Community Transformations

The Alliance provides responsive and preventative services to individuals and families, working through partners, supporters and collective action to create a safe, healthy and socially just community. The Alliance is an umbrella agency encompassing CASA, Mountain Crisis Services, Ethos Youth Center and Mariposa Heritage House.

Child Appointed Special Advocates

The Child Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program is a volunteer organization that provides advocacy and mentorship to dependent children in Mariposa County Juvenile Court. CASA has also recently been appointed for a delinquency case and there is one ward awaiting a CASA assignment. CWS staff collaborates with CASAs on most court cases and the two provide each other with court reports in advance of court hearings. The CASA Executive Director also collaborates with HSD staff on several community partner meetings and staffing’s. CASA receives funding from HSD in the form of Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) to administer the Nourish caregiver support program. The program offers peer support to relative and non-relative, caregivers. PSSF is part of OCAP funding; and like MSF, CASA is accountable to utilize PSSF monies to meet OCAP requirements. The CASA Executive Director and Program Specialist have increasingly demonstrated an understanding of the information that is needed to include in the annual OCAP report. The CASA program is highly regarded in Mariposa County.

Mountain Crisis Services

Mountain Crisis Services is the domestic violence agency in Mariposa County. Services include two confidential shelter homes and legal assistance in filing for restraining orders. Mountain Crisis Services assists domestic violence survivors through counseling and advocacy. In calendar year 2017, Mountain Crisis Services assisted 141 survivors/victims of domestic violence and answered 70 hotline calls from survivors/victims. Mountain Crisis Services also provides transitional housing in two shelter houses. There is frequently a wait list for shelter beds.
Ethos Youth Center

Ethos offers Mariposa County youth a safe haven with social interaction and recreational activities. Some of the youth who frequent Ethos are homeless or are “couch surfing”. Ethos has been a special fixture in the Mariposa landscape since its inception.

Heritage House

Mariposa Heritage House is a substance abuse recovery center providing a safe, healthy, clean and sober support center for adults and their families who seek to change their lives. Counseling and peer support is offered to individuals and their families. Values include sustaining and empowering clients, ensuring equality and respect and demonstrating personal and professional responsibility.

Helping Hands

Mariposa Helping Hands is a free, confidential program offering pregnancy tests, parenting classes, birthing classes and a baby boutique.

Faith Based Entities

Mariposa County is home to churches of various denominations and congregations, including Baptist, Methodist, Church of Latter Day Saints, Presbyterian, Christian Scientist, Lutheran, Church of Christ, Catholic and other smaller congregations. Depending on the denomination, spiritual guidance and pastoral counseling may be offered.

Homeless and Low-Income Services

Like many neighboring counties in California, Mariposa has a homelessness problem. This situation was exacerbated by the devastating Detwiler Fire in July 2017, which left many families homeless. Mariposa County offers a number of services for homeless and low-income residents. Such services include:

Open Arms is a church sponsored program that offers meals and bed space (on a limited basis). The United Methodist Church and St. Joseph’s Catholic Church are venues for Open Arms.

Manna House, located in the town of Mariposa, a high needs area, is the Mariposa County food bank entity. Its mission is to “provide emergency food to all in need”.

108
Habitat for Humanity provides individuals who construct housing for low-income residents.

Additionally, there are several low-income apartment complexes in town, many of which are Section 8 housing. Many Child Welfare Services clients reside in such complexes, which mean that quite a few clients know each other and are privy to each other’s case. This is not an uncommon phenomenon in a small county.

First Five

First Five of Mariposa County, also known as the Children and Families Commission, evaluates the current and projected needs of children ages 0 to 5 and their families; then develops a strategic plan that describes how community needs will be addressed, determines how to expend local First Five resources and evaluates the effectiveness of programs and activities funded in accordance with the strategic plan. The actions of First Five are guided by the needs of Mariposa County children and families. This means that First Five is in step with Child Welfare Services in focusing on improved outcomes for children and families. Services cover health care, preschool preparation, and early childhood education for families. First Five has utilized grants to fund ancillary positions in elementary schools and for dental education and services. First Five’s Strategic Goals are to create an integrated system of care that maximizes existing resources and minimizes duplication of services, to improve transportation and other means for families to access support services, to improve families’ access to high quality, affordable childcare and resources that enable children 0-5 to develop optimally and begin kindergarten at readiness level, to improve the overall physical and mental health of young children, and to improve families’ access and participation in education, information, and services that help them create safe, nurturing environments for children.

Infant and Child Enrichment Services

Mariposa County’s childcare referral agency is Infant and Child Enrichment Services (ICES). Parents who need childcare are provided with local licensed childcare facilities. Although ICES does not provide child care itself, its ability to assess which child care facilities are of the highest quality results in referrals in which residents can be confident. Parents are provided with expedited and quality childcare referrals to licensed providers.
**Preschools**

Mariposa County has five preschools located around the County. They provide enrichment for young children and are:

- Cathey’s Valley Preschool
- Greeley Hill Preschool
- Kiwanis Preschool Academy (temporarily closed at present)
- Lake Don Pedro Preschool
- Mariposa Cooperative Preschool

**Early Start**

Early Start is a home-based voluntary program serving women and families during pregnancy and after the birth of a baby. It provides support services, such as prenatal care and early childhood education to get the child off to a “Smart Start” in life.

A Health Department Public Health Nurse (PHN) will visit the home to help with:

- Pregnancy
- Reducing the risk of illness and injury
- Promoting nurturing parent-child relationships
- Improving the physical, intellectual, and emotional growth of the child
- Providing health care services and community resources

All Mariposa County residents are eligible. Early Start is available at no cost to every pregnant woman and every family with children under the age of six. The primary goal is to improve the brain development and health of children. This early start to a child’s healthy future lessens the likelihood that he or she will end up in the Child Welfare System.

**Regional Center (in Merced County)**

Infants and toddlers who are at risk of having developmental disabilities or who have a developmental delay may qualify for services from the Regional Center in Merced. Individuals at risk of having a child with a developmental disability may be eligible for counseling and other prevention services, such as:

- Information and referral
- Assessment and diagnosis
• Counseling
• Lifelong individualized planning and service coordination
• Purchase of necessary services included in the individual program plan
• Resource development
• Outreach
• Assistance in finding and using community and other resources
• Advocacy for the protection of legal, civil and service rights
• Early intervention services for at risk infants and their families
• Genetic counseling
• Family support
• Planning, placement, and monitoring for 24-hour out-of-home care
• Training and educational opportunities for individuals and families
• Community education about developmental disabilities

Since Mariposa County does not have anything close to a Regional Center within the County, it means that residents need to access services in Merced, which is only a 45-minute drive from the town of Mariposa. Yet, it underscores the problem that some residents have in a lack of reliable transportation. Fortunately, the Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS) does make trips to Merced, in addition to the route to and from Yosemite National Park, which is the pride of Mariposa County.

**COUNTY ADMINISTERED SERVICES**

**CalWORKs Services**

California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids provides temporary cash aid to eligible families with minor children. CalWORKs also provides assistance in finding and keeping a job. All parents and relative caretakers who receive CalWORKs cash assistance must participate with employment services unless they are exempt. Cash aid is based on income eligibility with a limit of 48 months. For Family Reunification cases, parents had to be on cash aid at the time of removal of children. There is no cash aid for parents whose children have been removed and parents must participate in Welfare to Work. Such individuals receive supportive services, such as job-related education or training, job search preparation, and mock job interviews. The goal of the program is to
help clients obtain employment so that they can become self-sufficient. Self-sufficiency is an overall goal of most programs in the Human Services Department.

**Mariposa County Eligibility Services**

Eligibility Services include assistance with shelter, food, utilities, medical coverage and general aid. CalFresh, Medi-Cal and General Assistance are essential provisions for many families who are at or below the poverty level. Poverty is additionally an issue in the general neglect of children, whereby Child Welfare Services becomes involved.

**North County Services**

The northern part of Mariposa County is significantly remote and more sparsely populated, compared to the areas surrounding the town of Mariposa. There is a County facility in Coulterville that offers limited services to residents. Computers at the Coulterville office offer residents online Eligibility documentation. A BHRS clinician also goes to North County twice per week to provide counseling services. Transportation is an issue for many residents of North County areas. Those with operating vehicles must drive on a steep and winding road to reach the town of Mariposa. The Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS) does not travel to North County.

**Mariposa County Victim Witness**

The Victim Witness Program offers crisis intervention, emergency assistance, court escort and support, forensic interviewing facilities, and restitution and assistance with filing a Victims of Crime Claim Form. Victim Witness is under the auspices of the Mariposa County District Attorney’s Office.

**Mariposa County Community Services**

Mariposa County Community Services Department coordinates and delivers services to elders and disabled adults in the community. It works with the Area 12 Agency on Aging to provide services. Services include senior information and referrals, outreach to seniors, education seminars, provision of meetings and lunches, senior nutrition congregate meals, a home delivered meal program, public transportation with designated routes through a dial-a-ride system, and medical transportation for seniors going to medical appointments.
**Mari-Go**

Mari-Go is the low-cost Mariposa County transportation program offering non-emergency assistance to seniors and disabled adults. The small buses are equipped for wheelchair access. Services can be provided for scheduled medical appointments or in-office medical procedures. Some limited transportation to and from Merced and the North County area is available. North County residents must call in advance to arrange for transportation to Sonora for shopping or medical appointments. This North County route is only on Tuesdays and only for North County residents. The fare is $4 one-way.

**Mariposa County Sheriff’s Office**

Mariposa County Sheriff’s Office (SO) is the local law enforcement agency. The Sheriff also acts as the coroner for the County. Within the Park, the National Park Service (NPS) has domain over activities occurring therein. Both CWS and Probation have good working relationships with the SO and the NPS. There is much more interaction with the former; however, on occasion, emergency responses are made within the Park.

The small size of Mariposa County is conducive to close working relationships between SO and CWS and Probation. All these entities are frequently on a first name basis, which attests to the longstanding working relationships. Emergency Response by CWS is usually at the behest of a Sheriff’s Deputy in the field. Deputies are the persons who may detain a child and subsequently release the child to CWS. CWS and Probation also collaborate with the SO on Multidisciplinary Teams (MDTs).

**Mariposa County Probation Department**

Mariposa County Probation oversees adult and juvenile divisions, as well as the local juvenile hall facility. Mariposa County Child Welfare Services collaborates with Probation on Welfare and Institutions Code Section 241.1 Protocols to determine the most appropriate system for serving minors (dependency or delinquency). Child Welfare Services (CWS) and Probation partner in the C-CFSR process and the two collaborate on foster care placements; Probation provides some funding for such, and CWS assists Probation with potential placements and with data entry into the CWS/CMS system. The Human Services Department (HSD) and Probation have developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the departments.
**Mariposa County Health Department**

Mariposa County Health Department offers general medicine services, including physical exams, immunizations, flu vaccinations, and well child exams. A physician oversees the Department and Public Health Nurses (PHNs) provide in-home services to monitor special needs infants (i.e. failure to thrive babies) and young children. A PHN spends two days per week embedded in CWS.

**Mariposa County Fire Safe Council**

The Fire Safe Council’s mission is to preserve Mariposa County’s natural and manmade resources by mobilizing all Mariposa residents to make their homes, neighborhoods, and communities fire safe. The Council offers free chipping services to all Mariposa County residents and defensible space brushing services for limited income senior citizens and disabled residents. Additionally, more recently, the Council has been offering tree mortality assistance for senior, disabled and low-income residents to defray the cost associated with removing hazardous trees within 100 feet of a primary residence.

**Independent Living Program (ILP)**

ILP serves Child Welfare Services and Probation youth ages 16-21 who are in foster care placements. ILP is part of the Child Welfare Services Support Unit at the Human Services Department. ILP classes include a variety of topics with the goal of assisting the youth to become self-sufficient. ILP youth participate in field trips to college campuses to encourage them to pursue post-secondary education. Classes also include assistance in completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The fact that ILP is part of the Social Services Division of the Human Services Department means that youth experience a sense of familiarity, and maybe even security, by virtue of the fact that they are already involved with either the Human Services or Probation Department.

