

STATE OF NEVADA
Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Child and Family Services



Nevada
Annual Progress and Service Report
(APSR)

SFY 2010

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**NEVADA ANNUAL PROGRESS AND SERVICE REPORT SFY 2010
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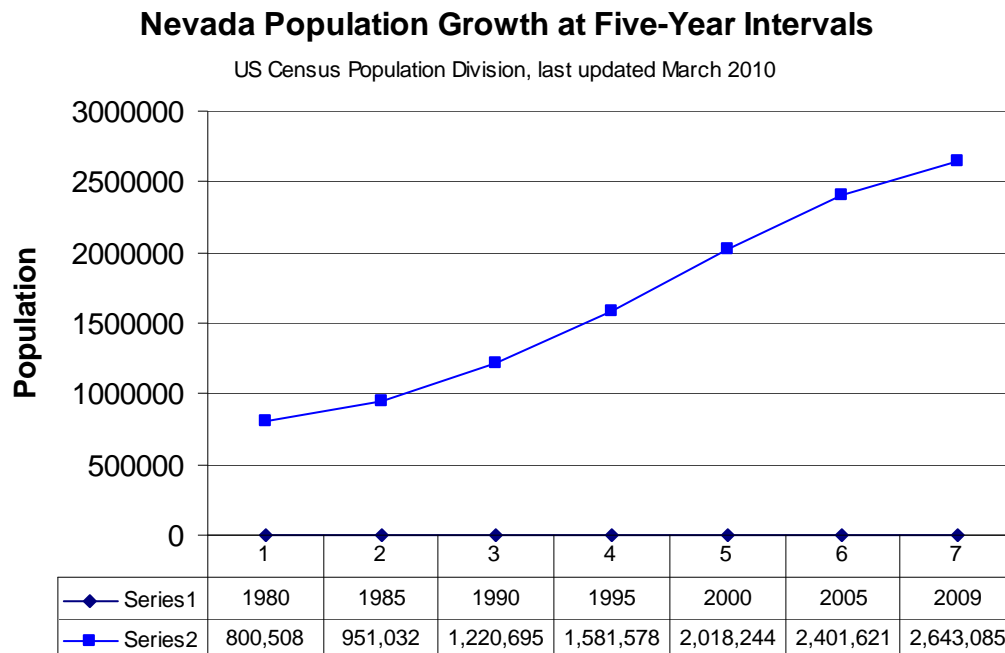
SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

Nevada Demographics

Population and Geography

Nevada is the seventh largest state in the nation with a total of 110,567 square miles. The state has seventeen counties and 27 Native American Tribal areas. In the 2000 Census, Nevada ranked 35th in the nation for population, with a total of 1,998,257 inhabitants. Nevada was the fastest-growing state for 19 years in a row with an overall population increase of 30.1% between July 1, 2000 and July 1, 2008. In 2009, the population reached 2,643,085 inhabitants, with 82% of the state's population growth occurring in Clark County. Nevada has now dropped to 17th of all states in population growth. For the first time in decades, Nevada's population actually declined from one year to the next, dropping 1 percent from 2008 to 2009, according to preliminary estimates prepared by the Nevada State Demographer's Office. Figure 1 shows Nevada Population growth from 1980 through 2009.

Figure 01: Nevada Population Growth at Five-Year Intervals



Overall, Clark County (Las Vegas/Henderson area) has a population of 1,874,837, making it 71.6% of the overall state population. Washoe County (Reno/Sparks area) has the second most populous area, with 409,085 residents (15.6% of the overall state population). The remainder of the state is made up of 15 rural and frontier counties. This area is vast, covering approximately 95,000 square miles, with the distance between most towns at an hour or more apart; the 15 remaining counties comprise 333,688 individuals or 12.7% of Nevada's population.

Nevada's population has a varied ethnic background. Data from the US Census Bureau (2010) reports that the majority of the population in 2008 was Caucasian (80.9%), followed by African Americans (8.1%); Asian Americans (6.2%); multiracial persons (2.8%); American Indian and Alaska Native persons (1.5%) and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (.5%). The population statistics indicate that 25.7% are persons of Hispanic or Latino origin.

The Nevada Kids Count Data Report for 2009 reports that Nevada's household population is estimated to be at 954,067 (2007 data). Families made up 66.2%, (631,720), of the households in Nevada. This percentage is made up of 72.7% married-couple families; 9.4% male-headed families (no wife present); and 17.8% female-headed families (no husband present). Family households with their own children under the age of 18 with their own children in the home made up 47.4% of all family households. The average household size was 2.65 individuals and the average family size was 3.21.

Economy

For years, Nevada's economy has grown at rates well in excess of national norms, regardless of the health of the national business cycle. Since the late-1990s, for instance, job growth in Nevada has averaged 3.1 percent vs. just 0.5 percent in the nation as a whole. Much the same was true for nearly every other economic indicator, including personal income and population growth.

However, a repeat of the boom-like conditions from earlier this decade is not expected to continue to occur. While there is some evidence to suggest that our nation is approaching the end of this economic decline; the Nevada economy remains in recession. December 2009 marked the end of a historically bad year for Nevada's economy. A year marred by record setting declines in nearly all major economic indicators.

- Home values in Nevada plummeted 24.5 percent in the third quarter of 2009. That's the steepest decline of any state and more than six times the national average. Nevadans are losing their homes to foreclosure at a rate that is four times the national average.
- Nevada's foreclosure rate, though moderating, is still highest in the nation and four times bigger than the national average — one in ten Nevada housing units received at least one foreclosure filing in 2009.
- Payrolls in Nevada in third quarter 2009 plunged 8.6 percent compared with the previous year, a larger drop than any other state and more than double the national average decline of 3.5 percent.
- Nevada personal income in third quarter 2009 was 4.6 percent lower than the previous year, a rate of decline only three one-hundredth percentage point smaller than the biggest drop, posted by Alaska.
- Nevada employment is down more than 10 percent compared with one year earlier.
- Nevada's unemployment rate is 13 percent. That's the second highest unemployment rate in the nation. More than 140,000 Nevadans have lost their jobs, and 90,000 more are projected to join the unemployment rolls over the next 18 months.

Nevada's public finances have been significantly impacted by this downturn.

- State agencies recently submitted budget reserve recommendations for the fifth time in the past two years.
- Nevada's General Fund revenues dropped 17 percent in 2009. Between now and June 2011, the state General fund will fall about \$1 billion short of its \$6 billion budget.
- The state caseload for Medicaid and TANF has grown by about 30% since the beginning of the recession.
- From June 2008 to June 2009, the number of Nevada food stamp recipients in households with no other cash income increased 173%, 60-percentage-points higher than second-ranked Florida.

Prior to the current recession, Nevada's economy was among the strongest in the nation, if not the strongest. As a result, the State served as a magnet for individuals in search of increased economic opportunity.

As further evidence Nevada may be experiencing an unprecedented population decline. The November report from the Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation cited people leaving the state as a reason the unemployment rate actually declined compared to October. According to the report, Nevada's labor force contracted for the second month in a row in November, falling by 1.5 percent, meaning roughly 13,900 workers either left the state or were too discouraged to seek employment.

Child Welfare Administrative Structure

Nevada uses a state-administered and county-operated structure for the management of child welfare services. The Nevada Division of Child and Family Services, under the umbrella of the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services, provides oversight to child welfare and direct child welfare services.

State Agency Administering Plans

The Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) is responsible for Children's Mental Health (in Clark and Washoe, the two largest populated counties), Youth Corrections, Child Welfare Services and Child Care Licensing. As such, the implementation and administration of the Child and Family Services Plan is the responsibility of DCFS. This includes:

Title IV-E, Title IV-B, Subpart I (Child Welfare Services) and Subpart 2 (Promoting Safe and Stable Families), Child Abuse and Treatment Act (CAPTA), and the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP). DCFS has an annual operating budget of approximately \$215 million with a workforce of over 1,100 employees. Our work encompasses:

Protection and Permanency for Children: The Division creates opportunities and programs that prevent and respond to issues of parental/caregiver maltreatment, mental health, and delinquency. The Division strives to support permanency within the child's biological or primary and extended family so children may grow and develop within stable environments. The Division also recognizes the responsibility to create and support alternative permanent environments when biological or primary families are unable or incapable of caring for their children. The Division will collaboratively craft public policies to promote the strength and well-being of families.

Preservation of Families: The Division supports the value that the family is the best structure to assure stability, nurturing, care, and safety of its members and communities. Services are designed to build upon family strengths, honoring the family's traditions, history, and culture.

Juvenile Justice Services for Youth: The Division recognizes that services must balance youth rehabilitation, treatment, and community safety. Many juvenile offenders have been victims of maltreatment and therefore accountability must be balanced by the provision of services addressing trauma, loss, substance abuse, and mental health issues. Juvenile offenders are held accountable through a comprehensive system of graduated sanctions that include commitment to state-operated juvenile facilities.

Children's Mental Health: The Division uses a system of care model that strives to provide creative, individualized, strength-based, and culturally responsive services for families with children that experience severe emotional disturbances. A developing continuum of care focuses on meeting the needs of children and families in the least restrictive environment, including utilization of the wraparound process to coordinate effective service delivery that enables children to reside with families when possible and with the assistance of informal supports rather than dependency on government or paid providers.

Mission

DCFS, together in genuine partnership with families, communities and county governmental agencies, provide support and services to assist Nevada's children and families in reaching their full human potential.

Vision

DCFS recognizes that Nevada's families are our future and families thrive when they:

- Live in safe, permanent settings;
- Experience a sense of sustainable emotional and physical well being; and
- Receive support to consistently make positive choices for family and common good.

Guiding Principles

Service principles guide our work towards achieving this vision and are consistent with children and family services principles specified in federal regulations [45 CFS 1355.25(a) through 1355.25(h)]. These practice model principles are:

- Protection - Children's safety is paramount;
- Development - Children, youth, and families need consistent nurturing in a healthy environment to achieve their full human potential;
- Permanency - All children need and are entitled to enduring relationships that provide a family, stability and belonging, a sense of self that connects children to their past, present and future;
- Cultural Responsiveness - Children and families have the right to be understood within the context of their own family, traditions, history, culture, and community;
- Partnership - The entire community shares accountability for the creation of an environment that helps families raise children to reach their full potential;
- Organizational Competence - Effectively structured and managed organizations with committed, trained, skilled staff are necessary to achieve positive outcomes for children and families.

- Continuous Quality Improvement - Strategic sequencing of continuous quality improvements must occur to reach Nevada's child and family services vision; and
- Professional Competence - Children and families need a relationship with skilled and empathetic case managers who can provide ethical support, confront difficult issues, and effectively assist them towards positive change that reinforces safety, permanency, well-being, and community safety.

Purpose

The Division is responsible for accomplishing the following purposes:

- Protecting and promoting the welfare and safety of all children, including individuals with disabilities; homeless, dependent or neglected children;
- Preventing or remedying, or assisting in the solution of problems that may result in the neglect, abuse, exploitation, or delinquency of children;
- Preventing the unnecessary separation of children from their families by identifying family problems and assisting families in resolving their problems and preventing the breakup of the family where the prevention of child removal is desirable and possible;
- Restoring to their families' children, who have been removed and may be safely returned, by the provision of services to the child and the family;
- Assuring adequate care of children away from their homes in cases where the child cannot be returned home or cannot be placed for adoption; and
- Placing children in suitable adoptive homes in cases where restoration to the biological or primary family is not possible or appropriate.

Figure 02: County Map of Nevada



Child Welfare Agencies

The organizational structure of DCFS and program delivery of child welfare services are influenced by the state size and concentration of county population. NRS 432B.325 states that in counties where population is 100,000 or more, that the county shall provide protective services for children in that county and pay the cost of those services in accordance with standards adopted by the state. In 2001, the state legislature expanded the county's responsibility to include all child welfare services of child protection, foster care and adoption (NRS 432B.030 and NRS 432B.044). Figure 02 provides a map of the state with each county outlined.

Agency Regional Coverage

The Clark County Department of Family Services (CCDFS), located in Las Vegas, provides child welfare services to all children and families in Clark County in the Southern most part of the State. Washoe County Department of Social Services (WCDSS) located in Reno, Nevada provides child welfare services directly to all children and families located in Washoe county in the northwestern part of the State and DCFS provides child welfare services to the remaining 15 counties in the state through its Rural Region offices.

The DCFS Rural Region is separated into four districts, each providing services to multiple counties each. District 1 covers the northern part of the State with its main office based in Elko. This District provides services to Elko, Eureka, Humboldt, Lander, Lincoln and White Pine Counties. District 2 covers the western/central part of the state and is based in Carson City. This

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District provides services to Carson City, the State's Capitol, Douglas County, Storey County, and a portion of Lyon County. District 3 covers the eastern/central part of the state and is based out of Fallon. This office provides services to Churchill, Lyon, Pershing and Mineral Counties. District 4 covers the southern rural part of the state and is based out of Pahrump. This office provides services to Esmeralda and Nye Counties. For the most part, growth in Nevada's rural counties has been fairly stable. Elko has seen substantial growth in the past few years.

Staff and Work Load:

There are currently 490 caseworker and 121 supervisory/management positions in child welfare filled statewide. There is currently an 8.2% vacancy rate statewide for all child welfare caseworker and supervisory/management positions.

Clark County Department of Family Services: CCDFS currently has 335 caseworker and 80 supervisory/management positions filled and 20 vacancies. CCDFS has a current case load ratio of approximately 1 worker to 15.7 cases for child protective services; 26.6 children per worker for permanency out-of-home workers and 24.6 children per worker for permanency in-home workers.

Washoe County Department of Social Services: WCDSS currently has 94 caseworker (case manager) and 25 supervisory/management positions filled and 19 vacancies (17 vacant caseworker and 2 vacant supervisory/management positions). The turnover rate for WCDSS case workers for SFY 09 was 12.12%. This is a 4.55% decrease from the previous fiscal year. Exit interviews were initiated this current year to analyze trends in staff turnover with the most common characteristic being job demands and timeframes. WCDSS has a current case load ratio of approximately 1 worker to 25 children for ongoing services and 1 worker to 12 cases for assessment workers.

DCFS – Rural Region: DCFS currently has 61 case worker (Social Worker II/III) positions filled, 49 of which are in the CPS/Substitute care area and the remainder in adoption and ICPC (5), adoption recruitment (1), quality assurance - QA (2) and licensing (4). There are four district office manager positions filled, nine Social Work Supervisors for CPS and Substitute Care and three for QA, Adoption and Licensing. Four of the above supervisors are new during the past fiscal year. There are currently five caseworker vacancies in the Rural Region, including four in CPS/Substitute Care and one in QA. In the past fiscal year, 13 staff either retired or were terminated and 17 new staff were hired. There has been a 50% decrease in vacancies in the rural region from July 2009 (10 vacancies) to April 2010 (5 vacancies). The DCFS Rural Region has a current caseload size of 15-18 cases for each CPS worker and 16 – 18 cases for substitute care workers.

Children in Care in Nevada

For the State Fiscal Year period of July 1, 2009 through May 31, 2010; Nevada had a total of 7,921 children in care. Table 01 shows a variety of information on how many children are currently in care; how many entered and left care during the year long period and how many had previous exposure to the foster care system. Compared to SFY 2009 data for the same time period (July 1 – May 31); there were a total of 7730 children in care during the fiscal year. Nevada has shown a 5.68% decrease in the number of children in care from this fiscal year to last fiscal year.

Table 01: Foster Care Summary Information

Summary	Total	Rural	Washoe	Clark
Total during this current time frame	7291	605	1336	5350
Total Entering	2461	218	481	1762
Entered with less than 2 placements in first year	2120	189	415	1516
Total with prior Foster Care Experience	20	1	6	13
Total Leaving Care During this time frame	2481	189	508	1784

Source: UNITY Report CFS721 for July 1, 2009 – May 31, 2010.

The majority of children entering care are birth to five years of age (50.9%); with an average of 1.55 placements. Youth age 15 to 19 years were the smallest group entering care (7.23%), but this group had the highest average number of placements (2.12) Table 02 shows the breakdown of children in care during SFY 2010 and includes a breakdown of the ages of the children entering and leaving care during the year.

Table 02: Age Facts of Children in Care

Age	Total Number	Percent	Upon Entering	Percent	Upon Leaving	Percent
0 to 4 year	3224	44.22	1254	50.95	1117	45.02
5 to 9 years	1844	25.29	603	24.50	641	25.84
10 to 14 years	1402	19.23	426	17.31	451	18.18
15 to 19 years	821	11.26	178	7.23	272	10.96
20+ years	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Total	7291		2461		2481	

Source: UNITY Report CFS721

A summary of children in foster care Table 03 shows the breakdown of children and youth in Foster Care (DCFS – Report CFS721 2004-2009; Nevada Kids Count, 2009). It is expected that there would be a similar breakdown of ethnicity in foster care as there is in the general population. However, based a comparison of data from Nevada’s SACWIS System – UNITY and information provided by the Nevada State Demographer for estimated population characteristics for children age 0-19 for 2009, there are a disproportionate number of African American children in Foster Care in Nevada. It is expected that approximately 8% of the children in care would be of African American heritage; however currently there are 28% of children in care of this ethnicity.

Table 03: Statewide Race/Ethnicity Distribution of Children Entering Foster Care by Fiscal Year

Race/Ethnicity	SFY 2005	SFY 2006	SFY 2007	SFY 2008	SFY 2009	SFY 2010	2009 Estimated Population Children age 0-18
African American	1771 20%	2150 21%	2472 22%	2531 22%	2475 23%	2246 28%	56,390 8.3%
American Indian/Native American (includes Eskimo or Aleut)	141 2%	148 1%	177 2%	184 2%	209 2%	217 3%	9,218 1.4%
Asian/Pacific Islander	243 5%	302 5%	356 6%	332 5%	303 5%	154 2%	44,062 6.5%
Caucasian	5139 59%	5899 58%	6336 56%	6465 55%	5859 54%	5225 65%	326,566 48%
Hispanic (All Races)	1389 16%	1683 17%	2011 18%	2170 19%	2085 19%	1879 25%	243,823 35.9%
Statewide Total*:	7294	8499	9371	9512	8846	7842	680,060

*Excludes Hispanic as these individuals are counted in other races.

Source: Unity Report CFS721 figures run from July 1 through May 31 for each fiscal year

Legislative Activities

Nevada's legislature meets every biennium. In the current fiscal year there has not been a legislative session. Nevada will enter its 76th regular session in 2011. In the spring of 2009, several bills were enacted during the 75th regular legislative session that have had an impact on child welfare and have brought about new initiatives. Table 04 lists the Bills that passed during the session that effect child welfare and are being addressed during the current biennium. Some of these have required regulation and policy development and/or revision.

Table 04: Legislative Bills enacted in 2009

AB76	Revises provisions governing the placement of children who are in the custody of an agency which provides child welfare services.
AB89	Revises provisions governing the regulation of licensed child care facilities.
AB103	Clarifies the role of the Child Welfare Specialist in the Audit Division of the Legislative Counsel Bureau.
AB227	Revises provisions relating to the provision of foster care.
AB337	Creates the Office of Statewide Coordinator for Children Who Are Endangered by Drug Exposure in the Office of the Attorney General and makes various other changes concerning children who are endangered by drug exposure.
AB364	Makes various changes concerning the protection of children.
AB500	Revises provisions relating to domestic relations.
SB3	Creates the Legislative Committee on Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice.
SB342	Expands the relatives who receive preference when a child is placed in the custody of a person other than the parent of the child by a court, an agency which provides child welfare services or other person.
SB343	Makes various changes concerning the application for and provision of certain treatment or services to a person involved in the child welfare system.
SB344	Authorizes the Director of the Department of Health and Human Services to create an interagency committee to evaluate the child welfare system.
SCR4	Urges certain agencies which provide child welfare services to develop a standardized practice model and to address certain issues related to child and family services.

SECTION II: GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND METHODS OF MEASURING PROGRESS

Nevada has had an established process for measuring the safety, permanency and well-being of children in the child welfare system for the past six years. This process was modeled after the federal Child and Family Services Review of state cases. However, due to consistent budget reductions over the last several years this process that was projected to be expanded to all 45 items in the next five year cycle as part of the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) will be truncated to accommodate for the diminished resources available. The Division is in the process of meeting with the PMAG group to receive approval on the new process for case reviews and measuring compliance related to all CFSP items.

Overall Goal

- **To ensure that the child welfare system in Nevada is meeting compliance in all Safety, Permanency, Well-Being and Systemic Outcomes as outlined in individual 45 performance indicator items.**

Overall Objectives

The overall objective of the state in its five year plan is to ensure a comprehensive ongoing review process using a variety of methods for examining compliance on Safety, Permanency, Well-Being and Systemic Performance Indicators. This is planned to be accomplished by redesigning the existing Quality Improvement Framework for Nevada to include a variety of processes. Each of the 45 performance indicators include key elements, such as statewide policy review and revision; development and monitoring of quantitative reports to address specific performance indicator questions; and the development and implementation of a qualitative process to answer those questions that cannot be measured through quantitative reporting. This includes the potential of developing targeted case reviews, stakeholder surveys, and other methods for gleaning the performance on individual items. The overall process also includes the provision for ensuring ongoing coordination and collaboration with key child welfare stakeholders to be involved in all levels of the Quality Improvement Framework process.

Progress on the individual methods outlined in Section III of the Nevada Child and Family Services Plan are included in several systemic performance indicator items and are highlighted below.

1. **Coordinating and Collaborating with Stakeholders:** Throughout the quality improvement process for the State of Nevada; Family Programs Office (FPO) representatives, child welfare agency representatives and key external stakeholders have been involved in the process. Current progress on this item is reported out on in Item 38: State Engagement in Consultation with Stakeholders and Item 40: Coordination of CFSP Services with other Federal Programs. Current stakeholder involvement has included members from a variety of areas including representatives from the judiciary, child advocates, caregivers (foster parents, adoptive parents, relative caregivers, etc.), foster youth, tribal representatives, educational representatives, medical/behavioral health representatives, differential response representatives, service providers (substance abuse, domestic violence, etc.) and other members as identified. A number of existing stakeholder groups are regularly collaborated with to ensure consistent involvement in the CFSP process.
2. **Review, Revision and Development of Policies and Procedures:** The State uses a collaborative process to develop statewide policy. To accomplish the review, revision or new development of statewide policies and procedures related to Safety, Permanency, Well-Being and Systemic Performance Indicators collaborative workgroups are convened with members from DCFS, the child welfare agencies and applicable external stakeholders in accordance with federal and state laws. This process is outlined in Item 31: Quality Assurance System and individual policy updates are included as applicable under all items.
3. **Review, Revision and Development of Quantitative Reports:** The Family Programs Office, in collaboration with the DCFS Information Management System (IMS) Office and the Statewide Quality Improvement Committee (SQIC) has begun the process to review and improve existing quantitative reports and to develop new quantitative reports for measuring progress toward specific measurable outcomes under individual performance indicators. This objective is currently in progress and new reports are scheduled for roll out from development in the spring of 2011.

4. **Review and Improvement of Existing Stakeholder Survey Instruments/Qualitative Review Methods:** This objective covers a qualitative method for obtaining information from key stakeholders regarding specific performance indicators. A pilot of this process was conducted during the spring of 2009 during the Nevada Statewide Assessment. This objective is not due to be reviewed until the fall of 2010. This process will include the review and improvement of existing stakeholder survey instruments and/or development (where needed) of new qualitative review methods for assessing system performance through the regular consultation with stakeholders key to the child welfare system in Nevada. In future APSR reports, progress on this objective will be reported out on under Item 31: Quality Assurance System. Individual data reports gathered from surveys or other qualitative methods to be developed.
5. **Review and Improvement of the existing Quality Improvement Case Review (QICR) Process:** This process is being redesigned as part of the upcoming Program Improvement Plan. Progress on this area will be reported on in Item 31: Quality Assurance System.
6. **Quality Improvement Loop and SQIC Annual Work Plan:** The State is in the process of developing a new process for quality improvement which will drive the annual work of the Statewide Quality Improvement Committee.

Technical Assistance

Table 05: Technical Assistance Received for State Fiscal Year 2010

Goals/Objectives/ TA request and date	Target Population and T/TA Approach	Providers/Coordinators and Contact Names
<p>Request/Objective: Asked for review of safety policy and to recommend revisions to the safety model.</p> <p>How Goal/objective will be measured: Revised policy</p>	<p>Direct Recipients of T/TA: State policy unit with support of county stakeholders.</p> <p>T/TA Approach: After a review of case records, recommendations for policy revisions via on-site and teleconferences</p>	<p>Organization providing the consultation: NRC-CPS</p>
<p>Request/Objective: Standardization of IL policies and procedures</p> <p>How Goal/objective will be measured: Policy and procedure manual and training guides</p>	<p>Direct Recipients of T/TA: Statewide</p> <p>T/TA Approach: Analysis and development of policies by conducting on-site work groups and teleconferences</p>	<p>Organization providing consultation: Casey Family Programs</p>
<p>Request/Objective: Assistance with having data drive practices and assess compliance related to CFSR items</p> <p>How Goal/objective will be measured: Data measurements</p>	<p>Direct Recipients of T/TA: State</p> <p>T/TA Approach: “GoTo” meetings and teleconferences to educate NV and assist in developing appropriate measurements</p>	<p>Organization providing consultation: NRC-CWDT</p>

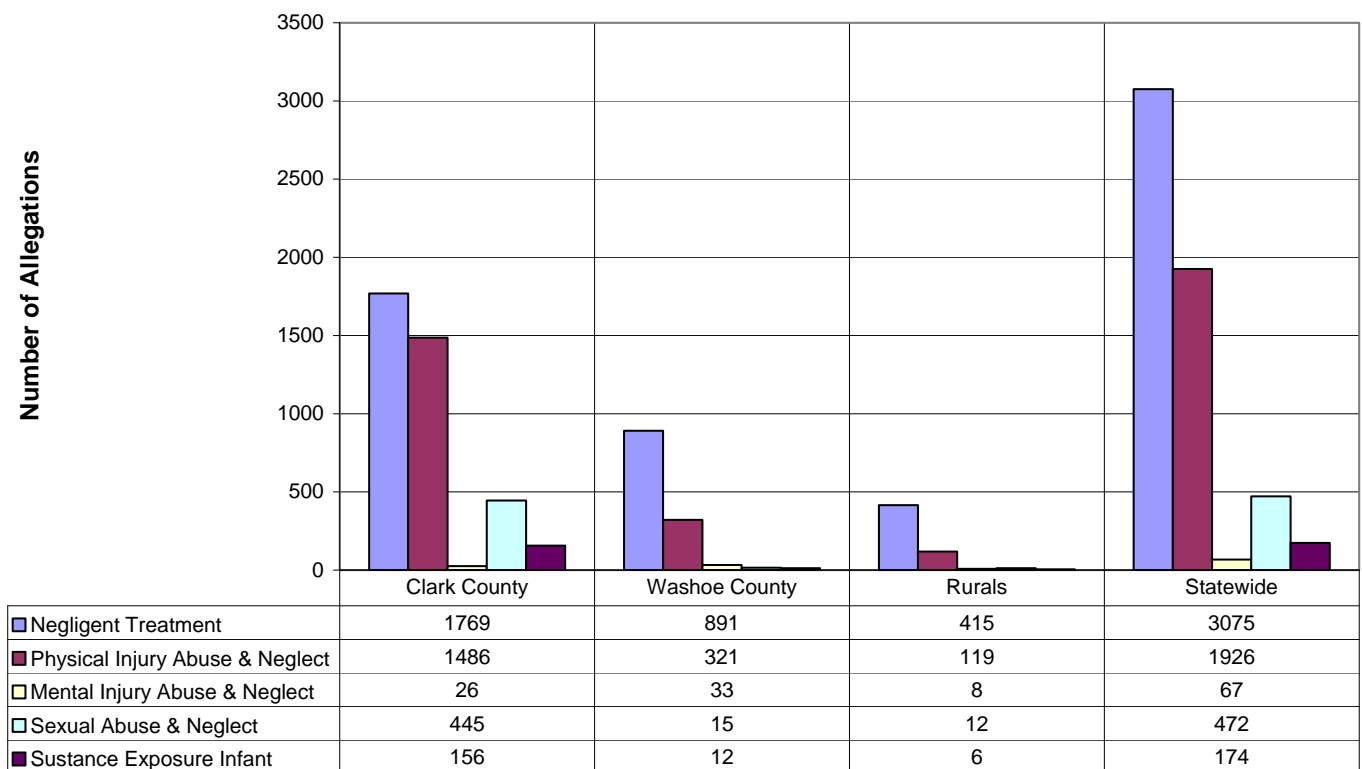
SECTION III: SAFETY

Trends in Child Safety

Child safety is a paramount concern for the Nevada child welfare system. The most frequent types of child abuse or neglect allegations reported for the period of July 1, 2009 through present highlight that Negligent Treatment (53.8%) and Physical Injury Abuse or Neglect (33.7%) are the most prevalent allegation types that children experience in the child welfare system. To a lesser degree children experience Sexual Abuse or Sexual Abuse Neglect (8.2%), Substance Exposed Infants (3%), and Mental Injury Abuse or Neglect (1.1%). Figure 03 shows the breakdown of allegations reported by child welfare agencies over the past year.

Figure 03: Allegations Reported in State Fiscal Year 2010

Allegations Reported in SFY 2010



Source: UNITY Report CFS727 July 1, 2009 to April 30, 2010

Initiatives

A variety of initiatives have been reported by Clark County in their efforts to improve child safety. The Emergency Response Team in Clark County was implemented subsequent to the previous CFSR; however in the past year CCDFS has expanded work hours to 24 hours per day, 7 days per week and has recently implemented an emergency response team checklist. Law enforcement admissions have been tracked and monitored for children age five and under and for children above the age of five. The child fatality team has an on-call shift for 24 hour response to all fatalities reported. Investigative teams have been implemented in all geographical areas that specialize in response to children age five and under. There have also been several updates to law enforcement regarding CCDFS practice and initiatives. One of the

particular strengths that CCDFS is experiencing this year is that removals with a return home in less than eight days continue to decline, with a reduction in the incidence rate of 13% to 9% in the last year. Some of the challenges that CCDFS reports are that there are a lack of voluntary in-home services to families due to lack of funding and community resources. In addition, the judicial system often forces a family through the court system and the District Attorney's often disagree with the recommendations of the Department.

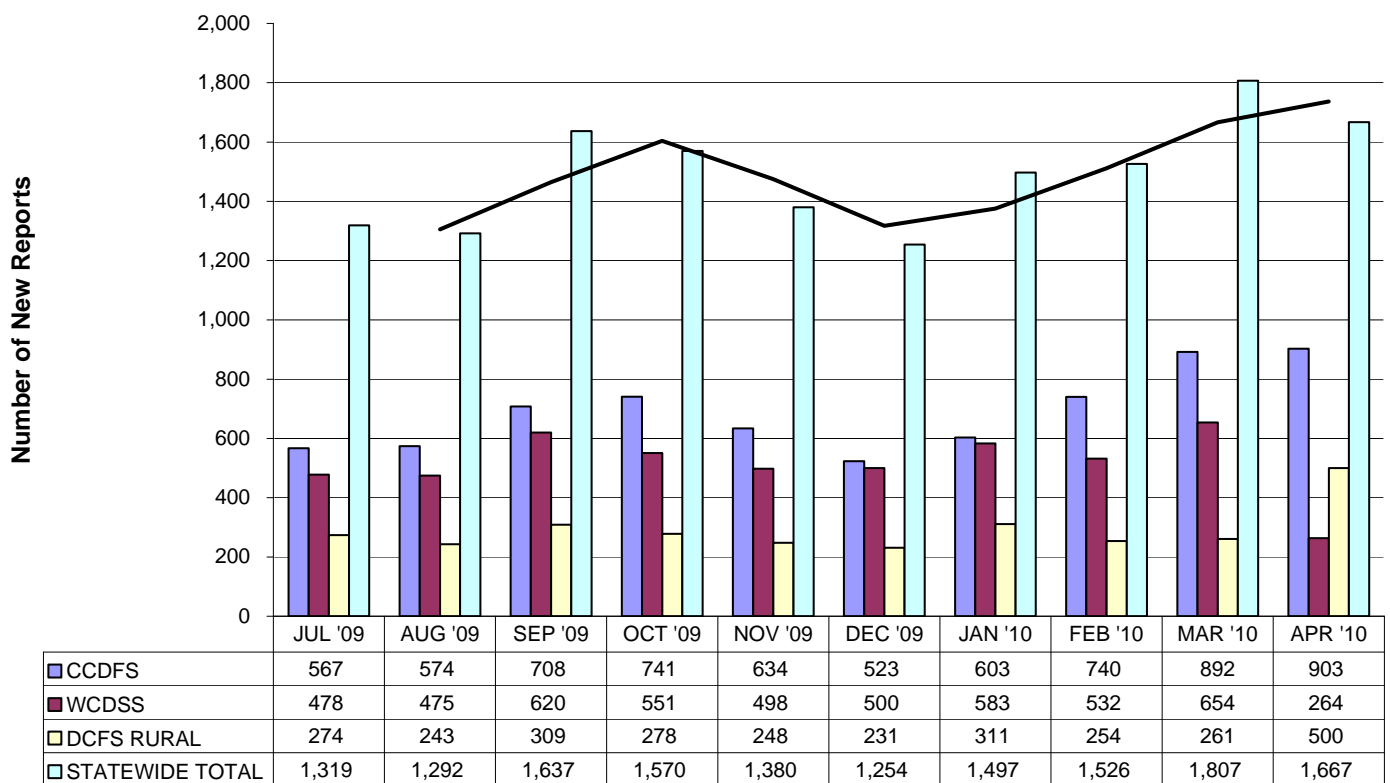
Program Areas

Reports and Investigations

A referral becomes a report upon child welfare agency determination that information received constitutes an allegation consistent with Nevada child abuse and neglect allegation definition. Reports are then forwarded to a supervisor or supervisory-level designee for review and a priority response time is assigned. The following graph depicts the number of new reports from July 2009 through April 2010 and shows a steady increase in new reports in all months except October, November and December 2009. Figure 04 shows that a total of 14,949 new reports that have come in statewide since June 2009.

Figure 04: Number of New Reports

Number of New Reports



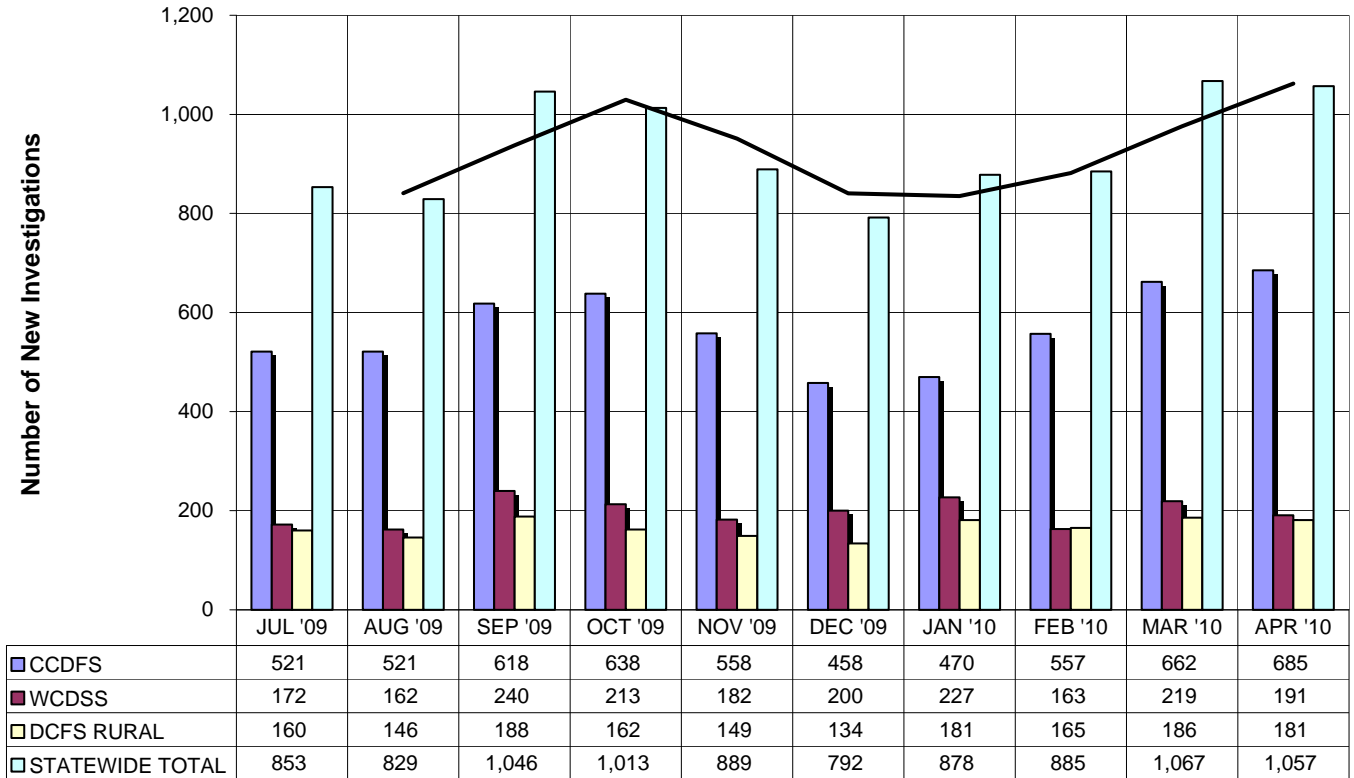
Source: CFS769 SFY2010 July 1, 2009 to April 30, 2010

When a report is screened in, it is assigned for investigation by a child welfare agency per policy 0506 Intake and Priority Response. The investigation process is outlined in the 0509 Nevada initial Assessment (NIA) Policy and includes interaction with a family for the purpose of assessing factors or conditions that are known to contribute to the likelihood of child abuse or neglect; to determine the strengths and/or protective capacities that can help mitigate risk and safety threats; to reconcile information contained in the Intake reports about alleged child abuse and neglect and alleged threats

to child safety; and to make a conclusion regarding the existence of present and/or impending danger. Figure 05 depicts the number of new investigations from July 2009 through April 2010 and suggests an upward trend statewide over the last year in reports that are screened in for assignment of an investigation. In both Figure 4 Number of New Reports and Figure 05 Number of New Investigations there has been an upward statewide trend in Nevada of referrals that constitute a report and those reports that are screened in for investigation.

Figure 05: Number of New Investigations

Number of New Investigations

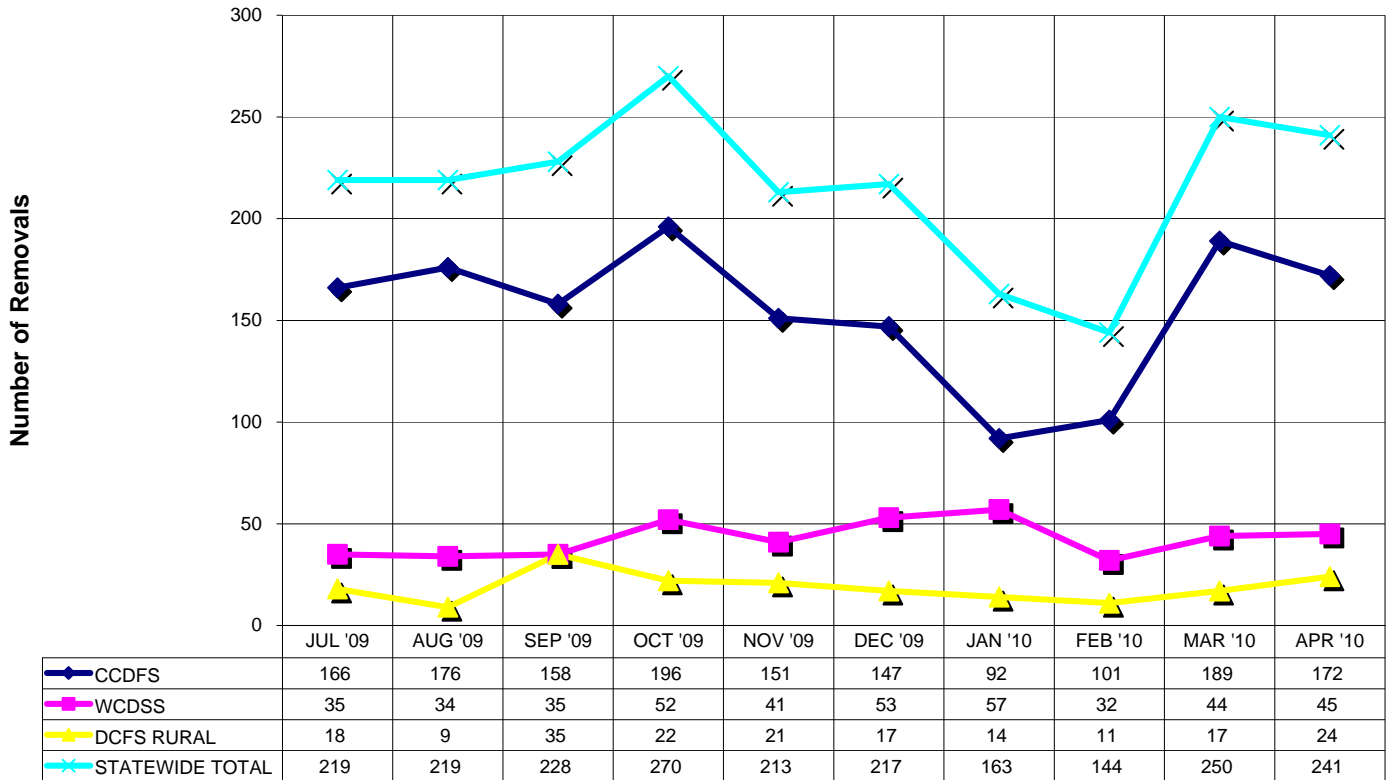


Source: UNITY Report CFS769 July 1, 2009 to April 30, 2010

A child is considered unsafe when present or impending danger threats exist and cannot be managed by the caregiver/family’s protective capacities. If present danger can not be mitigated with safety planning or resources the child is removed. The following graph in Figure 06 shows the number of children removed from July 2009 through April 2010. This figure demonstrates some variation over time in the number of children that have been removed statewide during the past year. There is a continuous rise in the number of statewide removals in October 2009 followed by a downward trend in statewide removals through February 2010. However, in March 2010 and April 2010 there was again an increase statewide in the number of children removed from their caregivers. There may be many reasons why there are marked changes in the monthly removal rates, especially in Clark County. Allegations for Clark County cases reported in this fiscal year show that 45.5% of Clark County cases are due to neglect, followed by 38.2% of cases for physical abuse. Only 4% of cases were substance exposed infants. Neglect and physical abuse are both precipitated by factors such as domestic violence, alcohol and drug abuse, untreated mental illness, lack of parenting skills, and stress and lack of support. A poor economy, job loss, housing disruptions and other economic factors that have been prevalent this past year; this in conjunction with increased public awareness efforts surrounding Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month (April 2010) may have contributed to the sudden rise and fall in removals over the past spring.

Figure 06: Number of Total Removals

Number of Removals by Month



Source: UNITY Report CFS7G6 July 1, 2009 to April 30, 2010

Child Fatality

In an effort to promote child safety, Nevada collects information and participates in a variety of teams to examine incidences of child abuse and neglect that result in child fatalities or near fatalities. Nevada continues to follow recommendations from the Blue Ribbon Panel reported in previous APSR's. These recommendations have resulted in numerous revisions to policies, procedures, legislative changes, quality improvement activities as well as participation from the Legislative Council Bureau auditors in ensuring continuous monitoring and review of fatalities and near fatalities that occur statewide.

Nevada continues the work of both state and local teams that review child fatalities. The Regional Multidisciplinary Child Death Review Teams are charged with periodic review of child deaths which occur within their region. The Administrative Team is comprised of agencies which provide child welfare services, vital statistics, public health, mental health and public safety. They provide oversight for local teams and receive the reports and recommendations from local multidisciplinary teams for review. The Executive Committee is comprised of members of each Regional Multidisciplinary Child Death Review Teams as well as other stakeholders. The Executive Committee makes funding decisions about prevention and awareness initiatives, oversees training initiatives, oversees training and development of the MDT's, compiles and distributes a statewide annual child death report, and adopts statewide protocol.

The Executive and Administrative Teams continue their work with local and statewide initiatives as a result of recommendations from the Regional Multidisciplinary Child Death Review Teams. In 2009, public awareness and education campaigns targeted the four leading causes of child death in Nevada, including: motor vehicle accidents, other accidents, homicide, and suicide. The primary focus of the campaign was in collaboration with the Nevada Children's Trust Fund on the *Fight Abuse Campaign*, which promoted abuse and neglect awareness, reporting, and prevention. One

of several ongoing activities included the printing and distribution of approximately 60,000 safe sleeping brochures to hospital labor and delivery units, pediatric clinics, Family Resource Centers, and WIC Offices statewide. These brochures educate parents of newborn infants and young children about safe sleeping environments and the prevention of asphyxia deaths. This year's campaign efforts included expanded safe sleeping campaigns, drowning prevention, securing firearms, and preventing accidental drug overdose. The CDR Executive Team provided scholarships for one person from each of the six CDR regions to attend the *Investigation and Prosecution of Child Fatalities and Physical Abuse* conference in February 2010. The conference was held in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The Administrative Team is meeting on a regular basis to discuss issues to improve and enhance data and to identify where Nevada needs to make policy changes.

A strength in this area is the larger focus on collecting improved data and the development of tools to ensure better consistency in the data. The Family Programs Office continues to participate in standardized data reporting since July 2008, and is in the process of creating an improved data base for tracking child death data. The newly designed database utilizing ACCESS will track the data related to public disclosures, case reviews and track trends, child deaths, compliance with policy, and help track prevention initiatives. At this time, UNITY does not track the information needed concerning child death data.

Policy Development and Revision

In the past year the two most significant changes in the area of safety came with the adoption of two revised policies. Policy 0506 Intake was revised and approved by the DMG in April 2010. Intake procedures consist of standardized information collection beginning at Intake that lays the foundation for assessing safety and risk throughout the investigation, a UNITY (SACWIS) system database search for previous Child Protective Services (CPS) history, a determination that the information collected meets one of the criteria for Nevada Child Abuse and Neglect Allegations and lastly the disposition of said referral. Major changes to this policy, included the adoption of newly defined Nevada Child Abuse and Neglect allegations and the adoption of eight referral disposition types that are now also consistently defined for statewide use.

The second policy revised and approved by the DMG in April 2010 was 0513 Substantiation. The result of an investigation culminates in the determination or finding of child abuse or neglect as substantiated or unsubstantiated. Policy 0513 Substantiation was reviewed and revised to ensure that findings of abuse and neglect are based upon whether the information gathered during the investigation and from direct observations made by the CPS investigator constitutes that credible evidence exists that child abuse or neglect occurred.

In addition to the above statewide policies, WCDSS updated several sections of their local policy manual related to safety, including Section 5, 8, and 11. Section 5, Report Intake, was revised and distributed to include information regarding AB56 (corporal punishment in schools). Section 8, Investigative Assessments and Section 11, Special Circumstances Cases, were also revised and distributed to local staff. The DCFS-Rural Region is in the process of developing a Rural Region specific child welfare policy and procedure manual. A draft, including applicable safety policies, has been developed and is currently under review by the Social Services Managers in the Rural Region. In addition, CCDFS completed an annual review and update of their Hotline/Intake policies and Child Protective Services policies.

Training

The State also offered a variety of training opportunities to promote child safety in child welfare practices. Discussions the child welfare agencies has identified that Nevada workers struggle with the ability to integrate assessing safety into practice after the provision of safety training. To further support the assessment of safety through managers and supervisors to their caseworkers the following trainings were sponsored by CAPTA funds through one of the two grants the State receives:

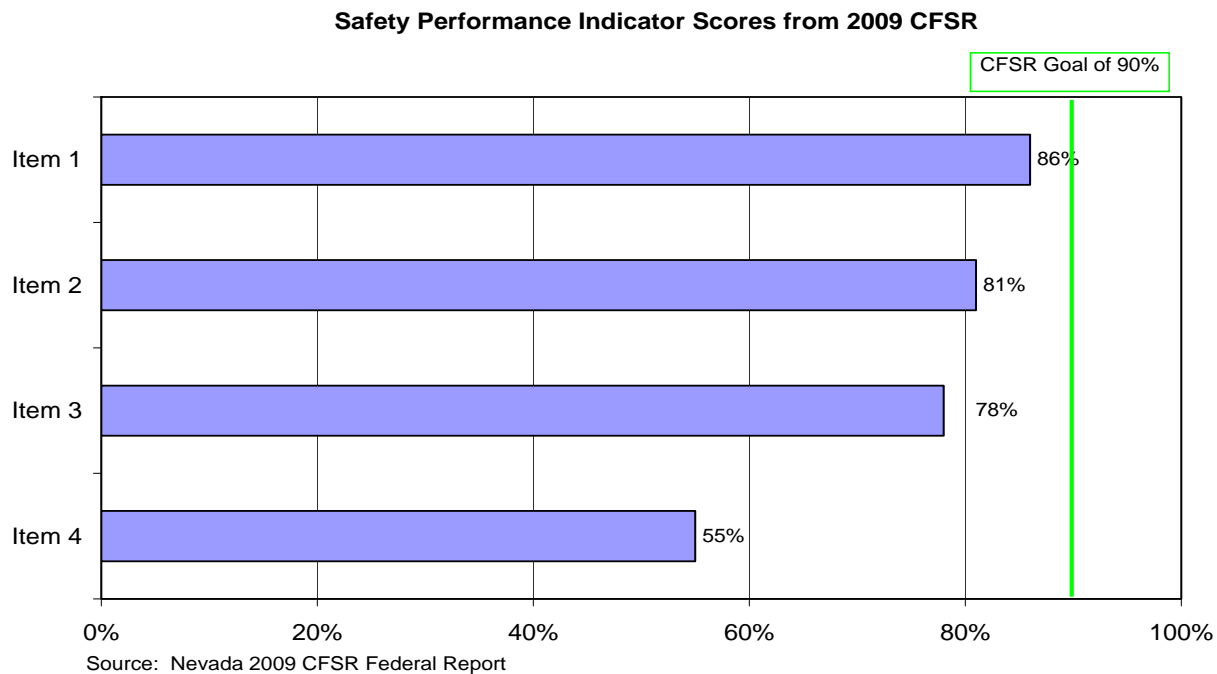
- **CPS Investigations – A Social Child Safety Intervention:** This is specialized social service training on child safety intervention that includes information collection and analysis, protective action, and decision-making related to investigating reports of child maltreatment. A total of 112 individuals participated in this training statewide in the last fiscal year.
- **Consultative Supervision- Evaluating and Managing Effective Safety Management:** This training covered the following topics: Sufficient information collection for effective safety decision-making; judging screening decisions and analyzing response times; evaluating the accuracy of safety assessments; and consultation with the safety intervention analysis. A total of 115 supervisors and managers participated in this training statewide in the last fiscal year.

In addition, WCDSS individually contracted with ACTION for Child Protection to conduct the Consultative Supervision training for their own supervisors. ACTION provided safety training to the Legal and Court partners in Washoe County in June 2010. A particular strength for this agency is that they were able to secure resources to ensure that all supervisors attended the training, which received exceptionally high ratings. Supervisors actively engaged in discussions and were receptive to the consultant/trainer's recommendations. A challenge for this agency is that ongoing training with case specific situations during supervisor meetings has been initiated, but was not consistently maintained. Consistent understanding of the safety model, including terminology across the entire child welfare system (courts, district attorneys, public defenders, etc) is a continuing issue. CCDFS also implemented internal trainings using the CPS Investigations – a Social Child Safety Intervention curriculum over the past year.

CFSP Goals and Objectives for Safety

In the 2010-2014 CFSP, each performance indicator was given an overall goal and one or more objectives. Each of the objectives are to be assessed through the development of data reports from the UNITY system or through qualitative means such as surveys or qualitative case reviews. This process is under development and will not be finalized until the new Program Improvement Plan is approved. UNITY reports are under development and are not planned to be completed until the spring of 2011. Therefore, for the purposes of the SFY 2010 APSR report, the data from the CFSR conducted in August 2009 is being used to show performance on each performance indicator as a whole. Where reports do currently exist, those reports are also included to address individual objectives. Unless otherwise noted, all objective reports are under development at this time. Figure 7 shows a brief graph of how Nevada rated statewide in the 2009 CFSR on individual performance indicators for safety.

Figure 07: Statewide Safety Performance Indicator Scores vs. 90% goal



Safety Outcome 1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect

Item 1: Timeliness of initiation investigations of reports of child maltreatment

Goal: *To determine whether responses to all accepted child maltreatment reports received are initiated and face-to-face contact with the child has been made, within the timeframes established by statewide policy.*

To reach this goal, the State had the objective to ensure that responses to all accepted child maltreatment reports are initiated, and face-to-face contact with the child is made within the timeframes established by statewide policy and that appropriate documentation (including reasons why timelines were not met, if applicable) is made in UNITY in 90% of cases reviewed. Table 6 below shows the CFSR 2009 data related to this item. Statewide, Nevada rated just below the overall goal of 90%, with Washoe County’s review exceeding the goal. This item remains as an area needing improvement.

Table 06: SFY 2010 Data for Item 1

Item 1: Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment.	CFSR 2009	NV Goal	Goal Met
Statewide	86%	90%*	No
Clark County	85%	90%*	No
Washoe County	100%	90%*	Yes
DCFS Rural Region	80%	90%*	No

*Unless otherwise negotiated or if exceeds federal requirements

Item 2: Repeat maltreatment

Goal: *To determine if any child in the family experienced repeat maltreatment within a 6-month period.*

To reach this goal, children in the child welfare system in Nevada will not have experienced an incidence of repeat maltreatment within a 6-month period in a minimum of 90% of cases. CFSR 2009 data in Table 7 shows that Nevada needs some improvement in this area. Clark County’s portion of the CFSR review indicates that they are currently meeting this objective.

Table 07: SFY 2010 Data for Item 2

Item 2: Repeat Maltreatment	CFSR 2009	NV Goal	Goal Met
Statewide	81%	90%*	No
Clark County	92%	90%*	Yes
Washoe County	83%	90%*	No
DCFS Rural Region	33%	90%*	No

*Unless otherwise negotiated or if exceeds federal requirements

The following Table 8 presents the most recent CFSR Data Profile provided by ACF dated April 20, 2010 for Repeat Maltreatment. As depicted in the table “Absence of Maltreatment Recurrence” the standard is 94.6%. For the most recent FFY 2009ab Nevada does not meet the national standard; however, Nevada does score above the national median. The National standard of 94.6% is the preferred percentage to meet for this measure. In addition, “Absence of Child abuse and/or neglect in Foster Care (12 months)” data is provided in the same table. The national standard for this measure is 99.68%. For the most recent FFY 2009ab Nevada does not meet the National Standard but is equal with the national median. The National standard of 99.68% is the preferred percentage standard to meet for this measure. Throughout the PIP period, Nevada will continue to submit data related to the absence of child abuse or neglect in foster care.

Table 08: CFSR Data Profile Information for Repeat Maltreatment

CHILD SAFETY PROFILE	Fiscal year 2008ab	12-month period Ending 3/31/209 (08B09A)	Fiscal Year 2009ab
Absence of Maltreatment Recurrence [standard: 94.6% or more; national median=93.3%,25th percentile=91.50%	95.1	Not Submitted	93.9
Absence of Child Abuse and/or Neglect in Foster Care (12 months) [standard 99.68% or more; national median=99.5, 25th percentile=99.30]	99.56	Not Submitted	99.54

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

Item 3: Services to families to protect children in home and prevent removal or re-entry into foster care

Goal: To determine whether the State is making concerted efforts to provide services to the family to prevent children’s entry into foster care or re-entry after a reunification.

To meet this goal, the State projected that an evaluation of case records would be needed to determine if concerted efforts were made to provide or arrange for appropriate services for the family to protect children and prevent their entry into foster care or re-entry into foster care after a reunification. Further, the State projected that if a child was removed from the home without providing for or arranging for services that the action was necessary to ensure the child’s safety. A further objective is that the above information would be documented appropriately in UNITY in a minimum of 90% of applicable cases. Table 9 shows that Nevada as a whole is not currently meeting this goal as reported in the Nevada 2009 CFSR report. For Clark County and the DCFS – Rural Region this item is an area that needs improvement. However, based on the CFSR 2009 data, Washoe County shows this to be an area of strength.

Table 09: SFY 2010 Data for Item 3

Item 3: Services to family to protect child(ren) in the home and prevent removal or re-entry into foster care.	CFSR 2009	NV Goal	Goal Met
Statewide	78%	90%*	No
Clark County	60%	90%*	No
Washoe County	100%	90%*	Yes
DCFS Rural Region	77%	90%*	No

*Unless otherwise negotiated or if exceeds federal requirements

Item 4: Risk assessment and safety management

Goal: To determine whether the State is making concerted efforts to assess and address the risk and safety concerns relating to the child(ren) in their own homes or while in foster care.

To meet this goal, there are several objectives planned in the Child and Family Services Plan. These focus on initial risk assessment, ongoing assessment of risk, and safety assessment. Safety concerns focuses providing assessments on the child’s living environment (both in the home and in foster care), during visitation with family members, and in trial home visits. A further objective is to ensure that this information is appropriately documented in UNITY in 90% of cases. Data from the 2009 CFSR, as shown in Table 10 below indicates that Nevada is not currently reaching this goal.

Table 10: SFY 2010 Data for Item 4

Item 4: Risk assessment and safety management	CFSR 2009	NV Goal	Goal Met
Statewide	55%	90%*	No
Clark County	50%	90%*	No
Washoe County	78%	90%*	No
DCFS Rural Region	39%	90%*	No

*Unless otherwise negotiated or if exceeds federal requirements

SECTION IV: PERMANENCY

Trends in Permanency

In Nevada, when a child must be removed from his/her home, the first placement option considered is relative care. Table 11 shows the number of paid and unpaid relative foster care placements by agency and statewide from September 1, 2009 through May 31, 2010.

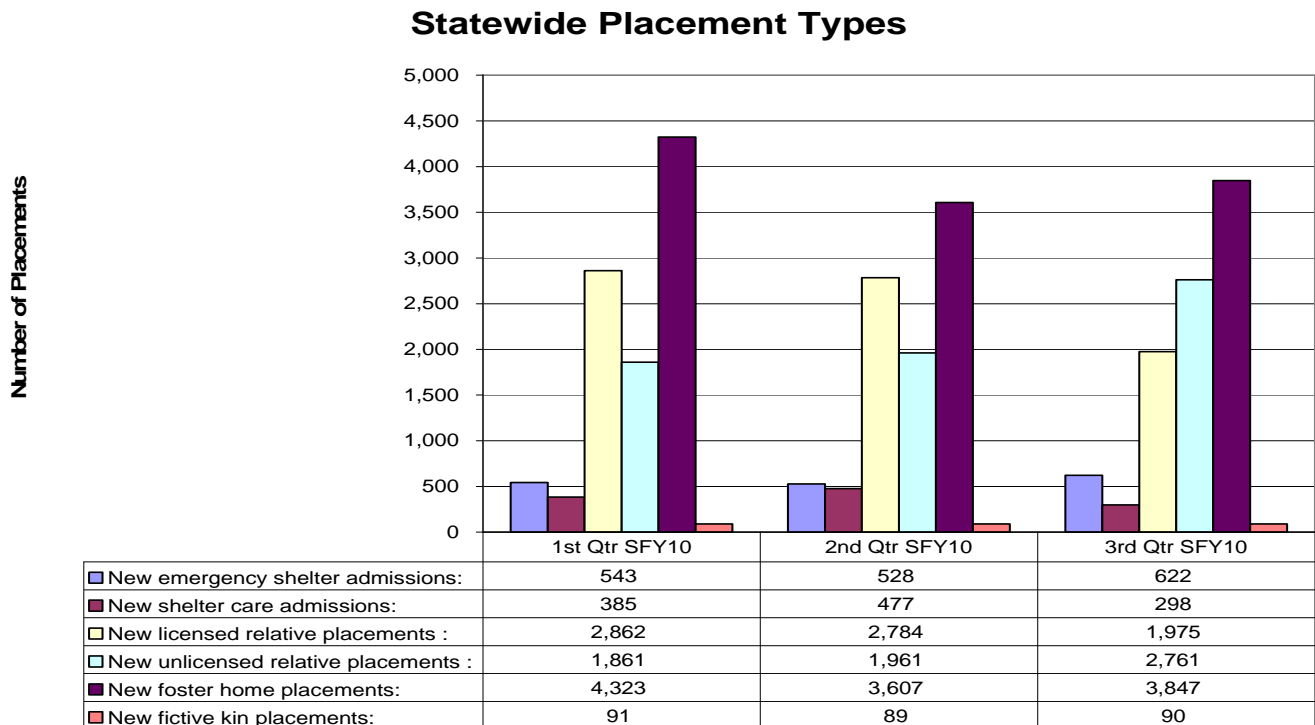
Table 11: Paid and Unpaid Relative Foster Care

Child Welfare Agency		Sep-09	Oct-10	Nov-10	Dec-10	Jan-10	Feb-10	Mar-10	Apr-10	May-10
Clark County	Relative Foster Care	778	766	763	758	753	763	771	768	751
	Unpaid Relative Care	555	567	579	584	591	574	572	590	614
Washoe County	Relative Foster Care	152	159	161	145	149	150	147	140	138
	Unpaid Relative Care	26	22	23	20	22	20	26	21	19
DCFS – Rural Region	Relative Foster Care	14	11	11	10	10	9	9	10	10
	Unpaid Relative Care	54	51	56	59	58	56	56	56	64
Statewide	Relative Foster Care	944	936	935	913	912	922	927	918	899
	Unpaid Relative Care	635	640	658	663	671	650	654	667	697

Source: CLEO Report September 1, 2009 – March 31, 2010

Figure 8 below shows the different placement types that occurred overall in the first three quarters of SFY 2010 (fourth quarter data is not available until July 2010). In addition to being the preferred placement type, relative home placements both licensed and unlicensed, are also the most prevalent placement type in Nevada (48.8%). This is followed by new foster home placements at 40.47%. New licensed relative home placements (26.19%) are utilized more frequently than new unlicensed relative placements (22.62%).

Figure 08: Statewide Placement Types



Source: CLEO Report July 1, 2009 to March 31, 2010

Relatives who care for their kin typically receive funds from the State in two ways. They become licensed foster care providers and receive payment through the States' child protective services agency. The State is then reimbursed for these payments through the Title IV-E program. The reimbursement rate for Nevada is 52.6%. Relatives who are unable to become a licensed relative foster family or who care for a child who has not gone through Child Protective Services (CPS) can receive a TANF child-only grant from the state's welfare agency. The State has continued to see a rise in the number of children placed with relatives, therefore the ability to support relatives financially while achieving permanency for children is something Nevada has been exploring through programs for relative and kinship care while establishing feasibility with our current budget crisis.

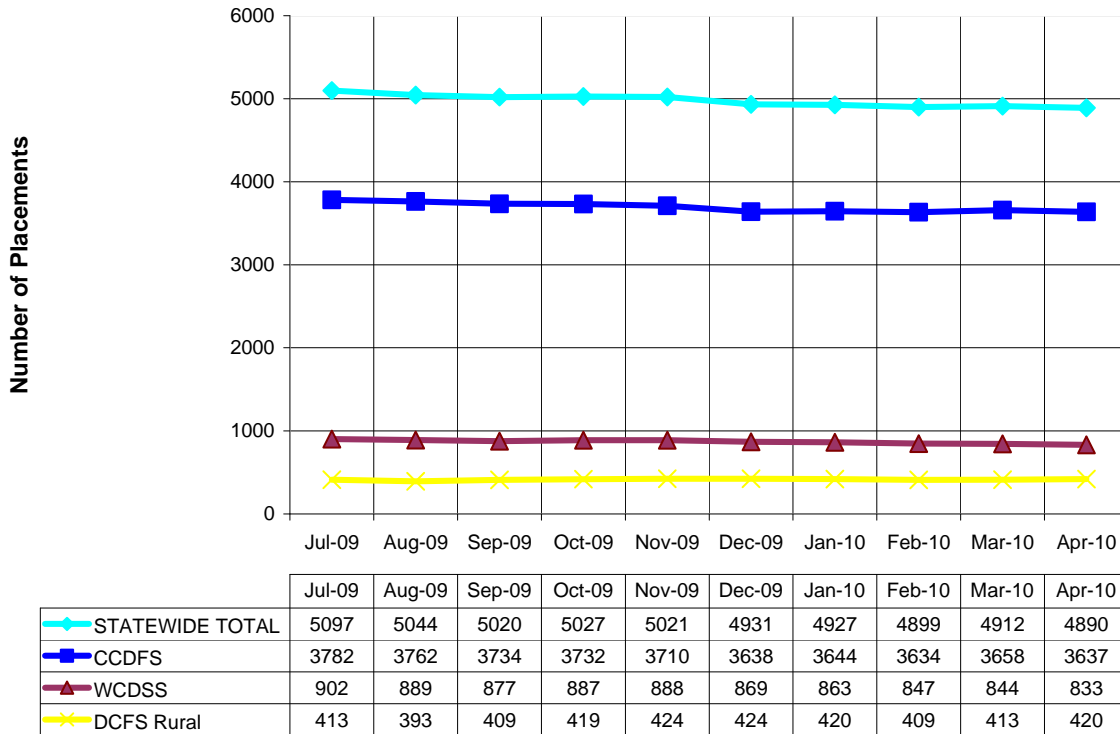
To assist relatives who care for children in out-of-home placements, Nevada has a Non-Needy Relative Caregiver Kinship Care Program. The Division of Welfare and Supportive Services currently administers the Kinship Care Program which went into effect on October 1, 2001. Since that time children living with a relative Non-Needy Caretaker (NNCT) may receive a Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) payment allowance which is a percentage of the State of Nevada foster care rate. NNCT is defined as relative caretakers who are not requesting assistance for themselves. In order for a relative caretaker to be eligible for this program they must be 62 or older; be a non-parent; be a non-needy caretaker; be caring for the child who is related (up to the 5th degree as described in the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services Eligibility and Payment Manual) by blood, adoption or marriage for at least six months; file for Nevada court approval of legal guardianship; comply with court imposed requirements; relative household members must have combined income below 275% of the federal poverty level; and the child must meet the age, citizenship and resource eligibility requirements. There is an exception to the age requirement due to undue hardship and a waiver can be provided under certain circumstances. According to the Eligibility and Payments Manual provided by the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services (04/09), current payment rates for the Kinship Care Programs are \$534.00 per month for each child, age 12 years and younger; and, \$616.00 per month for each child age 13 and older. The Kinship Care Program also makes available certain other services such as legal assistance to obtain guardianship, child care, transportation for certain situations and respite care.

In order for Nevada to implement this new option, a statutory change will be necessary, similar to the language included in statute related to Adoption Subsidies. Nevada is currently conducting a fiscal analysis on this option and will be making a decision by the end of August 2010 on whether a bill will be submitted for the 2011 legislative session. The benefit to the GAP program is that it would allow licensed relatives to move to a guardianship placement and still be compensated for caring for the child. This may be a favored alternative for children who will have no plan of reunification or adoption and there is a strong bond between the child and the relative. This would allow children to move into a permanent placement rather than remaining in foster care and not achieving permanency.

Keeping children with family members sustains their connection to their family roots; usually they are in close proximity to other relatives, including siblings, which allows them to receive family support that is unavailable or infrequent with non-kin placements. Additionally, relative foster placements may be beneficial as they may minimize trauma by providing the child with a sense of family support. The impact on Nevada caseloads may decrease due to permanency achievement, which is an added benefit of this program. Figure 09 shows the caseload sizes of caseworkers serving children in out-of-home care placements from July 1, 2009 through March 31, 2010. The chart shows that despite the fact that relative placements have become the most prevalent placement type in Nevada; caseloads for workers have remained consistent over time. The GAP program may assist in decreasing the time a foster child remains on a worker's caseload.

Figure 09: Children in Out-of-Home Placements

Children in Out-of-Home Placements



Source: CLEO Report SFY2010

Initiatives

Clark County Department of Family Services: In May of 2009, CCDFS began the implementation of the *Safety through the Life of the Case* tools to assist staff in being able to assess the safety of children in different settings and circumstances. The Department partnered with Casey Family Programs to develop several safety assessment tools to be used in permanency cases. The first was the *Out-of-Home Pre-Placement Safety Check*, a tool to ensure that children are placed in a home that is assessed to be safe and with parents willing and capable of meeting the child's needs. The second was the *Institutional Investigation Safety Check*. This tool is used to evaluate the safety of children placed in out of home care and to determine if safety threats are present. The third tool is the *In-Home Placement Safety Check*. This tool is used to evaluate the safety of children in the home throughout the life of the case. The fourth tool was the *Out-of-Home Placement Safety Check*. This tool evaluates the safety of children in foster, relative or fictive kin placements and the caregivers' ongoing ability to meet the needs of the children placed in the home. The final tool, the *Visitation Safety Check*, is used to assist caseworkers in developing appropriate visitation plans for parents. Training on these tools is described in the training section below.

A particular strength of this new model is that the *Out-of-Home Placement Safety Check* has assisted workers in standardizing how assessments are made in out-of-home placements. Prior to the development of this tool, only the *Nevada Safety Assessment* was used. This tool, however was primarily developed to assess safety for the biological parent and did not address some of the safety concerns regarding the caregiver, such as the caregiver's stress level in meeting the child's needs, the caregiver's need for additional training and or support to parent the child, or the safety threats that new children being placed in the home can cause. Especially as household conditions are expected to be at a higher standard than is expected of the biological parent's home. The new tools have given workers a way to have the conversation with care providers about their needs in caring for the child placed in their home and provide additional support when needed. The tool has also assisted out-of-home staff in ensuring that a safety threat truly exists that warrants a removal. Workers indicated that they saw the tool as being most helpful in assisting them to distinguish

between standard of care concerns and true safety threats. This has lead workers to have more Child and Family Team meetings to discuss concerns and develop plans for addressing concerns instead of removing children unnecessarily from placement providers.

Workers have also found the *Visitation Safety Check* helpful in being able to assess the parent's behavior during visitation to assist them in being able to determine baseline behavior for visitations and making decisions about the appropriate level of supervision required. Workers are required to review the *Visitation Safety Check* with their supervisor at monthly one-to-one supervision to increase the frequency of review of the visitation plan to allow for increases in visitation or moving toward unsupervised visitation in a timelier manner.

Washoe County Department of Social Services: In the past fiscal year, WCDSS was selected as a site for a Breakthrough Series Collaborative (BSC) with Casey Family Programs regarding timely permanency for reunification. Several goals and action steps were initiated with several promising results. These results include the reduction of the number of children placed into care and a greater understanding by all parties of the child safety model. The BSC team is very committed and engaged and is recognized often by Casey Family Programs staff for their work completed to date. Promising practices have been implemented and maintained. WCDSS indicates that continued implementation of the improvement model (Plan Do Study Act) once the BSC is discontinued (July 2010) will be a challenge. In addition, WCDSS reports that budget challenges are affecting caseworker caseload size, which in turn affects permanency outcomes.

DCFS – Rural Region: In an effort to increase diligent search efforts the DCFS-Rural Region, through the Children's Justice Act Taskforce Grant was able to purchase the LexisNexis program to conduct people searches for parents and relatives. The DCFS-Rural Region also had concerns regarding the length of time children are remaining in foster care; therefore, the Supervisory Review Committee was established. Supervisors throughout the region meet monthly to review cases and the barriers to permanency for children who have been out of home care for three months or longer. Each case is reviewed on a quarterly basis. Additionally, to increase contacts between workers and children and to increase visitation between children and families, webcams have been installed on the majority of DCFS-Rural Region workers' computers.

Policy Development and Revision

Statewide Policy: Over the past year two statewide policies were updated to reflect changes to legal requirements and statewide casework practice. These included Policy 0101 Adoption Subsidy and 1004 Training, Assessment and Licensing of Foster, Relative and Adoptive Homes. Policy 0101 Adoption Subsidy was revised to update information regarding the Fostering Connections to Success and increasing Adoptions Act of 2008(P.L 110-251). This revision was made to ensure that during the application process prospective adoptive parents of children in agency custody are informed by the child welfare agencies of the availability of a Federal Adoption Tax Credit and that they are directed to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and/or their tax preparer for more information.

Policy 1004 Training, Assessment and Licensing of Foster, Relative and Adoptive Homes (formerly Policy 1004 Structured Analysis and Family Evaluation (SAFE)) was renamed, revised and approved allowing flexibility for each child welfare agency to use their own preferred training curriculum, information gathering tools and home study template(s) to meet the needs of their children and families within their community. This revision maintains consistency in the information provided to prospective foster/adoptive parents and in the evaluative elements of home studies. Currently the DCFS Rural Region and WCDSS use the Parent Resources for Information, Development and Education (PRIDE) curriculum for training foster and adoptive parents. This curriculum uses a model for developing and supporting foster families and adoptive families, utilizing a standardized, consistent, structured framework for the competency-based recruitment, preparation, and selection of foster and adoptive parents, and for foster parent in-service training and ongoing professional development. In the fall 2009, CCDFS adopted the use of the Partnering for Safety and Permanence – Model Approach to Partnerships in Parenting (PS-MAPP) curriculum for training foster and adoptive parents. This curriculum, developed by the Child Welfare Institute, trains and licenses foster and adoptive families using consultation and interaction with the participants to allow families to “self select,” as they learn about the needs of children in foster care. Information used to complete the PS-MAPP home study is collected throughout the process. Both the PS-MAPP and PRIDE curriculum provide approved families certification for both foster care and adoption which eliminates the need for a separate home study when/if a foster family chooses to adopt a child in their care, thereby expediting the process.

In addition to policy development and revision, the State submitted a bill for the 2011 session to amend NRS 127.060 to allow Nevada agencies to finalize adoptions of children in their custody who are placed with families (usually relatives) in

another state. DCFS is suggesting permissive language to allow (but not mandate) local finalization of adoptions of children in the custody of a Nevada agency that provides child welfare services when the petitioners do not reside in Nevada. Allowing local finalization of adoptions of children in the custody of a Nevada agency that provides child welfare services would eliminate delays that our local agencies have no ability to control. This would eliminate unnecessary delays; improving permanency outcomes for children as well as CFSR Adoption measures. This will help to expedite the finalizations of adoptions and may assist in our CFSR outcome related to adoption.

Agency Level Policy: On an agency level, there was also implementation of local policies and procedures related to permanency. WCDSS and the DCFS – Rural Region did not report any agency level policy development or revision related to permanency for this past fiscal year. However, CCDFS has been engaged in a variety of policy activity related to the area of permanency. In June 2008, CCDFS developed work groups that included all levels of staff from different programs to develop new policies and procedures. In September of 2009, training was provided to all permanency staff based on the new permanency policies and procedures that were developed in the initial agency workgroups. The new policies provided timelines, documentation requirements and practice guidelines to improve the services provided to children and families. The policies implemented in Clark County changed practice in the following ways:

- When children are removed from their home as a result of safety threats that cannot be mitigated, the permanency worker is assigned within three weeks of the removal. Prior practice was to transfer the family to the permanency worker at adjudication which could be anywhere from 60 days or even a year after removal.
- Permanency workers are now required to complete the North Carolina Family Assessment System (NCFAS) on all families to assess family functioning prior to developing the formal case plan, which must be completed within 45 days of the removal.
- Permanency workers must utilize the NCFAS to develop the initial case plan, and to monitor the families' progress and update the case plan at a minimum of every 6 months.
- The policy and procedure provided clear direction for the required frequency of contact for children, parents, care providers and service providers.
- The policy and procedure provided clear direction for what information must be gathered and documented as a result of the contact with children, parents, care providers and service providers.
- Assistant Managers are required to review cases where the child has been out of the home for 10 months and they have not held a reunification Child and Family Team; they have not referred to the District Attorney to terminate parental rights; or they have not referred to the District Attorney to complete a guardianship.

A positive outcome from the development of CCDFS local policies and procedures has been that families are receiving services to support reunification much earlier than they did previously. Case plans are being developed and measured to address behavioral changes and not just compliance with treatment services. Workers have standardized tools to evaluate parent progress. CCDFS reports that they are consistently above 90% for child contacts every 30 days and the quality of the documentation for these contacts has improved. Assistant Managers are tracking how long children have been removed from their homes and are reviewing those cases and 10 months to ensure that they are moving toward a clear and appropriate permanency goal. A downside of this process is that caseload sizes have prohibited CCDFS from implementing all of the policies and procedures effectively. Helping staff to embrace and understand the change from compliance driven case plans to plans that are based on observable and demonstrated behavioral change has been challenging. It is also sometimes a challenge to train all the appropriate external stakeholders on the new policies and procedures, as is collaborating across agencies and with the family courts.

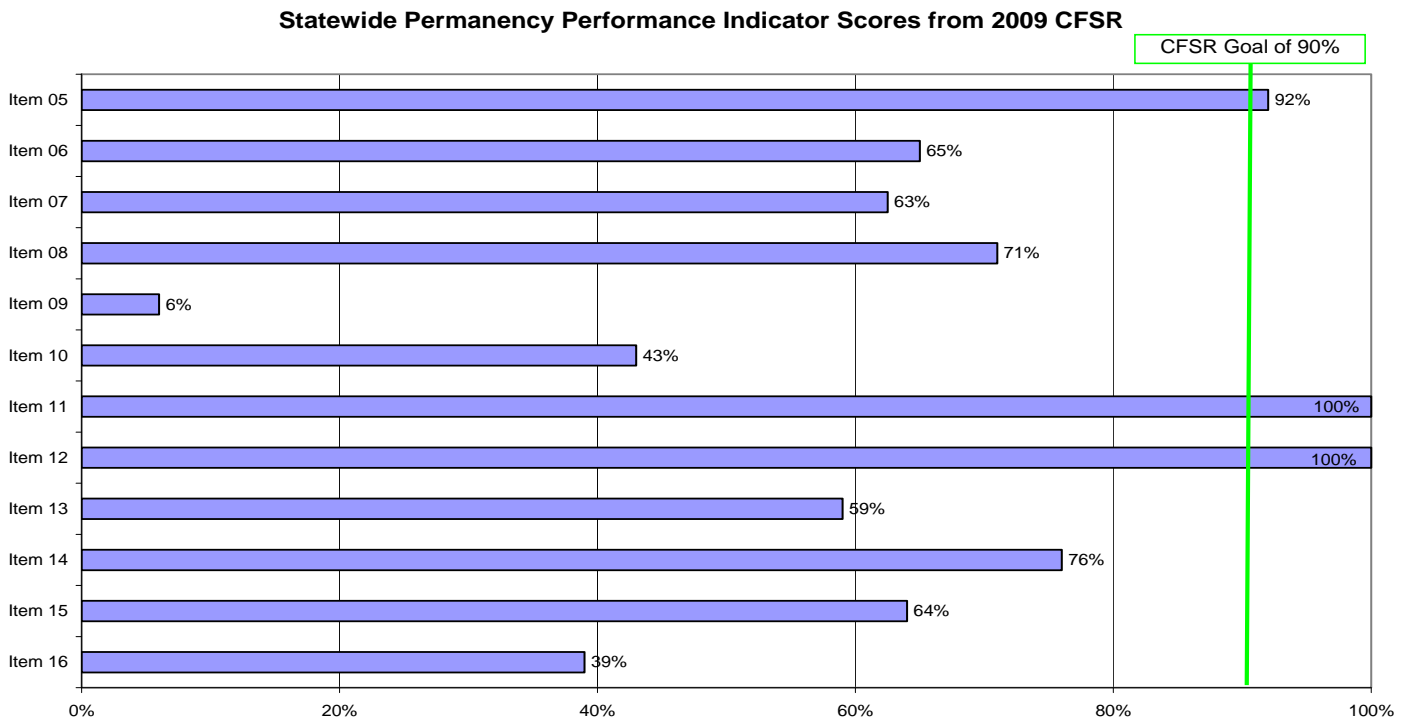
Training

CCDFS and Casey Family Programs provided training to CCDFS' out-of-home supervisors with a focus on the continuum of assessing safety throughout the life of a case using the tools described in the Initiatives section above. The training also focused on skill building with supervisors on how to review the new tools with their staff during on-to-one supervision. Supervisors and Assistant Managers then provided training to their individual units through the Month of June 2009. After in-house training was completed, training was then provided to the Nevada Care Provider Association and the Foster Parent Association on the implementation of the *Out-of-Home Placement Safety Check*.

CFSP Goals and Objectives for Permanency

In the 2010-2014 CFSP, each performance indicator was given an overall goal and one or more objectives. Each of the objectives are to be assessed through the development of data reports from the UNITY system or through qualitative means such as surveys or qualitative case reviews. This process is under development and will not be finalized until the new Program Improvement Plan is approved. UNITY reports are under development and are not planned to be completed until the spring of 2011. Therefore, for the purposes of the SFY 2010 APSR report, the data from the CFSP conducted in August 2009 is being used to show performance on each performance indicator as a whole. Where reports do currently exist, those reports are also included to address individual objectives. Unless otherwise noted, all objective reports are under development at this time. Figure 10 shows a brief graph of how Nevada rated statewide in the 2009 CFSP on individual performance indicators for permanency.

Figure 10: Statewide Permanency Performance Indicator Scores vs. 90% goal



Source: Nevada CFSP 2009 Federal Report

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

Item 5: Foster care re-entries

Goal: To assess whether children who enter foster care at a given point in time are re-entering within 12 months of a prior foster care episode.

To meet this goal, the State must make concerted efforts to prevent re-entry episodes for children who are in the foster care system and appropriately document these efforts in UNITY in a minimum of 90% of cases. Table 12 below shows that as a State, this is a strength. In the most recent CFSP review, only Washoe County fell below the required goal of 90%.

Table 12: SFY 2010 Data for Item 5

Item 5: Foster care re-entries	CFSR 2009	NV Goal	Goal Met
Statewide	92%	90%*	Yes
Clark County	100%	90%*	Yes
Washoe County	75%	90%*	No
DCFS Rural Region	100%	90%*	Yes

*Unless otherwise negotiated or if exceeds federal requirements

In addition to the information presented in Table 12 above, the most recent CFSR Data Profile provided by ACF dated April 20, 2010 provides current data for Component B: Permanency of Reunification Measure C1-4: "Re-entries to foster care in less than 12 months." The component is one measure in the overall Permanency composite 1: Timeliness and Permanency of Reunification. The national median for this measure is 15.0% and the 25th percentile is 9.9%. A lower score is preferable in this measure. Nevada scored 7.4% for the FFY 2009ab indicating a continued strength in performance on this measure.

Item 6: Stability of foster care placement

Goal: To determine if the child in foster care is in a stable placement and that any changes in placement that have occurred are in the best interest of the child and consistent with achieving the child's permanency goals.

To meet this goal, the State must ensure that the child's placement is stable and if a placement move was necessary, that the move was made in an effort to achieve the child's case goals or meet the needs of the child. Appropriate documentation in UNITY in a minimum of 90% of applicable cases is also an important objective. Table 13 shows that this is an area needing improvement for Nevada, and is not a particular strength for any child welfare agency in the State. In addition the CFSR 2009 results, the most recent Child and Family Services Review Data Profile provided by ACF dated

Table 13: SFY 2010 Data for Item 6

Item 6: Stability of foster care placement	CFSR 2009	NV Goal	Goal Met
Statewide	65%	90%*	No
Clark County	70%	90%*	No
Washoe County	70%	90%*	No
DCFS Rural Region	50%	90%*	No

*Unless otherwise negotiated or if exceeds federal requirements

April 20, 2010 provides current data for Permanency Composite 4: Placement Stability. The national standard for this composite is 101.5 or higher, however, in the last measurement period, Nevada needed to meet at least 85.6 based on past performance and a required improvement factor of 1.03. For FFY 2009ab Nevada scored 88.5 indicating that Nevada is currently meeting this goal.

Item 7: Permanency goal for child

Goal: To determine whether appropriate permanency goals are established for the child in a timely manner.

To meet this goal, the objective of the State is to ensure that the child's initial permanency goal and any amendments to the child's initial permanency goal are established in a timely manner; are appropriate to the child's needs for permanency and the circumstances of the case; and that cases that meet ASFA and statewide policy criteria for termination of parental rights (TPR) have a petition filed in a timely manner (unless there is a compelling reason not to do so). Documentation continues to be critical. Table 14, based on results of the 2009 CFSR, shows that this performance indicator is an area needing improvement for Nevada.

Table 14: SFY 2010 Data for Item 7

Item 7: Permanency goal for children	CFSR 2009	NV Goal	Goal Met
Statewide	62.5%	90%*	No
Clark County	55%	90%*	No
Washoe County	60%	90%*	No
DCFS Rural Region	80%	90%*	No

*Unless otherwise negotiated or if exceeds federal requirements

Table 15 below shows the number children in care between July 1, 2008 and April 30, 2010 (22 months) who had a TPR petition filed between 14 and 22 months as required by State policy; the number of children placed out of home who have not had a TPR filed in 14 months from removal and in 21 months from removal. Currently, 9.7% of children in care have not had a TPR filed as required are not meeting policy requirements of 22 months. This report does not determine whether or not there were compelling reasons not to file in those cases. This may be due to a variety of factors. However, one of the main reasons stated in the 2009 CFSR stakeholder interviews were that delays were due to increasing waits for treatment programs for parents with substance abuse problems, thus extending the requested time for reunification.

Table 15: Status of Petition to Terminate Parental Rights

Status of Petition to TPR	Total
Number of Children with a TPR Petition Filed Between 14 and 21 Months:	367
Number of Children placed Out of Home over 14 months without a TPR Petition Filed:	3321
Number of Children placed Out of Home over 21 Months Without a TPR Petition Filed:	361

Source: CFS7B3 July 1, 2008 – April 30, 2010

Item 8: Reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives

Goal: To determine whether concerted efforts are being made to achieve reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives in a timely manner.

To meet this goal, the State must ensure that concerted efforts are made to achieve the permanency goal of reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives in a timely manner and that efforts are appropriately documented in UNITY in a minimum of 90% of applicable cases. Table 16, based on CFSR 2009 results, shows that Washoe County is the only child welfare agency meeting this goal. Based on this data, statewide, this is still an area need improving for Nevada.

Table 16: SFY 2010 Data for Item 8

Item 8: Reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives	CFSR 2009	NV Goal	Goal Met
Statewide	71%	90%*	No
Clark County	50%	90%*	No
Washoe County	100%	90%*	Yes
DCFS Rural Region	83%	90%*	No

*Unless otherwise negotiated or if exceeds federal requirements

In addition, the most recent CFSR Data Profile provided by ACF dated April 20, 2010 provides current data for Permanency Composite 1: Timeliness and Permanency of Reunification. The data profile indicates that in order to be in compliance with this measure, that a state must meet the standard of 122.6 or higher. Nevada scored 135.2 on this composite and ranks 6th out of 47 states. This is a very different score than reported in the 2009 Nevada CFSR, which indicates that as a State; only 71% of cases reviewed were meeting this goal. Based on the data profile, the median number of months a child is in care is 5.6 months or less. The national standard is 6.5 months or lower. Therefore, this is an area of strength for Nevada as evidenced by the increasing placements with relatives and increased reunification.

Item 9: Adoption

Goal: To determine whether concerted efforts are being made to achieve a finalized adoption in a timely manner.

There is one main objective that the State has projected to achieve this goal. The State and court will ensure that concerted efforts are made to achieve the goal of finalized adoption in a timely manner and that efforts are appropriately documented in UNITY in a minimum of 90% of applicable cases. Table 17 shows Nevada's most recent performance on this performance indicator from the CFSR conducted in 2009. Statewide, Nevada only rated 6% out of a possible 100%. Clark County met 10% of this goal, while Washoe County and the DCFS – Rural region did not achieve any compliance.

Table 17: SFY 2010 Data for Item 9

Item 9: Adoption	CFSR 2009	NV Goal	Goal Met
Statewide	6%	90%*	No
Clark County	10%	90%*	No
Washoe County	0%	90%*	No
DCFS Rural Region	0%	90%*	No

*Unless otherwise negotiated or if exceeds federal requirements

Timeliness of Adoptions is a Federal Permanency Composite Measure. Component A: Timeliness of Adoptions of Children discharged from Foster Care Measure C2-2: "Exits to adoption, median length of stay" is the second of two measures in Component A, and one measure in the overall Permanency composite 2: Timeliness of Adoptions. The national median for this measure is 32.4 months and the 25th percentile is 27.3 months (a lower score is preferable in this measure). The most recent data profile on this measure from the Children's Bureau dated April 20, 2010 reports Federal FY 2009ab median months as 36.2 months which is higher than the national median.

Please note that Nevada measures the **average** months to adoption from the date of removal on UNITY report CFS732. In contrast the federal measure depicts the **median** length of stay from the date of the removal. Overall, and in contrast this graph presents higher average months to adoption than are required. Table 18 shows the results of UNITY report CFS732 – Adoptions in Less than 24 Months. This report is run each May and counts back 24 months from the date run to demonstrate the percentage of children adopted in less than 24 months. The table shows a decrease in the percentage of adoptions in less than 24 months compared to the same time one year before. Currently, the percent of children adopted in less than 24 months is 19%. Nevada scored 16.4% for the FFY 2009ab, which is lower than what our UNITY CFS732 reports, but is still within several percentage points of each other.

Table 18: UNITY CFS732 Report – Adoptions in Less than 24 Months

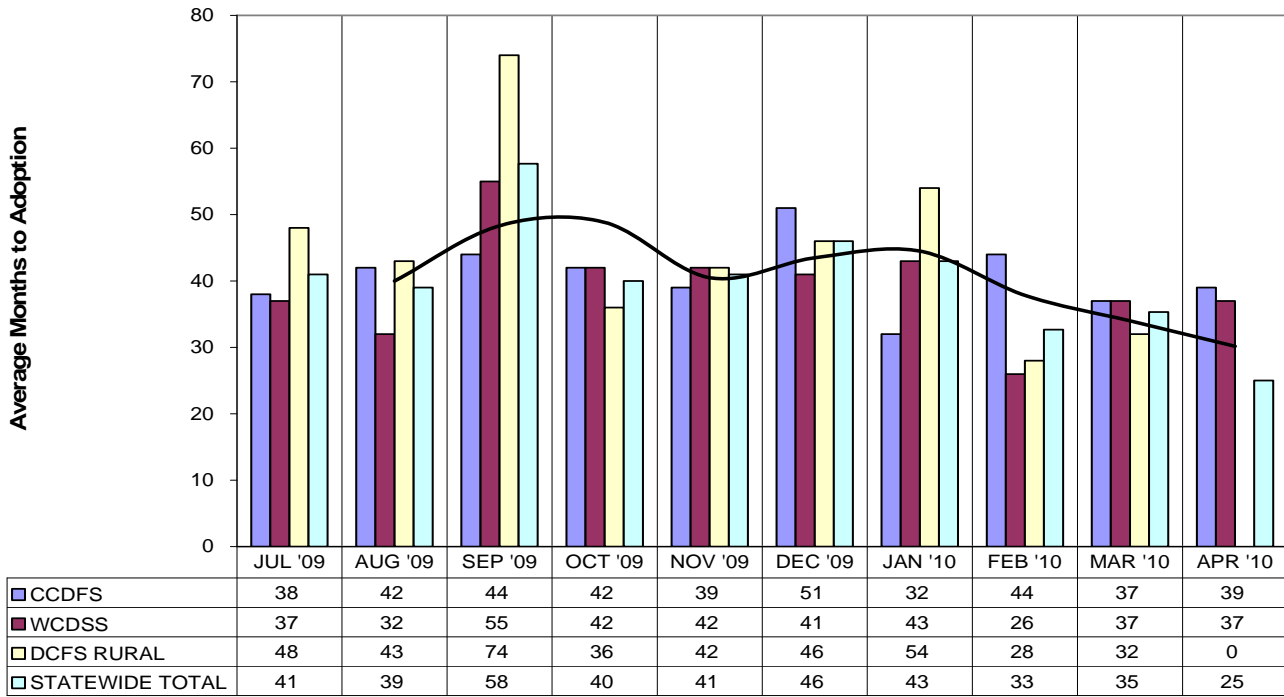
	Adoptions with a Custody Date in UNITY	Custody to Adoption Average Months	Number Adopted in less than 24 Months	Percent Adopted in less than 24 Months
Adoptions in Less than 24 Months <i>April 1, 2007 – May 31, 2009</i>	58	39	13	22%
Adoptions in Less than 24 Months <i>April 1, 2008 – May 31, 2010</i>	29	39	5	19%

Source: UNITY Report CFS732 Data for each May looks back 24 months from the date run on May 31.

Figure 11, also based on UNITY report CFS732, depicts the average months to Adoption from July 1, 2009 through April 30, 2010. While the chart shows that there is a steady decline in the number of months to adoption; finalization of adoptions are not occurring within 24 months as required by ASFA and are still more than 15 months more than required. Some of the reasons given by stakeholders during the 2009 CFSR review were that there is a shortage of adoptive homes and that those that are in place not being secured until a child's TPR is finalized; in addition to court proceedings. This practice has led to increased time to finalize adoptions. This item continues to present as an area needing improvement in Nevada and will be addressed during the PIP.

Figure 11: Average Months to Adoption

Average Months to Adoption



Source: UNITY Report CFS732 July 1, 2009 to April 30, 2010

Adoption in Nevada

The overall goal of Nevada’s adoption program is to continue to provide safe and permanent homes for children whose birth parents cannot care for them. Nevada Adoption services continue to provide pre-placement and post-placement counseling to birth parents; case management; legal service to free children for adoption; recruitment, training, home study preparation for pre-adoptive families; adoption subsidy; and, post legal adoption support. The State continues to be responsible for licensing and administrative oversight of private non-profit child placing agencies in the state. DCFS currently licenses eight private adoption agencies, one of which has full Hague accreditation, and one other has indicated their intent to apply for accreditation.

The State established and facilitates quarterly meetings with the Adoption Coalition; a forum for collaboration between public child welfare agency adoption programs and the licensed private child-placing agencies. Meetings include discussion of issues, concerns and challenges such as ICPC requirements, the impact of state and federal legislative changes (Adam Walsh Child Protection Act, Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act and Nevada’s Domestic Partnership bill) and the increasing number of drug and/or alcohol affected children being placed for adoption by private child-placing agencies necessitating the provision of information about adoption assistance. Coalition members have all signed confidentiality agreements since the body may also function as a multi-disciplinary team (MDT) by discussing the circumstances of specific cases; including service needs, sharing of information on community resources and information about birth parents who may be working with multiple agencies and/or accepting reimbursement of pregnancy related expenses from more than one adoptive family.

Inter-Country Adoptions: Children in the custody of state and county child welfare agencies may be placed with relatives in other countries. Placement approval and supervision are arranged by way of a process similar to ICPC through cooperative agreements with social service agencies in the prospective adoptive parent’s country of residence. Most families who adopt from other countries are served by licensed, private child-placing agencies. However, state and county child welfare agencies may serve families who adopt internationally, as they are able, contingent upon caseloads and staffing ratios. Home studies, post placement supervision, information and referral and other support services are

provided.

Adoption Incentive Grant Funds: The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 re-authorized the Adoption Incentive Grant Program for an additional five years; including updating the baseline above which incentive payments are made and doubling the incentive payments for adoptions of children with special needs and older children adoptions. The state was awarded \$150,000 for FFY 2009 and budgeted as follows for SFY 2010. Annual membership dues to the Adoption Exchange Association, as well as a separate contract with the Adoption Exchange to act as the state's Recruitment Response Team (RRT) for AdoptUsKids and in-state travel expenses for renewal and initial licensing of child placing agencies were paid from these funds. The balance was sub-granted to the three public child welfare jurisdictions based upon their respective shares of finalized adoptions. Funds awarded from the Adoption Incentive Grant are used to facilitate inter-jurisdictional placements; including travel for pre-placement transitional visits, post-placement supervision, specialized assessments, respite care and privatized delivery of therapeutic services not covered by Medicaid. The grant funds also support specialized recruitment and adoption finalization activities, including National Adoption Day, as well as a contract with Olive Crest Treatment Center to complete home studies and compile documentation necessary for social summaries and timely filing of termination of parental rights (TPR) petitions.

Adoption Assistance Program: It is the policy of the agencies providing child welfare services to provide financial, medical, and social service assistance to adoptive parents; thereby encouraging and supporting the adoption of special-needs children from foster care. Statewide policy outlines the special needs eligibility criteria, application process, types of assistance available and the necessary elements of a subsidized adoption agreement. The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 adds a new IV-E Plan requirement that agencies must inform prospective adoptive parents about the Federal Income Tax credit for adoption. The Adoption Subsidy Policy has been revised to specifically require agencies to so notify prospective adoptive parents and document this in the case record. The Act also phases in "de-linking" of a child's eligibility for federally funded adoption assistance payments from the outdated AFDC income requirements from 1996, thereby increasing the number of children with special needs who can be adopted with federal support. The state's IV-E Plan was amended to include these provisions. Eligibility policy will be amended to direct this change in eligibility determination as the revised adoption assistance eligibility criteria are phased-in from FY 2010 to FY 2018.

Item 10: Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement

Goal: *To determine whether the State is making concerted efforts to ensure:*

- *That the child is adequately prepared to make the transition from foster care to independent living (if it is expected that the child will remain in foster care until he or she reaches the age of majority or is emancipated).*
- *That the child, even though remaining in foster care, is in a "permanent" living arrangement with a foster parent or relative caregiver and that there is a commitment on the part of all parties involved that the child remain in that placement until he or she reaches the age of majority or is emancipated.*
- *That the child is in a long-term care facility and will remain in that facility until transition to an adult care facility.*

There are two main objectives related to this goal. The first is that the State will ensure that concerted efforts are made to provide the child with a primary or concurrent permanency goal of OPPLA with services to adequately prepare him or her for independent living when the he or she leaves foster care (at age 16 or older or for any age child with a goal of emancipation/independence) and the second is that the State will ensure that concerted efforts are made to achieve the goal of OPPLA in a timely manner by placing the child in a living arrangement that is "permanent" and the child will remain in the living arrangement until his or her discharge from foster care. Overall, these efforts must be appropriately documented in UNITY in a minimum of 90% of applicable cases.

Table 19 shows the results from the 2009 CFSR. While Washoe County individually achieved compliance on this item, the results indicate that this item is an area needing improvement for Nevada.

Table 19: SFY 2010 Data for Item 10

Item 10: Other planned permanent living arrangement	CFSR 2009	NV Goal	Goal Met
Statewide	43%	90%*	No
Clark County	25%	90%*	No
Washoe County	100%	90%*	Yes
DCFS Rural Region	50%	90%*	No

*Unless otherwise negotiated or if exceeds federal requirements

Permanency Outcome 2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children

Item 11: Proximity of foster care placement

Goal: *To determine whether concerted efforts are being made to ensure that the child's foster care placement is close enough to the parent(s) to facilitate face-to-face contact between the child and the parent(s) while the child is in foster care.*

To reach this goal, the State will ensure that the child's current placement is close enough to his or her parents or other potential permanent caregivers to facilitate frequent face-to-face contact between the child and the parents/permanent caregivers while the child is in foster care (unless the placement is based on the child's needs and intended to ensure that the child's case plan goals are achieved and are in the best interest of the child) and that these efforts are appropriately documented in UNITY in a minimum of 90% of cases. Results from the 2009 CFSR, as listed in Table 20, demonstrate that Nevada is effectively meeting this goal and that this is a strength for Nevada child welfare agencies.