**Transitional Housing Program Plus (THP-Plus)**

Mariposa County has five slots to provide financial and supportive services to young adults ages 21-26 who are transitioning into adulthood and self-sufficiency. Some of the THP-Plus young adults were ILP youth. Mariposa County THP-Plus employs a scattered site model, whereby participants live in various areas and types of abodes, often living with others to defray the cost of rent. A percentage of the stipend paid to participants goes into a
kind of trust account for future needs. In this way, these young adults learn about delayed
gratification and the value of saving money. These are important values that can translate
into a successful adulthood and reduce the likelihood that future offspring will be involved
with Child Welfare Services or Probation.

**QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM**

Quality assurance is extremely important to the management of services and
integrity of programs. Multiple methods are used to evaluate the appropriateness of
services and fidelity to policy. The Social Services Analyst participates in Continuous
Quality Improvement (CQI) conferences and trainings as it applies to CWS. Quality
Assurance for the federal case review mandate is currently on hold. Initially, it was the
domain of the Social Services Deputy Director with the case reviews being conducted by a
supervisor in the Program Integrity Unit to ensure objectivity in qualitative data collection.
Mariposa County is currently asking the state to take back the case review/QA process.

**Quality Assurance Systems to Evaluate Adequacy and Quality throughout Continuum
of Care**

A primary quality assurance system that CWS and Probation use to evaluate the
adequacy and quality of the systems is supervisor and manager oversight and feedback
from agency partners, families and care providers through regular community partner
meetings, such as the monthly Mariposa Abuse Prevention Collaborative (MAPC), which
helps guide CWS and Probation in making improvements. CWS has a vertical structure.
Rather than specializing workers to a service component and passing the case to another
worker when the service component changes, the case remains with the same worker
throughout the case. This structure allows the supervisor to observe the quality of systems
throughout the continuum of care. This occurs through regular individual supervision and
biweekly unit meetings.

**CWS and Probation Placement Policies for Evaluating Achievement of Performance
Measures**

The Berkley quarterly reports on outcomes for federal and state measures are an
important tool for CWS and Probation. The Social Services Deputy Director and the Social
Services Analyst review the measures when they are published on the California Child
Welfare Indicator Project (CCWIP) website. The Social Services Analyst uses SafeMeasures to monitor social workers’ compliance with requirements, caseload management and timeliness of service. Such requirements are monthly child contact requirements, Child Health and Disability Prevention (CHDP) medical and dental requirements, timely Structured Decision Making (SDM) assessments, Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) data elements, and National Youth in Transition Data Base (NYTD) survey completion. SafeMeasures is a valuable tool for day-to-day management because it is refreshed every day. CWS/CMS is used by social workers and supervisors not only to record case information, but also to prompt attention to pending or overdue tasks.

The quality indicators have more value as a quality tool for CWS than Probation. Probation has had a maximum of two youth in care at one time during the last five years. The quality indicators are not needed at a number that low. CWS reviews the quality indicators internally and has a conference call with CDSS Outcomes and Accountability staff quarterly after the new data is released.

**Effectiveness of County Policies for Monitoring Compliance with ICWA and MEPA**

Although Mariposa has no federally recognized tribes in the county, members of the local tribe, the Mi Wuk, live in the County, as do other Native Americans from surrounding counties. The CWS and Probation Supervisors, the Court, and the Tribal Council provide oversight to ensure compliance with the requirements of ICWA and Multiethnic Placement Act (MEPA). If the family or child reports a possible tribal connection, the CWS Legal Secretary contacts the appropriate tribe(s) and the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Mariposa County’s race and ethnic composition is by far predominantly white, at 91%. This percentage has held steady, while the Hispanic population has steadily increased, presently at 10%. This indicates a growing need for services for this population. It is projected that the Hispanic population will triple in Mariposa County over the next 50 years. There is a disproportionality between the Hispanic population and concomitant services available in Mariposa County. Hence, there will be an increasing need to provide services, such as bilingual social workers and probation officers, interpreters readily available, publications and commonly used materials translated into Spanish, and training for staff to reinforce the need for cultural sensitivity. There will also be a need for Spanish-
speaking resource families to provide care for Hispanic children/youth who do not speak English.

The County’s Assurance That a Comprehensive, Coordinated Screening Process, Identifying Trauma Needs is in Place; Case Planning and Child and Family Team Meetings (CFTMs) Are Utilized

CWS screens all children for mental health needs, including trauma issues. The screening tool and a referral form are then forwarded to HSD’s Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS) Children’s Systems of Care (CSOC) for further assessment to determine the appropriate mental health services. When a child in care requires medication of any sort, over the counter or prescribed, the social worker or probation officer documents it and explains to the foster parent, relative, NREFM, or legal guardian that he or she is expected to administer the medication. The social worker or probation officer checks for compliance at monthly visits. A Public Health Nurse (PHN) is embedded in CWS two days per week and monitors psychotropic medication administration. Well child routine checkups and dental exams are also carried out by the care provider and monitored as a part of monthly visits. SafeMeasures can produce reports that track timely dental and health exams as well as Individualized Education Plan (IEP) status. The CWS and Probation Supervisors and the Social Services Deputy Director have access to CWS/CMS to look at individual cases.

The CWS and Probation Supervisors review all cases. When children and families with special needs are involved, care is taken to ensure that appropriate referrals are made to specialized services, such as the Regional Center. Feedback from schools, providers and caregivers helps to ensure that the right services are in place. This is accomplished through direct contact with services providers, caregivers and school staff, along with the Foster Focus shared database.

The County places high value on child and family involvement in the case planning process. CWS utilizes Child and Family Team Meetings (CFTMs), which is an element of the Continuum of Care. The CFT model ensures child and family involvement. CASAs, foster parents, siblings, and other individuals important in the child’s life are included in the CFTM, depending on the circumstances. A CFTM occurs within the first 10 days for newly
opened CWS cases; monthly for group home placements; monthly for children/youth on psychotropic medications; within 24 hours of a youth being involuntarily hospitalized for a 72-hour psychiatric placement; and when there is a placement change. A Social Worker IV in the Support unit has been trained and is the facilitator for all CFTMs.

Reunification is the most desirable goal for every child, but not every parent is able and willing to make the changes required to make and sustain a safe and nurturing home. Since it is not possible to know how the parent(s) will respond, concurrent planning (conducting reunification efforts at the same time as planning for permanency through adoption or legal guardianship) commences as soon as reunification efforts are in place. Termination of parental rights (TPR) occurs when adoption is the permanent plan and the Court orders TPR at the WIC 366.26 hearing. Adoptions are now back in Mariposa County, after previously being contracted to another county. Timely adoption finalization is currently being achieved. When ICWA applies, TPR is not realized, as tribes are opposed to TPR because it breaks the family ties. In order to preserve familial connections to the tribe, adoption proceedings entail Tribal Customary Adoption (TCA), whereby a child is adopted without terminating parental rights. Concurrent planning, termination of parental rights, and adoption are monitored closely by the CWS Supervisor.

The older youth in care have special needs that need to be addressed. For the older youth a Transitional Independent Living Plan (TILP) must be developed when the youth is sixteen years of age. However, discussion of the youth’s hopes and dreams for the future can begin much earlier. The Juvenile Court receives a copy of the TILP. It is the responsibility of the social worker or probation officer to initiate the development of the TILP and the supervisor is responsible for oversight.

**The Process that the County Uses to Capture Data for CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF/ CTF**

Programs funded by CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF are very important to the community. The Child Abuse Prevention Council (CAPC) Board of Directors is the official advisory body for the use of Children’s Trust Fund and some CAPIT and CBCAP funds allotted to Mariposa Safe Families (MSF). The MSF Board meets monthly. In compliance with the Brown Act, the agenda, previous minutes and Profit and Loss statements for the previous month are distributed. The budget is proposed by the Program Director and approved by the Board.
Mariposa County has historically ensured that a Human Services Department CWS employee sits on the MSF Board of Directors, and this entails reviewing profit and loss statements at Board meetings. This means that the CTF, CAPIT and CBCAP fund expenditures are monitored on a regular basis. MSF collects demographic data and satisfaction surveys at every workshop and event. Such data serve to inform MSF whether the workshop or event had its intended impact. Information is shared at periodic meetings between MSF and CWS management staff. HSD administers the funds and MSF reports information to HSD for claiming and oversight purposes. MSF is accountable to the California Department of Social Services’ Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP) and must comply with the requirements set forth in the Welfare and Institutions Code. CASA receives PSSF funding from HSD to administer the Nourish program, which is geared toward care providers with a peer support component. All data documented by MSF and CASA are reported to HSD and the Social Services Analyst uses it for the annual OCAP report. In the event that a service provider fails to provide the agreed upon services to eligible children and families and the contract is in jeopardy, HSD will attempt to explain the deficiency to the provider and negotiate improvements. HSD has the option, if the problem cannot be resolved, to terminate the contract.
Mariposa County has developed a Child Fatality/Near Fatality Policy and Procedures (P&P) document, which is currently in the administrative review process by the Social Services Deputy Director. The P&P addresses fatal/near fatal critical incidents in the County regarding cases for which a child and/or family was known to receive Child Welfare Services (CWS) involvement with the critical incident being attributed to child abuse and/or neglect. The policy references All County Letters (ACLs), the Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC), the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Manual of Policies and Procedures, Division 31, and Assembly Bill (AB) 1625.

Upon learning of a critical incident, such as a child fatality/near fatality, an incident involving severe trauma, or any incident that might be likely to generate media coverage (i.e. a child witness to a murder or an attempted or completed suicide) and the critical incident is suspected to be or is attributed to abuse and/or neglect, the assigned social worker will notify the CWS Supervisor, who will in turn notify the Social Services Deputy Director. The Deputy Director will then notify the Human Services Department Director and any other relevant parties, such as the Social Services Division Analyst. The County must also notify the CDSS by completing the SOC 826A form, including the dates of reports, investigations, services provided, actions taken, the investigative disposition of each report, and any written comments of the investigative social worker. The SOC 826A is then submitted to the CDSS within 20 calendar days of a public request for information or the disposition of the investigation, whichever is later, via electronic file uploaded to the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS). Thereafter, the County notifies the CDSS, in writing via e-mail, that the SOC 826A was uploaded and is ready for review.

Mariposa County has a multidisciplinary Child Death Review Team (CDRT). Other departments in the County are members of the CDRT, including the Health Department, the Sheriff’s Office (the Sherriff is also designated as the County Coroner), the District Attorney’s Office and Mariposa County Unified School District. Additionally, staff from the Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS) Division within Human Services is usually involved with such cases. Fortunately, Mariposa County’s CDRT meets very infrequently,
only every 7-10 years, but all the team members are poised to convene if circumstances dictate such.

**National Resource Center (NRC) Training and Technical Assistance**

Mariposa County does not contract with the National Resource Center (NRC) for Training and Technical Assistance at this time and there are no immediate plans to do so. Mariposa County does receive training from the Central California Training Academy in Fresno for both CWS Core and other specialized training. Onsite technical assistance on the CWS/CMS database is periodically offered by a Training Academy staff member who also has a CWS/CMS computer laboratory on the California State University, Fresno campus. Additionally, the Resource Center for Family-Focused Practice at the University of California, Davis (UC Davis) provides multidisciplinary training in Davis and at other venues.

**Peer Review Results**

To ensure continuous quality improvement regarding outcomes for children, youth and families in the child welfare and probation systems, Mariposa County conducted a Peer Review in December 2017 with the peer interviews conducted on December 5, 2017. Mariposa County explored measure 3-P1, permanency within 12 months of initial entry into care for both child welfare and Juvenile Probation. In addition, as part of the overall Self-Assessment process, Mariposa conducted nine focus groups:

- Probation Officer and CWS Line Staff
- Youth/ILP
- Foster Parents
- Tribal Members
- Community Members/Parents
- Service Providers
- North County
- Sheriff’s Department
- CASA Advocates

Feedback from the focus groups can be found in Appendix A.