Table 20: SFY 2010 Data for Item 11

Item 11: Proximity of foster care placement	CFSR 2009	NV Goal	Goal Met
Statewide	100%	90%*	Yes
Clark County	100%	90%*	Yes
Washoe County	100%	90%*	Yes
DCFS Rural Region	100%	90%*	Yes

*Unless otherwise negotiated or if exceeds federal requirements

Item 12: Placement with siblings

Goal: *To determine if concerted efforts are being made to ensure that siblings in foster care are placed together unless a separation was necessary to meet the needs of one of the siblings.*

To meet this goal, the State will ensure that the child and his or her siblings who are also in care are in the same placement (unless there is a valid reason not to do so, such as it is not in the best interest of the child) and that this information is appropriately documented in UNITY in a minimum of 90% of cases. Table 21 shows that this is another area of strength for Nevada. 2009 CFSR results demonstrate that 100% of cases reviewed show that each agency is exceeding this goal.

Table 21: SFY 2010 Data for Item 12

Item 12: Placement with siblings	CFSR 2009	NV Goal	Goal Met
Statewide	100%	90%*	Yes
Clark County	100%	90%*	Yes
Washoe County	100%	90%*	Yes
DCFS Rural Region	100%	90%*	Yes

*Unless otherwise negotiated or if exceeds federal requirements

Item 13: Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care

Goal: *To determine if concerted efforts are being made to ensure that visitation between a child in foster care and his or her mother, father, and siblings is of sufficient frequency and quality to promote continuity in the child's relationship with these close family members.*

There are several objectives that the State must reach in order to be in compliance with this goal. Overall, the State will ensure that the frequency and quality of visits (or other forms of contact if visits are not possible) between the child and his or her mother, father, and siblings are of sufficient frequency to maintain or promote the continuity of the relationship. In addition, the State must ensure that these visits including the typical pattern of visitation are appropriately documented in UNITY in a minimum of 90% of cases. Table 22 from the 2009 CFSR show that Nevada is not currently meeting this goal, with the exception of Washoe County. This is an area needing improvement for Nevada.

Table 22: SFY 2010 Data for Item 13

Item 13: Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care	CFSR 2009	NV Goal	Goal Met
Statewide	59%	90%*	No
Clark County	44%	90%*	No
Washoe County	100%	90%*	Yes
DCFS Rural Region	60%	90%*	No

*Unless otherwise negotiated or if exceeds federal requirements

Item 14: Preserving connections

Goal: *To determine whether concerted efforts are being made to maintain the child's connections to his or her neighborhood, community, faith, extended family, tribe, school and friends.*

To reach this goal, the State must ensure that concerted efforts are made to maintain important connections for the child. This includes keeping the child close to his or her home neighborhood, placing the child in his or her home school, and placing the child with a family with similar faith or culture, etc. Efforts to preserve a child's connections are to be documented appropriately in UNITY in a minimum of 90% of applicable cases. Results from the 2009 CFSR report shown in Table 23 indicate that with the exception of the DCFS – Rural Region, that Nevada is not meeting this goal.

Table 23: SFY 2010 Data for Item 14

Item 14: Preserving connections	CFSR 2009	NV Goal	Goal Met
Statewide	76%	90%*	No
Clark County	63%	90%*	No
Washoe County	80%	90%*	No
DCFS Rural Region	100%	90%*	Yes

*Unless otherwise negotiated or if exceeds federal requirements

One primary objective for this item is ensuring that sufficient inquiry is conducted with the parent, child, custodian or other interested party to determine whether the child may be a member of, or eligible for membership in, a Native American Tribe. If the State determines that a child is a member or may be eligible for tribal membership that the tribe is provided timely notification of its right to intervene in any State court proceedings seeking an involuntary foster care placement or termination of parental rights. Additionally, the State must ensure that if a child is a member of, or eligible for tribal membership that concerted efforts were made to place the child in foster care in accordance with the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) placement preferences. In Nevada, there are systems in place to ensure that these efforts are being made and are being improved. The State continues to follow provisions of the Federal Indian Child Welfare Act that was added in 1995 as a result of State Assembly Bill 351, and the state continues to maintain the following activities to comply with ICWA.

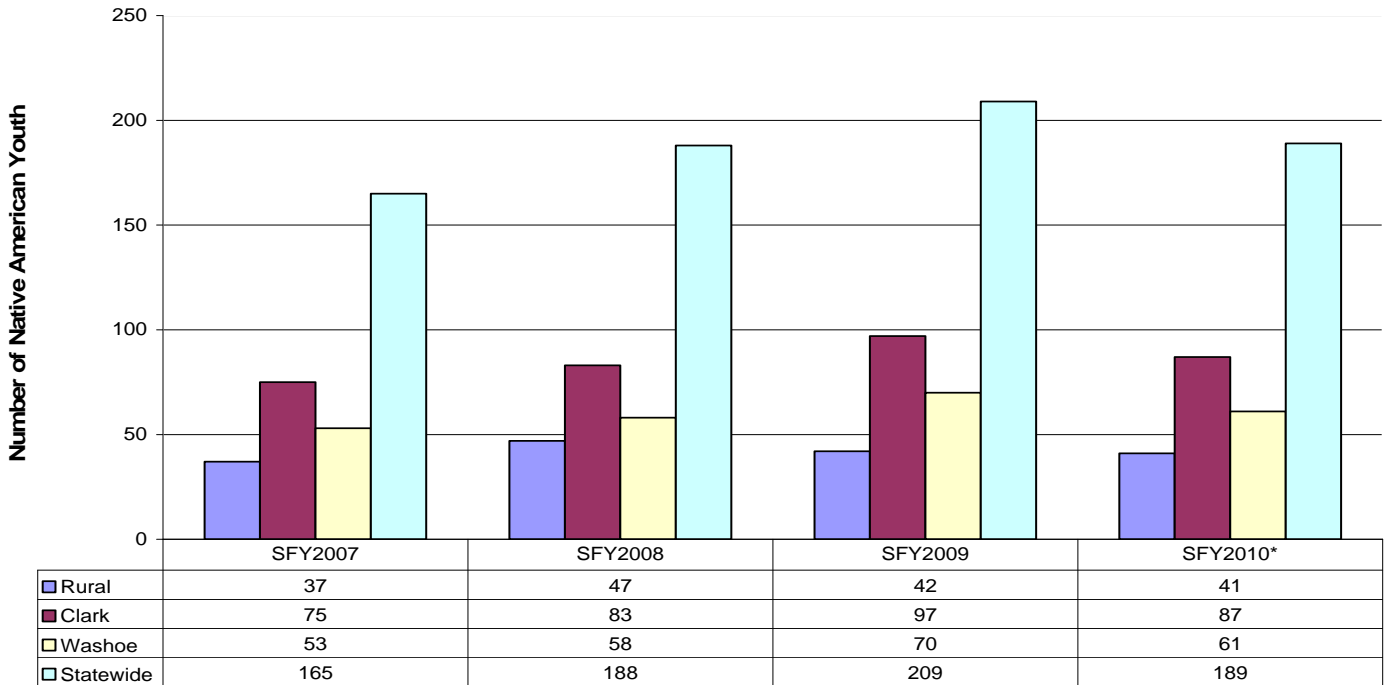
1. Inquiry about Indian heritage of a child (NRS 432B.397 and Nevada Administrative Code 432B.263).

The State's UNITY system collects the required information regarding Indian children and DCFS is able to identify Native American Indian Children. UNITY provides a special quarterly Detail Report CFS777 that collects data on the number of children statewide, by region and by individual child welfare agency. Figure 12 shows the results of this

report. Compliance with this requirement to identify Indian children has been met and has been maintained since 2006.

Figure 12: Number of Native American Youth in Care

Native American Youth In Care



Source: UNITY Report CFS777 - SFY 2010 is July 1, 2009 to May 31, 2010

- Notification of Indian parents and Tribes of State proceedings involving Indian children and their right to intervene (NRS 432B.425).

Nevada child welfare agencies continue to use a standardized Tribal Notification form that was developed in accordance with ICWA guidelines. The form and protocol are contained in the Nevada Indian Child Welfare Resource Guide, updated in May 2007. The Resource Guide is a tool for use by State and county child welfare staff. Information regarding ICWA is also contained in the Parent’s Guide to Child Protective Services Booklet, revised April 2006, and in a separate ICWA brochure. Compliance with this requirement has been met since 2006 through application of the Nevada Revised Statutes and it continues to be maintained through the court system and training. ICWA is part of the Nevada New Worker Core Training.

- Special placement preferences include Indian children (NRS 432B.455, .457).

Compliance continues to be met through application of the Nevada Revised Statutes, regulation, and placement policy. Compliance continues to be maintained through placement activities and staff training listed in our response to question 2 above.

- Active efforts, reasonable efforts (NRS 432B.393);

Compliance with this requirement has been in place since 2006 through application of the Nevada Revised Statutes, regulation, and placement policy. “Active efforts” is part of the ICWA training curriculum that has been provided to staff listed in question 2 above. ICWA is now a web-based curriculum and was deployed originally in June 2009. The curriculum was piloted for several months and then was revised based on stakeholder feedback. ICWA is also part of the Nevada New Worker CORE Training.

- 5.Use of tribal courts and the tribe’s right to intervene in State proceedings and allow transfer of the proceedings to

the jurisdiction of the tribe for a child custody proceeding due to child abuse or neglect (NRS 432B.425).

Compliance with this requirement has been met through application of the Nevada Revised Statutes, regulation, and adoption and policies. Compliance continues to be maintained through the court system and staff training listed in question 2 above. There is a clear understanding garnered from the development of the statewide "ICWA Jurisdictional Matrix" with representatives of each of the 27 Nevada Tribes that the State of Nevada is responsible for providing the assurances outlined at Section 422(b)(8). These assurances include provision of demographic and specific case placement and foster care information into the statewide informational system (UNITY); case review system; service programs; reunification or placement options; pre-placement preventative services; and policies and judicial procedures regarding children abandoned at or shortly after birth.

Item 15: Relative placement

Goal: *To determine whether concerted efforts are being made to place the child with relatives when appropriate.*

Under this goal, the State has the objective to ensure that concerted efforts are made to identify, locate, and evaluate maternal and paternal relatives as potential placements for the child. In addition, the State must ensure that a placement made where a child placed with relatives is stable and appropriate to the child's needs. All of these efforts must be appropriately documented in UNITY in a minimum of 90% of cases. As the data in Table 24 shows, Nevada is not currently meeting these objectives. Statewide, in the number of cases reviewed, Nevada only had 54% of cases listed as a strength in this area. Relative placements are sometimes unable to meet licensing regulations because of a variety of circumstances including: housing conditions, previous child abuse/neglect allegations and or criminal history. Such issues can slow the placement decision making process while the agencies assess the potential for issuing waivers for specific regulations. However, Statewide from the CLEO reports indicates that for the first three quarters of SFY 2010, that 14,204 licensed and unlicensed relative placements occurred. This is in contrast to 11,777 foster care placements. This data indicates that more children are being placed with relatives than not. Please refer to Figure 08 in the introduction to this section for the total placements made statewide.

Table 24: SFY 2010 Data for Item 15

Item 15: Relative placement	CFSR 2009	NV Goal	Goal Met
Statewide	64%	90%*	No
Clark County	53%	90%*	No
Washoe County	70%	90%*	No
DCFS Rural Region	78%	90%*	No

*Unless otherwise negotiated or if exceeds federal requirements

Item 16: Relationship of child in care with parents

Goal: *To determine whether concerted efforts are being made to promote, support, and/or maintain positive relationship between the child in foster care and his or her mother and father or other primary caregivers(s) from whom the child had been removed through activities other than just arranging for visitation.*

To meet this goal, the State must ensure that concerted efforts are made to promote, support, and otherwise maintain or strengthen a positive and nurturing relationship between the child in foster care and his or her mother and father and that these efforts are documented in UNITY in a minimum of 90% of cases. Table 25 below shows the results of the 2009 CFSR. This data indicates that with the exception of Washoe County, that the State is not meeting this goal and this continues to be an area needing improvement.

Table 25: SFY 2010 Data for Item 16

Item 16: Relationship of child in care with parents	CFSR 2009	NV Goal	Goal Met
Statewide	39%	90%*	No
Clark County	21%	90%*	No
Washoe County	100%	90%*	Yes
DCFS Rural Region	25%	90%*	No

*Unless otherwise negotiated or if exceeds federal requirements

SECTION V: CHILD AND FAMILY WELL-BEING

Trends in Child and Family Well-Being

Initiatives

Statewide: The State has been engaged in a variety of initiatives, workgroups and projects over the past year. Independent Living has been one of those major initiatives related to child and family well-being. Independent Living (IL) programs in Nevada are intended to prepare foster and former foster youth for adulthood and self-sufficiency. The IL program continues to assist and prepare foster and former foster youth in making the transition from foster care to adulthood by providing opportunities to obtain life skills for self-sufficiency and independence. To be eligible to participate in the Independent Living Program, a youth must be at least 15 years of age and have been a dependent ward of the State of Nevada or the Tribal system and removed from their home. In an effort to improve the IL program, the State recently contracted with FosterClub to utilize of the FosterClub CONNECT program as a means of not only marketing The National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) but in the completion of the survey and collection of the appropriate data for upload into the State's SACWIS system. The program also developed a brochure to showcase the IL program within Nevada and to supplement local marketing efforts. In addition, the IL program has expanded its work with the Youth Advisory Board (YAB). The YAB was expanded in the Rural Region with a newly formed board in Carson City and Pahrump. The YAB published their first newsletter, *The Advisory*, in March 2010 after many months of discussion and hard work. Both the YAB's in Clark County and Washoe County have established their own web pages with links to each other as well as Foster Club.

Agency Level: On the agency level, efforts have been made to improve child and family well-being. Washoe County reports that their staff pediatrician and medical unit has successfully implemented the initial placement wellness screening and EPSDT referral. A particular strength of this program is that WCDSS is fortunate to have a Pediatrician and Advanced Nurse Practitioner (APN) specially trained in child abuse and neglect on staff. An area that presents a challenge is the inability to implement medical care managers. These positions would ensure timely follow-through to medical requests. As a result, some services are not provided as quickly as desired.

The DCFS Rural Region indicates that they have seen improvements in out-of-state placements. These placements are now monitored by a DCFS Rural Region Clinical Manager in an effort to track and lower the total bed days for out-of-state youth and to improve transition planning. In addition, the Rural Region reports that Placement Review Team meetings are held in each District Office with the Rural Region Clinical Staff. Children who are placed in a higher level of care are reviewed quarterly or on an as needed basis in order to ensure that their needs are being addressed in their higher level placement. This results in discharge planning/placement, decreased disruptions, and increased efforts made to decrease and shorten placements in higher levels of care.

Clark County Department of Family Services has participated in a variety of projects related to child and family well-being. Since July 2009, CCDFS initiated a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with local psychiatrists to partner in reviewing psychotropic medications prescribe to foster children in Clark County. This step will provide the county with a medical team that will independently review psychotropic prescriptions. A challenge anticipated is that some psychiatrists may be reluctant to review their peers. The Department has also implemented a medication log that is included in the medical passport for every child that comes into care. The Medical Case Management unit collects and monitors those logs on a monthly basis and reports all psychotropic medication to Family Clinical Services for review. The promise of this practice is that a uniform procedure has been implemented, however currently only 20% of foster parents are completing the required paperwork. Another promise initiative is that the Department has increased efforts to produce an accurate and timely medical passport for each child in foster care. The Medical unit monitors medical care through the passport program and assures that the child's medical information is entered into UNITY and included in the passport provided to each caregiver. This process has been made possible through receipt of a grant which allowed the Department to double the staff dedicated to this task. To date it has been very successful. 97% of placements receive a passport upon initial placement within 72 hours.

In addition, the Medical Case Management unit has begun tracking and pursuing compliance for the EPSDT exam for all children within 14 days of placement by routinely pulling UNITY and COGNOS reports for compliance and contacting caregivers to schedule exams and provide transportation to the exam when needed. The Department has been able to increase EPSDT compliance within 14 days of placement from about 16 days by approximately 48%. A challenge to this

process is that sometimes caregivers are reluctant to comply, especially if the placement is short-term. Another initiative that has been implemented by CCDFS is the expansion of medical services at 701 N Pecos to include an onsite clinic with eight exam rooms. This will provide four times the capacity for medical care for CCDFS children. The Department is also working on contracting out the onsite nursing services at the Pecos site. By contracting out these services, this will provide the Department with a medical director and increasing clinic capacity will also increase EPSDT compliance, as well as provide general medical care to CCDFS children.

Since July 2009, the Department has initiated a Transition and Stability team. This is a team of Child Development Specialists who go with children when they are placed in a new home. They work to assimilate both the child and the caregiver to the new placement. This team assists with the initial EPSDT and registering the child in school. They also assist the caregiver with accessing clothing for the child, as well as, car seats, cribs, etc. needed to facilitate a successful placement. As a result of this team, the disruption rate during the two week period is minute. Additionally, the Department initiated a CAPTA IDEA liaison. This staff person assures that every child with a substantiated case under the age of three is referred to Nevada Early Intervention Services and tracks those that qualify. Another liaison position implemented is one with the Clark County School District. This staff person assists with the enrolling and/or re-enrolling of children in the district as needed. The Liaison also assures that IEP's are communicated between caregivers and schools and assures that the child is enrolled in the appropriate school to meet the IEP. This staff person also enters all the appropriate information into UNITY.

Policy Development and Revision

Several policies relating to child and family well-being were developed or revised in the last fiscal year. These include policies related to independent living services for youth, case planning related to educational stability, and psychotropic medication policy related to legislation from the 2009 legislative session. Independent Living for Youth is outlined below. The policies related to educational stability and psychotropic medications are found in Items 22 and 23, respectively.

Independent Living for Youth: With the assistance of Casey Family Programs, a statewide collaborative independent living workgroup was created to evaluate and revise the current independent living services system. Decisions were made to standardize the program statewide to provide for consistency and best practices to all youth within the State of Nevada. To facilitate this process, a new 0801 Youth Independent Living Program policy is being drafted and is in the process of being approved by the Decision Making Group (DMG). This policy will fall under Chapter 800 of the overall Statewide Child Welfare Policy and Procedures Manual and replaces the single existing policy 0801 Independent Living for Youth. The new policy will include the following subject areas:

- Assigning an Independent Living Support
- Individual Engagement and Assessment
- Youth Independent Living Planning
- Youth Independent living Case Management
- Youth Transitional Services
- Case Closure for Youth with Independent Living Plans
- Chafee-National Youth in Transition Database-NYTD

The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2009 (P.L. 110-351) and the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (P.L. 111-148) have amended the John H. Chafee Independent Living Program requirements of the Social Security Act. Each state is required to develop a Health Care Oversight and Coordination Plan to address these changes. As a result, the State has incorporated all requirements found in these amendments into the statewide 0801 Youth Independent Living Program policy. Foster Connections requires that youth exiting care must have an individual transition plan established within 90 days prior to their exit. Statewide policy requires youth to incorporate and Exit Plan (transition plan) to their Youth Plan for Independent Living at age 17½. In practice, youth meet with their Independent Living team and begin development of their transition plan shortly after their 17th birthday and have the plan in place no later than six (6) months prior to their exit from care. With regard to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, Statewide Policy states that youth must be educated on the importance of deciding who they would want to make medical decisions for them should they not be able to do so and will assist them in creating a valid Medical Power of Attorney at the time they exit care. The State will be incorporating in policy and in the Youth Plan for Independent Living Transition Plan areas which allows the youth to address their health insurance needs and create a Medical Power of Attorney prior to leaving the care and custody of the State of Nevada. Development of this overarching policy was a statewide collaborative effort. The workgroup has been committed to standardizing the program and in most cases; agencies are already starting to follow this new practice.

Agency Level Policies: In addition to the above statewide policies, WCDSS updated their local policy manual related to well-being, including Section 18 and 24. Section 18, Placement Services was revised to incorporate statutory changes to relative relationships and was distributed to staff. Section 24, Visitation was revised due to an initiative through the Family Court Senior Model Court. Training classes regarding new practices was developed by the policy team including foster parents, the public defender and agency staff. Training was delivered to a joint audience of foster parents and child welfare staff. In addition, a Psychotropic Medication policy was drafted and submitted for approval with an anticipated completion date of June 2010. Finally, an administrative policy regarding dangerous situations in the office was revised by the Staff Advisory Committee (SAC) and approved by WCDSS management. Training is being researched for implementation.

The DCFS-Rural Region is in the process of developing a Rural Region specific child welfare policy and procedure manual. A draft, including applicable permanency policies, has been developed and is currently under review by the Social Services Managers in the Rural Region.

For CCDFS, most policies were developed prior to July 1, 2009. However, implementation of several policies occurred in the last fiscal year. The first policy is entitled Out-of-Home (Permanency) Services. This was implemented on August 20, 2009 and the department is in phase one of implementation. In October of 2009, the Department implemented an Instructional Memo for Out-of-Home staff regarding requesting child support for parents and the Report and Dispositional Hearing. In March of 2010 the memo was revised and new training was provided to staff. An Independent Living policy and procedure was developed in October of 2009 and the Department is in the process of developing training to implement the policy in September 2010. Finally, a Clinical Services policy was developed and implemented with an effective date of October 21, 2009.

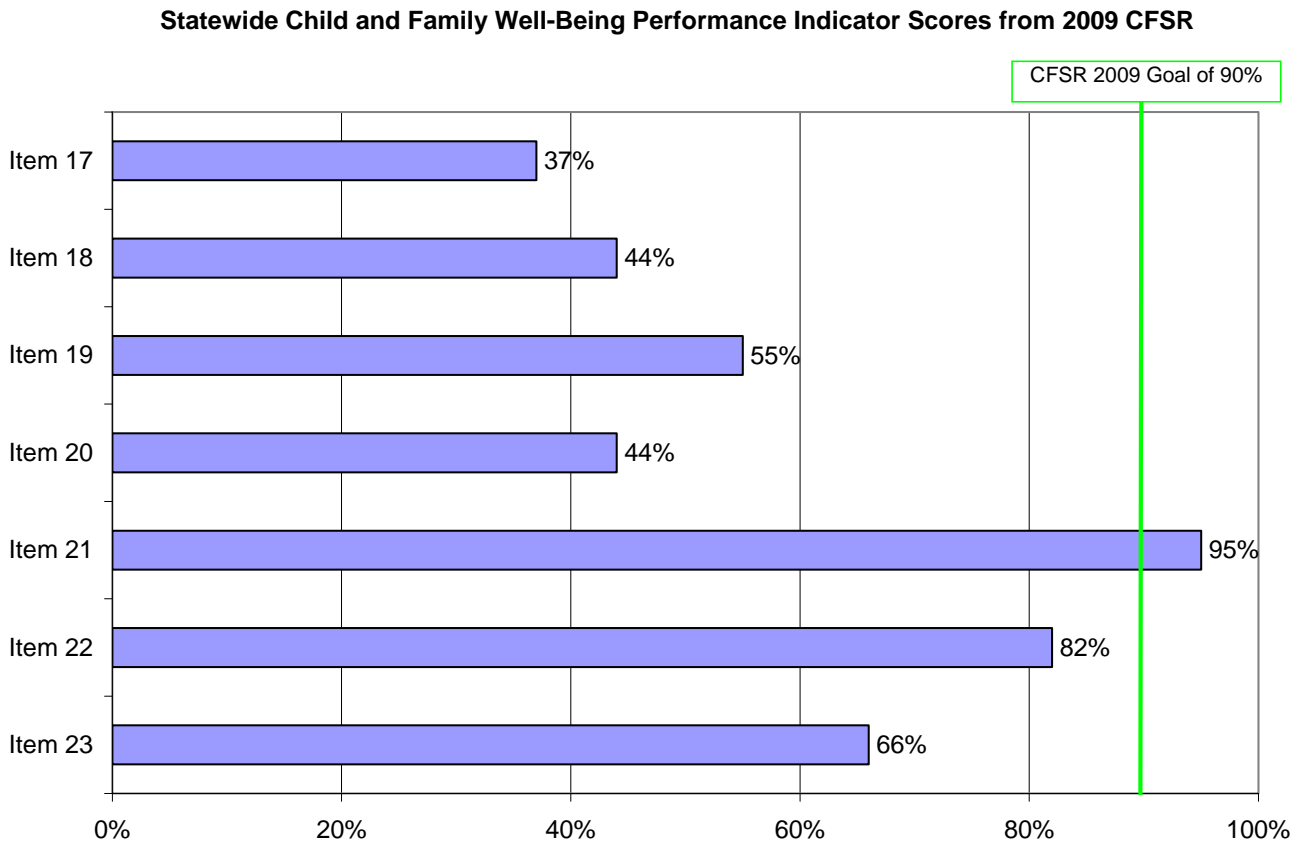
Training

Beginning in October 2009, several stakeholders participated in a “training of trainers” workshop on the Ansell Casey Life Skills Assessment. Participants included members from CCDFS, workers from the Family Recourse Centers (FRC) in Pahrump, and FPO independent Living staff. Approximately 10 child welfare staff are now trainers of Ansell Casey Plus.

CFSP Goals and Objectives for Child and Family Well-Being

In the 2010-2014 CFSP, each performance indicator was given an overall goal and one or more objectives. Each of these objectives are to be assessed through the development of data reports from the UNITY system or through qualitative means such as surveys or qualitative case reviews. This process is under development and will not be finalized until the new Program Improvement Plan is approved. UNITY reports are under development and are not planned to be completed until the spring of 2011. Therefore, for the purposes of the SFY 2010 APSR report, the data from the CFSP conducted in August 2009 is being used to show performance on each performance indicator as a whole. Where reports do currently exist, those reports are also included to address individual objectives. Unless otherwise noted, all objective reports are under development at this time. Figure 13 shows a brief graph of how Nevada rated statewide in the 2009 CFSP on individual performance indicators for child and family well-being.

Figure 13: Child and Family Well-Being Performance Indicator Scores vs. 90% goal



Source: Nevada 2009 CFSR Federal Report

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

Item 17: Needs and services of child, parents, and foster parents

Goal: *To determine whether the State is making concerted efforts to assess the needs of children, parents, and foster parents (both at the child’s entry into foster care and on an ongoing basis) to identify the services necessary to achieve case goals and adequately address the issues relevant to the agency’s involvement with the family, and provide the appropriate services.*

To meet this goal, the State must ensure that concerted efforts are made to conduct formal or informal initial comprehensive assessment of the child’s and his or her parents’ and foster parents’ needs and/or ongoing assessments to provide updated information regarding the child’s needs for case planning purposes. In addition, the State must ensure that concerted efforts are made to provide appropriate services to meet the child’s and his or her parents’ and foster parents’ identified needs. The State must also ensure that that this information is appropriately documented in UNITY in a minimum of 90% of cases. Table 26 below shows the results from the 2009 CFSR conducted in Nevada. Currently, this is an area needing improvement for Nevada, as only 37% of the cases had this area rated as a strength during this review.

Table 26: SFY 2010 Data for Item 17

Item 17: Needs and services of child, parents and foster parents	CFSR 2009	NV Goal	Goal Met
Statewide	37%	90%*	No
Clark County	27%	90%*	No
Washoe County	50%	90%*	No
DCFS Rural Region	39%	90%*	No

*Unless otherwise negotiated or if exceeds federal requirements

Item 18: Child and family involvement in case planning

Goal: To determine whether the State is making concerted efforts to involve parents and children (if developmentally appropriate) in the case planning process on an ongoing basis.

To comply with this goal, the State must ensure that there are concerted efforts to actively involve the child (if developmentally appropriate) and his or her parents in case planning and that these efforts are documented in UNITY in a minimum of 90% of cases. Results in Table 27 from the CFSR conducted in 2009 indicate that this is an area needing improvement for Nevada, as only 44% of cases statewide were rated as a strength in this area.

Table 27: SFY 2010 Data for Item 18

Item 18: Child and family involvement in case planning	CFSR 2009	NV Goal	Goal Met
Statewide	44%	90%*	No
Clark County	29%	90%*	No
Washoe County	75%	90%*	No
DCFS Rural Region	35%	90%*	No

*Unless otherwise negotiated or if exceeds federal requirements

Item 19: Caseworker visits with child

Goal: To determine whether the frequency and quality of visits between caseworkers and the child or children in the case are sufficient to ensure the safety, permanency and well-being of the child and promote the achievement of case goals.

This goal refers to the frequency and quality of visits between the caseworker and child in care. To reach this goal, the state must ensure that the frequency and quality of visits between the caseworker and child are sufficient to address issues pertaining to the safety, permanency, and well-being of the child and promote the achievement of case goals and that these visits are appropriately documented in UNITY. Table 28 below shows that this is an area needing improvement for Nevada, as only 55% of the cases reviewed in the last CFSR met this requirement.

Table 28: SFY 2010 Data for Item 19

Item 19: Caseworker visits with child	CFSR 2009	NV Goal	Goal Met
Statewide	55%	90%*	No
Clark County	62%	90%*	No
Washoe County	67%	90%*	No
DCFS Rural Region	33%	90%*	No

*Unless otherwise negotiated or if exceeds federal requirements

To assist in reaching this goal DCFS is dispersing the caseworker visitation funds to the three child welfare agencies to fund additional positions to expand caseworker visitation capacity, fund overtime for caseworkers to increase the number of children visited, complete appropriate paperwork in a timely manner and to purchase needed equipment to facilitate caseworker visits and documentation. In response to recent federal legislation PL ACYF-CB-07-08, the Information Management System (IMS) staff developed a monthly report which tracks caseworker visitation as well as in placement visitation based on the federal requirements. The new Federal guidelines were used to determine the monthly visitation and in-placement visitation compliance rates and include the following provisions:

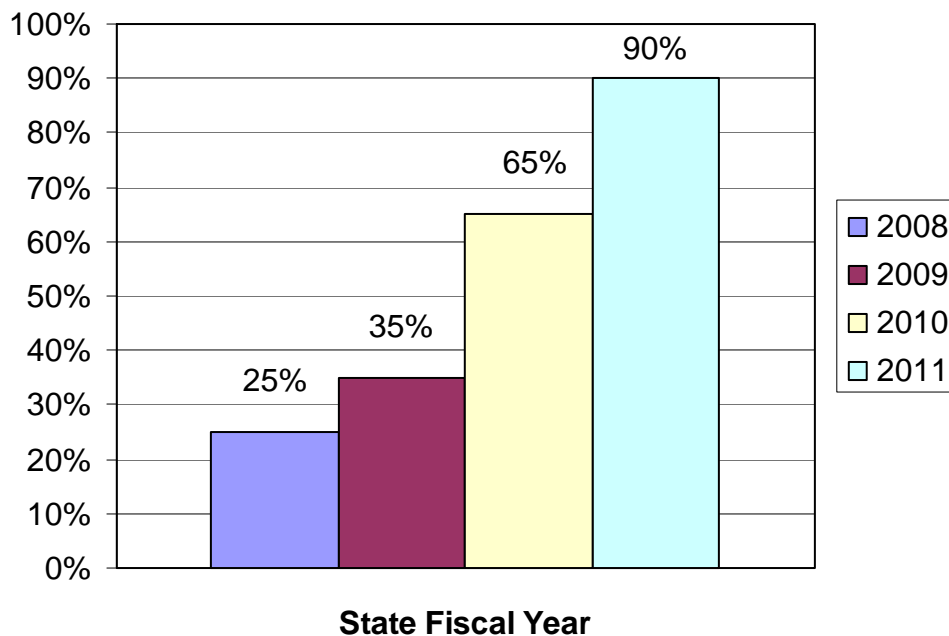
- Children who have been in custody for a full calendar month during the report period are included in the compliance calculations "Custody Visit Months" and "In-Placement Visit Months" are calculated and displayed.

- Children who have more than one foster care episode, whether under same Person ID or not, are included only once in the report. They are displayed in the report under the organizational unit that handled the most recent custody during the report period.
- Children who are placed out of state are included in the population.
- The report now displays the number of visits by any Nevada worker.
- The report shows the monthly visitation and in-placement visitation compliance percentage goals.

Figure 14 shows the established targets for compliance based on discussions with the three child welfare agencies to produce a progressive target, by year, to achieve compliance with the required 90% in 2011. The target for 2008 was 25%; the target for 2009 was 35%; the target for 2010 will be 65% and the target for 2011 will be 90%. The agencies pull information monthly from UNITY down to the caseworker level to determine how well goals are being met. Based on the federal reports filed for Federal Fiscal Year 2008 and 2009, Nevada the percentage of children in foster care who were visited during *each and every* calendar month was 39.83% in FFY 2008 and 49.7% in FFY 2009. The Nevada goal of 25% was met and exceeded in 2008 and 2009. In 2009, 73.61% of these visits occurred in the child’s place of residence. The actual visit numbers depicted in this UNITY report are higher than what was determined in the CFSR findings, which indicates that only 55% of cases reviewed were meeting this requirement. This may be because the entire population of cases are pulled into the report, whereas the CFSR is only looking at a sample of cases.

Figure 14: Target Goals for Monthly Caseworker Visits

Target Goals for Monthly Caseworker Visits



To achieve the targets described above, several projects have been implemented. A current Casey Family Project implemented to improve timely reunification has Washoe County tracking caseworker-parent contacts, parent-child contacts, and sibling contacts. Washoe County has also funded hand held recording devices and digital pens to help caseworkers ensure timely input of case contact documentation into UNITY. In 2008 Washoe County formed a “Visitation Workgroup” to review and submit recommendations to improve visitation between children and families. The workgroup is focusing on 1) Systematic improvements to assist workers in scheduling, location and transportation issues related to visitation to increase frequency; and 2) Improving the structure of visitation to enhance the quality of visitation to include parenting tips, modeling behavior, building mentoring relationships between parents and foster parents. Washoe County has Title IV-B Visitation Grant monies to pay overtime for monthly child contacts in their placement location. In addition, a

Caseworker-Child Contact report is reviewed monthly with supervisors and managers to identify trends, barriers and solutions.

The Clark County Department of Family Services (CCDFS) opened a Family Visitation Center in February 2008. The new visitation center is open seven days a week, including holidays, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. The center is staffed full time and has vehicles available for transportation in an effort to provide flexibility and support to parents and their children during visitation activities. The Family Visitation Center is designed to promote meaningful visitation between children and their caregivers in a safe, child- and family-friendly setting that is conducive to assessing parent-child interaction.

Item 20: Caseworker visits with parents

Goal: *To determine whether the frequency and quality of visits between caseworkers and the mothers and fathers of the children are sufficient to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of the children and promote achievement of case goals.*

To achieve this goal, the State must ensure that the frequency and quality of visits between the caseworker and mother and father are sufficient to address issues pertaining to the safety, permanency, and well-being of the child and promote the achievement of case goals and that these visits, including the typical pattern of visitation, are appropriately documented in UNITY in a minimum of 90% of cases. Data from the 2009 CFSR, as shown in Table 29 below indicates that Nevada is currently not meeting this goal and that this is an area needing improvement.

Table 29: SFY 2010 Data for Item 20

Item 20: Worker visits with parents	CFSR 2009	NV Goal	Goal Met
Statewide	44%	90%*	No
Clark County	27%	90%*	No
Washoe County	64%	90%*	No
DCFS Rural Region	50%	90%*	No

*Unless otherwise negotiated or if exceeds federal requirements

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

Item 21: Educational needs of child

Goal: *To assess whether the State is making concerted efforts to assess children’s educational needs at the initial contact with the child and on an ongoing basis, and whether identified needs were appropriately addressed in case planning and case management activities.*

To meet this goal, the State must ensure that an assessment of the educational and/or developmental needs of each child in care according to the requirements in statewide policy is conducted and that appropriate services are provided in a minimum of 90% of cases. This is an area that is a particular strength for Nevada. In the 2009 Nevada CFSR, the State achieved a rating of 95% and all child welfare agencies rated above 90% (see Table 30). The child welfare agencies have initiated a variety of methods to ensure that the educational needs of children are met. These include educational liaisons with the schools, referrals to Nevada Early Intervention Services, and tracking of children’s progress while in the school system. These areas are outlined more fully in the Initiatives section above.

Table 30: SFY 2010 Data for Item 21

Item 21: Educational needs of the child	CFSR 2009	NV Goal	Goal Met
Statewide	95%	90%*	Yes
Clark County	95%	90%*	Yes
Washoe County	100%	90%*	Yes
DCFS Rural Region	92%	90%*	Yes

*Unless otherwise negotiated or if exceeds federal requirements

Educational Stability: In relation to educational stability, Policy 0204 Case Planning was updated in January 2010 and formerly approved in April 2010 to reflect the promoting educational stability of the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (PL 110-351 language. This update has been approved by the DMG and there is

continued work on developing guidelines as it relates to determining the best interest of the child. However, the portion of Fostering Connections that relates to agency responsibility for transporting children to school has not been resolved.

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

Item 22: Physical health of child

Goal: *To determine whether the State is addressing the physical health needs of the child, including dental health needs.*

To achieve this goal, the State must ensure that child welfare agencies are conducting assessments of the physical and dental health needs of each child in care according to the requirements in statewide policy and that appropriate services are provided to meet these needs in a minimum of 90% of cases. As listed in the Initiatives section above, Clark County has engaged in several reforms to ensure that EPSDT exams are conducted as required and that tracking of medical histories are completed through the medical passport system. Washoe County also has implemented several measures to ensure that this is a priority in caring for children in their charge, as both Washoe and Clark County have medical personnel on staff to assist in this care. In addition, a statewide workgroup has been formed to develop policy incorporating legislation from the 2009 legislative session concerning the access and prescription of psychotropic medications to children in foster care. In the 2009 CFSR, this was an area needing improvement for Nevada, as shown in Table 31 below. However, with the initiatives that have been implemented, this item has shown great improvement.

Table 31: SFY 2010 Data for Item 22

Item 22: Physical health of the child	CFSR 2009	NV Goal	Goal Met
Statewide	82%	90%*	No
Clark County	78%	90%*	No
Washoe County	100%	90%*	Yes
DCFS Rural Region	67%	90%*	No

*Unless otherwise negotiated or if exceeds federal requirements

Item 23: Mental/behavioral health of child

Goal: *To determine whether the State is addressing the mental/behavioral health needs of the child.*

To reach this goal, the State must ensure that the child welfare agencies conduct assessments of the mental/behavioral health needs of each child in care according to the requirements in statewide policy and provide appropriate services to address these needs in a minimum of 90% of cases. With the exception of Washoe County, this is an area needing improvement for Nevada. The 2009 Nevada CFSR showed that statewide only 66% of cases met this goal (see Table 31).

Table 31: SFY 2010 Data for Item 23

Item 23: Mental/behavioral health of the child	CFSR 2009	NV Goal	Goal Met
Statewide	66%	90%*	No
Clark County	55%	90%*	No
Washoe County	100%	90%*	Yes
DCFS Rural Region	57%	90%*	No

*Unless otherwise negotiated or if exceeds federal requirements

SECTION VI: SYSTEMIC FACTORS

Each of the following performance indicators mirrors the 22 items from the Federal Statewide Assessment Instrument. The overall structure for each performance indicator includes the legal requirements, archival and anecdotal data, the overall goal to be reached and specific objectives for that item. In general, goals mirror the lead federal compliance question for each item. Objectives under each goal are modeled after specific data or program monitoring requested in the statewide assessment process and may include more specific compliance areas to be reached based on state statute, regulation or policy.

In the 2010-2014 CFSP, each performance indicator was given an overall goal and one or more objectives. Each of these objectives are to be assessed through the development of data reports from the UNITY system or through qualitative means such as surveys or qualitative case reviews. This process is under development and will not be finalized until the new Program Improvement Plan is approved. UNITY reports are under development and are not planned to be completed until the spring of 2011. Therefore, for the purposes of the SFY 2010 APSR report, the data from the CFSP conducted in August 2009 is being used to show performance on each performance indicator as a whole. Where reports do currently exist, those reports are also included to address individual objectives. Unless otherwise noted, all objective reports are under development at this time.

In the 2009 CFSP the systemic factor overall ratings were as follows:

- Systemic Factor A: Statewide Information System
 - This factor was not in substantial conformity with a rating of 2. The one performance indicator, Item 24 was an Area Needing Improvement.
- Systemic Factor B: Case Review System
 - This factor was not in substantial conformity with a rating of 2. Item 25, 28 and 29 were areas needing improvement. Items 26 and 27 were strengths.
- Systemic Factor C: Quality Assurance System
 - This factor was in substantial conformity with a rating of 3. Item 30 and 31 were listed as strengths.
- Systemic Factor D: Staff and Provider Training
 - This factor was not in substantial conformity with a rating of 2. Item 32 and 33 were areas needing improvement and item 34 was listed as a strength.
- Systemic Factor E: Service Array and Resource Development
 - This factor was not in substantial conformity with a rating of 2. Item 35 was a strength and items 36 and 37 were areas needing improvement.
- Systemic Factor F: Agency Responsiveness to the Community
 - This factor was in substantial conformity with a rating of 3. Items 38 and 39 were strengths and item 40 was an area needing improvement.
- Systemic Factor G: Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment and Retention
 - This factor was in substantial conformity with a rating of 3. Items 41, 42, 43 and 45 were listed as strengths and item 44 was listed as an area needing improvement.

Systemic Factor A: Statewide Information System

Item 24: Statewide information system

Goal: *The State will ensure that the State's SACWIS system (UNITY) has the tracking capacity that will, at minimum, readily identify the status, demographic characteristics, location and goals for the placement of entry of every child who is (or within the immediately preceding 12 months, has been) in foster care.*

To meet the parameters under this goal, the State must work on several objectives. The first of these is to assess the reporting capacity for system users to include program or case management areas and/or information, including, but not limited to, the status, demographics, current location and permanency goals for children in foster care. The DCFS – Information Management System (IMS) department continues to work to achieve SACWIS certification for UNITY. Among the functionality that has been added in the past year is the following:

- Redesign of the functionality that transitions responsibility of a report from Hot Line/Intake staff to Investigator staff. This functionality improves the usability of the system and also provides a more secure transition so that cases do not get dropped.
- Improved and additional functionality for ICPC staff.
- Improved functionality for the management of trust accounts.
- Improved reporting capability including the automatic schedule of reports and the capability for certain staff to generate reports on demand.

UNITY currently has the capacity to provide reports to system users regarding all functions that the system supports. This includes program and case management reports covering services provided to children, their status, demographics, location, and permanency goals. Currently there are over 60 scheduled reports available to the agency and external stakeholders. Many other reports can be run on demand. Additionally, IMS supports the agency by responding to ad hoc data requests and requests for new standard reports.

There have been three separate reviews and/or audits that have examined the UNITY system within the last five years. These included the Blue Ribbon Panel (BRP) for the Review of Child Deaths; the Nevada Institute for Children's Research and Policy (NICRP); and the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR). These reviews provided a number of recommendations including:

- UNITY should generate helpful reports.
- The state's UNITY data system must be examined by a team of internal and external experts to determine the necessary changes to ensure it is user-friendly, more efficient, produces adequate hard copy documents in order to analyze the flow of the case, and produces management reports that can be used effectively as a management tool.
- UNITY was found to be problematic for staff relative to navigating the system and was found not to be a useful case management tool (based on the 2009 CFSR).

In response to the recommendations issued by the BRP, NICRP and the CFSR, DCFS contracted with Integrating Factors Incorporated (IFI) to conduct an evaluation of UNITY. Among IFI's findings were the following:

- Time spent on an appropriate level of case documentation far exceeds and is disproportionate to the time spent on client facing tasks.
- UNITY'S positioning as a case documentation tool, as opposed to a tool that drives and guides the work processes, often keeps it disconnected from the operational processes.
- Significant data entered into UNITY are not available for searching, reporting, analysis, or quality oversight.

The IFI study characterized UNITY as a data capture system that does not adequately support the business process of its users. Consequently, users only complete data entry to the minimal extent possible in order to meet the requirements of a particular task. Thus, UNITY provides insufficient business intelligence to allow for the modeling of business trends or to identify critical areas of needed improvement. To begin addressing the evaluation conducted by IFI, the DCFS requested a Technology Investment Request. The Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) Technology Investment Request (TIR) mission is to enhance the Unified Nevada Information Technology for Youth (UNITY) system, an automated case management solution which supports Nevada's state and local child welfare agencies such that DCFS will significantly increase the service delivery and practice for the safety, permanency and well-being of Nevada's children and families. DCFS seeks to accomplish two main goals through the TIR. First is to design and implement a new presentation layer for UNITY using Web Portals that are better tailored to suit the needs of the specific functional roles performed by UNITY users. The second is to implement a Data Warehouse for use by DCFS management and other stakeholders to extract data in statistically relevant ways. On June 14, 2010 the TIR was presented to the committee and was approved. Final approval will be requested in the 2011 legislative session. If approved, DCFS will be able to make all changes included in the TIR.

Another objective under this goal is for IMS to assess the accessibility of the system to staff and external stakeholders (who require access) in all areas of the state. This objective has been met as UNITY is currently available to all agency staff and external stakeholders in all areas of the State.

A third objective is for IMS to develop a mechanism for linking the UNITY system with the Quality Improvement Case Review efforts to ensure a continuous quality assurance feedback loop, including methods for monitoring data consistency. IMS staff have been meeting since March 2010 with DCFS staff to identify and develop a mechanism for linking the UNITY system with the quality improvement case review efforts and continuous quality assurance efforts. At the initial meeting concerning UNITY automation the following four functional areas were identified in developing a Qualitative Review: Sample Selection, Sample Management, Case Review and Reports. The new Quality Improvement Case Review (QICR) tool is expected to be released in September 2010. It will include all four components listed above.

In addition, IMS in collaboration with DCFS staff is planning to review and analyze current UNITY reports with the intent of developing additional reports, and or redesigning the current reports to ensure a consistent monitoring of the data that captures and tracks specific data indicators on outcomes for children and families. The completion of this process is planned for the spring of 2011.

A fourth objective is that IMS will assess the quality assurance mechanism for ensuring that information generated from the UNITY system is complete, accurate, and current and includes the locations of all children in care, including those in relative care, unlicensed placements, voluntary placements and unpaid placements. UNITY has many quality assurance mechanisms for helping ensure that data gets entered into UNITY correctly. Features such as drop down lists and radio buttons ensure that only proper values for some data elements are entered. Window and other edits ensure that data entered is consistent with other related data. Window edits also ensure that mandatory data elements are entered. UNITY's missing data functionality generates alerts when certain data elements have not been entered or when certain tasks have not been completed in a timely manner. These features work together to help ensure that the data stored in UNITY is accurate and current.

A fifth objective is that IMS will develop tracking systems for monitoring children in out-of-home care, including those served by Title IV-E agreements with other agencies. IMS reports that UNITY currently has functionality that allows system users to record the placement of children that have been removed from their home and placed in an out-of-home setting both by the DCFS Rural Region, CCDFS and WCDSS. Placement status of children can be viewed on-line and through reports. The ICPC subsystem of UNITY allows the tracking of children that are placed out-of-state.

A final objective is that IMS, in collaboration with State agency representatives, will integrate the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) requirements into the UNITY system for data collection and reporting purposes by September 2010. In response to the requirement the State facilitated a statewide workgroup made up of stakeholders from all child welfare agencies, contract providers, foster parents, foster youth, and other interested parties in creating the State's Plan for NYTD implementation. At the recommendation of the workgroup, the State partnered with FosterClub to present the NYTD Survey on the FosterClub website. This will also give the State the ability to download the data to the State's SACWIS system. Several events, posters, brochures, and other marketing strategies have been developed over the past year with plans for future presentations being offered to youth, caseworkers, foster parents and other interested parties in the importance of NYTD and the mechanics of completing the survey on the FosterClub website. Beginning October 1, 2010, caseworkers will meet individually with youth shortly after their 17th birthday to complete the initial survey on-line. While the youth will actually complete the survey, the caseworker will be there to answer questions, etc. Nevada provides aftercare services via contract providers throughout the state. These providers will be responsible for maintaining contact with the youth once they leave care and facilitating in having the youth complete the survey shortly after their 19th and 21st birthday. By marketing the survey through FosterClub and through our network of providers, the State believes it will be able to meet NYTD requirements and the implementation deadline of October 2010.

In addition, IMS is currently working with the State to design functionality in UNITY that will satisfy the NYTD requirements. It is expected that the first installation of this functionality will be completed in June 2010 and the final installation in September 2010. This will also meet the required deadline of October 2010.

Systemic Factor B: Case Review System

Item 25: Written case plan

Goal: *The State will ensure that each child has a written case plan, to be developed jointly with the child, when appropriate, and the child's parent(s), that includes the required provisions.*

To meet this goal, the State must ensure that each child has a written case plan, to be developed jointly with the child, when appropriate, and the child's parent(s), that includes the required provisions in 90% of cases. Nevada Revised Statutes 432B.540, 553 and 580 require the agencies which provide child welfare services to adopt a plan for permanency in accordance with the requirements and timeframes in the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (ASFA); including periodic review by the Court. Further, the plan must include; a description of the type, safety and appropriateness of the home or institution in which the child could be placed, including, without limitation, a statement that the home or institution would comply with the provisions of NRS 432B.3905, and a plan for ensuring that he or she would receive safe and proper care and a description of his/her needs, a description of the services to be provided to the child and to a parent to facilitate the return of the child to the custody of his parent or to ensure his/her permanent placement and the appropriateness of the services to be provided under the plan.

Nevada Administrative Code 432B.190 requires that each case have a written case plan which identifies barriers to the provision of a safe environment for the child, clarifies responsibilities of the involved persons to address those barriers, and defines the overall goals of the case and the step-by-step proposed actions of all persons to reach the goal within a specified time. Each case plan must be reviewed and signed by the supervisor of the caseworker and updated at least every 6 months. Each case plan must include identifying information, a statement of the goal, objectives and activities of the case, and the time to meet each goal, objective and activity. Case plans must be realistically related to the familial situation, safeguard the child, and help the parents to gain the confidence and capacity to care appropriately for their child, and be sufficiently flexible to allow changes in the situation and the use of the services based on a continuing reevaluation of how the child is being affected. Parents must be encouraged to participate in the development of a written agreement for services and engage in a set of processes for receiving resources.