The information from both the focus groups and Peer Review highlighted Mariposa’s strong commitment to children and families, its efforts to create practices and processes that meet each family and youth’s needs, its work with the community, and its many efforts to support timely permanency and positive outcomes. CASA and Foster Parent focus groups both expressed interest in being more involved in permanency planning. The ILP youth would like to have more and longer home visits and more time with the social worker. North County needs better access to services. Feedback from the focus groups can be found in Appendix A. Staff from Mariposa County sought the input of both staff and partners through peer-to-peer interviews and focus groups. The information provided a look into county culture and practice, identifying both strengths and challenges.

**FOCUS AREA**

**CFSR Measure 3-P1: Permanency in 12 Months for Children Entering Foster Care**

This measure looks at all children who entered foster care, within a certain time period, and calculates the proportion who achieved permanency within 12 months of removal from their home. Because the measure looks forward from the start of the placement, data are not displayed for the most recent 12 months. The Peer Review looked at Mariposa’s performance on the selected measure. The most recent outcome at the time of the Peer Review was Q2 2017 (children who entered between July 2015 and June 2016) was 19.2%. Five out of 26 children exited to permanency within 12 months of entry. The national standard is to be equal to or greater than 40.5%. Mariposa has been below the standard for the last five quarters.

**METHOD**

The method for the Peer Review consisted of data analysis, focus groups and peer-to-peer interviews with staff from Mariposa on specific cases. These cases were selected in collaboration with CDSS and consisted of both cases that achieved permanency within the
initial 12 months and those that failed to achieve permanency within the initial 12 months. In October 2017, Mariposa CWS and Probation began the C-CFSR process by convening a team to plan the Peer Review. The Planning Team consisted of representatives from CWS, the Probation Department, the Outcomes and Accountability Section (OAS), and the Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP) with CDSS and various community stakeholders. The team, which met weekly by teleconference, determined that the focus area of the Peer Review would be CFSR3 Measure P-1: Permanency in 12 Months for Children Entering Foster Care for both CWS and Probation. To form the interview teams, Mariposa child welfare and juvenile probation invited staff from counties that were performing exceptionally well in the identified measure, asking them to share their expertise and insights. Child welfare staff came from Calaveras, Madera, Merced, and Ventura counties, and Juvenile probation staff came from San Diego and Tuolumne counties.

**SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

The Peer Review identified the following strengths and challenges.

**For Child Welfare and Probation, the following was noted:**

**Strengths:**

- Social Workers (SWs)/Probation Officers (POs) had experience in their field
- Probation Officers/Social Workers were assigned for the duration of the entire case (minimal change in case assignment)
- Low caseload (all cases)
- Low number of placements (Probation & CWS)
- Support from management (Probation & CWS)
- Resources were offered/provided from the very beginning (Probation & CWS)
- Placements remained in the county (CWS)
- Child is overall doing well (education, extra-curricular activities, etc.)
- Probation Officers/Social Workers were able to develop strong professional relationships with the youth, communicate often.
- Family was financially stable (Probation)
- Case Planning (CWS)
Challenges:

- Parental Substance Abuse (CWS)
- Resistance from Biological Parents to engage in services. (Probation)
- Many changes (4+) in SW assignment, lack of knowledge of case history, No warm hand off (not all CWS staff agreed with this statement)
- AWOL tendencies in the youth (Probation)
- Placement stability, lots of moves (CWS)

Maintaining Connections

Strengths:

- Maternal involvement (Probation & CWS)
- Child has many extended family members and agency was aware of them/supportive (Probation & CWS)
- Support from adults, CASA, relatives, mentors (Probation & CWS)

Challenges:

- Limited paternal involvement (Probation & CWS)
- Transportation/visitation/housing with family members (Probation & CWS)
- Limited contact with siblings due transportation issues
- Limited Family Finding connections (Probation & CWS)
- Biological parents influence with court system (Probation)

Engagement

Strengths:

- Has Family Team Meetings every 90 days and invites support network (Probation & CWS)
- Social Workers/Probation has built a relationship with the child
- Regular contact between agency/family involved with the case. (Probation & CWS)
- Family is involved from the onset of the case and developing permanent plan (Probation & CWS)
**Challenges:**
- Difficulty engaging fathers (Probation & CWS)
- Insufficient efforts reaching out to family members for potential placement. (CWS)
- Biological parents resistance to engage in services (Probation)

**Assessments and Services**

**Strengths:**
- Behavioral Health Assessment, Behavioral Health is co-located and involved in CFTs (Probation & CWS)
- Therapeutic services (Probation & CWS)
- ILP Services (Probation & CWS)
- Service array seems sufficient overall, but not county wide. (Probation & CWS)

**Challenges:**
- Transportation (CWS)
- Lack of services in North County (CWS)

**Placement Matching**

**Strengths:**
- Efforts to keep youth local (Probation & CWS)
- Youth’s voice was heard (CWS)
- Family Team Meetings regularly (CWS)

**Challenges:**
- Placements out of the county (Probation & CWS)
- Lack of trauma training for foster parents (Probation)

**Permanency**

**Strengths:**
- ILP services (Probation & CWS)
- Guardianship identified as concurrent plan early in case. (CWS)
- Mother involved in case. (Probation & CWS)
- Several resources and/or services were available to be provided. (Probation & CWS)
● Attempted to keep child in family home or reunify (Probation)
● Engaged youth in case planning process

**Challenges:**

● No discussion with older youth regarding permanency options. (CWS)
● Lack of communication with biological father (Probation & CWS)
● Lack of ongoing family finding efforts (Probation & CWS)

**Systemic Factors**

**Strengths:**

● Placement training was beneficial (Probation & CWS)

**Challenges:**

● Management Information Systems: Multiple systems; lack of user training; training guides inadequate. (CWS/Probation)
● Case Review System: Court only concerned with youth's behaviors and failed to hold parents responsible for participating in reunification services (Probation)
● Foster & adoptive parent licensing, recruitment & retention
● Lack of family finding efforts (CWS)
● Lack of sufficient training for staff, caregivers and service providers

**PEER PROMISING PRACTICE**

**Probation promising practice recommendations include:**

● RFA: outreach to community of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT)
● Parent engagement (51% of home visits with parents)
● Matching behavioral needs with minor to successfully reunify in <6 months
● Enforcement on family reunification efforts (family therapy)
● Wraparound prior to removal / Wraparound after reunification
● Identify “at risk” for every child
● Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) court now taking youth in placement
● Wellness unit
Delegate various PO's to be specialist in placement (Independent Living Program (ILP), Resource Family Approval (RFA), Extended foster care, residential screener)

Maintain connections/continue to build relationships/trust

Low caseloads

Build on resources additional partnerships

Policy to research case history; connect workers for hand off

Family finding procedure-continuance throughout case

Making efforts throughout life of case to reassess for needed services

Partnership with Behavioral Health for services including transportation

Probation has a therapist located onsite to work with youth

**Child Welfare promising practice recommendations include:**

- Concurrent Planning assessment every 6 months
- Transportation officer
- Pairing with probation on cases/referrals in remote areas
- Onsite social workers in the schools in remote areas
- Family finding uses clerical support
- Differentiate what practices can be done by clerical; aides; and clients served by employment training; Ameri-Core
- Blended funding with Probation
- Family finding, identifying families/relatives early, who are willing to provide connection for child
- Connecting to services that are supportive to child welfare and children in care
- Accessing aides to help with transportation, visitation
- Using service coordinator to refer to services
- Family Team Meetings (FTMs)/Team Decision Making (TDMs) to address placement/permanency
- Adoptions worker—secondary assignment
- RFA orientation...discuss permanency
- Adoption staffing every 6 months
- Tight timelines for transferring cases
- Linkages
- School coordination—Social worker on School Attendance Review Board (SARB)
- Smaller caseloads could allow for more frequent case consultation/warm hand off
- Community is close knit/ lots of resources
- Family finding specialist
- Case consultation prior to transfer
- New worker should take time to research case history
- Family team meetings utilize three columns and action plans
- Safety Organized Practice (SOP) training modules
- Transfer summary
- Harm/danger statements
- Family finding program
- More teaming-secondary assignment
- Permanency staffing
The Outcome Data Measures are state and federal standards that compare the performance of Child Welfare and Probation agencies across counties and states. They address the topics that concern the public as well as the Child Welfare Services and Probation Agencies. The Outcome Data Measures answer questions such as:

1. Are children safe in foster care?
2. How long do children remain in foster care?
3. How quickly are they returned to their parents?
4. How soon does a social worker see the child after a report of suspected abuse or neglect is made?

The Outcome Data Measures come in two forms: with or without a federal or state standard for performance. The nine measures that have a standard are related to the quality of the services provided to children and families. The measures without standards are workload measures, such as the number of allegations, substantiations and entries into foster care. Detailed information is available in Section 4C, Child Welfare and Probation Placement Population. This section discusses the nine outcome measures with standards, seven federal and two state. County specific reports are compiled and issued quarterly by the California Child Welfare Indicator Project at the University of California Berkeley (CCWIP). The data required for the reports are drawn directly from the CWS/CMS System. CCWIP allows a full quarter (three months) before the data draw to allow sufficient time for case recording in the system. Despite this time allowance, data entry lapses, especially recording events near the end of the last month of the quarter, can affect the outcomes.

The charts presented for the nine measures with standards illustrate Mariposa County Child Welfare Services' performance on each measure from the baseline of the last CSA, Quarter 2, 2012, to Quarter 2, 2017, the time frame chosen for this CSA. All the data used in this report is provided by CCWIP.68 The reports on the CCWIP site are dynamic. They are refreshed with new data at each quarter. The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) posts a PDF of the reports at the time they are released to make it possible

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to discern whether the refresh changed any of the outcomes. For example, a social worker makes a monthly visit to a child a day or two before the CCWIP before the cut-off for the quarter but does not record the visit in the CWS/CMS system until after the cut-off. That visit will not be counted in the outcome for that quarter, but it will be counted in the quarter in which it occurred, when the next data draw is made. Because each measure is a ratio, in a small county with low numbers that kind of data error can make a difference in the performance outcome, possibly the difference between in or out of compliance with the standard.

In some measures, the desired direction is up, like a bowling score. In other measures, the desired direction is down, like a golf score.

Reports are released quarterly, on the schedule below.69

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extract Name</th>
<th>Pull Date</th>
<th>Publication Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quarter 1</td>
<td>April 30</td>
<td>Jul 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarter 2</td>
<td>July 31</td>
<td>Oct 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarter 3</td>
<td>October 31</td>
<td>Jan 1 (following year)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarter 4</td>
<td>Jan 31 (following year)</td>
<td>Apr 1 (following year)</td>
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Most, but not all, of the measures cover a year. Some measures cover three months. Measures that have a time frame other than a year are identified in the narrative.

Between the previous CSA and this one, the measures were upgraded from CSFR2 to CSFR3. This report uses the CSFR3 measures exclusively. The federal measures are standard across the country and allow states to compare performance. They are a useful tool for identifying successes and challenges, although the performance for any quarter is only an indicator. It is important to examine the details and consider information from other sources, sometimes at the case record level, to fully grasp what factors are influencing the outcome.

Before looking at the outcomes, it is helpful to review the volume of work over the last five years as a potential influence on outcomes. The chart below provides an overview of the numbers for Allegations, Substantiations, Entries and In Care. As mentioned above, details are in Section 4C Child Welfare and Probation Placement Population.

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While the numbers in each category varies, same number of staff (with minor variations) has been available to do the work. Although the number of positions has remained about the same the CWS program has experienced almost 100% turnover since 2012, and much institutional memory has been lost. The line staff are well qualified (see description of staff qualifications in County Child Welfare and Probation Infrastructure section) but for most, tenure in the position is less than three years. Some staff has experience in other counties, but as a whole, the group is young in terms of experience in child welfare in Mariposa County.

There is no clear explanation of what factors resulted in the decrease in allegations in 2014 and 2015. Neither is there an obvious reason for decline in substantiations since the high of 258 in 2012. The County population has remained stable and does not account for the differences in the child welfare populations. Even though the reasons behind this information may remain obscure, the facts alone have bearing on the Outcome Measures.
MEASURE 3-S1 MALTREATMENT IN FOSTER CARE

Analysis

Measure 3-S1, Maltreatment in Foster Care, is one of two safety measures. It asks the question, “Of all the children in foster care for the twelve-month period, what is the rate of victimization per day of foster care?” The denominator is the number of child days in foster care. The numerator is the total number of substantiated or indicated reports of maltreatment by any perpetrator. The federal standard is 8.5%. The desired direction is down. The last incident of maltreatment in foster care occurred in Q1 2014, sometime between April 2012 and March 2013. Although the scores appear in the chart to be extremely different, and in fact, they are, the differences are partially attributable to the nature of the methodology. The table below provides the number of occurrences for each quarter that is out of compliance.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quarter</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Number of Occurrences/Age/Gender/Race</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Q2-12   | July 2011 to June 2012| 1 age 3-5; 2 age 6-10
|         |                       | 2 White, 1 Latino
|         |                       | 3 Male
|         |                       | Total: 3/9,655 |
| Q3-12   | October 2011 to Sept 2012 | 1 age 3-5; 2 age 6-10
|         |                       | 2 White, 1 Latino
|         |                       | 3 Male
|         |                       | Total: 3/9,030 |
| Q4-12   | Jan 2012 to December 2012 | 1 age 6-10
|         |                       | White
|         |                       | Male
|         |                       | Total 1/7,993 |
| Q1-13   | April 2012 to March 2013 | 1 age 11-15
|         |                       | White
|         |                       | Male
|         |                       | Total 1/8,099 |
| Q2-13   | July 2012 to June 2013 | 1 age 6-10, 1 age 11-15
|         |                       | 2 White
|         |                       | 2 Male
|         |                       | Total: 2/8,854 |
| Q3-13   | October 2012 to Sept 2013 | 2 age 11-15
|         |                       | 2 White
|         |                       | 1 Male; 1 Female
|         |                       | Total: 2/9,563 |
| Q4-13   | Jan 2014 to December 2014 | 2 age 11-15
|         |                       | 2 White
|         |                       | 1 Male; 1 Female
|         |                       | Total: 2/9,621 |
| Q1-14   | April 2014 to March 2015 | 2 age 11-15
|         |                       | 2 White
|         |                       | 1 Male; 1 Female
|         |                       | Total: 2/8,556 |

The substance of this measure is important. Although the standard allows for some occurrence, maltreatment in foster is never acceptable. However, this measure is an example of how a very small change, in this case, one, can make the difference between being in or out of compliance. Quarters Q4-12 and Q1-13 each have one person in the numerator, but that is enough to put the outcome into non-compliance.
This measure is vulnerable to a data entry error. If the child in care makes an allegation of abuse that occurred before he or she came into care, the person doing data entry into CWS/CMS must be very careful to document the date of the alleged abuse as well as the date of the allegation. If the date of the allegation is reported as the date of the occurrence, the case will be incorrectly included in the numerator for this measure.

The children who have experienced maltreatment in foster care are either White or Latino, with White accounting for over half of the numbers. This outcome is expected considering the racial and ethnic makeup of the County. Latinos are over represented in comparison to the frequency in the general population. Over representation of Latinos is likely due to a higher rate of poverty in the Latino community. The proportion of Latinos in the County is small, and the number may not be large enough for community support for young families. Latinos moving into the County is a fairly recent phenomenon, and families could be unsettled and in stress.

The drop in the outcome could be influenced by the drop in the number of children in care. The size of the staff has not changed but as the caseload gets smaller, each social worker can spend more time with each child and each family.

In reviewing these numbers, it is important to remember that each person remains in the count for a year. For example, a white female, age 11 to 15, initially appears in Q3–13. She appears again in Q4-13 and in Q1-14. It is most likely the same individual in each quarter.

Performance on this measure made a dramatic change in Q4-14. There have been no occurrences in the three years. This measure was not a target goal in the previous SIP; however, one of the action steps, implementing Safety Organized Practice, may have had an impact on this measure. MSF provides support to foster parents and family caregivers through the Nourish support group and free family activities such as summer pool parties, which provide water safety training in a relaxed and fun environment.

If maltreatment in foster care occurs, it is likely a matter of lack of proper performance of responsibilities on the part of the foster parent, social worker, or another adult in the child’s life rather than an external factor. Mariposa Safe Families, funded with CBCAP money provides a support group for foster parents, shaken baby syndrome training,
and mandated reporter training all of which could help avoid maltreatment. This measure can impact the next measure, Recurrence of Maltreatment, depending on the date of the occurrence.

**MEASURE 3-S2 RECURRENTCE OF MALTREATMENT**

![Graph of Recurrence of Maltreatment](image)

**ANALYSIS**

Measure 3-S2 Recurrence of Maltreatment asks the question “Of all children who were victims of a substantiated maltreatment allegation during a 12-month reporting period, what percent were victims of another substantiated maltreatment allegation within 12 months of their initial report?” The numerator is the number of children that had another substantiated maltreatment allegation within 12 months of their initial report. The denominator is the number of children with at least one substantiated maltreatment allegation in a 12-month period. The federal standard is 9.1% and the desired direction is down. Mariposa exceeded the federal standard most recently in Q2 2016, when two out of 15 children experienced recurrence of maltreatment. The overall trend is down, and the County has been under the standard for the last year. This measure could influence the entry and in-care rates. A probable factor in this trend is the care taken to implement a gradual visitation expansion to include a trial home visit before returning a child home.

Outcomes for this measure show a dramatic decline beginning shortly after the peak that took place immediately after the development of the 2013 SIP. To have a more
complete view of the dynamics of this measure, a look at the actual numbers can be helpful. The chart below shows the numerator and denominator for each quarter.

![3-S2 Numerator and Denominator](image)

Although no statistical test was done, it is obvious from the similarity of the curves on the two charts that a relationship exists between the volume of first substantiations and the outcome. As the number of first substantiations goes down, the outcome improves. All measures are vulnerable to data entry error. This one has no special vulnerabilities. The spike in Q4-16 represents two white children. The other measure that could impact this measure is 3-S1. Safety Organized Practice was being implemented in 2015/2016 and could have an effect on this measure.

In Q3-12, the quarter with the highest number of recurrences, 39, the ethnic group distribution was 34 whites, one African-American and four Latinos; numbers which reflect the population of the county. Services provided by Mariposa Safe Families could help to avoid recurrence of maltreatment.
MEASURE 3-P1 PERMANENCY WITHIN 12 MONTHS (ENTERING FOSTER CARE)

ANALYSIS

Measure 3-P1 asks the question, “Of all children who enter foster care in a 12-month period, what percent discharged to permanency within 12 months of entering foster care?” This measure is the one chosen by the Planning Team as the focus of the current CSA and SIP. The denominator is the number of children who enter foster care in a 12-month period, excluding those age 18 and older and those who were in foster care fewer than eight days. The standard for this measure is 40.5%. Between July 2015 and June 2016, 26 children entered care. Of those 26, five exited to permanency in twelve months or fewer. For this measure, “permanency” is defined as exit status of “reunified”, “adopted” or “guardianship”. Children with a current placement of ‘trial home visit’ are included in the count of children reunified if that visit lasted at least 30 days, its start date fell within 11 months of the latest removal date, and it was the final placement before the child was discharged from foster care to reunification. In this measure, the desired direction is up, and the County has been below the standard for five consecutive quarters. Challenges, identified in the Peer Review, of reunifying in twelve or fewer months included parents’ substance abuse, parents’ failure to engage in services, and too many moves in foster care. The concern was addressed in every focus group. The ILP group expressed it succinctly, “clear the home quicker”. CWS and Probation staff cited parental substance abuse,
resistance from parents to services, AWOL tendencies in youth, and placement stability as challenges. Foster parents proposed more engagement between themselves and the parents, offering to be mentors to biological parents. Foster parents want to be more involved in planning visits with the biological parents. Housing is a major issue. It was mentioned in the Foster Parent, Tribal, Parent, Service Provider, North County, Sheriff’s Office and CASA focus groups. The Peer Review cited housing as a barrier to reunification.

This measure has no special vulnerability to data error. The external factors that impact this measure are lack of housing and prevalence of drug abuse. Returning adoptions to the county may have had an impact, and implementation of RFA may impact it in the future. Of the 26 children who entered foster care between October 1, 2015 and September 20, 2016, 12 exited to permanency within 12 months of entry. Of those 12, seven were white, two Latino and three Native American. Latino and Native American children are over represented in this measure. Services funded by CAPIT/CBCAP/PSSF are not directly associated with this measure. This measure was not targeted in the last SIP. Actions steps from the previous SIP that could influence the outcome for this measure include training for SOP and CFTs. Training was provided, but due to staff turnover, the current staff is not trained in these practice methodologies. All children who exit foster care to reunification are followed for six months in Family Maintenance. At the end of six months, assuming the court approves, the case becomes Voluntary Family Maintenance, usually for about another six months. If the family is functioning independently, the case is closed.

This measure has a profound impact on the next two measures, which look at how many children exit to permanency in twelve months for children who have been in care 12 to 24 months and more than 24 months.

The SIP Planning Committee will determine the best strategies for improving the County’s performance on this measure, taking into consideration the feedback from the Peer Review and focus groups. Some barriers, housing for example, are beyond the direct control of either CWS or Probation. Many of the best practices and recommendations of the focus groups can be adapted for use in Mariposa County, including out stationing staff, and providing additional support to resource and biological families.

The table below provides the five-year history of exits within 12 months of entering foster care.
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reunification</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adoptions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guardianship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Permanency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Still in Care</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Includes child abducted, runaway, committed to hospital, incarcerated, refused service, deceased, dependent in other state, non-CWS agency has jurisdiction, parent refuses voluntary Family Reunification services

As with other questions that the numbers bring to mind, institutional memory has been lost with the nearly 100% of staff turnover. There is no informed speculation to explain why exits could vary from 13 to one. However, the Child Welfare Population chart at the beginning of this section illustrates the overall ebb and flow of work volume and the history of this measure follow the pattern.

**MEASURE 3-P2 PERMANENCY IN 12 MONTHS (12 TO 23 MONTHS IN CARE)**

![Permanency in 12 Months 12 to 23 Months in Care](image)

**ANALYSIS**

Measure 3-P2 asks the question “Of all children in foster care on the first day of the 12-month period who had been in foster care (in that episode) between 12 and 23 months
what percent discharged from foster care to permanency within 12 months of the first day of the 12-month period?” The denominator consists of the number of children in foster care on the first day of the 12-month period that had been in foster care (in that episode) between 12 and 23 months. The numerator includes those children with a placement episode termination date that occurred within 12 months of the first day of the 12-month period (the child has been in care 12 to 23 months), and a placement episode termination reason coded as exited to reunification with parents or primary caretakers, exited to guardianship, or exited to adoption. The national standard is 43.6% and the desired direction is up. The County’s performance on this measure appears to be erratic, but this measure is vulnerable to the small number phenomenon. Four quarters show 100% performance. From July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016, Mariposa had one child in care for 12 to 23 months. In Q2-16, he or she exited to permanency, raising the County's outcome to 100%, one out of one. No additional children entered the group for the next three quarters. Since the measure covers a whole year, that one case continued to create the 100% performance. When that case rolled off, the performance dropped to zero because there were no children in the denominator. Detecting a trend is challenging when the numbers are small, as they are in this measure.

This measure is dependent on the previous one. How many children remain in foster care beyond 12 months influences the denominator for Measure 3-P2. Strategies that are designed for 3-P1 will apply to this measure as well. This measure, in turn, affects 3-P3. This measure has no special vulnerability to data entry errors. The number of children who exited to permanency is in the table below.

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<tbody>
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<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reunification</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adoptions</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guardianship</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Permanency</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Adoptions were being performed by another county. In 2016, Mariposa County took back adoptions and the result is visible in the October 2016–September 2017 number for adoption. Of the seven exits in the 12-23 months group, six are white and one is Native American. Four are in the three to five age group, one in the one to two age group, and one in the 16 to 17 age group. There does not appear to be any ethnic or age bias influencing this measure.