0204.0 Case Planning Policy, based upon the existing statutory authority and regulations cited requires all cases opened for service to have a written case plan. This plan must be developed through a process of engaging the family, gathering information, evaluating it with the family and eliciting goals and solutions from the family. A Child and Family Team (CFT) is to be convened for decision making about desired outcomes and determining with the family and team what activities should be performed, by whom, how, and when to achieve proposed actions. Case planning is a family centered process that focuses on family strengths and resources to assist the parents in building protective capacity and increasing family functioning.

While the legal requirements for this item are in place, the Nevada 2009 CFSR rated this item as an area needing improvement. In the coming year, the State will work with IMS to develop reports to address this area.

Item 26: Periodic reviews

Goal: *The state will ensure that periodic reviews are conducted on the status of each child, no less frequently than once every 6 months, either by a court or by administrative review.*

To meet this goal, the State will develop a reporting mechanism that will monitor the periodic review process to ensure the timeliness and quality of reviews and that a review is conducted on the status of each child, no less frequently than once every six months, either by a court or by administrative review and will review the effectiveness of procedures to support (support services, preparation, encouragement to attend, and timing) the participation of birth parents, foster parents, age-appropriate children, relative caregivers, foster and pre-adoptive parents in periodic reviews.

Court procedures may differ by child welfare agency regarding the scheduling and tracking of hearings, but most courts schedule the semiannual review at the dispositional hearing to ensure compliance within ASFA timelines. Clark County assigns a judge and a court master to hear child welfare cases thus increasing the time available for reviews. Washoe County has a Model Court Program where the family court judge holds a monthly model family court meeting which is comprised of administrative representatives from social services, district attorney, public defender, Washoe Legal Services, school district, CASA and judges. These meetings address ways to improve court hearings, troubleshoot problems and to develop local rules. Washoe County also has an agreement with the court that in lieu of a court hearing the agency conducts a formal case plan review meeting 90-120 days from removal. This child and family team meeting is facilitated by one of four Coordinators (Managers) in the department. In addition to child and family team members the county district attorney must be also present. Washoe County further reports that there is adequate court time and that the court has moved to a scheduled calendar instead of a stacked calendar. Court clerks have been resourceful in scheduling extra time for cases they know will be longer.

The Nevada 2009 CFSR report rated this item as a strength. Based on the efforts in this area, this item continues to be a strength for our State.

Item 27: Permanency hearings

Goal: *The State will ensure that each child in foster care under the supervision of the state or county child welfare agency has a permanency hearing in a qualified court or administrative body no later than 12 months from the date that the child entered foster care and no less frequently than every 12 months thereafter.*

To meet this goal, the State is planning to review the system currently available in UNITY for monitoring that each child in foster care under the supervision of the state or county child welfare agency has a permanency hearing in a qualified court or administrative body no later than 12 months from the date that the child entered foster care and no less frequently than every 12 months thereafter. In addition, the State plans to develop a reporting mechanism to review the timeliness and quality of hearings for the purpose of providing a continuous quality improvement feedback loop for key stakeholders involved in the process.

Currently, Nevada Revised Statute 432B.590 mandates that the court shall hold a hearing concerning the permanent placement of a child no later than 12 months after the initial removal of the child from his home and annually thereafter, or within 30 days a finding that agency which provides child welfare services is not required to make the reasonable efforts toward reunification pursuant to NRS 432B.393.3. In compliance with ASFA, DCFS Policies 0206 Court Hearing Notification and 0514 Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) require agencies to make and finalize permanency plans by no later than 12 months after the child's removal and provide notice by certified mail to all the parties to any of the prior proceedings and parents and "any persons planning to adopt the child, relatives of the child or providers of foster care who are currently providing care to the child."

In the most current data run 2010B period to date (04/01/10 thru 06/07/10) for AFCARS Data Element #5 the rate of children *not* receiving a permanency hearing within 12 months was at .73%. The Nevada 2009 CFSR report also rated this item as a strength. Nevada is in compliance with this item.

Item 28: Termination of parental rights

Goal: *The State will ensure that a process is in place for Termination of Parental Rights (TPR) proceedings in accordance with the provisions of the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA).*

To meet this goal, the State must develop a mechanism for measuring the effectiveness of the TPR process, including information on the quality of the process and the timeliness of filing for TPR for the purpose of developing a continuous quality improvement feedback loop for key stakeholders involved in the process. The State also plans to monitor the impact of the courts and the legal system on the successes or challenges related to the TPR process as well as other factors regarding TPR, such as timeliness of TPR decisions, TPR appeals, compelling reasons not to pursue TPR, changes in procedures or approach to TPR and the TPR appellate process.

Based on the UNITY data report CFS7B3, Custody 14 to 21 Months, for the report period of July 1, 2009 through May 31, 2010, it appears that Washoe County successfully completed TPR on both parents in 53.5% of all cases within 24 months. However, for the same period, Clark County and the DCFS Rural region did not successfully complete any TPR's within the 24 month period. Washoe County reports an average of 43.01 months from the child's removal to adoption and an average of 20.42 months from removal to guardianship. This suggests that Washoe County is successful in meeting the ASFA requirements in the majority of cases and is more successful in guardianships than with adoptions. The DCFS Rural Region reports an average of 30.08 months from a child's removal to his or her adoption and an average of 29.40 months from removal to guardianship, which indicates that they are achieving TPR just a few months over the 24 month timeframe. Clark County, on the other hand, reports that average time from removal to adoption is 41.01 months and average time from removal to guardianship is 32.17 months. This indicates that TPR is taking approximately a year longer than is required. This is primarily due to the Clark County legal structure, which seeks to ensure that a child is legally free for adoption before any planning is made to find a permanent home. This information is consistent with the data from the most recent data profile (see Table 32), which indicates that approximately 10.9% are achieving legal freedom within 6 months. This area continues to be an area needing improvement for Nevada.

Table 32: Data from Data Profile for Item 28

	Federal FY 2006ab	12 month period Ending 03/31/2007 (06B07A)	Federal FY 2007ab	12 Month Period Ending 03/31/2008 (07B08A)	Federal FY 2009ab	12 Month Period Ending 03/31/2009 (08B09A)	National Median	Nevada's Percentile
C2-3 Children in care 17 plus months, adopted by the end of the year	24.3%	23.3%	21.7%	21.2%	24.4%	22.9%	20.2%	22.7%
C2-4: Children in care 17 plus months achieving legal freedom within 6 months	14.7%	13.3%	12.7%	11.6%	13.0%	15.7%	8.8%	10.9%

Source: Nevada Data Profile period ending 03/31/09

Item 29: Notice of hearings and reviews to caregivers

Goal: *The State will ensure that foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers of children in foster care be notified of, and have an opportunity to be heard in, any review or hearing held with respect to the child.*

To meet this goal, the State will work with the courts and child welfare agencies to develop a mechanism for child welfare agency reporting on the timeliness and consistency of notification for hearings for foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers of children in foster care for any review or hearing held with respect to the child and will ensure that this system is effective in 90% of applicable cases. To accomplish this goal, the State must develop a mechanism for reporting on the involvement of foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers of children in foster care at reviews and hearings. This process is still under development.

NRS 432B, NAC 432B and statewide policy 0206 Court Notification mandate that proper notification of court hearings and court reviews regarding the status of a child in the custody of a child welfare agency must be provided and is necessary to ensure active involvement and participation of parents, foster parents, guardians, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers in the child's safety, permanency and well-being. While internal policies and procedures regarding court notification requirements and protocols may differ between child welfare agencies, formal written notification to the aforementioned caregivers must be supplied pursuant to NRS 432B.580 (6) (a) (b). Notice of the hearing must be given by registered or certified mail to all parties to any of the prior proceedings, and parents and any persons planning to adopt the child, relatives of the child or providers of foster care who are currently providing care to the child. If a child in protective custody is determined to be of Indian descent, the child welfare agency must notify the tribe in writing at the beginning of the proceedings. If the Indian child is eligible for membership in more than one tribe, each tribe must be notified.

In the 2009 Nevada CFSR, this item received a rating of area needing improvement.

Systemic Factor C: Quality Assurance System

Item 30: Standards ensuring quality services

Goal: *The State will ensure that standards are adequately developed and implemented to ensure that children in foster care are provided quality services that protect the safety and health of the children.*

This goal has two main objectives. The first is that the State will engage in necessary regulation development to ensure quality standards for foster care are updated according to bills passed in the 2009 legislative session. The second is that the State will develop a system for evaluating the implementation of the standards for foster care, including a mechanism to provide feedback to key stakeholders; to ensure that children in foster care are provided quality services that protect the safety and health of the children. The second objective is dependent on the outcome of the first. Specifically, it will not be addressed until the regulations are adopted and an evaluation protocol is developed. Therefore, for this reporting period, only first objective will be addressed in Nevada's effort to reach this goal.

This item refers to quality standards. These standards for foster care fall into several categories including statute, regulation and statewide policy. These categories include child protection and foster care; licensure of foster care homes, residential facilities and foster care agencies; and out-of-state placements. To ensure child protection while in foster care, child welfare agencies must oversee and monitor the placement of children in foster homes or residential facilities pursuant to the Child Protection Statutes (NRS and NAC 432B), Foster Care Statutes (NRS and NAC 424) and statewide policies, such as out-of-home placement (Policy Chapter 1000); training, assessment, and licensing (Policy 1004), and case planning (Policy 0204); that outline requirements for quality standards. These regulations and policies embody elements of quality service delivery, such as the consideration of cultural differences, timeliness, safety, visitation location, placement preference, scheduling of medical, dental and mental health needs. In addition, child welfare staff and child care facilities that provide services to foster children must meet personnel requirements for appropriate licensure and training to work in various positions. Fingerprinting and a criminal background checks are mandatory in the State in order to work with children (NRS 432.100). Staff must have appropriate supervision and are monitored through regular evaluation of work performance standards. The law and regulations also designate the number of children that may be placed in a foster care home or group home and the physical requirements for the home or facility. These measures are intended to ensure that quality services are provided to children in foster care by child welfare agency staff. The law and regulations designate the number of children that may be placed in a foster care home or group home.

The standards for placement in a facility outside of the State of Nevada are established and monitored by the Out-of-State Placement Committee. Monthly visitation and monitoring by the local child welfare agency are required and an annual rigorous on-site facility review must be conducted by the State. Child Care facilities statutes and regulations (NRS 432A, NAC 432A) outline requirements for the protection of health and safety of children in facilities (educational, shelter care, and residential), and provides standards for child care including the provision of qualified service providers. These regulations include the provision of ensuring that no child under the age of six is placed in a congregate care facility.

In addition, the expectations for a foster parent's care and treatment of a child is contained in regulations (NAC 424.495-.610) where authority is given to the foster parent to administer appropriate discipline and supervision, but limitations are imposed to guarantee the safety and health of the child. The care and treatment of a foster child in care is monitored by the caseworker's monthly home visitation which requires time spent alone with the child. The caseworker and licensing authority work together to cross-report any activity that may impact the safety or health of child in placement. The monitoring of a single foster home or group home setting and a facility follow similar procedures and may involve other agencies or types of expertise as indicated.

In the 2009 Legislature, AB227 was enacted. This bill revises provisions relating to the provision of foster care. This will help develop standards of performance for the Foster Care Agencies, and to help differentiate between a Specialized Foster Home and a Regular Foster Home. This bill became effective May 29, 2009 for the purpose of adopting regulation and January 1, 2011, for all other purposes. A new workgroup was formed in the current fiscal year to draft the regulations for this bill. The drafted regulations will be submitted by July 1, 2010 to the Nevada Legislative Council Bureau. If approved, the regulations will become effective January 1, 2011.

The 2009 Nevada CFSR report rated this item as a strength, which is consistent with the ongoing work that has been done since this review.

Item 31: Quality assurance system

Goal: *The State will ensure that an identifiable quality assurance system is in place in the State where the services included in the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) are provided, and that it evaluates the quality of services, identifies the strengths and needs of the service delivery system, provides relevant reports, and evaluates program improvement measures implemented.*

This goal has several objectives to ensure a model quality assurance system. The first objective is that the State will ensure continuous improvement of the quality assurance system and the State will utilize process evaluations and stakeholder feedback for evaluating the effectiveness of individual case reviews conducted in each child welfare agency on an annual basis.

To address this objective, the CFSP was developed so that each of the 23 Safety, Permanency and Well-Being Performance Indicators and 22 systemic factors has specific goals and objectives. Additionally, Quantitative UNITY Reports are in the process of being developed to supplement a qualitative case review process and will provide current data for each quarterly PIP report. Due to budget reductions, the State will be implementing a new targeted quality improvement case review (QICR) process to replace the previous system. Since March 2010, the State has been

meeting with DCFS Information Management Services (IMS) to identify and develop a mechanism for linking the UNITY system with the quality improvement case review efforts and continuous quality assurance efforts which includes development, design and deployment of the functionality for sample selection, sample management and case review and reports. The newly designed tool is modeled after the CFSR tool, and the newly designed system will focus on specific items and a targeted review process. The tool is expected to be released in September 2010. The final process for implementation of the new QICR will be formalized after the State meets with PMAG.

The second objective to this item's goal is that the State will identify a process to increase involvement of stakeholders in the quality improvement process. This objective has been well implemented in the past fiscal year. There has been a great deal of work ensuring collaboration with key child welfare stakeholders during development of the Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). The Statewide PIP Kick-Off meeting occurred on December 2, 2009. During the current PIP development process, each region met with local stakeholders at least four times minimum through bi-weekly meetings beginning in mid-December and continuing through February. The Statewide Committee was made up of State-level stakeholders from DCFS Administration, each of the three child welfare agencies, the Division of Health Care Financing and Policy, the Division of Health, Children's Mental Health, Juvenile Justice, the Judiciary, the Court Improvement Program, educational representatives, foster parent associations, tribal members and more. Approximately 50 key individuals participated statewide on the Statewide Committee. Overall, nearly 100 individuals took part in this planning process across the state. Nevada will continue to utilize the collaboration of the key child welfare stakeholders in implementation of the PIP, and in planning and implementation of a quality improvement framework and system that includes a clearly defined continuous quality improvement loop.

A third objective under this goal was for the State to examine existing use of QICR reports and Agency Improvement Plans on the agency level and will develop a process with the agencies to increase the utilization of information at the caseworker, supervisor and manager/agency level for practice improvements. To ensure that the child welfare system in Nevada is meeting compliance in all Safety, Permanency, Well-Being and Systemic Outcomes; Nevada is currently planning a redesign of the existing Quality Improvement Framework and system.

The 2010 PIP development process focused on five key strategies to improve and enhance child welfare practice in Nevada. These included: Safety practices, connections and relationships, timelines to permanency, child welfare supervision and service array. Each practice area to be addressed has been examined to see where improvements are needed to be made as to how data is collected and reported in the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS) or UNITY. Additionally, areas of staff and/or stakeholder training needed were discussed in detail and were incorporated in the final plan. This plan is currently under review.

A fourth objective under this item is that the State will ensure that statewide policy is reviewed annually and revised as needed or will ensure that policies are developed and implemented to ensure the inclusion of requirements under this item based on the policy development and review schedule. Through the use of statewide collaborative policy workgroups, the Policy Approval Review Team (PART) and DMG, policies are developed and/or revised as new legal language or practice requires. Policies that have been revised in the past fiscal year are reported throughout the APSR under the section that applies most closely to the policy topic.

Agency Level Quality Improvement Activities: To assist in preparing for reviews, each child welfare agency engages in a case review process in order to meet this goal. In the past, this goal was addressed through a quality improvement case review completed by supervisors in each child welfare agency. Under this review process, every worker had a minimum of one case reviewed every quarter. These reviews were then forwarded to the State for inclusion in quarterly quality improvement reports. Due to budget restrictions this process has been made optional to the agencies. That is, the agency can choose to follow this process, or could opt to engage in an alternative process to meet the goal.

WCDSS continues to use this process. They report that as a result of this process case reviews conducted by supervisors are high. They do indicate, however, that the case reviews tended to be better suited to permanency and long-term cases than to those in the investigative unit. WCDSS also engages in an internal case review process. In this process, the WCDSS Program Specialist examines the reviews for internal consistency and data collection specific to child safety and risk. The Department has internal audits within specific division, such as eligibility; contractors engaged in reviewing the functions of certain areas such as Independent Living; and Independent Service Provider contracts who report to upper management. Case specific QA occurs in the Child and Family Team Meeting process, which includes meetings with team members from outside of the agency and a facilitator. The meetings occur at numerous points in time in the life of the case, including required milestones that encompass areas such as safety planning, case planning, diligent search and placement planning. Facilitators collect data for outcome measurements and trends for reports to management for system improvement and policy recommendations. Child fatalities are staffed in two separate

multidisciplinary processes and recommendations are reviewed and adopted into practice. In addition, in the past year WCDSS has implemented several new policies as a result of the QI process and new legal requirements. Their local policy manual has been updated related to case management, including Sections 13 and 20. Section 13, Case Management for Legal Cases was revised to incorporate Family Solution Team Meetings. Section 20, Hearings was revised pursuant to AB 364 of the 2009 Legislature and was distributed to staff. In addition, an Agency policy regarding Request for Warrants was drafted and submitted to the District Attorney's office for review and approval.

The DCFS-Rural region opted to use a slightly different case review method than the one originally used statewide. In their internal process, in alternating quarters, each of the four Rural Region districts undergoes a case review process. Using this method, one case from each worker within the District is selected and reviewed by the Quality Improvement Unit review team. These reviews and data are then provided to the DCFS-Rural Region Management Team to discuss training opportunities. In addition, the Rural Region Managers and Supervisors engage in regular staffings to go over cases on an ongoing basis as part of regular staff meetings to ensure that quality is present. Information from these case reviews is forwarded to the Quality Assurance-Training Unit so that the information learned can be disseminated to the field.

In the past year, CCDFS developed a new initiative which includes the development of a comprehensive case review system for all three direct practice child welfare programs (i.e. Child Protective Services (CPS), In-Home and Out-of-Home (OOH) Services). Over the course of SFY 2010, the CCDFS Quality Assurance and Improvement Unit completed a total of five supervisory case reviews and 24 in-home case reviews. Supervisory case reviews consist of either helping a supervisory complete their probationary period, or because of personnel issues within the unit. In-home case reviews began in November 2009 and consist of monthly reviews of each of the five units. As of the end of SFY 2010, all five units were completely reviewed. A challenge reported by CCDFS to this process, is that while the in-home case review process has been fully implemented, CPS and OOH case reviews have been delayed. This is because of decreases in staff in the QA/QI unit by approximately 40%.

Overall, the 2009 CFSR report rated this item as a strength for Nevada.

Systemic Factor D: Staff and Provider Training

Item 32: Initial staff training

Goal: *The State will operate a staff development and training program that supports the goals and objectives in the CFSP, addresses services provided under titles IV-B and IV-E, and provides initial training for all staff who deliver these services.*

The main objective under this item is to ensure that Nevada's child welfare workforce has a strong initial training system. To meet this objective, the State, through the collaboration with the Training Management Team and use of the Nevada Partnership for Training Reports System, will enhance reports to ensure that all new staff receives the required Nevada New Worker Core Training within the required timeframes, and also to ensure that an appropriate remediation plan is in place with the Child Welfare Agencies. This objective is being met. The State has a contract with each of the two in-state Universities for the SFY's 2010 – 2012. Part of the 2010 contract was to develop a three year training plan with annual updates to address the needs of initial worker training in Nevada. This plan has been developed and was submitted to the child welfare agency partners in late April 2010 for review and feedback. The final plan is expected to be presented in the summer of 2010 to the DMG. The plan outlines the infrastructure for the Training Delivery System and includes protocols for curriculum development, staffing, training plans, annual training calendars, decision making, and evaluation. The development of this plan has increased the efficiency of the Nevada Partnership for Training, and agency members of the TMT have openly voiced their satisfaction with the process.

Over the past several years, Nevada has been focused on developing a strong new worker core curriculum. The Nevada New Worker Core Training curriculum was first piloted in the fall of 2008 and then was finalized and has been in continuous operation since January 2009. In the past year, four sessions of Core were offered by UNR in the northern part of the state and one session was offered by UNLV in the southern part of the State. The reduction in delivery in Las Vegas was due to a year long hiring freeze by CCDFS. The 10-week course consists of five weeks of in-class instruction and five weeks of pre-reading assignments and on-the-job training assignments (to be done in the week's in-between in-class training). The training program is taught by trained University based instructors as part of the Nevada Partnership for Training. Table 33 shows the total number of individuals trained since January 2010. The third quarter NPT Report indicated that participant satisfaction ratings of workshop content and trainer competencies were high. The overall

means for workshop content for modules one through five ranged from 4.7 to 5.0 on a scale of one to five (5 = extremely satisfied). The overall means for trainer competency ratings ranged from 4.7 to 4.9 on a scale of one to five (5 = extremely competent).

Table 33: New Workers Completing Nevada New Worker Core Training since January 2009

New Worker Training Data	Clark	Washoe	Rural	FPO	Statewide
SFY 2009	24	11	19	5	59
SFY 2010	12*	15*	14*	2*	43*
TOTAL	36	26	33	7	102

*Indicates data through May 31, 2010

There are currently several components of the Nevada New Worker Core that are available online. The Nevada Partnership for Training website (www.nvpartnership4training.com) allows workers 24 hour per day, 7 day per week access to the Pre-Reading and On-the-Job Training (OJT) Activities components of Nevada New Worker Core. Each of the five modules has one of each of these components, including pre and post tests and other evaluation components to help the NPT trainers to determine student progress. Currently, all new workers attend the in person portion and online portion of the Nevada New Worker Core upon hire, with the exception of staff in the DCFS Rural Region. A moratorium on all State travel has prevented two workers from attending the in-person portion of the Core series this past spring. In an effort to address this challenge, the NPT is working on developing an upgraded online system so that all workers can receive training regardless of their office location over and above the pre-reading and OJT components. Table 34 shows the number of participants who completed the pre-reading and OJT activities in the current fiscal year. This information is only updated through May 31, 2010 and does not include participation by those enrolled in June deployments. Please note that staff from the Family Programs Office at the State do not complete OJT activities as they do not carry caseloads.

Table 34: Ongoing Online Nevada New Worker Core Courses Offered in SFY2010

Course Areas of Concentration	No. of Trainings	Number of Participants					Statewide
		Clark	Washoe	DCFS Rural	FPO	Other*	
Nevada New Worker Core Pre-Reading Modules 1-5	5	11	15	12	4	2	44
Nevada New Worker Core OJT Activities Modules 1-5	5	12	11	11	N/A	2	36

A final objective for this item focuses on quality assurance for training. Specifically, through the collaboration with the Training Management Team and use of the Nevada Partnership for Training Reports System, the State will ensure the ongoing review of the Nevada New Worker Core Training to ensure that the curriculum materials are current and reflect best practice where possible. This objective is currently being met. The Nevada New Worker Core Curriculum was updated in the fall of 2009 by UNLV staff to ensure up-to-date content and format. In addition, a new evaluation protocol was developed by UNLV to revise the pre and post test materials to reflect questions that more accurately fit the curriculum. Embedded skills activities and evaluation protocols were also reviewed and revised based on feedback from participants in the training and agency partners. In addition, when any statewide policy that is also a part of the Core curriculum is updated, as is the case with the new 0513 Substantiation Policy, either UNR or UNLV staff review the curriculum and make the appropriate adjustments to ensure that the material is always reflective of current practice. Currently, UNR is updating the curriculum to reflect the updates in Policy 0513.

The 2009 Nevada CFSR report gave this item a rating of area needing improvement. This was partially because the system being rated was just being deployed and had not had an opportunity to be rated after several sessions had completed. Based on the stakeholder feedback being received, if rated today, it is anticipated that this item would now be rated as a strength.

Item 33: On-going staff training

Goal: The State will provide for ongoing training for staff that addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to the services included in the CFSP.

To reach this goal, the State, through collaboration with the Training Management Team and the University Partners, was

charged with developing a standard on-line introductory level curriculum series to meet the ongoing training needs of staff in the child welfare agencies at the rate of two – three courses per year (as funding allows). The 2009 Nevada CFSR rated this item as an area needing improvement because there was limited opportunity during the period under review for staff to receive ongoing training. This is because the entire focus of the Nevada Partnership for Training was on the development of the Nevada New Worker Core curriculum. However, this objective is now being addressed and is being enhanced.

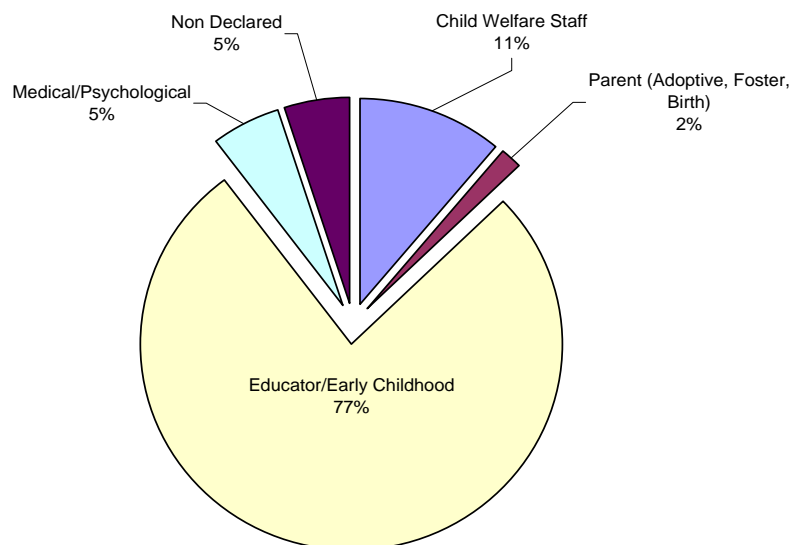
The State has a contract with each of the two in-state Universities for the SFY's 2010 – 2012. Over the past year, two online courses have been updated to reflect current best practices and legal requirements. These include the ICWA Indian Child Welfare Act Training and Ethics. Currently these two courses and a course on Mandated Reporters are available online at the Nevada Partnership for Training (www.nvpartnership4training.com) website. The courses are available to anyone in the community on a 24 hour, 7 day per week basis. As there are limitations to this system, Nevada will be working in the next fiscal year to upgrade the online system to include more functionality and online "real-time" courses to be taught by the University Trainers. This will assist staff in the rural areas of the state to receive training without the expense of travel. The new system is planned to be fully implemented by January 2011. Table 35 shows the total participation in all online courses (excepting Nevada New Worker Core coursework) this fiscal year. Figure 15 shows the breakdown of individuals listed as by type of agency/staff. 100% of individuals taking ICWA or Ethics online have been child welfare agency staff. Figure 35 shows the breakdown of individuals by occupation that fall in the "Other" category. The majority of these individuals are child care providers, many of whom work directly with the child welfare system.

Table 35: Ongoing Online Child Welfare Courses Offered in SFY2010

Course Areas of Concentration	Number of Participants					
	Clark	Washoe	DCFS Rural	FPO	Other	Statewide
Mandatory Reporting	7	0	4	2	105	118
ICWA	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ethics	4	0	2	0	0	6
TOTAL	11	0	6	2	105	124

Figure 15: Types of Individuals Participating in Mandatory Reporting Online Training

Types of Individuals Participating in Mandatory Reporting Online Training



Source: NPT Web Registration System Report July 1, 2009 - May 31, 2010

The second objective for this goal is that the State, through collaboration with the Training Management Team and the University Partners, will develop a standard (in-person) specialty core curriculum series to meet the ongoing training needs of staff in the child welfare agencies at the rate of two – three courses per year (as funding allows). This objective is being addressed. Since July 1, 2009, four series of Specialty Core Courses were developed with three classes in each series (12 courses total). Each of the Specialty Core courses includes a one day introductory course followed by two specialized courses on the topic. The following four Specialty Core Courses were developed, and then piloted and implemented between March and June 2010:

- Recognizing and Evaluating the Impact of Substance Abuse on Child Welfare Practice and Families
- Recognizing and Evaluating the Impact of Mental Health on Child Welfare Practice and Families
- Recognizing and Evaluating the Impact of Domestic Violence on Child Welfare Practice and Families
- Recognizing and Evaluating the Impact of Sexual Trauma on Child Welfare Practice and Families

Table 36 shows the total number of trainings offered by each topic and the number of participants by child welfare agency and statewide. In the coming fiscal year, each course series will be offered up to six times north and south.

Table 36: Ongoing Specialty Core Courses Offered in SFY2010

Course Title	No. of Trainings	Number of Participants					State Wide
		Clark	Washoe	Rural	FPO	Other*	
An Overview of the Impact of Substance Abuse on Child Welfare Practice and Families	2		9	3		3	15
An Overview of the Impact of Alcohol on Child Welfare Practice and Families	2		4	2	1	2	9
An Overview of the Impact of Amphetamine Type Stimulants on Child Welfare Practice and Families.	2		4		1		5
Domestic Violence: An Introduction for Child Welfare Professionals	2	18		1	1	6	26
Domestic violence in Child Welfare: Interviewing Techniques and Strategies	2	13		1	1	8	23
Domestic Violence: Child and Family Teams and Beyond	2	11		1	1	2	15
Mental Health 101: An Overview of the Impact of Mental Illness on Child Welfare Practice and Families	2		37	1	2	2	42
Mental Health 201: An Overview of the Impact of Mood Disorders on Child Welfare Practice and Families.	2		16	2			18
Mental Health 202: An Overview of the Impact of Personality Disorders on Child Welfare Practice and Families	2		16	2			18
Child Sexual Abuse 101: An Introduction for Child Welfare Professionals	2	6		3			9
Child Sexual Abuse 102: Communication Skills	2	1		3			4
Child Sexual Abuse 103: Working with Child Sexual Abuse Throughout the Life of the Case	2	1		2			3
TOTAL	24	50	86	21	7	23	187

Source: NPT Web Registration System Report July 1, 2009 – May 31, 2010

A third objective for this item is that the State, through the collaboration with the Training Management Team and use of the Nevada Partnership for Training Reports System, will enhance reports to ensure that all staff receives the required On-Line or Specialty Core Training within the required timeframes, or to ensure that an appropriate remediation plan is in place with the Child Welfare Agencies. In an effort to address the need for more specialized training for existing workers and remediation needed for both new and existing workers, DCFS contracted with UNLV to develop an Intermediate Core series when New Worker Core Training could not be delivered due to the CCDFS hiring freeze in the third and fourth quarters of this fiscal year. One of the goals of this training series is to enhance the capacity of child welfare staff to effectively engage children, youth and families in case decision making. It is the NPT's position that the New Worker Core curriculum, specifically the first two modules, is a solid basis for this type of family engagement training, and therefore the competencies of New Worker Core will help create a framework for Intermediate Core. Moreover, the family engagement principles in Nevada's New Worker Core overlap with the core principles found in the National Resource Center for Permanency and Family Connections Family Engagement Web-Based Practice Tool Kit.

Thus, UNLV started a process with the three child welfare agencies to develop competencies for training existing staff. As part of this process, UNLV surveyed lead caseworkers, supervisors and managers regarding the competencies found in the New Worker Core curriculum to determine their relevance in the development of Intermediate Core. An electronic survey was sent to specific contacts at the three child welfare agencies in March 2010 to distribute within their respective organizations. There were a total of 184 responses to the survey (131 CCDFS, 31 WCDSS, and 21 DCFS-Rural). Based on feedback from the TMT, those competencies that were rated as most important or relevant in the survey would serve as a platform for this level of training, and the delivery of this training would be designed to be more case-practice oriented as opposed to lecture. The University partner(s) have analyzed the data from the survey and presented recommendations based on the findings in May 2010 to the TMT partners. Upon approval of the competencies of Intermediate Core by the TMT and DMG, curriculum and evaluation instruments will be developed. Once final approval has been given, protocols and any necessary forms will be developed in preparation for delivering the training. At this time the plan for delivering Intermediate Core will be initiated by the UNLV training team and piloted in the southern region for Clark County existing staff in the first quarter of SFY 2011, followed by a pilot in the North by UNR starting in the third quarter of SFY 2011.

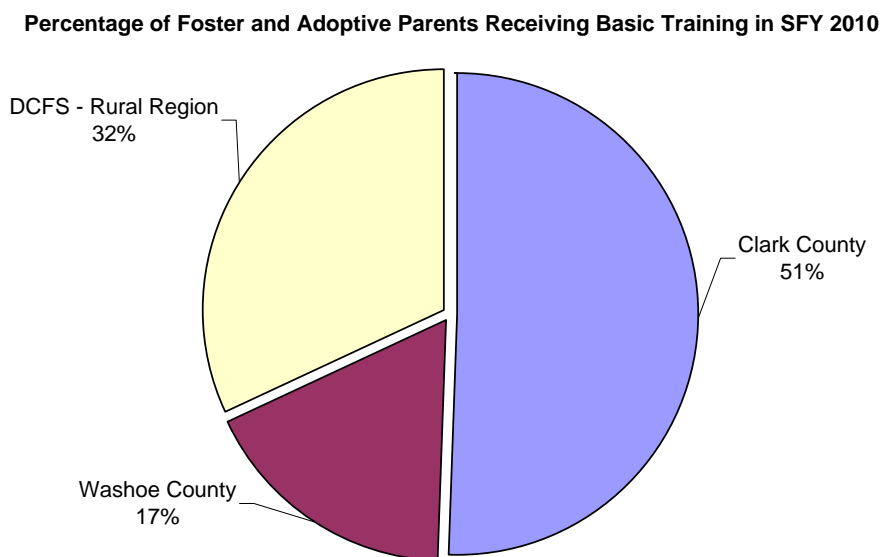
Item 34: Foster and adoptive parent training

Goal: *The State will ensure that training for current or prospective foster parents, adoptive parents, and staff of State-licensed or State-approved facilities that care for children receiving foster care or adoption assistance under title IV-E is provided in accordance with statewide policy and federal standards.*

To achieve this goal, there are several objectives to ensure that training for current or prospective foster and adoptive parents and staff of State-Licensed or State approved facilities that care for children in foster care is current and timely. The first objective to reach this goal is for an online web registration system similar to that currently in use by the Nevada Partnership for Training for initial and ongoing training. In the CFSP, the State projected that through collaboration with the Child Welfare Agencies and the Nevada Partnership for Training, to develop an on-line web-registration, reporting and evaluation tracking system to ensure that all foster and adoptive parents receive the training needed within the required timeframes. This system would be able to track electronic evaluation tools such as enrollment, knowledge gained and satisfaction with training received by participants in the training. The child welfare agencies currently use internal tracking systems to collect this information. The State will be reviewing these existing systems and will determine if a statewide system is feasible in the next fiscal year.

A second objective is to ensure that current and prospective foster or adoptive parents receive training. This item was rated as a strength in the 2009 Nevada CFSR and continues to be a strength for Nevada. Unlike the Nevada Partnership for Training, foster and adoptive parent training is a child welfare agency run activity in Nevada. Since the first Nevada CFSR in 2004, the agencies have been responsible for their own foster, adoptive, and kinship parent training programs. Beginning in July 2005, each child welfare agency began using the Parent Resources for Information, Development and Education (PRIDE) Pre-Service Curriculum for all initial Foster/Adoptive Parent training. However, in the past fiscal year CCDFS began the implementation of the PS-MAPP curriculum, while WCDSS and the DCFS-Rural Region still use the PRIDE curriculum. Both trainings are facilitated by agency workers and former foster/adoptive parents and both are provided in both English and Spanish. PRIDE training is covered over 29 hours, whereas PS-MAPP varies depending on the module. A total of 57 sessions of PRIDE was offered by all three child welfare agencies statewide to 860 participants in the past year (47 sessions of PRIDE in English to 776 participants and 10 sessions in Spanish to 84 participants). When Clark County switched to PS-MAPP, they offered 6 sessions to 80 participants in Clark County. Figure 16 shows the percentage of foster and adoptive parents receiving basic training in the past fiscal year.

Figure 16: Percentage of Foster and Adoptive Parents Receiving Basic Training in SFY 2010



Source: Child Welfare Agency Reports for July 1, 2009 - May 31, 2010

The agencies initiated several projects over the past year related to foster and adoptive parent training and collaboration with external agencies has improved training opportunities. For example, WCDSS is beginning to utilize youth who have aged out of the system to assist in training new foster parents and foster parent co-trainers. In addition, they are working collaboratively with community members to provide advanced foster parent trainings in the areas of substance abuse, child development, age specific issues in parenting, providing training in English and Spanish where available, and additional disability specific coursework. The DCFS – Rural Region has also been able to increase the number of licensed foster homes in the rural areas through a IV-B subgrant with the Sierra Association of Foster Families (SAFF). SAFF instructors provide initial PRIDE training of foster and adoptive families. CCDFS has also held a wide variety of advanced trainings, but these have been mostly offered through their in-house training unit. Table 37 shows the total number of trainings offered by topic followed by the number of participants who have taken the course over the past year.

Other initiatives include Clark County's focus on implementing a field training team and preparation of a comprehensive agency training plan and Washoe County's caregiver newsletter. The Clark County Training Plan includes Staff Development Training, Field Training, Advanced Caregiver Training, Parenting Project Training and PS-MAPP Foster Parent Training. A particular strength of this process is that it builds on the system that was implemented in 2007. As the training team members are integrated into the CCDFS system, they are aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the system. Each member of the training team possesses specific knowledge from curriculum development to past field (CPS and Permanency) experience. The ability of CCDFS trainers to meet the needs of foster parents and staff is evident in the number of trainings offered in the past fiscal year. WCDSS also provides its foster parents with a newsletter every two months which provides information about social service issues that impact foster families and training tips, as well as featuring children waiting for adoption or who need concurrent families. Flyers are also mailed each time and advanced training is available.

The child welfare agencies experience some challenges regarding training. For example, WCDSS has found that providing training on specialized care, such as specific high medical needs can be limiting. They find that it is also difficult to ensure proper screening through the training and licensure process to assist individuals and families that find out late in the process that fostering is not a good fit for them. CCDFS has found challenges due to budget constraints. Despite the success in implementing the Field Training Unit, this unit was dissolved in May 2010 due to lack of available funds and new hires. CCDFS has been unable to hire new people due to a hiring freeze since August 2008.

Table 37: Advanced Foster and Adoptive Parent Training

Training	Clark	Washoe	Rural	State
Child Abuse and Neglect and Sexual Abuse:				18/417
▪ Fostering the Sexually Reactive Child Ages 10 and Under		1/25		
▪ Fostering the Sexually Reactive Child Ages 11 and Up		1/28		
▪ Sex Abuse	1/21		4/11	
▪ Recognizing and Reporting Requirements of Child Abuse and Neglect	11/ 332			
Substance Use and Abuse:				61/322
▪ Drugs in our Community		1/33		
▪ Prescription Drugs Use and Cause		2/32		
▪ Drug and Alcohol on the Brain – Short Term and Long Term Impacts		4/61		
▪ Drug Recognition			4/7	
▪ Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder	2/125			
▪ Medications	1/11			
▪ Methamphetamines	5/30			
▪ Opiates	1/11			
▪ Substance Abuse	1/12			
Gangs:				1/27
▪ Gang Awareness in our Community		1/27		
Psychology & Human Development:				19/360
▪ Excelling as a Foster Parent: Using Emotional Intelligence Wisely		2/48		
▪ The Ins and Outs of Premature Babies		1/16		
▪ Reversing the Role of Reversal in Parentified Children		1/25		
▪ Why Kids Lie			4/6	
▪ Grief and Loss			4/33	
▪ The Change Process		1/23		
▪ Child and Adolescent Development	2/36			
▪ Compassion Fatigue	1/15			
▪ Failure to Thrive	1/126			
▪ GLBT Questioning Youth	2/32			
Parenting:				6/70
▪ P-Can Parts 1 and 2		2/34		
▪ Common Sense Parenting in English and Spanish		4/36		
Education:				1/18
▪ Educating Children in Foster Care – Creating a Positive Experience		1/18		
Communication and Discipline:				14/93
▪ Choices and Consequences		1/21		
▪ Positive Discipline		8/19		
▪ Communicating with Children	1/12			
▪ Discipline Dos and Don'ts for Toddlers	3/23			
▪ Positive Behavioral Interventions	1/18			
Collaborative:				6/198
▪ Working Together for Fostering Children – Enhancing Relationships to Improve Outcomes for Families (mandatory course)		6/198		
Kinship:				35/479
▪ Pre-service (English and Spanish)	34/470			
▪ Overview	1/9			
Adoptions	3/61			3/61
Total Trainings / Total Participants	71/1344	37/644	16/57	124/2045

Source: Agency Reports July 1, 2009 – May 31, 2010

Systemic Factor E: Service Array and Resource Development

Item 35: Array of services

Goal: *The State will ensure there is an array of services available that:*

- *Assess the strengths and meets the needs of children and families,*
- *Determine other service needs,*
- *Address the needs of families in addition to individual children to create a safe home environment,*
- *Enable children to remain safely with their parents when reasonable, and*
- *Help children in foster and adoptive placements achieve permanency.*

One objective under this item is that the State will seek out external sources of support (i.e. Technical Assistance) to improve the State's service array. During 2009, the Division sought and received Technical Assistance from the National Resource Centers (NRC) regarding service array. The National Resource Center for Organizational Improvement (NRCOI) assisted Nevada with completion of Washoe County's Service Array Assessment process. This assessment used the talents of nearly 40 members of the community, including the WCDSS Advisory Board Members. At this time, Washoe County has completed the process and the NRCOI indicated that this process was very effective. Several workgroups were convened to address the deficiencies found. These workgroups focused on the following three items: 1) Enhancing the service Capacity of Families to Provide for Foster Children; 2) Meeting the Educational Needs of Foster Children; and 3) Meeting the Physical and Mental Health Needs of Foster Children. Despite the success in this review, implementation of these strategies will continue to present a challenge considering specific budget cuts and their impact on local community services. Next, the NRCOI will be working with the State to complete the process in the DCFS-Rural Region. The ongoing technical assistance received from the NRCOI has been instrumental to the success of this item.

To reach the overall goals, the State has the primary objective of reviewing the effectiveness and level of sufficiency of the service array, including assessment of several key elements. These include: 1) Placing and maintaining children in safe environments; 2) Enabling children to remain home safely when reasonable; 3) Helping children in foster care and adoptive homes achieve timely permanency; 4) Supporting adoptive families after placement and finalization; and 5) Helping youth prepare for independent living. Each of these areas will be addressed as separate sections below.

Family Preservation Services (Title IV-B Subpart 2 Services):

Family Preservation Services programs are characterized by high intensity, immediately accessible treatment and ancillary services for at-risk children and families. The goals of Family Preservation Services' programs are to reduce the risk of child abuse/neglect and thus eliminate unnecessary out-of-home placement of children and to strengthen the family to better care for the developmental needs of their children. Program staff provides crisis intervention, clinical assessment, and family preservation services to a protective services population in nine areas: Washoe County, Clark County, Carson City, Fallon, Wells, Pahrump, Mesquite, Elko and Ely.

Clark County utilizes an array of prevention services to help children at risk of abuse and neglect to remain safely with their families. These services include flexible funding to support families in areas such as rent, utilities, apartment deposit, bus tokens, food vouchers and other basic needs, and contract services with community agencies. Drug court remains another option for families where substance abuse is a contributing factor to child abuse or neglect. Clark County maintains collaboration with community agencies, such as Safe House and Safe Nest, to provide services to high-risk families of domestic violence. Parent training classes are offered through numerous community agencies, as well as through the Clark County Parenting Project.

Family Preservation services in Washoe County include strength-based treatment utilizing pro-social adaptive behavior modification techniques to teach clients to change socially and personally maladaptive behavior; individual and group counseling to assist clients and their children to adopt strategies and behaviors that sustain recovery and maintain daily functioning including conflict resolution; couples and family therapy; supportive and instructive interventions to address life management needs; case management; assistance to families who were involved with or at-risk of becoming involved with child welfare agencies; assessments of strengths and needs of clients related to life and home management skills; development of individualized plans based on assessment results and client assistance in job seeking, resume development and application for employment.

Community providers receiving IV-B funds are a primary source for pre-placement services for the DCFS Rural Region

Intensive Family Services staff, which provides both clinical assessments and home-based family preservation services, is also a significant pre-placement service. State Rural Mental Health Clinics are responsible for providing children's mental health services in the Rural Region. The Rural Region also has four full-time Family Support Workers that are utilized similarly to the Human Services Specialist positions in Washoe County to provide additional needed support to families. The 2005 Legislature allocated 15 positions to enhance the Rural Region's service delivery capability. Two Social Work Supervisors, 11 Social Workers and two Support Staff were funded. Recruitment and retention of licensed social work positions is an ongoing challenge in rural Nevada. Other services utilized by the Rural Region include services available through community based non-profit agencies to provide substance abuse counseling, domestic violence interventions, truancy, tutoring, parenting and other prevention programs for children. County welfare programs and/or other community based resources are frequently accessed for temporary housing, vouchers for clothing, food, gas, utilities, transportation and other needed services. Community coalitions exist in many rural communities in an attempt to increase availability and accessibility through coordinated efforts between public and private agencies. The State has operated Family Preservation Services (FPS) existing in nine sites throughout the state for over 10 years – Las Vegas, Mesquite, Pahrump, Elko, Fallon, Carson City, Hawthorne, Wells and Reno. Services, like other FPS programs, are brief, intensive, home-based and family centered.

Family Support Services:

Awards to sub-grantees that provided Family Support services in Clark County include after-school and summer programs which offered activities and supervision to school-aged children, ages 9 to 12 within a safe environment while their parents were at work, which enabled parents to achieve and maintain better job performance in knowing that their child was in a safe environment; case management; budgeting classes in both English and Spanish and computer skills classes and developmental screenings. Title IV B funded Family Support services in Washoe County include tutoring; counseling; case management and linkage with supportive services; home visits; needs assessments; budgeting classes and goal planning. Funding for Family Support services to sub-grantees in the Rural Region enhance their capabilities to collaborate with other service providers; provide counseling; basic needs; case management; coping with stress, budgeting and parenting classes; youth / teen prevention programs focusing on drugs, alcohol, anger management, self-esteem, teen pregnancy prevention and communicable disease awareness; mentoring, tutoring and literacy for families which advanced their academic abilities; home visits; respite care and transportation.

Time-Limited Reunification Services:

Funded programs that provide Time-Limited Reunification services in Clark County include comprehensive assessments for both mental health and substance abuse issues for individuals, and groups as well as individual and family treatment. Under the Time-Limited Reunification category, services in Washoe County include psychological testing for adults and adolescents; psychiatric evaluations for adults; drug and alcohol evaluations; group counseling for drug and alcohol; individual counseling for addictions, sessions on depression, substance abuse, parenting, stress, family violence, sexual and physical abuse, loss and grief and marital and couple issues and mental health and family issues for adults. Time-Limited Reunification services in the Rural Region include case management; counseling; parenting classes; youth / teen prevention programs focusing on drugs, alcohol, anger management, self-esteem, teen pregnancy prevention and communicable disease awareness; mentoring, tutoring and literacy for families that advanced their academic abilities; home visits and mentoring.

Adoption Promotion and Support Services:

Funding for Adoption Promotion and Support Services allow sub-grantees in Clark County to educate the public, community leaders, policy makers and child welfare administrators by providing informative feedback on the foster parent perspective on adoption recruitment issues to better serve the foster parent community's needs and training for mental health professionals to help them understand why treatment strategies must be different for adoptive families. Funding also supports diligent search activities which focus on identifying and locating parents and relatives who might be placement resources for children utilizing multiple resources such as Accurant, Internet sources, telephone books, Department of Motor Vehicles information and diligent search programs in other states. Adoption Promotion and Support Services funding to sub-grantees in Washoe County and the Rural Region enhance their capability to collaborate with agencies to produce "child / family matching" events where children awaiting adoption were exposed to potential adoptive families; provision of series of training workshops for foster and adoptive parents; awareness promotion of special needs adoptive homes for children 12 years and older and sibling groups and increase interest in special needs adoption, ultimately impacting the number of finalized special needs adoptions. Washoe's Adoption Program and the Clark's CAC continue to utilize trained clinical staff to support families' adoption of children with emotional/behavioral needs. This service combined with the development of a "transition" case plan is a promising practice designed to better support and prepare both foster-adoption and stranger adoptions; and to increase the success of the child's placement.

Table 38: Title IV-B Subpart 2 Grantees by Funding Category and Region for Federal Fiscal Year 2010

Sub-Grantee Name and Region	Family Support	Family Preservation	Time-Limited Family Reunification	Adoption Promotion/Support
Clark				
Adoption Exchange, Las Vegas				✓
Boys and Girls Club of Las Vegas, Las Vegas		✓		
Bridge Counseling, Las Vegas		✓	✓	
Cappalappa FRC, Overton	✓			
Clark County Department of Family Services, Las Vegas				✓
East Valley Family Services, Las Vegas		✓		
Henderson Allied Community Advocates, Las Vegas		✓		
Nevada Children's Center, Las Vegas				✓
Olive Crest, Las Vegas				✓
Virgin Valley FRC, Mesquite	✓	✓		
Washoe				
Children's Cabinet, Incline Village	✓			
Children's Cabinet of Reno	✓	✓		
Family Counseling Services, Reno			✓	✓
Sierra Association of Foster Families, Reno	✓	✓	✓	✓
STEP 2, Reno		✓		
Washoe County FRC Coalition, Reno	✓	✓		
DCFS Rural Region				
Family Support Council, Gardnerville		✓		
FRC of Northeastern Nevada, Elko	✓	✓		
FRIENDS FRC, Fallon	✓	✓		
Hawthorne FRC, Hawthorne	✓	✓		
Little People's Head Start, Ely	✓			
No to Abuse, Pahrump	✓	✓		
Ron Wood FRC, Carson City	✓			
Wells FRC, Wells	✓	✓		

Clark County: 1,982 families, 4,116 individuals, 3187 children, 418 persons with a disability and 1,035 single heads of household were provided the services listed below through the agencies funded in Clark County in FFY 2009:

- *Children/Youth Development Services* – Child Development Classes/Activities and Teen/Youth Support Group, After-School and Summer Programs for Children.
- *Health Services* – Nutrition Classes and Health Education.
- *Information and Referral Services* – Referrals to Outside Agencies, Community Awareness Campaigns and Resource Libraries.
- *Life Skills/Development Training* – Budget/Financial Counseling, GED Classes, Life Skills Group, Employment Training, Literacy Training, Pre-Adoptive Counseling, Training Workshops for Foster and Adoptive Parents, Parenting Training, Translation Services, English as Second Language (ESL) Classes, Job Search/Placement Assistance and Parenting Classes/Training.
- *Support Services* – Assessment Services, Crisis Intervention, Home Visits, Case Management, Domestic Violence Services, Individual Counseling, Support Groups, Client Advocacy, Family Counseling, Relative Searches and Therapy.
- *Basic Needs Services* – Transportation Assistance, Clothing, Housing, Food, Rental Assistance and other Basic Needs that include the following:
 - Services to minority families such as ESL classes and translation services;
 - Home- and center-based assessment, counseling/treatment services for families with children at risk of removal due to family issues including domestic violence, poverty, substance abuse, etc.;

- Case management services for families with children having behavioral and emotional problems;
- Respite care including recruitment and training of respite care providers and respite reimbursement for low to moderate-income families having one or more children with a disability;
- Family self-sufficiency mentoring programs (for both youth and their families);
- Leadership skills development; after-school and parenting programs (bi-lingual and teen parenting);
- Domestic violence counseling;
- Transitional housing services including case management services, supportive services, and education for women with children;
- Intensive services to families referred by DCFS/CPS with first contact at the courthouse immediately after the court hearing; and
- Services to locate relatives of children for placement as an alternative to placing the child(ren) in foster care.