**MEASURE 3-P3 PERMANENCY WITHIN 12 MONTHS (24 MONTHS OR MORE)**

![Permanency in 12 months](image)

**ANALYSIS**

Measure 3-P3 asks the question “Of all children in foster care on the first day of the 12-month period who had been in foster care (in that episode) 24 months or more, what percent discharged from foster care to permanency within 12 months of the first day of the 12-month period?” The denominator consists of the number of children in foster care on the first day of the 12-month period that had been in foster care 24 months or more. The numerator includes those children who have been in care 24 months or more with a placement episode termination date that occurred within 12 months of the first day of the 12-month period; and a placement episode termination reason coded as exited to reunification with parents or primary caretakers, exited to guardianship, or exited to adoption. The national standard is 30.3%. The county has exceeded the standard for the last five quarters and the overall trend for the last five years is in the desired direction, up.
The ideas and suggestions that apply to the first two permanency measures also apply to this one. The increased emphasis on permanency may be impacting this measure. It is clear from the ILP focus that older youth want to return home and maintain contact with their family.

The table below shows the numbers of children who exited from this group.

<table>
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<tbody>
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<td>n</td>
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<td>n</td>
</tr>
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<td>Reunification</td>
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<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adoptions</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guardianship</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Permanency</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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Over the five years, eight children in this group exited to permanency. Of those, four are white, one Latino, and three Native Americans.

One pattern that appeared in these three measures was that white children tend to reunify, but children in other ethnic groups tend to go to adoption or guardianship. This trend can be considered as the County develops a stronger family finding program. Reasons why Latino and Native American reunify with their families at a (apparently) slower rate are not obvious.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exit</th>
<th>African American</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Latino</th>
<th>Native American</th>
<th>Other</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reunification</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adoptions</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guardianship</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Permanency</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Measure 3-P4 Re-Entry to Foster Care in 12 Months

**Analysis**

Measure 3-P4, Re-entry to Foster Care in 12 Months, serves as a check and balance to the first three permanency measures. It is futile to reunite a child with a family who is not ready and prepared to provide a safe home and appropriate nurture. The denominator is the number of children who entered foster care in a 12-month period and who discharged within 12 months to reunification, or guardianship. Please note that this denominator does not include children discharged to adoption, who re-enter within 12 months. The numerator is the number of children in the denominator who re-entered foster care within 12 months of their discharge from foster care. If a child reenters foster care multiple times within 12 months of when he or she was removed, only the first reentry into foster care is counted. This measure is a “golf” measure, the desired direction is down. The standard is 8.3%. Mariposa County has not had a child return to foster care in three years. In 2014, the entire CWS staff went through training for Safety Organized Practice (SOP). The staff embraced the concepts and implemented the practices. Q3-14 is calculated on children who entered foster care between September 2013 and October 2014. At least some of that cohort would have been in care when SOP was being implemented, implying that SOP could be a factor related to the zero returns.
Measure 3-P5 Placement Stability

**Placement Stability**

Measure 3-P5 asks the question: “Of all children who enter foster care in a 12-month period, what is the rate of placement moves per day of foster care?”

The denominator is, of children who enter foster care in a 12-month period, the total number of days these children were in foster care as of the end of the 12-month period. The days in care during the placement episodes are cumulative across episodes reported in the same year.

The numerator is the total number of moves from one placement to another placement during the 12-month period for all children in the denominator. The initial placement in foster care (removal from home) is not counted, nor is exits that do not lead to a subsequent placement (e.g., returns home or trial home visits). If the child leaves a placement temporarily, e.g., on a trial home visit or as a runaway, and returns to the same placement, that event is not counted as a placement move. If a child had more than one placement episode during the 12-month period, moves in all episodes are counted.

The standard is 4.12. The desired direction is down. This measure is harder to visualize than the first three permanency measures because it is measured in terms of total days in care versus placement moves. It is included with the permanency group because of the importance of stability to achieving permanency. The Peer Review cited placement
stability, in the context of fewer moves, as contributing to successful reunification, placements in-County being preferable to out-of-County, and delegation of placement to a specialist. Placement training was viewed as a strength in the Peer Review.

The chart below presents the number of moves by ethnicity. The ethnicity of children with moves does not differ materially from the general population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
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<td>.</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>.</td>
<td>.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
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<td>.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One possible reason for the recent increase in the number of moves is the effort to put as many children as possible in relative homes. Finding relatives at the time of removal can be challenging because biological parents frequently do not want family members to know about their involvement with CWS. Consequently, children are initially placed in available homes and later moved to relative placement. In the last time frame, October 2016 through September 2017, the number of moves went down even though the number of children coming into care is about the same as the years before. One possible theory about why October 2016 through September 2017 is that the number of moves went down because 50% (5/10) of the entries that year went straight to Relative/NREFM care.
MEASURE 2B-TIMELY RESPONSE (IMMEDIATE)

ANALYSIS

Measure 2B, Timely Response – Immediate, is based on a three-month time span, not a year, as in the previous measures. This chart covers a response period from April 2012 to June 2017. This report provides the percentage of child abuse and/or neglect referrals that require, and then receive, an in-person investigation within the specified time frame. The denominator includes child abuse and/or neglect referrals received within the analysis quarter that are immediate response types. The numerator is the count of the immediate response referrals above with the following:

- a delivered service type of “investigate referral”
- communication method of “in-person”
- a referral status of “attempted” or “completed”
- The delivered service provided by a “staff” person
- A contact visit code for a “contact” or “visit” within 24 hours of the referral receipt date for the immediate response type.

Mariposa County has met or exceeded the standard for the last five years. CWS leadership is clear that timely response is a top priority. The chart below illustrates the volume of allegations requiring an immediate response.
Measure 2B-Timely Response (10 Day)

ANALYSIS

Measure 2B, Timely Response, 10-Day response, is also based on a three-month time span. This chart covers a period from April 2012 to June 2017. This report provides the percentage of child abuse and/or neglect referrals that require, and then receive, an investigation within the specified time frame: three, five or 10 days. The denominator includes child abuse and/or neglect referrals received within the analysis quarter that are
not immediate response types. The numerator is the count of the referrals above with the following:

- a delivered service type of “investigate referral”
- communication method of “in-person”
- a referral status of “attempted” or “completed”
- The delivered service provided by a “staff” person
- A contact visit code for a “contact” or “visit” within the requirement of the referral type and receipt date.

The standard for this measure is 90%. The three quarters that dropped below the standard were:

- Q4-12, 81.8%
- Q4-14, 76.5%
- Q3-15, 75%

Overall, the trend is very stable.

The chart below illustrates the volume of referrals requiring an immediate or 10-day contact.

There does not appear to be a strong relationship between the volume of activity and the outcome performance. The consistency on this measure may be attributable to leadership’s commitment to timely response.
**Measure 2F-Monthly Visits (Out of Home)**

![Graph showing monthly visits out of home with trend analysis](image)

**Analysis**

Measure 2F, Monthly Visits Out of Home, looks at children who are in placement. The denominator is the number of children in care who were required to have an in-person contact, i.e., who were in an open placement episode for the full calendar month. The numerator is the number of children in the denominator who had at least one in-person contact during the month. The standard for this measure is 95% and the desired direction is up. This measure is vulnerable to data entry error because the calculation has multiple variables. If the contact date, type of placement, episode start or end date, or delivered services status, or several other variables is incorrect, the result for that case will be in error. For example, if a child moves from a permanent placement to guardianship, the required contact frequency changes. Permanent Placement requires a contact every month; guardianship requires a contact once every six months. Even though the CCWIP allows three months to enter the contact, failure to enter the contact in time for the data draw can influence this measure.

The County’s outcomes for the long period of below standard performance are concerning, but the last two plus years of meeting standards or above compliance is encouraging. In the last three years, the County has implemented a vertical case assignment
system. One worker keeps the case from investigation to closure. The resulting long-term relationship may be encouraging workers to make visits.

**MEASURE 2F-MONTHLY VISITS (OUT-OF-HOME IN RESIDENCE)**

![Graph](image.png)

**Analysis**

Measure 2F Monthly Visits in Residence (Out of Home) asks the question, “How many of the completed required visits to children in an out of home placement took place in the child’s current residence?” This measure is vulnerable to the same data entry error as the previous measure. The County has not been out of compliance in the five years since the last CSA.

As with the previous measure, the vertical case assignments may be influencing the social worker’s motivation to get the case off to a good start. Professional pride should not be discounted as a motivation for good performance on the process measures.

These measures provide an excellent overview of CWS over time. The measures are interdependent. Exit to permanency in 24 months after entering care is the target for this cycle. Focus group and Peer Review feedback indicates that stability in placement and social worker contact are important to achieve reunification. Many factors that are not in the quality indicators can be important to moving a child to permanency, but the quality indicators, properly understood, can be the mile markers to success.
Summary of Findings

Mariposa County Child Welfare Services and Probation approached the County Self-Assessment with enthusiasm and active participation on the part of both agencies along with the California Department of Social Services, Children’s Services Outcomes and Accountability Section. Community partners and interested individuals were open to the opportunities to learn more about both CWS and Probation and did not hesitate to offer objective feedback and share ideas.

The data clearly shows that the major reason a child comes into the CWS system is due to general neglect. Both the Peer Review and the focus groups cited substance abuse as a contributing cause. Poverty is another contributing factor to neglect. The census data shows that in Mariposa County, 18.3% of children under five; and 19.6% of five to 17-year-olds, live in poverty, making them vulnerable to potential neglect. Comparison of the demographic profile of the County to the profile of children in care shows that there is no bias toward any particular ethnic group. The County is unusual in that 89.8% of the residents are white. When a child from another ethnic group comes to the attention of CWS or Probation, it appears to be disproportionate to the general population because the numbers in non-white groups are so small. Regardless of the small numbers, CWS and Probation remain sensitive to cultural values. Although the population of Mariposa County historically has changed very little, it is slowly trending towards diversity. Since the previous CSA was written in 2013, the white group has grown smaller by a little less than 1% and the Hispanic/Latino group has increased a little more than 1%. This rate of change is slow, but it should be considered as the five-year System Improvement Plan is developed.

Age and income are two demographic categories that contribute to the environment in which CWS and Probation work. The median age in the County is 50.6, much higher than California at 35.2. In 2016, the median income in dollars was $49,266, significantly lower than the California median of $63,783. Social Security benefits are received by 43.5% of the population. These three facts indicate an older population, likely living on a fixed income. The County has a high unemployment rate, 6.2%. Employment opportunities are limited, especially for people without college degrees. Rental housing is scarce. For these reasons,
Mariposa County is not attractive to younger families who could potentially become resource families. Increasing the number of foster homes was suggested by focus groups, but accomplishing that goal in the County could be challenging given the demographic and economic environment. Another demographic trend that has the potential to impact CWS and Probation is the growing number of grandparents raising grandchildren. This group of grandparents and other family members caring for children could potentially be targeted for outreach and prevention services.

Combining information from the County population data and the Child Welfare population, the children most likely to be victims of abuse and/or neglect are white children of either gender under five. Using poverty as estimator of the likelihood of abuse and neglect, the communities at greatest risk are Mariposa (town)/Bootjack/Cathey’s Valley area or Coulterville area. The type of abuse and neglect is likely to be general neglect.

The Peer Review yielded insights into both positive practices and challenges. Strengths identified included low caseloads, social worker/probation officer assigned for the life of the case, Child and Family Teams, and case planning. Stationing a social worker in a school was recommended as a best practice. Foster parents praised the attention that social workers give to each case and appreciated the fact that Mariposa CWS will help with children placed from other counties. The Native American representative felt that Native Americans are accepted and honored. Local services like the Indian Health Center and the Mi Wu Mati Family Healing Center benefits the community. In general, CWS services were viewed as supportive and generous, including help with concrete needs such as medical insurance and CalFresh. CASA was cited as positive. The willingness of agencies and volunteers to work together was lauded.

Although the operations of CWS and Probation and the support of the community are working well, opportunities for improvement exist. In both the Peer Review and the focus groups, training needs were mentioned. Social workers and probation officers identified a need for training on management information systems, working with difficult parents, becoming better task managers, and advanced knowledge of sexual abuse and domestic violence. ILP youth suggested training for social workers on how to talk with youth and listen and understand. Foster parents would like training on trauma, family

Additional areas that need improvement are increased involvement of fathers, and additional and readily accessible mental health services for adults and children.

The only issue related to systemic factors is a need for training on how to use the management information systems effectively. Probation Officers, especially, need support because they use the CWS/CMS system so infrequently. With a new case management system expected within the next five years, training and reinforcement of new skills on the job will be critical to the integrity of the information that makes up the Quality Outcome Indicators.

Gaps in services fall into two categories, one that is inherent in the nature and geography of the community and one that addresses the services that are specific to families in CWS. In the first category, housing is a countywide issue. Mariposa County Housing Choice vouchers go unused because of lack of suitable rental properties. The community is aware of the lack of housing options at every budget level. The Mariposa County Board of Supervisors commissioned a study of housing options and availability and will follow up with a strategic plan. Transportation and lack of services in the northern part of the County is a gap that is inherent in the geography and the population size.

In the second category, there is a need for more resource families to avoid placing children out of the county. Many stakeholders identified a need for a longer period of follow-up and support services when children are returned home, including mental health services for parents and children as well as parenting education.

Mariposa County performs very well on the C-CFSR Quality Indicators. The seven federal indicators are outcomes for children. As of Q2-17, CWS was meeting or exceeding the federal standard on six out of seven indicators. The remaining indicator, Exit to Permanency in 12 Months, Entry Cohort, is the target for improvement in the System Improvement Plan. CWS meets or exceeds the state standards on the two process measures, Timely Response (to allegation reports) and timely visits with children. Multiple reasons can account for the County’s performance. Principle among the reasons is the close relationship among public agencies and private agencies. In small communities, human services professionals may encounter one another in multiple projects and venues.
Cooperation is the norm. The leadership of the community is dedicated to tackling the County’s known problems of poverty, unemployment and lack of housing options. The focus groups revealed that some residents misunderstand the purpose of CWS and see it as an organization that is paid for taking children into foster care.

A factor that contributes to success on the quality indicators is the training and preparation of the staff. Although the average tenure in the County is not long, CWS staff has the appropriate academic credentials and some have experience in other counties. Probation staff also has the appropriate credentials and the shortest tenured person has been with the Department three years.

Another possible reason for good performance on the Indicators is the small size of the CWS staff. A small staff is easier to train (from the perspective of logistics) and staff members know each other’s strengths and weaknesses. As shown on the other hand, small numbers mean that the staff can be stretched beyond capacity in the event of a spike in the incoming workload.

County child welfare staff does very well on the measures over which they have control such as timely investigations and visits. The challenges are in the measures that require the cooperation of others such as exit from foster care or recurrence of maltreatment.

Gaps in services result, in part, from the natural geography and demography of the county. Services are clustered in the population center, but families with service needs are scattered throughout the County.

The Outcome Data Measures are only as valid as the quality of the information from which they are derived. Because of the small numbers in the equations that generate the measures, any error or late entry can profoundly affect the outcome. An example of this phenomenon is Measure 3-P2, Permanency in 12 months, 12 to 23 months in care. In that example, one case generated a 100% outcome for a year, and subsequently generated a 0% outcome. From July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016, Mariposa had one child in care for 12 to 23 months. In Q2-16, he or she exited to permanency, raising the County’s outcome to 100%, one out of one. No additional children entered the group for the next three quarters. Since the measure covers a whole year, that one case continued to create the 100% performance. When that case rolled off, the performance dropped to zero because there were no children.
in the denominator. It is important to drill down into the data and use the outcome as a
guide to what to examine in depth, not as the final judgment on performance.

Challenges included parental substance abuse, resistance from biological parents to
engage in services, and lack of stability in placement. The Peer Reviewers generated a
bountiful list of promising practice recommendations. Highlights include on-site social
workers in schools in remote areas, designation of tasks that can be completed by clerical
staff or aides, and RFA orientation to discuss permanency.

With the support that the community has demonstrated and the enthusiasm of staff,
CWS and Probation leadership and stakeholders will take the next steps, designing
strategies and actions steps to achieve improved outcomes for children and their families.
FOCUS GROUPS

Mariposa conducted nine focus groups to gain an understanding of the needs, concerns and ideas for improvement of key constituent groups. All focus groups were facilitated by Patty Poulsen, MSW. Ms. Poulsen worked for 35 years for Fresno County Social Services of which 29 years was primarily in child welfare. As a child welfare professional, she was a social worker, supervisor and manager. She has worked as a child welfare trainer for over 15 years. She has facilitated numerous focus groups for child welfare agencies for over 10 years. The CSA planning team worked together to develop appropriate questions for each focus group. Where there was a routine group meeting, such as the foster parents’ regular monthly group meeting, the focus group was held during that meeting. That strategy maximized attendance.

Clear themes emerged and there were commonalities among the groups. Visits were mentioned 37 times. Almost every group saw visits as key to reunification. Foster parents want to be more involved in planning visits, and youth want more and longer visits. Communication was mentioned 24 times. There was unanimous agreement that communication among and between the Social Worker, foster parents, child and family is necessary to reunification. Time was mentioned 19 times, frequently in the context of Social Workers needing more time to spend with children. Housing was mentioned 16 times as a barrier to reunification. Transportation, with 11 mentions, was cited as a barrier to receiving services and visiting with family. Among the barriers to communication abuse of drugs and alcohol was mentioned and, in some cases, the parent’s unwillingness to cooperate. An interesting observation from the parent group that was not offered by any other group was regarding community beliefs and attitudes. That group expressed the opinion that many people believe that CWS gets money from the state for every month a child is kept in foster care, therefore there is a financial motivation to keep as many children as possible for as long as possible. Every group except the sheriff had ideas and suggestions about changes that would allow them to be more involved in case planning. There were two disappointments with the focus group process. Three women attended the
Parent Focus Group, but none actually had a child removed from their home. Only one person attended the tribal group, but she is a resource expert for CWS on Native American issues and has frequent contact with the agency.

The table below lists the dates and locations of the nine group meetings. When possible, groups were approached in their own natural environment. For example, the Foster Parent Focus Group was conducted at the monthly Nourish meeting. In focus groups where the participants came a long way or live in an impoverished area, each participant received a grocery store gift cards as a thank you for their time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mariposa County Focus Groups</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus/Stakeholder Group</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Probation Officers</td>
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<tr>
<td>CWS line staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth/ILP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster Parents @ Nourish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>support group meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tribal Members:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chukchansi</td>
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<tr>
<td>North Fork Rancheria</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service Providers</td>
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<tr>
<td>North County</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sheriff’s Department</td>
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<tr>
<td>CASA Advocates</td>
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**Feedback from Focus Groups**

**Staff Focus Group Responses**

Q: What do you think helps children achieve permanency?

- Connections within the agency and throughout the community
- Foster parents working with the biological parents doing things such as transporting to visits; communicating with the parents about the child(ren)
• Social workers close relationships with the entire family
• Youth voices are listened to and workers ask what they want.
• Having CFTs

Q: What do you think helps families reunify with their children? What factors impact the family’s ability to reunify quickly?
• Access to appropriate services
• Support from the community
• Support from the extended family
• Education...workers explain to the entire family about the court process from detention through adoptions
• Working with the foster parent
• Get to the root of the problem at the beginning of a case
• Acceptance of the parents; empower the parents
• Work with families with their case plan. This also serves the purpose of holding the parent accountable
• Housing is a need

Q: What works? What things are offered to families that help them in reunifying with the child/children?
• The collaboration between the agency and Behavioral health, probation, and the court as well as parents, youth and extended families
• Welfare to Work, eligibility, AOD programs are all utilized
• DV agency is local and has a shelter
• Parenting classes are offered through Helping Hands
• CASA
• Provide transportation to most clients but could be better
• Provide at least 2 hour a week visits and they offer lunch, snacks and often hold these visits in the community such as parks, the library or in the home
• Social worker/probation officers are available via Facebook, text, as well as in person
• Education in the community benefits pre-placement intervention
• A wellness center is operational, and client directed where public can get help with cooking, budgeting, etc. on site

Q: What didn’t work for the children/youth or families you worked with?
• Housing
• AOD services could be improved as they need more services and do not test on site; need more intensive services including residential, and really have nothing for youth
• Transportation
• Employment
• Substance abuse now is mostly methamphetamine, alcohol, and prescription pills
• It is a small community and people talk so creates barriers
• Need more foster placement options including local placements although this is improving now with RFA
• Need more homes for teens

Q: How can the County better support these families?
• Need more support groups
• Need more services post-adoption
• Expand services such as child care and increase numbers of CASA
• DV services
• Housing
• Employment opportunities
• More prevention services... hard in a small community as people do not wish others to learn they are involved with the agency
• No public transportation

Q: What would have helped you work with children/youth in your care reunify with their families?
• Talking about permanency at the onset of the case with the youth
• Don’t always move youth when they want to move and try to work with them to preserve placements
• Hard to work with the youth that are placed out of county especially related to home visits, dealing with crisis intervention. This is mostly teens who are in these placements

Q: If there were visits between the children and parents, how did this go? What worked well? What could be improved? How did it impact reunification? What worked well?
• Do as many visits as possible and try to meet the client’s needs such as having visits in family setting or at parks etc.
• Hold progressive visits from supervised; longer visits; unsupervised visits and overnight (weekend)
• The court orders visits but is liberal and not prescriptive
Q: What could be improved?
- Could use more staff to supervise visits and allow to debrief with parents following visits
- Have placements local to minimize distance
- Increase number of visits
- Utilize a tribal liaison

Q: How were you included in the decision-making process for the children/youth?
- Staff meeting with County Counsel, supervisors, deputy director
- Have Case Conference Group (CCG)
- CFTs
- In court the judge will ask the worker for their input/opinion even when not on the stand testifying

Q: What do you see as your role in the reunification process?
- Staff needs to be available; good communicator
- Cheerleaders/advocates
- Stress reunification and relative placements
- Ensure RFA process/approval occurs
- Coordinate services/be a task master
- Encourage families/be a positive support
- Early concurrent planning includes communicating and working with the biological parents and foster parents

Q: Are there ways in which you might want to work with a birth family?
- Would like to use life books to document the journey
- Work with the community to establish a support such as the Harlem Children’s Zone where families can come for services and is a one stop shop
- Biological parents would attend all medical/dental appointments. It happens in some cases but want it to be across the board and be consistent

Q: What training and/or support could be provided to assist you?
- Staff feel well trained
- Need training on how to work with difficult parents
- Interviewing including forensic interviewing
- Become a better task manager
- Mentorship/shadowing in the field with experienced staff for new hires
• General knowledge of sexual abuse, DV, etc.
• Staff would like a universal release of information form to expedite matters.