Washoe County: 2,786 families, 10,861 individuals, 6,057 children, 524 persons with a disability and 1,287 single heads of households were provided the following services during FFY 2009 through the agencies funded in Washoe County:

- *Children/Youth Development Services* – Child Care, Child Development Classes / Activities, Mentoring Programs, Teen/Youth Support Group, Tutoring, Day Care Assistance and Playgroups.
- *Health Service* – CPR Training, Nutrition Classes, Health Education and Health Screening.
- *Information and Referral Services* – Referrals to Outside Agencies, Community Awareness Campaigns and Resource Libraries.
- *Life Skills/Development Training* – Budget/Financial Counseling, GED Classes, Life Skills Group, Employment Training, Homemaker Services / Training, Literacy Training, English as Second Language (ESL) Classes, Job Search / Placement Assistance and Parenting Classes / Training, and Computer Skills Training.
- *Support Services* – Assessment Services, Crisis Intervention, Home Visits, Respite, Case Management, Domestic Violence Services, Individual Counseling, Support Groups, Client Advocacy, and Family Counseling, Parent Support Groups, Relative Searches and Therapy.
- *Basic Needs Services* – Child Safety Seats, Transportation Assistance, Clothing, Housing, Utility Assistance, Food, Rental Assistance and Other Basic Needs that include the following:
 - Home-based crisis intervention and counseling services for families with children who have been removed from their homes or who are at imminent risk of removal due to family issues including domestic violence, poverty, substance abuse;
 - Home-based homemaker services to prevent removal of children;
 - Services to Spanish-speaking families as well as translation services;
 - Washoe County's Child Protective Services (CPS) Family Assessment;
 - Family counseling/therapy (bilingual, home- or center-based);
 - Prevention/education services;
 - Advocacy and assistance for families with children with disabilities;
 - Families with children having special health care needs;
 - Transient/homeless services to families;
 - Family visitations;
 - Medical and dental care; and
 - Substance abuse outpatient and residential treatment for women with one child, including, transitional housing, life skills training, and parenting.

DCFS Rural Region: 1,420 families, 1,990 individuals, 2,785 children, 147 persons with a disability and 1,022 single heads of households were provided the following services during FFY 2009 by agencies funded to provide services in rural Nevada:

- *Children/Youth Development Services* – Child Development Classes/Activities, Mentor Programs, Teen/Youth Support Group, Playgroup, Tutoring, Child Care, Development Screening, Pre-Kinder Classes and Day Care Assistance.
- *Health Services* – Nutrition Classes, CPR Education, Health Education and Health Screening.
- *Information and Referral Services* - Referrals to Outside Agencies, Community Awareness Campaigns and Resource Libraries.
- *Life Skills/Development Training* – Budget/Financial Counseling, GED Classes, Life Skills Group, Parenting Skills Training, Coping Skills Training, Employment Training, Homemaker Services/Training, Literacy Training, English as Second Language (ESL) Classes, Job Search/Placement Assistance and Parenting Classes/Training.
- *Support Services* – Assessment Services, Crisis Intervention, Home Visits, Respite, Case Management, Domestic Violence Services, Individual Counseling, Support Groups, Client Advocacy, and Drug and Alcohol Evaluations.
- *Basic Needs Services* – Child Safety Seats, Transportation Assistance, Clothing, Housing, Utility Assistance, Food, Rental Assistance and Other Basic Needs that include the following:
 - Family Assessment Services (formerly CPS Differential Response Services) to families referred to Title IV-B Funded community-based programs by DCFS;
 - Child Protective Services (CPS). FASS services include family preservation services, including family assessment and case management;
 - Housing and services for homeless families;
 - Marriage and family therapy;
 - Basic education and job skill training;
 - Dental and medical care;
 - Family activity evenings;
 - Family visitation; and
 - Rural Homemaker Services.

Statewide, Nevada has experienced expansion of Title IV-B Subpart 2 services in seven sub grantee programs and the addition of one new program providing Title IV-B Subpart 2 services to a rural geographical portion of the State. These expansion activities enhance community based service provision being available to Nevada's families and children.

Estimated Expenditures for Services/Future Funding: Based upon the anticipated award, it is anticipated that approximately \$ 1,382,840 will be available to provide services in the four areas under the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program: Family Preservation; Family Support; Time-Limited Family Reunification; and Adoption Promotion/Support Services.

- The state will identify strategies, through the PIP process to address the identification, collaboration, availability, accessibility and sufficiency of the service array statewide.

Since the 2004 CFSR, Clark County has initiated and completed their Service Array Assessment. The assessment found gaps in the availability of family preservation and family support services. These services, which are focused on keeping families out of the child welfare system (to include family preservation services, substance abuse and mental health services), were not available at a level to meet the need.

The first quarterly Clark County Service Array Progress Report, completed in January 2009, identifies several potential strategies to decrease service gaps in the county and to engage stakeholders in serving Clark County's children and families. One of the potential strategies identified, the "Neighborhood Revitalization Pilot", proposes identifying which zip codes have the highest rates of child abuse and/or neglect removals and poverty/crime rates and mapping resources to identify service gaps and mobilize resources or using a "patch approach" to focus efforts on leveraging existing

community assets to make significant changes quickly related to awareness, access and array of available services. Other potential strategies include: legislative advocacy, development of a web-based system that streamlines service provider and client information, and refinement of service provider engagement strategies. The report also includes a summary of Clark County Department of Family Services upcoming Request for Proposals for Family Preservation and Support Services and Safety Team Decision Making (STDM) which has been funded through Casey Family Programs.

During 2009, Washoe County initiated their service array assessment. The NRC revised their assessment process to be more closely aligned with the CFSR in early 2008 and this revised assessment process is currently under way in Washoe County Department of Social Services (WCDSS). WCDSS has opted to assess service array as related to the three Well-Being Outcomes. Once Washoe County has completed their service array process, the Rural Region will begin their process, after having observed and participated in the Washoe County process. Completion of each child welfare agency's assessment process includes the creation of an action plan to address priority findings.

Item 36: Service accessibility

Goal: *The State will ensure that the services in the State's Service Array are accessible to families and children in all political jurisdictions covered in the State's CFSP.*

In the 2009 Nevada CFSR, this item was rated as an area needing improvement. The state has one main objective under this item that will help it to reach the overall goal for service accessibility. This objective is that the State will refine or further develop a process to identify and assess the effectiveness of the accessibility of services for families and children across the state, including the development of statewide or agency level plans for addressing fixable barriers identified in the system. As was identified in the 2009 Nevada Statewide Assessment, funding constraints and provider retention/availability present continue to present two of the most serious barriers across the state. However, despite these challenges there continues to be ongoing efforts to increase the accessibility of services through new initiatives statewide. During 2009 and prior to the release of the most recent Title IV B, Subpart 2, Request for Proposals (RFP) in early 2010, each child welfare agency developed a list of priority service needs. Priority service needs, by agency, included:

- Clark County: Family preservation services, homemaker services, substance abuse assessment and treatment, mental health assessments, medical case management, domestic violence response, and home studies and social summaries;
- Washoe County: In-home family crisis stabilization services and support services, facilitators to conduct safety team meetings to facilitate timely reunification, updating home studies and social summaries, comprehensive substance abuse and mental health assessments, family counseling and substance abuse treatment, parenting groups; and
- Rural Region: In-home family crisis stabilization services, in-home mental health assessments and treatment, community based and in and in-home substance abuse assessment and services, community based and in-home parenting training, community based and in-home homemaker classes, and training and classes for potential adoptive families.

Through Title IV B, service providers across the state are funded to provide family preservation, family support, timely reunification and/or adoption support services. Representatives from the state, Washoe, Clark and Rural child welfare participated during 2009 in the ongoing IV B workgroup established to monitor and address issues related to service provision and access. Several initiatives have seen ongoing progress over the last fiscal year. These focus on the Independent Living for Youth program in the DCFS – Rural Region, Domestic Violence, Substance Abuse, Caseworker Visitation, Differential Response and more. These programs help to ensure that services are accessible to families, despite funding constraints faced in the recent economy. These programs are described briefly below.

- In late 2008, the Independent Living Program transferred funding for rural service provision to four rural Family Resource Centers (FRC's). These FRC's are located in Elko, Pahrump, Carson City and Fallon. Each FRC agreed to provide services to youth residing in the surrounding areas to increase access to services. Since the previous CFSR Family Resource Centers, especially those in the rural counties, have built infrastructure and are also receiving additional funding and have expanded the array of available services. The FRC's continued to provide these services during SFY2010.
- Since the previous CFSR, Washoe County embedded a domestic violence advocate into the Child Protection Unit (CPS), through federal funding, to address domestic violence issues identified during the investigation process. The Advocate can facilitate and link victims of domestic violence who are involved with the child welfare system to

appropriate services and support them through their involvement with the legal system related to the domestic violence. This project was so successful that a second advocate was added in a subsequent year.

- The Regional Partnership Grant (RPG) provides treatment options for mothers, and their children, involved with child welfare and who are abusing methamphetamines in Clark County. The program allows the mothers to access intensive in-patient substance abuse treatment while remaining with their children. To date, the program has served 38 families with a total of 59 children. An additional component of the program has been an extensive cross training program with child welfare staff related to substance abuse. Multiple modules were developed and implemented to include opportunities to staff cases with substance abuse treatment staff to facilitate appropriate referrals and treatment expectations. The program is in Year three of a five year grant.
- During 2009, Caseworker Visitation funding was utilized to increase the frequency of monthly visitation through enhanced technology and/or additional hours for caseworker visitation. In addition, Adoption Incentive Funding was utilized to increase the number of social summaries and home studies completed to facilitate timely permanency for children.
- Differential Response in Nevada was first implemented as a pilot program in two Las Vegas Family Resource Centers beginning in February 2007. In 2008 the program was expanded to include Elko (1 location) and Washoe (2 locations) Counties and two additional centers/service areas in Clark County (total of 4 locations). The program was further expanded in 2009 to include: Carson City, Lyon County, Storey County, Churchill County and Nye County.
- During 2009, Casey Family Programs has provided funding for a number of projects designed to address foster care related issues with the goal of safely reducing the number of children in foster care. Projects have included several key trainings, consultation on increasing the State's penetration rate to maximize IV E funding, and the expansion of the Differential Response Program.
- The Division's Grants Management Unit (GMU) has implemented an online reporting system that is used by providers and the Division to track performance indicators, client utilization and demographics. During the past year, this system has been expanded to track provider services that have a waiting list.

Despite continued efforts on this item, Nevada still has challenges with accessibility to services. As mentioned this is primarily due to funding. However, distance and other resources also play a big factor in the success of this item. The DCFS – Rural Region in particular is challenged by lack of available providers in the small communities across the state and significant distances to the urban and metropolitan areas that may be able to provide these services. Clark and Washoe Counties have the challenge of lack of resources and in some cases significant waiting lists for services. This item continues to be an area needing improvement for Nevada.

Item 37: Individualizing services

Goal: *The State will ensure that the services in the State's Service Array are individualized to meet the unique needs of children and families served by the agency.*

One objective in this area is that the State, in collaboration with the Child Welfare Agencies and service array providers, will develop an ongoing process for assessing and addressing the needs of children and families within the system and providing a continuous quality improvement process for ensuring that the identified needs of these individuals are met. Several efforts have been made in this area.

For example, collaborative relationships/initiatives such as Differential Response and the RPG project enhance the provision of individualized services. In addition, the Youth Advisory Board (YAB) has been formed to assist foster and former foster youth to make the transition to adulthood. The purpose of the organization is to provide exemplary leadership and empowerment opportunities for youth who have or will experience out of home care. The YAB started meeting in January 2007 and continued to meet throughout 2009.

During 2009 DCFS developed several new UNITY screens related to service array that will provide additional information on services that children and families are referred to, including information about access/barriers such as waiting lists. These screens were operational in April 2009.

Several other groups are available that help Nevada to individualize services for families. For Foster and Adoptive families there are two groups, these are the Sierra Association of Foster Families (SAFF) and the Clark County Foster and Adoptive Parent Association (CCFAPA). SAFF is a non-profit organization in Washoe County comprised of caregivers whose purpose is to ensure licensed foster/adoptive families have the information, tools and support they need

to provide safe, quality care to abused, neglected and otherwise dependent children for Washoe County and 15 rural counties. CCFAPA has over 200 members who actively participate in Clark County activities and receive consultation and financial support from the National Foster Parent Association. During 2009, SAFF hosted the National Foster Parent Conference in Reno, Nevada and featured a full day related to Methamphetamine Abuse and Child Welfare related issues. The agenda included several panel discussions involving foster parents, biological parents, judges, child welfare staff, and substance abuse treatment providers.

For placements, there are several groups that individualize services such as the Out-of-State Placement Workgroup and the Indian Child Welfare Steering Committee. The Out-of-State Placement Workgroup was formed to provide oversight to the out-of-state onsite facility reviews and to review and approve policy and procedures. Members include Children's Mental Health, DCFS-FPO, DCFS Rural Region, WCDSS, CCDFS, Juvenile Justice, and legal and fiscal representatives. The Indian Child Welfare Steering Committee provides tribal consultation on the Indian Child Welfare Act and child welfare concerns regarding Indian children. There are four federally recognized tribes (Northern and Southern Paiute, Washoe, Shoshone) and 23 tribal entities and organizations in Nevada, including Urban Indians. The members include a wide representative of tribes, federal and state child welfare agencies. In addition, Clark County also has an Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) specialist dedicated to assisting with the provision of ICWA related services and a partnership with the Moapa Tribe that ensures that there is a sound process in place for working collaboratively. Both groups were active during 2009.

There are several entities that work with the agencies to assist in meeting direct service needs. For example, for bilingual services there is an Interpreter's Office for translation services that Clark County uses to enable workers to communicate effectively with the children and families that they serve; and a Language Line used by the DCFS Rural Region to provide translation services for the children and families in the rural counties throughout the state. Other examples include Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) in place with agencies to ensure that the needs of families and children are met in a timely manner. One such MOU is with Bridge Counseling, who provides outpatient substance abuse and mental health services and who is funded to provide immediate response to referrals from this agency.

DCFS and the three child welfare agencies have several strategies to assess the effectiveness of services and programs. DCFS evaluates services in several different ways. First and foremost, the Division's previous quality improvement process provided for regular review of the services provided at each child welfare agency using the federal outcome measures and review tool. Each agency was reviewed during the year, using the federal review tool, by a team of reviewers. The team included State staff, community stakeholders and staff from each of the child welfare agencies. The information gained during quality improvement reviews is critical in identifying gaps and needs as well as the effectiveness of services. In the future, more frequent Targeted Reviews are proposed to be conducted throughout the year to assess specific aspects of program/service effectiveness. These will likely be conducted by State staff and will involve reviews of specific UNITY screens or reports.

The Division's Grants Management Unit (GMU) evaluates services and service needs through required annual On-Site Reviews of funded providers. At a minimum, each funded provider is reviewed annually utilizing a tool that has both a programmatic and fiscal component. These reviews identify areas needing improvement, strengths of the program, best practices and subsequent corrective action plans (if needed). Special circumstances or concerns trigger additional reviews.

The Division also maintains an online data collection system which allows sub-grantees to track client utilization and outcome measures, to include data required by federal funding sources. This system is used with most federal grants by the funded providers and allows for online data entry as well as real time report generation. This system also tracks waiting lists for services at funded providers.

The Division's Decision Making Group (DMG) provides another mechanism to identify issues and mechanisms to address issues. These meetings include the Administrator of DCFS and the three child welfare agencies, the Child Welfare Deputy, program staff as well as invited guests. Most policies and procedures are presented to this group for approval.

Systemic Factor F: Agency Responsiveness to the Community

Item 38: State engagement in consultation with stakeholders

Goal: *In implementing the provisions of the CFSP, the State will engage in ongoing consultation with tribal representatives, consumers, service providers, foster care providers, the juvenile court, and other public and private child- and family-serving agencies, and ensure that the major concerns of these representatives are included in the goals and objectives of the CFSP.*

To reach this goal, the State has several objectives. The first is that the State will provide ongoing review opportunities for key stakeholders to provide input (including the incorporation of their feedback) on the child welfare system and the components within this plan through a variety of methods (as described in Section III of this document).

DCFS continues to actively engage and collaborate with external stakeholders through partnering and participation in workgroups, focus groups, meetings, public presentations, and surveys for purposes related to achieving State Plan goals and objectives. External stakeholders provide information about program functioning, policy and practice, protocol development, share resources and information that are used in program development and planning. Each program area identifies activities and stakeholders as part of its plan and provides reports and data about how the objectives are achieved relative to the overarching State Plan and federal child welfare outcome indicators.

A second objective is that the State will report on stakeholder activity, including how actively engaged external partners have been, how their input has been used and how information has been shared with the stakeholders throughout the year between annual reviews. In the past year there has been significant stakeholder involvement in the CFSR process. During the 2009 Statewide Assessment (SWA) and Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) stakeholders, including internal stakeholders (state staff, administration and members of the child welfare agencies), and external stakeholders (CASA, law enforcement, District Attorneys, courts, etc.) were identified to participate in group presentations, focus groups, surveys and state and community level interviews. A variety of existing stakeholder groups were presented with information on the process and were given the opportunity to provide feedback and participate in the ongoing process. Table 39 shows the variety of stakeholders who were involved in since early 2009.

Table 39: Stakeholders involved in the 2009 CFSR process

Stakeholders
Administrative Team to Review the Death of Children
CIP - Court Improvement Project
CJA - Children's Justice Act Task Force
Clark County Department of Family Services
Clark County Foster and Adoptive Parent Association
CRP - Citizens Review Panels
Executive Committee to Review the Death of Children
ICWA Steering Committee
Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada
Nevada Division of Child and Family Services – Rural Region
Nevada Partnership for Training
SAPTA (Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act)
Sierra Association of Foster Families
Washoe County Department of Social Services
Youth Advisory Board
Caregivers & Youth
Child Welfare Agency Caseworkers and Supervisors
Nevada Judicial & Child Advocates

During the 2009 Nevada CFSR stakeholder focus groups from all agencies were held in Washoe, Clark and Carson counties including a state level focus group. These stakeholders were local administrators, foster and adoptive parents, juvenile court judges, representatives from law enforcement, Supervisors and Caseworkers from the agencies, CASA representatives, tribal representatives and youth. After the 2009 CFSR the Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) kick-off

meeting occurred on December 2, 2009 with a host of Stakeholders from the agencies and communities. The Statewide PIP Committee included members from DCFS Administration, each of the three child welfare agencies, the Division of Health Care Financing and Policy, the Division of Health, Children's Mental Health, Juvenile Justice, the Judiciary, the Court Improvement Project, educational representatives, foster parent associations, tribal members, CASA, Nevada Pep and more. Approximately 50 key individuals participated statewide on the Statewide Committee. Overall, nearly 100 individuals took part in this planning process across the state. These meetings continued through February 2010.

The 2009 Nevada CFSR report rated this item as a strength. Stakeholders across Nevada are committed to children and the child welfare system. This item continues to be a strength for Nevada.

Item 39: Agency annual reports pursuant to CFSP

Goal: *The State will ensure that the Annual Progress and Services Report will include feedback from the ongoing consultation with the key stakeholders on services delivered pursuant to the CFSP.*

To meet this goal the State must provide ongoing review opportunities for key stakeholders to provide input (including the incorporation of their feedback) on the child welfare system and the components within this plan through a variety of methods. To meet this objective, the State engages in a variety of activities to ensure that stakeholders are more involved in the annual reporting of the CFSP. This includes consultation, collection of data or other reports from various entities and regular committees to facilitate open collaboration. Examples of our collaboration include:

1. Use of the DCFS website www.dcf.state.nv.us to facilitate the dissemination of CFSP plans, reports, policies and other documents for use to stakeholders and the general public. This contributes to the transparency of program administration and allows for public examination and input.
2. Use of the Grants Management Unit in DCFS to maximize funding for service delivery. This is accomplished through a more effective service needs assessment process and data collection. After the 2004 CFSR, the GMU replaced the single Title IV-B Coordinator position and has consolidated all child welfare grants, domestic violence, and fee based programs into one fiscal unit that oversees and monitors programs and completes fiscal reports. The GMU has an established an online web-based reporting system managed by the University of Nevada, Reno. Information about programs and services, public comments and surveys are available to the public on www.odesinc.org.
3. DCFS continues to collaborate with and include stakeholders from the community as well as other agencies at every level of the child welfare service delivery continuum, ranging from planning for allocation of funding to case level decision making to changes in policy, practice and reporting requirements. This collaboration and consultation with other agencies and entities expands partnerships and the sharing of available resources. It also allows for the provision of constructive feedback to the agency about programs, policies, procedures and practice that may be incorporated into the State Plan. DCFS representation includes, but is not limited to, educational/research institutions and agencies related to drug and alcohol, health, mental health, education, domestic violence, and juvenile courts, representing various counties. Examples of statewide consultation and coordination with stakeholders in implementing the provisions of the CFSP include (but are not limited to) the following committees or organizations (committee functions are outlined in Appendix C of this document):

- Administrative Team to Review the Death of Children
 - CIP - Court Improvement Project
 - CJA - Children's Justice Act Task Force
 - Clark County Department of Family Services
 - Clark County Foster and Adoptive Parent Association
 - CRP - Citizens Review Panels
 - Executive Committee to Review the Death of Children
 - ICWA Steering Committee
 - Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada
 - Nevada Division of Child and Family Services – Rural Region
 - Nevada Partnership for Training
 - SAPTA (Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act)
 - Sierra Association of Foster Families
 - Washoe County Department of Social Services
 - Youth Advisory Board
- The State will report on stakeholder activity, including how actively engaged external partners have been, how their

input has been used and how information has been shared with the stakeholders throughout the year between annual reviews.

In addition to those activities listed in a similar objective in Item 38, DCFS also engages in several stakeholder groups as outlined in the Decision Making Process narrative in Section 1 of this document. These groups include:

1. Decision Making Group made up of the DCFS Administrator and Rural Region Manager and the Directors of WCDSS and CCDFS. This group meets on the third Friday of each month.
2. Training Management Team made up of the DCFS Social Services Chief III (Training Manager); Training managers from each child welfare agency, a member from Differential Response and the Training Coordinators from each of the State's two University Departments of Social Work. This group meets on the second Monday of each month with additional subcommittee workgroups meeting as often as weekly. Recommendations from this group that require DMG approval are submitted to the DMG meeting in the month following the meeting where the recommendation is made.
3. Policy Approval Review Team made up of upper management from DCFS's Family Programs Office, Information Management Systems, Rural Region and Juvenile Justice Offices and upper management from CCDFS and WCDSS. Individual workgroups that develop policy include additional stakeholders as required by the subject matter. The workgroups meet as often as required to complete the necessary policy development or revision. PART meets on the first Wednesday of each month to review policy. When a policy is recommended for approval by DMG, it is placed on the DMG agenda in the month following the PART meeting where the recommendation was made to ensure that the policy is polished before it reaches the final approval process.
4. Statewide Quality Improvement Committee made up of managers and specialists from DCFS's Family Programs Office, Information Management Systems, Rural Region and managers from CCDFS and WCDSS. This team also brings in external stakeholders when appropriate to review quality improvement activities. This committee has two subcommittees that are working on the revisions to the Quality Improvement Framework and Quantitative and Qualitative Data reports.

These teams use a variety of methods to ensure that statewide policies, training and quality improvement activities related to Safety, Permanency, Well-Being, and Systemic Performance Indicators are reviewed and up-to-date. In the 2009 Nevada CFSR report, this item was rated as a strength. This continues to be a strength for Nevada.

Item 40: Coordination of CFSP services with other federal programs

Goal: *The State will ensure that the services identified under the CFSP are coordinated with the services or benefits of other Federal or federally assisted programs serving the same populations.*

To meet this goal, the State must provide ongoing opportunities for stakeholders to provide input and report on the activities engaged in by a variety of stakeholder groups to ensure that the appropriate stakeholders and other key federal programs are involved in the development of regulation, policy, training and proposed changes in practice. To do this, the State must coordinate with key Federal programs. The following is a list of advisory boards/committees/workgroups and or projects the Division utilizes when gathering information needed for the CFSP/ASPR:

- Administrative Team to Review the Death of Children
- CIP - Court Improvement Project
- CJA - Children's Justice Act Task Force
- Clark County Department of Family Services
- Clark County Foster and Adoptive Parent Association
- CRP - Citizens Review Panels
- Executive Committee to Review the Death of Children
- ICWA Steering Committee
- Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada
- Nevada Division of Child and Family Services – Rural Region
- Nevada Partnership for Training

- SAPTA (Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act)
- Sierra Association of Foster Families
- Washoe County Department of Social Services
- Youth Advisory Board

In addition to external stakeholder collaboration, the tribes, courts, youth and advisory committees, the findings of the quality improvement reviews and UNITY data are incorporated into the report to measure effectiveness, projected annual outcomes and targeted goals identified for the next year. The State also communicates with the child welfare agency Directors/Designees to receive child welfare agency updates for inclusion in the APSR. The Decision Making Group (DMG) is another form of communication between the state and the local child welfare agencies where CFSP discussion/activities occur. Many activities the CFSP requires are placed on the agenda throughout the year and are addressed in the monthly DMG meeting including the presentation and sharing of data reports, policy revisions, tools, checklists, instruments and any new federal requirements requiring actions the State may be required to take in order to comply with federal law. The State utilizes the Regional Office Representative to ensure that the information provided in the APSR adequately addresses the requirements and activities identified and a final draft is submitted to the Regional Office Representative for review and comment prior to June 30, 2010 to receive additional feedback or recommended changes. All CFSP and APSR submissions have been approved to this date.

While the State reported in the 2009 Statewide Assessment that this item was a strength for Nevada, the 2009 Nevada CFSR report indicated that this item was an area needing improvement. While more work needs to be done, the State collaborates with a variety of entities to achieve this goal. While there are many collaborations to report on; included in this report are examples from the Court Improvement Program, the Children's Trust Fund, Differential Response, Juvenile Justice, and the Nevada Tribal Community to demonstrate progress in this area.

Court Improvement Program: The first example of this collaboration is with the Nevada Court Improvement Program. The Court Improvement Program (CIP) is a multidisciplinary project that seeks improvement of interrelated systems that serve children and families who enter the child welfare system. The program operates through team-oriented court and agency initiatives. The goal of CIP is to make the systems more effective." Court Improvement Program funds programs and initiatives, which correspond and support efforts related to the three CIP Strategic Plans including: Administration and planning (Basic); Education and Training (Training); and Data Collection, Analysis, and Sharing (Data). Several recommended strategies are designed to achieve the following CIP goals:

- To continue the positive momentum the Court Improvement for the Protection and Permanency of Dependent Children Select Committee (CIP) has generated across the state and designate other standing committees around Child Safety, Permanency and Well Being;
- To improve the quality of representation for all parties in dependency proceedings;
- To implement a statewide strategy to provide for engagement of the courts and legal representatives in the CFSR and IV-E review processes;
- To increase public awareness about child abuse and the rights of children and families in dependency proceedings through an outreach campaign focusing on broad initiatives, resource development, as well as local issue specific advocacy;
- Improve outcomes for children at risk and strengthen families;
- Present collaborative multi-disciplinary training to the judiciary, state and county child welfare agencies, and other stakeholders involved in child welfare matters;
- Encourage, and where appropriate, support training for specific stakeholder groups involved in the child welfare arena;
- Develop a statewide data collection, analysis, and planning mechanism for child welfare cases capable of working in conjunction with the three predominant case management systems used in Nevada courts;
- Define and incorporate child welfare court performance measures into court procedures, and, where appropriate, incorporate the measures into the three predominant court case management systems and the Nevada Uniform System for Judicial Records (USJR) model;
- Develop or enhance case management systems to track child welfare cases;

- Emphasize the use of data as a critical and meaningful resource for all stakeholders in defining jurisdictional needs, identifying resources that positively impact outcomes for children and families, and planning for the allocation of personnel and other resources.

CIP as well as DCFS continue to share common goals related to safety, permanency, and well being as well as the lack of legal counsel. Child abuse and neglect issues are one of the Court's highest priorities for the previous years. Focus for the next couple of years will be on placement stability, permanency, and adoptions. There were areas needing improvement in the CFSR that the court has a direct role in affecting improvement. Issues requiring a collaborative approach are discussed and items of mutual concern are identified.

There are several ongoing CIP initiatives supported by this program. The first centers around the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC). Based on the 2008 Nevada State ICPC Assessment and best practices identified from sister states, activities in CIP's Strategic Plans were revised in January 2009. Benchmarks include evaluating and developing web-based training for judges and DCFS on the effective use of ICPC, and thereafter incorporating into regularly provided trainings for social workers, attorneys, judges, providers, CASA volunteers, and foster parents beginning with the evaluation in July 2010 and the development of web-based training in December 2010. This training is designed to assist stakeholders in understanding the complexities of the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children. The National Resource Center has provided technical assistance to CIP as well as DCFS by conducting on-site visits, interviewing staff, reviewing files, protocols and of state law and regulations to identify legal and practical barriers that might prevent timely judicial decision making determine methods to expedite ICPC cases.

A second initiative supported by CIP includes efforts related to the collaborative \$3.7 million methamphetamine grant. CIP collaborated with the State in submitting a proposal on a Target Grant to Increase the Well-Being and Permanency Outcomes for, Children Affected by Methamphetamine or Substance Abuse. Specific strategies to support the expansion of the family drug court program in the Eighth Judicial District Court were also included. The State of Nevada DCFS of Child & Family Services (DCFS) as the lead agency, sought funding in the total amount of \$3,742,000.00 under Program Option 2 (\$1,000,000 annual award for 5 years – Declining Federal Award) with the following partners: the Nevada Attorney General's Office (AG); Nevada's Court Improvement Project (CIP); CCDFS Drug Dependency Court, Nevada's Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Agency (SAPTA); CCDFS Department of Family Services (CCDFS), non-state entity, and WestCare Foundation (CCDFS non-profit community provider) to address methamphetamine abuse and its impact on child welfare in CCDFS Nevada. More information on this initiative is presented in Item 35: Service Array.

A third initiative supported by CIP is the Child's Attorneys Project (CAP) Pro Bono Lawyer and Surrogate Education Advocacy program. The Grantee for this program is the Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada. The purpose of this project is twofold: (1) to assist Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada (LACSN) in providing representation for abused and neglected children by enhancing recruitment and training for the volunteer lawyers; and (2) to assist LACSN in providing educational surrogates, pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Educational Act (IDEA), 20 USC Section 1415 (b)(2)(A), by enhancing recruitment and training of volunteers. The LACSN Pro Bono Project recruits and trains private lawyers to represent child victims of abuse and neglect. LACSN provides CLE, training manuals, and bi-monthly support luncheons for volunteers. Additionally, an LACSN CAP Staff Attorney is assigned as a mentor on each case. The Pro Bono Project met its stated goal of recruiting and training more lawyers to represent these children. During the first year of the grant, 103 new CAP cases were assigned to pro bono volunteers, which are up significantly from the 64 cases that were placed during the same period a year earlier. Additionally, 29 of the new volunteers recruited to the Project during the grant period got involved to take CAP cases. This is triple the 10 new volunteers recruited to the Project who accepted CAP cases during the same period a year earlier. Approximately 25 attorneys attended the 3-hour CLE training programs LACSN offered on "Representing Child Victims of Abuse and Neglect" in both October and May. In the year prior to the grant period, LACSN only offered one such training and taught about 13 volunteers.

The biggest barrier faced by this Project is providing an attorney for every child. At the present time, attorneys are assisting approximately one-third of the children in the dependency system. Because the courts are convinced that an attorney for a child makes a difference in the outcome, i.e., quicker resolution of the case or expedited services for the child, the Court is referring more children to LACSN than it can handle. LACSN is attempting to secure additional funding for staff attorneys and additional pro bono attorneys to assist. Second year funding was provided to LACSN for calendar year 2010.

The LACSN Educational Surrogate Program recruits and trains volunteers who will act on behalf of the children living in group homes or institutional settings, advocating when necessary, with regard to special education services. In addition to running the Educational Surrogate Program, the LACSN Special Education Program provides support and assistance regarding special education issues to CAP Staff Attorneys and CAP Pro Bono Volunteers. DFS and DCFS social workers,

as well as foster parents, are trained on state and federal laws regarding special education rights and services. During the current grant period, approximately 100 additional surrogate volunteers were trained. LACSN has worked with the Southern Nevada Paralegal Association and the UNLV William S. Boyd School of Law to recruit new volunteers to become surrogates. Approximately 90 children had active educational surrogates acting on their behalf with the school district. Funding for an additional year was provided in the spring of 2010 to update the training manual and train more volunteers.

The training goal has been met in a variety of ways. A Special Education Manual was created by staff at LACSN. The manual presents the pertinent federal and state law in an easily understandable manner and contains useful Clark County School District information, including an overview of how the District is structured and the District's regulations regarding Special Education. The manual can be adopted for use by other jurisdictions.

A fourth program supported by CIP is the Nevada CASA Association, Inc. CIP has provided second year funding for the Nevada CASA Association, Inc., which ended in August 2009. The purpose of the Nevada CASA Association is to support existing local CASA programs with volunteer recruitment, training, and support as needed; expand the program to one additional court per year, to reach the goal of providing a CASA volunteer for every abused and neglected child; and to promote the CASA mission throughout Nevada. With more CASA programs and more volunteers, more abused and neglected children have advocates working toward the ultimate goal of permanency. Since May 2009, there has been a 10.2% decrease in the number of children served in the rural areas in particular, and the cause for this decline is under investigation. Additional efforts made to promote the CASA mission include:

- August 6-9, 2009, Bill Fowler, Director of Nevada CASA Association, volunteered at the Legend's Reno-Tahoe Open Golf Tournament. Bill was able to speak with 15-20 people about CASA.
- September 19-20, 2009, NCA sponsored Bowling for CASA in Carson City, Las Vegas and Reno, with a combined turnout of more than 100 people. The main purpose is to promote CASA, but the fundraising component will be shared with the local CASA programs in Carson City and Las Vegas.

The current economic recession has and will adversely impact the funding of current CASA programs, start-ups of additional CASA programs for rural counties, and NCA goals.

A fifth initiative sponsored by the CIP is the Early Representation Pilot Project. Begun in February 2009, this pilot project follows best practice research regarding improving outcomes for children by reducing to a minimum the time a child spends in placement, and expediting comprehensive case planning while applying active efforts to reach an early resolution of plan and permanency. A core of the program is immediate appointment of counsel for children and parents, exchange of reports and necessary information, and a facilitated series of meetings with all counsel and stakeholders, within days of removal to identify and resolve conflicts and reach a collaborative solution. All cases are assigned to a single judicial officer and originate from a single geographic service area. The project has met the first goal of having 25 cases in ERP. Related to this goal, is the goal of assuring that all children and all parents in ERP actually receive legal counsel and assuring counsel's participation in hearings, safety team meetings and any subsequent child and family team (CFT) and other case-related meetings. This goal was met. A data collection system has been developed with help from the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC); a worksheet that captures the statistical information needed for analysis is complete and operational. The DCFS – Rural Region has trained its Children's Clinical Services' therapists to serve as safety team facilitators. ERP has two assigned clinical services workers who facilitate all safety team meetings and within a day, provide summaries to the stakeholders via e-mail. Monthly stakeholder meetings are held to address and resolve a wide range of issues related to the pilot project. Since the beginning of the project, 84 children have been provided legal representation. Of those, 42 have been reunified and their cases closed. Of the remaining 42 children, 13 have been placed back with their parent(s), 10 are in a relative placement and 19 remain in foster care. The second goal of assigning cases to a control group started in February 2010. Second year funding was approved through CIP.

A sixth and final initiative I was to improve video conferencing capabilities in the courts to improve communication and training opportunities. Elko County, Humboldt County, and White Pine County District Courts were all approved to receive video conferencing equipment as part of the CIP effort to implement video conferencing capabilities in courts for use in child welfare cases. Elko County is completely operational and has started providing quarterly information on its use. White Pine County is expected to be operational within 30 days. Once the technical issues are resolved in Humboldt County, video conferencing should be available within 30-45 days.

The following Judicial Training was offered in the past fiscal year:

- National Council of Juvenile & Family Court Judges Annual Conference
- National Council of Juvenile & Family Court Judges Child Abuse & Neglect Institute
- National Council of Juvenile & Family Court Judges Annual Conference on Juvenile Justice
- 2009 Victims Act Model Courts All-Sites Conference
- Beyond the Bench
- Nevada Specialty Court Training Workshop
- Family Jurisdiction Judges 2010 Annual Seminar
- State Bar of Nevada Family Law Conference
- Nevada CASA Association, Inc., Conference

In addition, the following conferences were attended this past year:

1. Court Improvement Program Meeting And New Strategies For Changing Times Meeting – August 2009 – Arlington, VA
2. Child Welfare Director's Policy Summit – September 2009 – Washington, DC
3. 2009 Victims Act Model Courts All-Sites Conference – October 2009 – Newport Beach, CA
4. Third Judicial Leadership Summit – October 2009 – Austin, TX
5. 2010 Spring National Association Of Public Child Welfare Administrators Conference – March 2010 – Washington, DC
6. Third Annual Nevada State Casa Association Conference – April 2010 – Reno, NV
7. 2010 Child Advocacy Institute – May 2010 – Louisville, CO
8. National Association Of Drug Court Professionals 16th Annual Drug Court Training Conference – June 2010 – Boston, MA
9. Beyond The Bench 20: Collaboration Works! – June 2010 – San Diego, CA

The State continues to build strong relationships and effective communication between the child welfare agencies and CIP within our organizations, and with our partners from other branches of government. Partnering and working together as a team, to accomplish the same goals for our children and families. A CIP meeting was held in April 2010. This meeting was facilitated by Joanne Brown, J.D., MSW and included CAP Attorneys; Judges from the DCFS – Rural Region, Washoe County and Clark County; DCFS; CCDFS, WCDSS and CASA. The meeting was to discuss the findings from the CFSR. The committee agreed to incorporate all PIP activities related to the courts in the CIP Strategic Plan. This commitment was an important step toward working better together to support the needs of children and families.

Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention: A second example of collaboration with other federally funded programs is the Children's Trust Fund programs for child abuse and neglect prevention. In 1985 Chapter 432 of Nevada Revised Statutes was amended to create a Children's Trust Fund (CTF). Monies from the account are used to fund programs and services designed to prevent abuse and neglect of children. Revenues for CTF are derived from a \$3.00 fee on Nevada birth and death certificates and from federal Community Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) funds. Through SFY 05, the seven-member Committee for the Protection of Children allocated the CTF funds. The 15-member Grants Management Advisory Committee assumed responsibility for funding recommendations in SFY06.

Funds are distributed through a competitive application process for a two-year grant cycle. The second year of the two-year grant cycle for CTF SFY 09 ended June 30, 2010. In May 2008, the Grants Management Advisory Committee awarded \$936,768 for 12 child abuse prevention programs throughout Nevada. Specifically, \$336,965 was allocated for seven programs to provide parenting classes; \$330,821 was allocated for two programs to provide statewide public awareness for child abuse prevention; \$92,209 was allocated for two programs to provide skills-based curricula to school aged children; and \$176,773 was allocated for one program to provide respite care for families with children with special needs. Unallocated SFY 09 CTF funds were added to unspent SFY08 funds and were used to fund the following

programs: \$244,633 was allocated to Family Resource Centers (FRC's) to provide baseline support for FRC's statewide; \$100,000 was allocated to the Institute of Applied Research of St. Louis, MO, to provide an evaluation of the Differential Response (DR) program; \$50,000 was allocated to the Division of Child and Family Services to support the Domestic Violence program of the Nevada Outreach Training Organization in Pahrump, NV; and \$26,815 was allocated to Positively Kids to provide respite care for families with medically fragile children. Each grantee is required to submit a Quarterly Report with information about their program's progress on their goals and objectives, the number of unduplicated participants in their programs, and results of "client satisfaction" surveys. In addition, two organizations were awarded funds for statewide programs. These included the *Area Health Education Centers of Southern Nevada*, which is the Nevada Chapter of Prevent Child Abuse America and the *Washoe County District Health Division* which coordinated a statewide media campaign for child abuse awareness and prevention.

Grants require a collaborative efforts and leveraging of funds. All of the grantees that received CTF grants used the funds to enhance and/or expand existing programs. Seven of the organizations used CTF monies for specific programs they would otherwise not have been able to provide. The 12 CTF grants awarded through the competitive process expended 96% of the funds awarded for in SFY 2009. Final expenditures for SFY 2010 will not be available until July 2010. Most of the grantees met or exceeded their stated goals and objectives.

In SFY 2010 grantees who received funds to provide parenting programs were required to use the Protective Factors Survey (PFS) for pre/post assessments. The PFS was developed by FRIENDS National Resource Center in collaboration with the University of Kansas Institute for Educational Research and Public Service. The PFS is a standardized tool that contains 20 statements. Respondents rate how often each statement is true. The PFS indicates areas of improvement in family function, nurturing and attachment, emotional support, and concrete support. Each of the protective areas have been researched and determined to be valid measures of child protection and family well-being. PFS has an accompanying database that allows grantees to house their own data and easily transfer quarterly data information to the GMU. The use of the PFS will allow the grant administrators to get the same information from all the grantees who are presenting parenting programs.

Because of a CBCAP grant requirement for grantees to be part of a statewide network, all CTF funded programs are required to participate in Prevent Child Abuse Nevada meetings, which are videoconferenced four times a year. In SFY09 many of the CTF grantees participated in the planning and implementation of the "Pinwheels for Prevention" campaign in April. A goal for SFY10 was to have all the grantees take an active role in their communities. To accomplish this goal, the grant managers continued work with grantees to ensure the goals and objectives were measurable and the reporting accurately reflects the funded program.

Differential Response: This program has been in operation since February 2007. Differential Response began in two service zones in Clark County and has now been implemented in areas of the state where over 98 percent of residents live. The percent of maltreatment reports referred for a DR family assessment response is low but rising—about 9% for reports received in 2009. The Nevada DR model, which involves Family Resource Centers (FRC) in all DR family assessment cases from start to finish, is unique among states that have implemented DR. Ten Family Resource Centers and the Children's Cabinet in Washoe County provide DR services in 11 Nevada counties. Table 40 shows the total number of DR locations statewide, as well as the total number of staff employed in these programs. In the few months of operation in SFY 2007 there were two programs in Clark County with four staff. This has grown each year until 2009 and is now stable. There are currently 12 DR programs statewide with 23 community based staff.

Table 40: Nevada Differential Response (DR) Program Report

	SFY 07 2/28/07 – 6/30/07	SFY 08	SFY 09	SFY 10 Current Status
Number of DR programs	2 (Las Vegas)	7 (4 Las Vegas, 2 Washoe, 1 Elko)	12 (5 Las Vegas, 2 Washoe, 5 Rural)	12 (5 Las Vegas, 2 Washoe, 5 Rural)
Number of Community Based DR Staff	4	16	23	23

Source: Nevada Differential Response Report 02/28/07 through 02/28/10

As of February 28, 2010, there were 251 open DR cases statewide. From SFY 2007 to SFY 2010 at the same time there has been a 670% increase in the number of families referred to DR from CPS. Over the past three years, a total of 2,057 cases have been referred. 13.9% of these cases have been returned to CPS, and 73.4% of cases have been closed. Cases have been returned to CPS for the following reasons: 1) Unable to locate family or family has moved; 2) Family

refused DR services or did not respond to DR communication; 3) Child in home under the age of 5 and reported to be unsafe; 4) New allegation of abuse or neglect; and 5) Family not in area of service. Table 41 shows the breakdown of the current cases open in the DR program statewide.

Table 41: Nevada Differential Response Current Status by Program

Program	Budgeted DR Staff	Number of cases carried forward from SFY 09	Number of Families Referred to DR from CPS	Number of Cases returned to CPS	Number of cases closed	Number of open DR cases
Las Vegas – South: HopeLink	2	21	37	4	35	19
Las Vegas – East						
East Valley Services FRC	2	14	60	4	50	20
Las Vegas Central						
East Valley Services FRC	2	20	57	7	52	18
Las Vegas – North						
Olive Crest FRC	2	9	59	7	44	17
Las Vegas-West						
Boys and Girls Club of LV FRC	2	19	56	6	54	15
Total Clark	10	83	269	28	235	89
Washoe FRC	2	10	68	7	45	26
Washoe Children’s Cabinet*	4	38	110	8	100	40
Total Washoe	6	48	178	15	145	66
Elko – FRC of NE NV	2	10	68	3	52	23
Lyon, Pershing, Mineral						
Lyon Co. Human Services FRC	2	19	82	6	56	39
Churchill - FRIENDS FRC	1	10	39	3	31	15
Carson City - Ron Wood FRC	1	13	36	4	39	6
Douglas (RWFRFC)		0	5	0	1	4
Pahrump/S. Nye						
NV Outreach Training FRC	1	4	16	5	6	9
Total Rural	7	56	246	21	185	96
Total State	23	187	693	64	565	251

Source: Nevada Differential Response Report July 1, 2009 – February 28, 2010

*Children’s Cabinet is funded by WCDSS to provide DR services. While they are not being funded by FRC state funding, they are participating in the training and other DR activities and their data will be incorporated into the evaluation information.

A recent study on Nevada’s DR system conducted by the Institute of Applied Research in St. Louis, Missouri found that the working relationship between CPS offices and FRC’s is quite good overall. Staff from CPS and the FRC’s understand the role of the opposite agency and, in most locations, interact on a regularly scheduled basis. At this time, FRC DR workers are limited to 15 family assessment cases at any one time. In most rural areas, DR workers are at or near case capacity most of the time. In the two urban counties, but especially in Clark County, DR workers are often underutilized. This study found that a high percentage of families who receive DR family assessments are satisfied with how they are treated (96%) and with the help they receive (90%), and 3 out of 4 believe their family is better off because of the experience. These responses compare very favorably to family surveys conducted in other states that have implemented DR. Results of family surveys indicate that the DR program has been implemented in Nevada as designed and intended. Families report that DR workers listen to them, treat them in a friendly manner and involve them in decisions that affect them and their children. About equal percentages of families (67%) and workers (65%) report that services were provided to DR families. Emergency food and clothing were the most frequently provided assistance, followed by counseling, and assistance with utility payments and employment. Workers frequently connect families to other community resources.

While workers see their intervention as effective and helpful to families, they also recognize the complex and often chronic nature of the problems of many families with whom they work. Although the follow-up period has not been long, DR families are somewhat less likely than non-DR families to have subsequent CA/N reports that require an investigation.

Overall the DR program has been well implemented with good effect, providing services to a set of families that have previously not received them. At the same time, a relatively small percentage of all child maltreatment reports are referred to FRC's for a DR family assessment, so that the impact on the broad CPS system in the state is limited.

Juvenile Justice: A third example of collaboration in the Nevada child welfare system is with juvenile justice. Following a federal compliance review in July 2006, it was found by the Children's Bureau of the Administration on Children and Families (ACF) that the Division failed to include in the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (also known as AFCARS) report, youth that receive juvenile justice services while under the agency's responsibility for care and placement. All children in foster care under the responsibility of the State agency administering or supervising the administration of the Title IV-B Child and Family Services State plan and the Title IV-E State plan; that is, all children who are required to be provided the assurances of section 422(b)(10) of the Social Security Act (the Act) (Appendix A – SECTION II). In Nevada, the juvenile correctional facilities and youth parole fall under these requirements. Because the youth served in this population are a part of the IV-E agency, the Division has made efforts to ensure that youth in out of home unlocked facilities are afforded the same IV-E assurances as youth in the custody of the child welfare agency. During this year, the Division hired a Program Specialist specifically to focus on developing policy, procedure and training for staff on how to work with these youth. The program specialist has been focusing on developing training guides related to SACWIS system requirements, developing policy and procedure on required casework activities, and will be assisting the Youth Parole Bureau with ensuring that engagement and casework strategies are effectively implemented. This position will also focus on training staff and ensuring Fostering Connections mandates for older and aging out youth are met. Table 42 includes the number of children that were transferred to juvenile custody (probation/incarceration) from child welfare (receiving services or in protective custody). These youth were known to the child welfare system prior to entering the juvenile justice system and these numbers are collected on a monthly basis via UNITY.

Table 42: Children Transferred into Custody from the Juvenile Justice System SFY 2010

Age	Male	Female	Total # Committed
13	0	0	0
14	0	0	0
15	2	1	3
16	2	1	3
17	6	2	8
18	7	3	10
Total	17	7	24

Nevada Tribal Community: The State continues to consult with the 27 Nevada federally-recognized tribes, bands and organizations (Section 422(b) (11), Social Security Act, as amended) through the Indian Child Welfare Committee and the Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada (ITC-N). The Indian Child Welfare Committee invites Tribal Chairs, or their designee(s), to participate on the committee for the purpose of discussing Indian child welfare issues in Nevada that relate to jurisdiction, investigation, and service delivery. Members of the Indian Child Welfare Committee include: representatives from the ITC-N, which is comprised of 27 Nevada Tribal Chairs/Vice-Chairs and Council Members or designees; members of Tribal Human Social Services agencies; Bureau of Indian Affairs; Nevada Urban Indians, Inc., Las Vegas Indian Center; Nevada Indian Commission; Nevada Children's Justice Act ; DCFS Rural Region, CCDFS Department of Family Services and WCDSS Department of Social Services; the UNR Partnership for Training, and other interested parties. The following presentations and consultations occurred during this report period:

Indian Child Welfare Committee:

On June 9, 2009; the Technical Assistance to Local Communities and Indian Tribes (TALCIT) Committee met with the CJA Task Force and presented a request to combine TALCIT and the ICWA Steering Committee into one CJA Task Force committee called the Indian Child Welfare Subcommittee. Both committees were working on the same projects, so efficiency would be improved by joining the two groups. The CJA Task Force approved the formation of the new single committee. Subsequently, the committee worked throughout the remainder of 2009 to plan an ICWA training track as part of Nevada's Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada (ITC-N) annual convention, which was held in November 2009. A primary focus of the ICWA training track was to educate Nevada tribes about changes in federal law for tribal access to Title IV-E funding

Prior to this report period, The Nevada Indian Commission provided the Indian Child Welfare Committee with a list serve beginning in November 2008, with the intent to serve as a communication mechanism to facilitate information sharing and collaboration between the State, Counties and Tribes: NVICWA@listserv.state.nv.us. The State, Counties and Tribes continue to utilize the communication mechanism for information sharing.

The Indian Child Welfare Committee decided that regional roundtables held on or near tribes in Northern or Southern and Rural Nevada would be more effective in reaching local tribes and child welfare agencies.

The Indian Child Welfare Committee's State-Tribal Roundtables' plan was presented to ITC-N on April 14, 2009. The purpose of the State-Tribal Roundtables was to build upon existing partnerships and increase collaboration between State, County and Tribes. The State-Tribal Roundtables provided the forum for information, dissemination, and discussion about the new law: Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008, Public Law 110-351, which allows tribes direct access to Title IV-E funding under certain conditions. The Casey Family Programs facilitated the 2009 State-Tribal Roundtable meetings, the Nevada Indian Commission coordinated logistics of each of the meetings, DCFS presented systems overview for greater understanding of the Nevada child serving systems, and ITC-N participated as well.

The State-Tribal Roundtables provided a forum to share information and improve provision of child welfare services for Indian children and families through consultation to: 1) identify tribal foster care and ICWA needs; 2) explore Title IV-E funding and/or agreements; and 3) provide technical assistance as indicated.

- *Building State-Tribal Partnerships: Regional Roundtable*

- Meeting on May 21, 2009, at Las Vegas Indian Center; Las Vegas, Nevada.

- Meeting on June 30, 2009, at the Te-Moak Shoshone Tribal Diabetes Center; Elko, Nevada.

- Meeting on July 27, 2009, at Nevada Urban Indian Center; Reno, Nevada.

- *Increased participation of Tribes during the CFSSR of 2009*

1. *Inter-Tribal Council Meeting-Building State-Tribal Partnerships*

A report to State, County and Tribal leaders was facilitated by DCFS on August 18, 2009 at the Nevada Health Division.

- *Workgroups*

Ongoing consultation with Nevada Tribes was conducted on ICWA policies and procedures and the development and/or improvement of at least one policy or protocol. Tribal discussion during the Indian Child Welfare Steering Committee Meetings of 2009; called for the formation of a workgroup to create a draft memorandum of understanding (MOU) for the child serving agencies in Nevada. The MOU Workgroup was created to clearly define the issue and how to approach appropriate service referral and delivery. The workgroup addressed the issue of non-enrolled or non-Native children residing on Indian reservations and who should serve these children across jurisdictions. The CJA Task Force Indian Child Welfare Committee formed a workgroup to develop a formal charter for the membership. The charter defines the purpose of the committee and outlines the goals and objectives of the work. The workgroup convened on March 29, 2010 to finalize the charter to be presented at the first meeting of 2010. The Indian Child Welfare Committee will reconvene in the spring of 2010 with plans to hold regional roundtable meetings during the summer of 2010.

- *Protecting our Children and Sustaining our Families Indian Child Welfare Track*

This was held in Reno, Nevada, on November 17 – 18, 2009. The Indian Child Welfare Track was part of the 44th Annual Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada (ITC-N) Convention. The Indian Child Welfare Track was coordinated by the CJA Task Force Indian Child Welfare Committee. Representatives were included from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), ITC-N, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, and Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) staff. The convention included a panel consisting of representatives from DCFS Family Programs Office, BIA, Court Improvement Program, and the Nevada Indian Commission which presented information on the CJA Task Force Indian Child Welfare Committee and provided updates in regard to the regional State-Tribal Roundtables during the general session. The Indian Child Welfare Committee provided the keynote speaker for the convention's first general session. Nationally-recognized Indian Child Welfare expert Judge William Thorne, of the Utah Court of Appeals, presented "In the Spirit of ICWA, We All Need to Work Together to Help Our Children." Judge Thorne provided the American Indian perspective on historical trauma in terms of the Boarding School era, effects on the

development of the brain for Indian children placed in non-Indian homes, the need for collaboration within Tribal child serving systems, and current implementation strategies for ICWA. Judge Thorne closed the session with a challenge for all Tribes to improve partnerships with State and county child welfare agencies. The Indian Child Welfare Track was attended by tribal chairs, tribal council members, Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada, Washoe County Department of Social Services, DCFS Rural Region, tribal social services agencies, attorneys, court appointed special advocates, service providers, and other interested parties. There were more than 250 participants who were impacted by the information provided during the sessions.

Systemic Factor G: Foster and Adoptive Home Licensing, Approval and Recruitment

Item 41: Standards for foster homes and institutions

Goal: *The State will ensure that implemented standards for foster family homes and child care institutions are reasonably in accord with recommended national standards.*

The first objective under this goal is that the State would engage in necessary regulation development to ensure quality standards for foster care and child care institutions, including the finalization of regulations related to NAC424 regarding treatment homes and NRS 432A regarding child care institutions. A second objective is that the State, in collaboration with the Child Welfare Agencies, will provide a mechanism for determining how effective foster family homes, child care institutions and facilities are at meeting required standards, including reporting on meeting corrective action for those homes or institutions that are not in compliance. A final objective, used to reach this goal is that the State will report on the length of time it takes to license foster and adoptive homes and facilities, including the number of waivers granted.

For foster and adoptive homes, Nevada statutes in Chapter 424 – Foster Homes for Children provide a framework for the licensing, license renewal, inspections, investigations of foster homes and background investigations for foster care providers. Under NRS 424, the child welfare agencies have the responsibility for licensing foster homes, therefore the DCFS – Rural Region, CCDFS and WCDSS have the responsibility for licensing foster homes. This responsibility also includes monitoring and providing technical assistance to family foster and group foster homes. The purpose of licensing is to reduce the risk of harm to children in care. The licensing process determines whether the applicant can provide suitable care for children. To ensure that an acceptable level of care is maintained, licenses are renewed annually per NRS 424 with a minimum of one visit made to each licensed home. FBI checks are conducted on all applicants and household residents 18 years of age and older.

Family foster homes fall under NAC 424 regulations. The regulations incorporate definitions, general provisions, licensing and organizational requirements, requirements for qualifications and training of personnel and adult residents, requirements for initial training and ongoing annual training, specifications for facilities, ground and furnishings, and operation of foster homes, including requirements for care, treatment and discipline of foster children. NAC 424 regulations pertaining to licensing also specify standards for accessibility, facility space, immunization records, health and sanitation, menus, food preparation, nutrition, fire safety and fire drill records, staff/child ratios, safety factors including pools and outdoor equipment, and transportation of children.

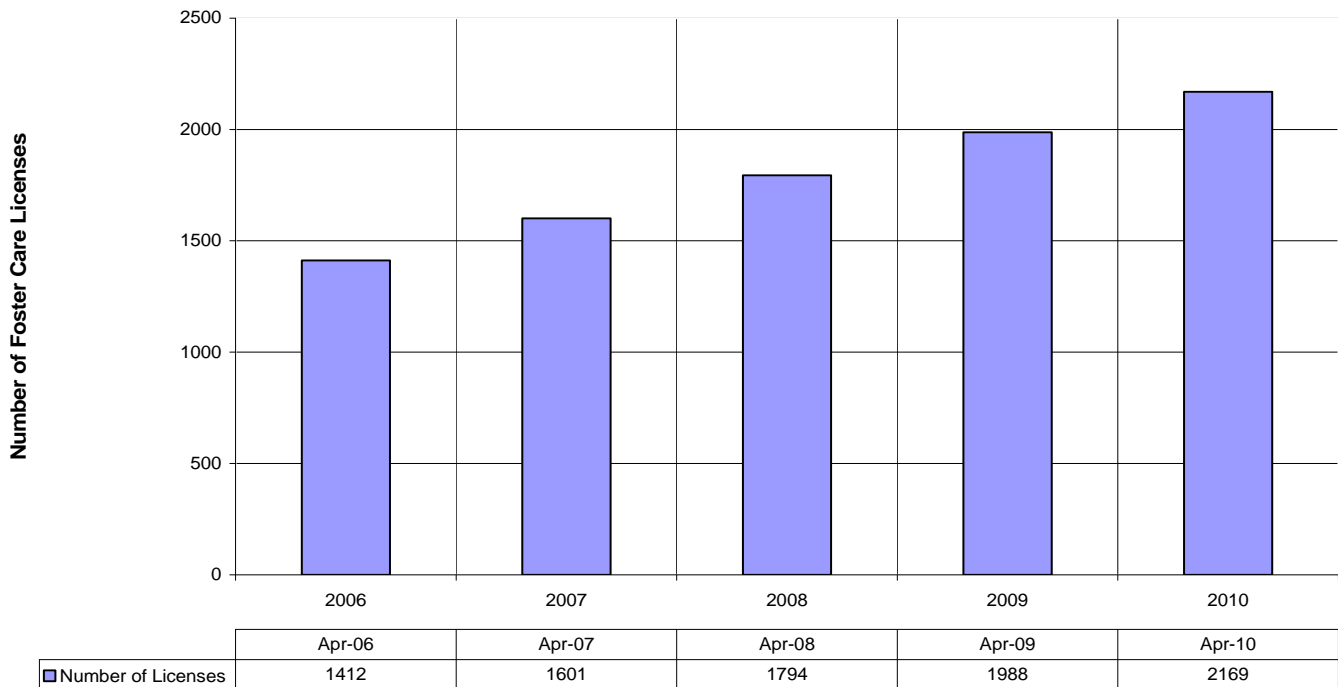
For addressing standards related to child care institutions, the Bureau of Services for Child Care created workgroups and amended proposed regulations to ensure Nevada's children were in a safe and nurturing environment when placed in out-of-home care. Child care institutions (educational, shelter care and residential) fall under NAC 432A regulations. The regulations incorporate definitions, training requirements, general requirements, social workers, maintaining records and ratios. Licensing Surveyors complete quarterly, semi-annual and annual inspections (surveys) of facilities, such as facility files, indoor and outdoor deficiencies based on NRS 432A regulations. The regulations are based on fire, health, facility space, advertising, immunization of records, staff qualifications and training records, menu, food preparation, nutrition, fire drill records, staff/child ratios, safety factors including toys and outdoor equipment, transportation and discipline. Once deficiencies are noted, licensing surveyors will work with providers to come into compliance with the NRS 432A regulations. The proposed regulatory process is still in the progress working toward bringing the State of Nevada standards closer to National Standards. During the last year's Statewide Assessment and CFSR Process, stakeholders commenting on this item were in general agreement that DCFS and the local counties have implemented appropriate standards for foster family homes and child care institutions. Stakeholders reported that re-licensing occurs annually and is done in a timely manner.

In the Nevada 2009 CFSR Report, this item was rated as a strength. This continues to be an area of strength for Nevada. The number of foster homes in Nevada is increasing and the length of time to license homes is decreasing. Figure 17

illustrates the upward trend in the total number of licensed foster homes in the previous four years, which is a 53.61% percent increase from the 2006 figures. Table 43 indicates that the average number of days required to license foster group homes has declined steadily until this year, while the number of waivers has steadily increased until this past year. This may be related to the increase in new relative foster home placements, which make up 26.19% of all placement types statewide in the current fiscal year. These types of placements have seen a large increase since SFY 2008. In SFY 08, there were 8434 licensed relative foster homes. In SFY 2010 there were 10,248 licensed relative foster homes. This is a 21.5% increase in two years.

Figure 17: Foster Parent Licenses – Trend Report

Number of Foster Care Licenses



Source: UNITY Report CFS720 - year runs 12 calendar months through April 30

Table 43: Average Number of Days Required to License Foster Group Homes

Year	Number of Facilities	Average days to license	Waivers
2006	521	91	116
2007	575	83	163
2008	539	73	207
2009	596	89	220
2010	435	91	148
Total	2666	85.4	854

Item 42: Standards applied equally

Goal: The State will ensure that the standards applied to all licensed or approved foster family homes or child care institutions receiving Title IV-E or IV-B funds are applied equally.

To achieve this goal, the State, in collaboration with the child welfare agencies, will provide a process for ensuring the effectiveness of applying standards to all licensed or approved foster family homes or child care institutions receiving Title

IV-E or IV-B funds, including IV-E review findings and agency level compliance with State standards.

As the State is responsible for the receipt and distribution of all federal IV-E or IV-B funds in the State of Nevada, it is a statutory duty of State to administer any money granted by the Federal government under title IV-E or IV-B. NRS 432A regulates and licenses all Child Care Institutions before they can receive IV-E funds. Child Care Institutions follow NRS 432A child care regulations which protect the health and safety of the children. NRS 432A regulations require every employee to receive criminal background checks and a Child Abuse and Neglect check (CANS). Institutions also have to follow the ratio between caregiver and children in order to ensure supervision is adequately being met. Institution staff is required to take 15 hours of annual training plus 90 day initial training. The State also licenses and regulates all foster homes according to NRS 424 and NAC 424 requirements. All family foster homes must meet the same licensure requirements. No distinction is made between relative and non-relative applicants.

In the 2009 Nevada CFSR, this item was reported to be a strength. The State monitors compliance with foster care licensing regulations and requirements and verifies compliance by family foster homes on an annual basis. Compliance is verified by a process of annual visits as part of the license renewal process, and the prompt investigation of any complaints or concerns relating to the operation of family foster homes. Complaints that involve the health or safety of a child are investigated immediately. All other complaints must be investigated within 10 working days. Family foster homes that do not comply with initial licensing requirements and maintain compliance as verified by annual inspections and license renewals will not receive IV-E or IV-B funds. This item continues to be a strength for Nevada.

Item 43: Requirements for criminal background checks

Goal: The State will comply with Federal requirements, including Adam Walsh, for criminal background clearances related to licensing or approving foster care and adoptive placements and the State will ensure that a background check process is in place that includes provisions for addressing the safety of foster care and adoptive placements of children.

To meet these goals, the State engaged in necessary regulation development to ensure compliance with Adam Walsh requirements, including making necessary regulation adjustments required by AB89 from the 2009 Nevada Legislative Session. AB89 was an act relating to the protection of children which made various changes concerning the investigation of applicants for a license to operate a child care facility, or licensees and others over whom applicants or licensees exercise some control. The bill required applicants and licensees to terminate certain employees and remove certain residents and participants in outdoor youth programs who have been convicted of certain crimes or who have had a substantiated report of child abuse or neglect made against them and expanded the grounds for denying a license and for taking other disciplinary action against a licensee. AB89 also provided authorization for the imposition of administrative fines for violations of certain laws and regulations concerning licensure of child care facilities. This bill was enacted and necessary changes were made to NRS432A.

The 2009 CFSR rated this item as a strength because Nevada completes criminal records checks in foster and adoptive homes before placing children in the home. State Regulations include requirements for local law enforcement criminal background checks, annual child abuse and neglect checks, home safety inspections, home studies, reference checks, and complaint investigations. Fingerprints are forwarded to State's Central Registry for Statewide and FBI background checks and 432B.391 allows name check for emergency relative placements. The state continues to comply with state and federal requirements. In addition in response to Adam Walsh, a Bill (AB 76) was submitted and was approved in the 2009 legislative session. This is an act relating to the protection of children which exempts certain relatives from licensure as foster care providers as a condition to placing a child in their custody in certain circumstances and revised the provisions governing the background check required for obtaining a license as a foster care provider. This bill made the required changes to NRS 432B.033. The legislative submission and policy development were completed within six months in order to meet the requirements of the federal law. Included in the policy is a procedural guideline for the local child welfare agencies regarding specific timeframes for completing checks requested by other states and procedures to follow when other states are not responding to Nevada requests. The state has developed an email address for state's to contact Nevada to request an Adam Walsh check and the applicable forms are easily accessible on the Division's website. Within Nevada, there is a 24 hour response time to provide the results to the requested state.

CCDFS reports that they have revised their pre-screening process (which includes a review of SCOPE and CANS). This process is more customer service friendly, in that it allows the agency to make some determination up front about who is eligible for licensure. CCDFS screens out approximately 30% of all those interested before the individuals spend money on fingerprints and dedicate their time (or the agency's) toward training.

This item continues to be a strength for Nevada.

Item 44: Diligent recruitment of foster and adoptive homes

Goal: *The State will ensure that the diligent recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families that reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed in the State is occurring.*

To meet this goal, one objective was that the State would develop a quality improvement process to monitor child welfare agency adherence to statute, regulation and statewide policy related to the recruitment and training of foster and adoptive families, including a process to ensure ongoing agency progress toward correcting identified areas of needed improvement and that stakeholders have an opportunity to provide input on the process. Currently, the State addresses this through a reporting process from each child welfare agency which documents what efforts have been made to recruit potential foster and adoptive families, as well as identifying strengths and challenges with the recruitment process. Diligent efforts are being made to ensure that there are enough homes to meet the needs of children coming into care. The child welfare agencies have reported a variety of initiatives in relation to this goal and the above objective. These examples are outlined below.

WCDSS uses a demographically based method of assessing the cultural backgrounds of children in foster care and the cultural background of prospective foster parents. Efforts are then made to focus recruitment efforts on achieving a balance in which the culture of foster parents closely reflects the culture of foster children. In addition, they provide recruitment through the school district (primarily through distribution of flyers promoting foster care and adoption information fairs) in an effort to target location and licensure of homes in schools that children are frequently removed from in order to possibly have the child not lose their school of attendance with they come into care. Efforts are made to locate homes that reflect special needs, such as medical issues, sibling groups and adolescent placement; however, this continues to be a challenging area. In support of relative placements, WCDSS reports that by having a specialist who works on relative licensing, this expedites the process and helps relative caretakers maneuver the necessary steps and regulations. This specialized worker is able to respond quickly to relative caretakers and quickly guide them through the licensure process. A challenge however, is that the number of relative caretakers wanting to become licensed in this area has grown significantly and the time demand is difficult to maintain. There has also been an ongoing challenge in using the SAFE home study tool to assess biological parents through ICPC placement requests. Alternative tools are not available thus far and as a result the ICPC worker has been required to be adaptive, but is not always comfortable, in the approval process in these circumstances. To address recruitment, WCDSS uses their bi-monthly newsletter "From the Heart" featuring children needing flexible/concurrent and adoptive homes. This has increased the number of older child adoptions for children who previously had not successfully been able to be placed. In addition, WCDSS reports success in recruiting families through events that other organizations are hosting. This has proved to be cost effective, as it provides access to an audience that they might not otherwise be exposed to. The school district is also a collaborative partner, as they send flyers home with children in area elementary schools. Foster care fairs were also held four times in the past year, mostly in libraries or churches to reach community members in areas they are most comfortable in. During these events, WCDSS offers individual orientation and screening to interested applicants so people can move from the initial contact through licensure if appropriate, rather than having to attend a group orientation at another time. Finally, WCDSS uses a broad based media campaign, based on the "Have a Heart" theme. This includes billboards, placement of the theme at recruitment events, promotional items, and awareness events at local malls for Foster Care Month.

CCDFS has developed new foster care licensing reports to assist management in matching children, as well as in tracking the number of beds and homes available for children. Because of these reports, children and caregivers are matched more quickly and more appropriately, which is anticipated to reduce placement disruptions. While these reports are starting to give important information, a challenge is that UNITY will require some modification to ensure that the desired information can be captured. These modifications have been pending for more than 18 months at this time. Clark County also engages in a public awareness campaign. In the past year, efforts have been made to revised foster parent recruitment materials (brochures, pamphlets, television shows and public service announcements) to include new messaging and updated information. The revised materials better communicate current need for Clark County Foster Parents. In addition, material is being updated to include Spanish translation, which will help to attract Spanish-speaking families. While promising practices are evident, funding for these campaigns continues to be a challenge, due to the current budget crisis.

Recruitment efforts remain focused yet flexible in order to leverage opportunities that present themselves. The DCFS – rural Region participated in several community events throughout their region to promote recruitment throughout the year depending on what opportunities are available in the rural areas.

As indicated in Figure 17 under Item 41, there has been a steady increase in the number of licenses given between 2006 and 2010. The Nevada 2009 CFSR report indicated that this is an area needing improvement for Nevada.

Item 45: State use of cross-jurisdictional resources for permanent placements

Goal: *The State will ensure a process is in place for the effective use of cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely adoptive or permanent placements for waiting children.*

There are several objectives under this item that the State is in the process of addressing as part of the five year process. The first objective is under development. In this objective, the State will be working on a process to provide stakeholders with an opportunity to provide input on the child welfare system and ICPC foster and adoptive parent recruitment and retention. In regards to recruitment, The State continues to use a variety of cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely adoptive and permanent placement for waiting children, including national media, adoption exchanges, photo listings, and the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC).

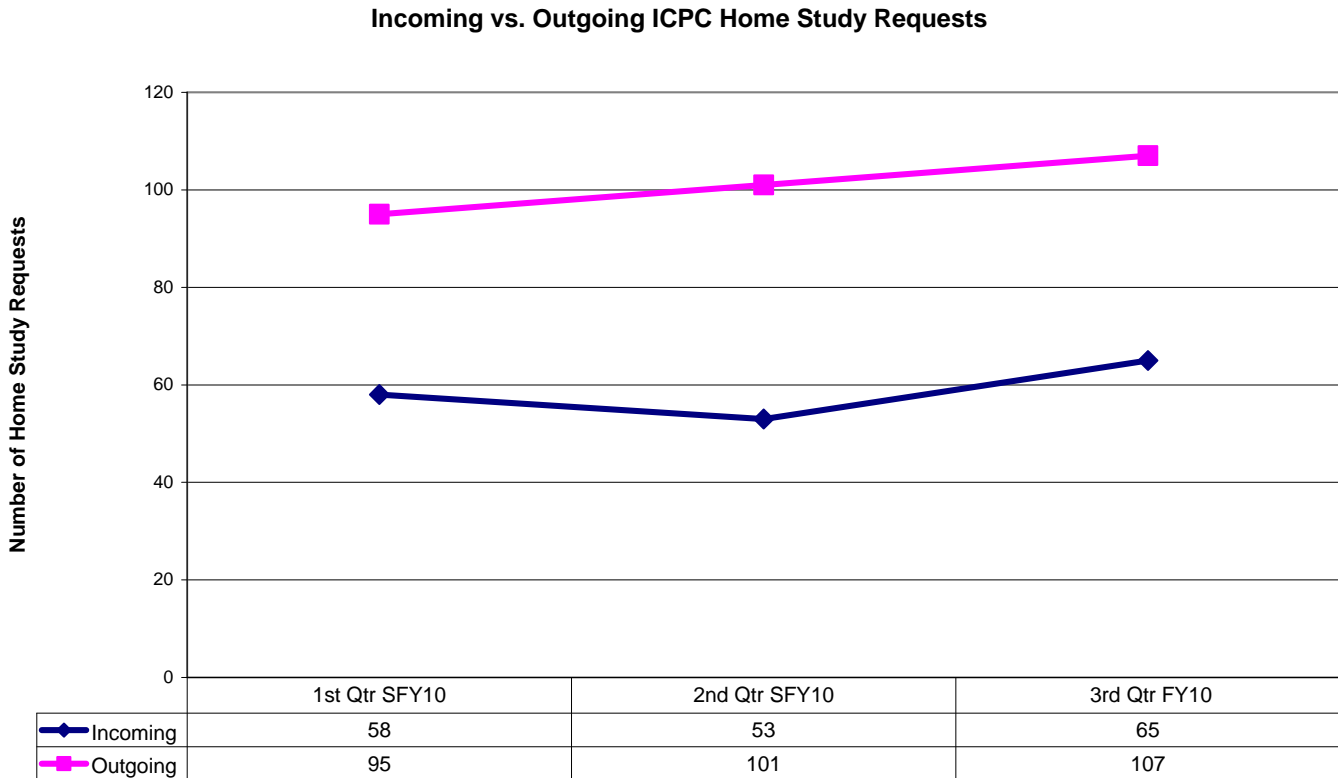
In April 2010, the Nevada Deputy Compact Administrator attended the annual convention of the Association of Administrators of the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (AAICPC). The purpose of this convention was to discuss and vote on changes as necessary on regulations applicable to the Compact, as well as, share information among member states. This year, a significant amount of time was devoted to the new Compact, regarding the changes and the impact of these changes on the ICPC process. Currently, 11 states have passed legislation to replace the former compact with the new one. It is anticipated that the majority of states will follow as their respective legislative sessions take place. Nevada is considering a bill for the 2011 Legislative session.

During the past year, the State ICPC Unit has been conducting ICPC Partner meetings each month. These meetings include representatives from the State ICPC Unit at DCFS, DCFS – IMS, WCDSS ICPC staff, CCDFS ICPC staff and DCFS – Rural Region ICPC staff. The goal of these meetings is to promote collaboration, and to discuss and resolve important ICPC issues. This has resulted in the effective use of cross-jurisdictional resources that facilitate timely adoptive and permanent placements for waiting children.

A second objective is that the State will complete the electronic process for the data collection, monitoring and reporting out on effectiveness of achieving timely home studies and other ICPC Compact Requirements. The State ICPC Unit continues to provide 24 hour internal processing time for incoming and outgoing referrals. Currently 27 states accept referrals electronically, greatly reducing transit time and increasing the time for receiving states to complete home studies within the 60 day required time frame. The State ICPC Unit continues to utilize an email box developed for ICPC inquires, status checks, and/or requests for additional information. This has allowed a quicker turn around time for caseworkers requiring immediate information on new referrals, home study completions, approvals, denials, status updates, placement dates for case planning purposes and/or court proceedings, as well as providing a mechanism to expedite communication to other states. Also, the State ICPC Unit continues to work with IMS on improvements of the electronic processing of cases. UNITY screens were developed in the previous year which allows the processing of new referrals, approvals and denials. These screens have streamlined the process and provided greater accuracy, accountability and success in meeting ASFA timelines. The addition of UNITY screens relating to ICPC has enabled the State to develop data reports for analysis and identification of trends and potential issues requiring training. By July 2010, the final rollout of the home Study Report is anticipated. This report will capture data relating to how many home studies have been requested by each agency, how many are past due and how far they are past due. This will allow the State ICPC Unit to identify states or counties who may have a consistent problem with returning home studies, providing an opportunity for contact and collaboration as appropriate. The report will also assist in maintaining numbers for workforce development and analysis.

Current reports the State ICPC Unit collects internally are able to provide the State with a variety of important data points. For example, the State has seen a slight increase in the number of outgoing referrals and a slight decrease in incoming referrals in the past year as shown in Figure 18. For outgoing referrals, Clark County had a slight drop, while Washoe County and the DCFS – Rural Region showed a slight increase. Incoming referrals are also showing a slight increase overall for all agencies, however, there was a small drop in the second quarter.

Figure 18: Incoming vs. Outgoing ICPC Referrals

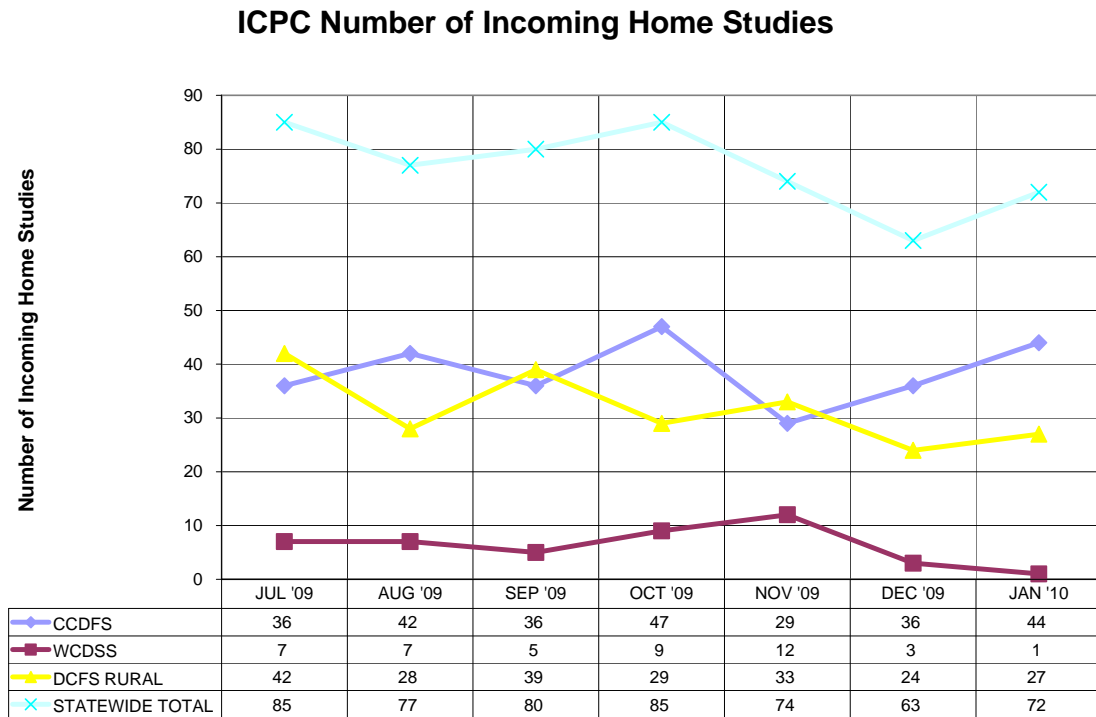


Source: ICPC Report July 1, 2009 - March 31, 2010

Data collected by the State ICPC Unit show that more children are being placed out-of-state than are coming in-state in the past year. For the second quarter of 2010, there were 57.43% less placements coming into state than were going out of state. California, Utah, Arizona, Florida and Oregon (in order of most to least) are the top five states that Nevada is referring children to and California, Oregon, Washington, Arizona and Utah are the top five states that Nevada receives referrals from. Incoming referrals into Clark County represent 66% of all incoming referrals for the State. In the most recent quarter, 55% of children coming into care from other states were male and 38.9% of all children were under the age of five (61.5% under the age of 10). 72.8% of all incoming requests were to place children with parents or relatives, while 6.1% was for adoption. For children being placed out of state, there was a nearly equal split of boys to girls (49.1% boys) and 39% of all children were under the age of five (66.3% under the age of 10). 46.7% of children being placed out of state are going to parent or relative placements, while 14.7% are for adoption.

Figure 19 shows the number of completed home studies in Nevada in 2010. The timely completion of home studies allows caseworkers to move forward with the placement of a child, or in the case of a denied home study to continue to search for a viable placement. This figure reflects a consistent number of home studies. CCDFS represents 61% of the total number of home studies for the period of July 1 2009 through January 31, 2010.

Figure 19: ICPC Number of Incoming Home Studies



Source: ICPC Report July 1, 2009 to January 31, 2010

Overall, there are few placement disruptions and few ICPC violations occurring in Nevada. From July 2009 through January 2010, a total of 13 placements disrupted. WCDSS did not experience any disruptions in the past year. The DCFS – Rural Region had two disruptions and the remaining 11 occurred in Clark County. This may be due to the transient nature of this community and the current economy. Clark County currently has one of the highest home foreclosure rates in the Nation, and as a result, many families are being displaced. Over the first three quarters of the year, there were 18 violations. 77.7% of these violations occurred in Clark County. Statewide, the primary reasons given were placements occurred because it was court ordered (33.3%), children were placed prior to approval was received (50%), or the home study was denied (16.6%).

In the 2009 Nevada CFSR report, this item was rated as a strength because the State was demonstrating a clear process for the effective use of cross-jurisdictional resources. Overall, this continues to be a strength for Nevada.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) Plan Report

In the past year, selected areas for improvement from Section 106 (a) of CAPTA in 2008 were:

1) Sec. 106(a)(1) Improving the intake, assessment, screening and investigation;

To accomplish the goal, several statewide policies have been or are being updated. These included 0506 Intake and Initial Response Times and 0513 Substantiation. Significant revisions were made to both policies and these were approved and implemented in the spring of 2010. In addition, 0516 Overturning Child Maltreatment Findings, 0507 Investigating Corporal Punishment in Schools and an updated 1202 Appeal Policy are all in various stages of development.

In response to training needs, several trainings were developed and implemented. For example, training on 4th and 14th Amendment Rights has occurred throughout DCFS - Rural Offices. This training was conducted by Nevada Deputy Attorney Generals. In addition, Nevada has contracted with ACTION for Child Protection to develop an investigative specialty core curriculum which will be designed as an advanced training for investigators. Investigative competencies include, but not be limited to; dynamics and indicators (including past history of reports) of child maltreatment; critical thinking as it relates to decision making; safety planning decisions and reconciling different explanations of injuries or allegations. This curriculum is almost complete. Training this curriculum will begin this summer.

2) Sec. 106 (a)(3) Improving the case management, including ongoing case monitoring and delivery of services and treatment provided to children and their families;

To address improving case management, Nevada has participated in several initiatives. For example, The Nevada Training Partnership completed and piloted the development of the Nevada New Worker Core training series for new workers in the spring of 2009. All new workers hired since January 2009 have participated in this training over the past 18 months. In addition in the past year four additional Specialty Core trainings have been developed, topic areas include; sexual abuse; domestic violence; mental health and substance abuse. These four trainings are currently being piloted across the state.

A second initiative was the revision to the case plan templates in UNITY. Over the past year, each child welfare agency has revised their case plan template to include all of the IV-E federal assurances. Those templates are now located in Nevada's SACWIS system, UNITY.

3) Sec. 106 (a) (4) Enhancing the general child protection system by developing, improving, and implementing risk and safety assessment tools and protocols.

In response to the September 2008, ACTION For Child Protection Case Review of the Nevada Initial Assessment (NIA) and Safety Assessment practices, DCFS began working with the NRCCPS and the statewide NIA/safety workgroup on revisions to the NIA policy and assessment tool to address the areas of concern that were identified in the September 2008 case review. A revised NIA was developed and presented to administration for approval. This policy is currently pending approval.

In addition, new court report templates that articulate safety threats, child vulnerability factors and deficit caregiver protective capacities are now being utilized in some courts across the state.

4) Sec. 106 (a)(7) Improving the skills, qualifications, and availability of individuals providing services to children and families, and the supervisors of such individuals, through the child protection system, including improvements in the recruitment and retention of caseworkers;

CAPTA funds provide Nevada with an opportunity to expand training coursework for staff and stakeholders in the child welfare system. As has been done in the past, these funds were used this past year to provide extensive training to child welfare workers. One priority, identified by the DCFS – Rural Region is to improve the use of multidisciplinary teams and interagency protocols to enhance investigations. Identifying sources to provide this training is currently underway. As a result, statewide training topics for the future year include, but are not limited to, Child and Family Team (CFT) building, CFT facilitation, and case planning, among others.

Activities for CAPTA State Grant Funds for FFY2010

The intent for use of CAPTA funds in SFY 2010, are to address the needs as identified in the Child and Family Services State Plan for state fiscal years 2010 through 2014. It is the overall goal to continue to improve the child protective services system in Nevada. Examples of activities conducted in SFY 2010 included, but are not limited to;

- 1) Evaluating procedures and processes for appealing and responding to appeals of substantiated reports of abuse and neglect.
- 2) Development of revised NIA / Safety policies and tools.
- 3) Develop internal child welfare agency safety consultants who can provide additional training and support for Nevada's NIA and Safety model. This will eventually lesson the need for outside and additional resources/support.
- 4) Funds were also directed towards recruitment and retention of workers and training of supervisors.

Personnel

Through the use of CAPTA State Grant funds, DCFS employs a full-time–Social Services Programs Specialist. This position is necessary in order to carry out the objectives of the grant. The funds utilized included salary, fringe benefits and travel. Under the direction of the DCFS Deputy Administrator, the Social Services Program Specialist coordinates with the DCFS rural district offices, WCDSS and CCDFS to help ensure that policy and practice in child protection are consistent throughout Nevada. The Specialist also participates in planning, coordinating and evaluating child protective services provided throughout the state.

The Specialist participates in the following activities: 1) Review of federal/state legislation, development of federal/state regulations, and agency policies; 2) Provision of statewide technical assistance and/or consultation through contract or sub-grant; 3) Coordination of training pursuant to CAPTA requirements; 4) Serves as the State Liaison Officer with the Office on Child Abuse and Neglect; 5) Prepares grant applications and progress reports for the CAPTA Basic State Grant program and other related CAPTA funding; 6) Develops, coordinates and monitors CAPTA Projects; 7) Serves on agency or other committees that promote the goals of child protective services; and 8) Monitors the collection of child abuse data for the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS).

Operating Expenses

Communications equipment purchased for the purposes of promoting staff and child safety were periodically reviewed for continued maintenance and possible upgrade through the use of grant funds. Grant funds supported staff telecommunications related to child protection activities including teleconferencing, video-conferencing, cell phones, and land lines. Grant funds may be used to purchase equipment, such as digital recorders, printers, scanner, computers, laptop computer, and necessary hardware, software upgrades, file cabinets and other office equipment and work materials such as journals, subscriptions, books and videos.

Maintenance of Citizen Review Panel and Statewide Child Protective Services Work Groups

Grant funds are used to support travel and per diem for panel representatives and for child welfare services representatives to participate in child protective services workgroups. Funds may also be used for a consultant/facilitator, including travel and per diem and materials, provision of technical assistance and coordination for the panel.

Services and Child Welfare Training

Services: The CAPTA Basic State Grant provides indirect services to individuals and families through provision of referrals from child abuse and neglect reports received by child protection agencies to contracted Title IV-B community-based service providers. These referrals are aimed at intervening and preventing the re-occurrence of child abuse and neglect by referring families to a family assessment and services system process. The family assessment and services system provides an opportunity for families to receive services, or other appropriate referrals to local community based service providers.

Training was provided to support direct line and supervisory personnel on child abuse and neglect on topics such as: intake and investigation, screening, safety and risk assessment, use of tools, decision making, court processes, concurrent case planning, case management, and other areas as indicated. Training is provided free to child welfare and other participants through collaboration with the Nevada Partnership for Training.

The CAPTA State Grant provides support for presenters, travel and per diem and materials expense and will provide support for staff travel and per diem to attend the training. Funds will be used to provide training materials and equipment, such as videos, books, and other materials to assist with training.

Substantive Changes

There are no substantive changes in state law that effect eligibility.

Criminal Background Checks

Nevada instituted a policy, 0515 Child Abuse and Neglect (CANS) and National Criminal Investigative Database (NCID) Requirements for Prospective Foster and Adoptive Parents in April of 2009. The policy creates statewide standards for completing and responding to CANS checks and establishes statewide standards for authorizing placement of children with caregivers who have undergone an NCID and CANS check prior to placement to ensure compliance with the requirements set forth in the Adam Walsh Child Protection Act of 2006.

AB76 was introduced and enacted in the 2009 legislative session. The intent of this bill was to ensure the state is in compliance with the Adam Walsh Child Protection Act of 2006 which requires all child welfare agencies to conduct checks of the fingerprint-based National Crime Information Databases (NCID) and a child abuse and neglect screening (CANS) in every state of residence in the preceding five years for every prospective foster/adoptive parent. This additional information will assist child welfare agency staff to assess caregiver protective capacity to maintain children safely in their homes. As a result of AB76, NRS424.033 was revised. The revisions are designed to improve the child welfare agencies ability to further ensure that vulnerable children are not put into situations of abuse or neglect; specifically:

- 1) The State of Nevada is in compliance with the requirements set forth in the Adam Walsh Child Protection Act of 2006.
- 2) the Division of Child and Family Services and all child welfare agencies within the state will conduct a national fingerprint-based criminal background check (NCID) and a child abuse and neglect screening (CANS Check) in every state a prospective foster/adoptive parent has resided in the preceding 5 years.
- 3) Checks will be made regardless of whether Title IV-E foster care maintenance payments or adoption assistance payments are to be made on behalf of the child.
- 4) Additional safeguards will be in place for children that are cared for through the child welfare system to ensure they are placed with caregivers who have undergone an NCID and CANS check in each state they have resided in the proceeding five years which will provide additional information to the child welfare agencies on prospective foster and adoptive parents when child welfare agencies need to make a decision as to whether the prospective foster and adoptive parents have the capacity to keep them safe.
- 5) Allow the state to charge fees for completing the CANS checks to off set some of the costs the state is currently incurring due to other states' fees. Some savings may result from placement of agency custody children with relatives not requiring licensure or receiving foster care reimbursement payments.

Nevada Citizen Review Panel

CRP was established in 1999 and is maintained by the CAPTA grant. The CRP is a subcommittee of the CJA. The Panel membership increased from one panel to three panels during 2006 to encourage more participation by Nevada citizenry. The panels include the Statewide CRP (it oversees all of the citizen review panels), the Northern Nevada Citizens Advisory Committee/CRP, and the Southern Nevada Citizens Advisory Committee/CRP. The panel participates in quality improvement targeted case reviews, review of policy and practice, and makes recommendations for improving the child protection system. The Statewide CRP, in collaboration with the northern and southern CRP's, produces an annual report that is submitted with the annual progress and services report. The DCFS response letter is located in Attachment A along with the CRP annual report.

Citizen Review Panel Report and State Response

State Requirements

As part of the CAPTA requirements, states are required to codify citizen review panels through state law. In Nevada, this was completed with the passage of Assembly Bill (AB) 158 during the 1999 legislative session. The relevant text of AB 158 was incorporated into Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) under Chapter 432B.396.

The DCFS of Child and Family Services shall:

- 1) Establish a panel comprised of volunteer members to evaluate the extent to which agencies which provide protective services are effectively discharging their responsibilities for the protection of children.

- 2) Adopt regulations to carry out the provisions of subsection 1 which must include, without limitation, the imposition of appropriate restrictions on the disclosure of information obtained by the panel and civil sanctions for the violation of those restrictions.
- 3) Establish a panel comprised of volunteer members to evaluate the extent to which agencies which provide protective services are effectively discharging their responsibilities for the protection of children.
- 4) Adopt regulations to carry out the provisions of subsection 1 which must include, without limitation, the imposition of appropriate restrictions on the disclosure of information obtained by the panel and civil sanctions for the violation of those restrictions. The civil sanctions may provide for the imposition in appropriate cases of a civil penalty of not more than \$500. The DCFS may bring an action to recover any civil penalty imposed and shall deposit any money recovered with the State Treasurer for credit to the State General Fund.

Nevada Citizen Review Panel

The Statewide Nevada Citizen Review Panel (CRP) was established in 1999 under Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 432B.396 and has federally mandated responsibilities under Title I, Section 106, of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA). In response to meeting the federal requirement for three CRP's based on a Basic State Grant funding increase for Nevada, both the Northern and Southern Citizens Advisory Committees (CACs) were invited into the CRP process in 2006. Approval to join as a CRP was given by the Northern CAC in late 2006 and by the Southern CAC in early 2007. These groups have begun to examine specific areas of focus defined for CRP's by CAPTA, and to develop system improvement recommendations for inclusion in the Annual Report. The Panel and the CACs operate with the following mission:

To ensure the protection and safety of children through an evaluation of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act State Plan by examining State and local agencies' policies and procedures and specific cases where appropriate.

Although membership categories for the Panel and Citizen Advisory are not federally mandated Nevada groups include representation from a variety of State and County agencies, community organizations and professionals with backgrounds related to child protective services, children's mental health/disability, substance abuse and child advocacy (CASA).

The Statewide Panel works toward fulfilling the following three primary goals:

- 1) Reviews the State's implementation of previous CRP recommendations.
- 2) Participates in ongoing Quality Improvement (QI) case reviews.
- 3) Considers and implements new areas of subject review within the CAPTA Assurances, Section 106.

In essence, the Panel and advisory committee's work consists of the review of internal policies and procedures within the CPS system. Each year, the Panel's findings are summarized in an Annual Report submitted to the federal government as part of the CAPTA requirements.

The Panel's feedback and recommendations are greatly appreciated and valued by DCFS. DCFS encourages the Panel to submit targeted review recommendations in a semi-annual letter to the DCFS Administrator so that recommendations to improve child welfare practice can be considered in a timely manner.

The CRP subcommittee is a part of the Task Force. The Task Force continues its support of the Statewide CRP and the two Citizen Advisory Committees (CACs) in Washoe and Clark County which also serve as review panels. These groups have begun to examine specific areas of focus defined for citizen review panels by CAPTA, and to develop system improvement recommendations for inclusion in the Annual Report.

During this report period, Statewide CRP members participated in two targeted reviews 1) a case review that focused on the requirement of CAPTA Part-C referrals for developmental assessments and 2) a policy review on statewide consistency in developmentally appropriate visitation practice. The targeted case review process allows CRP members to take a closer look at specific issues, rather than an entire case. Targeted reviews involve shorter time commitments and provide more flexibility for volunteer CRP members, potentially increasing the specific topics that can be examined by the CRP. Results from the CAPTA Part-C assessment case review yielded approximately a 50% referral rate. Unfortunately, it was difficult to determine whether this is a practice concern and caseworkers are not making necessary referrals for assessments, or if this is a documentation problem and referrals are not being tracked through UNITY. Panel members believe both may have been contributing factors.

Statewide CRP 2009 recommendations focus on the following:

- 1) Child Protective Service (CPS) practices to incorporate appropriate actions and referrals to promote safety, permanency, and well-being that are timely and based on the child and family's needs.
- 2) Staff utilization of the new service array window in UNITY in order to provide consistent case documentation and aid in a practice that ensures follow-through on service referrals.
- 3) Caseworkers to comply with CAPTA requirements for Part-C referrals and tracking the outcomes of those referrals.
- 4) Statewide consistency in visitation practice to be improved across all child welfare agencies jurisdictions in addition to re-integrating practice guidelines back into DCFS Policy 0205 Caseworker Contact with Children, Parents, and Caregivers.
- 5) Ensuring caseworkers complete visitation windows in UNITY so that the State can gather data on visitation frequency and outcomes.
- 6) DCFS to consider changes to UNITY, such that data entry requirements more closely match the flow of the casework.

APPENDIX B: CFCIP & ETV

Chafee Foster Care Independent Living Program (CFCIP) & Education Training Voucher Program (ETV)

Goals and Eligibility

The goal of Nevada's Independent Living Program for Youth (IL) is to provide youth making the transition into adulthood with the skills and resources necessary to be independent and productive members of society. The Nevada Division of Child and Family Services is responsible for the oversight of IL Programs in Nevada. The oversight responsibility is assigned to the statewide IL Specialist. Nevada is a state-supervised and county-administered program in the two major metropolitan counties, Clark and Washoe. Nevada continues to supervise and administer all child welfare programs in the remaining 15 rural counties, which are managed by the DCFS - Rural Region. Nevada plans to continue the implementation of its IL Program by allocating both federal and state funds to the two county-administered programs, the State administered DCFS - Rural Region, and tribal entities. The State will continue to retain a portion of the federal funds to develop statewide systems and materials to support county and rural implementation efforts, to monitor program development and implementation, to provide technical assistance, and to continue to assess program impact. Nevada and its IL partners will cooperate with the national evaluations of the effects of IL programs in achieving the purposes of the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program.

Nevada's IL Program is a set of services available to all foster youth between the ages of 15 until the age of 21. The DCFS considers all eligible foster youth to include those youth who are in the care and custody of the DCFS, WCDSS, CCDFS, or tribal youth. IL services may continue with the child after permanency has been achieved, depending on the needs of the child. Nevada will also extend IL services to eligible youth who have relocated to Nevada from another state. The requirements for Chafee and the Fund to Assist Former Foster Youth (previously known as AB94 and now recognized as NAC 432 FAFFY or Transition from Foster Care) requires each region and the tribal representative (currently Stepping Stones) to identify its local plan for providing services. Each year, Chafee and FAFFY monies are calculated and distributed to each region based upon the total number of youth in care, the number of 17 year olds in care, and the total number of youth receiving IL Services. It is anticipated that Clark County will receive 70% of the funds; Washoe County will receive 19%; the Rural Region will receive 9%; and the tribal representative 2%.

Federal IL funding is provided to all county and state programs to provide IL services, expand existing services, and to establish new services to eligible children. Federal funds are combined with existing state funds to provide IL services to eligible foster youth and former foster youth transitioning to independence. State funds through the Funds to Assist Former Foster Youth Program (FAFFY) are funds dedicated to Nevada foster youth who are transitioning from care and for Nevada youth who have aged out of the Nevada foster care system.