**ILP/Youth (16-17 year-olds)**

Q: What has been your experience with permanency?
• A worker meets with me each month and then advises the court if I am ready to return home
• Three youth did not always have monthly contacts
• One youth reported that their worker talked to them about adoption/guardianship twice and another youth said it was discussed about four different times over the years

Q: In what ways have Child Welfare Services /Probation helped you and your family?
• A few youth said that they do not help
• Some said that they are good at taking apart families
• One probation youth said it was helpful that I was arrested so that I can make changes and have time to think about things
• One youth said her worker was trying to help her move out of state, but that so far only talk; and no real follow up, probably because it would cost too much

Q: What did we, or are we, doing well? What can be improved?
• Slow to respond
• Need to do things faster
• Follow through with what they say they will do
• We like being kept informed
• They need to do more to keep families together

Q: What do you think helps families to reunify with their children?
• Getting help;
• More frequent contacts and visits with family
• Parent's home need to be cleared as soon as possible
• Hire more staff so that they have more time to work with us
• Return our phone calls
• Four youth said they were not involved in developing the case plan and three were involved
• ILP is helpful
• Need local doctors
• Therapist at the group home

Q: What do you believe doesn't work for families and youth?
• Being away from home
• Having no real choice in decisions
• People in Mariposa are hicks
• Mariposa is too isolated and not culturally diverse
• Encountered racism

Q: We would like to know about visits. How were your visits conducted? What do you believe works well? What could be improved?
• Visits in a small room at an office and filmed make it uncomfortable
• Court won’t allow visits
• Want longer visits
• Some have had four day visits and up to a week that they liked;
• Some wanted workers to take into account that family may live further away and that short visits are taken up with just travel time
• Need better transportation options; need to help so that visits don’t get cancelled due to transportation issues
• Visits to incarcerated parents take too long to set up
• Want more frequent visits and not just around holidays

Q: How are you involved in the decision-making process in Child Welfare/Probation? What worked well? What suggestion do you have for improving this?
• Want staff to be positive and not always negative
• Some social workers don’t want to listen to us
• CASA is helpful

Q: How were decisions made about your case plan or services you were given?
• One youth was recently in a Child and Family Team meeting. Usually this is just discussed one on one with the worker
• The turnover in workers slows down the services
• We have had good and bad social workers

Q: Please describe how you and the social worker/probation officer worked together? What role does a social worker/probation officer play in the reunification process? What did you see as your role?
• Some youth feel they have no role and see themselves treated like a slave in the Group Home (GH) and just have to follow the GH rules
• Some said they feel they really have no say in the plan
• Some have been with a worker four months and six months, but talked about changes in workers when they moved

Q: What suggestions do you have regarding how families and youth in child welfare/probation might work with the foster parent/care provider? If we could go back in time and do it over, what do you think would have helped your family reunify quicker? What advice do you have for the department? Any training needs?
• They want things to go faster and for those in probation, limit the time spent in juvenile hall
• A couple said they should have avoided contact with law enforcement, so they would not have got involved in the system
• One youth is in first group home experience, so had nothing to say
• Some said you cannot make probation better
• Some liked ability to have contacts with siblings, but one did not like having phone calls monitored
• One said the GH would not allow contacts
• As for training, they want workers to have training on how to talk with youth; really listen; understand what youth feel
• Want training on how to treat youth like a person and not an inmate
• Suggested they have training so that they can see what it is like to be removed
• Training on how point system can be restrictive
• Biggest thing they all said is they want to be told the truth and want answers to their questions

Foster Parents
Q: What do you think helps children achieve permanency?
• Emergency Response workers search for all relatives from the onset
• Pairing children with families open to adoption
• Adoption should be available to more persons. Agency should perhaps look at granting more criminal exemptions, especially when person shows years of rehabilitation
• Social worker should be knowledgeable about all community resources to offer parents to help them achieve reunification
• QPI homes should be used and could be resource to help work with families
• Caregivers need early on education about permanency options
• Children should be placed with a family that is similar to what they have been used to so social worker should consider culture
Q: What has your experience been like with permanency with Mariposa County?

- Social workers focusing on permanency and educating new care providers
- Social workers are great and there is open communication, and everyone knows the goal
- Social workers in Mariposa county are very helpful and supportive
- Years ago, there were problems and lack of notices but lots of improvement
- Questionable about who actually is searching for family both initially and ongoing
- Social workers need to be upfront about child/family history

Q: How can we better support this process?

- Social workers are responsive here
- Other organizations are willing to help
- If social worker is not available, we can already get a supervisor or manager to respond
- Other community supports. CASA will stand by care providers
- Social worker needs to be aware of how the child is doing and focus on any issues
- Every child should have quality counseling
- More continued education, conferences and in-service training for care providers

Q: What do you think helps a family reunify with their children? What factors impact the family’s ability to reunify quickly?

- Need to balance quickness of reunification with quality of the family’s actual commitment to change
- After a child returns home the family should have lengthy continued supervision or some type of monitoring
- Should continue to keep relationship with previous care provider so if a child needs to return to care the child can return to previous care provider
- How reunification transpires is important; is it well planned or are decisions made in a rush with no planning
- Social worker needs to take the SILP readiness seriously and ensure that these young adults who plan to move back with parents are ready to handle their own money and are not being manipulated by the parents
- Housing is a big challenge in Mariposa and it could be more difficult for parents to be able to secure housing to reunify
- Parents who remain in this community and retain contact are more successful
Q: What works? What things are offered to families that help them in reunifying with the child/children?
   - Employ social work aides to help families
   - Contact with partnering agencies for help with transportation, recovery service;
   - Mariposa county is very supportive and generous
   - There is help with welfare, medical insurance and food stamps for families

Q: What didn’t work for the children/youth or families you worked with?
   - Rushing to return a child to a parent
   - Focus on things like housing and other court orders, rather than improving actual parenting skills
   - Not ensuring family can have continued counseling, especially family counseling
   - Lack of child endangerment classes for all families
   - Lack of parent involvement in medical appointments while child is still in placement
   - Need to keep school involved

Q: How can the County better support these families?
   - Support group for parents
   - Use parent partners to help support the families

Q: What would have helped you work with children/youth in your care reunify with their families?
   - Some training to help the child deal with disappointment when reunification fails
   - More understanding about mandates such as a child must visit parents. More involvement in planning for these visits along with the social worker

Q: If there were visits between the children and parents, how did this go? What worked well? What could be improved? How did it impact reunification?
   - A child loves and wants to return home, so it is hard when a child returns from visits; the child and care provider need support and training
   - Change is difficult on the child so need counseling
   - The care provider is usually not present during visits
   - Overnight visits are more difficult
   - Care providers need more support during the visit process
   - For optimal success, there is a need for good communication between the care provider and the parents. Even the child needs to be kept in the loop and made aware of plans
Q: How were you included in the decision-making process for the children/youth?

- Invited to Family Team Meetings
- Frequent communication with social worker, even three to four times a week

Q: What do you see as your role in the reunification process?

- We are caring for the child but really have no voice
- As a care provider try to be supportive of the plan; help them pack and get excited over the plan; don't put barriers to reunification
- Would be open to mentoring a birth parent

Q: Are there ways in which you might want to work with a birth family?

- Yes, depending upon the support that I would get from the social worker
- Suggest that a social event be planned and include the birth family, care provider and child. Could all get together to go get an ice cream, but don't call it a supervised visit and let it be more free flowing with no specific time frame so if all is going well, it could last longer but if problems arise, could be short. Thus, a parent would not be concerned that the care provider is also present.

Q: What training and/or support could be provided to assist you?

- Help with issues related to when children return from visits. Care providers (especially new ones) need to know what to expect
- More trauma training
- More support groups
- Discipline
- How to create a tranquil environment and understand family dynamics

Q: What is it like in Mariposa County? What is different in other counties you work with?

- This is the best county to work with as both the agency and community supports are in place to help
- Mariposa county will even help with children placed in our homes who are from other counties
- Outreach occurs here
- Out of county children are included in local ILP classes
- Social worker keeps in contact here
- Mariposa and Madera counties were both very helpful
- Community partners, CASA kept abreast of new ideas and initiatives
- Social workers have smaller caseloads and can pay attention to every case
- Quest helps a lot and is responsive
These Nourish meetings!!! It is very nice that it includes food and child care

**Tribal Focus Group**

**Q:** What do you think helps children achieve permanency?
- Have resources for the parents so they can do better and be able to care for the child properly
- Involve family members whenever possible for the ease/comfort of the child

**Q:** Is there anything unique about the Native American culture that should be considered when trying to achieve permanency?
- Family traditions are key
- Bonding is naturally a part of the community
- Some Native Americans can be more isolated and not access services/resources

**Q:** What has your experience been like with helping to achieve permanency with Mariposa County?
- Limited services as there is not an active Native American office
- We have assisted with paperwork
- MiWu Mati (Family Healing Center) is important and the County helps fund it. MiWu Mati offers counseling services, elder lunches and language classes
- As an individual, I have been supportive of (members of my) own family, who have been in need of services

**Q:** How can we be a better support this process?
- Better outreach
- Education to the Native families
- Specific education on the Indian Child Welfare Act

**Q:** What do you think helps a family reunify with their children? What factors impact the family’s ability to reunify quickly?
- More interaction with the social worker and with service providers
- Keep the bond within the family, need to increase communication
- Counseling including group/family counseling
- Have a support system that they will use

**Q:** What works? What things are offered to families that help them in reunifying with the child/children?
- Social services, it is important to have local CPS staff
- Law enforcement can help
- The community has had a youth center, which is a help to the families
Q: What didn’t work for the children/youth or families you worked with?
- No response as non-applicable

Q: How can the County better support these families?
- Assisting with transportation so families can get to appointments/services
- I would love to see more activities/education provided to youth out of the American Indian Council
- Try to improve the housing situation in the county as there is a lack of housing.

Q: What would have helped you work with children/youth and or parents that you served to help reunify?
- No response/non-applicable

Q: How were you included in the decision-making process for the children/youth?
- There are individuals who have been involved
- The tribal chair and social services have met

Q: What do you see as your role in the reunification process?
- A support person
- Help guide the process; be an advocate
- We could be a trusting entity for the family

Q: Are there ways in which you might want to work with these families?
- Can direct persons to the healing center so they can access resources
- Sweat lodges and/or talking circles

Q: What training and/or support could be provided to assist you?
- ICWA training

Q: What is it like in Mariposa County? What is different from other counties you work with?
- Native Americans are more accepted/honored in this County
- We have local services e.g. the Indian Health Center; Healing Center

**Parents Focus Group**

NOTE: THERE WERE THREE WOMEN IN ATTENDANCE. HOWEVER, NONE ACTUALLY HAD THEIR CHILDREN REMOVED FROM THEIR CARE.

Q: In what ways have Child Welfare Services/Probation helped your child and family?
- The Juvenile Probation staff was very good with one of the women’s child who was on informal probation. Probation staff was open and communicated with all members of the family.
Q: What did we or are we doing well? What can be improved?
- Mariposa has CASA that is helpful
- Quest also offers classes that are helpful
- Helping Hands has good classes especially 1, 2, 3 magic
- Mariposa Safe Families is helpful. Have heard positive things about a grandparent’s group

Q: What do you think helps families to reunify with their children?
- Counseling through Behavioral Health for youth and parents
- Mariposa could use more foster parents
- Quest offers counseling
- Visitation between children and their parents
- Helping Hands offers parenting courses and support
- Helping parents with services such as employment and securing housing

Q: What could we offer that would assist more? How can we better support youth and families in Child Welfare?
- There should be an adequate number of time slots for counseling appointments to ensure that no one needs to be put on a waiting list to get help. This is especially important if one has a crisis.

Q: What do you believe doesn’t work for families and youth?
- We have heard bad things about the local mediation/family court
- There is insufficient housing for families
- Mariposa lacks things for youth to do. There is a skate park, but there are issues using it.

Q: We would like to know about visits. How were your visits conducted? What do you believe works well? What could be improved?
- **None had their own child removed, but one woman stated that she was aware that a social worker did not supervise visits and relied on a family member to do the supervision.**

Q: What suggestions do you have in regard to how families and youth in child welfare/probation might work with the foster parent/care provider?
- Time is needed to remedy issues, so staff should not rush things.

Q: What advice do you have for the department? Any training needs?
- The Mariposa community believes that social services gets money from the state every six months if children are still in out of home care and so the agency wants to keep children from reunifying early so they do not lose money. They also believe
that certain children are more likely to remain in care because the agency receives more money for them due to their age or ethnicity

- The community has the perception that more affluent families get differential treatment and abuse is overlooked in these families
- The child welfare department needs to be more educated about child custody issues and reports being made that are not true
- It appears that some parents get better treatment from child welfare
- Need better communication from child welfare
- Child welfare needs to treat families better. Staff should not be condescending or forceful
- The community is frustrated and unsure why some reports of neglect/abuse appear to have no investigation
- The community is frustrated that child welfare is non-responsive and persons making referrals get no feedback about the outcome

**Service Provider Focus Group**

Q: What do you think helps children achieve permanency?