Scope of Services

Funds for the IL Program are distributed from the state to the counties, the DCFS - Rural Region, and designated tribal program to support IL program development and activities. In Clark County, Chafee funds are distributed through the Department of Family Services (CCDFS) to Specialized Alternatives for Families and Youth (SAFY), a non-profit organization. Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessments and life skills classes are provided by CCDFS and SAFY staff for youth currently in care and by Child Focus, a private non-profit agency, and their Step-Up Program for youth who have aged out of care who partners within the private non-profit and profit sector to compliment their array of IL services. In addition, state resources from the Assistance to Former Foster Youth Fund are combined with Chafee funds for youth who have left placement. CCDFS sub-contracts with Child Focus for the purpose of providing the funds and services associated with the Assistance to Former Foster Youth funds.

In Washoe County, all Chafee and state funds are routed through Washoe County Department of Social Services (WCDSS) to the Children's Cabinet, a private, non-profit organization, to provide IL services to eligible youth who are in custody and to those youth who have left placement. The Rural Region routes both federal and state funds through four Family Resource Centers (FRC) for all IL program activities for youth in care, and to those youth who have left placement. The Children's Cabinet also has limited Chafee funds to assist the Rural Region in special IL related activities. There is a current Request for Proposals for the rural providers of Chafee and FAFFY funds for the time period July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2013, so the rural and tribal providers may be changing.

Nevada distributes IL funds, both federal and state funds, to tribal youth through the Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribal Stepping Stones Shelter enabling the tribes to develop programming specific to tribal youths needs. Stepping Stones was

designated to be the Chafee recipient by the Nevada tribal entities after lengthy consultation and deliberation.

For Fiscal Year 2010, Nevada's IL sub-grantees and service providers in the southern region were provided with additional technical assistance from the National Resource Center for Youth Development with a Train the Trainer training in the Ansell Casey Life Skills Assessment Plus (ACLSA Plus) curriculum.

The state received technical assistance funds from Casey Family Programs to allow the state to subgrant to an organization to establish a statewide workgroup made up of all child welfare agencies and the private, non-profit providers working with the agencies, as well as youth representatives, foster parents, and DCFS Family Programs Office and Integrated Management System (IMS) staff in analyzing and standardizing the entire statewide IL program. Through this process led by Face 2 Face Technologies, the workgroup created process maps and practice and procedure documents outlining the overall program. Currently the workgroup is drafting policies for approval by the statewide Decision Making Group (DMG) for implementation throughout the state.

DCFS created a workgroup to establish Nevada's evaluation and data collection process to be in compliance with the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) requirements. DCFS had initially contracted with Digital Matrix Software Solutions (DMSS) through the University of Nevada, Reno to facilitate online reporting for statewide grantees and sub-grantees of Chafee, FAFFY and ETV. However, it has since been decided that the DCFS IMS unit will be responsible for online reporting of Chafee as well as NYTD. DCFS has also contracted with FosterClub to implement and support NYTD outreach and survey requirements. The results will be provided to IMS to be uploaded into the state's SACWIS system

Statewide public and private partnerships are developed to provide IL services throughout the state. Each region develops a service array unique to their community. Representatives from IL partners from all regions, including tribal representation and IL youth, contributed to the development of the statewide CFSP process. An IL oversight committee meets quarterly in Clark County to review IL programs within the region. The primary focus of the committee has been addressing the needs of foster youth transitioning from care, and the needs of former foster youth. The committee is chaired by the CCDFS Child Welfare Services Division Manager responsible for the Independent Living, Foster Care, and Adoption programs and is comprised of representatives from public and private stakeholders, including the private providers, court, youth, former foster youth, and foster parents.

Room and Board: DCFS certifies that no more than 30 percent of their allotment of Federal funds will be expended for room and board for youth who left foster care because they attained 18 years of age but have not yet attained 21 years of age. All regions utilize Chafee and FAFFY monies to assist youth, ages 15-21, with transitional living needs. At age 16, depending on youth maturity and needs, youth statewide can live in an apartment under an IL Contract. Clark County will continue to partner with the Boys Town and St Jude's Ranch for Children which allow youth to select the type of support and assistance needed in achieving their independence. Both Boys Town and St. Jude's provides a more structured supportive environment. However, Nevada allows foster youth to reside in agency supervised apartments at age 16.

Medicaid Coverage: Nevada Revised Statute 422.2717 requires the Medicaid State Plan to include and serve foster youth who have aged out of the foster care system. This legislation established a new category of Medicaid eligibility allowing children in the state or county foster care who after reaching the age of 18 may continue to receive Medicaid assistance until the age of 21. The Aging-Out of Foster Care Medicaid Program has been in effect since 2005. Eligibility rules were simplified to include the following: one page application for Medicaid assistance; provide verification of aging out in any U.S. state or territory; be a citizen or qualified alien; provide verification showing age; meet Nevada resident requirements; and, fully cooperate with the annual case eligibility re-determination.

Trust Funds: Nevada does not have a trust fund program for IL Youth.

IL Program Objectives:

1. DCFS will identify legislative activities Impacting Youth Leaving Foster Care by June 2010 and September 2011 corresponding to each Legislative Cycle.
 - (a) While there were no legislative actions or activities impacting youth leaving foster care for this review period, Nevada is currently reviewing HR 6893, Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 as well as the Health Care Legislation to determine its impacts and will implement the requirements.
2. DCFS will continue the work begun with Casey Family Programs to implement the results of the IL Program Evaluation and Strategic Plan by July, 2010.
 - (a) The Casey Family Programs assisted the State in identifying service gaps and developing a strategic plan

to address and overcome presenting challenges that limit comprehensive, consistent IL program services throughout the State. The Casey Family Programs assisted in the IL Program assessment and evaluation and the development of a standardized overall service program delivery system. The IL Program continues to strive to improve IL services to youth in out-of-home care by evaluating the quality and efficacy of its current IL programming and opportunities extended to youth and reviewing ways to enhance fuller access and participation, identifying gaps in the service array, and building greater collateral involvement with community stakeholders throughout the state. In order to continue the work DCFS facilitates a Statewide IL Workgroup which meets twice per month to address issues concerning IL throughout the state.

3. DCFS will continue to elicit assistance from the NRCYD in order to support activities/practices to assist youth in developing the skills necessary for successful transition to adulthood.
 - (a) In addition, there will be an emphasis on how to create and sustain statewide and local advisory boards to assist youth with advocacy, self-advocacy, leadership development, and program improvement efforts. Officers on the Statewide Youth Advisory Board will receive training in public speaking and technical assistance in tracking and monitoring state and federal legislation related to foster care youth and other social welfare policies impacting them. These youth will also receive training on how to give effective testimony before legislative committees.
4. DCFS recognizes the need for continuous training and technical assistance as follows:
 - (a) Continue to utilize training and technical assistance from the National Resource Centers for development and implementation of IL programs statewide and Casey Family Programs;
 - (b) Collaborate with foster care training, recruitment, and licensing to develop an IL training module for foster parents;
 - (c) Include IL foster youth (current and former) to assist in the training of foster parents;
 - (d) Provide statewide training to existing foster parents and care providers regarding IL services and resources;
 - (e) Develop training for staff and supervisors regarding the identification of significant connections for youth and how to perform diligent search;
 - (f) Train staff and supervisors to ensure that they are knowledgeable about the full array of housing options that best meet the individualized needs of youth.
 - (g) Collaborate to enhance the coordination between IDEA and IL planning; and
 - (h) Continue to provide statewide training to all workers, supervisors, IL partners and stakeholders regarding IL, and access to services.
5. DCFS will build collaboratives with other federal agencies serving at-risk and neediest youth through the *Shared Youth Vision Initiative* by December 2012.
 - (a) Collaborative Development will occur with the following:
 - i. Transitional Living Programs
 - ii. Workforce Investment/Employment Training
 - iii. Department of Education
 - iv. Department of Labor
 - v. Department of Housing and Urban Development
6. DCFS will ensure full implementation of the National Youth in Transition Database by September 2010.

The Division of Child and Family Services has been actively involved in the implementation of NYTD through staff participation in all federally sponsored NYTD trainings and webinars. Beginning in the summer of 2009, DCFS created a NYTD workgroup consisting of the Independent Living Services staff and the Information Management Services unit (IMS). To date, DCFS has completed the following:

- Presented NYTD to two annual Youth Conferences and to several Statewide Youth Advisory Board meetings.
- Surveyed youth at the above events as to how best to survey targeted youth including various marketing techniques and strategies and the use of incentives.
- Contracted with Face 2 Face Technologies for development of a NYTD business process.
- Presented NYTD to a Statewide Independent Living group which included both administrative and line staff from all child welfare agencies throughout the state.
- Expanded the NYTD Workgroup to include representatives from all child welfare agencies statewide. Members of the workgroup include both administrative and line staff.
- The NYTD Workgroup has drafted statewide NYTD Policy and Practice Standards to be approved by the Administration within the next several months.
- NYTD Workgroup members will train their individual agency's staff on NYTD Policy and Practice.
- Contracted and partnered with FosterClub for marketing and completion of the survey.
 - DCFS will encourage all youth to register with FosterClub and require all target population to register.
 - Marketing materials will be provided by FosterClub regarding both information about their site and the importance of NYTD. Materials include, but are not limited to, training materials for child welfare staff members on the importance of NYTD.
 - Baseline youth will complete the NYTD Survey with their caseworker within 45 days after their 17th birthday. They will be able to list their UNITY (Nevada's SACWIS) Person ID in their Profile with FosterClub. This will enable "dump" of survey data from FosterClub site to UNITY.
 - FosterClub will also maintain a system of contact with youth as they age out of care.
- DCFS marketing materials have been disseminated throughout the state. This includes flyers, NYTD Guidebook, information in the Nevada Youth Advisory Board's Newsletter, and on the DCFS Website.
- DCFS' Independent Living Contract Providers statewide will be required to maintain contact with all youth who age out of care and participated in the Baseline Survey. Contract Providers currently provide all aftercare services for youth who have aged out of care and are the most appropriate means of contact.
- Contract Providers will assist in contacting all NYTD Follow-Up youth and facilitate their completion of the NYTD survey within 45 days of their 19th and 21st birthday. The survey will again be hosted on the FosterClub website.

EDUCATION TRAINING VOUCHER PROGRAM (ETV)

The State was recently awarded \$483,443 for 2010 which will serve youth during the period of July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011.

DCFS supervises the ETV program and distributes ETV funds to eligible youth through a sub-grant to a community non-profit organization. Its new community partner, The Children's Cabinet, has been successful in improving the provision of ETV services to our youth. The Children's Cabinet has designated one staff person to administer the funding allowing youth statewide to have one point of contact. A toll-free number is provided and the application along with program rules is provided on the Children's Cabinet website. Brochures have been distributed statewide to all IL providers and child welfare agencies.

Information on the Educational Training Vouchers can also be found on the DCFS website and link to the IL Program.

PROGRAM GOALS

Planning for and assisting and preparing youth to achieve educational success for future self sufficiency remains a consistent goal of the Independent Living Program.

1. Assist youth to make the transition to self-sufficiency.

Eligible foster youth's educational goals are developed with youth and their Social Worker/IL Advisor in the youth's

“Transitional Plan” for IL. Information of the ETV program is provided at the development of youth transition planning and during the youth’s exit interview.

Currently established collaborations with community-based IL contractors have expanded to include outreach and educational goal planning for foster and former foster youth. Improved tracking and reporting requirements, as well as specific outcome-based procedures have been developed. The DCFS contractors, community partners, state and county social workers are coordinating and collaborating to provide that services are delivered to the highest number of eligible foster youth and to ensure that youth are encouraged to follow through with postsecondary school application requirements and funding requests. With an increased focus on postsecondary education from all IL contractors, which includes assistance in planning educational or vocational training, applying for financial aid and additional support, more youth will remain motivated to reach their educational and vocational goals.

2. Assist youth receive education, training, and services necessary to obtain employment

Statewide, the Chafee funds support IL programs, which provide individualized life skills trainings and workshops for foster youth to prepare them for self-sufficiency in the community. IL Advisors assist youth to determine job interests, necessary education or vocational training, job workshops, budgets, practicing informed decision making and other skills necessary for employment. The ETV Program fund removes barriers for foster youth to attend vocational school or trainings to further their employment opportunities.

3. Assist youth prepare for and enter postsecondary training and educational institutions.

Educational achievement determined by the number of youth who leave foster care with a GED or high school diploma has dropped in recent years in Nevada. Approximately 59% of exiting youth receive a GED or high school diploma, as many youth are unable to pass the required state basic skills proficiency tests. Additional tutoring in basic skills such as English or math is necessary for many foster youth, as these youths often become discouraged and do not make the additional effort to obtain their GED or high school diploma after exiting from foster care.

Following state funding initiatives for former foster youth, a database is under development to track characteristics of the foster youth transitioning out of care. This will allow more effective transition planning and increased interventions for all exiting youth and provide a more complete support system for the youth upon exit. Identifying youth, before exiting care, with educational deficiencies and providing services such as tutoring, postsecondary education workshops, GED preparation and testing will better prepare youth to enter and complete postsecondary education and/or training programs.

To qualify for the ETV program, foster youth must be planning to graduate from an accredited high school, must have graduated from an accredited high school, or must have a GED or certification of high school completion for students who completed the mandatory hours required for high school instruction, but did not pass the high school proficiency exams.

The youth’s postsecondary school or vocational/training program must meet the following criteria:

1. Must be accredited or pre-accredited and is authorized to operate in that state.
2. Admits only students with a high school diploma or equivalent and/or students beyond the age of compulsory school attendance.
3. May be a public or nonprofit school or training program that awards a Bachelor’s Degree.
4. May be a public or nonprofit school or training program that offers not less than a two-year program and that provides credit toward a degree, or provides training towards gainful employment.
5. May be a vocational program that provides training for gainful employment and has been in existence for at least two years.

Although youth are encouraged to participate in full-time educational programs, the ETV program does not exclude youth who attend less than full-time, as this would limit the number of youth who would benefit from this program. The program provides personal and emotional support to youth through mentors and to encourage and promote interactions with dedicated adults.

IL Services are provided by contracted community partners and focus upon services for foster youth in care, the transitioning youth, and the youth who has aged-out of care. Specialized case management is developed for the youth and allows tracking and outreach. Each program coordinates information and referral for the youth. In addition, state and/or county social workers are available to youth and refer former foster youth to services. The ETV Program builds upon services available with existing programs and youth and their IL Advisors/Social Workers may contact the State IL

Specialist by telephone, mail, or electronic mail for continued ongoing information and support. ETV provides financial, housing, counseling, employment, education, and other appropriate support and services to former foster youth between 18 and 21 years of age.

ETV funds may be applied for in conjunction with other funding sources, including the State Fund for Former Foster Youth. The amount of a voucher shall be disregarded for the purposes of determining the recipient's eligibility for, or the amount of, any other federal or federally-supported assistance. Current programs created especially for the former foster youth provide referrals, goods, and services for this population. The ETV Program is an added component of these services. The total amount of educational assistance to a youth under the ETV Program and under other Federal and Federally supported programs shall not exceed the total cost of attendance or \$5000 per year, as defined in section 472 of the Higher Education Act of 1965. DCFS shall take appropriate steps to prevent duplication of benefits under this and other federal and federally supported programs. ETV Funds can be used for, but not limited to:

- Tuition and Fees
- Tutoring and Required Tests
- Transportation
- Books and Supplies
- Uniforms, Tools of the Trade
- Computer, Printer, Supplies
- Childcare
- Utilities and Deposits
- Meal Plan, Glasses, Adaptive Software, etc.

Vouchers are available for education and training, including postsecondary education to youth who have aged out of foster care. The youth's state or county ILP Social Worker/IL Advisor shall inform youth of the ETV program and how to apply. The State IL Specialist will inform community service providers and other state agencies, which maybe serving former foster youth of the resources available for the youth. In addition, queries by social service agencies, the foster and adoption community, high schools, vocational schools, colleges and universities concerning the ETV program shall be supplied with information and/or referrals. Youth may also access applications by contacting contracted aftercare service providers, by on-line applications, or contacting the State IL Specialist.

Outreach in development includes coordination with the admission and financial aid staff of Nevada's community colleges and universities and vocational/technical schools. All foster youth exiting care are informed of resources and services available and are encouraged to develop a support network within their community. Foster youth participating in the ETV program on their 21st birthday shall remain eligible, until they turn 23 years old, as long as they are enrolled in a postsecondary education or training program and are making satisfactory progress toward completion of that program.

In 2007-2008, the ETV program was provided ongoing technical assistance through the University of Nevada, Reno to streamline the program objectives and outcomes. In addition to this input, the Scope of Work for this program was expanded in order to promote coordination between the sub-grantee responsible for administering ETV funding, and other IL services providers. These efforts resulted in comprehensive service coordination for the youths utilizing the ETV program.

Nevada Matching Funds

Nevada provides additional funding to eligible youth who have aged-out of the State foster care system. Funds may be used in conjunction to ETV funds to provide additional financial supports for the foster youth while a student. A portion of the state fund for the Assistance to Former Foster Youth Program (20%) is the match for the ETV program grant.

APPENDIX C: Disaster Response Plan

This plan was submitted with the June 30, 2008 APSR report. While there have been no updates to the language in this policy and plan, the policy format has been updated and the policy has been renumbered. It is now policy number 1501. This policy and its attachments may be accessed on the Nevada DCFS website at:
http://www.dcms.state.nv.us/DCFS_Policies_CW_Chapter1500.htm.

APPENDIX D: Health Care Services Plan

Health Care Services Plan: While Nevada has addressed many of a child's health care screening needs, a formal Health Care Services Plan as required by the 2009 CFSP instructions has not been implemented. Nevada has received an extension to implement this plan.

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT A: Citizen Review Panel Report



CITIZEN REVIEW PANELS

ANNUAL REPORT

for calendar year

2009

submitted by

Nevada Statewide Citizen Review Panel
Northern Citizens Advisory Committee

and

Southern Citizens Advisory Committee

to

The Nevada Division of Child and Family Services

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Nevada Statewide Citizen Review Panel (CRP) was established in 1999 under Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 432B.396 and has federally mandated responsibilities under Title I, Section 106, of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA). The Panel has the following primary mission:

To ensure the protection and safety of children through an evaluation of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act State Plan by examining State and local agencies' policies and procedures and specific cases where appropriate.

The Statewide Panel consists of members appointed by the Administrator of the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS), whose designee also serves on the Panel. The group includes representation from community-based organizations and professionals with backgrounds related to child protective services (CPS), child advocacy, children's mental health, and foster parenting.

The Statewide Panel works toward fulfilling the following three primary goals:

1. Reviews the State's implementation of previous CRP recommendations.
2. Participates in ongoing policy and procedure reviews, and targeted case reviews.
3. Considers and implements new areas of subject review within the CAPTA Assurances, Section 106.

In essence, the Statewide Panel's work consists of the review of internal policies and procedures within the CPS system, along with individual CPS case reviews. Each year, the Statewide Panel's findings are summarized in an Annual Report (this document) submitted to the federal government as part of the CAPTA requirements.

Nevada's second and third CRPs have been active since 2007. Two existing oversight groups focused on child welfare, the Northern and Southern Citizens Advisory Committees (CACs), were invited into the CRP process in late 2006. These groups have begun to examine specific areas of focus defined for CRPs by CAPTA, and contribute to recommendations included in the Annual Report.

Primary Panel goals for 2009 included work in the following areas:

- Implementation of the Nevada Initial Assessment (NIA) including safety and risk assessments and timeliness of investigations.
- Training and implementation for the Child and Family Team (CFT) approach.
- Targeted case review of CPS referrals for CAPTA-required developmental assessments of children age three or under with substantiated abuse and neglect or a positive drug screen.
- Policy and procedure review of visitation practices in the northern, southern, and rural regions.

During 2009, the Statewide Panel's targeted case reviews and policy and procedure reviews resulted from specific requests made by the Nevada Children's Justice Act (CJA) Task Force. These requests result from two objectives that are part of the Task Force's 2009 – 2011 triennial workplan:

- **CJA Objective 6:** Ensure that DCFS completes changes to the UNITY system to track referrals made to NEIS for developmental assessments, and implements a system of data cross-checks between UNITY and NEIS to ensure consistent referral by CPS caseworkers and follow-up by NEIS staff. Conduct targeted case reviews by the Nevada Citizen Review Panel (CRP) to determine if CAPTA-required referrals are made by CPS in compliance with policy, and if screening and treatment is completed by NEIS and/or private providers.
- **CJA Objective 8:** Promote developmentally appropriate visitation with parents, siblings, and other relatives through targeted case reviews of existing practices by the Nevada Citizen Review Panel (CRP).

This work marks an important collaboration between the two groups, which both have mandated duties under CAPTA.

Statewide Panel recommendations for 2009 focus on CPS staff practices, referrals for developmental assessments, visitation, and UNITY data system changes. Additionally, the Statewide Panel received responses from DCFS based on its 2008 recommendations, which are summarized in this report. Updates on the activities of the Northern and Southern CACs are also included in this report.

PANEL ACTIVITIES

Statewide Panel

The Statewide Panel is directly involved in the DCFS Quality Improvement (QI) system and its members serve as external stakeholders in a targeted case review process that allows them to focus on specific factors of CPS cases that fall within the CRP's primary areas of review. Additionally, the Panel engages in regular work to review regional and statewide policies, procedures, and practices to ensure the protection and safety of children within the child welfare system. Areas of focus and specific work are detailed above in the Executive Summary.

Northern CAC¹

The expansion of the Washoe County Department of Social Services (WCDSS) Advisory Board in 2008 was particularly helpful during calendar year 2009, with the members serving on three different subcommittees to assess the array of services in Washoe County that serve children and families involved in the child welfare system. WCDSS received assistance from the National Resource Center for Organizational Improvement (NRCOI) to develop a comprehensive self-assessment and provided leadership and oversight of the project. Three well-being outcomes were the subject of the assessment and subgroups were formed around each:

1. Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs
2. Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs
3. Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs

Strategies were developed from each subgroup and WCDSS will report on progress to the Advisory Board during calendar year 2010.

Southern CAC²

During 2009, the Clark County CAC engaged in several initiatives as follows:

Policy and Procedure Re-Design: The Clark County Department of Family Services (CCDFS) began an extensive overhaul of its policies and procedures in 2008. The Clark CAC has been a very involved partner in this process. The CAC chair, Jacqueline Harris, served on the Executive Committee of the Policy and Procedure Re-design. In addition, CCDFS staff provided the CAC

¹ Marsh, J. (2010). *Washoe County Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) 2009 Update*. Reno: Washoe County Department of Social Services.

² Harris, J. and Bevacqua, J. (2010). *Clark County Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) 2009 Update*. Las Vegas: Clark County CAC.

with regular and ongoing updates of the development, implementation, and training process. Members of the CAC have been able to provide CCDFS with feedback on policies as they were in development, as well as guide the implementation process.

Increased Collaboration with Clark County Department of Juvenile Justice Services Citizens Advisory Committee: The CACs of both CCDFS and the Department of Juvenile Justice Services (DJJS) are keenly aware that there is overlap in the populations that each department is serving. Furthermore, often the children that CCDFS serves today will become the children that DJJS serves tomorrow, without adequate intervention. There continue to exist overlapping budgetary and resource issues within both departments that come to the attention of the CACs. With these issues in mind, the CCDFS and DJJS CACs have been attending each other's meetings to facilitate cross-collaboration. This cross-collaboration also occurs at the Policy and Fiscal Affairs meetings attended by County Commissioners, CCDFS, DJJS directors and judges, and the CAC Chairs.

Budgetary Issues and Legislative Agenda: The Clark County CAC has been continually updated in this unprecedented year of budget constraints and cuts beginning in the 2009 legislative session. The State of Nevada is facing a budget crisis that is affecting all State, County, and local jurisdictions. The CCDFS Director, Tom Morton, as well as his senior staff, have been informing the CAC about budget cuts and decreases to staffing and services, and how they will affect the children and families that are being served by the Department. This is an ongoing issue of focus, as budget projections for the next biennium and beyond are not favorable for stabilization or enhancement to support the Department's mission and vision. Staff also informed the Clark County CAC as to bills and initiatives that had the potential to impact the CCDFS in the 2009 legislative session.

Service Array: A report on the *DFS Service Array Needs Assessment* was issued in March, 2008. This report found that the State of Nevada is lacking in a comprehensive and quality service array to meet the needs of children and families in Clark County. Based on budget cuts and restraints, the Clark County CAC has been receiving reports from both CCDFS and participating stakeholders on the effects of cuts to State, County, and local funding, as well as changes and restrictions to services billable to Medicaid. The Clark County CAC continually strives to assist the Department in seeking out services to meet the needs of children and families involved in the child welfare system.

Model Court Project: Clark County Nevada has been chosen to implement a Model Court Project. This project is being spearheaded by Judge Cynthia Diane Steel. Judge Steel and Director Tom Morton provide the Clark County CAC with updates regarding changes to the court to improve access and efficiency for children and families involved with CCDFS.

Child and Family Services Review (CFSR), Performance Improvement Plan (PIP): Members of the Clark County CAC participated in a variety of ways with the federal CFSR on-site review in August, 2009. The CAC has been provided feedback from the results of the CFSR and members are currently participating on the committee to develop the PIP.

Community We Will: The Clark County CAC is partnering with the Community We Will initiative, along with Casey Family Programs, to launch a community engagement campaign to ensure that every child in Southern Nevada has a safe, permanent home. Members of the CAC serve on the Community We Will Advance Team. The Community We Will initiative focuses on three key strategies: 1) engaging a broad, diverse coalition of community members to develop a shared vision for child welfare; 2) develop a plan that is anchored in best practice; and 3) rally resources need to sustain work in child welfare.

2009 Recommendations

CPS Staff Practices

Recommendation 1: CPS practices need to incorporate appropriate actions and referrals to promote safety, permanency, and wellbeing that are timely based on the child and family's needs.

Discussion: This is a re-recommendation from 2008, and the Panel members continue to find delays in appropriate service referrals as part of caseworker practice. It appears in many cases that CPS intervenes to address child safety and then “may get around” to making referrals in the future. The Panel members noted that NRS 432B.393 states that the health and safety of children must be the paramount concern, and that reasonable efforts toward family preservation include appropriate referrals for services:

NRS 432B.393 Preservation and reunification of family of child to prevent or eliminate need for removal from home before placement in foster care and to make safe return to home possible; determining whether reasonable efforts have been made.

1. Except as otherwise provided in this section, **an agency which provides child welfare services shall make reasonable efforts to preserve and reunify the family of a child** [emphasis added]:
 - (a) Before the placement of the child in foster care, to prevent or eliminate the need for his removal from his home; and
 - (b) To make it possible for his safe return to his home.
2. In determining the reasonable efforts required by subsection 1, **the health and safety of the child must be the paramount concern** [emphasis added]. The agency which provides child welfare services may make reasonable efforts to place the child for adoption or with a legal guardian concurrently with making the reasonable efforts required pursuant to subsection 1. If the court determines that continuation of the reasonable efforts required by subsection 1 is inconsistent with the plan for the permanent placement of the child, the agency which provides child welfare services shall make reasonable efforts to place the child in a timely manner in accordance with that plan and to complete whatever actions are necessary to finalize the permanent placement of the child.

Additionally, DCFS Policy 0511.0, Risk Assessment, states that the assessment of risk for a child must cover intake through case closure and be “**future-oriented** rather than based solely on the child’s injuries or current condition” [emphasis added]. The Panel members emphasized that the mitigation of future risk is critical, and this can be best addressed by timely and appropriate service referrals. The earlier referrals are made, the more likely a family is to engage in services. In order to help families to become motivated to change, caseworkers need to connect them with services early in the investigation process. The focus of the Nevada Initial Assessment (NIA) process is to generate service referrals in order to promote child safety, permanency, and wellbeing. Beyond the assessment of immediate risk and safety, caseworkers need to understand and address deeper family needs that affect long-term child and family wellbeing, which ultimately supports permanency.

Ideally, referrals should be made within the first 24 hours. However, the Panel members understand that federal law mandates developing a case plan within 60 days, and immediate referrals must be balanced against making investigative determinations and allowing caseworkers enough time to assess what is appropriate for children and their families. The Panel is supportive of the Washoe County Department of Social Services (WCDSS)’s policy to develop case plans within 45 days.

Recommendation 2: Caseworkers need to complete timely data entry through the new service referral window in UNITY in order to provide consistent case documentation and to aid in practice that ensures follow-through on service referrals.

Discussion: During the 2009 targeted case review process, the Panel members had difficulty identifying child and family connections with services that were presumably being delivered, but could not be confirmed. There were very few case notes indicating that caseworkers were communicating with the treatment providers of children or parents. Likewise, there was little information on treatment participation or progress. In some cases, evidence of treatment could be found by reference to it having taken place in the past, with no original information on the referral. The caseworkers’ focus appears to be on addressing information needed for court hearings. However, it is equally important for case documentation to convey a holistic sense of how cases progress over time, and the major service components that contribute to child and family wellbeing.

On a deeper level, the Panel members believe that case documentation sometimes conveys a sense that caseworkers are anxious to consider a case or situation concluded once a referral is made. They appear to have a fixed idea of what case outcomes “should” be and then stick to it. Unfortunately, this attitude is contrary to the idea of a family-driven approach to services, and also runs counter to the importance of team decision-making that is supposed to be accomplished through CFT meetings. Caseworkers need to retain their focus on what is best for the child and family, even if the case plan and projected case outcomes change over time.

Referrals for Developmental Assessments

Recommendation 3: Caseworkers need to comply with the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) requirement for developmental assessments of young children: Within two working days of identifying a child age three or under with substantiated abuse and neglect or a positive drug screen, caseworkers must refer the child for a developmental assessment from Nevada Early Intervention Services (NEIS). Additionally, caseworkers need to follow through on the referrals by tracking outcomes in the new service referral window in UNITY.

Discussion: The primary findings from the CRP's 2009 targeted case reviews, focused on referrals for developmental assessments, are as follows:

- **Clark County:** Out of 20 cases reviewed, there were 11 cases that met the CAPTA criteria where no referrals were made, and 9 cases where referrals were made. This yields a referral rate of 55%. Many of the referrals did not meet the 2-day time frame.
- **Rural Region:** Out of the 6 cases reviewed, there were 3 cases that met the CAPTA criteria where no referrals were made, and 3 cases where referrals were made. This yields a referral rate of 50%.

These referral rates are similar to the rate estimated by the CJA Task Force in its review of DCFS data on referrals compared with NEIS data on assessments, which showed that about half of cases that meet the CAPTA criteria result in completed referrals. Unfortunately, it is difficult to determine whether this is a practice concern and caseworkers are not making necessary referrals for assessments, or if this is a documentation problem and referrals are not being tracked well through UNITY. This underscores the importance of Recommendation 2 above, because external case reviewers such as the CRP cannot make a conclusive distinction between practice problems and documentation problems in this area of review. The Panel believes it is likely that both are contributing factors to the low referral rate.

Either way, a referral rate of approximately 50% is not in substantial compliance with the CAPTA requirement. The Panel understands that NEIS faces funding shortages in terms of its ability to respond to referrals from DCFS. However, the CRP believes that a step-at-a-time approach should be taken, such that CPS agencies and staff are trained and supervised appropriately to comply with the CAPTA mandate and to complete referrals where required. Once correct referrals are being made in compliance with the law, then the CRP or other external stakeholders may choose to further evaluate NEIS' service capacity to respond to these referrals.

Visitation

Recommendation 4: Statewide consistency in visitation practice needs to be improved across all child welfare jurisdictions, and focus on five primary outcomes:

1. Statewide practice guidelines need to be re-integrated into DCFS Policy 0205.0: Caseworker Contact with Children, Parents and Caregivers. Training needs to be provided as part of the CORE curriculum to ensure the outcomes included as part of this recommendation.
2. Parents and children's rights are made clear to them through a statewide visitation brochure that reflects statewide policy and is required to be distributed to parents whose children are in state or county custody, or in substitute care placements.
3. Visitation is family-driven based on collaborative decision making through CFT meetings. Visitation is conducted in healthy and appropriate environments and focuses on improved parenting. Visitation is not caseworker-driven and is not used as leverage against families by caseworkers.
4. Reduced visitation is not used as a punishment for positive drug screens. Parents with substance abuse disorders who attempt to engage in visitation while intoxicated may be denied same-day visitation, per statewide policy, but this does not affect future visits. The Panel recommends that this particular directive be mandated for inclusion in state and county policies.
5. In cases of alleged sexual abuse, visitation is conducted in strict compliance with statewide practice guidelines such that visitation decisions are guided by a child therapist or expert evaluator, and visitation is done within the context of therapy and guided by a therapist or caseworker with knowledge in the field of child sexual abuse. The Panel recommends that this particular directive be mandated for inclusion in state and county policies.

Discussion: The Panel members commended the Clark County Department of Family Services (CCDFS) Visitation Center model, especially the promotion of a healthy, neutral environment for family and sibling visitation. In particular, the Panel members noted the availability of staff to facilitate supervised visits, as well as staff members' detailed entry of visitation frequency and outcomes in UNITY.

However, the Panel members believe that there are still "three countries" in Nevada in terms of the northern, southern, and rural regions engaging in different practices. The lack of coordination across regions is a serious issue. The fact that visitation is caseworker-driven in many cases means some parents get timely visitation and some do not, based on inconsistencies in caseworker approach and attitude.

The Panel members believe that DCFS Policy 0205.0 is concise but brief in terms of some of the background information required for caseworkers to implement best practices for family

visitation. The Panel understands that the statewide practice guidelines were formerly included as an attachment to DCFS Policy 0205.0. The Panel believes the guidelines should be part of the policy, and necessary training should be provided accordingly to caseworkers.

Several Panel members noted cases where reduced visitation was used as leverage against parents in various areas of the state, especially for those with substance abuse disorders. They noted the specific statewide policy barring this practice in DCFS Policy 0205.0:

0205.5.6 – A(1): The caseworker shall not limit visitation as a sanction for the parent’s lack of compliance with court orders or as a method to encourage a child to improve his/her behaviors. Visitation is determined by the best interest, health, safety and well-being of the child. Visitation shall only be limited or terminated when the child’s best interest, safety, health or well-being is compromised.

Using reduced visits as punishment for parents who use drugs increases the likelihood of relapse. The Panel expressed serious concern regarding feedback from the rural areas that judges may be using the punitive removal of visitation rights against parents with substance abuse disorders, and that gaps in visitation may be up to three months in duration. The Panel members questioned the legality of this, and will refer related concerns to the Attorney General’s Office.

In cases of alleged sexual abuse, the Panel members want to ensure the approval and guidance of visitation by mental health professionals. They believe that existing statewide practice guidelines describe the required approach well, and recommended that these be made clear to caseworkers.

Recommendation 5: Caseworkers need to complete timely data entry through the visitation windows in UNITY in order to provide consistent case documentation of visitation frequency and outcomes.

Discussion: Per the discussions in Recommendations 2 and 3, the Panel members continue to find inconsistent case documentation and data entry in the UNITY system, which hampers its ability to distinguish between practice concerns and documentation problems. Use of existing data entry windows in UNITY is critical to demonstrating compliance with laws, policies, and procedures, as well as successfully documenting the key milestones of a case. Part of improving visitation practice includes recording necessary information about family visits across the life of a case. In addition to frequency and outcomes, the information recorded should also tie to the visitation plan made as part of the CFT process.

UNITY Data System Changes

Recommendation 6: DCFS should consider changes to UNITY such that data entry requirements more closely match the flow of casework.

Discussion: The Panel members have heard considerable feedback over time that UNITY is an “unfriendly” data system that is difficult for caseworkers to use. The time consumption and navigation challenges of using the system appear to be a primary cause of poor case documentation. Because federal laws, state laws, policies, and the Nevada Initial Assessment (NIA) process all specifically outline various investigative requirements, steps, and case milestones, it makes sense that UNITY should match these more closely.

The Panel members believe that systemic improvement may lie partly in caseworkers’ better understanding of the case flow and the interaction between people and the process. In turn, UNITY should include check boxes and data entry screens that are reasonable in number and reflect this flow. Improvements to the data system may help workers see the long-term positive effects of timely and appropriate referrals when they are made visible to them in a logical way through the case information available.

Follow-Up on 2008 CRP Recommendations

Follow-up on the 2008 Panel recommendations was based on formal responses from the DCFS Administrator, as follows:

CPS Staff Practices

Recommendation 1: CPS practices need to incorporate appropriate actions to promote safety, permanency, and wellbeing that are timely based on the child and family's immediate needs.

DCFS Response: CPS practice focuses on the safety aspect of the federal indicators of the Adoptions and Safe Families Act (ASFA) of 1997. The standards for timeliness measures are set by the State in 0501 ASFA Reasonable Efforts Policy, 0509 Nevada Initial Assessment Policy, 0510 Nevada Safety Assessment Policy and 0511 Risk Assessment Policy. Applicable timelines for assessing safety response are outlined in the Safety Assessment Policy. It is important to note the distinction between safety planning and case planning. The purpose of safety planning is to insure the immediate protection of a child while safety threats are being addressed. A safety plan is a written agreement between parents/primary caregivers and contains activities, tasks or actions that are implemented to ensure a child's safety. A case plan consists of services that are needed for parents and / or a child to address unmet needs and ultimately necessary to mitigate threats of abuse or neglect.

- In the investigative phase, if present or impending danger exists safety determinations are made about whether to remove the child or if possible to maintain the child safely in the home with safety plan until the investigation is complete. If the child is removed, all of the efforts made to keep the child in the home, including use of available services, must be reported to the court as "reasonable efforts" that justify removal. While services may be identified that may benefit the family overall, those services that are critical to safety intervention may be the primary referrals.
- If the case has been investigated and it has been opened as an ongoing case and the child has been returned to the family or the child remains in foster care, a formal case plan will be developed within 60 days of the removal. This plan will include an assessment for those service needs that are critical to safety and that will improve family functioning. The intent of limiting services to meet critical needs first allows the family to concentrate on those services, rather than to embark on several services concurrently, which may dilute the effectiveness of the primary service referral. As the family progresses, other service referrals may be made as needed and appropriate. This staggered approach builds family capacity to address the abuse issues and improves long-term outcomes.

At issue is the documentation about the service referral or delivery and supervisory oversight to ensure that such referral(s) have been made. This information is generally captured in the Case Notes section of UNITY (Unified Nevada Information Technology for Youth), the case file, or in court reports. There has been no uniform place in the UNITY system to collect information

about referrals and services. To address this problem, a new *Service Array* window was deployed in UNITY effective 04/30/09. This window will be used to document services referred for specific individuals in a case. The window will track the date of the referral, the status of the referral, service begin and end dates, and the service provider. The window is also designed to track the history of referrals for each individual. A report was designed to track trends in usage of services / providers to include: 1) if services are available in a specific jurisdiction, 2) if someone is waitlisted for a service, 3) refused services, 4) services completed, 5) fee required but unable to afford, and 6) not qualified for a service. This new window will improve the documentation and data collection about services, and improve supervisory oversight and documentation. Supervisors will need to be trained to look for documentation of appropriate service referrals and linkages when they are reviewing investigations for approval and closure.

Recommendation 2: CPS caseworkers need to increase their use of the Child and Family Team (CFT) model to provide a strength-based, solution-focused, family-driven process to jointly develop a case plan for children in the child welfare system.

DCFS Response: A statewide Case Planning policy has been in effect since 08/13/07. In 2006, the state of Nevada contracted with a consultant to conduct Child and Family Team (CFT) training and facilitation, unit-by-unit, across all three child welfare agencies.

During the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) in 2004, this item was given an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement, based on the finding that in 53% of the cases, reviewers determined that the agency had not made diligent efforts to involve parents and/or children in the case planning process. A key concern pertained to the lack of involvement of children in case planning.

Statewide Quality Improvement Case Review Data (QICR)	CFSR 2004	QICR 2006	QICR 2007	QICR 2008
Child and family involvement in case planning	47% (n=49)	71.9% (n=38)	84.6% (n=50)	78.4% (n=55)

CFSR = Child and Family Services Review

A historic look at statewide QI(Quality Improvement) data shows that Clark County Department of Family Services (CCDFS) demonstrated steady improvement beginning with a 2006 baseline of 57.1% of applicable cases rated as “strength,” and ending with 87.5% of applicable cases rated as “strength” in the most recent review conducted in August 2008.

Washoe County Department of Social Services (WCDSS) improved dramatically from a baseline score in September 2006 of 78.6% of applicable cases rated as “strength” to 92.3% of applicable cases were rated as “strength” in June 2007, then in the most recent review conducted in September 2008, outcomes slipped slightly to 91.3%, however this is still rated a strength.

The Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) Rural Region results varied the most. This may be attributed, at least in part, to conducting reviews of individual district offices in 2006 and 2007. A review conducted in the Elko District Office established the 2006 baseline for this item at 80% of applicable cases rated as “strength.” The second review conducted in the Fallon

District Office in October 2007 rated 100% of applicable cases rated as “strength.” In the composite review for the DCFS Rural Region conducted October 2008, only 56.5% of applicable cases rated as “strength.”

Although all three agencies have shown improvement since the first CFSR, Quality Improvement (QI) data for the state as whole is inconsistent in demonstrating the agencies’ effectiveness in involving parents and children in the case planning process, therefore this remains an area needing improvement and will be reported as such in the 2008 statewide assessment and will continue to be addressed for improvements.

One current initiative to address the problem is that both in the new worker CORE training and in practice, greater emphasis is being placed on the importance of team meetings, which depending on the stage of case may be called something other than a CFT. When these team meetings occur during the investigation, they are often geared toward safety management in an effort to prevent removal while services to mitigate safety threats can be provided to the family.

Promising practices in Clark County include; utilization of the NFAS-G and R for conducting family assessments beginning in January 2009 which affords a more structured method of family assessment to drive individualized case planning, standardization of the process for holding CFT’s required for children of all ages who have been placed in custody within 48 hours of placement, highlighting the necessary engagement skills for working with absent or non-compliant parents and requiring foster care workers to have at least four visits with families within 15 days of case opening so that adequate assessments can be performed and families can be engaged. In April 2009 foster care workers began participating in CPS cases earlier to eliminate the need to rely on CPS workers to provide case plan information.

The DCFS Rural region utilizes video or telephone conferencing to facilitate absent parent(s) inclusion with the case planning process if they reside out of the area. Workers schedule case planning meetings around parent’s schedules to ensure that they are able to attend.

CPS Staff Training

Recommendation 3: CPS caseworkers should receive additional training on the implementation of the Nevada Initial Assessment (NIA), with a focus on the use of safety and risk assessment instruments.

DCFS Response: In September 2008, DCFS contracted with ACTION for Child Protection Inc. to conduct a case review of all finalized forms, policies, and procedures related to the use of the Safety Intervention Analysis; to conduct a review of the NIA/Safety Assessment Process, with a special focus on the Safety Intervention Analysis; and to make recommendations about enhancement of practice related to the safety Intervention Analysis. 178 cases were reviewed. Approximately half the cases were from Clark County, one quarter from Washoe County, and one quarter from the Rural Region.

Results of the study identified several areas of policy that needed clarification or further specification. Areas of concern included: assessment of present and impending danger was not being well delineated in policy or practice, limited demonstration of the concept and a working knowledge of caregiver protective capacities, a lack of understanding of how safety intervention analysis should be applied and how safety threats need to be managed in the least restrictive environment possible, and a lack of supervisory oversight and accountability for quality documentation of the NIA and Safety Assessments.

In response to the case review results, a request for Technical Assistance (TA) with the National Resource Center for Child Protective Services (NRCCPS) was submitted and approved. TA will assist in policy and tool redesign to ensure documentation fits and supports practice, capacity building begins in Nevada by developing purveyors who are experts in the safety practice model, and development of a long-range strategic plan which seeks to evolve practice and decision making with special emphasis on safety management and intervention in ongoing/permanency cases. In March 2008, DCFS began working with the NRCCPS and the statewide NIA/safety workgroup on necessary revisions to policy and assessment tools to address the areas of concern that were identified in the September 2008 case review. A revised NIA/safety assessment tool is currently in development. Once approved, final revisions to policies, assessment tools, and UNITY will begin.

In response to the Panel's feedback on the targeted review of Risk Assessments, training of CPS caseworkers occurred in December 2007, prior to implementation of the Risk Assessment tool. Risk assessment training is currently encompassed in the new worker CORE training. It is our expectation that additional training with supervisors and investigators slated to occur over the next year will address the lack of information collection concern raised by the Panel. The Panel's findings related to the automatic tallying of Risk scores will need to be explored with DCFS Information Management Services (IMS).

Recommendation 4: CPS caseworkers should receive additional training on identifying child and family needs related to mental health disorders, developmental disabilities, and substance abuse disorders, and then referring and actively linking children and families to needed services.

DCFS Response: The newly developed New Child Welfare Worker CORE Training includes a Module on assessment that emphasizes the need to be observant of functionality concerns that may indicate an underlying problem such as mental illness, developmental disabilities, or substance abuse, which may have an effect on the parent's child-rearing skills. However, this does not cover the diagnosis of such issues. The emphasis is on reporting the specific functional levels and not just reporting problems or behaviors. There is also an emphasis on record collection. When child or parent functioning is in question, new workers are encouraged to refer parents to the appropriate resource for screening. New Worker CORE Training officially rolled out in January of 2009. New workers are the first priority. However, the training will soon be open to all workers and other multidisciplinary team members such as law enforcement, CASA, judges etc. who want to attend. It is important to note that workers are strongly encouraged to speak with collateral contacts during the investigation, in order to obtain a complete picture of child and parent functioning and link families to the necessary services.

Recommendation 5: CPS caseworker training needs to reinforce the importance of data entry and case documentation so that the contents of case files are consistent and complete. Specifically, the UNITY system should require a standardized case summary indicating that the investigation has ended and the case is closed, including case disposition.

DCFS Response: The proposed redesign to the NIA and Safety Assessment tools and policies detailed in the response to Recommendation 3 are expected to also enhance documentation of the assessment/investigation process. All of the documentation issues identified in the above bullets should be addressed by supervisors and corrected by caseworkers before a supervisor approves an assessment/investigation as being complete. The proposed assessment tool and policy changes, in conjunction with anticipated specialized supervisor training specific to the investigative process, should improve all of the Panel's concerns noted above.

Targeted Case Review Process

Recommendation 6: The Panel recommends that DCFS continue inviting the CRP to participate in the Targeted Case Review Process and establish this as the new model for CRP stakeholder feedback.

DCFS Response: As the Panel is aware, on November 12, 2008, CRP members and DCFS staff conducted an on-site risk assessment tool targeted case review in Clark County. The risk assessment tool Nevada adopted is designed to help inform the caseworker about the risk of the future maltreatment and is specifically designed to be used after the completion of the Nevada Initial Assessment and prior to investigation closure. The QI sample consisted of 30 randomly selected closed and ongoing service cases.

A second targeted review of CAPTA Part-C referrals on children under the age of three and who are living in a family where abuse and/or neglect has been substantiated is being scheduled for the summer of 2009. DCFS plans to continue utilizing the targeted case review model to facilitate citizen stakeholder input through the CRP.

Recommendation 7: The Panel recommends establishing a process through which recommendations can be made to DCFS on a more frequent basis than is allowed by the existing Annual Report process.

DCFS Response: The panel's feedback and recommendations are greatly appreciated and valued by DCFS. DCFS encourages the Panel to submit targeted review recommendations in a semi-annual letter to the DCFS Administrator so that recommendations to improve child welfare practice can be considered in a timely manner.

Meeting Dates and Activities

During 2009, the Panel members met six times to conduct the business of the group, and participated individually in targeted case reviews.

<i>Meeting/Activity Date</i>	<i>Topics</i>
January 27, 2009 <i>Panel Meeting</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and finalize 2008 Annual Report • Membership update
April 7, 2009 <i>Panel Meeting</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation on targeted case review requests from Children’s Justice Act (CJA) Task Force • Presentation on Child and Family Team (CFT) statewide process • Review status of 2009 workplan topics
June and July, 2009 <i>Targeted Case Reviews</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panel participation in targeted case reviews focused on CPS referrals for CAPTA-required developmental assessments
July 7, 2009 <i>Panel Meeting</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal review and discussion of DCFS response to CRP 2008 Annual Report recommendations • Presentation on DCFS core training for child welfare workers • Presentation on Clark County Early Representation Program (ERP)
October 6, 2009 <i>Panel Meeting</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workplan development for review of parent, sibling, and relative visitation per request from CJA Task Force • Update on Nevada Initial Assessment (NIA) redesign • Membership update
November 10, 2009 <i>Policy and Procedure Review Meeting</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation on Clark County visitation policies and practices • Presentation on Washoe County visitation policies and practices • Presentation on rural visitation policies and practices • Roundtable discussion and recommendations for Annual Report
December 8, 2008 <i>Panel Meeting</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on activities of Northern and Southern Citizens Advisory Committees (CACs) • Review and finalize 2009 Annual Report • Update on Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) outcomes and program improvement plan (PIP) process

APPENDIX A: OVERVIEW OF THE NEVADA CITIZEN REVIEW PANELS

Federal Requirements

As outlined in Public Law 104-235, Title I, Section 106, the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) provides for a state grant program for the support and improvement of state child protective services (CPS) systems. This law sets forth a variety of eligibility requirements, including the establishment of citizen review panels. The purpose of the panels is “to provide new opportunities for citizens to play an integral role in ensuring that states are meeting their goals of protecting children from abuse and neglect.”

The citizen review panel (CRP) system within a given state must meet certain operational requirements and meet a scope of responsibilities within the function of the panel. These are outlined as follows:

Scope of Responsibilities

Each CRP is required to review the compliance of State and local CPS agencies in the fulfillment of their responsibilities with respect to the following:

- Work in accordance with the CAPTA State Plan.
- Examine State and local policies and procedures.
- Review specific cases, when appropriate.
- Review other criteria the panel determines important to the protection of children, including the following:
 1. Review of the extent to which the State CPS system is coordinated with the Title IV-E foster care and adoption assistance programs.
 2. Review of child fatalities and near fatalities.

Although the review of child fatalities and near fatalities falls within the scope of responsibilities for the CRP, the Panel does not review any child death cases because Nevada has a well-established child death review (CDR) process with existing regional CDR teams that review child deaths in accordance with Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS).

State Requirements

As part of the CAPTA requirements, states are required to codify CRPs through state law. In Nevada, this was completed with the passage of Assembly Bill (AB) 158 during the 1999 legislative session. The relevant text of AB 158 was incorporated into NRS under Chapter 432B.396. This law reads as follows:

The Division of Child and Family Services shall:

1. Establish a panel comprised of volunteer members to evaluate the extent to which agencies which provide protective services are effectively discharging their responsibilities for the protection of children.
2. Adopt regulations to carry out the provisions of subsection 1 which must include, without limitation, the imposition of appropriate restrictions on the disclosure of information obtained by the panel and civil sanctions for the violation of those restrictions.

During 2001, NRS 432B.396 was amended as a result of AB 248 to establish civil sanctions for violations of confidentiality on the part of CRP members. This amendment includes additional language highlighted in subsection two as follows:

1. Establish a panel comprised of volunteer members to evaluate the extent to which agencies which provide protective services are effectively discharging their responsibilities for the protection of children.
2. Adopt regulations to carry out the provisions of subsection 1 which must include, without limitation, the imposition of appropriate restrictions on the disclosure of information obtained by the panel and civil sanctions for the violation of those restrictions. **The civil sanctions may provide for the imposition in appropriate cases of a civil penalty of not more than \$500. The Division may bring an action to recover any civil penalty imposed and shall deposit any money recovered with the State Treasurer for credit to the State General Fund.**

Statewide Citizen Review Panel

The Statewide CRP operates with the following mission:

To ensure the protection and safety of children through an evaluation of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act State Plan by examining State and local agencies' policies and procedures and specific cases where appropriate.

Prior to 2004, the Statewide Panel consisted of a maximum of 12 members appointed by the Administrator of the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS), whose designee serves on the Statewide Panel. The group included representation from a variety of State and County agencies, community organizations, and professional backgrounds. Membership categories for the Statewide Panel are not federally mandated. However, they were originally based on the membership categories mandated under CAPTA for the Children's Justice Act (CJA) Task Force. The CJA Task Force functions in a complementary manner with the CRP, and therefore the membership was mirrored accordingly.

Recently, both the Statewide Panel and DCFS Administration have placed more emphasis on recruiting community members who are not directly affiliated with the child welfare service system, but still have a professional interest in the wellbeing of children. This includes recruitment from sectors including school districts, child care providers, nonprofit advocacy and service organizations, and professional medicine. As a result, Statewide Panel members from State and County agencies were asked to begin serving in an advisory capacity to the group. This change was made in 2003 prior to the beginning of the case record review process initiated by the Panel, so that members representing other disciplines would be able to provide more objective feedback on cases reviewed at that State and County level.

During 2004, the Statewide Panel underwent a major structural change and was reorganized as a subcommittee of the Children's Justice Act (CJA) Task Force. This was done for two primary reasons: 1) To increase the effectiveness of the Panel's work by joining with a larger advisory group whose work is most directly related to that of the Panel; and 2) to meet the requirements of new statewide advisory board restructuring done by the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) in order to reduce the amount of staff time and resources expended on the business completed by such groups. Prior to this restructuring, DCFS had a considerable number of advisory groups and other statewide committees, and it has become necessary to increase efficiency in the area of stakeholder contribution to the work of the Division.

Concurrent with this change, membership on the Statewide Panel has decreased as a result of member turnover. Some new members will be recruited to offset this turnover, and the participation of existing CJA Task Force members in the work of the Panel subcommittee will be encouraged in order to draw on the expertise of current members of the Task Force.

The Statewide Panel works toward fulfilling the following three primary goals:

1. Reviews the State's implementation of previous CRP recommendations.
2. Participates in ongoing policy and procedure reviews, and targeted case reviews.
3. Considers and implements new areas of subject review within the CAPTA Assurances, Section 106.

In essence, the Statewide Panel's work consists of the review of internal policies and procedures within the CPS system, accomplished through individual CPS case reviews. Each year, the Statewide Panel's findings are summarized in an Annual Report (this document) submitted to the federal government as part of the CAPTA requirements.

Northern and Southern CACs

Background: Required Expansion of Nevada Citizen Review Panels

CAPTA requires each state that receives the Basic State Child Abuse and Neglect State Grant in excess of \$200,000 to have a minimum of three CRPs. Nevada began receiving more than this amount in 2006 through grant adjustments, and will probably continue to receive more than this

amount in the future. Therefore, it was necessary that Nevada expand the number of CRPs to three in order to come into compliance with the federal requirements. According to CAPTA, Section 106, CRPs may function as part of other committees already in existence. Nevada's existing group, the Statewide Panel, has been established since 1999 per the above overview.

The CJA Task Force met in December, 2005, to review and approve a proposal from DCFS for the expansion of CRPs in 2006. Upon review, the Task Force recommended that DCFS invite the existing Northern and Southern Child Welfare Citizens Advisory Committees (CACs) to serve as the second and third CRPs. The CACs currently operate at the County government level in Washoe and Clark Counties.

During the first half of 2006, staff conducted preliminary discussions with the chairs of these two groups, and a formal letter was issued by the DCFS Administrator in May, 2006, inviting each of the CACs to serve as CRPs. A meeting was held between staff and the CAC Chairs in August, 2006, to formalize the plan for inclusion of the Northern and Southern CACs in Nevada's CRP process. Approval to join as a CRP was given by the Northern CAC in late 2006, and by the Southern CAC in early 2007.

Each of the CACs has re-focused some of its goals and workplans to begin developing recommendations for system change that can be incorporated into the statewide CRP process. Both CACs currently review areas of focus mandated for CRPs through CAPTA, which is a primary reason the CJA Task Force recommended their inclusion. Because the CACs are more closely tied to the CPS agencies in the north and south, which are the state's two largest population centers, they are ideally positioned to provide additional recommendations for system improvement in Washoe and Clark Counties. The Statewide Panel will maintain its broader focus, continuing to examine CPS across the entire state, while the CACs will be able to provide a deeper look at the CPS system through their respective ties to the County child welfare agencies. This will present new opportunities to make recommendations for more locally-focused system change that will rise up to the State level. This will also increase State and regional collaboration so that necessary changes can be actively addressed.

APPENDIX B: OVERVIEW OF THE STATE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM

Statewide Integration of Child Welfare

Prior to 2001, the child welfare system in Nevada was bifurcated between State and County agencies as a result of State law. Under Nevada Revised Statute (NRS) 432B.325, the law required that counties in which the “population is 100,000 or more shall provide protective services for the children in that county and pay the cost of all those services.” In Nevada there are two counties that meet this criterion: Washoe County in northern Nevada and Clark County in southern Nevada. As a result, there are three separate agencies that provide child welfare and child protective services (CPS):

1. State of Nevada Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS)
2. Washoe County Department of Social Services (WCDSS)
3. Clark County Department of Family Services (CCDFS)

Originally, these agencies worked together through the CPS Statewide Managers Team, also known as the Nevada Child Protection and Permanency Planning Team. This team collaborated on pertinent law, regulation, and policy issues necessary to maintain statewide consistency for investigative and casework practices. The CPS Statewide Managers Team assisted with the development and oversight of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) Basic State Grant.

The child protection agencies conduct child abuse investigations and may take children into protective custody and place them in licensed foster homes. Bifurcation occurred when the County child protection agencies transferred long-term or other foster care or potential adoption cases to the State via DCFS. Children were transferred from their initial CPS placement in the County to the State agency’s licensed foster care home. The transfer included changes in social workers, court process, and service delivery systems.

However, during 2001, the Nevada State Legislature passed Assembly Bill (AB) 1 of the 17th Special Session, which provides for the integration of State and local child welfare services. This bill was intended to end the practice of transferring cases from the Counties to the State, thereby reducing the number of changes in placement for a child in protective custody. Integration means that the two larger Counties will incorporate the previously separate child welfare functions of foster care and adoptions into one continuous system of child protection. The following are directives of AB 1:

- Transfers certain duties of the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS), under the Department of Human Resources (DHR), to agencies of Washoe and Clark Counties.

- Establishes a Legislative Committee on Children, Youth, and Families to oversee the system transition.
- Makes appropriations to fund the transition between State and County agencies.

The implementation of this transition was completed in 2004. WCDSS began implementation in April, 2002, and completed its transition in January, 2003. CCDFS began implementation in October, 2003, and completed its transition in October, 2004. DCFS remains responsible for supervising and administering child protective and child welfare services in the remaining 15 rural counties. The integration of child welfare services in the two urban counties is intended to accomplish the following:

- Begin to eliminate the inefficiencies of the current system by reducing the number of placements of children in foster homes.
- Decrease the length of time that children remain in out-of-home care and ensure that children are placed in permanent homes as soon as possible.
- Establish rates for foster care reimbursement at a level that enables a provider of foster care to care for a child adequately. Rates should be standardized within each county and structured in a manner that avoids any unnecessary interruptions in foster home placements because of changing levels of reimbursements.
- Establish as a priority the fairness to employees affected by the integration of the child welfare system.
- Establish that DCFS and counties whose population is 100,000 or more have a shared fiscal responsibility for the costs of providing child welfare services, must be committed to ensuring through negotiation in good faith future maintenance of their efforts in providing these services, and must equitably share future costs for providing these services.
- Establish that integration of the child welfare system in Nevada will allow the placement of children in a child welfare system that is adequately funded and structured to avoid unnecessary interruptions in placement and will ensure that permanency is achieved for children in accordance with federal and state laws.

Subsequent to the integration of child welfare services within Washoe and Clark Counties, DCFS has moved into a new supervisory role for county-administered child protective and child welfare services. Supervision within the larger counties is being accomplished in a number of ways, including the development of a Decision-Making Group (DMG) comprised of the DCFS Administrator, DCFS Deputy Administrators, and the Counties' Child Welfare Agency Directors. This group was originally formed to address the findings of the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR), which include the determination that Nevada lacks standardized statewide policies.

Historically, each of the state's three regional service areas (north, south, and rural) operated independently and were allowed to develop and implement regionally-based policies. Additionally, during the integration process, Nevada had not previously clarified the roles of the State and Counties, and so the State has not been viewed as the accountable supervisory authority for child welfare service delivery.

Based on this, a collaborative Policy Development and Approval Process was established under the Program Improvement Plan (PIP), which responded to the CFSR. Collaborative Policy Teams have been established and are comprised of representatives from each regional service area, along with select internal and external stakeholders as needed. Each Policy Team may include subject matter experts, consumers, managers, supervisors, trainers, and community partners. The role of the Policy Team members is to conduct research, provide content expertise, and develop draft policies that are provided to the DMG for final policy approval.

The Policy Teams are assigned specific activities in order to provide structure for the policy development process. Specific activities of the teams typically include the following:

- Review existing policies and procedures, comparing them to applicable federal regulations, Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS), and Nevada Administrative Codes (NAC); identify how the policies can be standardized and reflective of nationally recognized best practices.
- Develop new policies and where appropriate and include practice guidelines (field guides or practice manuals) to accompany each new policy developed. Streamlining documentation will be analyzed with each new policy developed.
- Present each new policy to the Decision-Making Group for approval. The Decision-Making Group will review all drafts submitted by the Policy Teams and will make recommendations for revision, or finalize and approve each new policy. The Decision-Making Group will provide oversight for the direction and implementation of the approved policies, and relevant procedures and practice guidelines linked to new policies.
- The Decision-Making Group will direct the Policy Teams to respond to any policy refinement needs discovered through the continuous quality assurance and improvement process.

Stakeholder involvement in policy development has also been promoted as part of the plan strategies developed through the PIP and the DCFS five-year plan. This includes collaboration with internal and external stakeholders across all program areas in the development of statewide policies, in order to improve safety, permanency, and wellbeing outcomes for children in Nevada.

Substitute Care – Foster Care

The authority for the substitute care program is delegated to the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) by Nevada Revised Statute (NRS) 432.020, which establishes the Division's responsibility to support and maintain children placed in its custody, and NRS 432.032, which provides authority to adopt program regulations. NRS 432B.180 establishes the duties of DCFS including the requirement to plan, coordinate, and monitor the delivery of child welfare services provided throughout the State. NRS 432B.190 requires the Division to adopt regulations for the provision of child welfare services, including the following:

- Protection of the legal rights of parents and children.

- Emergency shelter for a child.
- The prevention, identification, and correction of abuse or neglect of a child in residential institutions.
- Evaluating the development and contents of plans submitted for approval under NRS 432B.395, which pertains to efforts to prevent or eliminate the need for removal of children from their homes, and to facilitate a safe return to homes where removal is necessary.

Substitute care is a family-focused service that provides for the temporary care of children in need of protection. Its services are aimed at changing behaviors in parents that have resulted in child maltreatment leading to out-of-home placement. The Division returns children who have been removed and may be safely restored to their families through the provision of services to the child and family. When reunification is not possible, the Division seeks alternative permanency options which best suit the child's needs. Specifically, the Division provides assessment and comprehensive case management services that support the child, the parents, and the caregivers.

The continuum of out-of-home care services includes emergency shelter care, foster family care (including placements with relatives), group home care, therapeutic foster care, respite care, residential treatment care both in and out of state, and independent living services. The Division emphasizes the safety and wellbeing of children, recognizes the family as the fundamental foundation of child rearing, and acknowledges the importance of a comprehensive, community-based, child-centered, family-focused, and culturally competent teamwork approach.

The Division believes families offer children and young adults opportunities for permanency and family relationships that are intended to last a lifetime. Permanency affords the stability and security that children must have for building competency and self-reliance and for maximizing their cultural and spiritual growth. The Division supports collaborative efforts in every community to help assure permanence in the lives of all children.

DCFS began major child welfare reform in 1992 with the commitment to move from a protective authority to a family-centered approach in casework. The first phase was the adoption of a training series for social workers that incorporates the philosophy and principles of family-centered practice in the four major casework areas:

1. Child protective services (CPS)
2. Adoption
3. Foster care
4. Child welfare

In 1994, the second phase of this initiative included the creation of the Foster Care Statewide Steering Committee to address professionalization, training, and retention of foster caregivers. The goal was to improve the quality of foster care by means of a family-centered approach with foster caregivers. The yearlong efforts of this task force and its three subcommittees resulted in a number of improvements within foster care. These included the following:

- Implementation of a 36-hour pre-service foster parent training curriculum
- Involvement of foster care providers in case planning
- Promotion of the development of a Foster Parent Bill of Rights

To continue the efforts of this initiative and to address the quality of care standards required by the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA), DCFS formed a Quality of Care Standards (QCS) Statewide Task Force. The Task Force reviewed current standards and suggested additional standards to improve services and practices. The QCS Task Force was composed of child welfare managers, supervisors, social workers, specialists, foster care providers, and representatives from County social services. The Task Force represented Nevada's three geographic regions: north, south, and rural. Five areas were addressed by the Task Force:

1. Foster care licensing
2. Training
3. Retention and support
4. Quality of care for foster children
5. Professionalization of foster caregivers

After an initial review and recommendation report was developed, the QCS Task Force membership was dissolved into other groups that continue to evaluate the five areas outlined above and to recommend ways to improve the delivery of services and quality of care for children in foster care.

Specific to the training implemented by the Task Force, Nevada adopted a 36-hour pre-service training curriculum in 1997, which is required of all potential foster and adoptive families. The training is designed to provide families with knowledge and skills that can greatly contribute to their success. Some families will decide that foster care and/or adoption is not for them, while others will begin to gain an understanding of the role of their family and how additional children can enhance their family life.

The northern and southern regions have trainers on staff who provide the 36-hour pre-service training. The rural region contracts out to a local provider to recruit and train foster homes, using the same pre-service curriculum. This is an established curriculum developed by the Institute for Human Services in Columbus, Ohio, which is widely considered to be state-of-the-art training.

Beginning in 2002, since the implementation of the integration of child welfare services in Washoe and Clark Counties, the training now varies by region in terms of hours required and curriculum content, ranging from approximately 22 to 36 hours. However, since only eight hours are required by law, the regional training requirements significantly exceed the minimum established requirements.

APPENDIX C: PANEL MEMBERS

Statewide CRP Members

<i>Member</i>	<i>Affiliation</i>	<i>Representation/Region</i>
Chris Bayer	CASA of Carson City	CASA – Rural Region
Betsey Crumrine	Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS)	Designated Representative for Division Administrator – Statewide, DCFS Central Office
Jackie Harris	Southern Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)	Child Protective Services – Southern Region
Jeanne Marsh	Northern Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)	Child Protective Services – Northern Region
Luci Mullins	Clark County Special Public Defender’s Office	Children’s Attorney – Southern Region

Advisory Staff

<i>Member</i>	<i>Affiliation</i>	<i>Representation</i>
Cynthia Freeman	DCFS – Family Programs Office	Child Protective Services – Statewide, DCFS Central Office
Tom Morton	Clark County Department of Family Services (CCDFS)	Child Protective Services – Southern Region
Kevin Schiller	Washoe County Department of Social Services (WCDSS)	Child Protective Services – Northern Region

Northern CAC Members

<i>Member</i>	<i>Affiliation</i>	<i>Representation</i>
Eric Beye	Washoe County School District	School District
Frank Cervantes	Washoe County Department of Juvenile Services	Juvenile Probation
Denise Everett	Quest Counseling and Consulting, Inc.	Substance Abuse Service Agency
Stuart Gordon	Family Counseling Services of Northern Nevada	Agency Serving Low Income Individuals
Mary Herzik	CASA of Washoe County	Court-Appointed Special Advocates
Shirley Luke	The Robison House	Children's Mental Health
Jennifer Lunt	Washoe County Alternative Public Defender's Office	Attorneys Representing Parents
Eddie Martinez	UJIMA Youth Services	Former Participant in the Child Welfare System
Sherri Rice	Access to Healthcare Network	Advocates for Health Care for Low Income Families
Amy Saathoff	Committee to Aid Abused Women	Domestic Violence Service Agency
Karen Sabo	Washoe Legal Services	Attorneys Representing Children
Michael Sandefer	Alliance Family Services, Inc.	Parent Advocate

Southern CAC Members

<i>Member</i>	<i>Affiliation</i>	<i>Representation</i>
Jennifer Bevacqua <i>Co-Chair</i>	Olive Crest	Private Providers of Mental Health Services
Jan Biggerstaff	State Board of Education	Child Welfare Advocate
LaTrece Coleman	Housing Authority of the County of Clark, Nevada	Local Housing Agency
Jacqueline Harris <i>Chair</i>	Bridge Counseling Associates	Substance Abuse Services Agencies
Patty Merrifield	DCFS	Children’s Mental Health Services
Patty Miller	Nevada Division of Health Care Financing and Policy	Nevada Medicaid
Carolyn Muscari	SAFE House	Domestic Violence Service Agencies
Sheila S.Parks	CASA	Court Appointed Special Advocates – CASA
Fritz Reese	Clark County Department of Juvenile Justice Services	Local Juvenile Probation Services
Susie Sernoe	Clark County School District (CCSD)	Local School District
Cynthia Diane Steel	Clark County Family Court	Family Division of District Court
VACANT	-	Former Participant in the Child Welfare System
VACANT	-	Youth with Foster Care Experience
VACANT	-	Foster and Adoptive Parents
VACANT	-	Parent Advocates
VACANT	-	General Public



**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES**

**4126 Technology Way – 3rd Floor
Carson City, Nevada 89706
(775) 684-4400**

To: Citizen Review Panel
From: Diane Comeaux
Date: June 30, 2010
RE: Report back to the Nevada Citizen review Panel on 2009 Recommendations

Child Protective Services (CPS) Staff Practices

Recommendation 1: CPS practices need to incorporate appropriate actions and referrals to promote safety, permanency, and well-being that are timely based on the child and family's needs.

DCFS Response: The State agrees that referrals for services to families should be made as appropriate and as timely as possible. Federal and State law requires a case plan be developed within 60 days of removal.

Within the past year, each child welfare agency in Nevada has developed a standardized case plan format for their agency. Case plans are now located in the Unified Nevada Information Technology for Youth (UNITY) system, which is Nevada's Statewide Automated Child Welfare System (SACWIS). Each agency's case plan has a section to address the medical, mental health, behavioral and/or educational needs of the child. A subsequent section asks the worker to describe what services are in place to address the specific needs of the child. Despite the newly approved case plan formats, documentation of the entire case plan template remains inconsistent across the state. Additional training in case plan development and documentation would be beneficial to caseworkers.

Additionally, several related areas of key concern were noted during Nevada's most recent Child and Family Services Review (CF SR):

- Lack of appropriate and timely in-home services to ensure safety.
- Wait lists for many key services, along with the need for tailored, specialized services such as sexual abuse treatment, grief counseling, and services to support THV/reunification.
- Services need to be clearly directed at assessing and building parental capacity, and progress communicated in a way that helps agencies and courts make key decisions.
- Inadequate availability of services to meet needs of children and families, major gaps include: prevention services/alternatives to detention, substance abuse treatment, accessibility to quality mental health services, transportation, educational supports, housing, post-adoption, quality therapeutic homes.

SB 343 was enacted in the 2009 legislative session. This bill authorizes the Director, to the extent authorized by Federal law, include in any state plans adopted pursuant to NRS 422.271, priority for a parent which is referred by an agency which provides child welfare services and who qualifies to receive treatment. The

Division will be collaborating with other state agencies to develop a process to assist families in more timely access to treatment including mental health and substance abuse services.

Recommendation 2: Caseworkers need to complete timely data entry through the new service referral window in UNITY in order to provide consistent case documentation and to aid in practice that ensures follow-through on service referrals.

DCFS Response: The service array window is not being utilized to the degree it was intended, in part because the Service Array policy, which was meant to accompany deployment of the new window has not been approved and therefore has not been disseminated to the field. Upon further review of that policy it was decided that additional revisions are needed and a decision was made to wait until after Nevada receives its approved PIP to proceed with revision and implementation of this window and policy.

Referrals for Developmental Assessments

Recommendation 3: Caseworkers need to comply with the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) requirement for developmental assessments of young children: Within two working days of identifying a child age three or under with substantiated abuse and neglect or a positive drug screen, caseworkers must refer the child for a developmental assessment from Nevada Early Intervention Services (NEIS). Additionally, caseworkers need to follow through on the referrals by tracking outcomes in the new service referral window in UNITY.

DCFS Response: DCFS FPO (Family Programs Office) staff and Information Management Services (IMS) have begun to analyze the business process for how CAPTA Part-C referrals are made to ascertain if there is any way to maximize programming within UNITY to prompt and/or expedite the referral process.

Along with the CAPTA Part-C policy, an Instructional Memo is being drafted and will be sent out to all child welfare agencies as a reminder of this federal mandate. Once referrals are being tracked in the service array window, UNITY reports can be developed to track compliance with this mandate on a statewide level.

Visitation

Recommendation 4: Statewide consistency in visitation practice needs to be improved across all child welfare jurisdictions, and focus on five primary outcomes:

1. Statewide practice guidelines need to be re-integrated into DCFS Policy 0205.0: Caseworker Contact with Children, Parents and Caregivers. Training needs to be provided as part of the CORE curriculum to ensure the outcomes included as part of this recommendation.
2. Parents and children's rights are made clear to them through a statewide visitation brochure that reflects statewide policy and is required to be distributed to parents whose children are in state or county custody, or in substitute care placements.
3. Visitation is family-driven based on collaborative decision making through CFT meetings. Visitation is conducted in healthy and appropriate environments and focuses on improved parenting. Visitation is not caseworker-driven and is not used as leverage against families by caseworkers.
4. Reduced visitation is not used as a punishment for positive drug screens. Parents with substance abuse disorders who attempt to engage in visitation while intoxicated may be denied same-day visitation, per statewide policy, but this does not affect future visits. The Panel recommends that this particular directive be mandated for inclusion in state and county policies.

5. In cases of alleged sexual abuse, visitation is conducted in strict compliance with statewide practice guidelines such that visitation decisions are guided by a child therapist or expert evaluator, and visitation is done within the context of therapy and guided by a therapist or caseworker with knowledge in the field of child sexual abuse. The Panel recommends that this particular directive be mandated for inclusion in state and county policies.

DCFS Response: The more frequent and consistent the visits, the more positive the outcomes are for children and families. In addition the greater the understanding of the importance of visits to all involved in a child welfare case, further supports the engagement of children and families.

Family reunification remains the goal for the majority of children in foster care and parent-child visits are considered to be the primary intervention for maintaining and enhancing the development of parent-child relationships necessary for successful family reunification.

A request has been made to the Deputy Administrator to reattach the *Practice Guidelines, Quality and Frequency of Visits between Children, Their Siblings and Parents* to the 0205 Caseworker Contact with Children, Parents and Caregivers policy. As this is a statewide collaborative policy, this recommendation will need to be agreed upon by all three child welfare agencies. A recommendation has also been made on behalf of the CRP to write a separate statewide policy that specifically addresses Parental/Sibling Visitation. Creating a statewide visitation brochure, referred to above, would fall under the purview of that policy workgroup. These efforts would assist in meeting this recommendation.

Additionally, insufficient efforts to ensure visitation with mother/father/siblings was noted as an area of key concern during Nevada's most recent CFSR, therefore this recommendation is consistent with the federal review and will be an area needing additional exploration and revision.

Recommendation 5: Caseworkers need to complete timely data entry through the visitation windows in UNITY in order to provide consistent case documentation of visitation frequency and outcomes.

DCFS Response: The solution to this recommendation is two-fold: The first is to more clearly articulate in Statewide policy where and how data regarding visitation plans is entered into UNITY; the second is to ensure that the policy is fully emphasized and supported by all three child welfare agencies. WCDSS and CCDFS have implemented agency specific policies regarding parent/child/sibling visitation, however DCFS uses the *Caseworker Contact with Children, Parents and Caregivers* policy which does not articulate parental visitation guidelines to the extent the other agencies have in their internal policies. Similar to Recommendation 4, a new policy that specifically addresses Parental/Sibling Visitation would assist in further clarifying this concern.

UNITY Data System Changes

Recommendation 6: DCFS should consider changes to UNITY such that data entry requirements more closely match the flow of casework.

DCFS Response: The State is aware of the enhancements needed for UNITY. In 2009, a contract with Integrating Factors, Inc. (IFI) was initiated to complete an analysis of UNITY. Among IFI'S findings were the following:

- Time spent on an appropriate level of case documentation far exceeds and is disproportionate to the time spent on client facing tasks.

- UNITY'S positioning as a case documentation tool, as opposed to a tool that drives and guides the work processes, often keeps it disconnected from the operational processes.
- Significant data entered into UNITY are not available for searching, reporting, analysis, or quality oversight.

The IFI study characterized UNITY as a data capture system that does not adequately support the business process of its users. Consequently, users only complete data entry to the minimal extent possible in order to meet the requirements of a particular task. Thus, UNITY provides insufficient business intelligence to allow for the modeling of business trends or to identify critical areas of needed improvement.

To begin addressing the evaluation conducted by IFI, the DCFS requested a Technology Investment Request. The Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) Technology Investment Request (TIR) mission is to enhance the Unified Nevada Information Technology for Youth (UNITY) system, an automated case management solution which supports Nevada's state and local child welfare agencies such that DCFS will significantly increase the service delivery and practice for the safety, permanency and well-being of Nevada's children and families.

DCFS seeks to accomplish through the TIR the following:

- Design and implement a new presentation layer for UNITY using Web Portals that are better tailored to suit the needs of the specific functional roles performed by UNITY users.
- Implement a Data Warehouse for use by DCFS management and other stakeholders to extract data in statistically relevant ways.

On June 14, 2010 the TIR was presented to the committee and was approved. Final approval will be requested in the 2011 legislative session. If approved, DCFS will be able to make all changes included in the TIR.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Nevada Citizen Review Panel and the northern and southern Citizen Advisory Committees for their volunteer work to improve the child protection system and look forward to their continued review and recommendations.

Sincerely,

Diane Comeaux, Administrator

Cc. Tom Morton, Clark County Department of Family Services
Kevin Schiller, Washoe County Department of Social Services
Amber Howell, Division of Child and family Services

ATTACHMENT B: Glossary of Acronyms

AB	Assembly Bill
AFCARS	Adoption Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System
APSR	Annual Progress & Service Report
ASFA	Adoption and Safe Families Act
CANS	Child Abuse and Neglect System
CAPTA	Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act
CASA	Court Appointed Special Advocate
CBCAP	Community Based Child Abuse Prevention
CCDFS	Clark County Department of Family Services
CCFAPA	Clark County Foster and Adoptive Parent Association
CFCIP	Chafee Foster Care Independence Program
CFSP	Child and Family Service Plan
CFSR	Child and Family Services Review
CFT	Child and Family Team
CIP	Court Improvement Project
CJA – TALCIT	Children’s Justice Act Technical Assistance to Local Communities and Indian Tribes
CJA	Children’s Justice Act
CPS	Child Protective Services
CRP	Citizen Review Panel
CTF	Children’s Trust Fund
DCFS	Division of Child and Family Services
DCFS-RURAL	Division of Child and Family Services Rural Region
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services
DMG	Decision Making Group
DR	Differential Response
ETV	Educational Training Voucher
FPO	Family Programs Office
FRC	Family Resource Center
GMU	Grants Management Unit
ICAMA	Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance
ICJ	Interstate Compact for Juveniles
ICPC	Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children
ICWA	Indian Child Welfare Act
ILP	Independent Living Plan
IMS	Information Management System
IV-E	Title IV-E
MDT	Multi-Disciplinary Team
NAC	Nevada Administrative Code
NCANDS	National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System
NCFAS	North Carolina Family Assessment Survey
NPT	Nevada Partnership for Training
NRC	National Resource Center
NRS	Nevada Revised Statutes
NYTD	National Youth in Transition Database
ODES	Online Data Entry System
OPPLA	Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement
PART	Policy Approval and Review Team
PIP	Program Improvement Plan
PRIDE	Parent Resources for Information Development and Education
QA	Quality Assurance
QI	Quality Improvement
QICR	Quality Improvement Case Review
SACWIS	Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System
SAFE	Structured Analysis Family Evaluation

SAFF	Sierra Association of Foster Families
SB	Senate Bill
SWA	Statewide Assessment
TALCIT	Technical Assistance to Local Communities and Indian Tribes
TANF	Temporary Assistance to Needy Families
TPR	Termination of Parental Rights
UNITY	Unified Nevada Information Technology for Youth
UNLV	University of Nevada, Las Vegas
UNR	University of Nevada, Reno
VOCA	Victims of Crime Act
WCDSS	Washoe County Department of Social Services

ATTACHMENT C: Stakeholders and Groups

A. Child Death Review (CDR): The child death review account was established to support statewide child death review activities of the mandated Administrative Team and the Executive Committee to Review the Death of Children. The activities of the committees include the following outcomes:

- Development of statewide policies, procedures, strategies, and initiatives undertaken by public child welfare;
- Issuance of public awareness messages surrounding relevant topic areas;
- Report on the number of training held each year;
- Conduct annual evaluations completed of combined statewide prevention efforts; and, monitor and report the number of contacts with statewide boards and commissions.

Executive Committee: The Executive Committee to review the death of children, formed in 2003 is composed of representatives from local multidisciplinary child death review teams whose statutory purpose (NRS 432B.403) is to:

- Review the records of selected cases of deaths of children under 18 years of age in this State;
- Review the records of selected cases of deaths of children under 18 years of age who are residents of Nevada and who die in another state;
- Assess and analyze such cases;
- Make recommendations for improvements to laws, policies and practice;
- Support the safety of children; and
- Prevent future deaths of children.

Local teams members must include (a) a representative of any law enforcement agency that is involved with the case under review; (b) medical personnel; (c) a representative of the district attorney's office in the county where the case is under review; (d) a representative of any school that is involved with the case under review; (e) a representative of any agency which provides child welfare services that is involved with the case under review; and (f) a representative of the coroner's office; or other representatives of other organizations concerned with the death of the child as the agency which provides child welfare services deems appropriate for the review per NRS 432B.406. Local teams review child deaths and make recommendations regarding various agency laws, regulations, policies and practice, training and public education to the Administrative Team.

The Executive Committee makes decisions about funding initiatives to prevent child maltreatment and death, which may be based on recommendations from the Administrative Team. Additionally, the Executive Committee adopts statewide protocols for the review of the death of children; designates the members of the Administrative Team; oversees training and development for the regional CDR teams; and compiles and distributes a statewide annual report. Funding for the work of the Committee was also established as a result of AB 381, and is derived from a \$1 fee collected from death certificates issued by the State. The funds are intended to be used for prevention efforts and training of the local CDR teams.

The Administrative Team: The Administrative Team is comprised of Administrators of agencies which provide child welfare services, and agencies responsible for vital statistics, public health, mental health and public safety per NRS 432B.408. The purpose of the Administrative Team is to provide oversight for local teams and to receive the reports and recommendations from local multidisciplinary teams for review and make appropriate responses back within 90 days after receiving the report. These recommendations are made by Administrators who are able to affect agency policy or may make other recommendations to other entities regarding policy, laws, regulation or practice, and public education. The Administrative Team members may be able to resolve issues that local child death review teams have identified. The Administrative Team works with the Executive Committee in developing the annual budget, public education campaigns and public policy. Both teams work together to prevent child fatalities. The Administrative team reviews reports and recommendations from the regional CDR teams and makes decisions regarding the recommendations for improvements to laws, policies, and practices and also makes recommendations about funding for improvements, initiatives, and public education requiring expenditures.

- B. Children's Justice Act Task Force (CJA):** The CJA task force is composed of professionals with knowledge and experience related to the criminal justice system and issues of child physical abuse, child neglect, and child sexual abuse and exploitation, and child maltreatment related fatalities. The purpose and function of the CJA is to comprehensively:
- Support, promote and initiate systematic change that will improve the investigation and prosecution of child abuse and neglect.
 - Review and evaluate Nevada's investigative, administrative, and both civil and criminal judicial handling of cases of child abuse and neglect, particularly of child sexual abuse and exploitation, as well as cases involving suspected child maltreatment related fatalities and cases involving a potential combination of jurisdictions, such as interstate, federal-state, and state-tribal;
 - Make policy and training recommendations in each of the following categories:
 - Experimental, model, and demonstration programs for testing innovative approaches and,
 - Reform of state laws, ordinances, regulations, protocols and procedures to provide comprehensive protection for children from abuse, particularly child sexual abuse and exploitation, while ensuring fairness to all affected persons.
- C. Citizen Review Panels (CRP):** Nevada's CRP's have been a great asset to the State and the field of child protection due to their ongoing commitment and continued involvement in Quality Improvement (QI) and training activities that benefit the child welfare system. The Statewide CRP was established in 1999 per NRS 432B.396 and has federally mandated responsibilities under Title I, Section 106, of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA). The Statewide CRP consists of representation from community-based organizations and professionals with backgrounds related to child protective services (CPS), child advocacy, children's mental health, and foster parents. In essence, the CRP's work consists of the review of internal policies and procedures within the CPS system, accomplished mainly through individual CPS case reviews. In response to meeting the federal requirement for three CRP's based on the Basic State Grant funding increase for Nevada, both the Northern and Southern Citizens Advisory Committees (CACs) were invited into the CRP process in 2006. Approval to join as a CRP was given by the Northern CAC in late 2006 and by the Southern CAC in early 2007. During 2007 and 2008, the Statewide CRP members continued to serve as regular, external stakeholders in quarterly case reviews implemented as part of the DCFS Quality Improvement Framework. Statewide CRP recommendations for 2007 focus on CPS staff training and practices, improving the DCFS QI case review process and expansion into other areas of review such as differential response and differential response training. Northern CAC/CRP recommendations for 2008 focus on CPS caseworker unit restructuring, family involvement in the child welfare system, and differential response. Southern CAC/CRP recommendations for 2008 focus on increased funding for child welfare services, policy and procedure redesign, and CPS caseworker training.
- D. Court Improvement Project (CIP):** Nevada's CIP was formed to address changing roles of court oversight in child abuse and neglect cases brought on by federal guidelines and Nevada statutes and is supported with federal funding. CIP continues to work closely with DCFS and other stakeholders to plan and develop changes statewide that will significantly improve the handling of child welfare cases throughout the state. The monthly schedule of meetings between the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC)/CIP and DCFS is ongoing. Issues requiring a collaborative approach are discussed and items of mutual concern are identified for strategic planning. In the last year, extensive child welfare training was made available and delivered to Judges and Attorneys statewide. In addition to trainings, a final draft of the bench book, a guide for the judiciary on child welfare proceedings has been completed and is currently under review by the judiciary, the Office of the Attorney General and the DCFS Eligibility Unit. DCFS and CIP have had monthly meetings regarding a variety of child welfare topics and children assigned to youth parole and have been exploring UNITY data reports that could be useful for judges during court proceedings. CIP also received a presentation by the Eligibility Unit and were provided with recommendations for language in court orders to maximize IVE funding opportunities.
- E. Mental Health Consortia:** The 2001 Legislature, per NRS 433B.333 established a Mental Health Consortium in three jurisdictions: Clark County, Washoe County the Rural Counties, to encourage cross system referral, ongoing collaboration and accessibility to services. The functions of the Mental Health Consortia are to assess the need for behavioral health, mental health and substance abuse services for children and families in each jurisdiction; to determine how well the current system is meeting those needs, and to develop an annual plan on how the need can

be better met. This information is reported to the Legislative Committee on Children and Youth regularly. This group serves as an integral part of the service array process and facilitates the linkages between child welfare and children's mental health.

- F. Nevada Partnership for Training (NPT):** The Nevada Partnership for Training is a partnership, in collaboration with the Family Programs Office, the Rural Region, Clark County Department of Family Services, Washoe County Department of Social Services, University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) and the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR). Individuals from these entities work collaboratively together to improve the child welfare training delivery system. The goal of the NPT is to assess Nevada's training delivery needs and develop and implement a comprehensive training delivery system.
- G. Foster Parent Associations:** The Sierra Association of Foster Families (SAFF) a non-profit organization in Washoe County and the Clark County Foster and Adoptive Parent Association (CCFAPA) a non-profit organization in Clark County are comprised of caregivers whose purpose is to ensure licensed foster/adoptive families have the information, tools and support they need to provide safe, quality care to abused, neglected and otherwise dependent children. These organizations also provide support for the 15 rural counties. SAFF primarily serves the counties in the Northern part of the State, and CCFAPA primarily services Clark County and the community of Pahrump in Southern Nye County.
- H. Out-of-State Placement Workgroup:** Members of the Out of State Placement Workgroup consist of representatives each with a specialization unique to the diagnosis and placement of Nevada youth in out of state facilities. These members include staff from Children's Mental Health, DCFS FPO, DCFS Rural Region, WCDSS, CCDFS and Juvenile Justice as well as support from management, legal and fiscal representatives as needed. Children are placed in out-of-state placements when in-state services are not available to meet their needs. The Ensuring that these out of state resources are adequate and meet the standards set by the State requires inspection, review and, sometimes, revision of State policy. This workgroup makes itself available to participate in meetings and assignments that meet these objectives and tasks. The Out of State Placement Workgroup will continue to meet periodically with the goal of developing a schedule of inspections and an equitable and fiscally responsible way to divide the travel among all participants. The workgroup recognizes that, in most cases, it is preferable to keep children in their home state and to facilitate permanency in a healthy environment. The workgroup remains committed to ensuring that when out of state placement is the only alternative for a Nevada youth that the facility meets all of the requirements set forth by State and Federal requirements.
- I. Youth Advisory Board (YAB):** The YAB assists foster and former foster youth to make the transition to adulthood. The YAB exists to provide exemplary leadership and empowerment opportunities for youth who have or will experience out of home care.

ATTACHMENT D: Assurances and Certification

Per the APSR Instructions, Nevada is not required to submit these again, as they have not changed since the submission of the CFSP in June 2009.

ATTACHMENT E: Financial Information

CFS-101, Part I: Annual Budget Request for Title IV-B, Subpart 1 & 2 Funds, CAPTA, CFCIP, and ETV

Federal Fiscal Year 2011, October 1, 2010 through September 30, 2011

1. State or Indian Tribal Organization (ITO): NEVADA		2. EIN: 88-600022-A9	
3. Address: 4126 Technology Way, 3rd Floor Carson City, Nevada 89706		4. Submission: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Revision	
5. Total estimated title IV-B Subpart 1, Child Welfare Services (CWS) Funds		\$	2,425,004.00
a) Total administration (not to exceed 10% of title IV-B Subpart 1 estimated allotment)		\$	242,500.40
6. Total estimated title IV-B Subpart 2, Provides Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) Funds. This amount should equal the sum of lines a - f.		\$	1,570,850.00
a) Total Family Preservation Services		\$	353,441.25
b) Total Family Support Services		\$	353,441.25
c) Total Time-Limited Family Reunification Services		\$	353,441.25
d) Total Adoption Promotion and Support Services		\$	353,441.25
e) Total for Other Service Related Activities (e.g. planning)		\$	
f) Total administration (FOR STATES ONLY: not to exceed 10% of title IV-Bsubpart 2 estimated allotment)		\$	157,085.00
7. Total estimated Monthly Caseworker Visit (MCV) Funds (FOR STATES ONLY)		\$	93,279.00
a) Total administration (FOR STATES ONLY: not to exceed 10% of estimated MCV allotment)		\$	9,327.90
8. Re-allotment of title IV-B subparts 1 & 2 funds for States and Indian Tribal Organizations:			
a) Indicate the amount of the State's/Tribe's allotment that will not be required to carry out the following programs: CWS \$ _____, PSSF \$ _____, and/or MCV(States only)\$ _____.			
b) If additional funds become available to States and ITOs, specify the amount of additional funds the States or Tribes requesting: CWS \$970,002 (40%), PSSF \$628,340 (40%), and/or MCV(States only) \$105,721 (total of \$199,000).			
9. Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) State Grant (no State match required): Estimated Amount plus additional allocation, as available. (FOR STATES ONLY)		\$	261,178.00
10. Estimated Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) funds		\$	1,442,032.00
a) Indicate the amount of State's or Tribe's allotment to be spent on room and board for eligible youth (not to exceed 30% of CFCIP allotment)		\$	-
11. Estimated Education and Training Voucher (ETV) funds		\$	483,443.00
12. Re-allotment of CFCIP and ETV Program Funds:			
a) Indicate the amount of the State's or Tribe's allotment that will not be required to carry out CFCIP Program		\$	-
b) Indicate the amount of the State's or Tribe's allotment that will not be required to carry out ETV Program		\$	-
c) If additional funds become available to States or Tribes, specify the amount of additional funds the State or Tribe is requesting for CFCIP Program		\$	1,442,032.00
d) If additional funds become available to States or Tribes, specify the amount of additional funds the State or Tribe is requesting for ETV Program		\$	483,443.00
13. Certification by State Agency and/or Indian Tribal Organization. The State agency or Indian Tribe submits the above estimates and request for funds under title IV-B, subpart 1 and/or 2, of the Social Security Act, CAPTA State Grant, CFCIP and ETV programs, and agrees that expenditures will be made in accordance with the Child and Family Services Plan, which has been jointly developed with, and approved by, the Children's Bureau, for the Fiscal Year ending September 30, 2011.			
Signature and Title of State/Tribal Agency Official		Signature and Title of Central Office Official	
<i>Priscilla Colegrove ASD III</i>			

CFS-101 Part II: Annual Estimated Expenditure Summary of Child and Family Services

State or Indian Tribal Organization (ITO) _____ For FFY11 OCTOBER 1, 2010 TO SEPTEMBER 30, 2011

SERVICES/ACTIVITIES	TITLE IV-B			(d) CAPTA*	(e) CFCIP	(f) ETV	(g) TITLE IV-E **	(h) STATE, LOCAL, & DONATED FUNDS	(i) NUMBER TO BE SERVED		(j) POPULATION TO BE SERVED	(k) GEOG. AREA TO BE SERVED
	(a) Subpart I- CWS	(b) Subpart II- PSSF	(c) Subpart II- MCV *						Individuals ***	Families ***		
1.) PREVENTION & SUPPORT SERVICES (FAMILY SUPPORT)	\$ 545,625.90	\$ 353,441.25						1,345,554.00	16967	6188	All Eligible Children	Statewide incl. Reservations
2.) PROTECTIVE SERVICES				\$ 261,178.00				4,914,763.00			All Eligible Children	Statewide incl. Reservations
3.) CRISIS INTERVENTION (FAMILY PRESERVATION)	\$ 545,625.90	\$ 353,441.25						76,634.00	16967	6188	All Eligible Children	Statewide incl. Reservations
4.) TIME-LIMITED FAMILY REUNIFICATION SERVICES	\$ 545,625.90	\$ 353,441.25						0.00	16967	6188	All Eligible Children	Statewide incl. Reservations
5.) ADOPTION PROMOTION AND SUPPORT SERVICES	\$ 545,625.90	\$ 353,441.25						13,545,299.00	16967	6188	All Eligible Children	Statewide incl. Reservations
6.) FOR OTHER SERVICE RELATED ACTIVITIES (e.g. planning)								0.00			All Eligible Children	Statewide incl. Reservations
7.) FOSTER CARE MAINTENANCE:								0.00			All Eligible Children	Statewide incl. Reservations
(a) FOSTER FAMILY & RELATIVE FOSTER CARE								0.00			All Eligible Children	Statewide incl. Reservations
(b) GROUP/INST CARE								24,203,840.00	****ave per qtr 2120		All Eligible Children	Statewide incl. Reservations
8.) ADOPTION SUBSIDY PMTS.								540,844.00	****ave per qtr 2779		All Eligible Children	Statewide incl. Reservations
9.) GUARDIANSHIP ASSIST. PMTS.								0.00			All Eligible Children	Statewide incl. Reservations
10.) INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES				\$ 1,442,032.00				0.00			All Eligible Children	Statewide incl. Reservations
11.) EDUCATION AND TRAINING VOUCHERS								0.00	***** 705		All Eligible Children	Statewide incl. Reservations
12.) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS	\$ 242,500.40	\$ 157,085.00	\$ 93,279.00					36,405,077.00			All Eligible Children	Statewide incl. Reservations
13.) STAFF & EXTERNAL PARTNERS TRAINING								701,404.00			All Eligible Children	Statewide incl. Reservations
14.) FOSTER PARENT RECRUITMENT & TRAINING								125,806.00			All Eligible Children	Statewide incl. Reservations
15.) ADOPTIVE PARENT RECRUITMENT & TRAINING								74,156.00			All Eligible Children	Statewide incl. Reservations
16.) CHILD CARE RELATED TO EMPLOYMENT/TRAINING								0.00			All Eligible Children	Statewide incl. Reservations
17.) CASEWORKER RETENTION, RECRUITMENT & TRAINING								0.00			All Eligible Children	Statewide incl. Reservations
18.) TOTAL	\$ 2,425,004.00	\$ 1,570,850.00	\$ 93,279.00	\$ 261,178.00	\$ 1,442,032.00	\$ 483,443.00	\$ 21,929,681.00	81,933,377.00	67,868	24,752	All Eligible Children	Statewide incl. Reservations

* States Only, Indian Tribes are not required to include information on these programs.

** Calculation based upon IVE+ IVE FMAP ARRA.

*** Calculation based upon APSR 2010.

**** Calculation based upon IVE Roll Up Reports (retrieved April 2009 - March 2010 & added quarters/4 to get quarterly average) which are generated from CFS703 data. Also review of APSR 2010 Report for additional data.

***** Calculation based on data submitted by GMU and total includes new clients and carried over clients served.

CFS-101, PART III: Annual Expenditures for Title IV-B, Subparts 1 and 2, Chafee Foster Care Independence (CFCIP) and Education And Training Voucher (ETV) : Fiscal Year 2008: October 1, 2007 through September 30, 2008

1. State or Indian Tribal Organization (ITO): NEVADA		2. EIN: 88-600022-A9		3. Address: 4126 Technology Way, 3rd Floor Carson City, NV 89706	
4. Submission: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Revision					
Description of Funds	Estimated Expenditures	Actual Expenditures	Number served		Geographic area served
			Individuals	Families	
5. Total title IV-B, subpart 1 funds	\$ 2,328,750.00	\$ 2,328,750.00	16,480	5,553	All Eligible Children Statewide & Reservations
a) Total Administrative Costs (not to exceed 10% of title IV-B, subpart 1 total allotment)	\$ 232,875.00	\$ 232,875.00			
6. Total title IV-B, subpart 2 funds (This amount should equal the sum of lines a - f.)	\$ 1,573,605.00	\$ 1,573,605.00			
a) Family Preservation Services	\$ 354,061.13	\$ 354,061.13	16,480	5,553	All Eligible Children Statewide & Reservations
b) Family Support Services	\$ 354,061.13	\$ 354,061.13			
c) Time-Limited Family Reunification Services	\$ 354,061.13	\$ 354,061.13			
d) Adoption Promotion and Support Services	\$ 354,061.11	\$ 354,061.11			
e) Other Service Related Activities (e.g. planning)	\$ -	\$ -			
f) Administrative Costs (FOR STATES: not to exceed 10% of total title IV-B, subpart 2 allotment after October 1, 2007)	\$ 157,360.50	\$ 157,360.50			
7. Total Monthly Caseworker Visit Funds (STATE ONLY) NOTE: Estimated (Projected) Expenses obligated entire NOGA, upon arrival of actual bills and payment processing left a remaining balance of \$243.	\$ 23,360.00	\$ 23,117.00			
a) Administrative Costs (not to exceed 10% of MCV allotment) NOTE: SEE ABOVE	\$ 2,336.00	\$ 2,311.70			
8. Total Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) funds	\$ 1,310,081.00	\$ 1,310,081.00			
a) Indicate the amount of allotment spent on room and board for eligible youth (not to exceed 30% of CFCIP allotment)	\$ -	\$ -			All Eligible Children Statewide & Reservations
9. Total Education and Training Voucher (ETV) funds	\$ 441,297.00	\$ 441,297.00	80	0	All Eligible Children Statewide & Reservations
10. Certification by State Agency or Indian Tribal Organization (ITO). The State agency or ITO agrees that expenditures were made in accordance with the Child and Family Services Plan, which has been jointly developed with, and approved by, the Children's Bureau, for the Fiscal Year ending September 30, 2008.					
Signature and Title of State/Tribal Agency Official			Signature and Title of Central Office Official		Date
Priscilla Colegrove ASD III					6/30/10