- Addressing traumas that children have experienced
- Getting parents on board and committed to getting services/help
- Have placements that support both the parents/children’s work to help reunify;
- Good communication among all parties
- Strong collaboration among all
- Family teaming is also helpful to bring in natural supports

Q: What has your experience been like with helping to achieve permanency with Mariposa County?

- Linking families to counseling with various agencies is being done
- It takes a long time to achieve permanency. It may take longer than the 12 months
- It can be complicated and not a clear path
- It can be frustrating, and it is difficult seeing children who have had to change placements
- Have seen external barriers (e.g. lack of housing) come in the way to achieving reunification

Q: How can we be a better support this process?

- Encourage the use of more multi-disciplinary meetings
- More contacts between the social worker/child/bio family
- Better communication among all parties
Q: What do you think helps a family reunify with their children?

- Understanding of children’s position
- Ability to reinstate stability within the home
- Working from a strengths perspective

Q: What factors impact the family’s ability to reunify quickly?

- Substance use
- Economic issues including the lack of jobs
- Parent’s desire to cooperate
- In this community, there is an anti-government sentiment
- Lack of supports
- Isolation to even resources especially for those living in the North county
- Lack of transportation

_North County Community Focus Group_

Q: What do you think helps children achieve permanency?

- Need a sense of security
- Safety
- Each child needs a safe person to communicate with
- The level of involvement of parents as well as social workers
- If the child has been included/involved in planning
- Need a school environment that is supportive/accepting
- Need full range of services including alternative education

Q: How can Mariposa County Human Services Agency better support this process?

- More availability of the social workers
- More publicity about the whereabouts of the North County
- Community knowledge of services available
- More interagency collaboration/knowledge of each other’s programs. Perhaps have staff training across disciplines
- Housing;
- Services/counseling for child when reunification does not work

Q: What do you think helps a family reunify with their children?

- Families making meetings and following through with mandates
- Getting clean and sober
- Families need transportation
- Good communication

Q: What factors impact the family's ability to reunify quickly?
- The availability and their participation in rehab services
- Parenting classes
- Need a strong support system and use them
- An advocate to help the family
- Professionals/others should not be punitive as the family needs to feel open about working with the system
- The availability of non-governmental agencies to help

Q: What things should be offered to families that could help them in reunifying with the child/children?
- Housing
- Jobs and help with job search
- Child care for younger children
- Support for the parents who may be alone trying to parent because they are a single parent or left as partner/spouse is out of the area working or incarcerated
- Counseling services for children too
- Interagency collaboration (including schools)
- Adult education
- If child is placed the care giver needs to be safe and secure

Q: In your experience, do you know of anything that didn't work for the children/youth or families involved in the child welfare system?
- Lack of local services due to the size/structure of the County itself
- Child was placed in out of home care, but the situation was not good so suggest that there be better screening of care givers
- Change in placements too often impact a child’s education
- Communication is lacking and the community in general does not understand why or why not the county is responding/taking action

Q: How can the County better support these families?
- Provide family counseling once the family reunifies
Q: Have any of you been included in the decision-making process for the children/youth? If so, how were you included?
- I was when I was a foster parent several years ago
- Another has been involved in the past in her role as an educator
- One person went to a juvenile court hearing

Q: What do you see as your role as a community member in the reunification process?
- Suggest that perhaps SARB could be more fully used in this process
- Encourage persons who are in the process of reunifying
- Not shaming or stigmatizing the parents

Q: Are there ways in which you might want to work with these families?
- One person responded and said that she was taking classes to become a resource parent

Q: What training and/or support could be provided to assist you?
- Some type of ongoing interagency training/support
- Utilize a liaison
- Mariposa already has these classes

**Sheriff’s Office Focus Group**

Q: What do you think helps children achieve permanency?
- Having a safe environment at home
- Child’s ability to express concerns to a third party
- Having a stable routine

Q: What has your experience been like with helping to achieve permanency with Mariposa County?
- The Sheriff’s office doesn’t typically work with this aspect
- The Sheriff’s office is ONLY involved initially in some cases
- The Sheriff’s department is part of the foster parent training program and gives presentations there

Q: How can we be a better support in this process?
- For Juvenile Probation we think there needs to be consequences for negative actions taken by children who are in the program
- We see frequent runaways and repeat offenders even among children who are placed in relative/foster care
- Need better communication and feedback regarding outcomes
Q: What do you think helps a family reunify with their children? What factors impact the family’s ability to reunify quickly?

- Families lack the ability to provide for children due to economic issues (lack of jobs)
- Parents need support to deal with their personal issues such as spousal abuse, cleanliness of housing, and substance abuse
- Mentoring to help parents especially as many of whom are single parents

Q: What works? What things are offered to families that help them in reunifying with the child/children?

- On site counselors at schools
- Sheriff’s office outreach program helps build rapport with youth
- Mountain Crisis
- The foster care system seems to work as Sheriff’s do not receive calls to respond to these homes

Q: What didn’t work for the children/youth or families you worked with?

- It seems that some of the homes where children have been placed are not equipped to deal with the issues. Thus, the county could use more placement resources especially for immediate/emergency placements
- Lots of issues at the local girls group home. Not sure if local girls should be placed there
- Lots of staff turnover. Agency needs more stability. Perhaps better compensation to retain staff

Q: How can the county better support these families? What would have helped you work with children/youth and or parents that you served to help reunify?

- Overall social services are doing a good job and are responsive
- It might be a good idea to have more outreach/preventative services
- There could be more money spent on local programs
- Additional training for mandated reporters
- It would be helpful if people were able to identify children/families who are struggling before issues get too serious and get them the help they need

Q: What would have helped you work with children/youth and or parents that you served to help reunify?

- We have good interactions/protocols in place
- It is important for professionals to have more training on child development and on the best ways to communicate with youth
Q: How were you included in the decision-making process for the children/youth?
- We are usually only involved in the initial response and not involved long term
- We are not invited to any meetings where decisions are made

Q: What do you see as your role in the reunification process?
- The Sheriff’s office does not have a direct role
- The Sheriff’s office is considered “the hammer” and thus this role excludes us in the reunification process
- We may inhibit the flow of information as people may not be as forthcoming with a law enforcement officer present over fear of possible consequences

Q: Are there ways in which you might want to work with these families?
- The standard protocols seem to be working
- It could be seen as a conflict or a show of favoritism if the Sheriff’s officer became too involved

Q: What training and/or support could be provided to assist you?
- Child development/communication styles
- Cross training on each department’s protocols
- Need up to date information on what CPS responds to

Q: What is it like in Mariposa County? What is different from other counties you work with?
- Lack of affordable housing
- Lack of jobs that pay enough to sustain a family
- Other than school there is a lack of community family activities
- Isolation (geographical issues)
- Lack of affordable child care
- Not sure that the community is educated about the availability of services

**Advocate (CASA) Focus Group**

Q: What do you think helps children achieve permanency?
- Finding a family that they can stay with as soon as possible
- Age of the child determines whether the system itself or the child’s own wants/desires impact permanency
- Providing supports to parents
- Outreach to the child’s extended family
- A team that communicates well and is persistent
• Services that can be provided to the family
• Therapy for the children

Q: What has your experience been like with helping to achieve permanency with Mariposa County?
• The process itself is long, tedious, and frustrating
• There are too many hoops for the child to be able to be placed with family
• Therapy is needed for everyone
• Concern that our support ends with successful reunification and believe that the biological family often could use continued support after case is closed
• Social workers don't seem to have the proper amount of time to do family search. Some counties have a designated person who ensures that these searches are completed
• Sometimes the justice system fails a child
• There is some lack of communication between the social worker and other professionals
• Social worker turnover including transfers/promotions hampers permanency

Q: How can we be a better support in this process?
• Ensure that you communicate with all resources/parties
• Provide opportunities for care providers and biological parents to be supportive of one another
• There should be more focus placed on the educational needs of the child and try whenever possible to keep a child in their own school
• Allow for the child to be integrated into the community and not segregated/isolated
• Ensure that especially for probation youth that we are updated on changes with the youth including runaway status and dates of court hearings

Q: What do you think helps a family reunify with their children? What factors impact the family's ability to reunify quickly?
• There should be more parenting classes
• Counseling/therapy for all
• Quicker access to services for the children. Social worker should not just focus on the parents
• Getting intervention to parents who have substance abuse issues
• Clear communication from the social workers to the parents. Make sure parents are understanding of language uses including the use of acronyms
• Need more check-ins with the family
Q: What works? What things are offered to families that help them in reunifying with the child/children?
- Parenting classes
- Mariposa has a support group for adoptive, foster, relatives and guardians
- CASA
- The social worker is accessible and has good hearts. They care
- CFT'
- Leadership at child welfare has good communication; is honest; collaborative
- Drug Court
- Core had been helpful
- Deferred entry of Judgment for youth in probation cases
- The judge and attorneys listen to the advocates

Q: What didn’t work for the children/youth or families you worked with?
- There seems to be more of a focus on services for parents and we need the same for youth
- The probation department and social workers have not always gotten along
- Probation does not talk to CASA
- Higher turnover among child welfare staff
- Gossip in this community even among professionals can be harmful
- Probation staff is over worked
- Decisions by the justice system sometimes is an issue and there appears to be bias/fairness issues
- Little can be done to have a social worker changed if the child confides that they want a new social worker
- There is a lack of a sufficient number of foster parents who live in this county and some who are here are doing it mainly for the money
- There is a shortage of behavioral health therapists so children do not get seen as they should. There is also a shortage of community partner therapists
- CFTMs can be troubling to the youth due to inappropriate comments including shaming statements made by some professionals

Q: How can the County better support these families?
- Recruit and retain more local families to be resource parents
- Offer support/training to resource families
• Be nicer to foster parents. Some have heard that some foster parents say that they do not believe that they are respected/supported by the social worker. The social worker sometimes assumes the worst of a care provider before investigating an accusation

• Listen to the youth, group home staff and the care providers

Q: What would have helped you work with children/youth and or parents that you served to help reunify?

• It would be helpful if everyone has a better understanding of CASA and our role

• Frequent communication to the advocate, care provider, youth and the family as to what needs to be done to move forward

• One person said that she feels very supported

• It would be great if there was a case management portal that CASA could access and have up to date information about cases

• It would be best if there were no court continuances or if there is to be a continuance that we are notified prior to showing up to the court

Q: How were you included in the decision-making process for the children/youth?

• We write reports for each court hearing that include recommendations

• We attend CFTMs and advocate on behalf of the child. We only attend though if both the youth and parent approve of our attendance

• Some CASA volunteers have educational rights

• The judge sometimes will ask the CASA advocate their opinion while in court

Q: What do you see as your role in the reunification process?

• CASA fills gaps and steps in when a social worker needs us to help with transportation to doctor's appointments or other appointments and we sometimes are asked to help locate resources

• We are to be objective when making recommendations and when working on a case

• We keep tabs on the youth's feelings/wishes and share the information with the social worker

• We support a secure environment. Often the family sees us as less intimidating that the social worker and may reach out to us more

• We can help a child get to visits

Q: Are there ways in which you might want to work with these families?

• We are already doing what we should but would desire that there were other agencies to help a parent such as more parenting classes or help with drug problems
Q: What training and/or support could be provided to assist you?

- Training on family law
- Training on Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- More training from Probation and Behavioral Health on new laws, regulations and changes in their systems
- How to better communicate with very young children
- We would appreciate being kept up to date with changes within the child welfare department including personnel changes

Q: What is it like in Mariposa County? What is different from other counties you work with?

- It is easier to work with Mariposa Probation vs Merced
- In Mariposa County one social worker may have to wear many different hats due to limited numbers of staff
- Social workers in Mariposa County have smaller caseloads and have more time to work on a case and are nicer to CASA volunteers
- More intimate working/living in a small community
- Mariposa County doesn't have the same severity of problems as larger counties
- Our county lacks transportation; jobs for parents; child care and adequate housing